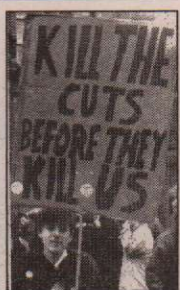


Germany



1919

centre pages



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# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

*Unite the left!*

**Stop the  
bombings!  
Troops out of  
the Gulf!**

# BOMBS

# BOOST

# SADDAM!

What  
we  
think

See page 3



# Fight hospital cuts!

By Gerry Bates

With the NHS in the midst of a severe nationwide crisis, the Tories are starting to show the first signs of losing their nerve. Reports in the press last weekend (17 January) suggest that Tory Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley is set to retreat and announce that Barts, the famous London hospital, will not now close. If these reports are true, they represent a significant step back by the Tories, proof that they can be forced to retreat.

However, it is important not to overestimate the significance of the Barts climb-down.

The Tories still intend to pursue the core proposals contained in the Tomlinson report:

- \* 20,000 NHS jobs will go in London.
- \* Either Guy's or St Thomas's will close.
- \* The Middlesex hospital site will close.
- \* After the recent opening of a multi-million pound clinical block, the Royal Marsden faces closure.
- \* The Royal Brompton will

be sold.

- \* St Mary's faces big cuts and will be partly sold off.
  - \* The Royal National Ear, Nose and Throat hospital, and the London Hospital for Tropical Diseases will close.
  - \* Queen Charlotte's maternity hospital will be axed.
  - \* The Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children will also close, putting a big question mark over the future of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital.
- This butchery is taking place in the name of rationalisation, yet the report

provides no answers to some of the major problems facing London's health service:

- \* London's children are missing out on crucial vaccinations, and women on vital cervical smear tests as a result of the shortage of GPs.
- \* 150,000 Londoners are on hospital waiting lists.
- \* Over 10% of all operations are cancelled because of lack of staff or facilities.
- \* 28 London hospitals had to close at one time or another last year because there were no beds left.
- \* 18% of patients have to wait over 2 years for treatment.
- \* London has 65% of the bed capacity per person of Paris, and 50% that of

New York.

The final result of the implementation of the Tomlinson report is that 250,000 people will be denied hospital treatment of one kind or another each year.

While useful, caring jobs are slashed, the introduction of the market and trusts into the NHS has only led to a big increase in the number of managers who are needed to run the rigged and bureaucratic market for health-care.

The Barts backdown could be the start of a major political crisis for the Tories over the NHS. But only if the Labour and trade union leaders go on the offensive.

The health unions should link up the issue of the health service to that of jobs

and pit closures, by calling a Day of Action in defence of the NHS to coincide with the TUC's 18 February Day of Action on unemployment.

A massive demonstration in London could act as the focus for winning protest strike action from other groups of workers outside the NHS.

**In next week's  
Socialist  
Organiser**

We interview Branka Magas on the war in the Balkans; and begin a series on the legacy of John Maynard Keynes.



Last week another epoch-making turn was taken in Irish politics, when a Labour-Fianna Fail government was formed. Fianna Fail's Albert Reynolds (above, with Mary Robinson, who presented him with his seal of office) is Taoiseach (Prime Minister), and Labour's Dick Spring Tanaiste (Deputy Taoiseach).

Fianna Fail began as a populist republican party in the '20s and, though long the main party of Irish big business, it still has popular roots. In the '30s it formed a reforming government which gave Ireland the weak beginnings of a welfare state, sidelining the smaller Labour Party.

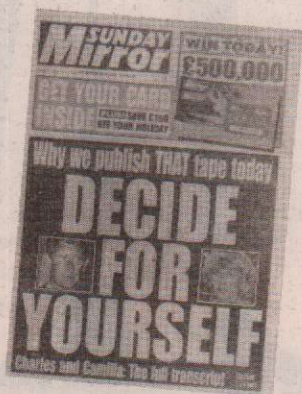
Fianna Fail ruled alone for most of the last 60 years. For decades it scorned the coalitions which its variegated opponents formed for shortish periods to keep it out of office.

Now it rules with Labour as partner.

In its rise, during its first reforming year of government — 1932 — Fianna Fail depended on Labour votes in the Dail. Now, in its slow decline, it has Labour as formal partner. But Fianna Fail may now reverse its decline at Labour's expense.

## The Poisoned Well...

The news that the preposterously misnamed "Security Services" have been systematically recording the private phone conversations of Charles and Diana, and that they may have passed recordings onto the press will come as no surprise to conspiracy buffs amongst *Socialist Organiser's* readers. That explains everything! The tabloids' campaign against the Royals is all part of a royalist plot: they believe that newspaper coverage such as that in these pages will eventually trigger a wave of outraged, pro-Royal sympathy! No sign of that yet — not much sign, either, of the revulsion this stuff should provoke even in Republicans. Yuk!



# Labour must look to the unions

By Wendy Robson

Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley — the people who lost Labour the last three elections — now say they know how Labour can win the next election. Those who can, do; those who can't, retire and give advice!

What have these mental giants come up with? "Modernising" and "Clintonising" the Labour Party.

Kinnock thinks he has learned the lessons of Clinton's victory. So does Hattersley. What is it? No more identification with "special interest groups" like the working class; Labour needs a divorce from the unions!

Kinnock and Hattersley want to take the British working class movement back a full century. They want to gut the Labour Party of its one real strength: its link with the organised working class, the trade unions. If they succeed, they will disorientate hundreds of thousands of class-conscious trade unionists and Labour Party members.

In the process they will move Labour away from a mass membership.

John McTernan, Labour's "Clintonising" Chair of Education in Southwark, worked for the Democrats in the recent presidential campaign. He explains:

"Canvassing is done entirely by 'phone. This is for practical reasons. They do not have enough volunteers for door-to-door canvassing."

Well done, John! The man who presides over some of the

worst education in Britain is championing a political party which, despite the fact that there are 250,000,000 people in the United States, has fewer members than the British Labour Party! But then, so awful is the political system there that most people in the US do not even bother to vote.

Listen to "left-wing" David Blunkett on the same Clintonising trail: "The Labour Party is seen as in favour of mollycoddling. We have to convince people we are not a tax-and-spend party."

**"We must not let these lame-brained careerists destroy our party."**

According to the *Guardian*, Blunkett is drawing up plans to require the long-term unemployed to work for their benefits.

So, "Clintonisation" means ditch the unions, move to the right, and get tough with the unemployed? Why not go the whole hog? Clinton is for capital punishment. That would be very popular. Let's stop "mollycoddling" the murderers!

Writers in *Tribune* say Clinton is "on the left", and call his politics "deft political positioning". They are wrong. Clinton is a right-wing politician of a pro-capitalist party, and he has run an anti-union

government in Arkansas for the last decade.

Clinton is funded by Wall Street, not by the unions. Big business directly pulls his strings.

Ask yourself — do you want a party like that? And while you're thinking about it, ask yourself this practical question: is it not more likely that the "modernisers" will gut the party of members and democracy, than that they will successfully carry through their plans? These political featherweights have succeeded in nothing in over a decade!

Let the labour movement call a stop to their game! We must not let these lame-brained careerists destroy our party.

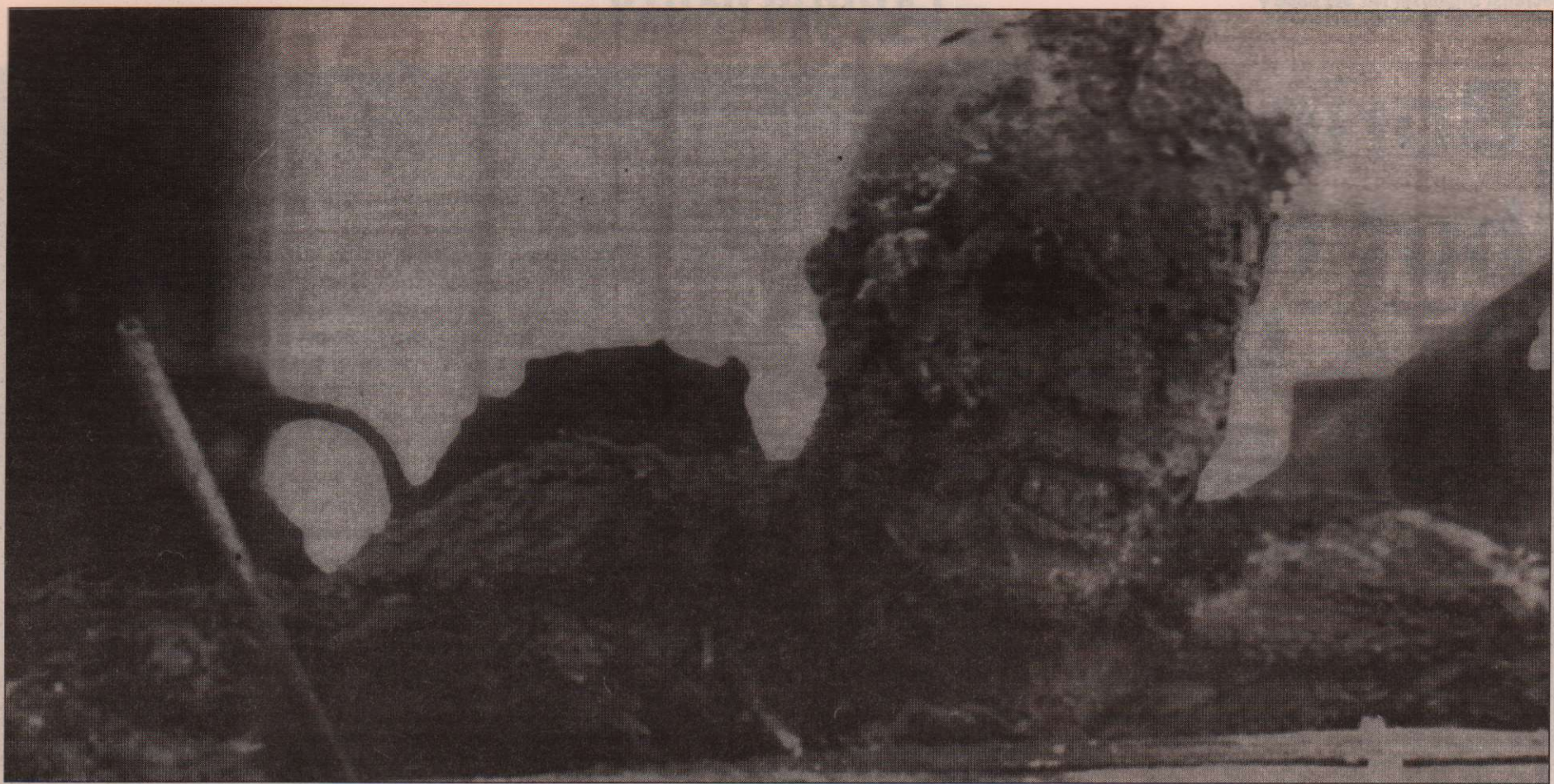
These "modernisers" have no principles and no concerns higher than the desire to build their own careers.

The proper road for Labour is to campaign for the interests of working-class people. There are big majorities for defence of the Health Service and support for the miners.

Here are the people who will vote and fight for Labour — if the Party is seen to be sincerely, solidly, actively on the side of the working class.

We need to look to the unions as our main strength. We need to defeat the so-called modernisers. We need to act to save Labour!

The point is not to learn the lessons of Clinton's victory, but to learn the lessons of Labour's defeats. People, rightly, do not trust Smith and his friends. We need a Labour Party that working class people can trust!



The horror of the Gulf War two years ago. Bombs only kill Iraqi people — they do nothing to undermine the regime

# Stop the bombing!

It is tempting to see the US bombing of Iraq as merely George Bush's "last hooray". Bush leaves the White House this week, ignominiously dismissed by the US electorate. It must be galling for him to leave Saddam Hussein still in power, with no end to his rule in sight. Now the flash of US bombs, dropping once more on Iraq, lights up America's TV screens as the "Commander-in-Chief" makes his exit.

The bombs kill Iraqi civilians: they do no damage at all to Saddam Hussein. They do Saddam Hussein a power of good, focussing the anger of the Iraqi people on the murdering American rockets, and inciting them to back Saddam Hussein against those raining death and destruction from the skies.

America's allies in Europe and in the Arab world are publicly uneasy about the new spate of US bomb-

ings. UN inspectors have openly contradicted American claims that one of the factories they have blown up was a nuclear bomb site. Having visited it a number of times recently, they say it was no nuclear bomb site. Russia now wants a UN security meeting to rein in the Americans.

**"The bombs kill Iraqi civilians: they do no damage at all to Saddam Hussein."**

This trigger-happiness contrasts badly with US inaction when Saddam Hussein's military machine has butchered Shi'ites and Kurds — whose revolt was triggered by the US-led blitz on Iraq two years ago.

The US did not want them to win against Saddam Hussein because

they did not want Iraq to break up into its component parts.

They did not and do not want Saddam Hussein overthrown by sections of his own long-suffering people. They want the Iraqi army generals to overthrow him, and put in one of their own in his place as a more pliable dictator. So far they have not obliged the US. If the new bombings boost popular support for Saddam Hussein that will make them less, not more, likely to act against him.

Saddam Hussein has undoubtedly been probing on Iraq's border with Kuwait, preparing, maybe, to see once again what he can get away with when a 'soft' civilian President, Clinton, replaces Bush, who once ran America's CIA. To Bush, it was "only natural" for the US to play the role of international policeman — above any rule that its rulers will.

