

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

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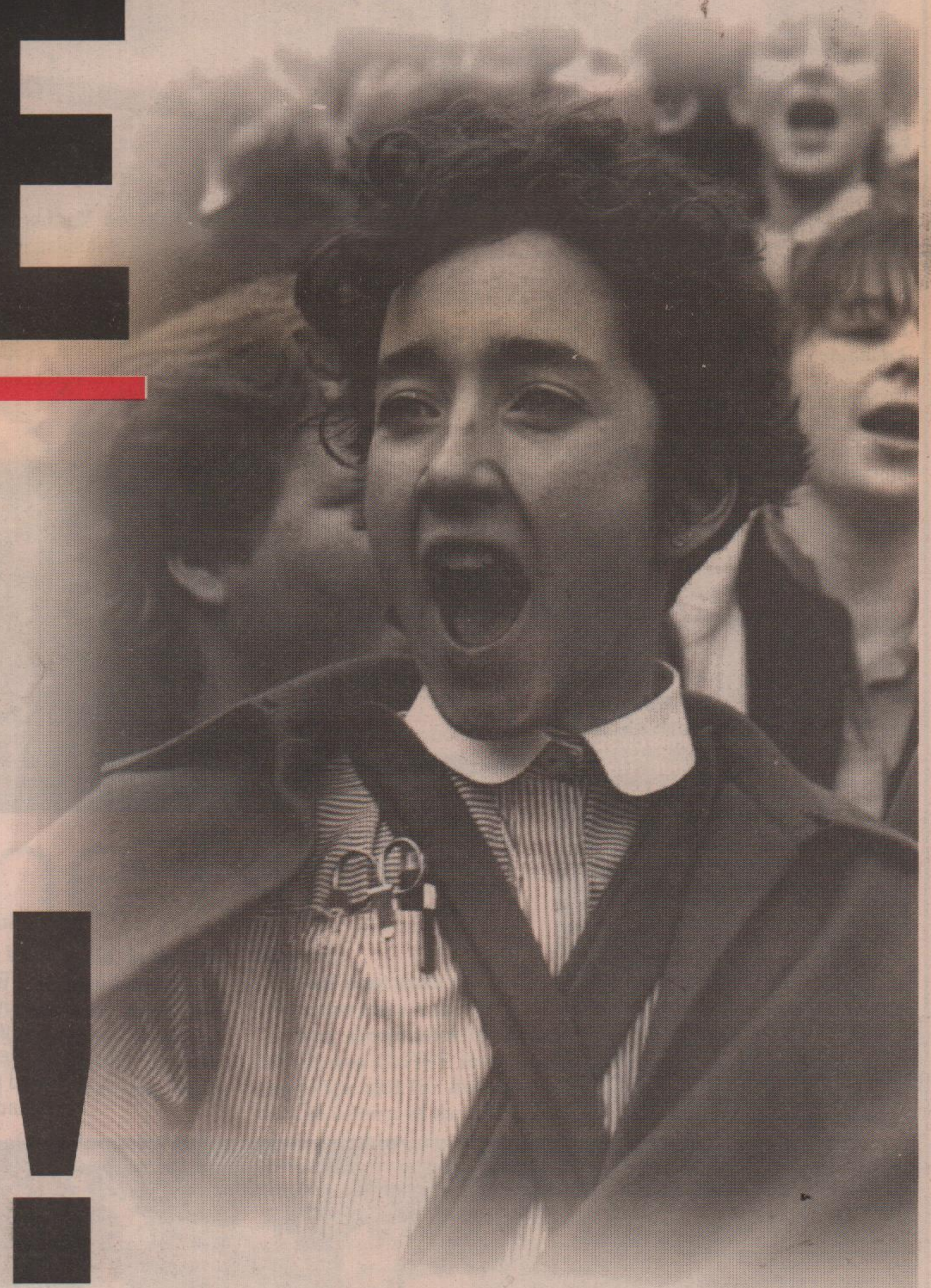
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Fighting the new Nazis centre pages

Doctors' leader slams Tories: seven years left for the health service

SAVE THE NHS!



By Richard Bayley, York UNISON Health

“WHETHER THERE is a health service in the year 2000 depends on whether there is the political

wisdom to stop and think about what's happening”.

These are not the words of a Labour or trade union leader. They are the words of the newly elected head of the British Medical Association, Dr Sandy Macara.

That the leader of such a conservative body as the BMA — which opposed the setting up of the NHS in 1948! — can speak out so clearly in defence of social medicine shows the massive potential there is for a crusade to save the NHS.

In the 1992 General Election, the Tories gave their solemn promise to the British people that the NHS would be preserved. The Tories are liars!

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Ideas for freedom '93:

Forging the weapon!

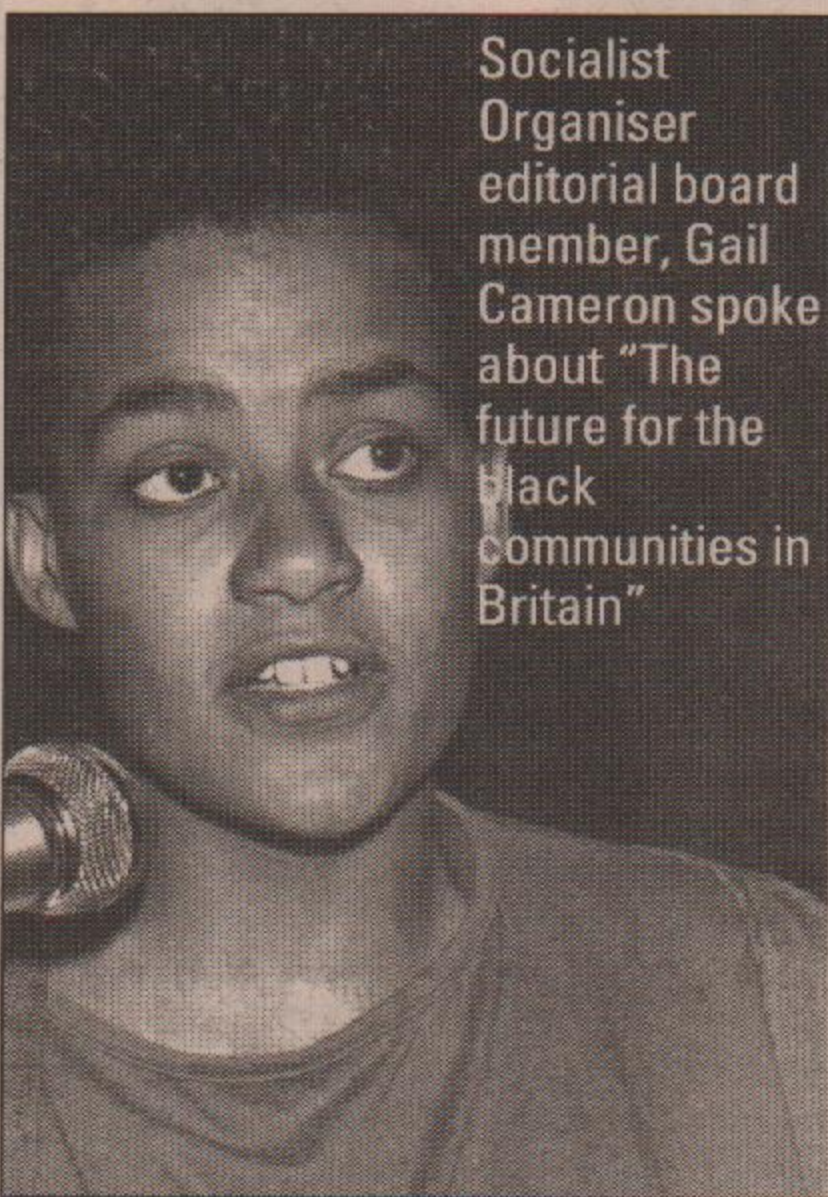
WORKERS' LIBERTY '93



Darcus Howe, presenter of Channel Four's 'Devil's Advocate' and long standing activist speaking at WL '93.

Howe is a Marxist and a follower of CLR James. He demanded an uncompromising fight for liberty and equality against racism. Darcus Howe believes in clear talking and theoretical clarity — just what the socialist left needs.

Northern Irish socialist, Patrick Murphy debated Sinn Fein's British representative, Gerry McLochlainn



Socialist Organiser editorial board member, Gail Cameron spoke about "The future for the black communities in Britain"



Michael Zinzun was a Black Panther in the late '60s and is now active in the LA black community.

Clara Buckley spoke about her campaign to get justice for her son Orville, who died inside Broadmoor



350 YOUTH and workers attended this year's Workers' Liberty event, Ideas for Freedom, held in North London, 2-4 July.

Devil's Advocate presenter Darcus Howe and Los Angeles based activist Michael Zinzun introduced wide-ranging discussions on the politics of black liberation. Gail Cameron, Dion D'Silva and Sab Sanghera from the Alliance for Workers' Liberty took up aspects of the struggle against racism in Britain and the US.

