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Socialist ORGANISER

Fight for
socialist
policies

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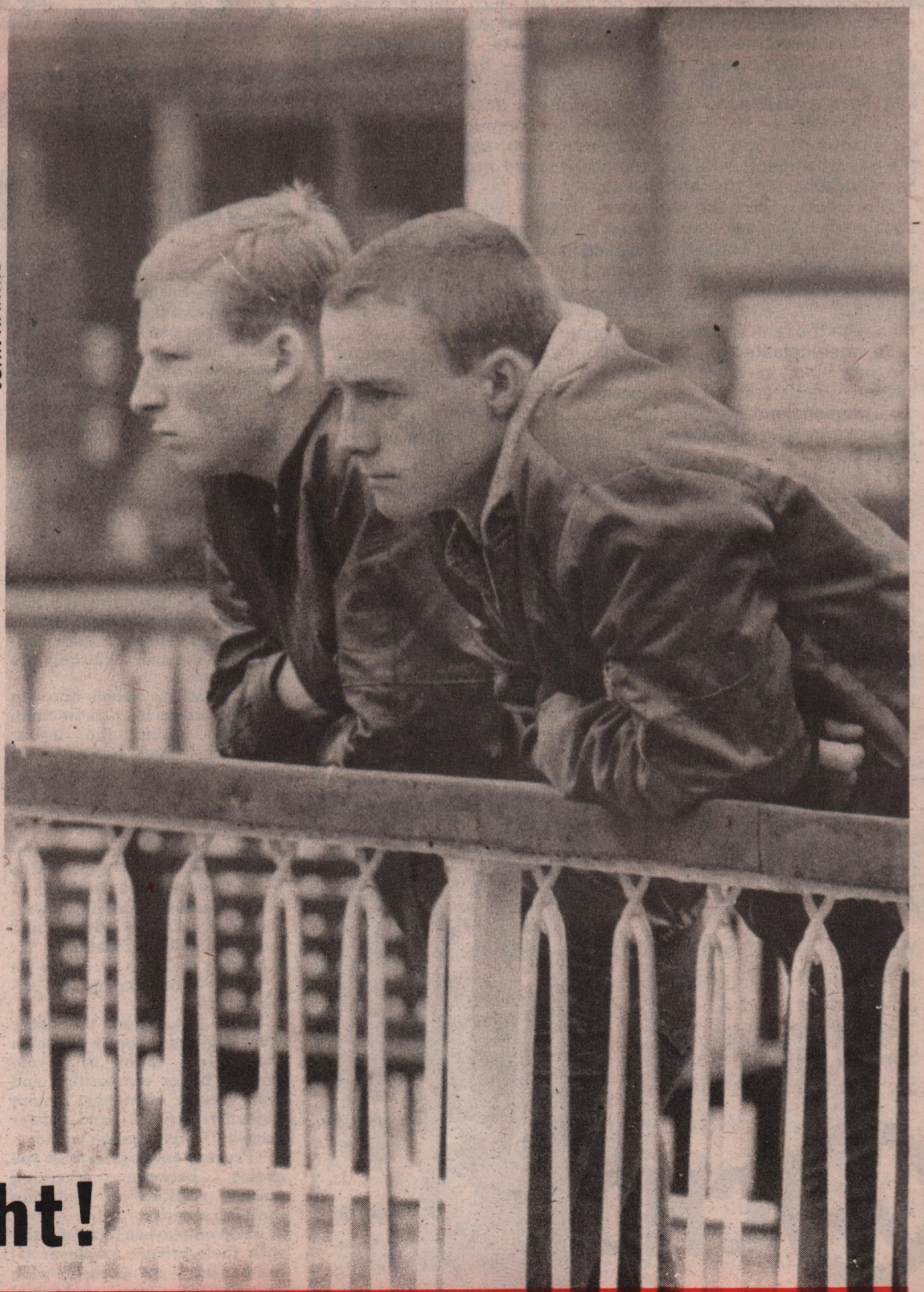


JOHN HARRIS

There is an alternative!

**Vote
LABOUR
and
ORGANISE!**

**A class vote and class
action! Employed and
unemployed unite and fight!**



JOHN HARRIS

Next week: a special issue of 50, out on Monday June 6

EDITORIAL

Winning the arguments?

DAY AFTER DAY on television we see a "balanced" presentation of the election. First comes the "news" headlines — in which the latest Labour Party wrangle is introduced.

Then comes the election coverage. A Tory speaker denounces nuclear disarmament or nationalisation or some other "Marxist" policy. An Alliance speaker also makes similar points.

Then, to complete the "balanced" presentation, comes a Labour front bench speaker ... if not actually denouncing then at best fudging and apologising for Labour's policies.

The ruling class is not short of convinced exponents of its views.

Theirs is the easy role — swimming with the stream of the mass media, conforming to rather than challenging people's natural reluctance to embark on abrupt and complete change. They can concentrate their attention upon presenting the views of socialists as outlandish, wild-eyed schemes of fringe elements — whether doddering eccentrics like Michael Foot, or hard-faced Marxist wreckers and rioters.

In complete contrast, the representatives of the labour movement appear constantly uncomfortable, wearing the policies of the Labour manifesto like ill-fitting and uncomfortable costumes foisted upon them by malevolent stage-hands.

And in a real sense, this is true. Left policies of nuclear disarmament and nationalisation have been foisted upon a bitterly resistant right wing Labour leadership by the rank and file of the labour movement.

The momentum that enabled this to occur was generated not through the "official" politics of Parliamentary shadow-boxing and media chat shows but through thousands of committed activists flying in the face of methods and institutions of the establishment — and leafletting, holding meetings, selling papers hand-to-hand, striking, demonstrating and mandating delegates.

For those in favour of missiles, in support of cuts, and happy with unemployment, there is no call for such extraordinary effort. The onus is on those who fight for change.

Here is the contradiction of the Labour Party. While — unlike any of the other "establishment" parties — the rank and file can, at times, foist left wing policies on its leadership, they still have a leadership steering in quite a different direction.

While rank and file Labour activists are committed to the fight for change, the bulk of Labour's leaders are respected parts of the establishment, who see themselves and the Labour Party as integral parts of the capitalist state.

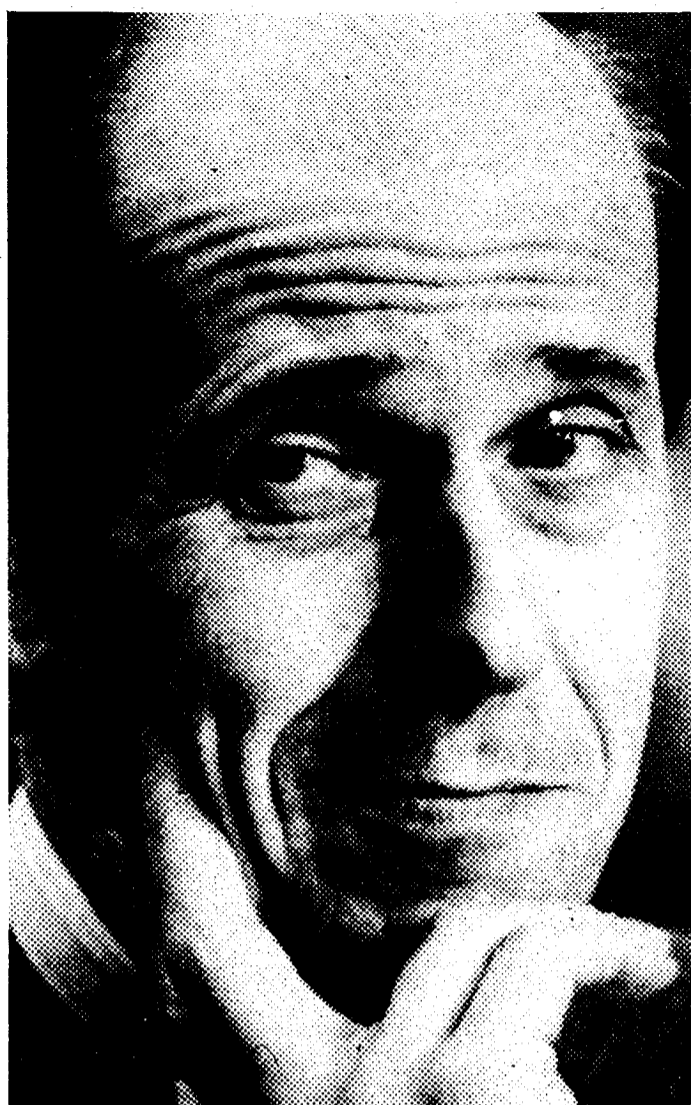
One reason why the unilateral case is widely rejected is because it has never been argued by Labour's leadership; the reason they won't argue it is because they recognise and fear the massive, lasting blow that scrapping Britain's nuclear weaponry would strike at British imperialism, its relations with NATO and the USA. These leaders identify more with British imperialism than with the rank and file of the Labour movement.

So when defeated on policy, Labour's leaders move to neuter the new line, by smothering it in respectable establishment jargon: unilateralism is submerged in talk of multilateral disarmament and support for NATO. Opposition to cuts and wage controls are wrapped up in vague talk about economic planning.

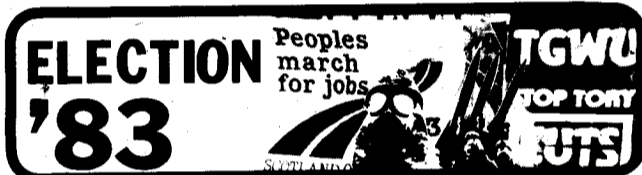
The job is done in such a way as to take the sting out of the radical policies, and to divorce them from any realistic perspectives of struggle to achieve them.

Labour activists who have fought battle after battle against cuts and wage controls, arguing that money should be lopped from profits rather than from wages and services, now find our leaders saying that the money for public services should be found by ... borrowing from the capitalists!

No wonder Labour comes across badly in the media. We have to change the media, together with the system of which they are part. But first, most importantly, and as a precondition, we have to change the labour movement and its leadership.



Tebbit: directors' club foreshadowed his strategy



Directors back salami tactics

UNTIL Thatcher's gang took office, the Institute of Directors was seen as a fringe outfit to the right of the capitalist establishment. But its rabid politics have been caught up and overtaken by the Cabinet, making some of its views appear distinctly moderate in comparison to Tebbit.

This is shown by comparison between an Institute discussion document drawn up last year and the proposals for new anti-union measures contained in the Tory election manifesto.

Both the government and the Institute are agreed on the link between union-basing moves and the privatisation and compartmentalisation of large state enterprises.

The Institute labels the big public sector unions as the main element within the labour movement which has not lost strength in the recession, and advocates moves to break up the existing national-level bargaining structures:

'Decentralisation of bargaining would be a major step towards solving the problems of public sector union power. However the most obvious and most desirable method for achieving the aims ... would be a massive programme of privatisation.

'Quite apart from the many other desirable aspects of such a change [e.g. inflow of private funds; better competition and thus greater efficiency; more consumer choice and lower prices (!!)] privatisation would:

1. Present employees with the choice between accepting market realities or reducing their job security;
2. Help employees (!) to identify with their private employer (!) rather than an industry-wide organisation [any industrial action taken on an industry-wide

basis would therefore be secondary industrial action and would thus fall within the provisions of the Employment Act 1980];

3. Tend to make bargaining arrangements [and thus the scope for industrial action] far more localised than at present.'

The IoD focus on this line of action — in preference to new legislation on secret ballots, on legal enforcement of procedure agreements, or further frontal attacks on the closed shop.

And they argue that once again this 'salami tactic' — eroding conditions slice by slice — should be adopted in order to minimise working class resistance:

'The danger of any attempt to curb public sector union power is that the attempt might itself generate massive industrial action, in which a number of industries or sectors engage in sympathetic action.

'A piecemeal approach, introduced first in those sectors which could most easily accommodate change, would gradually isolate those sectors which initially might find such changes wholly unacceptable, and would lessen the possibility of secondary industrial action being taken in their support.'

Though the Institute expresses its reservations on pre-strike ballots, to which the Tories are now pledged, and the usefulness of mass lay-offs during strikes, it is unreservedly enthusiastic about 'any measure which might lead to the development of non-party political trade unionism'.

In this respect, therefore, perhaps the Institute should have lent its backing to the People's March which aims to further the 'non party political' approach to unemployment — and, by implication, to trade unionism as well.

Albany riot lifts lid on prisoners' frustration

Geoff Coggan of the prisoners' rights group PROP explains the Albany riot

THE Albany riot has exploded, perhaps once and for all, the notion that overcrowding is the cause of prison riots and that the simple answer is therefore to build new jails.

Albany, like that very other riot-prone prison, Gartree, is modern and uncrowded. There is never any cell-sharing in these prisons, nor in the other top-security prisons of Parkhurst, Long Lartin, Hull, Wakefield and Wormwood Scrubs D wing.

For 11 years PROP has been trying to get across the basic fact that overcrowding is just one of the results of the prison crisis, not its cause. The fundamental cause of riots in the long term prisons and of the overcrowding and squalor in the big city jails is the same — sentencing levels which, on average and across the range, are the highest in Europe.

The UK does not imprison more of its citizens than other countries, so the reason for having proportionately the biggest prison population throughout the EEC is essentially because of sentence length.

Now that overcrowding is becoming untenable as the easy explanation for the riots, the authorities have to dream up other causes to divert attention from a correct analysis of what is happening.

Every national newspaper, from the Sunday Times to the Sun, has accepted without question the charge that the Albany riot was an 'IRA plot'. Prison officers, using the platform of a conveniently-timed Prison Officers Association (POA) annual conference, have fleshed out the charges with the sort of detail which insults the intelligence of anyone else, but appears to go unchallenged by other prison officers.

Irish prisoners, using their own babies to smuggle in drugs during family visits, are supposed to have steadily built up a drug reliant prison population 'who will do anything to pay off their debts which they owe to a drug habit fed to them by the IRA' (Daily Telegraph).

Similar allegations have been used in the past to justify degrading strip-searching of visitors, including women and children, despite the total control which the authorities have over the prisoner after the visit. Searching of visitors is a blatant provocation with no logical justification whatsoever.

Yet the prisons to which these allegations refer are precisely those jails which head the list of those issuing, through the prison medical service, a whole battery of psychotropic drugs which are employed specifically as control measures.

Compared to that lot, any soft drugs which might or might not be smuggled in represent a drop in the ocean.

As it happens PROP has always argued against the acceptance by prisoners of drugs that have no specific medicinal purpose — precisely because we believe that drug-induced docility plays into the hands of the prison

authorities. Some drugs have, of course, been the subject of recent public alarm after medical research has identified side effects leading to violent behaviour — for example after long-term use of Valium.

Whatever else can be said for or against cannabis, it has never attracted that particular charge from any knowledgeable quarter.

Speaking not only on behalf of PROP but also in the personal capacity of someone who has served part of a prison sentence alongside Paul Holmes, Andy Mulryan, Kevin Dumphy and other Irish political prisoners, and who has been on the rooftops of Parkhurst with them, I would deny categorically that Irish prisoners either have or could have the sort of influence which is alleged.

Yes, Irish prisoners are at the forefront whenever issues of prisoners' solidarity arise: where else would they be? But they are not so superhuman as to be able to tell other prisoners what to do. Prisoners must be just about the most difficult people in the world to lead by the nose.

It is notable that the newspapers which make the most of these stories of the IRA undermining of prison order are those which at other times entertain themselves by publishing 'Irish jokes' portraying Irishmen as incapable of organising anything. When racism feeds the imagination, reason flies out of the window.

A couple of years ago, these same newspapers were busy manufacturing plots to explain away the street riots in Brixton — anything to avoid recognising that there are deep reservoirs of justifiable anger in the streets or, in the present example, the prisons.

Conflagration

The anger will continue to grow, and the prisons are heading for the sort of conflagration that will make Hull, Gartree or Albany seem like picnics. The Irish prisoners could all be repatriated tomorrow, as they should be, but the anger will continue to fester, fuelled by the deeply-felt injustices inherent in a prison system which gets bigger and more repressive day by day.

The national press, in its failure to discuss the real issues and its willingness to accept at face value the most blatant propaganda emanating from the Home Office, will carry a heavy responsibility for the disaster which is looming.

JOIN

Membership of National CND is £6 (adult), £9 (couple), £3 (student) and £1 for Youth CND (under 21). Send to CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4.



Scrap the bosses! Stop the Bomb! A Class Fighter

The Bomb and how to get rid of it — a new pamphlet from Class Fighter, 10p plus postage from Class Fighter, 214, Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.



Howe: government for the rich, by the rich

All the way from the bank



Carrington: Rio Tinto Zinc...

IMAGINE a group of 219 people. 130 of them (58%) are company directors, sharing 400 directorships between them. 37 (17%) are barristers, 36 (16%) farmers or landowners, and 53 (24%) consultants or "advisers" to banks or businesses.

A typical cross section of the ruling class? A random sample of today's capitalists?

Maybe, but these statistics apply to the 219 Tory MPs who were not ministers in the last government and who are standing for Parliament again. (Ministers, by law, have to give up their directorships).

Wondering why the banks and finance houses have done so well out of Thatcherism?

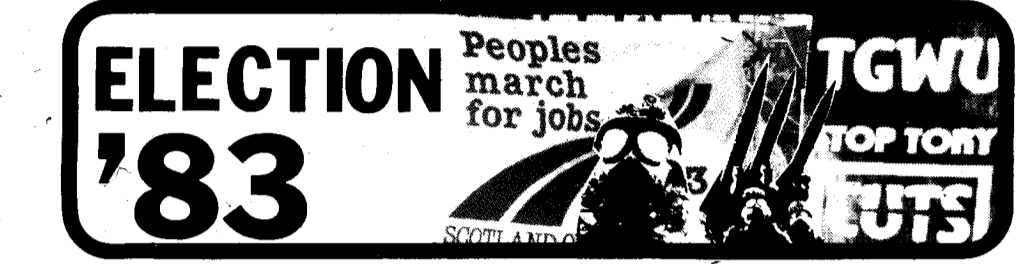
12 Tory MPs are directors of such businesses, including Jonathan Aitken (Aitken Hume), the Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Rippon (Britannia Arrow), Sir Hugh Fraser (Sun Alliance and London) and Esmond Butler (National Westminster).

Health

And what about the rundown of the National Health Service?

The Tory benches feature John Browne MP, Director of the Churchill Private Clinic, and three other Directors of pharmaceutical industries.

Or how about our "free media", with 11 Tory MPs as directors of media and publishing companies, including the Rt. Hon. Maurice Macmillan (of Macmill-



an), Tim Brinton (East Kent Radio), Sir Paul Bryan (Granada TV and Piccadilly Radio); Frederick John Silverster (J. Walter Thompson), and Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith (LWT [Holdings]).

