

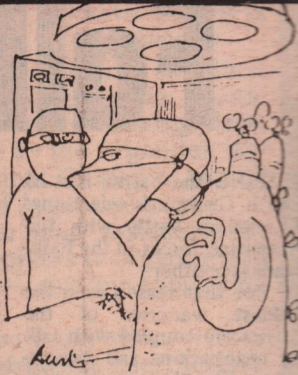
# MAY 6 ELECTION: VOTE LABOUR!

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# Socialist Organiser

Against all bans and proscriptions!

IN  
THIS  
WEEK'S  
ISSUE



Forceps... Invoice Book...  
Calculator...

## NHS PAY Fight

FEATURES on Whitleyism,  
Cuts, the growth of Health  
union militancy, and the  
lessons of the 'Winter of  
Discontent'.

4-page  
special

Paper of the Socialist Organiser Alliance No.82 APRIL 29, 1982 (Claimants and strikers, 10p) 25p

## MAY DAY

MAY DAY is International  
Workers' Day. And in 1982  
it once again finds workers  
around the world locked in  
struggles for the most basic  
democratic rights, for national  
liberation, and for  
socialism.

In El Salvador and other  
countries of Central and  
South America, the workers  
and peasants are in struggle  
against US-backed military  
dictatorships. In Turkey the  
labour movement faces the  
savage violence of General  
Evren's NATO-backed junta.

And while British imper-  
ialism mounts its punitive  
raid in the South Atlantic,  
its troops continue to repress  
the Irish people with daily  
violence.

In Poland, the Solidar-  
nosc movement which grew  
in mass struggle from the  
summer of 1980 has been  
driven underground by a  
brutal Stalinist bureaucracy.

To these workers in  
struggle, to the masses of  
black Africa, the toilers and  
oppressed on the Middle  
East and Asia, and to our  
fellow workers in Europe,  
East and West, the Editorial  
Board of Socialist Organiser  
sends this May Day our  
warmest solidarity and revolu-  
tionary greetings.

Workers of the world,  
unite!

## Irish prisoners send greetings

THE Irish Republican PoWs  
in Hull prison wish to take  
the opportunity on inter-  
national workers day, May 1,  
of sending greetings to the  
English, Scottish and Welsh  
working class and its revolu-

tionary organisations.

We would like to send  
warmest thanks to the indiv-  
iduals and groups who have  
practised true international  
solidarity with the develop-  
ing Irish revolution in the

face of massive media-  
inspired hysteria and the  
intimidation by the state  
forces and anti-democratic  
laws.

We would like to ask the  
workers, youth and national

minorities not only to  
support the struggle for  
socialism and national inde-  
pendence in Ireland but to  
deepen the struggle for  
socialism at home.

While Ireland may be the

grave-digger of British Imper-  
ialism, it is the English,  
Welsh, and Scottish working  
class who will put it in the  
grave.

PRO  
Irish Republican Prisoners,  
Hull Prison

# WITHDRAW THE FLEET!

## Thatcher threatens pitched battle

"SOUTH Georgia was the appetiser. Now this is the  
heavy punch coming up behind. This is the run-up to  
the big match, which in my view should be a walk-  
over..."

The warmongering bluster of Admiral Woodward,  
chief of the British fleet in the South Atlantic, shows  
that the military top brass have got the bit between  
their teeth. They are eager for battle, and becoming  
more trigger-happy as they are encouraged by Thatch-  
er's warcries.

By the time this Socialist Organiser reaches its  
readers, they may have launched another assault as a  
follow-up to South Georgia — if not a frontal assault  
on the Argentine occupation forces in the Falklands,  
which would be a very big and bloody affair, then  
some operation to establish a bridgehead on the Falk-  
lands, or an attack on Argentine airfields.

With each new battle, their taste for warfare will  
be sharpened, and their opportunities to step up the  
bloodshed increased.

All this has little to do with the rights of the Falk-  
land Islanders, and a lot to do with the search for

prestige and glory by the admirals and generals and  
by the jingoistic Tories. Reactionary though Galtieri's  
occupation of the Falklands is, Argentina will have  
every right to defend itself against any attack by  
Woodward's forces on its own territory and people.

After approving the dispatch of the fleet, and after  
endorsing the seizure of South Georgia, now, on the  
very brink of horrifying slaughter, Labour leader  
Michael Foot has started nervously to distance him-  
self from Thatcher.

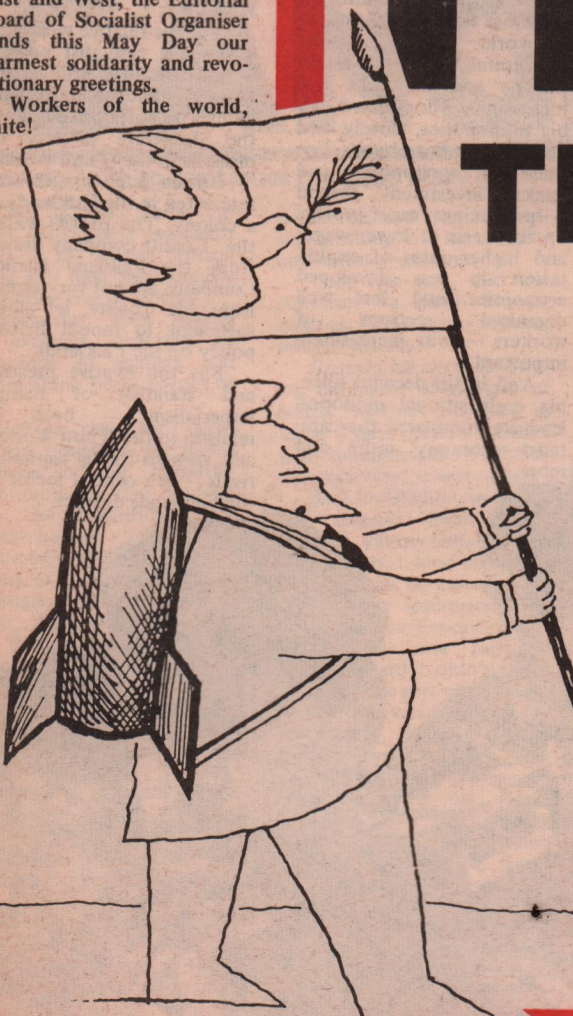
But the war danger is increasing a great deal faster  
than Foot's willingness to come out clearly against it.

Action by the Left and by the rank and file is  
urgent. We must demand:

\* Withdraw the fleet. Repudiate all British claims  
to the resources of the South Atlantic.

\* Link up with Argentine labour to stop the war  
and to safeguard the rights of the Falklanders. Help  
Argentine workers to organise, to win democratic  
rights, and to fight to overthrow Galtieri.

\* Black military supplies to stop Thatcher's war!  
Kick out the Tories.





# Hot and cold on Falklands

SEIZING the barren islet of South Georgia is one thing. A head-on battle with the Argentine forces in the Falklands is another.

For that reason even the wildest war-cries of the Tories are coupled with talk of negotiations and concessions. For that reason, too, they rely heavily on economic pressure.

The military threats and actions, apart from their direct effect, are designed to spur Britain's US and EEC allies into helping maintain that economic pressure.

The recent Royal Institute of International Affairs briefing on the Falklands points out:

"Its (the Galtieri junta's) greatest vulnerability... lies in the external debt, now over \$32 billion. This year alone over \$7 billion has to be either paid or rescheduled..."

"The Argentine government for the last six years has pinned its whole economic strategy on attracting foreign capital... and it is this which renders it most vulnerable of all".

Economically as well as militarily, the Tories must aim to gamble on the brink. For if Argentina is pushed into defaulting on its debt, the results for the whole capitalist world economy could be drastic.

## Martin Thomas looks at the pressures and possibilities for negotiations over the Falklands

The Argentine assets now frozen in London are about a quarter of Argentina's total reserves. And Argentina's blocked exports to the EEC amount to 32% of its total.

The Tories' essential aim is to secure an impression of victory - to save their face. The rights or wishes of the Falklanders (let alone of the Argentine workers suffering under the brutal military dictatorship which British politicians of all stripes suddenly so freely denounce) are strictly incidental.

Since the early 1970s Britain has plainly been trying to get rid of the Falklands.

In 1971 there was a communications agreement, tying the islands economically to Argentina.

"In the House of Commons in February 1977", the RIIA briefing reports, "the Foreign Secretary,

Anthony Crosland, made clear that the United Kingdom would not finance projects that the Shackleton Report of 1976 had identified as necessary for the economic development of the Falkland Islands. Nor would private investment be forthcoming unless there was a political settlement. Hence cooperation with Argentina was essential..."

"After talks in December 1977, two working parties were set up (between Britain and Argentina), one to consider political issues, including sovereignty, the other to consider economic cooperation".

This was, of course, the Labour government dealing in this way with the Argentine military regime which the same Labour leaders now brand as a "fascist dictatorship" to be fought at all costs!

### Expect

The Tory government continued this policy. Tory minister Nicholas Ridley visited the Falklands in November 1980 and "tried to persuade the Islanders that it was unrealistic to expect the existing situation to continue indefinitely".

He stressed that cooperation with Argentina was

vital, and urged the islanders to consider either a straight transfer of sovereignty or a transfer combined with a 'lease-back'.

However, the negotiations between Britain and Argentina never got anywhere: partly because the islanders had some political clout among nostalgic imperialists in Britain, partly for lack of sufficient urgency; and partly, no doubt, because of Britain's desire to secure some of the spoils of the oil and mineral resources of the South Atlantic and Antarctica - revealed in the early 1970s - as part of the settlement.

### Spoils

As the RIIA briefing points out, the dispute:

"would probably deter any oil company from embarking on any substantial investment in offshore mineral exploitation without firm assurance that its activity was acceptable not only to the Falkland Islands government but also to Argentina. Political risks apart, the logistics of an exercise that avoided Argentina would probably make it economically unattractive".

Economic interests drove towards a settlement - but not hard enough to overcome the political blockages and the disputes over the division of the spoils.

Now the war has jerked the whole slow-moving process onto a different level. But the framework of the long years of negotiation remains.

### Flotilla

The RIIA briefing points out that:

"Even if Britain were successfully to recapture the Falkland Islands, it would clearly not be able to hold them indefinitely... a defeated Argentina would not be willing to negotiate a long-term agreement leaving the Islands in British hands".

For Britain to hold the Falklands by force, the RIIA estimates, it would have to install a force of helicopters, coastal defences equipped with missiles, a small flotilla of frigates and nuclear-powered submarines, an air defence system, artillery, and about 8,500 troops. The airfield and harbour would have to be enlarged, roads developed, and a power station built...

### Pawns

Even Thatcher's enthusiasm for reviving the gunboat era would wilt at this! Thus British 'success' would probably mean some temporary restoration of British administration followed by a gradual evacuation of the islanders.

If it were not that they have become pawns between Britain and Argentina, the island community could very well live as it chose, troubling and oppressing no other community, its rights secured by an alliance with the Argentine labour movement. Thatcher's war is set to block any such prospect.

### Escalate

And worse: in the nature of war, it may escalate way beyond what any rational calculations would indicate. The more it does so, the more the islanders and the working people of both Britain and Argentina will be the sufferers.



# THE ECONOMICS OF IMPERIALISM

## Crisis watch

Britain's 50 biggest industrial companies do over 40% of their production abroad. Interest, profits, and dividend from abroad are a sizeable part of the income of the British capitalist class - £5,000 million in 1978, for example. A quarter of the whole world's banking business is concentrated in London.

Those facts sketch in some of the reasons why Marxists still speak of 'British imperialism', even though the Empire is practically vanished.

Every social system based on plunder - and that means practically every social system to date - has generated empires, formal or informal. The bigger powers have conquered subject peoples and made them pay tribute.

Modern imperialism, is however, different in major respects.

Capitalism, unlike previous systems, has generated a world economy. The basic process of capitalism is the conversion of money, via productive capital - means of production and labour power - and then products, into more money. In short, the self-expansion of capital. This self-expansion is by its nature relentless and insatiable.

Previous ruling classes sought power, prestige, and luxury. The capitalist class seeks these too - but it is also driven on by an insatiable drive of capital itself towards new markets, new fields of investment, and new sources of raw materials.

So capitalism has drawn the world together - closer and closer. Today we can see this strikingly in the fact that the Argentine crisis threatens to join with the Polish crisis to wreak havoc in a world financial system moulded by the Vietnam war and by the aftermath of the Middle East war of 1973. The most widespread events are connected by a close mesh of economic relations.

But this close-meshed

The late 19th century scramble to divide the world took the form of the seizure of colonies by the European powers. Yet that was only the form. Most fundamental was the world-exploiting drive of the big capitalist monopolies.

That fundamental drive remains, though the form in which it is expressed has been changed a great deal in decades of war and revolution.

In two world wars the big capitalist powers have fought for a redistribution of spoils. In one third of the world capitalism has been overthrown, though Stalinist regimes now rule.

Massive struggles by the former colonial peoples have ended colonial rule in most places, and weakened the direct political control of the big powers.

Since World War 2, the whole of the capitalist world has been massively dominated by the USA. Though inter-imperialist rivalries are now developing more sharply, with the slide into crisis and the relative decline of the US, over the last decades countries like Britain have been very much junior partners of the US in the exploitation of the world. In whole areas - including Argentina - US capital largely pushed out British capital after World War 2.

Yet the relative wealth of a few big capitalist powers - and Britain is still one of them - still depends on, and is inextricably linked with, the desperate poverty of millions in the 'Third World'. Britain is no longer very interested in the Falklands as a colony. The profits which the Coalite company draws from the Falkland Islands Company are not very significant for Coalite, let alone sufficient to mould British policy on the Falklands.

But the relative prestige and standing of British imperialism - both in relation to the 'Third World', and vis-a-vis its big capitalist rivals - is a central factor in the Falklands dispute.



# DIVISIONS IN THE JUNTA

THE immediate background to Galtieri's invasion of the Falklands was the mass anti-junta demonstration on March 29, and the trade union plans for a General Strike on April 5.

It seems that a further factor was manoeuvres and tensions within Argentina's ruling class.

Finance Minister Roberto Alemann has made practically no changes to his budget since the invasion. Yet he admits unhappily that the military spend just what they like on the Falklands operation, without consulting him or his budget.

The Financial Times (April 26) comments:

"The biggest loser has perhaps been Sr. Alemann."

"Before the invasion Sr. Alemann had secured major concessions from the military as part of his attempts to put the economy on a more stable footing. Generals had been replaced by competent civilians at the head of state

companies, the military had agreed to a 10% cut in defence spending, and the delicate subject of the privatisation of the military-controlled industrial complex, Fabricaciones Militares, had been broached.

"Now the military are firmly back in control - and, apparently, united".

Fabricaciones Militares is big business, with interests in industries like chemicals and petrochemicals. The Navy, for example, has made an agreement with multinational companies for a gas liquefaction process, aimed at exports to the US, involving investment of \$2,300 million.

But sections of the Argentine ruling class want to slim down the swollen military-dominated state apparatus. Hence tension: and hence a motive for the military to assert themselves and their claims by a suitably-chosen invasion.

An article by an Argen-

tine Marxist written in February and recently reprinted in the Paris magazine Inprecor notes that the Navy newspaper had openly mooted the idea of action against the Falklands or against Chile over the disputed Beagle channel.

"The military high command, after the huge military expenditure of recent years, is not going to lose any opportunity to justify itself historically by a real conflict. The newspapers have recently reported that a plane flew over the beaches of Mar del Plata trailing an enormous banner rejecting any concession to Chile on drawing the frontier around the Beagle Channel... The campaign against any military intervention in the Malvinas or against Chile should be part of the struggle for human and democratic rights, both inside and outside the country, in coordination with the Chilean and British workers..."



**Socialist  
Organiser  
EDITORIAL**

# War on May Day

**MAY DAY is International Workers' Day. Yet this May Day will find the leaders of the British labour movement backing Thatcher's war against Argentina.**

Some back it openly, even trying to outdo the Tories in jingoism. Michael Foot has tried to play the issue as many ways as possible, but when it came to it, he supported the sending of the fleet and he supported the storming of South Georgia.

Other labour movement leaders are silent. Only a tiny few, like Judith Hart and Tony Benn, have opposed Thatcher's war. Even they have made no call for working class action against the war — instead, they have looked towards the United Nations, i.e. the assembled diplomatic weight of the big capitalist powers.

Nearer the rank and file, too, jingoism has had its effect. Merseyside dockers have said that they will cancel their strike planned for May 10 if there is a national emergency by then over the Falklands issue. Thatcher's 'national interest' will overwhelm class interest.

The record of some Argentine labour leaders in the crisis has been more honourable. Exiled Argentine trade unionists have appealed to the TUC to meet them to discuss joint labour action to achieve a peaceful settlement and to stop right-wing politicians in both Argentina and Britain using the crisis to their advantage.

It is up to socialists to save the honour of British labour by pressing the TUC to respond to this appeal, and by openly pro-

testing against and campaigning for working class blacking action to stop Thatcher's war.

The Thatcher government has already established itself as a ruthless enemy of the working class in Britain and in Ireland, as well as a staunch ally of Reagan and the repressive regimes sponsored by imperialism on a world scale.

### Intimidation

A British 'victory' in the war over the Malvinas would simply reinforce this stance, and increase the ability of British imperialism to play an active role in the intimidation of workers' struggles and oppressed peoples internationally. It would also mean increased taxes or cuts for

British workers on top of the suffering inflicted on Argentine workers. And it is unlikely to do any good for the islanders.

The future of the islanders, and their legitimate right to decide their own affairs, must rest on a fight by the working class, and in the first place by the Argentine labour movement, against Galtieri's gambit and for withdrawal of Argentine troops.

British labour can lend assistance by helping Argentine workers to organise and overthrow Galtieri — not by supporting Thatcher's fleet!

May Day should be a day when we say loud and clear: **Withdraw the fleet! Repudiate all Britain's claims to the resources of the South Atlantic! Kick out the Tory warmongers!**



## Defend the Bradford 12!

**AFTER** supporters of the twelve Asian youth activists arrested during the riots last summer protested outside Leeds Crown Court on Monday 26th, defence lawyers tried to challenge the whole jury panel of 75.

This challenge — unprecedented for over 150 years — was based on the fact that the panel was disproportionately middle aged or elderly, and no Asians had turned up to serve as potential jurors.

But the judge turned it down. So the trial — on charges of conspiracy to make explosives — continues.

The Bradford 12 defence campaign needs support: contact c/o Box JK, LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds.



## Chomping YCND birthday cake

"We have to go out of here and build a mass YCND. Already we have a paid-up membership of 6,000, and probably many more unpaid. This year more than last is critical if we are going to build YCND."

That's how Annajoy Davidson introduced one part of this year's YCND conference and that's how we felt when we were chomping YCND's 1st Birthday cake.

### Adults

Over 200 delegates and observers met in London for the YCND conference in an atmosphere free from adults and stifling bureaucracy.

For those of us who have suffered the stagnation of the LPYS conference, this was like a breath of fresh air.

We were absolutely free to make points of information, move emergency resolutions. Despite a packed agenda we had nominations and hustings from the floor for the National Committee and we went en masse on the Sunday to the demonstration on the Falkland Islands.

