

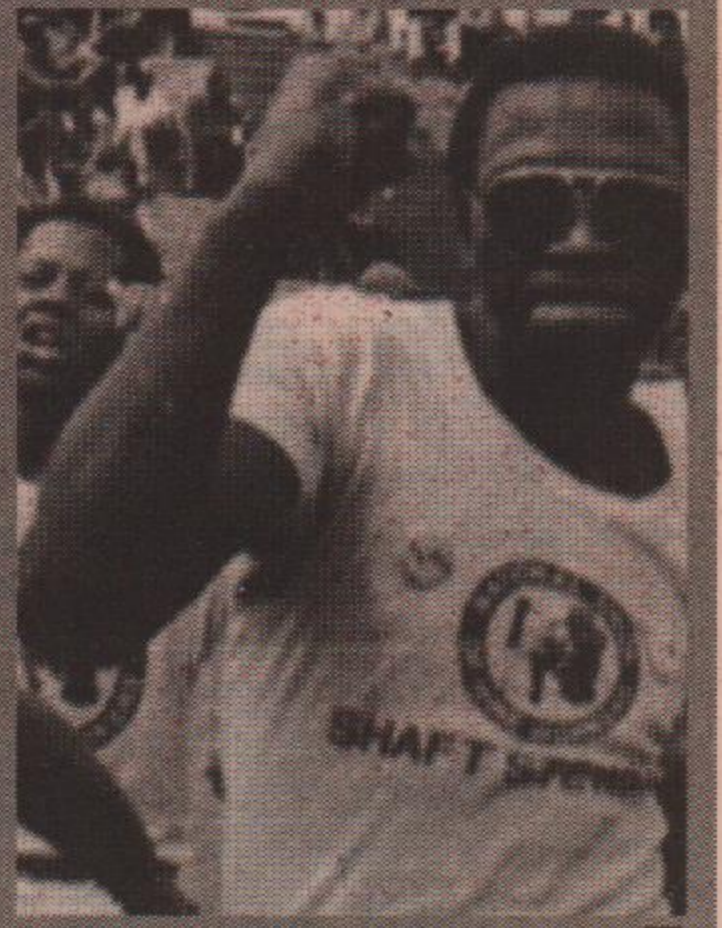
SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

Workers' Liberty '93

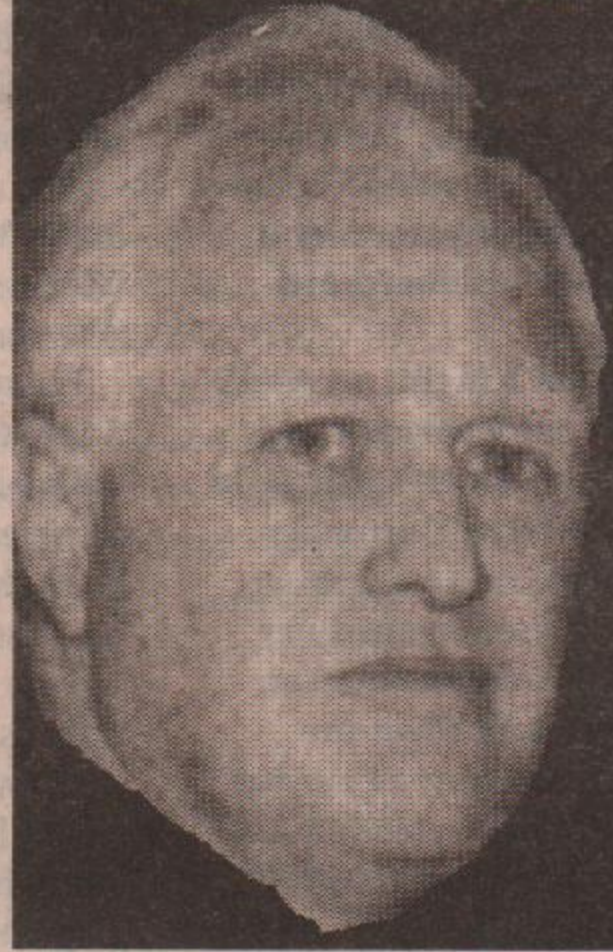
...three days of socialist debate from Friday 2 to Sunday 4 July at Caxton House, 129 St. John's Way, Archway, North London, hosted by the Alliance for Workers' Liberty



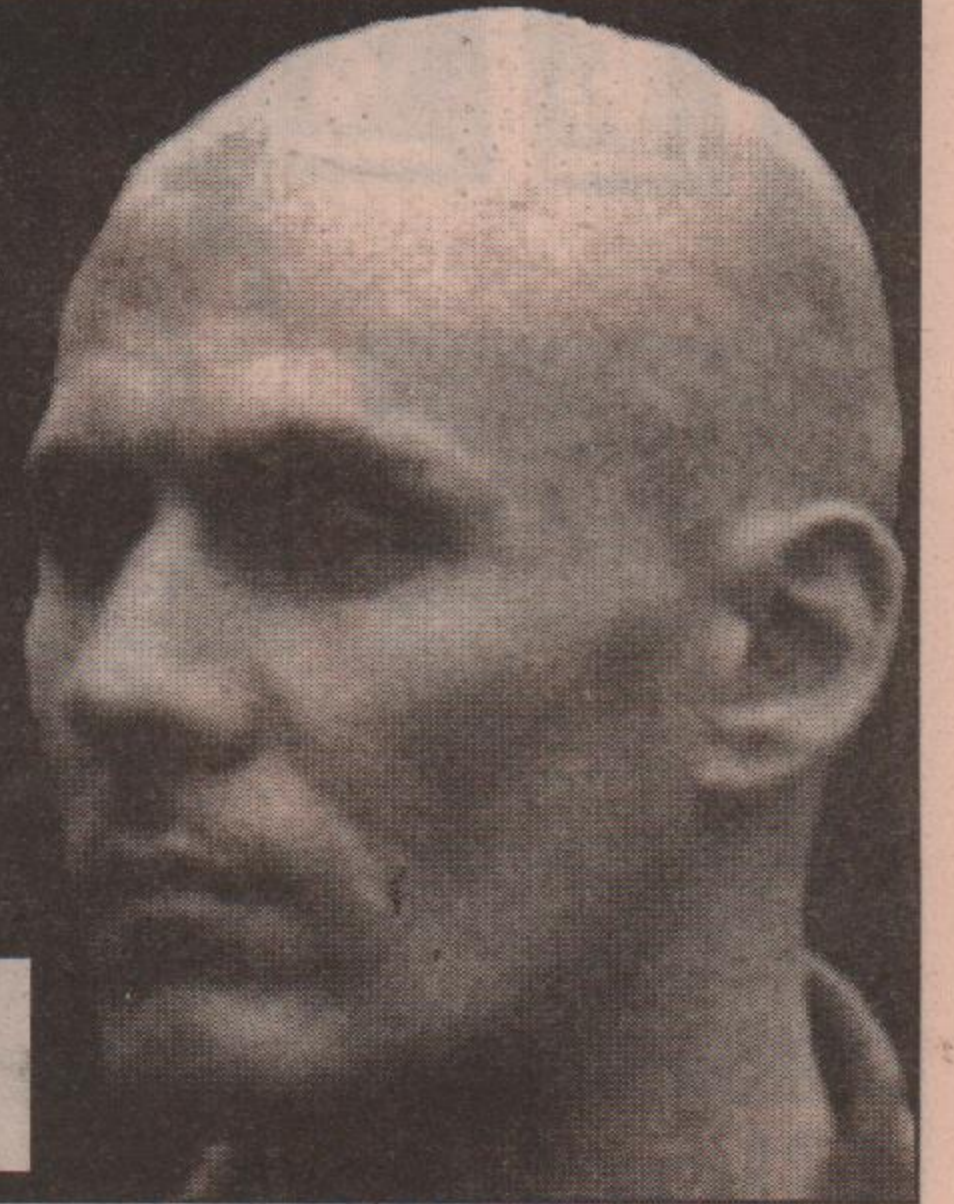
see page 7

NO

Churchill speaks



...Nazis kill



ROOM FOR

RACISM!

WINSTON CHURCHILL is a racist, ignorant Tory bigot. Churchill, who owes his prominence to his family background rather than his own efforts, deliberately targeted black people in a speech to Bolton Conservatives last week. He claimed that "There is a relentless flow of immigrants into this country," threatening "the British way of life".

Churchill is rallying nationalists and racists. The immediate practical effect will be more intolerance, more racist attacks and a strengthening of the far right as the confidence of racists and fascists is bolstered by a prominent backbench MP.

Continue on page 2

Scrap immigration controls

Bosnia: Tories add insult to injury

By Richard Love

"They lied to us...they told us if you go to England, within fifteen days we will send your family." Maho Hadzic has been in Britain three months now, his wife is still in Bosnia, he hasn't heard from her in over two weeks. "I don't know whether she is still alive", he says. Maho is only one of hundreds of refugees who have been admitted to Britain with promises that their families will follow shortly only to find that

the authorities have lied.

Socialists know that the Government promise to admit 4,000 Bosnian refugees into Britain was only a pretence at humanity. Now the Home Office have failed to reunite families that even it agrees should be together.

The assertion by the Home Office that Britain can only receive 140 refugees a month is obviously nonsense. Charitable organisations without any Government support at all could handle more than that. With a little state support many times that 140 could eas-

ily be received.

It was only under intense domestic and international pressure that the Government finally agreed to waive parts of the Asylum Act to allow these Bosnian refugees in. The fact that the Asylum Act had to be waived to allow these refugees in shows the Act for what it is and what the Government's attitude is towards the rest of the world.

The few refugees that have got in have not been given refugee status and have no right to work or settle. They

have only temporary leave to stay here which will be re-examined in six months' time.

Almost all the refugees in Britain have come from illegal detention camps. Few asked to come to Britain. They just wanted to get out of Bosnia with their families, and that is what they were promised. But the promise has gone bad.

Socialists should make as much noise as they can about this brutal hypocrisy. We have a duty to not let the Government get away with it.

Bosnia
Saturday 5 June.
Demonstrate in
Solidarity
Assemble 1.00 at
Elephant and Castle,
London. SE1.



Blocking the exploiters

German metalworkers wall up the entrance of the bosses' federation: the metalworkers' union IG Metall recently won wage improvements for East German workers through a campaign based on solidly-supported strike action and aimed at strengthening East-West workers' links..

Back to the old days?

By Elaine Jones

THE CULTURE where you won kudos in student politics by speaking "as a woman" or "as a lesbian" is fading — and being replaced by a much more old-fashioned attitudes.

When Karina Knight, an AWL member and out lesbian, stood for election as women's officer in Manchester Metro University Student Union, an anti-lesbian vote was mobilised against her by allegations that Karina had touched up women when she searched them as part of her job at a night club. The election was won by "re-open Nominations".

In elections for delegates to the National Union of Students Conference, Karina won, but then the union executive refused to let her be a delegate on the grounds that Karina had "intimidated" the union's women's officer in the student union.

Then the union leadership tried to put off counting the votes and to rule Karina out. After count-

ing the votes they declared a no-chance outsider the winner.

Another AWL member, Tracy McGuire, has been banned for life from the student union.

One night at a union disco, union Welfare Officer, Simon McEwan called her "a trollop". She slapped his face.

Tracy is a slightly-built woman 5 feet tall. McEwan is a well-built rugby player. McEwan and his friends have banned Tracy from the Student Union building for "intimidation".

Even worse, Simon McEwan and his colleague Frank Shepherd (with the help of NOLS Chair Paul Hewitt) have joined the university Labour Club.

Together with their friends, they have taken over the previously left wing club. None of them had previously shown interest in socialist or Labour politics.

With left activists increasingly looking to Left Unity, the right-wing Labour Student leadership are increasingly looking to people like McEwan to back them up.

Alliance for
Workers' Liberty
Public meetings.

Weds 9 June

"Fight Police harassment"

Youth Fightback meeting
 12.30 Room G1. North London College

"Fight Police harassment"

Youth Fightback meeting
 7.00pm Gregson Community Centre, Lancaster.

Thurs 12 June

"Fight Police harassment"

Youth Fightback meeting
 12.00 Southwark College Common Room (Cut site)

"Is Socialism Dead?"

York AWL debate the Tories.
 Room G120 York University

"Fight Police harassment"

Luton Youth Fightback meeting
 7.30pm Youth House, St. Mary's Road, Luton

Tues 15 June

"Fight Police harassment"

Youth Fightback meeting
 1.00pm Lewisham College.

Thurs 24 June

"How to defend public sector jobs and services"

Manchester AWL meeting
 8.00pm Unicorn pub.

Fighting Racism.

Mon 7 June

"Stop the racist murders"

Southwark ARA meeting.
 7.30pm Warner Castle pub, Peckham Road, London SE5.

Sat 12 June

Demonstrate Against Racist Attacks

National ARA demonstration.
 Assemble 11.30 am, Norbury Park, South London

No room for racism!

From front page

Last week the German parliament gave in to racist pressures and restricted the rights of asylum seekers. The decision was closely followed by the murder of five Turkish people in one of the worst neo-Nazi firebomb attacks in recent German history.

Churchill has been widely condemned in the press and even by leading Tories. The *Sunday Telegraph* described the "furious backlash from within his own party as colleagues accused him of endangering the Conservatives' growing links with 1.8 million Asians in Britain".

The truth is that the Tories are not so worried about Churchill's racism — they are more battered about losing votes.

Churchill has taken a drubbing — but a lot of the arguments

against him accept his racist assumptions.

For instance, the *Sunday Times* attacks Churchill's stupid statement: "The population of many northern cities is now well over 50% immigrant. In fact, "There are fewer than half a dozen northern cities where the proportion of ethnic minorities even approaches 20%". (And many members of ethnic minorities are not immigrants, they were born here).

But what if the population of many cities were over 50% immigrant? So what? Why would this be a problem?

The *Sunday Times* would be bothered if what Winston Churchill said was actually true! They do not want the free movement of people across national borders, in other words the abolition of all immigration controls. *Socialist Organiser*

does want that.

The *Sunday Times* did manage to argue that Britain's immigration laws are too tight and suggests it would be good to let in "a few hundred thousand Hong Kong Chinese". But examine this matter and you find that they want to allow in the rich business class, a small proportion of the 6 million Hong Kong people. This group of people would "do wonders for our economy". They do not care about the rest — ordinary working class people who face tyranny under the Chinese Stalinists after 1997.

The *Sunday Times* is simply following the policy of doing what's good for British capital.

Immigration laws are altered to suit the needs of the British ruling class. When labour was needed after World War 2 the bosses toured Africa and the Caribbean

asking black workers to come to Britain. As the boom slowed down immigration was restricted and the race card was played.

Immigration laws were justified as protection against foreigners, in particular black foreigners.

Currently British immigration laws are some of the tightest in the world. Families are separated and "primary" immigration (immigration by anyone except those joining their family here) from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean was ended by legislation in 1971.

There are no limits on immigration from European Community countries — but Churchill is not worried about that. Why? Because Europeans are white. Because Churchill is a racist!