Other famous names crop up in the shadowy field of "consultants/parliamentary advisers": John Browne (Barclays Bank International), Sir Bernard Braine (Police Superintendents Association); and many others employed by bosses' organisations in the building and other trades, and multinational corporations.

Thirty-nine MPs (including Ministers) are "members of Lloyds": a nasty little capitalist enterprise if ever there was one.

The system involves putting up your assets (minimum, £50,000) against possible insurance losses. This brings you a financial return on your £50,000 plus, but as you don't actually have to part with it, you're free to

invest it elsewhere: so you can invest your money twice!

And to stop the £50,000 being wiped out, in the event of Lloyds having to pay out insurance money, you can... insure yourself against this, and get the insurance to pay!

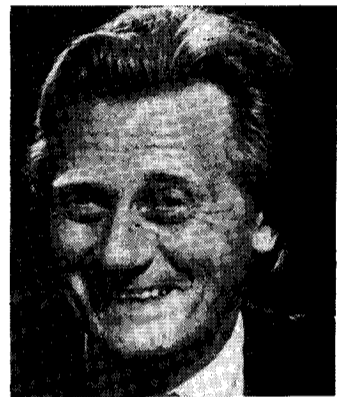
Members of Lloyds include Tory junior and senior ministers in the Treasury department, the ministries of Defence, Education, Science, Energy, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Offices.

Alike

Of course, Tory and Labour governments alike will govern in the interests of big business. But at least in the Labour Party we have a chance to establish Party policy which is in the interests of the working class (through conference) and to hold our MPs accountable to the working class

(through local Parties' rights to re-select).

But no wonder Tory policies have been so anti-working class and pro the bosses: they're not only the Party of the capitalists; they're the Party of the capitalists!



Heseltine: Haymarket Publishers...

THE Sun
A message to Labour supporters
The first day of the rest of our lives
VOTE TORY THIS TIME
IT'S THE ONLY WAY

Press Daily Mail
EXPRESS
FINANCIAL TIMES
The Daily Telegraph
Gang
Sun

EXPRESS
Single vote sinks Jim - now an election
MAGGIE'S THE ONE

TO: Director General.
From: Controller of News.
Since there is one week before polling day I write to review our coverage of the campaign and outline plans for the next few days.

We can congratulate ourselves on fair and balanced coverage so far. I enclose our breakdown for TV news last night so you can see a typical programme content.

The first items were not about the election as such; Mrs Thatcher being greeted by President Reagan and his speech about the upturn in the world economy, starting in mid-June providing there were no upsets, and police providing armed guards for Tory and SDP leaders to protect them from IRA gunmen.

The election coverage started with the Tories. We had a discussion between Norman Tebbit and a trade unionist on his walkabout

in which the trade unionist said he votes Conservative because of communist infiltration of the unions. (Norman suggests we make a feature or two on this theme - I have told current affairs).

The SDP was featured with a major speech by David Owen in his constituency attacking Labour's defence policy. He claimed that a vote for Foot was a vote for Andropov. Mrs Shirley Williams said she criticised Tory plans to wind up local authorities although she sympathised with the desire to stop left wing revolutionaries from using ratepayers' money to finance IRA bombing runs.

The Labour Party was split into two parts (ha ha appropriately you might think), the first being a recording of a speech Mr Callaghan made in a Welsh

chapel saying how repealing the Tebbit laws could result in the worst kind of lawlessness, but that they should only be repealed if the trade unions agreed to an incomes policy as part of a multi-lateral agreement.

The second was a speech by Michael Foot on the same platform as that Militant tendency bloke whose name I forget. We had a shot of the Militant saying 'comrades' with his arms out.

The next week is of course an important one for broadcasting and I am pleased to be able to tell you that we have drawn up a programme of events, based on some information available to our reporters about forthcoming speeches and government announcements.

Thursday June 2: World economic summit ends with communique declaring the recession to be over. "Rate of increase in unemployment will start to accelerate less quickly". Peter Shore to make speech saying paybeds will be phased out only so long as those in them agree.

Friday June 3: SDP say Labour now finished as opposition party. NOP poll shows Tories 60%; Labour 21%; Alliance 19%. Foot says policy on pay beds quite clear. They will be phased out after negotiations with the people in them. Harold Wilson says in televised speech to Horticultural Society that if Britain leaves the EEC unemployment will rise to five million. Tony Benn reported missing to police.

Saturday June 4: Thatcher says Japanese have agreed to sponsor new slimmed down civil service budget. If Labour win election, deal off and unemploy-

ment will rise to ten million. Foot says policy on EEC quite clear. Labour would take Britain out, but only if renegotiations with Labour right are successful. Denis Healey in all channel speech to his neighbour over the fence, says Labour's economic policy was worked out on the back of a packet of fags and would make the country bankrupt in a week.

Sunday June 5: Day of rest. Archbishop of Canterbury gives service of thanksgiving for Mrs. Thatcher. Falklands memorial snooker contest televised live on all channels, except Channel 4, which is showing basketball. Mori poll shows Tories 65%, Labour 18%; Alliance 17%. Benn spotted in Bristol.

Monday June 6: Thatcher grants audience to Queen. Queen poses with grandson outside the door of number 10. Thatcher gives Falklands to Prince William as first birthday present. Jenkins says polls show Labour dead and buried. Asked about low rating of Alliance he says he has never attached too much importance to opinion polls. Foot says economic policy quite clear. Labour would strive to get unemployment down after negotiations with the IMF. Benn announces he will be canvassing only his own street as he thinks politics have become too much of a travelling circus.

Tuesday June 7: Gallop Poll shows Tories 80%, Labour 11%; Alliance 9%. Steel says Labour will now be squeezed between Tories and Alliance. Reagan says world peace depends on Thatcher being re-elected. Labour NEC votes 14-13 vote of confidence in Foot's leadership 'for the time being'. Foot abstains. Foot says

leadership of Labour Party is quite clear. Healey says Foot is in charge so he must be. Benn stops canvassing. Politics a private matter' he says.

Wednesday June 8: Daily Mail world exclusive: Andropov letter to Foot: "We hope you win Britain's last ever election, comrade." Thatcher asks army to guard polling booths to prevent IRA/GLC guerrilla squads blowing up pensioners. Shore, Wilson and Callaghan take part in TV discussion: "Why Labour lost the election". Healey says Foot will stay on as party leader "at least until Thursday afternoon".

Thursday June 9: Daily Mail leads on "Red Foot letter rumpus grows". Guardian fails to appear as all journalists are on SDP hustings. Poll of Polls show Tories 91%; Labour 6%; Alliance 2%. Owen says Labour are coming apart at the seams. Alliance poised for breakthrough. Thatcher says she is too busy on Cabinet reshuffle to vote. Foot says Labour's manifesto is quite clear and his advisers are working on redraft in time for lunch. Newsnight eve of poll poll shows that if everyone voted like Vincent Hanna there would be a landslide.

Election results give Thatcher 40 more seats than Labour (32%). Liberals have 17 seats. SDP 2.

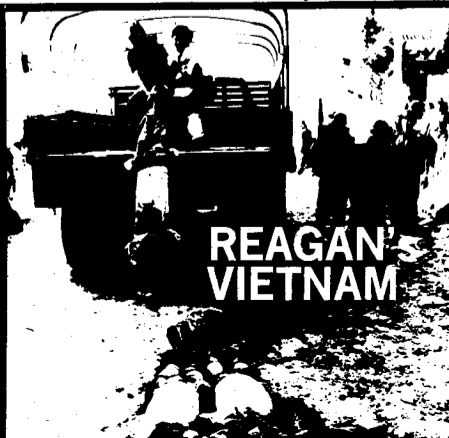
Friday June 10: Thatcher drives in triumph through London. Foot launches redraft manifesto at press conference attended only by Morning Star. Stay in EEC, keep nuclear weapons, find some tiny forgotten island to go to war over. Unemployed to be fined until they get a job. Roy Jenkins loses Hillhead but goes to palace and pleads to be Prime Minister anyway. Daily Mail admits Andropov

letter a forgery. Lord Dacre says he was fooled by the Moscow postmark.

Saturday June 11: Healey, Shore, Callaghan blame Benn, Livingstone and Foot for election result. Thatcher abolishes the health service. Announces plan for home owners to buy their own Cruise missile. Shirley Williams says SDP have succeeded in aim of stopping a Labour government. World economic recovery over says Reagan. New slump on way. Opinion poll shows Tories 38%, Labour 51%; SDP Alliance 11%. Unemployment up a million. Row breaks out over break in at Labour Party campaign headquarters in Bradford...

EL SALVADOR

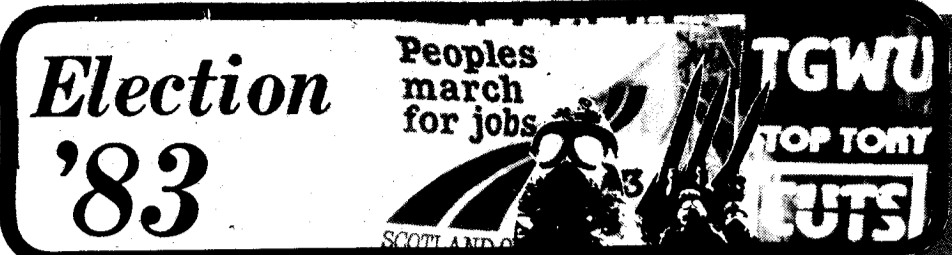
News Bulletin No 20 May-June 1983



El Salvador Solidarity Campaign

El Salvador Solidarity Campaign: affiliation £5 for individuals and £10 for organisations, from 29 Islington Park St., London N1. (01-359 2270)

CLASS FIGHTER
Scrap the bosses: stop the BOMB!
10p plus postage from 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.



THINK POSITIVE. ACT POSITIVE. VOTE

Campaigners talk on the issues



X VOTE LABOUR



Unemployment is a key issue

The Liberal campaign is much more on policies this time. But their leaflet still says: "Beware. Tatchell's not the candidate, but the party's still the same. Labour is still the same party, still the same policies, still the same mess."

"There is a fantastic response from ethnic communities"

Kevin Flack, Labour agent in Lewisham East
It's the most political campaign I've been involved in. People want to talk politics. There's massive support from trade unions and the ethnic communities. I just don't believe the national opinion polls.

Val Veness, Labour candidate for Hornsey and Wood Green.
The issue of the Health Service is a big one in Haringey. There have been two hospital closures, and the borough now has no accident and emergency facilities.

SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Save South London Hospital Campaign meets every Tuesday at Balham Food & Book Co-op, High Street, Balham at 8.00 p.m.

'On defence, the working class is not with Labour'

What are the problems? Unemployment - both getting our message across, and people getting fed up with us telling them how bad unemployment is. Rates - the local rates went up by 25% and people are saying that's too high. Housing - the big issue is people who want to buy their council houses.

On nuclear weapons it's been 50/50 - split between people who are very pro-unilateralism, and people who are very worried that we're not going to have any defence at all.

Unemployment has been the key issue. We've got public meetings on unemployment, and there's a local People's March next Saturday.

We've done a lot on the health service. We've got the Labour candidate speaking at a meeting organised by the workers themselves at one hospital.

Overall, we seem to be gaining votes in the middle class areas and losing in the working class areas. There's a fantastic response from the ethnic communities. A number of black groups are out canvassing for the Labour Party.

There's a lot of anti-Thatcher feeling around, but it's not necessarily translating itself into pro-Labour. After the election, we'll have to analyse what's wrong and think what the left can do to get across what we're saying.

Women's Right to choose women doctors

SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Richard Chessum, Labour candidate for Warwick and Leamington Unilateralism is an issue that I'm playing up a great deal, and we're trying to get CND posters side by side with Labour posters.

We find that we're losing quite a bit of the male working class vote on the question of unilateralism. On the other hand, we're picking up some votes on the issue, mainly from women, and also in middle class areas.

I've got a good response from women during the day, and then when their husbands get in, in the evening, less good. "I'm going to vote Labour, but my husband says he's going to vote SDP because he thinks we've got to have the Bomb."

It's mainly middle-aged and elderly working class men who are defecting on the issue of unilateralism. The Labour Party here had a big campaign last year against the Task Force going to the Falklands - I organised it - and the general reaction is, "You don't even believe in conventional defence. You were opposed to the Task Force."

The black community is overwhelmingly in favour of us. The president of the local Indian Workers' Association has just joined the party. We immediately made him vice-chairperson of the constituency, and he's been working hard for us; and several others, in other black community organisations, have joined as well.

Even in the working class areas, we find people blaming the trade unions for unemployment (though there's been less racism than I expected). The economic analysis of the Tories seems to have a big hold, even among people who still vote for us.

The way I've tried to counter it is to say, yes we do live in a new age when it's going to be capital-intensive industry but we have to use the wealth that's created in capital intensive industry to finance public services and people's needs.

I'd like then to go on and say that the people who have the private ownership of the means of production won't allow us to use their wealth to finance public services, and therefore we'll have to take them over - but it's difficult to argue that one because it's not in Labour's programme.

Labour candidates and activists in the Labour Party and trade unions around the country told Socialist Organiser of the progress and problems in the campaign.

Lol Duffy, GMBU shop steward and secretary of the Labour Party workplace branch at Cammell Lairds, Merseyside.
We're holding factory gate meetings for as many candidates as possible - we've already had two fairly successful ones. We're organising teams of people to go to marginals to help leaflet and canvass. We had about 13 out the first time, and more than half of them were new to it.

We've distributed posters round the yard, and there are a lot of people wearing Labour stickers. We're meeting every week up to the election to coordinate the campaign, and we've got the Confed shop stewards' committee calling for a vote for Labour and producing a special issue of the stewards' bulletin.

Jerry Hughes, Hackney North Labour Party.
We've done a lot of work with particular groups in the community, like the black community for example - Ernie Roberts, our candidate, has been quite closely involved with the Colin Roach issue. The black community seems to be determined to vote Labour en masse.

We had a joint event with Hackney South on the day when the fares went down on London Transport. We got an open-topped bus, and drove round the borough with the candidates publicising the GLC fares policy and saying vote Labour in order to

defend cheap public transport. That was followed up with leafletting at the main tube stations.

We'll have a rally on unemployment this Friday, with a speaker from the People's March, and on Saturday a meeting with the Turkish community, organised jointly with Islington North.

Martin Willis, Labour candidate for Birmingham Hall Green.
The key issues coming over are very clear. First, nearly everyone on the doorstep knows that the Tories have made a mess of it. What they're not convinced about is that Labour's programme is going to work.

The nuclear issue is also coming up quite a lot. There are two sides to it. Some people are getting the idea that a non-nuclear defence policy means no defence at all. Others fear that what's been said about Polaris in the last few days weakens our commitment on getting rid of nuclear weapons.

Mick O'Sullivan, UCATT shop steward, Haringey DLO.
At present there's only a small Labour Party workplace branch in the architects' department. But when the election was called we had a meeting covering all the council.

We've got out a leaflet, to go to all Haringey council employees and we've arranged a dinnertime meeting next week with both the Labour candidates (Hornsey and Tottenham) speaking.

We've tried to use this to build up contacts in different areas of the council, so that we can form new workplace branches after the election. We've also held one council workers' canvass, and there's another coming up.

Peter Tatchell, former Labour candidate in Bermondsey.
Labour can win the seat back. Our canvass returns are stronger than in the by-election and the Liberals have a lot fewer window posters.

Steel's statement that the Liberals were prepared to go into coalition with the Tories in the event of a hung parliament, and thereby sustain Thatcher in power is proving very damaging to their local support.

vote for gay liberation.

Labour Campaign for Gay Rights

fighting in the Labour movement for lesbian and gay male liberation

Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, c/o 61A Bloom St, Manchester 1

SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!

Save South London Hospital Campaign meets every Tuesday at Balham Food & Book Co-op, High Street, Balham at 8.00 p.m.

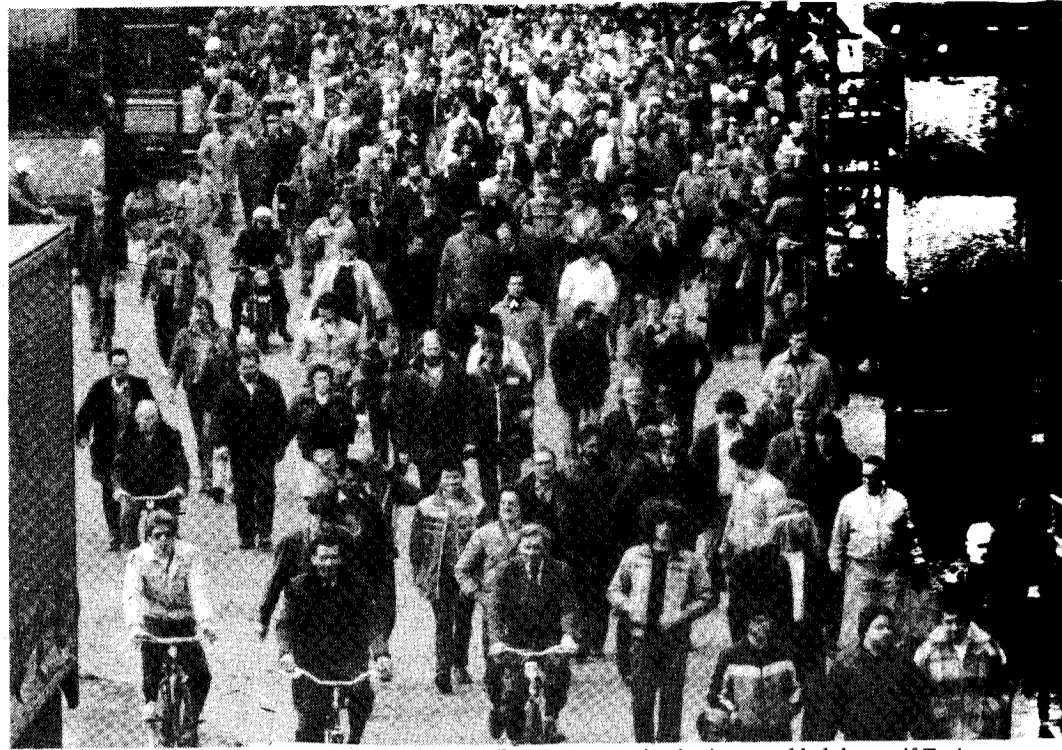
WOMEN'S Right to choose women doctors

SAVE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL!



JOHN HARRIS

Flagging fortunes: the Alliance has decided to move Steel centre stage in place of Jenkins



BL Cowley workers: privatisation an added danger if Tories return

'We're being undercut at the top'

Jo Richardson, Labour candidate for Barking.

I find it very difficult to reconcile the reaction we've had on the doorsteps, and the fact that we've got more party workers than ever before, with the opinion polls. Labour voters seem more enthusiastic than ever before.

Disarmament is obviously causing question marks in people's minds, but when we've explained that it is not a total giving up of all weapons - as they seem to have been conned into thinking - then they've been OK. "Oh yes, I'm all against nuclear weapons."

