

SOCIALIST PRESS



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Affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

DEMONSTRATION US hands off El Salvador!

March and Rally—Saturday April 25

Assemble at 12.30 pm at Speakers Corner

Speakers include Michael Foot, Ken Gill, Eric Heffer, Alan Sapper, Salvador Moncada (FDR)

Double blow to Tory authority

SANDS ELECTED

NOW FORCE

POLITICAL

STATUS!

The Honourable Member of Parliament for Fermanagh/South Tyrone could well be dead before the end of the month.

And if he dies, the leaders of the British labour movement will bear a heavy responsibility.

Bobby Sands, 42 days on hunger strike, drew over 30,000 votes from the nationalist people of Fermanagh to win last Thursday's by-election.

Those votes were votes against Loyalist candidate Harry West; and against imperialist rule.

They were therefore also votes against the Thatcher government, and against those British Labour and trade union leaders who continue through their "bipartisan" policy to support that government in its policies of military repression in the six counties of Ireland.

Indeed for the whole period of Bobby Sands' hunger strike prior to the election the British labour bureaucracy willingly collaborated in the conspiracy of silence that had blacked out media coverage.

The only exceptions had been a few witch-hunting speeches designed to isolate both the hunger strikers and any militants that might campaign for their support in the British workers' movement.

Typical was the reactionary speech from Labour's Northern Ireland spokesman Don Concannon only hours before voters went to the polls in Fermanagh.

"A vote for Sands means approval for the perpetrators of the Mountbatten and Warrenpoint murders and all the other senseless murders that have taken place over the years, including the latest brutal and inhuman killing of Mrs Mathers, the

census enumerator."

The fact is that the vote for Sands was, as the recording officer was forced to declare, a vote for a candidate standing quite clearly as a republican "Anti H Block/Armagh Political Prisoner".

Recognition

As such it was a vote for political status for Bobby Sands and other political prisoners—a demand which the Labour leadership have consistently opposed.

It was a recognition that the sometimes violent struggle by the republican movement to liberate Ireland from imperialist rule is more acceptable than the daily violence of the vicious sectarian state machine and the British army which maintain the oppression of the Catholic minority in the North.

It is for this reason that Sands' victory came as such a heavy blow to the Thatcher government and its Loyalist hangers-on. They had attempted in several ways to minimise the republican vote by:

*The cynical murder of Mrs Mathers, the census enumerator only hours before the election. This killing, immediately denied by the IRA, was plainly a provocation designed to frighten nationalist voters out of backing Bobby Sands.

*Placing restrictions on press coverage of Sands' campaign—refusing him the right to speak direct to the press from his hospital bed in Long Kesh.

*Persistent police harass-

ment of Sands' campaign workers canvassing the constituency—confiscating publicity material and arresting supporters only to dump them on isolated stretches of road.

Despite this filthy campaign of sabotage, imperialism suffered a severe jolt in the election.

The demand for political status has been shown to carry mass support in the six counties.

It should—after six weeks of Bobby Sands' hunger strike—by now also be ringing loud and long throughout the British labour movement.

But rather than support Bobby Sands, his fellow hunger strikers, the republican prisoners on the blanket in Long Kesh and Armagh Jail, and the oppressed Catholic minority, the labour bureaucracy have nailed their colours to the mast of support for the Tory government, the British armed forces and the sectarian statelet with its police and paramilitary apparatus.

Witch-hunts

Anyone who seeks to challenge this stance in the unions or the Labour Party must not only persuade their workmates or fellow socialists but also run the gauntlet of savage witch-hunts from right wingers, fake lefts and even Communist Party members.

Yet the fact is that by challenging and weakening British imperialism, the republican movement is at the same time sapping the

strength of the Thatcher government which is so savagely attacking the British working class.

We are fighting a common enemy. British workers have not only a moral duty but a direct interest in giving material assistance and solidarity to the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland, in securing the defeat of the British army and forcing the withdrawal of British troops from the six counties.

Bobby Sands has not got long to live. Action in his support and to build a campaign against British imperialism is already long overdue.

If we do not as socialists take up this fight with renewed urgency in the wake

of the election, then the blood of Bobby Sands' death will not simply be on the hands of the Tories and Labour bureaucrats: it will be on our hands too.

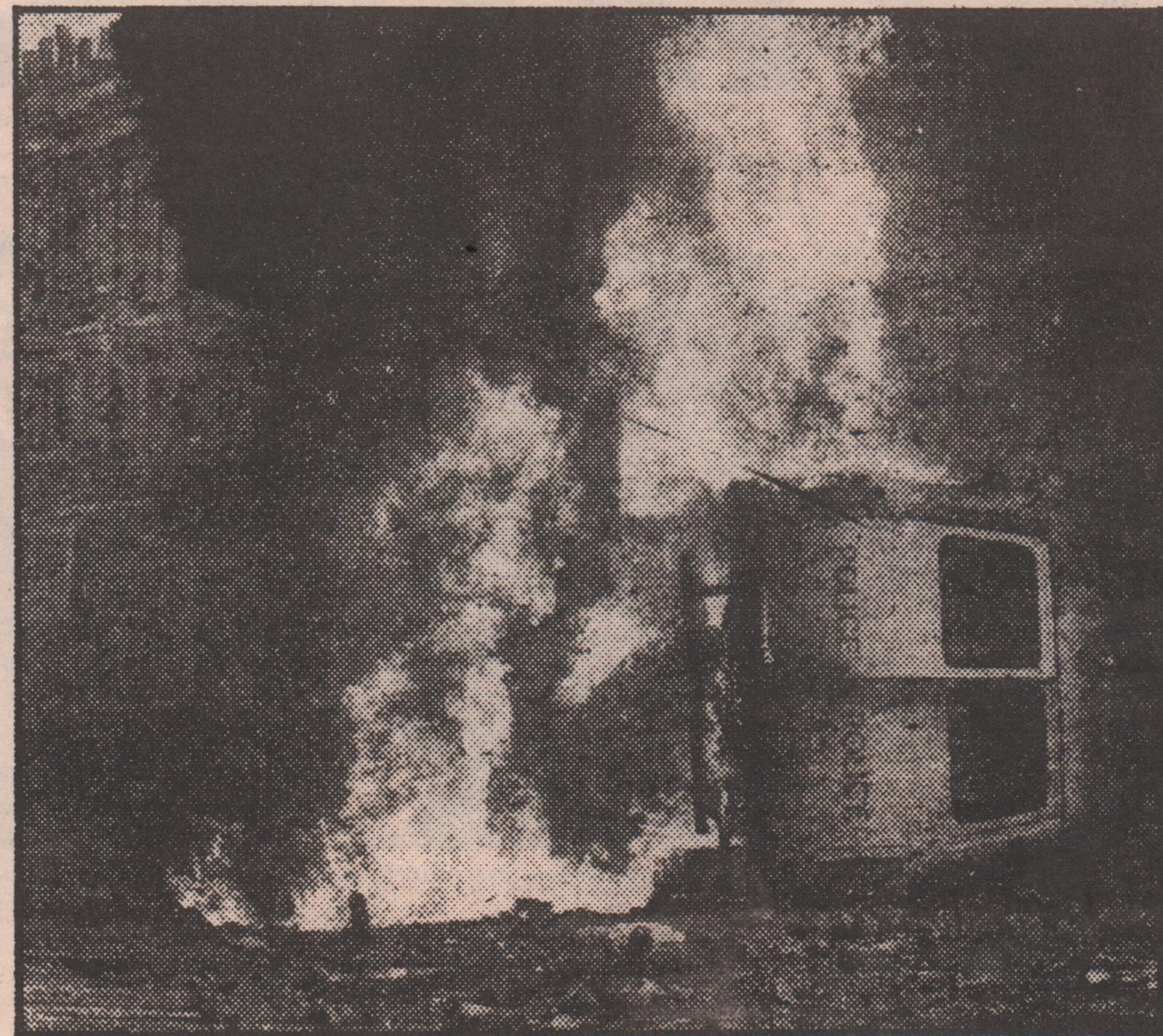
*Move resolutions in your union and Labour Party pledging full support for the hunger strikers and their demand for political status!

*Mobilise the maximum delegations and labour movement banners on the national demonstration called by the National H Block/Armagh Committee for April 26 in London!

*Mobilise pickets, lobbies and publicity campaigns to break the wall of silence and distortion that surrounds the hunger strikes and blanket protest!



Mass support for the hunger strikers in the six counties



BRIXTON ERUPTS!

Brixton did not experience race riots last Saturday and Sunday. White youth fought the police side by side with blacks, who were in the majority.

For the most part, white people went unmolested.

It was an explosion of anger against the police—and against the rotting and decaying capitalist system the police defend and personify to the youth.

It was a revolt against the racist "forces of law and order" who stalk the streets of Brixton wielding the Sus laws like a club—and wielding ordinary clubs too—in a running war with black youth.

Last year Lambeth Council commissioned a report on police/community relations which painted an alarming picture of the relationship between the police and black youth in the area.

Nothing was done about it. In these affairs nothing ever is. The police are a law unto themselves.

They retain the anti-democratic right to be their own prosecutor, jury and judge as well as being the accused in any investigation into charges against

them of gratuitous violence, frame up or racism.

When Blair Peach was beaten to death, the internal police inquiry failed to catch the policeman who murdered him. Naturally.

The police and the media talk of "black paranoia" and say the problem is one of "bad communications".

But it is the black people of Brixton who are the proper judges of their own experience with the police.

The need for the labour movement to assume full responsibility for the interests of the workers and youth of Brixton is urgent.

Socialist Press proposes to the Lambeth labour movement:

*the police should be immediately withdrawn from Brixton.