Bush will have been glad of the chance to go out with a bang but, objectively, the bombings are probably intended to signal to Saddam Hussein that there will be no change in US policy. The bombs may be lying about that: Clinton is not Bush, even though he publicly backs him now.

**"Saddam Hussein is one of the foulest political gangsters on the planet today."**

The USA's hypocrisies and double-standards, and its brutally naked concern only for oil are shown up by these renewed tensions culminating in new air-raids on Iraq.

Before and during the blitz on Iraq two years ago, the propaganda

machine of the Western powers filled the world with tears and lamentations for "poor little Kuwait", invaded and conquered by Iraq. Since the old regime was restored in Kuwait, hundreds of thousands of 'Palestinians' — many of them Kuwaiti-born — have been driven out. It has scarcely made the news.

Saddam Hussein is one of the foulest political gangsters on the planet today. He is still in power because the US government and its allies two years ago decided to be careful not to destroy his regime but to put pressure on it to throw him out and replace him with a new dictator.

Bombing will only strengthen him against the millions of Iraqis and Kurds who want to kick his rotten carcass into hell, or at least into history's abyss.

Stop the bombing!

## A guillotine would be cleaner!

**"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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Two decades ago the Queen and her family were the central figures in a Theatre of the semi-sacred ritual, floating around in an aura of sanctity, mystery and magic.

Then, about a decade ago, the show was restyled and recycled. Harsh, modern spotlights cut through the cobwebbed magic, dispelling the illusions of mystery and the last lingering traces of mediaeval moonshine. Glamorous new members were added to the stodgy old cast. A modern TV soap-opera was born.

At first it was a great success. New-found familiarity bred friendliness, not contempt.

The show relied on old-favourite stories, burnished to a brilliant new shine. Their greatest success was the recycled Cinderella story, with a twist. A beautiful nursery-school assistant marries the ugly prince — and is then revealed to be herself an Earl's ambitious daughter in disguise.

World-wide ratings soared so high

that they repeated it soon afterwards, with a new twist. This time, a handsome prince married one of the big, greedy, ugly sisters. She too was a sort of undercover aristocrat. Ratings soared again.

But then, somehow, the show's producers seemed to lose control of the script. The wholesome family soap opera with the crazily lavish production values suddenly turned into something out of the Theatre of the Grotesque. Roman Polanski, Luis Bunuel and Federico Fellini began to write the scripts.

Soon the pretty Cinderella was feeding dirty stories about the ugly prince to the town criers. The big, ugly sister was caught biting the heads off small, founding children. The script began to feature scenes in which the Prince imagined himself reborn as a sanitary towel.

Meanwhile, down in the sewer, second-hand sanitary towels started to imagine themselves reborn as princes of morality.

Weird episodes from surrealist movies got mixed in with the domestic scenes. London's brothel-keepers, prize-fight promoters and purveyors of child pornography dressed up in Puritan clothes from Cromwell's time to constitute themselves a Committee of Public Morality.

Followed by a gleeful, casually fornicating crowd of yuppies, jobs and topless "page three girls", they roamed the streets denouncing Sin. Armed with rolled-up newspaper and brass neck-guards, they broke into private bedrooms hunting middle-aged adulterers, braying with crazy, self-righteousness.

From sacred theatre to soap opera and then to the Theatre of the Grotesque — that is the story of the British Royal Family in the last 20 years.

The baiting of the Royal Family is now so unpleasant that it begins to look like we have entered a fourth phase, a phase which harks back to the earliest form of monarchy, about which anthro-

pologists write, when the king was honoured for a short time — then hunted and ritually slaughtered.

This baiting is utterly degrading to everyone concerned and to the society which engages in or tolerates it.

The labour movement should put a stop to it. Transfer the 'discussion' on to the level of serious politics — raise the demand for a republic! We do not need the monarchy! We do not need the gutter tabloids and their demeaning stunts.

The existence of a monarchy at the apex of a system of hereditary political privilege has long degraded British public life. The decay of that monarchy is now poisoning it.

Labour should pledge itself to put an end to it. This show has run too long already.

The monarchy is rotting before our eyes. Long live the Republic!

# Boring but true

**W**e all go on about "the trade union movement" as though we know exactly what we're talking about. In practice we don't: our own personal experience is limited and our general knowledge comes from the bourgeois press and/or publications like this one. That's why it is sometimes useful to read the *Employment Gazette*, even though it is a stupefyingly boring publication from the Department of Employment. Given that the

## INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

*Gazette* functions, in effect, as an internal bulletin of the ruling class, it's a fair bet that it is at least factually accurate.

The current issue of the *Gazette* contains a special feature on union density across the employed workforce. The fact that a government publication sees fit to carry such a feature tells us one thing, if nothing else: the Thatcherite objective of obliterating effective trade unionism and the *Marxism Today* predictions of a union-free "Post-Fordism" have not come to pass.

The "Labour Force Survey" deals with union density — the members of a particular group who are members of a trade union — across the entire British workforce, dealing with industrial, regional and personal (i.e. age, race, sex) factors. The picture that emerges is generally consistent with other recent surveys that have been covered in this column: our movement has taken a battering and there are some worrying trends (not least the increasing evidence that the decline in union membership is structural as opposed to cyclical), but unionism is by no means on its death-bed (as both the Thatcherite triumphalists and the "Post-Fordist" lefties would have you believe). The LFS concludes that "over the period between 1989 and 1991, union density... fell slightly from 34% to 33%". Disappointing, but hardly a catastrophe.

More significant is the ongoing change in the make-up of the trade union membership: as we have pointed out in *Socialist Organiser* many times, the public sector is now the main bastion of unionism; the LFS report comments: "differences between manufacturing and service industries are quite small; instead the key factor connecting areas with quite high levels of union density appears to be public sector status."

This fact is of prime importance. Understanding its implications is the key to developing any kind of coherent trade union strategy.

Firstly, we must recognise that apart from a few exceptions like the Post and Railways, public sector workers lack industrial muscle. Strike action hits services to working class people. It does not hit capitalists' profits. It is therefore best for industrial action to be pinpointed and selective so as to achieve maximum effect — such as NALGO's targeting of "key" groups of workers, like computer staff during the 1989 pay strikes.

At the same time, it is important to fight to establish and maintain trade union control over essential services. Often this kind of action which challenges management's authority puts more pressure on bosses than any other action.

This point has been proved by the recent UCH healthworkers' occupation. In order to stop a ward closure, the unions gained control of the bed rota. Management collapsed. They wanted things back to 'normal' and to stop this embryonic form of workers' control.

The second thing to say about the disproportionate concentration of trade unionism in the public sector is that this "base" is a) vulnerable; b) under attack; and c) not as firmly rooted as manufacturing unionism was during the post-war boom.

If the public sector is broken up into competing elements through the extension of Compulsory Competitive Tendering, some at least will be fighting for their survival. The Tories know this, and they are determined to break up the public sector "monopolies" in order to break the unions resting on them.

Trade unions which have recruited and organised public sector workers on a relatively easy basis will not find things so easy with private contractors who are vehemently anti-union and whose contracts are dependent on cutting labour costs and keeping the workforce docile.

Breaking up of trade unions and refusal to recognise them has been a central feature of contracting out to date. Indeed, in some cases it seems to have been the major motive for contracting-out.

Even where work remains in-house, contracting out squeezes serious trade unionism.

A serious, co-ordinated, national fight against the extension of contracting out or market testing, as CCT is also called, has to be a central priority for public sector trade unionism. The alternative is to see the great bulk of public sector trade unionism reduced to the grotesque spectacle we've seen in the last decade amongst local authority and NHS manual unions: one-time militants devoting themselves to negotiating wage cuts and concessions on conditions in order to win in-house bids are not a very pretty sight.

Next week we'll continue our inquiry into the implications of LFS by looking at why 53% of trade unionists now have "A-level" education or above, and why supervisors appear to be more unionised than ordinary workers.



The reality of Tory Britain is homelessness and despair. Isn't it time Labour started to campaign on issues to defeat the Tories?

# Clinton? No! Campaign? Yes!

## PLATFORM

By John Nicholson,  
Chair, Socialist Campaign Group Network

**T**he aim of the Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network is to co-ordinate and sustain a non-sectarian network of actively campaigning Labour Party members who want to turn their Party to socialism.

It is vital that socialists in the Labour Party campaign, because the leadership of the Party is not going to do it for us. Indeed, the present direction of the leadership continues to be American presidential-style media promotions based on Clinton-type "good looks".

The 1987 and 1992 General Election TV broadcasts were compared to Oscar-winning films. Unfortunately, they flopped at the box-office. Clinton is supposed to show the way forward for Labour. Yet he says about the bombing of Iraq: "There is no difference between my policy and the policy of the Bush administration".

But the Labour leadership has not learnt the lessons. Instead it continues to jettison the last remnants of socialist policies, and to expel socialists who campaign for them. It has capitulated to Tory ideology, and exchanged parliamentary deals for political opposition.

On the other hand, we must campaign in new ways ourselves, not just knocking on doors at election times. We must campaign outside and inside the Party, with people who are prepared to struggle against the Tories, and draw people into the Party.

**"The 1987 and 1992 General Election TV broadcasts were compared to Oscar-winning films. Unfortunately, they flopped at the box-office."**

We must campaign in a democratic and participatory manner, working together co-operatively, and encouraging the same values within our campaigns as we would want to see in our policies. And we must support the left MPs, and ensure links between them and the

grassroots of the Party.

Parliament is designed to alienate its members from their origins (if they are on the left, that is). Socialists who work in the Party, to ensure representation, must not then allow their representatives to vanish behind the veneer of Westminster. We should not leave our MPs to become isolated individuals but should enable them to be accountable to the rank and file which supports them.

Most of all, socialists in the Labour Party must never forget why we are campaigning. It is not just to fight against the Tories — though we must. It is also to transform the balance of wealth and power, to strive to eliminate disadvantage, and to improve the institutions of society so that they work in favour of the people they are supposed to serve. In short, we are campaigning to fulfil a vision of socialism, and our actions must be judged against this vision.

The Labour Party is not an island (though it often feels like it). The Socialist Campaign Network must therefore turn local Labour Parties into participatory and campaigning organisations reaching out to new forces — in the community, the country

and the world.

We must not be afraid to assert principles which have been submerged by the PLP's increasingly frequent claims that the Tories' plans are not wrong, just that Labour thought of them first.

**"We must campaign in new ways ourselves, not just knocking on doors at election times."**

Public ownership and control of the economy, restructuring wages and benefits, abolition of nuclear missiles and of the consequent reliance on nuclear power, self-determination for Ireland as much as for Southern Africa, the freedom for women to control their reproductive rights — all of these are campaigning issues which will be supported by large numbers of people.

What is needed is the leadership to put them forward.

The Labour Party should be providing that leadership. The job of the Socialist Campaign Network is to make the Labour Party provide that leadership — and to make the Labour Party a party fit for socialists to be in.

*Their education and ours*

# Return of the grammar school?

**Education trade unionists have criticised plans for the formal streaming of primary schools as a first stage in the re-introduction of selection for secondary education.**

**Colin Waugh takes a look at the way the Tories' education policy seeks to revive everything that was bad about the old grammar school system.**

The government is dictating in more and more detail what schools teach. Not content with bringing in the National Curriculum, and testing at 7, 11, 14 and 16, nor with attacking coursework in GCSE, they've recently intervened to cut out the creative, problem-solving elements from Craft, Design and Technology, and to lay down which three Shakespeare plays are studied. Soon they will interfere with History teaching.

They seem to want all state secondary schools to work to a narrow version of the old grammar school-style curriculum, in which the traditional mainstream subjects are taught so as to be memorised rather than understood, and treated in isolation from one another and from other ways of looking at the world.

There is nothing 'natural' or inevitable about such a curriculum.

It was first evolved around 1900 to do a job for the capitalist class in the UK. By then the "public" schools (fee-paying boarding schools for ruling-class boys) had been re-organised to turn out administrators for the Empire abroad and the state at home.

Needed for lower-ranking administrative roles, people from less well-off

groups were selected and trained through "grammar" schools, using a version of the public school curriculum.

This grammar school curriculum encouraged individual ambition (in line with a scholarship system which let a few working-class children into these schools), attention to detail (because low-level administrators would need to write official letters and keep accounts), and a willingness to accept authority, not to question things, not to think outside boundaries or across categories.

It ruled out some areas of knowledge altogether, and organised what remained into watertight compartments ("subjects").

Eventually all state secondary schooling was structured around this curriculum, instead of, for example, around producing technically-qualified people, or raising the educational level of everybody.

Between the early 1960s and the late 1970s, other approaches were laid over this basic structure. There was more emphasis on learning by doing, on "skills" rather than "facts", on linking different kinds of knowledge, on questioning rather than accepting things on authority, on cooperating rather than competing. But, except with "non academic" pupils or in non-examined areas such as Personal, Social and Environmental Education, these approaches did not threaten the underlying structure.

Now the government wants to strip away what's left of these different approaches.

They have two main reasons for doing it. First, because pushing the grammar school-type curriculum is a way of buying support from ambitious parents; secondly, because standardising what's taught cuts the need for learning materials to be designed by teachers,

making it easier for publishers, broadcasters and software manufacturers to realise profits from the school sector.