The immigration laws discriminate against black people and are implemented by a racist state. The political effect is to break down the solidarity of workers of different nations and to reinforce racism in Britain.

But would abolition of these laws and an increase in the numbers of

immigrant workers be used, as the 4 million unemployed currently are, to drive down working class living standards?

No one demands the four million workers leave the country to stop the bosses driving down wages. Socialists demand that the working week is cut with no loss of pay to abolish unemployment.

The principle holds for immigrant workers. The unions must organise immigrant workers, fighting for jobs for all.

Countries with lots of immigration — like the USA in the 19th century do not necessarily have high unemployment. On the contrary, they often prosper.

The Labour Party and trade unions must demand a cut in the working week and jobs for all. This is the way to stop British workers being played-off against immigrant workers.

Right now the labour movement must stand firm against racism and fascism. The onus is on white workers to stand with black, not allowing the Tories to divide us.

Nursery campaigners link up

By Belinda Weaver

FOR THE FIRST time in over a decade, anger against nursery cuts is cohering into a nationwide movement of resistance.

Campaigns from across the country were represented at a Conference on Saturday 22 May.

In Westminster they are campaigning against plans by their

Tory council to privatise their nurseries. Workers, parents and children invaded the offices of Price Waterhouse, one of the bidders, to show them what dealing with small children is like. Price Waterhouse soon withdrew their bid!

Westminster NALGO sponsored the conference. Jenny Edwards, deputy leader of the Labour opposition on Westmin-

ster council, spoke — but elsewhere Labour councils are cutting nurseries.

Campaigners from Bury in Lancashire reported how they had mobilised 5000 people to march on the town hall against nursery cuts by their Labour council. They stressed the importance of taking the issue into the Labour Party.

From the conference we hope to build for an awareness week, leading up to a national day of action.

Only a national campaign, solidly based on strong local campaigns, can force the Tories to fund nurseries.

Contact: Westminster Joint Nursery Parents Campaign, 11 Blanche House, Whitehaven Street, London NW8 8DB.

Islington nursery campaigners fight council threats

By Martin Thomas

LABOUR PARTY meetings this week and next may be decisive in the fight to save Islington's nurseries.

Labour Party ward branches meet on 2 June, and the council Labour Group on 7 June. The Labour-controlled council wants to close two nurseries, but workers and parents have been occupying the threatened nurseries round-the-clock since 5 May, and hope to swing the Labour Group on 7 June to reverse the closures.

The occupations are supported

by the Islington NALGO and NUT branches, and the NUT branch has won a 72 per cent ballot majority to strike against Islington's education cuts.

Council leader Derek Sawyer initially promised to "look into alternatives" to closing the nurseries, but on Thursday 27 May he told the workers and parents that they must give in by 11 June, or else the workers will be sacked and the parents will lose any chance of alternative nursery places for their children.

Messages of support and donations to: Islington Under Fives Action Group c/o Springdale UFEC, 15A Springdale Rd, N16.

Union militancy revives in Poland

Poland's Solidarnosc is acting more confidently as a trade union again.

On 28 May Solidarnosc MPs moved a motion of no confidence in Parliament which brought down the

government. New elections are in September.

There has been a major wave of strikes and Solidarnosc is still threatening a general strike over public sector pay.

Labour and trade unions

Why we must keep the link

WHY IS THE battle to defend the Labour Party's trade union link important? How did Labour decline to such a state that its leaders now sound like pale-pink Tories, embarrassed about any connection with the working class? And, being in such a state, is it worth bothering with?

The political decline of the Labour Party since the early 1980s is a reflection — exaggerated and distorted by its wretched leaders, but still a reflection — of the defeats suffered by its base, the trade union movement. The drive to cut the trade union link is a drive to freeze Labour in this state of decline, and to cut off the possibility of it being revived by the renewal of trade-union struggle which is already under way, slowly, unevenly, and patchily. That is why the battle over the link is important.

A review of the last 15 years puts today's problems in perspective.

Labour's swing to the left in 1979-81 did not come out of thin air. It was propelled by thousands of Labour and trade union activists who had been stirred up and politicised by the big working class struggles of the 1970s.

In October 1979 at Brighton the Labour Party conference voted for mandatory reselection of MPs and the principle that the Party manifesto should be controlled by the elected National Executive, not just the party leader.

A special conference in May 1980 approved a manifesto for "Peace Jobs and Freedom". Tony Benn made the main speech, calling for abolition of the House of Lords, extension of public ownership and no compensation for renationalised enterprises.

The Blackpool conference in October 1980 consolidated mandatory reselection, lost NEC control over the manifesto, but voted in the principle of election of the Party leadership by the whole Party (not just the MPs). It adopted unilateral nuclear disarmament, backed direct action against local government cuts, and committed Labour to withdrawal from the Common Market.

James Callaghan retired as Party leader the same month, trying to get a successor securely in position before the new leadership election procedure could be introduced. But Callaghan's chosen successor, Denis Healey, was narrowly defeated by Michael Foot, an obvious interim figure and a left-winger, though a faded one.

In November Labour MPs disrupted Parliament to stop the Tories decreeing a rise in council rents. In January 1981 a special Labour Party conference adopted procedures for electing the leadership: there would be an electoral college with 40% of the vote for the unions and 30% each for the CLPs and the MPs. In March David Owen and others quit the Labour Party to set up the SDP. Tony Benn announced that he would stand for deputy leader against

Denis Healey. At the end of a hectic battle he had 49.6% of the vote to Healey's 50.4%, including 83% of the constituency vote.

Two things made all this leftism shaky and feeble.

First: it depended on the support of trade union leaders who were fed up with Labour's parliamentary Establishment because of the wage-cutting and service-cutting of the 1974-79 Labour Government.

Those union leaders were not left-wing. To consolidate its advance, the Labour left had to turn to, and link up with, a fight for democracy and militant policies in the trade unions. It did not do so.

There was no Marxist group strong enough to coordinate an across-the-front fight against the bureaucracies in both Labour and the trade unions (and some of the bigger would-be Marxist groups is not even try).

By January 1982 the top trade union leaders were meeting with the Labour Party leaders at Bishops Cleeve to agree a programme to restabilise the Labour Party and witch-hunt the left.

Second: an important section of Labour leftists were tamed and turned to the right by becoming captives of the local government machine.

From 1978 through to 1983, the "hard" left gained control of a series of councils — Lambeth, Lothian, the Greater London Council, Hackney, Islington, Liverpool. Everywhere they talked about fighting the government. Everywhere their willingness to fight went only (as Islington council leader Margaret Hodge put it) "up to the brink": *at the brink*, when it came to the crunch, the fight would always be replaced by rate rises, creative accountancy, or some other way of muddling through.

The left councils collapsed finally and definitively in 1984-5, leaving the miners in the lurch. All made cuts. They schooled hundreds or thousands of Labour activists, on the councils or around them, in the politics of being benevolent managers of a capitalist system.

THE JUNE 1983 general election was Labour's worst since 1918. It won 27.6 per cent of the vote — only marginally more than the 25.4% gained by the Liberal-SDP Alliance. The Tories were helped by their boost from the Falklands War, and the Labour leaders' inability to voice any independence from the wave of chauvinism that came with that war.

And Labour's 1983 election campaign was a fiasco, neither convincingly left-wing nor safely right-wing.

On the rebound, in October 1983, Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley swept to victory in the first leadership election under the new rules. Kinnock won 71.3 per cent of the electoral college as against 6.3 per cent for Eric Heffer; Hattersley got 67.3 per cent while Michael Meacher got 27.9 per cent. A very wide



The current sorry state of the Labour Party reflects defeats like the miners' in 1985. Labour's leaders want to cut off the possibility of revival. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni.

range of Labour Party opinion believed that Kinnock-Hattersley was indeed the "dream ticket".

Kinnock was a firm unilateralist, or so Labour activists tried to convince themselves. And Hattersley's election as Deputy ensured that the right wing was integrated into a subordinate role.

The headline in *Socialist Organiser* "Not our dream!" was widely resented. But we were right.

The miners' strike of 1984-5 slowed down Kinnock's drive to make Labour safe for capitalism again — the 1984 Labour conference backed the miners and called for no police interference in picket lines. But Kinnock had made his position plain by his attacks on the "violent" miners' pickets.

After the 1987 election — in which Labour improved its vote slightly, but was too pallid to do any better — Kinnock had the whip hand.

Within the next couple of years. Unilateralism was scrapped, Common Market withdrawal junked, free-market economics adopted. The Policy Review allowed Kinnock to ride roughshod over Party Conference and he started the pro-

cess of trashing Labour Party democracy in order to keep the leadership's grip secure.

The main prop of the new regime in the Labour Party is the trade union leaders. They are a more right wing lot than they were in the '70s or even the early '80s. They are under much less pressure from their rank and file. Battered and demoralised by 14 years of Tory government, they want a Labour government on almost any terms. If volunteering to have themselves fettered by continued anti-union laws under a Labour government seems advisable to win votes, then volunteer they will.

The trashing of Labour democracy, however, is not straightforward. Mandatory reselection of MPs, though eroded, is still not abolished: the issue comes up again at this year's Labour conference.

And, in attacking the trade union link, Labour's leaders may have overreached themselves. They can be defeated at this year's Labour Party conference.

That defeat, by itself, will not revive the Labour Party. A Labour revival will come from (and probably lagging after) a renewal of

grass-roots working class activity. But to keep the link now, and to keep up a battle for socialist ideas in the Labour Party, will give us a vital base from which to ensure that the working class revival produces a competent socialist movement, not the half measures and missed chances of 1979-81.

"The emancipation of the working class is also the emancipation of all human beings without distinction of sex or race."

Karl Marx

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BEHIND THE NEWS

'A voice for

Modernisers vs Grey Power

NO SOONER had the dust settled after the general election defeat last year, than the bright young things who ran today's modern Labour Party came up with their ready-made explanation: it was all the fault of the unions.

Top secret Walworth Road "internal polls" proved beyond doubt that the voters had been scared off by visions of union leaders brandishing block votes while rotting corpses piled up outside strike-bound cemeteries and flying pickets ate babies.

Strangely, no-one outside Walworth Road had noticed the union link playing a particularly important part in the election campaign. The Tories' attempt to play the 'union card' had been ridiculed even by the Tory press.

Nevertheless, the Labour "modernisers" were determined that the union link had to go — or at least be weakened to the point where Labour could never again be accused of being the party of the unions. The union block vote at party conference would be abolished and "One Member, One Vote" (OMOV) would eliminate the unions' collective input into parliamentary selections.

The leading 'modernisers', smart young men like Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, were hopeful of a swift and relatively bloodless victory. John Smith overcame some initial caution and soon nailed his colours to the OMOV mast. Bill Jordan and the AEEU leadership were longstanding OMOV advocates and there was every reason to hope that other enlightened union leaders would soon come round.

Yet now, the modernisers' best laid plans lie in tatters and John Smith faces the prospect of a humiliating defeat at this year's Labour conference. All the party's largest union affiliates — with the exception of the AEEU — have, come out firmly against OMOV, or look set to. According to some press reports the leaders of the TGWU, NUPE, GMB, MSF and UCW have now agreed a united front in defence of union collective input into party leadership elections and parliamentary selections, based on balloting political levy payers.

John Smith's "compromise" proposals of "levy-plus" (whereby political levy payers could top up their subscriptions in order to become individual party members) bit the dust when last week's MSF conference rejected it against the advice of the union's new "moderate" leadership.

Smith and the 'modernisers' have clearly misjudged and mishandled the union leaderships. Crucially they antagonised John Edmonds of the GMB (previously a leading advocate of 'new thinking' in all its forms) by rejecting his suggestion that all levy papers be given a vote without an additional payment.

But more importantly, they underestimated the resistance of rank and file trade unionists. There is a mood of seething resentment against Smith and his cronies at every level of the trade union movement. Middle aged, not particularly left-wing, unionists have had enough of being pushed around, taken for granted and made to carry the can for Labour's election defeat. Something approaching a 'grey power' rebellion of lower-echelon bureaucrats, District Committee stalwarts, branch secretaries, shop stewards and plain union loyalists is presently taking place. Even in unions like MSF and the UCW, where the national leadership backed Smith's plan, the national conferences have chucked it out. What we are witnessing is the bedrock of the British labour movement saying "enough is enough". Smith, Blair and Brown never bargained for that.

Smith's best hope now is the "rescue package" offered by Tom Sawyer of NUPE. Sawyer has come up with a trade-off whereby parliamentary selections would be limited to individual party members but union political levy-payers would have a vote in leadership elections. Even John Edmonds has dismissed this, saying "trade union members would be very upset at the idea of trading off their voice in the selection of candidates for the opportunity of continuing their vote in the election of leader. These are two separate issues and each should be settled on its merits".

For once, Edmonds is speaking for the majority of union activists. On this issue, there is no room for shabby little tricks: we either defend the status quo or we allow Smith and the "modernisers" to introduce some unworkable scheme that will soon be scrapped in favour of OMOV.

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

KEEP THE LINK

This appeal to trade unionists has been issued by the "Keep the Link Campaign".

THE BASIC purpose of the Labour Party in providing a voice for organised labour in Parliament and local government is under threat.

Unions strengthen the Labour Party

Following the general election defeat in 1992 some in the Party are looking for scapegoats rather than seriously confronting the real reason why Labour failed to gain a majority. Egged on by the hostile press and media they have turned on the unions.

Labour lost because it failed to address the issues of concern to trade unionists, like unemployment, low pay, long hours and the collapse of our public services. Far from being a source of weakness, the trade unions are a source of strength to the Party.

This was overwhelmingly recognised at the Party's annual conference in October 1992, when it resolved to:

"strengthen and deepen the historic and essential link between the industrial and political wings of the Party."

Threat to trade union rights

But, despite this clear decision, a section of the Party is pursuing a very different agenda:

- end the involvement of trade unions in the selection and reselection of Labour MPs;
- eliminate any say for trade unions in the election of the Labour Party leader and deputy leader;
- drastically reduce the share of the trade unions' vote at the Party conference and hand this influence over to Labour MPs. This would mean MPs having a vote they have never had in the past, ending the nature of the conference as an assembly of affiliated bodies. The effect would be that one MP would have a vote that would be equivalent to 2,000 Party members. So much for One Member One Vote!

Model motion for annual conference and NEC

This reaffirms the decision of the 1992 Labour Party conference to strengthen and deepen 'the historic and essential link between the industrial and political wings of the party'. And to continue to support

1. continued substantial union representation at the Labour Party conference, whilst welcoming the intro-

- duction of a fairer distribution of votes between constituency parties and unions;
2. representation of trade union branches, co-operative parties and other affiliates at every stage in the selection of parliamentary candidates by Constituency Labour Parties;
3. participation of national trade unions in the election of the party leadership.

Registered supporters — a bureaucratic nightmare

In a vain attempt to compromise with this agenda some in the Party have floated the idea of "registered sympathisers". This would mean the creation of a second level of Party membership in which individual trade unionists get the occasional chance to

take part in a narrowly restricted area of Party affairs through the medium of postal ballots.

