

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

Inside this week



4 page pull-out

**YOUTH  
FIGHTBACK**

## TORY TESTS IN TATTERS

# Teachers join the fightback



Delegates at this week's NUT conference vote unanimously for a ballot on a test boycott

**T**OP TORIES are already saying that Education Minister John Patten should back down a bit over his school tests in order to head off the boycott now planned for this summer by the main teachers' unions.

On Friday 16 April, miners and railworkers will strike again over job cuts. The previous strike, on 2 April, drew in London busworkers and many smaller groups of workers.

These moves reflect a growing working-class revolt, not just over wages and work conditions, but over the whole way the Tories run Britain - their arrogance, their mystical worship of the "free market", and their oppressive drive for ever-expanding central government controls.

The Labour and TUC leaders should be organising for a huge public campaign of rallies and demonstrations, and coordinated strikes by public sector workers against the 1.5% pay limit and "contracting out", in order to bring down the Government, force a new general election, and reverse cuts in public services.

The leaders do not want that! But links can be built, and action coordinated, at rank-and-file level. The labour movement is regaining confidence after a decade of defeats. Socialists must get active in the labour movement at every level, to demand that the Labour leaders fight and to build rank-and-file groups.

# WHY DON'T YOU?

**Back the pit and rail strikes!**

# Chris Hani

## A fighter, but a Stalinist

By Anne Mack

**C**HRIS HANI WAS a fighter. He was born in poverty in the rural Transkei. His mother was illiterate and his

father was a miner who worked hundreds of miles away in the Transvaal. He dedicated his life to the overthrow of the white racist regime in South Africa, and for that dedication he was

murdered. But Hani was not just a fighter. He was also a vicious Stalinist. In 1984 Hani became the political commissar and deputy commander of the

ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. That was the year of the mutinies in the ANC's Angolan camps. Youth from the "Soweto generation", radicalised in the uprising of 1976, rebelled after their demand to be sent back to South Africa to fight was refused.

Hani was responsible for the suppression of the mutiny and the jailing of dissident ANC guerrillas in the notorious Quatro prison camp in Angola, which was run by people trained by the KGB and the hated East German secret police, the Stasi.

The fact that the liberal press is now full of eulogies to this "supremely honest

man" shows how profoundly true the old saying is that "the more things change, the more they stay the same".

In the 1930s, the USSR's torture chambers, its Gulag, and Stalin's rule of the lie were defended and justified by liberals and Stalinists as the "lesser evil". So today, liberals, Stalinists and third-worldists seem to be prepared to forget that if Hani had ever come to power it would have been as part of a state machine imposing an iron tyranny on the working class.

Even after 1989 it is still possible to be both a fighter against capitalism and an enemy of working-class socialism. Chris Hani proved it.

### Demonstrators oppose BNP in Birmingham



On 6 April, the racist British National Party turned up in Birmingham. Two black people were arrested for voicing their objections and racially abused by the police.

On 8 April Shane Ward, one of those arrested, appeared in court to face charges. There was a picket outside and the case was adjourned until 17 April.

Photo: Mark Salmon.

## Workers' Liberty '93

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### POLITICAL FRONT

By Colin Foster

**T**HE LABOUR PARTY looks set for a lot more rows about systems of election.

The "Plant Commission" has come out with a majority (but not a decisive one) for a system called the "supplementary vote", or "SV", for the House of Commons.

Under "SV", everyone votes for a first and second preference. Unless one candidate gets over 50% of the first preferences, second preferences are added in to decide the MP.

This recommendation will satisfy neither the advocates of proportional representation nor the supporters of the present "first past the post" system.

"SV" would tend to produce parliaments slightly more in proportion to the parties' votes than the present system, but only slightly. It is not clear that it would be much better than France's modified system of first-past-the-post with two rounds, which has just given the right-wing coalition 80% of the seats in parliament with 40% of the vote.

According to its supporters, "SV" would have given the Liberals an extra few dozen seats in 1992, almost all at the expense of the Tories.

Socialist Organiser favours proportional representation (we have no set "line" on exactly what system of PR), because it is more democratic to give each vote roughly the same weight. In our view, socialism can only be won by a labour movement which fights for, and is seen to fight for, the broadest democracy, and a majority on the basis of that democracy.

"First past the post" supporters say that PR increases the chances of no party having an

overall majority in parliament, and thus makes coalitions more likely. But it is possible both to back PR and to oppose Labour making coalitions with the bosses' parties.

"SV", however, will create great pressure for Labour to seek electoral deals in order to get Liberal "second preferences".

"First past the post" is no guarantee against deals and coalitions. It encourages "tactical" voting, as would "SV": history suggests that Labour lost about 40% of its voters in the South-East to "tactical" voting for the Liberals or SDP in 1983, and has never regained them since.

More and more people on the right wing of the Labour Party are arguing openly that Labour should elevate this "tactical" voting to a conscious policy, by standing down in seats where the Liberals might beat the Tories.

The "Plant Commission" report is unlikely to settle the argument, especially as it also proposes straight PR for Euro-elections and for a new upper house to replace the House of Lords.

Whatever our different views on PR, the left should unite now on two major lines.

First: the debate inside the labour movement on democracy must not be narrowed down to electoral systems. There are broader and more important issues: the monarchy, the unelected judiciary, the old Chartist demand for annual parliaments, local democracy...

Second: whatever about electoral systems, Labour must be firmly committed against both pre-election pacts and post-election coalitions with the bosses' parties.

Labour's National Executive will consider the Plant report at its meeting on 28 April, and it is reported as likely to take a recommendation to Labour's conference this October.

One free market for the rich, and another for the poor

### THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

By Chris Reynolds

**O**NE BANK has recently offered its workers bonus payments if they add extra charges on to customers' accounts.

Another tried to charge an old age pensioner £3 when she brought in a £10 note and asked for change in coins.

My building society recently charged me £20 for the "service" of bouncing a cheque for £14.03. For the building society, £20 was a token; for me, it was a quarter of a week's wages. Almost anyone who runs a bank account near the breadline will be familiar with such punitive charges.

All overdraft agreements say that the bank can withdraw the overdraft at any time, without needing to give a reason. More and more often, banks do just that.

The banks are trying to make good their huge losses on lending to property companies. The property millionaires who took those loans are alright: their companies have gone bust but they personally just move on to another venture. The top bank managers who lent the money are still receiving their fat salaries. They do not pay for the losses.

Neither do big businesses, or rich individuals: no bank will run the risk of losing plum accounts by overcharging.

But most banks can overcharge ordinary workers or small businesses with little risk of loss.

Small businesses usually run overdrafts so they can't move from one bank to another without repaying the overdraft, and usually that is impossible. The bank can impose punitive charges without risk.

The same goes for individuals who have overdrafts and do not have the means to repay them at will.

Individuals who have a small credit balance can move their accounts, but the banks know that usually they will not. The overcharging varies only a little from bank to bank; it costs time and effort to find out which charges least; even if you do find out, your research may become immediately out-of-date when the previously low-charging bank raises its charges; and just to change the account you have to fill in forms and find time in your normal working hours to visit the bank. It's not worth it.

Here, as in many other areas, the free market is "one law for the rich, another for the poor".

The poor generally pay more for worse food than the rich, because we have to buy smaller quantities nearer to home. Now the poor pay more for worse banking than the rich, and many workers have no choice about it, because their employers, saving costs, pay only by cheque.

*Western leaders promise aid to back Yeltsin*

# Russia heads for capitalist disaster

**T**HE RICH COUNTRIES of the world are piling on their efforts to help Boris Yeltsin.

This week the "Group of Seven" governments meet in Tokyo, and will probably agree new aid for Russia.

European Community governments have already agreed to open talks on a free-trade deal with Russia; the "Paris Club" of bankers have granted Russia extra time to repay its foreign debts; and US president Bill Clinton offered extra aid and messages of support for Yeltsin after meeting him in Vancouver on 3-4 April.

Much of the aid is likely to end up in the hands of Russia's new gangster capitalists, and a lot of it siphoned back out of the country again into Swiss bank accounts.

But the aid is not meant to sort out the Russian economy. The aid programmes — or rather the announcements of aid: whether, or when, the money will actually be paid is another matter — are meant to boost Boris Yeltsin.

*"If decrees alone could make dictatorships, then Yeltsin would already be a dictator."*

The West's support for Yeltsin has nothing to do with democracy. If decrees alone could make dictatorships, then Yeltsin would already be a dictator, having pushed aside parliament and imposed strict controls on political parties, trade unions, and local government. In reality the decrees are often waste paper.

On 20 March Yeltsin proclaimed a coup, saying that he would rule by diktat and any decisions by parliament would be invalid. He would seek a mandate from a referendum to dissolve the parliament.

The Constitutional Court ruled Yeltsin's proclamation invalid. Yeltsin's opponents failed narrowly to get a two-thirds majori-

ty in parliament to impeach him.

Since then, a stand-off has developed. Neither Yeltsin nor his main opponent, speaker of parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov, has a political machine strong and coherent enough to impose their will. Local bigwigs often ignore all central directives.

A referendum is going ahead on 25 April, on terms decided by parliament. To win according to the rules, Yeltsin must get 50 per cent of all those entitled to vote.

However, the rules are only as strong as the people enforcing them. Yeltsin no doubt hopes that a big majority of votes on 25 April — which seems possible: opinion polls indicate that he is much less unpopular than parliament — will serve him as well as the magic 50 per cent.

The Western leaders back Yeltsin because Yeltsin favours opening up Russia to the world economy. The people round Khasbulatov want to convert Russia to private-profit capitalism just as much as Yeltsin does, but they want a more *nationalist* capitalism, bolstered by trade barriers and a big state sector.

According to the *Morning Star*, speaking through its new champion Ken Livingstone MP on 22 March, the people round Khasbulatov "deserve our support". "Their only crime is that they want to modernise their country's economy without being reduced to Third World living standards and without having to accept some kind of presidential dictatorship."

This is false. The parliament was elected in 1990, in an election which was only partially free, and has a big majority of ex-members of the old state-party, the "Communist Party". On all the evidence available, it has very little support now.

These ex-bureaucrats cannot realistically hope to restore the old Stalinist system which guaranteed them steadily increasing privilege so long as they toadied adroitly and climbed the bloated official machine of management and administration. They can hope to save their own careers, and to ensure that as many as possible of the old bureaucrats switch over smoothly to jobs as capitalists or administrators in the new private-profit order.

Yeltsin, though a former CP leader himself, heads those who want a more radical shake-up, clearing out more of the old



Pro-Yeltsin demonstration. Opinion polls suggest that he is much less unpopular than Parliament.

guard and bringing more people into the top ranks from the middle class and the black-market underworld.

*"Neither Yeltsin nor Khasbulatov can offer any way out other than mass unemployment and pauperisation."*

Throughout Eastern Europe, except perhaps in Serbia and Slovakia, the counterparts of Yeltsin have triumphed with little contest. But the balance of forces, and the economic problems, are different in Russia.

In Russia, the old CP bureaucracy was, and is, a huge social force. Even after the destruction of the bureaucrats' political machine, their administrative hierarchies and informal net-

works wield great power through their grip on the means of production, information, and economic coordination. The Russian bureaucracy was, and is, much more robust than the bureaucratic elites of Eastern Europe, whose power depended a lot on Russian backing.

Russia is different, too, because so much of its industry — as much as a third, according to some guesses — was military-oriented. Much of Eastern Europe was geared towards trade with Western Europe even before 1989. Russia was not.

The Russian economy is still dominated by huge state-owned enterprises. Most of them, apparently, carry on much as before, getting their supplies the same way as before and sending off their products the same way as before if anyone will take them.

The chief result of all the attempts to move towards free markets has been a collapse in the value of the rouble. Consumer prices have rocketed. A few spivs have got very rich very quickly, but most people can barely afford the essentials of

life. Because final demand is low the big enterprises have very little cash.

Often they do not even have enough cash for wages and salaries. This month Yeltsin summarily declared that the wages of all state employees, that is, of almost all workers, would be *doubled* — but the decree is valueless unless the wages are actually paid out!

Continued on page 5

*"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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Foot: wanting an open paper?

# Stinking rich

## GRAFFITI

**B**E CAREFUL NOT to breathe too heavily the next time you go shopping, it could cost you an arm and a leg. Retail aromatics is the latest marketing ploy to squeeze more money out of unwitting consumers. Shops circulate the smells through their ventilation systems: supermarkets use the smell of brandy and mince pies at Christmas to encourage customers to turn their thoughts to festive fare and travel agents coconut oil to summon images of exotic (and expensive) destinations.

One academic study discovered the right smell could persuade customers to part with the dollars over the odds for a pair of Nike trainers.

More sinister is the use of a chemical, C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>24</sub>O, which is emitted by newborn babies to trigger bonding behaviour in their mothers. So if you see someone leaving the shops cuddling a can of beans, offer them some nose plugs.

**H**EALTH OFFICIALS in the West Midlands have made a staggering discovery. There is a direct link, they claim, between people being disconnected from water supply and sewage disposal, and the diseases that ran riot in Victorian slums.

Last year there were 21,000 disconnections. And the cases of dysentery and hepatitis reported to doctors have increased three-fold since water privatisation — to nearly 10,000 each last year. Experts believe that homes with no means of washing or flushing away human waste might be an unhealthy environment.

By an amazing coincidence a similar discovery was made over a hundred years ago by Victorian scientists, who suggested a publicly run water and drainage system as the answer. Government ministers are stumped as to the solution in late twentieth century Britain.