Anti-Tory

On unemployment, reactions are very anti-Tory. I think there is something in the theory that some people are so stunned by Thatcher that they think it is all because of the world recession and no party can do anything different. But that's a minority of cases.

Don't get caught!

IN THE rush for the election, don't forget this year's Labour Party conference.

The deadline for resolutions is July 8. Normally wards would discuss them in June. But now most regular June ward meetings will be cancelled.

Make sure your ward organises a special meeting in June to discuss resolutions in time to go through the GC for the conference schedule.

The last Socialist Organiser delegate meeting decided to back model resolutions from the Labour Committee on Ireland, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (its resolution on the 'Greenwich amendment'), and the constitutional amendment to clause 9, and the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights. There will also be a SO model resolution on incomes policy.

Also: the closing date for payment of affiliation fees is June 10. Make sure your CLP treasurer doesn't miss it, or you lose your vote!

Andy Harris, joint secretary of Socialists for a Labour Victory.

People on the ground have been working hard, putting out imaginative, hard-hitting stuff, only to have it cut away every time they turn on the television, or open a newspaper, and find out what the

leadership and Callaghan are doing.

The campaign in Putney is very good indeed. The council estates are plastered with posters. But everything we're doing is being undercut at the top.

Black people: a survival vote

Vidya Anand, London Region Labour Party:

June 9 must be victory day for a Labour Party unequivocally committed to conference decisions on peace, jobs and the socialist reconstruction of our society. We who represent the ethnic minorities cannot afford another term for Thatcher and her counter-revolutionary politics.

Ethnic minorities have no illusions. They have not been mesmerised by the 'Falklands Factor' and have seen through Mrs. Thatcher's designs. They realise that in some constituencies they are in a position to swing the pendulum in favour of Labour Party candidates.

And while there may be apathy among some sections of the white working class on June 9, there will be no abdication of their responsibilities by the ethnic minorities. The overwhelming majority of their vote throughout the country must and will go to the Labour Party.

If there is a greater sense of urgency among Asian and West Indian voters about the need to throw out the Tories, it is because they sense that if a new Tory government came to power, it will be the most extreme ever. They are well acquainted with the historical parallels.

They know too well what fate befalls racial minorities in societies economically wrecked by the militarists, and minorities who are ethnically and racially identifiable at that!

Racial, religious, and ethnic minorities have always been made a scapegoat, with fascist thugs capitalising on discontent of the workers. History may repeat itself if the monetarists are allowed a further term of office to continue their havoc in Britain.

When on June 9 the ethnic communities cast their biggest ever vote for the Labour Party, it will not just be voting for more

jobs, for better education, for better housing, for a stronger National Health Service, and a compassionate and caring society, but it will also be voting for its very survival in this society.

Asian and West Indians, alarmed by the racist Nationality Act 1983, the Police Bill, which will surely be revived whenever Tories come to power, and the cavalier and contemptuous treatment of the trade unions, are convinced that the signs unmistakably point in the direction of greater totalitarianism if the Tories win on June 9.

Mick Woods, Brent East Labour Party:

In Brent East we've had a candidate imposed by the National Executive Committee and an agent appointed by the candidate who doesn't enjoy the confidence of the party. The reaction of the Left has been very varied. Some are refusing to work in Brent East and going to marginals elsewhere, but we're working in this constituency. In my ward we're running the campaign through the ward structure as much as possible.

We have got 15,000 of the London Labour Party's women's leaflet out. In our ward we've flyposted a lot of People's March posters, and we're going to do CND posters.

Obviously the attack on Freeson recommences on June 10.

'For the first time disarmament is an issue in the factory'

Joy Hurcombe, secretary of Labour CND and Labour candidate for Shoreham.

Callaghan's speech has been a big blow. I think it was built into the campaign document. It was ambiguous on Polaris. We said at the time that every opposition speaker would use it to claim that Labour's policy is not a non-nuclear policy. I didn't expect the opposition speakers to be from our own party!

Many candidates have had a very straight, clear commitment on unilateral nuclear disarmament - and then we have all this nonsense at the top.

In a sense Polaris is a red herring. Unless you put money into it, it's going to be obsolete. So the real issue is Cruise, Trident, and nuclear bases. But the current position makes the Labour Party look stupid. The issue of disarmament is completely glossed over now, and we're all talking about defence.

The only thing is to keep battling on, and hope that we can recover in the next ten days. We'll have to say that the Labour policy is the conference policy. Callaghan and faded politicians can do what they like, but they're speaking as individuals, not for the party.

I don't know why Michael Foot can't say that. Why doesn't he call their bluff? A lot of people admire Thatcher for her resolution and determination - not what she says - and he could have taken a leaf out of her book.

We've got to be more straightforward in future. It's like the issue of where do you get the money from. The strongest thing to say is that there are huge profits being made at the expense of ordinary people, and we will take those profits into the public sector to use for the community. That is far better than saying we're going to borrow it.

Dave Edwards, Labour candidate for Coventry South West.

We've defined unemployment as the main issue. We meet many, many people on the doorstep who are unemployed. But the Labour Party's programme hasn't really got over yet.

In Coventry South West we're having street meetings, very successful ones, trying to wake up the Labour vote. A lot of people are don't know.

We've had several factory gate



Callaghan

meetings, with a very good response.

Ricky Houston, POEU Edinburgh External branch.

We're doing a leaflet, and circulating it through the branch machinery, calling on members not only to vote Labour but to join the Labour Party and hold their MPs to account. The leaflet has been sponsored by the District Labour Party.

Tory strategy and privatisation is a big issue for POEU members, and we've tried to put the election in the context of that fight.

James McAllister, Labour candidate for Basingstoke.

On nuclear disarmament, the response is generally good, but understanding has been dulled by Fleet Street and the media.

Those who have lived through the 1930s are rock solid Labour voters. The young are not as solid as they should be.

The campaign is drawing in new people, and one of the tasks of the constituency parties after the election must be to build the membership and consolidate that increased active support. Despite a management ban, I did manage to address the annual general meeting of the G&M hospital branch in worktime.

Colin Ellison, Labour candidate for Halesowen and Stourbridge.

We started by working in the areas which had given us a good

Labour vote in the local elections. At that point it looked as if our vote was firming up.

Since then we've been moving into the middle areas, and we are finding some resistance, particularly on the nuclear disarmament issue. It could be that some of the traditional areas of Labour support are going weak on us on the same issue.

When we push it further, we find that people don't want to see Trident bought. They don't want to see American-controlled Cruise here. Cutting out the American bases doesn't get too bad a response. Going further than that and cutting out Polaris - dropping our so-called independent so-called deterrent - seems to scare them.

One of the troubles is that if we convince them that it is credible just to stop Trident, for instance, and to stop Cruise, then there's not much difference between us and the Alliance.

A TGWU steward, BL Cowley Assembly Plant, Oxford.

For the first time nuclear disarmament has been a big issue of discussion in the factory, and that's been quite useful. I think there'll be a very big Labour vote from the factory. The main discussion now is how the hell can the Tories have such a big majority.

We put a 'Vote Labour' leaflet in on Tuesday (24th) and had a factory gate meeting with the local candidates and a speaker from the local women's peace committee. On Thursday night and Friday morning we put in another 'Vote Labour' leaflet with a bit on privatisation of BL, which went down very well.

HARD TIMES

From Pluto Press: an analysis of capitalism in crisis from regular Socialist Organiser contributor Bob Sutcliffe. £2.50 (from bookshops, or (with 50p post and packing) from Pluto, The Works, 105a Torriano Avenue, London NW5.

Elections in the six counties



Carron: capitalised hunger strike movement in electoral terms

THE BRITISH general election involves the people of Northern Ireland in electing 17 Westminster MPs. But apart from the timing the election in the Six Counties has little in common with the election in Britain.

Even where the same terms are bandied about, they mean very different things. What, for example, is meant in Northern Ireland by a 'marginal' seat? It is a seat in which the Catholic and Protestant communities are close to being evenly balanced.

Much of the outcome of the election is decided before it, inside the Catholic and Protestant blocks, by way of deals and after fierce competition to be the Catholic or the Protestant candidate.

The most important political contest in this election is between the SDLP and Sinn Fein (political face of the Provisional IRA), within the Catholic community.

The SDLP has been the main victim of the collapse of political structures in Northern Ireland in 1974-5.

Impotence

Relegated to impotence as the party of a minority community, the SDLP has gone to seed in the last seven or eight years, becoming more and more a Catholic and merely nationalist party. Its leadership-level 'socialists' — Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin — are long gone.

The proven hopelessness of constitutionalism to gain anything has undermined the SDLP. The upsurge of support for the Provisionals during the hunger strike marginalised the SDLP and its concerns.

The Provisionals directed this upsurge to electoral purposes, electing Bobby Sands and then Owen Carron. And they learned

By John O'Mahony

the lesson that the ballot box could be a useful back-up to their military campaign. Their further electoral successes last year confirmed the turn, and now they may well pose a mortal threat to the SDLP.

Sinn Fein has in the last few years turned to 'community politics' — taking up grievances in order to build a base of support. The support, and the electoral work itself, are to be geared primarily to military ends. The Provisional leaders see themselves fighting a war for perhaps 20 more years, and the 'turn to politics' is a turn to secure the necessary sustenance and support in the Catholic community.

Their manifesto focuses on the turn to community politics and 'constituency work'; on opposition to the SDLP as 'collaborationist' and a failure; and on their policy of abstentionism. If elected, they will not take their seats.

Short on specific social policies, they have a general commitment to a '32 County Democratic Socialist Republic'. The manifesto ends: "We see the Six County state as irreformable and believe that full civil rights, an end to discrimination, unemployment, social deprivation and sectarianism can only be achieved when we achieve our national rights — that is, independence and unity".

That sums up their basic politics: the national question is central, and everything else must wait on it, or be coopted as an auxiliary support for the national issue.

Between the SDLP and Sinn

Fein the choice is between two nationalist parties. It is simply not true when Sinn Fein says that the SDLP is not concerned for unification and independence. The SDLP hope to get these by way of a deal between Britain and the South. They differ from the Provisionals on methods, not on basic nationalist goals.

On that level there is nothing to choose between the SDLP and Sinn Fein. The SDLP's methods are inadequate: but a strong case could be made out that much of what the Provisionals do is, in the extremely complicated circumstances of Northern Ireland, counterposed to their own case. We have carried detailed criticisms of the Provisionals and their politics in SO.

Nevertheless the Provisionals are a Catholic working class based movement whose rather vague populist socialism expresses the aspirations and the traditional revolutionary nationalism of the radicalised segment of the Catholic community. Development towards better politics in the Catholic community will perhaps come about by the development of the political and social turn of the Provisionals — which, for sections of the Catholic community, will take on a logic and momentum of its own.

Sinn Fein is the clearest expression of the legitimate demands and aspirations of the oppressed Catholic community to put an end to the artificial Six County state. It is the party which embodies the demands of the Catholic prisoners of war for political status.

By contrast, the SDLP is a straightforward middle class party with bourgeois links and conceptions, and unashamedly bourgeois aspirations — one which looks only to regain the position it had in 1973-5 as the embodiment of the common interest in Ireland of the British and sections of the Irish ruling class.

In these circumstances it makes sense to vote Sinn Fein — without illusions.

But the Protestant workers won't vote Sinn Fein... In that community, the most 'radical' social comment comes demagogically from the Paisleyite arch-bigots, in their denunciations of the Orange establishment represented by the Official Unionist Party. They are now priding themselves in public on being the party that never did a deal with the Tories!

The Northern Ireland Labour and Trade Union group, which is associated with Militant, is standing a candidate in Protestant East Belfast — Muriel Tong, CoHSE representative at Belfast City Hospital, who became politicised in last year's strikes.

Their politics, like Militant's in Britain, try to evade the issues that have kept Northern Ireland in political convulsions for the last 15 years. Nevertheless, for the workers in East Belfast, it would be a giant stride forward even to consider voting for such a candidate.

Election '83

Peoples march for jobs

SCOTLAND



True blue "Law and Order"

By Bob Fine

"WE stand for law and order: Labour stands for political control of the police at the expense of law and order". Such is the Tory message which feeds off a social imagery almost two hundred years old.

On the side of law, it lines up the deities of individual freedom, security, equality, social order and legitimate authority; against the law are arrayed the godless forces of anarchy, despotism and socialism.

On the one hand the police appear as the voice of reason, helping old ladies cross the road, chatting to schoolchildren, reminding travellers to don safety belts and crash helmets for their own good; on the other hand they appear as the embodiment of external authority, tough, helmeted, trained like a pack of hounds, capable of swooping down mercilessly on hardened thugs or political subversives.

What has happened in fact? Like the military the police are exempted from public expenditure cuts. The size and cost of the police force has grown sharply.

They are armed with new equipment: protective shields, tear gas, highspeed landrovers, plastic bullets, computers and of course guns (many police forces now have special firearms units and over 12,000 have been trained in their use).

Potentates

They have been reorganised into larger and more centralised units. Chief Constables have become local potentates.

Special units (the SPG, Police Support Units, the Special Branch) proliferate. Protagonists of "community policing" (like Devon's Alderson) have given way to the hard men (London's Newman learnt his trade in Northern Ireland).

Police representatives — whether chief constables, the Police Federation or the Association of Chief Police Officers — have become an articulate political lobby on a range of issues.

During the current election campaign, leading spokesmen for the Police Federation have received loud ovations in their recent conference as they — implicitly but unmistakably — lent their weight to the Tory election campaign.

Not only has the police force itself been buttressed; its powers of intervention have been extended.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act stays in force, giving the police the power to arrest and detain anyone suspected of involvement in "the use of violence for political ends"; the Scottish Criminal Justice Act increased the power of detention; the ABC trial revealed that the police had been given the power to vet juries.

The current Police Bill, the passage of which was interrupted by this election, grants to the police the power to stop and search you if they think you look suspicious; to set up roadblocks for indefinite periods; to arrest people for any offence, including minor ones like parking, if your name and address cannot in the view of the policeman be properly established; to search under a warrant the homes of people not even suspected of committing an offence; to fingerprint compulsorily anyone with a criminal record; to detain suspects in

theory the police are presented as servants of the law and of the community.

If this ideal is to be any more than hollow rhetoric, there must exist mechanisms whereby the community and the law can impose their respective will on the police. Such mechanisms have always been limited and weak, nevertheless they have existed. What we witness now is the erosion of even these tenuous democratic safeguards.

Interference

On the one hand, the powers of local authorities to control the police which they pay for is under sharp attack on the grounds of "political interference" and Labour calls for a police authority in London are rejected. We should not be surprised if the democratic component of police authorities is altogether scrapped if the Tories are re-elected.

On the other hand, the judges have voluntarily taken the initiative in attacks on defendants' rights (like the right of silence) and in restricting legal inhibitions on police behaviour.

The Police Bill, by making practically all violations by the police of rules regarding detention and interrogation a matter for internal discipline and not legally enforceable punishment, gives a Tory mark of approval to these judicial innovations.

Now Thatcher raises the spectre of capital punishment (presumably one of those Victorian values she so admires).

Socialists have been fighting on all fronts to oppose this ever more rapid drift towards a police state. We fight in defence of legal rights of defendants and suspects and for legal sanctions against police misconduct.

Fight

We fight for more democratic police authorities with more powers to control the police. We fight for the extension of a police authority to London and for the basic democratic rights of "no taxation without representation".

We fight for the right of self defence for those denied police protection and for self-defence against the police for those whose rights (to picket, to walk the streets without harassment, to enter a police station without being shot) are attacked by the police themselves.

We fight to scrutinise, to control and to put in question not only the individual copper who sins against his hierarchy but also the police hierarchy itself in its crimes against the community.



police stations for up to four days without charge on the authority of a magistrate's warrant, to deny access of suspects detained in police stations to solicitors for up to 48 hours.

It is certainly true to say that previous Labour governments "paved the way" for the extension of police powers.

But it is the Tory administration which is turning this preparatory work into a basis for something more akin to a police state.

Labour's opposition to the Police Bill, for all its timidity, does indicate a decisive difference from the Tories' blood lust.

At the same time as police powers are extended, their accountability to open, democratic organs is diminished. In

Stop the Police Bill!

Saturday June 4, national day of action with pickets of police stations.



TROOPS OUT NOW!

Join the Labour Committee on Ireland!



BM Box 5555, London WC1N 3XX

**Socialist
ORGANISER**

*People's March
Special*

This is no way to fight for jobs!

by Jane Ashworth

THE People's March has been run like a Stalinist state on the move. Marchers have been expelled for 'disobeying the marshals' (crimes against the state) and acts of violence against dissident marchers have been ignored.

The right wing of the TUC didn't want a march going around the country giving support to workers in struggle, linking up the battles of the unemployed with employed workers, and encouraging the unemployed to join a union and stand up and fight for their rights. And the march organisers, dominated by the Communist Party, have ensured that the right wingers aren't embarrassed.

The march has done precious little of that type of organising. But it has expelled marchers for shouting 'Tories Out' and called in the police to remove labour movement support banners from the march in Birmingham.

Scarce

On the western leg march meetings were scarce, and even when they were called, marchers couldn't vote at them. On the eastern leg at first there was more democracy, and anti-Tory chants were permitted.

Since the two legs met in Northampton on May 26 matters have got worse, if anything. The East Midlands banner was dragged off the march in Northampton because of the anti-Tory chanting and the chants drowned out by

Several marchers have signed this protest letter to the Morning Star.

THE People's March for Jobs '83 was called not just as a protest at



The response has been there in the working class - but it has been squandered

"I've heard we're not supposed to say this" said Tom Robinson over the mike at his gig at Milton Keynes, as he led the audience into singing 'Tories Out'. Before the gig, Class Fighter supporters had interviewed him and told him about the march regime.

Among the furious CPers was chief security steward John Ellis, a large and drunken man. Later that night he stumbled on some

a gang of Stalinists. After that the Eastern leg decided that if anyone was expelled they would refuse to march. They would continue to chant the slogans their meetings had decided on.

But the following morning, after a marshals' meeting and recommendation, they agreed not

dissidents and seized his opportunity to get his own back. He abused them, threatened to put one through a window, pushed a woman against a wall, stamped on her foot and broke her toe.

As yet the marshals have done nothing about this. Ellis is still on the march. Marshals from the western leg didn't turn up to the inquiry.

to chant that day, until a full march meeting that evening. The evening meeting didn't discuss the slogans. In Luton the leg went on sit-down strike. Again the leg agreed not to chant until another meeting, due to happen that night.