This system cannot work. It will be a tiresome bureaucratic nightmare and an additional financial burden which will divert energy away from the important issues facing trade unionists.

Plus there will be a huge problem associated with constructing an effective and accurate data base. Post codes, for instance, do not neatly coincide with constituency boundaries.

It has already been admitted that this system cannot be in place before the next round of Parliamentary selections.

What's more, judging from the low turnouts in already existing Tory-imposed postal ballots the "registered sympathisers" scheme is unlikely to increase the participation of trade unionists in Party affairs.

Finally... the positive case for trade union involvement

Collective debate and discussion is infinitely preferable to any other form of decision making. Branch meetings provide a sounding board and allow different views to be aired in a context in which it is possible to create a collective agreement which can then be acted upon. If this role is taken away it will further undermine the life of many trade union branches and make much political discussion purposeless because the branch will have no way to make its collective voice heard.

For this reason we would ask you to vote to maintain collective trade union decision making in the Labour Party including in the selection of candidates and the election of the leadership.



The Labour Party needs trade union involvement, needs the experience of, for instance, GMB members like the Burnsall strikers. Picutre: Mark Salmon

Keep the Link statement

THE LABOUR PARTY was founded to represent organised labour in Parliament and in local government. It should continue to do so.

The federal constitution of the Labour Party has ensured that it remains a broad movement, involving millions of working people through the affiliated trade union, co-operative and socialist societies. To remove the participation of affiliated members would break up the Party's base.

We support reforms which will make Labour Party decision-making more democratic, but we would reject proposals which take no account of the fact that changes in union procedure are matters for their own members.

We will defend:

1. Representation of local trade union branches and other affiliates in the regular business of Constituency Labour Parties through delegates to General Committees;

2. Representation of local trade union branches and other affiliates at every stage in the selection of Parliamentary candidates by Constituency Labour Parties;
3. Representation of national trade unions at Party conference;
4. Participation of national trade unions in the election of the Party leadership and National Executive Committee.

Signatories to this statement include:

Tony Benn MP
Tom Clarke MP
Colin Christopher General Secretary FTAT
Bill Fry President NCU
Peter Lenahan President UCATT
Tony Lennon President BECTU
Alice Mahon MP
Arthur Scargill President NUM
Denis Skinner MP
And hundreds of other labour and trade union movement activists.

organised labour'



The main reform needed in the block vote is a comprehensive drive for democracy in the trade unions on which it is based. Photo: John Smith

UCW says Keep The Link

By a UCW conference delegate

THE RECENT UCW conference has dealt a severe blow to John Smith and those others in the Labour Party who have been trying to loosen or even sever the links between the Party and the Trade Unions.

The Executive Council came to conference with a report on the selection of Parliamentary candidates. They wanted the introduction of One Member One Vote based on the levy plus system. They also wanted to reduce the share of the union vote in the election of leader and deputy leader to 33% from the current 40%.

Instead conference passed an amendment from Greater Manchester Amal and five other branches which called upon the Union to "oppose any proposals that weaken or remove the Union's voting strength from the selection of Parliamentary candidates and the election of the Party leader and Deputy leader".

In replying to the debate the delegate from Greater Manchester Amal challenged UCW Deputy General Secretary Derek Nodgson's claims that the proposed changes were minor and aimed at creating a mass membership. In fact, those in the Party who were pushing these measures were presiding over the decimation of Party membership and the changes, if achieved would merely encourage the so-called modernisers to come back for more until the link was finally severed.

The overwhelming vote in favour of the amendment showed that UCW delegates, like those at other union conferences, are not interested in a divorce with the Labour Party. On the contrary, if

anything they want closer involvement. Another report put to conference outlined how branches should and could increase their contact with the party. The opportunity now exists to turn the debate about Labour Party/Trade Union links on its head. This would be the best reply to John Smith and Co. that we could give..

Model motion for CLPs

This CLP notes the 1992 conference decision to retain the "Representation of trade union branches at every stage in the selection of parliamentary candidates".

This CLP therefore regrets that the options contained in the NEC's questionnaire do not reflect this decision.

The five options on offer not only exclude trade union branches from the proposed new "trigger" ballot, they also, in the event of an actual contest, either

disenfranchised trade union branches altogether or else restrict voting in those branches to certain limited groups in a way that is both internally divisive and administratively complicated.

This CLP therefore calls for the retention of the present procedure for the round of parliamentary selections due to start early in 1994 and calls on the CLP officers to respond accordingly to the NEC's questionnaire.

GMB, NUPE, NCU: Vote to Keep the Link!

NEXT WEEK SEES THE start of the NUPE, GMB and NCU annual conferences.

These three unions, overwhelmingly made up of manual workers, have something like one and a half million votes on the floor of Labour Party Conference.

All three conferences will be debating resolutions rejecting the Labour Party leadership's proposals for weakening the link with the trade unions and calling for the continued representation of trade union branches in the selection of parliamentary candidates and of national trade unions in the election of the party leadership.

Already the Labour leadership have received surprise defeats on this issue at shopworkers (USDAW), technicians (MSF) and postal workers (UCW) conferences.

If delegates stand firm they can send a clear message to John Smith: "Keep the Link!"

There is more to democracy than postal ballots

By a Central London British Telecom engineer

"One member, one vote" is not as democratic as it sounds. Firstly all Labour Party members do have a vote now — which they can cast at a meeting. Secondly, Edmonds clearly means "one member, one postal vote".

Democracy is more than just about voting. Look at America. There is more voting there than anywhere else in the world. Thousands of public officials, from local dog-catchers to the President, are directly elected, and even the main candidates for President are chosen by popular vote through the "primary" system.

Undoubtedly it's better than the pre-Gorbachev USSR, with its compulsory 99.9% "votes" for bureaucratically-appointed rulers. But it's a very pale, corrupt form of democracy.

Politics is just a branch of show business. It has very little to do with informed debate on issues. Political campaigns consist mostly of spending millions of dollars on TV advertising about your opponent's alleged sexual, medical, psychiatric, or financial flaws.

The American people are not more gullible or less educated than people elsewhere. Most of them are disgusted with the way that politics works in the USA, and around 50 per cent of them don't bother to vote.

But elections don't decide political issues in the USA. They just give some individuals a four-year lease to take part in the complex haggling among the powers-that-be (many of them, like big business bosses and Pentagon chiefs, unelected) which does decide. The people get a yes-or-no vote on those individuals, that's all.

Those smart Alescs who think workers can influence the Labour Parties' policies through back room deals and informal contact in the same way as big business influences the Tories don't seem to realise that workers don't rule this society. The bosses do. In order to organise workers we need to cut against the grain.

Capitalism in the raw reduces us to a mass of isolated individuals, each pursuing our own advantage in the market economy, relating to others only through the "cash nexus" — and politically, utterly vulnerable to manipulation by the closely-knit top layers of the wealthy classes.

Collective working class political organisation — of which the block vote is one expression — is the product of many decades of workers' struggles against the atomisation which the private-profit economy tries to impose on us. It has become bureaucratized. But the answer is to democratise it, not to dissolve it back into a scattering of isolated individuals connected to politics only by the television screen and the ballot box.

The meetings, committees, mandates and so on of which the block vote is one expression are a beachhead of informed, participatory democracy in a terrain of manipulated, formal democracy. We should not let them be overwhelmed.

"One member, one vote" in the Labour Party would mean policies decided by stitched-up, unelected, elite "policy commissions", and the members having a vote only to endorse the media-backed leaders.

The main reform needed in the block vote is not a reform in its formalities and mechanics, but a comprehensive drive for democracy in the trade unions on which it is based. And the labour movement will never be ready to fight for socialism until it has carried through that drive.

If you would like to know more about Keep The Link or would like a speaker on the issue write to:
120 Northcote Road,
London E17 7EB.
Affiliation £50 national bodies/£5 branches

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Organisation

Not so smart

GRAFFITI

REMEMBER all those pictures of "smart bombs" during the Gulf War — bombs that would find their way to the target, knock politely on the door, pause to send some pictures to the viewers back home, and then cleanly and clinically decommission some hostile military hardware. So precise were the bombs that "collateral damage", the military term for bad publicity, would be kept to a minimum.

The US Air Force, using F-15E fighter-bombers filled to the brim with new technology, flew 1,500 missions against Iraqi Scud missile launchers. The laser guided bombs could hit any target with complete accuracy, so military talking heads told the masses via TV.

So how many Scuds did the USAF hit in 1,500 flights? The US military have just come clean with the figure. None.

SEEMS THAT one football hooligan stayed away from last week's qualifying match between Iraq and Jordan. Head of the Iraqi Football Association, Uday Saddam Hussein al-Tikriti (who is Saddam's eldest son), might have faced arrest if he had attempted to attend the match in Jordan.

The call for his arrest came from the Iraqi opposition group the INC, who claim that at a Baghdad v Basra match Uday responded to the crowd who were chanting slogans which were less than complimentary about his father by ordering his bodyguards to open fire on the spectators, killing three people. Now, whenever Uday attends a match, fans have to run a gauntlet of five body searches, such is Uday's popularity amongst the football fans of Iraq.

(For all you football fans out there, the score was 1-1)

GLOATING is an unpleasant and contemptible trait, politics should be about issues not personalities. So do keep a straight face next Wednesday (9



Weeping in his bath?

June) when the Boundary Commission announces the reorganisation of parliamentary constituencies. It is strongly rumoured that one seat due to go is Kingston-upon-Thames, sitting MP a backbencher called Norman Lamont.

TWO YEARS ago 10 year old Abigail Wright caused a storm of controversy when she was banned from joining the Girl Guides because she refused to take its oath to "do my duty to God, to serve the Queen and to help other people". Abigail wasn't sure about the God business and would have preferred to pledge to "mother earth" instead. She wisely opted to join a gymnastics club instead.

Now after two years of deliberations a new modernised pledge has been announced by the Guides patron, Princess Margaret. Now every new recruit will have to promise "that I will do my best to love my God, to serve Queen and country, to help other people and keep to the Guide law".

At this rate the Guide movement could modernise itself right into the twentieth century by the end of the decade.

FRANZ STEINKUHLER cut a swathe as one of Germany's most thoroughly modernised and dynamic trade union leaders. He leads the world's biggest union, the 3.5 million strong IG Metall. As part of his job he sits on the supervisory boards of some of Germany's biggest companies — Daimler-Benz, Volkswagen and Thyssen.

Steinkuhler used his position to get information about impending takeovers and mergers and do a little insider share dealing. He spent millions of marks on shares which he then resold at large profits.

The union leader is rumoured to have made over DM 1 million on the deals. Last week an ungrateful workers' movement forced Steinkuhler to resign.

SOME ON the left might argue that Steinkuhler was doing the working class a favour by subverting capitalism from within with his insider deals. But according to a new study by academics from Harvard University insider dealing is good for capitalism. While someone makes a quick killing, share prices are pushed up or down, quickly becoming "more accurate" in their reflection of a company's true worth.

So greed is good after all — Ivan Boesky should be welcomed back into the financial community as a useful aid to market mechanisms. But not everything is rosy for stock market crooks. According to the article the average profit from an insider deal in the US is the merest \$25,000. Not even enough for a second hand Porsche.

GRAFFITI

Not gloating over Lamont

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

THE Curse of the Turnip has claimed its man. The *Sun* which put Norman Lamont's face on a turnip nine months ago, said on Friday that "we do not gloat at his departure". Not gloating, the paper invited readers to send in suitable job offers for the ex-Chancellor, quoted various fish-mongers saying that they would not trust him to run their wheel stalls and published a list of "kinky humiliations for the fallen Chancellor", dreamt up by his former tenant, Miss Sara "Whiplash" Dale.

But the *Sun* had a more serious (and genuinely nongloating) point to make: "Lamont knows where all the bodies are buried. He knows

who's really to blame for the recent economic misery. Were they *HIS* policies alone that made the recession deeper and longer than it need be? Or were they the misguided views of his boss?"

Much the same line was taken by the *Sun's* stablemate, the *Sunday Times*: "Mr Major has not boxed his way out of his uncomfortable corner with this reshuffle. His credibility is on the line from here on, not the hapless Mr Lamont's".

"How long before the Sun puts Major's head on the turnip?"

It was never much of a secret that the Murdoch press's ferocious campaign against Lamont was, in fact, a proxy war on John Major. As the *Sun's* political editor, Patrick Kavanagh put it, "the Chancellor acted as lightning conductor for the torrent of abuse which might otherwise have been directed at the Prime Minister himself".

Now that the lightning conductor has been removed, Kelvin Mackenzie, Andrew Neil and higher minions will have to decide whether or not to come out openly against Major. Neil's *Sunday Times* this week gave Major "another year to persuade his party and the country that he is the battle-hardened leader Britain needs". In Monday's *Times*, William Rees-Mogg argued that "it is now as probable that Mr Major will have to go as it was nine months ago that Mr Lamont would have to. Why wait?"

Admittedly, the poor old Thunderer is now just about the least influential of Murdoch's British papers, and William Rees-Mogg is widely regarded as an unstable eccentric. But it was a straw in the wind now blowing from Wapping. How long before the *Sun* puts Major's head on the turnip?

TINY Rowland's last farewell to the *Observer* and its readers took the form of 7,000 words of self-justification spread over two full pages last Sunday. Editor Donald Treford claimed that Rowland offered him the article; Rowland said

Treford suggested it. Either way it was a fitting valedictory, summing up both Rowland's totally shameless manipulation of a once-great newspaper and Treford's craven acquiescence.

And as so often before, *Observer* journalists protested to no avail. Foreign correspondent Julie Flint had particular reason for bitterness: the same edition trumpeted her accolade at this year's British Press Awards, yet Treford had publicly disowned her copy when it upset various of Rowland's African dictator chums.

But the full extent of "Pixie" Treford's prostration before Rowland has only just come to light, thanks to Tom Bower's book "Tiny Rowland: a Rebel Tycoon". During the 1983 general election campaign, Treford told BBC "Newsnight" that the *Observer* would be calling for a Labour vote and that no "proprietary interference" would be tolerated in the matter. The *Observer's* pre-election editorial, written by the Pixie himself, urged readers to vote Tory.

Happily, Rowland's departure as proprietor will be closely followed by Treford's resignation as editor.

What profit hath wrought

WOMEN'S EYE



By Jean Lane

WHEN Samuel Morse, the inventor, sent his first cable telegraph in that incomprehensible dot-dash language in the 1840s, he was asked by an aide what the message was. The words "One giant step for mankind" could have been uttered many many years before humans ever got near the moon — but they weren't. The man who had put the world in touch, across vast expanses of space, answered: "What hath God wrought?"

One hundred and fifty years later religious mumbo-jumbo and even social prejudice get in the way of progress. When the advance of science enabled a

woman to give birth last week to six children after seven years of infertility (with a one in 200,000 billion chance of it happening naturally), the response of media commentators, government spokespeople and the like was not a jubilant "One giant step for womankind" but a finger-wagging "It's disgusting: this woman isn't married" and a penny-pinching "This costs the NHS too much".