Pat Murphy from *Socialist Organiser's* Editorial Board debated Sinn Fein's Gerry McLochlainn about the solution to Ireland's troubles. Other debates included sessions about the way forward in the unions, with the Democratic Left, and "Should Labour Keep the Union Link?" with councillor John McTernan.

Unlike many socialist events the emphasis at Workers' Liberty was on a clear presentation of ideas and competition between conflicting points of view. This is the only way that youth will get a comprehensive education in Marxism and the only way workers can thoroughly prepare for the class battles ahead.

The new 1.5 million strong union

UNISON can thwart the Tory wreckers

THE FIRST OF JULY was a great moment for the trade union movement, a moment of hope. With 1.5 million members, UNISON will be the main obstacle to the Tory offensive against the NHS and local government.

The fight to stop the Tories destroying the NHS and gutting the rest of our public services is perhaps the single main issue facing the labour movement. But will public sector workers really put divisive trade union rivalries and sectional divisions behind them as they form the new union? Unity is the strongest weapon that trade unionists have, but there are worrying signs.

At a rank-and-file level there has been overwhelming support for merger — but the “machines” of CoHSE, NALGO and NUPE now seem determined to slow the whole process down.

To make the unity a reality public sector workers need to create a structure that represents members: that means employer-based, united branches. And from branch level they need to argue now for democratising the new national structure.

A central priority for UNISON has to be the harmonisation of pay and conditions between blue and white collar workers in local government and the NHS. All UNISON members should share a common pay settlement date. It would ensure that a united front could be presented against the Tories and make it much easier to defeat centralised Government initiatives like the pay freeze.

UNISON is a union that covers all grades of public sector employers from senior managers on over £26,000 to part-time hospital cleaners. If this unity is to be real it must be based on prioritising the needs of the most exploited. That means a fight for a legal minimum wage of at least two-thirds the male manual average.

UNISON's links with the

Labour Party are a vital issue.

At a time when trade unionists are fighting to keep a strong link with the decision-making processes of the Labour Party (and opinion polls show that is what most union members want!) the new union will have “one foot in and one foot out” of Labour Party affiliation.

UNISON members need to campaign now for Labour Party affiliation for the whole of UNISON including what used to be NALGO.

Anyone who thought that the privatisation threat ended with compulsory tendering for cleaning services, or that the TUPE legislation and EC directives are more than a hiccup in the Tories' plans, is wrong.

Privatisation and contracting-out are key to the Government not only as a way to force down costs and cut services and to try to balance their books but as a way to attack the strength of public sector trade unionism.

But it's not just the Tories. Labour in parliament is so feeble they have hardly argued with the Tories' plans, while Labour councils have deliberately used the threat of privatisation as a way to drive down conditions and cut jobs.

To counter the threats we need a national and local fight against privatisation and we need a clear lead.

A one-day national strike would be a sign to public sector employers and the Government that public sector workers are saying “enough is enough”. It could be the start of a national fightback.

Save the NHS!

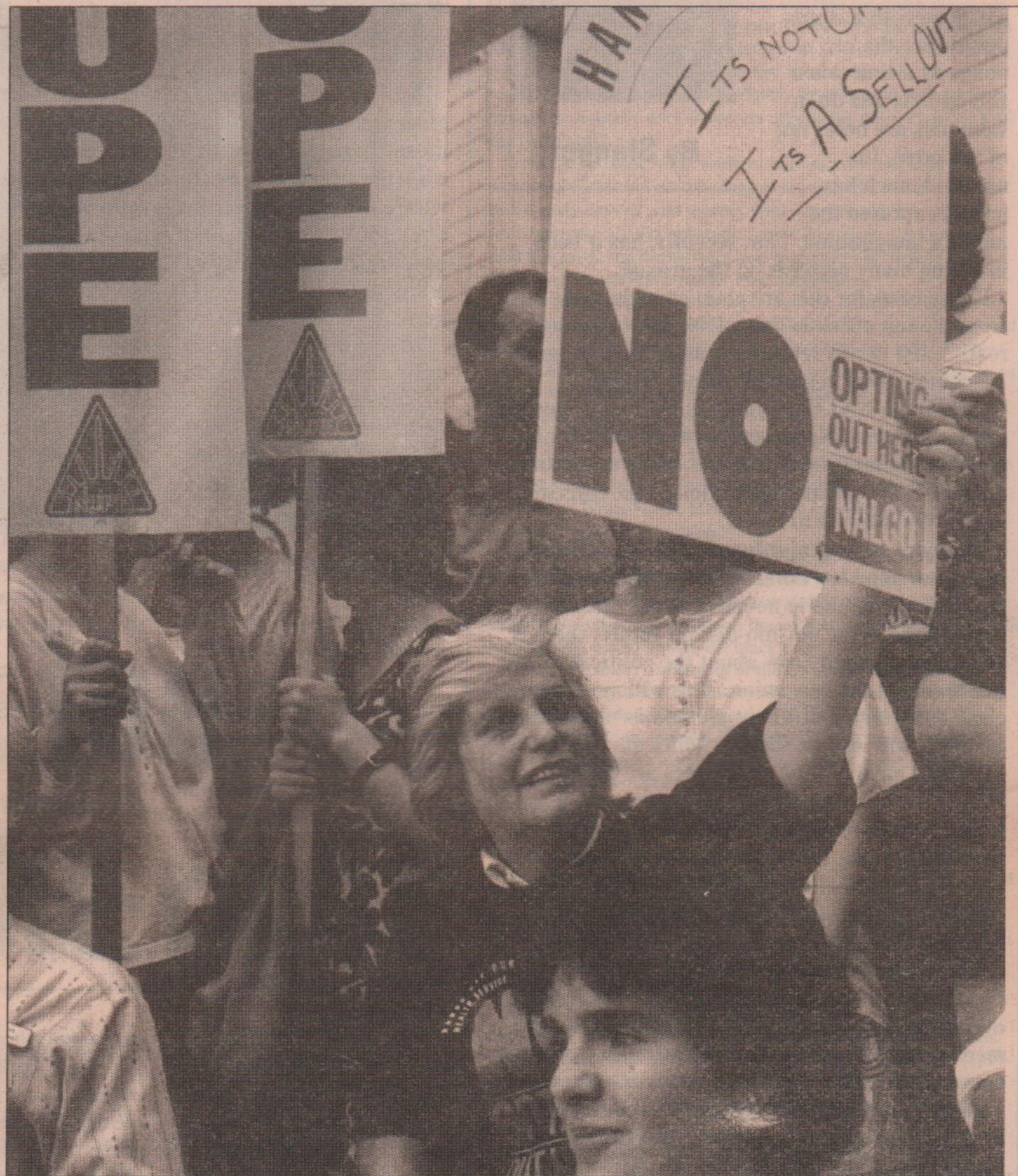
Continued from front page

Far from slowing up since the election, the spread of so-called “market principles” in the Health Service has gone ahead rapidly in the last year.

The NHS is visibly crumbling before our eyes.

One million people were on the waiting lists at the end of April! Free dental treatment and eye tests have disappeared. Something like half of all Trust hospitals are expected to have run out of money for standard procedures 3 or 4 months before the end of the financial year.

The doctors know this. They know what it means. Macara has just ousted Jeremy Lee-Potter as Chair of the BMA, the “moderate” who argued for doctors to drop their vocal opposition to NHS “reforms”.



All public sector workers have to united to fight the government's attacks

If 1 July is to be a moment of renewed hope for trade unionists UNISON must start

organising around the issues that affect all our members — the attacks on jobs and wages.

There have been recent leaks from the Cabinet Office which show the Tories are really worried about the prospect of confrontation over public sector pay. Let's turn their worries into a nightmare for them!

More on UNISON, page 4

UNITY

If you are a public sector worker why not get your branch to subscribe to “UNITY”, the broad-based bulletin for UNISON activists.

More information and copies (at 30p each) can be obtained from Nik Barstow, NWRHA UNISON, Gateway House, Piccadilly South, Manchester M60 7LP.

Macara was elected, in his own words, to “communicate [doctors'] disillusionment, anger and despair about what is happening to the Health Service and the effect it is having on their patients”.

Labour should learn from the doctors that the time for talking is over!

The Labour leaders seem to have accepted since the election that there is little mileage in campaigning on the NHS: whole swathes of Tory policy, such as the internal market and Trust Hospitals, are now accepted as facts of life by the Labour front bench. Blunkett and Co. have sleep-walked through the Tomlinson Inquiry into the NHS in London, even though Tomlinson's recommendations threaten the future of at least six major

hospitals.

Labour must wake up! We must wake it up.

Labour should back the call of NUPE and CoHSE for a mass campaign and for demonstrations in defence of the NHS. The whole weight of the labour and trade union movement should be thrown behind it.

Even in these day of mass unemployment and low confidence in the workplace, the defence of the NHS can stir Britain's working class into action. Factory gate protests — even sympathy strikes — are possible. We could win on this issue — given half a lead by our leadership.

The BMA is right: the whole future of the NHS is at stake. — Labour should come off the sidelines and join the fight!

