

**Socialists and democracy**

centre pages



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For socialist renewal!



For workers' liberty!

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# SOCIALIST

**ORGANISER**

*Unite the left!*

**Fight  
for a  
General  
Election**

# LIVERPOOL:

# Fighting for

# jobs!



National leaders of the two main council workers' unions have authorised ballots on all-out strike action in Liverpool City Council.

Many workers are already on strike. 2,000 more are being balloted now. 500 members of NALGO, UCATT and TGWU have already voted for a strike.

The Tories, the media, and the Labour Party leadership,

all in unison, are trying to smear the council workers' struggle as unnecessary and politically motivated.

In fact, the workers are in dispute over the most basic issues of jobs and conditions.

In a city of mass unemployment, in a Britain of ballooning dole queues, the City Council plans to cut its workforce from 29,000 to 22,000. Thousands of workers stand to lose their jobs. Many

of them would then never work again.

Thousands of young people in Liverpool face a future without jobs, without prospects, without hope.

The City Council — led by a group of right-wing Labour people who are pushing through Tory policies with the frantic urgency of traitors sunk too deep in the mud to turn back — is also out to smash trade unionism. The

private firm to which they are handing refuse collection is non-union, as well as offering fewer jobs and worse pay and conditions.

Council leader Harry Rimmer has publicly called on workers to cross picket lines and scab.

The council has organised squads of students to scab on the binmen in the weeks before the private contractor comes in.

Victory for Rimmer will be a deep blow for the working class in Liverpool, and a green light for the Tories and servile Labour councils to go ahead with job cuts and union smashing elsewhere.

Victory for the council workers will be a tremendous boost to the struggle to save jobs and demand a decent livelihood for all workers, and not only in Liverpool.

**More on page 7**

Miner driven to death by the system

# A fallen comrade

By Paul Whetton

On Wednesday I had the misfortune to attend a funeral. Funerals are never pleasant things to attend, but this had significant overtones for me. It was for a young guy called Mark Hunter who was sacked, along with Tony Geddis, from Welbeck pit for publishing a leaflet about Ian McGregor.

Tragically, last week Mark

was driven to taking his own life, at the age of 30. I went to the funeral along with many of the comrades who knew him before, during and after the strike.

Mark did a tremendous job during the strike and after, rebuilding the NUM in Notts and, following his dismissal, he spent a considerable amount of time trouble and effort helping the sacked miners through the Justice for Mineworkers campaign.

Mark was victim of the system, a system that was brought about by scab elements inside our organisation working

with the government, the police and the courts in order to strangle our own organisation. They eventually broke away and formed what is now known as the UDM.

Whatever other pressures Mark had on him, I'm quite convinced in my own mind that had Mark not been blatantly victimised he would have been alive today.

It's a sacrilege for people inside our own organisation to talk about sitting down with the UDM, the NCB, the perpetrators, the people who put Mark Hunter into that coffin in the first place.



Photo: John Smith

## French fascist at London conference

On 4 July Jean Marie Le Pen, leader of the French neo-Nazi party, the Front National (FN) held a press conference at the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Centre in Westminster, as the culmination of a three day event organised by the Fascist "Technical Group of the European Right" of the European Parliament.

The group comprises Euro MPs (MEPs) from the FN, the German Republikaner Party of ex-Waffen SS man Franz Schonhuber, and the Belgian Vlaems Blok. There are no British fascist MEPs. But present at the event were members of the Monday

Club and of the dangerous far-right group Western Goals.

The objective of the event, as illuminated by Andrew Smith, director of Western Goals, was to build a European right-wing "network" of which Le Pen would be "the natural leader".

The statements of Le Pen, which can be summed up in the slogan "Stop Immigration, Start Repatriation", included using the armed forces against the "massive invasion from foreign populations", and greater police and judicial power to enforce repatriation.

Talking about the need for "increasingly drastic steps to control immigration," Le Pen said failure to do so would mean going "into the logic of war".

Despite the whole event being shrouded in the utmost secrecy until the press conference was ready to take place, there were two demonstrations outside the Centre, one organised by the Union of Jewish Students, the other by the Newham Monitoring Project, supported by Socialist Organiser.



Le Pen

## Save Iraq's children!

A UN team just back from Iraq has recommended that Iraq be allowed to export again in order to buy necessary food and medical supplies.

The situation facing children, in particular, is desperate, according to the team. Up to 30% of children are suffering from malnutrition on top of the foul water and open sewers that dot the main cities as a result of the bombing that took place during the war.

The mission's appeal has fallen on deaf ears at the G7 summit this week. While the leaders of the richest seven nations feasted on salmon, beef, strawberries, washed down by wine, they categorically ruled out any lifting of the sanctions they imposed leading up to the war.

Lift the sanctions!

## Left wins in CPSA

By Steve Battlemuch, Mark Serwotka and Dave Armes, CPSA DHSS Section Executive (elect)

The Broad Left has won an 18 to 7 majority in election for the DSS Section Executive Committee of the CPSA. The result could be a prelude to change throughout the rest of the union.

The DSS is the largest and strongest section of the union but for the past three years it has been controlled by the right wing who have sapped it of much of its militancy.

The election comes in the wake of a staffing campaign built from the bottom up in the Northeast, spearheaded by the 9 week strike in Hull. The strikes were 'supported' in name only by the previous executive who made no attempt to spread the action into a national campaign. The new executive must have this as its first priority.

## Sheffield protest grows

By Ruth Cockroft

Already two wards in Sheffield Central constituency Labour Party have called on the GC to reverse its previous decision to launch an investigation into the "presence of Socialist Organiser".

It seems that the planned purge will be more difficult for the LCC clique than they first anticipated. Although a letter has already been sent to affiliated organisations from

the Constituency secretary giving all party members the opportunity to give information for the investigation, it seems that the manner in which the investigation has so far been handled may in fact be unconstitutional.

Investigations have to be into named individuals not into proscribed newspapers and their influence in the party. The right wing may have to start the whole process again if they wish to continue the witch-hunt.

In Sheffield Brightside CLP the chair of the constituency has stood down because of that constituent's attempt to investigate party member Nof Ttofiyas and the way the Sheffield Party seems to be throwing itself into a massive witch-hunt. There are now plans to organise a left caucus in Brightside as a response to the right's offensive.

A "Stop the Sheffield Witch-hunt Campaign" is underway and already a number of prominent trade unionists and party activists have put their names to a list of sponsors opposing the witch-hunt. A public meeting is planned for Monday 29 July, 7.30, SCAU, West Street.

## Tories offer bribe for sell-off

By a worker in PSA

Last week a letter addressed to Mr Heseltine from the Treasury was leaked to the press. The letter concerns the forthcoming privatisation of the PSA, the Property Services Agency, the Civil Service department responsible for building and maintaining government buildings.

In it mention is made of giving the PSA a "dowry" of money. When challenged in parliament Heseltine claimed that the money was to cover redundancy payments for PSA staff in the private sector.

If that is so, why has the government refused to underwrite the PSA's redundancy payments up until now. On many occasions, when asked to do so, they have always refused.

Of course the truth is that

the Tories were caught out by the leak.

The government is determined to avoid what happened to a bit of PSA, called TCS, put up for sale over a year ago. Only two bids were received for the company, both negative — that is, the Tories would have to give the bidders money, not the other way round.

They hope that by pumping cash in and holding a few fast sales that they can get rid of most of the PSA.

## CIA linked to crooked bank

US Senate investigators are claiming that the BCCI collapse is the largest banking crash in history.

And as the bank's past performance unfolds more people and institutions will regret their contact with it.

This week details about the CIA's use of the bank have been revealed. America's spy agency used the bank to channel operational funds to agents and sources around the world; as a secret slush fund; possibly to launder drug money; and most notably in the Iran-Contra scandal.

Even before Oliver North's plan to trade arms to Iran in order to send cash to the Contras, the CIA used BCCI to send money via Saudi Arabia to Nicaragua.

Second in command at the CIA then was Robert Gates, who is now Bush's nominee to head the Agency. Gates had previously been nominated by Reagan in 1987 but Congress wouldn't approve it. Bush has gone out on a limb by campaigning for Gates. If the Congress again refuses his nomination it will

be a personal defeat for Bush.

British Midland Bank also stand accused this week of secretly operating a bank within a bank. The Financial Times claims that Midland lost £75 million over the past decade without disclosing the loss to shareholders.

The losses were associated with a subsidiary, Midland International Trade Services, which had secret links with Brit-

tain's security services. MITS employed retired military officers on defence business without the knowledge of even the Chief Executive. Their business was arms deals.

As with BCCI, the losses at Midland highlight the lack of accountability of the financial sector of the economy. Those who suffer in these collapses are the employees, and small investors.

## Poll tax non-payment rises

By Alison Brown

About 40 poll tax activists from groups all over the country met in Manchester last weekend to discuss the way forward for the campaign.

In its second year in England and Wales, and third in Scotland, non-payment has increased, reaching levels as high as 70% in Scotland, 40% in parts of London. Generally, though, active campaigning around the poll tax has drop-

ped off since recognition by the Tories that the tax is unworkable.

Alongside this slump in activity the rise of use of bailiffs and proceedings to jail non-payers are being stepped up. Demands that the poll tax be scrapped immediately, and an amnesty be declared for all non-payers and poll tax prisoners, still need to be fought for.

The group decided to set up a national conference, "Finishing Off the Poll Tax", to look at the ways forward, which will be held in Manchester in the autumn.

## The lie machine



It's all a bit like GBH really. Things aren't what they seem. Could it be that the Mirror, Star, Express are all trying to destroy the Royal Family?

It's the future king who is being lambasted after all. The Mirror shared with us the "full incredible story" of the thirteen year smouldering romance. Charles, really?



The Daily Star came up with not only one "stunning blonde" but two. It also revealed that Diana, the future Queen, has had a bad back for years, though it did clear Charles of any blame for her condition.



It was all too much for the present Queen. She's apparently furious that the "troubled marriage" has been "revealed", but not, it appears, that the marriage is troubled.

Which will be the first tabloid with "Abolish the Monarchy"?



The Sun meanwhile tried to link Neil Kinnock with another "sleazy pal" — no, not Bryan Gould. The Sun has its eyes focussed on the short-term. Kinnock and, through him, Labour need to be smeared this year. For the Sun, Charles will have to wait.

For Workers' Liberty East and West

# SOCIALIST ORGANISER

## BANNED!

**INSIDE**  
 Four pages on the USSR & Eastern Europe  
 Soviet workers begin to move  
 Bureaucrats turn capitalist  
 Anti-semitism in USSR

### Labour Party bans SO: but we vow to fight on!



On 27 July the Labour Party's National Executive Committee voted to ban the Socialist Organiser.

The ban was passed by a vote of 100 to 20. The Socialist Organiser has been banned from all Labour Party events and from all Labour Party premises.

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# Stop the purge!

Frank Field, leading candidate for the post of *Witchfinder General* in the next Labour government, put it well: "We will never get a better opportunity to shake this group warmly by the throat".

The opportunity is the Walton by-election; the group, of course, is *Militant*. It surely is a golden opportunity, and they will not fail to take it.

On Monday 15th, Labour's Organisation Sub-Committee gave the signal for the biggest purge in Labour's recent history. Dozens of *Militant* supporters now face expulsion.

Much of Labour's effort in Walton went into collecting information about supporters of Lesley Mahmood. Kinnockites went around the streets of Walton taking photos of Mahmoodites, and of houses with Mahmood posters in windows, in a bizarre parody of

guerrilla warfare, with cameras instead of guns!

Read, for example, this report from an SO supporter who went to Walton to support the Labour Party candidate, Peter Kilfoyle:

*"Parking midway between the rival committee rooms, we spied a group of people bustling around a Labour van. Electioneers hard at work? No! On Kilfoyle supporter repeatedly photographed us, and anyone who came within 20 yards. Others braced a ladder up against the back wall of Mahmood's committee rooms so as to photograph people and things in the back rooms — to the amusement or disgust of passers-by.*

*The stench of witch-hunting was unbearable. When we returned from our first leafletting run, "Militant Tendency Incident Forms" were handed out for people to write down details of Mahmood supporters seen. When we refused to give the name of a Leeds University Militant seller, supposedly spotted, one Kinnockite suggested a form should be filled out about us too!*

*Gleeful Kinnockites regaled each other with tales such as their having to hit one Mahmood supporter who "got in the way".*

*At the end of the day, when we returned to our car, a different Labour van was there, with new people now hanging off the end of the ladder, still snapping away!*

*One of these burly, tight-lipped men told us that he'd been there a few hours. Sliding back the door on his van, he picked up a sledgehammer just inside and tried to crack a joke — if the Militant think Labour's so keen on bailiffs, they shouldn't be surprised he had a sledgehammer."*

Now comes the pay off in a mass purge. And it is not confined to those who backed Mahmood in Walton. Terry Fields, MP for the Liverpool constituency of Broadgreen, and a long time associate of *Militant*, did not endorse Mahmood and he did not

canvass for her. But the press targeted him and now, in jail for fighting the poll tax, he is being driven out of the Labour Party.

Birkenhead Labour Party is being suspended to make Birkenhead safe for Frank Field.

The purge is gathering force and momentum. Not only is there the nasty Walton farce with the cameras and stepladders, you can now be expelled from the Labour Party on the mere say-so of another Labour Party member who says he saw you doing something to support Mahmood.

And why stop there? People say things that can be construed as support for Mahmood; why shouldn't they be expelled?

People canvassing for the Labour

**"Socialists in the Labour Party should oppose the purge. From Militant they should demand a statement pledging that it will not stand against Labour."**

oppose the expulsion of *Militant*? Last week's *Tribune* quoted left MP Tony Banks as saying that those up to be expelled deserve their fate. *Tribune* itself has the same attitude.

On one level, of course, this is simply unanswerable. *Militant* did stand against the democratically selected Labour Party candidate in Walton, did split the Labour vote, did risk letting the Liberal Democrat candidate take the seat. No party in existence, even a party for which elections are less central to its raison d'être than they are for Labour, would tolerate that behaviour.

In Walton, *Militant* split itself off from the Labour Party: that its supporters did not formally leave the Labour Party is just a messy detail. Even now *Militant* seems to be planning to stand more candidates against Labour.

How then is it possible, from any point of view which accepts the integrity of the Labour Party, to argue against expelling those who worked for Mahmood?

Because the Walton by-election is part of a bigger story. *Militant*'s sectarian stupidity in Walton is no more than an excuse to intensify the witch-hunt Labour's leaders were already conducting.

You don't have to stand against Labour to be banned and expelled! Because the split in the Liverpool Labour Party came about as a consequence of the right wing offensive against the left, running for over five years and culminating in the expulsion of over 20 left wing councillors. In Liverpool it is not a case of expelling a few rule-breakers, but of a major split in the local party, initiated by Kinnock though now helped by *Militant*'s foolishness. That split should be mended.

Because socialists who believe that *Militant* must be fought should not lend their support — even by an indifferent shrug of the shoulders — to these expulsions which are part of a prolonged campaign to purge all remnants of socialism out of the

Labour Party.

*Militant* must be fought politically and it can not be fought by socialists politically now in active or passive alliance with the Kinnockite right wing.

Intolerance grows with gratification. People like Tony Banks MP may feel safe now, but they should remember the last time the Labour Party had an authoritarian purging regime like this.

Then Michael Foot and four other MPs could be expelled from the Parliamentary Labour Party for daring to *abstain* on the Tory defence estimates, which Labour voted to support! Think again, Tony Banks!

Socialists in the Labour Party should oppose the purge. From *Militant* they should demand a statement pledging that it will not stand against the Labour Party.

The main enemy of the Labour Party as a working class organisation is not those who have just committed a suicidal sectarian stupidity in Walton. It is no-guts Neil Kinnock and the gang of careerists around him who are trying to turn the Labour Party into what the late Eric Heffer rightly described as "the SDP Mark Two".

Fight this purge!

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

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## Unpredictable electricians

That leading intellectual, Mr Paul "Gazza" Gascoigne once said "I never make predictions and I never will". Wise words indeed. I seem to remember that earlier this year I confidently predicted the return of the EETPU to the TUC fold, in the not-too-distant future.

