

SOCIALIST ORGANISER

FOR WORKERS' LIBERTY EAST AND WEST

Stuff your discipline!

Miners tell the Tories



Striking miners lobby Yorkshire NUM executive. Photo John Harris.

In a magnificent display of rank and file militancy, 900 Frickley miners struck work on Monday 13 July and brought the rest of the South Yorkshire coalfield to a halt last week with flying pickets. Some pits in North Yorkshire also came out in solidarity. The Frickley strike was in defence of five miners victimised under British Coal's new discipline code.

All 900 striking miners were threatened with the sack, but the Frickley miners voted to call off their strike only because of pressure from the Yorkshire Area leadership.

British Coal's new 'Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures'

By John Bloxam

was imposed unilaterally by the bosses last March. Management claims the 'right' to:

*Discipline and sack workers for alleged offences committed away from the pit, and irrespective of whether such offences lead to court convictions or not;

*Sack workers for conduct which "destroys the necessary mutual trust and confidence which exists between British Coal and the mineworker" — in other words, industrial action;

*Sack workers who commit an 'offence' within *three years* of receiving a written warning, for however trivial a reason;

*Pick which union official can represent workers brought before management.

These are clearly 'rights' management intends to use.

Already, a Nottinghamshire miner has been threatened with the sack after a fight in a miners' welfare, although no criminal charges were involved. Over 3,500 South Wales miners have the threat of the sack hanging over their heads for the next three years after getting written warnings following a series of disputes in different pits.

Ted Scott, branch secretary at Stillington in the Selby complex in North Yorkshire, is awaiting the result of his appeal against sacking. Scott is charged, or so the NUM believe — (Ted Scott is still waiting for proper notification!) with 'gross

misconduct' because he *made it clear that it is union policy to have no coal cutting during overtime.*

British Coal claim that the new code is needed now because there are two unions in the industry, the UDM as well as the NUM. But even the UDM, which is normally happy to accept anything the bosses throw at them, now feels able only to "note" the new code's provisions.

Anger

Many miners have said they would rather not work at all than do so under the disciplinary code they call a "slaves' charter". Last week Frickley ignited this anger. By the end of the week 14 pits in South Yorkshire were out in solidarity. Both the South and

North Yorkshire panels, representing all the pits in their area, had given their full support to Frickley. Kellingley in North Yorkshire, the biggest pit in Europe, had agreed to strike in solidarity on Monday.

The NUM National Executive Committee, meeting last Thursday, unanimously agreed to hold a national ballot on industrial action *short of strike action*, to get the code withdrawn or changed. To take account of the pit holidays, the ballot which began on Monday 20 July, will continue until Friday 21 August. The result will be known in September.

The impact of the NEC decision did not become clear until last Saturday morning, when the Yorkshire

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Keetons: one year on strike

By Gail Cameron

"We're not just fighting for our jobs. We're fighting for others. If a chap can get rid of 35 workers with over 600 years' service between them — any bosses can get shot of anyone". A striking engineer.

For over a year 35 workers at an engineering firm in Sheffield, Keetons, have been on strike, fighting for their right to work, for full redundancy payments for those who want it, and for full trade union recognition.

In July 1986, the workforce came out after management imposed a system of multi-manning on the workers. Although he followed the Tory trade union rule book to the letter, the boss used the strike as an excuse to sack the workforce and bring in non-union cheap labour.

For the duration of the strike the bosses have used all Thatcher's 'strike-breaking' legislation in an attempt to undercut the strikers. Supporters from the local unemployed centre have been told by the police that if they do anything but stand on the picket line (e.g. shout slogans), they will immediately be arrested.

Two strikers hauled up in court for following one of the firm's lorries, have been stopped from going anywhere near the picket line. One striking engineer said: "We should have listened and fought back with the car workers. Maggie's intent on breaking trade unions — making us work without the protection of a union."

Now in its second year of strike, union backing seems to be flagging. Strikers still receive union resources but get little effective leadership. Despite this, support throughout the labour movement remains strong, especially amongst local mining communities.

One striker commented: "We supported the miners — having a weekly levy and regular collections. Now it is paying dividends with their support for us." All round support has been good.

One problem is that National Front thugs and their racist sympathisers have been collecting for Keetons and using this activity as a means to recruit amongst local unemployed youth. Keetons strikers have dissociated themselves completely from this activity and over the last few weeks the Sheffield Defence Campaign, a city-wide anti-racist organisation active in the black community, have visited the picket line with banners to lend support.

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South African unions meet

By Anne Mack

The second national congress of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) ended last weekend.

Nearly 1,500 delegates, representing 712,000 workers, voted to adopt the Freedom Charter of the banned African National Congress (ANC) as a "guiding document".

The Freedom Charter calls for a society in which:

*The people shall govern.
*All national groups shall enjoy equal rights.

*The people shall share in the country's wealth.

*The land shall be shared among those who work it.

*All shall be equal before the law.
*All shall enjoy human rights.

*There shall be work and security.
*The doors of learning and culture shall be opened.

*There shall be houses, security and comfort.

*There shall be peace and friendship.

The adoption by COSATU of the Charter marks a very close identification between the independent black trade union movement and the ANC.

However, it leaves many political questions unanswered.

The Freedom Charter can be and has been interpreted in many different ways. Some see it as a socialist document, or at least as a document that could only be implemented by a workers' government. Others view it as a vision compatible with a kind of welfare capitalism. That was certainly Nelson Mandela's view when he stated:

"It is true that in demanding the nationalisation of the banks, the gold mines and the land, the Charter strikes a fatal blow at the financial and gold mining monopolies and farming interests... But such a step is absolutely imperative and necessary because the realisation of the Charter is inconceivable... until the monopolies are first smashed up and the national wealth of the country turned over to the people."

The breaking up of these monopolies will open up fresh fields for the development of a non-European bourgeois class. For the first time in the history of the country the non-European bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to own in its own home and right mills and factories and trade and private enterprise will boom and flourish as never

before.



Pickets say: Free Nelson Mandela

Picket outside South Africa House demanding the release of Nelson Mandela on the occasion of his birthday. He has been in prison for 23 years. Photo Lanre Fehintolo (IFL)

before.

The workers are the principal force upon which the democratic movement should rely but to repel the savage onslaught of the national government and to develop the fight for democratic rights it is necessary that the other classes and groupings be joined. Non-European traders and businessmen are also potential allies."

This sums up Mandela's strategy: a broad, multi-class alliance against apartheid, with the working class as a stage army rather than the leading class, and a model of post-apartheid South Africa which is explicitly capitalist. Oliver Tambo of the ANC reiterated on several occasions recently that this is still the basic strategy of the ANC.

Talks last week between the ANC and prominent Afrikaaners have underlined this.

Mandela's, which is the dominant

interpretation of the Charter, fits uneasily with the commitment of many trade unions to a socialist solution to the crisis of apartheid.

What appears to be happening is that COSATU is being drawn into a long-term strategic alliance with the ANC without there actually being any real agreement on long-term strategic goals.

This points to a second problem with COSATU's basic political position as expounded by miners' leader Cyril Ramaphosa. The NUM leader talks of a time when working class politics "eventually become the politics of all the oppressed in this country."

Given the differences that obviously do exist between different forces within the liberation movement, it is difficult to see how Ramaphosa's position does not necessarily entail a struggle of different "class politics" for leadership of the liberation move-

Stuff their discipline!

From page 1

Area EC met in Barnsley. The Frickley-led strike achieved a wide level of support throughout the coalfield and it could have given a real boost to the campaign for a 'yes' vote in the ballot. But instead of using the strike to influence the ballot, the Yorkshire Area leadership did the opposite — they used the decision to ballot to undercut the strike.

"Unity and discipline" was the watchword as the EC recommended that the strikes be called off.

In a carefully orchestrated move, the North Yorkshire panel immediately met again and reversed its previous decision to support the Frickley strike. Kellingley branch did the same. On Sunday the South Yorkshire panel fell into line. On Monday, 20 July, the Yorkshire Area Council voted 60 to 3 to back the leadership against Frickley.

Frickley stood out against the intense pressure until Tuesday. On Sunday the branch had voted, with only 84 against, to reject Area President Jack Taylor's pleas to back down. On Monday the branch's

pickets stopped another 11 pits. But, isolated, the branch decided on Tuesday morning to return to work the next day.

Jack Taylor and the Yorkshire leadership said they wanted the strike called off to allow a proper campaign for a 'yes' vote in the ballot, which will be held in Yorkshire on Thursday and Friday of this week.

It was not clear why miners had first to go back to the pit, or could not vote when they were on strike.

More importantly, the cautious approach of the Area leadership carries with it huge risks. How many other groups of workers are they going to damp down before the result of the national ballot is known in September? If it is wrong to fight now in support of the five workers victimised at Frickley, presumably it will be wrong to strike in support of Ted Scott at Stillingfleet, which the Yorkshire leadership themselves say is a much stronger case.

Rank and file action cannot be turned on and off like a tap. Even if there is an attempt to get action in defence of Ted Scott, it will be more difficult to achieve because the Frickley strike was undercut.

The resulting bitterness and

demoralisation could also make it more difficult to get a 'yes' vote in the ballot.

Last week, Yorkshire miners were saying 'enough is enough'. The Yorkshire Area leadership should have helped spread their action with the aim of getting British Coal to rapidly back down, at least over the Frickley suspensions. The bosses' initial reaction was far from confident and that shows they were shaken by the workers' action.

On Saturday British Coal was insisting that the code was still open for negotiation. But by Monday, after the Yorkshire Area leadership had damped down Area militancy, Kevan Hunt was saying that there were no "fertile grounds" for negotiation with the NUM. He strongly hinted at a witch-hunt against the 'agitators' in South Yorkshire.

On Tuesday morning Frickley miners went to neighbouring pits to thank the workers for their solidarity. They were still insisting, in the words of branch secretary Steve Tulley, that "Frickley was going the right way". He is dead right.

What we need now is a massive campaign for a 'yes' vote in the ballot.

ment.

The question is how best to pursue the struggle for working class leadership.

One of the alternatives to a 'convergence' of the popular movement and the trade unions which is the most popular option in COSATU at the moment, is to build a mass workers' party based on a significant section of the trade unions.

A workers' party would not sum-up strategic differences into existence. They exist already. What such an organisation could potentially do is provide a specially political vehicle for ensuring that "the politics of the working class eventually becomes the politics of all the oppressed."

The workers' party idea draws out the political logic of positions such as that of the metal union NUMSA which said at its founding congress:

"The lack of initiatives and the confusion that exists within the community itself as political issues arise from the lack of a working class programme... the organised working class can only take the lead in the struggle if it has a clear programme and aims which clarify exactly what is wanted by the working class and what is meant by their demands."

A working class programme needs an organisation to embody it and fight for it otherwise it is simply something suspended in mid air.

A party is needed to do this job.

Because of its social nature, the working class needs conscious, open political organisation like no other class in history has needed it. The working class cannot grow organically to the position of dominant class as a result of economic development in the period preceding the great bourgeois-democratic anti-feudal revolutions.

Nor can the working class come to power semi-spontaneously as a result of the collapse or partial disintegration of the existing state.

The working class can only triumph consciously. This means that the workers can only become "the leading class of the nation" through a process of political, ideological and economic struggle. This struggle will first and foremost have to be directed against the old order; but working class leadership necessarily implies a struggle against other classes who project themselves as "leaders of the nation".

Conversely, it is difficult to see how a capitalist, post-apartheid South Africa could be created without a section of the popular movement in alliance with South African and international capital attempting seriously to defeat and disorganise the workers' movement.

So the decisions of COSATU's congress should not be seen as closing down the option of building a workers' party. Rather it has made that task more urgent.

More on centre pages

The assembled delegates gasped when a telegram of support from the exiled South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) was read out at the start of the second national congress of the Congress of South African Trade Unions COSATU.

What was it that had so startled the assembled worker militants?

The audience was objecting in its own way to a piece of "advice" from SACTU. The exiled trade union had warned COSATU that it would be an "error" if the federation adopted a socialist programme. The miners' and metalworkers' unions, COSATU's two biggest affiliates, have already done so.

For years SACTU slandered many of the independent unions who are now part of COSATU, saying they were not being "political" enough. Now it seems they are too political.

Our duty by Solidarnosc

P R E S S
G A N G

'A Thoroughly Bad Lot'

By Jim Denham

JEFFREY Archer's libel action against the *Star* and its editor Lloyd Turner has provided a fascinating insight to the murky world of 'popular' journalism.

Archer's QC, Robert Alexander, seems particularly good at humiliating tabloid hacks. *News of the World* reporter John Lisners, accused of deceiving Monica Coghlan, protested that "it was subterfuge, not a lie". David Montgomery, editor of the *News of the World* at the time of the Archer story (the Digger has since moved him on to *Today*), even protested that Alexander was treating him and his colleagues with 'sneering cynicism'. What sensitive souls these fellows are!

But the most interesting aspect of the case is the light that has been shed on the relationship between the Dirty Digger and the present occupant of Number Ten.

Archer was questioned about a lunch he had with Montgomery during last year's Tory conference at Bournemouth. Michael Hill, QC for the *Star*, asked Archer: "Did you say words to the effect that the Prime Minister listened to you and that, for example, if you were to say to her that David Montgomery was a very good fellow and that she should speak to him from time to time she would do just that?"

"Whereas if, on the other hand, you were to say that David Montgomery was a thoroughly bad lot and she should have a word with Mr Rupert Murdoch, she would do that?"