**P**AUL FOOT, recently departed from the *Daily Mirror*, seems to have developed a habit of writing pieces that his editors might feel a little uncomfortable with. First there was the column that never was in the *Mirror*, criticising the *Mirror* regime for union bashing. *Mirror* boss David Montgomery was less than pleased and didn't print the column.

Now Foot has turned his attention to the internal regime at *Socialist Worker*. Writing in last week's *SW*, Foot comments that "The uniformity of the capitalist press should not provide anyone with an excuse

to make our socialist papers more sectarian and hysterical... socialist editors should ensure that their papers are open, democratic and varied".

Notice that Foot writes "our papers" and "socialist editors" (plural).

This directly contradicts the *SW* house style of pretending it is the only socialist paper, apart from the occasional love letter to the *Militant*.

And Foot's comment is quite clearly an attack on the closed, monolithic nature of *SW*.

*Socialist Organiser* has a good tradition of carrying minority opinion in the AWL, and giving space to other currents of opinion quite at odds to *SW*'s general view. The traditions of *SW* are quite the opposite — the party line excludes any dissent.

Recently there has been a huge row in the SWP about their call for TUC general strike action last year, but no-one reading any of the SWP's publications would have had the slightest inkling. Minorities are simply not given access to the pages of the paper. It seems that Foot wants a better internal regime in the organisation.

It is unlikely that *SW* editor, Chris Harman, will give Foot the same treatment as Montgomery gave him — as anyone who has ever read *SW* will know, they need journalists of the calibre of Foot. Whether *SW* will end up any more democratic than Montgomery's *Mirror* remains to be seen.

**M**ARKET TESTING in the civil service is the device that will save the government millions. A Whitehall audit came up with the figure of £1.75 million. No, that's not saving, it's cost. Seems the market has failed its own test.

**A**RE SOCIALIST ideas the province of a small minority? It seems that even columnists in the *Daily Telegraph* can succumb.

Stephen Pile writes of his experience of this year's conference of the National Union of Teachers:

"Outside the conference centre on Saturday morning, a tunnel of 60 left wingers showered arrivals with leaflets of a baffling array of newspapers reflecting every shade of socialist opinion; the hard left, the Extremely Hard Left, the Unbelievably Left and the Amazingly Incredibly Astonishing Left.

"[They] criticise the unhelpfulness of the Labour Party and questioned the 'ruthless imposition of market forces on every aspect of economic and social life.

"Things have come to a pretty pass when correspondents from the *Daily Telegraph* can find nothing to complain about in the raving handbills for the Howlingly Amazing Incredibly Astonishingly Left."

# The tabloid lynch mob

## PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

**J**ONATHAN BALL and Timothy Parry have been laid to rest, the memorial service has come and gone, Princess Di has made her phone call and media interest has moved on. Soon, for most people, Warrington will be just one more dimly-remembered atrocity.

Before that happens, let's just recall the brief but near-hysterical reaction of the tabloids: *The Sun* headline "Put the IRA up against a wall then shoot them" for instance. Or the *People* declaring that "the evil men should be hounded down and handed over to the people of Warrington for summary justice". Such reactions would be understandable if they came from the families of the victims (in fact, the families expressed their feelings with restraint and dignity) but

what we're talking about here is national mass-circulation newspapers calling for the lynch mob.

*The Sun* then turned on the BBC and Channel 4, accusing both of giving aid and comfort to the IRA. The evidence? BBC1's *Rough Justice* had exposed yet another probable wrong conviction of an Irishman. Channel 4 had scheduled two feature films (Ken Loach's *Hidden Agenda* and Neil Jordan's *Angel*) that are critical of British policy in Ireland. The fact that neither film is pro-IRA (*Angel* is explicitly pacifist) was neither here nor there. As was the fact that both were pulled. *The Sun*'s neanderthal TV "critic" Gary Bushell ranted about Channel 4 putting out "pro-IRA propaganda" and accused the channel of being in Gerry Adams' pocket.

Former *Daily Mirror* editor Roy Greenslade had better watch out. In one of the few half-way rational articles to have appeared in the aftermath of Warrington (in the *Guardian*'s media section) he dared to point out the double standards of the tabloids: "There are, as far as the British press is concerned, two kinds of massacre and two kinds of innocents. There is a unique massacre as against the everyday, run-of-the-mill, seen-it-all-before sort of

massacre. There are innocents who live in "mainland" Britain, and then there are innocents who live in Ireland, even that bit of it designated as part of the United Kingdom". In the same week that the Warrington bomb went off, six people were shot down in cold blood with scarcely a mention in either the tabloid or the broadsheet newspapers. But then, those six all died in Northern Ireland.

Greenslade also pointed out that such is the tabloids' deep concern with events in Northern Ireland, not one of them bothers to employ a full time correspondent there. They rely instead upon agencies "to cover outbreaks of violence that make a paragraph or two".

**O**N THE subject of double standards, that champion of free speech, the *Daily Mail*, is less than enthusiastic about John Major's forthcoming meeting with Salman Rushdie: "Wiser heads are less impressed, fearing that well publicised images of the two men shaking hands might be misconstrued in the Middle East as indicating British approval for Mr Rushdie's views about Islam with damaging repercussions for this country's trading interest" (*Mail Comment*, 12 April).

I've tried to think of a snappy follow-up to that, but words fail me.

**R**EADERS OF the *Sunday Times* may not have noticed the following ominous announcement: "Next week the *Sunday Times* marks the beginning of a new era with two revitalised sections. The new *Style and Travel* will be a 48-page tabloid, like the successful Culture section, printed on quality paper, stapled and with full colour spreads on fashion, food interior design, travel and..." Need I go on?

How much longer are those of us who shell out inordinate sums of money for so-called "quality" broadsheet paper, going to tolerate this sort of thing? The words "style", "travel", "fashion" and so forth, mean only one thing: trash about trivial nonentities and their tedious "life styles" instead of news and commentary. "New eras" accompanied by "revitalised sections" are equally unwelcome, accompanied as they inevitably are by grotesque computer-generated art work and unreadable layouts. The "new-look" *Independent* is bad enough, but can you imagine what the "new era" at the *Sunday Times* will be like? I have seen the future and it smirks.

# Cashing-in on misery

## WOMEN'S EYE



By Jean Lane

**T**HE VAST majority of women are unhappy with the shape, size or weight of their bodies. 95% of people using the slimming industry are women, and the slimming industry is booming in a big way. Well over £6 million a week is spent on low-calorie meals and drinks in the UK alone.

Not all of these women diet for their health, nor are all of them overweight. According to a survey carried out by the

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 36% of women in the UK are overweight to a degree that affects their health, but 85% of women want to lose weight.

*"The shop that lies the most gets the most sales."*

At its worst, when slimming turns into one of the causes of anorexia, this unhappiness can turn into self-loathing. As an anorexic woman, after a particularly punishing gym session, said to her friend; "You've got to really hate yourself to do this". Most women do not become anorexic; but they do spend almost all their lives battling against their body's shape and weight.

The slimming industries; whether in low-calorie prod-

ucts, special dietary aids, obsessive fitness videos, or the massive advertising of these products and of the so-called perfect woman's body, between them make enough profit out of the misery of women in the affluent world to feed the whole of Sudan and Somalia for free.

The clothing industry, too, feed off the fears of women. You can go into clothing shops and find that a size 14 dress is different in every one. *Woman* magazine sent a standard size 14 model around several shops and she found that the differences between some of them were so great that a size 16 in one shop was smaller than a size 12 in another. As a representative of Wallis shops said; "It's a form of flattery — a size 14 woman fits into a Wallis size 12".

A free-lance pattern-cutter who has worked for more than 150 manufacturers producing clothes for shops including Wallis, Etam and Debenhams said; "If a woman fits into a size 12 in one shop but needs a 14 in another, she'll buy at the first". Because there are no

British standards for sizes, manufacturers can cut to a bigger pattern with the intention of fooling women into thinking they are slimmer, i.e. the shop that lies the most gets the most sales.

The model of the survey said "Who are they trying to fool? Wearing the wrong size dress doesn't make me any smaller. I'm normally happy with my size and I don't need women's clothes shops to help me pretend I am what I am not".

If only all women were so well adjusted! Most, it seems, do play mind games to allow themselves to think that they look better or that a particular product will work wonders. And most do submit to the media pressure that tells us that we should look like something off the front cover of *Marie Claire*.

I use the word 'Thing' advisedly. If your collar bones aren't competing with those of your cheeks and hips for prominence, then you're nowhere. If they are, and you are not black and living in a desert surrounded by death, then you are a pillar of success — apparently.

# Labour women back Workers' Charter

Emma Parsons reports on the 1993 Labour Women's Conference, held in Llandudno on 3 and 4 April

CONFERENCE voted to support workers who exercise their right to strike, take solidarity action, picket and organise in trade unions in order to defend their jobs and conditions of work. This was very encouraging.

The other main controversial debate was on mandatory women-only shortlists to ensure that women are chosen as Labour candidates for parliament.

The motion for women-only shortlists where MPs retire was lost, but only on a card vote. There was much talk about EMILY — the new system for ensuring that there is an upturn in consumer spending on power-gear for women Labour Party high-fliers.

I'm not sure if this system of sponsoring women candidates has much to do with women's representation in the Party. It is likely to act as a way of ensuring that if quotas for women work in the Labour Party, any political change this could bring about for the good is neutralised by hordes of middle class careerists in suits.

The undemocratic, nar-



Protesters challenge Ros Hepplewhite, boss of the Child Support Agency, which starts enforcing the Child Support Act this month

row and elitist way of sponsoring candidates through EMILY contrasts with efforts made by women trade unionists to insist that union-sponsored lists include women. This is surely a better way forward for a party that lost the last election because it did not connect with the needs and aspirations of working class women.

John Smith failed to turn up at the conference and few Labour women MPs attended. Margaret Beckett and Mo Mowlem addressed the conference. The general consensus was

that my tea break (timed for when Beckett was on) was 100% more interesting than her speech. Mo Mowlem seems more in tune with the delegates' feelings, but there was a

conspicuous lack of substance or lead in her speech.

Delegates were united against the Tory attacks on jobs and services in the public sector, and there were calls for

Labour to run a more effective campaign to save the Health Service. The widening of state provision of benefits, pensions and legal aid were all condemned.

*"Conference called on the Women's Committee to campaign for the unionisation of women workers."*

## An old trick, but it might just work

**B**ARRY REAMSBOTTOM, General Secretary of the CPSA, is not a man noted for any great knowledge of the history of the British trade union movement. He has never, in fact, been a rank-and-file trade unionist. Nor has he ever worked as a civil servant — despite now leading the largest Civil Service union in the land.

Nevertheless, Bro Reamsbottom has recently demonstrated an impressive mastery of the essential techniques of right-wing bureaucratic manoeuvring — Gormleyism.

This is the art, named after Arthur Scargill's right-wing predecessor at the NUM, of selling out whilst sounding very militant. Back in 1973, delegates to the NUM's conference were calling for action in pursuit of their pay claim. "You're quite right, brothers," cried Joe Gormley, "our claim is fully justified and there ought to be a fight for it. However, the miners cannot win on their own, we will need a general strike to defeat this government" (or words to that effect).

The point being, of course, that Gormley hoped that the membership wasn't yet ready for such extreme action. Thus a complete capitulation could be guaranteed, and the membership could be blamed. But that wasn't quite what happened. The miners decided to fight and the Tories lost the '76 election on the issues of 'who rules?' — the unions or the government?

A recent circular from Barry Reamsbottom, dealing with the Civil Service pay claim, demonstrates that the spirit of Joe Gormley lives on: "After more than 20 hours of talks we have reached the position of a final offer. There is no more to be extracted," declares the CPSA leader. The "final offer" is 1% — below even the government's declared 1.5% norm. Whether more than 1% could have been extracted from the Treasury is debatable, given Reamsbottom's notorious lack of negotiating skills and the open contempt with which Treasury officials regard him.

The circular then goes on to describe a "long and agonising debate" (actually, one afternoon) at which the CPSA executive discussed the 1% offer: "the mood of all NEC members was to reject, but the majority took the realistic view that only large-scale strike action stood any chance of busting out of the public sector pay limit. One-day strikes will achieve nothing... let there be no doubt this is the final offer and the only alternative is large-scale and prolonged strike action with no guarantee of success".

So, there you have it: all-out, indefinite strike action, or acceptance of the 1% "final offer". No prizes for guessing which alternative the Executive "reluctantly" recommended. No discussion of co-ordinating more limited action with the RMT or NUM; no discussion of the likelihood of the firefighters coming out over pay later this summer. Just take it or leave it. And in their determination to ensure acceptance, Reamsbottom and the NEC then attempted to rush out ballot papers in world record time.

Sometimes, issues do have to be posed sharply: fight or capitulate, it's as simple as that. But more often, in the real world, it's a matter of gauging the membership's confidence, building up the action gradually and preparing for an eventual confrontation.

The Joe Gormley technique of "all-out action now or complete capitulation" (all too often echoed by people on the left, who really *do* want to fight, but who mistake their own impatience for the mood of the membership) is a time-honoured cover for selling out. Barry Reamsbottom may not know much about Joe Gormley, but he has an intuitive bureaucrat's grasp of his methods.

### INSIDE THE UNIONS

By Sleeper

## Russia heads for capitalist disaster

Continued from page 3

Supplies are "paid for" just by increasing the enterprises' debts to each other.

Inertia, and the threat of resistance from both bureaucrats and workers, has blocked any large-scale closures in Russia's vast swathe of bankrupt industry. Officially there are still only one million unemployed in Russia, though large numbers of workers are effectively idle while remaining on enterprise payrolls. The central bank issues more and more credits, and prints more and more money — with no effect but continuing inflation.