“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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Inside the whale...

UNISON's launch on 1 July as a public sector union with 1.4 million members has gone with a whimper, rather than a bang. At a time when Bill Morris and John Edmonds are never out of the press, the union's launch has hardly captured the public's imagination. Nor, recently, has it been inspiring many activists on the ground.

The reasons for this are plain enough: aside from the top officials' jobs, UNISON does not really exist at any level. At branch level, progress is achingly slow in getting former NUPE, CoHSE and NALGO branches to discuss merged local structures. No structures at all exist for lay members at intermediate levels, while at the top, the new NEC (an amalgamation of the three old executives) has yet to meet.

There are some senior former NUPE officials who seem none too bothered about this lack of any structures, and in no hurry to set them up. Somewhere in the not-too-distant future, there is due to be an unholy row about the political role of full timers in the new union. This will mostly be a clash between the different old unions' apparatuses, but it will also be sharply political.

Put in a nutshell, the differences are these: NALGO was a heavily federal union, with a strong tradition of branch autonomy, and a correspondingly weak centre. Union full-timers played very little political role in branches. By comparison, NUPE was strongly led by its HQ, with the key relationships being a strong bond between union full-timers and a core of lay activists, going right down to branch level. CoHSE's officialdom, overwhelmingly drawn from the ranks of its own membership, has gained a reputation as staid and conservative within the trade union movement.

Throughout the 1980s NALGO's reputation as a "left-wing" union has steadily increased, while NUPE's political drift has exactly mirrored that of the Labour Party in the '80s. The NUPE/NALGO clash within UNISON, at the top of the union, will be interesting, to say the least.

Quite a lot of NALGO's former leadership will be happy to ditch the union's more left-wing policies (especially on the anti-union laws) and accept a tight, bureaucratic structure in UNISON, as long as their positions are secure. They may face a revolt, though, from those doughty fighters for democracy and openness, the *Morning Star*.

Recently, *Morning Star* supporters in NALGO have shown signs of twitching and getting fretful about securing a niche in UNISON. It is difficult to see, for instance, what use NUPE's Tom Sawyer would have for them in his bid to make UNISON "safe" for the Labour Party. The interim proposals for UNISON's regional structures, with Regional Councils meeting just once a year with no direct branch representation, gives them hardly any space at all in their natural habitat — removed from the shop floor, but not in the full light of day.

The key to the left wing progress in UNISON is a speedy merger at the rank-and-file level of the union, with the left championing merged branches and building open structures. The left in the old NALGO, which was generally all over the place during the merger debate, needs to make a serious drive to reach out to individual militants and active branches within the old NUPE and CoHSE structures. This is the top priority.

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

Socialist Party victory in Spanish elections

'Smear and fear' politics

By Graham Woods

THE RULING Socialist Party's unexpected win in Spain's general election on 6 June was more than just a victory over the opinion polls. It was as much a victory over the prejudices and patronising concerns of many of Spain's EC partners.

In winning a fourth consecutive term in office, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez was widely heralded as having bucked the European trend — the trend against left-wing governments and incumbent heads of state.

Within Spain his triumph seemed fairly remarkable too. The country he has governed for over ten years is in deep recession, with over 3.3 million unemployed, and has seen three peseta devaluations since last autumn. And the Socialist Workers' Party which Gonzalez leads (PSOE) is widely discredited by repeated allegations of corruption.

However, despite the claim that Gonzalez won through despite the opinion polls, it can be argued that he won because of them. It seems highly likely that many of Gonzalez's unexpected voters turned out precisely because of the closeness of the polls.

PSOE won 159 seats — 16 fewer than in 1989 and not enough for an absolute majority but 18 ahead of the PP.

Gonzalez will probably rely on ad-hoc pacts rather than a formal coalition, knowing that it will take an unlikely alliance of conservatives, Catalans, Basques and



Franco died in 1975. But the threat from the right has not died.

others to thwart or even oust him.

The minority government is a first for post-Francoist Spain, but then there has been a lot that is new in this election campaign.

Previous elections have seen hard-fought campaigns based on basic ideology and real current issues. Franco's death led to an explosion of pent-up political energy and activity, culminating in the 'spirit of '82' that first brought PSOE to power.

This time round voters were treated to televised debates, constant media hype, slanging matches, insults and smears and even a critical comparison of the two leaders'

"Franco's death led to an explosion of pent-up political energy and activity."

campaign photos.

In fact Spain experienced all the elements of modern beauty contest and circus 'politics'.

Spain has moved from a position of isolation to the heart of the Maastricht vision of Europe. All of a sudden it matters who governs in Europe. To the bourgeoisie in the rest of Europe.

They still have doubts about Spain's political viability. Only recently emerged from a dictatorship, Spain is seen as an immature democracy, still too taken with romantic political notions and too distant from the sober, pragmatic form of government that EC leaders favour.

This was seen most obviously in a ludicrous leading article in *The Independent* on 4 June which suggested that a Conservative Party (PP) win was needed to test the strength of Spain's new constitution and its ability to effect a change of government. These kinds of attitudes stoked the PP campaign. While Gonzalez appealed for 'the spirit of '82' to guide

voters, Aznar simply turned on the government and hit out at its record in office.

He shied away from genuine debate and dialogue in his TV encounters with Gonzalez, preferring to keep his eyes fixed on the camera.

Aznar latched onto the idea that a change of government was a step forward for Spain and many Spaniards sensitive to the perceived need to 'catch up' with the rest of Europe listened. During his campaign Aznar met with John Major, and invited former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing to appear with him at a rally in Valencia. The message was clear — vote PP, it's what the rest of Europe is doing.

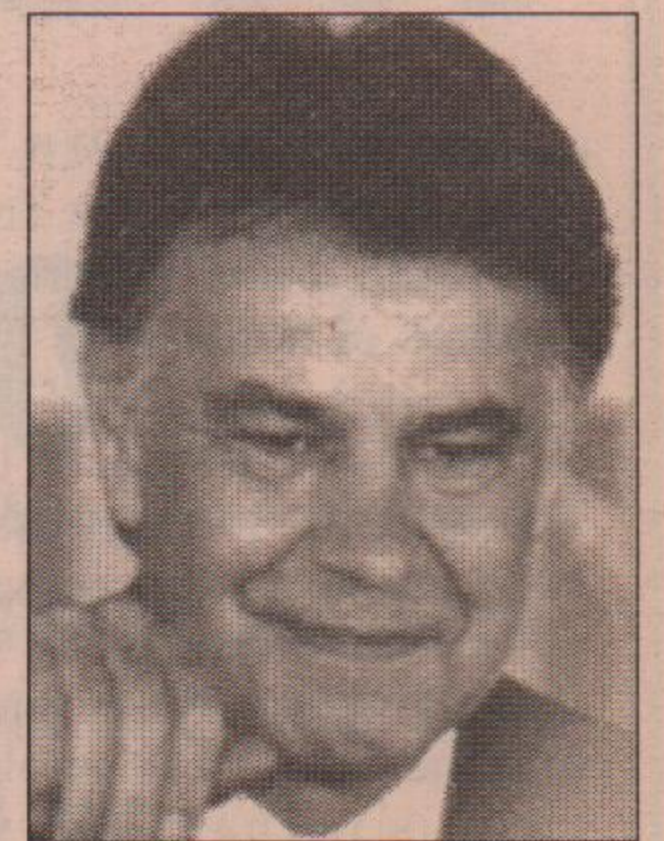
Gonzalez was slow to realise what was happening, but once he found out he was not above reacting in the same fashion.

In the first televised debate Gonzalez lost out by having no counter for Aznar's vague attacks on the government's record. Aznar was credited with having won that debate, but when the two leaders met again a week later Gonzalez was more prepared. This time he would not sit and listen to blind criticism — he wanted to know what Aznar would do in his place. Aznar failed to answer, resorting instead

"The political scene in Spain is all set to become just as dour and turgid as it is in Britain."

to platitude and allowing Gonzalez to accuse him of "solemnising the obvious".

Having emerged from that debate a winner, Gonzalez went all out on the offensive, culminating in a rally in Barcelona. Up on the stage came the former prisoners and exiles of



Gonzalez will face a much rougher ride in the next election

the Franco era to hit out at the conservative opposition.

"Don't trust them!" yelled a Civil War veteran imprisoned under Franco, "There is no 'new' right, it is the same old right it always was."

The spirit of '82 had given way to fear of '39. But if the PP really were just Francoists under a different name, how had Gonzalez managed to let two previous election campaigns against them go by without mentioning it?

Both sides had now dragged the campaign down to the level of what one British correspondent called "smear and fear". Now it seems the political scene in Spain is all set to become just as dour and turgid as it is in Britain.

Gonzalez knows he must tread carefully. Having moved his party ever closer to the centre during his years in office, he runs a risk of finding himself stranded.

The main general unions have signalled that they will return the support for Gonzalez if he curbs his attachment to market-based "socialism". If he does so he will probably lose support to the PP. And by not forming a coalition he runs the risk of alienating all potential allies in parliament.