Another result is to close any "spaces" in the curriculum where radical approaches survive.

But broader changes now threaten this traditional curriculum itself.

**"The Labour leadership wants to attract some of the same voters as Patten, so it apes his emphasis on standards."**

The Empire has gone. Electronic technology means capital that needs fewer people to write official letters or do book-keeping. Some ideological control can now be done more efficiently through the mass media rather than through schools.

Lastly, whereas in 1918 the Labour Party's Constitution could talk about "the workers by hand or brain", the line between

office and skilled manual work is now so blurred that the bosses can't rely on it to set workers against one another. They need an education system — and therefore a curriculum — which uses different criteria to allocate people to their positions in the workforce.

One way might be to make education more like industrial training, hence CBI support for the new qualifications called CNVQs (General National Vocational Qualifications). But the Education Minister, John Patten, can't go too far in pushing this "vocational" trend because he has to balance the broader needs of his class against the government's need to buy parents' support.

The Labour leadership wants to attract some of the same voters as Patten, so it apes his emphasis on standards. The TUC backs the bosses' industrial-training model. There is grassroots opposition by teachers and parents to Patten's interventions. But this will peter out unless the left, in supporting it, also puts forward an inde-

pendent, working-class perspective on the curriculum.

The grammar school-type curriculum was originally designed to pick and train a particular part of the labour force. It also helped to suppress and marginalise anti-capitalist ideas that working class activists were developing at the time.

**"Some ideological control can now be done more efficiently through the mass media rather than through schools."**

In the twenty to thirty years up to 1914, there was an explosion of both individual and collective self-education amongst working-class activists. They focused on economic, philosophical and political understanding.

To understand capitalism they studied Marx, and also books like Robert Blatchford's *Merrie England*.

To understand the relationship between thinking and the world they studied Engel's *Anti-Duhring* and Joseph Dietzgen's *The Positive Outcome of Philosophy*. And to understand, for example, how the bourgeois parties cheated the workers while claiming to represent them, they studied Daniel De Leon's *Two Pages from Roman History*. In short, they went after knowledge that would enable them to act together to change the social order, the kind of knowledge we need now more than ever.

In contrast, the grammar school curriculum offered individual, abstract knowledge. But if you wanted your child to get on, that was what you had to accept, whatever your own beliefs.

The left should now work out a programme of demands about the curriculum, starting from the need to develop the kind of understanding which activists in those days were seeking, and which the grammar school curriculum helped to suppress.



The Tories want an education system where working-class students will be taught to accept received authority

GRAFFITI

# Showtime in Mold

GRAFFITI

Starting now at Mold Crown Court in North Wales, and scheduled to last six months, (bags of time if you fancy a day trip to the public gallery) one-time, municipal revolutionary Derek Hatton is facing charges of conspiracy to defraud Liverpool City Council. The charges, you may recall, concern Degsy's dealings with the council with respect to two car park sites and the site of a proposed cinema complex.



What a show!

Among the former socialist leader's co-defendants is John Monk, his "personal tailor".

Socialist Organiser will keep you briefed. I wonder if Militant will?

Oh, the problems of being an ethical investor! Having to disinvest from all those companies with dodgy products, environmentally unfriendly practices and exploitative working practices. The trouble is that the only alternative is cleaner, more sensitive firms, with exploitative working practices, run by ex-hippies, which are not always as profitable as they might be.

But stop worrying about your share portfolio — New Consumer, the charity to help rich green folk spend their money, have published their Shareholder Action Handbook. In the handbook, investors are encouraged to invest in the least ethical companies that they can find and reform them from the inside. And if these companies have very high returns on investment that will be fine, as long as the "ethical investor" goes to

a shareholders' meeting once a year, and makes a nuisance of themselves.

The day that Brazil's President Fernando Collor resigned in the heat of financial scandal, every copy of *O Globo* sold out in Rio de Janeiro.

But the reason was nothing to do with Collor; it was the murder of actress Daniela Perez. From this point on the boundaries between the soap-opera in which she appeared, and reality become rather blurred. The murderer confessed: he was Guilherme de Padua who played Perez's possessive boyfriend in the soap.

The plot thickens. The soap then used real news footage of the murder and the funeral mixed with footage of the actors mourning the murder of Perez's character, quickly written into the plot. The next twist is that the cast are going to organise a demo against violence on the show, which will really take place (as well as being used on the soap).

The name of the soap is "Body and Soul", which seems pretty accurate.

Jobs for the boys update: the following Tory ex-Cabinet ministers are now holding jobs in the industries they helped to privatise:

Norman Fowler was Secretary of State for transport, privatising National Freight. He is now a director of National Freight; Norman Tebbit: Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, privatised British Telecom, now on their board.

The list continues: Peter Walker (Energy, British Gas), Lord Young (Trade and Industry, Cable and Wireless), Giles Shaw (Industry, British Steel). In addition to this there are 18 Tory MPs who hold directorships and consultancies in nearly every privatised electricity firm.

But one thing must be for sure: current Transport Minister, John McGregor, will never find an easy pay cheque with whatever remains of British Rail, should he ever succeed in privatising it...

"From firebrand to folk hero"? Eh? Kinno? From a red to a rat! Maybe someone at *Tribune* is being funny. The three column piece on Kinno, 'Folk Hero' is coupled with a much longer piece on 'Gardening for Socialism!' Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds!

# Tories and press fall further out of love

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

A week is a long time in politics and longer still in journalism. Who'd have predicted seven days ago that *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie would emerge as a convincing champion of free speech and civil liberties? Or that his newspaper would forgo the opportunity to publish the Camillagate pillow talk? Or that Lord McGregor of the Press Complaints Commission, would accuse the Princess of Wales of manipulating the press for her own ends? Or that the so-called Security Services would emerge as the chief suspects in the Squidgy tape affair?

The upshot of all these extraordinary revelations is that Sir David Calcutt's

proposals for statutory controls over the press are now almost certainly a dead letter. John Major has already ruled out Calcutt's central proposal — that of a statutory tribunal with the power to restrain publication and to impose fines of up to one per cent of an erring newspaper's annual revenue. Even Calcutt's less contentious proposals — introducing new civil laws on infringement of privacy and the use of electronic bugging devices — now seem unlikely to reach the statute books.

A week ago things looked very different. Ever since the Tory press and the government fell out of love with each other last year, John Major has been making noises about the need to do something about "irresponsible" and "intrusive" newspapers. "Mellorgate" and the various scandals involving Norman Lamont served to further whet the government's appetite for draconian press controls. The Parliamentary Labour Party is, if anything, less well disposed towards the "free press" than the government — although the Labour lead-

ership's hostility has the justification of decades of misrepresentation and character-assassination at the hands of Britain's virulently anti-Labour fourth estate.

Last week I urged socialists to stand with Kelvin and the boys against Calcutt's posse outside the

**"There is one proposal that would help the 'little people' without endangering press freedom: legal aid for libel cases. But legal aid is being phased out. Except for Norman Lamont that is."**

Last Chance Saloon. I didn't expect that to be a popular view on any section of the left. From the PLP front-bench leftwards, we've all got good reasons to hate the British press.

The vicious hounding of the likes of Derek Robinson, Peter Tatchell, Arthur Scargill and (even) Neil Kinno; the lying campaign against "Loony Left" councils; the blatant bias at election time: it all makes Calcutt-type legislation very appealing. And then there is the tabloids' record of hounding private individuals like the families of disaster victims. Surely something has to be done?

Well, maybe. But to be honest, I can't think of any form of press legislation that wouldn't in practice curtail serious investigative journalism and benefit the rich and powerful rather than the "little people". Britain is already a much more secretive society than that bastion of capitalism, the USA. Calcutt would make matters much worse. It is to the credit of the left that, from the PLP down, we've opposed Calcutt despite our gut feelings. Actually, there is one proposal that would help the "little people" without endangering press freedom: legal aid for libel cases. But legal aid is being phased out. Except for Norman Lamont that is.

# 'Pricing ourselves out of a job'

WOMEN'S EYE

By Jean Lane

The government has decided that giving pregnant women in Britain maternity leave comparable to the rest of Europe would be too costly and would drive women from the labour force. The European directive on pregnant women, providing 18 weeks maternity leave on full pay, would cost, according to government ministers, £500 million a year, and are prepared to raise maternity leave to only 14 weeks, instead, at a cost of £100-250 million. Patrick McLoughlin, junior Employment Minister and top contender for the Peter Lilley-defender-of-social-provision-award, argued that countries with better mater-

nity provision, such as Italy or Spain had 38-40% of women in work, as against 62% in Britain — proof, according to him, that excessive costs created unemployment. If women demand too much, the warn-

**'Women getting equality with men is not always the most radical demand.'**

ing is clear, they will lose their jobs.

The same message came over during the General Election campaign, when we were told that a minimum wage would result in workers losing their jobs. The people who would most benefit from a minimum wage being established are women who

form the bulk of the low-paid and part-time work force. These are the people who, it seems could price themselves out of a job if they ask too much, not your average managing director who gives himself a fifty percent pay increase to better reflect all that slaving over a hot golf club, or your average Maxwell-style tycoon. Oh I don't know though, maybe he did price himself out of a job. But he was earning a bit more than a hair dresser before he got the push.

Now the government are set to surpass themselves in meanness, by planning to make women work until the age of 65 before they can receive the state pension. Debate went on for much of last year to find a method of equalising men and womens' retirement. For once, the government had the chance of giving men equality with

women by bringing their pensionable age down to 60. Sorry lads, can't be done. By raising women's retirement age to 65 instead, they save the exchequer £3 billion a year. Women getting equality with men is not always the most radical demand.

The attacks on the low paid and on social welfare are merely the tip of the iceberg. Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, who is drawing up the White Paper on this equalisation of pensions is a member of the right wing Tory 'No Turning Back' group. This group is pressing for the scaling down of the welfare state, for private insurance schemes and for the American "work-fare" system, and Lilley will be demanding that the cabinet take up these policies. If he demands too much, will he be pricing himself out of a job?





Palestinian exile remains defiant. The Islamic inscription reads "Victory from God"

# Israel after the deportations What is Hamas?

The deportation of 415 Palestinian Arabs, many of them members of the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas, has caused an outcry both within Israel and abroad. This article, which appears in the latest addition of *The Other Israel* explains what Hamas is, and why the policy of the Israeli state is both short-sighted and wrong. The article is by Pinchas Inbari.

In the past, Israel attributed to the entire PLO the positions of its most radical groups. The mistake is now being repeated towards Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, towards Islamic Fundamentalism, or even towards Islam as a whole.

By such a mistake the positions of the Az Addin Al-Kasem Commando, which claimed responsibility for kidnapping and killing Sergeant Nissim Toledano, were attributed to the entire Hamas movement.

Historically, Hamas is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. In the Occupied Territories, the Muslim Brotherhood strongly opposed for years any confrontation with the Israeli authorities, fearing that armed struggle would jeopardise its network of religious and educational institutions. That was reason for the Israeli military authorities to covertly help the Brotherhood, hoping to turn it into a counterweight against the PLO.

Around 1985, the rival Islamic Jihad was founded calling for armed struggle

against Israel. Sheikh Ahmad Yassin was a dissenting voice in the Brotherhood's leadership; he sympathised with the aims of the Islamic Jihad, but was blocked by the other spiritual leaders. With the outbreak of the Intifada, however, Sheikh Yassin's militant position got new adherents, and the Muslim Brotherhood had to accept the formation of the Islamic Resistance Movement - Hamas.

Hamas took the position that "the whole of Palestine belongs to God" and carried out many attacks, including the kidnapping and killing of two Israeli soldiers. This led to its being outlawed and to the imprisonment of its founder, Sheikh Yassin.

Nevertheless, also Hamas made great efforts to preserve the network of Islamic institutions. And in the relatively calm period after the Madrid Conference, Hamas took an active role in elections to the Chambers of Commerce - elections held by a tacit understanding between Israel and the PLO.

It was also hinted that, should elections take place to a Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority, Hamas might participate in them - despite its present opposition to the peace talks. At least some circles in Hamas want to be represented in any Palestinian body to be elected - while others oppose the very idea of an interim solution, of which the elections would be part.

In an interview published shortly before the Toledano affair, Mahmud A-Zahar of Gaza considered the unofficial spokesperson of Hamas

spoke for the first time in a positive way about the idea of Palestinian autonomy, as well as about the possibility of limiting the Jihad to a struggle against the occupation, rather than against Israel as such.

During the Toledano kidnapping, A-Zahar proposed a compromise: the kidnapped soldier would be released in return for the appointment of an international medical commission, which should examine the state of Sheikh Yassin's health and determine his ability to stand imprisonment. This proposal was ignored both by the Israeli government and by the kidnappers, who killed Toledano when the time limit they set for releasing Sheikh Yassin

had expired. Moreover, the kidnappers also ignored an appeal by Sheikh Yassin himself, on Israeli television, to spare their captive.

As a result of the Toledano killing, many of the prominent Hamas pragmatists were deported or imprisoned, and the movement's religious and educational institutions were seriously disrupted. On the other hand, as deportees some of the pragmatists gained considerable exposure to the international media. Thus, the internal debate in Hamas is not ended, though it is now carried on under different conditions.

Contact *The Other Israel* c/o PO Box 2542, Holon 58125, Israel

## Peace Now demands

No to deportations!  
Yes to talks with the PLO!  
The deportation of hundreds of people who never stood trial, and therefore were never found guilty of any charges, constitutes a grave infringement of the basic principles of the State of Israel and of the basic freedom and rights of the individual.