Archer at first denied saying anything, but later admitted that "if I discovered... a particular editor who was a high intelligent [sic] sophisticated person with things to offer our country in any way, I wouldn't have minded saying to the Prime Minister that that person was a good person". Enough said, I think.

'Defiance'

The *Sunday Times* decision to publish extracts from Peter Wright's book *Spycatcher* (albeit three months after the *Independent* and the *London Daily News*) seemed a bold act of independence in the face of the government — something the *ST* has not exactly been noted for since Murdoch installed the craven Andrew Neil as editor.

When the injunction banning further publication was slapped on, Neil at first made brave defiant noises — he would publish and be damned.

Predictably this Sunday there were no more extracts. Instead Neil published a long editorial accusing the government of attempting to "gag the British press and Parliament while the rest of the world looks on in astonishment that such a thing could happen in a country famous for its freedoms".

Conspiracy?

'SECRET Coal Strike Plot', screamed Tuesday's *Daily Mail* front page lead. "Pit militants were accused last night of secretly conspiring to wreck the coal industry", declared the first paragraph of the article.

What was the evidence? Tucked away towards the end of the story was a quote from British Coal's Industrial Relations director Kevin Hunt, describing disputes in South Yorkshire as "a phenomenon happening too often to be a coincidence".

That's it. Conclusive, I'm sure you will agree.



Illegal Solidarnosc demonstration

SEVEN YEARS ago one of the greatest episodes in the long history of the international working class began to unfold.

At the beginning of August 1980 Stalinist Poland was engulfed by a wave of illegal strikes. Spreading slowly outwards from the Gdansk shipyards in the north, the strikes had brought most of Poland to a standstill by the end of the glorious month of August.

The Polish authorities were forced first to recognise the strike leaders and to negotiate with them, then to concede their economic demands. Finally, they were forced, for the first time in the 50 and more years during which totalitarian Stalinist regimes had existed, to agree to 'tolerate' a trade union movement independent of the state.

That movement took as its name 'Solidarnosc', or Solidarity — the word which sums up the essence of labour movements from the time, over 200 years ago, when the first handful of workers agreed to stand by each other and to act together against employers and the state.

The upheaval in Poland was the dress rehearsal for the workers' anti-bureaucratic revolution in the Stalinist states.

In 1953 workers had risen in revolt in East Germany. In June 1956 workers had struck and risen in revolt in Poznan, Poland. In late 1956 workers had spearheaded the Hungarian national revolt against Russia and its Hungarian satraps, and used the sit-in general strike in last-ditch resistance once the Russian army had reconquered Hungary.

In 1968 workers had begun to move in Czechoslovakia, first in response to the liberalising bureaucrats, and then against the Russian invasion. Workers had also rebelled in Gdansk, in Poland, in 1970.

What was new about Poland was the narrowly working-class character of the core movement — other sections rallied, but they were auxiliaries — and its all-embracing power.

Today Gorbachev is embarking on

a drive to shake up the USSR's economy. Like Alexander Dubcek in Czechoslovakia 20 years ago, he encounters entrenched bureaucratic opposition. Like Dubcek he turns to liberalisation, of a very limited sort, to clear the way for economic rejuvenation.

Immediately the working class stands to suffer economically from this programme, as their jobs become less secure, pressure is put on to speed up work in the factories, and the pay differentials increase. But Gorbachev's moves to loosen the clamps on Soviet society may well set free working-class energies of the sort seen in action in East Germany, Hungary and Poland. We do not know what strikes and working-class uprisings have already taken place in recent decades in the USSR, and been suppressed.

Where will the British labour movement stand if the workers of the USSR start moving, and begin to organise independent trade unions? Where will the left stand?

To someone who did not know how things stand in the labour movement and on the left, that would seem a stupid and superfluous question. Where else can the British labour movement stand but with the nascent labour movements in the Stalinist states? Where else but with the working class and those suffering state oppression?

In fact many people on the left, like Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill, consider that the bureaucrats represent 'socialism', and they look at movements like Solidarnosc with jaundiced and suspicious eyes.

Even some of those who call themselves Trotskyists, around *Socialist Action* and *Labour Briefing*, are equivocal: they support Solidarnosc, but they reject the idea of the British trade unions breaking links with the stooge official 'unions' in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

Many right-wingers in the British labour movement also feel an affinity with the bureaucrats of the East, no doubt for different reasons. When

Solidarnosc was at its peak, the right-wing steelworkers' leader Bill Sirs spoke with sympathy on TV about the difficulties faced by 'his Polish colleagues' in the official 'unions'.

Those official 'unions' are not real workers' organisations. They are controlled by the governments. Their function is not to fight against the bureaucrats, in the factory or nationally, for improvements, but to campaign for higher productivity and to dole out the various sports, holiday, health and social facilities granted by the governments to the workers. To stand with those 'unions' is to stand against the workers.

The unpleasant truth is that the whole British labour movement has fallen far short of doing its duty by the working class in the Stalinist states.

Take a terrible contrast. Arthur Scargill is the foremost militant trade union leader in Britain. He stands for working-class action against the Tories.

Eric Hammond is a scab — the worst form of trade union leader, committed to tying the unions to the bosses, and willing to sell out other workers in order to make sweetheart deals with employers.

Yet Hammond supports the working-class movements in the Stalinist states. Scargill is against Solidarnosc, and the NUM has links with the Stalinist state 'unions'.

If you want more information about the 7 November conference, fill in this form and send to Mark Osborn, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Name

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CLP

Trade union

In Britain today, for the most part, the cause of the workers in one-third of the world is the property of the right wing, not the left. It should be said honestly that, even if they are scabs in the British class struggle, the right-wingers who support the workers against the 'socialist' bureaucracies are right.

It is because they are right that they can use this issue effectively as a weapon against the left.

But the cause of movements like Solidarnosc should be the cause of the left. In 1980-1 Solidarnosc demanded:

- Workers' self-management in the factories; managers to be subject to recall by elected workers' councils
- 'Opening the books' of the bureaucrats' economic planning
- Wages and benefits to be protected against inflation by escalator clauses
- The right to work for all
- Expansion of creches and nurseries. Extended maternity leave, with job security
- Free trade unions and the right to strike.

Eric Hammond would never support demands like that raised by his own members in the EETPU!

Conference

The left has a duty to put itself straight on this issue. We have a duty, as elementary as not crossing a picket line, to side with, champion and defend the workers in the Stalinist states.

That is why *Socialist Organiser* is helping to organise a conference on 7 November to rally support for the workers in the Stalinist states. The date 7 November is appropriate, because it is also the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. The heritage of the Bolsheviks today is represented by movements like Solidarnosc, not by the Kremlin.

We hope that out of the conference a campaign will emerge in the British labour movement to make sure that we are not found lacking again in our duty to the workers suffering under bureaucratic dictatorship.

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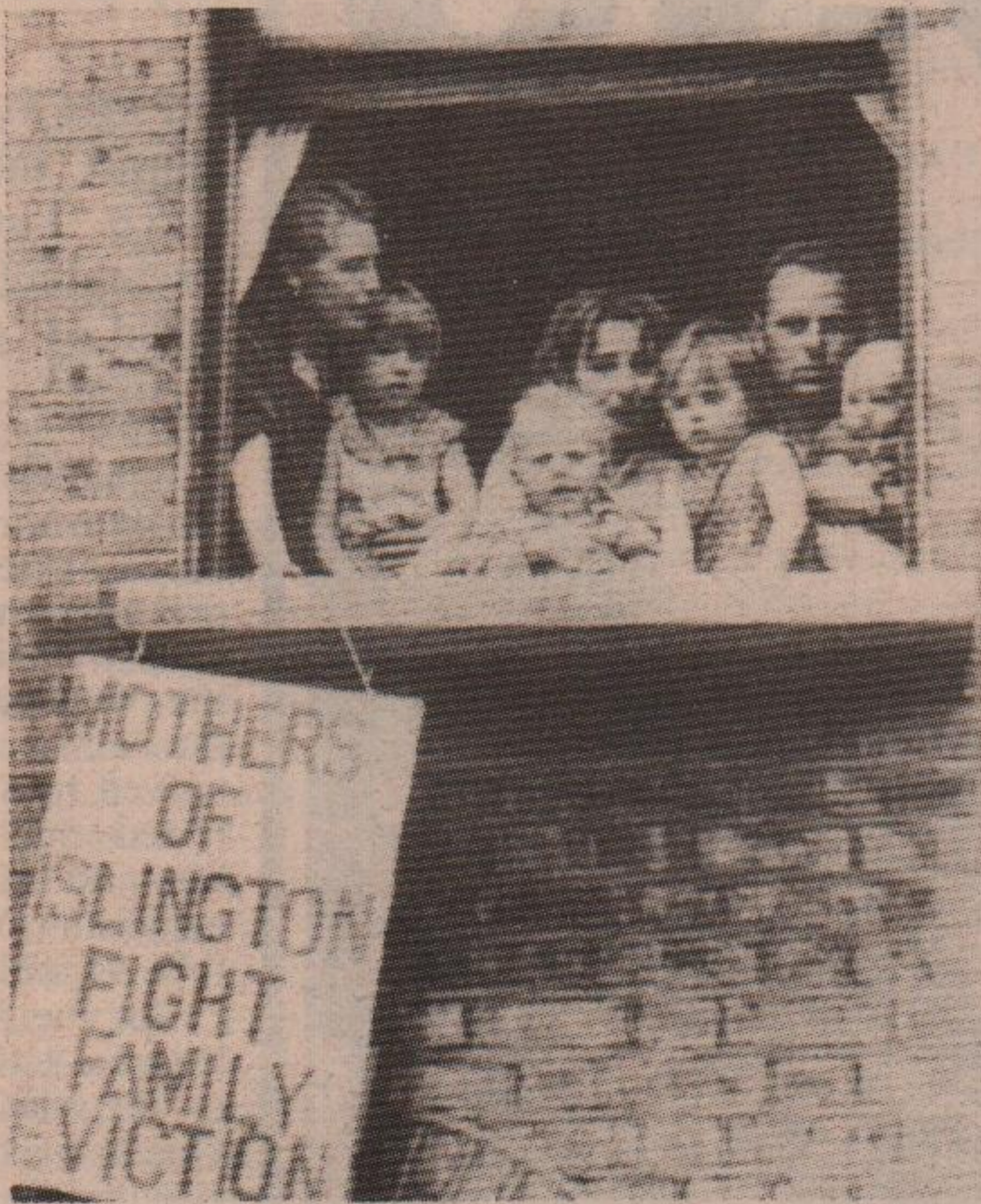
Homeless double

The number of homeless families put in bed and breakfast hotels by London councils has doubled in 15 months.

The latest survey by the London Research Centre and Shelter shows 7,792 families in B&B. Camden, with 1,258 families in B&B, Tower Hamlets, with 930, Ealing (863), and Brent (805), account for nearly half the total.

The survey also shows that a disproportionate number of homeless families are black — 48% in Hackney, and 75% in Brent.

Councils and the DHSS paid about £83 million to B&B hotel owners last financial year. That's enough to build 12,000 new council homes, but the government won't let councils build. Meanwhile, hotel owners are making millions, and thousands of families are living in single rooms with no cooking facilities. In the Thorncliffe Hotel in West London, 1000 people live in 350 rooms.



According to another recent report, from the Bayswater Hotel Homelessness Project, people put in B&B suffer

from depression, gastrointestinal diseases, skin parasites, under-nourishment and chest complaints.

Close to the edge

"The world economy is close to the edge of recession, according to the economists of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)", reports the Financial Times.

UNCTAD economists

dispute the optimism of many other economists for two reasons. First, the US's huge trade deficit: "if it improves so slowly that exchange markets lose patience (and the dollar slumps), the US could be forced to raise interest

rates sharply."

Second, the Third World debt burden. Brazil, the Ivory Coast, and Zambia have already unilaterally stopped paying interest on their debt. This could spread, ruining the world banking system.

Competition

Pepsi-Cola has recently come a cropper with a competition it ran in the US to promote sales. They printed letters on their bottle caps, and you won a prize if you collected enough caps to spell your name.

Pepsi thought they had made themselves safe by

printing very few caps with vowels. Only they forgot that names like Ng are fairly common in the US these days...

The giant Beatrice food corporation has come off even worse from a competition based on scratching cards to reveal

numbers and winning if the numbers matched football scores. A computer wizard discovered that the numbers were printed on the cards according to a pattern, and now he and his friends are trying to claim \$21 million prize money from Beatrice.

Korea outstrips UK

If South Korea's rulers can survive their present troubles, they still have scope for continuing the country's hectic capitalist development, according to a new report from the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Within a few years, according to the EIU, South

Korean capitalism will outstrip the UK in the latest area it is trying to take by storm — car pro-

duction.

The main thing that could block this is import controls.



Hidden poverty

Poverty figures are high enough anyway. But an article in the Guardian last week suggests that they miss a whole large area of poverty — poverty within families.

Researchers found that one-third of married women report serious disputes with their husbands about money.

And quite a lot of divorced or separated women found themselves better off on social security than they had been as part of a household which shows up in the statistics as well-off.

Millions of women and children in such households are actually living in poverty.