That meeting, once again, was

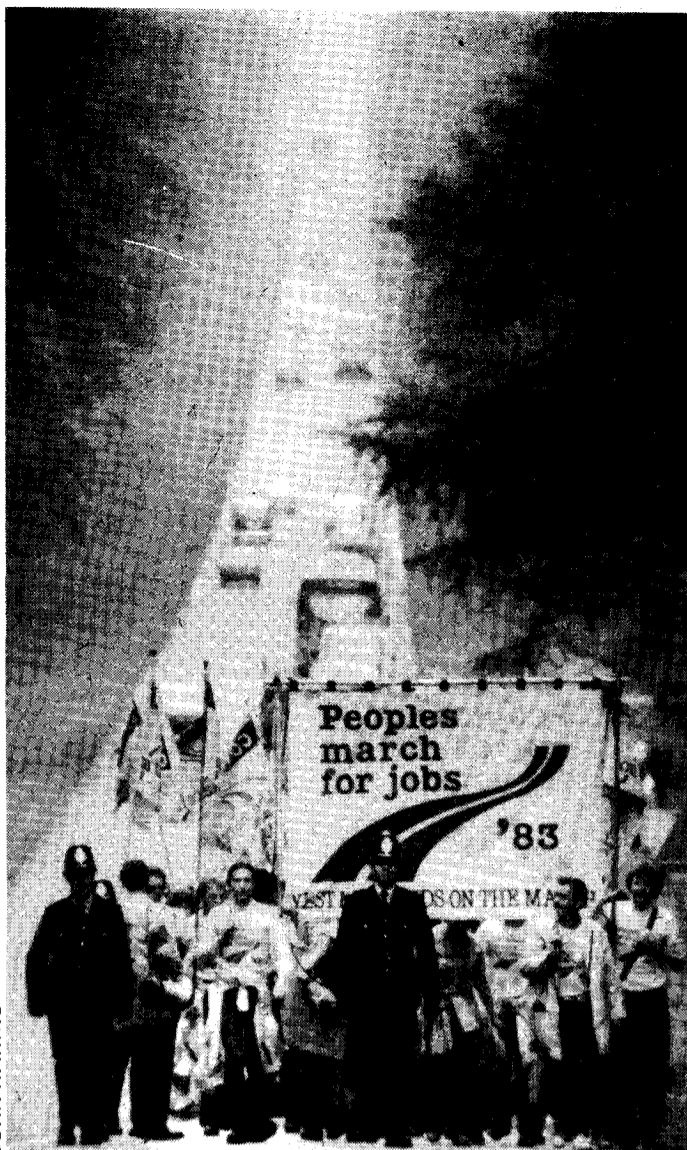
undemocratic, with no speeches from the floor. A list of slogans was read out and voted on, with no debate or amendments. 150 marchers walked out and insisted on chanting the following morning.

The marshals hauled them over to the side of the road and threatened to expel the lot of them. Anyone who didn't like it should go home, they said. Six or so did.

As the march enters London, the CP marshals will find it harder to control. And for sure when the marchers report back to their trades councils and sponsoring organisations, a lot of people are going to want to know just who is responsible for this fiasco.

They will find that the answer is: the Communist Party and their co-thinkers in the Labour Party.

JOHN HARRIS



North-West march diary

Coventry to Northampton

22.5.83
GOT up late and missed the march. We had to get several buses to catch up and then we were on our way to Coventry.

As we came to the outskirts of Coventry we were met by a support march of quite a few hundred people. Later on a Church Brigade band joined us and was conveniently placed between the march and the support march.

We arrived at the Cathedral, where there was a rally, and we then went to a nearby school for dinner. Trying to find out where you were staying was very chaotic and in addition there wasn't enough transport, so a lot of us were left hanging about. We finally got away at about 8 o'clock. Stayed the night at Warwick University.

23.5.84
Rest day. There was a short march from the Cathedral to the shopping precinct where there was a rally, a band playing and of course speakers. A vicar, at one point in his speech, asked the crowd to all say "mass unemployment is evil" and some idiots did.

We then went back to Warwick University for a full marchers' meeting. This meeting turned out to be the same as the other two, lots of talk, no action.

We made several proposals, which we had also made at previous meetings. We proposed that there should be regular marchers' meetings and also that the expelled marchers should be allowed to tell the marchers their view of the expulsion.

A vote of no confidence in marshals was proposed but the subject was swiftly changed and the vote was forgotten.

The meeting was full of complaints about laundry and the pace of the march but anything we said was lost as the subject was always changing.

There were some heavy personal attacks being thrown at people, mostly by the marshal charring the meeting.

In his reply at the end of the meeting the chair said there would not be any chance of the four expelled being allowed to speak to us, and that anyone who didn't want to sing the official slogans could leave at anytime they wanted.

In the evening we were bussed to a Sikh community centre for our meal and afterwards were presented with a cheque for the march fund.

24.5.83
March from Coventry to Leamington. At the march meeting we got a concession from the marshals to send a minibus of women down to Greenham Common. On the march itself women were asked to the front of the march. It was a really tokenist gesture and a lot of the women went along singing love songs.

The support march was mainly all women who sang "what do women want - jobs not bombs".

Reception at Leamington was a bit sparse. That evening we went to another Sikh temple for our meal and then went to the Spa centre for a social. When we arrived, a couple of marchers

told us that there was an occupation of an empty hotel, so a group of about ten went down there, climbed in through a window and stayed a little while.

They told us they were there because of the lack of housing in the area and lots of unemployed people had no homes.

The hotel, the Clarendon, is owned by Trust Houses Forte and there is only the caretaker still there, but he told us that his job was lost.

We were only there a short while before two marshals turned up and asked us to come down and talk to them. They said they were in sympathy but we were discrediting the march by being there. They went on to say that the press would tear the march apart and if we went back in we would be off the march by the morning. We had all made a point to hide or cover up our march clothes so that it wouldn't happen.

25.5.83
Coming out of the Spa centre after breakfast, the same two marshals from the night before came up to us and, looking very tense, told us that we had been on breakfast TV because of the occupation.

Varieties

They then went on to spiel about the structure of the march and how all these people who were arguing for democracy thought there were 57 varieties of it.

While we were waiting for the march to start a girl from the occupation told us five or six idiots had gone into the hotel with iron bars and smashed the place up.

After this the people in the hotel decided it was best to leave, although some of the people said it was probably the police who had gone in.

The march itself was a very hard slog. When we arrived in Daventry we were met by half a dozen Labour Party members and their banner. Later on there was a rally of about a dozen non-marchers and only about twice as many marchers.

26.5.83
Daventry to Northampton. North-West region held a meeting where the Stalinists managed to pass a vote of no confidence in their marshal, who is in the Labour Party, and TGWU. In his place they now have a member of the CP who used to be the steward. We set off to Northampton where we would meet up with the Yorkshire and Humberside leg of the march.

As we came into Northampton our leg of the march started up their defeatist, pleading slogans for jobs. One of their favourite slogans comes from a spiel the marshals do over the megaphones - "Full employment is the first priority". Another is, "All we are saying is give us a job".

The meeting up with the Eastern leg wasn't that dramatic as they were far smaller in number but it was probably the high point of the day.

People's Marchers complain to Morning Star

mass unemployment but as an opportunity to mobilise the labour movement around its alternative policies.

That opportunity is being missed.

The broad non-party political appeal is an obstacle to mobilising the labour movement to fight

unemployment; for support for workers fighting redundancy; for a Labour government, for demands on the Labour Party to spell out a programme of policy and mobilisation of the labour movement to make full employment a reality.

Rejecting such a class perspec-

tive to woo "Tory businessmen" as suggested in last Friday's Star (20.5.83 p.4) is misguided nonsense. Tory businessmen benefit from mass unemployment. That is why they create it.

To succeed the March must: *have factory, labour movement and youth club tours in all

towns en route, not just stage managed rallies with identikit speeches;

*demand a platform at all major Labour Party election rallies;

*be seen as a clear part of a campaign for a Labour government responsive to workers' needs.

*and, as a matter of course, reinstate the four comrades from Liverpool expelled for taking up anti-Tory slogans.

We're not walking to London with our caps in our hands asking for pity. We're angry and we demand action.

*Why has Britain
fared the worst?*

The death agony of British industry

JOHN HARRIS



THATCHER enters this election proclaiming that "monetarism" has broken the cycle of decline, that the joy-stick has been pulled back and the economy is climbing out of recession.

Inflation is down to 4%, the economy has grown by three-quarters of one percent in the first three months of 1983 and productivity per worker is up by 11%.

Are these 'facts' indicators that Britain is undergoing a recovery or are they merely footnotes to a thesis of collapse?

A deeper look at the processes that generated the economic slide of Britain reveal a different story.

At the heart of the UK's economic decline is the death of manufacturing industry. True, over the last twenty years, manufacturing has declined perceptibly in all the developed capitalist countries.

But whereas in the OECD as a whole manufacturing's share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell from 29.6% to 26.1% in the two decades from 1960-1980, the British fall was from 32% to 21% - a staggering decline of a full third - from higher to considerably lower.

A still greater discrepancy will appear in 1981-83. In short the "MacWilson era" whilst ostensibly signifying "you've never had it so good" in effect signalled an increasing gap in economic performance with other national capitalisms.

Export share is a classic yard-

*By Noel
Hibbert*

stick of capitalist production. Clearly whilst Britain could not have been expected to hold on to the full third of export markets it had in 1900 - it should have held its 16.4% share of 1960.

Today it is down to under 8%. Only the USA has similarly been losing its share of markets, principally to West Germany and Japan.

From a position of leader at the top of the First Division, Britain is now lingering deep in the relegation zone.

Sir Terence Beckett of the CBI, summed up his class's problems well. "We have become uncompetitive in both price and product." As regards imports, the volume of international manufactured goods being sold in the UK is increasing at 9% a year.

So whilst UK capitalism has barely retained its proportion of overall UK exports, imported manufactures have massively increased their take of inward trade.

In 1950 manufactures accounted for 4% of British imports; by 1979 these figures had leapt to

36%. This was the biggest shift of any capitalist country.

Under Thatcher, the manufacturing sector's output has been in decline not only relative to the economy as a whole, but in absolute terms over the last three years as well.

Needless to say, all other national capitalisms have done better. Between 1958 and 1981, Britain's output increased by only 49%. Only Luxembourg of the EEC's UK partners failed to match that. Belgium has managed a rise of 122%, France 144%, Germany 150%, and Italy 253%.

The average for the original six members of the EEC is 163% - over three times the UK rate.

Thatcher's policies have simply lanced a septic carbuncle that has been growing for decades, and unleashing in the process an unparalleled haemorrhaging of jobs.

Once again, whilst all advanced capitalisms have seen some recent shift of employment out of industry, the extent of the exodus out of the UK manufacturing sector is unparalleled in the West.

Taking the same period from 1958 to 1981, of the original EEC six, France and Germany maintained stable numbers in manufacturing while Italy and Luxembourg increased theirs.

'The cause lies with the moneyed interests who have traditionally managed the old imperialist war horse'.

Belgium lost a few and Holland rather a lot, but even the latter's 16% loss pales besides the UK's 26%.

At just 5.4 million, the British manufacturing workforce is now smaller than at any time since the 1890s, including the thirties.

Peaking at 9 million in 1965, it has now, accentuated by Thatcherism, fallen by one third; with almost all of the decline coming in the decade from 1970.

From June 1981 to June 1982 UK manufacturing was losing 1,000 jobs a day - thanks to structural decline and M. Thatcher. While Tebbit says "unemployment is tailing off" - workers are losing about 700 jobs a day this year across all sectors!

Losses

Interestingly, if manufacturing employed the same number of people today as it did in 1970, there would be no unemployment. The job losses in the last decade have stemmed from a disintegrating "productive" sector.

But British capitalists do have their problems. Take Germany for example. The latter has almost exactly the same size of labour force as the UK and is only a little less export dependent (26% of GDP is exported as opposed to the UK's 30%).

The amazing difference is that Germany's 26% of GDP contains a whopping 21% of the world market for manufactures, while Britain's 30% represents a tiny 8% market share.

West German GDP is now nearly twice the UK's £200 billion and the gap is still growing.

So what are the historical and structural reasons for the disintegration of the British economy?

The domination of the landed banking fraction over manufactur-

ing capital within the English bourgeoisie, during the early phase of the industrial revolution, set the economic, political and cultural framework for the financing of British imperialism.

The pre-eminent historic project of the British bourgeoisie was the growth and maintenance of extensive imperial markets abroad, to the exclusion of the intensive development of productive technique at home.

For the City of London was not only the new Mecca for Indian maharajahs to pay homage to, it was also the sovereign head of an economy to which Northern manufacturers doffed their caps.

The journal Management for Industry put it well:

"The free market mechanism worked well enough for the first 80 years or so. But after the first phase, the short-term economic interests of the firm and the long term economic interests of an imperial economy as a whole, began to diverge, with the advent of foreign competition".

Germany and the USA in particular built formidable infrastructures (research institutes, technical colleges) in order to exploit and apply the new scientific innovations that would facilitate the new burgeoning economies' ability to claw back the UK's lead.

Moreover, by 1913, Germany was producing 3,000 graduate engineers a year; the UK with no long term strategic planning, had only 9,000 students in total and the entire output of all branches of science was only 350.

Hence as George Bernard Shaw said at the time "British industry and its 'practicalness' were no more fit to meet this formidable attack than the British militia would have been to meet the Prussian Army."

Furthermore, the whole cultural ethos of the British Establishment was to "make your money and get out".

The more enterprising capitalist turned to finance and trade rather than "mucky industry".

Even the great Frederick Engels retired at 49 with an ample pension and a successful business, to turn his mind to more important problems!

In short a process of "ideological de-industrialisation" had already set in long before the economic fruit was delivered by Thatcher and Tebbit.

Ironically, Terence Beckett put his finger on a major factor for his class's decline. "So the really bright people go into the City if they want wealth, the Civil Service if they want comfort. The rewards are not high enough in industry. It's not fair".

The dominant structural element reinforcing decline, has been the imbalance in investment vis-a-vis the UK and its competitors.

Cumulative

Indeed, it has been estimated that overseas investment was already exceeding net domestic UK capital formation by 1870. By 1914, industrial investment was inadequate for the modernisation of an increasingly geriatric industrial base.

Today, argues the bourgeois economist Eltis, "there is now a very large cumulative loss of capital and research and development".

Bourgeois economists are now forced to admit that the historic starvation of investment has created a massive structural imbalance in the economy: whilst the private sector has contracted, the public sector has expanded throughout the seventies (nearly £30 billion is now spent on the NHS and DHSS).

Hence, in 1961 20.8 million market sector employees were running parallel with 3.6 million in the public sector. By 1981 the respective totals had become 18.1 million (13% fewer) and 5.3

JOHN HARRIS

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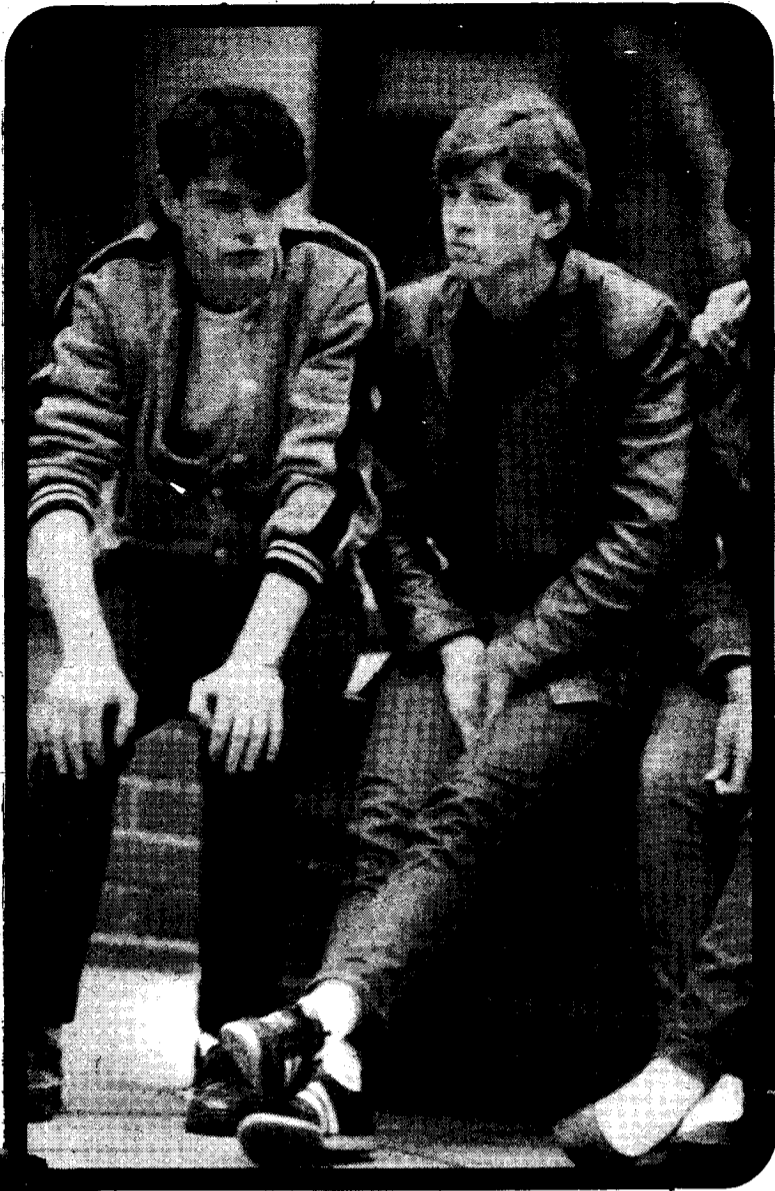
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of total industrial output. It now receives only one-third of all industrial investment.

Today's investment is tomorrow's production. So what has "tomorrow" perennially brought for British bosses? Between 1955 and 1965 capacity grew by 3.5% and from 1965 to 1975 by 2.5%. Today it is well under 2%.

These realities represent a time bomb under Thatcher's bed. For there is now a real capacity limit to growth if the economy did start to expand: over a broad range of products, the plant and machinery (and soon even the skills) will not be there to meet demand.

So the crisis of UK capitalism is a crisis of underproduction — not as the Tories tell us — a crisis of overmanning.

Confirmation

The story of BL during the 1970s is confirmation of this.

Twelve years ago, the motor industry employed 500,000 people directly and indirectly, and say, four times that number in supplier firms.

The UK built over two million vehicles. (1.6 million cars) and exported 827,000 of them. Imports were around 20%. The total UK build was a quarter of the EEC six's 7.9 million and ran a European third after Germany (3.6 million) and France (3 million).

By 1982 the UK was fourth, having lost one million (half) of its 1972 total to drop behind Italy's with 1.3 million. (It actually made fewer cars than Spain).

UK output was now a tenth of the EEC six total. Exports were 395,000 and imports 59%.

Employment stands at 303,000 and with more sackings in the offing. In a vastly expanded market and with new industrialisation drives in the offing in Third World countries — Britain is the only significant manufacturer to be turning out less vehicles in the 1980s than in 1958. To talk of increases in productivity per man at Cowley and Longbridge in this context, as Edwardes and Thatcher have done, is nonsense.