All the media reports of the birth have made a point of telling us how many doctors and nurses were involved in the caesarean operation (ranging from 38 to 50 depending on the paper read) and how much money the treatment cost the NHS (hundreds of thousands of pounds). Nicholas Winter-ton (Tory minister for progress, perhaps?) complained about the NHS's "extraordinary priorities" and stated that "If this woman wanted fertility treatment she should have paid for it".

It's a good job the same restrictions as to the cost of bombing Baghdad back into the stone age and the marital status of those doing the bomb-dropping weren't taken into account, isn't it? Otherwise no bombs would have been dropped at all. It's nice to see that Winter-ton's party and government have got their priorities right.

Now the government is expected to call for a review of the rules about who can receive fertility treatment on the NHS, and obviously plan to restrict it to married couples. For those women who can do as Winterton suggests, pay for it themselves, morality — Victorian or otherwise — will not come into it. To be a suitable parent you will have to be either rich or, failing that, married.

"What hath profit wrought? Not progress but decay"

The government is not bothered about the social and moral implications of the bringing up of children — though we will hear a lot about this from them as the debate develops — but about the cost. They will want to restrict fertility treatment not for the good of the child, but because of the expense.

They have restricted funds for scientific research that is not directly linked to industry and manufacture for the same reason. Pure research into why things happen; the kind of research mostly likely to benefit human beings because it

bears no relation to the political and economic system — the profit system — such as infertility, for example, is cut back. Research into developing products which will make a profit regardless of social usefulness is given the go ahead.

If they were bothered about the well-being of children, they would fund social welfare rather than bombs. Jean Gibbons now has six extra children to raise and in Britain, unlike much of the rest of Europe, there is no statutory help for anyone who has a multiple birth. Essential services such as health, education, nursery facilities are being cut to the bone and maternity and paternity leave and benefits are appalling. Instead of congratulating Jean Gibbons and providing her with the services needed to raise her kids, the government responds by planning to restrict the possibility of other infertile women benefiting from a fantastic scientific breakthrough.

A system that cannot allow itself to advance, to benefit from its own discoveries, is an out of date system that needs to be replaced. Just as the bourgeoisie pushed feudalism aside when its laws and prejudices could not cope with capitalist progress, so the working class must push aside capitalism, which cannot tolerate social progress. The old pioneers may have looked to God for inspiration. We must look to ourselves and our class and ask the question: "What hath profit wrought?" When the answer is not progress but decay, then the profit system must make way for something more progressive — socialism.

Los Angeles: one year on, business as usual

Michael Zinzun, leader of the Los Angeles Coalition Against Police Abuse, spoke to Socialist Organiser about the continuing problem of police racism and violence in Los Angeles

PEOPLE ASK, HAVE there been any changes to policing since the Rodney King verdict and last year's uprising?

Although we now have a new police chief, the basic power relationships have not changed.

We still have police officers who continue in the old way.

What we are demanding is community control of the police. It is the only way to deal with an out-of-control police force. It is the only way to deal with an out-of-control police department who have an "us against them" mentality.

For instance, there have only been 15 attempts since 1984 to prosecute officers for the use of "excessive force". This is out of thousands of cases which the District Attorney's Office have rejected. Out of those 15 cases there have only been six successful prosecutions.

The County of Los Angeles has a population of 7,000,000. There are 12,000 under the County Sher-

iff, 7,500 Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and several more thousands of law enforcement officers in other cities in LA county.

These departments are responsible for hundreds of shootings each year. But since 1984 the DA's office has only managed six convictions!

In this situation the police have a green light to continue abuse.

There are three cases you should know about on which we are working.

First the case of Darryl Hart, shot by the police. This case highlights the fact that it does not matter what your standing is in the community — if you are black or Chicano, you are under suspicion.

Darryl Hart had just graduated from a training course to become a police officer. There are no rights that the police are bound to respect when they are dealing with the black community.

Darryl Hart's case came on the heels of the case of Hasson Netterley, killed by the police after an argument with his brother. The biggest mistake this man made was to call the police.

When the police called at his door they claimed he had an axe. They fired through the door and

killed him.

Thirdly, the case of Michael James Bryant, who was Rodney King's barber.

When those people in Waco, Texas were given over 40 days, Michael Bryant, a black man, was given no chance at all.

He jumped into a swimming pool to escape being beaten by the police. They left him in the pool for 5 minutes before shooting him with 50,000 volts from a Taser gun. Within minutes he was dead.

This is why we demand community control over the police. This means an independent body comprising representatives from each of the local communities to control the police.

Such a board should have elected representatives (so people can be recalled), and serving police officers should not be allowed to serve on it.

We need the power of independent investigation into the police's activities. The police must not be allowed to police themselves.

We need to give help to police officers who witness police abuse to come forward. We need what we call a "whistleblower's clause" which states a legal obligation for such police officers to report police crime and to stop such



Although there is a new police chief in LA the basic power relationships have not changed

crimes. Such police officers need to be assured of protection.

I do not expect a lot of officers will come forward. But such a "clause" may help.

A body for city control of the police would need the power to fire police officers, the power of subpoena, and the power to change policy.

We also need a prosecutor whose sole job would be to prosecute the police who violate the law under the cover of authority.

These sort of demands are necessary now. They are not revolutionary but they would give labour and our communities breathing space and a chance to organise for real change.

Workers' Liberty '93...

...is three days of socialist debate from Friday 2 to Sunday 4 July at Caxton House, 129 St John's Way, Archway, North London, hosted by the Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

■ What do we do about the police? (3.30) with Clara Buckley (Orville Blackwood Campaign), Joanne Rowe (M25 campaign) and Ruth Cockroft. ●

John O'Mahony (editor of Socialist Organiser) discusses the Legacy of Max Shachtman (8.15). ● What should socialists say about the prison system? (6.00)

Debates:

■ Which way forward in the unions? (7.15) Trudy Saunders debates the Democratic Left. ● Should we build a Leninist Party? (3.30) Mike Marqusee (Labour Briefing) debates AWL.

Course:

■ A four-part introduction to Marxist economics with Martin Thomas. (Starts 3.30).

Black History:

■ Sab Sanghera looks at the Roots of modern British anti-Black racism (7.15) ● Dion D'Silva examines the history of Black workers in the British class struggle (6.00). ● Bruce Robinson on Music of Rebellion (US jazz, soul and blues 1955-70). (7.15)

SATURDAY HIGHLIGHTS

■ Former Black Panther and current leader of the Los Angeles Coalition Against Police Abuse, Michael Zinzun, speaks on What we can learn from

the Black Panthers (1.30) and Los Angeles, One Year On (5.00).

■ Anthony Arblaster on Opera (3.00) ● Cathy Nugent on the History of Rioting (5.00) ● Jeremy Corbyn MP on Can the Labour Party win? (1.30) ● Peter Tatchell and Maria Exall on What can we learn from Queer Politics? (3.00) ● John O'Mahony on The Revolutionary Paper (6.30).



Racist violence in Germany is on the rise. Last weekend five Turkish people were burned to death in what was almost certainly a neo-Nazi attack. Winfried Wolf from the Cologne-based socialist paper Sozialistische Zeitung will speak about the rise of the German far right and how to defeat them at Workers' Liberty '93.

International crisis:

● Branka Magas on Yugoslavia (1.30).

Black History:

● Gail Cameron from Socialist Organiser editorial board on Marcus Garvey and the Roots of American Black Nationalism (10.45).

Additional Sessions

● Jim Kearns discusses What is Human Nature? (10.45). ● Alan Johnson speaks on Can we win a majority for socialist revolution? ● Belinda Weaver on What will socialism be like? (3.00) ● Who was Jesus Christ? (5.00) with Rob Dawber ● Do films lead to violence? with Geoff Ward ● Socialism and Zionism — a contradiction? (5.00) with Vicki Morris

SUNDAY HIGHLIGHTS

■ Dion D'Silva (author of the AWL pamphlet Malcolm X) looks at Martin Luther King (1.45).

Debates:

● Which way forward in Ireland? (1.45) ● What should we say about Black Power? (10.30)

Forum on Education:

● Liam Conway on What sort of Education do School Students need? (10.30) and Jason Barron from Summerhill School on How Summerhill works (12.00).

■ John O'Mahony on the Cliff-SWP tradition (10.30).

■ Matt Cooper on Post-Modernism (3.00) ● Mark Serwotka on the Unions and the Civil Service (1.45).

■ The Gene Revolution (3.00) with Les Hearn (Socialist Organiser science correspondent)

International:

● Tom Rigby on South Africa (3.00).

● Don Filtzer on Russia in Crisis

Black History:

● Gail Cameron discusses Answers for the Black Community in Britain (3.00).

Workers' Liberty will be packed out. Be sure of getting in — get a programme now! [Programme gives entry to the event]

- Before end June unwaged £7; low-waged/students £11; waged £16.
- On the door unwaged £8; low-waged/students £12; waged £19.
- One day tickets £3 and £7 (waged) before the end of June.

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Can Militant build an alternative to Labour?

Militant Labour — as Militant now calls itself since its definitive split from the Labour Party — has its first national rally on 5 June.

Here we print excerpts from an assessment of this new venture. The assessment was published by the group around Ted Grant and Alan Woods who opposed Militant's turn away from Labour and who now publish the monthly Socialist Appeal.

To our mind, many of the criticisms of Militant Labour made here were equally true of Militant when the Appeal people were part of its leadership. For example, as the document itself points out, the Broad Lefts Organising Committee in the early 1980s was run as a lifeless "front organisation" in just the same way as the Public Sector Alliance is now.

And some of the argument is angled so as to try to justify the bombastic claims which Grant and Woods used to make for Militant's supposedly ever-growing influence in the Labour Party, and their complacent "perspective" of certain triumph if only they stayed put and continued their monotonous propaganda for nationalising the top monopolies.

Nevertheless, what they write about the parallels between Militant Labour now, and the WRP and SWP in the past, seems to us basically true.

The full text, and other publications from the Socialist Appeal group, can be obtained from PO Box 2626, London N1 6DU.

MILITANT, AFTER MORE than 25 years, has now broken from the Labour Party. Its February Conference decided to break with its past approach and establish its own open revolutionary party. A press conference, hosted by the new General Secretary, was called at the plush St Ermins Hotel, Westminster, to launch the new party.

More experienced Militant comrades will recognise there is nothing new on this road. It has been well trodden by all sectarian groups, most notably the SWP and the WRP, which proclaimed themselves the real alternative to the Labour Party, and called on the working class to follow them. As night follows day, Militant's adventure will fare no better.

It is no accident that the vast bulk of the so-called EC Reply [to the Socialist Appeal group] deals with Scotland and not with England and Wales. It is no accident that it doesn't mention the Walton debacle, the demise of Real Labour in Liverpool, the increased majority for Kilfoyle, the defeat of Terry Fields, Leslie Mahmood, etc. These things are better swept under the carpet, together with all embarrassing facts that conflict with the new "line".

Surely the task of genuine Marxists is to analyse past defeats and mistakes in order to learn from them? An organisation that fails to do this is doomed. And yet for Militant's leadership there are apparently no defeats or mistakes, only successes. Our arguments about Walton, Kilfoyle, etc are simply referred to as "juvenile points" and "lies and distortions". Any thinking comrade would reject such a light-minded approach to these serious issues.

But what about Scotland anyway? Here the EC Reply quotes extensively from university academics and Tory newspapers to "prove" the success of SML.

"We have not eclipsed the nationalists completely," states the EC Reply. "But we have undermined their support in a serious way... we have indeed had a massive impact on the ability of the SNP to grow".

And where is the evidence for this incredible assertion? The EC Reply states, "This is clearly seen from the elections we have contested". It begs the question: how many elections have SML contested and on what basis? They contested Pollock in the General Election. Last May, out of well over 1000 district council seats contested, the SML stood in three and won two. Despite the fact that the SML claim two more seats in Glasgow held by Chic Stevens and Jim McVicar, these were not contested on a SML ticket but as "Queenslie Labour" and "Ballieston Labour". At the end of last year, the SML contested three Regional elections and won two. To date they contested a further district council seat in Dundee, but lost. In Tayside SML plans to fight a regional by-election on an "anti-corruption ticket".

Incidentally, none of these campaigns were fought on a socialist programme, but on "radical community politics". This was also true of Steve Nally's Militant Labour campaign in Lambeth. The programme that they put forward could, as best, be described as left reformist. In the election leaflets there was no explanation of socialism or the need to transform the trade unions and the Labour Party.

Militant's leaders' decision to rewrite history is summed up in their boast, "our organisation has had more of an impact on the Labour Party in Scotland in the last twelve months from the outside as SML than we had in the previous twelve years from inside". All past influence is dismissed at a stroke! The fact that we came within one vote of taking the PPC in Glasgow Central, one vote in Glasgow Provan, and nine votes in Pollock in the 1980's is all forgotten. The five councillors we had in Glasgow is likewise dismissed.

The whole break from the Labour Party was based upon a short-cut (where none exists) to building. The same approach was adopted in the past by the WRP and SWP, with a far larger industrial basis than Militant. 8,000 attended the Empire Pool in London to launch the WRP in



"Militant Labour" launched itself as "the newest political organisation in Britain" on 30 March. Yet the propaganda is the same as for decades past, only with a new sectarian twist

1973 with conveners and shop stewards from Cowley and elsewhere. They thought they had arrived. Militant now thinks it has arrived! Marx once wrote that history repeats itself first as a tragedy then as a farce. After all the numerous sectarian experiences of the past, this latest attempt is truly farcical.

The vast bulk of the membership nationally is made up of paper members. Whereas there are officially 2,970 on the books (para 22, Org Resol.), no more than 20% are active. Who was Peter Taaffe trying to fool at his St Ermin Hotel press conference with his claim that the new party "had nearly 5,000 committed members"? At the recent Public Sector Alliance [PSA] conference, Militant's proposals got around 250 votes. This conference was supposed to be the tendency's major industrial initiative. Either the bulk of the 2,970 are not active in trade unions or they are paper members. There is no other explanation.

This disintegration of the internal life and structures is a product of the false methods pursued over a number of years. The turn towards "activism", and away from patient work in the mass organisations, has placed the tendency on a treadmill. Education and the training of cadres, which was the hallmark of the tendency in the past, has been replaced with "education on the streets". This has resulted in a big fall in the political level of the organisation. The methods employed now are more akin to those of the Healyites, which resulted in huge turnover and burning people out. Recently Militant approvingly reported:

"People buying papers and filling in cards to join Militant Labour"... One signatory asked 'That means I'm a member now, doesn't it?' (2.4.93). Recruitment is not so much an 'open door' policy, as a 'revolving door' policy!