Whatever happens, it is clear that Gonzalez will face a much rougher ride in the next election. Once the process is started, the smears can only get worse, the platitudes will keep coming and the circus will keep rolling. In one respect at least Spain can be said to have caught up with the rest of us.



Terre Blanche, leader of the AWB. Will the far right be able to undermine the regime's reform programme?

South Africa: the threat from the right

By Anne Mack

ON 25 JUNE over 4,000 heavily armed supporters of the South African neo-Nazi Afrikaaner Resistance Movement (AWB) occupied the World Trade Centre in Johannesburg where the multi-party negotiations on the future of South Africa are taking place.

The intruders slapped and punched black people, urinated in the corridors and scribbled racist obscenities on the walls.

The action by the AWB which was watched impassively and without any arrests by over 1,000 armed police was a very

dramatic demonstration of the potential power of the South African far right.

The perpetrators look set to get away with their action. The police chief responsible is supposed to have told South African President De Klerk that no arrests are possible because the people who occupied the World Trade Centre gave false addresses!

But how serious a threat are the far right?

Large numbers, perhaps the majority, of whites in the security apparatus sympathise with them. However, the hard core of the military top brass do not and seem committed to De Klerk's pro-

gramme of "reform from above".

The far right would be at its strongest if it could cement an alliance with the black bantustan leaders and thus be able to present itself as part of a multi-racial force against the "communist" ANC.

"The far right would be at its strongest if it could cement an alliance with the black bantustan leaders."

Unfortunately for the far right South African big business is putting all its money on the prospects of an ANC-National Party coalition. This will make it very difficult to make the "Communist" charge stick.

The far right's difficulties are compounded by the fact that during the

World Trade Centre raid its storm troopers beat up its supposed allies in Inkatha as well as enemies. Not the best way to cement an alliance.

The far right's other problem is winning support amongst black leaders for a boycott of any non-racial election.

Even if there are no guarantees for them the Bantustan leaders will have to take part in democratic elections otherwise they will lose all credibility in the eyes of the vast majority of blacks. This applies most of all to Buthelezi, the bantustan leader with the closest thing to a genuine popular movement behind him.

As things stand right now it looks like South Africa's first non-racial elections will take place next April. But an awful lot can happen between now and then.

The obvious problem for De Klerk would be if the Afrikaaner towns in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State do go ahead with their plans to declare UDI before the elections.

Briefing:

The white working class

SOUTH AFRICA'S BIG capitalists want to get rid of apartheid and co-opt the ANC into running the system. The white workers, however, are in their great majority supporters of apartheid. How did this come about?

The early white working class was often militant. In 1883 white diamond miners struck against strip searches for stolen diamonds. Yet they made no attempt at common cause with the black miners who were to strike on the same issue four years later. And when told that London dockers had agreed to such searches, they replied: "Neither can overseers rightly be compared with dock labourers. Actually dock labourers occupy the position of our Kaf-firs [Africans]".

From the start the white workers were usually overseers and supervisors, paid maybe ten times as much as the black workers. In the early days of gold mining, until after World War 1, the white miners were like sub-contractors. The black workers were paid flat rates; the whites were paid piece rates according to the work done by the blacks under their supervision.

Many of the white trade unionists saw the defence of the colour bar as a defence of organised labour against unorganised, low-paid labour — and, in particular, a defence of their own jobs. The best socialists among them got only as far as saying that race questions were a diversion and an irrelevance, and the only real issue was capitalists versus workers, white or black.

During the Rand Revolt of 1922 (a militant miners' strike which saw the government launch air attacks on strikers), these attitudes were expressed in the slogan "Workers of the World Fight and Unite for a White South Africa". White socialists saw this as defending 'civilised standards'.

Some of the strikers sang the Red Flag as they were sent to the gallows for their part in the fighting with government forces. Yet at the start of the dispute the strikers had been encouraged by the police to set up armed squads on the understanding that they would suppress any unrest among the black miners.

After 1917, under the impact of the Bolshevik revolution and Bolshevik theory a small minority of white workers broke from racism and founded the Communist Party of South Africa. The Russian Revolution, and especially the USSR's treatment of its dark-skinned peoples also inspired many black South Africans. The first sizeable black union in South Africa, the Industrial and Commercial Union, was formed in 1919.

The CP, at first exclusively white in membership, moved slowly towards a new outlook.

In 1922 it justified the slogan "Workers of the World Unite for a White South Africa"; in 1924 it supported the racist Nationalist-Labour alliance, saying that this was an "anti-imperialist united front".

But by 1928 it had worked its way through to the slogan of a black republic.

The CP was winning substantial support among black workers and though small held leading positions in the white trade unions.

By now Stalinism ruled in Moscow. Along with the 'black republic' slogan, the CP was frogmarched into a 'two-stage' theory of revolution. And in 1931 its main leaders were purged, to be replaced by loyal Stalinists.

Better things might have been possible without the cancer of Stalinism. In any case, the CP — along with Trotskyists and other leftists — registered some significant achievements in non-racial trade unionism in the 1930s.

Though the skilled white workers were absorbed into the ruling elite the position of the factory operatives and unskilled white workers was still in doubt. Left-wing trade unions and Afrikaaner nationalism would compete for their allegiance in the following two decades.

Afrikaaner nationalism won. After 1948 the white labour movement rapidly abandoned any sort of independent role.

Now the white workers are firmly linked to the established order by racist pay differentials giving them wages four or five times that of blacks.

Some whites do side unequivocally with the oppressed blacks. White students and ex-students have helped the new non-racial unions and sometimes serve them as officials. There are now even one or two white shop stewards in the non-racial unions, technicians who have come over to the side of the black workers.

But their vast privileges keep most white workers firmly on the side of the regime. An increasing number have reacted to the rising black revolt by leaving South Africa.

Despite everything they have done, the whites should have equal rights; and indeed documents like the ANC Freedom Charter recognise that a workers' revolution will be easier and less bloody the more whites it can win over or at least render neutral; and the education and skills of many whites will be valuable to a new South Africa.

Separate self-government or a formal federal system to accommodate the white separatism are scarcely possible; in every big city and every area except the bantustans, blacks and whites are closely mixed together.

But a loose system of regional autonomy coupled with guaranteed language and cultural rights is another thing altogether.

Although some of the South African whites' attitudes are paralleled by the Israeli Jews and the Northern Ireland Protestants, as a community they are not similar. The South African whites are not a more or less complete and autonomous community, embracing all classes, but a capitalist class, a middle class and a thin labour aristocracy, all resting on top of a black working class.

There can be no justice in South Africa unless the whites accept equality. And the blacks can't, won't and should not be asked to wait until the whites accept equality voluntarily rather than having it forced on them.

Labour's misspent youth, 1959-87

Seedbed of the left

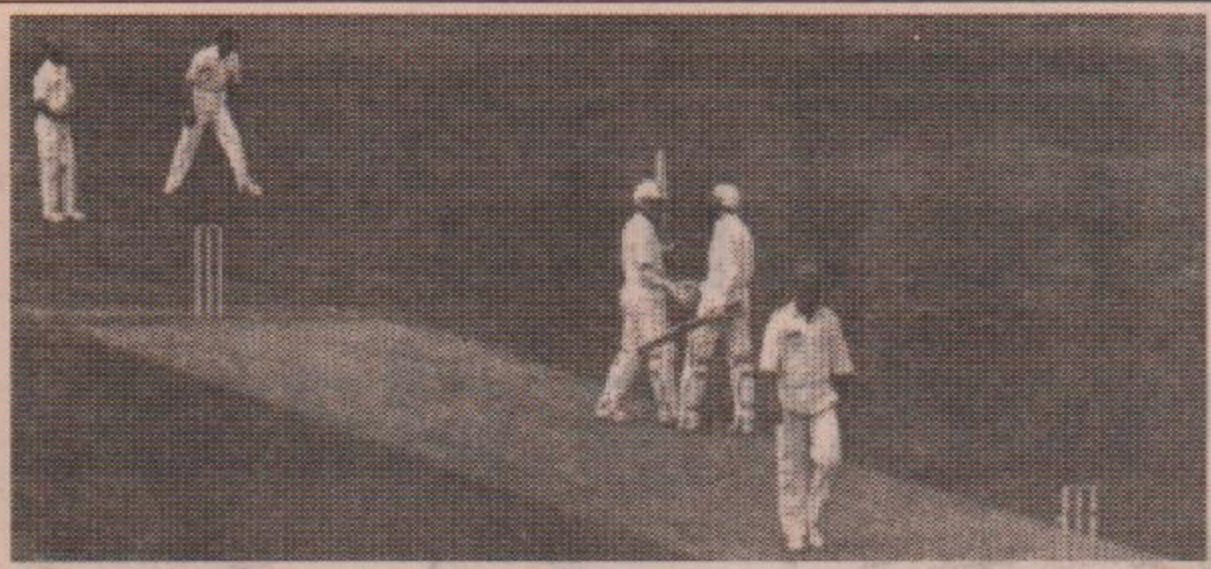
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The main enemy is on the wicket

The real thing

GRAFFITI

FORMER SOVIET politician and now President of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, doesn't seem to have got the hang of this market capitalism thing yet. Giving a helping hand to that foreign investment that every ex-Soviet leader dreams about, Shevardnadze opened a new Coca-Cola bottling plant in Georgia. "It's just like Pepsi-Cola" he said sipping the Real Thing, obviously forgetting that although all brown fizzy liquids are equal, some are more equal than others.