There were good reasons for that prediction: the electricians had not prospered since their expulsion from the TUC in 1988 and the grand designs for a new union confederation had attracted only a pathetic rag-bag of small managerial and professional bodies. Eric Hammond was making conciliatory noises about "building bridges" back to the TUC. Most importantly of all, Hammond could argue with some justice that his version of business-unionism (no-strike deals and all) more or less became TUC orthodoxy.

It all made sense at the time, especially as Danny Carrigan (an EETPU national official and very much part of the union machine) was opposing Hammond's chosen successor, Paul Gallagher, on an openly pro-TUC platform.

Now, all those straws in the wind seem to have been blown off course, and the electricians' return to the fold looks as unlikely (or at least, far off) as ever. The main reason for this is the electricians' sheer greed for members at the expense of other unions: they can't resist a spot of poaching, especially when it seems to be offered on a plate. So when the building union UCATT was thrown into crisis a couple of months ago, the EETPU had no hesitation in recruiting a dozen or so "rebel" UCATT officials and announcing the creation of an EETPU construction section. This move was bound to antagonise even the electricians' closest allies within the TUC, the AEU, who aren't particularly bothered about UCATT but who are concerned about their own substantial construction section.

Signing no-strike deals and crossing picket lines may be tolerable behaviour within today's go-ahead TUC, but poaching members definitely isn't. The Bridlington agreement remains sacrosanct (or more or less sacrosanct: in the words of AEU general secretary Gavin Laird, "we all of us, at times, poach: but if we are caught we obey the rules").

Thus it was that the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) voted last month to expel the EETPU if it does not rejoin the TUC by January 1993. The CSEU is the umbrella organisation representing two million engineering workers; the electricians were allowed to remain members after their expulsion from the TUC, mainly because the CSEU is dominated by the AEU.

The anti-EETPU resolution was nominally occasioned by their poaching of GMB members at Vickers in Barrow and was strongly motivated by Roger Lyons of MSF and Charlie Kelly of UCATT. But it would never have been passed but for the abstention of the AEU, whose general secretary Gavin Laird even lectured the electricians about "working class morality".

Meanwhile, Hammond's successor, Paul Gallagher (he defeated Carrigan by 85,000 to 31,000 votes in a low poll) recently responded to the suggestion that recruiting UCATT members might further antagonise the TUC, with the memorable words, "Who gives a toss anyway?"

All of which would seem to rather rule out an early rapprochement between the TUC and the electricians. But you never can tell. Talks on amalgamation between the AEU and EETPU are going ahead this month despite everything. Hopefully, the AEU rank and file will mobilise to stop any such amalgamation as they did in 1989. But the electricians' leaders have not given up hope of creeping back into the fold via an amalgamation, despite their belligerent anti-TUC rhetoric. Meanwhile, I've decided to give up making any predictions.

### INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

# Walton today, the world tomorrow

Well, Walton was a big success, wasn't it? Success? Yes, Paul Foot is certain of it. It all depends on how you look at it.

Start by remembering the worst socialist election results imaginable, those of the SWP in 1977. Then forget all the special features of the Walton by-election and imagine that this result can be achieved evenly everywhere in Britain.

Twenty-six hundred votes? No, comrade, half a million!

This is Paul Foot in last week's *Socialist Worker*: "If the votes are seen as a hard core of people ready to fight the Tories and the Labour council, it looks good — 2,600 fighters in Walton probably means 15,000 in Liverpool and at least half a million across the country. That's not bad, not bad at all."

Allright, then, let us pretend to believe Foot and talk electoralism, seriously. If Foot is serious and not just whistling a happy tune to keep his spirits up, then he should think all this through to the logical conclusion: the SWP should start now to campaign for the creation of a left bloc (itself, *Militant*, and so on) to fight the general election in every constituency, or in some hundreds of constituencies anyway.

If there is this half million "fighters" out there waiting to be organised — and if they can be organised by an election campaign, a nationwide version of Mahmood's campaign — then Foot and his comrades who believe this should attempt to organise them. It is their socialist duty to try. Such united left campaigns have been done in France, in the '70s.

There are, I believe, an awful lot of people — and I guess they number millions, not Foot's half million — who are embittered at life in the Britain Thatcher built. People frustrated — knowingly, or otherwise — by Kinnock's belly-crawling mimicry of the Tories. A Labour Party willing to fight even for moderate reforms could have mobilised them against the Tories.

The left of the Labour Party could have mobilised them in the early '80s if it had used its local government positions as bases from which to fight the Tories.

*Militant* mobilised a lot of them in Liverpool, only to do the Grand Old Duke of York on them, marching them up to the top of the hill and then down again. (It is against that record that the number of votes Mahmood got has to be measured.)

Could a left-wing anti-Labour general election campaign in all constituencies or in most get through to such people, organise them, give them a focus, and weld them into a political force against the Tory-Labour-Liberal Democrat establishment?

This is the serious question posed by Foot's account of Walton and his general conclusion from it. If it could be done electoral-



The end of the Prague spring: Foot is still living in 1968



### AGAINST THE TIDE

By Sean Matgamna

ly, and was done in Walton, then why not elsewhere?

Why don't the SWP now campaign with *Militant* and others to prepare a general left-wing slate for the general election. Perhaps the SWP will do this?

I'll give you odds that they won't! In this, as in many other questions, the leaders of the SWP don't believe what they are saying. They say things demagogically, for effect.

Why won't they? Because they know Walton, and Liverpool, are exceptions. Contrary to Foot's picture, political conditions in Walton are highly exceptional, and Foot is just waffling. Despite its record in control of the council, *Militant* does have a real base of support, and in the current conflicts around control of the council a big political issue.

The bad vote for Mahmood, which so impresses Paul Foot, was, in these comparatively favourable conditions, only achieved by massive canvassing with hundreds of people bussed in by the national *Militant* organisation. In a general election that effort could not be repeated in more than two or three constituencies, if that.

In a general election there will be no comparable anti-Labour protest vote: there will be deadly earnest voting against the government and for a future government.

Under the British system, unlike that of France, you have to choose: you can not vote socialist and then have your vote transferred as se-

cond choice to Labour: it is either/or.

The SWP knows that a call for a general anti-Labour vote in the election would completely destroy them in the trade union movement.

Of the disgruntled constituency a left campaign would appeal to, those who are not too alienated to vote, will in the main vote Labour.

These are the objective reasons why such a course would not make sense, even if the condition of the far left made it a possibility, though, in fact, it is inconceivable that the organisations of the far left now could unite in such a campaign. (*Militant* would not even let the SWP canvass for them in Walton! But that is something the readers of the SWP are not mature enough for the manipulative gentry who run the SWP to tell them!)

The SWP might be willing — as in Walton — to accept *Militant* as good socialists, but it takes two to tango.

**"If Foot is serious the SWP should campaign for a left bloc to stand in every constituency."**

Since the existing left will not unite in such a campaign, the only sense in advocating such a campaign would be as a group-building exercise. (I offer the idea as a fraternal gift to Workers' Power and the WRP!)

This is a good thing, in my opinion. Such a campaign, a generalised "Walton", even if it could get Foot's half-million votes, would do no good. For the left it would mean shunting itself further into a blind alley of illusion and irrelevance to the working class, separating itself further from the broad mass of the working class who continue to look to Labour against the Tories.

Such a generalised Walton campaign, were it possible, would be a species of sectarian abstention from the irreplaceable political strug-

gle in the mass working-class movement.

Even if it could be justified as a means of regrouping the left, the regrouped left would be a radically miseducated, deeply sectarian left, self-ghettoised. A bigger ghetto, but a ghetto nevertheless.

The recurring pattern in Britain in the last quarter century is a pattern of limited groups becoming radicalised and cutting themselves off from the working class. The SWP is itself led by people who stopped thinking about real politics back in 1968, believing Labour could be written off (so, a member of the same organisation, did I, for a while). It is one reason why the British left has rendered itself into a grotesque toy town caricature of socialist politics.

The only electioneering the left should organise in the build up to the general election is a powerful independent campaign in support of the mass workers' party, the Labour Party. Unfortunately it is also the party of Kinnock? The best way to change that is to help it displace the Tories and organise a serious left within both the Labour Party and the trade unions.

"Socialists for Labour" makes more sense now than "Sectarians for joke candidates and displaced municipal bureaucrats"!

It occurs to me, rereading what I've written, that this is a debate with myself, a dialogue between what I know about the political world I operate in and powerful underlying fantasies and wishes. It is a heart-lifting idea that we might suddenly leap over where the socialist left is now into a different and better world!

But there is no fault worse in politics than to mistake wishes for realities. To change the world revolutionary politics must base itself on the world as it is.

Fantasy politics is passive politics: instead of rearranging the world, you rearrange images of it in your head.

Instead of fighting Kinnockism, you run off away from it, whistling your own happy tune, and create your own sectarian world. You leave the Kinnockites in control of the real labour movement, and dominant in real working class politics.



We can't abandon a union of 300,000 to Hammond's cronies



Croats surrounding the house in Osijek yesterday that they claimed had been occupied by a Serb "terrorist gang". One man died in the attack

## Yugoslavia: simmering civil war

By Tony Brown

It took less than 48 hours for the Brioni agreement to break down.

Last Saturday representatives from Croatia, Slovenia, Yugoslavia and the EC issued a statement announcing a ceasefire had been agreed and a three-month freeze on independence would be adhered to.

It also announced that Slovene and federal troops would return to barracks and a 30-50 strong EC observer force would monitor the ceasefire in Slovenia.

By Monday this had broken down as both Croatian nationalists and federal army forces began shooting at each other. Each claimed that the other had fired first. In some instances federal troops — Serbs — in eastern Croatia refused orders from their officers to desist and return to barracks.

What is clear is that the political leadership has no authority over the army and that even within the army some command structures have broken down. It means that any accord signed by the Presidency is subject to veto by the army hierarchy, and cannot be guaranteed to carry any force within the country.

On Monday the Yugoslav Presidency met and further agreed to the disarming of all paramilitary units in the republics, and for the resumption of normal recruitment of conscripts to the federal army.

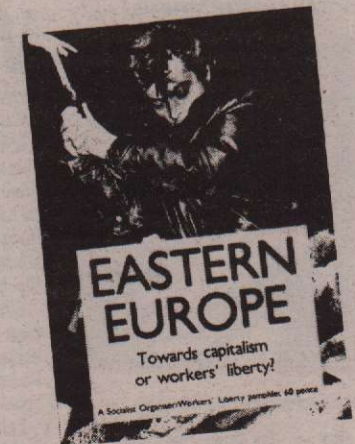
This agreement lasted only as long as it took Stipe Mesic, a Croat and current President of the state Presidency, to get back to Zagreb.

The main fighting is now centred in eastern Croatia where Serbian Chetniks are fighting it out against the Croatian militia in a number of villages.

Threats to Bosnia's continued existence and warnings from Albania's government against Serbian action in Kosovo (where the population are ethnic Albanians) highlight how close Yugoslavia is to sliding into full scale war.

At this stage, however, it is in no one's interests for fighting to erupt on a wide scale. The Yugoslav economy, already unhealthy, is suffering badly from lost tourist income this summer. While Slovenia may be able to successfully secede due to its relative homogeneity, there is no prospect for peaceful secession in any of the other republics due to the intricate mix of nationalities and religions.

What is needed is a settlement based on a loose federation with wide regional autonomy and fully democratic local government. Within the republics full rights to religion, language and equal access to social services must be guaranteed to break down the murderous nationalism that currently reigns in the country.



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# The losers at the London summit

By Allison Roche

As the leaders of the world's seven richest countries meet this week in London to see if they can stop the dreaded return of a new era of protectionism, by encouraging more liberal free trade terms. The issue of the Third World debt repayments will also be on the agenda.

But it will be low on the agenda. After all, for the big capitalists, a region of 500 million people like Africa which has a total income lower than North Yorkshire seems very uninteresting.

Since the Third World debt crisis erupted in 1982, the response by the world capitalist leaders has been ad hoc, slow and uncaring. This in part has been because the money lending originated from three sources: governments, commercial banks and international institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

When Mexico defaulted on loan repayments in 1982, followed by numerous other countries, there was no co-ordinated response by the three. The banks blamed the IMF and the World Bank for not predicting the crisis, the IMF and the World Bank blamed the banks for engaging in greedy and imprudent lending, and governments were blamed for not placing restrictions and monitoring or official regulations on banks lending abroad.

The three groups seemed to be dancing around the debtors in an exhausted unco-ordinated frenzy. The debt crisis arose out of Third

## IMF debt plans push hundreds of millions into misery

World borrowing from American and European banks which, after the 1973 surge in oil prices, had so much cash deposited by the newly oil-rich states that they didn't know what to do with it — especially with US and European industry in a slump.

The developing countries were encouraged to take up loans to help industrialise and — with the wave of nationalisations in the 1970s — to buy out local and foreign-owned shares in industry.

Much of the money borrowed did little to help industrialisation. The Third World rich often invested abroad rather than in their own countries because that gave them more security. Loans often went into projects that didn't stimulate local industry such as the building of a luxury international hotel in a sub-Saharan African capital. Then, after 1979, the richer countries hit a new slump, interest rates rose, and the Third World debtor states could no longer export enough to meet their debt repayments.

From the mid-'80s, the IMF's role was changed from being a watchdog and advisor on balance of payments and trade difficulties to being a policeman for the banks. Countries had to negotiate with the

IMF, introduce "adjustment" policies, and get its seal of approval before the banks would give new loans.

"Adjustment" meant increased taxes, cuts in welfare spending, higher prices for food and public services, and cutbacks or sell-offs of state industries.

Loan repayments were re-scheduled but only bit by bit. The idea was that the debt crisis was only short-term and that the world economy would boost debtors' export earnings and make loan repayments easier.

The re-scheduling — spreading repayments over a longer time — is dictated not by generosity but by the desire not to kill the very scrawny goose that lays the golden eggs for the banks.

The "Trinidad Agreement" of 1990, which John Major will be pushing this week, plans to reschedule the whole loan stocks in one go rather than keeping indebted countries in uncertainty over future repayment. No payments will be required for the first five years, and the payments will be linked to increases in the exports of debtor countries. The repayment period has been extended from 14 to 25 years.

This deal covers 19 countries, all but two are in sub-Saharan Africa. To qualify, countries have to be so poor that they can't get loans from commercial banks, hence have to rely on the IMF and the World Bank — and they have to be willing to implement IMF plans!

It does nothing about debt repayments owed to commercial institutions, which make up two-thirds of the total.

So the bleeding continues. The debtor countries continue paying — though often with delays and hitches — because the poorest desperately need international aid, and the stronger ones reckon they can win better terms for new loans from the banks.

The IMF programmes continue, slashing jobs, cutting wages, and increasing poverty.

What is spent on the military across the world — mostly in the richer countries — would be enough to finance a programme in the Third World to wipe out starvation, control many crippling diseases, teach everyone to read and write, and create decent jobs for all.

But to expect anything approaching that from the leaders meeting in London this week would be like expecting a wolf to help hungry sheep. The best that could ever be hoped for from them, is a bit more aid to the Third World, a few less conditions, a bit more debt written off.

To deal with poverty we will have to oust the sort of leaders meeting in London this week — and their counterparts in poorer countries — and bring the huge wealth currently channelled by the big international banks under collective and democratic control.



Corinna Gilbert, triumphant after winning her case for unfair dismissal by the Redgrave Marxist Party

## Nazi 'games'

### GRAFFITI

The Holocaust is now a game. The circulation of Neo-Nazi computer games has been growing in Germany, Austria and France over the past few months, although they have been available in one form or another since 1986.

There are believed to be about 140 games targeting mainly Jews or Turks. In one, "Aryan Test", you are asked if you are a Jew or an Aryan — if a Jew you get gassed.

Another ends with the German national anthem while on the screen is "The Jews are our misfortune".

In "Turk Test", contestants are asked to guess a Turk by smell and dress, then to gas the Turk and sell the remains for dog food.

An Austrian poll showed 22% of students in three surveyed municipalities had played one of the games.

All the games are illegal under racial hatred laws (although they would be legal in the USA).