At present rates, average prices in Russia double roughly every three months. The economy teeters on the edge of all-out hyperinflation, where prices spiral daily and the ordinary use of money breaks down.

Neither Yeltsin nor Khasbulatov can offer any way out other than the scrapping of a large chunk of industry, mass unemployment and pauperisation, and eventual "recovery" based on super-exploitation. And neither, at present, has the strength to force that through.

The supposed triumph of democracy and the free market in Russia is most likely to lead to a military coup, sooner or later, as the only way to

impose a capitalist economic solution. Whether Yeltsin or Khasbulatov, or someone else, is the front-man for the military, will make little difference to the Russian workers.

Military dictatorship will increase the danger of war with the other republics of the ex-USSR, or with national minorities inside Russia; war, if it comes earlier, will increase the drive towards military dictatorship.

It does not follow that the Russian workers would have done better to stick with the old Stalinist system. That system crushed them under oppression and exploitation more stifling than most military dictatorships. Its fall has allowed the Russian workers, for the first time in 60-odd years, to organise autonomously, to create trade unions, and to debate their future.

So far, unfortunately, it seems that most of the independent trade unions are backing Yeltsin, presumably because they see him as the most prominent enemy of their immediate enemies, the old entrenched bureaucrats. And those trade unions are still very weak.

Yet only workers' organisation, workers' politics, and workers' power offer Russia an alternative to the increasing horrors of its present capitalist road.



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Bosses turn back to "Keynesian" policies: can they bring

# Keynes, capitalism

After 10 or 15 years of monetarism and free-market dogma, "Keynesian" economics is influential again among the powers-that-be.

Who was Keynes? What is "Keynesianism", and does it offer any answers? Martin Thomas looks at the issues.

**J**OHAN MAYNARD KEYNES was a gadfly within the Establishment. He first came to fame in 1919 with a pamphlet that denounced as unworkable the Allies' plan to make defeated Germany pay huge amounts in compensation for World War I. He was active not only as an economic theorist but also as a journalist, civil servant and political figure on the fringes of the Liberal Party.

Through his book, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), he fundamentally shifted the terms of orthodox debate on economics.

By the 1920s, orthodox economics had developed a whole theoretical system based on the balancing of supply and demand. It ran as follows. The cost of producing an extra unit of blouses or Bibles, or whatever, increases, or does not decrease much, as more are produced. On the other hand, as the price of blouses or Bibles increases, demand for them declines fairly markedly.

At a very low price, demand would exceed supply. At a very high price, supply would exceed demand. A balance will be reached at that scale of production which puts cost equal to price. (For these economists, return on capital was always included as a necessary cost of production).

As for blouses and Bibles, so too for labour. At a very high wage, everyone would be keen to work, but the additional production to be got by hiring an extra worker would not be sufficient to make it worthwhile. At a very low wage, demand for labour would be high but many workers would not consider it worth the trouble. Balance would be reached when the wage was just equal to the additional production got by hiring an extra worker, and just not high enough to persuade the idle and reluctant who remained jobless to offer themselves for work.



John Maynard Keynes — gadfly within the Establishment

For an orthodox economist, therefore, the only possible cause for unemployment (beyond the temporary 'between jobs' type) was wages getting stuck at too high a level. As Keynes put it, such an economist "may sympathise with labour in refusing to accept a cut in its money wage... but scientific integrity forces him to declare that this refusal is, nevertheless, at the root of the trouble".

In fact, most of the economists did not sympathise with labour at all! Their theory was designed to prove that profit was the "natural" reward of capital, and that wages were fixed "naturally" too, so that a fight for better wages could do no good and might even do harm, by causing unemployment.

Their "dismal science" was also designed to prove that governments could do nothing much against unemployment or poverty. When trade unionists demanded better wages or more aid for the jobless, the Treasury would reply: it can't be done! The budget must be balanced! The free market must have its way! Labour governments in 1924 and 1929-31 echoed what the Treasury "experts" told them.

Keynes was no socialist, but he was liberal-minded and instinctively disrespectful of complacent orthodoxy. He argued that unemployment was not caused by high wages, or any other quirk. It was a chronic disease of free-market capitalism.

In the orthodox theory, as Keynes put it, "money makes no real difference except frictionally." It figures only as a convenient token to facilitate exchange, not as a store of value. Keynes looked more closely at the role of money.

He showed that, far from automatically balancing supply and demand, the capitalist free market could, and would, produce unsaleable stocks of goods on one side, and needy people unable to buy those goods for lack of cash on another, while piles of idle cash were held by the rich.

Total market demand is made up by consumption and investment. Investment in machinery and equipment, Keynes argued, is determined by the rate of profit which capitalists expect from that investment.

That expected profit rate, he thought, was generally low in mature capitalism. (He explained profits as being due to the 'scarcity' of capital: as capital became more plentiful, profits had to decline). At any shock, expectations of profit fall lower still.

Result: a decline in investment. And closely following on that decline will be an increase in the general desire to hold wealth in the form of cash, rather than lending it at interest. The rate of interest will be forced up, worsening the decline of



The most thorough putting into practice of Keynes's recommendations came with the war economies of 1939-45

investment by making it harder for entrepreneurs to borrow.

The decline in investment will lead to a much bigger decline in overall effective demand, and therefore in employment, through a process which Keynes called the "multiplier". £1 million less demand for equipment, for example, will mean £1 million less income for workers and capitalists in industry. That in turn will mean less demand for the consumer goods otherwise bought by those people. Suppose they would have spent 80% of the £1 million on consumption, and saved the rest.

Then there is a loss of £800,000 in demand for consumer goods.

That in turn means a further £800,000 loss in incomes; and following on from that, yet another loss in demand, £640,000 this time... When the process has worked itself through, then in this example the total loss of demand is £4 million. And there is a corresponding loss of jobs.

Prices and wages chase each other down a spiral. And, with the rich holding on to their cash, the demand for luxuries and for investment goods remains low, too.

There are counteracting factors; but Keynes saw no reason to suppose that they would be enough to push investment up to a level allowing full employment.

"So, failing some novel expedient, there is no answer to the riddle, except that there must be sufficient unemployment to keep us so poor that our consumption falls short of our income by no more than the equivalent of the physical provision



for future consumption which it pays to produce today".

What did Keynes propose? A willingness by central banks to increase the supply of cash in times of downturn, and thus to keep the rate of interest low, would help. That would not, however, be enough. The state must undertake additional investment. If it does so, the multiplier works the other way. £1 million extra spent by the state will produce £4 million total boost to demand, and a corresponding boost to employment.

For the state to "overspend" is not therefore folly: in a slump it is the wisest policy. To balance the government budget is folly.

As the "scarcity-value of capital" falls, the state will gradually have to take a commanding role in investment. "A somewhat comprehensive socialisation of investment will prove

the only means of securing an approximation to full employment". This would, however, preserve much of capitalism: it would, indeed, be "the only practicable means of avoiding the destruction of existing economic forms in their entirety" by socialism.

Keynes was something of a snob in his political views. Against Marxism he wrote: "How can I adopt a creed which, preferring the mud to the fish, exalts the boorish proletariat above the bourgeois and the intelligentsia...?" Against the Labour Party his chief complaint was the importance within it of "the trade unionists, once the oppressed, now the tyrants

*"The leaders of the labour movement embraced Keynes's theories eagerly. Here was a man of science giving support to the view that wage cuts were not the answer to unemployment."*

*"Ought I to join the Labour Party? It is a class party, and the class is not my class. The class war will find me on the side of the educated bourgeoisie."*

economic revival?

# and class struggle



employed workers, the bosses will succeed.

They will lay the basis for a new boom. In that boom, yet again, the accumulation of capital will lurch ahead of the market and the possibilities of profit-making, and the conditions will be created for another slump. The whole process contains vast complexities — many different factors may be the immediate cause of a slump — and the idea of regulating it smoothly by a careful expansion of state investment is fantasy.

For all that, “Keynesian” policies of increased state spending may indeed “work” in the short run to pull the economy out of slumps. The conditions which lead capitalists to subordinate their interests to a “socialisation of investment” by the state are not, however, those of the liberal regime which Keynes hoped for. The most thorough putting into practice of Keynes’s recommendations came not through the bright idealists of the New Deal but through the hard-faced men who administered the war economies of 1939-45. When the labour movement embraced Keynes’s theories, it tied itself to the chariot of state capitalism, not socialism.

After World War 2, a new bloodless, bowdlerised Keynesianism emerged. The question of falling

profits was pushed out of the picture — in the boom of the 1950s and ’60s, it looked as if that could be done safely — and the problem was redefined as one of short-term dips in investment below the level needed for full employment, to be corrected by short-term running adjustments to monetary, tax and state spending policies.

Keynesian economists argued that their policy of adjustments to public spending had made capitalism stable. Events were to indicate that the truth was rather the opposite. More than the Keynesian public spending policies permitting capitalist prosperity, it was the capitalist prosperity permitting the public spending policies.

From the late 1960s or early 1970s, capitalism lurched into stagnation and acute instability because of a general decline in its rates of profit and decrease in the viability of its international trading and financial arrangements.

Now “Keynesian” public spending

brought with them a long list of problems for the capitalist state.

Keynes’s had always been a theory which took the national economy as its basic unit, in an epoch when capitalism is increasingly an integrated international system. Considerations about foreign trade, capital flows, and so on can easily be added to the Keynesian scheme — and, indeed, Keynes himself was an expert on international trade — but the international framework is an extra factor tacked onto the national unit, rather than being the starting point of analysis.

This flaw took its toll in the 1970s. Profits do not come from the natural “scarcity value” of capital: they are an expression of surplus value, the value produced by labour in excess of the amount paid in wages. Public spending is a deduction from that surplus value, it therefore tends to reduce profits. Capitalist states with high public spending tend to lose out in international competition.

Increased public spending and increased employment strengthen workers’ fights for higher wages. In a situation where capitalists are desperately striving to reverse a fall in their profit rates, they generally respond by trying to outstrip the higher wages by higher prices. There is an inflationary spiral.

Public spending boosts also push up prices directly. Inflation and low interest rates are liable to lead to balance of payments problems.

“Keynesianism” became discredited in the 1970s. It was ousted by new versions of the old pre-Keynesian dogmas.

Some economists, like Anatole Kaletsky of *The Times*, argue that “Keynesian” policies are now workable again. The trade unions have been smashed up, there will be no effective push for higher wages, and, therefore, profits can be pushed up and inflation restrained. But they are likely to be proved wrong; and, in any case, wage-push was only one among several problems which ruined “Keynesian” policies in the 1970s.

The ruling classes are floundering. Their free-market dogmas have brought chaos; their rediscovered alternatives will do little better. The case for socialism must be put back on the agenda.

*“More than the Keynesian public spending policies permitting capitalist prosperity, it was the capitalist prosperity permitting the public spending policies.”*

whose selfish and sectional pretensions need to be bravely opposed”.

“Ought I, then, to join the Labour Party”, he asked himself. “Superficially that is attractive. But looked at closer, there are great difficulties.

“To begin with, it is a class party, and the class is not my class. If I am going to pursue sectional interest, I shall pursue my own. When it comes to the class struggle, as such, my local and personal patriotisms, like those of everyone else except certain unpleasant zealous ones, are attached to my own surroundings.

“I can be influenced by what seems to me to be Justice and good sense; but the class war will find me on the side of the educated bourgeoisie”.

Yet the main leaders of the labour movement embraced Keynes’s theories eagerly. Here was a respected man of science giving support to the view that wage cuts were not the answer to unemployment, and support to their demands for public spending. Here was an alternative to the assaults of the Tories, free from the horrors of revolutionary socialism.

So easy! But is it? Keynes’s system has some fatal faults.

In one sense Keynes was more pessimistic about capitalism than Marx was. Keynes thought capitalism was sinking into a permanent slump, as the rate of profit fell, while Marx argued that capitalism would continue to lurch through booms and slumps as long as the working class did not overthrow it.

Keynes’s extreme “pessimism”, howev-

er, allowed him to conclude that there would be no alternative for the bosses but to accept an increasing role of the state in investment and the “euthanasia of the rentier” — the quiet death of the inactive capitalist who lives off dividends or interest without playing any part in industrial management.

Once the bosses had accepted that, the new state-regulated capitalism would be stable. Thus Keynes transformed his pessimism into optimism.