One of the reasons for this

activism is the cost of a massive apparatus being shouldered by a shrinking layer of real members. This results in a continual financial crisis, which demands greater and greater financial sacrifice from the ranks, and greater pressure for campaigns to raise more money. The latest innovation is selling whistles! Under this continual pressure from the centre and full-timers, the cadres and trade union comrades are gradually squeezed out of the branches. Increasingly the full-timers become a substitute for the membership.

THE PROCESS is accentuated in Scotland with the demands of an open party and the need to desperately keep up the tendency's profile in the capitalist press. Before the launching of the SML, the official membership in Scotland was 636. We were informed in April that 500 new members were signed up during the Pollock election campaign. In November an article in Militant (6.11.92) boasted "SML is now far and away the fastest growing political force in Scotland... During this election campaign literally dozens of people have joined SML... with over 100 members in the area". In the Dundee election we are told 19 have joined, and new branches had been formed in Aberdeen and Inverness. If this is all true how could Peter Taaffe state at his press conference, that there were "600 members in Scotland". This is less than the 1991 figure! So despite all the "successes"... the SML has not grown or faced a continuous turnover. This is not surprising given the ra-ra methods pursued. The SML makes no pretence about education or theory, but simply concentrates on campaigning and community politics. Such an approach, rather than building the SML, wears out the cadres, and leads inevitably to disintegration.

For a whole number of years the tendency has turned away from sys-

tematic trade union work. Of course, as now, lip service is periodically paid to its importance.

Revolutionary work in the unions is above all patient work, which is incompatible with sectarianism and adventurism. It is no accident that the whole of the tendency's original trade union department has resigned.

Over a period, a dozen industrial full timers threw in the towel, including the main industrial organiser. More attention and resources were given to rallies and publicity stunts. The trade union work could never compete with this priority. For quite a number of years, the industrial workers were treated as second best. The Broad Left Organising Committee [BLOC], which had a very promising future, was simply treated as a "front organisation", with no independent life of its own.

For instance, during the 1984-85 miner's strike, BLOC was not in evidence for the first six months of the dispute! Instead of being a focal point for rank and file solidarity, it was effectively sidelined. It did not start taking initiatives over blacking until nine months into the strike, and that was due to the fear of being overtaken by the sectarians.

Everything is subordinated to 'keeping control' of an organisation, not by political but by bureaucratic methods. The same is true unfortunately of the launching of the Public Sector Alliance. There is without doubt a burning need to establish a genuine broad left organisation in this field. Unfortunately the recent PSA conference was run in such a way as to allow Militant to keep firm control of the leadership. A layer of non-aligned delegates, who were initially enthusiastic about the initiative, came away disappointed. To manipulate such a body as simply a front organisation may serve Militant's interests, but in no way furthers the broader interests of workers in the public sector.



Demi Moore and Robert Redford in "bad trash"

American dream turned bad trash

Cinema

Belinda Weaver reviews *Indecent Proposal*

IF THE PEOPLE and situations in Adrian Lyne's films don't seem real, it's because they aren't real; they're projections of Lyne's own fantasies. Lyne's women may be beautiful or bitches from hell (like Alex in "Fatal Attraction"). But they don't ring true. They're celluloid, not solid.

Hollywood can be good at fantasy, and a trash film can often be good in a way that a better film can't be — juicy and irresistible. But "Indecent Proposal" is bad trash.

It's about a young couple, David and Diana Murphy, married for seven years, who see their dreams slip away when they both lose their jobs. Though they're professionals — he's an architect, she sells real estate — their one scheme to make money is senseless and stupid, a sucker's idea. They go to Las Vegas, hoping to win at gambling.

While there, they meet the billionaire gambler, John Gage, who takes a shine to Diana and offers her a million bucks to spend the night with her.

The couple accept the offer, then things fall apart. David cannot forgive or forget.

The way Lyne sets up this supposedly idyllic marriage, it doesn't look strong anyway. This seven-years-married couple have no mechanism for resolving conflict. Diana rampages around, moaning that David is a slob;

they fight, and end up having sex. That's the marriage.

Later, instead of ever trying to talk rationally about his feelings, David repeatedly blows his stack.

He's like an overgrown toddler. Whatever he feels, he expresses, at once, and in a loud, attention-getting way. His brain never engages; his outbursts are pure feeling.

You don't want Diana to stay with him; you can't see what she liked him for in the first place. He's infantile, violent and abusive. Yet Lyne expects women to find David appealing. The ideal American husband is a testos-

"In a way the film is satirising the American dream — but with a Mills and Boon add-on"

terone-propelled infant!

Gage may be cynical, but he's also considerate, and he's mature and thoughtful. He's not a big, blundering bonehead like David. I couldn't help thinking Diana would be better off with him.

But the film doesn't care what Diana thinks; it's all about what David feels. When David leaves, and Diana takes up with Gage, we never know what she's feeling.

The film turns her into a beautiful blank, a trophy that the men fight over. That fits in with the film's view of her as a chattel, a

commodity at the disposal of men. When Gage wants to have Diana at his side while he's gambling, he asks David's permission; he doesn't ask Diana's. Who she ends up with is something settled between the men rather than any free choice of her own.

Sexual politics aside, the film goes off the rails about the money. It's presented as the stuff that dreams are made of. But Diana and David don't enjoy their million. They don't spend it; they don't plan to do anything with it. They just want to get rid of it as fast as they can. It's as if Lyne can't trust us to sympathise with them if they seem even the least bit greedy.

In a way, the film is satirising the American dream. It's showing what people are willing to do for money in a country where money is king. But Diana and David should end up damaged or even destroyed by their bargain, not romantically holding hands at the beach where David first proposed. That's a Mills and Boon add-on.

In the real world, Diana and David would have looked for other jobs (which they get anyway once they've sold their souls). They would have checked whether Gage had AIDS before selling Diana to him. Gage wouldn't have been the romantic Jay Gatsby figure he cuts, but a grubby money-grabbing exploiter. Diana and David would have found a way to resolve their problems, or gone under. Life isn't glossy and phoney like "Indecent Proposal". Thank goodness.

Black artists struggle for space

Wesley Sandford gives a personal view of why black artists are staging a protest sit-in at Brixton Art Gallery

TWO MINUTES' walk from Brixton underground station, and not a stone's throw from Railton Road, scene of the riots of the early eighties, behind a glass shop front, is a white walled space called Brixton Art Gallery.

I am an artist who has lived locally for about two years. I have passed the gallery many times, occasionally stopping to look through the window at an interesting exhibit, but never feeling that it was "my kind of place". I assumed it was a private gallery.

In fact the Brixton Art Gallery is the premises of the Brixton Artists Collective, a group of about 140 artists who use it to exhibit work for sale to the public. It is a charitable organisation receiving public funds from Lambeth Council and the London Arts Board "to promote equal opportunities in the arts... to redress the imbalance within society which discriminates against groups and individuals on the basis of race, gender, sexual

orientation, class, disability, age, marital status, HIV status, religious beliefs etc".

The Black Artist Group (BAG) is a subgroup of the collective representing those who do not feel themselves to be "white". When I joined there were about two dozen active members.

"Why were there so few non-white artists represented, in an area that is more than 70% non-white?"

When I attended my first BAG meeting the questions that were buzzing in my mind about this "Community Gallery" began to be answered. Why were there so few non-white artists represented, in an area that is more than 70% non-white?

Other black artists had been challenged when they walked in: what they were doing there? did they belong to any official organisation? A black pensioner who was a member received such a cold greeting that she never returned.

Salome, a black artist who was the chair of the Management Committee last year, told members how she had discovered the lies that the Committee had told Lambeth Council in order to gain funds. She was given two completed funding forms, one for a new educational worker's post and the other for developing some unused space. When she read through them she found that figures had been massaged in order to make it appear that the Collective were fulfilling council criteria. For example, two white members of the management had been classified not as white but as "other" (i.e. neither black nor white).

Salome asked for copies of other forms — but was refused.

Salome also became aware that £17,000 had been paid to a member to produce a spectacularly uninspired sign for the gallery. When a proposal was put for spending £5,000 on cups and a coffee pot for the use of the management and two admin. workers Salome managed to quash it.

During Salome's term there were many battles to secure exhibitions for black artists. Of the 13 exhibitions held at the gallery each year only 3 were allocated for black artists.

There is a lot more to this story but that was enough for the Black Artists Group to start a sit-in protest. Enough was enough!

"Pro-lifers" with guns

Periscope

"**H**EART OF the Matter" (Sunday 6th, 10.30pm, BBC1) looks at how American anti-abortion campaigners are starting activity in Britain. One of these supposed "pro-lifers" in the US recently shot dead a doctor who did abortions, and many others made it clear that they approved of the shooting.

"World in Action" (Monday 7th, 8.30pm, ITV) looks at how locking teenagers up in prison-type "schools" breeds crime rather than reducing it. "Unfinished Business" (Monday, 11.10pm, Channel 4) is about the MacBride principles — an attempt (counterproductive in our view) to combat sectarian discrimination in Northern Ireland by making American capitalists withdraw investments.

On Tuesday 8th, at 10pm, Channel 4 will screen Neil Jordan's film "Angel", pulled out of the schedules in April because the TV bosses thought we should not watch films which might make us think about Ireland after the IRA bomb in the City.

Capitalist democracy: myths and reality

This excerpt, concluding our series on the state, is from a book written by the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky in 1922 against Karl Kautsky, a venerable Marxist "authority" who condemned the Russian republic for not following the channels of parliamentary democracy.

FEELING THE HISTORICAL ground shaking under his feet on the question of democracy, Kautsky crosses to the ground of metaphysics. Instead of inquiring into what is, he deliberates about what ought to be.

The principles of democracy — the sovereignty of the people, universal and equal suffrage, personal liberties — appear, as presented to him, in a halo of moral duty. They are turned from their historical meaning and presented as unalterable and sacred things-in-themselves. This metaphysical fall from grace is not accidental. It is instructive that the late Plekhanov, a merciless enemy of Kantism at the best period of his activity, attempted at the end of his life, when the wave of patriotism had washed over him, to clutch at the straw of the categorical imperative.

That real democracy with which the German people is now making practical acquaintance Kautsky confronts with a kind of ideal democracy, as he would confront a common phenomenon with the thing-in-itself. Kautsky indicates with certitude not one country in which democracy is really capable of guaranteeing a painless transition to socialism. But he does know and firmly, that such democracy ought to exist. The present German National Assembly, that organ of helplessness, reactionary malice and degraded solicitations, is confronted by Kautsky with a different, real, true National Assembly, which possesses all virtues — excepting the small virtue of reality.

The doctrine of formal democracy is not scientific socialism, but the theory of so called natural law. The essence of the latter consists in the recognition of eternal and unchanging standards of law, which among different peoples and at different periods find a different, more or less limited and distorted expression. The natural law of the latest history — i.e., as it emerged from the middle ages included first of all a protest against class privileges, the abuse of despotic legislation, and the other "artificial" products of feudal positive law. The theoreticians of the, as yet, weak Third Estate expressed its class interests in a few ideal standards, which later on developed into the teaching of democracy, acquiring at the same time an individualist character. The individual is absolute; all persons have the right of expressing their thoughts in speech and print; every man must enjoy equal electoral rights. As a battle cry

against feudalism, the demand for democracy had a progressive character. As time went on, however, the metaphysics of natural law (the theory of formal democracy) began to show its reactionary side — the establishment of an ideal standard to control the real demands of the labouring masses and the revolutionary parties.

If we look back to the historical sequence of world concepts, the theory of natural law will prove to be a paraphrase of Christian spiritualism freed from its crude mysticism. The Gospels proclaimed to the slave that he had just the same soul as the slave owner, and in this way established the equality of all men before the heavenly tribunal. In reality, the slave remained a slave, and obedience became for him a religious duty. In the teaching of Christianity, the slave found an expression for his own ignorant protest against his degraded condition. Side by side with the protest was also the consolation. Christianity told him: "You have an immortal soul, although you resemble a packhorse." Here sounded the note of indignation. But the same Christianity said: "Although you are like a packhorse, yet your immortal soul has in store for it an eternal reward." Here is the voice of consolation. These two notes were found in historical Christianity in different proportions at different periods and amongst different classes. But as a whole, Christianity, like all other religions, became a method of deadening the consciousness of the oppressed masses.

Natural law, which developed into the theory of democracy, said to the worker: "All men are equal before the law, independently of their origin, their property, and their position; every man has an equal right in determining the fate of the people." This ideal criterion revolutionised the consciousness of the masses insofar as it was a condemnation of absolutism, aristocratic privileges, and the property qualification. But the longer it went on, the more it sent the consciousness to sleep, legalising poverty, slavery and degradation: for how could one revolt against slavery when every man has an equal right in determining the fate of the nation?

ROTHSCCHILD, WHO HAS coined the blood and tears of the world into the gold napoleons of his income, has one vote at the parliamentary elections. The ignorant tiller of the soil who cannot sign his name, sleeps all his life without taking his clothes off, and wanders through society like an underground mole, plays his part, however, as a trustee of the nation's sovereignty, and is equal to Rothschild in the courts and at the elections. In the real conditions of life, in the economic process, in social relations, in their way of life, people become more and more unequal; dazzling luxury was accumulated at one pole, poverty and hopelessness at the other. But in the sphere of the legal edifice of the state, these glaring contradictions disappeared, and there penetrated thither only unsubstantial legal shadows. The landlord, the



The triumph of the workers in Russia in 1917 was not brought about simply by parliamentary agitation, parliamentary means. It was won through mass mobilisation and a theoretical exposure of parliamentary democracy by the bolsheviks.

labourer, the capitalist, the proletarian, the minister, the bootblack — all are equal as "citizens" and as "legislators." The mystic equality of Christianity has taken one step down from the heavens in the shape of the "natural", "legal" equality of democracy. But it has not yet reached earth, where lie the economic foundations of society. For the ignorant day-labourer, who all his life remains a beast of burden in the service of the bourgeoisie, the ideal right to influence the fate of the nations by means of the parliamentary elections remained little more real than the palace which he was promised in the kingdom of heaven.

In the practical interests of the development of the working class, the Socialist Party took its stand at a certain period on the path of parliamentarism. But this did not mean in the slightest that it accepted in principle the metaphysical theory of democracy, based on extra-historical, super-class rights. The proletarian doctrines examined democracy as the instrument of bourgeois society entirely adapted to the problems and requirements of the ruling classes; but as bourgeois society lived by the labour of the proletariat and could not deny it the legalisation of a certain part of its class struggle without destroying itself, this gave the Socialist Party the possibility of utilising, at a certain period, and within certain limits, the mechanism of democracy, without taking an oath to do so as an unshakable principle.

The root problem of the party, at all periods of its struggle, was to create the conditions for real, economic, living equality for mankind as members of a united human commonwealth. It was just for this reason that the theoreticians of the proletariat had to expose the metaphysics of democracy as a philosophic mask for political mystification.