*black/white labour movement patrols should be set up as community self-policing.

*special provision might have to be made to allow fullest involvement by black community groups.

*The Lambeth labour movement should immediately take steps to start such patrols. They are needed now—and not least against the racist thugs in blue uniforms.

STALINISTS GIVE BOOST TO GISCARD CAMPAIGN

"I am standing in this election as a citizen—candidate not a president-candidate. I will not use my position as president to gain unfair advantage over the other candidates."

So said Giscard d'Estaing in a 20 minute item on the news very reminiscent of the Queen's Speech at Christmas.

Like all his other promises, he has not had any intention of keeping this one.

Giscard has over his last seven years of office developed in pomposity and aspirations to be the King of France.

His arrogant attitude to the struggles of workers and the growing numbers of unemployed; his glittering visits to Black Africa and his defence and boosting of the "greatness of France" and encouragement of nationalism belie his belated attempts at ordinariness.

The French Presidential elections take place in two rounds, the first being on 26 April and the second round on 10 May—a run-off between the two best-placed candidates.

It is worth looking at the record of Giscard since 1974 to see if there can be any credibility put in those "reform" elements in the President's party, the UDF, who say in a new seven year term reforms would be carried out.

Right wing

Seven years ago Giscard stood on a platform of "reform", "change", "openness" and proclaimed his intention of "governing in the centre".

But in fact his term has represented a classic right wing position.

Like Thatcher in Britain, he has carried out, in collusion with Raymond Barre, the Prime Minister, a policy of major attacks on the workers' movement.

Unemployment is now nearly two million with the heaviest toll being exacted among youth.

The rise in prices, rents and social service charges have continually driven down the conditions of workers. The laws which have been proposed to restrict civil liberties have led to massive repression (particularly of immigrants), to censorship of the press and to restrictions on the rights of accused and those in prison.

The emphasis on the restoration of the Great France of the past has encouraged the racists, who have grown more and more emboldened in their attacks on immigrant workers.

Third choice

Giscard's boasting of an independent nuclear armaments policy has brought him into collision with anti-nuclear demonstrators.

He has needed to offer France as a third choice between Washington and Moscow in his diplomacy with the heads of African states in which he has set great store.



Giscard

Mitterand

Chirac

Marchais

Laguiller



Marchais and CP leaders march in support of Mayor of Vitry

He has still to live down his friendship with Emperor Bokassa, now proved to be a cannibalistic murderer and dictator of the impoverished Central African Republic.

Desperately embarrassed at the revelations of his acceptance of 'presents' of jewelry worth hundreds of thousands of francs, Giscard has attempted to gag the press, such as the daily *Le Monde*, with court orders.

His latest attempt to dazzle the electorate has been the agreement just signed with the West German government in a blatant pre-election manoeuvre.

His boasting of trade with the Soviet Union and his refusal to be such a puppet of US imperialist policy as say the British government has paid off.

"Support"

Pravda has divided its support between Marchais, the Communist Party candidate "for class solidarity" and Giscard "because of his foreign policy".

Clearly the Kremlin's so-called "support" for Marchais is just a ritual thing.

Presumably in the second round of the election where the candidates will doubtless be Giscard and Mitterand, the Socialist Party candidate, the bureaucrats in Moscow will argue for a vote for Giscard.

The French Communist Party, while occasionally attacking the Socialist Party, has said its main aim in the election is to beat Giscard, so may find it difficult but not impossible to vote for Mitterand.

But Marchais has already gone so far as to threaten to call strike action if the CP-led CGT union if Mitterand is elected.

Since Giscard sees Mitterand as his main rival to the "throne" he has centred his attack on him.

"It seems to me that there are three issues concerning the French

people—peace, unity and work. My listeners (at election meetings) have understood the importance and the precision of my plan for jobs.

They do not want demagogic or illusory propositions but a well-thought out methodical, calculated, real plan."

This is an allusion to Mitterand's woolly proposals. He has put forward a six-point plan for jobs:

1. Selective regenerating of the economy.
- 2) An organised reduction to 35 hour week.
3. A large national investment for industry.
4. The creation of 210,000 public sector jobs.
5. Reduction of social service charges.
6. An active and concerted politics of wages and jobs."

This is linked with "six measures for social justice" which include things like revision of the tax system, of VAT and taxes on large fortunes.

Mitterand has also campaigned for a reduction in the retirement age.

The Socialist Party has no policies to deal with the problems of the capitalist economic crisis and has put forward a classic reformist position.

Allegiance

Mitterand has, however, particularly over the last seven years gained the allegiance of very large sections of the working class.

The Socialist Party has nurtured the support that the Communist Party enjoyed in the past when it was in a leadership position—its members in 1974 when it played a key role in selling out the general strike.

Because of the illusions now vested in the SP by important sections of the working and middle classes, we will support a critical vote for Mitterand if he emerged as the best placed workers' party candidate.

Electoral support for Mitterand would be to secure a position where workers can make demands of the SP, break from their illusions and create better conditions for the development of a party which will not betray that trust.

Giscard is also challenged from the right by a strong contender Chirac who has concentrated on economic reform, for the renegotiation of the Treaty of Rome and for monetary stability.

The citizens of Paris have unwittingly paid for large

Saturday April 4—the day they caught Mario Moretti—was for Mr Rognoni "the finest day of my life since I became Minister of the Interior".

Mario Moretti, long time best-known leader of the terrorist Red Brigades, has for years been Italy's most wanted person until police captured him in Milan.

For nearly a decade the small left-wing terrorist organisations have snubbed the authority of Italy's political rulers—most notably when they held hostage and then killed Christian Democratic leader Aldo Moro two years ago.

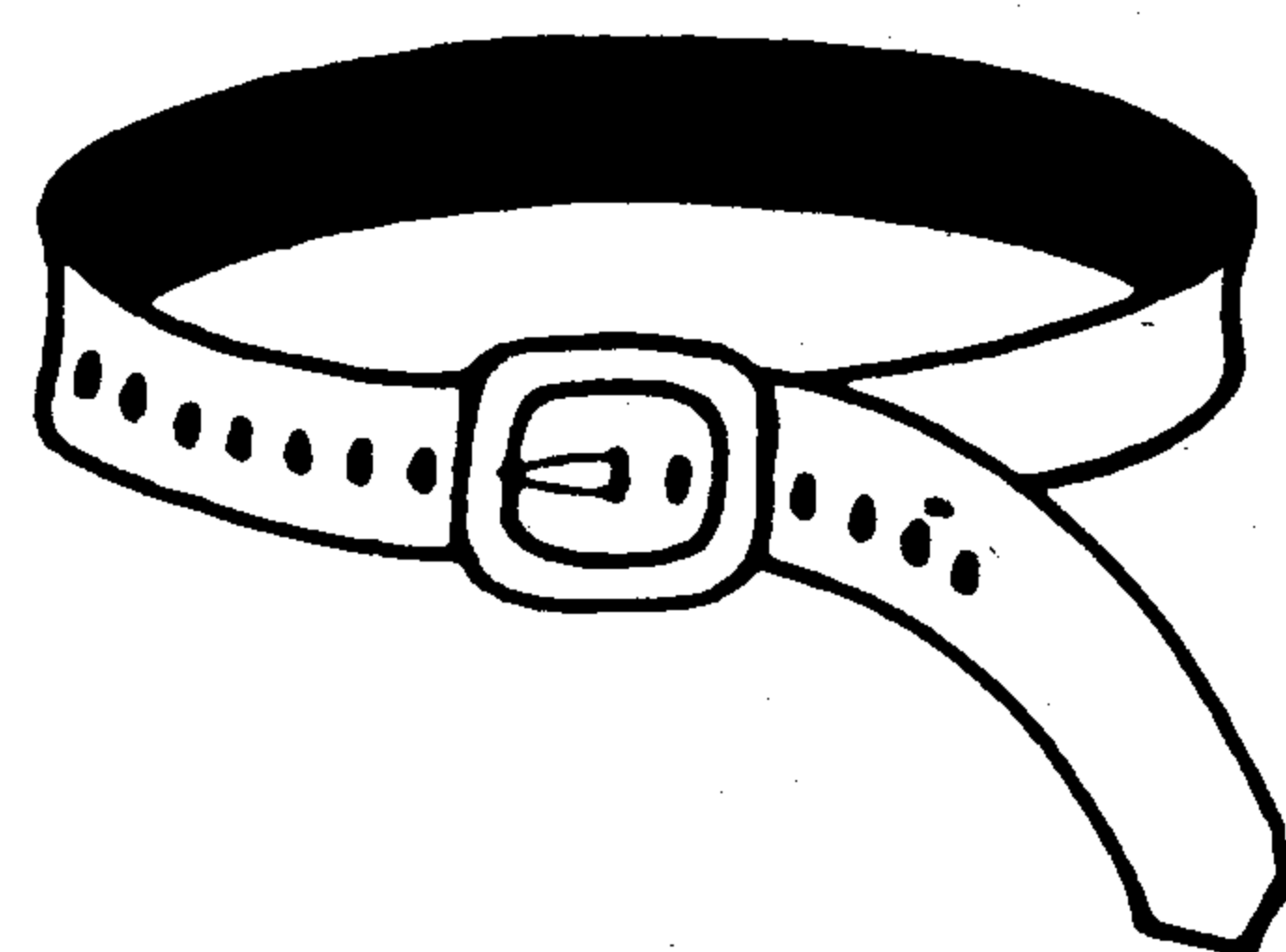
Judges, magistrates, generals and ministers have gone in fear of their lives.

Politically, of course terrorism is not the source of the weakness of the political rulers of Italy.