He complained that “the difficulty is that the capitalist leaders in the City and Parliament are incapable of distinguishing

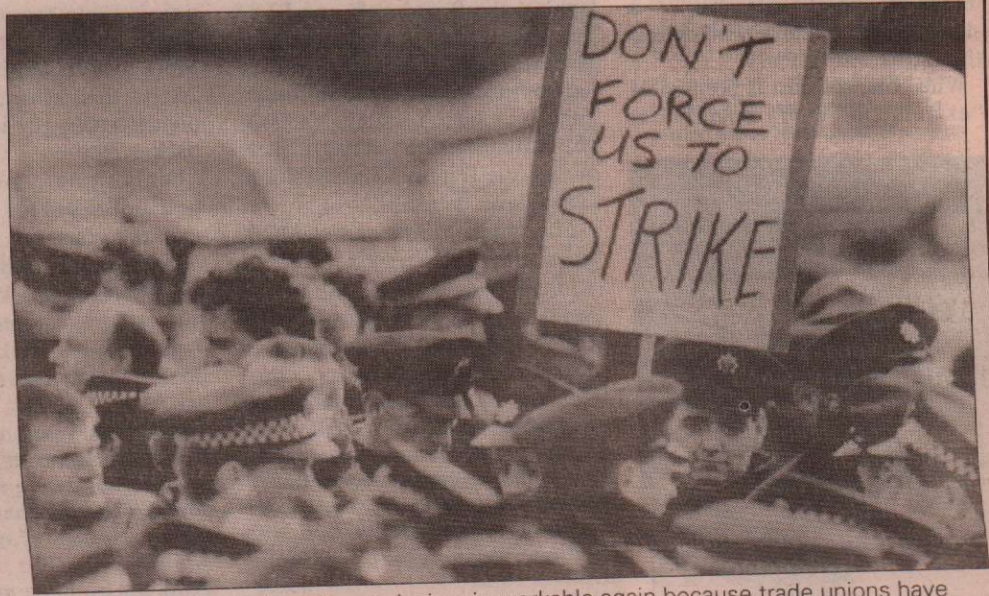
*“Unemployment was not caused by high wages, or any other quirk. It was a chronic disease of free-market capitalism.”*

novel measures for safeguarding capitalism from what they call bolshevism”, but clearly believed that it was only mental rigidity, not anything more fundamental, which held up the “capitalist leaders” from adopting his “moderately conservative” recom-

mendations.

For Marx, there was no chance that the profiteers would quietly fade away. For Marx, profits are not determined by technology or nature. They are not an index of the “scarcity of capital” (and, in fact, Marx argued, the whole idea of a long-term “scarcity” or “excess” of capital is a confusion).

Profits are determined (within limits — but very broad limits) by the class struggle. If profits fall, the profiteers will try to restore them by cutting wages and speeding up labour. They may succeed. If the workers do not overthrow capitalism, then eventually, backed up by the pressure of mass unemployment on the



Some economists believe Keynesianism is workable again because trade unions have been smashed along with their will to push for higher wages. They could be proved wrong

**"Militant" backs witch-hunting tactics**

# Serwotka faces slander

It is a law in politics that when people resort to lies and slander they have already lost the argument. If you are sure of your ground you don't need to throw any muck around.

It is surely, therefore, cause for celebration that *Militant* and their allies in the low paid civil servants' union CPSA have embarked on a major campaign of lies and slander against the socialist candidate for national President, Mark Serwotka.

Mark is winning the argument for fighting unity in the union around a national strike to stop "Market Testing" (the contracting out of Civil Service jobs to private profiteers). *Militant* and their friends, who are backing a candidate who has nothing clear to say on this, the central issue facing civil servants, have been forced to resort to the most outrageous tactics. Trudy Saunders, editor of the CPSA DsHSS Section newspaper *Viewpoint*, tells the story.



Mark Serwotka is the only CPSA union presidential candidate calling for strike action to stop Market Testing

**A**N INCREDIBLE campaign of lies and slander has been launched in the DsHSS against left CPSA Presidential candidate Mark Serwotka.

In a Section election address he is described as **"an extremist put up by a small left wing sect"**.

Mark was voted as Broad Left SEC Deputy Chair candidate at a full Broad Left meeting. Yet the source of this witch-hunt is not the "Moderates", but the *Militant*-backed wrecking DsHSS Deputy Chair candidate, Steve Cawkwell.

In Steve's desperation he has resorted to anti-socialist rhetoric in order to win votes. He seems to have forgotten that it is not socialists or socialist ideas that are extreme. It is capitalism and those who defend it who should be tagged extremists.

Does not Steve think a capitalist system which causes the death of millions through poverty, hunger and war extreme? No. Seemingly, he thinks a socialist who wants to work for the end of this vile system and to replace it with a society based on need not profit merits the tag of "extremist" — a slur invented by those who defend this barbarous system.

When one socialist is accused of "extremism" every socialist is

slandered. The very idea that human beings are capable of something better than the murderous, unfair society in which we live is denigrated.

We demand that Steve immediately withdraws his remarks, and publicly apologises to Mark and all other socialists in the CPSA.

Steve and his backers have branded Mark's Presidential campaign sectarian. Nonsense!

**"Mark is described as 'an extremist put up by a left wing sect'. In his desperation Steve has resorted to anti-socialist rhetoric in order to win votes."**

Steve is standing against Mark for DsHSS Deputy Chair for one reason: to *punish* him for standing against the Broad Left and BL84 backed Grade 7 Presidential candidate, Albert Astbury, and to attempt to assert Broad Left discipline over him. Yet Steve's actions mean that the right wing are likely to win the Deputy Chair position. *This is sectarianism!*

The witch-hunt against Mark goes beyond Steve's election address. The latest edition of the Section Broad Left newsletter *Union News* contains numerous lies.

This is particularly interesting because the editor of *Union News* is one Rob Williams, a long-standing *Militant* supporter who failed to stop the branch of which he is Secretary — DSS Inner London South — backing Mark for President!

*Union News* claims: **"Mark says he is the only candidate calling for**

**national strike action against market testing. This is a deliberate lie. All Broad Left candidates agree strike action is needed."**

In fact, this paragraph twists the truth. Mark is the only Presidential candidate calling for national strike action to defeat market testing. One of the central reasons for Mark's Presidential candidature was that the Broad Left are not backing a candidate who makes this important demand. That is a fact. The anonymous author of *Union News* is the one telling this lie, among many others. The word *Presidential* is deliberately missing because members might start asking questions about why the Broad Left-backed Presidential candidate Albert Astbury *isn't* calling for national strike action against market testing. Yet Mark makes this entirely true statement only in the context of his *Presidential* candidacy.

Steve Cawkwell also claims all the credit for the DsHSS Section market testing campaign plans.

Another conscious lie. The original proposal for a campaign came from the Merthyr Tydfil branch, which is backing Mark for President.

Steve then attempted to put his own twist to the idea of a fight back.

His unique contribution has been not to call for a strike to *stop* market testing.

Steve wants a strike against the *bad effects* of market testing and for certain 'guarantees'. He is *not* arguing for a strike to *stop* the implementation of market testing as such.

Those who resort to such tactics are clearly desperate and disorientated. They trade slanders and sling mud rather than concentrating on the issues which affect members.

Another example of combining direct untruth with lying by omission is provided by the attempt in

*Union News* to compare Mark and Steve's record in the union:

**"Steve first came to prominence because of his massive contribution to the 1980/81 pay campaign. In '87 he led a seven week branch strike against fixed term contracts. In 1991 he led an eight week branch strike which won 20 extra staff and extra resources for the whole benefits agency."**

**"By comparison Mark has not led a single major campaign or dispute in recent years. His reputation rests on the 26-week Caerphilly strike against casuals. But that was years ago."**

Whoever wrote this piece doesn't experience time in the same way as the rest of us do.

**"When one socialist is accused of 'extremism' every socialist is slandered. The idea that humans are capable of something better than the murderous society in which we live is denigrated."**

We are told that the Caerphilly strike "was years ago". Well, it started in 1986 and ended in 1987. The same year as the Hull strike which *Union News* makes so much of! It appears that Steve Cawkwell's exploits in 1987 are well and truly up to date and relevant whereas anything Mark did in 1987 took place in the dim and distant past.

In fact the Caerphilly strike ended 8 weeks before the Hull

strike started. If a week is a long time in politics for *Union News*, two months appears to be an epoch!

But that is not all. Two weeks after the Caerphilly strike ended, the Aberdare office (Mark's own workplace) came out on strike. The action lasted for six weeks. Aberdare ended their strike as Hull came out. One of the last acts of the Aberdare strikers was to donate £100 from their fighting fund to their brothers and sisters in Hull.

Merthyr Tydfil then came out again on a month-long strike in 1989.

Of course none of this is mentioned by *Union News*.

They are too busy glorifying Steve's role in the 1980-1 pay campaign which was not "years ago" but very recent, and much more recent than the 1989 Merthyr Tydfil strike or the vote for branch-wide strike action in Rotherham alongside the miners that Mark won for 2 April 1993!

Steve and his supporters clearly have no concern whatever for the truth. For them reality can be twisted and warped to suit their factional purpose: "the end justifies the means". Their only concern is to assert their factional control of the Broad Left. For them the Broad Left is the measure of all things good. If the truth has to be wrenched out of shape to fit the interests of the Broad Left, so be it.

The left in the CPSA should rise to standards higher than those of Marion Chambers, Barry Reamsbottom and the *Sun* newspaper!

Mark's supporters in the DsHSS Broad Left will be demanding an immediate right of reply in *Union News*. We shall also be challenging Steve Cawkwell and *Militant* to provide evidence for their crazy allegations in front of a panel of independent and impartial trade unionists.



Mark Serwotka



# Old-fashioned with a twist

## Cinema

Cathy Nugent reviews  
*One False Move*

THIS IS ONE OF THOSE old-fashioned thrillers. In films like this the hero is always unlikely, the villain's girlfriend is always a victim (usually of her own high spirits), and everyone ends up dead. But black director Carl Franklin adds a more modern and unusual theme to the formula in *One False Move*: racial tension in the USA.

Fantasia, her boyfriend Ray, and Ray's psychopathic mate Pluto team up to pull off a cocaine and cash heist in Los Angeles. They don't make a very professional job of it and the cops soon identify them as suspects. The police figure that the gang will eventually end up in Ray's lil' ol' home town, Star City in Arkansas, and a two man team go down there to wait for them to show up.

The film now alternates between Star City and seeing the gang travel to Arkansas by way of Houston, Texas.

Going South to the heart of racist America is a metaphoric journey as well. For Pluto, a black American from Chicago, the trip represents a reverse migration. For Fantasia, and for her lover Ray, it is going home. But "home" means very different things to "white trash" Ray and Fantasia.

The hero, the oafish but amiable Dale "Hurricane" Dixon, is the sheriff in Star City. Dixon is overjoyed to have a "big case" to deal with at last. However, things turn out to be not as exciting or as uncomplicated for him as he first



Fantasia, played by Cynda Williams imagined.

At this point in the film comes the big (and only) twist in the plot.

It is a well-made thriller with all the ingredients for suspense and atmosphere, but at the end it was,

in both its plot and imagery, quite predictable, and that made the serious content of the film seem very shallow. For instance, the director's device for invoking the atmosphere of the South was to

keep on showing us an old black guy playing a harmonica. This is really corny stuff!

A well intentioned film though, and certainly worth seeing, as I did, on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

## Anti-Nazi film is banned

Willie Laidlaw looks at the continuing controversy surrounding the film *Romper Stomper*

GLASGOW DISTRICT Council's licensing committee has decided to ban the showing of *Romper Stomper* at the Glasgow Film Theatre. The six person committee took the decision not because of doubts over its portrayal of skinheads but because they "felt the film should be banned because of the level of violence and the use of knives, in accordance with the council's support of the *Operation Blade* campaign run by Strathclyde police".

*Operation Blade* is a campaign being run by police against knife violence. The last film banned by the licensing committee was the *Life of Brian* in 1979, and a ban still stands on *The Devils*, a film now available on video in Glasgow. No doubt *Romper Stomper* will be available in the video shops in a few months.

*Romper Stomper* deals with racial violence in a controversial and challenging way which may not be to everyone's taste, but this is not why it has been banned in Glasgow. The issue of its treatment of racism has not been mentioned by the licensing committee.

Last month the licensing committee had a special viewing of *Reservoir Dogs* with a view to banning that film, although it was decided to allow it be shown.

*Romper Stomper* has been banned for its violent content whilst other completely gratuitous but bland films clearly pass the licensing board's standards. This banning exposes what happens when you call on the authorities to use the power of censorship, i.e. six Glasgow councillors make their moral judgment on what the rest of us are permitted to see.

Less serious perhaps, but still misguided, is the SWP/ANL's call for a boycott of this film. They are effectively doing the same thing: making a moral judgment about the film. Such calls can only add to the climate of censoriousness. In any case, to call for a boycott says you are not in favour of the film being shown or, in other words, you are in favour of a ban. All this will, in the long run, play into the hands of the right wing.

The ANL/SWP clearly take a very simplistic view of the effect of screen violence on people in general and a fairly ignorant view about this film in particular. As the director Geoffrey Wright points out "this is not an exploitationist, simple-minded piece of junk. If it was, people would be setting fire to the cinema or running around bashing other people. That has not happened."

There have been reports of fascist boneheads cheering violent action scenes in the film and this is sickening, but these thugs would no doubt find enjoyment in many things abhorrent to the rest of us. An effective way to fight their politics is to use this film as a focus for anti-fascist activities, leafletting outside cinemas where it is being shown — not to call for either bans or boycotts.

The people of Glasgow, meanwhile, will have to wait until *Romper Stomper* comes out on video before making up their minds about it.

## Students need a living grant!

### Television

By Alice Sharp, National Union of Students Women's Officer

CHANNEL 4 TV'S *Free For All* documentary this Tuesday (13 April) is showing the increasing numbers of students using the sex industry to get through their courses.

The programme has had a lot of media coverage, from *Time Out* to the *Sunday Telegraph*. Is this because of concern about sex workers? Or is it the idea that middle class women students (it could be your daughter) are becoming prostitutes and strippers?

In fact, issues of the conditions of workers in the sex industry have not been taken up in any of the press coverage.

Students are going into the sex

industry in increasing numbers. This is not surprising when the grant is so low and students have no income in the summer. To continue studying, students have to get jobs, and in a recession these are likely to be risky or dangerous work in poor conditions.

In one escort agency shown in the programme, 80% of the workers are students.

Students are also taking drugs for pharmaceutical companies which use them as guinea pigs and pay them for it.