Last year's conference was hostile to those on the left. This year there was much wider critical discussion, mainly from supporters of Class Fighter and Revolution.

The most important decisions made were that YCND should be autonomous from CND. Last year, conference passed a resolution that the age limit should be 25. CND, quite unilaterally and with no consultation with YCND put it down to 21, overruling the conference — the sovereign body of YCND.

Feeling over this was for overwhelming condemnation of CND and that we should have more faith in our ability to make our own decisions and policy and that they have no right to overrule us.

It was also agreed to link up with other sections of youth — to make unions of

by Judith Bonner (YCND National Committee member)

YOPs schemes, at school and in colleges to build local activities and above all to contact the LPYS National Committee to remind them of the LPYS 1981 Conference decision to affiliate to CND and to encourage them to fulfill this role not as a paper policy but by action as well.

While CND invited other groups, including the Young Tories to send a speaker, it was only the LPYS and Schools Against the Bombs who bothered to reply.

A major issue was how YCND should relate to other political groupings and how political YCND should be.

The conference did mark a major development in political consciousness. On Sunday a debate was held on what the slogan should be on the main YCND banner on the Youth Peace Festival scheduled for September.

The slogan put forward

was 'No Cruise — No SS20s' but this was overwhelmingly thrown out and conference welcomed more the slogan 'No Cruise — Jobs Not Bombs'.

On the Falklands the conference agreed demands for the withdrawal of the British Fleet and no war with Argentina, suspending the conference agenda to participate in the demonstration organised by CND.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the day was the elections. Discontent had been displayed because nominations had closed in December with the result that for many of the positions there was only one person standing.

A proposal for a postal ballot in three months time was opposed by Class Fighter supporters in favour of taking nominations from the floor and proceeding to hustings and an election.

This procedure was adopted, and a Class Fighter supporter, myself, was elected to the National Committee.

# PRESS GANG

**Daily Mail**  
**DAILY EXPRESS**  
**FINANCIAL TIMES**  
**The Daily Telegraph**  
**THE Sun**

### Patrick Spilling continues his fleet diary

So this is war. Today, as dawn broke over sea-swept decks of the British armada I can still hear faint echoes of celebrations of victory.

Yesterday ships rocked to exultant cheering of thousands of soldiers and sailors lining every corner of deck.

Not a day for faint-hearted doubters, for pinko pacifists or for niggardly negotiators. A day for real men, for Englishmen, for English heroes.

Victory will go down in annals of naval history with Trafalgar, Battle of River Plate, Agincourt. This was day British fighting machine showed itself best in world.

Argies nil, England 1. That scoreline will be remembered when Wembley '66 has faded into distant memory.

Now in private diary away from prying eyes of millions I can reveal exclusively the identity of the person who made this dream come true. It was me.

It was last Sunday over dinner Admiral of Fleet told us of his plan to storm South Georgia. We sat spellbound as he negotiated the salt cellar within range of his

bread roll and sent a broadside crashing into her. Ketch-up went everywhere.

That was war, said the Admiral, "a damn bloody business." He took another swig of whisky.

Outside ice crystals forming on beard of captain of watch. Marines on deck in force 9 gale playing football with handgrenade. Visibility down to zero. It was night.

Back in Blighty, treacherous coward Benn made another yellow-bellied anti-war speech. I filed an exclusive on how he changed his name from icecream salesman Antonio Benoni. Night Editor asks me for my source. I said I didn't think that was the sort of question a patriot would ask. He went very quiet and said over and out.

Next day marines on deck limbering up. Naval equivalent of SAS diving from bridge, landing head first on deck below. Good neck-strengthening exercises. Must remember to suggest to editor series on Keep Fit in Falklands. With line drawings of marines keeping in trim.

As boats are got ready I approach the Admiral. "Any

chance of going with the lads," I ask for form's sake. Too late I see that Admiral has been at vodka and is in no state to take decisions. "Quite right, old boy," he says. "Freedom of the press. Take him with you lads."

My blood runs cold. I stammer something about being against regulations but am shoved into Windcheater and tumble into boat. The last sound I hear as we are winched into sea is the rest of press lobby drawing lots for my top bunk.

Next few hours terrible to contemplate. Plunged up and down in monstrous sea. I shut my eyes and prayed. Rhythmic chanting of marines kept their paddles going. "Kill, kill, kill".

Later I scrambled into icy water and onto a rock. I was handed a rifle but dropped it. Stumbled up beach after my companions but lost them in the rocks. I was alone. Terror and despair gripped me. I walked across the rocks calling for help.

One minute I was on dry land, the next I'd plunged into a wallow — a treacherous trap full of seal blubber and urine. Scrambled out

choking with the smell and found myself back on beach.

Then a miracle. I see a submarine alongside jetty and run towards it. Crew on deck freeze as I hurl myself aboard and tumble down hatchway shouting "Save me, save me".

Too late realised not one of ours. Captain shrinks away. Crew clutch throats and fall to their knees. Seal's urine spreads panic through ship.

When helicopter dives through cloud, crew run on deck to greet it. It opens fire and they surrender. Victory is ours.

Rocket from chopper severs my leg below knee. On my return Admiral, now sober, tells me I must be listed as Argentine casualty or he will be court-martialled. Ship's carpenter to make me new leg. Am elected mascot of Marines, who say I should be first to set foot on Falklands. They roll about laughing.

My part in adventure to be hushed up. Admiral asks my advice on dispatch home breaking news. He suggests: "Kindly tell Her Majesty that we stuffed the bastards". I propose a few amendments

**Spread the news!**

**Socialist Organiser**

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# SHIFT OF STRATEGY IN IMPERIALIST 'CRESCENT OF CRISIS'

EVERY major peace treaty between Israel and its neighbouring Arab states has been a signal for a renewed attempt to smash the Palestinian resistance.

Last week's attack by Israel on the Palestinians in Lebanon is no exception. US imperialism had forced Israel into exchanging the Sinai Peninsula for recognition by Egypt of the legitimacy of the Zionist state. But the resulting peace agreement in no way limits Israel's determination (and the US's) to solve the "Palestinian question" by liquidating the Palestinians as a national entity.

Using the assassination of an Israeli diplomat as an excuse, the Zionists last week launched bombing raids on Palestinian bases, on refugee camps, and on a number of major towns in Lebanon. Many Palestinians have been killed.

The Israelis also shot down two Syrian Mig 23 jet fighters and destroyed part of the Syrian SAM missile batteries in Lebanon.

According to Begin, this murderous action which could have sparked off a wider war in the Middle East was only "a warning to the Palestinians".

In fact, of course, it is further evidence of the expansionist logic of the Zionist state, which, having dispossessed the Palestinians, is forced to carry its war against them into the neighbouring territories where they live as refugees.

On Saturday 24 April, the Bradford Labour Movement Campaign for Palestinian Solidarity held a day school on the Middle East.

The speakers, Moshe Machover, Elfi Pallis, Andrew Hornung, and a representative of the PLO dealt both with the recent events in Israel and the occupied territories, and also with the background to Zionism and imperialist activity in the region.

The article below is based on Andrew Hornung's opening speech on imperialism in the Middle East.

**DESPITE** upheavals on the tips of what Time magazine calls 'the crescent of crisis' — in Iran to the East and in Ethiopia to the West — compared with the two decades from 1952 to 1972, the last ten years have shown a steady rise in imperialist strength throughout the Middle East.

Almost thirty years ago, a group of Egyptian army officers overthrew the government of King Farouk. Soon Gamal Abdel Nasser became the undisputed leader of the 'Free Officers' Movement' and the government.

Under his leadership British troops were forced to withdraw, and a series of bold economic measures — land reforms, nationalisations, confiscation of British and French property after the Suez affair, and big infrastructural projects — transformed the country.

Nasser also turned to Eastern Europe for arms and money, advice and expertise.

Similar moves towards nationalism took place in Syria (1954) and Iraq (1958).

And in 1956, when Britain and France in collaboration with Israel attempted to retake the Suez Canal and bring down Nasser, they were forced by the US to withdraw. In addition, while the nationalist movement in Iran led by Mossadeq was defeated in 1953, Britain could only win this victory by cutting the US in

on a share of Iran's huge oil wealth.

So the older imperialists were being battered by revolts in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and later Algeria and Aden, though a younger, more powerful, US imperialism was increasing its strength in the Middle East.

In 1958, when the Chamoun government in Lebanon considered itself threatened, it was the US and not France, the Lebanese Christians' historic protector, that intervened.

## Trade

The period from those tumultuous years to the early '70s was a period of big Soviet involvement and influence in the Middle East. The volume of trade between Egypt and the USSR increased more than elevenfold between 1953 and 1957; in 1957 almost half of Syria's machinery and equipment imports came from the Soviet Union.

Huge credits were also forthcoming from the USSR, the most notable being \$200 million for the building of the Aswan Dam, as were increasingly big shipments of arms. At the same time, these more or less radical nationalist regimes managed to severely restrict the possibility for imperialist investment in their countries.

## Crack

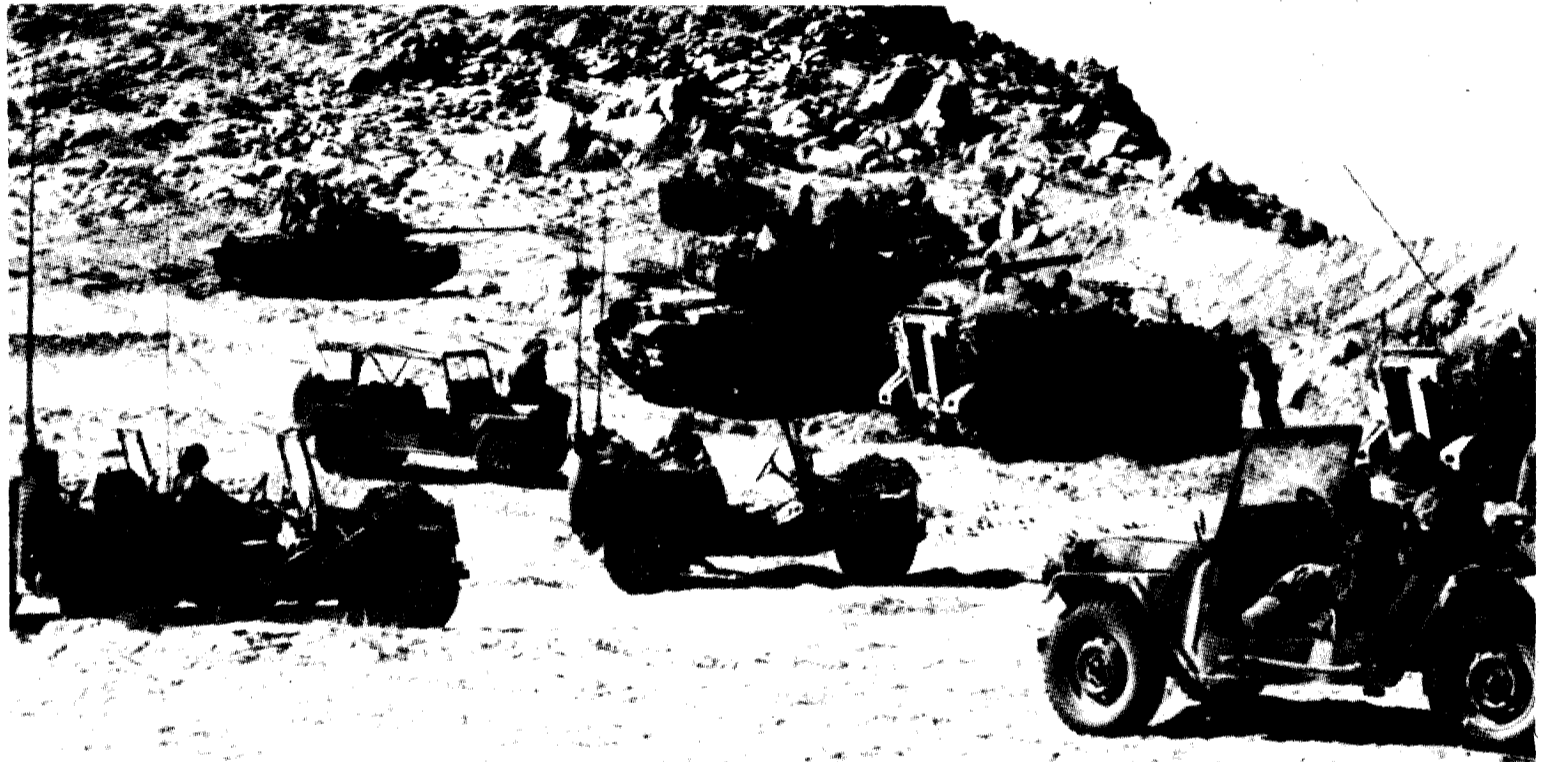
The first big crack in the picture came in 1972. In July of that year President Sadat (who had succeeded Nasser after the latter's death in 1970) expelled Russian military advisers from Egypt.

Sadat's plan was to regain the Sinai peninsula, reopen the Suez Canal, attract foreign investment, and reprivatise sections of Egyptian industry. The 1973 October War was fought by Egypt precisely to force the US to intervene and secure a peace treaty in exchange for the Sinai peninsula.

## War

And it worked. Despite US military support for Israel in the 1973 War, it was able to squeeze the USSR out of the peace negotiations to make itself the sole godfather of the final agreement.

Sadat's peace moves went hand in hand with his 'Infitah' policy, opening up Egypt for imperialist investment in partnership with the Egyptian bourgeoisie.



Control over the economy was shifted from state bodies to boards which included representatives of foreign capital. Enterprises investing in the Canal Free Zone were exempted from taxes and duties, and new enterprises in the rest of Egypt from paying taxes on profits for a period of five to eight years.

Businesses and investment banks were freed from currency controls. All confiscation of property was declared illegal and its consequences void.

Harsher conditions for the peasantry resulted from the abolition of the peasant courts, from higher rents, and from a change in law allowing payment of part of the rent in kind.

Soon ventures sponsored by the World Bank and the banks of the Gulf States controlled much of the economic activity of the country, though Egypt was bulging not so much with investments as with debts.

The trajectory of Egypt's development away from state capitalism, radical nationalism and close relations with the USSR is paralleled by similar trends in Iraq and Syria, although neither has as yet gone as far as Egypt.

There are several reasons for this reorientation. At bottom, however, they demonstrate that even the most radical nationalist regimes headed by representatives of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie in the Third World do not serve to break once and for all the domination of imperialism.

As Mohammed Haydar, once vice-premier of the Council in Syria, admitted in 1976, "It's a fact that a new bourgeoisie has developed in the shadow of the (ruling) Ba'ath Party. Having been able to adapt itself to the new system we established, it is richer and more widespread than the earlier owning class".

Iraq's shift to the right is reflected in its changes of position on the Palestine question, its attempts to develop a series of joint projects with Saudi Arabia, and above all its recent bid, by making war on Iran, to become imperialism's gendarme in the Persian/Arabian Gulf.

These developments are also connected with the huge increase in oil wealth in the Middle East. Not only does European and Japanese imperialism base itself overwhelmingly on the import of oil and natural gas from the Middle East, but today the US, once an exporter of oil, imports some 10% of its oil needs from that region.

Since the oil price rise of 1973 the region has become even more crucial to imperialism. States like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates have gained enormous incomes, whose recycling has become one of the critical elements in the world capitalist system today.

Between 1970 and 1977, for instance, the gross domestic product of Saudi Arabia measured in money terms increased by over 1000%; that of the Gulf Emirates, 800%, and that

of Kuwait and Libya, 400%.

With their fabulous financial resources, the ultra-conservative sheikhs of the Saudi house now play an important political role in Egypt, in North Yemen, among the Palestinians, and even in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

This oil wealth has been one of the reasons for the stunning rise in imports to the Middle East. In 1970 they rose 10%, next year 17%, then 24%, 40% in 1973 and 76% in 1974. Of this enormous increase, 62% comes from just six countries — the US, West Germany, France, Japan, Britain and Italy.

Vast profits are also being made from the sale of services like construction.

The Wall Street Journal quoted one British construction engineer working in the Gulf region as saying, 'A lot of money is being poured down drains. This whole area is becoming a boondoggle belt.'

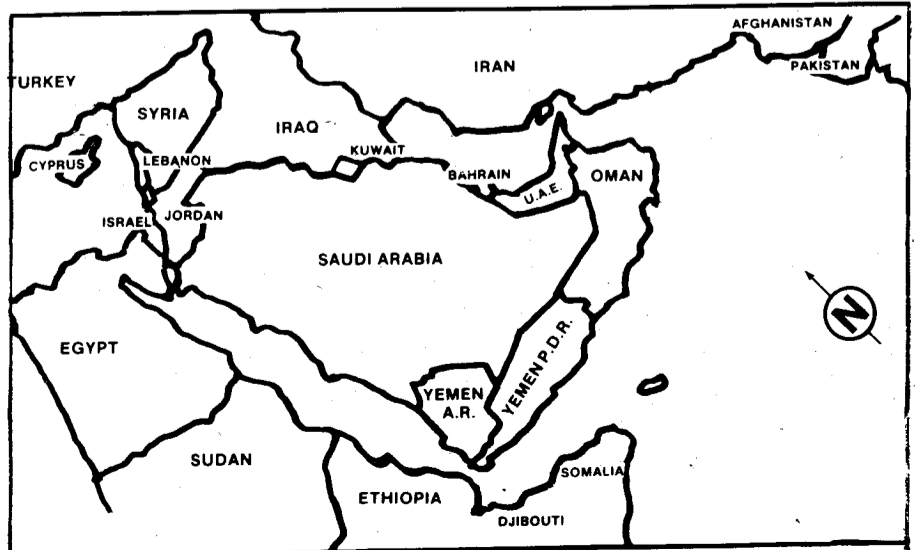
"Thank god for that. These countries are developing their own systems for recycling petrodollars — spend, spend, and spend some more. The oil money is coming back to people like myself and companies like ours".

The Middle East has also been one of the chief destinations of the US's booming arms sales.

The 1981 estimate was that the Middle East received \$18 billion of the \$32 billion worth of foreign military sales agreements.

In addition, the US now has a score of military bases and facilities it did not have 20 years ago. Besides those in the approaches to the Arab East (Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and the vast base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia), the US now has facilities in Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Oman, Somalia, and Israel.

The use of Egypt as a staging post for Carter's abortive attempt to retake the hostages in Iran, the use of Egypt and Sudan for exercises for the marines and the Rapid Deployment Force, and the vast US build-up on Masirah Island off the coast of Oman, are all indications of an unprecedented US military strength in the region.





# MAY 6:

# PUT A NAIL IN TORY COFFIN!

Alan Clinton, Labour candidate for Hillrise Ward, Islington, looks at the issues at stake

## Steward runs for council

Martin Timmins, an AUEW shop steward and Socialist Organiser supporter, is Labour candidate for the Kings Furlong ward of the Basingstoke Borough Council.

Martin's campaign centres around housing and cuts. As a member of the Basingstoke Socialist Organiser Group, he played a leading part in last year's big local campaign against a swingeing 66½% council house rent increase, to which a further 12½% has been added this year.

Socialist Organiser has successfully fought, in Basingstoke, for a Labour manifesto commitment to freeze rents for at least a year should a majority on the council be won.