The G7 leaders are trying to screw further concessions out of Gorbachev this week before agreeing to any monetary assistance.

They are demanding that further large military cuts be made which the Soviet delegation is reluctant to agree to.

However, the decision may be easier to make in the light of recent statements by Marshal Yazov, the defence minister.

At a closed session of the Soviet parliament Yazov spoke of the collapse of the Soviet army since the withdrawal from Eastern Europe and draft resistance encouraged by the Republican governments.

"There will soon be no armed forces if conscription goes on as it is now. By the end of this year the forces will be at 79% of their required strength."



Gorbachev: in trouble again

Each day brings new reports of huge losses in the airline industry.

Already British Airways have reported massive losses this year

and job cuts. And the story is the same around the world.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents 96% of all airline carriers, reported 1990 as their worst ever year with combined losses of \$2.7 billion.

But after only the first three months this year combined losses total \$2.5 billion.

25 airlines, including Air Europe, Pan Am, Continental and Eastern Airlines have either gone broke or filed for protection from their creditors.

The effects of the Gulf War continue to be felt, and combined with high interest rates offer little prospect of an early recovery.

This December will see the first ever direct election for President of the US International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The notoriously corrupt and mafia dominated union has previously appointed their President in secret conclave, not dissimilar to that used to select the Pope, though if anything less representative.

Whoever the 1.5 million members elect will inherit a position routinely held by criminals. Dave Beck (1952-57) was jailed for fraud; Jimmy Hoffa (1957-71) also served time before disappearing, presumed murdered; Jackie Presser (1971-81) died before he could face trial for embezzlement; and Roy Williams (1981-83) was jailed for bribery.

William McCarthy, the current President, is retiring.

Traditionally the Teamsters have supported the Republicans and that isn't likely to change this December. But opening up the union's officers to the members will allow the rank and file to become involved in one of the most important of America's industrial unions.

Vanessa Redgrave unfairly sacked her secretary and former Marxist Party comrade Corinna Gilbert, an Industrial Tribunal has ruled.

Gilbert was sacked for "breaching security" by showing American actor Cork Hubbard, said to have FBI and CIA links, around Redgrave's Clapham home. The house also doubles as the HQ of the Marxist Party.

Gilbert was given two hours to clear her desk and get out, but not before Vanessa's brother, Corin Redgrave went through her personal letters and medical records.

Fans of the Gerry Healy/Redgrave saga will be waiting for the next episode in which, surely, Vanessa and Corin Redgrave will finally denounce each other as CIA agents.

# The naked and the dread

Last Thursday the Sun published two photographs of naked women. Nothing unusual about that.

What was unusual was the prudish caption: "Some people find the pictures offensive and dirty. Others regard them as beautiful." Readers were even asked to phone in their opinion.

Was this a partial victory for Clare Short's campaign against Page Three? Had the Sun decided to open up a debate along the lines of "Pornography or erotica — the unresolved dilemma"?

I fear not. The point about these two photographs was that they were of obviously pregnant women. The Sun clearly felt that this factor made the pictures risqué and controversial in a way that



By Jim Denham

the usual gorgeous, pouting Page Three girls are not.

Six months pregnant Yasmin Le Bon's photo had originally appeared accompanying an interview in the previous day's Independent. Film star Demi Moore's feigned nakedness had first appeared on the cover of this

month's Vanity Fair magazine.

The fact that the Sun had felt it necessary to filch the two pictures and then make a big song and dance about whether or not they were "offensive" surely tells us an awful lot about the mentality of the people who produce that newspaper: a bizarre combination of prurience, misogyny and self-righteousness.

Incidentally, Sun readers voted the pictures not offensive by 3,198 to 2,619.

More nudity and more double-standards were to come: Friday's Sun gave us a centre-page spread of a naked man. This briefly caused a bigger row than the pregnant women, with Tory MPs huff-

ing and puffing on the radio and indignant editorials in the Mail and Express. The reason wasn't that it was a man per se, but that it was Prince Andrew "as you have never seen him before...in all his glory".

This was real Silly Season stuff: a snap taken seven years ago by a "friend", with the royal genitalia tastefully obscured by a small, drawn-on crown. Not my idea of "news", but no more trivial, irrelevant and boring than the Mirror's story the same day, alleging an affair between Prince Charles and the actress Susan George...13 years ago!

It seems that naked bodies are acceptable in newspapers so long as (1) they're commoners; (2) their curves serve no known biological function.

# The strange case of the missing socialist

### OVER THE EDGE

By May Grey

Liverpool police have appealed for help in their search for missing Anfield councillor Jackie Smith.

Jackie was last seen in the May council elections, accompanied by fellow Anfield councillors, Stewart Oldfield and Judy Nelson, when she stood as an independent Anfield-Labour candidate (see picture, right above).

At some point during the last two months — the police are unable to be more specific — Jackie disappeared from public view. On the occasion of Lesley Mahmood's recent ill-fated escapade in Walton, only a mere shadow of Jackie remained (see photo, right below).

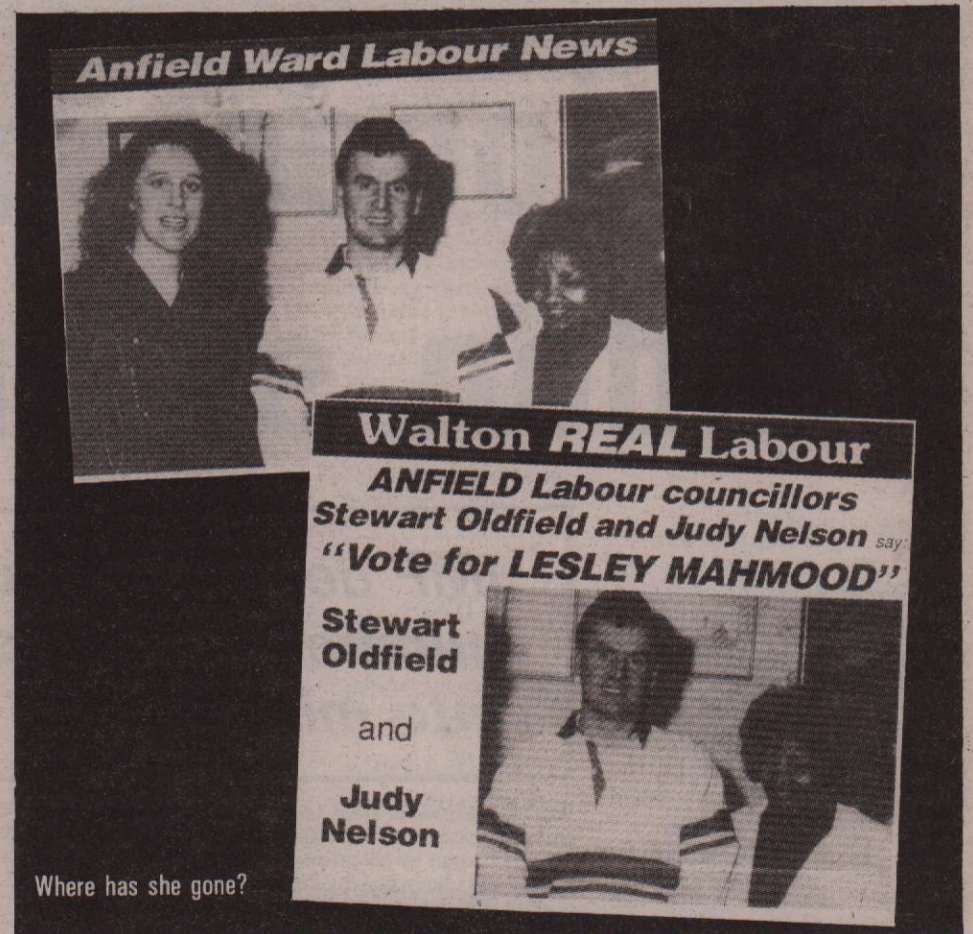
Speaking on behalf of the Merseyside Constabulary, Inspector Clousot stated: "We have already spoken to 2,613 people in Walton, but none of them have been able to help us in our inquiries. Frankly, we are completely baffled."

"We know that in May 1,624 people in Anfield voted for Ms. Smith. We know that in the course of June, these people had several 'visits' from the Mahmood mob."

"The mobsters were running a straightforward protection racket, warning people that unless they coughed up their votes for Mahmood on July 4th the Kilfoyle hoodlums would move in on the area."

"But then the trail came to a dead-end — just like Mahmood's election campaign."

"We have been going through our files for similar cases. But nothing like this has been heard of since the 1920s, when gangland-leader Joe Stalin showed a similar skill in eliminating people from photos."



The police have expressed fears for the safety of Jackie Smith. They have pointed out that she has already been stabbed in the back by the notorious Walworth Road hoods. They fear that her failure to cough up the votes in the Walton by-election may have equally dire consequences.

"She may end up paying the ultimate penalty of finding herself portrayed on Alan Bleadale's GBH," warned Inspector Clousot.

The police have linked the mysterious disappearance of Jackie Smith to another case currently under investigation: the missing Broad Left meeting.

Inspector Clousot explained: "The Broad Left failed to meet on July 4 because of the Walton by-election. Normal-

ly, their meeting would simply have been postponed to the second Thursday of the month. But July 11 has passed and the Broad Left still has not met."

According to well-informed sources in the criminal underworld, "the knives are out" in the Broad Left. According to one ex(?)-mobster, currently awaiting trial on corruption charges:

"I know how these people think. I used to be one of them. It looks like a classic case of gangland warfare. The Mahmood mob has been chasing after Smith, but now they're having to duck for cover themselves. There's another bunch of hoods gunning for them. They reckon they got double-crossed in

the Walton heist. Tony and the boys aren't too happy.

"Of course, I really don't know anything about these things myself. I'm just an honest Tory-voting businessman. Wanna buy a Sekonda watch?"

Police have advised Liverpool citizens to stay indoors and away from Labour Party meetings as much as possible.

"These mobsters are entirely unpredictable," warned Inspector Clousot, "a lot of them have got nothing left to lose, not even their Labour Party membership cards."

You don't know what desperate act they might resort to next. We fear that they might even have a go at bumping off Bob Wareing in the West Derby constituency in Liverpool in the General Election."

# Students — don't scab on the binmen!

National Union of Students NEC members Alice Sharp, Janine Booth, Steve Mitchell, Mark Sandell and Kevin Sexton have produced the following appeal to students

Students are experiencing some of the worst hardship in years. This summer they have no entitlement to any social security benefits, and there is an average of 23 people applying for every single job vacancy.

Sky-high rents, general inflation and the 25% cut — in real terms — in the now frozen student grant all add up to an appalling level of student poverty.

Poverty, demoralisation and

desperation have created the conditions for students to be used as scab labour against the council bin workers in Liverpool.

Students are being used to break the work to rule of the bin men who are fighting to save 1,000 jobs. We appeal to students to refuse to play scab for the Tories, who have, for the last decade, attacked students and workers alike.

The current situation has been brought about by a number of factors, but primarily by the Tories' attacks on local government funding and their programme of privatisations.

Student hardship is also a direct result of the Tories' policies. The common enemy for workers and students is this Tory government.

The sacking of a thousand binmen in Liverpool will mean incredible hardship for those workers and their families. Liverpool, like many other cities in Britain, offers no jobs and no future.

If the binmen lose, the Tories

will be encouraged to squeeze local government even more. That means more cuts in schools and Further Education colleges. Labour local authorities will be bolder and more shameless about passing on the Tory cuts.

The trade unions in the public sector will be made weaker, and that will force the Tories' hands for further cuts across the board, including in education. Those cuts, in turn, will mean fewer jobs for students finishing their courses.

Because students are future workers, and because students depend on the publicly-financed education system which was granted by the Establishment only after many decades of struggle by the working class movement, students have a common interest with the council workers fighting cuts.

Don't scab! Don't cross picket lines! Don't sabotage the struggles which workers are waging for their future and yours!

## Liverpool council workers fight

By Anne Field

160 workers were declared compulsorily redundant by Liverpool City Council last Friday (12 July).

More compulsory redundancies are on the way. 460 jobs are due to go in refuse collection next month as a result of the City Council's decision to privatise the bins service.

Notification of nearly 300 further redundancies has been sent by the council to the Department of Employment. Many of them are in street sweeping, due to go out to tender later this summer.

Overall, the right-wing controlled Labour Group which runs the City Council in alliance with the Liberal-Democrats, wants to slash the workforce from 29,000 to 22,000.

The council turned down appeals from the trade unions for last Friday's 160 compulsory redundancies to be held over for two months in order to allow time for redeployment, claiming that it could not afford the £250,000 this would allegedly cost (a trivial amount in terms of overall council spending).

But last week also saw the beginnings of an escalation of the dispute on the part of the council workers, with many members of GMB Branch 5 coming out on strike and setting up picket lines.

The GMB national executive responded by giving the go-ahead for balloting on all-out strike action, but on the condition that GMB members called off their picketing. Prior to last week the GMB national leadership had rejected calls for ballots on all-out ac-



Council workers protest at jobs cuts, 11 April

tion. NALGO has also agreed to give the go-ahead for more of its members to be balloted on all-out strike action, though local NALGO leaders called for last week's GMB picketing to be withdrawn from workplaces where NALGO members were based, and also apparently instructed NALGO members to cross the GMB picket lines.

2,000 GMB members are currently being balloted, along with 500 NALGO members, in addition to those already out on strike. Members of UCATT and the TGWU have already voted in favour of strike action.

Many GMB members have

already come out on strike in advance of the formality of the announcement of the result of the ballot. But in NALGO, as has already been the case, even a vote in favour of strike action does not necessarily lead to the workers involved being called out on strike. Many NALGO members are unclear as to just what action their local officials are planning.

Labour Group leader Harry Rimmer responded to last week's picketing by progressing from supporting sackings to advocating scabbing, welcoming workers who had the "courage" to cross picket lines and carry on working.

The council has also brought in Onyx (the company which won the

refuse collection contract last month) a fortnight ahead of schedule, after refuse collection workers refused to cross GMB Branch 5 picket lines last week, and in response to more and more Liverpoolians barricading their streets with bin bags in protest at the infrequency of refuse collection.

The media, with the Walton by-election out of the way, have returned to their usual pastime of attacking striking council workers, claiming that redundant gravediggers planned picketing cemeteries, and that action by pickets would prevent council workers not on strike from getting paid.

Even the election of shop stewards in NALGO Social Ser-

vices, where a coup backed by local NALGO officials ousted four left-wing stewards, has suddenly become the focus of media attention.

The dispute is now about to enter its third month, throughout which time union officials at both national and local level have continued to drag their feet over escalating the action, and sometimes even over keeping their members properly informed of developments.

The momentum built up over the past week needs to be maintained, and the message got across to both council workers and also the public that this is not a dispute about "just" 160 jobs, but about the fate of thousands of jobs.

## City council organises student scabs

By Dale Street

The Tory vision of a dog-eat-dog society took another step towards reality last week when students from Manchester were bussed into Liverpool to undermine industrial action by council workers.

Last Sunday (14th July) residents in Toxteth built a dozen barricades of bin-bags up and down Lodge Lane, setting fire to some in the process.

"We Protest At Our Rubbish Not Being Taken" was painted in three foot-high letters across the steel shutters of a row of shops in the street.

"We've got no sympathy at all for the binmen," said one of the

residents, "we have not had our bins emptied in 14 weeks. We've been living amongst rubbish, rats and flies. We can't even open our windows."

The backlog of rubbish had accumulated as a result of local binmen operating a work-to-rule in protest at the City Council decision to axe a thousand jobs. Since last Thursday, no refuse collection at all had taken place, as binmen had been picketed out by striking council workers.

On Monday (15th July) the City Council contacted Onyx UK (the private company which recently won the refuse collection contract in Liverpool) to get the rubbish in Lodge Lane and elsewhere cleared.

In turn, Onyx contacted a private employment agency in Manchester to supply them with a temporary workforce.

When the 'workforce' turned up



Burning redundancy notices

in Lodge Lane last Monday afternoon, it looked as if the old saying that you'll soon need a university degree to be even a binworker had become reality: all but three of the twenty or so temps were students.