But terrorism continually exposes the weakness to public view, and stirs the deep divisions both within the Christian Democrats and between them and the other parties of the government coalition.

Equally it is not terrorism which represents the

GISCARD: 7 TROUS EN PLUS A LA CEINTURE



Unité contre Giscard et l'austérité!
Votez Alain Krivine

LIGUE COMMUNISTE REVOLUTIONNAIRE

"Giscard: tighten your belt 7 notches!"—poster for ill-fated Krivine election campaign.

numbers of posters around Paris calling him "A man of conviction. A man with a heart".

The CP have completely changed their election tactics in a way which must horrify many members who want to be communists.

While mouthing many of the same policies as the SP—such as for a 35 hour week and a reduction in retirement age—they have made the main plank of their campaign opposition to immigration, "French jobs for French workers", and the growth of drug abuse, linked with concentrations of particularly North African workers.

From the time of the attack on the immigrant workers' hostel in Vitry, the

CP in Paris seems to have gone into battle on the problems created by the presence of so many non-French workers in France.

They organised the demonstration outside the house of a Moroccan family in Montigny who they accused of being drug peddlers.

Moralistic

This has led to a moralistic, boy-scout type of approach to youth. As Marchais said, "For youth, I choose study, sport, struggle and not drugs".

The CP Stalinists are directing their campaign not round the factories among organised workers as in the past, but in the localities,

among poor French workers who live in conditions similar to the immigrant workers.

The CP has tried to rally its own members on the basis that the Party is now—deservedly—assailed from all sides as a result of their reactionary campaign.

Paid the price

The Stalinist union confederation, the CGT, has paid the price of the new CP policy.

Many immigrant workers have left the union and have joined either the SP-dominated CFDT union or the more right wing Force Ouvrière.

The CP will certainly lose votes and credibility because of its racist, class collaborationist policies.

The Presidential elections are always held up as being open to anyone to stand.

This is not the case. 500 signatures from elected representatives are needed to get a candidate onto the ballot paper.

Alain Krivine of the LCR (section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International) failed to get the necessary number.

A vote in the first round should therefore be given to Arlette Laguiller of the Lutte Ouvrière group.

She is calling for "a vote of defiance so that the workers give a lesson and a warning to the leaders of the major left parties". She makes it clear that she does not think the elections will result in any real change in society.

"The reality of power is in the hands of those with money, the hands of the major families, in the hands of the national and international monopolies."

She bases herself on the interests of the working class and on its needs to struggle against whatever candidate wins the election.

Short day for Rognoni

political needs of Italy's working class. But terrorism has brought out in an extreme form and exposed the craven collaboration of Italy's dominant working class party, the Communist Party.

Until a recent tactical turn towards "opposition" the CP has consistently supported attacks on democratic rights, in the form of anti-terrorist laws.

In its vociferous support for repression of terrorists by the bourgeois state, the CP expresses one side of its policy of class betrayal which assists groups like the Red Brigades and First Line to recruit sections of the radical petty bourgeoisie to their false politics.

In view of all this the politicians of both the bourgeois parties and of the CP would heave a sigh of profound relief if the arrest of Mario Moretti meant the end of terrorism (despite the fact that that also would remove the pretext for some repressive legislation).

Unfortunately for them, however, scarcely had the key turned in the lock of Mario Moretti's prison cell than there were new terrorist attacks bearing all the

hallmarks of a Red Brigade attack.

So Mr Rognoni's finest day didn't last long.

But, worse than that, new storm clouds are gathering for the Italian bourgeoisie.

It is not only terrorism which continually undermines the authority of the bourgeois government—but also financial scandal.

The latest scandal revolves around a list of 500 politicians—of the Christian Democratic and other parties—who had used accounts in one of the banks of Michele Sindona to illegally transfer funds out of the country between 1972 and 1974.

40 billion lire is alleged to have been transferred in this way.

Michele Sindona is now serving a 25 year jail sentence for fraud in the United States.

But his former right-hand person Carlo Bondoni has been extradited from the US and is now being interrogated by an all-party parliamentary enquiry.

The incriminating list of 500, Bondoni admits, was in his possession but he entrusted it to a friend who put it

in the safe keeping of a lawyer and then died suddenly, having conveniently failed to tell Bondoni who the lawyer was!

So the list is officially lost. But Bondoni has already "remembered" 31 names from the list for the parliamentary enquiry.

These 31 included the president of the Senate, Amintore Fanfani, who is also the leader of the most anti-communist wing of the Christian Democratic Party.

Bondoni's list is a threat not only to the Christian Democratic political leaders, but also to the other parties, since the first 31 also include a leading Socialist Party MP, Giacomo Mancini.

It is little wonder that growing sections of the Italian ruling class—headed by the Republican Party which is close to the northern industrial bourgeoisie—are trying to devise a more technocratic government with fewer professional politicians in it, and including perhaps nominees of the relatively clean and reputable Communist Party.

Reagan's successful re-entry

As scientists worked against the clock to re-wire and reprogramme the Space Shuttle, praying almost as hard as the would-be astronauts that the glue succeeds in holding on its heat-shield tiles, doctors were giving the wounded President Reagan his clearance to lift off from the George Washington Hospital.

Reagan successfully negotiated his first re-entry to the White House—to cheers from the world's mass media—while the astronauts were still glumly biting their nails and dosing themselves with Valium at Cape Kennedy.

However, while the Space Shuttle seems doomed to disastrous failure before or soon after the completion of the countdown, the Reagan administration is far from home and dry even after its Head of State's remarkable recovery.

Benefit

Certainly Reagan has benefited politically from the episode. It is ironic that with tens of millions of US citizens cherishing healthy material reasons for wanting Reagan dead, the would-be assassin turned out to be an incompetent, cranky fascist, who hit almost everything but the President.

Having survived the bullet, Reagan can cash in on the sympathy he will now receive from Congress in order to ram through his vicious package of economic policies.

The situation exposed once again the disarray of the Democrats—who are so bombed out by last year's electoral disaster that they scarcely have a leading figure who might be considered worth assassinating!

But Reagan faces tensions and divisions within his Cabinet team—particularly the intense competition for power between the Secretary of State, General Haig, and the Vice President, former CIA Director George Bush.

The weeks prior to the shooting had seen unseemly squabbles over Reagan's decision to announce that Bush, rather than Haig, was the man in charge of "crisis management" at the White House in the absence of the President.

In command

Haig was almost visibly licking his lips when, in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, he was able to take advantage of the absence of both Reagan and Bush to declare to television cameras that he was in command.

Workers the world over shuddered at the prospect of this flamboyant sabre-rattler taking over control of the US military machine.

But Haig had made a blunder in explaining the basis for his new found (and short-lived) power: he is number three only in Reagan's appointed executive, not in the order of precedence embodied in the US constitution.

As Bush arrived back in Washington it was plain that Haig had once again put his

JOHN LISTER examines recent political developments in the wake of the abortive assassination bid.

foot in it with the other members of the Reagan team.

To reestablish himself he must now set out to accomplish something in his field of US foreign policy. And in a period of acute political crisis for imperialism, there is nothing more threatening than a US Secretary of State setting out to accomplish something.

His visit to the Middle East saw immediate backing for the unholy alliance of Zionist armed forces with Lebanese fascists against the occupying Syrian "peace-keeping" troops.

But Haig will be looking for more spectacular diplomatic and military alliances and agreements in the Middle East in order to secure his dual ambition of restoring his own personal political career and furthering the military aggression of US imperialism.

Yet one major propaganda weapon utilised by both Haig and Reagan to justify their huge military build-up has taken a heavy battering—at the hands of none other than the CIA.

No evidence

It has been conspicuous since January that—despite repeated allegations that both Cuba and the Soviet Union are literally pouring

arms and aid to the left wing guerrillas in El Salvador—Haig, Reagan and Defence Secretary Weinberger have been unable to produce so much as a scrap of evidence.

On the basis of no more than bald assertions, the Reagan team has accused the Stalinist leaders of aiding and abetting "world terrorism".

It seemed that possibly some undisclosed industrial dispute had halted the CIA's forgery press—since not even the most flimsy invoice for guns delivered to Salvador has been turned up.

But a draft CIA report has now emerged that not only fails to support the Administration's wild anti-Soviet allegations, but actually pours cold water on them.

Poor quality

The CIA's Foreign Assessments Centre has declared that while there may be some support for the claim that the USSR was supporting terrorism, there was little, if any evidence, and most of that is dubious in quality.

The CIA report flies in the face of a State Department report, allegedly compiled from documents captured in El Salvador, stating categorically that there is:

"definite evidence of the clandestine military support given by the Soviet Union, Cuba and their Communist allies to Marxist-Leninist guerrillas now fighting to overthrow the government of El Salvador."

Weinberger has now publicly attacked the CIA report and repeated that evidence of Stalinist backing for "terrorism" does exist.

ETA tweaks the Generals' noses

ETA (militar) has continued its military campaign against the Spanish armed forces, despite their increased role in policing Euskadi (the Basque country).

And with every successful attack Spain holds its breath—to see if the army general staff will decide that this is to be used as the pretext for the next coup d'état.

But at present there is a chance they will hold off to see how much the civilian politicians will dance to the military tune.

At present in the aftermath of the failed coup of February 23, political leaders of virtually all the parliamentary parties are doing everything they can to please, flatter and placate the Francoist military.

The military have been given an even stronger role in repression in Euskadi.

The process of development of regional autonomy

has been slowed down. The main workers' parties (Socialist and Communist) and their respective national trade unions are calling for moderation so as not to provoke the anger of the generals—and they are organising reactionary demonstrations against ETA.