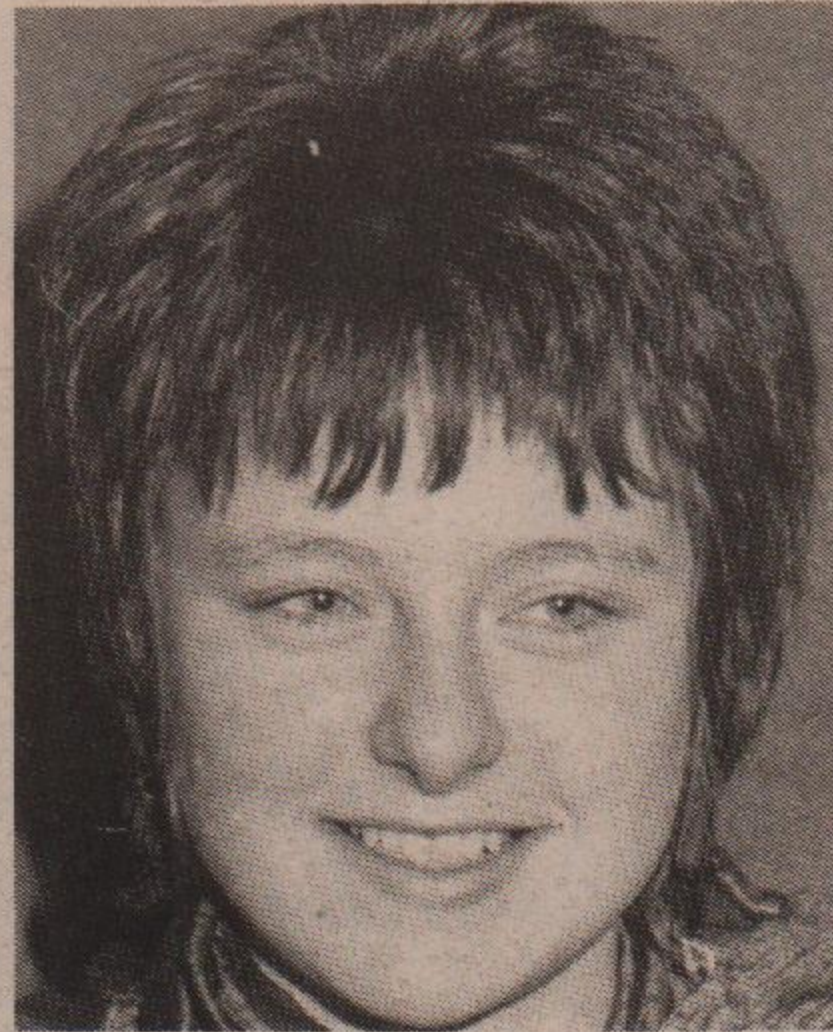
Desirables

Ever wondered what "non-racist" immigration controls would look like? US monetarist economist Gary Becker has an idea. He believes the free market can solve this problem, too.

He suggests that a price be set for entry to the US — say \$40,000 — and anyone who can pay should be allowed in. This would mean "a few billion dollars of annual revenue", and "immigrants willing to pay for immediate entry would include many of the most desirable newcomers..." (From the US magazine Dollars and Sense).

Two women's movements

Ruth Cockcroft reviews "Sylvia and Christabel Pankhurst" by Barbara Castle, published by Penguin books, £3.95.



For those of us who have taken the view, fed to us from school text books, that the Pankhursts were the pioneers for women's political freedom, Barbara Castle's book is a refreshing challenge.

Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, at the head of the militant suffragette movement, have all too often been evoked as romantic figures, prepared to suffer any hardship in their untiring fight to extend the suffrage to women.

That there was widespread disapproval from socialist feminists of their tactics and their politics has been poorly documented even by feminist historians and is still largely unknown.

Castle's book aims to trace the growing divisions within the women's suffrage movement, but by placing the personal relationship of Christabel and Sylvia at the centre of the political antagonisms Castle has produced a book which is only a

limited account of the women's movement at the time.

Nevertheless, the story of the Pankhurst family, and Christabel's development from a staunch radical into one of the "extreme jingoists" whom Sylvia deplored, is a very instructive account of the political careers of the two women.

Before the Pankhursts were to stumble on the suffrage movement their household was a meeting place for all progressives and political agitators of the time, from refugees of the Paris Commune to William Morris and the Fabians. Both Emmeline and her husband, Dr. Richard Pankhurst, were among the first to join the Independent Labour Party.

In this climate, saturated with ideas of social justice and the need to develop working class organisation, the fight for women's rights was combined with the fight against exploitation everywhere. Yet, paradoxically, under the Pankhursts, the leadership of the suffragette movement was to become insidiously right wing and conservative.

Christabel felt it was better to persuade men of the right of female citizenship in a gradual way and plunged the suffragettes into campaigns that were actually opposed to the widest franchise reform.



Members of the National Federation of Women Workers, which amalgamated with the National Union of General and Municipal Workers

1917

YEAR OF REVOLUTION

The June days

Thursday 15 June

A meeting of soldiers of the Moscow regiment of the Petrograd garrison demands the despatch of all officers and land-owners to the front, the dissolution of the State Duma, and the closing down of Black Hundreds' newspapers. The Executive Committee of the Helsingfors Soviet votes in support of the policies of the Kronstadt Soviet and condemns the Provisional Government's attacks on the latter. A provincial peasant congress in Archangelsk declares its support for the Provisional Government and a strengthening of the army.

By 262 votes to 182 the Moscow Soviet of workers' deputies votes down a Bolshevik resolution advocating workers' control over production and distribution. A general meeting of the regimental committees of the 169th infantry division on the Western front condemns the domestic and foreign policies of the Provisional Government as a threat to the revolutionary democracy of Russia.

Friday 16 June

The first All-Russian Congress of Bolshevik military organisations opens in Petrograd, attended by 107 delegates representing 26,000 Bolshevik members in Bolshevik military sections. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets resumes its session after a break from 13-15 June; it discusses the commission of enquiry into the Tsarist government's activities and use of provocateurs, especially R V Malinovsky.

The Mogilevsky provincial governor requests troops to put down the agrarian movement. The Saratov Soviet votes down a Bolshevik resolution advocating the right of political parties to participate in the 18 June demonstration under their own slogans; only those slogans adopted by the Soviet are permitted. On the South-western front, delegates of the 101st Infantry division inform their commander that they will open fire on Russian artillery positions if they are used to prepare for a new offensive. A meeting of soldiers of the 1st Reserve Infantry regiment in Petrograd calls for all power to the Soviets and declares in their resolution: "We shall die, but we shall be victorious over the most cursed, the most evil enemies of the revolution — the bourgeoisie".

Saturday 17 June

Pravda calls for support for the demonstration of 18 June. The Central Council of factory committees in Petrograd calls for support for the demonstration on the basis of "Long live workers' control over production and distribution", "Long live the revolution", "Down with the lock-out capitalists", "All power into the hands of the Soviets". The Helsingfors Soviet issues the slogans "Down with the battalions of death — down with the provocation of an offensive...", "All power to the Soviets", "Free all arrested socialists" and "Long live popular control of production".

On the South Western front the commander-in-chief orders the use of cavalry against soldiers who disobey orders for the launching of a new offensive. In Rostov-on-Don workers take over the Metall factory after management attempts to sack them and close down the factory. Fighting breaks out in Astrakhan after soldiers are ordered to the front for the new offensive.

Sunday 18 June

"News of the Petrograd Soviet" carries an appeal signed by all parties, including the Bolsheviks, not to carry weapons on that day's demonstrations.

Nearly half a million demonstrate in

Continued on page 8



Sylvia Pankhurst (centre) leaves Holloway prison in May 1921

Castle calls this "gradualism with a vengeance" and Sylvia complained of the "votes for ladies" attitude which Christabel espoused as early as 1907.

Rather than Sylvia organising a counter-attack on this right-wing development and its expression in the suffrage movement she was always frozen into inactivity by family ties and emotional commitment. Castle claims that Sylvia was "torn...between admiration for her sister and her dislike of her politics" and that "for Sylvia blood was thicker than politics."

The Pankhurst leadership became sarcastically known as the "family party" and it was not without good reason, having autonomously placed themselves at the head of the movement. Emmeline and Christabel declared that the Central Committee would be appointed by themselves and cancelled a conference which showed signs of developing into a rebellion against Christabel's "autocracy".

Obsessed

Christabel became obsessed with her role in the leadership, preserving herself from arrest and issuing orders for hunger strikes and arson campaigns from her political sanctuary in Paris at the height of suffragette militancy.

Her justification is transparently put: "The government's purpose was to hold the shepherds captive, while they did their utmost to scatter the flock."

With such an unhealthy internal regime, it became difficult to question the growing severance of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) from the newly emerging labour movement and members were asked to sign a declaration of withdrawal of support from all political parties until women had the

vote.

The hallmark of the suffragettes was their indifference and hostility to all social reform in a period of working class militancy and their abstention from the growing tide of organised labour.

The WSPU tactic of opposing the Liberal government at any cost and organising campaigns against it which merely strengthened the Tory vote made Sylvia fear Christabel's "tunnel vision" and her "incipient Toryism". In the Bury St. Edmunds by-election of 1907 the suffragette policy of "keep the Liberals out" had helped to double the Tory majority.

Sylvia comments miserably, "My gaze turned from the jubilant, well-dressed Tories on the balcony, across the laughing non-Party masses of the crowd, to a little group of frowning

workmen with red favours. My thoughts were sad."

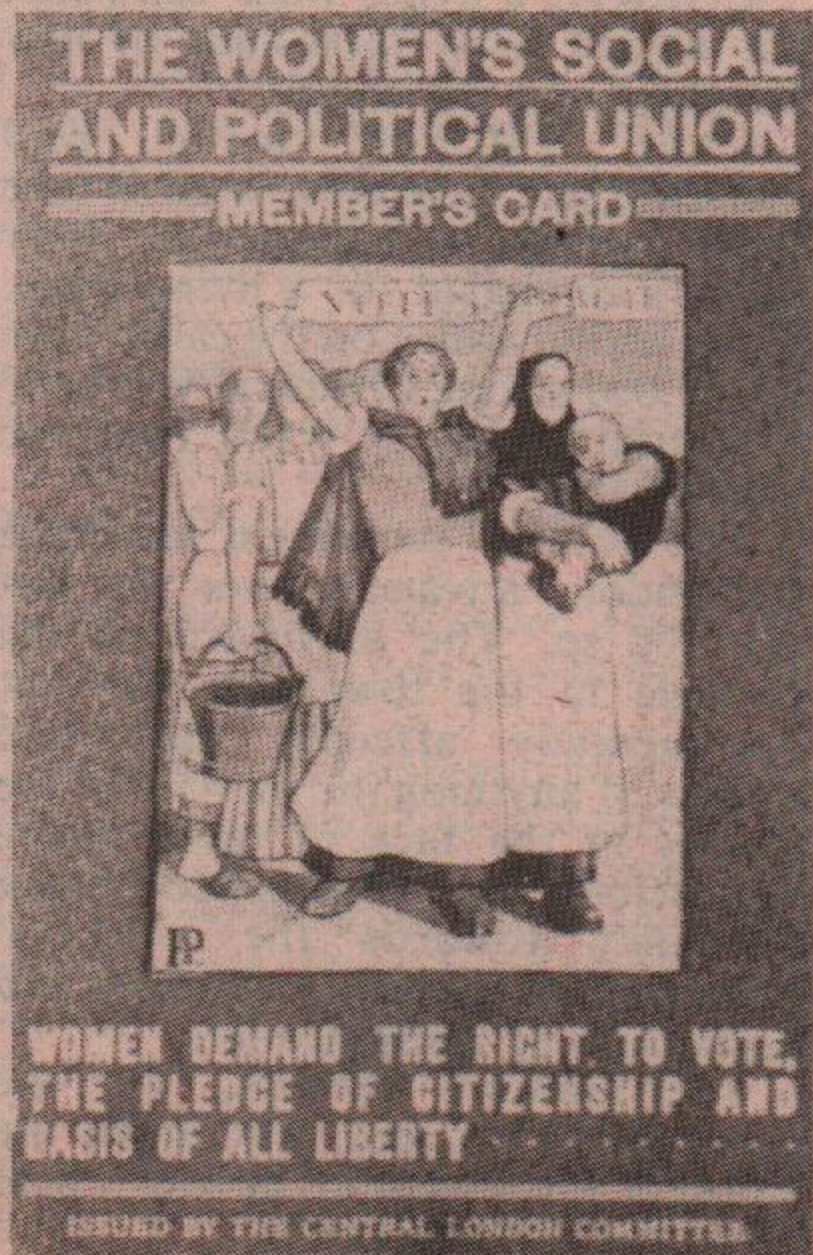
It was not until Christabel had fled to Paris that Sylvia finally had the courage to organise a more proletarian campaign for women's suffrage. Agitating for a universal franchise and using propaganda about the hardship of working class women's lives she helped to increase the Labour Party vote in a Crewe by-election.

Christabel could not tolerate this and insisted that Sylvia and the working class women she had organised in the East End split from the suffragette movement. By this time the suffragettes had become a fragment of their size because of their insistence on army-like discipline and loyalty.

Indeed, it was Sylvia's East London federation of the suffragettes which spurred a changed attitude in Asquith towards women's emancipation. Sylvia was laid on the steps of Parliament after a prison cell in which she had been on both hunger and thirst strike. Asquith, fearful of her intentions of continuing the strike outside prison agreed to see a deputation of women workers who urged upon him the view that the vote was not only a right but a necessity in their lives.