The democratic party at the period of its revolutionary enthusiasm, when exposing the enslaving and stupefying lie of church dogma, preached to the masses: "You are lulled to sleep by promises of eternal bliss at the end of your life, while here you have no rights and you are bound with the chains of tyranny." The Socialist Party, a few decades later, said to the same masses with no less right: "You are lulled to sleep with the fiction of civic equality and political rights, but you are deprived of the possibility of realising those rights. Conditional and shadowy legal equality has been transformed into the convicts' chain with which each of you is fastened to the chariot of capitalism." In the name of its fundamental task, the Socialist Party mobilised the masses on the parliamentary ground as well as on others; but nowhere and at no time did any party bind itself to bring the masses to socialism only through the gates of democracy. In adapting ourselves to the parliamentary regime, we stopped at a theoretical exposure of democracy, because we were still too weak to overcome it in practice. But the path of socialist ideas which is visible through all deviations, and even betrayals, foreshadows no other outcome but this: to throw democracy aside and replace it by the mechanism of the proletariat, at the moment when the latter is strong enough to carry out such a task.

Glossary

Plekhanov: pioneer Russian Marxist who moved to the right in old age and opposed the Russian revolution.

Kantism: derived from the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant. What Trotsky means here is an outlook based on timeless moral principles supposedly deduced by pure reason (such as the "categorical imperative" — "do always so that your conduct can be a model for others").

Patriotism: i.e. nationalist support for his "own" capitalist government in World War I.

Feudal law: was based on inherited privileges (of kings, lords, bishops, etc) while bourgeois law mostly assumes that individuals are formally equal.

Democracy: Throughout this article, Trotsky uses the term "democracy" to mean formal or parliamentary democracy. "To throw democracy aside and replace it by the mechanism of the proletariat" — Trotsky's words later in the article — means replacing formal, parliamentary democracy by real working class democracy, not some putsch or coup.

Absolutism: the "absolute" rule of kings, who could — in theory anyway — decree whatever they liked. This sort of regime existed in England in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, and in France in the 18th century.

The property qualification: in most West European countries, the right to vote for parliament was at first limited to those owning a certain amount of property.

Rothschild: a famous banker.

Second International: the international league of socialist parties formed in Paris in 1889. It fell apart in 1914 when the different parties supported their "own" governments in World War I, but was revived as an openly reformist alliance after the war.

"Fascists out!" is not enough

LETTER

THIS YEAR'S commemoration of the murder of Altab Ali in May 1978 highlighted the anti-fascists disunity reported by Mark Osborn (SO 563).

A memorial meeting at the offices of Samaj Chetana in Hanbury Street on 8 May recalled the events of 1978, their background and their significance for the anti-racist struggle today. The presence of the National Front (as it then was) in massive numbers in Bethnal Green Road, and later the creation of their national headquarters in Great Eastern Street, Shoreditch, was a major factor in the escalation of racial violence — as with the BNP in Welling today and we got similar official denials that there was any connection.

The occupation, Sunday by Sunday, of the NF pitch by very large numbers of anti-racists, beginning with a small number of white left groups and then drawing in thousands of Bengalis, brought an end to the NF mobilisation for a while.

A public inquiry, at which a number of anti-racists gave detailed evidence, ended the headquarters. Unity was essential.

The newly formed ANL played a positive role in 1978. They were new, naive, energetic. They made some silly mistakes and often didn't take the trouble to understand the local situation, but on the whole their role was good. But once the public political face of the NF was undermined, they lost interest and went away.

Today, after years of absence from the field, they seem to have come back with energy but the same naivety. One of the most important

lessons of 1978 is the need for unity rooted in concrete understanding of, and opposition to, racist organising and racist policies. This is different to vague "popular front" unity.

Today — largely as a result of the struggles of that period — the Bengali community is very powerful in the East End and includes a number of committed socialists with an internationalist perspective. It also includes some Islamic fundamentalists and some populists with a narrow ethnic-cultural approach.

Many at the meeting felt that progressive forces on the left need to combine if we are to defeat the forces of organised racism and the sectarian infantile disorders of the left.

In 1978 you knew where you were. The NF and their satellites were crude, nasty and clear. If you attacked them, you got obscene

phone calls in the middle of the night, your windows smashed, death threats, razor blades through the post etc. Today we are confronted with a more subtle, more genteel racism in central and local government which has stolen the fascists' clothes.

One of the most serious mistakes, now as in the '30s, is to assume that all working people who vote for the fascist parties are hard line racists: they may be in deep despair confronted by a reactionary Labour Party and, in Tower Hamlets, by so called "Liberals" who exploit reactionary populist sentiments.

Unless the needs which are expressed are taken seriously, and a way ahead is shown which is not racist things will continue to deteriorate. No amount of "Fascists Out" sloganising will work

Ken Leech,
East London

NCU: fight back now!

By an NCU
Conference Delegate

THE 1993 conference begins this week with delegates hopeful that the incoming left dominated Executive will fight to retain jobs and stand firm against managements' attempts to worsen conditions.

BT's attempts to bring in a 7 day week as the norm for customer staff is the hot issue of the moment. The anger of the average member at being pushed too far by BT management resulted in an increased vote (3,000 more people voted in the postal ballot than last year) for Broad Left supporters who promised no 7 day deal, in the recent Executive

elections. Conference must give an impetus to the campaign against the management proposals on Attendance Patterns and send the new Executive to discussions with the long standing demand for a shorter working week as the first item on the agenda.

As 1993 rolls on and the discrepancy between BT managers' budgets for

staffing and the number of staff employed becomes evident, the fear of compulsory redundancies grows. The haemorrhaging of jobs from BT (70,000 in the last few years) through voluntary redundancy must stop. The fight against contractors depends upon it. The incoming Executive should adopt a positive stance to job cuts: stop the rot.

UCW votes for fight on jobs

By a UCW Conference Delegate

IN PASSING THE composite amendment calling for an "immediate claim for a 35 hour gross working week" and a ballot for industrial action if a "a speedy and satisfactory agreement" is not reached, UCW delegates at last week's Annual Conference in Jersey have served notice that the gloves are now off in the fight for jobs.

Thousands of jobs have already been lost over the past couple of years as automation and office closures have taken

their toll. Now the management of the various businesses have made it plain that this is just the beginning. One office in London, W.C.d.O., is due to close completely in the next six weeks and so far none of the staff there have been offered acceptable alternative full time jobs. In London as a whole 5,000 jobs are due to go under the office closure programme. In the rest of the country the introduction of new machinery in Automated Processing Centres will affect thousands more in both the processing and delivery sides.

Postal workers are not Luddites. We are not opposed to

new machinery as such. It's just that we don't see why this should happen at our expense. If machines can do the job quicker, then that's fine. But where the management say cut jobs, we have to say cut the working week. The fight for the shorter working week is the only alternative now to the dole queue for many postal workers.

The passing of the composite, in and of itself, doesn't mean that the campaign for the 35 hour week has started. The Executive Council was opposed to it, although the vote on the E.C. was close. This means that the leadership are hardly going

to bust a gut to implement it. It's now down to the activists in the branches to make sure that the work of preparing the membership for the fight for a cut in hours gets started.

No doubt at this very moment those on the E.C. who opposed the composite are working out how to get around it. They'll duck and they'll dive but if the rank and file, who the cut in hours really benefit, keep the pressure on then at the end of the day they'll have no alternative but to lead the fight.

It's our jobs. It's our future. We've got to start organising now to make sure we defend it.

Timex: for a workers boycott

By Stan Crooke

WITH THE Timex dispute in Dundee now in its eighteenth week members of the strike committee have been building support for their fight for reinstatement of all 343 sacked workers at the current round of union conferences.

Some £12,000 was raised as a result of speaking at the recent UCW and NUCPS conferences. At the MSF conference (the union which most of the scab supervisors at the factory belong) the Timex striker never got to the platform, but put across the facts of the dispute at a well attended fringe meeting.

The next stages in the strikers' campaign were outlined by convenor John Kydd.

"Through the Scottish TUC an all-Scottish shop stewards meeting is being organised, probably on June 5th. We need to get the shop stewards together from different workplaces to begin to generate more support.

"The next mass demonstration will be on June 19th. The Executive Councils of both the UCW and the NUCPS are already supporting the demonstration. At the UCW conference Alan Tiffin called on every branch of the union to make sure that they get people up

here on the day.

"In between times we are continuing to speak at union conferences, raising money and support for the June 19th demonstration. In addition, we are organising a women's and children's day on the picket line on June 11th."

Support for the boycott of Timex products, focussed so far on consumers rather than trade unionists in the workplace, continues to hold up. "There are a number of retailers, I believe, who have cancelled orders with Timex, from information we have had back out from inside the factory" said John Kydd.

Inside the factory, manager Peter Hall continues to face problems in maintaining both the quantity and quality of production. As John Kydd explained:

"Last week an entire order was returned to the factory. There are bucketfuls of scrap everywhere in the factory. What Hall needs, but does not have, is trained workers, working up to speed, and producing quality goods."

Financial and moral support for the strikers clearly remains solid in the labour movement, and the mood of the strikers themselves remains one of complete determination. But there can never be room for complacency.

The longer the dispute continues, the more it is to the advantage of Timex. With 90 days gone Hall already has the legal right to re-employ sacked workers, and although a lot of what is being produced now might be scrap, eventually the scabs will be trained up to standard.

Whilst support must be built for the June 19th demonstration (just as for all the other demonstrations which have been called in the course of the dispute), this must be coupled with campaigning to try to escalate the dispute.

With no illusions about the problems involved, the boycott campaign needs to be extended

into a refusal by trade unionists in the workplace to handle products destined for or coming to Timex in Dundee.

If at the all-Scottish shop stewards conference were to campaign for a workers' boycott, coupled with a pledge of solidarity strike action in the event of the anti-union legislation being used to block "secondary action", then the pressure on Timex would increase dramatically.

In addition, mobilisation for the Monday morning mass pickets must be renewed, along with the launch of a campaign for the dropping of charges against all those arrested in the course of the dispute.

Glasgow march against pay limit

AROUND 3,500 Strathclyde Regional Council workers marched through Glasgow last Wednesday (19 May) on a Day of Action called by the Strathclyde Joint Trade Union Council (SJTUC).

The focus of the Day of Action was the Tories' pay limit of 1.5% for public sector workers, and also the Tories' plans for the "reform" of local government in Scotland (under which, in the manner of the GLC, Scottish local government would largely be "reformed" out of existence).

some of the marchers also felt that, whilst there is an obvious link between attacks on pay and attacks on jobs, many union members were more concerned about possible job losses, especially as a result of "Compulsory Competitive Tendering", then about the issue of pay.

But the fact that 3,500 trade unionists were prepared to lose a day's pay to support the Day of Action shows a solid basis for continued campaigning in the months ahead over the issues of both jobs and pay.

Tories privatise road safety

By a DoT Civil Servant

ON THE 27th May, the Department of Transport (DOT) announced that two Agencies were to be sold off and that virtually all the administrative functions of yet another agency are to be Market Tested.

The Agencies to be sold are Vehicle Inspectorate (VI) and the Transport Road Research Laboratory (TRL). VI carries out once a year safety checks on all lorries and vans over a certain weight limit. TRL is a world renowned centre of research into all aspects of road transport (i.e. car safety, constructions of motorways). Although the Government wants to sell off both Agencies it is ordering studies of how exactly they can be sold. There is very little market interest or profit margin in checking that HGVs are

safe. The wholesale market test of the administration side of the Driving Standards Agency is the most radical announced to date by the Government and will probably serve as a model for other departments.

These announcements show yet again that Agency status is a half way house to privatisation or major market testing. In the CPSA it was the Moderate group who claimed that being an Agency was protection against privatisation. That has been proven totally untrue as, in DOT alone, three Agencies are up for sale. If there had been a determined fight against Agencies, we might have avoided the problems we face today. We cannot afford to lose the fight against privatisation and market testing. If we do, there won't be anything left in the Public Sector to fight over.

NUCPS: build action across the civil service

By a NUCPS conference delegate

THE Executive of NUCPS (the managerial and supervisory union in the Civil Service) revealed its woeful lack of grasp on mass Market Testing when it submitted an 'emergency' amendment — to its own previously submitted motion! — calling for 'nationally co-ordinated action including a one-day strike by Autumn 1993'. The very suggestion that mass Market Testing could ever have been defeated sectionally was always dangerous nonsense.

The passage of the amendment — submitted under the growing pressure from the ranks — might charitably be deemed a small step forward. However, the amended motion was successfully designed to ward off motions calling for a one day strike followed by ongoing industrial action. Yet no single member believes Market Testing will be defeated by a one-day strike.

Effectively any real resistance will have to be organised in the branches and groups and to such an extent as to force the NEC to lift the struggle on to a much higher level. The NEC promised almost automatic backing for any branch wanting to ballot for industrial action.

The decisions of the DHSS and Home Office Group Conference to ballot for a one day strike on 2 July are therefore crucial. With other groups such as DOE/DoT committed to urgently building for industrial action, there is a real potential for developing membership action across significant sections of the civil service.

The Broad Left needs to put all its energies — as an organised group — into the Market Testing campaign.

The dominant but increasingly disoriented Membership First NEC group have little base amongst the activists, have an increasingly arrogant attitude to conference as their positions are voted down, and are incapable of providing the necessary leadership. Unfortunately, while the Broad Left's own vote increased in an appallingly low NEC poll, it was nowhere near sufficient to either dislodge the Membership First Group or prevent the still powerful Stalinists from making a little headway on last year's results.

A Broad Left drive for serious industrial action which positively attempts to link with all those who want some level of action, coupled with attempts to increase the membership's understanding of Market Testing, would boost the wider campaign while building the Broad

The Industrial Front

The London busworkers' dispute over longer hours, pay and pension cuts is in serious danger.

The officials seem keen on breaking the dispute down into local negotiations. It looks like the one-day strikes across most of London are to be replaced with a series of run-ins which will shut down the service for a few hours.

Hardly the best way to escalate the dispute at a time when RMT tube workers are balloting for strikes over pay.

British Airways workers voted by a clear majority for national strike action in protest at attacks on pay and conditions in the wake of BA's purchase of Dan Air. A strike over the Whit weekend was cancelled for negotiations but action is needed soon, talks or no talks.

Printworkers in Salford and Bristol are still holding out after being sacked for taking part in the GPMU's pay campaign.

Message of support, donations etc to: Revell and George, Manchester GPMU, Graphic House, Moseley Road, Manchester, M19 2LH.

Arrowsmith, Mike Vine, 45 Leinster Avenue, Bristol BS4 4NU.

Teachers in Further Education came out on a one day strike on Thursday 20 May.

NATFHE's response to the employers' attempt to up the stakes has yet to be seen.

Violence at Burnsall's

THE STRIKE at Burnsall's Metal Coating in Smethwick has taken a new and sinister turn. Last week a striker, Kuldip Dhaliwal had his fingers severed while fending off a knife attack by a scab. The knife-wielding thug was obviously trying to cut Kuldip's throat. A strike supporter, Kevin Hayes, was hit over the head with an iron bar and hospitalised in the same picket line incident.

The previous week GMB official Jo Quigley received threats to himself and his family from three men who turned up at the picket line in a black BMW. The police took the threats seriously enough to install a special alarm system at Quigley's home.