And the government is strongly resisting any strong move—verbal or otherwise—against the military plotters of February 23.

Military court

They are supposedly being "investigated"—in private, and at snail's pace—by a military court.

But there will be no attacks, no purge and no public investigation.

In taking such a conciliatory line towards the plotters, however, the government runs the risk of losing all its authority rather than share it with the military.

That problem has been highlighted by the fact that



Bush



Haig with Reagan



A new national shrine for the US masses? The Dallas gun shop where failed assassin Hinkley purchased his weapon

But with the nation's major espionage agency not convinced, the credibility of the Reagan case is thrown into new doubt.

Resistance

Meanwhile as the effects of the Reagan assault on public spending, on working class living standards, on jobs, and on health and safety legislation make themselves felt, US miners—on all-out strike—are in the forefront of the resistance.

Youth, facing a prospect of unemployment, conscription and war, blacks and other oppressed minorities and the poorest sections of the US working class can be increasingly expected to find ways of making their opposition felt, too.

Reagan may have survived his first bullet: but he is a long way from persuading American workers that they should bite on the bullet in order to boost the profits of the oil monopol-

ies, banks and millionaire corporations.

His best hopes lie in the fact that the US workers' movement still lacks any independent political expression for its demands. The unions remain tied to the two main capitalist parties.

Labour Party

To take the struggle forward it is vital that a fight is waged in the unions for the breaking of these political shackles, and the building of a Labour Party, within which Marxists will argue for an adequate programme of transitional demands to mobilise a struggle for a workers' government.



The Transitional Programme in Today's Class Struggle

The founding programmatic document of the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee.

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TOWN CLERKS' PLAN FOR DICTATORSHIP

By Ernie Stubbins



In its 20 March 1981 issue, *New Statesman* described the contents of a secret Home Office circular to local authority Chief Executives setting out an outline of the arrangements for the recovery period after a nuclear attack on Britain.

Subsequently *New Statesman* has made available the complete text of the secret circular.

The appearance of this material is an important event for those who are concerned to make a serious study of the state's plans for its own survival. It shows a number of new aspects of state planning which were not previously known.

The circular is numbered ES 3/1976. ES is an abbreviation for Emergency Series. The complete size of the ES series is not known, but it is widely believed that at least 11 have been produced.

Not all of these are directed at local government. Similar plans are made for the nationalised industries, the police and the health and water services.

The first point to be noted about this circular is that it is by now quite old; the material may be as much as ten years old. Certainly it predates the 1979 Home Defence Review which has led to widespread revisions in emergency planning.

It may well be that the *New Statesman* was only able to obtain the document because it is now superseded by more detailed material.

Nonetheless it is the most up to date guide to this area of government thinking.

The text begins with the

injunction against communicating the information in the circular to the press or to any person not specifically authorised to receive it.

It emphasises that during 'normal peacetime' recipients of the circular should not even need to pass on the information in it to their own deputies or assistants, except on a strict 'need to know' basis.

This is notable because the Chief Executives of local authorities are of course employed by elected councils, to whom they should be answerable.

However when it comes to secret Home Office circulars we find that the Chief Executive keeps these plans from the councils who pay him and provide him with the resources to draw up his local war plans.

Light of day

So successful has this secrecy been that a 1976 circular has only now seen the light of day, despite the fact that copies were in the Town Halls of every local authority, including the most militant left Labour councils.

The first section of the circular deals with the problems of 'law and order' after a nuclear attack. Recognising that 'conditions of anarchy' would prevail, the writer, a Mr J.F.D. Buttery, states that an essential task for the wartime regional government would be to establish and maintain public order, using the police and armed forces.

A new system of courts would be set up to cope with the problems of a devastated Britain.

These new courts,

according to the Home Office, would have much greater powers than peacetime courts. There is nothing conditional or hesitant about this statement, no 'might have' or 'could have', but a complete certainty.

This must mean that the writer is fully aware of the powers which the emergency government will have. To be as confident as he obviously is about these powers he must also be sure that they will be arranged through some process other than Parliament.

No civil servant, however senior can ever be truly confident of the parliamentary process in the way that Mr Buttery is about the emergency powers.

Obviously Mr Buttery knows that the powers of the emergency government will never be approved by elected representatives of the people, and will be passed as 'Orders in Council' with the approval of a handful of cabinet ministers and the monarch.

In its description of the likely operation of the emergency courts the circular tells us more than it intends.

While stating that its main targets would be 'The anti-social conduct of individuals which seriously interfered with the essentials of the life of the community', it is in some doubt about exactly what behaviour can be considered anti-social in conditions of total devastation.

It is grimly amusing to read how the senior civil

servant attempts to come to terms with this problem.

However, at a time when the paramount aim would be survival, certain conduct which would be regarded as anti-social in peacetime (e.g. the occupation of empty dwellings, or the appropriation of unused chattels to one's own use) might well be condoned, provided that the act did not involve violence...

In other words, the forces of the state would not set out to protect those who had provided themselves with shelter and supplies from squatters and looters—provided these gangs were not seeking to overthrow the existing government, such as it would be.

Regional Commissioners would be enabled under this circular to make any deals necessary with leaders of gangs of homeless and starving—provided they maintained themselves in positions of public authority and did not allow the development of any mass agitation against the system that had led up to the war.

But there will be no 'kid glove' treatment for those who incur the displeasure of the Chief Executive/Commissioner after the nuclear attack. The delicate Mr Buttery notes that:

"In conditions in which death, destruction and injury were commonplace, such penalties as probation, fines or sentences of imprisonment would no longer be effective in dealing with anti-social offenders."

Such penalties as com-

munal labour, restricted rations and exposure to public disapproval might be appropriate for all but the gravest offences, but in the case of flagrantly anti-social behaviour there might be a need for harsher penalties than would be generally acceptable in peacetime."

Or in plain English, your local town clerk can arrange to have you shot!

And of course Mr Buttery is at pains to assure the Commissioner that he need have no doubt about his ability to be 'decisive'.

If there are any judges or JPs left alive in his area he can bring them into his court, but if not they will not be needed because 'if necessary a Commissioner sitting alone would still constitute a court'.

In order to allay the fears of the most democratically inclined of the Chief Executives/Commissioners Mr Buttery informs us:

"In capital cases, where ever practicable, there would be a jury of not more than five, empowered summarily, or a court consisting of not less than three commissioners."

Concluding this tactfully written section he assures the tremulous Chief Executive that:

"There would be no appeals, but the senior commissioner would make arrangements to review decisions of the emergency courts in his area."

Turning from such painful matters to the real business of survival and recovery for the ruling class, the next section of the circular looks at the 'use of surviving industrial resources'.

The obvious priority would be to assess the power supplies in the Commissioner's region, and to decide on how they should be used. Any stocks of supplies, manufactured goods or productive machinery would have to be identified and plans drawn up for the re-establishment of production at whatever level would be possible.

A special problem would be transport and communications, and Commissioners would have to make hard decisions about which areas of housing, if any in their areas merited any attempts at repair or reconstruction.

Badly damaged areas however would not be completely written off by Mr Buttery and his Commissioners.

"... the main activity in these areas, when radiological conditions permitted movement into them, would be the salvaging of usable building materials."

Encouraging news no doubt for those who live in the big cities, they will not be entirely useless. They will not of course be rescued, but their property may be salvaged after their deaths.

Now all of these gran-diose plans for recovery require a workforce. Mr Buttery is no fool. He is aware that:

"In spite of heavy casualties among the able-bodied population, there should be no general shortage of manpower, since industry, as it existed before the attack, would be virtually at a standstill."

The Commissioners' problems are not so easily solved however. With little or no electrical power available, there will be a return to heavy manual labour both in industrial recovery work and in agriculture. The compassionate Mr Buttery observes that:

"With insufficient food and no balanced diet available, there would be an added reluctance to undertake heavy or unpleasant work."

Problems

But this reluctance must not be allowed to stand in the way of the work of restoration of industry. Mr Buttery reminds Commissioners that they will have powers to 'direct' labour.

There might be some problems, he concedes, in the absence of effective sanctions: but the Commissioner would have charge of all the available food and medicine, and ought to be able to devise some local scheme to keep the hungry workers going.

In his closing paragraphs Mr Buttery faces the bureaucrat's nightmare full in the face, courageously.

The worst and most serious problem, he finally breaks it to the Commissioners, is that the monetary system would have collapsed as a result of even a minor nuclear attack.

It might take a year or even more, says the anxious Mr Buttery, to re-establish a national system of money. Worse yet, the old money might have to be abandoned altogether, and never redeemed by the new government.

Difficulties

The intervening period would be full of difficulties for the Commissioner, but Mr Buttery and his civil servants have advice for the Commissioners even in such dire conditions:

"Regional Commissioners would be assisted in these monetary and other economic problems by financial advisers drawn from the Treasury and the private sector."

Many aspects of this kind of planning appear ludicrous, and may well prove to be wasted effort if the final crunch comes, but there are many possible forms of nuclear attack short of total destruction.

It may well be that these precautions will enhance the survival chances of the ruling class and the bureaucracy during and after a nuclear war affecting Britain. Most importantly, this kind of secret planning is inextricably tied up with state power for the repression of the working class by force.

The establishment system of undemocratic control linking together military, the police and bureaucracies of central and local government presents a very serious concrete threat to democratic rights in Britain.

The embryonic form of the police state are created through these emergency plans.

The Labour Party trade unions must every opportunity to develop these developments expose them to public ination.

Labour Councils publicly demand that officers reveal all secrets from central government, and must refuse to vote money for war plans of any kind.

In London, Islington Council has already announced its intention to public the GLC war plan after it has censored names and addresses of individuals. (It has suggested that this plan will leave very little document at all, but an issue to be faced by the document appears.