PLEASE, no-one tell the Labour Party's ruling bureaucrats about the Swedish Social Democratic Party. It might give them ideas.

Last year the party decided to hire a market research firm to see which leading Social Democratic politician was the most popular choice to succeed the current Finnish President, Manuo Koivisto.

The pollsters included a few non-politicians, in an attempt to pick up how many people would just choose a name at random irrespective of their political track-record. One of these people was a little-known UN envoy, Martti Ahtisaari, at the time a special UN representative in Namibia. Ahtisaari topped the poll! It was an opportunity that the party managers thought too good to miss. He went on to win the SDP's presidential primary with 61% of the poll beating the favourite, Finland's former prime minister, Kalevi Sorsa, who only managed 32%. Anything can happen in a "political process" decaffeinated of politics!

Now Ahtisaari is in the lead in the polls for the election, and looks almost certain to win.

NOTHING UNUSUAL about a bit of student radicalism. At the Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah, USA, demonstrations have broken out, slogans have been painted on the walls and the perfectly manicured lawn in front of the university's main administration block has had a huge ironic swastika burnt into it.

All run-of-the-mill student politics. But BYU isn't just any old university. It is owned and run by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, better known as the Mormons. Virtually all of the 33,000 students are members of the

church.

The dispute is about academic freedom. Two members of the teaching staff have been sacked for going against the Church's world view. David Knowlton, an anthropologist, had the temerity to suggest that terrorist attacks on Mormon missions in Latin America could be explained by understanding the locals aversion to suited white Americans. Celia Farr plumbed the depths of moral turpitude by arguing that abortion should be an issue of choice, not of religious canon.

However, what do you expect from the Mormons? The church was founded by Joseph Smith, who claimed to have found a lost book of the Bible, the book of Mormon, written in a strange runic language that only he could read with a pair of magic glasses that God gave him. No-one was ever allowed to see the holy crockery apart from Smith. I think this is crap, as does Simon, my invisible friend.

THE SPORTING decline of England has been endlessly commented on by the press, so sooner or later the left press had to get in on the act. *Socialist Worker* has identified the cause of the decline of English cricket: Ted Dexter, Chairman of the England selectors, is — the have now decided — a Tory.

But out of evil sometimes comes good. According to SW England's recent defeats undermine nationalism,

"Socialists should cheer every American header [the US beat England at football], New Zealand try [British Rugby team beaten], Swedish volley [tennis], every Warne leg spinner that bamboozles "our" players [Australia, cricket]"

Readers of *Socialist Organiser* should note this: the SWP is now openly, albeit conjuncturally, pro-imperialist! Even the arch-imperialist USA should, it seems, be supported against Britain where football is concerned.

Unless of course you are American, in which case you should support England, (confusing thing this internationalism).

But if the main enemy is always at home, what about away games?

WHEN IS GREEN not green? On the lawns of the US mid-West. The US lawn occupies more land than any single US crop; sprinklers account for 60% of all water used in the Western cities.

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

ON THE EVE of the last general election the editor of the *Financial Times* held a straw poll of his staff and found that the majority favoured a Labour victory. This was not as surprising as might first appear: the *FT* hacks were bored with the Tories and reckoned that a Labour government would make for more interesting copy.

As a result, the *FT* came out

for Labour. It was hardly a clarion call to rally the capitalist class to the red flag — more of a half-hearted suggestion tucked away at the end of a rambling editorial. Basically, it was a little joke (and a warning to the Tories not to be too complacent).

It is said, however, that the *Pink 'Un's* support caused great excitement at Walworth Road. Here at last was proof that the prawn-cocktail offensive was paying off. The semi-official mouthpiece of British finance capital had endorsed the new-look Labour Party and its new, responsible economic policies.

Despite this, Labour still unfortunately lost the election. But that, of course, was entirely due to the bias of the rest of the press and the unpopularity of the trade union movement. The support of the *FT* was a small but valued consolation prize.

So it is not a great surprise to find that John Smith has chosen the *FT* as the vehicle

for his latest thinking upon such diverse subjects as the role of government in society, the desirability of a strong economy and the need for more investment in education, training, science and technology. Bold, challenging stuff, I'm sure you will agree.

Take this example of Mr Smith at his most profound: "Government must do the things that without government intervention will not happen. That is not a dirigiste, command-style economic policy."

Or the Labour leader's insistence that, "There is no dramatic choice between prosperity and justice. The task of politics is to improve our society. A strong economy and a fair society is my slogan".

Faced with statements of this kind, I can never resist playing a perhaps childish little game: imagine the speaker saying exactly the opposite.

But of course, these pearls of wisdom were not the real

meat of the interview, or the reason that the *FT* decided to trail it on Monday's front page. As the paper's Political Editor Phillip Stephens comments: "All this... will be irrelevant if Mr Smith loses his conference showdown over party democracy with those erstwhile allies Mr John Edmunds and Mr Bill Morris... Someone has to blink. Mr Smith says it will not be him".

The front page trailer confirmed that, "Mr John Smith has set himself on collision course with the trade unions at this autumn's Labour Conference by refusing to moderate plans to reduce their collective role in the party's decision-making."

Plainly, Mr Smith sees nothing untoward about using the *FT* to announce that he is upping the ante in his showdown with the unions. And equally, the *FT* has been only too happy to oblige: no doubt the *FT* hacks consider it another splendid joke.

A suitable book for the curriculum?

WOMEN'S EYE



By Jean Lane

One day Pooh Bear was walking through his favourite forest and trying to make up a new song. He already had 4 lines but couldn't think of a fifth to rhyme. The first 4 went:

I live in a classical book.
It's one that the Tories will brook.

For they care about grammar,
And testing, and crammers.....

Humming away and feeling glad that he belonged in a book which was quintessentially English and decent, he didn't notice Kanga coming towards him through the trees until they almost bumped into each other. They almost did this because Kanga didn't notice him either. She too was lost in thought, but she wasn't making up a song.

"Hello, Kanga", said Pooh.

"Where are you taking Roo at this time of the morning?"

"I've got to go down to the Social Security office", Kanga replied. "They have told me that my benefit will be cut — unless I tell them who Roo's father is". Pooh was puzzled. "But Roo doesn't have a father", he said. "Never has. There's never been a Mr. Kanga in this book that I can remember".

"I know", said Kanga. "Even if I knew where the father was I wouldn't want to tell them. He wasn't very nice, Pooh. He didn't belong in a book like this at all". Kanga began to sob. "How shall I live if they cut my benefit?"

"Let's go and find Christopher Robin", suggested Pooh. "He'll know what to do". And off they went to look for their friend.

On the way they met Wol who was very wise. "Kanga won't be safe any more, Wol", called Pooh into the tree.

"She's having her security cut unless we can find a Mr. Kanga to look after Roo". Pooh, despite being in a very grammatically correct book, had not quite grasped that 'security' in this context had nothing to do with being safe.

"I don't want anyone else to look after Roo", sobbed Kanga. "I've looked after him all his life". Roo, while all the commotion was going on, had hopped off and was chatting to Piglet, who, as far as any one knew, didn't have a father either.

"Wol says I might be a deli-

cate if we don't find a Mr. Kanga", he said. "Will I like being a delicate?"

"I don't know", mused Piglet. "Shall we try it and see?"

Meanwhile, Christopher Robin had come upon Wol, Pooh and Kanga discussing how to live without benefit. "You'll have to get a job", said Christopher Robin, helpfully. "Then you won't need a Mr. Kanga to look after you. Let's have an expedition to find one".

"I can't get a job", said Kanga. "They won't let me use a pouch at work. I would need a childminder, and they are too expensive"

"Well, we'll have to find Mr. Kanga, then, so that he can keep you and Roo instead", said Wol.

"But he's in A.A. Milne's wastepaper basket", cried Kanga. "He just wasn't suitable for this book. And anyway, Roo's better off without him". And they all reflected that it was true. Roo was a very well-adjusted child of a lone parent.

Suddenly, they all realised that Roo was missing. They began to search for him through the forest and to call his name.

"Roo-oo", Kanga called. "Oh, where is he?" she cried. "Maybe it's true. Maybe I do need a Mr. Kanga to look after him. Maybe he will end up in a wastepaper basket if I don't marry one, and it'll be all my fault. Oh where is he. Roo-oo". It was Pooh who found them. Roo and Piglet were lying on

their backs, saying "Ooh" with a paw to a thigh, and "Aah", with another to a forehead. "What are you doing?" asked Pooh with wonder.

"We're being delicates", said Piglet, "to see if we like it or not".