The car industry was the heart of mechanical engineering, which was and is the core of the manufacturing sector. Push through 50% redundancies as BL management have done over the last period and you destroy the "relations of production" that can respond to an upturn, on a horrendous scale.

No wonder that the final mocking epitaph for Edwardes'

reign at BL, is the recent application for area development status for the West Midlands!

Indeed it has been this goal of "de-manning/increasing productivity per man" that has underpinned the whole gamut of formulae from the Participation Committees of Ryder to the Corporate Plan of Edwardes, that has been thrown at the BL workforce.

Steel

The same story also holds true for the steel and shipbuilding sectors. In 1948 the UK made two-thirds as much steel as the original EEC six — 15 million tonnes.

Thirty five years later the UK was still making 15 million tonnes — but the EEC six were making 108 million tonnes with Germany contributing 41 million.

The Tories say there is gross overcapacity in the industry — but capitalist investment starvation has demolished the manufacturing base that should be the source of demand for steel. The evaporation of Britain's shipyards is another classic case of this.

In 1950 Britain had 25% of the world market. Indeed in the following 25 years, annual gross world tonnage grew from five million to 35 million yet Britain's market share dwindled to 4%.

In 1981 the UK turned out just 216,000 tonnes compared to 8.4 million tonnes for Japan.

Similarly, the job level in all aspects of UK shipbuilding is 137,000 (including warships and marine engineering), roughly half of the 1961 total.

The reason for the decline is intrinsic to the degeneration of UK capitalism; lack of strategic planning for established and newly developing markets, an obsession by high finance with short term profitability policy not related to the manufacturing sector, an increasing willingness to sell off new technological innovations to other capitalism a total disinterest in renovating old productive techniques.

The Falklands expedition was indeed a military cameo for a much greater historical absurdity; that is the notion that contemporary monopoly capitalist Britain can be returned to an era of laissez faire free enterprise capitalism.

The responsibility for the decline of UK capitalism lies with the moneyed interests who have traditionally managed the old imperialist war horse. Thatcher's call for a return to Victorian values is literally "history repeating itself; the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce".

What are the answers on unemployment?

The Tories argue that unemployment is due to the world recession.

That certainly doesn't account for a lot of the job cuts since 1979. 50,000 school meals workers' jobs have been lost because of cuts and price rises pushed by the Tory government. 400,000 building workers are unemployed because the Tory government has cut public spending on house-building by half.

That's not 'the world recession'. It's government policies that can be reversed.

But what about the big decline of jobs in manufacturing?

Yes: capitalists world-wide produce where it is most profitable, and buy from the cheapest supplier. The ebbs and flows of investment and trade, regulated by the rule of profit, leave armies of jobless all round the world (some much bigger than Britain's).

'The world recession' does not just operate through impersonal forces. It means governments and employers across the world carrying out attacks in their countries like the Tories' and the bosses' in Britain.

The answer is to change the world — to get rid of the Tories, their counterparts in other countries, and the system they represent.

In the meantime?

We can start on changing the world by changing Britain. Anyway, although a workers' government in Britain alone would be severely limited by the world economy, it could deal with unemployment.

Massive resources are wasted by unemployment itself, or remain in the hands of speculators, profiteers, and financiers. They can be mobilised and re-directed to planned reconstruction, development of new industries, re-training, and expansion of public services — on condition that the bulk of industry and the banks is in the hands of the workers' government.

How can you put faith in nationalisation to solve unemployment, when you look at the jobs cut in nationalised steel, car, coal, and rail industries?

There's a difference between state-capitalist nationalisation and socialist nationalisation. In steel, BL, coal, and rail, nationalisation meant the state bailing out failing capitalists,

Problems



and Policies

By Martin Thomas

taking over the job of ruthless rationalisation and running these basic industries on behalf of the capitalist class as a whole.

What we need is to extend nationalisation into the profitable sectors, win workers' control, and develop the industries within an integrated workers' plan.

What about new technology? When one silicon chip can replace a dozen workers, isn't unemployment inevitable?

Not at all. New technology creates unemployment only because of the capitalist way in which it is used — as an instrument to make a reduced workforce work even harder while growing dole queues increase the capitalist's power over employed workers.

In a socialist economy, new technology would mean more wealth produced with less effort and shorter work hours, and more resources free for services like education and health.

How do we get from Tory Britain 1983 to a socialist economy?

The first step is to mobilise the Labour vote on June 9. Not because a Labour government would introduce socialism:

it wouldn't. But getting the Tories out and Labour in would be a step in the process of the labour movement rousing itself, fighting for alternatives, and then developing better alternatives through experience.

We must fight to hold a new Labour government to its promises on issues like re-nationalisation, increased public services and public investment. At the same time we need to organise for direct action.

Cuts can be stopped and jobs can be saved by strikes and occupations. Work-sharing without loss of pay is a direct alternative to job cuts which can be fought for at the level of the workplace, the company, the industry, and finally the whole economy.

It is specially important to organise the unemployed — in unemployed branches of trade unions if possible, and in special unemployed associations. Unorganised, the unemployed get demoralised and split up, and can be used by employers against employed workers. Organised, they can be a tremendous force fighting together with employed workers to maintain existing jobs and win new ones.

If properly organised, the unemployed could also bust up the government's attempts to fob them off and exploit them with cheap labour schemes, and instead force it to create proper public projects and expanded public services at trade union rates of pay.

What about import controls as an immediate measure. Wouldn't they help?

No. At best import controls are an attempt to export unemployment to workers in other countries, and usually they don't succeed even in doing that.

We live in a world economy today. Protectionism is an attempt to turn the clock back. It's not an alternative to capitalist crisis, only a way of making it worse.

For workers facing moves by employers and the government to cut their jobs, the call for import controls is a blind alley. It diverts them away from struggle against the people who are cutting their jobs, to unity with those people against an unidentified foreign enemy. And it cuts across the international workers' unity which is more and more essential in this age of the multinationals.

million (46% more).

In short, an 'unholy symbiosis' has taken place whereby low investment levels have forced governments to increase public sector borrowing. The Thatcher project of smashing trade union power and "privatising" nationalised industries is of course one "solution" to this dilemma. But it could only succeed if two conditions were met.

Firstly, if the labour movement could be thoroughly shattered and placed in a legal straight-jacket and secondly, if that magical phenomenon "market forces" could assemble investment funds of the enormity required to reinvigorate the UK industrial base.

The latter notion is about as realistic as expecting the Victorians to expect the Grace to cricketers of W.G. Grace to Viv Richards' present day West Indies.

Heart

The "anti-etatist" policy of the government, by definition, is the only instrument of the framework of capitalism by which such a project could even be initiated.

Given all this, however, manufacturing is still the heart of the UK economy, accounting for 70%

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Women on the March

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People's March Special

Two women describe their experiences on the March

Some victories were won



to by Danny Collins and his band of merry Stalinists. When the command is given to march, a patter of feet can instantly be heard. We are ordered to march until we drop and a line of marchers can't be seen strung across the countryside like a defeated army.

The issues of unemployment, sexism and democracy are thrown out of the window as the slaves are marched from one point to another.

Some examples of sexism on the march: one woman expressed a fear of walking across a room full of men at night when she wanted to go to the toilet because of all the sexist jeers she would receive on the way.

(Separate accommodation was arranged for women who requested it, but only after it was demanded by some women. This is necessary as it enables the women to get away from the sexism for a while if they need to).

Another woman was asked if she was a virgin because she wasn't seen to be engaged in any sort of relationship with any of the males. That time, when she objected and argued the point, she did receive an apology. A woman outside the march was asked "How would she like to be fucked by one of the marchers?" - the man was given a final warning by the marchers at one of the march meetings.

Two women's sexuality was questioned in an extremely offensive manner, implying that they were lesbians and that there was something wrong with them. The women were extremely upset and

one was about to leave the march. The matter was raised at one of the meetings and more or less cleared up.

Few women have spoken at the rallies arranged by the town committees. This is the type of sexism which is hardest to challenge as most people don't realise that it is a form of sexism.

When TUC officials announced the plans for the People's March, they stressed that it would feature the theme of women's right to a job. Even if mention of class struggle was to be shunned, a feminist tinge would be permitted. The TUC would endeavour to make sure that 50% of the marchers were women.

In practice it has been very different. The women marchers are a small minority - currently perhaps 50 or 60 out of 400 - and they have faced continuous sexist harassment.

Most of the sexism comes from male marchers, and at least in words the marshals have deplored it. Yet much of the responsibility for the sexism must lie with the organisation of the march.

In the recruitment of the marchers, it was clear that above all the organisers wanted to avoid having too many Trotskyists and potentially dissident political activists. So the march was filled out with people with little experience in or contact with the labour movement.

Sexism is often bad within the labour movement itself. It was worse among the marchers. And then the atmosphere of intimidation, threats, and bullying in which the march has been conducted made an effective fight against the sexism difficult or impossible.

Two members of the delegation from the Oxford People's March for Jobs Committee, Oxford TUC and the Oxon County Association of TUC's who joined the People's March for Jobs at Towcester for its march to Milton Keynes were arrested last Saturday after incidents provoked by the march officials.

Meeting the following day, the Oxford Committee heard reports of the arrests and unanimously passed a resolution deploring the conduct of the march marshals and demanding the national march organisers carry out an immediate inquiry into the incident.

The busload of Oxford supporters had marched for several miles behind the main march shouting anti-Tory slogans before the trouble began.

After a stop, the march re-assembled. But the march marshals then insisted, without consultation, on putting a medical van immediately behind the march, forcing the supporters to trail along in its wake.

The situation was made worse by the police then ruling that no-one could march on the road behind the van.

At this point, chief marshal Collins was appealed to directly by the Oxford contingent. He refused to give them any assistance. Shortly afterwards, some of the Oxford marchers attempted to join in behind the end of march in front of the van. One of these was physically attacked by People March for Jobs members, at which point the police appeared and immediately arrested the Oxford marcher.

Another marcher from Oxford was arrested shortly afterwards, and both were charged with breach of the peace.

Both are Socialist Organiser supporters who had earlier been warned by marshals for selling papers to march members.

This is yet more evidence of the outrageous behaviour of the Communist Party-dominated march officials. It is quite evident that their actions were politically motivated and aimed at those people who have criticised and fought against their bureaucratic dictatorship since the marches began.

At Sunday's meeting of the Oxford People's March for Jobs Committee, the chairperson and secretary of which are CP members, several people spoke of the apparent collusion between the march marshals and police to set up the arrests. The Oxford Committee reaffirmed its commitment to a full mobilisation for the June 5 London demonstration.

When Harry Colvin explained in Ann that the march was not anti-government as such, but against its policies of mass unemployment, Tory civic dignitaries applauded.

"A rare occasion indeed, Tory civic leaders giving an ovation to a Communist!"

Star snippets

From the self-styled 'paper of the People's March'

"The March of 1981 did provide a vehicle for substantial sections of the churches, for a very wide spectrum of politicians, for local authorities, a wealth of democratic organisations and, yes, even some employers, to speak out against the crime of unemployment." (Mick Costello, Nov. 17)

"The People's March for Jobs provides the opportunity for the construction of the broadest possible alliance of all who agree with the central demand, which of course ranges from bishops to bricklayers, from non-Thatcherite Tories to revolutionary socialists." (Pete Carter, March 25)

"Some people will continue to argue for the People's March to be anti-Tory and pro-Labour, not recognising the need for different levels of struggle and alliances." (Tony McNally, Feb 1)

"Since this is an appeal to the whole Scottish people to take up the issue we will be looking for the widest possible financial support. Churches, local councils, chambers of commerce, community organisations of every kind will be urged to put themselves on the line for the march." (Jimmy Milne [STUC] March 4)

"Mr Heseltine might be interested to know that a meeting of Young Conservatives recently had a collection for the Morning Star in tribute to its support for the Greenham Common peace campaigners. "Labour, Liberal, Communist and, yes, Tory, can be in favour of CND's demands." (Editorial, April 28)

Halifax Tories... first claimed the march was political. When that was disproved worries were expressed over possible disruption of a youth programme." (April 28)

"An unexpected treat before leaving Halifax was a donation to march funds made by two police constables. One of them was also engrossed in reading the Morning Star." (April 29)

"A moving ceremony took place at St. Mary's Church in Wombwell, where local clergy and lay people washed the marchers' feet, dried them with paper towels and dusted them with talcum powder. The ritual was not only symbolic but also therapeutic." (May 6)

"When Harry Colvin explained in Ann that the march was not anti-government as such, but against its policies of mass unemployment, Tory civic dignitaries applauded." "A rare occasion indeed, Tory civic leaders giving an ovation to a Communist!" (May 20)

Why I left the March

I'm unemployed and I thought coming on the march would be a chance to do something about unemployment. I had mixed feelings whether it would have any effect. I thought women had been encouraged to go on the march and that there would be a lot of other women.

I have reservations about the labour movement because it's



important that women work within the male political structure but they should be allowed to organise separately. This march has really been my first experience of the labour movement. Until now I have been involved with women's groups and feminist politics.

But the women on the march are completely unrepresentative of most women. Apart from the two women marshals, we are all under 25, there is only one black woman and most of them haven't worked since leaving school or college.

I think if I'd been more involved in the labour movement I'd have been better prepared.

One main reason for me leaving the march was the expulsion of a woman marcher from the march. She must have told someone she was nine weeks pregnant and this threw the marshals into a panic.

I am angry that no other ways were explored to enable her to continue without walking all the way. There was no respect for her ability to decide for herself what to do.

This incident is indicative of

the attitude to women on the march.

I have had to make personal compromises. When you have to get on with a group of people for a period of weeks, it doesn't matter if you like them or not, you have to compromise and step down all the time.

When you're surrounded by a gang of sexists you can't do anything unless you feel strong and effective.

I thought they wanted as many women as possible on the march, but no concessions are made unless someone specifically asked for them.

More women could have been encouraged to go on the march if creches and child-minding facilities were arranged. There is a woman with a child on the Western leg. Perhaps we could have walked shorter distances.

Six weeks is a long time for many women to consider sleeping rough with lots of strange men.

One male marshal has put his neck out to help women. There are some efforts going on. If there is another march, women activists should make sure they go en masse.

At this point, chief marshal Collins was appealed to directly by the Oxford contingent. He

Communist Party's long march to the right

SAATCHI and Saatchi have seized upon the similarity of the Communist and Labour Party manifestos, in the hopes of witch-hunting the Labour Party.

What the comparison really shows is how far to the right the Communist Party has evolved during its inglorious history since the mid 1920s.

Whatever purpose there was in the CP's publishing its Manifesto and running its handful of candidates in this election, it was certainly not to offer a left wing alternative to Labour. On the central issue of the economy both CP and Labour envisage a reformist programme restricted to more investment, planning agreements with private firms, and limited nationalisation within the capitalist economy. On most other questions, too, they agree.

And while the CP has no James Callaghan to stick the public boot into its public campaign, the recent record of its leading trade unionists on the TUC General Council and its militants in recent union conferences indicates that a sizable element of the Party is prepared to collaborate with, if not argue for a policy of wage controls in line with Labour's National Economic Assessment.

Reluctant

Given this congruence on almost every question between CP and Labour policies, it takes little imagination to see why workers have shown themselves profoundly reluctant to vote for candidates representing this dwindling, ageing and particularly pernicious party which offers a bizarre blend of bureaucracy, banality and (on the People's March) brutality.

Responsibility for the present rightward trajectory of the Communist Party is no longer to be laid, as in the past, directly at the door of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Long decades of home-grown reformist and class collaborationist politics in the tiny British CP, with its disproportionate influence in the trade unions preserved by squalid political compromises with other sections of the reformist bureaucracy, have borne fruit in the form of an increasingly influential "Eurocommunist" wing of the Party.

By
Harry
Sloan

The "Eurocommunists" are a current that emerged in the late 1970s within the international Stalinist movement who, under the pressures of preserving their own bureaucratic interests and relationships with the bourgeois parties in their own countries, have increasingly been prepared to distance themselves from and even criticise the actions and policies of the Kremlin leaders.

Recent developments have shown the extent to which the "Euros" now dominate the British Party's Executive Committee and have taken a firm grip on the CP's monthly journal, laughingly entitled Marxism Today.

The magazine has focussed with dogged determination on the problems posed by the "rise and rise of the SDP" for those - like themselves - who seek a "broad alliance" against Thatcherism.

In amongst the very long and extremely boring articles on the SDP have been concealed little gems of Eurocommunist thought, arguing a case for a cross class coalition in which socialism is seen as secondary:

"The defeat of Thatcherism and the discrediting of the politics of the Right is the highest priority at the present time, and while the Left will wish to inflect this debate in the most socialist direction that is possible, it may have to recognise that the centre parties are a lesser evil who may need to be treated accordingly to stave off a worse one . . .

"What is certain is that any left strategy must now reckon with a plurality of class interests, and the difficulty of achieving power only on the basis of Labour's traditional constituency."

"Experience in Italy, in the regions controlled by Communist governments or Communist-led majority coalitions, seems to have been that some cooperation from small private capital can be won

by working class-controlled authorities that are committed to regional economic goals, and that are in any case the permanent, efficient and legitimate administrations of their locality. One object of regional government should be to achieve class coalitions in which capital's local interests oblige it to cooperate in socialist economic programmes."

(Mike Rustin, 'Power to the Provinces', Jan 1983).

(The tell-tale reference to the Italian Communist Party underlines the fact that the British CP could yet go on even further along the road to undisguised right wing policies. The electoral programme of the Italian Party makes Britain's SDP seem positively left wing in comparison).

Perks

Interestingly enough it is not this class collaborationist aspect of the politics of Eurocommunism which has proved contentious within the CP. That is a common line, shared by the old guard Stalinists and more "innovative" reformists such as Marxism Today editor Martin Jacques.

The differences have arisen on international issues such as Poland and Afghanistan, and when the trendies have raised questions which tread on the toes of the CP's cronies in the unions.

So when last September Jacques published an article by non-member Tony Lane which (among other things) pointed out the growing perks and privileges extended to leading shop stewards, he came under heavy fire from the traditional Stalinists.

Industrial Organiser Mick Costello was furious. It was too near the knuckle for his cultivated coterie of full time bureaucrats, convenors and careerist stewards.

Costello (author of many an admiring article on the "unions" in East Europe) denounced Lane's article in an interview in the Morning Star - whose editor, Tony Chater, is also an opponent of the "Euros".

But a fortnight later it was Costello himself who was publicly denounced - by the "Euro" majority on the Party's Executive Committee.

An angry storm of correspondence followed in the pages of the Star - but the EC's position was upheld, and Costello eventually resigned "for personal reasons" as Industrial Organiser. He soon took up a journalistic post on the Star.

Bamboozle

His replacement as organiser was Pete Turner - a one-time militant turned full-time official in UCATT, who had endorsed the Lane article.