Key role

More Labour councils must follow this approach, and rank party members must come home to their constituents that this planning was on in secret in every hall.

Trade unions must take up this vital struggle break up the system of secret planning. On the public sector union a key role to play.

A good example of initiative on the resolution on the part of the NALGO annual conference this year called for an official NALGO resolution into the involvement of members in planning, and their exposure to checks and pressure action against fellow activists.

NALGO members ensure that their delegates are mandated support this resolution to press for it to be passed in full conference.

Other public unionists should thought to drafting resolutions for the conferences.

RAGING GENIUS!

TONY RICHARDSON reviews the new Martin Scorsese film, 'Raging Bull', starring Robert De Niro and now on general release.

"Astounding" is the only way to describe the impression left after seeing the latest Martin Scorsese film, 'Raging Bull'.

The strength is twofold: the power of the film itself—which is even more stunning than 'Taxi Driver', and the acting of Robert De Niro.

If you thought De Niro was good in 'Godfather Part 2', 'The Deerhunter' or 'Taxi Driver', then you haven't seen anything yet.

This performance has to be seen to be believed.

Not only does he eat himself to the point of looking fat for the part of the film, but he is thoroughly convincing in an extremely difficult part.

Hollywood

De Niro got the 'best actor' award—but it is rumoured that 'Ordinary People' only beat 'Raging Bull' for the 'best film' Oscar because director Robert Redford is a Hollywood man, while Scorsese comes from New York.

'Raging Bull' is the story of ex-World Middleweight boxing champion Jake La Motta as told by Scorsese. La Motta was an advisor, but the story line reflects Scorsese's interpretation.

For effect, the film is shot in black and white, except for a few sections shot as family "home movies".

La Motta's early life in the Bronx shows him as a thoroughly despicable character who does not simply "rage" in the ring (where such behaviour is a certain way to lose a fight) but beats up his wife and is generally vicious.

Most reviews, including the *Morning Star* have said that this is enough to turn people off boxing, and that there is no way anyone could identify with this character.

Well portrayed

But what they mean is there is no film reviewer who would identify with him.

La Motta did reach the top in professional boxing—going so far as to beat the legendary Sugar Ray Robinson.

But even after he ends up splitting from his second wife and from his manager brother—after beating him up—Scorsese still ends the film with a religious statement to the effect that "we are all sinners".

La Motta's attitude to women is well portrayed. He beats up both his first and second wife, and treats both entirely as his personal property.

Between fights he spends his whole time thinking his wife is having affairs—even

with his brother. It is this suspicion which leads to him splitting with the only person he is really close to.

This links in with his sense of machismo: he, the great man, is going to make it to the top, on his own, with no help from the 'mob'.

Independent

But the problem is that he cannot get a crack at the title without help, and he is eventually forced to take a "dive" to enable the 'mob' to rake in enough cash to make it worth their while to offer him a title fight.

La Motta is so independent however that he will not simply go down in order to lose the fight: he makes it obvious that he is taking a dive, and loses his licence for a period as a result.

The fact is that the image of the man they couldn't knock down is crucial for his machismo.

Indeed when he finally loses his title to Sugar Ray Robinson he proudly boasts that "you never knocked me down Ray".

In this last fight he seems determined to be badly beaten—trying to make himself suffer.

This pervades the whole film. Why does he have to torture himself? Why can't he have a real relationship with his second wife?

After retirement he opens a club, and allows under-age girls in. He is arrested for introducing them to men.

In prison he keeps asking himself why he does it. He starts punching the wall and knocking his head against it—to make himself suffer.

He winds up as a

compere in a strip club—the stripper being his girlfriend. Then the religious message is delivered.

Scorsese, as a confused elements of the US middle class, sees the blame as an individual question. But he also believes that we are all simply individuals and therefore "all to blame".

His recent interview with Melvin Bragg on the South Bank Show indicated what a tortured mind he has. He plans to make a series of films on early Christianity "to see where we went wrong". Scorsese himself trained as a priest but failed to make the grade.

When asked about the religious maniac who is the main character in *Taxi Driver*—and who goes around shooting people to "clean up the streets"—Scorsese says that his attitude was "basically right", though "he used the wrong methods".

And when describing his past in 'Little Italy'—part of New York—he talked of the racialism of his characters which "intellectually" he rejects, but which plainly remains part of his attitude.

Listening to Scorsese shows that it was no fluke that the young fascist who tried to assassinate Reagan was deeply moved by the film *Taxi Driver*. This blend of religious mysticism and violence strikes a chord amongst many confused petty bourgeois forces in the USA today.

But this criticism of Scorsese's politics is not meant to detract from the genius of his achievement as a film maker. 'Mean Streets', 'Taxi Driver' and now the best, 'Raging Bull' are all great movies.

Boxing—and profits

Is Raging Bull an anti-boxing film?

Certainly the fact that La Motta actually won the world title detracts from it playing such a role, though it is true that he ended up penniless, proving that in those days only the mob and the promoters made real money out of boxing.

The film in no way compares to John Huston's 'Fat City' as an indictment of boxing. Huston's film concentrates on a fighter who never gets very far at all.

But 'Raging Bull' avoids the glorification of boxing depicted in 'Rocky', where the hero revels in beating his fellow man into a pulp.

The best anti-boxing displays however come in

watching the real thing on television—where, for instance, close friends like Sylvester Mittee and Clinton McKenzie wind up trying to knock each other senseless.

Professional boxing is only organised for the money. Boxers only take part for the money. As John Conteh's wife said, "he didn't want to fight".

Recent revelations in the world of professional boxing—with the President of the World Boxing Council Jose Sulaiman accused of taking bribes to arrange world title fights—indicate that Scorsese got it right.

A boxer, for all his sacrifices, cannot make it on his own. And the biggest money is made by hoodlums and parasites who never step into the ring.



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Nurseries: How & Why to Fight for Them



"The aim is to force the state to run the services we need. Many unions — NUPE, NALGO, NUT, etc., cover all sectors in the social and educational services, and their union officials must be forced to act in support of policies already accepted against the cuts..."

So states this vital booklet 60p plus 15p p&p from NCCC, c/o Surrey Docks Child Care Project, Dockland Settlement, Redriff Rd, London SE16.

SCOTTISH TUC TO DISCUSS ACTION AGAINST TORIES

By Donald McVicar

A key debate at this year's STUC at Rothesay beginning on Monday 20 April must surely be that on economic strategy when the course of action to be adopted in the struggle against the Tory government must be decided upon.

Resolutions and amendments from Cumbernauld, Stirling and Moray Trades Councils all demand a more positive stance than that generally favoured by the trade union leadership.

Whereas the TGWU only call for "the continuance of the TUC campaign to bring pressure on the present government", Stirling's amendment wants "a programme of mass action aimed at forcing a General Election and returning a Labour government", whilst Cumbernauld and Moray favour the calling of a General Strike to bring Thatcher down.

Clearly these trades councils have drawn the

lessons of the Tory defeat at the hands of the miners and see the necessity to deliver a knock-out blow to a reeling government.

Their approach contrasts sharply with that of the STUC leadership, whose Scottish Convention on unemployment earlier this year could only bring down upon them the ridicule and contempt of militant workers.

No churchmen

That feeling is conveyed in the resolution from Edinburgh and District Trades Council on unemployment which specifies that this cannot be fought "by inviting Conservative, Liberal and Church people to Conferences."

Obviously the strategy of forcing the resignation of the Tories requires a consistent build up of the forces of resistance at a local level and the resolutions from Edinburgh and Falkirk Trades Councils calling for the establishment of Centres for

Unemployed Workers and Unemployed Workers Associations point the way forward on that vital front.

At another level, that of cuts in local government, the NALGO resolution that the General Council should convene "a meeting of affiliated unions in the Local Government sector and Local Authorities who are opposed to the government's policy", is a worthwhile contribution which should be built upon.

An occasion for debate of more than usual interest must surely be the resolution that follows from the FBU which "calls upon the movement to discuss with the Labour Party, at local and national level, the possibility of a no cuts, no rate rises" policy.

The adoption of a principled position on rates would be a major step forward by the STUC.

A keynote resolution in the section on international affairs must be the Dundee Trades Council call for a declaration of support for the Palestinians in their struggle for "an independent sovereign state".

Courageous

The courageous stance of the Dundee Labour Council on this issue deserves the fullest backing of the Scottish trade union movement, thus rebuffing the propaganda of the Zionist orientated capitalist press.

On some of the other international resolutions, a degree of confusion is

apparent. The only resolution on Northern Ireland is that from ASLEF which speaks of "an end to... the... search for a military solution to the crisis", but stops short of a call for withdrawal of British troops and contains no mention of the demand for political status for Republican prisoners.

Poland also figures on the agenda in a resolution from USDAW which tries to square the circle by on the one hand welcoming the free trade union movement, whilst on the other, hoping "that the warm and friendly relationship which has existed between the Polish trade union movement and the STUC will be maintained."

Attempts by the mover of the motion to reconcile these two incompatibles should prove an absorbing balancing act.

Criticisms

The Conference promises to be the occasion for some sharp criticisms of the way in which the Scottish trade union leadership has conducted itself over the past year.

Many militant trade unionists have been unimpressed by such activities as the undermining of the strike at Hunterston Marine Construction and the weak-kneed Scottish Convention on Unemployment.

This conference may well witness the emergence of forces prepared to challenge the old guard and thus provide fighting policies and resolute leadership.



PRESS GANG

The press was only mildly concerned. Harry West exuded confidence. The SDLP were going to spoil their votes. The army had taken charge of the ballot boxes.