Women on the programme say they were afraid to tell their families or friends about their work. Student union officers have a responsibility to provide students in this situation with information and help about clinics and health

checks, etcetera. The Praed Street Centre, which advises sex workers on health and legal rights, is concerned that students might not be well informed of the importance of Sexually Transmitted Disease and other health checks.

**"For every student working in the sex industry there must be many more who have dropped out of education."**

The media have highlighted the fact that students can earn large amounts of money very quickly in the sex industry, rather than working long hours in supermarkets or waitressing.

But those students are still being exploited, and they are doing a job that is judged as degrading and which can be very dangerous.

The illegality of the sex industry means that workers can be treated however the police want with arrest, fines and sometimes

prison. Sex workers have been arrested for carrying condoms in parts of London. The case for decriminalisation is very strong.

Students should not have to go into the sex industry or any other kind of exploitative work to get through their courses.

For every student working in the sex industry there must be many more students who have dropped out of education. Students should get a living grant.

The right to education no longer exists, and contributions by students and their parents are increasing. Students should unite with trade unionists who are gaining confidence to defend their rights and demand change — change so that no-one has to work in an illegal and dangerous sex industry.

If people work in the sex industry then it should be in a safe, legal environment where they have rights, not in conditions they accept only through desperation.

Debate: paying NALGO strikers full take-home pay

# 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 force-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.

# Giving up on democracy

## LETTER

**I** DISAGREE WITH Dion D'Silva's article which opposes NALGO's policy of paying strikers full take-home pay.

The issue of the national union's abuse of full take-home pay to sabotage and destroy effective union action has to be tackled by making the leaders directly and democratically accountable to the membership.

Strike pay is part of the product of people's labour, saved by them, through their union, for the purpose of enabling them to take strike action and hurt the employer but not themselves.

To then argue that workers should not avail themselves of their own foresight in collectively providing for themselves during a strike is like saying it's wrong to collect money on picket lines, or from other unions, or from the working class in general to support workers on strike.

The whole point of strike funds is to ensure, that, as far as possible, striking *isn't* a sacrifice for the strikers, but *is* an attack on the employers.

Dion argues that full take-home pay means a passive dispute that can't easily be built on or escalated. But in the Camden social work dispute of 1991-2 strikers held daily strike meetings of between 80 and 120 throughout the 12 months of the strike. They spoke to literal-



For some low-paid workers the sacrifice of going on strike is "not worth it"

ly hundreds of trade union meetings and raised money for their own independent fighting fund.

This fund still has money in it, and is being used by the social workers sacked at the end of the strike to support them in their campaign for reinstatement.

Newham NALGO — out on strike on full take-home pay — had regular branch meetings attended by 300-500 members, and organised a series of marches in conjunction with other branches.

They were able to occupy NALGO HQ when they first

threatened to stop full take-home pay, forcing the NEC to continue support.

In the end the NEC were only able to stop take-home pay by ignoring a massive vote at the Local Government Group Meeting on the pay claim.

The NEC has to be condemned for this blatant disregard of members' wishes! To say we shouldn't have asked for full take-home pay to begin with is to give up on the struggle for democracy in the union just at the time when it is most

under threat from the merger with NUPE and CoHSE.

Also, NALGO has a large percentage of low paid workers in it.

Many are single parents, or sole income-earners in households. Being on strike pay of £62.50 is like being on Income Support, which we know is below subsistence level. Workers faced with losing their homes might feel that by keeping their heads down they might not be the ones for the chop.

We have to have something to say to these people other than "sacrifice is worth it".

Roy Webb  
Southwark NALGO

# Alliance for Workers' Liberty public meetings

**Thurs 15 April**

**"What next after 2 April?"**

Glasgow AWL meeting. 7.30, Partick Burgh Halls.

**Weds 21 April**

**"Abortion rights — the debate"**

The AWL debates SPUC on a Woman's Right to Choose. ULU, Malet Street, London.

**Thurs 22 April**

**"Railworkers — how to fight back"**

Leeds AWL meeting. 7.30, Adelphi Pub. An RMT member discusses the issues.

AWL weekend school

**Sat-Sun 17-18 April**

**"An introduction to Marxism"**

Hosted by Newcastle AWL. Details: 091-284 6347.

Labour Party

**Sat 17 April**

**Socialist Campaign Group Conference**

11.00-5.00, Sheffield Hallam University.

Details: Jeremy Corbyn MP, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

CPSA

**Tues 20 April**

**"How to fight market testing"**

Speaker: Mark Serwotka. 7.30, Adelphi pub, Leeds.

Miners

**Sat 1 May**

**NUM benefit show** 8.00, Hackney Empire, East London.

Pro-choice

**Sun 25 April**

**"Cabaret for choice"**

A benefit for NAC. 7.30, Hackney Empire.

Students

**Thurs 13 May**

**Lobby of Parliament against voluntary membership**

12 noon. Organised by Save our Student Unions Campaign. Details: Elaine Jones, 071-272 8900.

# Scots workers learn from Timex example

## NOTES FROM THE NORTH

THE EMPLOYERS' offensive, their attempt to batter down the wages and conditions of Scottish workers, has taken a new turn over the last couple of weeks. Since the beginning of the year the bosses have been carrying out a concerted attack on the wages and conditions not to mention jobs, of workers across the Scottish engineering industry.

The betrayal of the workers at the Hoover plant in Cambuslang was the start. The deal the AEEU struck with Hoover management signalled the way

forward for the bosses. After being given the green light at Hoover they've all geared up to have a go.

Bosses at Scottish Power have now jumped on the bandwagon. Despite profits of £205 million last year they are trying to squeeze the pay and conditions of the workforce. The new proposals from the management at Scottish Power would affect 630 workers in shops throughout Scotland.

The cuts package includes a three year wage freeze, loss of public holidays, a reduction in annual leave from 25 to 20 days and cuts in payments for week-end working and calls out.

The proposals also cover drastic cuts to the salary scale. The current maximum salary of

£12,500 would be cut to £10,000. This year Scottish Power's MD got a pay rise of £95,000. He now gets £180,000 a year.

NALGO represents the workers affected by the cutbacks. A mass meeting condemned the proposals and voted unanimously to reject them. The union is now deciding what action to take to defend wages and conditions.

Bill Speirs, Deputy General Secretary of the STUC, said recently in the *Evening Times*:

"Next month's conference (STUC) is set to be a launchpad for a fightback against the attempt by employers using the high number of jobless to try and turn Scotland into a sweatshop economy."

"That battle will be fought by hospital workers in Ayrshire,

Scottish Power workers in every High Street in Scotland, striking Timex workers in Dundee and in firefighters battling to save the wages and conditions built up over 15 years.

"It will happen wherever employers try to take advantage of the 300,000 unemployed in Scotland. Enough is enough".

Fine words indeed. Take them together with the STUC call for a mass demonstration outside the Timex plant in Dundee on 12 April and it seems that things are looking up.

However actions speak louder than words. It would seem that the AEEU leadership have become extremely anxious to comply with every dot and comma of the Tory anti-union laws. At the Glasgow rally in support of the Albion workers it was announced that John Kydd, Convenor of the sacked Timex workers, had been stopped from speaking from the platform by his union leadership. The national AEEU leadership seem to have 'advised' Kydd to comply with the court ban which was imposed on him and other union leaders to stop them organising mass pickets at the plant. Jimmy Airlie has also been anxiously making it clear that unless Kydd is speaking on a platform direct-

ly authorised by the AEEU, he is not representing the union or the sacked workforce. When Peter Hall, the managing director of Timex, is publicly blaming John Kydd for the dispute and the sackings, the last thing Kydd or the workers need is their own union leadership corroborating such ridiculous nonsense.

Now is the time for action, not left talk. Drivers at Western Scottish buses have rejected a £9.50 a week pay rise and are taking industrial action. Shop stewards at Weirs Pumps, the engineering works on Glasgow's South Side, have said that there will be immediate action if there

is any threat of compulsory redundancies. Postal workers in Edinburgh staged an immediate walkout when the shop stewards in Fife were disciplined, bringing the postal service in the East of Scotland to a halt. Obviously the courageous fight by the Timex workers is an example to us all.

The STUC Congress should launch a fightback which unites all the struggles taking place across Scotland and links them to the battles of the miners and railworkers across Britain.

The employers' offensive continues but there is a mood to fight back. It cannot be thrown away.

## 10,000 join Timex protest

By Steve Banks

THIS MONDAY'S day of action in support of the Timex strikers was a big success (13 April). Up to 10,000 people joined a protest march and over a thousand people turned up to the mass picket. A massive and very expensive police presence ensured that the hooded scabs managed to get in, but their numbers appeared to be down and so

Timex's major contract with IBM could be at risk because of reduced production.

Deputy convenor Willie Leslie made the best speech of the day and pointed out how Timex management were spearheading the employers offensive across Scotland and the UK as a whole. Send messages of support and requests for speakers to: AEEU, 2 Union Street, Dundee. Phone 0382 22406.

## Left victories at NUT

By Liam Conway (Central Nottingham NUT)

AT THIS YEAR'S conference of the National Union of Teachers the most publicised victory — the ballot for a boycott of testing — was in reality won before conference started. The only question remaining at conference was whether the victory would be against the opposition of the executive, or whether they would cave-in to avoid an inevitable defeat. That the executive did cave-in, to give us a unanimous decision, is a valuable propaganda point as teachers now campaign for the necessary two thirds majority in the ballot at the start of term.

Delegates gained in confidence to overturn the platform and win a majority to ballot later this term for boycotting teaching 'appraisal', a scheme already used in some areas for implementation of 'performance related pay'.

Delegates defeated the executive 101,799 votes to 75,291 in winning rule changes to prevent political witch-hunts in the union, of the sort conducted against elected

Treasurer Ian Murch. The executive were defeated despite being backed by the SWP.

Also passed was a rule change to widen the objects of the union beyond educational questions to general trade union issues.

The key victories at conference such as the appraisal vote were won when the Campaign for a Democratic Fighting Union and Socialist Teachers Alliance worked together. This left unity will be vital as teachers return from conference to build joint action committees with the NAS/UWT, campaign for a yes vote in the SATs ballot and push forward on the politics of the implications of the Tories education plans.

**Open meeting for rail-workers  
Campaign for a Democratic and Fighting Union  
12 noon, Saturday 24  
April  
Mechanics Institute  
Manchester**

## Day of Action: 16 April

• 11.00 am: Mass Lobby/RMT picket (St Pancras Station forecourt)

• 2.00 pm: Rally — unite the struggles! Camden Town Hall, Bidborough St, WC1

• Speakers: Jim Perry, Chris Brown (Cannock Chase NUM) Rose Hunter (North Staffs Miners' Wives Action Group) Greg Tucker, Ray Knight, Brian Whitehead (RMT) Candy Udwin (University College Hospital) Tony Benn, Paul Foot (invited)

Sponsored by the NUM and Women Against Pit Closures. Organised by the National Miners' Support Network London Regional Council.

Workers in South London will also be supporting the RMT picket at Waterloo Station. Assemble corner of Bayliss Road and Waterloo Road at 12.30pm. Called by Waterloo RMT.

### AWL Trade Union School

Marxism and the trade union struggle

Sessions on • Connolly and the sympathetic strike • Classical Marxism and the unions • Unofficial strike action • Solidarity and the law • The state of the movement today

10.30 am onward Sunday 25 April, Sheffield

Details: phone Tom 071 639 7965

## Strike on 16 April!

THE SECOND synchronised pit and rail strike is set to take place this Friday 16 April.

It is vital that the new activists who turned up on the picket lines are drawn into more systematic activity to provide a strong background for the strikes.

On the railways joint ASLEF/RMT strike committees must be built with joint picket lines and rallies.

In the pits it's going to be important to focus activity on the Notts coalfield and the coal-fired power stations.

A real chance exists to win over large numbers of the big minority of UDMers who voted for strike action in their ballot and didn't scab on 2 April.

NUM militants in Notts have already made gains in this department and are focussing on trying to win over production

teams rather than individuals.

Although the leaders of the London busworkers are doing their best to make sure rank-and-file busworkers know as little as possible about what direction their dispute is going, it seems clear that their action would be solid if it was linked to that of the miners and railworkers.

Possibilities also exist for drawing in the Tube workers. They could be balloted on pay or over job losses.

### Solidarity with the miners

Delegate recall conference (officially sponsored by the NUM)

Saturday 24 April  
11.00am-5.00pm  
Sheffield Poly Students' Union  
(opposite Sheffield BR station)

## Telecom workers say no to changes in work patterns

NCU MEMBERS from all over London met last month to discuss the management proposals to change attendance patterns in Personal Comms (PC) the division of BT which deals with phone boxes and personal phones. The changes management have proposed are far reaching and would represent a worsening of existing working patterns — weekend working with no compensation, flexible start and finish times, reduction of promotion opportunities.

Staff in PC and all the other BT divisions are unanimous in their opposition to the management proposals and are calling on their union leadership to fight against them, not to compromise.

At last week's meeting a senior union officer admitted the Attendance Pattern proposals were the most serious attack on our working conditions for decades.

To enter negotiations with BT

accepting BT's reasoning that the business case for a change in Attendance Patterns is overwhelming, as the NEC leadership has done, can at best lead to a damaging compromise that will boost the management's offensive against jobs and working conditions in BT.

A delegate meeting in London with representatives invited from all NCU branches has been called for 17 April. The response to this meeting, which is to build opposition to the management proposals amongst the membership, has so far been very encouraging, with signs that not only Broad Left but also many right wing branches are supporting the unofficial meeting.