Further clashes followed when Chater used the editorial column on the Star to attack Labour's National Economic Assessment as "class collaboration" and declare: "It is almost inconceivable that those on the left on the TUC General Council could have allowed themselves to be bamboozled into voting for this document on the basis of assurances that it did not mean wage restraint."

(March 24)
Among this "left on the TUC"



Jack Adams: no call at all for nationalisation of motor industry

were two Stalinists, George Guy and Ken Gill. Guy's pained response in the letters column stressed the "pressures . . . to close ranks for the defeat of the Tories" which have consistently brought CP union bureaucrats to capitulate to the right wing and left reformists.

Guy's line of self-defence has in fact been a far more accurate guide to the line in practice of Communist Party delegates and leaders in union conferences than the formal opposition to the National Economic Assessment in the pages of the Morning Star.

Significant in this respect was the Stalinist assistance to the wholesale switch of policy in NUPE this year from opposition to all forms of wage controls to acceptance of Labour's latest "social contract" con-trick.

Nor is it simply on the wages front that CP industrial members have been surrendering to outright reformist policies.

Alliance

On March 10 Jack Adams - BL Longbridge convenor - gave a foretaste of the limited calls for nationalisation in the CP's election manifesto when he mapped out a perspective to "save Britain's manufacturing base" which made *no call* at all for nationalisation in the motor or component industry, but focussed entirely on government taxation policy and investment cash:

"Ford could be assisted (!) again only on condition that the number of British built vehicles increased"

Of course if all you seek to do is institute reforms of this kind within British capitalism, and save "British industry", then there is *no need* to build a specifically labour movement, socialist campaign. A "broad alliance" of the "people" against "Thatcherism" might seem to be a better idea.

And on such a "broad alliance" both the "Euros" and the old-line Stalinists are unanimously agreed. Costello and Carter; Chater and Guy; both sides of the divided and demoralised Communist Party are enthusiastic about this reformist strategy and accept its political consequences.

So it is no accident that this year's People's March, run under the brutal control of Communist Party members, rigorously excludes all politics - since any element of political debate or development would cut across the CP's desired cross-class alliance.

It is no accident that the venom of the Stalinist marshals is directed exclusively against the left, while the door is opened wide to welcome chambers of commerce and in the words of Star reporter Martin Tostwick:

"the churches, the liberals, the nationalists, students, teachers, factory workers, unemployed workers, yes and even Tory farmers, businessmen and councillors."

(May 20)
Nor is it the first time that such right wing politics have been combined with outright gangsterism and anti-Trotskyist hysteria

by the Stalinists.

In the mid-1930s, Stalin's Comintern issued directives to switch from an ultra-sectarian policy of branding social democracy as "social fascist" to the opportunist cross-class alliance policy of the "People's Front", including the "anti-fascist" elements of the bourgeoisie.

The results were catastrophic - and grotesque.

In Spain, the turn to the People's Front smashed the revolutionary struggle against fascism, with the Stalinists taking on the role of hangmen of the left. In France, the same policy implemented by the mass CP neutered the mass struggles of the working class.

In Britain too there was a turn to grotesque forms of Popular Front though with less immediately obvious consequences.

The Young Communist League appealed for the calling of "mass conferences of all social, Christian and political organisations in the depressed areas." It convened "keep fit" conferences involving "Boys Brigade, Scouts, Ramblers Association, Bible Class, Girl Guides, Trade Union Youth Advisory Committee, Young Communist League and many other youth organisations."

But of course friendly links with the Boy Scouts and Bible Classes do not come easy - still less, those sought by the adult CP with 'progressive Tories'. To create conditions to hob-nob with these people, the "broad movement" must be purged of class conscious socialist elements who might offend the vicars and businessmen.

So it is no accident that in Britain and abroad this desperate search for alliances with sections of the capitalist class ran alongside fevered witch-hunting of Trotskyists as "agents of fascism" and support for Stalin's Moscow

Trials. Yet in 1939, it was Stalin who was to sign a formal treaty with Adolf Hitler himself!

After the betrayal of 1926 there was no revolutionary mass struggle for the British CP to betray in the 1930s: but the poison of the People's Front had lingered on in the cadres brought into the CP and miseducated at that time, and the leaders who prostituted every Marxist principle to pursue Stalin's policies.

The same policies of class collaboration made the CP a key wartime strikebreaking force in Britain after Hitler's invasion of the USSR; and made the CP in 1945 call for a continuation of the wartime coalition at the very time when Labour won its biggest ever majority.

Now the same bankrupt policies, dressed up in Eurocommunist flannel or Brezhnevite double-talk, are at the very heart of the CP's daily work and long term strategy.

Just as in the 1930s, the reactionary notion of the 'broad alliance' runs flatly counter to the needs of the working class for a principled, revolutionary leadership and for policies that defend its independent class interests.

But the gangsterism of the CP marshals on the People's March is an indication that they are only too aware that their 'no politics' line is far from 'popular' in the workers' movement - and least of all among the unemployed who have suffered most acutely at the hands of the capitalist class and system.

While, for the lifetime of the march, brute terror and bureaucratic control can preserve the fiction of support for CP policies, the final rally on June 5 will open up a new period of well-deserved decline and crisis for a Party that has nothing progressive to offer the workers' movement.

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Agenda

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LABOUR election meeting. Speakers: Ken Livingstone and Julian Jaccottet (Labour candidate, Oxford West and Abingdon). Wednesday, June 1, at Oxford Town Hall.

LABOUR CND West inaugural meeting. Sunday June 26, 2.30pm, Taunton CLP meeting rooms, 24, East Reach, Taunton. LP members only.

CONFERENCE of Socialist Economists conference 1983: The World Economy in Crisis. July 9 to 11 in Sheffield. Details from 25, Horsell Rd., London N5.

LABOUR Movement Conference on Ireland: July 16, from 10.45am at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Delegates £3, observers £2, details from LMCI, Box 189, 32, Ivor Place, London NW1.

'VOICE of Solidarnosc': £8 for 6 months to Solidarnosc Information Office, 314-320, Grays Inn Rd.,

Don't miss out on election sales

MAYBE it's the sunshine, maybe it's Les Hearn's birthday (see science column, p.13): it could, I suppose, even be the election, but something is certainly galvanising our supporters into action this week.

Groups with regular public sales — in shopping centres, round estates, at the dole — are reporting increased sales.

Glasgow SO found that the number of papers they sold in their street sales doubled, and the group increased its paper order from 150 to 200. They still ran out, and there'll be 240 papers going to Glasgow this week.

Does your group have a public sale? Are you missing out on extra sales this

week?

Groups are also reporting big sales of our new pamphlet, 'Socialist Organiser: where we stand'. South East London SO supporter Cheung Siu Ming took 50 last week, and sold them all in a few days.

If you've put your supply of pamphlets under your bed, get them out and take them with you to dole sales, to your workplace, to other people's workplaces, to canvassing, and see how easy it is to sell them.

Whatever the result on June 9, the fight for socialist policies starts afresh on June 10. And that fight will be all the stronger if we get our ideas across now. Sell the paper, sell the pamphlet, and get organised!

Next Monday:

Don't miss our election special

Or afterwards

Getting organised means joining together with everyone who's been active in the election campaign, and doubling our forces for the fight ahead.

Many groups are planning "After the elec-

tion, where next?" meetings. Here are the details of the meetings that are definite. If your area isn't mentioned, phone the contact number of your group, or see SO sellers.

Basingstoke. June 15, 7.30pm. Chute House, Church St.

16, 7.30 pm. Club Room, bottom of Block 40, Stirling Sauld Place, opp. Citizens Theatre, Gorbals St., Near-est Tube: Bridge St.

Coventry. Friday, June 17, Binley Oak, Paynes Lane.

Hull. June 15. Speaker: Alan Thornett. Venue to be confirmed.

7.30: Speaker — John Bloxam — and discussion.

Manchester. Thursday 23 June, 7.30 pm. The Millstone, Church St., Manchester.

9.00: Wholefood Buffet. 9.30-12: DISCO. Tickets £1.25 (60p unwaged). Food free. Full bar extension.

South East London. June 14, 8pm., Lee Centre, off Lee High Rd., SE12.

Glasgow. Thursday June

Northampton. Contact 713606.

every other Thursday, 7.30, Trade Union Centre, Brabant Rd.

Nottingham. SO is sold outside the Victoria Centre (Saturday 11-1) and at the Mushroom Bookshop, Heathcote St. Contact: Pete Radcliff, 585640. Next meeting: June 16, 7.30pm, on Gay Rights, with speaker from Labour Campaign for Gay Rights. Contact above tel. no. for venue.

Hounslow. Meets alternate Sunday evenings: for details see SO sellers. SO is sold outside All Saints Church, Hounslow High St., Saturday 10.30-12.

Islington. Contact Nik, 278 1341.

Southwark/Lambeth. Meetings every other Wednesday at Lansbury House, 41, Camberwell Grove, London SE5. Business meeting 7.30pm, Open Forum discussion 8.30pm. Next public meeting Wednesday June 22: Alan Thornett on the Cowley strike and the fight inside the unions. Next Marxist educational: 'Imperialism — how the bosses divided the world'. Sunday June 12. For details ring Ian 670 3279.

Tower Hamlets. Meets fortnightly on Fridays, 6.30-8.30pm. Contact 377 1328 for details.

SO is sold at the following London Bookshops: Collets, Central Books, The Other Bookshop, Bookmarks, Bookplace [Peckham Rd., SE 15], Kilburn Books, and Reading Matters [Wood Green Shopping Centre].

• SOUTH

Oxford. SO is sold at the Cornmarket (Saturday 11-1) and outside Tesco, Cowley Rd., Friday 5-7. Also at EOA Books, Cowley Rd.

Basingstoke. Meets every other Friday, 7.30, at Chute House. Next meeting June 3.

• LONDON

North-West London. Readers' meeting first Sunday of month. Phone Mick, 624 1931, for details. SO is sold at Kilburn Books.

Hackney. Contact Andrew Hornung, 28, Carlton Mansions, Holmleigh Rd., N16.

Haringey. Contact 802 0771 or 348 5941. Meets

Where to find Socialist Organiser

• SCOTLAND

Glasgow. For details of meetings contact paper sellers or Stan Crooke, 114, Dixon Avenue, Glasgow G42. SO is sold at Maryhill dole (Tuesday mornings) and Rutherglen shopping arcade (Friday lunchtime).

Edinburgh. For details of meetings ring Dave 229 4591. SO is sold at Muirhouse (Saturday 10.30-12) and the First of May bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

• NORTH-WEST

Rochdale. Meets second Monday of the month, 7.30pm Castle inn.

Manchester. SO is sold at Grass Roots Books, Newton St., Piccadilly. Contact: 273 6654.

Stockport. Contact c/o 38, Broadhurst St. Meetings every Sunday, 7.30pm: phone 429 6359 for details. SO is sold at Stockport market every Saturday, 11-12.30.

Wirral. Contact Colin Johnstone, 1, Wellington Rd., Wallasey.

Liverpool. Contact 733 6663 for details of meetings. SO is sold at Progressive Books, Berry St., and at News from Nowhere, Whitechapel.

Hyndburn. Contact Accrington 395753. Meetings weekly — see SO sellers for details. SO is sold at Broadway, Accrington, Saturdays 11.30 to 1pm.

Stoke. Contact Paul Barnett, 151, Broadway Meir, Stoke-on-Trent (328 198).

• YORKSHIRE AND NORTH-EAST

Huddersfield. Contact Alan Brooke, 59, Magdale, Honley, Huddersfield HD7 2LX.

Durham. SO is sold at the Community Co-op, New Elvet.

Leeds. Contact Garth Frankland 623322. SO is sold at Books and Corner Books, Woodhouse Lane.

Bradford. Contact Barry Turner, 636994. SO is sold at the Starry Plough bookshop.

Sheffield. Meets every other Wednesday, 7.30pm, at the Brown Cow, The Wicker. SO is sold outside Boots, Fargate (Saturday 12-1) and the Independent Bookshop, Glossop Rd. Contact Rob, 589307.

Hull. Meets every Wednesday, 8pm: details from SO sellers. Childcare available. SO is sold at the Prospect Centre (Saturday 11-12).

Halifax. Contact 52156. SO is sold at Halifax Wholefood, Gibbet St., and at Tower Books, Hebden Bridge.

York. Contact 796027. SO is sold at Coney St. on Saturday mornings, at the Community Bookshop, outside the dole office most mornings, and at the University on Friday mornings.

• WALES

Cardiff. Contact 492988.

• MIDLANDS

Birmingham. Meets alternate Fridays, 7.30pm, the Hen and Chickens, Consti-

tution Hill. Next meeting: Friday June 3, 7.45pm, on YTS. Also meeting on Monday 13th: Marek Garztecki (from Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group) on the present condition of Solidarnosc. SO is sold at the Other Bookshop, Digbeth High Street.

Coventry. Contact Keith White, 75623. SO is sold at the Wedge Co-op, High St. Meets on first and last Thursday of the month, 7.30 at the 'Queen', Primrose Hill St., Hillfields.

Leicester. Contact Phil, 857908. SO is sold at Blackthorne Books, High St.

Where we stand

* Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket-line; no state interference in our unions! No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions.

* Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. For a price index calculated by working class organisations, as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class. The same inflation-proofing should apply to state benefits, grants and pensions.

* Fight for improvements in the social services, and against cuts. Protection for those services against inflation by automatic inflation-proofing of expenditure. For occupations and supporting strike action to defend jobs and services.

* End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs. Fight for a 35 hour week and an end to overtime. Demand work-sharing without loss of pay. Organise the unemployed — campaign for a programme of useful public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.

* Defend all jobs! Open the books of those firms that threaten closure or redundancies, along with those of their suppliers and bankers, to elected trade union committees. For occupation and blacking action to halt the closures. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' management.

* Make the bosses pay, not the working class. Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions, without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.

* Freeze rents and rates. * Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem: racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets. Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence. Build workers' defence squads.

* The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, MI5, etc.), public accountability, etc.

* Free abortion on demand. Women's equal right to work and full equality for women. Defend and extend free state nursery and childcare provision.

* Against attacks on gays by the state: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and affirm their stand publicly.

* The Irish people — as a whole — should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.

* The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.

* It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each parliament and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.

* The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now — in Britain and throughout the world — show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control. The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist alternative in its place — rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for crumbs from the tables of the bankers and the bosses.

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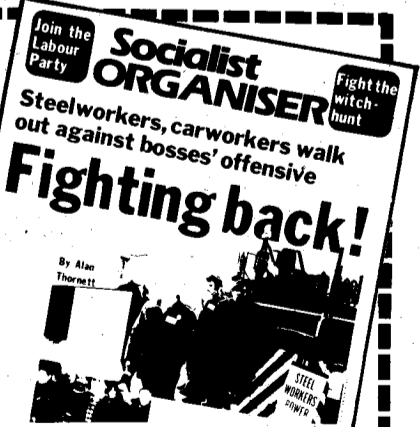
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Stalinism in El Salvador

THANK you for publishing an historical resume for El Salvador. I confess that I, for one, had been having difficulty trying to recall past developments there. However I think that the article as published suffered from not being put in a more international context.

Unless Socialist Organiser is never sold to casual readers who have never studied the past machinations of Stalinism and reformism, there are bound to be people who will not easily read between the lines of Paul Muddle's article.

Thus when we are told of the Salvador Communist Party's denunciation of Arturo Araujo in 1931, it ought to be mentioned that this was the year of the Red-Brown Referendum in Prussia. Stalinism, world-wide, was

pursuing the line that all non-Stalinist socialists, particularly those of the Left, were Social Fascists, and it was ready to enter into open alliances with real fascists against these "social fascists".

Moreover, this sheds a rather different light on the attempted "Revolutionary Military Committee" rising. Given that Martinez only took power after the December elections and that the rising was planned for January 22 it follows that either the rising was planned in an adventurist manner at extremely short notice without proper planning, or that it was initially planned as a rising against the reformists.

Either way the Stalinists, who were strong enough to consider a rising in January, saw no reason

to come out for united action to prevent a right wing rising in December.

I don't know what Trotsky said about that at the time, (as an anarchist I am not, of course, an uncritical admirer of his) but I cannot imagine that he would not have stressed that Stalinist policies must have contributed to the right wing rise to power there as they did in Germany.

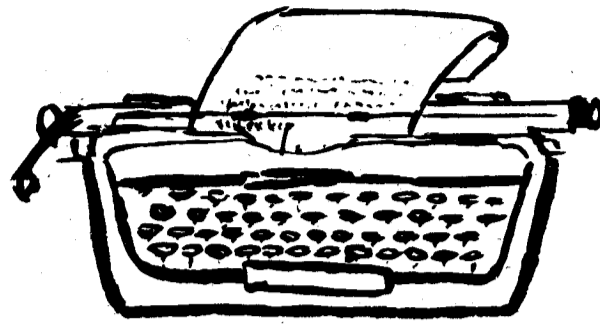
Similarly when Muddle talks of the PCS rebuilding itself after 1936, this is presumably as a Popular Front-based CP; it would be interesting to know whether (as in most of the world) the earlier leaders had in the interim been denounced and - where alive - expelled, or (as in Britain) they had stood on their heads, changing their policies complete-

ly. A small point, but indicative, since the latter process, presumably makes for a peculiarly gutless leadership, and this explains much of the CPGB.

It may well be inexpedient and dangerous to give a comment on the strengths of positions of whatever Trotskyist currents there may be in El Salvador, but if Socialist Organiser is to pride itself on presenting a clear-cut revolutionary policy that is practical under the circumstances of differing political situations, then in order to do this for El Salvador it must, in some way, contrast its advocated policies with what other groups are offering.

Fraternally,
LAURENS OTTER

Writeback



Send letters to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. No longer than 400 words, please: longer letters are liable to be cut.

Why Khomeini has launched Tudeh pogrom

HAS Harry Sloan been imbibing yet again from the poisoned pages of Soviet Weekly? His article on Iran (SO 132) would certainly suggest that he has.

How else could he present the banning of the Tudeh Party (Iranian Communist Party) as "clear confirmation" of the anti-communist nature of the Iranian regime and as "a further blow to any working class resistance to the regime"? The whole record of the Tudeh Party - to which the article itself refers - makes a mockery of such an analysis.

More likely reasons for the crackdown on Tudeh are:

- a) it could no longer fulfill a useful role for the IRP regime in crushing working class opposition,
- b) its alleged spying activities could be used as a diversion from internal problems in the same way that the American Embassy seizure was previously).

Harry Sloan is correct to argue that the banning of Tudeh is meant to be a green light to foreign investment. But this also needs qualification. The Tudeh

Party itself has supported capital investment in Iran and raised the slogan of "produce more for less" since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war. The politics and activities of the Tudeh were therefore no obstacle to foreign investment. Quite the opposite in fact.

The article then collapses into that mysticism so beloved of the mercenary scribes of Soviet Weekly. We are told that the USA feared that "under the pressure of the mass movement" Khomeini might "realign Iran with the Soviet bureaucracy". But when did a mass movement ever exist in Iran pushing Khomeini in this particular direction?