God was in his Protestant heaven and all was well with the world.

Bobby Sands' election as MP of Fermanagh and South Tyrone shattered this confidence with a brutality which left Fleet Street dazed and disorientated.

The *Daily Mail* didn't report the election at all until page nine. The *Daily Express* had front page banner headlines: Elected the Hon Member for Violence.

For years the Provisionals have been accused of lacking support and of not daring to put themselves to the test of the ballot box rather than the bullet.

Now the press found itself calling for Sands to be given the bullet.

The *Times* called for his immediate expulsion from the House of Commons.

With the timeless double-talk of the bourgeoisie it remarked coolly:

"That would be an entirely proper thing to do since he is precluded from attending the House for the duration of this Parliament."

Yet even the *Times* was forced to concede:

"It is a brilliant propaganda coup for the Provisional IRA. It authenticates their H Block protest as never before."

The *Daily Telegraph* described it as "a major political disaster" and also gave an

approving nod to his 'expulsion' from the House of Commons:

"In order to give Fermanagh and South Tyrone a chance to elect a suitable representative."

(Harry West for example?—but how do you expel someone from Westminster when he has never left his prison cell?)

The government must stand firm, said the *Telegraph*, but it complains that such firmness:

"will now be misrepresented as an attack on the electoral rights of a Parliamentary constituency."

There is no misrepresentation required. The outcome of the election forces the capitalist class to spell out that its "democracy" extends rights only to those prepared to work within the system, and denies them to all others.

The *Guardian*—no wet liberal over Ireland—was honest enough to admit that with the election, years of myth-making had gone out of the window.

"The biggest myth is that the IRA in its violent phase represents only a tiny minority of the population... Scarcely a Catholic can have voted for the Union as it stands now. That fact alone must colour all policy-making between London, Dublin and Belfast."

Shock has a way of making people say things they conceal in calmer times.

If Bobby Sands could only get the British press in his H Block cell he too could gauge how deeply his election has shocked the system of British imperialism.

BACKING FOR BENN AT JOBLESS RALLY

George Bolton, Vice-President of the Scottish Area of the Mineworkers' Union, speaking in Falkirk on Monday last, launched a scathing attack upon Terry Duffy, Alex Kitson and those other trade union leaders who have set out to sabotage Tony Benn's campaign to become Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The personal role of Benn is not the main issue, said Bolton, but what he represents in terms of the demand of the rank and file for implementation of socialist policies.

These criticisms of sections of the trade union leadership followed upon a ringing call for the overthrow of the Thatcher government by mass working class action, recalling the defeats inflicted upon Heath by the miners in 1972 and 1974.

The occasion of this significant speech was a well attended public meeting in Falkirk Town Hall to promote the campaign against unemployment in the

Central Region.

Earlier, the meeting had heard Bridie Bellingham speaking on behalf of the workers in occupation at the Lee Jeans factory in Greenock, explain how the multinational employers had deliberately run the factory down to make it appear inefficient—with the aim of transferring production to their factory in Northern Ireland which is less well organised than the workforce at Greenock.

Open the books

The workers had asked the management for an independent enquiry to examine the books of the firm and challenge their argument that the factory was not viable.

On the basis of the published accounts alone, said Bridie, it was clear that profits had remained high throughout the 1970s.

The response of the trade union and labour movement over the nine weeks of occupation had been "brilliant" and the workforce were determined to fight on to victory.

The workers had rejected all blackmail attempts by the

management, and had publicly burnt the last batch of letters sent out to them.

No threats or bribes would induce the workforce to surrender; "We are not in the business of selling jobs".

A collection at the meeting raised over £60 for the fighting fund at Lee Jeans.

A salutary warning note was struck at the meeting by Jim Denham, victimised ex-shop steward at Longbridge. Speaking from the platform, he contrasted the past reputation of strong trade union organisation at British Leyland with the defeats that have been inflicted since Edwardes took over—57,000 jobs gone, numerous factories closed and the sacking of shop stewards, beginning with Derek Robinson 18 months ago.

Undermined

Jim drew attention to the way in which the trade union leadership involved, especially that of the AUEW, had repeatedly undermined the militant response of the workforce.

"High unemployment", warned Jim, "threatens us all, even those in factories

with a reputation for militancy and strong unionism."

The meeting was another step forward in the ongoing campaign in the Central Region against unemployment.

Beginning with a conference in Falkirk in October last year, there have been since then a successful demonstration in Stirling and the establishment of an Unemployed Workers Association in that town.

Centres for the unemployed are also in the course

of being set up in Alloa, Grangemouth and Stirling—to ensure the closest relationship between the unemployed and the trade union and labour movement fighting together against the Tory government.

Lynn Mackenzie, Secretary of Falkirk Trades Council and a leading figure in the campaign, outlined all of this to the meeting and went on to appeal for support for forthcoming activities such as street collections in Falkirk on the following two Fridays and a rally in Stirling that Wednesday afternoon as part of the TUC "week of activity".

The campaign being waged in the Central Region of Scotland may be regarded as containing valuable lessons for the entire trade union and labour movement as to how to orientate and organise a struggle against unemployment.

The way is now opening for a fuller exchange of experiences amongst the various organisations of the unemployed that have sprung up throughout the country in order to draw upon the lessons grasped in the different areas and to begin to coordinate these campaigns.



Benn

Faslane 'explosion' threat Coventry council workers rebel

Knees could almost be heard knocking last week as Civil Service union leaders issued dire warnings to the Tory government.

If Thatcher's gang sent in Navy scabs to break the strike by civil servants at the Faslane Polaris base in Scotland, there might be an 'explosion' of strike action, they warned.

In other words, an ill-considered move by the government could wreck the union bureaucrats' carefully laid plans to restrict the

scope and direction of the selective strikes they have been calling for the past six weeks.

Militancy

There is no doubt that the level of militancy among civil servants remains very high—despite the efforts of union leaders to wear down members' fighting strength through demoralising partial action designed to spin out the pay battle for as long as possible.

By holding off their threatened move to use Navy

personnel to do the work of the Faslane strikers the Tory government implicitly recognised this strength—and the crucial role being played in their defence by the union leaders.

Elsewhere the extent to which the Thatcher government has antagonised crucially-placed workers even in the military and espionage sectors was confirmed by the stoppages at satellite tracking stations and the top secret GCHQ monitoring station (which featured prominently in the ABC 'Official Secrets' trial).

But such support for action can be frittered away if the union leaders are not forced to step up the action and press home the fight for the full claim.

Hull strike solid

The strike by 600 workers at the Priestmans factory in Hull enters its third week with no sign of the unions involved making the action official.

The strike began on Friday 27 March when the workforce walked out after management had posted up a notice saying there would be a 10% cut in the workforce and that there would be no annual wage increase.

The workers remain solid, and determined that management withdraw any threats of redundancies and open up negotiations on a realistic wage increase, before there is any talk of a return to work.

The developments of the past week have clearly shown how great is the gulf between the strikers and the official leadership.

The strike committee have resisted all the efforts of the bureaucracy to wrest the control of the strike out of their hands, openly displaying their suspicion and distrust.

The Priestmans management who initially refused to discuss the situation at all, have now said they are prepared to meet with the full time officials, but not in the presence of shop stewards.

This has been totally opposed by the strike committee, who correctly stress that they as the elected representatives of the workforce, must be involved in any talks that take place.

Blackmail

This appears to be one of the reasons why the AUEW, one of the unions involved, has not made the strike official.

The District Committee of the AUEW endorsed the decision taken by their membership, but because the full time officials are not involved in the strike, the EC of the AUEW will not ratify the decision taken by the District Committee.

In effect they are trying to blackmail the strikers into handing over the reins to the official leadership.

A meeting called by the full time officials which brought the strike committee and the bureaucrats together was designed, as stated by one of the stewards, to split the strikers and get them back to work.

The meeting ended up in a slanging match.

A delegation from the strike committee has visited the Manchester area where they were well received by stewards from plants also in the Acro group. As a result, a conference has been set up for all shop stewards in the Acro group to meet towards the end of the month.

*Messages of support and donations to the strike fund should be sent to: Priestmans Strike Fund, c/o AUEW, 78 Beverley Road, Hull.

A magnificent class response by Coventry's 700 local authority workers developed over the course of the last week.

This action was triggered off after years of consistent attacks that the City Council had launched upon the working conditions of local government trade unions.

Though forced to beat a total retreat by the furious reaction and united strike action of several sections of manual workers, council leaders have signalled their intention to implement Tory cuts by far-reaching and many-sided attacks on the public sector workers.

The strike arose after management responded to a union meeting by taking city engineers off the clock along with 150 other workers.

Frustrated at this latest attack on their ability to discuss their problems workers staged a spontaneous march of protest to the Council House.

This set off other events that culminated in the biggest local authority strike in Coventry since the 1960s.

By Thursday the action had escalated and the workers were joined by the entire City Engineers Depot plus those at Whitley and Windmill Road.

Standstill

Street lighting, cleansing, refuse collection, highways, stores, and mechanics all came to a total standstill.

At issue was the council's history of demanning, running down of essential services and the recent imposition of cuts, rent and rate increases, together with another attack—limiting shop floor meetings to 15 minutes and lock-outs devised to divide the workforce.

The strike committee's demands are:

1) the right to hold shop floor meetings of a reasonable duration.

2) to maintain traditional sections

3) that management negotiate before forcing new duties upon the workforce.

A volatile situation arose. The political scene was complicated by the Labour Group's call for the expulsion of the 12 left wing rebel councillors, some of whom had supported the demands of the strike.