Limited

Because Castle's book is so limited in its scope, the obvious, but controversial, conclusion is missed. By the beginning of the war, a new women's suffrage movement had emerged which had its roots in the organisation of local working class women. Only a fleeting mention is made in the book of the radical suffrage campaign in the Lancashire cotton mills who were bitterly opposed to the suffragettes' desire to strengthen the Tory vote with a meagre extension of the franchise to women of property.



WSPU poster

The workers'

COSATU's first 20 months

How successful have the federation's campaigns been?

Generally there has been good progress in terms of most tasks. At many levels of the COSATU structure, formal and informal contact has been initiated and maintained. We expect this to be strengthened this year. The congress is expected to give much more decisive direction on this issue.

The organisation of areas like unemployed, farm, domestic and the public sector is proceeding well, although structures are still weak. The construction union has rapidly established a national presence.

COSATU has also built solid links with the National Unemployed Workers' Co-ordinating Committee (NUWCC) and we hope it will not be long before the unemployed are sufficiently well organised to form a national union and affiliate to COSATU. But much more energy and more active involvement of affiliates and our locals needs to take place to assist the organisation of unemployed.

FAWU's farmworker project has employed four organisers and the organisation is taking off in some areas. At least one national agreement has already been signed for farmworkers.

Our living wage campaign has not achieved the depth of organisation

"I am certain that COSATU will fulfill its historic role in establishing the leading role of the workers"

and co-ordination and solidarity we need.

But again the fact that single industrial unions are only now coming into place in COSATU has been a big factor hindering the development of our living wage structure. In practical terms the NUM and NUMSA have been the main beneficiaries of the campaign so far. By next year, this could extend to the whole of COSATU.

The campaign was also important in that it gave COSATU a concrete issue to link up with our democratic allies among the youth, civic and other progressive organisations. COSATU will clearly emerge from our coming congress with more concrete strategies to develop the role of workers in the struggles against national oppression and economic exploitation.

One of the tasks the organisation set itself was to build strong regions and locals. How successful has the federation been in this regard and how well are these structures functioning?

Our structures have not functioned as well as they could have — but this was mainly due to the delays we experienced in consolidating our industrial unions. We will have 12 industrial union sectors represented at this congress instead of the 13 we hoped to establish. In addition, the railway sector will be represented by SARHWU.

But all industrial unions will be in place after this congress and progress at regional and local level will then be smoother.

On a local level, our task is to boost the extent of organisation and to ensure that shop steward councils

A poem written by two metal workers to celebrate the launch of South Africa's great trade union federation calls COSATU "the workers' freedom train". That sums up the view that many black workers have of COSATU, it is not just a trade union, it is an instrument for working class liberation.

In this interview Jay Naidoo, the general secretary of COSATU assesses the development of the federation over the first 20 months of its existence.

are properly represented and well organised. The tightening of our structures is crucial in the light of increasing state repression and imperialist intervention.

What is the next step after the consolidation of industrial unions within COSATU?

COSATU's orientation is towards all workers — irrespective of the organisations some of them find themselves in at the moment. Now that we have consolidated our organisation into industrial unions, we can concentrate on building COSATU into the only federation in South Africa.

To complete this process COSATU will have to address the question of workers in other trade union federations. How does it propose to deal with this issue?

This is mainly an organisational task. Where there are well-organised unions outside COSATU's ranks, we will try to persuade workers and their leaders that unity is paramount. Our doors remain open to any democratic union to join our ranks and we can see no reason why such unions should not come in if they are interested in mass worker unity. It goes without

saying that this will be on the basis of our principles.

NACTU in particular has had problems without non-racial principles. For the NACTU leadership and us, this is an important political principle. And more than ever before it is crucial to win white workers into our ranks. Our organisation and policies are, whether the white worker knows or not, the only way out of the nightmare of racism and fascism for the whole country.

Affiliates representing a clear majority within COSATU have adopted resolutions backing the Freedom Charter in one way or another. How do you view these moves?

I feel these resolutions together reflect the direction workers are actually taking and the debate going on in COSATU. The struggle for a worker-led society is already unfolding. The Charter and COSATU's own programme — as reflected in the resolutions adopted at our founding congress — are part of the bridge workers must build and cross in the struggle to achieve such a society.

I am certain that COSATU will fulfil its historic role in establishing the leading role of workers and in the struggle for non-racial democracy in

A massive strike wave

As the revolt in the black townships has declined due to repression, exhaustion and the lack of a clear strategy, black workers have turned towards the industrial struggle and the trade unions.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) now has in excess of 700,000 members, nearly 300,000 more than at its founding congress.

NACTU, the rival independent trade union federation now claims a membership in excess of 400,000. However the number of trade unionists is still a small fraction of the black working class.

NACTU unions have also been involved in far less strike action than COSATU affiliates.

The period since the formation of COSATU in November 1985 has seen many previous strike records broken.

1986 was a record year for major labour disputes. Counting "stayaways", there were more than five million strike days in 1986.

More than 420,000 workers participated in 793 strikes last year, compared with 240,000 workers in 389

strikes in 1985.

Strikes are getting longer, averaging 3.1 days in 1986 compared to 2.8 days the year before.

January and February 1987 saw 750,000 strike days — more than the total for any one of the years 1980-4. Strikes are also tending to take on a national as opposed to local character.

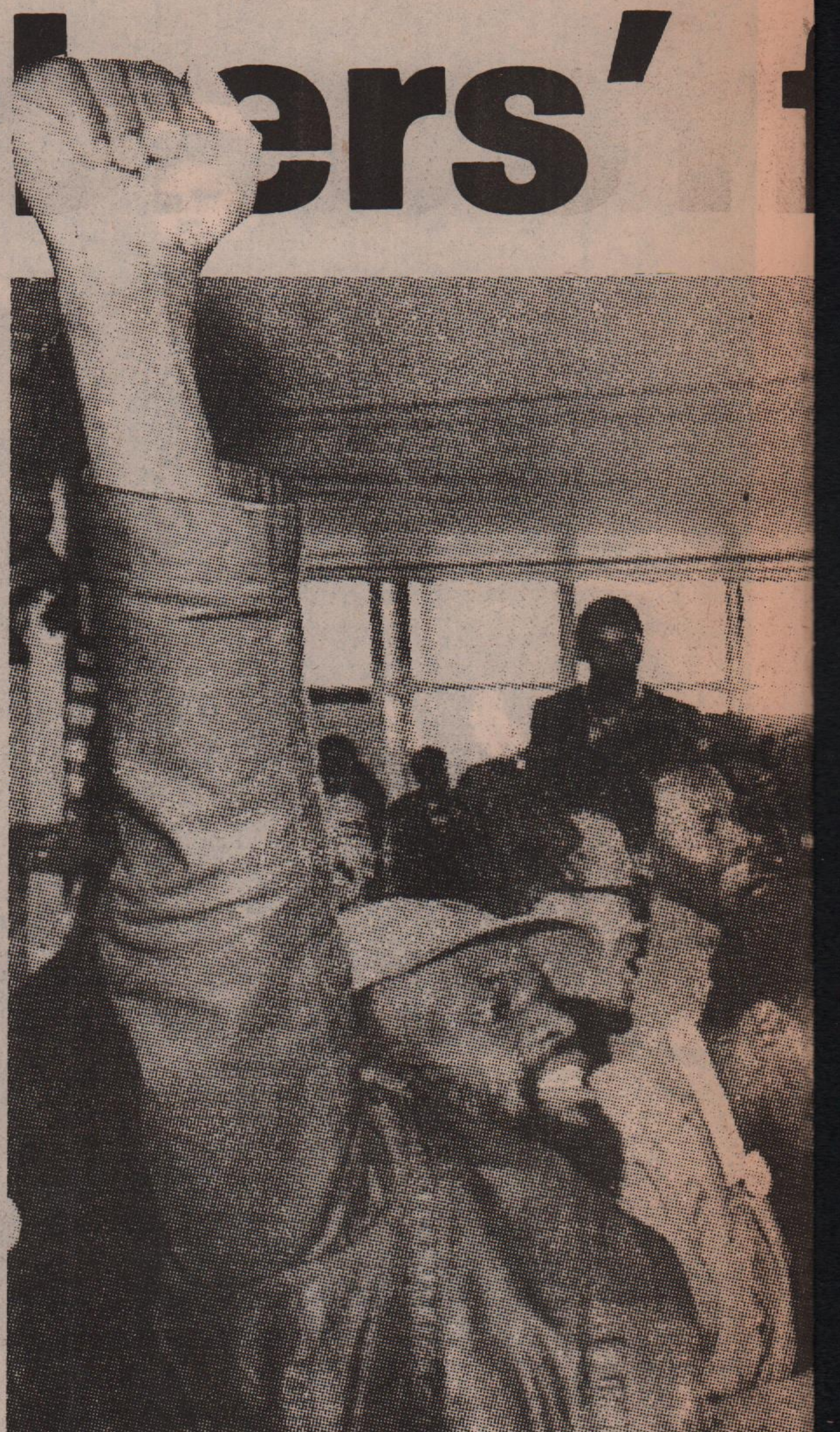
This pattern of rising militancy was only partially reversed and only for a short time by the declaration of the second state of emergency in June last year.

Victories

There have been major steps forward in union organisation and significant if small victories for the workers in nearly every industrial sector over the last 18 months.

A crucial breakthrough occurred with the victory of the postal and rail strikes in the last few months. The outcome of these strikes represented a significant victory for the working class as strikes are supposedly illegal in the public sector in South Africa.

Previous public sector strikes in the early 1980s, had been broken very



Metalworkers at COSATU Congress

South Africa. I am certain that this is what the mass of workers in COSATU are striving for with all their energy.

COSATU is also in the process of cementing links with the National Union of Namibian Workers.

COSATU

Perhaps the most significant setback suffered by COSATU in the first twenty months of its existence was the defeat of the strike at General Motors which followed the US company's decision to pull out of South Africa.

This battle has forced the Federation to clarify its position on sanctions and disinvestment.

COSATU's original position on disinvestment placed only one condition on withdrawal: "that the social wealth of South Africa remains the property of the people of South Africa."

As a result of the experience at General Motors three of the unions that came together to form the giant metal union NUMSA set out a series of minimum conditions under which disinvestment should take place.

The unions demand severance pay, the maintenance of existing benefits and at least a year's pay from the departing company.

From the new company the union's demand:

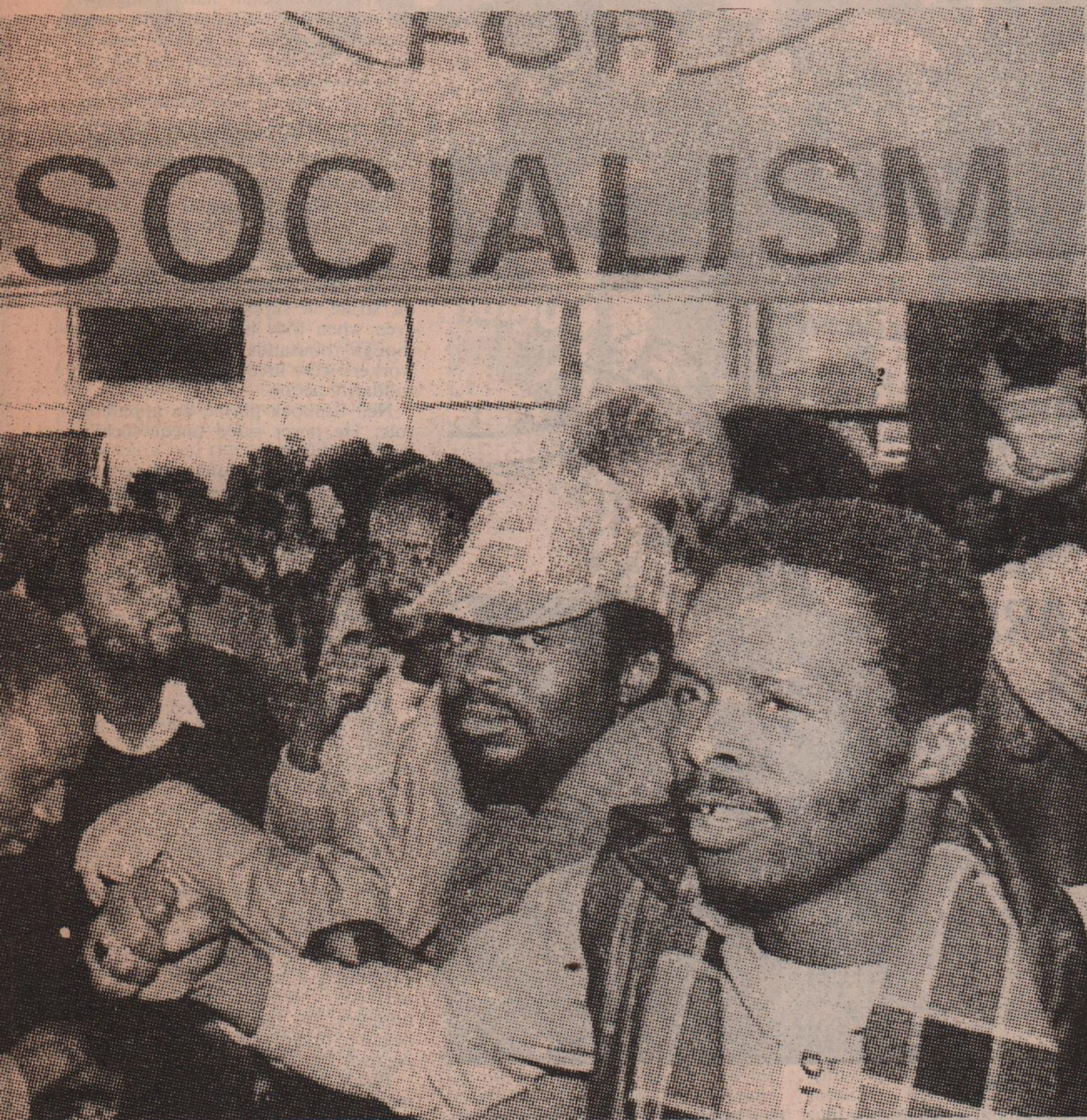
*No job losses;
*Union recognition and negotiating rights.