The deportations are also a political mistake, and will in the long run bring severe damage upon Israel.

The deportations will not prevent bloodshed, but will deepen the hatred and increase the state of war between the two peoples. Already the deportations have caused damage:

- uniting all Palestinians and all Arabs against Israel;
- aborting the peace talks
- bringing sharp international criticism upon Israel

The only way to fight terrorism is to isolate and weaken

Hamas, precisely by making quick progress on the way to peace.

We call on the government of Israel:

- to bring the deportees back in order to have them stand trial
  - to abstain in the future from collective punishment and from punishment without trial
  - to start immediately talking to the PLO, in order to let the negotiations with the Palestinians progress.
- Come and demonstrate with us on Saturday night. Share in our call upon the prime minister of Israel and his government:
- No to deportations!
  - Yes to the war against terrorism!
  - Yes to direct talks with the PLO and to making concessions for peace!

Contact: *Peace Now*, POB 8159, Jerusalem 91081

# Clintonise the Labour Party? No, Bhumibol it!

## THE POLITICAL FRONT

Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and the Walworth Road PR team agonise over the elusive secrets of Clintonism and Clintonomics. The Great Man's "election technicians" are flown over at enormous expense and the T&G hosts a £120-a-head Clinton Conference.

The column could have saved everyone a lot of time and money. The secret lies in sax appeal.

Once Wild Bill Clinton picked up his horn and blew a hot chorus on "Summertime", he was home and dry against that old Square Bush — a man who couldn't swing on the end of a rope.

*"The column could have saved everyone a lot of time and money. The secret lies in sax appeal."*

I asked my friend, jazz correspondent Zoot Suit and he commented: "Actually, Clinton's performance was a real uncool vibrato, like so many Ofay cats. He makes the

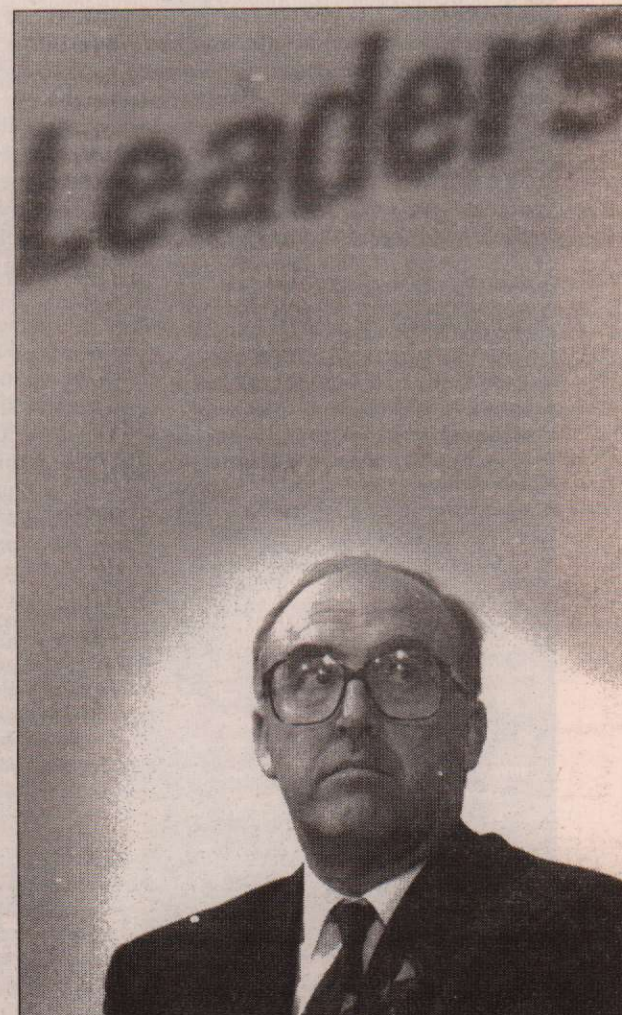
tenor sax talk and it says 'please put me back in my case'. Ben Webster he ain't".

If Labour's Clinton-obsessed "modernisers" want a real hep cat to latch onto, they'd do better to look to swingin' King Bhumibol of Thailand. Unlike Clinton's efforts the King's sax prowess is held in serious regard by jazz musicians.

He also doubles on clarinet, and has composed prolifically throughout his 47-year reign. Although old age and illness curtailed his gigging in the early eighties, Thai national radio still broadcasts a weekly show of Bhumibol's music, recorded in the palace studio.

And he is probably more popular than Clinton: subjects still stand to attention when military bands play the royal composition "his Majesty's Blues".

If Walworth Road's image gurus want further proof of the power of jazz reeds, they should ponder this: Margaret Thatcher's overthrow of non-swinging Edward Heath followed the publication of a photograph of her "jamming" on clarinet alongside Chris Barber and Kenny Ball. Start blowin' Johnny Smith.



Get blowin' Johnny Smith

# The German Revolution of 1918-19

# Lessons confi

Ray Saunders continues the story of the German revolution of 1918-19 — an event that shaped the course of modern German history. Its defeat prepared the way for the rise of Adolf Hitler, who became Chancellor sixty years ago on 30 January 1933.

On 16-20 December 1918 delegates of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils from all of Germany attended a conference of workers' and soldiers' deputies in Berlin.

Inside the Congress the Social-Democratic Party [SPD] was firmly in control. The delegates lagged far behind the militant rank and file. Out of 489, 288 were Social-Democrats, 80 were Independents, (USPD) and only 10 were Spartakists.

The resolutions were often radical in words, but always nebulous in content. In terms of action to back up the 'left' words, they were knives with no blades.

The Spartakist leader Eugen Levine, was sentenced to death and shot later that year in Berlin, reported angrily: "We did not have very high hopes of the Congress from the start. We knew that we, the Spartakists, would be a tiny minority and we also knew that our neighbours on the right, the Independents, would not have a majority either.

"Nevertheless, we would never have imagined that it would, in fact, present such a hopeless picture, nor could we have envisaged that the Soviet Congress would be composed, as one comrade has remarked, of Party Secretaries with their numerous 'tickets', and zealous Trade Union officials indifferent to the interests of the workers and concerned only with narrow Party interests; that those would be in the majority who are ready to stake the interests of the working class and the revolution for the sake of picking up mandates to the National Assembly...

"On the crucial questions, such as the National Assembly and



Eugen Levine, one of the Spartakists' leaders

the declaration of the Congress as the supreme authority, we of course had no hope at all. We knew that the National Assembly would be passed and that the Congress would also approve the

**"From the uppermost limit of the state down to the tiniest parish, the proletarian mass must replace the inherited organs of bourgeois class rule with workers' and soldiers' councils."**

report of the government and the Executive Committee. It was also clear that nothing would come of nationalisation..."

His conclusion was clear: "We must put an end to our unnatural alliance [with the USPD], this marriage of fishes and young lions. We cannot possibly act the part of the whip that drives the Independents. How can there be an alliance between a whip and a donkey which digs in its heels and declares 'you can go on whipping me but I won't budge'? If we continue to ally ourselves with the USPD we shall be the donkeys".

From mid-December, the Spartakists steered towards a clear break with the USPD, founding the Germany Communist Party at a Congress on 30 December/1 January.

The Spartakists had counterposed the Workers' Councils to the Assembly (Parliament) called for by the SPD leaders. "The present government", they declared, "is calling a Constituent Assembly in order to create a bourgeois counterweight to the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, thereby shunting the revolution onto the track of a mere bourgeois revolution and conjuring away its socialist aims.

"The National Assembly is an obsolete heirloom of bourgeois revolutions, a husk without content, a stage-prop from the period of petty-bourgeois illusions



Government troops and Spartakists in conference during a ceasefire

about a 'united people', about the 'freedom, brotherhood and equality' of the bourgeois state".

Rosa Luxemburg explained: "From the uppermost limit of the state down to the tiniest parish, the proletarian mass must replace the inherited organs of bourgeois class rule — the assemblies, parliaments and city councils — with its own class organs, with workers' and soldiers' councils. It must occupy all the posts, supervise all official needs by the standard of its own class interests and the tasks of socialists."

Now that the Congress of Workers' Councils had refused to make itself the power in the land, and had approved the Assembly elections to take place on 19 January, the Spartakists had to make a difficult, tactical shift.

On 23 December the paper, *Die Rote Fahne*, announced that they were in favour of participation in that "stage prop of petty bourgeois illusions", the National Assembly, to combat it from within and use it as a forum for revolutionary agitation.

The SPD leaders did not

believe that Assembly Elections could solve anything, any more than the Spartakists did. They set about trying to crush the revolutionaries, to make sure that

**"In 1933 the President of the Republic — a President put in office with Social-Democratic support — was to call Hitler to power. By then the German CP had been corrupted by Stalinism, and it was crushed without a shot being fired."**

the Assembly elections would set the seal on a firmly re-consolidated bourgeois power.

Counter-revolutionary troops had now been assembled round Berlin. On December 24 they began to shell militant sailors who had been occupying the Imperial Stables and had now

kidnapped Commandant Wels. They had to stop when hundreds of workers — many of them women — surrounded them and began taking weapons off them.

The counter-revolution began in earnest in the New Year. As the hounds run ahead of the huntsmen, so now the clamouring press opened up the next round of the reactionary offensive.

After the "Independent Socialists", the USPD withdrew from the Government, the right-wing opened a campaign for the sacking of the left-USPD Berlin Police Chief Emil Eichhorn, and the dissolution of the workers' militias which he had built. It was all part of the struggle to crush the new centres of workers' power, and to restore to the bourgeois state its monopoly of the means of violence.

On 4 January, Eichhorn was sacked. The Berlin Executive of the USPD and the Revolutionary Shop Stewards realised that the Social-Democrats were trying to remove Eichhorn in order to clear the decks for an official terror campaign directed against the whole radical left. They called



# Confirmed in blood



demonstration for the next day.

The demonstration was a huge success. But its leaders had little idea what to do next. When it finished, the suggestion was made — by an agent provocateur, it turned out — that the office of the SPD paper *Vorwärts* should be occupied. Later that evening several other newspaper offices were also occupied.

This was what Noske, the new SPD Minister of Defence, had been waiting for. On his appointment he had proudly stated, "Someone has to be the bloodhound. I shall not shirk my responsibilities".

On the pretext of fighting for 'freedom of the press' he ordered troops to shell the workers occupying *Vorwärts*.

The USPD was confused. It called another demonstration, and a declaration was drafted — and signed by the impetuous Liebknecht — calling for the overthrow of the government.

Having issued the call, the USPD and the Revolutionary Shop Stewards dithered, not mobilising broader forces for the struggle but negotiating with the enemy. The SPD took the chance

thus offered without any dithering.

In the following days, the riff-raff into whose hands the SPD had thrust the banner of 'Peace, Democracy and National Defence' murdered hundreds of militants. They said they were putting down a "Spartakist rising". And on January 15 they finally tracked down Luxemburg and Liebknecht and butchered them — claiming that they had been shot "while trying to escape arrest".

Before the January events, Rosa Luxemburg had already warned of the danger of premature confrontation: "[The authorities] are the people who are trying to saddle the socialist proletariat with the responsibility for anarchy and putsches fabricated by themselves so that they can unleash real anarchy at an opportune moment".

In the Russian Revolution, there was a similar moment: the "July Days", when the right wing used a premature, revolutionary demonstration in St. Petersburg as an opportunity to mount a counter-offensive. But in Russia the Bolshevik Party was suffi-

ciently well-organised and politically firm to make sure the militant workers retreated in good order, with minimum losses.

The new German Communist Party (Spartakus), only a few days old, could not do the same. At the CP's founding Congress at the New Year some of its leaders had been almost in despair at the immaturity of the membership, who reversed the leadership's line of participation in the National Assembly and almost committed the new party to withdrawing from the trade unions.

***"While the social-democrats identify revolution with violence, they are ready to shed blood on a massive scale to avoid revolution. Bourgeois constitutionality is a thousand times more soaked in blood than the socialist order."***

In January, the CP put itself bravely on the side of the revolutionary workers, against the right-wing mobs. It could do little more.

In the months after January, the terror knew no bounds. Berlin saw one punitive expedition after another. In Bremen a counter-revolutionary offensive in February removed one of the few real revolutionary Workers' Councils. What happened in Bremen was repeated in the nearby Northern ports of Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven. Then the right-wing pogromists turned their attention to Central Germany.

In Berlin, the revolutionary spirit still had not been crushed and fighting broke out again in March. Now Noske excelled himself. The bloodhound became a vampire. As Commander-in-Chief he announced his infamous Schiessbefehl, the order to shoot on sight any person opposing or obstructing government troops.

The numbers of victims jumped from hundreds to thousands. Heroic resistance in the Ruhr and in Brunswick was crushed too.

And finally came the turn of Munich, where May Day 1919 was a day of celebration for the blood-thirsty rabble that destroyed the Bavarian Soviet.

Ebert's 'Social Republic', born in so much blood, was a sham. Its reforming promises soon faded away. It was raddled by inflation, unemployment and poverty. In 1933 the President of the Republic — a President put

in office with Social-Democratic support — would call Hitler to power.