Martin is additionally arguing against rate increases on the grounds that attempts to fight the Tories in this way have proved to be a dead end wherever they have been tried, and anyway rate increases hit most heavily at working class people.

Within the Labour Party Martin argues for the ending of divisions between Labour Groups and the rest of the party which can allow councillors to be a law unto themselves.

In Basingstoke, as in many other parts of the country, the political centre of gravity in the Labour Party has moved a long way to the left in the last couple of years. But much of the twenty-strong Labour Group is resisting this change, with the group being one of the last bastions of traditional right wing Labourism in the town.

As part of a small group of new left-wing candidates in the borough Martin wants to see councillors taking a leading role in building up across the board working class resistance to cuts and redundancies in the Direct Labour Organisations - which he well understands, being himself currently under threat of redundancy.

In short Martin's campaign is part of the wider struggle to regenerate the labour movement with policies for direct action and class struggle, rather than traditional passivity, defeatism and class collaboration.

LOCAL government has been the most successful forcing ground for Tory efforts to reduce public spending over the past three years. Where there have been great difficulties in reducing state aid to industries like British Leyland, and no desire at all to reduce payments to police and army, the Tories have concentrated on reducing Rate Support Grants and forcing up rents and rates at the same time as reducing services provided by local government.

All over the country the result of these policies can be seen in reduced educational facilities, in the closure of nurseries for the under-fives, and of day centres and homes for old people.

They can be seen perhaps worst of all in the virtual



Labour fights Islington cuts

ending of any form of housing programme at the same time as the criminal selling off of land and houses

owned by local authorities and earmarked to provide shelter for the poor in this and succeeding generations.

In the past it has not always proved easy to organise a fightback against these policies. Local Labour Councils in particular have often "defended" the services by simply increasing the burdens in other ways, especially by pushing up rates.

Heseltine's latest legislation means that this is no longer an option in the future.

In the May 6 elections Labour candidates for local authorities are standing throughout the country on platforms which oppose future cuts in services. This will mean that fulfilling manifesto commitments will involve a confrontation with the government. This can only be carried through successfully with mass support.

The election campaign itself has no doubt helped to galvanise this. In the area where I am standing, the support of new groups of working class women for a fighting Labour campaign has been particularly striking.

### Threats

This support will need to be consolidated and developed in the next period. Supporters of Socialist Organiser will no doubt be working to secure Labour victories throughout the country on May 6. This will by no means be the end of the story however.

After this it will be necessary:

\*To make sure that manifesto commitments like the

one here in Islington for a one-year rent freeze are not abandoned in the face of threats from governments, district auditors and other such elements.

\*To develop democratic accountability not only within the Labour Party itself but also in the administration of housing, social services, and other council provisions so that those who benefit from public spending can be mobilised to defend and extend it.

\*To make sure that the left wing groups in local Labour Parties are well organised to secure adherence to these policies.

In this way, Labour victories on May 6 can be a nail in the coffin of the Tory government and a step towards the socialist mobilisation of the working class.

# Let's have some socialist action!

"We have had one year of socialist rhetoric, now let us have some socialist action!" VIDYA ANAND, a newly elected member of the London Labour Party Executive, spoke to Socialist Organiser about the London Labour Party and the GLC over the last year.

I think I cannot be alone in regarding the Executive Committee of the Greater London Regional Committee as a remote body - operating in a way understood by very few at the rank and file level, least of all the very groups like - ethnic minorities, women, tenants associations, etc - who are in sympathy with most of the tenets of the Labour Party - i.e. disarmament, peace, equal opportunity, right to work, opposition to cuts in services, etc.

I am surprised about the way the EC appears to work. Its lack of clout makes it impotent to say the least - although it is supposed to be the custodian of conference decisions. It seldom appears to be able or willing to exert proper pressure on those elected to Parliament, GLC or to the Local Borough Councils, to broadly abide

by Labour Party views as expressed at conference decisions.

### Lead

GLC Labour Group has shown the way by making it possible for the representatives of the CLPs to come to its meetings. I am sure EC can give the lead by opening its meetings to the members of the Labour Party, so that the labour movement and its elected comrades can fuse its energies towards a common goal of building a socialist Britain.

I do not understand why no voting records at the EC are kept and the minutes containing both the voting and attendance records are not circulated to the very bodies - trade unions, CLPs and the other organisations - which elected the comrades onto the EC.

At the moment the EC seems to me to be a mere paper tiger. The press speaks of the hard left having taken over the EC - but the hard left seems to me to be more like a marshmallow!

### Reflect

I think the time has come for the EC - with its latent potential - to exercise its rightful influence on those whom the party got elected to Parliament, the GLC and the Borough Councils. It

should see that the Labour front bench should broadly reflect the conference decisions and not the privately held views of certain individuals who get elected and then forget the conference decisions - on cuts, school meals, sale of council houses or cheap fares.

I have been criticised by the leading comrades on the GLC for writing in Tribune - in the way I did - posing the question of accountability of elected members and their adherence to the conference decisions and Manifesto commitments. I stand by what I have written.

### Duke of York

I cannot see how in one breath comrades can give a clarion call to defy the law but when the GLC Labour Group was faced with the choice of accepting the Law Lords' decision - and in defiance of EC's resolution - then like the proverbial Grand Duke of York who led his troops up the hill only to lead them down again, the Labour Group voted en bloc to double the fares.

The subsequent propping up of the Tory newspapers with thousands of pounds of advertising could hardly help them to move the diehard Tory government to help them champion the over-

whelming wishes of the people of London as expressed in the May elections last year on the cheap fare issue.

On the school meal issue too the ILEA members who voted with the Tories to torpedo the Labour Manifesto are not only alive and well but are even flourishing on the front bench. Why has no action been taken by the EC or Labour Group or the CLPs?

### Cults

The hysterical attacks by the Tory media on the London Labour Briefing is a tribute to the comrades who have supported and encouraged it during the last few difficult months. Contrary to the misrepresentations that are currently circulating, London Labour Briefing is concerned with politics and principles not personalities or personality cults.

The rank and file of the Labour Party is pleased that the Socialist Organiser has made a welcome contribution to the success of London Labour Briefing. Briefing has excellent relations with the comrades on the PLP, the comrades on the GLC and ILEA Labour Group and the Labour Groups.

We have had one year of socialist rhetoric, now let us have some socialist action for a change!

## Campaign for



## Democracy

# SIGNS OF PROGRESS

"A SEWER with all sorts of rubbish floating in it", was the less than fraternal description of the Labour Party by Sir John Boyd CBE a fortnight before polling day.

Very seriously, the AUEW National Committee then proceeded to call (by a wafer-thin majority of six votes) for the reintroduction of bans and proscriptions.

Fortunately, Sir John's Salvationist simplicities are not universal. At the other major union conference occurring at the time of writing, USDAW President Syd Tierney more accurately reflected the feelings of the rank and file when he declared that "The bickering must stop. It dissipates our energy".

Calls for Party unity and an end to witch hunts appear on the agendas of several unions other than USDAW. Revulsion from divisive practices is also evident in the calls on at least three major union agendas to abolish the undemocratic 'shortlist of one' manoeuvre.

A number of agendas, including the NGA's, show great interest in the mechanics of how various unions should in future determine their votes in Labour leadership elections. A simple but radical resolution on the UCATT agenda proposes that the union's voting in all Labour Party elections (i.e. including NEC) should depend on each candidate's adherence (or otherwise) to the union's policy. A real threat, this, to any possibility of private horse-trading between General Secre-

taries! The quest for unity is also reflected in submissions seeking to integrate the Parliamentary Labour Party (e.g. ASTMS) and local Labour Groups (e.g. NUPE) with the Party as a whole.

Breaking newer ground several union agendas (e.g. NUR) show support for positive discrimination in favour of women, though not surprisingly action within a particular union is felt to be even more urgent than action within the wider context of the Labour Party as a whole.

Nevertheless CLPD's three basic demands on this subject appear on more than one agenda.

Even this scanty survey provides encouraging evidence that the union rank and file is re-learning the futility of operating in isolation from the Labour Party. In addition to the constitutional demands referred to above, many Agendas contain highly precise policy demands (e.g. public ownership of at least 25 major private manufacturing companies) for inclusion in Labour's next Manifesto.

FRANCIS PRIDEAU  
[Secretary, CLPD Trade Union Committee]

[Any comrade (especially delegates) wishing to help promote Labour democratic proposals at his/her union's conference is asked to contact Francis Prideau (CLPD) at 18, Hornsea Rd, London W9, or else writing Victor Schonfield at 01-969 2511.]

# Dining with Denning

AT THE initiative of Socialist Organiser supporters, Basingstoke Labour Party organised a forty-strong demonstration on Friday April 23 against a banquet, held at the headquarters of the AA, at which local judicial hatchet man Lord Denning was to be the guest of honour.

The demonstration - in solidarity with the GLC's stand on low fares, drew a positive response from local activists despite quite a hard fight on the General Management Committee between

those arguing for the demonstration and those who feared its effect on forthcoming council elections.

On the night, however, a fair number of those who had opposed the SO initiative demonstrated considerable political integrity by participating in the demonstration.

Unfortunately this cannot be said for all. The GMC decision to demonstrate was passed to the Labour Group of Borough Councillors, who had been invited to attend the func-

tion - which ironically was on behalf of the "Sunshine Buses" charity, at £13 a head.

The Group decided to support the boycott recommendation put to it by the party, but in the event three Labour Councillors attended!

No doubt in the inevitable accountability fight which will follow, such hoary chestnuts as 'freedom of individual choice' and 'coercion by unrepresentative cliques' will be used to justify the deep rooted

desire to hob-nob with the upper crust which probably motivates such shabby betrayals.

### Votes

Socialist Organiser supporters will press for votes of no confidence in those who attended on three main counts.

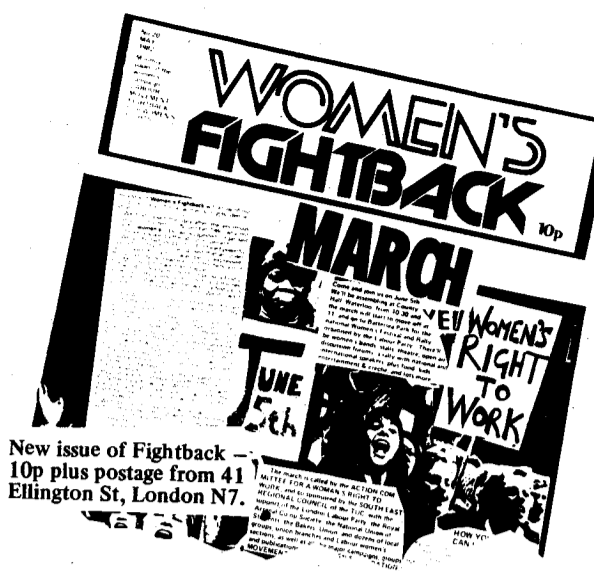
1. That clear policy lines were laid down for the event by the local Labour Party, of which councillors are just as much a part as any other member.

2. That attendance amounted to sanctioning Denning's use of the law against the London labour movement and therefore constituted scabbing on the GLC's stand on fares.

3. Similarly, attendance amounted to tacit support for Denning's judicial moves to undermine the credibility of Labour Party policy decisions in general and manifesto commitments in particular.



# Darwin, Desmond Morris and Mickey



New issue of Fightback - 10p plus postage from 41 Ellington St, London N7.

## Mouse

by Gerry Byrne

LYING IN bed last week, sleepily listening to a programme on Charles Darwin (it was the 100th anniversary of his death), I suddenly got a rude awakening.

Desmond Morris was explaining that Darwin was the single most influential person in the history of human thought. I half-expected a mighty crack as the vault of Westminster Abbey opened, and Charles Darwin rose up to protect his name.

It's not that the comment itself was particularly wide of the mark. But from Desmond Morris? With heirs like that, who needs monkeys?

The descent from Darwin to Desmond Morris would be tragic were it not so farcical. It seems to be the fate of revolutionary ideas to be taken up by counter-revolution as it rearms. And that certainly seems to be poor Charles Darwin's fate.



### Animal

Darwin was pilloried by the Church and the Establishment for locating Man (and we'll look at that word later) as part of the animal kingdom (another revealing term), and subject to the same laws which determine the diversity of the animal world.

Religion held that Man was a unique creation, made in God's image and obedient to higher, God-given laws. Woman, of course, had her own special, morally-inferior place in the scheme of things, created as she was from a bit of Man's superfluous anatomy as his plaything and obedient to his bidding.

A hundred years on, Darwin's revolutionary ideas, spiced up with a dash of sexual titillation and dished up with a flourish of quackery, are used to return us to a position that prevailed before he came onto the scene.

And, big surprise, not least among the 'new' reactionary ideas is the reinstatement in suitably pseudo-scientific garb of the Adam's Rib theory of women's existence.

### Species

Darwin pointed to the process whereby, under the pressure of natural selection, in the face of a changing environment, species have to adapt to the new conditions or die out. Something very similar seems to have happened to the concept of 'natural': it has evolved and adapted to a changing ideological habitat.

In the religious schema, it acted as the negation of all that was uniquely human, spiritual, moral. 'Natural' meant animal, bestial, dirty, carnal, uncontrolled, i.e. BAD, that which should be overcome by the God-loving spirit. And woman, in this picture, was closer to nature and therefore more in need of suppression and control.

As the climate changed, as evolution took over from creation and the precepts of

religion were more and more undermined, 'natural' had to find a new meaning or perish alongside predestination or the flat earth.

And now we see it emerging from its 100-year metamorphosis. 'Natural' now equals GOOD, or at the very least unchangeable, inevitable. It has become the new Eternal Truth, and like every grand abstraction, it can be brought to bear in the service of the most abominable acts.

The fault is not in ourselves but in our genes. Ergo, there is no possibility of remedying it.

### Clubbing

So, for example, you get Man the Aggressor. The argument runs: we are descended from hunting primates with fierce teeth, we developed to humanity through clubbing other animals to death, so how can we be expected to do anything about war/imperialism/genocide: they're only giving expression to our natural aggressive and territorial instincts.

As for rape, don't you know that certain species can't mate until the male has cowed the female into submission by displays of his superior force? So lie back, sister, and enjoy it, it's only natural after all!

Of course, all sorts of things are 'natural' which we don't find desirable or even tolerable, like famine and disease, and we have the human capacity, if not the social will, to eradicate them.

Now Desmond Morris is by no means the worst in the field of animal behaviourists turned moral philosophers. In fact, he seems quite an affable fellow, which is why his ideas on women can be particularly pernicious.

He specialises in an archly-detached exposition of human sexual behaviour. And it certainly gets his books sold.

He offers this wondrous explanation for women's breasts: when Man started walking upright and engaging in face-to-face sex, he was deprived of the natural stimulus of the female buttocks, which play an important role in arousing male primates. But abundant nature came to the rescue: women developed larger breasts as buttock-surrogates to raise their menfolk's flagging ardour.

So there you have it. You're pleased you found that out, aren't you? You always wondered what those things dangling round your armpits were for, didn't you?

### Nose

Now, I love this story. It has a certain poetic absurdity, like the Dong with the Luminous Nose, but it has as much in common with Darwin's years of painstaking research and rigorously argued conclusions as has Mickey Mouse. Still, it does reveal some of the more common devices used by these people to arrive at their spurious conclusions.

The first centres round the use of 'Man'. However much it is protested that 'man embraces woman (ho ho)', that this term refers to the species and not the gender, there is a constant slippage between the two.

Why does 'Early Man' breastfeed her children and carried them round with her as she searched for roots and berries' sound weird, while 'Early Man' was a hunter, and was often away from his women and children for long periods' could be passed over without remark, unless you're already sensitised to it by feminist arguments about



language?

This isn't just a linguistic accident, it represents a thoroughly male-oriented perspective. In the above example, a change in women's anatomy must be for male consumption. What else are women for?

### Playboy

Which leads on to another question: even if it could be proved that a certain type of body had a particular 'function', should the individuals of that body-type be defined by that function?

Then there's the problem of projecting back the social categories of an advanced capitalist society onto pre-history, like our Playboy centre-fold catapulted back a million years. Apart from anything else, it's illogical.

If normal healthy women have flat hairy chests, what advantage is there in going for a bald freak with lumps in the wrong place? Looks like a recipe for an evolutionary wash-out.

### Monogamy

Closely allied to this

'eternalising' of historical products is the taking of analogies as literal identities. A good example is the pair-bonding/monogamy equation.

### Law

Monogamy is a social institution which decrees one man and one woman marry (for life) and do not take other partners for the duration of the marriage (though, almost universally, illicit liaisons are condoned for the man). Monogamy is enforced by law,

### Moral

Not only that. It's taken a step further, from 'function' to moral imperative. It is not only woman's 'natural' role to please men, that's how it ought to be, that's all she should aspire to.

Which seems to take us back full circle. Having dethroned God, we have another superhuman architect, Evolution personified, decreeing that bondage is our birthright and we should accept it gladly. God preserve us from Mickey Mouse.

**MARCH WITH US TO THE LABOUR PARTY WOMEN'S FESTIVAL AND RALLY**

**JUNE 5th**

**WOMEN'S RIGHT TO WORK**

Come and join us on June 5th. We'll be assembling at County Hall, Waterloo, from 10.30 and the march will start to move off at 11, and go to Battersea Park for the national Women's Festival and Rally organised by the Labour Party. There'll be women's bands, stalls, theatre, open-air discussion forums, a rally with national and international speakers, plus food, kids' entertainment & creche, and lots more.

The march is called by the ACTION COMMITTEE FOR A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO WORK, and co-sponsored by the SOUTH EAST REGIONAL COUNCIL of the TUC, with the support of the London Labour Party, the Royal Arsenal Co-op Society, the National Union of Students, the Bakers' Union, and dozens of local groups, union branches and Labour women's sections, as well as all the major campaigns, groups and publications of the WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

\* Come to the Action Committee meetings - there is a meeting every Monday evening at 7.15 at County Hall, Waterloo. Send us a donation. Publicise the march in your local press, at work, at college, at school, among your friends.

\* Leaflets from: Action Ctee for a Woman's Right to Work, 181 Richmond Road, London E8.



# Socialist Organiser

# INDUSTRIAL SPECIAL

5p if sold  
separately

If NUPE leader Alan Fisher has his way and the NHS pay dispute drags on from a 'spring offensive to a summer of discontent', health workers could be the first guinea pigs of Norman Tebbit's anti-union laws:

- 'Political' strikes would be unlawful — so what about fighting government pay limits?

- Solidarity action — blacking or supporting strikes — would be unlawful, leaving NHS workers isolated, and NHS unions exposed to claims from damages by supply firms.
- Militants and strike leaders could be given an ultimatum — return to work at once or be sacked, with no legal protection.

- The few sections with 100% trade union membership or closed shops would face regular ballots.

To fight now and win on NHS pay is part and parcel of the fight against these savage new laws and the Thatcher government.



## Health workers' pay fight

# UNITE — IN STRIKE

# ACTION!

THERE is plenty to unite health workers in their struggle on pay this year.

For the first time ever, all sections of health service workers — from nurses and ancillaries through to craft unions and clerical workers — have had a common date for pay negotiations.