Hysterical

In the District Labour Party meeting on Thursday night councillor Geoff White the chairman of the public works committee sought to prevent a discussion on the strike after making a hysterical statement against the strikers in the local press—which at once sprang to their defence.

In the eyes of the strikers the hypocrisy of the right wing councillors did not go unnoticed.

After years of cuts, the cause of the elderly, the mentally and physically handicapped, day centres, hospitals appointments and the 'innocent' was being nobly upheld by these class traitors!

Workers maintained picket lines, contacting the Parks Department and ambulance, fire and bus stewards, and setting up a strike headquarters.

The strike committee was beginning to consolidate itself on Thursday as a totally independent shop stewards committee forging links with all sections in the dispute.

Proposals for a strike fund were elaborated upon and the strike committee was acquiring a firm identity.

While the workers were organising the city wide dispute, Mayor Tom McLatchie

returned with TGWU officials from talks with the Council on Thursday afternoon.

He brought news that the Council had agreed to go back to status quo. This meant the total collapse of the council position with an agreement in document form.

An emergency shop stewards committee was called for that evening and it ended with a vote to recommend a return to work at the mass meeting the following day.

Union officials having witnessed the strength of local authority workers developing, were relieved to secure a quick settlement.

The strike committee had discussed taking complete control of policy and had plans for the setting up of an ongoing organisation arising from the strike in order to defend jobs in the future.

However, the TGWU official, effectively claiming credit for the victory, wound up the mass meeting swiftly in an attempt to defuse the new found unity of the workforce.

Confused

The meeting ended in a confused manner without having discussed a perspective of developing strength from the dispute.

The task now remains to regain the organisation of the shop stewards movement and to shape it in the form of a joint shop stewards committee which can prepare itself for the next round of attacks that the council has to introduce under new conditions.

The defensive action of the local authority workers must now be turned into a political offensive against future cuts and against the class traitors of the labour movement.

BL SKILLED MEN DEFEND JOBS

On Wednesday the 600 AUEW skilled men in the Leyland Body Plant at Cowley walked out. They are due to meet on Tuesday as we go to press.

The strike is in response to a company offensive which is aimed at breaking all demarcation lines.

Amongst the skilled men this first of all means merging some skilled departments such as the Press and General Millwrights.

But this is only the first step. It is to be followed by the skilled men doing a number of other jobs—such as sweeping.

The same is happening amongst production workers where, on the new Leyland Honda, workers are doing their own inspection and their own sweeping.

The AUEW members are making a stand for all Leyland workers. And, true to form, the AUEW has instructed them back to work.

Immediately the strike started the company was able to issue a letter to all the strikers saying:

"There is no objection from your union full time officials to the amalgamations taking place."

But these amalgamations, and those amongst other

workers, are rapidly creating a situation where compulsory redundancies are liable to take place.

The strike of the skilled men is having only a limited effect at the moment.

The danger is that a defeat would not only set back the fight in defence of jobs but also enable union leaders to victimise toolroom leader Roy Fraser—who has just resigned as Oxford District President in disgust at the AUEW leadership's attitude.

The only possibility for victory is the continuation of the strike and the blacking of scab work done by management.

NUPE ATTACK ON OCCUPATION CALL

The National Child Care Campaign held its Aims and Action Conference on Saturday 11 April at Redfield School, Oxford.

The day's events were marred at the beginning with the report that the NUPE East Midlands Division (in the form of official John McGuigan) wanted the cam-

paign's publication, *Nurseries: How and Why to Fight for Them* withdrawn from circulation.

The attack centres mainly round the claim that McGuigan has been 'libelled' in the account of his failure to defend the jobs of 136 Nottingham nursery workers.

The East Midlands Division is to ask their National Executive to recommend withdrawal from the NCCC.

The issue was not discussed or voted on at the conference (on the constitutional grounds that affiliated groups had not been notified of this item on the agenda). But a discussion will take place at the next National Steering Meeting in Newcastle on 30 May.

Implications

The attack has implications for the campaign which has from its inauguration realised the importance of being independent and not relying on charitable status so that one could campaign without fear of losing funding.

NUPE's threatened withdrawal, while having some serious implications for the campaign in its aim of seeking to orientate towards the trade union and labour movement, will confront the campaign with the importance of its independence and not being dictated to by seemingly powerful individuals or organisations.

This was reiterated later on in the morning's agenda when there was a move to

amend one of the "aims" to delete support for the policy of occupations and strike action in defence against cuts in child care provision.

It was argued by advocates of this deletion that organisations like the Council of One Parent Families and the Campaign for Nursery Education would not affiliate on such a political aim in fear of losing their charitable status.

It was noticeable in the vote that John McGuigan voted for the amendment though he had earlier stressed his involvement in occupations and tried to take credit for putting forward a call for occupation in Nottingham.

The vote on the amendment was close; it was lost by 3 votes.

In the afternoon workshops discussed defending provision, making childcare a trade union issue, regional groups, research groups, and childcare and the Labour Party.

There were many recommendations that came out of the workshops for further action in the next few months.

A message of support went from the conference to Beal Street occupation in Leicester and to the Gorbals nursery occupation in Glasgow.

The tasks ahead of the campaign are demanding—to retain its independence while at the same time broadening out and getting more trade union and labour movement affiliations. Has your trade union branch or Labour Party ward affiliated?

BEAL ST SIT-IN HOLDS FIRM

Parents and supporters at Beal Street Play Centre have now entered their third week of occupation in their fight with the Tory County Council to keep it open.

Despite an offer from the Social Services which would give them the use of the building to continue to run it themselves they are determined to stick out for their demand that Social Services should continue to fund it as before.

The offer came from Social Services Director Brian Rice after a delegation from Social Services had visited the occupation to discuss with the parents' action committee.

Local elections

Although no agreement was reached the local paper, the *Leicester Mercury*, who have frequently pioneered self-help as an alternative answer to cutting services, proclaimed in their headline that the parents had won and accepted a self-help scheme.

The forthcoming local

elections are an important feature in this campaign.

At present the Tory Council has taken no legal action against the occupation nor have they made any move to cut off services.

The massive cuts in education and social services have made possible a Labour majority on the County Council for the first time.

However, parents have no illusions in the Tory council reversing their decision. There is a Social Services Committee meeting being held on Wednesday when Beal Street will be discussed and there may well be an attempt to offer a compromise solution.

A large lobby is planned and three Labour councillors on the Council are already committed to fighting for it to stay open.

There has been support from Labour councillors on both the County and City Councils and it is planned to consolidate this to further the campaign.

In the event of the Tory council rejecting the parents' demand, they will call on the Labour controlled City Council to take it over.

Letters and offers of practical support have come from NUT, NUPE, AUEW, CPSA, Blind and Disabled Association, the Youth Bureau, women's lib groups, Labour Party wards and many others.

This kind of support, coupled with increasing backing from the community such as the £14 raised in door-to-door collections on Saturday, must be turned into a sharp political fight with the Labour City Council to provide this very necessary facility in the city and a complete rejection of any kind of self-help scheme.

The action committee was very heartened by the occupation in Gorbals and letters of support and solidarity have been sent to the occupation of the Moffat Street Nursery there.

These kinds of action against cuts show clearly the willingness and determination of the working class to struggle against the Tories.

*Messages of support and donations should be sent to the action committee, c/o 1 Pegasus Close, Leicester.

CORRECTION

Translation problems in *Socialist Press* 241 brought two errors into the text of our interview on Turkey (page 3).

The bottom paragraph of the first column should have begun:

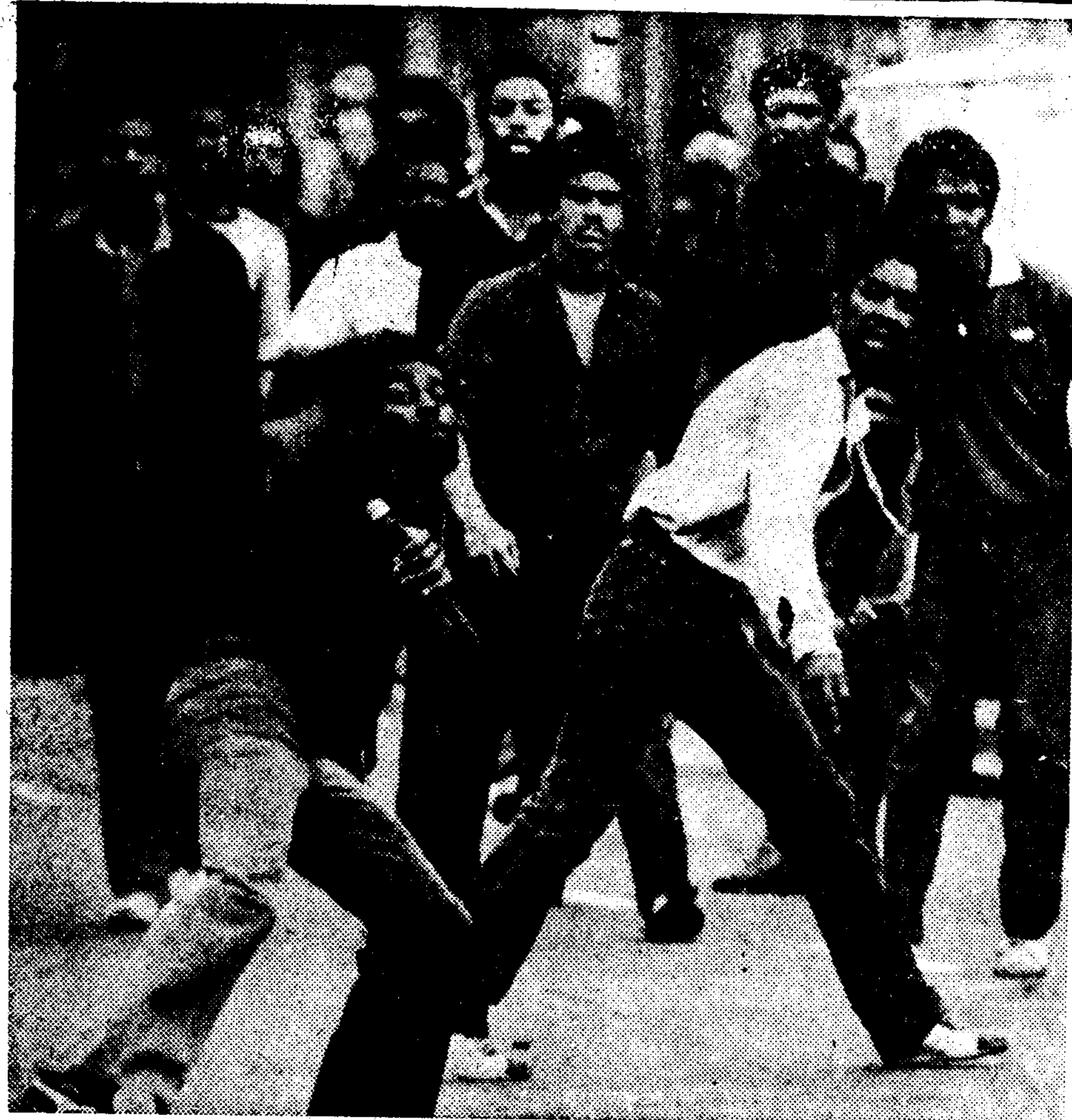
"From 1973 to 1980 the monopoly capitalists tried to overcome their crisis..."