"Don't get me wrong, we support the binmen in Liverpool. We know what this is about," said one of them in a sincere tone of voice, although he had clearly chosen a strange way to show his "support".

"But we don't get any grant for the holidays," he continued, "and now we can't even get dole money either. We have to take anything going to get some money."

According to the student, they will be working in Liverpool for the next three weeks, bussed back and forth from Manchester every day. The only protective clothing with which the students had been issued were heavy-duty gloves.

Despite having to clear up 14

week-old rubbish which was scattered all over the street as a result of Sunday night's fires, the wind on Monday and cars bursting the bin-bags as they tried to cut through the barricades, the students had neither masks nor overalls, nor protective footwear.

Lodge Lane lies on the boundary between Granby ward and Arundel ward. One of the Labour councillors for the latter is Vicky Roberts, one of the "Gang of Three" in the City Council Labour Group which has pushed through the thousand job losses and thereby provoked the current industrial action.

Whether she thinks that the use of students as strike-breakers and the toleration of sub-standard working conditions is the way to achieve her promise of improving council services in Liverpool remains to be seen.

# Marxism and

Comrade Munis<sup>1</sup> is dissatisfied with our assertions at the trial that "we submit to the majority". The Oehlerites<sup>2</sup> also are scornful of this declaration and represent it as some kind of capitulatory repudiation of our principles in order to impress the jury. All of these assumptions are without foundation.

Our "submission to the majority" was not first revealed at the trial. We said it before the trial and continue to repeat it after the trial. It is a correct statement of our position because it conforms both to reality and necessity. Moreover, our Marxist teachers said it before us; we learned it from them.

What else can we do but "submit to the majority" if we are Marxists and not Blanquists<sup>3</sup> or anarchist middle-heads? It is a timely question because we believe any ill-considered talk about some kind of mysterious "action" presumed to be open to us while we remain not only a minority but a very small, numerically insignificant minority, can lead only to a dangerous disorientation of the party.

An exposition of the Marxist position on this question can also be useful as an antidote for any remnants of the half-Blanquist tradition of the early years of the Comintern in America.

The pioneer communists in the United States (and not only here) heard of the Bolshevik victory in Russia long before they learned about the political method and propaganda techniques whereby the Bolsheviks gained the mass support which made the seizure of power possible. Their first impressions were undoubtedly coloured by the capitalist press accounts which represented the revolution as a coup

Yet again the "soft left" are glossing up a witch-hunt by claiming that they stand for "democratic socialism" against Marxism. The truth is that they adhere to the formalities and limitations of existing Westminster democracy — as a bulwark against working-class action — whereas Marxists advocate the widest democracy, both as part of our struggle for socialism and as part of socialism itself. This article from the 1940s by veteran American Marxist James P Cannon explains our basic views.

d'état engineered by a small group. This distorted conception was epitomised by the title given to the American edition of Trotsky's classic pamphlet, *Terrorism and Communism*, which was published here by the party's publishing house in 1922 under the completely misleading title *Dictatorship versus Democracy*. We took the "dictatorship", so to speak, and generously handed over to the bourgeoisie all

*From James P Cannon's reply to those who criticised his defence speech — when on trial for disrupting the US war effort in World War 2 — as capitulation to bourgeois democracy.*

claim to "democracy". This was far too big a concession, perhaps pardonable in a young movement lacking adequate knowledge about the democratic essence of the Bolshevik programme, but by far out of date today.

The bourgeoisie have always tried to picture communism as a "criminal conspiracy" in order to alienate workers who are profoundly democratic in their sentiments. That was the aim once again in the Minneapolis trial. It was our task at the trial to go out of our way to refute this misrepresentation and emphasise the democratic basis of

our programme; not in order to placate our enemies and persecutors, as is assumed, but in order to reveal the truth to our friends, the American workers.

We cannot eat our cake and have it too. We must either "submit" to the majority and confine ourselves to propaganda designed to win over the majority — or, we must seize power and break the neck of the party, by minority "action".

Marxist authority is clear and conclusive in choosing between these alternatives. When we took our stand in court regarding "submission" to the majority we were not "folding our arms" and making "opportunistic" statements of "passivity in the face of imperialist war" as we are accused. Nothing of the sort. The testimony states, repeatedly, and with sufficient emphasis, that, while "submitting to the majority" — that is, making no minority insurrections or putsches — we are organising, speaking, writing and explaining; in other words, carrying on propaganda with the object of winning over the majority to our programme which is the programme of social revolution.

Neither were we simply trying to "make an honourable impression on the jury without taking into consideration that we should talk for the masses". To be sure, we did not stupidly disregard the jury which held the fate of 28 comrades, not to mention the legality of the party, in its hands. But we were speaking also, and especially, "for the masses".

We testified primarily for publication. It was our deliberate aim to convince those who would read the testimony in printed form of the truth that the proletarian movement which we aspire to lead is a democratic movement, and not a "conspiracy", as the prosecutor and the whole of the capitalist press would picture it, and as loose talkers would unconsciously aid them to so picture it; not a scheme to transfer power from one clique to another, but a movement of the majority in the interest of the majority.

In addition, it may as well be said candidly that this testimony was also deliberately designed as an educational shock to such members and sympathisers of our movement as may still, at this late day, be dabbling with the idea of a shorter cut to socialism by some mysterious prescription for "action".

The Marxist authorities have all spoken in one voice on this question. The *Communist Manifesto*, the first, and the most fundamental statement of the principles of scientific socialism, defined the proletarian movement of emancipation, in contradistinction to all others in history, as follows:

"All previous historical movements were movements of the minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the im-



The Russian revolution: a majority revolution

mense majority." The communist political method and strategy follow ineluctably from this basic premise. Nowhere and never have the authoritative representatives of Marxism formulated the question otherwise. The Marxists aim to make the social transformation with the majority and not for the majority. The irreconcilable struggle of Marx and Engels against the Blanquists revolved around this pivot.

In 1895, summing up the experience of 50 years, Engels wrote, in his Introduction to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*: "The time of surprise attacks, of resolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of the unconscious masses is past. Where it is

a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for, body and soul. The history of the last 50 years has taught us that."

The successors of Marx and Engels followed in their footsteps. The experiences of the Russian revolution confirmed in life the basic premises of the founders of scientific socialism. It was precisely because Lenin and Trotsky had assimilated this concept into their flesh and blood that they knew how to concentrate their whole activity on propaganda to win over the majority, biding their time till they gained the majority and resorting to

## Socialists and Democracy

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## Defend and extend dem

Leon Trotsky insisted that the fight for democracy was essential to the fight for socialism. This excerpt is from 'An Action Programme for France', 1934

As long as the majority of the working class continues on the basis of bourgeois democracy, we are ready to defend it with all our forces against violent attacks from the Bonapartist and fascist bourgeoisie.

However, we demand from our class brothers who adhere to "democratic" socialism that they be faithful to their ideas, that they

draw inspiration from the ideas and methods not of the Third Republic but of the Convention of 1793.

Down with the Senate, which is elected by limited suffrage, and which renders the power of universal suffrage a mere illusion!

Down with the presidency of the republic, which serves as a hidden point of concentration for the forces of militarism and reaction!

A single assembly must combine the legislative and executive powers. Members would be elected for two years, by universal suffrage at eighteen years of age, with no discrimination of sex or nationality. Deputies would be elected on the basis of local assemblies, constantly revocable by their constituents, and would receive the salary of a skilled worker.

This is the only measure that would lead the masses forward instead of pushing them backward. A more generous democracy would



# democracy



solutely insured myself in my theses against skipping over the still existing peasant movement, or the petty bourgeois movement in general, against any playing at 'seizure of power' by a workers' government, against any kind of Blanquist adventurism; for I directly referred to the experience of the Paris Commune. And this experience, as we know, and as was shown in detail by Marx in 1871 and by Engels in 1891, absolutely excluded Blanquism, absolutely ensured the direct, immediate, and unconditional rule of the majority and the activity of the masses, but only to the extent of the conscious and intelligent action of the majority itself.

"In the theses I definitely reduced the question to one of a struggle for influence within the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. In order to leave no trace of doubt in this respect, I twice emphasised in the theses the necessity for patient and persistent 'explanatory' work 'adapted to the practical needs of the masses'. Ignorant persons or renegades from Marxism, such as Mr Plekhanov, may cry anarchism, Blanquism, and so forth. But those who really want to think and learn cannot fail to understand that Blanquism means the seizure of power by a minority, whereas the Soviet of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and admittedly the direct and immediate organisation of the majority of the people.

"Work confined to a struggle for influence within these Soviets cannot, absolutely cannot, blunder into the swamp of Blanquism. Nor can it blunder into the swamp of anarchism, for anarchism denies the necessity for a state and for state power in the period of transition from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat, whereas I, with a precision that excludes all possibility of misunderstanding, insist on the necessity for a state in this period, although, in accordance with Marx and the experience of the Paris Commune, not the usual parliamentary bourgeois state, but a state without a standing army, without a police opposed to the people, without an officialdom placed above the people"

Again explaining wherein "Marxism differs from Blanquism" — he obviously considered it absolutely necessary for the advanced workers to understand this so as to be sure of their ground at every step — he wrote in a letter to the Central

Committee of the party on September 26-27, 1917:

"To be successful, the uprising must be based not on a conspiracy, not on a party, but on the advanced class. This is the first point. The uprising must be based on the revolutionary upsurge of the people. This is the second point. The uprising must be based on the crucial point in the history of the maturing revolution, when the activity of the vanguard of the people is at its height, when the vacillations in the ranks of the enemies, and in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted, undecided friends of the revolution are at their highest point. This is the third point. It is in pointing out

**"The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of the unconscious masses is past"**

Engels

these three conditions as the way of approaching the question of an uprising, that Marxism differs from Blanquism."

Naturally, when Lenin, or any other Marxist, spoke of the necessity of the revolutionary party having the support of the majority, he meant the real majority, whose sentiments are ascertainable in various ways besides the ballot box of the bourgeois state. On the eve of the insurrection he wrote his devastating attack on Zinoviev and Kamenev who opposed the insurrection on the ground, among other things, that "we do not enjoy a majority among the people, and in the absence of that condition insurrection is hopeless".

Lenin, in "A Letter to the Comrades", written on October 29-30, scornfully dismisses the authors of this statement as "either distorters of the truth or pedants who desire at all costs, without the slightest regard for the true circumstances of the revolution, to have a guarantee in advance that the Bolshevik Party throughout the country has received exactly one half the number of votes plus one". Nevertheless, he took pains to prove the Bolsheviks had the majority by "facts".

Turn to page 10

"action" only when they felt assured of the support of the majority.

What did they do in the meantime? They "submitted to the majority". What else could they do? Lenin explained it a hundred times, precisely in those months and days when the Bolsheviks were consciously preparing the struggle for power. In his *April Theses on the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution*, published in *Pravda* on April 20, 1917, a few days after his return to Russia, Lenin wrote: "As long as we are in the minority we carry on the work of criticising and exposing errors and at the same time advocate the necessity of transferring the entire power of state to the Soviets of

Workers' Deputies, so that the masses may by experience overcome their mistakes."

A few days later, he returned to this question, explaining the reason for this attitude, the reason being that "we are not Blanquists, we are Marxists". On April 22 he wrote: "In order to obtain the power of state the class conscious workers must win the majority to their side. As long as no violence is used against the masses, there is no other road to power. We are not Blanquists, we are not in favour of the seizure of power by a minority. We are Marxists, we stand for a proletarian class struggle against chauvinist defencism, phrases and dependence on the bourgeoisie."

Not once or twice, but repeatedly

and almost continually, so that neither friend nor foe could possibly misunderstand him, in the months directly preceding the October Revolution, Lenin limited the Bolshevik task to the propaganda work of "criticising", "exposing errors", "advocating" in order to "win the majority to their side". This was not camouflage for the enemy but education for the workers' vanguard. He explained it theoretically as we, following him, tried to explain it in popular language at the trial.

Again, in April 1917, refuting the accusations of Plekhanov and others who accused the Bolsheviks of "anarchism, Blanquism and so forth", Lenin once again explained the question, for the benefit, as he said, of "those who really want to think and learn". Into a few paragraphs he compresses a profound thesis which every member of the workers' vanguard ought to learn by heart. He wrote: "I ab-

various groups of toilers, but by real workers' democracy, by propaganda and loyal criticism, by the voluntary regrouping of the great majority of the proletariat under the flag of true communism.

Workers adhering to democratic socialism must further understand that it is not enough to defend democracy; democracy must be regained.

The moving of the political centre of gravity from parliament towards the cabinet, from the cabinet towards the oligarchy of finance capital, generals, police, is an accomplished fact. Neither the present parliament nor the new elections can change this.

We can defend the sorry remains of democracy, and especially we can enlarge the democratic arena for the activity of the masses, only by annihilating the armed fascist forces that, on 6 February 1934, started moving the axis of the state and are still doing so.

## democracy



Leon Trotsky facilitate the struggle for workers' power. We want to attain our objective not by armed conflicts between the



September 16, 1973. President Allende of Chile leaves the presidential palace — machine gun in hand — to face his executioners. The *Daily Telegraph* commented at the time: "President Allende of Chile, the world's first democratically elected Marxist head of state,

died today during a military coup which overthrew his government. The revolt, led by commandos of the armed forces and the paramilitary police, marked the climax of three years of opposition from the political right and centre to the government."

## An "anti-Zionist" blind alley

## Smash Israel?

## THE POLITICAL FRONT

By Mark Osborn



**S**ocialist Organiser supports the oppressed Palestinian people, and we support the PLO's policy of a two-state solution to the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Jews, too, have rights. Two peoples, two states!

Recognition of the national rights of both the Palestinians and the Israeli Jews is a precondition for working class unity in the area. It is a bedrock part of any socialist policy.

It is the only way forward now; it would still be the only way forward if the working class ruled in the Middle East.

You don't have to have been around long on the left to know that we are widely detested and reviled for this policy. This year, once again, our position on this question was made the excuse for excluding Socialist Organiser supporters from the SWP's annual jamboree. "Marxism '91" they call it! An old Russian proverb said it well: "Paper is patient, it will let anything at all be written on it!"

Most conventional "left" wisdoms about Zionism have little or nothing to do with historical reality.

*"The 'democratic secular state' slogan... implies a new bloody Middle East war, plays into the hands of the Israeli right, aligns the Palestinians with states such as Saddam's Iraq".*

Historical Zionism is equated with the politics of Herzl and Jabotinsky (the prophet of Israel's present-day right wing), rather than recognised as the very broad movement of millions of oppressed Jews that it was. The left-wing currents in it, such as Ber Borochov, Poale Zion or the Russian Zionists who fought with the Red Army at the time of the Russian revolution are ignored, dismissed or lied about.

Ignoring and denying the record of those Zionists who actively fought the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s, most of the far left in Britain now increasingly adheres to the poisonous myth of systematic Zionist-Nazi collaboration. Zionists and Nazis are often depicted now as twins. The origin of this idea in Stalinist USSR propaganda does not deter

the "Trotskyist" left from purveying this nonsense. Zionists are portrayed as cunning and cold-hearted conspirators, ready to sacrifice six million Jews if it helped achieve a Jewish state in the Middle East. How killing two thirds of the Jews of Europe could help them achieve Israel is one of the great mysteries at the heart of this crazy rigmarole.

The Israeli Jewish Hebrew speaking people are a distinct group on a distinct territory. They are a nation and like any other nation are entitled to self-determination. The equation which most of the "left" make between the Israeli Jews and the white South Africans is absurd.

The equation between the white South Africans and the Israeli Jews is an ideological lie constructed by the pseudo-left to justify the "smashing" of Israel. South African whites do not exist as a majority on a particular piece of land. South African whites are a small elite who are privileged because of exploitation of a much larger black working class. The Arab labour force in Israel is smaller than the Jewish. The analogy falls down.

Socialist Organiser is opposed to the Israeli government's oppressing of the Palestinians. But Israeli government policy — however horrible — does not and cannot cancel out the Israeli people's national rights. Just like any other nation the Israeli Jews will rightly fight to keep their right to self-determination.