They have a common 12% claim. They face the same inflation — currently running overall at 12% — bringing increases in rents, rates, prices and charges, all fuelled by Tory policies.

And they have all received an insulting reply to their claim — ranging from no increase at all for young technicians, through 4% for ancillaries, 5% for ambulance crews and a miserable 6.4% for nurses. In each case this amounts to a savage cut in real wages among some of the lowest paid workers in the country. The extra 79p for a domestic for instance will be gobbled at once by increases in national insurance; nurses increases will be eaten up by a huge rise in lodging charges.

Health workers are clearly united in their anger over pay, as shown by the strong response to the April 14 day of action. All the conditions seem ripe for a concerted, all-out fight against the Tory pay limit.

But there has been no such lead from the unions involved. Only one union — COHSE — has called for any action at all — and that is restricted

to 2 hour strikes and bans on non-emergency admissions. Other union leaderships are either stalling, leaving COHSE members isolated in their struggle, or (like NUPE) openly dragging their feet.

The NUPE leadership, under the guise of 'democracy' has called a time-wasting ballot, while also effectively abandoning the claim, calling for it to be referred to arbitration.

They are using as justification the recent arbitration award of 6% average increases to civil servants — ignoring the fact that a 6% award falls in any event far short of the rise in the cost of living.

The fact is that health workers have only one means of securing decent living standards: to organise and to fight for them. We must mobilise the health unions at section, branch, area and national level to

demand united, indefinite strike action in pursuit of the 12% claim.

This means in the first instance fighting alongside COHSE members and any other sections that embark upon action seeking to extend the impact and duration of that action. And it means demanding that union officials stop crawling to management and looking for compromise and start the fight for strike action. It means building links with other trade unionists in local industries and supply firms, to mobilise them in support of the NHS unions.

Without this clear strategy, all of the fine talk of "unity" among the NHS unions means in reality that every section of workers will share in a miserable sell-out.

Together with strike committees controlling the provision of essential

emergency cover, the trade unions could rapidly bring all but the emergency functions of the NHS to a halt, winning the full claim and dealing a major blow to the Thatcher government and its policies of cuts and cash limits.

Instead, there is a very different type of "unity" — with NUPE, TGWU, GMWU, ASTMS and other union officials uniting to isolate the COHSE action and sell out their own members.

It is for this reason that *Socialist Organiser* urges health workers to lobby the May 7 meeting of NUPE's National Executive (where the results of the ballot will be discussed) demanding that the biggest union in the NHS give the lead in calling all-out strike action.

And we urge militants in other health unions to take up the fight to force their leaders to call action to win the 12% claim.

Only by starting now from the fight in defence of jobs and living standards can we construct the kind of leadership in the working class necessary to defeat and remove this Thatcher government and carry through the struggle for the expansion of the health and other public services as part of a planned socialist economy.

A meeting of health union activists has been called on Sunday May 21 at the Labour Club, Bristol Street, Birmingham, starting at 10pm.

## Hampshire

THE April 14 one-hour official stoppage brought a sizeable rally of health service workers on the combined site of Basingstoke District Hospital and Park Prewett Psychiatric Hospital.

About 150 workers from various unions attended, with the biggest contingent coming from the manual workers organised in the GMWU Hospital Branch.

Now a joint shop stewards committee in Basingstoke has called a one-day strike on May 19, together with a demonstration and rally.

## Manchester

OVER 1,000 workers in the Manchester and Salford area responded to a half-day strike call issued from the local Joint Shop Stewards Committee for March 23.

Now a further half-day strike has been called for April 28 of NUPE, NALGO, ASTMS and the craft unions at Prestwick Hospital while COHSE's attitude locally remains in doubt.

## Oxford

In Oxford, a successful demonstration on pay on April 17 secured support from all health unions organised in the local Joint Trade Union Committee.

The concluding rally heard reports from local COHSE militants on their decision to strike on Thursday April 20 — the day of the next meeting of the TUC Health Services Committee.

But NUPE leaders are insisting that no action should be taken by their members pending the result of the union ballot at national level.

## Leicester

In Leicester, a good turn-out on the April 14 1-hour protest has been followed by demands from health workers that their leaders give a call for action.

Despite local rivalry between NUPE and COHSE, a NUPE shop stewards committee has voted to support COHSE action, and to start the dispute together.

It is expected that action will include work-to-rules, overtime bans and possible lightning strikes in the future.

## Edinburgh

NURSES and ancillary workers in Edinburgh went on 2 hour strike on 23 April as part of COHSE's campaign on pay. 25 workers from the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, including about 20 nurses, were mobilised by 25 workers from another nearby hospital at the gates of Woodburn House, headquarters of the Scottish Health Education Group.

## South Wales

THROUGHOUT South Wales COHSE members have been taking action in line with their Executive Committee decision. Two-hour stoppages have been occurring and hospital workers have banned overtime.

Other hospital workers in other unions are still awaiting Executive Committee decisions, but the mood is very militant with most hospitals setting up joint shop stewards committees. While the leaders hang back, the rank and file are determined to win their claim.

Most NUPE branches in the South Wales area have now met and the vote is for industrial action in support of the 12% claim.

When members of our NUPE branch read in the press a statement from Alan Fisher that NUPE ruled out strike action by nurses, our Secretary phoned up to complain. We were told that Fisher was 'misquoted'. But since then he has again been reported saying the same thing.

It is not NUPE policy. So why has NUPE issued this statement?



## Lobby NUPE — May 7th



# The rise of health serv

The 1970s were a period of rapid change in the NHS. By 1975, after years of inactivity, virtually all grades of hospital staff had taken industrial action in pursuit of wage claims. Among them were 370,000 nurses.

Yet until 1972 there had never been an official strike over pay in the NHS and almost no rank and file activity.

One exception had been female domestics in London who held a series of mass meetings in 1956 in pursuit of their demands for a 44-hour week.

Undoubtedly the burst of unofficial strike action in the early 1970s was influenced by a number of factors, not least of which was the rising level of confidence and scope of shop floor organisation throughout the working class. This could not fail to have its effect even on less well-organised sectors such as health workers.

Inflation had cut mercilessly into the miserable pay packets of NHS workers, and the appalling working conditions in many hospitals caused by persistent under-financing and staff shortages led to an explosion of rank and file anger — which shocked both the government and the union officials who had previously themselves accepted and fostered the myth of their members' supposed 'passivity' and 'lack of fight'.

In 1970, unofficial strike action was taken by ancillary workers at the Royal Free and other hospitals in London. In the same year COHSE nurses at the Levensdon Psychiatric Hospital struck over a range of grievances extending from staffing levels to conditions in the nurses' homes.

Most of these nurses were from Senegal and Mauritius and indeed, over the next years it was those very sections, blacks and women workers, who had been least represented in the official union structures who were to prove to be the best fighters.

They were at the forefront of demonstrations and picket lines and found their own ways of organising even in the face of varying degrees of hostility from full-time officials.

Over the next four years, layers of oppressed and exploited workers moved to battle.

It is all the more remarkable for the most complete absence of militant activity and shop floor organisation in the past.

In the autumn of 1972 unofficial action was taken by TGWU ancillaries in Bristol, and on 27 November the London Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers (LASH) an entirely rank and file body led for one-day strike action and got an unprecedented response.

## Immigrant workers in the forefront

Hundreds of strikers demonstrated outside the DHSS demanding an £8 wage increase, a 35 hour week and four weeks paid holidays.

Again, immigrant workers who made up half to two-thirds of the workforce in many London hospitals emerged as some of the most militant and determined workers.

On 17 December in the face of mounting rank and file pressure the union leaders terrified of losing their grip on the situation — called for a one-day strike.

In January 1973, TGWU ancillaries in Bristol took all-out strike action for four days before being blackmailed back to work.

Eventually after a long-winded and complicated process of balloting, national official action was called including selective strikes, overtime bans etc.

The half-heartedness of these measures, the delaying tactics and lack of real leadership meant that by the end of March 1973 demoralisation began to set in.

The eventual award was woefully inadequate but the NHS could never be the same again.



## ANNA LUNTS looks at the struggles of the last 10 years

A long history of passivity and servitude had been decisively broken with and the effects of the ancillaries' action continued to reverberate throughout the NHS. Over 400 hospitals had been hit during this period by action ranging from one-day strikes to all-out action.

The involvement and determination of women and immigrant workers had dealt a death blow to that divisive myth that these groups of workers were responsible for inactivity and low pay.

It had also been firmly established that there was a real alternative to productivity schemes and overtime as a means of dealing with low pay.

The ancillary workers' struggle placed strike action on the agenda for thousands more workers in the next three years.

In Autumn 1973 ambulancemen challenged phase 3 of the Heath government's pay code. But NUPE withdrew official backing after only 15 of the 140 areas had settled locally, completely capitulating to Tory wage restraint.

In the same year, the nurses woke up from their harsh history of Victorian discipline, stifling hierarchy and severe exploitation, to take their part in the pay struggles.

During this period over 350,000 nurses took part in some form of industrial action to the amazement of the government, the upper echelons of the nursing profession and the union officials who had written the nurses off as an inherently passive, conservative female workforce.

For some time nurses' anger had been growing. In 1969 the Royal College of Nursing's "Raise the Roof" campaign had involved nurses for the first time in campaigning actively despite its hopeless emphasis on petitioning and lobbying.

The huge discrepancies between nurses pay claims in 1970-73 and what they were actually offered fuelled their anger. For example, in 1972 a 25% claim was met with an 8½% award while in 1973 a 40% claim (the minimum needed to keep up with inflation) was met with an award of £1 plus 4%!

In April and May frustration built up after the miserable March offer. Nurses' action groups were set up, rallies and meetings organised and there was a wave of nurse recruitment to the TUC-affiliated unions.

900 nurses packed a meeting in Manchester after which they surged out of the

hall and sat in the road holding up the traffic.

Gone was the image of the genteel nurse for whom such things just weren't proper! On 8 July there was a national day of action on nurses pay.

In Swansea, 1500 miners stopped work for 24 hours in solidarity with the nurses after flying pickets of uniformed nurses asked miners to "strike a blow for the nurses".

Engineers in South Wales and Manchester also responded with sympathy strikes.

The action resulted in the Halsbury inquiry into nurses pay. After months of deliberations the inquiry awarded increases averaging 30%.

However these were highly differentiated according to grade, offering for example 58% for management grades, but only 5.6% for first year student nurses whose basic wage went up from only £23.30 to £24.43.

Medical technicians in ASTMS were the next to strike, followed by radiographers.

3,000 of the 8,000 radiographers marched through central London on 6 July 1974.

Radiographers at the Royal Free became the first ever to strike, followed by a stoppage in the North-East region.

Their action resulted in an interim settlement and a Halsbury inquiry.

NHS engineers and junior doctors were the next to take action. In fact by the mid-seventies virtually every non-management grade of hospital worker had taken some form of action.

The years 1975-78 were characterised by vicious wage controls under Healey's Social Contract. But in the winter of 1978-79 there was mass national action throughout the NHS and local government.

The so-called 'winter of discontent' was again notable for the militancy of the rank and file and the totally inadequate leadership of the union officials.

The ancillaries were awarded 9% plus £1 "on account" followed by the Clegg inquiry. This eventually awarded ancillaries between 3.8% and 16.6% — though most got only between 3.8% and 6.5% and wound up having to pay back money to management.

Clegg awarded ambulance drivers 12.25%, while nurses received increases from 25% for a sister to 13% for student nurses.

# Cuts — and the fight for wages

by Jane Goss (COHSE)

After some tentative moves by the Heath government, which were never fully implemented, substantial cuts in NHS spending first began in the mid-seventies under a Labour government. They heralded a new era of reductions

in staff, services and facilities.

They also brought into budget systems 'cash limits' — and consequently pay offers — well below industrial rates and well below inflation.

What the Labour government started (with IMF urging) as a money saving operation the Tories have continued with a vengeance as an onslaught on the whole concept of a National Health Service.

There have been several notable battles around cuts and particularly around closures of wards/hospitals.

Among the hospitals, Hounslow, the EGA, St. Benedicts, Longworth and St. Mary's have all had strong fightbacks centred on occupations by staff in defence of services.

But the cuts begin with low wages and go much deeper than most people realise.

Because of their appallingly low basic wages, health service workers are particularly susceptible to 'extras' such as bonus schemes, overtime, and various extra payments in lieu of a decent basic wage.

Union bureaucrats often find it easier and simpler to negotiate extras than to fight a good strong campaign for wage claims or against the cuts.

Acting-up allowance, originally negotiated as a protection against exploitation, is now increasingly misused to cover for unfilled vacancies.

Until the cuts began it was very diffic-

ult to get management to even consider bonus schemes. Now, hospital administrators are initiating discussions on bonus schemes as a way of cutting back on staffing levels and to get workers to take on jobs which have been left vacant but need to be done.

It is, of course, essential to oppose any attempt to introduce bonus schemes. But it is also a very difficult position to argue in Health Service branches when it is very often only bonus and overtime payments which give workers enough money to pay the bills and survive.

Are low wages then related to cuts? The answer is a resounding yes. Continued unfilled vacancies begin the creeping cuts which signify plans to close a ward or department and possibly the whole hospital.

A ward without its own domestics and ancillaries and staffed mostly by agency nurses is much easier to close down than a ward with permanent staff.

Absurdly, the lack of staff, engineered by management, is often the excuse given for closing wards.

Low pay, deliberately kept low by the Tories, also makes it more difficult to recruit workers — some of whom are financially better off claiming benefit than working for Health Service wages.

This is again used as an excuse for poor services which increase the waiting lists and waiting time in clinics, and helps to create a general sense of frus-

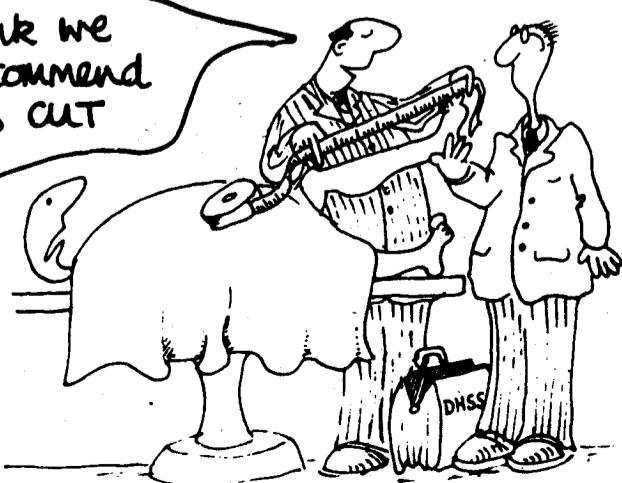
tration in the public.

Private medicine then seems more attractive and 'worth the money'.

If all health workers earned a decent basic wage it would be much easier for us to carry out union policies of no cover for unfilled vacancies.

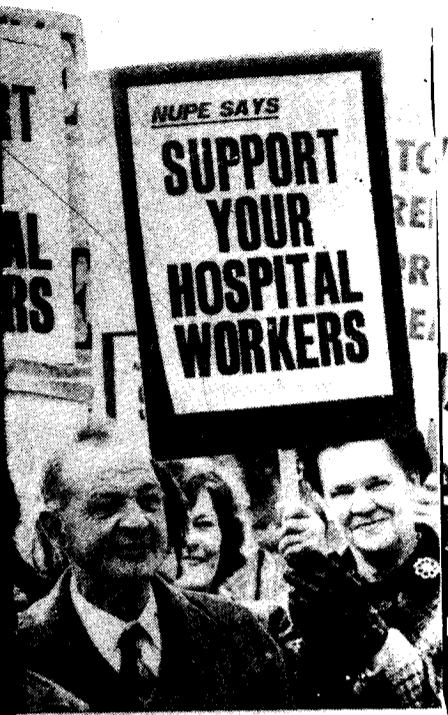
If we knew that our wages would pay the bills, there would be no need to work extra hours or 'fill-in' at higher grade

I think we can recommend a 5% cut





# Low pay militancy



# The mysteries of Whitleyism

by Anna Lunts (NUPE shop steward, Prestwich hospital, Manchester)

MOST NHS workers have only a dim conception of the complicated and bureaucratic system by which their pay is determined – the Whitley Council system.

Daniel Vuillamy of WEA describes Whitleyism as follows:

"Whitleyism can be compared to a long playing football match where the management have a moveable goal (the elusive DHSS and Treasury) and are allowed to foul at will (particular favourites are obstruction and time wasting!). The staff side have improved in recent years, although the team selection remains strange and some members (the professional associations) are reputedly bribed by the opposition and they always have to play uphill. The spectators are getting frustrated and logic seems to demand a change in the rules."

Whitleyism as a system of pay bargaining actually originated from a series of recommendations made by a parliamentary committee in 1917 under the chairmanship of J.H. Whitley.

This system was in fact an attempt to break the back of the growing shop stewards' movement by imposing industry-wide, centralised pay bargaining which would shift negotiations from the arena of the workplace to national committees set up for that purpose.

The idea that a "consensus" could be arrived at by both parties and that any breakdown in negotiation could be settled by arbitration was an essential part of the recommendation.

The Whitley recommendations were vigorously opposed by the shop stewards movement and were thrown out in industries such as engineering which were relatively well organised.

Before the legislation of 1946 which established the National Health Service in 1948, hospital bargaining followed the lines of hospital ownership.

Trade union organisation was weak, with the exception of some of the large mental asylums, which had their own national negotiating machinery.

In the Second World War, national machinery was set up for nurses and domestics as part of the centralisation of the economy under war-time conditions.

The Whitley Council system was introduced into the newly established NHS with the support of NUPE who favoured a

joint national negotiating approach but with the opposition of the general unions.

From the outset, the Whitley Council system was cumbersome, bureaucratic and heavily weighted in favour of the NHS organisations. There was no regional machinery resulting in the rigid application of national rates of pay.

The negotiations on the form which the Whitley Council would take were heavily dominated by government officials and union full time officers.

Both groups had an interest in securing a system of centralised bargaining.

In the government's view it meant that labour costs could be easily controlled and uniformly applied; while the trade union officials saw it as shifting control over pay bargaining into the hands of the "professional negotiators" – the full time officials!

## Minimising the power of the unions

In fact it ensured that the power of the unions is minimised – particularly on the issue of nurses' pay, where the anti-union "professional" association, the RCN, retains a majority vote on the council.

Last year, for example the RCN voted to accept the government's pay offer secured its unilateral imposition by management – despite the fact that both COHSE and NUPE remained formally opposed to it.

The collaborationist structure of the Councils perpetuates this role for non-union bodies and for the top consultants whose colossal salaries are a sign of the influence.

Some groups of workers such as engineers and electricians, have refused to accept the Whitley system and negotiated directly with the DHSS.

The medical profession have an independent review body set up in 1961 and have much greater access to the DHSS.

## Abolish the Whitley Councils!

Whitleyism in the NHS gives paper guarantees of the right to trade union membership which was one of its initial attractions to the trade union officials who were anxious to increase membership figures.

In practice, management intimidation and an absence of effective union organisation has meant that it was only during the pay battles of the 1970s that health service trade unionism expanded rapidly.