By then the German CP had been corrupted by Stalinism, and it was crushed without a shot being fired. But in 1919 repression failed to crush the revolutionary vanguard, however many of its leaders were murdered. The German CP survived, found new leaders, became a mass revolutionary party, and led new revolutionary struggles.

1919 proved conclusively that, while the social-democrats identify revolution with violence, and constitutional reformism with peace, they are ready to shed blood on a massive scale to avoid revolution. It proved that bourgeois constitutionality is a thousand times more soaked in blood than the socialist order.

Rosa Luxemburg has since been 'adopted' by social-democrats; her criticism of the Bolshevik dispersal of the Constituent Assembly in Russia is frequently cited as an 'alternative' conception to Leninism — 'communism with parliamentary democracy'.

Such political philistines and ideological hucksters hide the fact that, faced with roughly similar problems to those faced by Lenin and forced to deal with

them more concretely than before, Rosa Luxemburg endorsed in theory and practice the policy of Lenin.

The German events of 1918-19 confirmed in blood the same lessons which some try to pass off as 'peculiarities' of 'backward' Russia:

- That the old state power must be smashed.
- That it must be replaced by a new state power — one which is openly a class dictatorship, but infinitely more democratic than bourgeois parliamentarianism: a proletarian state power based on workers' councils.
- And that the working class needs a disciplined, revolutionary party, able to lead the decisive battle for state power in the few days or weeks in which the chance of revolution remains open, before being crushed by bloody counter-revolution.

The main difference in conditions between October 1917 and January 1919 was that decades of Parliamentarianism in Germany had bred 'socialist' politicians whose hypocrisy and ruthless treachery far outstripped anything the Russian social democrats could do against the Revolution.

## Karl Liebknecht

Karl Liebknecht was the son of William Liebknecht, one of the founders of the German socialist movement. William, who died in 1900, had gone to jail for anti-war activity during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870.

As a member of the Reichstag (Parliament) in the years before World War 1, Karl Liebknecht agitated against the militarist system then dominant in Germany. With Rosa Luxemburg and Franz Mehring, he led the left wing of the powerful German, socialist movement.

The whole socialist movement was officially committed to oppose war, and resist it. But when, in 1914, war came, and German armies quickly over-ran Belgium and northern France, the Party collapsed into nationalism, supporting the Government.

On August 4 1914, the German Socialist Party voted for the German Government's war budget. This treason of German socialism to its own principle triggered a general, socialist collapse: in France, Belgium, Britain and other countries, most erstwhile socialists lined up behind their national governments and "national defence". The Socialist International had irreparably broken down.

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg picked up the fallen banner of international socialism in Germany. Liebknecht was the first MP to come out publicly against the war.

On August 3, the day before the Party voted for the Government's war budget, the socialist Reichstag group met to discuss the proposal to back the Government. At first fourteen voted

against the proposal. After further discussion, the fourteen boiled down to three — Hugo Haas, Georg Ledalow and Karl Liebknecht. But the idea of "iron party discipline" was a power in German socialism, and Liebknecht and the other two submitted to party discipline. Liebknecht voted for the war budget on August 4.

The war was not the short episode many expected. It fell into a blood-drenched stalemate. In September Liebknecht went to Belgium and saw for himself the horrors of the German occupation there.

On December 2, 1914, he put socialist principle before party discipline. In defiance of the Party, he voted against the Government's new war budget. At that point, he stood entirely alone. He was howled down when he tried to explain his point of view in the Reichstag.

Now he started to agitate publicly against the war. He continued to vote against the Government, soon joined by a trickle of MPs, such as Otto Rühle. With Luxemburg and others he organised the 'Spartakusbund', a faction of the Social-Democrat Party. He was expelled from the Party.

On May Day 1916 Liebknecht addressed a great crowd of anti-war socialists at a meeting at the Potsdamerplatz in Berlin. The crowd was attacked by mounted soldiers wielding whips.

Karl Liebknecht was arrested and sentenced to 30 months jail. Appealing, he had the sentence increased to four years and one month.

The German Revolution freed him from jail.

AGAINST THE TIDE

# “Are you making slaves?”

I rashly promised to devote this week's column to Dora B Montefiore's account of her attempt in 1913 to take the starving children of Dublin strikers to refuge in the homes of English and Scottish workers, during the Dublin labour war. I find that I will have to keep that for next week.

Instead, this week I follow an American practice and give this space to a "guest columnist" with something to say in our discussion on the rights and wrongs of adults hitting children. He signs himself "Seumas". Beyond that I cannot tell you his name, because I do not know what his name is. Or, rather, was: Seumas has been dead a long time now. His article was published in December 1911 in the paper of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, Jim Larkin's *Irish Worker*. I read it in the files of that paper some time back, and our discussion reminded me of it.

Seumas was addressing himself to Dublin workers who lived in extremes of poverty, degradation and squalor unimaginable even in post-Thatcherite Britain. 21,000 families — big, Catholic families — lived in one-room tenements without running water or sanitation. Most had no regular income. They were women and men about whom James Connolly, praising the work of "Larkin's Union", which raised them up, truly said that centuries of social outlawry had thoroughly degraded and left them with no means of

self-defence except "the arts of the lickspittle and the toady" — until they learned to combine and organise. If conditions ever justify hard-pressed adults 'smacking' children, 'smacking' children was 'understandable' in these conditions.

Yet the union worked to civilise its members, fighting drunkenness and the habit of settling arguments with fists, campaigning to stop employers paying out wages in pubs, and so on: it published this article as part of that work of raising up the working class into a fitness to rule itself. Seumas's article is reminiscent of the articles Trotsky wrote in *Pravda* in 1923, "*Problems of Everyday Life*".

It seems to me that Seumas, whose article is printed here under its *Irish Worker* headline, puts his finger right on the issue: the social submissiveness of the worker, on which capitalist class rule depends, is taught first in the home, by blows and other forms of coercion.

I have not cut the parts of Seumas's article which deal with things other than the treatment of children — his appeal for tolerance and reason and so on. After 80 years, he is entitled to say his full piece; and even after 80 years, though many things are changed — corporal punishment was abolished in Irish schools, earlier than in English schools — the descendants of those he addressed would benefit by listening to him.

were so ruined by beating and overwork (with result-fees for object) that more than ten years steady treatment barely sufficed to bring them back to normal.

In some schools a monitor cannot teach long multiplication without mimicking the German Emperor, and persecuting the people who do not minister to his miniature majesty; none dare ask the reason why, or question the utility of what they are taught.

To ensure an unhealthy meekness of manner, which the teacher says is "being good", all initiative is discouraged, and personal opinions are punished as impertinence. Hypocrites and tell-tales are frequently installed as favourite. The head teacher or manager leads the way in fawning on anyone of place or title who comes near the school.

Thus are "good" citizens trained for the "battle of life".

In business, his fellow workers continue the same slave-making process. Everyone tries to sit on the newcomer, and his senior, at the workbench or in the office, copies the antics of the monitor in the class. Slaves have no respect for their fellow slaves, and their employers, being of the tyrant persuasion, promote those who are most slavish. The tone of a clergyman's sermon here is much more imperious than what we hear in England or America, though the doctrine be the same!

Let the working man be no party to this slave-making. Remember the words of Lazare Hoch, Napoleon's brilliant rival, to his wife: "Do not beat our boy, but correct him with gentleness. I do not wish that he shall be degraded by having to endure physical violence".

Do not connive with the slave makers at school by telling your child: "If you did not deserve the punishment, you would not get it". Inquire of the school. Don't lend your flesh and blood to schoolteachers for slavish displays. If the school books are unmanly and un-Irish be manly enough to object to get them changed. Get others to object and you will change them.

If you want liberty for yourself, don't be harsh with men under you. Treat them as men. If you believe that the salvation of Ireland can only come from Westminster, per John Redmond, don't hate Sinn Fein because it doubts the first article of your faith. Sinn Feiners don't imagine nationality began ten years ago; or think it if you like, but don't despise the man of longer memory, and let him see it.

Allow the other man the liberty to think for himself, and voice his thought. A free exchange of opinion brings out the truth; hatred and disrespect give brawlers their chance, and the enemy their light.

You, workers, can, if you choose, rear a generation of men whose souls will be free. A generation of free men would lose no time in gaining free institutions; they could not be denied.

AGAINST THE TIDE

By Seumas

Thomas Davis penned a very significant phrase when he wrote of the "Cymric [Welsh] Nation":

**"Freedom is the Soul's creation,  
Not the work of hands".**

This is not the contradiction of the phrase quoted by Garryowen last week:

**"Who would be free themselves  
Must strike the blow".**

Men do not strike blows for freedom who have not freedom in their hearts, whose souls are not already free. In this sense there are men who are in dungeons who are free, and highly respectable citizens who are slaves. The pride of freedom or the meanness of slavery is in the soul, and the temper of the soul decides whether we walk with the progressive legions of liberty or take any of the various ways of telling our brothers and sisters to "keep on starving".

This is the point to which I want to call the attention of working men, that in the everyday course of their lives they are making liberty or slavery dominate in the souls of those they have influence with, their friends, comrades, but, especially, their children.

In this "distressful country" of ours, blighted by foreign rule and our own imitation tyrants, it is hard to find a man of free habit of mind, one that can think and talk independently of the common prejudice, and who does not desire to replace one tyranny by another. Many of our countrymen have learned freedom of soul in other countries where it is common; comparatively few of our people at home have succeeded in raising their heads above the fog of prejudice (made and fostered by our

rulers) that obscures every public issue in Ireland.

Fewer still have learned the precious lesson of charity and politeness towards those of their countrymen who do not think and act as they do themselves, and the urgent necessity of keeping out blows of the common enemy; that is freedom for others as well as themselves.

There is tyranny with its attendant slavery all through Ireland; one of the numerous historical legacies with which we can profitably part. Those who have never lived outside our atmosphere of cant, cringe and mutual disrespect seldom realise to what

extent our liberty as individuals is invaded and our common rights as God's creatures denied or cornered by petty tyrants, and retailed at a profit.

From early childhood, the children of the monopolists are pampered and spoiled; those of the working man are shouted at and kicked, and beaten by parents, guardians and neighbours. In school, masters are frequently worse. The writer of this article (though of average behaviour) was brutally flogged in presence of the school by a strong adult male for having skipped two pages in his exercise book; and in seven years of school life, his nerves



In the miserable conditions of Dublin's slums working-class parents were often a party to the slave making of children

*Tales of the rich and infamous*

# Roberto Calvi, the Pope's crooked banker

**This is the first in an occasional series in which Stanley Raptis looks at some of the leading men of modern capitalism**

**R**oberto Calvi — whose corpse, weighed down with five pieces of brick and concrete, was found hanging beneath Blackfriars Bridge in London in June 1982 — was one of Italy's most powerful bankers. After returning to Italy from fighting on the Russian front in 1943, Calvi found a job with the Banca Commerciale. Three years later, thanks to his father's influence, he transferred to the Banco Ambrosiano.

Ambrosiano was a bank with a Catholic ethos. Job applicants had to submit references from their parish priest. An annual, religious ceremony appealed to God to protect the bank's financial performance.

Calvi, however, believed that Ambrosiano had more to gain from his business acumen than from divine providence. He began to modernise the bank's structure and activities, and gained rapid promotion as a result. By 1971 he was the bank's general manager.

Calvi was aided by the patronage of Michele Sindona, then, one of Italy's leading financiers and an owner of banks in Italy and Switzerland.

Sindona had access to a wide network of influential and powerful contacts from the mafia, Italian freemasonry, and the Vatican.

By the 1970s Sindona's banking network was a prime vehicle for laundering mafia money "earned" from drugs smuggling and racketeering.

Sindona, as a freemason, was in contact with 43 Italian MPs, the heads of every branch of the armed forces, the heads of the Italian intelligence agencies, and leading figures from business and the media.

**"An annual, religious ceremony appealed to God to protect the bank's financial performance."**

And he was a top financial adviser to the Vatican. He bought and resold companies owned by the Vatican, made the Vatican a partner in his own banks and companies, and smuggled currency out of the country through the Vatican bank, the IOR. (Given the Vatican's status as a sovereign state, money paid into the IOR, and then transferred out of the country was not subject to Italian currency-exchange controls).

Such links with organised crime enabled Sindona to amass a fortune. Calvi followed in the footsteps

of Sindona. Enjoying the network of contacts to which Sindona gave him access, and using the same fraudulent banking techniques as his patron, Calvi built a financial empire stretching from Italy to Latin America.

In 1970 he bought a Luxembourg-based "ghost company" (a nameplate outside a building and a post office box) from Sindona, and renamed it the Banco Ambrosiano Holding (BAH).

Through BAH (and other ghost companies) Calvi operated in the Italian stock market, and controlled other banks and companies outside of Italy, thus evading Italian laws (the product of an earlier banking scandal) which banned banks from owning industrial companies.

Calvi also founded a number of new banks in the Caribbean and Latin America which provided the basis for other crooked business ventures.

After financing a series of arms deals for the benefit of the Peruvian government, Calvi got the go-ahead to set up a bank in Peru in 1979. The following year he launched another bank in Argentina, where members of the ruling military junta enjoyed a close relationship with the P2 freemasons' lodge in Italy.

The subsidiaries in Luxembourg, the Bahamas and Latin America borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars from international banks. The money was then recycled to ghost companies which invested it in Ambrosiano shares — thus maintaining the value of shares in the Banco Ambrosiano in Italy at an artificially high level.