A very similar stance has been taken by the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union.

COSATU national education officer Alec Erwin has pointed to some of the problems with disinvestment:

"Sanctions imposed here and there without careful thought will not translate into an effective form of

freedom train



and sanctions: the debate

"Mandatory sanctions and disinvestment are the only few remaining means which could assist in bringing about a non-violent, truly democratic and non-racial South Africa", declared Elijah Barayi, mineworker and president of COSATU at the end of the Federation's recent conference.

COSATU now backs a comprehensive sanctions policy. We look at the debate inside the workers' movement about the issue.

pressure. The present form of disinvestment by foreign companies is also not effective pressure. Their investments are either held in trust by local managers or are being sold to the Anglo-American Corporation...Our concern is to apply pressure. We will therefore push for ways to maximise the pressure on capital and the state and minimise unnecessary detrimental effects for workers.

COSATU knows only too well that we can never rely on sanctions alone (to remove the regime). The real struggle is here, on our own doorstep."

The key question is workers' control. As the South African Metal Worker commented:

"It is clear that disinvestment is a far larger issue than just creating or destroying jobs. Workers need to talk about this issue in a different way. For, so long as workers have no say in how money is invested — into

what industries and what areas this money should go — they will be bound to decisions made by the government and bosses (local and foreign). Surely the issue for workers is not the amount invested or where it comes from, but how workers can begin to control these investments so as to make a real contribution to the struggle to create a South Africa which is free from capitalist oppression and exploitation in the form of apartheid?"

There are other issues at stake. The whole strategy of sanctions should be examined more closely.

As one CCAWUSA militant put it: "Companies will pull out of South Africa. Then what? Hopes here are being put on that threat leading to the transfer of power. But I don't think the workers can come to power through such a mechanism, which is remotely controlled.

Imagine the future of South Africa relying on Mrs Thatcher's mood. If

she applies sanctions, then we have won freedom; if not then we are still in chains. What kind of power would that be? We would be back to square one. We would be a colony.

Companies are pulling out now, not because of sanctions but because their own interests are being threatened inside the country.

Buthlezi (the leader of the right wing Zulu movement Inkatha) is frank with the workers. He says sanctions equal no jobs. This turns the workers against their unions. If the reasons for sanctions were explained to the workers, then people would probably back sanctions. But the ground Buthelezi has made is worrying.

I don't understand where the whole strategy of sanctions and boycotts comes from. During the consumer boycotts in South Africa members of our union faced retrenchments as the shops sold less. This put the union in the position of saying 'yes, we support the consumer boycott, but...' We said that if they retrenched any workers we would go out on strike.

There is a contradiction between support for the disinvestment campaign and commitment to defend workers' jobs and develop international workers' solidarity. Workers should rely on certain things they can carry out themselves. They should do things for themselves. Actions like the Dunnes Store strike in Ireland, or the support for the BTR strikers, are the kind of action we need."

The last few months have seen a worrying escalation of physical attacks on the workers' movement.

The three most dramatic are:
*The state's attempt to hang the metalworkers' union general secretary Moses Mayekiso. His "crime" is building a democratic community organisation in Alexandra township.

*The shooting of six trade unionists during the recent rail strike.

*The bombing of COSATU headquarters by "persons unknown" during the same strike. At the moment the bomb went off, making the building unusable, a policeman a few blocks away was heard to say "There goes COSATU".

There are scores of other cases of detentions, beatings, torture and murder of trade unionists carried out by black vigilantes and/or the security forces. COSATU meetings, campaigns and publications have been banned. Many union offices have been raided or vandalised. Over 750 trade unionists have been detained over the last year.

On top of all this there has been talk from government ministers, including Pik Botha, about the need for "tough" new labour laws to curb the political stance and militancy of the unions.

COSATU has responded to this state offensive with a "Hands off COSATU" campaign. The first publications and broadsheets of this campaign were then banned while the government's media campaign against COSATU as a "communist front" continued.

Jay Naidoo replied for COSATU by saying "Our struggles are not hatched in Moscow but in the objective reality of South Africa." In its New Year message to members, COSATU called for the building of self-defence teams against state and vigilante attacks.

The problem for South Africa's rulers is that they have no clear agreed strategy for dealing with the workers' movement.

This was seen very clearly during the recent rail strike when the state and capitalists were divided amongst themselves on the way to deal with the rail union SARHWU.

'Sweat out'

Law and order minister Adriaan Vlok claimed that the rail strike was part of the ANC's "Advance to people's power" and the rail bosses SATS prepared to "sweat out" the strike using lies, disinformation, bribes and repression.

On the other hand a large body of opinion, not just amongst 'liberal' bosses but inside the state, favoured conciliation.

Piet van der Merwe, director general of the Department of Manpower, argued that structures had to be created inside the public sector that would allow for conciliation and negotiation:

"If people can't get their requests and grievances addressed by legitimate means they will resort to more radical means."

Dr. Weihahn, who proposed the legal recognition of independent unions in 1979 was asked if the recent strike wave showed that he had helped create a monster in the unions. He replied: "It is not a monster, we can and will have to come to terms with it, we have no

other option."

In the end the SARHWU lawyers managed to force major concessions out of SATS and the strike ended in victory for the railworkers.

The debate inside the ruling class continues. It is a debate about how best to control and neuter the unions.

Differences should not be overexaggerated — "liberals" aren't too perturbed by gradual repressive attempts to grind down the unions, nor are "hardliners" opposed to the cooption of the unions if it can be shown to work.

Nor are 'liberal' bosses all that liberal.

For instance, labour relations consultant Andrew Levy, who is considered to be "softer" towards the unions, was the "brain" behind the British multi-national BTR's mass sacking of 1,000 MAWU members at BTR Sarmcol.

Levy has also pointed to the metal union NUMSA as a possible weak point in the workers' movement to be attacked, as he considers that MAWU, one of NUMSA's major components, has been battered over the last 18 months.

Strike

Just last week the state declared a legal NUMSA strike illegal. In this context the NUMSA leadership were probably right to call off the strike by 80,000 workers. To continue with an illegal strike may have prompted a more serious attack from the metal bosses and the state in conditions not of the union's choosing.

Right now, it is by no means clear that the state has the capacity to smash the independent unions even if that were its goal. Rather Botha seems to have opted for a gradual tightening of the screws.

But if Botha did go for all-out confrontation with the workers' movement — something like martial law in Poland in 1981 — then the 'liberal' bosses would be unlikely to revolt.

The last months have seen a whole series of bitter struggles against supposedly liberal employers. The shopworkers' union CCAWUSA as a result coined the slogan "Anti-apartheid bosses are not our friends" during the recent fight at OK Bazaars.

Important sections of the employers are pushing a new strategy, "de-regulation". The aim is to reduce the number of legal restraints on employers so weakening industry and class-wide organisation so that only the strongest and best organised sections of the working class can make gains. For instance, Industrial Council wage agreements will no longer be compulsory on all employers, and health and safety agreements and regulations can be scrapped on the say-so of the state president.

This represents an attack on the trade unions by cutting across their ability to make gains for the weakest and worst organised by using the industrial muscle of the strongest.

The aim is to divide and undermine the unity of the workers' movement.

So far, despite increased repression and recession, the state is a long way from inflicting anything resembling a decisive defeat on the workers' movement.

If anything, climbdowns like that during the recent rail strike only fuel working class militancy. What is certain is that the present impasse cannot go on forever.

1917

YEAR OF REVOLUTION

The miners last time

By Gerry Bates

"It was as though we'd been sleeping for hundreds of years. We awoke, we realised a new political awareness.

"Organising food, raising money, speaking. Men have acknowledged that we, as women, are vital to...victory...

"We are witnessing something amongst the women which I can only compare with the suffragettes. We are living and making history. We won't return to the status quo...

"...it has made me realise that not only must we fight our injustices, but others too.

"...Look at the injustice in Ireland. What really happened in Toxteth? In Brixton? I realise the black community is struggling against injustice.

"After we win we must turn and right other injustices."

Of course the miners didn't win. But this woman from South Yorkshire expressed very clearly one of the central features of the great strike that lasted from March 1984 to March 1985. Working class people who were involved in the strike — on strike themselves, or actively supporting those who were — learned a great deal from it. Many of them drew potentially revolutionary conclusions.

The strike was well prepared by the Tories and the coal bosses. In fact the Tories had planned to provoke a coal strike since before they came to office in 1979. They wanted dramatically to reorganise coal production — introduce new technology and close a lot of pits — and to destroy the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) as an effective union.

The Tories hated the miners. The NUM was the most powerful union, and it had brought down the Heath government in early 1974.

So in March 1984 the Coal Board announced massive pit closures with thousands of job losses. With Spring coming on they thought they could easily beat the NUM.

Beginning in South Yorkshire (and in some Scottish pits which were already on strike) the strike fanned out over the country. It spread by picket line: pickets persuaded other areas to join the strike. Even areas like South Wales which had voted against strike action joined in when faced with a picket line.

The Achilles' heel from the very beginning was Nottinghamshire. Here only a minority supported the strike — although those that did were very often among the most militant strikers. Partly this lack of support was due to the relative safety of Notts jobs. Partly it was due to the vacilla-

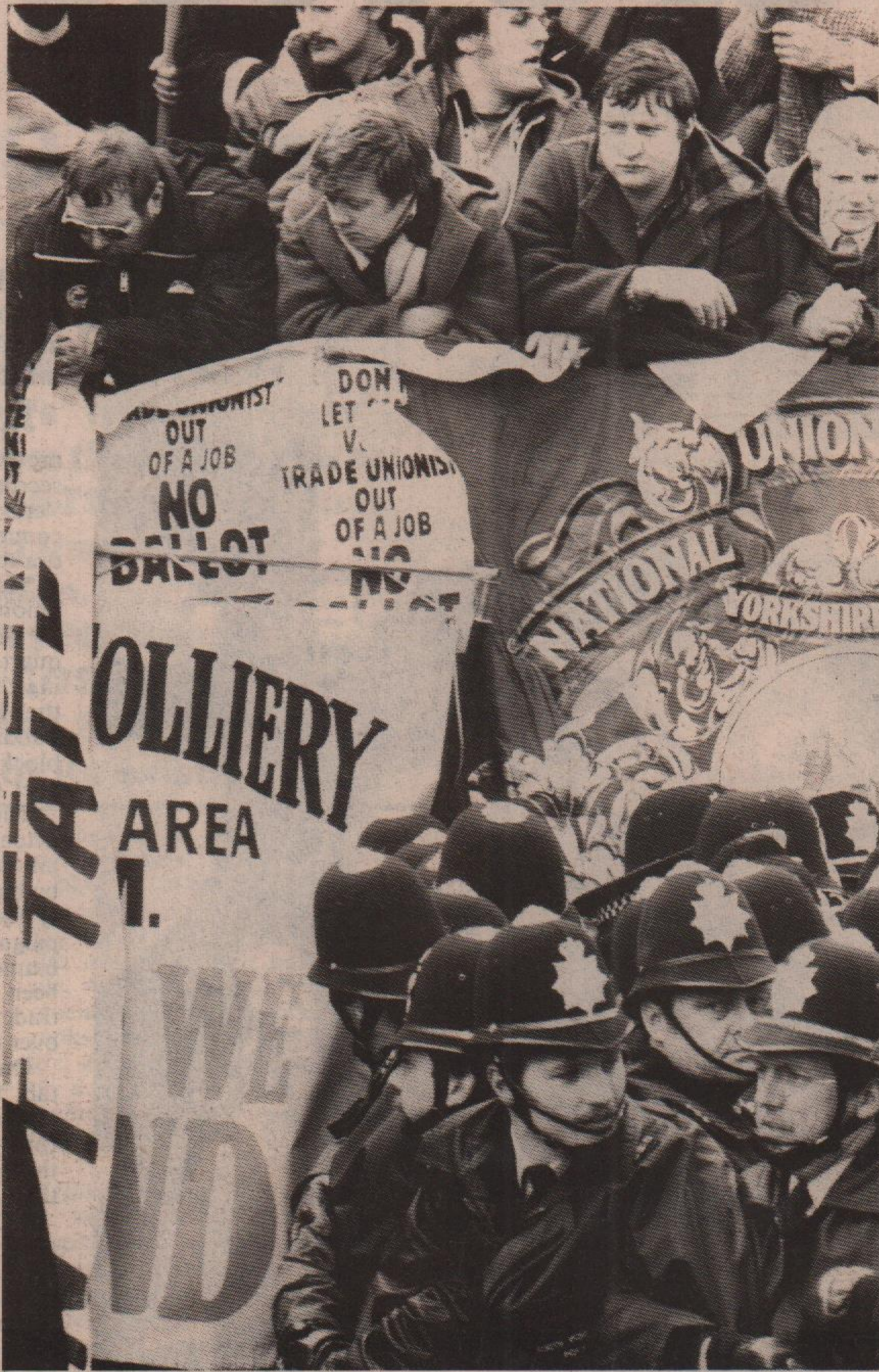


Photo John Harris

tion of the Notts area leadership in the early days.