The call for a so-called single "democratic secular state" means forcibly depriving the Israeli Jews of their national rights. Since Israel will not dissolve itself into an Arab state, the "democratic secular state" must mean the conquest (presumably by Arab armies) of Israel. So the policy of — for example — the SWP implies a new bloody Middle East war which will result in the replacement of Palestinian oppression with the denial of national rights and oppression of the Jews! This is not "democratic" and the resulting Arab state is unlikely to be secular.

In the existing relations of military power in the region, it is simply crazy. The insistence of the Palestinian leadership on nothing less than the end of Israel has been one factor in their impotence for so long. It plays into the hands of the expansionist Israeli right and it aligns the Palestinians with such an awful Middle East militarist state as Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

Israel was not "set up by imperialism". The big impulse behind the growth of the Zionist movement and the creation of Israel itself was Hitler's Holocaust of six million Jews. The Zionist movement took



Israeli troops in the West Bank

help from wherever it could. They took weapons from the Stalinist stodge government in Czechoslovakia, for instance.

Nor is the Israeli government simply a "watch dog" or "out post" of imperialism. The Israeli government has its own interests which sometimes bring it into conflict with the US.

*"Often the left uses 'Zionism' to finger Jews. 'Zionist' is inserted where the word 'Jew' would be seen for what it is, a form of anti-semitism. The left hides behind the transparent fiction, 'we're not anti-semitic, we're anti-Zionist'. Fiction? The result is the same: comprehensive hostility to Jews."*

Not the least of the crimes of professional muddleheads like the SWP is that they lose sight of the fact that it is the Arab bourgeoisie which is the real prop of imperialism in the region — the bourgeoisie which they would support if it had the power to destroy the Jewish state!

Whether "Zionism" today has any meaning is open to debate — the Zionist project and its defining feature was to achieve a Jewish national homeland. That project was accomplished over 40 years ago.

However, most of the far left use the expression as a negative buzz word and general term of abuse for political opponents who support national rights for Israeli Jews. The left's conception of Zionism today is in-

separable from its ahistorical analysis of Zionism, and its refusal to support national rights for Israeli Jews today.

Often the left uses "Zionism" to finger Jews. "Zionist" is inserted where the word "Jew" would be seen for what it is, a form of anti-semitism. The left hides behind the transparent fiction, "we're not anti-semitic, we are anti-Zionist". Fiction? The result is the same: comprehensive hostility to Jews.

Anti-semitism has had many forms, from the "Jews killed Christ" Christian-influenced anti-semitism, to Hitler's zoological racism, to the "anti-Zionist" campaigns of Stalin.

Yet, some anti-semitic themes keep recurring: Jewish "conspiracy", for example. The left has developed its own version of a Zionist conspiracy theory of the creation of Israel. (Or, rather, taken over the Stalinist "theory").

In all anti-semitisms there is the comprehensive hatred of Jews. Sometimes it is implacable, blood-lusting hatred; sometimes conditional: like the Christians who "only" wanted to convert the Jews, "left wing" anti-semitism "only" wants Jews — whose modern identity has been reformed after Hitler around Israel — to support the destruction of Israel. This, of course, is not racism. No...

"Zionism" and the "Zionists" are now a special category of people to loathe. So because most Jews are Zionist, the left finds itself loathing almost all Jews. There is no separation of the identification with Israel and the rights of the Jews (Zionism) and support for Israeli government policies.

For instance, after the Lebanon war of 1982 the Israeli army did not stop the murder of Palestinians by Lebanon's Christian army in the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps on the outskirts of Beirut. Inside Israel the peace movement organised a (perhaps) 400,000 strong demonstration (the British equivalent is something like 6,000,000). Most of these demonstrators the SWP would write off as utterly "pro-imperialist" and "Zionist". So they are, in SWP terms! The SWP have written off a whole people, believing that they are capable of no progressive action, and that they deserve nothing but subjugation.

The Israeli Jews are a bad people and the SWP pick on them as the only people in the world unworthy of a state. What is this if not a form of anti-semitism?

The national conflicts in the Middle East demand a democratic resolution, which recognises the rights of both Israeli Jews and the Palestinians. The Palestinians have been terribly oppressed. They have a right to a state of their own. Socialists support them in this demand and back them in their struggle against anti-Arab discrimination within Israel itself.

But it makes no sense to achieve an end to the national oppression of the Palestinians by depriving Israeli Jews of their national rights and thus creating a new oppressed nationality in the Middle East or in an Israeli diaspora.

Two states is not an alternative to socialism. It is a way to help break down national antagonisms in the Middle East and lay the basis for joint struggles between Israeli and Arab workers. Without that socialism cannot be achieved in the Middle East. All the rest is demagogic populist waffle.

## Marxists and democracy

## From centre pages

"The elections of August 20 in Petrograd"... "The elections to the Borough Dumas in Moscow in September"... "The new elections to the Soviets"... "The majority of the Peasants' Soviets" who had "expressed their opposition to the coalition"... "The mass of the soldiers"... "Finally, the revolt of the peasantry". He concluded his argument on this point by saying: "No, to doubt now that the majority of the people are following and will follow the Bolsheviks is shameful vacillation."

Once again disavowing Blanquism, he wrote in his polemic against Zinoviev and Kamenev: "A military conspiracy is Blanquism if it is not organised by the party of a definite class; if its organisers have not reckoned with the political situation in general and the international situation in particular; if the party in question does not enjoy the sympathy of the majority of the people, as proved by definite facts."

On September 25-27 Lenin called upon the Bolshevik party to take power. In this famous letter, addressed to "the Central Committee, the Petrograd and Moscow Committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party", Lenin, with the logic and directness which characterised him, states his premise and his conclusion in the first sentence: "Having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, the Bolsheviks can and must take power into their hands."

He was not worried about a "formal" majority: "no revolution ever waits for this". But he was

sure of the real majority. He insisted upon the revolution "right now", as he expressed it, not sooner and not later because: "The majority of the people is with us. This has been proven by the long and difficult road from May 19 to August 12 and September 25: the majority in the Soviets in the capitals is the result of the people's progress to our side. The vacillation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the strengthening of internationalists among them, is proof of the same thing."

The prosecution at the Minneapolis trial attempted to convict us, as charged in the indictment, of an actual "conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence". We successfully refuted this accusation, and the indictment covering this point was rejected by the jury.

The most effective element of our refutation of this absurd charge against our small party was our exposition of the democratic basis of the proletarian programme, of the party's reliance on the majority to realise its programme, and its corresponding obligation, while it remains in the minority, to "submit to the majority".

In making this exposition we had a legal purpose, but not only a legal purpose, in mind. As with all the testimony, it was designed primarily to explain and simplify our views and aims to the workers who would be future readers of the published court record.

We also thought a restatement of the Marxist position in this respect would not be wasted on the members of our own movement, and might even be needed. The discussion which has arisen on this question only proves that we were more correct in

this latter assumption than we realised at the time.

Socialism is a democratic movement and its programme, the programme of the vanguard party, can be realised only with the support of the majority. The party's basic task, while it remains in the minority, is "propaganda to win over the majority". To state this was not capitulation to the prejudices of the jury; it is the teaching of Marx and Lenin as has been shown in the foregoing references.

1. Grandizo Munis was a Spanish Trotskyist who later became a spokesperson for the ultra-left group that calls itself the International Communist Current. They consider the existing labour movement as bourgeois, rejecting trade unionism, etc. They publish *World Revolution* in English.

2. Oehlerites were an ex-Trotskyist faction in the US led by Hugo Oehler. They made a principle of proclaiming "the revolutionary party" no matter how small its numbers and support, and of counterposing it as a supposedly finished institution to everything else. Essentially they were "Trotskyists" who were extremely formalistic and rigid in their thinking on general political questions as well as on the party, and thus parted company with Trotsky.

They are the unacknowledged political ancestors of organisations like the WRP and SWP.

3. Blanquism was an early form of revolutionary communism in France. The term as used here means the politics of armed insurrection by a conspiratorial minority who would seize power for the workers.

## Debate on the US "Politically Correct" movement

# Smokescreens and scarecrows

US university campuses are torn with battles over what has been tagged "Political Correctness". Some say that what's involved is a drive to broaden academic courses and counter racism and sexism; others, that it involves efforts to regulate language which are ludicrous or counter-productive, stifling real debate. Two articles continue the debate — one from Allison Roche (below) and this one from US activist Robin Templeton.

George Bush began slithering down his 1992 presidential campaign trail this spring in a series of commencement speeches that were designed to bash civil rights and promote free enterprise.

On 4 May at the University of Michigan, for example, Bush praised America's "egalitarian system", "built upon the foundations of private property" and attacked supporters of affirmative action and welfare programmes, saying that "when governments try to improve on freedom — they fail" because "we cannot federalise virtue".

In the same address, Bush fired his rhetoric at the "notion of political correctness", complaining that while "the [PC] movement arises from the laudable desire to sweep away the debris of racism and sexism and hatred", it has resulted in "political extremists roam[ing] the land, abusing the privilege of free speech, setting citizens against one another on the basis of class and race".

The notions that racism and sexism are mere "debris" and that free speech is a "privilege" underly Bush's unfounded assertion that a so-called "PC movement" currently poses a threat to free speech (or free enterprise, the President often uses the terms interchangeably) in the United States. Bush's attack on the so-called "PC movement" is part of a right-wing backlash against real struggles for equal rights and justice in the US, which are otherwise referred to by the right as anti-Americanism.

In his commencement address, Bush joins with political pundits who have for months now been saturating the mainstream media with harrowing accounts of "political correctness", also labelled "Marxism without the economics", "liberal fascism", "thought policing" and "left McCarthyism". Such caricatures of college campuses and the left in general are drawn as a smokescreen to hide real and deep



Demonstration against growing violence and intimidation at Michigan University

rooted social, economic and educational problems that are a direct result of ten years of Reagan/Bush policy.

Demystification of "political correctness" is in order. *Socialist Organiser's* Jim Denham, for instance, describes the supposed US "PC movement" as "linguistic Stalinism" (SO 488) without addressing the pertinent political issues behind the PC hype.

According to Denham, PC involves "reducing multi-culturalism to an absolute 'relativism'...purging reading lists, limiting free speech, and hounding 'incorrect academics'." These claims, however, presume that those who are being most deliberately and relentlessly hit with the PC charge hold institutional power.

PC is used by Bush and the right as a codeword to discredit the civil rights community in attempt to render it effectively powerless. While it is true that certain segments of the academic establishment deserve PC-bashing because of their post-modern, deconstructionist theories that are forever divorced from practice, the attack on PC is really aimed at those who demand real cultural diversity and equality.

Historically, those who have fought hardest for multi-culturalism are people of colour,

women, lesbians and gays; it is we who have been excluded from the curriculum and essentially written out of history. The movement for multi-culturalism grew out of the Civil Rights and Vietnam anti-war eras and it is the potential for such a movement to join forces with present day civil rights and anti-war struggles that has those in power dedicated to eliminating the "PC enemy".

**"The attack on PC is really aimed at those who demand real cultural diversity and equality."**

It is no coincidence that the attack on PC developed in conjunction with the Gulf War, when campuses nationwide were decrying US militarism abroad and calling attention to domestic problems of poverty and racism.

Because Denham quotes the former radical social critic Eugene Genovese's attack on PC, I am compelled to do likewise. In a recent issue of the *New Republic*,

Genovese refers to student activists who demonstrate for multi-cultural programmes as "terrorists" and "stormtroopers" and he encourages university administrators not to negotiate with them. Genovese, a former Marxist, condemns "sensitivity" when it comes to approaching issues of race and gender and suggests to his readers that, "like loving parents, we must accept the disagreeable duty to inflict excruciating pain on ourselves by whipping our errant children for their own good" and he urges an "all out counter-attack" against activists.

As for Denham's assertion that "the highest achievements of art, literature, science, history and philosophy that we have on record [sic] tend to be the work of DWEMs", this is true only in that the "records" have been written and controlled by dead white European males.

Multi-culturalism calls for the inclusion of perspectives and voices formerly excluded from the curriculum and barred from full participation in the power structure. The extent to which such inclusion poses a threat to Bush and company's new world order is the extent to which multi-culturalism is branded "political correctness" and attacked by the right.

## Change language, but change society!

By Allison Roche

A spate of recent articles in the liberal press have taken a very right wing line on the "politically correct" movement.

PC involves many issues, not just the banning of certain words which marginalise or exclude women's black people's, lesbian and gay experience by use of "Dead White Male" language.

It is also about whether a national curriculum should be developed in the US, empowering people with the ability to promote their culture/language/experience, institutionalised bias in academic achievement (that is, racism and sexism), multi-culturalism, rewriting history from the position of the oppressed.

For example, PC is about questioning the value of Eurocentric philosophy, literature, values, etc. Although Jim Denham, writing in *SO*, was right to say that it is absurd not to learn Western thought, from Plato through to the ideas of the New Right economic philosophy dominant today, it is also absurd to pose this as being the mainstream and only philosophy that

students learn.

Obviously, as Marxists, we need to understand the historical development of dominant ideas and ideologies in order to understand how the ruling class uses ideas and ideologies to cement new forming power relations in society. We need to understand their relationship with developing economic forces shaping the material foundations of that society.

However, that doesn't mean we are against learning what the working class or oppressed groups felt or understood about all of this, or how they may have developed a counter-culture or low culture to it. Or how other dominant philosophies functioned in different historical-economic developments; for example, Maoism was a big influence in South East Asia in the '40s, '50s, '60s and '70s, yet it is not studied at all as a political doctrine (we may say thank god, but for understanding things in South East Asia, it would be important).

The main concern of PC is about language and how it excludes and marginalises women's and black experience, because language is "White, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant" in the US, that is a male, white experience or

view of the world.

Language reflects the reality that US society was and is dominated by a white male ruling class which is also racist and sexist. In the world of academia this means that most history, literature and sciences are predominantly written from a white male view.

The challenge to this stems initially from the radical feminist movement in the US in the 1970s and '80s, when people like Mary Daly and Dale Spender began to show how language is about excluding women and black experience. They showed that words do not exist that relate to much of their experience.

A lot of this thinking is based on psychology — Lacan and Freud — mixed with structuralism — Althusser — symbols signify meanings which are dominant in society and there is always an opposite, a binary opposite, eg. black/white, man/woman. Each binary opposite always has a negative or positive meaning attached to it. So, obviously, white/man is always superior to black/woman, but this binary division goes for most things which have values attached to the words.

I don't think we should be against attempts to formulate language which sometimes can be asexual, neutral, an-

drogynous, bisexual (however you want to define it). What has come from the radical feminist movement is now being picked up by the black student movement.

It is not linguistic Stalinism, but merely a misguided attempt at liberation. At the moment the right wing are using the arguments about free speech to slur the campaign. Instead we should welcome the initiatives to explore the role of language and its oppression of black people and women. We should also argue that language is obviously the reflection of class society, and therefore, no matter whether language or culture is changed, economic reality will be in contradiction with it, ie. black people will still be in ghettos, in poverty, women will still be housewives dependent on men.

The argument we should use is that yes, change sexist and racist language, but that won't liberate women or black people because it doesn't empower them in capitalist society where they are exploited. Hence the PC campaign is futile unless linked with social, political and economic campaigns to liberate women, black people and lesbians and gay men.

Finally, far from PC being against multi-culturalism, isn't it expanding it?

## Castro, si! Lenin and Trotsky, no!

By Duncan Chapple

Pathfinder Press, the main publishers of the writings of Leon Trotsky, have ceased circulating some writings of Lenin, Trotsky, of the Fourth International and of American Trotskyists including James P Cannon.

Scores of items are deleted in the new Pathfinder catalogue which arrived in Britain this week.

One deleted book contains the writings of Lenin and Trotsky during their joint struggle against Stalin in 1922 and 1923. Also gone are all 65 booklets in the *Education for Socialists* series, which included the writings of SWP founder James P Cannon on fascism, and on revolutionary perspectives in America, as well as a collection of speeches and writings from the last year of his life.

In 1938 the SWP helped Trotsky found a world socialist party, the Fourth International, the "workers' state" segments of which broke up into different public currents in 1953. The SWP drew some of these together in the USFI to form the mainstream of world Trotskyism. But a new SWP leadership team installed in the 1970s took a Castroite line and purged those who claimed to be Trotskyists, and led the SWP out of the USFI last summer.