And through the ghost companies Calvi effectively took control of the Banco Ambrosiano itself.

Borrowing money from other banks, the ghost companies bought shares in Ambrosiano. But the ghost companies were controlled by Calvi (and the IOR). Calvi soon had a controlling interest of 20% of the shares in Ambrosiano. From then on, as one former director commented, "Board meetings were only rituals": Calvi exercised complete control.

Calvi took care to maintain a close relationship with the network of contacts to which Sindona had given him access.

In 1975 he joined the P2 lodge. Ambrosiano funds were soon being used to bail out the businesses of fellow members of the lodge. In quick succession Rizzoli publishers, Voxson television manufacturers and the Genghini construction firm all received massive loans from Ambrosiano.

From a business point of view they made no sense. Genghini, for example, collapsed shortly after the loan was made, exposing Ambrosiano to the tune of a hundred million dollars.

Calvi also greased the hands of politicians, making secret payments, according to an Ambrosiano official, to the Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists. The banker did not



The Vatican welcomed the moneylenders and crooks into the temple

allow his personal right-wing, political views to dictate the direction of his financial largesse.

Most important was the close relationship Calvi enjoyed with the IOR, the Vatican bank.

In 1971 an IOR representative had joined the board of the bank opened by Calvi in the Bahamas. In future years more IOR representatives were allocated places on the boards of other banks and ghost companies. In fact, two of the major ghost companies, were entirely controlled by the IOR. Jesus might have driven the moneylenders out of the temple, but the Vatican welcomed them back in.

**"Jesus might have driven the moneylenders out of the temple, but the Vatican welcomed them back in."**

The IOR tried to help keep Ambrosiano afloat as long as possible. In 1981, the fraudulent schemes operated by the ghost companies were beginning to fall apart. The IOR then issued "letters of comfort".

These letters indicated that the IOR stood by the ailing companies in Liechtenstein and elsewhere, apparently guaranteeing to underwrite their debts. The issuing of the "letters of comfort"

restored confidence, briefly, in Ambrosiano.

But the IOR had also obtained a letter, which was kept secret, from Calvi, in which the latter freed the IOR from any obligations to pay off the ghost companies' loans. When Ambrosiano collapsed, the IOR produced Calvi's letter and denied all financial responsibility.

By 1982, Calvi was in deep trouble. The P2 lodge had been exposed. He had been found guilty of smuggling currency abroad and was out on bail.

His ghost company scheme was also facing bankruptcy. They borrowed in dollars, but received dividends on their shares in lira. The rise in the value of the dollar, combined with higher interest rates, meant that they had less money to service a bigger debt burden.

Calvi was not the most interesting Captain of Industry. In fact, he was a colourless non-entity. As one of his business colleagues commented: "How can anyone go through their life looking at the point of their shoes?"

Calvi's response to the imminent collapse of his fraudulent empire was to flee the country. He got as far as Blackfriars Bridge. (Incidentally members of the P2 lodge wore black robes in their ceremonies, and addressed each other as friar. Hanging was the method of execution for those who betrayed the lodge).

If Calvi deserves an epitaph, it is the question once asked by the German dramatist Bertolt Brecht: "What is the crime of robbing a bank compared with that of owning one?"

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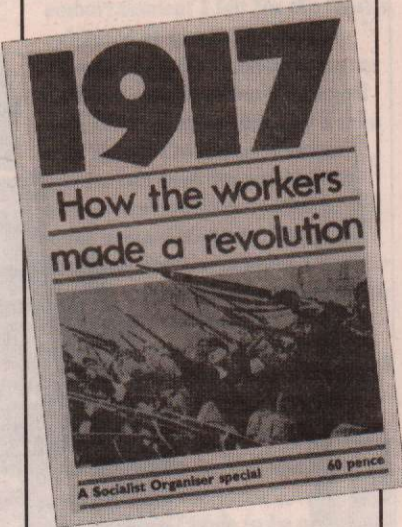
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# The roots of the class struggle

*What is the key to a proper understanding of history? What is the class struggle? VI Lenin explains the basic teaching of Karl Marx on these questions. If you want to learn to be a better fighter against the bourgeoisie, study this series.*

## MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Realising the inconsistency, the incompleteness, and the one-sidedness of the old materialism, Marx became convinced that it was necessary "to harmonise the science of society with the materialist basis, and to reconstruct it in accordance with this basis."

If, speaking generally, materialism explains consciousness as the outcome of existence, and not conversely, then, applied to the social life of mankind, materialism must explain social consciousness as the outcome of social existence.

"Technology," writes Marx in the first volume of *Capital*, "reveals man's dealings with nature, discloses the direct productive activities of his life, thus throwing light upon social relations and the resultant mental conceptions."

In the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx gives an integral formulation of the fundamental principles of materialism as applied to human society and its history, in the following words:

*In the social production of the means of life, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will — production relations which correspond to a definite stage of the development of their productive forces. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political superstructure arises and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond.*

*The mode of production of the material means of life determines, in general, the social, political, and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of human beings that determines their existence, but, conversely, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness.*

*At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing production relationships, or, what is but a legal expression for the same thing, with the property relationships within which they have hitherto*

*moved.*

*From forms of development of the productive forces, these relationships turn into their fetter. A period of social revolution then begins. With the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.*

*In considering such transformations we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic conditions of production, changes which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic, in short, ideological forms, in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out to an issue.*

*Just as little as we judge an individual by what he thinks of himself, just so little can we appraise such a revolutionary epoch in accordance with its own consciousness of itself. On the contrary, we have to explain this consciousness as the outcome of the contradictions of material life, of the conflict existing between social productive forces and production relationships...*

*In broad outline we can designate the Asiatic, the classical, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois forms of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society.*

[Compare Marx's brief formulation in a letter to Engels, dated July 7, 1866: "Our theory about the organisation of labour being determined by the means of production."]

The discovery of the materialist conception of history, or, more correctly, the consistent extension of materialism to the domain of social phenomena, obviated the two chief defects in earlier historical theories.

- For, in the first place, those theories, at best, examined only the ideological motives of the historical activity of human beings without investigating the origin of these ideological motives, or grasping the objective conformity to law in the development of the system of social relationships, or discerning the roots of these social relationships in the degree of development of material production.
- In the second place, the earlier historical theories ignored the activities of the masses, whereas historical materialism first made it possible to study with scientific accuracy the social conditions of the life of the masses and the changes in these conditions.

At best, pre-Marxist "sociology" and historiography gave an accumulation of raw facts collected at random, and a description of separate sides of the historic process. Examining the totality of all the opposing tendencies, reducing them to precisely definable conditions in the mode of life and the method of production of the various classes of society, discarding subjectivism and free will in the choice of various "leading" ideas or in their interpretation, showing how all the ideas and all the various tendencies, without exception, have their roots in the condition of the material forces of production, Marxism pointed the way to a comprehensive, an all-embracing study of the rise, development, and decay of socio-economic structures.

People make their own history:

- But what determines their motives, that is, the motives of people in the mass?
- What gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and endeavours?

- What is the sum total of all these clashes among the whole mass of human societies?
- What are the objective conditions for the production of the material means of life that form the basis of all the historical activity of man?
- What is the law of the development of these conditions?

To all these matters Marx directed attention, pointing out the way to a scientific study of history as a unified and true-to-law process despite its being extremely variegated and contradictory.

## CLASS STRUGGLE

That in any given society the strivings of some of the members conflict with the strivings of others;

- that social life is full of contradictions;
- and that history discloses to us a struggle among peoples and societies, and also within each nation and each society, manifesting in addition an alternation between periods of revolution and reaction, peace and war, stagnation and rapid progress or decline;
- these facts are generally known.

Marxism provides a clue which enables us to discover the reign of law in this seeming labyrinth and chaos: the theory of the class struggle.

Nothing but the study of the totality of the strivings of all the members of a given society, or group of societies, can lead to the scientific definition of the result of these strivings. Now, the conflict of strivings arises from differences in the situation and modes of life of the classes into which society is divided.

**"In the modern age... the class struggle has shown itself still more obviously the mainspring of events"**

*The history of all human society, past and present [wrote Marx in 1848, in the *Communist Manifesto*; "except the history of the primitive community," Engels added], has been the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild-burgess and journeyman — in a word, oppressor and oppressed — stood in sharp opposition each to the other. They carried on perpetual warfare, sometimes masked, sometimes open and acknowledged; a warfare that invariably ended either in a revolutionary change in the whole structure of society or else in the common ruin of the contending classes...*

*Modern bourgeois society, rising out of the ruins of feudal society, did not make an end of class antagonisms. It merely set up new classes in place of the old; new conditions of oppression; new embodiments of struggle. Our own age, the bourgeois age, is distinguished by this — that it has simplified class antagonisms. More and more, society is splitting up into two great hostile*

*camp, into two great and directly counterposed classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat.*

Since the time of the great French Revolution, the class struggle as the actual motive force of events has been most clearly manifest in all European history.

During the Restoration period in France, there were already a number of historians (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers) who, generalising events, could not but recognise in the class struggle the key to the understanding of all the history of France.

In the modern age — the epoch of the complete victory of the bourgeoisie, of representative institutions, of extended (if not universal\*) suffrage, of cheap daily newspapers widely circulated among the masses, etc., of powerful and ever-expanding organisations of workers and employers, etc. — the class struggle (though sometimes in a highly one-sided, "peaceful," "constitutional" form), has shown itself still more obviously to be the mainspring of events.

The following passage from Marx's *Communist Manifesto* will show us what Marx demanded of social sciences as regards an objective analysis of the situation of every class in modern society as well as an analysis of the conditions of development of every class.

*Among all the classes that confront the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is really revolutionary. Other classes decay and perish with the rise of large-scale industry, but the proletariat is the most characteristic product of that industry.*

*The lower middle class, small manufacturers, small traders, handicraftsmen, peasant proprietors one and all fight the bourgeoisie in the hope of safeguarding their existence as sections of the middle class.*

*They are, therefore, not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay, more, they are reactionary, for they are trying to make the wheels of history turn backwards.*

*If they ever become revolutionary, it is only because they are afraid of slipping down into the ranks of the proletariat; they are not defending their present interests, but their future interests; they are forsaking their own standpoint, in order to adopt that of the proletariat.*

In a number of historical works, Marx gave brilliant and profound examples of materialist historiography, an analysis of the position of each separate class, and sometimes of that of various groups or strata within a class, showing plainly why and how "every class struggle is a political struggle."

The above quoted passage is an illustration of what a complex network of social relations and transitional stages between one class and another, between the past and the future, Marx analyses in order to arrive at the resultant of the whole historical development.

Marx's economic doctrine is the most profound, the most many-sided, and the most detailed confirmation and application of his teaching.

\* Lenin was writing when all women and sections of the working class did not have the vote.



Lenin and the Bolshevik Party fought the class struggle in the 1917 Russian revolution



Directors, actors and crew: André Bonzel, Benoit Poelvoorde and Remy Belvaux

# A dog of a documentary

## Cinema

### Matt Cooper reviews *Man Bites Dog*

This is a remarkable film. It was produced by three Belgian, film-school-students — who took the lead roles — with one hand-held camera, as a demonstra-

tion piece on the minuscule budget of £40,000.

They took the film to the Cannes Film Festival, seeking backing to remake it "properly". It won a major prize, the Directors' Award. It has become the biggest grossing, home-produced film in Belgium ever.

It is a parody of *Cinéma Verité*, a fly-on-the-wall documentary. A three-man film-crew follows Ben

around his everyday life. He talks freely with the crew, but continues about his work nonplussed by their presence. The catch is that Ben is a psychopathic killer. The opening shot shows him garroting a woman in a train; he calmly explains to camera how to dispose of a dead body, and the weighting necessary to keep a corpse at the bottom of the river bed.

For the early part of the film there is genuine humour. Ben is just doing a job, earning his living in a way. He treats his 'job' in a neutral, professional way, one with a certain moralism to it. He talks of architecture and art, and recites the poems he has written. But as the film progresses the tone changes.

**"It is an essay about the relationship between violence, film-makers and the audience."**

The film crew are drawn into Ben's "work" as accomplices. Members of the film-crew are killed in shoot-outs. Ben is increasingly revealed as a sub-human murderer.

This view is cemented with a vile gang-rape and a murder in which the film-crew participates. Here, properly perhaps, the humour of the film fails, but there is nothing to replace it, and the film becomes a soulless drag.

By the end you feel it was overly long, at 90 minutes.

It is, of course, an essay about the relationship between violence, film-makers and the audience. The gang-rape scene is surely a parody of the voyeurism of films like Michael Winner's *Death Wish*. Ben's cultured acquaintance, respectable family and the film-crew themselves are — like modern cinema audiences — sucked into the vortex of violence that he breeds. This is, I suppose, what film students do, but the result is ghastly voyeurism which neither entertains nor enlightens.

Calloway, but, in the late 1930s, at about the same time as Parker, he became dissatisfied with the scope of improvisation then prevalent.

In the late 1940s, Dizzy ran a big band, which, apart from sheltering some of the best talent of the time, was instrumental in the fusion of jazz with Afro-Cuban music. Though he had to disband the band in the early '50s, in 1956 he put together another band to go on a State Department tour of the Near East and Latin America. Jazz had become one face of the US which the Government felt (ironically, given the way black musicians were treated in the US) would show the superiority of 'the American way'. Dizzy's band was the first to be given this treatment at a time when few blacks ever represented the US officially for anything.