The Attendance Pattern crisis is occurring in the run up to the annual NCU NEC elections and promises to positively contribute to the campaign to elect a Broad Left Executive that will stand up against BT's attacks on its workforce.

## Happy birthday, LSD (Part 2)

LES HEARN'S

### SCIENCE COLUMN

perceived an uninterrupted stream of fantastic pictures, extraordinary shapes with intense, kaleidoscopic play of colours."

Later, he deliberately took a quarter of a milligram (about a hundred-thousandth of an ounce), a relatively large dose. He reported that "Everything in my field of vision wavered and was distorted... pieces of furniture assumed grotesque, threatening forms... a demon had invaded me, had taken possession of my body, mind and soul. I jumped up and screamed, trying to free myself from him, but then sank down again and lay helpless... I was seized by a dreadful fear of going insane."

These properties led to some use of LSD in trying to investigate some psychiatric disorders. These attempts were unsuccessful though LSD was used to help some patients relive painful experiences. It was also used to help reduce the pain and fear of terminal cancer. Any medical or research use is now ruled out by its illegality.

Its sensory effects rendered it attractive to those wishing to "expand" their minds. Though it is non-addictive and physically harmless, scaremongering stories led to its banning and to inappropriately harsh treatment of those, like Dr. Timothy Leary, whose experiences with LSD led them to reject the authority of their governments. Users have sometimes experienced psychological disturbances or suffered accidental injury, and crimes have been committed under its influence (through perhaps proportionately less than alcohol). Proving that the drug is responsible for these is rather difficult but it is certainly true that victims of the CIA's "experiments" in giving them LSD without their knowledge suffered long-term psychological damage, leading in some cases to suicide. Following release of details under the Freedom of Information Act, some of the victims are trying to gain compensation.

LSD was later identified in the seeds of the Morning Glory plant. The Aztecs made a magical drink called *ololuiqui* out of these which they used for divination and in sacrifices. Their descendants use the seeds under the name "Seed of the virgin" or "Herb of Mary". There is very little new under the sun!

One useful derivative, Bromocriptine, is used to treat parkinsonism, acromegaly (a bone disorder caused by production of growth hormone in adulthood), overproduction of milk, some breast cancers and some reproductive disorders.

It was when trying to find other useful derivatives that the renowned chemist Albert Hoffmann synthesised lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). It is said that he discovered its properties while cycling home from work, having inadvertently absorbed a minute amount of it. In fact, it seems that he felt remarkably restless at work and had to go home. There, he said, "I sank into a not unpleasant intoxicated-like condition, characterised by an extremely stimulated imagination. In a dreamlike state I

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

## Los Angeles police prepare for terror

# Blood on De Klerk's hands

By Anne Mack

**P**RESIDENT F W DE KLERK has the blood of Chris Hanani on his hands – and the blood of perhaps six thousand people who have died as a result of the “political unrest” since the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1991.

De Klerk's strategy since then has created the conditions in which acts like Hanani's murder were bound to take place.

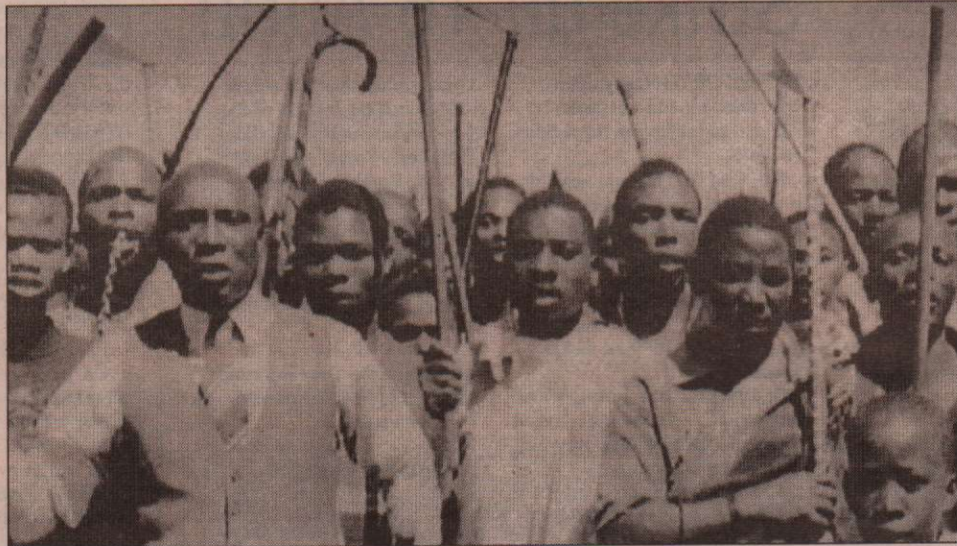
The basic idea behind De Klerk's reforms has been to replace apartheid with the market and a strong state, unleashing the death squads against his opponents while preparing for democratic elections.

Evidence is already coming to light that South African Communist Party boss Hanani may not have been killed by a single white extremist working entirely on his own. Someone must have given Hanani's address to chief suspect Wallus, and told him that Hanani's bodyguard had been given the Easter weekend off. The most likely source of such information is the security services, who keep close tabs on the movements of leading ANCers.

How far up the chain of command in the security services such information could have come from, we do not know. But we do know that when De Klerk has distanced himself from the activity of the death squads, he has been deliberately lying.

Terror goes hand in hand with De Klerk's version of democratisation, as part of the same reform process.

Independent South Africa correspondent



ANC supporters protest after Chris Hanani's death

John Carlin managed to draw out this description of De Klerk's strategy from ex-spy-master and dirty tricks operator Nico Basson.

“It was only now, when apartheid was going and ‘non-racial’ elections were in the offing, that SADF [South African Defence Force] strategists were beginning to see the prospect of a comprehensive WHAM [Winning Hearts and Minds] success.

“The end of violence [in the townships, orchestrated by the SADF] has not been to destroy property or to kill – that has only been a means. The political objectives have all been directed towards the eventual goal of securing white control in the post-apartheid set-up.

“The end goal is a divided and undermined ANC, and an alliance of the ruling National Party, Inkatha and other ‘moderate’ black organisations which will sweep ‘legitimately’ to power, with the SADF's own power structure remaining intact”.

The National Party strategy has now shifted to centre on a power-sharing pact with the ANC, but in essence it is the same. The state terror has been crucial in pushing the ANC leadership towards their offer of a “sunset clause” in the constitution which would guarantee power-sharing.

Hanani was the most influential potential opponent of such a long-term deal, and had made vague noises about the Communist Party possibly standing against the ANC in elections if the latter compromised its goals.

The ANC leadership have been right to stress that everything possible must be done

to prevent the struggle degenerating into a racial civil war, and to stress that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black or white. They are also right to say that there should be no Nurembergs in South Africa.

But the only way to turn the situation round is to focus the anger and outrage of the black workers and youth towards the goal of the immediate convening of a democratic parliament to set up a new constitution.

**Chris Hanani: a fighter but a Stalinist – see page 2.**

**A**S SOCIALIST ORGANISER goes to press, the jury is still out in the trial where four Los Angeles policemen are charged with violating the civil rights of Rodney King.

A year ago, riots swept LA after an all-white jury found the police innocent of assaulting King, despite videotape which showed them beating King brutally and repeatedly as he lay on the ground.

American socialist monthly *Bulletin in Defence of Marxism* describes what's happened since.

“In the first days and weeks after the 1992 social explosion, there were highly publicized promises of federal and state aid. But government agencies and politicians have provided scant help. Unemployment in California and in Los Angeles has been increasing over the past year and is currently the highest in the nation.

Complicated paperwork discouraged thousands of persons seeking help from the Small Business Administration, and insurance companies used every possible loophole and excuse to refuse payments on claim. The results are: many employees who worked in destroyed small businesses remain unemployed, and housing conditions have become worse than before.

The Police Commission voted unanimously to ask the City Council for over a million dollars to purchase new riot equipment including: tear-gas bombs, rubber bullets, special helmets, face shields, bull-horns, television monitors, and 10 police vans.

On December 14, 1992, rounds of rubber bullets were fired at people following a peaceful action in the South-Central area.

The co-owner of a chili dog stand complained that he was pushed to the ground, handcuffed, and dragged to a police car for ‘not moving fast enough’ as he watched from the driveway of a nearby business. The owner of a car retailing business said police tore up the fence around his property, shot him with a rubber bullet, shoved him to the ground, and arrested him.

A middle-aged homeowner described what she saw: ‘Lots of people were running down the street and being chased by the police. Some of the people ran in my yard to get away from the police. I saw police hitting people for no reason. They hit my niece and nephew because they didn't go inside the house.’

The *Independent* (10 April, 1993) reported: “If anything, the scale of their preparations is serving to increase tensions.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's department has pledged to swell the number of police on the streets to more than 8,000.

The governor of California, Pete Wilson, has 5,000 National Guard troops on stand-by, supported by armoured personnel carriers. The arsenal of security apparatus is breathtaking – plastic bullets, gas; helicopters, guns.”



Chris Hanani

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# YOUTH FIGHTBACK

The paper for  
well red youth!

*In this issue...*

• *Interview: Rage Against  
The Machine* • Northern  
Ireland • French killer cops

**YOUTH FOR JUSTICE**

# FIGHT THE POWER!

**T**HE TORIES AND THEIR friends in the editorial offices of the tabloid press say that it is 'evil' youth who are to blame for crime. They say that youth need more 'discipline' and that criminals should be dealt with more harshly by the police and the courts.

But we say they are wrong. Youth For Justice insists that youth are not to blame for a decaying economy that pushes four million out of work. We say that youth are not the people to blame for festering

inner-cities, with their growing slums and increasing poverty and despair. Do not blame young people for the cuts in services and the decay of communities.

Put the blame on the people who deserve it! — the Tories and their capitalist system which produces great wealth alongside great poverty, and which rewards selfishness and disregard for others.

In such a world is it any wonder that some young people with little to do and no hope of a job turn to crime for some money, some excitement, and to 'get on'? Youth For Justice — *Youth Fightback's* campaign for youth rights — says we must *understand* why youth drift into crime in order to begin to offer solutions.

We say that many of the roots of crime lie in terrible social conditions. Youth frustration and boredom are fed by lack of work, lack of money, lack of decent housing and harassment from the police.

A police clamp-down is not likely to stem the growth in crime. Even police chiefs say it is social conditions that are causing an increase in crime rates. But what a clamp-down *will* do is produce an increase in police brutality and frame ups. We know what the police are like! Youth do not need more police harassment, more people framed to 'solve' crimes, more youth locked up for years in hell-hole jails for petty offences.

The Tories are out to frame working-class youth for the problems *they* have created. *Youth Fightback* exists to fight for our rights — join us, join the fight back!

Youth For Justice's demands:

- The right to live free from police harassment.
- An end to prosecutions based solely on confessions. (Cases like the Tottenham Three showed that the police rig confessions to convict the innocent).
- An independent and elected police complaints body. (Complaints against the police are currently dealt with by a powerless complaints authority who rely on... the police).
- Directly elected bodies to control the police with power over operational policy and budgets. (Police authorities have little power and can be ignored by the police).
- Abolish the Prevention of Terrorism Act. (The police use special powers to override laws that protect our civil liberties).
- Disband the Special Branch and Special Immigration police. (The Special Branch are the British political police).

*Youth For Justice campaign*

**National lobby  
of Parliament**

12 noon, Thursday 13 May

Details: Mark, 071-639 7965. Or  
write to: *Youth Fightback*, PO  
Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

## M25 appeal

In March 1990 three black men, Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson, were sentenced to life imprisonment for murder, robbery and firearms offences.

The charges concerned a series of violent crimes around the M25 in Surrey during December 1988. The police said at the time that they were looking for two white men and one black man.

Three suspects admitted some involvement in the crimes but were never charged and became key prosecution witnesses.

Rowe and Davis had alibis which were not challenged in court. There was no forensic, direct or confessional evidence.

The men's hearing for leave to appeal has been adjourned. A new hearing is to be held in June

For more information contact: M25 Three Campaign, 42b Copplestone Road, London SE15.

## Make war on workfare

By Jeni, Hackney

**U**NEMPLOYMENT IS now over 3 million. In fact the real figure is over 4 million. The economy is deep in recession.

What's the Tories' response? An offensive against the unemployed.

John Major, speaking to bosses pigging themselves at a Carlton Club dinner, said the Government should "require some activity in return for benefits" — a clear signal that the Tories want to introduce a work for benefits 'Workfare' scheme.

Blaming the unemployed for the lack of jobs is an old Tory trick and, of course, it fits nicely into the Tories' desperate search for scapegoats for the current economic crisis.

But plans for Workfare also fit into the Tories' long-term aim of driving down everyone's wages. After all, what employer will pay a living wage when they can get a conscripted claimant to do the job for benefits?

For youth the debate about introducing Workfare is a sick joke. In 1988 16-17 year olds were barred from benefits. YT schemes became the only way for unemployed 16-17 year olds to get any income. YT is now a youth Workfare scheme. It has been a disaster.

- These schemes have little or nothing to do with training. In March 1991 only 39% of trainees left YT with any sort of qualification.
- The 'pay' of £29.50 or £35 a week on YT has not increased since 1986. When the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) was introduced in 1978 it was labelled cheap labour, but if the £19.50 a week that was paid on YOP had kept pace with inflation it would be equivalent to £93.44 today.
- YT has worked for the bosses. It gives them cheap labour and together with unemployment has driven down wages. A recent survey found teenagers working for as little as 90p an hour.

What the YT (youth workfare) has shown above all else is that it's the rotting capitalist system that causes unemployment, not the attitude of the unemployed.