Overflowed

Even worse is the statement that, "now, overjoyed at the Iranian break from Moscow, American businessmen are scampering around Tehran". But when was Iran ever in any kind of alliance or bloc with Moscow from which it has "broken"?

Moreover, American business-

men have been scampering around Tehran for eight months or more, whilst German and Japanese businessmen have been "scampering around" Tehran since before the start of the Iran-Iraq war. The banning of the Tudeh therefore cannot be equated with a sudden turn to Western imperialism.

Parrot

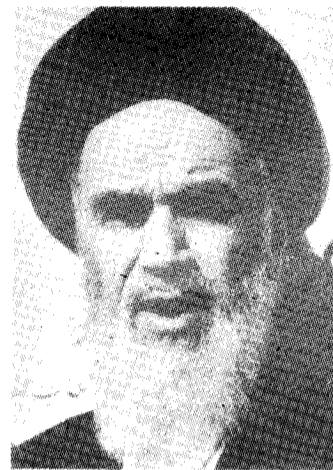
Equally fallacious is the statement, "links are opening up between Iran and... Turkey and Pakistan". Links with both these countries are long-standing, particularly with Turkey, through which Western goods were imported during the American trade embargo at the time of the Embassy siege. And Iran and Turkey have long collaborated in the war against Kurdistan's right to self-determination.

Thus, whilst rejecting the politics of the Tudeh and the Kremlin, and their analysis of the IRP regime, Harry Sloan ends up parroting their analysis of the banning of the Tudeh, i.e. that it

is a particular blow against the Iranian working class and that it marks a decisive turn towards imperialism. But the Tudeh was an anti-working class agent of Khomeini and the Kremlin, and the IRP regime has long since been an ally of imperialism.

After the defective analysis come the unbelievably insensitive "solutions". Without batting an eyelid, Harry Sloan calls for mass struggle against Khomeini, including (quite correctly) the struggle of gays. But, in my experience, the better Iranian leftists regard homosexuality as something to be remedied by therapy and genetic engineering, the others regard it as a crime deserving heavy punishment. Perhaps Harry Sloan could propose how such reactionary views are to be challenged and overcome?

Finally, the article concludes by calling for a campaign in defence of the Tudeh. Not a mention of the justified gut reaction that Iranians, who have been beaten up and informed upon by Tudeh supporters in this country and whose comrades in Iran have



Khomeini

Ditch Slipman

Dear Comrades,
Having just returned from the NUPE National Conference I would like to take the opportunity through your pages to make an appeal to all NUPE members who read your paper.

All NUPE members, and you readers, must be aware that Susan Slipman, a full-time paid official of NUPE, is standing for the SDP in the Basildon constituency.

It is the weekly contributions of low-paid and poorly treated NUPE members that pay Slipman's £10,000 a year salary and provide her with a brand new car every year. It is therefore disgusting that she has been granted three weeks' paid leave by the union to go off and campaign for the SDP's repressive and reactionary trade union and incomes policies.

We are urging all NUPE branches to send resolutions direct to the Executive Committee and call for her dismissal on the grounds that her actions directly contravene Rule 2(1) under the objects of the National Union of Public Employees.

Yours fraternally,
GEOFF MARTIN
Branch Chair,
Sutton Area Hospitals NUPE

been murdered thanks to the dirty work of the Tudeh, have against such a notion.

And where were the Harry Sloan articles calling for campaigns in defence of all the Iranian workers and leftists who have suffered at the hands of the Tudeh? And what of all the other oppressed groups in Iranian society infinitely more in need of a solidarity campaign than the Stalinist gangsters of the Tudeh?

Insofar as socialists oppose a reactionary regime turning on its own reactionary supporters, it is because it is the right of the working class, not its oppressors, to stand in judgement on such people and implement the appropriate penalty.

STAN CROOKE
Glasgow

Non-smoker wins

ARGUABLY the most interesting event in the world of science last week was my birthday. However, several other interesting items came to my attention, including the following:

First, from the Guardian, a report of the campaign against tobacco smoke in the U.S.

Worries about health have prompted a fall in the proportion of smokers from 52% to 38% of males and 34% to 29% of females between 1965 and 1980. (In Britain in 1980, 42% of men and 37% of women were smokers.)

Suffer

But non-smokers also suffer from the effects of 'involuntary smoking' - breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes. Typical short-term effects are runny nose, sneezing, stinging eyes, headaches and asthma, while long-term effects include higher rates of lung cancer and heart disease than in non-smokers not exposed to tobacco smoke.

In a historic case, a woman employee of Bell Telephones sued her employers for failing to protect her against tobacco smoke in her office which activated her allergies. She won after the company admitted



that it banned smoking around the computer to protect it from damage.

Now, most American states restrict smoking in public places, and San Francisco is bringing in a law to cover all workplaces.

Predictably, the tobacco firms have opposed such laws just as they opposed laws against spitting during the days of tobacco chewing, though this was known to spread tuberculosis!

Second: My birthday coincided with the 30th anniversary of the ascent of Everest and with an article in the Observer describing a developing ecological catastrophe which threatens to dump the Himalayas in the sea. As in last week's article about the loss of important plant species, the problem is again one of destruction of forests.

The Himalayan forests are part of a delicate ecosystem. The violent rains of the monsoons are absorbed by the soils

of the Himalayas which are held in place by the roots of the trees. The waters are then slowly released allowing the terraced fields below to yield plentiful crops of rice and maize.

But in the last 30 years, half of these forests have been felled, mainly to supply the firewood that accounts for 87% of Nepal's energy supplies. And now the monsoon rains just sweep away the unprotected topsoil, in landslides that engulf the centuries-old terraces and the villages that cultivate them. Rivers carry away the soil to the plains below and eventually to the sea. A new island is appearing in the Bay of Bengal!

In Nepal, crop yields have fallen by a quarter in 5 years, with starvation, malnutrition and enforced emigration. The plains also suffer as the unchecked monsoon water causes erosion of river banks and flooding.

TV Review by Martin Thomas Confessions of Felix Krull

CHANNEL 4 is serialising Thomas Mann's novel, 'Confessions of Felix Krull, Confidence Man', on Saturday evenings.

From the 18th century, German writers had been concerned by what (in different ways) they saw as a conflict between, on the one hand, critically analysing society and its values, and, on the other, being part of an integrated society with shared values.

Even Marx was concerned by this problem. He found a solution in a programme of changing society. Bourgeois German writers continued to wrestle with the problem, and none more so than Thomas Mann.

Switched

During World War I Mann supported the German war effort, in the name of tradition and the nation - as against democracy and radicalism. After the War he switched, becoming an outspoken suppor-

ter of democracy and opponent of Hitler. Throughout, his thinking remained sceptical, self-doubting, full of paradoxes and reservations.

He had started 'Felix Krull' in 1911. In his strongly conservative and patriotic writings during World War I, he condemned the satire: 'A writer who, when this war broke out, was on the point of writing a parody of the German Bildungsroman in the form of memoirs of a confidence-trickster, has a share in the intellectual disruption of German culture'. (Bildungsromane were novels centred on the formation of the character of the hero as a young person.)

At the same time as Mann criticises himself, he also ridicules his self-criticism. When, in 1954, he completed 'Felix Krull', it was ridicule piled on ridicule, irony piled on irony, parody piled on parody.

The theme is not very different from that of Mann's other novels - like 'Doctor Faustus', in which a composer agonises

over selling his soul to the Devil, or 'The Magic Mountain', in which a rationalist intellectual and a Jesuit obscurantist battle for the allegiance of the hero. But the style in 'Felix Krull' is close to slapstick.

'To be allowed to live symbolically spells true freedom', says Felix. It could be the motto of the artist; but the formula is mocked, criticised and examined by being made the motto of a con-man.

The style, the allusions, and the theme are all distinctively German - very different from most strands in English literature.

I hadn't read 'Felix Krull' before, though I had read some of Mann's other books. None of the other books are easy reading, and 'Felix Krull' is (for me, anyway) often difficult to follow. Still, I found it readable and watchable, even though I sometimes lost the thread - and also interesting enough to make me want to read more of and about Thomas Mann.

International news

France: why the right is on the streets

AFTER another day of street violence on May 24, the wave of mass action led by the right wing in France is likely to subside, for a while at least.

Five separate groups, with separate grievances, have been involved in the action. On May 5, for example, there were three distinct anti-government demonstrations on the same day in Paris: one by students, one by farmers, and one by small shopkeepers and businessmen.

The medical students' dispute saw 41,000 students on strike from February until they suspended their action on May 24 - declaring that they were still not satisfied despite shifts in the government's position. The movement was sparked by proposals to change the exam system.

The number of doctors in France has almost tripled in the last 20 years, and there is now one doctor per every 450 of population, as against one per 750 in Britain.

Instead of a national health service, France has a system of state health insurance and private medical practice; but now private medical practice is not quite the money-spinner it was.

The junior hospital doctors - who, like their counterparts in Britain, work extremely long hours for not specially high pay - are therefore more and more concerned about their career prospects.

Their strike - which ran from

by Martin Thomas

March until it was suspended on May 2, and may start again on June 1 - was concerned with increasing the possibilities open to them for careers within the public hospital system, and with a number of pay and conditions issues.

The government made concessions on pay and conditions and promised to create a number of new posts.

Since April students of all sorts, but most prominently law students, have demonstrated against government proposals for the reorganisation of higher education.

Debate on the proposals began on May 24 in the National Assembly, where the right wing opposition have put down over 1,000 amendments, but student protests may diminish now because of approaching exams.

Small shopkeepers and businessmen have demonstrated on May 5, on May 16, and on other dates against the government's austerity programme, which they claim has crippled them through tax increases. The demonstrations have repeatedly led to street fighting.

Farmers have also demonstrated. Their protest is as much against EEC policies as against the government.

In each dispute there is a mixture of economic concerns, arising from the state of French

capitalism and from government austerity policies, and organised right wing exploitation of those concerns.

France has long had a sizeable right wing ready and willing to practise its politics on the streets. Its large class of small shopkeepers and peasant farmers provides the strongest social base for these politics.

The Gaullist movement of the 1940s had a strong paramilitary wing, supposedly to steward its meetings. The Poujadist movement, at its height in 1954-8, again brought right-wing politics onto the streets. In 1958 De Gaulle returned to power through a military coup d'etat, and created the 'Service d'Action Civique' (SAC) squads. Only two years ago, 12 members of the SAC, including its secretary-general, were charged with the murder of a police inspector and five of his family.

The small groupings of the hard right overlap and interrelate with the main right wing parties, the UDF and RPR, and also with the fascist CSL, which functions as a company union in Citroen, Peugeot and elsewhere. The right in general has gained recently from discontent with the Socialist led government, and so has the hard right: Jean-Marie Le Pen of the French National Front gained 11% of the vote in one district of Paris in recent local elections.

The small shopkeepers and farmers have well-established organisations firmly linked to the



Only the conservative Force Ouvriere has called strike action against the austerity plan

Right. And upper-class family backgrounds can explain the right wing alignment of many of the students who have been demonstrating - particularly the medical students and law students. But there is more to it.

The most complicated situation is in the students' protest against reorganisation of higher education.

Chaos

French higher education has long been in chaos by anybody's reckoning. Apart from a few institutions which demand special qualifications, access to higher education is open to anyone who passes the school-leaving exam, the baccalaureat. But then the system is run so that almost half the students drop out in their first two years at university.

The new reorganisation proposals from education minister Alain Savary follow pretty much in direct line from the measures and proposals from previous right wing governments since the 1960s.

Savary's major proposals are:

- 1) Removal of minor obstacles to access to higher education.
- 2) Introduction of a new system of selection after two years. Access to different specialised courses would be determined competitively, with the numbers on each course decided in line with estimates of the needs of business.

3) Further adaptation of higher education to the needs of business through sandwich courses and representation of employers in university administrations.

The right wing object to selection after two years (but would favour stricter selection for entry to university), and see in Savary's proposals a risk of 'political' control of the universities. Objections from the left are to the selection after two years and to the increased power of big business over higher education.

The strongest student organisations are those of the Left. The Right has gained a prominent (though by no means overwhelming) role in the student protest crucially because of the passivity of the Left.

Demonstration

According to the Paris daily Le Monde, on May 24, the more right wing students coordinating demonstrations numbered 15,000 in Paris. The demonstrations were held in the city centre and in the Bois de Boulogne. The largest demonstration so far: the student forces mobilised by the right are not huge. A left-wing

committee got only 1500.

France does not have a single student union with more or less automatic membership, like the NUS in Britain. There are a number of student unions, divided politically. The right wing unions are all much smaller than the two left-wing unions, which are roughly level pegging: UNEF-solidarite etudiante, dominated by the Communist Party, and UNEF-ID, in which the strongest force is the Trotskyist rhetoric but weak on practical initiatives.

The Communist Party UNEF has generally supported the Savary proposals (the CP has ministers in the government). UNEF-ID has called some demonstrations, but the attitude of its PCI leadership has generally been to 'seek clarification' from the government.

But the problem is not only, or even mainly, to do with the activity or inactivity of the left student organisations. At the end of March the Socialist-led government announced its second austerity plan: tax increases, an additional tax in the form of a

compulsory loan by everyone to the state; increase in electricity charges, phone charges, fares, etc; increased health charges, a strict limit on money for foreign holidays.

Since then, while the right wing has taken to the streets again and again, the big union federations, the CGT and the CFDT, have done nothing. The only protest has been by the small, generally right wing and white collar union federation FO, which called a one-hour strike on May 18.

Paralysed

The Socialist-led government has been paralysed and thrown into disarray by the logic of trying to administer the system in the midst of capitalist crisis. The French workers' movement needs to stop this paralysis spreading down to the organised workers - to re-mobilise for working class demands, and thus to be able to win over to its side the sections of the middle class who currently are being thrust into the hands of the Right.

South Atlantic strategy

EVEN a year after the bloody events in the South Atlantic, the 'Falklands Factor' is a crucial component in Thatcher's electoral support.

But the outcome of the war - Thatcher's 'Fortress Falklands' policy - has long term implications for British and world imperialism lasting far beyond this election.

A recent article by Simon Winchester in the Sunday Times points out that millions of pounds are being spent building up both the Falklands and Ascension Island as major strategic outposts in the South Atlantic.

As much as £38 million is allocated to a two-phase devel-

opment of the Ascension air base, which is also being equipped with long range radar systems.

On the Falklands itself, what Winchester describes as a "huge new radar dome rising on Mount Kent - Project Zeus" has a range of over 1,000 miles: "Yet Argentine Patagonia is but 200 miles away".

Winchester explains that: "The Falklands are starting to assume a more global defence role. "Diego Garcia South" was how one air force man privately described them, referring to the Americans' big island base in the Indian Ocean."

The costs of all this are enormous. Each 40 ton plane-load of

cargo received in the Falklands costs an estimated £750,000 to deliver. Why this vast expenditure for a previously forgotten handful of islanders? Winchester replies:

"As colonies, the Falklands and Ascension can seem like twin Black Holes, swallowing money as fast as it can be printed. As strategic bases, the costs seem more forgivable."

Yet where is any Labour pledge to scrap this vast scheme and withdraw imperialist troops from the South Atlantic? As before, the Labour leadership is being carried along in Thatcher's slipstream.

Greek anti-union laws

Greece's supposedly left wing socialist government has introduced anti-union laws aptly described by the Economist magazine as "much more radical than the limitations on trade unions proposed by Mrs Thatcher in Britain".

A bill brought to parliament for an emergency debate this week hits the right to strike for the large proportion of Greece's

workers who are in the public sector.

Public sector unions will be able to call a strike only if an absolute majority of members have voted for it in a secret ballot. Even then, if the strike is called by a federation of unions, an objection from any one union or ten per cent of its membership makes the action illegal until endorsed by a general assembly of the federation.

The PASOK government has already introduced wage controls (in January this year) and gone back on promises to legalise political and sympathy strikes. The foreign policy pledges which were central to its election victory - withdrawal from NATO and EEC, and expulsion of US bases - have been effectively junked.

The new law has got the backing of the General Confederation of Greek Workers executive - but this is an executive stacked out with PASOK members, imposed by a court decree last year. The Association of Civil Service Unions has also had its leadership changed by a court decision.

The Communist Party and the conservative New Democracy Party still, however, retain substantial positions in the unions, and a strike wave has developed in response to the new law. According to the Financial Times, bank workers struck on May 30 and 31. The teachers are also on strike. The Olympic Airways and port workers."

For an independent inquiry into the death of Colin Roach!
Roach Family Support Committee, 50 Rectory Rd, London N16



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Telecom engineers in frontline of attack

THE POEU's annual conference this year takes place against the background of a determined management offensive to drive down wages and cut jobs both in British Telecom and the Post Office and no real response from the POEU leadership.

Last year's campaign against privatisation began well with a one day strike of all POEU members in British Telecom. In some places members who work on the postal side came out in solidarity despite NEC instructions against it. (Postal engineers have also been under attack. Last year's pay deal for the first time gave the same grades in BT and the Post Office a different rate of pay - a direct result of the splitting of the business from the Post Office into BT and the Post Office, a policy supported by the POEU's leadership).

But the potential shown by the huge support for the strike was never built on by the union's right wing leadership. They concentrated instead on lobbying MPs and "press release opposition".

Pressure

In the last few months industrial action has been sanctioned, but this was only because of the mounting pressure from the rank and file in a growing number of branches. When the industrial action was called off, against the advice of the branches involved, after the announcement of the General Election, urgent calls were being made by branches to step up the action.

The campaign has been little different from the one against the first Telecoms Act in 1981. That was passed, and the second Bill only fell because of the General Election. If the Tories are re-elected, it will be immediately rushed through unless stronger opposition comes from all unions in BT.

The leadership are proposing calling off the conference three days early on June 7 because of the General Election, but it is likely that the conference will vote to continue, recognising that the next few months could prove to be crucial especially, but not only, if the Tories are re-elected.

A special two-day conference to discuss union structures and possible moves towards union mergers precedes the annual conference.

The Special Conference is around two counterposed positions. The present union leadership is apparently in favour of a BT based union only, encompassing both management unions and workers. The other position, supported by the Broad Left and a number of branch propositions is for a rank and file based union

Ricky Houston previews POEU conference

spanning both businesses, the Post Office and BT.

There is also an exceptionally high number of propositions on union democracy to the Special Conference.

The annual conference agenda is dominated by the threat to jobs, but the first issue will be the leadership's proposed pay sell-out - 5% in July, followed by 1%, then 1/2% in December, for workers in BT, and a similar proposal for postal members.

BT last year made record profits of £450 million, and both BT and the Post Office are making huge profits out of the workforce this year.

There will undoubtedly be a number of emergency propositions on the pay deal, which was made known only on May 20.