And the third paragraph of the reply to the second question should have read:

"In contrast to this appearance of general tolerance it takes a very sharp irreconcilable attitude to proletarian socialist left groupings and fascist terrorists who had been alienated from popular support."

TURKEY SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The TSC campaigns in the labour movement to expose the claims that the Turkish military junta is in any way 'democratic' and fights for solidarity action in support of the Turkish working class. If you would like more information about the campaign write to TSC, BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.



BRIXTON HITS -BACK!

Report from
Brixton by Henry Phillips

The citizens of Brixton last weekend struck a major blow against police repression.

The head of the Brixton police claims that it was "outsiders" who fomented the anti-police riots.

He is right—but the outsiders were all wearing blue uniforms.

The massive outburst of fury expressed by thousands of inhabitants of Brixton—mostly but by no means only young, mostly but by no means only black—was clearly provoked by the police.

Following an incident on Friday April 10 in which police had been attacked while arresting a black youth, from early Saturday extra police began to arrive in the town.

As the day wore on the number of police in the streets grew steadily until, as was entirely predictable, the mounting tension exploded.

Barricades

Groups of young people built barricades around Railton Road—one of the areas of worst housing conditions in Brixton—and directed their anger against the police.

Stones and petrol bombs were thrown. Several houses and shops and two pubs were burnt down before the police regained control of the area after a series of charges and attacks.

At the same time in the main street and the market area shop windows were broken and goods were looted on a very large scale.

As the main body of those involved in the riots was dispersed and the police—now in numbers probably never before seen in an area of London—got control of a smouldering and glass-strewn town, they began a series of small police riots.

Arriving in the area soon after 10 p.m. I saw several unprovoked police baton charges directed at groups of young black bystanders.

I saw individuals pulled out of the groups and savagely beaten by groups of 5 or 6 police.

Anyone watching this too closely was told by other police to "piss off" or "fuck off".

The police claim that 190 of them were hurt. The number injured by the police must run into hundreds though they claim they only arrested 80 people.

Occupation

The next day (Sunday) Brixton was under police occupation and siege. Main roads through the town were blocked and bus and underground services suspended.

And Brixton waited for the next results of continuing police provocation.

And the labour movement, the black movement—and the ruling class—began to consider what had happened and its consequences.

The outburst of anger was in no sense a race riot. It was directed first of all against the police who for years have treated Brixton as virtually an occupied area and carried out continual harassment especially of young blacks and of gays.

Second, the looting was directed largely against big stores (Woolworths, Burtons, Morleys, a big department store) and not so much against small locally owned shops (though there was considerable looting of market stalls).

Provoked

Third, though the movement was predominantly black, it was not directed against whites as such and a not insignificant number of whites (including skinheads) fought against the police.

There is some evidence in the destruction of property that it was consciously directed against known racists, though some of it was obviously more indiscriminate.

Why did it happen?

Clearly the events were provoked by the mounting police occupation of the town on Saturday.

It is very hard to believe that this provocation was not completely conscious, designed both to give a pretext for more police harassment of blacks and also perhaps with broader political objectives such as spreading racist support for the Tories' racist Nationality Bill and other such measures. Though the police were almost certainly taken aback by the strength of resistance which they did provoke.

It was striking after the events that the radio and the bourgeois press found it difficult to find anyone in the local area who did not blame police provocation for the riots.

Urgent

Difficult too to find anyone who was hostile to the implicit grievances and demands of the rioters.

Because they reflect the unemployment, bad housing conditions, poverty and racial oppression by the police, all of which are worsening as a result of the policies of the Tory government.

It is urgent that these grievances are taken up with maximum vigour by all socialist, labour movement, black, women's and gay organisations—both in Lambeth and nationally around the demand for the ending of the police occupation of Brixton and of continued police harassment of blacks, gays and others, and the dropping of all charges against those arrested.

Into such a campaign, too, should be brought demands relating to unemployment useful public works spending, the organisation of the unemployed, the provision of youth facilities and against racism—the abandonment of the Nationality Bill and the repeal of the racist Immigration Acts.

All of these policies imply the need to bring down the Tory government.

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

POLISH PM's 'NO STRIKE' CALL

Polish Prime Minister Jaruzelski has succeeded in pushing a law through the Sejm (parliament) banning strikes for two months. He said that if the law wasn't passed he would resign.

This was a clear threat, with the inference that if he goes, Russian troops will move in.

The first response of Solidarity was clear:

"Suspension of the right to strike will be interpreted by the community as an announcement of measures which can generate these

strikes."

Solidarity leaders threw down a challenge to the Sejm's power:

"No resolution of the parliament will manage to prevent a strike if the security of our union is threatened or a glaring violation of the law occurs."

The latter point is a challenge in that it effectively states that the union has a right to decide what "the law" is.

This confrontation has weakened the hand of Lech Walesa who has been arguing in Solidarity for an end to strikes.

The question is why the

Polish bureaucracy is carrying out this provocation when their policy has up to now been to try to strengthen Walesa and weaken the militants.

This policy was once more confirmed by a private speech to militiamen given by Politburo member Andrzej Zabinski in which he described how the Polish government hoped to bureaucratise Solidarity.

The reason for Jaruzelski's moves were revealed by his references to the worsening economic crisis which forces the government to act.

Solidarity is right. The 'no strike' moves were because the government is going onto the offensive. Contained in Jaruzelski's speech was also a proposed austerity programme.

He proposed rationing of bread and other products, closing factories, cutting house building, and selling off machinery to other workers' states.

And he insisted that 'all goods that don't fulfill basic social needs and can be sold outside the country must be exported'.

All this is to pay Poland's huge foreign debts.

This "austerity" comes at a time when Jaruzelski himself already admits that life for Polish shoppers is "torment".

This crisis is not resolvable by peaceful means.

The Polish bureaucracy will not fade away and cannot be reformed out of existence.

It is necessary to build a revolutionary party in Poland to lead a political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy and defend the nationalised property relations.

There is a strong possibility of developing such a revolutionary leadership. The mass movement is in a ferment of discussion.

When Polish CP leader Stanislaw Kania last week addressed workers in the Lenin shipyard at Gdansk the questions he was asked showed a very high level of understanding.

Another important question was what happened to the \$26 billion borrowed from the West:

"We don't know how that money was used... society has a right to know".

This latter point, which is really calling for the opening of the books, shows how a transitional programme would connect in with the spontaneous struggle of the Polish masses.

It follows on a series of similar wide-reaching spontaneous developments such as workers defence squads to guard militants against the bureaucracy.



Lech Walesa

SPECIAL FUND Off to a great start

We can only say that we are delighted at the response to our £2,500 Special Fund appeal.

Within two weeks we have received £967.00. The Fund, which runs until the beginning of the WSL Summer School on 19 July will ensure our return to 12-page production of *Socialist Press*, which began last week, and provide more resources for the development of our international work.

Our thanks therefore to the following for their donations:
Oxford: KW £50. BC and HC £150. TR £30. Anon £130. AT £60; Oxford supporters £52; BM £100.

London: SG £40; DF £50; BS £50; AC £20; GH £50; West London supporter £5.

Midlands: Coventry supporters £44; MJ, Leicester, £80.

North West: DS and SS £25; DM and WM £20. Hull: GN £11.00.

If you haven't sent us a donation yet, our address is:

Socialist Press Special Fund
BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX

And in the meantime, don't forget that we have to complete our Monthly Fund of £850 each month.

We can't afford to fall behind on this fund because it would mean diverting money from our Special Fund to make up the shortfall.

The total for the April fund stands at £358.04 leaving us £491.96 to raise by the end of the month.

If you have a bank account why not consider filling in the Standing Order form printed below.

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Please pay on (date of 1st payment)

To Cooperative Bank, Northampton Branch, Code No.

08-90-73 the sum of £ (in words)

for credit to the account of the Workers Socialist League

Account number 5023090153 and make similar payments

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cancelled in writing, charging such payments to my/our

account. numbered

Signature

Date