Despite YT compulsion, despite the Tories' promise of a YT place for every 16-17 year old, there was a shortfall of over 80,000 YT places last year, leaving 80,000 youth with no income at all.

The Labour Party and trade unions must oppose any plans for Workfare, and demand an end to YT. We need real training with union rates and rights that leads to a guaranteed job, but we'll only get that by fighting for it.

If you want to fight back start now — join a union, sell *Youth Fightback*.

MSF is a union that organises YT and the unemployed.

MSF, 64-66 Wandsworth Common North Side, London SW18 2SH. 081-871 2100.

## Northern Ireland

# What we say

### Who are the IRA?

The Irish Republican Army is made up of ordinary Catholics who have grown up as members of an oppressed community within an alien state, Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, Catholics are more likely to be unemployed. They have the worst housing. They are treated as the enemy by the British troops and the predominantly Protestant police, the RUC.

From these conditions the IRA recruit angry youth who want change.

### How did the Troubles start in Northern Ireland?

When Northern Ireland was created by Britain dividing Ireland into two states in 1921, it trapped a big Catholic minority in what one Northern Ireland Prime Minister called a "Protestant State for a Protestant People."

The Troubles started when a mass Catholic civil rights movement was violently repressed by that Protestant state. The British Government, fearing a full-scale civil war, put British troops onto the streets in 1969, but the troops propped up the status quo that oppressed the Catholics. Conflict grew up between the troops and the Catholics; the Provisional IRA emerged and gained more and more support.

### Let's just get the troops out, then, and wash our hands of it!

The troops are repressive and prop up a vicious status quo, but they are keeping the lid on a full-scale civil war. The fundamental conflict is not between the British troops and the Catholic community, it is between the Catholics trapped in the Northern state and the Protestants who support that state. If the British troops just marched out without any solution to that basic conflict, it would spark a battle for control between the well-armed Protestants and the less well-armed Catholic militias. Result: a bloody civil war like the one in Yugoslavia, and repartition. The troops should come out, but as part of a political settlement.

### Do the IRA have the answer?

No. Bullets and bombs hit ordinary Irish Protestants more often than they hit the British state. They deepen the division between Catholic and Protestant, and take us further away from a free united Ireland.

### Why does the IRA kill children with bombs like the one in Warrington?

Because the IRA is in a political dead-end, and a lot of IRA members know it. Desperate and frustrated, they lash out. Their aim — though often they do not spell it all out, even to themselves — is to push the British state to break through the dead-end by forcing the Protestants into a united Ireland. But the British state won't do it; and even if it did, a united Ireland with a coerced Protestant minority would be no better than Northern Ireland with a coerced Catholic minority.

### Is internment the only way to stop the violence? Northern Ireland peace campaigner Gordon Wilson has called for it.

No. It would only increase the anger, bitterness and alienation of the Northern Ireland Catholics, and probably increase the violence. When internment was introduced in 1971, many socialists who had nothing to do with the IRA were jailed without charge or trial.

### Is the peace movement the answer?

No. Peace is impossible without political change.

Over 100 children have been killed in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Between 1972 and 1989 eight children were killed by RUC or British Army plastic bullets. Without a political solution the violence will continue. Unfortunately, the peace movement has no political solution. Worse, it is being cynically used by those to blame for much of the violence — the British Establishment.

### Can Catholic and Protestant workers unite?

Yes! They unite in many trade union struggles — in the 1984 health-workers' dispute, for example. In Northern Ireland, like everywhere else, workers have a common cause. But unity will remain at the trade union level unless workers find a common political solution to the Troubles. Catholic workers face oppression; Protestant workers support the Northern Irish state and partition because they fear becoming an oppressed minority in a united Ireland where Catholics would be a majority.

### Is there a socialist solution, what should socialists do?

We should work for political unity between Catholic and Protestant workers. This can be achieved by arguing for a federal united Ireland within which the mainly Protestant areas could have local autonomy to protect the Protestants' rights as a national minority.

Protestant workers could be won to support a united Ireland with such guarantees. Protestant and Catholic workers could be united in a non-sectarian struggle to end the partition of Ireland, to scrap the sectarian Northern Irish state, and to create a workers' Ireland.

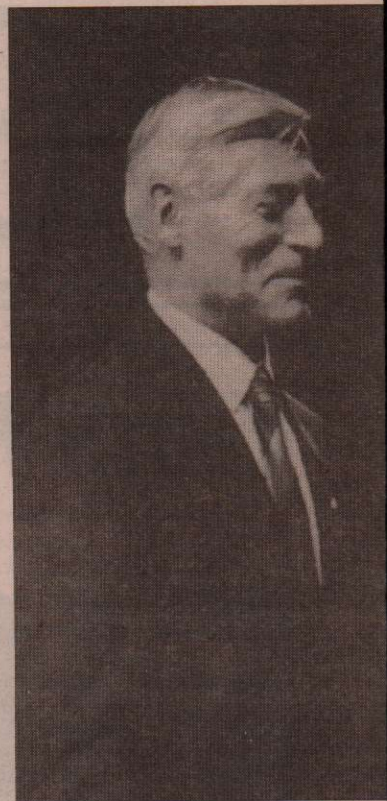
## Police violence in France

# The same

It isn't just in Britain that right-wing politicians scapegoat youth. In France, the Minister in charge of the police, Charles Pasqua, a 'hard man' on crime, has launched a national campaign of round-ups. The result in just ten days has been three youths shot dead by the police!

The French police aren't much different to the British police — except that they have guns. The Youth For Justice campaign exists to fight for justice against the British police, but it is important to remember that all over the world police forces are used to break strikes and to control the working class, with as much violence as it takes them. It's the same the world over. The police target working class youth while the really big criminals, the ruling class, give them their orders.

This report is by Joe from Kent.



Charles Pasqua (centre) celebrates the

"**N**AKOME WAS sitting on a chair arguing with an inspector in the interrogation room when the cop took out his gun and shouted: 'shut up, it's me who's got the petard'. Nakome took the bullet right through the middle of his forehead and dropped dead on the floor."

That was 13 year-old Petit Mo's description of how 17 year-old Nakome M'Borwole was slaughtered in a Paris police station.

Only three days before, an 18 year old, suspected of stealing tyres, was shot dead by a policeman.

The reaction to Nakome's murder was a demonstration that soon became a battle between local youth and the police in which over

thirty people were injured.

Despite a ban on protests over the Easter weekend, nightly demonstrations continued outside the police station where the murder took place.

Nakome was one of the thousand black youth arrested in a sweep of northern Paris's Goutte d'Or, in a nationwide 'clampdown on crime' which has been launched by Charles Pasqua, the Interior Minister of the newly elected right-wing Government.

These round-ups have of course focused on working class youth and the non-white immigrant communities. They also show the increasing racism in French politics as the mainstream parties follow the fascist lead of Le Pen's National Front.

Obviously, racism and police violence are not new in France. As a young French born Algerian told the *Guardian*: "even before Pasqua turned up again, you could be stopped and checked half-a-dozen times a day around here."

The French anti-racist organisation SOS-Racisme has taken up the issue of police violence and harassment. It says the police act like gun-toting cowboys in France's inner cities.

It is vital that youth campaigns link up across Europe. The battle for justice for young people has to be international.

The Youth For Justice Campaign is building links with French youth organisations.



## WOMEN FIGHT

# Women fight

By Hannah Wood, Lewisham

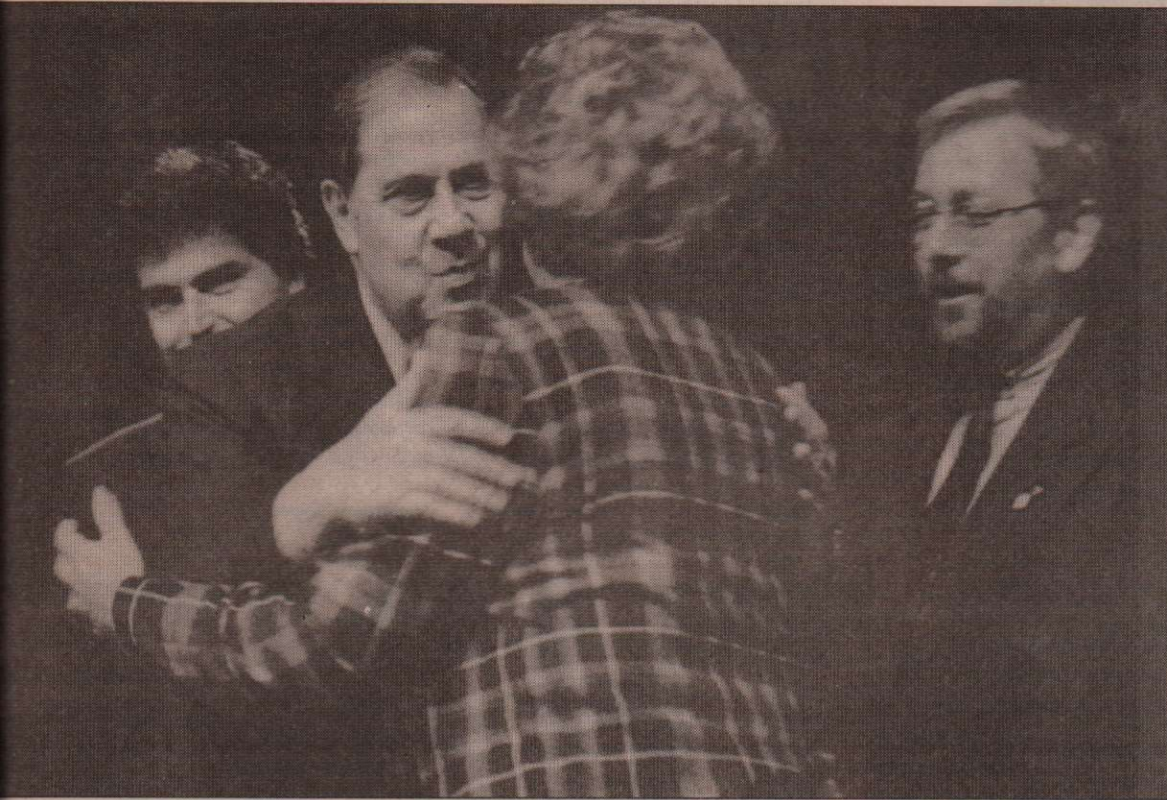
**R**ESCUE AMERICA, AN AMERICAN anti-abortion group, has come to Britain. The tactics of this group include picketing abortion clinics and harassing women who are going in.

They also try to intimidate staff. Recently a doctor in an abortion clinic in Florida was shot dead by anti-abortion protesters, making a mockery of these people's supposed "pro-life" stance.

Women do not take the decision to have an abortion lightly. Being met by protesters telling her that she is killing her baby will not make the stress of going through an abortion any easier.

Anti-abortion campaigners claim that they are trying to "save babies' lives". Rescue America want to have abortion made completely illegal. All this will do is to force women to risk their lives having unsafe, back-street abortions. What the anti-abortion campaigners are really about is a moralistic campaign against women who choose to have sex when they don't want to have a child.

# nce e all over



cent victory of the right in the French elections

## YOUTH FIGHTBACK — the paper for well red youth

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

### Sell YOUTH FIGHTBACK

- I want more information about YOUTH FIGHTBACK
- I want ..... copies of YOUTH FIGHTBACK and enclose £ ..... (20p per copy; cheques payable to "Socialist Organiser").

Name .....  
Address .....

Return to: YOUTH FIGHTBACK, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. Or telephone Mark on 071-639 7965 for

## GHT BACK

## t the bigots!

The National Abortion Campaign is organising against the tactics of Rescue America. They are trying to build on their network of people around the country. Anyone who lives near an abortion clinic or advice centre and has time to spare at short notice should contact NAC and get involved with fighting for women's right to choose what we do with our own bodies.

The National Abortion Campaign (NAC) can be contacted at: Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DR. Tel: 071-923 4976.

## Child Support Con

By Morenike

FROM THE BEGINNING OF APRIL, THE Tories' Child Support Act becomes law. This means that single mothers can be

forced to name the father of their child or face cuts in their benefits. Fathers will be required to pay maintenance for their children and money can be taken from any benefits they receive at source.

The Act will affect young parents particularly badly. Young people are hit hardest by unemployment and many are in low-paid employment. Young fathers will be means-tested to assess how much maintenance they can pay.

Women who, for whatever reason, do not want to identify the father of their child, will be hit by cuts in their benefits. Through this new law, women could be forced back into contact with violent ex-partners.

The Child Support Act set up the Child Support Agency, which has the right to pry into a woman's life in order to seek out the father of her child to make him pay maintenance. This is an attack on women's rights to raise their children independently. It reflects the Tories' attitude that single mothers, especially young single mothers, are irresponsible and do not have the best interests of their children at heart.

The Child Support Act will have an adverse effect on the lives of many parents and their children. It is an attack on women's rights and on the living standards of children.

It is being portrayed as a way of ensuring that women get maintenance for their children. In fact, any maintenance received will be deducted from their benefits and so will make no difference to the amount of money coming in. It is just a cheap, disgusting way for the government to save a bit of money at the expense of parents and their children.

# who we are

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

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

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

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

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

## WRITE BACK

**O**VER THE PAST SIX WEEKS IN Luton we have had five police forces, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Thames Valley, Northamptonshire and the Met, out in force in full riot gear every weekend. Their target has been a group known as "The Exodus Collective".

This group holds fortnightly free raves where at the end of the evening people are asked to make a donation to help with their community projects, such as the Luton Housing Action Zone who take over long abandoned properties to house homeless families.