Gillespie was famous for his humour, which coexisted with a serious approach to his music and also to life more generally. In 1964 he was sufficiently pissed off with mainstream politics in the period of the civil rights movement to run a semi-serious campaign for President. His platform included renaming the White House the Black House, and putting Miles Davis in charge of the secret service. After a few apparently hilarious rallies, the campaign fizzled out, but it shows that the humour could be put to serious use.

Dizzy wrote a fascinating autobiography, *To Be Or Not To Bop*. For anyone wanting to listen to his music, the 1945 recordings with Parker, and anything by the late '40s big band are good places to start.

# Dizzy Gillespie

## By Bruce Robinson

Dizzy Gillespie, who died on 6 January aged 76, was one of the few surviving leaders of the bebop revolution which changed the sound and face of jazz at the end of the Second World War. More than anyone else, except perhaps Charlie Parker, Dizzy epitomised bebop, both as a trumpeter, composer, arranger, singer of nonsense (scat) lyrics ('Oobopshbam'), humorist and, for a time in the late '40s, style-guru for aspiring hipsters (who didn't realise that he'd grown his goatee beard to help his trumpet technique).

On its arrival, bebop was generally greeted by loud, critical condemnation. *Time* magazine asked 'How deaf can you get?', and the music became restricted to musicians and a small group of people with more open minds.

If it now seems difficult to understand what the fuss was about, it is necessary to go back to the music that Gillespie and Parker produced in 1945, and listen to it as if it was new. Big-band tracks such as "Things to Come" retain a violent intensity as well as a fearsome speed.

Spiky rhythms, use of unusual chords, rewriting standard tunes to get new material from a well-known song structure, drummers 'dropping bombs' to accent the beat in unexpected places, and more open-ended improvisation were fresh and shocking to those brought up on the bands of the 1930s.

Gillespie was both a founder of the new music and one of its most accomplished executors. He had played in the big bands of Teddy Hill and Cab

# Deathly hush in the Close

## Date-rape in Brookside

By Joan Trevor

**B**rookside fans are hotly debating whether he did it or not. Peter Harrison, that is — date-rapeing Diana Corkhill.

*Brookside's* writers usually tackle controversial subjects such as drug abuse and racial harassment with great Political Correctness. But the date-rape story-line is putting viewers in a quandary.

Confusion arises because Peter, the *Close's* college-educated radical, has never shown the least sign of being a swine. Now, that is often the problem with date-rape cases, like that of the nice Kennedy boy acquitted of date-rape in America last year. So nice, you can't be sure whether he did it or not, not like that nasty, black boxer, Mike Tyson. *He did it* — you can be sure of that!

If you are intelligent enough to realise that wearing double-breasted jackets and silk ties, and lending paperback classics to the newly-literate woman next door is no guarantee of a man's good character, well and good.

But the waters in *Brookside* have been muddied by the way Diana's meddling grandmother-in-law nagged her into going to court, because she couldn't believe anyone would want to cheat on her grandson.

And the way Diana was next

coached by Patricia, the ball-breaking career-woman. And the way Diana is now seen to be a bit of a nutcase. Well, you would be if you had been raped, wouldn't you? And your husband was divorcing you on the grounds of adultery.

**"Brookside's writers usually tackle controversial subjects such as drug abuse and racial harassment with great Political Correctness."**

But a nutcase is also quite capable, it is implied, of getting sozzled, copping off with the neighbour, and then accusing him of rape to cover her own guilt, and, once he is acquitted, of going round to attempt suicide in his bathroom.

That's the problem. Date-rape is real and *Brookside's* writers know that women who are date-raped have a hard time of it convincing juries of their ordeal.

So why do they leave us all thus taking sides, as if the whole question was no more vexed than whether Mick should own up to snogging his brother's fiancée on New Year's Eve?

# Poodles with flair

## Television

By Liz Millward

**H**ighlight of the week was another excellent episode of *Drop the Dead Donkey* (Channel 4). This is the telly equivalent of impressionist painting — never laboured or re-worked. The characters are sketched in with intriguing clues from which our imagination can read disastrous personal lives, without having to see them acted out in tedious detail.

The action takes place in the newsroom, which appears as noisy and disordered as such places probably are. The news being discussed is the real news — i.e. it's the same news that you've just seen an hour before. How this is achieved I don't know, but I cannot see the join between the day's news and the bits which must have been recorded three weeks earlier. I can only imagine that like the newspapers the night before an election producing two possible headlines, stories covering every conceivable news item are all recorded in advance.

This week's episode included the loathsome Ken Livingstone making a guest appearance. I can only hope he was well-paid as he was completely upstaged by a woman with rolling eyes. Actually, he was upstaged by the furniture.

The only thing more embarrassing than seeing Ken Livingstone trying to demonstrate presence on

*Drop the Dead Donkey*, was the embarrassment I felt for the freaks exhibited at *Crufts* (BBC2).

I watched with fascinated horror as living creatures were arranged on a stand to be prodded by a man in a blazer. One poor, standard poodle had been shaved, leaving only 6-inch pompoms of fur in odd spots around his body. 'What a beautiful dog', whispered Peter Purves, commentating "what a fine example of his breed". Remarkably, this candy floss could walk (although he did have to be lifted from the three-foot high stand). But I was relieved when something which actually looked like a dog was awarded the prize.

Next week I hope to be able to review *Sounds of the Seventies* (BBC2). It may be too heart-breaking to watch, but I have got over the first shock by listening to some of the sounds on Radio 4, who ran a two-part documentary covering the whole decade. The problem with the Seventies was not the music, or even the clothes, but the fact that Thatcher was elected at the end of it.

This was a decade of turmoil in British politics, the time when most thirty-somethings were growing up. Many of us voted for the first time in 1979, and some of those young people voted for the Tories. If punk and Thatcher were responses to the Seventies, how much worse are the prospects for young people thirteen years later?

## Why you should be a socialist

**W**e live in a capitalist world. Production is social; ownership of the social means of production is private.

Ownership by a state which serves those who own most of the means of production is also essentially "private".

Those who own the means of production buy the labour power of those who own nothing but their labour-power and set them to work. At work they produce more than the equivalent of their wages. The difference (today in Britain it may be more than £20,000 a year per worker) is taken by the capitalist. This is exploitation of wage-labour by capital, and it is the basic cell of capitalist society, its very heart-beat.

Everything else flows from that. The relentless drive for profit and accumulation decrees the judgment of all things in existence by their relationship to productivity and profitability.

From that come such things as the savage exploitation of Brazilian goldminers, whose life expectancy is now less than 40 years, and the working to death — it is officially admitted by the government! — of its employees by advanced Japanese capitalism. From this comes the economic neglect and virtual abandonment to ruin and starvation of "unprofitable" places like Bangladesh and parts of Africa.

**F**rom that comes the cultural blight and barbarism of our society forced-fed on profitable pap.

From it come products with "built-in obsolescence" in a society orientated to the grossly wasteful production and reproduction of shoddy goods, not to the development of leisure and culture.

From it come mass unemployment, the development of a vast and growing underclass, living in ghettos, and the recreation in some American cities of the worst Third World conditions.

From it comes the unfolding ecological disaster of a world crying out for planning and the rational use of resources, but which is, tragically, organised by the ruling classes around the principle of profitable anarchy and the barbarous worship of blind and humanly irrational market forces.

From it come wars and genocides: twice this century capitalist gangs possessing worldwide power have fallen on each other in quarrels over the division of the spoils, and wrecked the world economy, killing many tens of millions. From it come racism, imperialism, and fascism.

The capitalist cult of icy egotism and the "cash nexus" as the decisive social tie produce societies like Britain's now, where vast numbers of young people are condemned to live in the streets, and societies like that of Brazil, where homeless children are hunted and killed on the streets like rodents.

From the exploitation of wage-labour comes this society of ours where the rich, who — through their servants and agents — hold state power, fight a relentless class struggle to maintain the people in a mental

condition to accept their own exploitation and abuse, and prevent real democratic self-control developing within the forms of what they call democracy. They use tabloid propaganda or — as in the 1984-85 miners strike — savage and illegal police violence — whatever they need to use. They have used fascist gangs when they needed to, and they will use them again, if necessary.

**A**gainst this system we seek to convince the working class — the wage slaves of the capitalist system — to fight for socialism.

Socialism means the abolition of wage slavery, the taking of the social economy out of private ownership into common cooperative ownership. It means the full realisation of the old demands for liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Under socialism the economy will be run and planned deliberately and democratically: market mechanisms will cease to be our master, and will be cut down and re-shaped to serve broadly sketched-out and planned, rational social goals.

We want public ownership of the major enterprises and a planned economy under workers' control.

The working class can and should win reforms within capitalism, but we can only win socialism by overthrowing capitalism and by breaking the state power — that is, the monopoly of violence and reserve violence — now held by the capitalist class. We want a democracy much fuller than the present Westminster system — a workers' democracy, with elected representatives recallable at any time, and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

Socialism can never be built in one country alone. The workers in every country have more in common with workers in other countries than with their own capitalist or Stalinist rulers. We support national liberation struggles and workers' struggles worldwide; we back the struggles of workers and oppressed nationalities in the ex-Stalinist states of Eastern Europe and in still-Stalinist China.

What are the alternatives now? We may face new wars as European and Japanese capitalism confronts the US. Fascism is rising. Poverty, inequality and misery are growing. We are deep in the worse capitalist slump for 60 years.

Face the bitter truth: either we build a new, decent, sane, democratic world or, finally, the capitalists will ruin us all — we will be dragged down by the fascist barbarians or new massive wars. Civilisation will be eclipsed by a new dark age. The choice is socialism or barbarism.

Socialists work in the trade unions and the Labour Party to win the existing labour movement to socialism. We work with presently unorganised workers and youth.

To do that work the Marxists organise themselves in a democratic association, the Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

To join the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, write to: PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

# The enemy within

## THE STUDENT LEFT

By Elaine Jones, NOLS NC

**"N**igel Foreman [Tory] MP's resignation was sad"; "all we need is 40 back-bench Tory MPs on our side"; "closed shops are dreadful". These are some of the things said not at a young Tories' event but at this year's Labour Student Council.

The line for the event was set by Judith Church, LP NEC, talking about the need for a mass, youth section in which she pointed out that although we need more young people in the Party we have expelled some recently. However, we haven't expelled enough yet, an error, she assured us, which would be sorted out by the Constitutional Committee.

Banning people, proscribing

organisations, was welcomed by most people there, and 'the enemy within' was identified to great applause as being those in Left Unity and Socialist Organiser. There was no discussion of the miners or the public sector pay-freeze, and the sessions which did take place saw little debate; all we heard was the same old, discredited ideas we've been hearing for years.

On the issue of voluntary membership, we were told to keep lobbying back-bench Tory MPs; after all we only need 40 to vote against the Government in order to win, and we were told that we had to promote 'positive images' of student unions, to get away from the discredited and outdated image we had in 1968.

Everyone was touched by Lorna Fitzsimmons lamenting the resignation of Nigel Foreman on the basis that "he really did support us", and congratulating each

other on how successful they had been in stopping the Tories introducing voluntary membership so far.

From this you would be right in thinking that these people are completely out of touch with reality. They ignore the fact that the Tories haven't attacked NUS yet because they have been too worried about the 250,000 people on the streets in support of the miners, the value of the pound, the state of the economy, Europe, etc.

**"It will be up to Left Unity to take on the Tories, to defend NUS. NOLS have no intention of doing so."**

They also fail to remember that Tory back-benchers didn't vote against the Government on Europe — they are hardly likely to vote against them on an issue such as voluntary membership.

There was no mention of involving the student membership in any campaign, and demonstrations involving the "grassroots" were dismissed as outdated.

In another discussion, it was explained why NOLS do deals with the Liberals in NUS. They don't do it because they like them, or because you can't tell the difference between the policies they stand for. They only do it because they don't have enough delegates to NUS conference to win! Apply that logic to General Elections and you have an excellent

reason why the Labour Party should have pacts with the Liberals.

There was a lot of talk of building a mass, youth section, but their strategy is not to campaign on issues which affect young people such as unemployment, housing, education. The important thing is to alter the structures of the Party. But not to alter them in such a way to give young people more representation in the Party. They plan to remove the right of Young Socialist branches to send delegates and motions to CLPs, and continue the practice of closing down youth groups which disagree with the official Labour Party positions.

The event showed that NOLS have no intention of changing their current ideas and ways of organising. They made it clear that their main priority at the moment is to attack the autonomy of the Women's Campaign and Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Campaign, in order to attack Left Unity. They showed that their main priority for this year is not to take on the Tories, but to attack us.

The quotation which sums up the current attitude of NOLS is Lorna Fitzsimmons describing Left Unity as "the enemy within", borrowing, appropriately, a phrase of Margaret Thatcher. She was referring to the miners in the 1984-85 strike. NOLS see us as their main enemy. Left Unity is proud to be playing the same role in NOLS as the miners played in Tory Britain, but we are also worried that it seems it will be up to us to take on the Tories, to defend NUS. NOLS have no intention of doing so.

## Labour left students organise

**L**ast weekend, Jeremy Corbyn MP spoke to the launch conference of 'Clause Four', the student section of the Campaign Group Supporters' Network.

Clause Four will unite and organise the left in Labour Students.

The focus for Clause Four will be mobilising Labour Clubs in the campaign

against pit closures.