Breaking from its Trotskyist roots, Pathfinder has withdrawn the booklets which give a history of the split in the FI and the life of the USFI up to 1979, as well as the book containing the USFI's founding documents. Most of this material is not available elsewhere.

Further deleted booklets include the anti-Stalinist writings of Joseph Hansen, Trotsky's secretary from 1937 to 1940, and of several SWP leaders who opposed the SWP's adaptation to Castroism such as George Breitman, Tom Kerry and Cliff Corner.

Books by Les Evans, former editor of the SWP's magazine, including *China After Mao*, are withdrawn. Other paperbacks reportedly out of stock include *Leon Trotsky on China*, P'eng Shu-tse's *The Chinese Communist Party in Power*, Tom Kerry's *The Mao Myth*, and Joseph Hansen's *Dynamics of the Cuban revolution, a Trotskyist analysis*.

Pathfinder Press had already tried to remove this material through massive price rises last year; one 21-page pamphlet by George Breitman was £3. But their deletion is a deep blow.

These books and booklets were valuable tools for socialists who, in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky, wished to build an international workers movement against both capitalism and Stalinism.



Lenin and Stalin

# Marxism versus "hit or miss"

Jill Mountford looks at a classic of our movement — James P. Cannon's *Letters from Prison*

In 1941 28 American trade unionists were charged with disrupting the war effort and later imprisoned for between 12 and 16 months.

Among those jailed were the leaders of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP: no relation to the British SWP), and militants from the Teamsters (truck drivers) Union.

The trial lasted six months. SWP leader James P Cannon used his evidence for the defence to explain the Marxist view on the war, socialism and democracy. His speech was later reproduced in book form under the title *Socialism on Trial* and still serves as a useful text for revolutionaries today.

After two years of appeals, our American comrades started their sentences on 1 January 1944.

*Letters from Prison* is a record of Cannon's time at Sandstone Jail and, more importantly, a living dialogue with the party outside on the tasks of building a revolutionary organisation.

At the forefront of Cannon's mind was the overall project of the revolutionary party. Not losing sight of this, he developed straightforward solutions to organisational questions in his letters to Rose Karsner, his comrade and partner.

The letters also describe how Cannon tried to use his time in jail. He set himself a rigorous and gruelling regime.

He was not a professional intellectual, and had little formal education; but he set about learning three languages and systematically worked his way through Greek and French philosophy.

Cannon's greatest contribution to our revolutionary movement was his ability to work through and elaborate the organisational side of the Leninist party.

His letters called for an extensive education plan for the party's membership:

"It is the historic task of the party to bring the element of consciousness into the spontaneous labour movement. The party, that is, the continuing organisation of the vanguard, grows up to this task to the extent that it succeeds in introducing consciousness and plan into all phases of its own work.

"This takes place not automatically, but slowly and painfully as the party grows and learns from its mistakes and difficulties and gradually, in a long process of work and struggle, throws up a leadership which understands its tasks and knows how to plan and organise their study and execution."

Cannon stresses the importance of training and developing comrades as opposed to some "hit or miss method". He says it is "to make a revolutionary step forward by systematically planning and organising the continuing education of the party membership as a whole, from the newest recruit to the members of the leading committees."

"...The plan, viewed as a whole, contemplates not a single school but rather a system of schools and study courses — a communist university."

Cannon's letters aim to convince, to create an atmosphere and an attitude in the party that would inspire young comrades to take their studies seriously.

He seems conscious, too, of the usefulness of his letters for future revolutionaries.

His letters are still inspiring today, impressing on our minds the necessity of a Marxist education, encouraging us, tempting us, reminding us why we need a radically different education to the bourgeois education forced upon us.

He deliberately leads the reader to the conclusion that to be without a Marxist education is to be unarmed, unprepared and unable to take the working class forward.

Cannon also gave much thought to the role of the revolutionary newspaper. *The Militant*



James P. Cannon

(the paper of the SWP — no relation to the British *Militant*) started out as a "cadre organ". It was theoretically heavy and limited to a small audience of advanced Marxists.

As the war dragged to its end, however, the SWP's position as the only group clearly championing working-class struggle was winning it much wider support. *The Militant* could take on a new role.

Cannon saw the revolutionary paper as a tool, and not as a static tool, always serving the same purpose. It was a tool that not only helped to change and clarify the consciousness of workers, but can

itself be changed and clarified. Cannon redefined the paper as a "combination tool". He explained:

"We can only afford to publish our paper. And we must address ourselves to the politically educated as well as to the uninitiated... We must publish a paper for them all."

"Most important of all, we must bear in mind that the new reader does not remain a new reader all his life. The average intelligent worker quickly absorbs the few simple ideas which attracted him to the paper in the first place. Then he begins to feel the need of more substantial food."

In his last letter (no.182) Cannon

sums up simply and wholly a task of all revolutionaries: "Our great-mission, I take it, is to popularise unadulterated Marxism." One of the most important ways of doing this is through the revolutionary newspaper. The "combination tool" is designed to reach the widest possible audience, and to help that audience learn, change and develop.

In one of his letters Cannon talks of the need for heroes in our movement. "The young relate the word to the deed. They are moved and inspired by example. That is why the young demand heroes; nobody can talk them out of it."

For us today, Cannon himself is one such hero. For him, revolutionary politics was no hobby or passing phase, but a way of life, one he stuck to from a teenager until his death in 1974 at the age of 84, despite all the disappointments and setbacks along the road.

Ironically, I want to give the last word to Jack Barnes. Ironically, because since writing the introduction to *Letters from Prison* Barnes (the central leader of the American SWP today) has become a renegade, unforgivably subordinating the SWP to Stalinist forces such as the North Korean government, unable to stick to "unadulterated Marxism" in face of the apparent power of the Stalinist world. But when he wrote his introduction Barnes knew how to explain the task that he would later shirk:

"Giants and geniuses in the short history of the modern revolutionary movement are rare, but the march of history does not require each of us to be one, nor to wait for one to come along. *Letters from Prison* does not challenge each of us to be a Marx, a Lenin or a Trotsky."

"We are simply challenged to be ourselves, to study what went on before and to apply the discoveries of our predecessors to the problems of our time. By standing on the shoulders of earlier working class fighters... Marxists as a team of revolutionaries can accomplish the task before them."

## The testament of a shameless careerist

Ruth Cockcroft looks at what is already almost a classic of shameless climbing to position on the backs of the working class — Derek Hatton's *Inside Left*.

Derek Hatton's *Inside Left*, although written in 1985, is once again becoming very topical. Hatton's "story so far" is a thinly disguised PR job; a heavily edited and rather light coverage of events which surrounded Liverpool Council between 1983 and 1986.

Hatton's self-satisfaction and his breathtaking arrogance slap you in the face from every page, but what is more illuminating is the insight that Hatton allows into the *Militant* Tendency's political world.

Hatton makes little mention of being a socialist in his early "political career" and admits to being "fired with political ambition".

Then, Hatton says, the *Militant* "made me realise that I could become part of the mainstream of politics, but at the same time be part of revolutionary change."

Hatton speaks of the *Militant*'s religious devotion to politics; the "spreading of the gospel" and the "shared

political faith". It is interesting that Hatton rejects the Protestant church in his youth but almost consciously takes on board the *Militant*'s politics as a new religion.

Hatton makes it clear that the *Militant* had a significant influence over events which occurred in Liverpool. He signals out Mulhearn, Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant, "the long-standing inspirational figure of Trotskyism in Britain". Yet, as the tragedy of mistakes and incompetence unfolds it becomes clear that the strategy was at all times to stay within the law and to delay setting an illegal budget that would confront the Tories head on.

**"The strategy was to stay within the law and to delay."**

From the beginning the Council was prepared to raise the rates to "bridge the gap" between providing services and underfunding from central government. Rather than implement an illegal budget and face surcharge and disqualification, the Council instead took the option of the infamous showdown with the Council's workforce when they issued 30,000 redundancy notices.

Hatton's reaction to the hostility he received for his so-called "tac-



Derek Hatton

tical withdrawal" enlightens us of the *Militant*'s own concept of capturing power and institutionalising socialism through the state. "If government recognises its responsibility then all notices will be withdrawn", said a letter signed by Hatton to 31,000 workers, making it clear that this was not a question of rank and file activity and grass roots organisation, but one of deals in which people's livelihoods were being bartered.

Hatton complained that shop stewards "actually took over and brought work to a standstill"

Because the trade unions were unprepared to follow Hatton and the *Militant* in their attempt to use power within the framework of Tory legislation, ie. to make redundancies, Hatton categorically states, "I despise and hate them for what they did... The greatest obstacle to socialism is the leadership of the trade union movement."

Hatton is clearly a creature of the *Militant*, but it becomes obvious from the book that there were tensions between *Militant* and Hatton; the *Militant* complained of Hatton "playing a personality game". Hatton makes clear that life on the breadline because of commitment to ideas "is something I would never do myself". Instead Hatton lists his home, his "attractive wife", his holidays, his nice car, good clothes and good food as his priorities.

Hatton was in conflict with shop stewards in *Militant* during the redundancy period. Finally, Hatton gives us an account of a discussion with Peter Taaffe when he gave his decision to resign as Deputy Leader, in which Hatton seems almost unaware of the relief he describes in Taaffe's words: "for the sake of the labour movement and the sake of socialism in the future he said it was important that the Labour Party was not denuded of good quality lefts to continue the fight".

And what of socialism as we think of it? As a democratic move-

ment of the oppressed and exploited for liberation? The Sam Bond affair throws the most appalling light on such a notion. Bond was appointed as Race Relations Officer because "he took the *Militant* view of race relations" and Hatton glibly states that "those who accepted views without question" were promoted.

In *Today* (1 July) Hatton said "There is no real alternative to the Tories... Whether I would be physically able to pick up a pencil and put a cross against a Tory name, I'm not sure. But in principle, that's what I'd have to say."

Having decided that the labour movement won't give him more fame and fortune, he looks elsewhere.

Hatton's history tells us as much about *Militant* as about Hatton himself. *Militant* has still not denounced him, and it has chosen to defend Hatton against police proceedings for corruption since he left Labour (and *Militant*) politics. Maybe Hatton still gives *Militant* money — I don't know.

Throughout 1983-6, *Militant* rallied behind Hatton, defended him, and denounced all criticism of him. They let their better judgement — which conflicted with Hatton — be swamped by the desire for position and prestige. They shared one crucial idea with Hatton — the programme of socialism from above, or socialism by decree of benevolent administrators.

# A girls' own fantasy

## Cinema

Tony Brown reviews  
*Thelma and Louise* —  
and warns that the storyline  
is given away...

Hollywood has maintained its movie making pre-eminence largely because of its ability to reshape and retell a number of stock stories.

To be successful they require updating or a new twist. In the past few years we've seen plenty of amplexes of reworked genres in *Dances with Wolves* (Western), *Presumed Innocent* (murder mystery), *Pretty Woman* (Cinderella fantasies), and *Class Action* (justice achieved through the courts). Now add to this list *Thelma and Louise* as a modern road movie.

Building on the common thread of past road movies *Thelma and Louise* adds a new, feminist, dimension. It also pays homage to two other genres, the older hunted outlaw on the run, and the more recent (male) buddy films.

All this might sound too conscious, too crafted, too didactic, but that's exactly what it is. Writer Callie Khouri, and director Ridley Scott have set out to put feminism before a mass audience. They have taken an old, successful formula and used it to put across their story.

It's a worthwhile goal and much of it works. There is an emotional appeal that will register with many female viewers, like the two women behind me who cheered each act of revenge on the witless males on screen. But its conclusions are crude, outdated, contradictory and deeply pessimistic.

The fantasy of Hollywood makes life cheap and personal, violent, revenge an all too easy option.

The road has stood as a spiritual and physical metaphor for enlightenment through journey. Generally the characters are either outlaws or outside of conventional society. They must embrace an alternative moral code to the dominant one. We judge them by their code and how they follow it.

Thelma (Geena Davis) and Louise (Susan Sarandon) set out for a short holiday to get away from the men in their lives. Thelma's husband is oblivious to her, except when he is being rude and being fed, and is off screwing around while she waits patiently for him at home.

Louise's boyfriend Jimmy is less rude but equally thoughtless. He won't make any commitments to her.

Three crucial events change their lives.

At their first stop, at a bar, Thelma naively accepts a few drinks



Susan Sarandon as Louise and Geena Davis as Thelma

from, and dances with, a predator. When they step out for some fresh air he attempts to rape her and is only prevented by Louise holding a .38 to his ear. After a brief verbal exchange Louise shoots him.

A rather severe response, I thought, but it is no accident and is portrayed as justifiable.

The attack triggers off something from Louise's past that we are not let in on. That's deliberate, we are left to guess whether she has been raped in the past, or abused, or subjected to some other horror. Her secret is held up as something shared, or potentially shared, by all women. The attempted rape is an attack on all women and the retribution is a form of gender revenge.

From here on *Thelma and Louise* are on the run, hunted by the local Detective Slocumbe (Harvey Keitel) and the FBI.

Completely disoriented and alone they begin to plan their escape to Mexico. While waiting in an Oklahoma hotel for some money to come through their metamorphosis

takes place.

Thelma befriends a young hitchhiker, spends the night with him and is transformed. Incredibly, this feminist tale asks us to believe that one good fuck has replaced the girlish, scatterbrained suburban housewife with a confident, assertive woman.

***"But Thelma and Louise have crossed a divide. They are not prepared to re-enter society and the cops are bent on destroying them. Rather than surrender they hold hands and fly away. To freedom? It's all a bit of a girls' own fantasy."***

Meanwhile, Louise's boyfriend turns up unexpectedly with the money and even more unexpectedly

with an engagement ring.

She turns him down. The murder has opened her eyes to something in men that she will no longer collaborate with.

Their attitude is further hardened when they realise that the hitchhiker has stolen Louise's life savings — not even a good lover can be trusted.

As their position becomes more desperate, their bond is strengthened. This is one of the film's strong points, their time together in the spectacular desert allows some reflection and calm before the climax.

Louise progressively strips off all her feminine adornments, her make up, earrings, jewellery. Thelma tells her that her only regret is that she didn't shoot her attacker herself.

To cement their break from male society they confront the tanker driver who has harassed them repeatedly on the road. They lure him into stopping and demand an apology which they don't get. Here the script lets them down badly. Revenge is the point but blowing up the truck is neither very imaginative nor ecological.

They are finally trapped between the Grand Canyon and an army of heavily armed men poised to shoot them down. Ironically, their lone supporter and the only decent man in the film is Slocumbe, who exhorts the FBI to take them peacefully.

But *Thelma and Louise* have crossed a divide. They are not prepared to re-enter society and the cops are bent on destroying them. Rather than surrender they hold hands and fly away. To freedom? It's all a bit of a girls own fantasy.

The message is clear enough, and it is depressingly defeatist. Once a woman steps out of the rigid roles established for her by a male society any individual act of revenge is justified, but in the end it's impossible to survive in such a hostile environment.

## Slavery here and now

### Television

By Belinda Weaver

Twenty pounds a week for a full-time servant, but that's all some stingy bosses pay the foreign servants who work for them.

Quite a few don't even pay that much, or anything at all. Worse, many ill-treat their servants, locking them in the house, beating them, refusing to allow them any contacts outside, or with their families back home.

For most of these servants come from abroad — from the Philippines, from India, countries where people are desperate enough to take such low paid work.

World in Action (ITV) told the story of these modern-day slaves, and a sad story it was. The servants had been recruited in their home countries to work for rich employers, who had promised decent wages which would help support families left behind. But the reality for most of these servants was very different.

Forced to accompany their employers on trips abroad, they found themselves in a foreign country, stripped of rights, abused, unable to get away.

The British government colludes in this slavery. It allows rich foreigners to bring their servants into Britain, and it prohibits such servants from leaving their employers or taking other work. Quite often, the employer holds onto the servant's passport, making it impossible for them to leave.

With no money either, and often no knowledge of English, many servants are trapped, forced to work endless hours for no reward, and often beaten and abused to boot.