"Delinquents", said Christopher Robin, who knew nearly everything. "If you don't have fathers, you will become delinquents".

"Will it hurt?", asked Roo, who had had quite enough of feeling his forehead for one day. But before anyone could answer him, Kanga had swept him up, smothered him with kisses and popped him into her pouch.

"I don't know what all the fuss is about", snuffled Eyore, who was rummaging in the undergrowth nearby. "She doesn't need a Mr. Kanga. She needs the right to work without having to go on one of Christopher Robin's insufferable expeditions to find it, and when she gets there, she needs the right to put Roo into a pouch". And he snuffled off as if it was all very obvious.

Pooh, glad that Kanga had got Roo back and sauntering through the forest on his way home suddenly thought of the last line for his song. It went like this:

"I live in a classical book.
It's one that the Tories will brook,
For they care about grammar,
And testing, and crammers,
But for children they don't give a f..."

Out of control!

TORY HOME Secretary, Michael Howard is a hard man. He doesn't waste time with any of this "justice" rubbish. Repression — that's the name of Howard's game.

First he introduced tests to improve the various types of bone-crushing truncheons at the disposal of the police.

Now he has produced a White Paper on policing.

The White Paper proposes that the almost powerless and only slightly democratic police committees be made even more feeble, less democratic and less powerful!

Howard has also dumped previous Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke's plans for a London Police Authority, and put the Metropolitan Police under a 16-strong body appointed by the Home Office.

He is to give the Chief Constables full financial control of their departments, without even the current supervision by Police Committees.

Howard says: "These proposals will lay the basis for the police service of the 21st century". For 2000 AD? Judge Dredd! Say no more.

The pigs already have massive power. We have no control. And this Bill even takes away any real democratic supervision, limited



though it was.

Youth For Justice are fighting against police power and for controls on the pigs.

We demand:

- An end to prosecutions based solely on confessions. (Cases like the Tottenham Three show that the police rig confessions to convict the innocent).
- An independent and elected police complaints body. (Com-

plaints against the police are currently dealt with by a powerless complaints authority who rely on... the police).

- 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. In London there is no police authority).
- Abolish the Prevention of Ter-

rorism 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).

John Jefferson, a Labour County Councillor on Luton Police Committee, spoke to Youth Fightback:

"THESE POLICE reforms are less democratic than what we have now and that is very undemocratic anyway. Whereas now two-thirds of the police committee are made up of the elected members, it will only be one half. At present the police committees elect their own chair which gives them some degree of local accountability. The White Paper will mean the chair is imposed by the Home Secretary's hand-picked representatives on the new committees. Secondly, Chief Constables are going to be given free rein to do with their budgets what they like. That means cases I've seen in Luton, where £121,000 was spent to smash up a youth organisation, will be hidden. Police Constables will be able to do what they want without any reference back to the committee. Thirdly, the coppers will be on performance-related pay, which means if a copper's nicking record is a bit low they will fit up youth and black people for minor charges to bump it up. It won't be an incentive to solve difficult crimes like domestic violence because those cases take more time and are harder to prosecute.

It's one step closer to a dictatorial state."

Family values

IDEAS FOR FREEDOM

THE TORIES, LIKE all establishment politicians, are desperate to show their commitment to 'the family'. The family? Well, not just any old sort of family — the 'proper' family! Mummy at home, Daddy at work, and 2.5 kids in the green, rose-bordered garden.

Other sorts of families are not 'proper' families. This week Tory back-benchers have been attacking single mothers. It has long been illegal to 'promote' — that is talk about — lesbian or gay families in British schools.

In fact most people do not live in the Tories' 'normal' family, so why are they so keen to promote it?

The family is not some ever-existing institution. It has changed throughout history. In feudal society, ruled by barons and kings, the peasant family was the centre of production. Everyone from a very early age worked on the family plot of land.

With the growth of capitalist agriculture, peasants were driven off the land to provide a pool of labour for the new factory owners.

Women and children were employed in the hell-like factories and destroyed the old family.

Many, looking at the British working class in the mid-19th century, thought the family would vanish for ever. But conditions changed.

Partly due to the battles of the workers' movement, and partly due

to the bosses' need to improve the quality of their workforce, the British ruling class began to legislate against unregulated child labour and women were excluded by law from certain especially brutalising jobs.

A new family emerged in the working class, a version of the middle class family.

In this family, the woman was expected mainly to service the male worker, and to raise the next generation of workers.

This new family emerged out of struggles by workers for an end to such things as children of five working down the mines, and battles to win a family-supporting wage for male workers. But it emerged in a society dominated by ruling-class ideas. "A woman's place is in the home", "children must obey and not challenge authority". These were the key ideas of the ruling class on this question then.

This family is the Tories' beloved 'proper' family. It is highly repressive. It forces on to women the bulk of the job of bringing up the next generation of society. It gives massive power to parents over children. Over half of all violent crime is committed within this family, as is most child sexual or physical abuse.

But, however much the Tories bang on about "traditional family values", the real world is undermining the traditional family.

Women are now over half the working population. This gives them more independence. People — men and women — expect more from "couple" relationships, and over a third of marriages now end in divorce.

The traditional family is an institu-

tion of exploitation and oppression. It provides free to capitalism refreshed workers and the next generation of wage slaves.

It teaches children to obey, and gives men power over women and parents power over children. This is bad even when it is not, as it often is, abusive.

Socialists should not support such a set-up.

The tragedy is that the family is collapsing all about us with nothing better to take its place. Without social support for children, and adequate social housing the collapse of the oppressive family often leaves people in poverty and isolation in an uncaring dog-eat-dog world. That is, it often leaves them worse off!

We should demand:

- Free 24-hour nurseries.
- Free provision of cleaning and washing by paid workers, laundrettes etc.
- Decent housing for all.
- A massive reduction in the working week and decent leisure facilities.

Who is going to pay for this? Well, in our society the richest 5% own 37% of marketable wealth: we should take these vast resources through tax to provide for the majority of society.

Socialists have a duty to support the rights of anyone to break free of the oppressive family, but we must also fight for a society that will take responsibility for the raising of children and care for all its people.

Only a society based on production for need, only a society based on liberty and democratic control can or will do this.

That is socialism. That is why we fight for socialism.

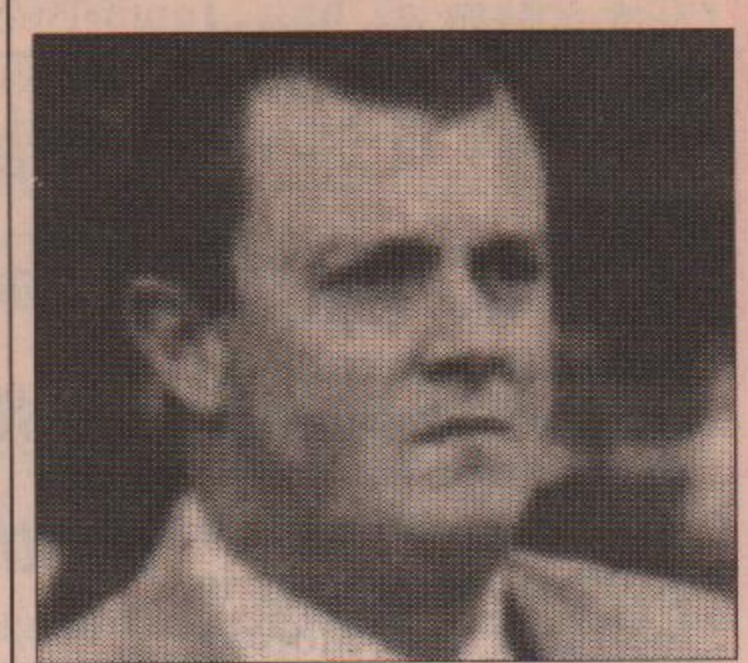
... the voice of revolutionary socialist youth. This page is separately edited.

Editor: Mark Sandell

Phone: 071-639 7967 for details of our activity.

Letters and articles to Youth Fightback, c/o PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Reactionary Git of the Week



PC Terence Chitty is our "reactionary git of the week".

The Metropolitan Police have paid £87,500 in damages for assaults carried out by Chitty and other officers on the picket lines at Wapping in 1986.

Between 1975 and 1988 Chitty was the subject of 30 complaints, mostly for assault. But they kept shitty Chitty on the job!

Until recently he worked at the notorious Stoke Newington police station where he has been accused of fitting up addicts.

Constable Chitty is still a serving officer in the Met!

P.S. Runners-up for "Reactionary Git of the Week" were all the coppers at Wapping and all those working at Stoke Newington, closely followed by the whole police force.

ARafest '93:

Stand up to racist violence!

Sunday 8 August • 2-8pm

Burgess Park, Southwark, London SE5

Bands, DJs, celebrity compères and other attractions.

For more information phone 071-837 3797, or write to: ARafest c/o ARA, PO Box 150, London WC1X 9AT.