The management offensive includes privatisation; driving down real wages; regrading proposals to break down demarcation lines in order that a "rationalised" workforce can carry out a wider range of jobs, including those of their redundant brothers and sisters; area, regional and trunk service reorganisation in order to break down the national organisation and solidarity of the unions; and tying the introduction of new technology to reducing the workforce, not the working week.

The offensive has only been spurred on by the softly, softly, approach of the present leadership. But this is being seriously challenged by the Broad Left and by branches.

Productivity

There are ten propositions calling for a 32 hour, four day week, some realistically calling for industrial action to achieve it. Other propositions call for future productivity payments to be converted into a reduction of the working week and increased annual leave.

North London Internal's proposition on regrading states what the POEU response should be: "that such a structure should represent the interests of POEU members, not the political and commercial interests of BT."

Propositions opposing the effects of reorganisation (and some opposing reorganisation

itself), show that the union branches - unlike the leadership - recognise what management's intentions are.

The Broad Left earlier in the year circulated a list of suggested model propositions which has evidently been taken up by branch activists. There is a motion of censure and no confidence in the 1982 NEC's handling of the major issues facing the POEU throughout the last twelve months.

Liverpool Internal branch are calling for the resignation of the general secretary, Bryan Stanley, for his alleged "Sid Weighell-type conduct" at last year's Labour Party conference.

The allegations have been well substantiated by correspondence from Pete Willsman, the chairperson of a compositing meeting, and have been circulated throughout the union over the last year.

Swansea branch have the only proposition opposing the Labour Party witch-hunt. (This does not mean they are the only branch to oppose it - each branch is entitled to only one proposition

to general conference). The proposition is of special significance as the POEU political organiser is witch-hunter general John Goding.

There are no propositions on the National Economic Assessment, but some emergency propositions may be forwarded as the Labour election manifesto was not published until after the closing date for conference propositions.

The conference itself will see a major challenge to the right wing's hold on the union and could well prove to be one of the most important conferences the union has ever seen.

The POEU faces the biggest challenge it has seen for years from the government and management, and it is evident that unless the membership are mobilised into taking industrial action in defence of jobs and living standards, both the industry and the POEU could well be decimated to the same degree as British Steel.

Missed chance in Scotland

IN mid-May there seemed to be a real potential in the West of Scotland to relate the campaign for a Labour vote to the day-to-day struggles of the working class.

BL in Glasgow was on strike against the threat of compulsory redundancies. Miners at Cardowan colliery were organising to fight its possible closure. The Confed was pledged to oppose the loss of 2,500 jobs in the shipyards on the Clyde.

The Timex plant in Dundee was occupied. And the women's Day of Action for Peace was coming up on May 24.

Instead, the result has been: job losses at BL and Timex in line with management's demands; a defusion of opposition to threatened job losses in the shipyards and at Cardowan; little more than token support for the women's Peace Day; and a staid, traditional campaign for a Labour vote.

Nationalism (both the British and Scottish varieties) was an Achilles heel of the disputes. Timex in particular saw attacks on the French, Japanese and English, not to mention Norwegians and Americans, whilst threatened job losses in the shipyards are attributed to the Koreans.

The same type of nationalism underpins the strategy of the Alternative Economic Strategy. But this nationalistic approach proved to be a road to defeat.

As soon as the notion of "nation" is raised above that of class, then the inevitable consequence can only be an attempt at collaboration with forces hostile to the labour movement - and the ditching or playing down of any class struggle identity for the Labour Party.

Timex was one example of this nationalism. The same thinking is also apparent among union leaders in shipbuilding, and the organisers of the People's March for Jobs.

In the Scottish context, the call for a Scottish Assembly is a

prime example of such glorification of cross class alliances. A campaign for such an Assembly, to quote George Galloway, would involve "Scottish MPs of all parties leading the fight".

This "national unity" approach leads to "softly, softly" tactics in industrial disputes - so as not to put off cross-class allies - and in the general election, instead of attempting to rally support on the basis of providing clear and militant opposition to capitalism, the Labour Party leadership sees "consensus politics" as the vote catcher. But there is not room for two SDPs. (June 9 may show there is not room for even one).

Ironically, the one occasion when a call for a Labour vote was related to the defence of jobs, its result was to undermine both.

At Cardowan, local NUM branch officers had already raised the idea of occupation prior to the militant May 13 rally against closure.

But instead of boosting support for the call for occupation, Mick McGahey, addressing the rally, said nothing about this and instead called for a vote for Labour: "A vote for Labour will save your jobs. When Labour wins the next election, Labour won't allow Cardowan to close."

Miners walked out of the rally in disgust. "This is more like a Labour Party rally than anything else," said one.

McGahey effectively counterposed a vote for Labour to occupation, thereby undermining support for the latter and discrediting the former.

Thus the politics and strategies of the various recent industrial disputes (nationalism, cross-class alliances, a conscious rejection of militant tactics) has dovetailed into the Right's nationalistic, anti-militant, SDP-orientated policies and tactics in the Labour Party. Albeit negatively, this shows the impossibility of compartmentalising off the struggle in the unions from the struggle in the Labour Party.



UCW Conference: Tuffin ducks nut

IN THE second part of its conference (May 22-27) the Union of Communications Workers leadership managed to regain some of the ground it had lost in the first two days. It suffered only one more defeat.

The issue was again New Technology. Following Monday's vote to withdraw all cooperation until a New Technology agreement had been reached with the Post Office, conference instructed the leadership to fight for a reduction of hours from the present 43 to 38, and report back to the members on progress.

But on other major issues the Executive Committee won. Conference accepted the recommendation to reopen negotiations with the Communication Managers' Association as part of trade union 'rationalisation' which had been defeated by the 1982 Conference in favour of a union merger of rank and file grades only between the UCW, POEU and CPSA.

The bag of peanuts thrown at Alan Tuffin by a speaker from the rostrum showed the rank and file feeling at the EC's failure to deliver any reductions on differentials, but still they won a vote in support of their record. And on

pay, the Labour Party and TUC new 'social contract' document was easily carried after an amendment calling for its rejection was withdrawn.

Other important issues were not even reached. Despite its obvious importance, privatisation was not discussed and hardly mentioned by the platform. An amendment demanding joint action with other BT unions was never heard. Neither was the composite against expulsion from the Labour Party, which called for the reinstatement of those expelled.

The new EC, elected in ballot immediately before Sunday's vote of no confidence showed little change. The only gain for the left was Broad Left supporter John Griffiths (White Amal).

There was an undoubted feeling of bitterness throughout the conference at the UCW leadership's record of capitulation on both pay and jobs. However, the ability of the EC to ride it out and even regain some lost ground underlines the Left's lack of coordination and organisation. The Broad Left needs to tackle this problem.

Holding the line

- Greenings, Warrington: on strike against moves to abolish the annual wage claim, end negotiated holidays, reduce trade union facilities, and axe 89 jobs. Now facing redundancy notices. Greenings is a subsidiary of Johnson Firth Brown. Messages/donations: N Greening JSSC, c/o Len Blood, 26 St John St, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside.
- Firth Derihon, Tinsley, Sheffield: another subsidiary of JFB, occupied against redundancies. Messages/donations: Paul McKey, 17 Melin Way, Sheffield 5.
- 'Lady at Lord John', Liverpool: TGWU picket to demand reinstatement of Audrey White, sacked for complaining against sexual harassment of women workers by the area manager. Messages etc: TGWU, Transport House, Islington, Liverpool 3.
- Hodkin and Jones, Sheffield: on strike after being sacked for working to rule against a wage cut. Messages/donations: R. Horne, 74 Hands Road, Sheffield.
- Arlington House hostel, Camden: still on strike for better wages and for reinstatement. Donations c/o the Labour Centre, 8 Camden Road, London NW1.



BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

1ST CONFERENCE

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APPLY FOR DETAILS FROM 32 ELLERY ROAD LONDON SE

4 & 5TH JUNE 83

**Cowley
washing-up
time fight**

Socialist ORGANISER

WE COULD BE OUT AGAIN!

There had been no real negotiations since the national officials managed to get a return to work, though management had met the JNC.

But since many workers failed to understand how they had been sold out, and believed that they scored a moral victory over the employers, militancy has remained high.

This was shown when management sent round supervision to do a straw poll of feeling on the shop floor.

They asked if workers would give up the washing up time in exchange for a guarantee of a £22 bonus. Fifty per cent told supervision to 'fuck off'; 20% said it was in the hands of the unions.

That means - with 10% absenteeism - that a maximum of 20% were prepared to accept.

Last week we had a stewards' meeting - with no recommendation from the JNC.

A resolution was moved to reaffirm our position that the 6 and 9 minutes are not for sale, and to call mass meetings for Wednesday night and Thursday morning. This was carried unanimously.

On Wednesday during the day shift management carried out another sounding, offering a 'last chance'. If workers agreed, they could have a back bonus of around £10.50; if they didn't, they would lose the £10.50 and the washing-up time would simply be abolished.

The company claimed only 45% were opposed to this - but that is certainly an optimistic figure for them. In the trim shop, for instance, management only

WORKERS at Cowley Assembly Plant struck for 4½ weeks to defend their traditional 'washing up time', 6 or 9 minutes per shift, which management had attempted to abolish.

Last week, after a month's fruitless charade of 'negotiations', mass meetings voted again on where they stood on the issue.

Later, an Assembly Plant TGWU Steward spoke to Harry Sloan.

claimed a 25% acceptance.

When it came to the mass meetings, the position was even stronger. On the night shift only 3 voted against the stewards' recommendation. On days, a very big meeting saw Bob Fryer, the Convenor, speak very well.

Fryer had asked management to say how much the 6-9 minutes was worth - and they said £1.50 per week. So he asked why in that case we shouldn't now be earning £28.50 of the £30 bonus we are supposed to be eligible for.

He also pointed out that the extra ½ hour a week management are demanding is worth an estimated £25 million a year, which he calculated at £1,000 per worker. He said that when he suggested to management that this £1,000 be split down the middle - giving an increase of £500 per worker per year, the company

nearly fell off their chairs.

The vote for the stewards' recommendation was carried - again with only 3 against.

The vote was not actually for another strike - but most must realise that this is likely. They had until Sunday to negotiate at national level - then it goes to national conference.

An idea of the feeling in the plant came when we were leafletting before the mass meeting. One young worker came up to me explaining the dangers of the company moves. I thought I recognised him. It turned out that he was one of those featured on television during the strike, arguing that he would be going back to work, come what may. 4 weeks of being screwed into the ground on the Maestro Track had taught him a few lessons. Management have really done a job on them!

The big dangers are firstly the probability of a Tory election victory - though from this plant it's hard to see any evidence of a Tory vote - and secondly the role of national union officials.

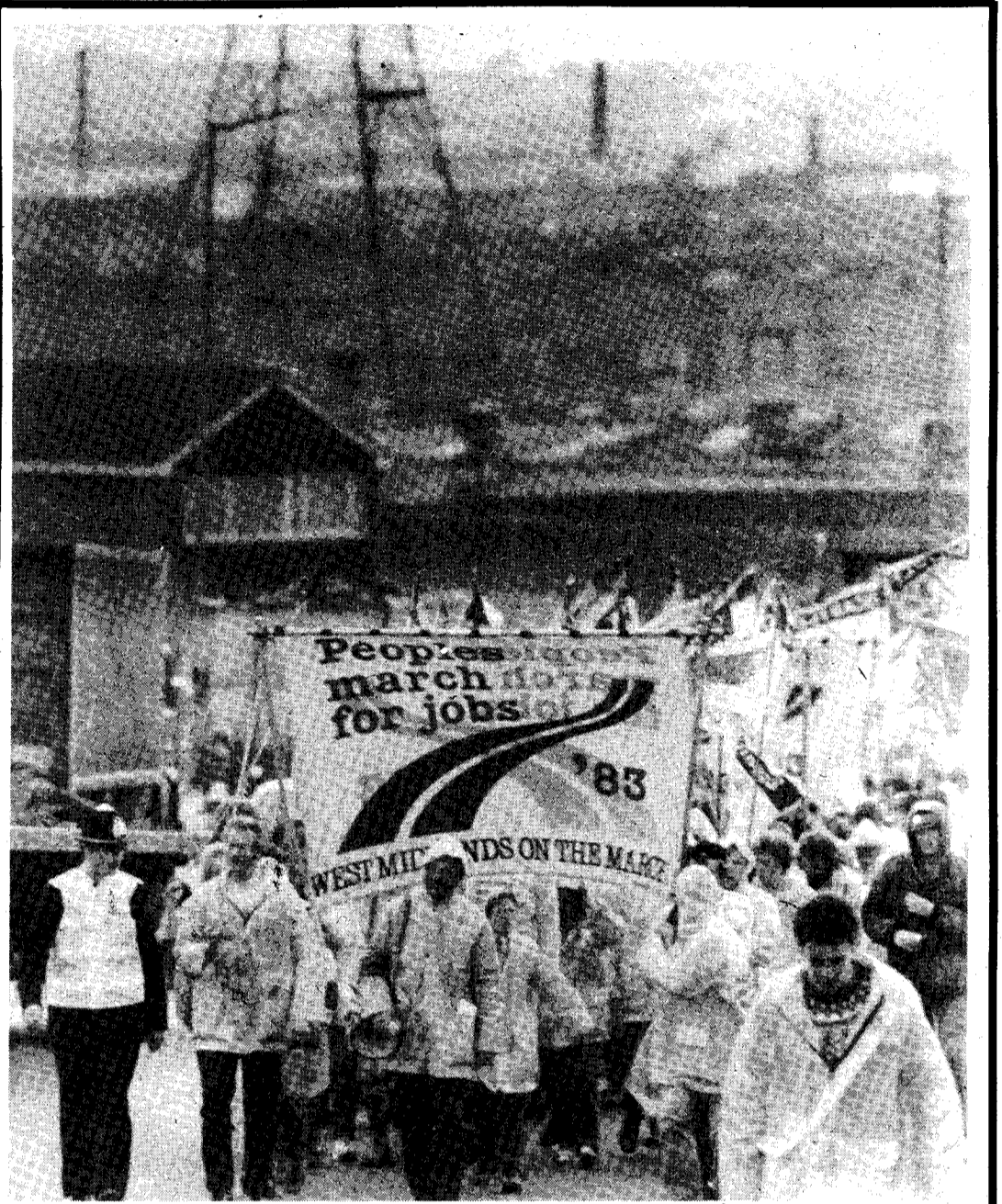
Holiday

Already we hear that at 8.15 am on the Monday morning after the holiday all the AUEW stewards have to get on a coach to Luton to meet their union Executive.

You can bet that Duffy and Co. don't want to congratulate them on the struggle so far! The AUEW stewards have been the weakest in the dispute.

But if we can keep the national officials out of it, and if the mood holds up, we could still be out again on the issue management thought they'd killed a month ago!

PHOTO: JOHN HARRIS



Organise the jobless!

UNLIKE those who are idle because they live from profits and dividends, the unemployed have no established share in the privileges and power of society. Only by strength of numbers and organisation can they make their voice heard.

That's what the People's March, and its concluding rally on June 5, should be about. And they should also be an opportunity to lay the basis for organising work after June 5.

The first organising job is to get the voice of the unemployed heard on June 9. And the call from the organised unemployed can only be: vote Labour, fight for jobs! Labour Parties, especially in London, should be mobilising to make June 5 the biggest anti-Tory demonstration ever held at election time.

For the ongoing organisation of the unemployed, the trade union movement has so far done far too little. Region 6 of the TGWU has organised the unemployed into union branches; in some areas NUPE has made an effort to unionise youth on government cheap labour schemes.

Official

Apart from that the official trade union movement has been indifferent or hostile to the organisation of the unemployed. Trade union leaders have given full backing to the government cheap labour schemes. The TUC has promoted centres for the unemployed - and, working in league with the government Manpower Services Commission, imposed a rule on them of 'no politics, no campaigning'.

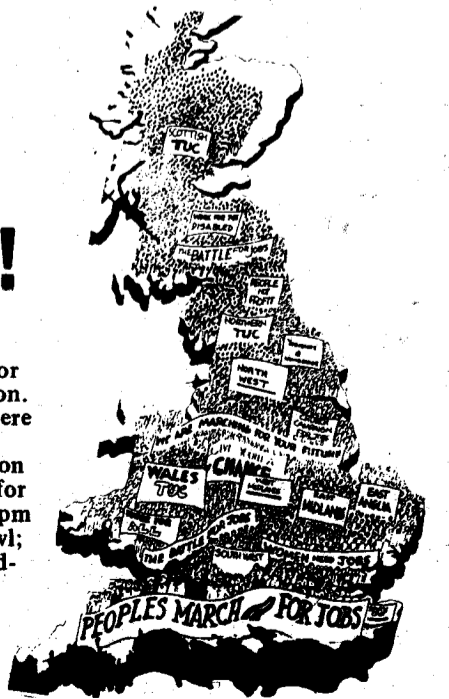
Our job now must be: to organise the unemployed, and youth on government schemes, into the unions wherever possible; to organise and win labour movement support for unemployed workers' associations; to fight for democratic control by the unemployed in the local unemployed centres; and to work for joint action of employed and unemployed in struggles for jobs and

against cuts.

The People's March could and should have been a boost to this organising work. Unfortunately for the most part it hasn't been; and its organisers have systematically silenced the anti-Tory slogans that marchers wanted to chant. For reports on a missed opportunity, see pages 7 and 10.

Meet the March!

This Thursday, 2nd, the People's March for Jobs arrives in London. On Friday at 3.30 there is a rally at Southall Community Centre; on Saturday, a Festival for Jobs from noon to 8pm at Crystal Palace Bowl; on Sunday, a concluding march and rally, assembling in Battersea Park at noon.



Let's hit £1,000

WITH the first paper in June we start the climb towards a new £1,000 target. And with donations of £353.50 this week, we've got the best start yet.

As long as we don't get complacent! Three weeks isn't long to organise fund-raising activities and collect donations to bring in the next £646.50. And without reaching our fund target, we won't be able to build up the fight for socialism after June 9.

Congratulations to three groups for organising their after-the-election fund-raising plans now:
- to Coventry for planning a mega-social after their SO meeting (see 'Where to Find Us' p.12).
- to Southwark-Lambeth, for organising a social on June 11.
- to Cardiff for organising a barbeque stall to tour local fetes, making use of local culinary expertise.

We haven't reached the £1,000 target since February: let's make it in June!

Thanks this week to: an Oxford factory worker for launching the fund with £150; to Chris Goodwin for a £10 donation; and a £100 donation 'because the paper's so good'; to a "friend in the media" (yes, there is one!) for £50; Mark Starr, £25; Roger Welch, £5; a YS member in Yorkshire, £5; and Edinburgh supporters Pete Knight, £5, Dave Nelson, £2, and Callum Macrae £1; and to Jo Thwaites for donating 50p, proceeds from the sale of a 3d piece! (remember them?).

Rush donations to: The Treasurer, 214 Sickert Court, Essex Road, London N1.