The worst case involved two wealthy Kuwaiti princesses who starved and beat their servant, Lakshmi, knocked out her teeth and tried to strangle her. She finally got away. She took the women to court, and won, but the £300,000 compensation was still not paid a full year later. The princesses received only suspended sentences for their crimes.

Only the Gulf War got Lakshmi her money. The Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait was the brother of the princesses. Worried about his country's relations with Britain, he paid up.

Many of the women interviewed for the programme were in tears, still shaken by their ordeals. Many had escaped only by chance, or by climbing out of windows. Though freed from their tyrannical employers, many were still trapped by circumstances. Lonely and homesick, broke and unable to work, they lived an underground existence, in constant terror of deportation.

The government does its best to keep out would-be immigrants from the Third World. It can take two years or more for Bangladeshis to get a visa for Britain. Yet, if Bangladeshis work for rich Arabs, the government bends the rules to let them in, then turns a blind eye to the abuse the servants face.

No-one expects rich people to be nice, but the meanness and the cruelty revealed in this programme was astounding — millionaires grudging someone a measly twenty quid, parents encouraging their children to spit on servants, case after case of beatings and abuse.

People say the rich are different. They are. They're scum.

## Male nuns against the poll tax

By Mike Jenkins

A rag-tag of demonstrators outside the Rugby Club. TV reporters lollipopping microphones hungry to make deadlines.

Thought I saw three Rebeccas changing in the bus-shelter. Remnants of the Red Choir croaked into the PA system.

"Poll Tax, No Way! Don't Collect! Don't Pay!" chanting in the ghost-steps of the Red Flag Rising.

The Rebeccas were really nuns men dressed in drag, who shouted raucously about "dykes" and "fags".

Hundreds were there, cheery in protest, but we were obsessed by their vulgar weirdness: were they Special Branch? were they anarchists?

In the hall, they sat in a row in front of staid speakers: black tights, scarlet lipstick, high-pitched voices.

Their placard read "Fags and dykes

shit on the poll tax." My daughter asked "What's a dyke?" My wife replied, "You know, in Holland..."

The male nuns left in disgust cursing about boring political broadcasts I heard they were arrested afterwards for swearing in the lifts.

Where's the justice and who's prejudiced? My daughter still can't connect the boy with his finger in the hole with the anti-poll tax march.

# "Guilt-tripping" or action?

## WRITEBACK

draw your attention to what I consider a nasty little campaign called "Socialist Women on Male Platforms" (SWOMP)...that is, if they haven't already drawn themselves to your attention.

"I note, for example, that much of the publicity for your events features men as speakers in far greater numbers than it does women," says their letter to SO complaining about our "Workers' Liberty '91" summer school. It doesn't take a genius to know why this might be: women have not achieved equality of opportunity, nor therefore of expertise, in any field.

Attacking the organisations who are trying to improve this situation is futile, even counter-productive — would socialists advocate a similar campaign targetted at local government bodies advertising themselves as "striving to become equal opportunities employers"? No, and they shouldn't.

Some of the more or less prominent women sponsoring this campaign undoubtedly

ly appear on platforms groaning with men from their own organisations. It's a bit rich for them to pontificate to other organisations about their equal opportunities.

I'm sure these women fight for their own organisations to encourage and educate women comrades to the point where they can push themselves to the fore and be an encouragement to other women to get involved in socialist and labour organisations. That is what they should be doing, not drawing people's attention — in a rather cocky (sic) way — to the bad situation we already know about.

Since receiving one of SWOMP's nominations for their prize for maintaining women in a lowly position, I have at the back of my mind a sneaking suspicion that my organisation is merely trying to appear un-male-dominated when it asks me to speak at a meeting or puts my name on a leaflet. That is worlds away from reflecting the truth that it is becoming less male-dominated.

The SWOMP reminds me of the "300 campaign" to get 300 women MPs, without regard to their politics, in Parliament. I am more concerned to draw large numbers of women into the labour movement in whatever

# SWOMP

Socialist Women On Male Platforms

Date as postmark

1991 SWOMP AWARD

Dear Colleagues

CONGRATULATIONS! Your organisation has been nominated to receive the 1991 SWOMP Award.

This prestigious award is designed to draw attention to organisations such as yours who publicly demonstrate their commitment to women's equality — through their recognition of the importance to our movement of ensuring women maintain their traditional place in society — unseen and unheard.

Yours faithfully  
The SWOMP Committee

*Nota bene:* a nomination will not ensure that you receive the award competition is fierce. The Committee's decision is final and no appeal will be considered.

<b>SWOMP Committee</b>	Irene Fick Akosua Asante Kate Bennett Maggie Bowden Irene Brennan Jenny Bristow Barbara Brooks Frances Burt Dinah Caine Gail Cartmail Jane Caro Andrea Carroll Sheila Clark Phillippa Clark Deirdre Couchman Jill Crouch Marcelle Davis Megan Dubney Hazel Downing Harriet Eisner Louisa Ferreiro	Irene Fick Anita Flynn Joanne Fontana Jacqui Frost Maria Fyfe Mary Godatzandeh Lesley Gould Anita Graham Katie Hanson Pam Harbord Sue Harris Shirley Heads Diana Holland Mary Honeyball Eve Hudson Judith Hughes Lesley Jacomelli Mairi Jazzy Caroline Jones Anne Kane Peny Kemp	Maggie Lee Lynda Lookes Gillian Lockett Terry Marsland Angela Mason Jacki McCarten Sue Michie Mariane Miller Lorna Nicholas Maria Normie Jane Paul Brenda Phibbs Anne Rawcliffe-King Linda Sandison Nicola Seyd Isla Stewart Ruth Tallon Pam Tear Julie Thompson Marjorie Thompson Carole Turner	Janice Turner Maureen Twomey Linda Vance Anna Wagstaff Nicola Webber Margaret Whitham Linda Wilde Jenny Woodley Jan Woolf Anita Wright	<b>Fact One</b> Women are more than half of the population of the United Kingdom <b>Fact Two</b> Women are nearly half of the workforce <b>Fact Three</b> Women are almost 34% of trade union members <b>Fact Four</b> Women earn less than three-quarters of men's average earnings <b>Head Office</b> 43 Dasset Road London SE27 6UF
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The SWOMP award: hypocritical and ineffectual

capacity, than to hawk a layer of "prominent women" around the country...the same sort of "experts" who, if they were male, would undoubtedly be dubbed boring and pompous by the same SWOMP women. Those are my priorities.

I agree that the process of involving women will be helped by women being seen to be involved. How many

good public speakers do you know? Not many, and of those less than 50% will be women. That situation we need to change by educating and encouraging women, not by guilt-tripping "male dominated" organisations and embarrassing the women in them.

Vicki Morris  
East London

# Liverpool: stop the witch hunt!

## AS WE WERE SAYING

**M**ilitant runs Liverpool as though the tendency were a criminal brotherhood and Liverpool 1920s Chicago. They use political violence and the threat of it together with political graft and personal corruption to keep their grip.

This is the image of *Militant* in Liverpool presented in the press. Those who make these allegations against the leaders of the Liverpool Labour Party now have the authority of Labour leader Neil Kinnock to back them up.

This image has, to be sure, been fed by events in Liverpool.

Allegations are widespread that the Council's control of patronage — jobs, promotion, perks — has been used openly to reward *Militant*'s supporters and to intimidate or punish its opponents Council "Deputy" Leader Derek Hatton seems deliberately to go out of his way to court publicity which portrays him as a Flash Harry fly boy; he allows the widely circulated publication *Private Eye* to report with impunity detailed allegations that he is personally corrupt.

In face of charges such as those now being circulated against the leaders of Liverpool's District Labour Party and Council, socialists would normally argue that the correct thing to do would be to set up an impartial labour movement inquiry which could establish what the facts are.

But Neil Kinnock's Labour Party NEC-endorsed inquiry into Liverpool Council will not be such an impartial inquiry and it will not clear the air in the Liverpool labour movement. It is an inquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party and into *Militant* which runs it, which will be conducted by the most bitter enemies of everything *Militant* stands for.

It is an inquiry initiated, set up and staffed by people who chose the very time when the Tories were battering down the resistance of the Liverpool labour movement to mount a viciously divisive and destructive campaign of denunciation against the embattled Liverpool Council.

Kinnock threw all the weight he could muster into the scales — on the side of the Tory government and against the Liverpool Labour Council.

To the breathtaking ineptitude of the *Militant* council leaders was added the open treachery of the national Labour leaders, though *Militant*'s ineptitude was probably more decisive in undermining Liverpool's fight than was Kinnock's invective.

These days Neil Kinnock reserves most of his considerable stock of alliterative venom for the left of his own party. Kinnock acted throughout the crisis in Liverpool according to his belief that "the main enemy is at home" — in his own party. Instead of helping Liverpool fight the Tories he chose to give unashamed and undisguised help to the Tories against the council and the labour movement.

The performance of the Labour leaders, and in the

first place Kinnock, disqualify them as either impartial investigators or proper judges of the Liverpool Labour Council or of the District Labour Party. They are not the fair-minded and honest representatives of the labour movement, nor an honest and loyal labour movement leadership calling *Militant* to account for its stewardship in Liverpool.

They are *Militant*'s envenomed factional opponents and people who have themselves — like the most embittered and blinkered "sectarians" — subordinated the interests of the Liverpool labour movement and the working

class to their own short-sighted factional and political interests, not scrupling even to form an open political alliance against Liverpool with the Tory government.

If there is to be an investigation of Liverpool District Labour Party it should be an honest and impartial inquiry, not a factional witch-hunting "investigation" whose findings are a foregone conclusion and which can be no more than an empty ritual hurried through as preparation for the real business in hand: the burning of the heretics.

From SO, 5 December 1986

## WHAT'S ON

### Thursday 18 July

"Crisis in Yugoslavia". Speaker Branka Magas. 7.30, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1. Organised by the Socialist Movement and Socialist Society.

"Socialists, Labour and the General Election", Glasgow SO meeting. 7.30, City Hall, Luton Socialists for Labour meeting. Hosted by Luton Labour Parties. Speaker, Cate Murphy. 7.45, Labour Club.

### Friday 19 July

"Labour and the General Election", York SO meeting. Speaker Pat Murphy. 7.30, Priory St, City Centre.

"Cabaret night for Nicaragua", organised by Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign. Acts include John Hegley and Jeremy Hardy. 7.30-midnight, Conway Hall, London. £6/£3.50.

### Wednesday 24 July

"After the Walton fiasco, re-organise the left", Merseyside SO meeting. 7.30, Merseyside TURC, Hardman St.

### Thursday 25 July

Manchester LPS discuss a socialist response to the general election. Speakers John Tocher (AEU), John McLroy and councillor Shirley McCardell. 7.30, Town Hall.

### Saturday 27 July

"Socialists and the Labour Party", Manchester Alliance for Workers' Liberty dayschool. For venue phone 061 227 9004.

### Monday 29 July

"Crisis in Yugoslavia", Manchester SO meeting. Speaker Mark Caterall. 8.00, Bridge St Tavern.

"Fighting Racism", Socialist Organiser London Forum. 7.30, Lucas Arms, Grays Inn Rd, Kings Cross, London.

"Fight the Tories, not the left", Sheffield LPS meeting. Speakers Mandy Moore (NCC), Lambeth Councillor, Nof Trofias. 7.30, SSSAU, West St.

### Thursday 1 August

"Socialists and the General Election", Hull SO meeting. Speaker Ruth Cockroft. 7.30, Queens Pub.

# Uranium gets the elbow

## LES HEARN'S



## SCIENCE COLUMN

One of the consequences of the fall of the East German puppet regime was that the uranium mines of Ronneburg, near the Czech border, suddenly became uneconomical.

The mines, which made East Germany the third largest producer after the US and Canada, were selling uranium at three times the world price and, with the halt to the nuclear arms race, the USSR no longer wanted to buy so much. 10,000 miners lost their jobs.

This leaves the mining company, Wismut, its last and perhaps most difficult task — that of cleaning up the results of years of neglect of safety standards. The problem is huge. Not only do 1400 kilometres of tunnels, 140 shafts and six caverns have to be filled and sealed, some to a depth of two kilometres. There are also thousands of heaps of waste rock, one of 130 million cubic metres (equivalent to a cube of side half a kilometre).

The radioactivity of these piles is about 700 becquerels per kilogram (Bq/kg)\*, well above the level at which special authority would be required for disposal in the UK. The heaps must be protected from erosion, wind and water and then either covered and replanted or levelled and removed.

There are also 18 tailing ponds, the two largest measuring 250 hectares (about a square mile), whose radioactivity is about 10,000 Bq/kg. Once again, these must be isolated from the environment, particularly since they also contain lots of sulphuric acid and other toxic chemicals which must be kept out of the water supply.

The ponds will have to be drained and the water treated to remove pollutants before being released into rivers. Drying out the ponds could take ten years because the dust in the water is extremely fine. The solid waste would have to be protected from rain water so as to reduce leaching into the ground waste. This will involve covering it with about three metres of clay, gravel and earth.

A further problem centres on the location of the mines — in the middle of a highly populated area. Homes are

subject to high levels of radioactive radon gas, a decay product of uranium, which seeps out of the ground, spoil heaps, etc. In one of the four towns in the region, radon generates up to 100,000 Bq per cubic metre of air, 500 times the maximum level advised by the UK National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB).

In human terms, the miners and local residents are all prone to cancers, mainly of the lung, caused by breathing radon gas or radioactive dust particles. Such cancers can take years to develop so it is crucial that proper records of exposure to radiation be kept.

Now, the mines were opened in 1946, under USSR control, but it was not until 1954, when they were transferred to joint GDR/USSR management, that proper records were kept. Exposure to dust may have been considerable for miners between 1946 and 1954. One doctor who worked for the mines at that time states that miners drilled the ore without dampening down the dust and without adequate ventilation. His warnings were ignored.

Estimates for exposure to radiation at that time range from 300 to 3,000 milliSieverts per year (mSv/y). This contrasts with the NRPB's recommended maximum of 15 mSv/y (with up to 50mSv/y allowed in exceptional circumstances).

According to Wismut, current exposure levels would be between 10 and 40 mSv/y (if there were still any miners). Despite an improvement in conditions after

**"The miners and local residents are prone to cancers, mainly of the lung, caused by breathing radon gas or radioactive dust particles"**

1954, it is still likely that exposures to radiation between 1954 and 1960 were above current recommended maxima.

Cases of lung cancer reported by 1989 numbered about 5,000, according to the united German government, of which nearly all were due to exposures before 1955. However, the German environmental magazine *Atom* claims that there are more than 9,000 miners with lung cancer.

Epidemiologists now face the massive task of monitoring all miners who have ever worked for Wismut until they die to find the true incidence of lung cancers, leukaemias and skin cancers. Their data could answer questions about the efficacy of the various safety measures introduced over the years in the mines, about the links between radiation exposure and smoking or breathing polluted air. The studies will need to be adequately funded, though, and this may be a problem in the newly united Germany.

\* A becquerel is one particle or ray of radiation per second. 700 Bq is the same as 2,520,000 particles/rays per hour, etc.

INDUSTRIAL

# Civil Service union leaders give green light for sackings

By a Department of Employment worker

The Departmental Redundancy Agreements are one of the few good agreements that the Non Industrial Unions in the Civil Service have.

In fact it would be fairer to say that they are not redundancy agreements. They force senior management to go through a number of steps, which can't be skipped, before declaring compulsory redundancies.

Going through these steps has two effects: firstly, the whole process of compulsory redundancies is enormously slowed down. Secondly, the need for compulsory redundancies is greatly reduced or even eliminated by forcing senior management to comply with the

steps. The Agreements also set down the Union's consultation rights and lay down the principle that compulsory redundancies are to be carried out on the basis of "First in, last out" (so-called LIFO rules).

Even the LIFO rules help prevent compulsory redundancies, because if they are applied, senior management has no control over who gets sacked. Therefore they have an interest in preventing a rundown reaching the LIFO stage.

To judge how successful the Agreements have been, over the last 11 years there have been approximately 60,000 job cuts in the non-industrial Civil Service. The number of compulsory redundancies has been a few hundred.

Now, of course, winning the membership to fight redundancies is the most important task of activists, but the agreements as they stand greatly help the unions.