Burnsall Strike Fund, c/o GMB, Birmingham Road, Halesowen, West Midlands.

Scots dispute exposes realities of in-house bids

By Steve Banks,
Renfrew NALGO

CLEANSING and Grounds maintenance workers at Renfrew District Council based in Paisley, Strathclyde, were to begin a programme of industrial action on 28 and 31 May. The action was to follow the Council's repudiation of a post-tender agreement which guaranteed them a partial return of any surplus generated by the operation of the contracts they won in-house under Compulsory Competitive Tendering.

Back in 1988, when the first round of contracts went out CCT, unions and management "sold" the cuts in basic pay, restructuring, and new work practices which were deemed necessary to win contracts in house on the basis that contract surpluses would in part be paid back to workers.

Hardly a radical gain you may think, but the right wing controlling Labour group on the council have attempted to deny the existence of any agreement, and this is despite the fact that their own Appeals Committee upheld a

union grievance to the contrary. They have cynically sought to plough the cash, totalling over £900,000 in 1992/93, back into the revenue fund.

The unions, T&GWU and GMBU, balloted workers, who voted 4:1 in favour of strike action. But at a mass meeting on May 26th the unions recommended a cessation of hostilities, despite the fact that there is no definite pay back offer. They have also signed an agreement which promises no further industrial action on the basis that a "reasonable" offer is

negotiated!

Union members should press for the re-imposition of strike action if the negotiations drag or no satisfactory offer is made. Local Labour activists should highlight the shameful role of the councilors in cynically breaching the agreement and making the workers pay twice over with cuts in wages and conditions.

With Labour nationally beginning to adopt CCT as a necessary tool to use to provide local services, the Renfrew case should warn workers elsewhere of the implications of such a policy.

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Tube workers: vote yes for action

Our pit stays open!

Say Parkside miners and community

FOUR MEMBERS OF Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) spent a long weekend perched 250 feet up the winding-tower at Parkside Colliery, Lancashire, in protest at the High Court's go-ahead to British Coal to close the pit.

The women began their four-day occupation in the early hours of Friday 28 May and came down last Monday to be greeted by families, friends and NUM leader Arthur Scargill.

Parkside miners and supporters are making a defiant stand against the Tory government's butchery of mining jobs. This weekend the Parkside miners voted to continue the fight for their pit and not to accept voluntary redundancy.

Socialist Organiser spoke to Sheila Gregory, one of the four WAPC members:

"There has been some press coverage of our occupation — but not as much as we would have wished. The media seem to have been playing down the resistance to the threatened pit closures in the wake of the Tory defeat in the Newbury by-election.

The men have already received their letters from management about redundancy.

I hope that the men continue to stand firm. We are strongly behind them and the North West People's March will rally support and strengthen our resolve.

I am certain we will continue to resist the management, British Coal and the government. The battle will continue!



Women march against pit closures. Photo: John Harris

One thing I have learnt is how easy it is to fight back. The Tories are weak and divided!"

By a Central Line guard

RMT MEMBERS on the London Underground are balloting this week for a series of one-day strikes against the government's 1.5% pay limit.

This provides tubeworkers with the opportunity to start turning things round after the recent defeats.

Last December saw the implementation of London Underground Ltd's Company Plan. This means 5,000 job losses and a bonfire of conditions and agreements. The way it was brought in - without a fight - has had two effects: demoralisation for us and a boost to management arrogance (as if they needed it!)

Management now believe they can do whatever they want and will no doubt go on acting like this until we show them we are ready to stand up to them.

It has also become clear that rather than being the limit of their ambitions, the Company Plan was just the starting point. This year sees a 30% cut in tube funding. P.way and signal maintenance are already threatened with further job losses. They are not likely to be alone.

However the situation is not quite as bleak as it may appear. The industrial action on BR and the buses has had a good effect. It has shown it is possible to take action and has also reminded us of our potential power when we do take action. Morale amongst tube workers has improved since immediately after the Plan came in.

What is now vital is to find the issues on which we can get united action from all tubeworkers, regardless of grade or union.

One issue that may well prove important - particularly amongst train crew - is the five day week.

Now most tubeworkers work on an 11 day fortnight. The five day week was supposedly promised to ASLEF full-timer Kevin Rose in November in return for calling off the ASLEF ballot and ensuring the Company Plan came in smoothly. Since Rose did management's job for them in derailing the opposition to the Plan there has been no sign of the five day week.

Rank and file ASLEF and RMT activists are now beginning to organise together to start the fight for the five day week. Formally the policy of both unions is for a 35 hour week and "Five days and 35 hours" would be an excellent slogan.

Whatever happens we must remember this: if we are to have any chance of beating management we must be united. And we desperately need a rank and file movement to build that unity - in depots and workplaces - across unions and grades. Otherwise what we have seen so far from management will only be the beginning.

The first step would be for ASLEF and TSSA to ballot on pay.

North West jobs march needs your support!

PLANS ARE NOW WELL UNDER WAY FOR A MASSIVE North West People's March in solidarity with the NUM's fight to save Parkside Colliery at Newton-le-Willows and against the increasing unemployment in the region.

The march aims to help heighten the media profile of the campaign against pit closures in the North West and bolster the fighting spirit of Lancashire's 500 remaining miners who are continuing to stand firm against British Coal's attempts to shut their pit.

The march will be starting on Thursday 17 June in Lancaster. Other legs will start in Burnley, Oldham and Birkenhead on Friday 18 and in Manchester on Saturday 19 June. The different contingents will come together for a mass demonstration and rally near the pit on Sunday 20 June. Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn MP and Dennis Skinner have been asked to lead the march.

This People's March has been jointly organised by NWTUC, Lancashire NUM, NW Miners Support Group Network and Lancashire Women Against Pit Closures. If you are prepared to help please contact the appropriate organisers (see below).

The organisers need sponsors (£50 per marcher) to help with the costs. They also need people to march all or part of the route.

Contact: Lancaster/Preston/Wigan — Chris Cooper 0524 843512; Burnley/Bury/Leigh — Steve Hall 0942 884763; Merseyside — Alec McFadden 051 709 3995; Manchester — Rick Sumner 061 881 3508

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YOUTH FIGHTBACK

The paper for well red youth!

Contents

- Fighting Racism and Fascism
- Lesbian and Gay Pride
- Student Rebellion in South Korea

The police:

corrupt and racist



Police in Hackney, East London have had their credibility shattered by a series of terrible miscarriages of justice. The local police monitoring campaign, Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA), talked to *Youth Fightback* about the latest cases to come to the Court of Appeal.

ON MONDAY 24 May, Cyrus Baptiste, a 36 year old West Indian man, had a six year sentence for possession of crack cocaine with intent to supply, overturned by the Court of Appeal.

Baptiste was cleared after the Crown admitted that it could no longer rely on the evidence of three Hackney constables — Terrence Chitty, Mark Carroll and Peter McCulloch. The court had heard that in at least two other similar cases

juries had refused to believe the evidence of these officers.

The Crown Prosecution Service admitted that if these other cases had come to court before Baptiste's, the case would have been dropped.

Cyrus Baptiste had been jailed in December 1991.

HCDA is calling for these three officers to be suspended. Three other Hackney police officers were suspended last year.

Chitty has been previously suspended when he was a member of the Territorial Support group. A group of 24 officers were suspended, after allegations of violence and fabrication of evidence.

On Thursday 27 May Basil Swaby had his case for possession of cocaine with intent to supply overturned.

It took just seven minutes to overturn this case which also involved Hackney police who were described in court as not being "reliable witnesses of truth".

Basil Swaby had been arrested in August 1990 and had a sentence of three years in jail and a deportation notice

imposed on 31 May 1991.

For the first time in this series of exposures of police abuse in Hackney, the court actually apologised to Basil Swaby.

The main point to stress about policing in Hackney is that it is completely a political matter. How to fight crime is not an issue here. For the police there is only one issue at stake — how to maintain their credibility.

The scandal here in East London is now bigger than that which surrounded the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad. There have now been eight cases won in the Court of Appeal against Stoke Newington police — just a divisional police station in Hackney.

The allegations in West Midlands solely concerned fabrication of evidence, but here police officers are actually alleged to have taken part in crimes.

Free the M25 Three!

Picket the appeal hearing! 9 am 21 June, Court of Justice on the Strand, London WC2

Three black men — Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson are serving life sentences for crimes they did not commit. Rowe and Davis had alibis and there was no forensic, direct or confessional evidence.

Contact Joanne 071-639 0568

Hackney Community Defence Association, 10A Bradbury Street, London N16. Phone 071-249 0193.

what we say:

Fighting racism and fascism

The roots of racism

RACISM SATURATES British life. Modern, anti-black British racism has its roots in the development of British capitalism. As the slave trade developed and fortunes were made by selling black bodies the ruling class looked to justify their barbarity.

Black people became "sub-human". Pseudo-scientific gibberish was written to reinforce prejudice.

The ruling class made racism "normal" and "natural" in Britain.

As British colonialism spread across the world it became common to talk of the "white man's burden" of dragging the non-white part of the world out of primitive backwardness. As if British imperialism was one, big, philanthropic exercise!

The legacy of slavery and Britain's imperialist brutality has poisoned British society with nationalism and racism. The social institutions of British society — from the Tory party to the Home Office's implementation of racist immigration laws to racist policing — maintain the foul tradition.

The fascist threat

During the 1970s against the backdrop of a Labour government which was attacking working class living standards, some thousands of white workers turned towards the fascist far right.

Across Europe the social conditions for the growth of new Nazi movements are being created: mass unemployment and disillusion with traditional working class organisations.

In France Le Pen's fascist National Front gets around 10% of the vote.

In Germany the neo-Nazis have carried out many hundreds of racist attacks in the last year.

In Britain there is the potential for fascist organisations to recruit out of the disillusion of white youth. Labour and the unions put up little resistance to the Tories or to unemployment; our labour movement has abandoned thousands of white youth and appears to have no answers.

In these conditions socialist youth must campaign for jobs and for Labour and the trade unions to organise and provide answers to poor housing, unemployment — all the problems which youth face.

Fighting back against racism

The Nazis are part of a more general problem. The majority of racist attacks and the day-to-day racist practice of the police are not organised by the fascist organisations.

The first thing that socialists say is that we will help black youth and Jewish youth organise self-defence against the fascists and racists. Communities have the right to defend themselves and the labour movement must give its active support.

We demand that white workers and youth side with black people. Not an inch given to the racists!

Beyond self-defence we need political answers — answers to be implemented at the level of government, like jobs and decent housing for all, democratic control of policing and the abolition of racist immigration laws.

We demand the current working class movement — the Labour Party and unions — campaign on these issues now.

Immigration controls must go!

Tory MP Winston Churchill recently claimed that the "British way of life" is under threat from a "relentless flow of immigrants". He means black people and he wants even more restrictions on immigration into Britain.

Britain's immigration laws explicitly target people from Africa and Asia as people to be excluded, while immigration controls within the European Community have been removed. This is absurd. These controls must go!

We need unity

We need two types of unity against the racists and fascists — the *unity of black and white* and the *unity of the various anti-racist organisations*.

We need no more of the squabbling between left groups which has characterised recent campaigning — *we are for one mass anti-racist movement!*

We need to take the arguments to white workers. We need to convince these people that the racism of white workers weakens us all.

White workers who are racist help to cut their own throats by attacking another part of our class.

Unity against racism and fascism!

South Korea: Lessons from

By Paul Field, Durham

SOUTH KOREAN students are no strangers to militancy or struggle. It was a student-based popular revolt that overthrew Syngman Rhee's dictatorship in 1960. In the 1970s hundreds of student activists entered factories and shipyards to help organise workers into democratic unions.

In May 1980 students and local people seized arms from police stations and army stockpiles and ejected the military from the city of Kwangju. For 5 days workers and students controlled Kwangju through their own people's committees. The uprising was finally crushed when the US army released 20,000 troops under its command to join local paratroopers who retook the city with the "zeal of Nazi storm troopers", according to an Asia Watch report, leaving 2,000 dead behind them.

These struggles were to serve as an inspiration for the thousands of students at the forefront of the mass mobilisations for democracy in 1987. While 5 million people participated in the June demonstrations it was the presence of the middle class that was to prove decisive in forcing the military to relinquish power. Workers responded to the promise of civilian elections by beginning their own determined fight for improved pay and conditions in the space opened up by the June events. In the months of July and August three million

workers took strike action in over 3,400 factories across Korea. The wider struggle for democracy found its expression among workers with the creation of over 1,000 new trade unions that were organised independently of the state-controlled Federation of Korean trade unions. The response of students to this unprecedented and largely spontaneous wave of worker militancy was to launch Chondaehyop in August 1987 which had as its principal aims an end to all government oppression of workers and immediate democratisation.

The national alliance of student unions has since become one of the most important forces in the post-'87 democracy movement and has co-ordinated student/worker solidarity in numerous strikes.

The so-called "Democratic" governments of Roh Tae Woo and now Kim Young Sam have proved more adept at dealing with student and worker unrest than their militarist predecessors. In this they have been able to rely on the support of the middle class, who in the words of one student activist, "gave up fighting" once the military had been overthrown and a facade of liberal democracy established in its place. Roh Tae Woo used the carrot and the stick to quell an insurrectionary working class, conceding pay rises of 400% in the last five years with one hand and viciously breaking up any strike with the other.

The western media may extol



Industrial action 1991. A workers

the democratic credentials of President Kim Yong Sam's newly elected government but some 250 trade unionists continue to languish in Korean prisons for crimes as heinous as strike action or belonging to the illegal union federation Chunnohyup.

The student movement experienced the brutality of Korean "democracy" in May 1991 when riot police armed with steel pipes beat a 20 year old student to death for protesting at the arrest of a fellow student. Chondaehy-

Youth: back the t

By Karen, Tottenham

THERE IS WIDESPREAD outrage about the level of unemployment. There has been outrage against VAT on fuel. The plans for London's hospitals

were also met with disgust and protest. However, none of the anger has been as well co-ordinated as the teachers' boycotts of tests and their refusal to accept government proposals.

All the teaching unions have

voted in favour of boycotting the tests.

School students and students should support their teachers' boycott of tests.

The tests are not useful for assessment. Teachers already have to assess their pupils throughout the year, when they write reports, have parents' evenings, mark work and so on.

To base assessment simply on tests is wrong. School students get ill, they get stressed, they have any number of problems which can cause bad scores in a test. Also the tests are simply about academic skills in a very narrowly-defined range laid down by the Tories. The tests are part of a whole programme of narrowing down education to a stereotyped narrow range of academic skills and knowledge.

School students should support the boycotts in their own interest, for the sake of getting a decent education. One of the unions' main arguments against the tests has been the amount of work they involve.

Teachers are already massively overworked. For example, my stepdad is a science teacher. A typical evening for him is home, three hours' work, supper, more work, a bit of television, more work, bed.