Sponsored by the Anti-Racist Alliance, Voice newspaper and Southwark Council

Fighting the

We print below the text of a speech given by Winfried Wolf of the German VSP [United Socialist Party] at Workers' Liberty '93

IN THE LAST THREE YEARS people have had to learn a new map of Germany — town and place names they have never heard before. It is the map of the new racism.

Towns like Hoyersweder, Hunkse, Rostock-Lichtenhagen, Moln, Solingen. In all of these towns we have witnessed cruel attacks by racists and fascists. Refugees and immigrants have been killed or expelled from their houses. Wider parts of the German population have often supported these actions — by applauding, or by remaining neutral while the racists attack blacks, Vietnamese or gypsy people.

German racism exists within the framework of an international upsurge of racism — the successes of Le Pen in France and Eggar in Italy for example.

This international upsurge has a common base in the deep crisis of capitalism, which has brought mass unemployment and mass misery in the advanced capitalist countries, and in the sharpening exploitation of the so-called "Third World", which produces hundreds of millions of refugees.

Bourgeois governments and the bourgeoisie itself use the tactic all ruling classes have used: divide and rule.

Racism means a split inside the exploited class. It prevents the necessary common fight against those who rule.

There is another base of the racist upsurge in the racist conditioning which exists inside the average white European and North American person. It exists also in the white working class.

The majority of them have got the impression that there is no alternative to capitalism. Many don't fight

against the bosses: they transfer the pressure of capitalist crisis on to those who are the weakest — to the refugees, to the immigrants, to the disabled, to the gay people, to women, to the gypsies.

This is the international framework for the rise of racism. Racism is everywhere. But nonetheless, German fascist racism has a special quality, and signals a special danger. This is true for two reasons.

The first reason is German history. The German Nazis imposed the most brutal dictatorship which has ever existed in the world. It practised an industrialised, organised genocide.

The roots of that German fascism have never been destroyed. After World War 2 the same state apparatus that functioned under the Nazis was used as the basis of the West German state.

To date, two of the Presidents of the West German state have been former members of the NSDAP, the Nazi Party. And the President Mr Lipkin was a constructor of concentration camps.

One of the German Chancellors, Mr Kiesinger (1966-69), was an official in the Nazi propaganda office of Goebbels. Nearly all the German capitalists who supported Hitler and who got good profits by using the Nazi-supplied slave workers were trading

normally by the beginning of the 1950s!

One of them, Mr Hans Schleger, was for a long time the President of the bosses' federation, until he was killed in 1974 by the Red Army faction. He was a former member of the Nazi state terror police, the SS, and had been personally involved in the Nazi robbery of Poland.

Many of you will remember the incredible event of 1984 when Chancellor Kohl and President Ronald Reagan visited the cemetery of Pittsburg, which contained the graves of the so-called Waffen SS, the SS integrated in Hitler's army.

German Nazi history is still alive! There is a long, still living tradition.

THE SECOND REASON German Nazism and racism present a special danger is due to the quality of the present racist and fascist attacks. Don't think German Nazi attacks are on the same level as those in France or Britain!

From 1949, when the federal republic of West Germany was founded, until the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, a continuous stream

of people came from East Germany and the former German regions in the East into West Germany, about 12 million in all. This inter-Germany immigration was the first human base, the first human material for the expansion of German capitalism after the Second World War.

Then the Stalinist regime in East Berlin stopped that stream with the wall and barbed wire. So the West German government recruited immigrant workers from the South. First from Italy,

then from Spain, then Yugoslavia, Portugal, Turkey. At the end of the 1960s more than 1 million workers from the South had been integrated into the German economy, and more than 2 million were living here.

In the economic crises of 1974-5 and 1980-82, the German government tried to reduce the number of non-German people in the country. The government, the bosses and parts of the trade union leadership practised a racist crisis policy: the immigrants lost their jobs first and many of them had to go back to their countries.

Nevertheless, the main trend remained that of a more or less continuous increase in the non-German population of West Germany. Now there are more than 6 million non-German people. This is about 8% of the total population.

Among the 6 million non-Germans about 2 million are immigrant workers. About half a million are refugees. The largest group is the 1.5 million people from the Turkish state, including 400,000 Kurds.

The second biggest group are people from former-Yugoslavia, about 950,000.

About 60% of the non-German people have been in the country more than 10 years. About one fifth have been in my country more than 20 years. About 350,000 children of people from the Turkish state have been



Torchlit demonstration against Nazi racist attacks in Munich, December 1992

born in Germany — but they are not allowed to be Germans!

It is not only a moral question to claim the 6 million immigrants as part of the society in Germany: it is also necessary to accept this from a purely economic point of view. The German economy would not function without those 2 million immigrant workers, and those 100,000 shops run by non-German people.

Since immigrants are younger than the German population their contribution to the gross German product is higher than their proportion of the population. The systems of social welfare would immediately collapse if there were not the huge contributions paid by the immigrant population.

The existence of the 6 million non-Germans is the starting point when we discuss racism in Germany today. Another starting point is German re-unification — the disintegration of the GDR and its absorption in the Federal Republic of West Germany. This is the most important event in post-war German history. I want to stress briefly four points.

First, at the very beginning, from autumn 1989 until spring 1990, this whole process in Eastern Germany had a strong democratic character. Some spoke about a democratic revolution. That is exaggerated, though we supported the overthrow of the former Stalinist regime.

Secondly, from the beginning of 1990 the dominant character of the re-unification was non-progressive and even reactionary.

In the West it was understood and organised by the government and the bosses as an imperialist project to enlarge the private capitalist system. In the East a huge majority wanted to have the same level of living standards as the West. But that should not be interpreted as the wish for or understanding of a democratic revolution.

But parallel to that mood, nationalist and fascist currents developed. This is well illustrated by the two slogans: "we are the people" and "we are one people". The first slogan was that of the democratic revolution, confronting the Stalinist regime with democratic demands. Most of these people wanted a democratised GDR in a federated Germany. The second slogan "we are one people" has frightening similarities with the Nazi slogan "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer" ("One People, One State, One Leader").

Thirdly, the unification, as an imperialist project, resulted in the deepest structural crisis in German history. Today the output of the East German economy is only one quarter of 1989. More than half the jobs have been destroyed. This crisis has important negative social effects. This is an excellent basis for racism and fascism.

The fourth and last point on re-unification

new Nazis



Since Solingen the Turkish community in Germany has tried to fight back, only to be met with repression from the German state

is that since 1989 and 1990 we have seen a sharp shift of the political forces in Germany to the right. The bosses became stronger and stronger, the trade unions became weaker and weaker. Last year alone the trade unions lost 1 million members.

THE ECOLOGIST MOVEMENT has got much weaker though the destruction of the environment is accelerating in East Germany. The feminist movement lost ground, and the patriarchy could win a big victory when the German High Supreme Court decided that abortion was illegal.

The left and the radicals are weaker than they have been since 1967 — at a time when the reactionary and fascist forces are stronger than they have been since 1945.

We have a level of racist and fascist attacks unknown since the time of the Nazi state. Since unification, 3 October 1990, 55 people have been killed by Nazi and skin attacks. Hundreds have been injured, thousands chased from their houses and living places.

The official state statistics systematically underestimate the racist reality of Germany today.

Since re-unification there have been 1,002 bombing and fire attacks by racists and fascists.

Compare this to Britain. The Anti-Racist Alliance say that in 1992 8 people in Great Britain were killed by racist attacks. This

number was reached in Germany in the same quarter of the same year.

Altogether in 1992 26 people were killed by racist attacks. In 1993, already, 17 people have been murdered.

There has also been a widening of the target range of racist attacks. Before, it was mostly refugees from countries like Mozambique, Angola or Vietnam. The victims were the weakest of the weak. The attacks of Hoyersweder, of Hunkse and of Rostock-Lichtenhagen were the most notorious of these.

Since 1991 we have also witnessed racist attacks against leftist people, homeless people and disabled people. Many attacks now are aimed at Jews, and at Jewish cemeteries and so on.

At the end of 1992 the attacks on Turkish immigrants started. At Moln, two Nazis organised a fire attack at the house of a Turkish family. The woman died in the fire. This year on 29 May, at Solingen, 5 women died by fire after a Nazi attack.

It is said that these attacks are the work of young, unorganised and often unpolitical people. They are the result, so it is said, of alcohol and spontaneous decisions. All this is not true. In more than 90% of the cases where people have been killed it has been proved those who did it were members or sympathisers of Nazi parties or groups.

It is still very difficult to give concrete figures about the strength of the Nazis in Germany today. We definitely can say that the

legal more or less mass Nazi parties, NPD, DVU and the semi-Nazi Republikaner (Republican) party, count altogether about 50,000 members. The weekly paper of the Republikaner has a circulation of about 150,000.

In the elections at district level they get between 8 and 10 per cent. On the Parliamentary level they have a chance to get more than 5%, and thus get into Parliament.

There are about 40 semi-legal, open racist and open fascist organisations which should be defined as hard-core Nazi. The fact that they are not united is not their weakness, but their strength. They use it consciously as a tactic to make it more difficult to make them illegal and to destroy their structures.