Since the Exodus Collective started out, crime in Luton has fallen by 5.7%, the only place in the country to do so. In response the police have framed, beaten and terrorised not only members of Exodus but many other innocent people. Drugs have been planted, men and women have had their heads broken and their cars and property smashed up.

Senior officers have been asked to attend private and public meetings, as have the two Luton MPs, Bright and Carlisle, and they have been rude and obstructive in their refusals.

On Monday 1 March, a long empty hotel housing twenty homeless people was raided by police in full riot gear under the pretence of executing a bailiffs' warrant of repossession. Nine people were arrested, including somebody on the other side of the road who was going to cash his Giro. Eight were charged with public order offences.

I have written to Kenneth Clarke demanding a full public inquiry into the corrupt and brutal tactics being used, such as police with no numbers and full-faced balaclavas prowling the streets, charging people with possession with intent to supply when no drugs were found... The list goes on.

Clarke and Labour's Tony Blair talk about the need to do something about young people and crime. In Exodus they have a *positive* model, but their idea is to lock 'em up.

Exodus and the Housing Action Zone are about the very collectivism that the Labour Party was formed to fight for. If the Labour Party is serious about being a party of mass membership and the need for young people to become members then they must take a lead against such corrupt policing. The problems of this country are the fault of capitalism, not youth, and must be shown to be so.

John Jefferson  
Luton

RECENTLY READ YOUR FIRST ISSUE of *Youth Fightback*.

It's a very good paper which should have been started a long time ago. The issue was not my own, therefore I am writing to you in order to find out how I can receive an issue fortnightly, monthly, etc. And also how I can help the paper. Thanks for your time.

Indy Selvarajah  
Canterbury, Kent

**P**LEASE FIND THE ENCLOSED £2 for the sale of *Youth Fightback*. I would be happy to sell future copies of the paper. The paper has successfully increased support for my campaign of the left in my local Labour Party. I believe strongly that people like us have a duty to fight the Tories' vested and selfish interests. I also think that it was not the Tories that won the general election, but Labour that lost it. The only way forward is to build a country that's socially just, and a community that cares for all its people. Please keep me in touch with any other issues that you are campaigning on. That's all for now but I look forward to hearing from you.

John  
South-west Labour Party activist

# Not fair to Malcolm

Karen reviews Spike Lee's epic *Malcolm X*

**A**LL THE HYPE WHICH surrounded the film *Malcolm X* caused much excitement, high hopes and high expectations. However, I was disappointed by the film, and do not feel that it lived up to my expectations, or was a fair reflection of Malcolm X.

In contrast to the *Autobiography of Malcolm X* — which is inspiring, motivating and extraordinary — the film sidetracks the issues Malcolm was trying to tackle.

Malcolm X finishes his autobiography with the words "if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the fascist cancer that is malignant in the body of America, all praise is due to Allah."

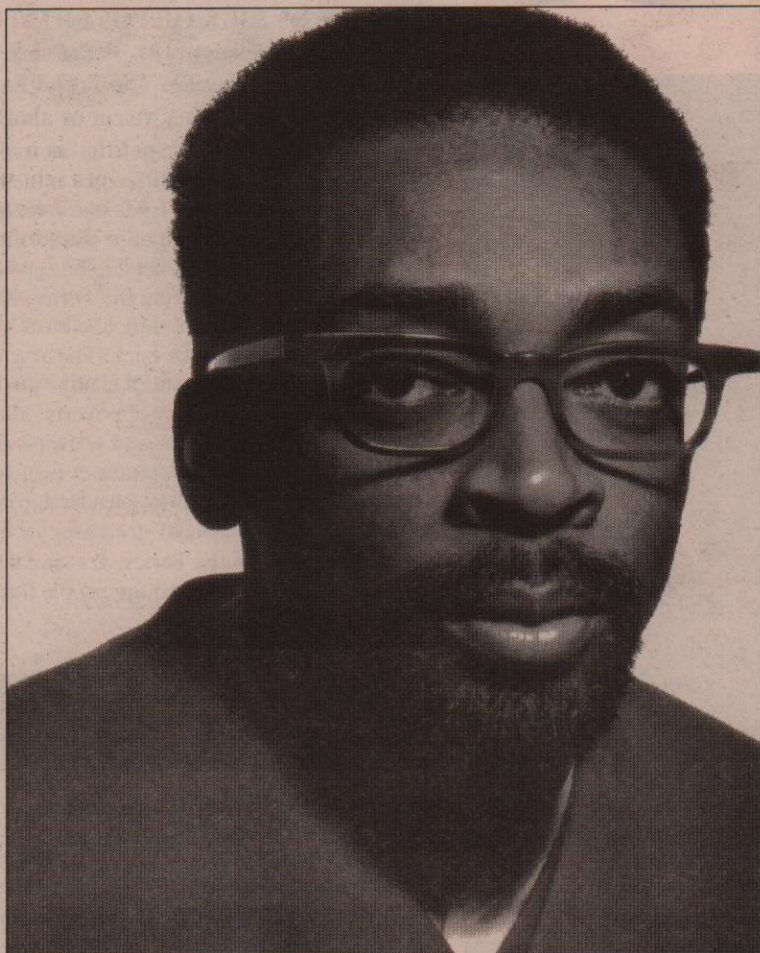
Though I do not follow the religion of Islam, I believe that Malcolm X was more interested in fighting racism than being a celebrity. If he had been given the budget Spike Lee was given he would have used it to address the racism of America, not just to produce an epic which is uncontroversial enough for the BBC to show on Christmas Day, instead of *Gandhi*.

The film is stunning — it is beautifully directed, the acting is amazing, particularly Denzel Washington, who is so detailed he even has a 'lazy eye' like Malcolm X.

The speeches are edited in a skillful way — cutting from Washington to footage of Malcolm X, which works well.

But the film does not tackle racism strongly enough, and gives only one solution in detail — that of separatism. Islamic, black separatism is not a solution — the National Front would like to see separatism, they don't want racial integration either. It is true that for a large part of his life this is what Malcolm advocated. However, it is important to look at Malcolm X's later conclusions, after his pilgrimage to Mecca:

"In the past I have made sweeping indictments of white people. I will never be guilty of that again, as I know some people are truly sincere, that some truly are capable of being brotherly towards a black man... blanket indictment of all white people is as wrong as when whites make blanket indictments against blacks."



Director Spike Lee does not always give a balanced opinion of Malcolm's views

There are (unsubstantiated) claims that Spike Lee is a black supremacist. A strong point of the film is that it advocates a "proud to be Black" attitude of which the importance cannot be underestimated in our racist society. It is therefore one of the best and strongest points of the film.

But there are instances in the film where Spike Lee does not give a balanced opinion of Malcolm X's views.

For example, a white college girl asks Malcolm X "what can I do?" and he replies "nothing". This received a huge amount of applause and laughter in the cinema I saw it at. Malcolm X later in his *Autobiography* says that he regrets that reply, but this is not covered in the film. Yes, the incident should have been shown. But Spike Lee should have balanced it with Malcolm X's later, more developed beliefs.

It would have been far better to come out of the cinema inspired to take action against racism, not to have race divisions encouraged.

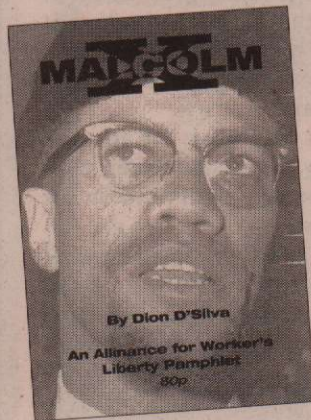
Malcolm X was totally inspiring and more than earned the respect given to him in the film. Spike Lee has made some classic films, but I don't think he used Malcolm X's legacy in the best way he could.

Yes, I'm a white girl. Spike said white people should accept that subconsciously they are racist. But working-class white people today are not responsible for the atrocities some white people have carried out in the past. What everyone should be interested in is fighting against prejudice, discrimination and oppression today.

This does not mean black people should not set their own agenda, just as women should set their agenda to fight sexism. Malcolm X wrote: "here in America, the seeds of racism are so deeply rooted, that these things are in the natural white subconscious. Many whites are even actually unaware of their own racism."

This is not to let white people off the hook — racism is a disgusting prejudice and individuals have to challenge their own beliefs. But, ultimately, we need to change society to a fair, equal, humane society rid of all discrimination, and to get rid of the capitalist system that survives by using oppression and exploitation.

As Malcolm X said himself, to be anti-racist, you have to be anti-capitalist. If the film inspired you to get involved in changing the system, good. If it didn't, think about it for yourself.



From: WL Publications,  
PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.  
80p plus 32p p&p.

## Labour's youth

By Debbie, Lewisham

**Y**OUTH WHO ARE serious about working class politics know that the fight for socialism must be taken into the trade unions and the Labour Party.

The Labour leadership have effectively destroyed Labour's youth organisations, the Labour Party Young Socialists. Now they say they want to re-launch a youth section but they want the new youth sections under the thumb of Labour's HQ, with no democratic rights in the party. They also want Labour Party officials to be able to shut down youth sections they don't like (i.e. left wing sections) at will.

Stop the carve-up and put this motion for Labour Party Conference through your local party and trade union.

"Conference accepts that winning more young people to the Party must be seen as one of the chief tasks of Constituency Labour Parties. Conference therefore welcomes the

NEC's proposal in its document *Proposals for change* presented to the 1993 Youth Conference, to raise the age limit for youth sections to 26. The NEC is instructed to present 1994 Annual Conference with a constitutional amendment to provide for this.

At the same time, Conference rejects the document's suggestion that new youth sections 'would not have a representative role and would not send delegates or resolutions to constituency party General Committees'. Conference believes there is an urgent need for more young people on GCs, and that GC representation for new youth sections would help achieve this.

Conference also resolves that decisions on whether to have new youth sections should be the responsibility of Constituency Labour Parties, either individually or jointly, and that our already overstretched Regional Offices should not be given this additional burden."

## Rage Against the Machine

Mark spoke to Timmy C from the LA Rap/Punk band Rage Against the Machine

"Now freedom must be fundamental, In Johannesburg or South Central..." Township Rebellion

### On the LA riots

The riots were an expression of discontent over a lot of things, not just the Rodney King incident, but things that are going on in the US and LA right now. When the riots started I got to see them from the outsider's point of view. We were recording in Canada when it happened. We turned on the TV and the big news was the riot in LA, but what they showed was not necessarily what happened. What they showed was "look at these crazy black people killing each other, killing everybody. Look at how unruly they are".

The US government turned the riots around and they pointed the finger at the blacks.

The riots were for a good reason but I don't think that they achieved what they should have achieved.

The Rodney King case is coming back up, it's not the end of it, there is a lot more to be said.

In the riots there were incidents of black-Korean violence. A Korean store owner shot this black girl for stealing a candy bar just before the riot, that created a lot of tension. I think the black-Korean thing is another example of pointing the finger at the black man, instead of looking at the real problem.

The political system in the USA is segregated, it speaks of blacks, whites, Chicanos.

### On the Black Muslims

A lot of blacks in the USA are trying to put Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam, on the same level as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. He will never be like them because he is a bigot. Farrakhan is using reverse racism against white people and Koreans. He is trying to turn the tables instead of finding a different way, a solution.

"A yellow ribbon instead of a swastika, Nothin' proper about ya propaganda, Fools follow rules when the set commands ya."

Bullet in the Head

### On the Gulf War

As far as the media was concerned you never saw opposition to the war, but there was. In Stanford there were big, big rallies going on against the war. After the war ended though you started to hear more about the underlying reasons why the war took place, but even now you have to dig for the information. When Zack and

I started to look into the war we found that the US had backed Kuwait to get a low price for oil.

Every time you turned on the TV they would show the smart bombs going into buildings and you would have these ignorant people saying "how cool that is", "look how strong our army is". It was sickening, people driving around with yellow ribbons on their cars, and that's no different to the Germans that were wearing the Swastika during the Third Reich.

Even after the war we left Saddam Hussein there, all the ignorant people in America say "why is he still there? I don't understand". He is there so we can go back, we have a reason to go back.

"Ignorance, hypocrisy, brutality, the elite, All of which are American dreams."

Know Your Enemy

### On Clinton

To be completely honest with you I voted for Clinton, but the only reason I did was to vote George Bush out. I have a simple way to look at the US political system. It's like a swing set, it goes back and forth and every four years a new guy gets a chance to take it for a ride. Ross Perot nearly bought his way into the Presidency. That's one way to get in, the other way is to do what every President this century has done, that is to borrow your way in. They just sell their soul to the large corporations. Clinton is no different from Bush or Reagan or Carter or any of them.

The only difference that Clinton might make is on the abortion issue, that was my sole reason for voting, in the hope that maybe if I had sex with a girl and the rubber broke she would be able to have an abortion.

### Rap

It's the latest, angriest form of pop music. Pop music has come from the black man. Jazz, funk, all forms at the beginning expressed the discontent of black people. That's what Rap is doing right now, and it's one of the most important forms of music to come out because you can say so much. You're not restricted by melody and by the things that restrict other forms of music. You can put a wealth of information in a four minute song. Lately there have been bands coming out that are sexist and racist in a lot of ways, but there are the bigger bands, Public Enemy for example and even Ice Cube, that talk about life in the inner-cities.

Rap is one of the most political forms of music, that and punk are two of the most political forms of music that have ever been. These are the two biggest influences on us.



(L-R) Tom Mareello, Timmy C, Brad Wilk and Zack de la Rocha