School students should support the testing boycott in their own interest. Photo: Monique Blanchet

the rebellions



party is needed in Korea.

op saw this as a turning point and called upon Korea's one million students to start a "life or death" struggle to bring down the government. 100,000 protesters joined street battles in Seoul with a further 150,000 participating in demonstrations in other cities. Throughout this the middle class continued to identify with the state and against the students whereas the union movement was still reeling from the effects of government repression itself and was unable to pro-

vide any meaningful support. The students were left isolated. Water canons, tear gas and tens of thousands of "White skeleton" riot police were deployed to smash the demonstrations. Very little was gained by these protests that took place in a political vacuum without any generalised industrial action or a leadership that was able to rally the working class.

The conclusion that student activists have drawn from this is about the futility of mass street

demonstrations without a workers' party based upon the democratic union movement to lead them. A party of this nature, organised along the same lines as the Brazilian Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), could co-ordinate strikes and mass action and at the same time command support of broad sections of the working class in elections. The struggle to build such a Party is the most important task that faces student and trade union activists in Korea today.

teachers action

Where is his time for relaxing, for himself and his family? The overwork has made him resent his job as a teacher, and that can't have a good effect on his teaching!

Tests give the impression of delivering results, or parents being able to watch their children's development and therefore being involved. However, it is one thing to get the results of imposed tests, with the government deciding the content, another for parents and school students to have any say about the content of their curriculum and assessment. Many school students hate

school. However, if they were learning things they saw as relevant and necessary for preparation for the "outside world", they would take more interest.

The Tories want a "traditionalist" approach — learning how Britain was great when it was an imperialist nation and so on.

Of course the 3Rs are important. But pupils are not stupid. They can see these things are necessary but they can also make decisions for themselves.

They may see the history of slavery as an important part of the legacy of Columbus and not just

the fact that white people descended upon America.

Socialists should argue against going back to the traditional methods of streaming, (Tory Minister Patten has encouraged schools to re-introduce this). And we should argue against an underfunded education system where classes are large, teachers are overworked, and those schools which don't have the best academic results in new league tables get less funding than those which do well academically so that schools divide into ones for the well off and others for the poor.

WRITE BACK

Youth for Labour!

By Hannah, North London

YOUTH IN THE LABOUR PARTY are campaigning for the relaunch of Labour's Youth Sections. We are demanding the right to control our own youth sections and campaign in the way that we see fit. The Labour Party effectively closed down the Young Socialists in the late 1980s because they thought that the YS was too left wing. The net result of their bureaucratic tampering is that no youth join the Party, no campaigning amongst youth is done and no YS branches really exist.

Now a lot of labour activists - from both the left and the right - can see the need for a youth section. Many Labour members also accept the obvious point that youth will not get involved in a Labour youth section which is run from London and carved up by creepy student bureaucrats.

A motion has been put together to go to Labour Party Conference supporting the setting up of Youth Sections and saying that local YSs would be the responsibility of the local Constituency Labour Party.

This motion has been sent to all Labour MPs asking them for their support. Amongst the MPs who have already backed this move are Alice Mahon, Dennis Skinner, Tony Benn, Gavin Strang, Chris Smith and others.

It is vital that we take on the serious task of winning more young people to the Labour Party.

If you want to know more about this campaign and the resolution for Labour Party Conference, contact: Hannah c/o Youth Fightback, PO Box 823 London SE15 4NA. All letters will be forwarded.

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK

Tories attack women's rights

By Debbie, South London

THE TORY GOVERNMENT HAS plans to introduce charges for contraception, removing women's right to free contraception. General Practitioners are no longer allowed to distribute free condoms which they have been able to do in the past.

For some women, these changes will mean making a choice between not having sex or risking becoming pregnant. This is no choice. Women must have the right to control their own bodies and this includes whether and when they should have a child.

The recent birth of sextuplets to an unmarried mother who had received infertility treatment on the National Health Service has provoked an enormous reactionary outcry. Nicholas Winterton, a Tory MP, said that the health service appeared to have "extraordinary priorities. For scarce resources to be spent in the way that they have been is a cause for great anger. If this woman wanted to have fertility treatment she should have paid for it." Since when is having a child a privilege which has to be paid for? If Nicholas Winterton is so concerned about the lack of resources for the NHS then surely he should be taking on those in his own party who have been starving the health service of funds. What he is actually saying is that unmarried women who want children and need fertility treatment can only have a child if they can afford to pay.

We must not accept that the Tories have the right to take decisions about who can and cannot have children and about whether or not women have sex. We need to campaign for women's right to control their fertility, which includes free contraception, free access to infertility treatments and free abortion on demand.

who we are

WE'RE SICK OF POVERTY, OF UNEMPLOYMENT, of police harassment. We're sick of pointless jobs and YT cheap labour schemes. The Tories have used unemployment to drive down our wages. They've cut or abolished benefits and grants. Yet most young people see politics as irrelevant.

The reason for this indifference is the failure of the leadership of the labour movement. The trade union leaders have cowered at the Tories' attacks and failed to organise workers in new industries or the unemployed. The Labour leadership has given in and trailed along behind the Tories. Instead of fighting the Tories, Kinnock attacked the left and broke up the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Young people do kick back. The anger does explode — in riots. But riots achieve nothing and cannot change the basic problems we face. The only force that can rid society of poverty, alienation, unemployment and cut away the roots of racism and sexism is the labour movement.

The place for a youth fightback is in and through the labour movement. We will fight the right wing leadership of Labour and of the unions. If they bar us from official structures we will build our own.

We can take on the Tories, drawing the anger of young people into class politics. We can show young people that they can change the world and that we can fight back.

YOUTH FIGHTBACK — the paper for well red youth

"YOUTH FIGHTBACK was launched by Alliance for Workers' Liberty youth because youth need a socialist paper. If you want to get involved, write to us or send us articles, and sell this paper."

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The United Colours of Frustration

Fun-da-mental are serious anti-racists. They have played gigs up and down the country for numerous organisations. Currently they are working with Blade, and Bloggers ITA in an anti-racist tour: "The United Colours of Frustration".

Mark spoke to Propa-Ghandi about Fun-da-mental's politics.

THE UNITED Colours of Frustration tour is about people from different bands, black and white, going out and playing gigs against fascism, getting across the message to people on the street.

It is important to get bands not only singing about the Nazis but also taking action against fascism. A lot of bands talk about how racism is wrong, but not enough bands do anything about it. They go and play for Live Aid as a means of getting publicity but do little else.

Ever since the Anti-Nazi League during the 1970s and Rock Against Racism bands have not really tied *action to music*.

We will do gigs for *any* of the campaigns, but we don't want to ally ourselves with any particular group because of the internal fighting and bickering. We just do gigs for everybody and we want to be an example — here's a band who is trying to get everybody together. We have to *unite* to fight racism. All the different campaigns must unite.

Racism is a disease of western society, it's a fear. The education system does not teach about other peoples, about other cultures or the West's domination of the Third World. It does not make young people change their attitudes, it only reinforces prejudices.

Socialism

We are not socialists but we *are* open to discussion and debate. We are not opinionated because we don't have the answers, we are still learning. At the same time we know what is right and wrong.



Propa-Ghandi

We base ourselves on human solidarity.

I don't care if you are black, white, yellow, pink or whatever. I think it's important to stand up for your rights. If a white person was getting attacked they would defend themselves. Is there any problem with a black man doing the same? A lot of racist right wingers don't just deal in verbal abuse, they use violence. It's going to be very difficult to combat racism, but we can't accept black people being victims.

Unemployment

It's not fair that if a white man loses his job then the hate is turned on a black family who get fire bombed. The black family is not to blame — it's the fault of the government. Malcolm X talked about this — don't give us white men's jobs, create more jobs. But government policy helps create racial hatred and so we must also fight against the Tory government. We are not anti-white, we're anti-government. We are against the apathy, the complacency of our government, that will go to every effort to sort out the Maastricht Treaty and things

like that, but it is not interested in dealing with racist murders.

At the end of the day we're not into division — and neither was Malcolm X or Martin Luther King. But they were put into a position where they asked for rights and were not given them. So they then decided not to ask but to take their rights. They did not want to be separated from whites but whites did not want unity.

Gay rights

On lesbian and gay rights I would say — who are we to judge who is right and who is wrong? We are against bigots.

Fascists attack gay people and these people who deal in violence should be met with the same amount of violence. If they attack the gay movement the gay movement should fightback.

The police

The police are the arm of the government. They have too much power. They are not accountable, they should be accountable to elected local committees on a weekly basis. When there is an incident they should be in front of people to answer how they dealt with it and why they dealt with it in a particular way. They should be under strict surveillance because they continually abuse their power.

Of course we need law, but it does not give the police dictatorial rights to restrict freedom and infringe liberty. We have to fight injustice. We must stop being apathetic about it and when there is an anti-racist or anti-police demo people have got to be out there in force.

Our message

Fun-da-mental's message to youth is open your minds, deal with things on a humanitarian level, start caring about the future. The future is worth fighting for.

Have Pride!

By Julie, Sheffield

Pride is set for 19 June. Pride is a demonstration and festival of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals and has been an annual event in Britain since the early seventies.

The lesbian and gay liberation movement began life after a riot in New York City in 1969 when police raided a gay bar and people fought back. These 'Stonewall' riots were the beginning of a movement against gay oppression.

So where is this movement today? There are a large number of lesbian, gay and bisexual campaigning groups. Outrage is one such group, doing publicity stunts, organising kiss-ins etc. Stonewall is another, which operates much more on the level of lobbying MPs, sending Sir Ian McKellan for tea with the Prime Minister and so on.

The tactics of Outrage are shock tactics — "We're here, we're queer, get used to it" and is not followed up with political campaigning. Stonewall is trying to persuade the Tory government that lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are not such bad people really so would they please give us equal rights. The Tories are bigots and so Stonewall is not likely to meet with much success.

Pride is now big business and has become a limited company. The "Pink Pound" has been discovered. Many groups and organisations are taking advantage of the fact that a group within the gay community (mainly middle class gay men), are financially well off, and are neglecting the fact that the rest of us are skint.

There are plenty of pink capital-

ists and pink Tories. Money can buy a certain amount of distance from the day-to-day oppression and threats working-class lesbians and gay men face. We are likely to be in low-paid work with little job security and therefore most vulnerable to homophobia at work and discriminatory dismissal. The gay groups which spend all their time hanging around the club scene and pulling off publicity stunts must start to take into account the big group of working-class lesbians and gay men to whom they are largely irrelevant.

There are groups campaigning within the labour movement around issues of lesbian, gay and bisexual oppression. Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners was an active group organising solidarity work during the miners' strike of 1984-85 and following this, the NUM moved policy which put lesbian and gay rights onto the agenda of the Labour Party. The Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition is currently campaigning within the unions and Labour Party to get the labour movement to fight for lesbian and gay rights.

Any group campaigning for lesbian, gay and bisexual rights needs to have an understanding of gay oppression. Capitalist society has an interest in restricting people's lives and choices. We should be campaigning for the rights of everyone to determine and express their sexuality as they choose to. Lesbian, gay and bisexual oppression is a part of current prejudice and bound up with the capitalist society we live in — any serious fight against it has to be as part of a fight to change society.

REACTIONARY GIT OF THE MONTH — WINSTON CHURCHILL

By Tracy, Manchester

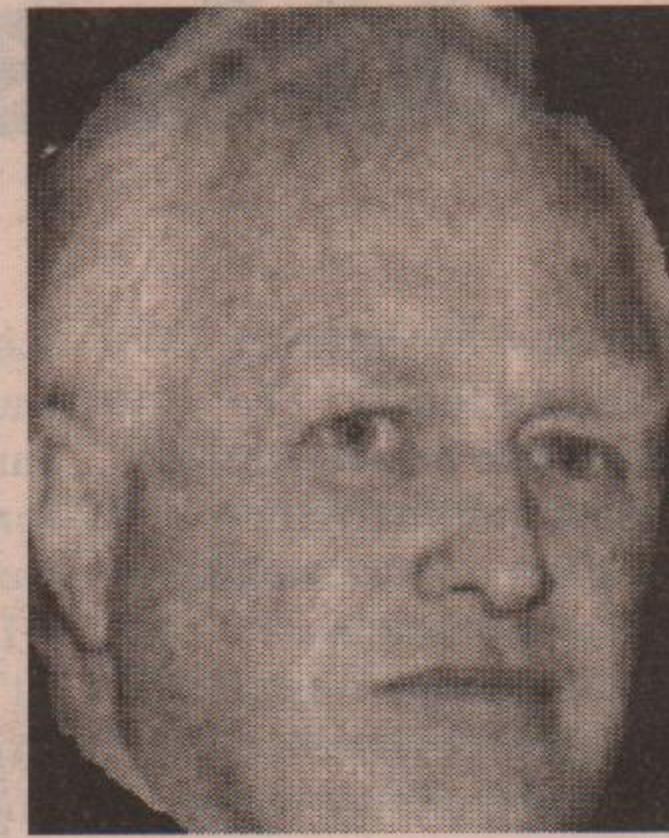
WINSTON Churchill, Tory backbencher and MP for Davyhulme, South Manchester, has given the green light for extreme right wing fascist groups in Britain.

At a meeting of Tories in Bolton, Greater Manchester, Churchill made the cheap, sick, racist call for a stop to the "relentless flow of immigration so that the British way of life could be preserved." In particular, Churchill targetted people from the Indian sub-continent as those who are "threatening the British way of life".

Tanuka, a young Asian woman living in the area, told me:

"Churchill is disgusting. It is comments like these which breed animosity and racist hatred in the community. People are scared!... The Tories are playing the race card, setting white against black at a time when we should be united against attacks. We are being used as scapegoats. They are blaming us instead of their own corrupt capitalist system for the fact that the country is in such a mess and for the fact that there are no jobs. Just today, one of my neighbours was interviewed on national television. She stated that 'immigration should be stopped, because as it is there aren't enough jobs for our lads'.

I hate Churchill and the Tories for what they are doing. It is even more disgraceful that they think that it's okay to say what they are saying and see no reason why they should be criticised for it. This is extremely



People like Churchill have to be stopped!

dangerous! Churchill's attack has been launched at a time when racism, fascism and the far right are on the increase in Western Europe. Only this weekend, five innocent Turkish people were burnt to death by fascists in their own home in Solingen, Germany.

Where will this end? Racism is real and will continue to increase until racists like Churchill are stopped!"

There will be a Youth for Justice meeting at South Trafford College Student's Union, Manchester, on Tuesday 8 June, 1pm. If you are interested in other activities, including a picket of Winston Churchill's surgery, contact Tracy on 061 226 0228.

Workers Liberty '93

Black Panther speaks in London

Michael Zinzun, former Black Panther and current leader of the Los Angeles Coalition Against Police Abuse, will speak at Workers' Liberty '93, Friday 2 to Sunday 4 July at Caxton House, 129 St John's Way,

London N19
Michael will discuss • The legacy of the Black Panthers and • Los Angeles — One Year On.
We will send you an agenda and programme telephone Mark on 071-639 7965