Eventually, when the strike was over, a new scab union, the so-called Union of Democratic Mineworkers, was to be built, based in Notts.

A big cry from the right was that Arthur Scargill and the NUM leaders should call a national ballot. The cry for a ballot was particularly loud in Notts: the absence of a ballot, they said, was their reason for not supporting the strike.

In retrospect, a ballot would have been a tactical advantage. But it was not a matter of principle.

In 1983 a national ballot proved to

be a mechanism for calling off a rolling strike. In 1984 the miners had to fight. It would have been wrong to 'constitutionalise' themselves out of the struggle, as one of the miners' leaders, Mick McGahey, put it. In South Wales, the picket-line tactic worked. It might have worked in Notts.

The labour movement was now in a head-on confrontation with the Tories. The miners were showing the way, in a heroic and increasingly bitter dispute.

But the labour movement as a whole failed miserably to come to the aid of the miners.

Twice in the summer of 1984 there

were national docks' strikes. If the dockers had fought hard alongside the miners, the situation could have escalated towards a general strike. But the dockers' leaders ducked it. At a lower level, the leaders of Liverpool city council also ducked it, in July — just as a dock strike was beginning. The second and third fronts against the government collapsed.

The trade union leadership failed to act in support of the miners. The TUC in September passed noble resolutions, but did nothing afterwards. No national union came out on strike in support of the NUM, even when they had the chance — though thousands of rank and file workers were involved in small-scale solidarity action.

Neil Kinnock played an appalling role. He never sided unequivocally with the miners.

Meanwhile the ruling class was throwing a lot of energy into securing the defeat of the NUM. In particular, the police (often secretly strengthened by soldiers) was put on a war footing. Across the country, miners and their supporters experienced first hand what 'law and order' meant.

It meant picket-line violence — by the police.

Eventually the combined effects of police strong-arm tactics and the failure of serious solidarity action to materialise led to a slow process in which the strike 'bled to death'. Gradually — in some areas more than others — as Christmas approached, miners started to go back to work.

And the bleeding process went on until, weakened, the miners ended their strike in March 1985.

But despite its defeat, the strike galvanised a movement of militant activists. Within mining communities, for the first time, women began to organise — through Women Against Pit Closures.

Black people, lesbians and gay men, women's organisations formed groups to support the miners.

A wide network of labour movement activists did what they could to raise money, make propaganda and try to get workers to take action in solidarity.

What was lacking was a strong organised movement in the rank and file of the unions. Scargill could call for solidarity action — but he was only an individual and had no means to make it happen. We still need to build such a rank and file movement in the unions.

And we need a powerful, militant socialist left in the Labour Party to fight the betrayals and fence-sitting of the Labour leaders.

From page 5

Petrograd with support rallying round the Bolshevik slogans. 25,000 demonstrate in Helsingfors. Over 50,000 demonstrate in Riga. 10,000 demonstrate in Volmar.

An attack by Black Hundreds on the Revel demonstration is driven off. There is no demonstration in Moscow as a result of the decision of the Soviet of workers' deputies. Over 12,000 participate in a demonstration called by the Bolsheviks in Kourou. 20,000 demonstrate in Kaluga. An attempt by Black Hundreds to break up the Minsk demonstration is defeated by the militia. Over 10,000 demonstrate in Vitebsk. An attempt by army officers to hold a separate demonstration from the main one in Tver is driven off the streets. 15,000 demonstrate in Makeyevka. Speakers at the rally in Nizhny Novgorod who call for a continuation of the war are greeted with cries of "why don't you go to the front yourself?"

While the demonstration is under way in Petrograd, anarchists free political prisoners from the Krestov prison. In a separate incident 460 ordinary criminals are freed by provocateurs. On the Southwest front the June offensive is launched.

Monday 19 June

Armed troops are used by the Provisional Government to track down the escaped prisoners, and carry out 60 arrests; workers in a number of Petrograd factories walk out on strike in protest; the Bolsheviks appeal for a return to work and an end to spontaneous strikes. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets votes in favour of the new offensive at the front, and the government's activities in pursuit of the escaped prisoners.

The council of factory committees of the Nevsky region (Petrograd) resolves to introduce workers' control over production. A meeting of reserve soldiers stationed in Vyatka passes a resolution advocating transference of all power to the Soviets. Soldiers in the 703rd Infantry division on the Western front arrest members of a delegation from the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet after they appeal for support for the offensive.

Tuesday 20 June

In votes on resolutions dealing with preparations for a Constituent Assembly and on the question of Finland, the Bolsheviks are defeated at the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. A joint statement of the All-Russian Soviet Congress and the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of peasant deputies appeals for all sections of the population — peasants, workers and soldiers — to support the offensive. The Petrograd Soviet votes in support of the new offensive, and the government's pursuit of the escaped prisoners.

A mass meeting of workers at the "Novy Lessner" factory in Petrograd declares that workers do not need "an offensive at the front, but an offensive against the bourgeoisie within the country." 25,000 workers in factories run by the Sormovo company in the Nizhegorodsky province walk out on strike for higher pay. A district congress of local soviets in Glazov passes a motion of no confidence in the Provisional Government and calls for transference of all power to the Soviets.

Wednesday 21 June

The All-Russian Congress of Bolshevik Military Organisations adopts resolution declaring that the new offensive in the war "has ended the first period of the Russian revolution, and with the blessing of the socialist minister: the bourgeoisie of the Allies again has at its disposal the army of the Russian revolution."

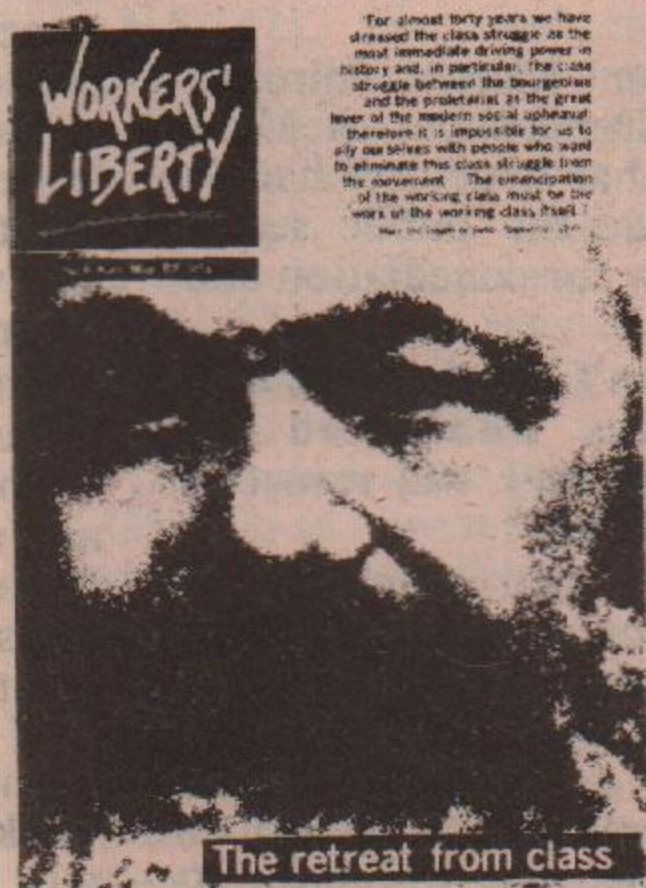
The All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions opens in Petrograd, attended by 211 delegates representing 1,400,000 organised workers; it calls for immediate publication of a decree on the 8-hour working day, a ban on overtime, and the organisation of industrial unions, but votes down a Bolshevik resolution opposing the political "neutrality" of trade unions.

At the All-Russian Congress of Soviets a Bolshevik resolution on measures to

Turn to page 10

For more about socialist ideas, read these pamphlets

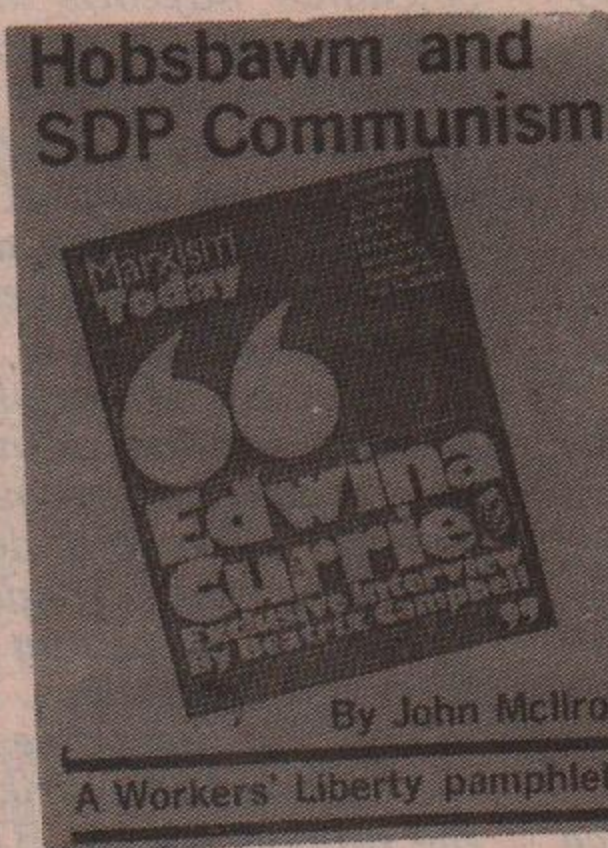
Available from SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.



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The debate on Palestine, Zionism and anti-semitism (including "Trotsky and Zionism")

A Workers' Liberty pamphlet



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The fight against sexism in the workplace, by Jean Lane. 50p.

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Articles on the Labour Party, S. Africa and the miners strike. A Workers' Liberty pamphlet

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By John McIlroy. Price 50p

Belinda Weaver reviews "Something Wild"

A good package

Watching 'Something Wild' is a bit like being on a rollercoaster — things happen very fast. You only realise you've had a good time once it's over.

Yet there's less to it than meets the eye (or ear). It's just a good package. The plot isn't terribly new, and the assumptions are pretty trite.

But the music carries you along, and the performances are terrific. It may be just entertainment, but at least it does that rather better than lots of other movies.

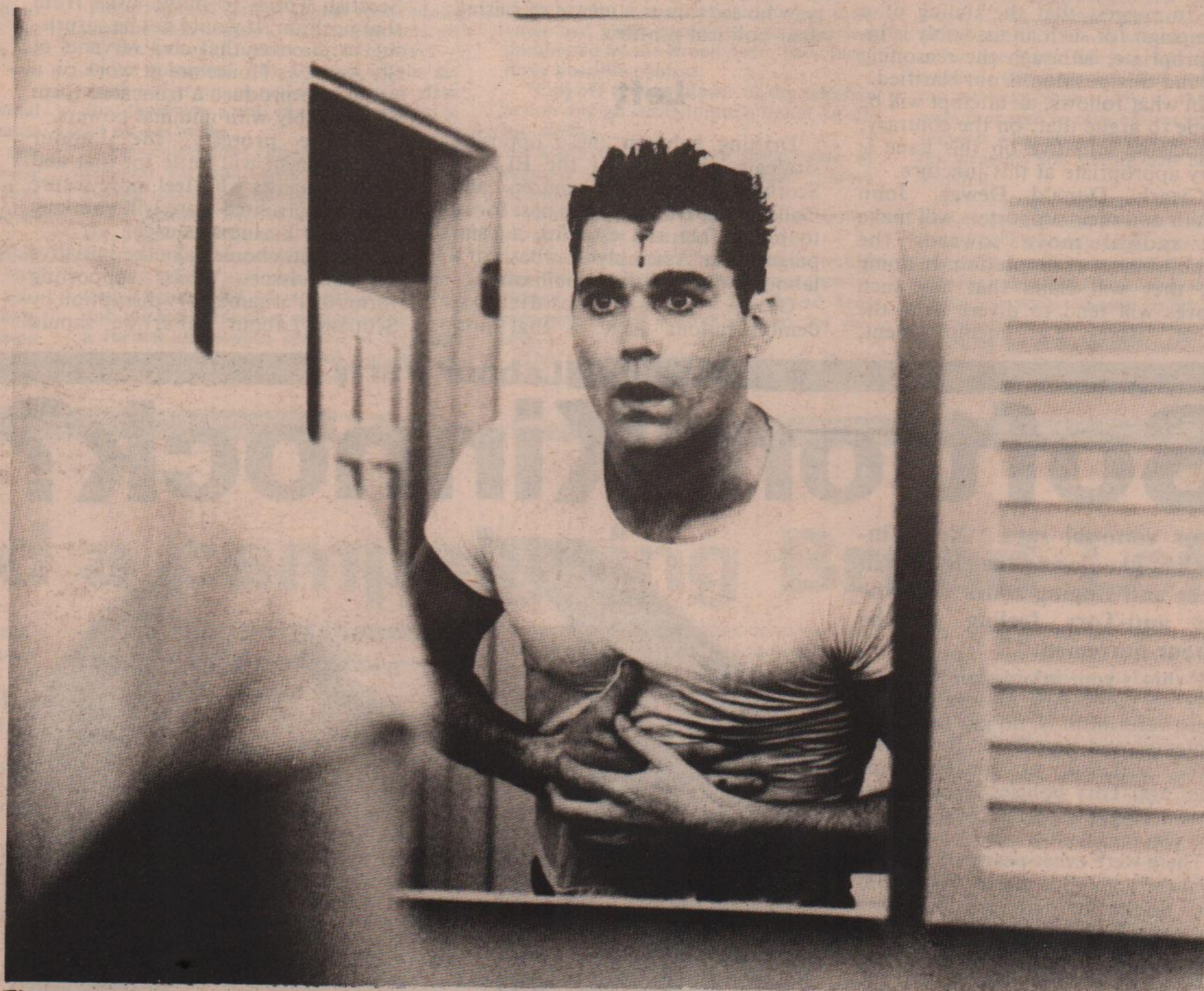
It's not a bad ride to be taken on. It begins with Lulu, a femme fatale in black, picking up Charlie, a Yuppie in a grey suit, after she sees him sneak out of a diner without paying. She offers him a ride, and he accepts. Soon Lulu is heading out of Manhattan, swigging booze all the way. Like Charlie, we don't know where we're headed, but we're prepared to go along for the ride.