The unions themselves, whether right wing or left talking, were characterised by a lack of internal democracy and accountability, a totally inadequate system of workplace organisation, a largely passive membership, huge, inactive branches which met infrequently, and a near pathological reluctance to use industrial action to pursue wage claims.

The majority of members were estranged from their own union – the immigrant workers, the part-timers and the thousands of women workers let adrift by the inaccessibility of their union structures.

So what is the way forward. We need to abolish the bureaucratic Whitley Council system and we need to encourage rank and file activity at all levels by building and strengthening Joint Shop Stewards Committees.

But we also need a serious campaign to reform the unions, to make them more responsive to their members. We need to encourage the involvement of blacks and women workers and part timers at all levels. We need to democratise the union structures and to force our leaders and full time officials to be accountable to the members that pay their fat salaries.

Finally we need to commit the Labour Party to a properly financed NHS under the democratic control of the labour movement and the community, and we need to fight for a Labour government that will actually carry out its responsibilities to provide a fully comprehensive national health service, free at the point of need and which provides decent wages and conditions for its workers.

## Wages

In 1980 nurses got 13% and ancillaries 12%. In 1981 ancillaries were awarded 6% over 15 months (averaging 4.5%) and nurses 6%, despite a 15% rate of inflation.

The history of pay since the NHS was first set up in 1946 is one of exceptional exploitation. There has been continual underfinancing of the NHS in which labour costs make up approximately 70% of the NHS budget and any restriction or cuts in the budget directly affect pay and/or services.

The decisive factor has been the temerity and sometimes the outright treachery of the officials, selling out and undermining struggles, weakly giving in to government pressure and conducting negotiations in an atmosphere of secrecy.

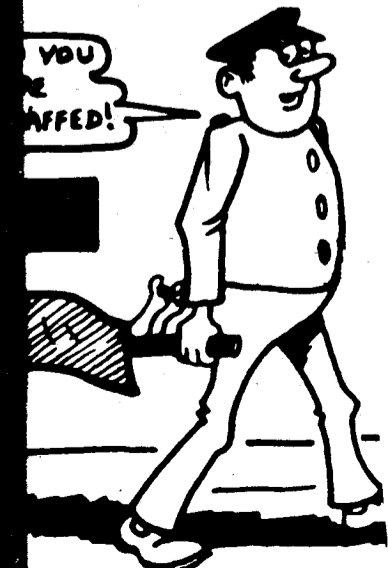
This has severely affected the ability of the rank and file workers to mount a consistent challenge to successive governments, who have been intent on using NHS workers as the backbone of their wage cutting policies.

And only in response to angry struggles by the rank and file have the officials been forced kicking and struggling into any form of action.

## Wages

jobs for extra money. One of the main weapons in the bosses' attempts to dismantle and ruin the NHS would be taken away.

By calling for strike action (with workers defining emergency cover) and by staying out until we win our demands, we can begin to halt the cuts and start to rebuild the NHS.



# Vital fight for women



In 1975, over 75% of Health Service workers were women, of whom 50% were part-timers.

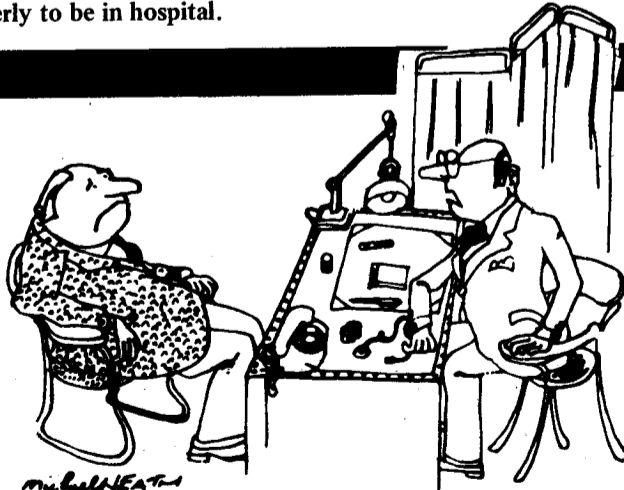
Women in the NHS are predominantly employed as nurses or as ancillary staff – doing what is commonly regarded as "women's work".

Senior positions throughout the medical profession are almost entirely monopolised by men. Less than 20% of medical posts in the UK are filled by women.

The vast majority of NHS employees fall into the low-paid grades: ancillaries and nurses make up 64% of the workforce. The practice of successive governments of awarding percentage pay increases weighted in favour of the top pay grades has increased this inequality.

And cuts in service hit women the hardest. Not only are they denied necessary health care, including family planning clinics and abortion facilities: but it is primarily women who suffer the burden of caring for sick and elderly relatives who ought properly to be in hospital.

# Stop the profit privateers!



Well, Mr Thompson, you can either die, or have private treatment

By 1980 3.3 million people were covered by private health insurance schemes. The largest of these operations, BUPA, had an income of £82 million in 1978, of which it paid back £52.7 million in benefits.

Since then private medicine has further expanded. The Tories have scrapped the Health Services Board whose task had been to limit private hospitals and phase out pay beds in NHS hospitals. They have made it obligatory for AHAs to provide pay beds 'where there is a demand for them' and given increased scope for expansion of private hospitals.

The cuts in the NHS – with a national

waiting list of over 700,000 in 1979 – have helped persuade many to seek private cover. But BUPA-style schemes are no answer to workers: they are not cheap – as much as £40 per month: and they do not cover geriatric or mental illness, conditions requiring long stays in hospital or chronic conditions such as asthma, arthritis, or diabetes.

They feed off the NHS, which alone trains doctors, nurses and technicians, and whose resources are milked by consultants.

Other lucrative sources of profit from the NHS are drugs – £125 million profits

were made by drug firms from sales to the NHS in 1979 alone.

The nationalisation of private medicine, the drug monopolies and other suppliers would be a major step towards the planned expansion of the NHS under the management of elected committees of health trade unionists and consumers.

To achieve this means first to defeat and drive out the Tory wreckers and the Labour leaders who began the attack on the NHS.

In this, health service militants must fight side by side with the whole working class.



**NUPE  
says:**

**5%**

**insults  
the Low  
Paid**

**all out  
against  
low pay**



# Bitter lessons of 'winter of discontent'

# 'SELECTIVE' ACTION MEANS BETRAYAL

by a NUPE ambulance worker

In the winter of 1978-9, two months of the most intensive industrial action ever seen in the public services brought struggles by hospital staff and ambulance drivers, alongside local authority workers and school staff.

The public sector manual workers however wound up with a miserable £2-3 in their pay packets — and for hospital ancillary staff even part of this increase was later to be snatched back under Professor Clegg's so-called 'comparability' inquiry.

The weakness was not that of the membership, whose militancy had reached an all-time high. On January 22 1979 over 1 million public sector workers took action in pursuit of their £60/35 hour week claim, and 60,000 marched through London.

From that point onwards hundreds of sections of workers showed time after time that they were prepared to face the most massive scabbing operation organised by the Labour government, involving the use of police, troops and 'volunteers', backed up by a large-scale Tory press witch-hunt.

They organised strike committees which for a period virtually took over control of the public services in whole cities, and formed links with trade unionists in supply industries.

This action was defeated above all by

**All out -  
with unions  
controlling  
emergency  
cover**

the treacherous policies and practices of the public sector union leaders.

The claim had been launched at NUPE's 1978 conference and quickly taken up as a common claim by the three other major public sector unions — COHSE, GMWU and TGWU.

But despite arm-waving speeches bellowing about the plight of low paid workers, NUPE leader Alan Fisher was in no way ready to lead a fight if it meant a head-on confrontation with the Labour government.

He was instrumental in delaying action on the claim, which should have begun on the earliest settlement date in



November.

At that point Ford workers were already on strike against Healey's 5% pay limit, soon to be followed by bakers, tanker and haulage drivers.

But Fisher kept hedging and delaying, plainly hoping that the militancy of NUPE's rank and file would die away as the other struggles were defeated.

But they were not defeated, and instead militancy in the public sector grew with every blow meted out to Healey's pay policy.

The response to the January 22 Day of Action was far beyond all expectations, forcing the bureaucrats to maintain the public appearance of fighting for the claim for fear of losing control of their membership.

Yet at the same time the bureaucrats did everything possible to isolate and demoralise those sections who were taking action and prevent the strikes from spreading.

The chosen strategy to achieve this objective was that of 'selective action'.

If there had been a call for all-out indefinite strike action with no return until the full claim was met, then the militant sections could have come out immediately and fought to bring out other sections, building the strike with the full backing of the leadership.

Instead, selective action presented tremendous difficulties for militants at branch and section level.

There was quibbling between sections over who should come out; the partial action often meant that non-unionised or weaker sections would do extra work. The levy to support the action was organised nationally and meant no extra strike pay; and most important, it enabled management to step in and victimise a divided workforce.

This happened at Westminster Hospital, where management were able to

provoke an all-out strike on their terms by suspending six NUPE domestics who blacked the private patients' wing as part of the branch's selective action.

Meanwhile the officials were also employing another line in order to weaken the impact of the action that was taken — handing to management the initiative on the question of emergency cover.

Following on from the lorry drivers' strike, where pickets had undertaken the control of the flow of essential supplies despite a barrage of press vilification, public sector strikers too showed themselves willing and able to take over the running of the hospitals and other public services.

In the Westminster and St. Mary's hospitals pickets made agreements with stewards from the Esso tanker drivers branch which delivered to the hospitals, maintaining a supply of oil only sufficient to keep essential parts of the hospital heated, to be cut off at any time at the discretion of the pickets.

Despite this and many other incipient forms of workers' control, the bureaucrats used the issue of 'emergency cover', and their so-called 'code' for pickets, to withdraw support from and sell out many sections of workers.

Without making a single mention of the wide-scale army scabbing, the leadership refused to give official backing to striking ambulance drivers on the grounds that they had ignored the union's instructions to maintain emergency cover.

After two months of efforts to kill off the strikes, the bureaucracy finally managed to sell out the £60/35 hour week claim with a series of blatant manoeuvres which accepted the 9% offer — at a time when many sections throughout the country were still taking action.

## RCN - a suitable case for treatment

Many nurses are afraid to act because of the fear of victimisation — nurses are always in a very precarious position.

Their jobs depend on ward reports from Sisters. Some nurses have even been intimidated by management from attending union meetings — never mind striking.

The key problem is unionisation — the fight to show that the so-called 'professional' organisation, The Royal College of Nursing, can do nothing for nurses.

The RCN is constitutionally barred from taking strike action. This leaves them prey to each and every government decision to penalise low-paid health workers by further poverty-line pay rises — and incapable of seriously fighting cuts and closures in the NHS.

But the RCN is not affiliated to the TUC and its members are not therefore covered by the Bridlington 'no poaching' agreements. They are not only 'fair game' for unionisation: nurses' interests can only be defended by their organisation into genuine trade unions such as COHSE and NUPE, coupled with a fight for action within those unions.

Socialists in the NHS should be at the forefront of this fight for unionisation and a new militant leadership.

## Fighting for support

MANY nurses can't take all-out action because of the harm it would do to the patients. One answer to this problem is to ask other powerful sections of the trade union movement to take action on our behalf.

Last week a nurses' delegation went to the South Wales Area Miners' Executive to ask for the miners' support.

Unfortunately the full-timers of our union got to hear about it and sent one NUPE full-timer along with us which was inhibiting as he tried to tone down our militant call for an immediate pithead ballot of all the miners asking for strike action.

When we got into the meeting, attended by about 30 pit delegates, Emlyn Williams, in the chair, asked a man in our delegation — the only man there was the full-timer — to speak. This didn't go down very well with the rest of us.

He spoke on our behalf and outlined our case but didn't put it very strongly that we wanted all-out strike action now so the miners, while declaring their solidarity, gave no promise of strike action.

In fact Williams sounded quite apologetic when he said that as the miners had been unwilling to strike over their own pay claim, they were unlikely to strike over ours in spite of the massive sympathy that miners have for nurses.

We have been promised to be allowed to go as a delegation to speak to the miners' Area Conference in about a week but we have decided that we will go to the Joint Lodges Committee — a semi-official body which is more powerful than the Miners' Executive and ask them to take strike action on our behalf.

We've now got to start calling on other sections such as the seamen, the transport workers and the railway workers.

**Socialist Organiser Alliance**

# Get Organised!



SOCIALIST Organiser fights to act as a real campaigning paper which can organise workers in the struggle for new leadership.

To do so we need consistent support and money. Socialist Organiser Alliance groups have been established in most big towns.

Why not join with us? Supporters are asked to undertake to sell a minimum of 6 papers per week and contribute at least £1.50 per month (20p for unwaged).

If there is no group in your area why not help us to build one?

To 'Get Organised', write at once to us at 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

Name .....

Address .....



# A proposal to Mr Healy

THE libel case brought by Vanessa Redgrave of the WRP against Sean Matgamna and John Bloxam of Socialist Organiser now seems almost certain to come to court, despite the support from many in the labour movement for the appeal launched by Socialist Organiser - "A Labour Inquiry, Not the Courts".

At the time of an outcry by the Tories and the press against the WRP in February Sean Matgamna wrote the following letter to Gerry Healy of the WRP, backing up the appeal.

The response was a refusal. So the case continues, and the Labour Movement Press Defence Fund still needs to appeal for contributions.

Dear Gerry, I read in this morning's papers the comments of Ms Margaret Thatcher in the House of Commons on Youth Training. It reminds me that reality isn't just what it is but also, at a certain level, what it appears to be and what those who have power in our society can make it appear to be.

If reactionaries see the WRP and its activities as Trotskyism, that doesn't have much bearing on whether you are or are not Trotskyists. But it does mean that what is being attacked in the form of the WRP is nevertheless being made to act as a stand-in for Trotskyism.

Your organisation and its activities make it easy for them to target and discredit Trotskyism, of course. Nevertheless I am now even less happy than I have been at the prospect of having to publicly rake over in court the entire history of your organisation over the last two decades.

That the labour movement should know about that history and that papers like Socialist Organiser should have the right to freely comment on it without being gagged by fear of the courts (for which read fear of Ms Redgrave's money) is one thing. I consider it to be of great importance; and the protection of free speech and the right of free comment in the labour

movement is a matter of principle.

I consider it also to be a matter of principle that people claiming to be part of the labour movement should not use the bourgeois state against others in the labour movement. My views on your organisation (etc.) have not changed: preparing for the libel case has had the opposite effect on me, for it has refreshed my memory.

The current developments however put our dispute in a radically new context. So I pose the question again to you - in the present circumstances do you still think it advisable to proceed with a court action that can only help those who aim to discredit socialism and Trotskyism? By now you will have seen an outline of our basic case (and there is more) and an indication of some of the witnesses who will be called for us.

Whether or not there is to be a court case is entirely a matter for you to decide. I will have no alternative - despite Ms Thatcher etc. - but to defend myself in the only way open to me if you do proceed with the libel action. I will, of course, try to make it as difficult as possible for anyone to associate Trotskyism with the antics of your organisation: but that will be uphill work, I fear. Which is why I write you this letter.

I propose that representatives of your side and of ours - either legal representatives or better, representatives of the WRP and John Bloxam and myself meet to discuss the matter and see if anything can be done about the situation that is now shaping up. This would, of course, be entirely without prejudice and not in any way an admission by you that my defence is valid. My comments here are only an explanation of my motives for making this approach. I urge you to agree to this suggestion. If you think an informal discussion would be of any use please ring me.

I assume that you will inform Ms. V. Redgrave of this letter.

Yours etc. Sean Matgamna

# NUPE school on Ireland

THE weekend school on Northern Ireland, organised by the East Midlands Division of NUPE on 3-4 April was an important step in the struggle to raise the question of Britain's continued presence in the six counties, inside the trade union movement.

NUPE, whose Northern Ireland membership is split 50/50 Catholic and Protestant, has as yet no policy on Northern Ireland,

although this could change at this year's conference. The week-end school, which was led by the two full time officials for Northern Ireland was aimed primarily at breaking the silence which surrounds the whole issue.

No answers were provided by the two officials, who wanted just to provide the school with as many facts as possible and for those attending the school to draw out their own

conclusions.

The school did not duck any issues, for example, the relationship of the Provisional IRA to the Catholic community, or the question of women's rights and gay rights in both communities and both political leaderships.

Nor is the whole question solved by simply calling for unification with the south: what about the 1

million Protestants, the 100,000 legally held guns and the fact that there are Catholic ghettos which cannot be defended by those communities.

Finally came the two points that are of most significance to the supporters of British withdrawal. There was opposition to the glorification of the armed struggle amongst some sections of the British left; no one takes

up arms until it is the last option.

Secondly that the British left while arguing for self determination for the Irish people as a whole, should not hide behind that slogan, failing to take into account how that transformation can take place, with as little bloodshed as possible.

CHARLIE SARELL NUPE Leic. Hospitals

# Writeback



We invite readers to send us their letters, up to a usual maximum length of 400 words.

Send to 'Writeback', Socialist Organiser, c/o 28, Middle Lane, London N8.

# WHO DECIDES?

LEAVING the Falkland Islanders to decide to which they belong would be equivalent to accepting the pseudo-democratic call of the Tory and Labour Establishments to leave the people of Ulster to decide on Partition.

Just as Partition, and earlier with the plantations, the population of the six counties was predetermined and hand-picked to ensure that there was always a majority for partition; so when in 1833 the Argentine Governor and population of the Malvinas were expelled and our own countrymen planted there, this was to ensure British possession of a British colony. And though elections were not a matter of concern for ordinary Britons in those days, it was inevitable that the heritage of this - like the heritage of the Ulster Plantations - would at elections provide a majority for unity with Britain.

Though there are no ruled 'natives', the Falkland Islanders are nevertheless in the position of a colonial elite.

The plantation was made for the same reasons as plan-

tations in colonies and in Ireland. This time they wanted a trading and naval post - a policy that has left the same aftermath of complications.

The fact is that in an archipelago, nearly the size of Wales, there is a population roughly equivalent to that of a very small market town or large village. Despite the enormous size of Latin America there is throughout it considerable land hunger and pressure for cultivable land - no doubt caused by too many very large land owners, (which latter are diverting their own people's attention from their own greed by pointing to the Malvinas) - and insisting on the Falkland Islanders' right to choose means insisting on "their rights" as a relatively privileged grouping.

That said, I don't claim to have the real answer, but it seems certain that the Falkland Islanders ought to share their land with others, whether Argentines or people from far more overcrowded countries is a different matter.

Fraternally, LAURENS OTTER

# AUEW leaders suspend benefit

Please find attached an appeal circulated by this Leeds 6th Branch of our Union (AUEW).

This campaign has the full support of the branches within the Leeds area, the Leeds District Committee, the shop stewards and (we believe) the overwhelming majority of our members.

Yours fraternally, A. JACKSON

The leaders of the AUEW (engineering section) has arbitrarily taken a decision to end the payment of certain benefits to its members. It has done this without prior consultation and without submitting the matter to the vote of its members, even though the Rules governing this particular matter, specifically required the agreement of at least 40% of the membership.

Having done that, it denied the right of members to challenge the decision in the Union's Final Appeal Court and has thereby created a situation in which members must accept the unconstitutional action or take the matter to the High Court, with all that this entails.