Clause Four will be producing a national newsletter, and organising caucuses at NOLS (National Organisation of Labour Students) and Labour Youth Conference.

For information, contact: Elaine Jones/Hamish Renton c/o NUS, 461 Holloway Road, London N6; tel: 071-272 8900.

## Alliance for Workers' Liberty public meetings

### Thur 21 January

"Europe: what should the left say?" Sheffield AWL meeting. 7.30, Adelphi pub. Speaker: Ruth Cockcroft.

### Mon 25 January

"How to fight the crisis". Northampton AWL meeting. 7.30, Royal Mail Club. Speaker: Tom Rigby.

### Wed 27 January

"Support the miners". Goldsmiths College AWL meeting. 2pm.

Speakers include Paul Whetton.

"Support the miners". Sheffield University AWL meeting. 1.00, Room 2, Octagon Centre.

"The state and revolution". Lancaster AWL meeting. Details: Pete, 0542-848263.

### Wed 3 February

"Fight the Child Support Act". Merseyside AWL meeting. 7.30,

Wallasey Unemployed Centre. Speaker: Janine Booth.

### Thur 4 February

"Ireland: what solution?" Manchester AWL meeting. 8.00, Unicorn pub. Speaker: Pat Murphy.

### Thur 11 February

"How to fight cuts and job losses". Nottingham AWL meeting. 8.00, ICC, Mansfield Road.

### Saturday 30 January

Nottingham march and rally against pit closures. Assemble: 11.30-12.00, Forest Recreation Ground. Speakers include Arthur Scargill.

### Saturday 6 February

Conference: Defend State Education. 10.30-4.00, North Westminster School, North Wharf Road, NW1. More information: Flat 2, Downs Park Road, E5.

# NHS workers need to gear up for action

# Unite to smash the pay freeze!

By Richard Bayley  
(North Riding Health Services NALGO)

Last week saw the opening shots in the government's battle to impose a pay cut on NHS workers. Representatives of 120,000 NHS Admin and Clerical (A&C) staff rejected a 1.5% pay offer at a meeting with the employers in Leeds.

NALGO, which organises half of the NHS staff nationally has a policy of actively fighting the pay cut. In December representatives of NALGO's healthworkers called for a campaign against the 1.5% policy, including industrial action if necessary. In addition, they called for the co-ordination of campaigns across the public sector, and for a TUC public sector Day of Action. It is vital that this policy is put into action.

Immediately, NALGO should line up with the NUM and the rail unions to organise a Day of Action — including strike action — in

February. All branches of NALGO should send motions to the NEC, demanding that NALGO acts in concert with the miners.

It is particularly important that NALGO's NHS section is fully involved, as theirs is the earliest offer in this year's public sector pay round. NHS management obviously hope that they can push for acceptance of the 1.5% limit by NHS clerical workers, so as to make it easier to impose on Nursing and Ancillary staff. It is over a decade since NALGO's members in the NHS last took national industrial action; if a ballot for action took place now, the 1.5% limit would go through. This is why a serious campaign, with a focus on united action with mineworkers, railworkers and other trade unionists in the public sector is so important.

The pay limit is a major test for UNISON, the result of a successful merger ballot between NALGO, NUPE and CoHSE. It should, on paper, be a major asset in

fighting the pay limit.

At the moment, it provides a convenient excuse for the union leaders to hide behind each others' policies. For instance, the jointly produced publicity by the three unions clearly states the case for opposition to the 1.5% limit in the NHS. It says nothing, however, about how to fight it and mentions nothing of the policy adopted by NHS workers in NALGO.

In these circumstances,

NALGO activists in the NHS should fight for no settlement of the A&C claim in isolation. Locally, they should try and win NUPE and CoHSE branches to a position of joint action on all claims in the NHS and for developing a campaign to win the unions to this policy nationally.

The key task, not just in the NHS but across the whole public sector, is to win the unions for co-ordinated

action and settlements. This is decisive for two reasons; firstly, simply by sitting on their hands, the union leaderships have the capacity to wreck the campaign, leaving sectors who want to fight isolated. Secondly, and most importantly, it is only by clear calls for national official industrial action that a serious challenge to the pay policy can be mounted, especially in a period of mass unemployment and low confidence amongst

the rank and file.

In these circumstances, calls for unofficial action, evade the major issues in how we can mobilise members on a national scale. Co-ordination is vital, and the positions in the various public sector unions must be discussed thoroughly by union militants. The Public Sector Alliance conference called for 6 March should be used as an opportunity to start winning the unions to this strategy.

## Build for the Day of Action 18 February

By a Manchester NALGO member

The TUC has called a Jobs Action Day on 18 February. The day of action was the reference to a call from the NUM and the rail unions as part of the campaign against pit closures. The day of action has been broadened out to a protest against the public sector cuts.

So far so good but the TUC look as if they will do little to

organise a real Day of Action. So far the TUC have only called for leafletting outside employment offices. There are no plans for a national demonstration!

Arthur Scargill has called for a one day strike on 18 February. He is right.

The public sector trade unions should ballot their members on a national one day strike action.

Everything necessary must be done to get the public sector

unions in an official dispute situation with the employers. If this doesn't happen all the fine words from the TUC public services committee mean nothing.

Just take one example: the NALGO leadership should be called to account for the fact that the local government committee is not due to meet until Friday 12 February, giving just 3 working days until the 18th, thus making a national strike ballot for then a practical

impossibility. In the face of this inactivity it's up to local branches to push for a one day strike on the 18th.

A real day of action against pit closures and to defend public services will link together the local disputes over cuts. It could act as a rallying point, the start of a major national campaign to defend public services and to oppose the public sector pay freeze.

Now is the time to launch such a campaign.

# Fight back in Humberside against cuts

By a NUT member

Last week saw a great turning point in the campaign against the Humberside County Council's cuts package, just as it became clear that the real extent of the cuts was nearer £43 million.

A special NUT meeting in Hull on Tuesday 12 January of nearly 150 teachers reflected soberly on the stakes involved in this fight but resolved to take on a rolling programme of action to stop the authority. The Socialist Teachers Alliance (STA) sponsored

motion was passed unanimously bar a couple of abstentions focussed on the following points.

\* opposition to all cuts and redundancies, or worsening of conditions of service for all workers.

\* a public sector alliance based on joint lobbies, meetings and solidarity action with other unions.

\* a campaign amongst parents on the effects of these cuts on their children's education.

\* a call for a ballot of Humberside teachers for one day

strike action as soon as possible, as part of a national campaign of action.

As part of the campaign the Hull Association NUT backed the NALGO lobby of the Labour group on Monday 18 January, advocating that schools send delegations, with fellow union members organising cover for them back at work. The lobby, also backed by NUPE, Community and Youth Workers Union (CYWU) and Aventure Labour Party ward, looks like being a powerful signal to the Labour-led authority

that they cannot do the Tories' dirty work. NALGO were informed last week to expect compulsory redundancies, and 2/3 of management grades in some areas of the Youth Service have been 'terminated' for April. The Humberside NUT Division meets on 23 January and clearly co-ordinated action by the public sector unions would be the best outcome for February.

However, with 30,000 job losses expected from local authority cuts nationally, the need for a national NUT Campaign

against all the Tory education policies has never been more necessary.

With a ballot of members for a boycott of English tests at 14, real possibilities exist for a generalised campaign for comprehensive education.

The 5th Education Conference on 6 February should provide a useful focus for this kind of initiative, and a conference at Easter looks like being a lively event to force the right wing/soft left Executive majority to organise some action.

(Details Defend State Education Conference, see page 14)

## The Industrial Front

The second national one-day strike by BIFU members at the TSB is due to take place this Friday 22 January. The action is in protest at 1,000 job losses.

30 Engineering workers at Hilliers of Reading need your support. The workers were sacked over a month ago after a one-day strike in protest at wage cuts of up to 40%. Picketing has been reasonably successful with a large number of deliveries turned away. It is now vital that the AEEU and MSF national leaderships throw their weight behind the dispute.

Messages of support and donations to: Nick Monaghan, 1 Rossington Close, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4DQ.

The executive of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union has voted to commence balloting on the question of TUC affiliation.

The AEEU's electrical section, formerly the EETPU, was expelled from the TUC four years ago. Rank and file activists should attempt to organise an independent pro-TUC campaign linking the question of TUC affiliation to the need for a fighting and democratic union. The executives' decision to recommend a yes vote to TUC affiliation means the end of Eric Hammond's dream of a rival TUC.

Workers at Burton's Group are to ballot on strike action in protest at plans to sack 2,000 full time workers and create 3,000 part-time jobs.

This move represents a massive attack on the pay, conditions, legal and pension rights of the Burtons workers. It is also an attack on their union USDAW.

## LOBBY THE TUC!

### For a National Day of Industrial Action!

**MINERS MUST NOT FIGHT ALONE**  
Wednesday 27 January, 8.30am.  
Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Called by NMSN/SMTUC

**Open meeting for railworkers RMT — towards a democratic and fighting union**  
Saturday 23 January 10.30  
Glasgow City Hall Albion Street Glasgow  
Called by Motherwell and Wistow RMT

## Lambeth payroll dispute

By a Lambeth NALGO member

Striking NALGO members from Lambeth's Payroll Section are set to continue their action into a bleak New Year.

Despite the fact that they are now down to just over £60 per week strike pay they are still determined to fight the hypocritical flaunting of Lambeth's equal opportunities policy. The basis of the dispute is that two years ago four workers were secretly upgraded and told "not to tell anyone". Of the section workers 85% are black. But the first workers who were upgraded through the back door were white. Lambeth's own grievance procedures have supported the striking workers but management refuse to settle their claim for equality.

Negotiations have ground to a standstill. Scabs, both workers and management are operating the payroll computers — not without problems though. In December Lambeth teachers were paid twice — oh dear!

Lambeth council workers are also being threatened

with 1,000 job losses due to a £29.5 million budget deficit.

### Public Sector Alliance Conference

Saturday 6 March 1993

Burslem Hall, Stoke-on-Trent  
Write to Organising Secretary Roger Bannister, Knowsley NALGO, 60 Admin Buildings, Admin Road, Knowsley Industrial Park, Liverpool L33 7TX. Tel: 051 5480148.

### Civil Service Conference on Market Testing

Saturday 30 January

11 am the Library Theatre, Paradise Street, Birmingham

Sponsored by many branches in the frontline of the fight against Market Testing including CPSA British Library plus CPSA, IRSF and NUCPS Broad Lefts.

Branches are invited to sponsor the conference, send delegates, and submit motions (closing date for motions is 22 January 1993) Delegations will be on the basis of branch size to be notified to branches when the likely size of the conference is clearer.

A professionally-staffed creche will be provided.

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Primary class streaming introduced

## NUT should organise resistance

### Women's pit camps thrive and spread



MEMBERS of the women's pit camp and supporters show their determination to keep Trentham (Staffs) and all the other threatened pits open.

Last week the NUM at the pit gave a vote of thanks to the women for "lifting the spirits of the men".

There are now five pit camps with plans for more to be set up. Many activists in the NUM value the camps because they

create a focus around the threatened pits themselves, a vital step towards preparing for any occupations that may become necessary.

Women against pit closures are planning to lead a national demonstration in London on February 6. They hope for a turn-out to rival last October's mobilisation.

Photo: Paul Herrmann/Profile

Tory Education Secretary, John Patten has announced that he intends to introduce formal class streaming into primary schools.

The teaching unions and the Labour Party have quite rightly reacted by condemning the proposals themselves and pointing out how streaming at primary level is the first stage towards the re-introduction of selection at secondary level.

But streaming is no answer. What is needed to deal with the crisis in education is smaller classes, to allow more attention to individual pupil's needs, and more resources.

Patten, who functions as little more than a cipher for the ultra-reactionary educational philosophy emanating from the Thatcherite Centre for Policy Studies, seems determined to push through his policies.

His problem is that the resistance from teachers is growing.

Already English teachers at some 600 schools have said that they will boycott this year's Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) for 14 year olds.

It looks certain that the NUT will vote overwhelmingly for a national English SATs boycott when the ballot results are announced at the beginning of next month.

This is great news for teachers, pupils, parents and a disaster for the Tories. If the English SATs boycott works — and English is amongst the first three subjects in which 14 year olds are to be tested — than the entire Tory project is on the rocks.

(Return of the Grammar Schools? turn to page 5)

### Tyneside strikers show the way

## Thousands join North East day of action

Thousands of trade unionists in the North East of England took part in a day of action this Tuesday 19 January.

The action gave a glimpse of what could be achieved if the TUC pulled out all the stops and built for a day of action to back the miners and oppose the Tory attacks on jobs, wages and services.

The background to the protest is massive cuts and job losses across the region:

- £25 million is to be cut from Newcastle City Council's budget over the next three years;
- 2,000 council jobs are under threat;
- 2,000 NHS jobs are also under threat with the downgrading of Newcastle General Hospital.

The initiative for the day of action came from a rank-and-file trade-union body, the Northern Trade Union Alliance — this body encompasses NUM, MSF, RMT, UCATT and coun-

cil and health service trade unions.

The action was backed by Arthur Scargill of the NUM, and the 5,000-strong march included many miners' banners.

1,500 teachers took strike action, and many sections of council workers action of some form, including strike action.

The TUC should now give a lead and turn the February 18 "National Day for Jobs and Recovery" into a full-scale day of strike-action.

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