The Departmental Agreements are based on guidelines issued by the Treasury. If the guidelines are changed then the agreements can be changed. So it was with some disgust that we found that the union leaderships have secretly agreed with the Treasury to sign up to new guidelines which abandon LIFO and the steps mentioned above.

They will allow senior management to pick and choose who will get sacked, they will allow the whole redundancy process to be greatly speeded up. The new guidelines are an open invitation to sack local union reps. Senior management can use the new catch-all phrase "business needs" to sack anybody they want.

The unions have not issued



Activists under threat. Photo: John Smith

one all-members circular to keep people informed about a fundamental change in their conditions. Absolutely no attempt has been made to start any fight back in the membership.

In right wing terms this is a straightforward trade union issue, yet all the right wing groups which control the unions, who claim to put members' interests above politics, have bottled it.

They refuse to campaign amongst the membership to resist the changes. They sit on their hands and say there is nothing they can do. These new proposals can be defeated, but it will take Civil Service-wide strike action. With nearly all departments shedding staff in ever increasing numbers, that action can be won, but only if there is a campaign.

So what can activists do. Well, it would appear that *Militant* have already made up their

mind. In CPSA the Deputy General Secretary, John McCreadie, is a supporter of *Militant*. He is one of the leading negotiators for the union. He knows what is going on. But we don't see any articles in *Militant*, we don't see any CPSA Broad Left campaign (*Militant* are the major group within the Broad Left).

## What the activists think:

### "An open season on reps"

SO talked to a few activists in various parts of the Civil Service asking them how any changes in the Redundancy Agreements would effect them

DSS  
Although we have won a few local staffing disputes, there still are major

This silence is strange. Could it be that the *Militant* are worried that if there was a leak McCreadie would be blamed. His position is fairly wobbly as it is. Could they be worried that he might get suspended? Who knows. Their tactic will probably be to wait until all this blows up and then denounce the right wing when it is too late.

Already I can picture the torrent of outrage followed by their usual message to the masses — vote Broad Left.

Serious people have very little time to act. The guidelines are due to be discussed at NECs in the next few weeks. Union branches must pass motions at members' meetings calling on the leadership not to sign the new guidelines.

All Broad Lefts must be mobilised to fight the new guidelines. It is vital that the memberships are told what is happening.

The right wing are hoping to keep this issue in the dark. We must put the brightest searchlight on it! The more publicity the better.

Time is running out. Act now before it is too late!

starting problems across the country. DSS still claim that with computerisation in the offices, that we are overstaffed. In fact they claim that over the next few years up to 15,000 posts will have to go. So any weakening in our redundancy agreement is worrying. But worst of all, giving management the right to pick and choose who to get rid of is just mad. It will be open season on local office reps.

PSA  
In PSA we have a few hundred people surplus, with more to come. We have been told that management want to give us six months notice, to scrap our redundancy agreement as from the end of August. The Agreement has prevented compulsory redundancies for the last year or so. Therefore to be told that our own side is going to sign up to the new agreement is sickening. We are going to have to get our act together and fight this.

Customs and Excise  
We have major relocations of work out of London in the next few years. If the unions agree to this, management will have the big stick of compulsory redundancies to keep people in line.

## Kinnock snubs the miners — again!

Gary Scott reports from the Durham Miners' Gala

Since the Miners' Strike, the media have been suggesting that the Durham Miners' Gala will be no more due to the decline of the mining industry.

But the event still remains popular both as a family day out and as a political event. This year's meeting was as big as last year's.

This year's speakers included David Hopper (Gen. Sec. of NE Area NUM), Bill Morris (Gen. Sec. of the TGWU), Peter Heathfield (Gen. Sec. NUM) and John Prescott substituting for Neil Kinnock who, for the third time in six years as leader of the Labour Party, was 'unable to attend'. The Labour Party leader has only failed to appear once, before Kinnock, in 107 years.

As often happens when faced with an audience of miners and their families, Labour Party speakers find themselves having to make radical speeches.

John Prescott repeatedly spoke of the need to bring about fundamental change. "You cannot change the present society unless the change is fundamental."

The snub by Kinnock was condemned by David Hopper who applauded Norman Laws, a pensioner jailed by a Labour Council for not paying his Poll Tax.

Kinnock has become the first leader ever to refuse an invitation to the Gala. He has obviously decided to sever his links with the miners, preferring the company of City stockbrokers and bankers.

## DSS: national campaign needed!

By Mike Ronan, Branch Secretary, Merthyr Tydfil DSS

200 CPSA members at 2 DHSS offices in Aberdare, Bargoed, Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil took strike action last month over staff cuts.

Management plan to cut 29 jobs, 10% of the workforce,

even though claims for benefit are increasing as a result of the recession.

Members are angry. Management seem to be only concerned with not spending their budget while desks get fuller and service to the public becomes even more of a joke than it already was. Members are fed up with the pressures and have taken it upon themselves to do something about it. We know that if 29 posts are lost the situation will be further compounded. Members have taken heart

from the strikes across the country in other DHSS offices over staffing, and especially from the Hull DHSS strikers who secured 20 extra permanent staff.

Members in the branch often ask why CPSA nationally aren't calling for a national staffing campaign. My reply is that the right wing SEC of the DHSS Section have for three years done nothing on any of the vital issues.

The newly-elected left wing section leadership should change this (see page 2).

## Local government officers pay:

# NALGO: reject the offer!

By Tim Cooper, Secretary, Notts County NALGO

So the employers have "improved" their offer to 6.4%. This offer is still an insult and will hopefully get a unanimous thumbs down throughout the

union.

Pay rises elsewhere are running at an average of around 9%. 6.4% is well short of even that figure. Over the last number of years council workers' pay rises have repeatedly fallen short of inflation. In real terms that means pay cuts. We need to regain some of the lost ground. Reject 6.4%!

The employers have offered nothing on the claim for a minimum wage of £9,330. This part of the claim was debated and passed by last year's NALGO conference. The minimum wage is not an added extra to be used as a bargaining counter in negotiations.

A quarter of a million white collar council workers earn less than £9,330 per year. That is half of NALGO's local government membership. The figure of £9,330 was not plucked out of thin air; it is recommended as the minimum wage by the Council of Europe.

Low pay is the biggest problem facing many NALGO members. The time has come to deal with it. There should be no settlement without a minimum wage. The employers refused to address the rest of the claim — 35 hour week, and extra holidays. These

issues should not be dropped.

So the offer should be rejected, but what action do we need? The rolling programme of 1,2 and 3 day strikes proved very popular and successful in 1990.

This year the national leadership are proposing a rolling programme of 10 days of strikes spread over 8 weeks. The idea of 10 days of strikes is a good one, but to spread it over an 8 week period would blunt its effect. The 10 days of strikes should be concentrated in a four week period in an escalating rolling programme of 1, 2, 3 and 4 day strikes. This would ensure the

strikes have the greatest impact.

If such a rolling programme does not extract a satisfactory offer then a ballot should be organised on indefinite strike action.

What about selective action? In 1989 selective action left most members on the sidelines. Since 1989 many authorities have drawn up contingency plans including lock outs of non-striking workers. Selective action is no alternative to all-out strikes, which gain maximum publicity and involve every member in the fight for their claim.

## Barnsley social workers

By Fiona Monkman, Barnsley NALGO

Barnsley social workers are currently taking all-out indefinite strike action, following intimidation and provocation over a regrading dispute.

The dispute has been running for 16 months. Management delays in negotiation and cancellation of meetings with the union have left social workers with no alternative but to walk out.

The escalation resulted from a deci-

sion by council bosses to deduct 20% from council workers' wages after a work to rule in March. A ballot was taken in May to initiate strike action of one week in four, but following management's pulling out of further negotiations, a vote clearly indicated members wanted to take all-out action.

Striking workers have maintained pickets at their workplaces and the Town Hall. Money and support have come from across the country with requests for speakers from as far away as Strathclyde and London. Requests for a levy have met with support amongst Barnsley NALGO members.

## TGWU conference: strange stirrings beneath the surface

By Gerry Bates

The TGWU biennial delegate conference held last week in Blackpool provided that all too familiar mix of fudge and mudge that makes this great movement of ours what it is.

General Secretary elect, Bill Morris managed to both promise that there will be "No pay norms, no quick fix cobbled together in a smoke-filled room" and declare "Yes, we will support a national economic assessment".

What purpose the NEA will serve if it is not to hold down wages was not explained...

The same fence-sitting exercise occurred over the anti-union laws. As region 6 (North West) delegate Phil Griffin put it, the executive was "on the one hand, supporting repeal and on the other backing Labour's policy which is opposed to this."

Nevertheless, there were some positive signs from the conference. A whole series of so-called "progressive" positions on women, and lesbian and gay rights were passed by big margins. This marks a big change in Britain's biggest union over the last 10-15 years. Remember it was T&G members on the London docks and at Smithfield market who marched in support of Enoch Powell's "rivers of blood" anti-immigrant tirade in 1968.

As one BDC delegate put it: "The hairy-arsed workers elect a black general secretary."

"The Kinnockites talk a lot about black rights, women's rights and so on, but push forward blue-eyed boys in posh suits as candidates."

"The difference comes from the fact that it is stewards in unions like the T&G who have to defend black people, women, lesbians and gays in the workplace. Their commitment on this issue is a little deeper than that of the Kinnockites whose first and only concern is getting elected."

Many delegates felt insulted by Kinnock's speech to conference on Wednesday. "Kinnock used the conference to hand out a press statement" commented one delegate. "It's an insult that he didn't relate to the debates and decisions of his own union conference."

Though the left had little organisational presence at the BDC, it does not mean that the vast majority of delegates are uncritical Kinnock loyalists. On the contrary, many people especially from passenger transport and public services believe that Kinnock has gone too far. "He is promising us nothing and making a point of telling the city that," explained another delegate.

Many solid right wing Labour loyalists in the TGWU are starting to show private signs of scepticism about Kinnock's electoral chances.

"He is pissing off the whole of the active layer of party members in the union" was how it was described to Socialist Organiser.

If elected, Kinnock's honeymoon with the TGWU rank and file should not last too long. The task facing the left in the union is to prepare for those battles now.

## London Forest

"This is a do or die situation and I think the members recognise it."

That's how Tom Seabury from the TGWU described the all-out strike at London Forest buses.

The strike is in opposition to a 20 per cent wage cut imposed after routes from the company's Walthamstow garage were put out to tender.

The strike is solid after a ballot majority of 35 to 1 for action. Already crews from other garages have refused to drive through the strike-bound area.

Send messages of support, donations etc. for the strike to: 42 Stringer House, Nuttall Street, London N1.

## Move this motion

On 22 July delegates from NALGO's local government branches will meet. *Socialist Organiser* is recommending the following motion to branches for submission to the 22 July recall local government meeting:

"This meeting condemns the employers' offer of 6.4% as an insult to local government workers. This offer comes nowhere near NALGO's claim for a 13% pay rise.

The offer fails to address the problem of low pay. Nearly a quarter of a million local government workers earn below the Council of Europe's decency threshold of £9,330 per year.

It does not provide a minimum adult rate at 18, a 35 hour week, nor improved holidays.

This Branch proposes that the national group meeting on 22 July instructs the National Local Government Committee to:

(a) Continue to campaign for the full pay claim;

(b) Ballot NALGO's local government membership on a rolling programme of 10 days of strikes over four weeks. If this rolling programme of escalating strike action does not extract a satisfactory offer from the employers, then a ballot on all-out strike action should be organised."

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

**Students: no benefits, course closures, rising debts**

## Students face hardship and poverty

By Emma Colyer

**S**tudents are facing a hard time this summer. As well as not being able to get housing benefit or income support over the holidays, they've been confronted with signs in some job centres and temporary agencies saying that they're not taking on students.

Student hardship has been caused by 12 years of underfunding by a Tory government determined to privatise the control of resources, funding and curriculum and deliver it into the hands of a small selected group of private business and industrial employers.

Along with the removal of students from the benefits system there have been staff redundancies, course closures, removal of LEA powers, reduction in block grants by central government and the creation of Tory bodies such as the University Funding Council, where universities bid for money, or Training Enterprise Councils where large control of resources for local education is given over to leading industrialists who are put in charge of central government training, education and enterprise schemes.

*"Instead of encouraging mass action, the strategy of NOLS was a bit of lobbying and united action with banks against the introduction of loans."*

This year the government decided to increase the loans on offer by 40% to encourage more students to take them up — in order to make the operation of the scheme cost-effective, not because they are concerned about student hardship.

A government survey found out that most students hadn't bothered with loans because they were so much in debt that the income seemed too insignificant to bother with!

Access funds were introduced alongside loans to compensate for the frozen grant. Access funds amounted to £25 million compared to £100 million claimed in benefits by students in 1989-90. It is at the discretion of the College to use whatever criteria it wants to decide which student deserves the money more than others.

The first criterion most colleges have used is that students who apply for it must have applied for a loan first — ie. encouraging students to get into more debt before they're given any funds. Surprisingly, only 12% of students have applied for it.

The obvious result of all of this is that young people are being deterred rather than encouraged to go into education. The UK has only 42% of 18 year olds in full- or part-time education compared to 80% in Germany and 60% in France. Student hardship is maintaining the middle class elite system of education rather than giving access to the working class, and to black, women and disabled students.

The coming General Election should be used to show the Tories' record on education and, whilst we campaign for a Labour government, to raise demands of Kinnock and Co. to put money back into education and provide a living student grant for all students over 16.



Millions back refusing to pay poll tax. Photo: Geoff Ward

# Hands off Terry Fields!

By Cate Murphy

**T**erry Fields is in jail for refusing to pay his poll tax.

He is only one of millions throughout the country resisting the poll tax and refusing to pay. But Terry Fields is Labour MP for Liverpool Broadgreen.

In jail, Fields is the representative of far more people than when he sits in the House of Commons!

And what does no-guts Neil Kinnock, leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Labour Opposition do? No, he has not protested that Fields has been jailed.

No, he has not used the jailing of Fields to argue more forcefully that the poll tax should be scrapped now, immediately, and not in two years time, and a general amnesty proclaimed.

He has initiated moves to expel Terry Fields from the Labour Party for "bringing the party into disrepute"!

Kinnock and his team of ex-public

school careerists and soulless advertising agency men and women who now run the Labour Party have done a lot more than Terry Fields to bring the Labour Party into disrepute!

Working class people who want to fight the Tories are sickened every time Kinnock opens his mouth. And there are millions of us.

In fact, the right wing were after Terry Fields anyway. All through the Walton by-election the press had harried him. He didn't like the official Labour candidate Peter Kilfoyle and he had more in common with Lesley Mahmood. He did not campaign for either Kilfoyle or Mahmood.

That is not good enough, said the press. Off with his political head!, says little Lord Echo Kinnock.

And now, while the servants of John Major's government lock Fields up, the servants of Mr Kinnock's shadow government-in-waiting are taking up position to bundle him out of the Labour Party when they release him from jail.

This obscenity should be stopped — now!

Fields did not break Labour Party



Kinnock and his careerist associates have done a lot more than Terry Fields to bring the Labour Party into disrepute.

rules during the Walton by-election. Many MPs did not, for various reasons, go to campaign for Kilfoyle. Fields was only one of them.

There is another Merseyside Labour MP called Field, Frank Field. He has repeatedly threatened

that if his Birkenhead Labour Party exercised its democratic right to choose someone else to fight the General Election instead of himself, Field would immediately resign and provoke a by-election.

He threatened to stand against Labour. He threatened it repeatedly. Was he disciplined? No! Instead, the Labour leaders danced themselves silly to this right-wing blackmailer's tune. They have now suspended the Birkenhead Labour Party because Field felt insecure while it remained active.

During the 1987 General Election, the same Frank Field publicly denounced the Labour candidate in a neighbouring constituency. This is a very great deal more than Terry Fields has ever done. Was Frank Field disciplined? Of course not!

Now they are setting up the expulsion machinery to expel an MP in jail for fighting the poll tax which both Labour and the Tories agree is unjust and unworkable.

Every Labour Party in the country should protest to Labour's NEC against this obscenity!

Hands off Terry Fields!