### Law

Ernie Jacques has decided that the obvious financial pressures cannot be allowed to determine the degree of democracy within the union. He has therefore reluctantly decided to challenge the leadership at law. The financial implications for him and his family are considerable, and we therefore ask you to dig into your pockets to help support him in pursuit of trade union democracy.

Please help, please give

generously. The costs are likely to be very high. Please send donations to: Bro. Jack Benson, (Leeds 14th Branch Secretary, AUEW), 14 Neville Parade, Leeds, LS9 0LD.

The appeal committee

and fund trustees represent all the 34 AUEW branches within the Leeds District. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to the "Ernie Jacques Appeal Fund" Co-operative Bank Ltd.

# WHY NO REPLY FROM MILITANT?

I am a supporter of the paper Socialist Organiser and Class Fighter (in the LPYS) and a few weeks ago Socialist Organiser printed an open letter to the Militant tendency calling for a joint campaign against the witch-hunts in the Labour Party. To this day I don't think we have received any reply.

At the Annual LPYS Conference 10th, 11th, 12 April 1982 the question of 'no reply' was raised by a supporter of Socialist Organiser in the debate on Labour Party democracy. Laurence Coates (the LPYS representative on the National Executive Committee and a supporter of Militant) summed up the debate for the LPYS National Committee. He said, words to the effect, that to the supporters of Socialist Organiser he would say, 'Thank you very much for your offer, but no thanks. We (meaning Militant) can do it on our own. We don't need any joint campaigns.'

Is this the official position of the supporters of Militant, not to work with any other tendencies in joint campaigns? This seems to me a very sectarian viewpoint. The only way to defend the gains of the Labour left and the right of Marxists to be in the Labour Party is surely for the left to unite and fight together? If we stand divided then we will surely fall divided also. We must show our strength and unite together to defend the gains of the left.

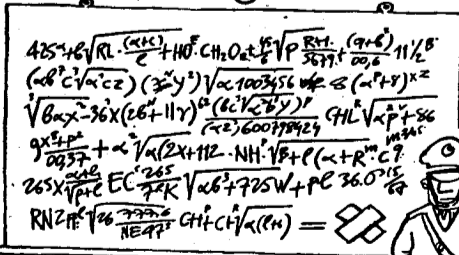
### Print

I would be grateful if you would print this letter in your paper and also a reply to the points raised above.

In Sisterhood Kate Williams (Secretary, Wolverhampton SW LPYS and West Midlands Regional Youth Committee member)

\*This letter has been sent to Militant.

# Dangers of post-meeting indulgence



by Davy Jones

# SCIENCE

MOST readers of this paper will look forward with relish, or at least relief, to the end of their more routine labour movement meetings, and the opportunity of having a pint or two before closing time.

There are even comrades who keep Friday nights religiously free for more serious imbibing, and hell, high water or SO meeting will not keep them from their tittle. Even those who are most critical of the drugs industry and drug-obsessed medical profession for pushing Debendox, or Depo-Provera or Valium are likely to have a drink at the end of an evening discussing such problems.

Alcohol, the most common addictive drug in the Western world, which ravages nearly every organ in the human body, is acceptable to even the most critical comrade.

Alcohol consumption in Britain is increasing dramatically. Hospital admissions for problems related to alcohol have doubled in the past 10 years. Deaths from cirrhosis of the liver have similarly increased. The number of people with a drink problem has been estimated at around half a million in the mid-1970s.

For some reason, women appear to be particularly susceptible. As little as 1 1/2 pints of beer or its equivalent (1/2 bottle of wine, 2 1/2 measures of spirits) daily exposes some women to the risk of liver damage, though a more conservative estimate of the danger level is about 4 pints of beer or its equivalent.

Despite the fact that the equivalently dangerous dose for men is slightly higher, there are three times as many men alcoholics as

women. However, the gap is closing, even though women alcoholics are likely to be diagnosed at a later stage than men.

Perhaps it is unsurprising that those who drink most are people who are separated from normal social relationships (e.g. construction workers away from their homes), those with alcohol available at work (brewery and distillery workers) and those with expense accounts and social pressures towards drinking (not too many SO supporters here).

Behind these statistics lie the effects of alcohol on the body. Liver damage is only one aspect (and, contrary to popular belief, depends solely on the amount of alcohol consumed. Beer is just as damaging as wine or spirits).

In addition, alcohol is related to cancer of the

throat and possibly of the liver. Maternal drinking leads to retarded growth of the foetus.

A condition known as foetal alcohol syndrome results from excessive drinking during pregnancy, and is characterised by the newborn child having a small head and brain, some physical distortion of the face, small eyeballs, and intellectual impairment.

Most devastating are the effects of alcohol on the brain of the heavy drinker, resulting at its extreme in the loss of memory both of past experiences, and of recent ones (Korsakoff syndrome). Such amnesia is associated with observable lesions in parts of the alcoholic's brain, and long before memory loss is noticeable, brain damage has begun.

Nor is this the end of the

list. Alcohol affects bone marrow, the pancreas, and a host of other organs.

There can be little doubt that if alcohol had been discovered by a pharmaceutical company today, it would have been considered too dangerous to merit its use, even under prescription.

Interestingly, addiction to alcohol may depend on similar brain mechanisms as addiction to heroin and morphine. One drug, naloxone, which prevents the action of opiates on nerve cells, can be used to reverse coma induced by alcohol.

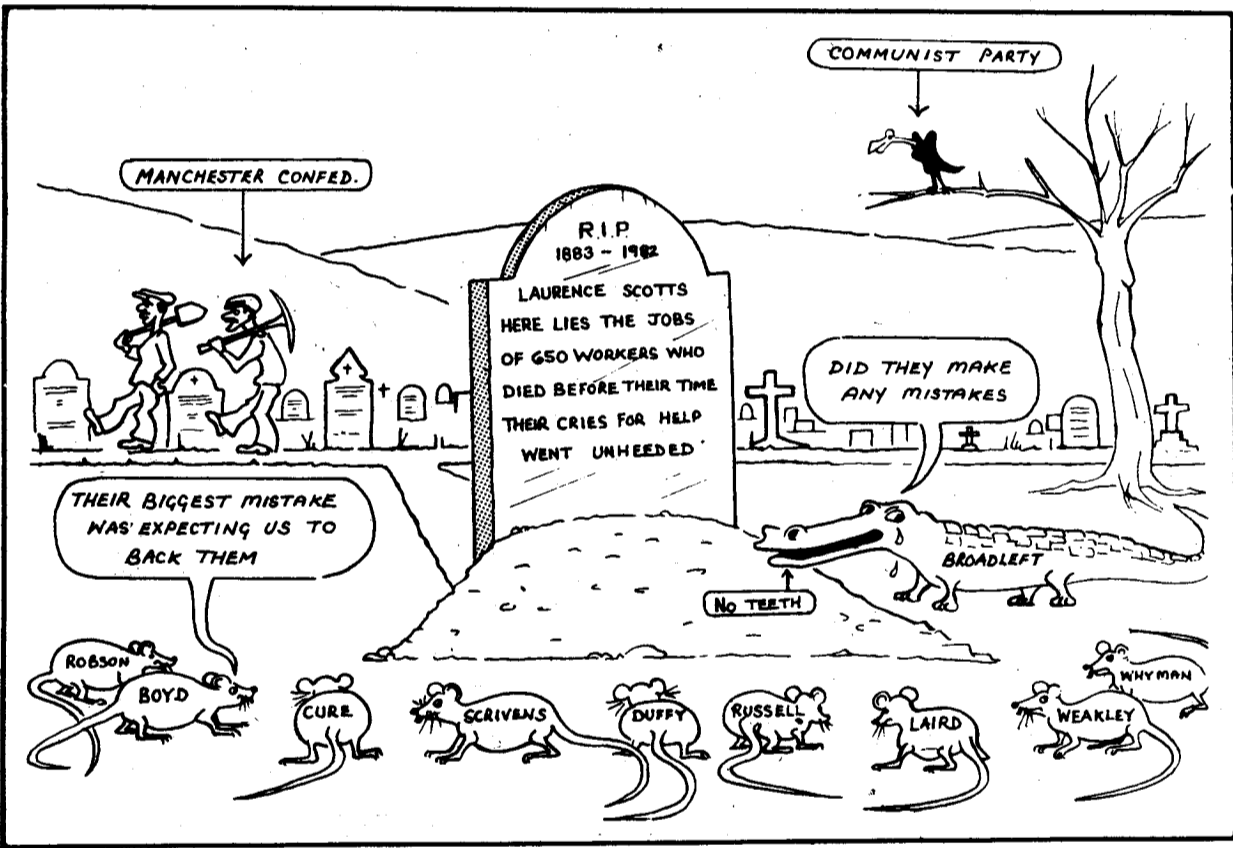
Few of us are at the stage of requiring treatment, but remember: economic recession can lead to an increase in alcoholism, and the brewers are the Tories' paymasters.

Source: British Medical Bulletin, January 1982.



I bore witness to a funeral,  
The date, last Tuesday week.  
The hallowed ground was Openshaw,  
'Tis Scotts of whom I speak.  
The mourners packed surrounding streets,  
The front, the sides, the back,  
And though we were in casual dress,  
Most people were in black.  
I'm not well up in colours:  
Is it black or blue?  
Or would it be suffice to say  
Anti-proletarian hue?  
Inconspicuous by their absence  
Were Duffy, Boyd and Di:  
No doubt with valid reason,  
Perhaps they'd no black tie.  
The cortege of indecent haste  
No doubt to fool the goaders  
Consisted not of hearse and cars,  
But ten or twelve lowloaders.  
Predictably, or so it seems,  
On this unhistoric day,  
Some people do get overwhelmed,  
Some carried clean away.  
Which wreaths would be appropriate  
To send to Laurence Scotts?  
No 'Blue Bells' and no chicken weed,  
Perhaps forget-me-nots?  
A millionaire did this foul deed,  
His profits to increase;  
To Arthur Snipe Esquire -  
Thou shalt never Rest In Peace.

# 'Look to the North and say that was Laurence Scotts, if they can do it - we can!'



From the Scotts strikers' bulletin

## Communist Party record on Scotts

Open Letter to the Morning Star.

Dear Editor,  
In your paper dated 7 April 1982, you went to great lengths to describe the cartoon in the Laurence Scotts' March Bulletin. The main point was the indignation of certain Communist Party members.  
I notice you did not reproduce the cartoon in your paper to explain your criticism. We have no criticism of any individual Communist Party member who supported us. In fact we appreciate a minority and would not wish to offend any genuine trade unionists. But it is a fact that the Communist Party and the Broad Left as a whole, who we considered to be the vanguard of the trade union movement, did not do their duty.  
The members of the shop stewards and the strikers is

that we were badly let down and felt it was our duty to express our feelings.  
We did not criticise the Communist Party or the Broad Left in the Bulletins, but illustrated our feelings in the cartoon, which the Joint Shop Stewards Committee considered very mild form.  
It is a pity you did not show the same indignation when we were smashed on the picket line. And it would be a disgrace if other trade unionists fell into the same trap and were eventually abandoned.

### Deluding

One of the main criticisms of the Broad Left and the Manchester Confed, including yourselves, is that genuine socialists are deluding themselves. Laurence Scotts were promised Grunwick type support but when the crunch came they were

unable or unwilling to come up with the goods.

Accepting that the Broad Left are genuine pro-working class it must be pointed out that they are sitting in Ivory Towers promising the earth. During the boom years they were talking of fighting when it was unnecessary but in the recession when the rank and file were looking for leadership, they have not got the ability to produce it.  
They are kidding themselves and the factory members. At a time when workers are being crushed all over Britain, you can find the time and place in your paper to express your over-sensitive criticisms of a cartoon.

Well, brother, the truth hurts, doesn't it. Let's hope the pain stirs you into some sense of perspective.

It is one thing to stand and fight in times of full employment, but when the

chips are down and with over 3 million on the dole the time is here to stand up and be counted.

In our Rule 14 Campaign within the AUEW the Communist Party are refusing to support us. The excuse they offer is that they do not feel that sufficient support could be mustered from the rank and file to remove the Executive. You have been saying it is better not to fight, the time is not right.

What a load of rubbish. If you are awaiting the green light, let me say that the revolution was not official. With your attitude and the present union leadership, the Thatchers and Tebbits of this world will find no problems in crushing workers.

Their position is now in cricketing terms a 'batter's paradise'.

Yours fraternally,  
D.J. Barry  
Laurence Scotts Shop  
Stewards Committee

THE Laurence Scotts dispute started last October. Arthur Snipe of Mining Supplies decided to buy the group up. This was refused. He then wrote a letter to the City stating 'I wish to buy Laurence Scotts, not to close them down. Mining Supplies will give them all the work necessary with no loss of jobs or remuneration.' On this basis it was allowed.

As soon as he got control he put Manchester on a 3 day working week and a government subsidy.

This went from October to April. In April we were told there would be a total closure by July 10.

We approached the union - our local District Committee, who I must say are one of the best in the country - and they went through procedure. When the procedure had been exhausted the union came to us and said 'For God's sake fight these redundancies.'

We had a general meeting and by a small majority the verdict was to fight.

The following week we called another general meeting. By a smaller majority it was still the verdict - fight.

After this had been going on for six weeks, Arthur Snipe said he would meet John Tocher on a Monday if he could see the workforce on the Tuesday. So we said we'd have the workforce there for Sunday to let them decide. But some of us were going on a trip to

Steve Longshawe (below), told the LSE story to the Socialist Organiser/London Labour Briefing TU conference on April 3

London for the People's March.  
Tocher was taken aback. He said if you take 50, we haven't got that big a majority.

He was told, this is a workers' decision, not a shop stewards. And we went to London.

We phoned up on the way down to see how this meeting had gone. And lo and behold, with the 'extremists', activists, 'reds', 'Trotskyists', away John Tocher got 100% backing.

That meant Laurence Scotts were in business. And from that day on we were ready to take the world on. We had a workforce that would follow the union anywhere.

This was Laurence Scotts, the greatest fighting workforce the country ever saw. You can have your multinationals. We were 650 and we'd take anyone on.

After 11 weeks Snipe said he'd meet the Confed. The Confed went. Snipe showed his contempt for them. He didn't turn up. He

sent a solicitor and two directors.

The Laurence Scotts workers said 'Sod this'. We threw a picket across Doncaster.

Our picketing at Doncaster brought Snipe to the table within a week. The District Secretary told me, 'Cure is not negotiating, he's been sent to British Leyland'.

'But Mr Duffy, your President, is negotiating'. Well I fainted because I knew it was a sell-out and so did the Manchester Confed.

The following morning we were at Scotts when the local delegates told us what had been accepted.

That money except you. So Duffy knew that he could not accept anything on our behalf. He knew that according to the rule book he could only accept proposals and bring them back to the district whose fight it was.

He broke three rules. Well, Laurence Scotts wouldn't back down. He sent Cure to meet us at the Free Trade Hall. We let Cure speak and the officials of six other unions speak.

Then the convenor and I had a go and I reminded Cure what he had told me the week before down at Peckham Road when we had occupied that place. We said, make the strike official and give us two weeks and we'll have Snipe round the table negotiating properly.

He wouldn't give us a fortnight. I said give us a week and we'll have him here. He said, I know, you'll put a secondary picket on Doncaster again, endangering their jobs. So we, the AUEW, are going to sacrifice your 650 jobs - to stop you from secondary picketing.

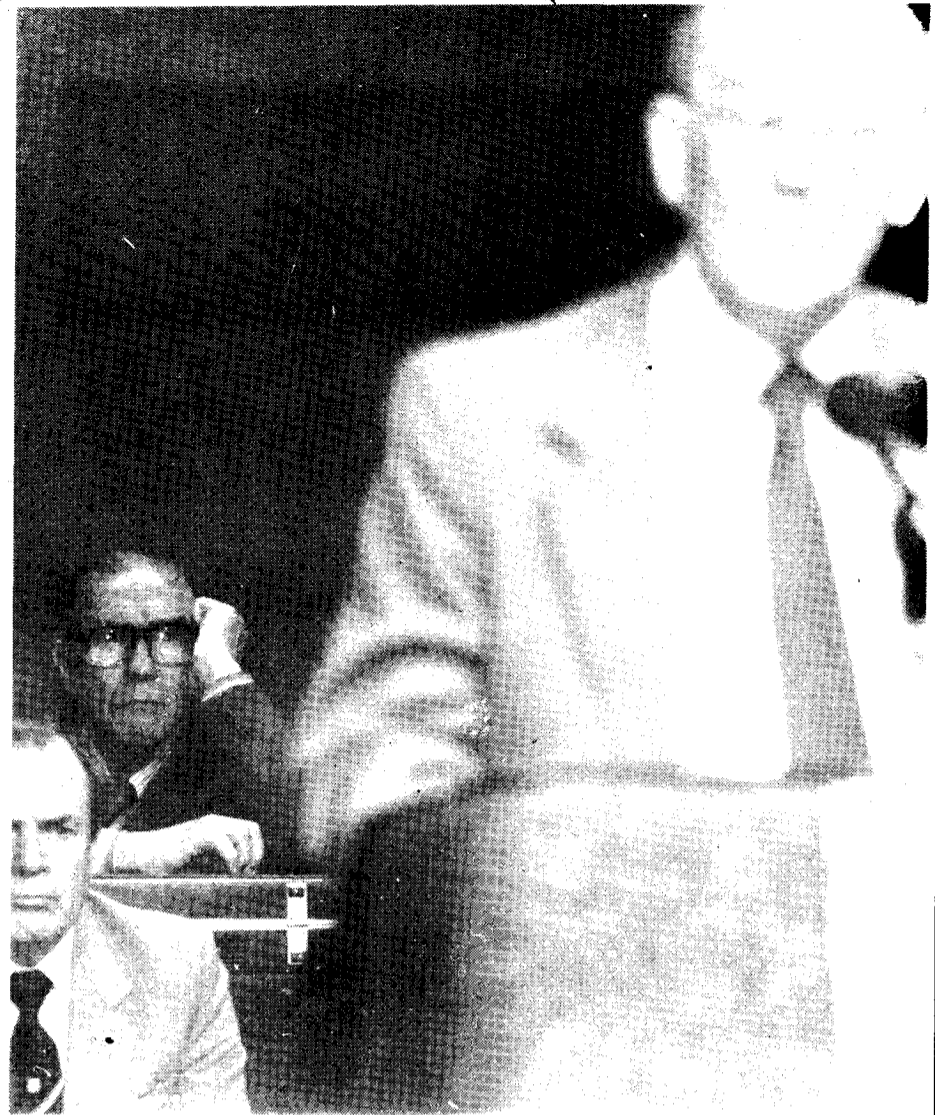
Now at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester I told him that he was a puppet. He denied being a puppet although the strings are there for anyone to see. He wouldn't deny what I said about him sacrificing our jobs.

They threatened us with bailiffs. The sheriff came. He was told politely to go home. On his third attempt he said 'I will be back'. One night with 18 pickets there, the bailiffs came, 47 of them escorted by a party of police.

They couldn't get in the gate so they smashed their







Fighters (left) — and saboteurs (right)

way in through the windows. When you had men coming at you — they all seemed to be about 10 feet tall — with pickaxe or sledgehammer handles in their hands, threatening to part your hair, all you can say is 'Fellers, I didn't mean it'. And the 18 pickets were thrown out.