At first Lulu is our main interest. She's in control. Charlie is just like some big baby she can order around. Out of his depth, he whimpers and protests, but he's no match for Lulu. She's done it all before, even if he hasn't.

Charlie can't match Lulu's casual way with problems. When she's broke, she steals; when she's blue, she takes a slug of whisky. She seems the very antithesis of suburban old Charlie, who's just been made Vice-president of a Wall Street firm.

But the film turns our thinking around. Lulu turns into Audrey, the kind of girl who wants to take a nice man home to meet mother, and it's a loss. Up till then, we've been intrigued by Lulu. But once her mystery goes, we lose interest in her. She just becomes a prize that Charlie and Lulu's old flame, Ray, fight over. Being the spoils in a battle isn't a very interesting part to play.

To compensate, we get Charlie changing. From being the fall guy who catches on too slowly, Charlie changes into a fairly quick-witted guy who knows what he wants and means to get it. He knows Ray won't play by the rules and he's prepared to risk that.



The denouement: bland Yuppie Charlie kills gangster Ray

Charlie is freed up by his entanglement with the Lulu/Ray combination. It helps him break out of his straight way of life, and face himself a little. But there's no real indication of exactly where he's headed. We know he can't go back to Wall Street, but there is enough of the safe and the straight in him to keep him fairly close to a comfortable life style.

And for Lulu, it's a blank too. We know that what attracted Charlie to her was the chance it gave him to be different, to give in for a while to the anarchic side of his nature. But what attracted Lulu was the safeness of

Charlie.

When Ray screams at her that, with Charlie, she's finally made it to suburbia, it's true. Lulu plays at suburbia early on, and sends it up, but partly because it attracts her.

Exchange

So Lulu and Charlie meet in the middle — they exchange characteristics.

The bonus in the film is that there is a lot going on to distract us from the banality of the plot. The sound-

track is full of old songs we're glad to hear again, and new songs that sound even better.

The film is also full of interesting secondary characters who all register. They aren't just a set of people to take up room or for the stars to play against — they seem to have lives and personalities all their own. And the performances of the main players are pretty near perfect. Ray is the kind of guy who exudes danger from every pore.

'Something Wild' is just intense entertainment, but that's not nothing these days.

A generous and good man

By Jim Denham

John Hammond died last week, aged 77. He was not particularly well-known to the general public and his passing was scarcely mentioned in the press.

But he played a huge and benign role in the development of modern American popular music (which is to say, in all modern popular music) and deserves to be credited with "discovering" some of the finest and most influential popular musicians of this century: Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Charlie Christian, Aretha Franklin and Bob Dylan, to name just a few.

And if he didn't exactly "discover" Benny Goodman, he was certainly responsible in large part for both the Goodman band's popular success, and for its policy of recruiting the best black jazz players into its ranks — a bold and pioneering development for the 1930s.

Hammond was born into a wealthy



Bob Dylan, Benny Goodman and John Hammond.

and conservative New York family. His mother was a Vanderbilt. But his love of jazz and rage at the way black musicians were treated by the music and entertainment establishment, led him to take a firm stand on the radical side in US politics.

When the radio station he worked for in the early '30s allowed itself to be bullied into making black musicians use the freight elevator, he led a walk-out and picketed the building (he was particularly angry because the station's call-sign was WEVD,

the initials of the great socialist leader Eugene V. Debs!)

He gave practical support to the struggles of black miners in Harlan County, and throughout his life took the side of decency, justice and civil rights.

But it was his unceasing work to break down racial divisions in the world of music and entertainments, and to ensure that black musicians received their just rewards — both financially and artistically — that made John Hammond such an important and exceptional figure.

He remained active as a music critic, "A and R man" (i.e. talent scout) and record producer right to the end: his last big "discovery" was Bruce Springsteen!

Many of the records Hammond produced, featuring the likes of Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Charlie Christian and Teddy Wilson are now permanently available for future generations to enjoy and to learn from, thanks to his persistent lobbying for re-issues at CBS records. These classics are probably the most fitting memorial to this generous, good man.



Energy and jobs

How can socialist environmentalists help workers fighting for their jobs? The Brighton branch of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA), has been fully involved in the campaign to keep the Brighton "B" power station open and described their contribution in the Summer edition of their bulletin.*

Having previously announced a £7 million refurbishment of the coal-fired power station at Shoreham, the CEBG then said it would cost more and would therefore be too expensive. In any case, they claimed that electricity from the plant would not be needed.

Faced with the loss of 300 jobs at Brighton "B", shop stewards approached Brighton SERA to help develop a case against the closure. Academic workers from Sussex University's Science Policy Research Unit provided statistics to back up the campaign and Brighton Council gave its support.

One result was a detailed analysis of job losses locally and in the North East of England, where the coal for Brighton "B" is mined. But the campaign also came up with a "green" case for keeping the power station open.

Firstly, though it was true that Brighton "B" was particularly bad in pouring out acid fumes, this was because existing pollution control equipment was old and worn out. The previously-planned refurbishment could have dealt with this by fitting new de-sulphurisation equipment.

Secondly, the station could have figured in a combined heat and power (CHP) scheme. This would involve running pipes in the neighbouring dwellings, carrying "waste" heat and saving on local heating costs. All power stations waste about 70% of their energy in the form of hot air, a long-standing scandal whose explanation can only be guessed. One of the few exceptions was Battersea Power Station which for many years piped warm air to blocks of flats in Pimlico. Battersea was closed a few years back for similarly dubious reasons. CHP would have improved the efficiency of Brighton "B", taking the cost of its electricity down to two-thirds that of "nuclear" electricity. (CHP is not feasible for nuclear power stations since they are rightly built far from densely populated areas). CHP had much local support and Brighton had been ear-marked by the last Labour government for a pilot scheme.

In the event, none of the arguments had an effect on the CEBG's strategists, leading to the inescapable conclusion that the closure of Brighton "B" was not an economic decision but a political one. It is part of the CEBG's (and the government's) commitment to nuclear power. Closing Brighton "B" will make Britain more dependent on nuclear power, present and future.

Local management were put on the defensive in March when Stan Orme, Shadow Energy Minister, visited the station. He gave a commitment to keep the station going under Labour and it was perhaps to forestall this that management started to covertly decommission the plant. This involved demolishing parts of it, removing walkways, stopping maintenance, allowing essential machinery to deteriorate or removing it from the site.

Unfortunately, it seems that the election has scuppered the chances of success in the campaign to keep the plant open, damaged as it already was by management's vandalism.

Perhaps the message is that campaigns of this kind should rely not just on producing good arguments but also on workers' willingness to challenge management and its backers by preventing piecemeal demolition and subsequent closure with the weapons of industrial militancy — sit-in strikes, work-ins or occupations — and involving the workers and communities affected in action to support them.

*available from 111 Albion Hill, Brighton. Send four 13p stamps.

1917

YEAR OF REVOLUTION

From page 8

combat the economic crisis is rejected in favour of a Menshevik-Social Revolutionary one. The Orel Soviet passes a resolution of protest against the dispatch of a local artillery division to the front. At a meeting of the Tomsk Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies, speakers declare that soldiers should be sent to gather in the harvest, not sent to the front. On the Western front soldiers in the 12th Caucasian corps refuse orders.

Thursday 22 June

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets votes down a Bolshevik resolution advocating the right of Ukraine to complete self-determination; instead the Congress resolves to postpone a decision until convocation of a Constituent Assembly.

On the Northern front 500 soldiers in the Neyshlitsky regiment of the 22nd Infantry division demonstrate with placards demanding "Down with the Offensive" and drive off speakers urging support for the offensive. Soldiers stationed in Simbirsk hold meetings, arrest officers, and stage a demonstration in opposition to being ordered to the front to support the offensive; the demonstration ends in armed conflicts.

The Belaya Tserkov Soviet discusses a resolution proposing sending a message of support to the army in the offensive; a counter-resolution from the Bolsheviks advocates sending bread and medicine to the soldiers, and capitalists to strengthen the ranks; the former resolution is adopted by 32 votes to 29.

Friday 23 June

A meeting of workers at the Putilov works (Petrograd) protests at the withdrawal of revolutionary troops from Petrograd for use in the offensive. In elections for delegates to the Petrograd Soviet at the Baranovsky factory, three Mensheviks, hitherto the delegates, are replaced by three Bolsheviks.

War Minister Kerensky issues a decree ordering strict punishment of any soldiers who disobey orders. A meeting of the Kronstadt Soviet condemns the new offensive. Disturbances break out among the Tula garrison as a result of dissatisfaction with the continuation of the war. On the Rumanian front the commander of the 31st Rifles regiment reports to his superiors that his troops are "hostile to the war and the offensive, almost all possess pamphlets by Lenin."

At the request of the President of the Union of Landowners, 200 cossacks arrive in Rechitsa in the Minsk province to put down the peasant movement.

Saturday 24 June

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets approves the decision of the Provisional Government to overturn an earlier decision of its own, and recall soldiers between the ages of 40 and 43 from agricultural work to full military service in the army; the Congress elects a Central Executive Committee: 104 Mensheviks, 99 Social-Revolutionaries, 35 Bolsheviks and 18 from other parties.

The Vyborg regional soviet (Petrograd) condemns the offensive, and calls instead for an offensive against the bourgeoisie of all countries to achieve soviet power. A meeting of soldiers of the 58th Reserve Infantry regiment in Voronezh resolves to ignore any orders that they be sent to the front. The Tiflis Soviet passes a resolution in support of the offensive and pledges full support for the army.

In Sulim, workers arrest the manager of the local mines for refusing to meet a demand for a pay increase of 50% and demand that he be summoned before the local soviet to account for his conduct.

**Brent Action
Against the Cuts
Mass Lobby of
Brent Council
Wednesday 29 July
at 6.30, Brent Town
Hall, nearest tube:
Wembley Park**

The left and a Scottish Assembly

The recent statement of the SO Editorial Board as to being "not in principle opposed to devolution" for Scotland is welcome.

Although couched in the form of a double negative, the statement implies a principled support for a Scottish Assembly at a time when that is the major talking point in Scottish politics.

Unfortunately, the resolution goes on to suggest that the timing of a campaign for such an assembly is inappropriate, although the reasoning behind this position is not clarified.

In what follows, an attempt will be made to argue that, on the contrary, a socialist initiative on this issue is very appropriate at this juncture.

Clearly Donald Dewar, John Smith and their supporters will make no radical move towards the establishment of devolution. In doing so, they will claim that any such moves will tend to divert from the "real" issues, e.g. unemployment,

housing, etc.

Secondly, they will, rightly, argue against the dangers of any cross-party, cross-class alliance to establish an assembly, such as epitomised by the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly. Here they may find themselves increasingly at odds with their normal co-thinkers in the Scottish TUC, the leadership of which, and of several trade unions, is strongly influenced by the Communist Party, who see this as a means of raising their political profile.

Left

Drifting between these opposing strategies, the left of the PLP in Scotland, such as Cameron and Galloway, are unlikely, on past form, to break free and establish a campaign for an Assembly on a basis of a labour movement-led mobilisation.

Given these conditions, demonstrations such as that pro-

jected for late August, are unlikely to lead anywhere. The result may well be that the Nationalists, led by newly elected Alex Salmond, will begin to make gains amongst those who voted Labour on a conditional basis.

Nor should we dismiss the possibility of a Tory initiative on an Assembly. Although Rifkind continues to speak of it as being low on his list of priorities, he is under increasing pressure from influential Scottish Tories to move away from that position. It would not be surprising to discover that civil servants at St. Andrews House are at work on a project to produce a truncated form of Assembly with minimal powers.

Despite protests, the Labour establishment will settle for that and those socialists who feel more secure with a centralised state will continue with their business as usual.

Socialists should take the initiative on this issue. Whilst supporting forms of Parliamentary disruption by Scottish Labour MPs, we should

argue for a Scottish labour movement conference, organised on the broadest possible basis and with the maximum democracy, called to discuss an Assembly as one of a range of strategies to fight back against the Tories.

Mistaken

It would be mistaken at this juncture to lay down that support for such an initiative must be conditional upon acceptance of a prescriptive list of socialist policies. Once that initiative was set in motion, it would be obligatory upon socialists to argue within that forum for their detailed policies.