So we threw a picket around the factory. And we still played the game. We didn't do any violence or damage of any description.

That was our factory. Those were our machines.

We were going to work again.

There'd been too much redundancy, too many people accepting it, not realising that they were selling not their own jobs, but the jobs of youngsters behind who had never had the chance of working, never known what it was to learn a skill. That's what Laurence Scotts were fighting on.

Snipe did all sorts to try and beat us.

We said there were 280 pickets left. This was last October. We wanted them

all in. He said 'I'll give you 150 jobs, full-time work'. We said we'll leave no-one out. They all come in on a short-time working week.

He said I'll be here on Monday. I'll send 650 cards out and then I'll lottery 150 jobs. Well, we told him where to go.

Then they sent round horsemen, a couple of hundred police. They allowed six pickets on the gate. A few minutes later the helicopters arrived. People cried 'It's over'. It wasn't. What they got out was nothing.

We laughed. Snipe described us as picketing an empty factory. It was not empty. But the pickets were reduced to 180. The police said they would smash open the gates. The convenor said we'll put 100 pickets on. We'll have 100 police against you. Good, we'll put 200 pickets on. We'll have 200 police against you. And if you get help from anywhere else and there are 700 of you we will put 1400 police against you. And all police leave in the Greater Manchester area was stopped.

you ever met with regards standing up for their rights. We want 250 branches — 10% — to support our resolution and fetch Boyd Duffy and the rest of this hierarchy down.

We were smashed into oblivion, but we are still there. We never put another picket on because the police were never less than 300. And we weren't sending women or men out to be smashed again.

What happened that Tuesday morning at 6.30 had to be seen to be believed. Women were dragged out of the picket line by their hair. And the sorriest sight I've ever seen in 40 years as a trade unionist was to see trade union men smashed to the ground.

They had 500 police, 400 in reserve, another 800 in Ashton, caravans, television, the lot.

son, and what about the man in charge of the TUC, Len Murray. You all saw that wonderful photograph of them last week when they were loading up a lorry with food and stuff for Poland.

Did any of you notice the name on the wagon? Because we did at Scotts — Eldreds. Now they were one of the scab firms that ran across us only the week before. And the TGWU were going to stop these scabs.

Yet lo and behold there was the high and mighty loading up one of these scab wagons.

At Laurence Scotts we are not martyrs, but we did show that the ordinary working people can stand up, can fight, and can win. We beat Snipe. We beat the AUEW. We beat the government on secondary picketing but at the end of the day we couldn't beat the police.

Now that exercise wasn't just to smash Scotts. That exercise was to let you people know that they are in charge and that if they

come to smash you they will smash you.

Now for the Tebbit Bill. Do you know what it means? Never mind the £250,000 a union can be charged. I've got to take a little bus ride on Tuesday morning — down to the Crown Court in Manchester along with other stewards.

Because we led the strike, we are faced with a bill for £6,800. But Laurence Scotts have no money to pay that £6,800. And if we had, we wouldn't.

Duffy sent us word that the union lawyers would not represent the Manchester members after July 14. Now the main money is for the Sheriff — £4,118.06 and I am determined to find out where the 6p came from.

And that is only the beginning. I'm only on one charge. The convenor is on three.

But on Tuesday we'll win again because we'll smile. That's all we can do. We'll never be beaten. Look to the north and say that was Laurence Scotts, and if they can do it, we can.

Lee Lane-Smith  
Solicitors  
11 St. James's Square  
Manchester M2 1RN  
Telephone 061 834 7780  
Telex 667985

Dear Sir,

re: LAURENCE SCOTT'S PICKETS

Further to the action dated 23rd July 1981 party and party please acknowledge

Yours faithfully  
Lee Lane-Smith

11th February 1982

LAURENCE SCOTT AND ELECTROMOTORS LIMITED  
(1) ROBERT PENNION  
(2) THOMAS CLARKE  
(3) STEPHEN LONGSHAW  
(7) FELIX ROYAN

and  
at  
21 Victoria Road, 1981  
London W12 3 7P  
Tel: 01-734 2776  
and at  
100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

We were told on Monday 15th at 4 o'clock that they were coming the following day. At 6.10 we had 70 pickets there. Our local District Secretary came up and said, 'For God's sake, Steve, be careful, they're going to hit you'.

After five minutes they smashed their way into us. It was a wonderful fight. 70 of us against 500 police. I think I lasted 42 seconds.

They smashed us into oblivion. That was the saga of the greatest workforce

Now I'm going to give you some wonderful men in the unions. We'll start with the TGWU. Moss Evans, Kit-

Now that exercise wasn't just to smash Scotts. That exercise was to let you people know that they are in charge and that if they

But on Tuesday we'll win again because we'll smile. That's all we can do. We'll never be beaten. Look to the north and say that was Laurence Scotts, and if they can do it, we can.



The police and Duffy: obstacles for the LSE strikers on two fronts

The Laurence Scotts strikers still need cash. Send c/o G.Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.





# Industrial News

## Lively bulletin for unemployed

by Chris Erswell

The bulletin produced by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement is a lively publication, reflecting the experiences of several local groups. They have been fighting for the right to exist and organise against the attacks on the unemployed, not only from the Thatcher government, but also the attempts by the TUC to limit and curtail the autonomous and militant development of the organised unemployed.

Whilst in a few areas the unemployed have managed to maintain their right to join a union, in most areas they have met indifference and obstructiveness from the local and national trade union bureaucracy.

In the face of the dead weight of bureaucratic inertia (and hostility in some cases), many unemployed groups have been forced into organising themselves in unemployed action groups and even unemployed unions.

For the 'crime' of not waiting until the established trade unions pull their finger out on recruitment of the unemployed, these local unemployed unions have been pompously and hypocritically witch-hunted in the TUC's bulletin for unemployed centres.

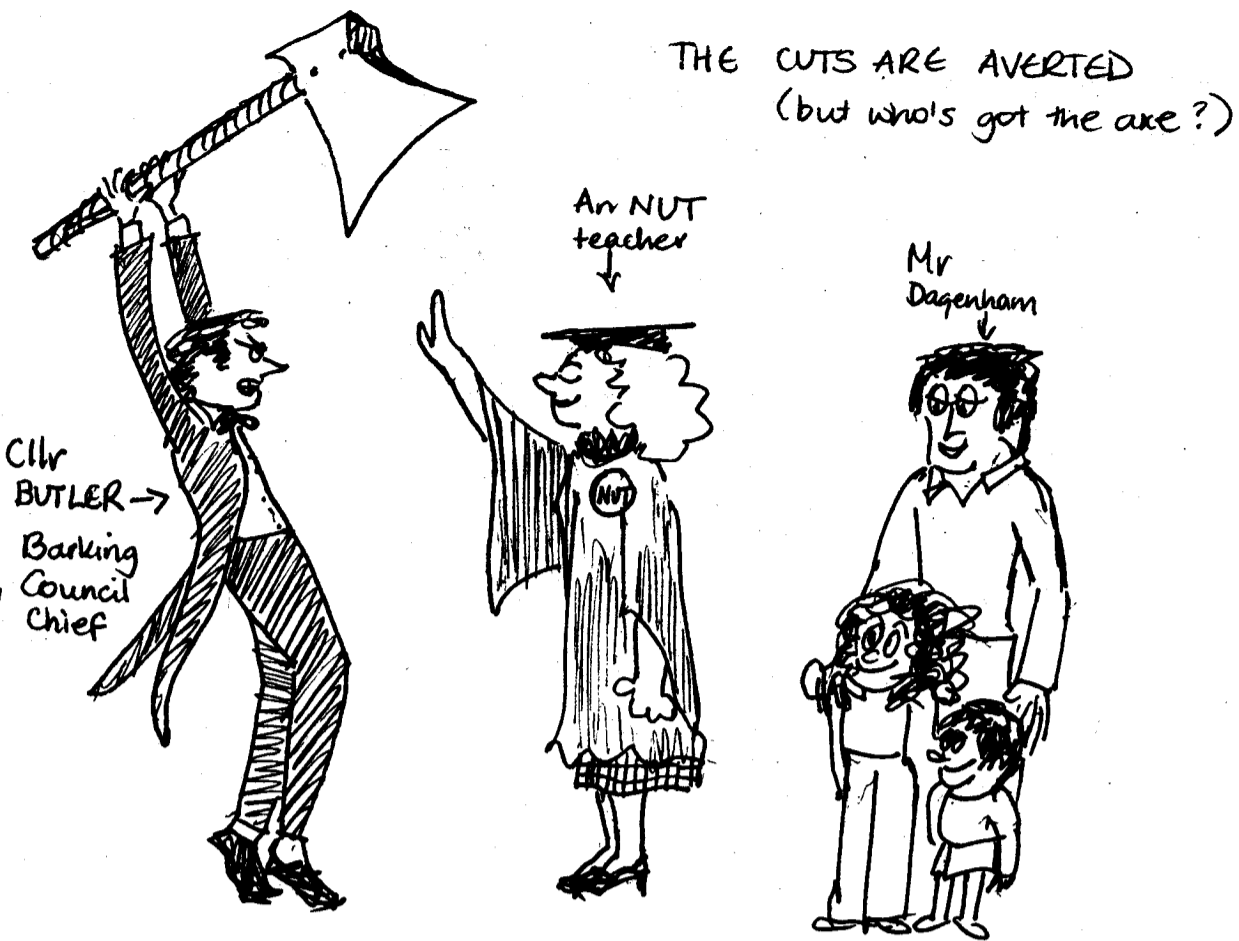
In an article in the NUWM bulletin by the South Shields Unemployed Union answering this slander, the following important point is made:

"The unemployed cannot wait for the TUC leaders to organise the unemployed,

for this will not stop the savage attacks on benefits by the government, they have no choice but to combine to defend themselves... It is not those unemployed that form themselves into a union that are the 'splitters', but it is the TUC leaders who are trying to split the unemployed and employed; they are trying to split the unemployed and the employed. They are trying to stop the unemployed from being organised as a militant part of the working class movement, just as happened in the 1920's and 30's ..."

In addition to a report of the NUWM unionisation rights campaign there is a useful analysis of the Rayner Report.

Copies at 10p each are available from NUWM.



## The battle of Barking

LOUISE O'CONNOR reports

the loss of 80 jobs in September last year - although we had won on 23 redundancies in that round.

Therefore, the new proposals were viewed with total dismay, by both the teachers and the local Chief Inspector, whose report on the probable effects of the cuts in the Borough's schools described them as 'catastrophic'.

The local National Union of Teachers felt that the role of a Labour Council was hardly to do the Tory government's job for them.

Public meetings called by the Barking and Dagenham Trade Union Committee Against the Cuts were very well attended by hundreds of people calling for the Council to give a lead to a fight against punitive Tory policies, but the Councillors who turned up told us we were living in cloud cuckoo land if we expected them to put themselves in the position of facing individual surcharges or worse.

With emotive warnings of 'a Clay Cross' situation being thrown at us we quickly realised that it would indeed be a case of cloud cuckoo land to expect this Labour Council to defend the interests of its working class electorate.

A Borough-wide ballot on strike action was organised three weeks into the new term and the results showed over 80% of teachers in the NUT were prepared to take such action in defence of education.

A large proportion of the threatened jobs were in fact redundancies - termination of permanent contracts. A General Meeting decided that the non-reappointment of teachers currently on temporary contracts (except for those covering maternity leave, of course) should also be regarded as redundancy, since those jobs were, in effect, permanent posts in the schools concerned, and their disappearance would seriously affect the curriculum.

We were told by the General Secretary, Fred Jarvis, that even if redundancies had not been threatened the sheer scale of the cuts would have merited strike action as the best means of fighting them.

So we all went on strike, and began to picket the

deliveries of oil, food, bricks, equipment, and maintenance work to our schools.

The strike committee comprised the local committee and the representatives from each school. It was subdivided into groups responsible for publicity, school liaison, contacting other trade unions and Labour Party wards, finance, and the disco and creche organisation!

It quickly became obvious that the majority of parents were supporting us, many because they found out that four of the eleven comprehensive schools would lose their Sixth Forms; that nursery education would be seriously cut; that German, French, Geography, Chemistry, Computer Studies, Technical Drawing, Music, Remedial Classes and more would disappear across the sector; that capitation would be cut even further than before.

A TGWU driver, turned away by pickets, was suspended by the Council and the other drivers walked out and began picketing their own depots. We took large collections (£5 each) due to the different levels of strike pay, and appreciated the support.

But other unions' members kept telling us why they "had to cross" our lines; we were not impressed, especially when they were from the school dinners or local works departments, both of which are being cut "even more" severely than we were!

### Labour Party

The local AUEW lent us some offices; donations poured in; and all the local and surrounding Labour Party wards and Constituency Parties sent us messages of support.

After a couple of marches through Barking and Dagenham, supported by some 7,000 people - despite the NUT Executive refusing to sanction a national half-day strike in our support - the Council asked us to meet them.

The first meetings were unproductive, since they offered us 30 jobs!, muttered about ACAS, and kept reiterating their goodwill in the face of government cutbacks which they were 'powerless to resist'.

National Executive members had come to General Meetings every week. But despite our demands not all members were brought out - a few were in a minority

in some schools - and a national levy was not organised because they felt that the strike could be ended without testing national support.

After a series of very long meetings with the Council, the Executive told us that the curriculum was protected, a working party was being set up to renegotiate the redeployment agreement and they had an undertaking not to misuse temporary contracts; so the strike was over.

### Primary schools

We had 'gained' 104 jobs out of the 159; or, to put it another way, since Easter 1981, we had lost 134.

In addition, the Primary Sector came off worse than the Secondary, since only 36 of the 104 (plus seven to Special Schools) were saved for Primary Schools. Exactly which jobs and where is to be decided by the Working Party this term, of which half will be members of the NUT.

The figure of 134 includes the 80 jobs lost at the beginning of this school year.

The Executive have now ordered us to cease all action which means that those jobs fall by default, since they were not included in the remit of those negotiating on this round of cuts (1982-1983) - the 159 jobs due to disappear over September 1982 and Easter 1983.

The strike did not cover these jobs; the action around them was no-cover action, as I stated above. The Union Committee have recommended a re-ballot.

But in 3 weeks, no-cover action will cease to have much effect since examinations start and many fifth years leave school.

It is unlikely that the results of a ballot will be known before then.

### 150 jobs lost

Finally, the head of the Council's Finance Committee, Councillor Booker, was quoted in the local newspaper (Barking and Dagenham Post) last week as saying that despite the agreements reached to end the strike he believed that 150 jobs would be lost before the end of this year.

If this proves to be the case, then the Borough's NUT (and maybe that time the NAS's National Executive would listen to their members) could well be in the news again.

## CONFERENCE ON RAYNER

60 unemployed activists met on April 17 in Birmingham to discuss the fight against the Rayner Report.

The meeting, called by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement passed two resolutions. The first, from the NUWM, was for a campaign to end all harassment of the unemployed; for benefits as a right for all; a woman's right to work; unrestricted study for the unemployed; an end to racial

categories and ethnic monitoring.

In Birmingham, it was reported, there has been a successful campaign by a number of organisations including the Indian Workers' Association and Claimants' Unions to encourage claimants not to have anything to do with the ethnic monitoring.

The second resolution, from the Federation of Claimants' Unions, said:

"This meeting recognises the Rayner Report as an

attack on both claimants' rights and the jobs of civil servants employed in the DHSS and Department of Employment.

### Ethnic

"We support the efforts of trade unionists to oppose the introduction of availability testing and ethnic monitoring, and urge CPSA and SCPS members to refuse to implement these procedures.

"We ask that CPSA and SCPS actively support claimants unions and unemployed

workers groups in their demand for the repeal of the 1980 Social Security Act and its substitution by an individually-based, adequate, guaranteed minimum income, in or out of work, without means testing."

The meeting was a start in coordinating campaign activity and the NUWM bulletin will aim to continue the work.

Contact: NUWM, 119 Maidstone Road, Leicester

## Union lead for jobless

This broadsheet produced by the 6/612 branch of the TGWU in Liverpool, the first and only branch actively organising the unemployed, is a first class initiative in promoting the work of this unique and pioneering branch.

It is being sold on the

dole queues throughout Merseyside.

The broadsheet arose out of a special branch meeting earlier this year in which the normal routine branch agenda was suspended and the whole time was spent discussing the difficulties and

problems of building the branch and recruiting new workers.

A number of sub-committees were set up to promote new recruitment, including a publicity committee which produced this broadsheet. Such meetings are to be held regu-

larly.

In the front page article an important point is made concerning the advantages of the unemployed joining the established trade union movement which ought to be noted by the organised unemployed groups in other parts of the country:

"For us, divided we've lost - united and organised we've a lot to win. 3,000 people after one job, we're onto a loser. 3,000 people outside Steers House [DHSS]... More important, united with those who still have jobs [for the moment] in a union like the T&G, we've got the chance of using that muscle on our behalf."

Inside the broadsheet, there is an attractively laid-out analysis of the little-known Rayner Report on "Payments of Benefits to the Unemployed". It succinctly exposes the dangers for the unemployed, especially for women and blacks, of 'availability testing' and ethnic monitoring.

The broadsheet is a major step forward in turning the branch over to the mass of unorganised, jobless people.

It can be obtained from 6/612 branch c/o Transport House, Islington, Liverpool 3.

## DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON



MAY 8th BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND MAY 8th SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE



# OFFICIALS RAILROAD

## BL SELL-OUT

by Bill Peters

BL management's union-busting procedure agreement which accepts the Tebbit Bill, provides for summary dismissal and the rapid introduction of speed-up measures was manipulated through the Joint Negotiating Committee by senior trade union officials last Friday.

A week earlier the document which represents a grave new danger for workers and shop stewards in BL had been referred back to the shop stewards committees in the individual plants by meetings of both the AUEW and TGWU senior stewards.

Although the document had been negotiated under a cloud of secrecy, since a commitment to negotiate on it had been smuggled into the final stages of last November's wage negotiations, National Officers had opposed this reference back.

In the case of the AUEW, the full Executive had already unanimously accepted the document. At the TGWU convenors' meeting, Jack Adams, convenor of Longbridge and chairman of the meeting, assisted Automotive National Officer Grenville Hawley to neuter the motion moved by Bob Fryer from Cowley.

They argued that since the JNC was due to meet on the issue on April 23,



Hawley: rammed through Edwardes' document

the reference back to the stewards could not result in a further convenors' meeting since there would not be time. Instead, stewards' committees should send letters to Hawley giving their views on the document and he would inform the JNC of the decisions.

It was designed to put everything into the hands of Hawley and it did. At the JNC Hawley claimed that

the only definitive rejection of the document was from the Cowley Assembly Plant and therefore he regarded himself as having authority to sign it.

He reached this position by counting resolutions which rejected the document on the basis of certain paragraphs or called for substantial amendments as acceptance in principle. As

were stewards' committees who failed to reply in writing.

Not a single committee actually accepted the document. Faced with this Bob Fryer called for a private meeting of the ten TGWU delegates. There, he moved a resolution to the effect that the TGWU would not sign the document until a full convenors' conference had been held.

Hawley refused to accept the motion and moved his own motion that he be allowed to sign, sweeping aside criticisms that he was out of order to move a motion as a full time official and chairman of the meeting.

The meeting voted 5-5 on Hawley's motion and he used his casting vote to declare it passed, thus allowing him to sign.

With the AUEW it was much more simple. Ken Cure ruled a convenors' meeting out of order since the Executive had already decided.

Once again BL workers have been the victims of bureaucratic manipulation moves by their leaders over moves designed to put more power in the hands of BL management.

Once more the urgent need for alternative leadership and democratic control by the membership is painfully obvious.

# Scottish TUC

## clings to

## fake 'unions'

by Stan Crooke

THREE MOTIONS on Poland were submitted to this year's conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), held in Perth last week. But in the debate the question of Poland played second fiddle to fervent denunciations of the hypocrisy of Frank Chapple and Margaret Thatcher.

One motion, from Aberdeen Trades Council, was fairly innocuous, condemning the imposition of martial law and pledging the STUC to 'campaign for the release of trade union and political prisoners in Poland and the restoration of civil rights'.

Unfortunately, a STUC 'campaign' rarely, if ever, gets beyond sending off a few letters of protest in various directions.

The other motions called for an end to the links between the STUC and the fake trade unions in Eastern Europe.

The need for such motions was underlined

by a report from a STUC youth delegation to East Germany, where labour laws of 1961 and 1968 define the role of the unions as 'mobilising the entire working class and intelligentsia to fulfill economic plans', and abolished the nominal right to strike. Even the British TUC, no militant anti-Stalinist force, has broken off links with the East German 'unions'; but the STUC report lavished praise on them for 'the degree to which they are able to help members' daily life, from health to holidays'.

Another STUC delegation reported from the May Day 'celebrations' in Budapest. 'The May Day demonstration was a massive display of people's power and their support for the government... I wish to thank the General Council for bestowing this great honour on me, and wish that contacts between...

our Trade Union Centres

can be maintained and strengthened'.

This same sycophantic whitewashing could be found in the reports of STUC delegations which visited Romania, Cuba and the USSR.

Inevitably, therefore, the EETPU/Moray Trades Council composite calling for the severing of links with the East European 'unions' led to bitter clashes.

TGWU full-timer and STUC General Council member Hugh Wyper condemned the composite as an attempt to divorce the STUC from 50% of the world, and a gift to the Cold Warriors, as well as reminding delegates of the 'splendid support' consistently extended to the Scottish trade unions by the East European 'unions'.

A NALGO delegate, Pat Kelly, took up the same theme of how the motion meant abandoning the international working class, and went on to condemn the hypocrisy of the EETPU for submitting such a motion, given its own lack of democracy. Poland was mentioned in passing.

# Dockers plan national strike for agreement

by John O'Mahony

DOCKWORKERS won a short-term victory last week when they forced the withdrawal of plans to give the port employers more power over dockers and to reorganise the National Dock Labour Board (NDLB).

On Wednesday 21st, about 10,000 dockers, mainly in the northern ports, came out on a one-day warning strike. They had threatened an all-out national strike from Monday 26th unless the plans were withdrawn.

The NDLB was set up by the Labour government in 1947 to be the employer of a registered workforce. Dockers were then hired out to individual employers on a half-day basis and reverted to the NDLB when jobs were finished.

This kept the 'flexibility' the bosses wanted because

of the irregular nature of much of the work. At the same time, it was for dockers a great step forward from the previous system of completely casual unregistered labour.

### Regional

The NDLB is administered on a 50/50 basis by the employers and the TGWU at both national and local level.

Now the employers want to reorganise the existing system. They want to replace the 20 subsidiary local Boards with five regional bodies, and to pass back responsibility for welfare and medical services to the employers.

Dockers see it as the thin end of the wedge to erode and then dismantle the

scheme which gives dockers security of employment.

They are almost certainly right. In 1947 the NDLB offered some advantages to the employers — the organisation and regulation of the vast armies of dockers.

But since the '60s the NDLB has been a fetter on the employers in their efforts to reorganise the industry.

The technology of the ports has been revolutionised. Armies of militant dockers, using techniques for shifting cargo as old as Pharaoh's Egypt, have been replaced with mechanical cargo handling techniques.

To carry this through, the bosses needed two things.

First: to reassert control over dockers who through militant action had used the National Dock Labour Scheme to achieve, unofficially, a high degree of control over the details of their daily working lives. Second, to radically reduce the labour force, replacing them with machines and bulk containers.

### Fall-back

The docks were reorganised in the late '60s and completely decasualised. Dockers went to permanent employers, and the NDLB became a fall-back employer, to 'hold' the unemployed dockers at a basic minimum wage.

The dockers put up a tremendous fight, involving mass strikes, against

aspects of this reorganisation. But essentially they lost.

It would have needed the reorganisation of society to combine the changes in handling techniques with preservation of the elements of real self-control that the dockers built up within the NDLS in the 20 years before 1967. The strikes and militancy lessened the power of the employers, stopped them doing what they liked, and made them pay through the nose for what they imposed on dockworkers; but the pressure of the 'technological revolution' in the ports was inexorable.

The labour force has been cut drastically. In 1967 there were 57,000 registered dockers. Now there are 18,000. The employers want it down still further. With four million unemployed, they are now offering redundancy money of £22,500 in an effort to get rid of a further 2,000 jobs.

The NDLB framework is a straitjacket for the employers. Bulk container handling means that much that was dock work can be done far from the docks — and from dockers' wages and hard-won protective conditions and practices.

Thus the drive of the employers has been to move port work from the ports. This sparked the 1972 clashes with the Heath government that led to five dockers' pickets being arrested under the anti-union Industrial Relations Act and freed under press-

ure of mass spontaneous strikes and the threat of a General Strike.

The the 1972 Jones/Aldington agreement defined loading and unloading work within a certain radius of the ports as under NDLB conditions, and quietened things down. Big redundancy payments were offered to buy dockers' jobs.

### Wilson

The present proposal to restructure the NDLB, loosen it up, and shift some more responsibility and control to individual employers, is seen by dockers as a new blow in the war that began under the Wilson government in the mid '60s to break the power of organised labour in the docks.

They have just shown the Tories and the dock employers that dockers are still a power to be reckoned with. However, the issue hasn't gone away.

The attempts to restructure the NDLB have only been postponed.

### Spark

Dockers are planning a national stoppage for May 10th unless the government begins talks about extending the NDLS to include the 4000 dockers in ports like Felixstowe who are still outside it.

Actions like this will be unlawful under the anti-union laws now being rammed through Parli-

The docks could once again provide the spark for a trial of strength between the labour movement and an anti working class Tory government.

# FUND

THE BANKERS' standing orders totted up so far this month come to £159.55. There's more to be added to that total, but with only £9.50 from Hyndburn and £1.50 from Lambeth in the post this week, the monthly fund looks like being as hard hit by the Special Fund this month as last.

It stands at £308.05. April's final total next week. But let's get working so that May is the month where the monthly fund keeps its proper level as well as the special fund.

Send contributions to: Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL. Cheques payable to Socialist Organiser.

HEALTH SERVICE activists meeting: Sunday May 2, 1pm to 5pm, at the Labour Club, Bristol St, Birmingham (opposite the 'Night Out').

NATIONAL EDUCATION FIGHTBACK meeting: Saturday May 8, in Manchester. Details: phone Kurshad at Manchester Area NUS.

### Friendship

A third opponent of the composite, by chance the secretary of the Scotland-USSR Society, painted a grim picture of what the motion, if passed, would mean for him personally. His friendship with Boris, the fraternal delegate from the USSR 'unions' who attended Congress every year, stretched right back to 1946. Was the EETPU going to prevent him from ever again speaking to 'Bo', as Boris is known to his friends? No it most certainly wasn't!

Jimmy Milne, the STUC general secretary, summed up, in a manner of speaking. Ducking all the political issues posed by the composite, he made a series of personalised attacks.

He didn't need the EETPU to tell him how to organise solidarity. And as for the CPUSA official who had spoken in favour of the motion, what right did he have to speak of solidarity when he could only get four per cent for his members? The motion reflected an alliance of the extreme right and the extreme left.

### Dead letter

The composite was overwhelmingly rejected, with only the EETPU, the CPUSA, the NAS-UWT, and a sprinkling of Trades Council delegates voting in favour.

Having thus avoided any concrete measures in support of Solidarnosc, the conference could contentedly listen to the addresses by Solidarnosc fraternal delegates Marek Garzdecki and Piotr Kozlowski and deliver polite applause at the end, safe in the knowledge that real solidarity would remain a dead letter as far as the STUC is concerned.

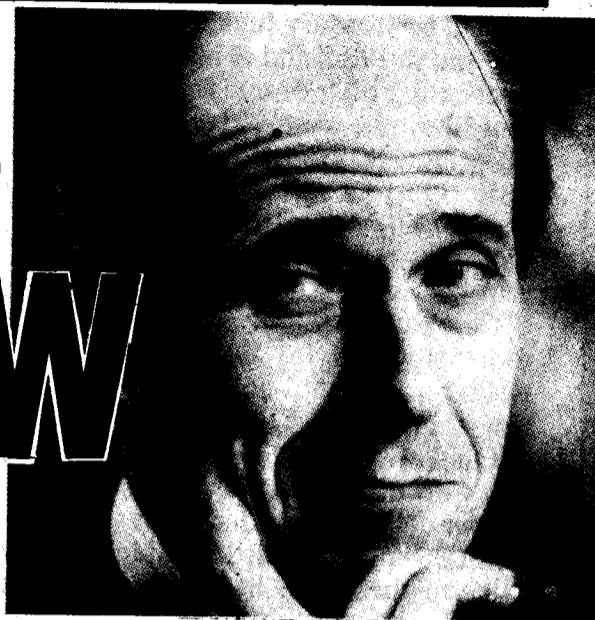
**CLASS FIGHTER**  
INSIDE: THIS MONTH'S PAPER...  
MENACE OF THE ST  
CLASS FIGHTER Steering Committee - Sunday May 9, 11am to 4pm, Keskidee Centre, Gifford St, London N1. Open to all Class Fighter supporters.

10p plus postage from NLWYM, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.

# Socialist Organiser

# TEBBIT BILL:

# AMENDMENTS TIGHTEN SCREW



by John Cunningham (Dinnington NUM)

THE response of the NUM to the Tebbit Bill as with the rest of the trade union movement, has been very slow.

Typical of its attitude was the response of the Yorkshire NUM leadership at a recent emergency Area Council meeting which ruled that a resolution calling for strike action against Tebbit had to be remitted to the next Council meeting.

Owen Briscoe, the Yorkshire General Secretary, arguing for its remittance, came out with the amazing statement that the TUC Special Conference had come out with a much firmer line against Tebbit than had been expected, so

the resolution wasn't necessary.

The last NUM Branch meeting at Dinnington rejected these defeatist arguments and resolved to press ahead with the resolution at the next Council meeting.

The resolution reads:

"This branch calls on the Yorkshire area to stage a one-day strike when the Tebbit anti-union Bill comes up for its third reading in parliament. This one day strike is to be the first stage in a series of industrial actions and campaigning to defeat this Bill. We also call on our NEC representatives to obtain full and active support from the union nationally for this and future action."

**ACT NOW AGAINST TEBBIT**

Mobilising Committee in Defence of Trade Union Rights

**TORY THREAT TO OUR UNIONS**

Break links with Tories!

by Wendy Mustill

ON 22 April the government announced that it is tightening up clause 7 of Tebbit's Employment Bill to make it easier for the bosses to sack selective groups of strikers.

The new amendments — brought in at the last-minute committee stage — are even more divisive than the original proposals. They include:

\*Instant dismissal for strikers, who will not be able to bring unfair dismissal cases. (Originally the

employer was to be required to give 4 days' notice to return to work).

\*Bosses can sack people taking any type of industrial action, not just strikes, e.g. work-to-rule.

\*Selective dismissal. Whereas under the law now, all strikers must be treated the same, the new clause will mean that if some workers who don't return to work are sacked, and the ones who go back are kept on, there will be no case for unfair dismissal.

\*Discrimination between plants. Under the original draft, strikers from all plants had to be treated the same. The new amendment means that strikers in one plant can be sacked, while others elsewhere in the company can be kept on.

The implications are clear. Selective "fair" dismissal of those who stay out gives a clear go-ahead to employers wanting to get rid of militants. The threat of the sack without redress for taking any form of industrial action is geared to intimidating people into submission. By selective dismissal on a plant basis, the Tories aim to undermine solidarity strikes e.g. over plant closures (cf Leyland, British Steel).

AS THE TEBBIT Bill approaches its Third Reading in Parliament, the TUC has finally... authorised the printing of 100,000 leaflets.

It has also named a day of protest — June 10, to be called 'union day'.

But the number of rank and file activists unwilling to wait for the TUC's 'too little, too late' is growing. The Mobilising Committee for the Defence of Trade Union Rights has been mailing out leaflets and factsheets, and has planned two meetings in London.

**TUESDAY MAY 11: 7.30** at the Mother Redcap, opposite Camden Town tube. Speakers: Reg Race MP, John Suddaby (chair, Camden NUPE), Alan Thornett (T&G deputy senior steward, BL Cowley), Wendy Mustill (Women's Fightback).

**THURSDAY MAY 13: 7.30** at Southwark Labour Party Rooms, Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5. Speakers: Peter Tatchell, Alan Thornett, Wendy Mustill.

Also planned is a Women's Fightback meeting:

**WOMEN AGAINST TEBBIT** — Friday May 7, 6.45pm at A Woman's Place, 48 William IV Street, London WC2.

Contact: Mobilising Committee for the Defence of Trade Union Rights, c/o 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

For public sector workers, where selective industrial action in certain key areas is most effective (cf civil and health service disputes), industrial action could be shackled. Your section or group may go on strike one day and be sacked, whereas those in another area taking action as part of the same campaign the next week may not be sacked.

The new law will attempt to breed divisiveness, uncertainty and fear of stepping out of line. The Tories are trying to undermine the fundamental precepts that unity is strength and an injury to one is an injury to all. It is based on intimidation and will undoubtedly be used to try to victimise key groups of workers.

These further new restrictions make it even

more vital to organise NOW against the Bill.

## Stem tide of racist violence

# BLOODY MURDER!

On Tuesday 27th, Paul Carr was found not guilty of the murder of Doctor Dharry in Coventry last June.

The jury at Birmingham Crown Court accepted a plea of manslaughter after being told by defence counsel that "not even the police believed that Carr was a 'terrified skinhead full of racial hatred'. They treated him and all he said as a joke".

If this report of the police attitude to a brutal,

cold-blooded racist stabbing is true, then all their fine talk about building good relations with the Asian population is what many have believed all along, cynical lies.

Carr got seven years for manslaughter, but many people are shocked and outraged by the case. Socialist Organiser will be carrying an article on the trial and local responses to its outcome.

Following extensive racist and fascist activity in Coventry last year, Coventry Trades Council has organised a local labour movement conference against racism.

This will provide the Coventry area labour movement with a valuable opportunity to send delegates to discuss the programme and policies required 'to forge the unity in struggle necessary to smash racism and take on the economic and political structures responsible for it'.

The two central themes of the conference are racism in the workplace, and the unions' counter-strategy to racism in the rest of society.

**Coventry labour movement anti-racist conference. Saturday May 8, 10.30 to 5pm at Lanchester Poly**

**Delegates invited from TU organisations in the Coventry area. Contact: Coventry TC, c/o The Tom Mann Club, 34 Stoke Green, Coventry**

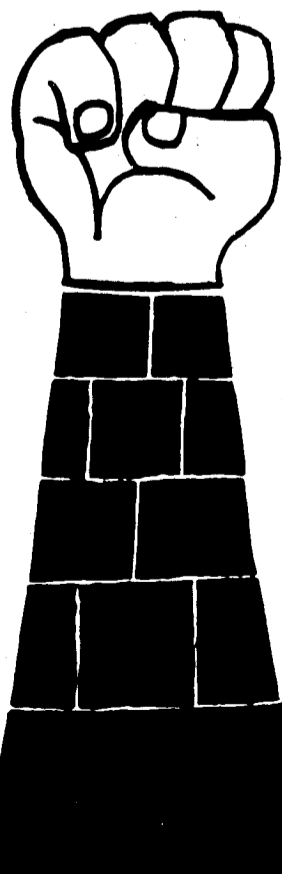
## EAST END KILLING

ON FEBRUARY 5, 1982, Shamsu Miah was working at a Bangladeshi takeaway restaurant at Bethnal Green, London E2. At about 11.45pm two white men entered the restaurant and were positively identified by the restaurant owner as customers who previously took away food without payment. A quarrel started.

One white customer lost all control, broke away a piece of wood from the counter, and began to fight. Shamsu Miah was hit and died instantaneously.

Yet the Coroner has handed down an open verdict. A protest demonstration has therefore been planned by all Bangladeshi and many other community organisations, to be held on Sunday May 9, 1982. The demonstration will start at 11am from Shaheed Bhaban, 39 Fournier Street, London E1.

## £6000 fund



£1442.80 (represented by the red patch below) is now the total of our Special Fund, towards its £6000 target.

Contributions over the last week include £150 from John Lister, £50 from Pete Radcliff, £25 from Stephen Corbishley, £20 Tony Cashman, and a series of smaller donations totalling £55.80 — altogether £300.80.

The Basingstoke group promises money next week from a local fundraising event. Let's hear from other groups, too, about jumble sales, book-sales, or socials to help the fund, in addition to the individual donations.

Send to: Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

## WHAT'S ON

Paid ads 5p per word, £4 per column inch. Send to Socialist Organiser (What's On), 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

**BRITISH OUT of Ireland, self-determination for the Irish people! Demonstrate Saturday May 8, 1pm from Speakers' Corner, London.** Called by Labour Committee on Ireland, Indian Workers' Association, Troops Out Movement, and Veterans Against the War.

**U.S. HANDS OFF El Salvador! Demonstrate against Reagan's visit. Sunday June 6, 12.30 at Hyde Park, Monday June 7, 5.30 at US Embassy, Grosvenor Square. Tuesday June 8, 1pm, lobby of Parliament. Contact: Reagan Reception Committee, PO Box 51, London SW10.**

**ISRAEL OUT of Lebanon! Stop the repression in the occupied territories! March from Hyde Park to the Israeli Embassy. Sunday May 2, 2pm. Organised by Palestine Solidarity Liaison Committee.**

**LUTTE OUVRIERE fete: international festival of revolutionary socialism. Saturday to Monday, May 29-31, at Presles, Val d'Oise, France. A delegation of SO supporters will be going over to the fete: all comrades interested, please write to SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8.**

**STOP THE DEPORTATION of Najat Chafee! Picket the appeal. Friday May 7, 9am, Thanet House, The Strand. Contact: Friends of Najat Chafee, 138 Minet Ave, London NW10.**

**SOCIALIST ORGANISER Delegate Meeting: Sunday May 9, 11am to 5pm, at County Hall, London SE1.**

**LONDON Workers' Socialist League classes on basic Marxism. Next one: Trotskyism and the mass movement. Friday April 30, 7.30pm. For details of venue, write to PO Box 135, London N1.**