On the other hand, we can ignore all of the above, hope that it all blows over and return to "business as usual".

IAN McCALMAN
Glasgow

Labour Party

Soft on Kinnock?

Your editorial says "Neil Kinnock spoke during the election in clear and ringing tones with the gut anti-Tory feeling of the labour movement".

If this is your impression then you have no gut feeling of what opportunist reformism is, no gut feeling of contempt and hatred for those who betray socialism, no conception of what anti-Tory policies are and certainly no right to pretend you paper is Marxist.

There were other pearls of wisdom right through your paper. "Neil Kinnock spoke for millions of working class people. He spoke out for sanity against nuclear weapons..." Foster says "The Labour leaders did not make a bad job of the campaign itself. There were some good ads and television broadcasts..." (and so on, ad nauseum).

The Labour leaders' line, and that certainly included Kinnock, was to play down the class issues. To Kinnock the election was "whether we are to have a more divided Britain" (Kinnock, News on Sunday, June 21).

In other words Labour would overcome the class conflict, Thatcher would not.

Labour's peace policy? Kinnock and Healey were enthusiastic in their defence of NATO, on an increase in conventional arms, in agreeing that the threat of war came from the Soviet Union and not from American



and British imperialism, in swearing loyalty to the USA and to Reagan, to agreeing to the possession of nuclear weapons by NATO and the USA, and indeed agreeing that Britain would "shelter" behind America's bomb (the nuclear "umbrella").

Kinnock even pretended that Reagan would not mind were Britain

to go unilateral, that it was open to negotiation in any case and that Reagan was neutral in the election and did not prefer Thatcher.

When the opportunity arose to speak out against war, e.g. by taking a stand against Reagan's warmongering actions against Iran in the Gulf, the Kinnock clique were (and remain) silent. They could, on this issue, have exposed and discredited the Tories as lackeys of American imperialism and a threat to peace during the election campaign but remained silent because, just like the Tories, they also wrap the Union Jack around themselves.

As to Kinnock's television programmes, they were *shameful*. Self-adulatory, (the cult of the individual is obviously growing), the broadcasts included a witch-hunt on the Liverpool councillors and on Militant, an implicit support thereby of the Tory gutter press "loony left" campaign (which as we know followed an explicit attack from Kinnock's office before the election) and a justification of the attack on Sharon Atkin.

Any left wing paper worth its salt would have made it clear that the fight against the Tories is inseparable from the struggle against the right wing leadership in the Labour Party and the trade unions.

The fact that you've written the crap I've quoted and regard Kinnock's arguments "for running the Tories' own system" as a "weakness" and not as the *bed-rock* of the Labour leader's policies discounts your paper as any organiser for socialism.

Yours fraternally,
DAVID FINCH,
Croydon

We need Trotskyist unity

Could you please send me £5's worth of the excellent supplement to Socialist Organiser of July 2, "The Battle for Wallasey".

May I add though that whilst I am all in favour of your making constructive criticisms of Militant, as that of Lol Duffy who, pointed out that the Liverpool Militants should have taken on the government earlier, during the miners' strike, I find the part under "Slanders and lies from Militant" unfortunate.

On the reference to a Militant supporter wearing a sticker for a candidate in another constituency, Terry Fields, I saw here, where as well as being very active in Mid Sussex we helped the candidate in Crawley, who had a better chance of winning, how someone can easily forget to change stickers, etc.

And where do we find in Socialist Organiser full recognition of the remarkable fact that the two sitting Militant supporter MPs did so well? The swing from Conservative to Labour where Terry Fields stood at

Liverpool Broadgreen was 12.42%, the largest swing to a Labour MP in that city where Militant has a considerable influence and there were also big swings to Labour in the other seats.

In Coventry South East where Militant supporter Dave Nellist stood, the swing from the Conservatives to Labour was 5.19% compared with a swing of 3.42% in Coventry South West, 3.23% in Coventry North West and 3% in Coventry North East.

Add this to the fact that SO supporter Lol Duffy increased the Labour vote by 39% in Wallasey, and what the evidence suggests is that with a large number of Trotskyists as Labour candidates and Trotskyists leading the party nationally Labour could have won a great victory in the election.

We need now to bring Trotskyists together if we are to make the most of the opportunity that clearly exists for Trotskyism to emerge fairly soon as a decisive force.

DAVID HARRIS,
West Sussex

SOCIALIST ORGANISER

Council workers say "We'll fight the Tories!"

By Nick Barstow, Chair, Islington Council Joint Trade Union Committee (personal capacity)

In headlong retreat after the Tory election win, Labour councils are planning job cuts.

Camden Council, with a budget gap of £12 million this year, started the stampede on 2 July. They decided on a package of job cuts: a freeze on filling job vacancies (900 now and more to follow); ending 300 temporary workers' contracts; and plans for redundancies and compulsory redeployment in September.

But the response of council workers has scared them and other Labour councils with the same plans. Over 2,000 Camden NALGO members at their branch meeting on 14 July heavily defeated moves to cooperate with the council. By 1200 to 800 Camden NALGO pledged itself to defend jobs, to refuse to cover vacancies and to defend temporary workers' rights.

Other Labour councils, pushing the job-cuts policy under the guise of defending 'efficient services', have now taken a step back. Islington Council, for example, is trying to make a virtue of not taking 'panic measures' in order not to provoke a clash with the unions.

On 20 July Islington Council leader Margaret Hodge unveiled the results of secret discussions at a Labour Group meeting — a more 'subtle' version of Camden's policy. Islington plans a big push to identify priority services, demand huge flexibility from council workers with the council having powers to change jobs and conditions of service at will, and — key to success — limiting unions' negotiating rights.

What their strategy for survival does not mention in Islington, Camden or anywhere else is a campaign against the government's massive attacks on local government.

The Tories have a huge array of laws planned to hit local councils. However, some, like the poll tax, are already running into trouble. The government has already started talking about driving up the rates in order to make the poll tax idea more acceptable!

We need to make the most of their problems. We need to build a broad-based, united campaign against the attacks in services and jobs.

But Labour council leaders have already thrown the towel in. The only option, most of them claim, is to remain in the Town Halls and 'humanely' pass on the Tory cuts. They are sabotaging the campaign in advance. Defending the working class of the main cities in Britain is a job that is falling to the people who provide the services, the council workers.

We will fight the Tories; we will probably have to fight the Labour Council leaders too.

A threat to democracy

Tony Benn MP slams official secrecy

Both the attempt by the American Congress to get the truth out of Colonel Oliver North, and the attempt by the British government to suppress the truth contained in Mr Peter Wright's book underline the urgency of a fundamental review of Britain's whole relationship with the United States.

For the evidence of these two men, both of whom have worked at a very senior level in the security services of their countries, throws a penetrating light on the way the American government conduct their foreign and defence policies.

Colonel North has now confessed that he consistently lied about the covert operations upon which he was engaged, even though in doing so, he was simultaneously admitting that he had violated the democratic constitution of the United States.

And Peter Wright, in describing the role of the American CIA in seeking to overthrow the elected Prime Minister of this country, has also made what amounts to a confession that MI5 was involved in the destruction of democracy in Britain, and that the American Government was intent on the same objective.

Each of these men were under

orders from far higher up, and what we have learned is that neither the American, nor the British Security chiefs, have any respect for the basic principles of democracy.

In resolving the British end of this crisis of confidence, we suffer from having a Prime Minister who has tried to use the law officers, and the courts to conceal a crime, instead of seeking to punish it.

But fortunately we now know, for a fact, from the publication of extracts from the Wright book, that the United States authorities have, in the past, intervened directly to subvert our Parliamentary democracy, and this necessarily raises the whole question of whether Britain ought to regard America, any longer, as an ally we can trust, with bases in this country.

For what guarantee can there ever be that the Americans would not seek to subvert any government elected, here, in the future, whose policy they did not like?

The time has come when those in Britain who believe in democracy must consider a long campaign to remove all US bases and troops from our soil, and re-examine our membership of NATO, under which they now remain here.

The whole question of the future of Anglo-American relations must be

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discussed seriously, and is bound to come up at the Party Conference, this October, when Labour's future foreign and defence policy will be

discussed. Tony Benn was speaking at a trade union school at Ruskin College on July 15.

Exclusive: JTS abuse exposed

Socialist Organiser has just been leaked an internal document produced by the Prospect Centre for the Manpower Services Commission, the state body that runs the cheap labour schemes. The Prospect Centre's document is an assessment of the pilot programmes that preceded the full-scale introduction of the new Job Training Scheme (JTS).

JTS is the work-for-your-dole scheme, aimed particularly at unemployed young people aged 18-25. There are currently between 10,000 and 20,000 youth on the

By Sue Hill

scheme, which is being introduced despite strong official union and TUC opposition.

The leaked report's most damning evidence against YTS is contained in a section which compares the scheme with the two-year Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

The report notes that the new JTS is well liked by the bosses because of the lack of monitoring and the absence of interference from trade unions. The JTS is far freer from the limited safeguards that protect peo-

ple on other schemes. For instance, the union reps who sit on Area Manpower Boards (which administer the schemes at local level) have no right of veto over JTS schemes as they do have over the Community Project.

The report also claims that the employers would like to see the length of JTS extended beyond its current one year.

In fact this is one of the major implications of comparing JTS with YTS. Others include: if YTS is compulsory why not make the currently voluntary JTS mandatory too? If JTS trainees will work for their dole money why pay YTS trainees a rate higher than dole?

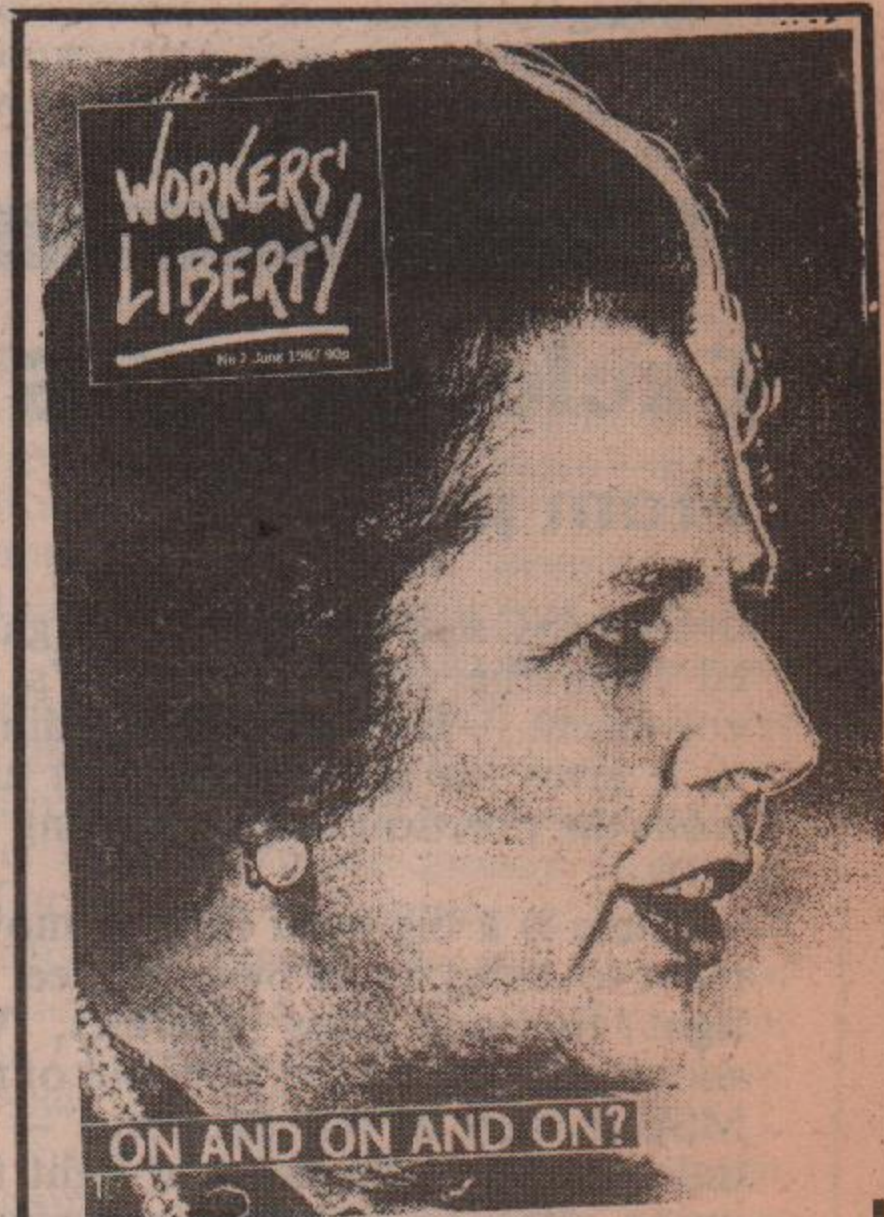
The introduction of the scheme has

meant a mini-level crisis for the union leaders. Even they recognise that their members' jobs (and so the union dues that pay their wages) are threatened by a cheap labour scheme which to a large extent will replace existing jobs with JTS labour.

The unions have come out for a boycott of JTS and activists should fight to enforce this official union position.

On top of this even moderates like John Edmonds of the GMBU are talking of pulling out of the TUC's long-standing participation in the MSC. The TUC has got very little out

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Workers' Liberty no.7 available for 90p plus 20p p&p from SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.