Most of the leaders of these groups are separately and in parallel members of nationwide Nazi cadre organisations like the MSPAD.

These hard-core Nazis have succeeded in recruiting big numbers of skins as members or sympathisers. They could count on another 60,000 people together. Nearly all of them are armed and trained in racist attacks.

This upsurge of German fascism can only be understood by studying the official policy of the German government and of the bosses.

First of all, this government accepts Nazi groups as a legal part of German society. Officially, all Nazi groups are forbidden by laws introduced by the allies in 1945-6. These laws are part of the constitution —

but nobody cares about this any more.

Secondly, parts of the German state apparatus are directly linked with the Nazis. For instance, many policemen have been recruited by the semi-Nazi Republicans. In the case of one Special Police formation in West Berlin it was proved that more than 20% of its members had direct contact with the Nazi milieu!

The state supports the Nazi upsurge through its policy for a new, big imperialist Germany.

Lastly the German government encourages the Nazi upsurge through its policy on the asylum question. Only three years ago, all parties in the German parliament agreed that this paragraph in the constitution should never be abolished, because of German history it was essential.

The Nazi and racist attacks have changed that policy. On 26 May this year all parties in the Parliament, except the Greens and the PDS, the former German Communists, and a minority in the SPD, voted that this asylum right should be abolished. This was a historic victory for the Nazis.

Three days later we had the attack in Solingen. Since that decision we have had no day without racist attacks.

WHAT IS THE RESISTANCE? In 1992 we had the huge "Torchlight" demonstrations. These involved some 100,000 people. They proved to be insufficient, and in many ways ambiguous. On 26 May when the asylum right was being debated, more than 10,000 demonstrators blocked the German parliament. Members of the parliament had to be taken in by helicopter and by ship up the Rhine.

In each town now there are broad anti-fascist movements, mostly of young people. Dozens of anti-fascist and anti-racist papers exist.

The refugees are defending themselves by organising 'refugee fortresses'. They do so at present in the area of the former concentration camp at Dachau, near Munich.

There has been an upsurge of Turkish resistance since Solingen. Militant resistance comes particularly from the young people.

There is a campaign calling for the right to double citizenship for all immigrants. Even

people who have been born in Germany are not allowed to have a German passport. About 600,000 signatures have already been collected for the manifesto calling for this double citizenship.

The most important thing that is lacking is national co-ordination for German and non-German people. It is the same situation in Britain, except that it is more stupid and more counter-productive in Germany where the Nazi danger is greater.

Our comrades are arguing, as *Socialist Organiser* argues, for unity in action and we hope to report next year that we have had some successes in doing this.

We would be glad if you can help us in our fight. We think it is important to co-operate on a European wide level. For instance the German public is still very sensitive if there are debates about German Nazis abroad. One thing that can be done is to spread information about the reality of German racism and fascism. It is very urgent.

"The re-unification was non-progressive and even reactionary. It was organised by the government and the bosses as an imperialist project to enlarge the private capitalist system."

"This year all parties in the Parliament, except the Greens and the PDS and a minority in the SPD, voted that the right to asylum should be abolished. This was a historic victory for the Nazis."

Marxism and the na

On these pages we print the second part of Martin Thomas's contribution to a symposium on nationalism and self-determination published in the current issue of the American radical magazine *New Politics*.

Part one appeared in *SO* 567.

MAYBE MARXIST THEORY has not had enough to say about what democracy should grant to linguistic or cultural minorities which live among a majority population of a different language or culture, and do not have the compactness of nations, but which nevertheless have a sense of *collective* grievance, over and above all questions of equality of *individual* rights. Such linguistic, cultural, or ethnic "layers" in society, commonplace in pre-capitalist systems, tend to merge into nations as capitalism assimilates people to abstract labour, but a lot of them still exist. Examples are Jews in early 20th century Russia and Eastern Europe, the different communities in Lebanon, the different linguistic/ethnic groups in South Africa, and African-Americans in the U.S. Maybe Marxism has a gap here. I don't know. But it seems to me certain that to advocate a political structure which gives separate quotas of power to the various communities — whether in the form of the confessional state in Lebanon or the arrangements advocated by the Austro-Marxists in the Austro-Hungarian Empire — can only be like trying to construct a carefully balanced system of equal communal privileges, rather than the abolition of all privilege which is necessary to underpin workers' unity. And it is something completely different from the right of nations to self-determination. The right of nations to self-determination goes together with a series of other democratic principles, summarised crisply by a 1913 resolution of the Bolshevik Party:

"Insofar as national peace is in any way possible in a capitalist society based on exploitation, profit-making and strife it is attainable only under a consistently and thoroughly democratic republican system of government the constitution of which

contains a fundamental law that prohibits any privileges whatsoever to any one nation and any encroachment whatsoever upon the rights of a national minority. This particularly calls for wide regional autonomy and fully democratic local government, with the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions determined by the local inhabitants themselves on the basis of their economic and social conditions, national make-up of the population, etc."

"The collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the ex-USSR has unfrozen all the national conflicts there. Versions of Marxism on the National Question waterlogged by nationalist influence are unable to deal with this. Where are the 'good' nations?"

Or, as Trotsky put it some 27 years later: **"Insofar as the various nationalities, voluntarily or through force of necessity, coexist within the borders of one state, their cultural interests must find the highest possible satisfaction within the framework of the broadest regional (and consequently, territorial) autonomy, including statu-**



Tito meets the leader of the largest imperialist nation in the world. The legacy of Tito is now being so tragically seen in ex-Yugoslavia.

tory guarantees of the rights of each minority."

The collective grievances of a non-compact community are here addressed by local or regional rights for the localities or regions where they are a majority. This seems a roundabout way of doing it: its advantage is that it does not solidify or codify divisions between the communities in the way that explicitly communal institutions would, and it does not put barriers in the way of free mutual assimilation.

The collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the ex-USSR has unfrozen all the national conflicts there, and led to explosions of immense bitterness in circumstances far more complicated than the relatively clear-cut battles of African and Asian nations for freedom from colonial rule. Versions of Marxism on the National Question which have become waterlogged by nationalist influence are unable to deal with this. Where are the "good" nations? All the nations seem to be "bad"! Who are the "anti-imperialists"? Where are the prospects of national independence bringing economic progress? Revulsion at the chaos and confusion here can lead us to want to wash our hands of any involvement in any national cause. This tendency is often reinforced by the half-thought that the old structures — the USSR or the Yugoslav federation — were forms of socialism, or at least of deformed or degenerated workers' states, and had better be defended against the new capitalist mess.

To discuss the nature of the Stalinist states is beyond the scope of this article. In my view they were state-capitalist systems of class exploitation no better than western capitalism. In any case, the National Question is not resolved automatically by socialism. The creation of a cooperative commonwealth should make consistent democracy for the nations involved easier, but it does not substitute for it. The right of nations to self-determination still has validity.

THE "WASH-OUR-HANDS" approach is well illustrated by the reaction of many on the left to the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia: the different nationalist leaderships are all to blame, they all have chauvinist ambitions, and we should simply advocate peace, reconciliation, and workers' unity across the borders. I can see strong arguments for saying that socialists in Slovenia or in Croatia should have argued against independence, indisputable arguments for saying that they should oppose their own governments most fiercely, and imperative arguments for saying that Croat socialists should fight hard against the anti-Serb chauvinism of Tadjman and of almost all official Croat politics. None of that has any weight or relevance to the question of self-determination for Slovenia or Croatia. The Slovenes and the Croats are indisputably nations, and they felt or feared oppression by a stronger nation, the Serbs. They had the right to secede. Likewise, whatever our fears about the possible effects of an uprising in Kosovo in triggering a wider regional war which would bring in Albania, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey, the Albanians of Kosovo have a right to secede. At the same time, all the other demands of consistent democracy — guarantees against discrimination, local autonomy, and so on — are relevant, especially in relation to the Serb minority in Croatia.

A final example should illustrate some of the theoretical arguments developed in this article and give a better idea of their political drift. It is Ireland. In the whole period up to the War of Independence following

World War 1, the Irish were not a fully-fledged nation. Their separate language, Gaelic, had become confined to a small minority. Culturally, they had, through centuries of mutual influence, developed much in common with the English. Economically, Ireland was not a compact unit. There were diverse regional economies in North and South, separately connected to the outside world through the two centres of Belfast and Dublin. There was a clear territory — the island of Ireland — but a big chunk of it, in the northeast, had a majority of Protestant-Irish (or Anglo-Scots-Irish: their demarcation from the rest of the Irish was, and is, fundamentally national, not religious) who preferred rule from London to rule from Dublin. Nevertheless, there was plainly a drive toward developing a fully-fledged nation — and it was the drive of a long-downtrodden people to demand equal rights. It was in discussing the attitude of the English to that Irish struggle that Marx coined his famous phrase: "No nation that oppresses another can itself be free". The Marxists supported the Irish national struggle. They could have coupled that support with a programme of consistent democracy for dealing with the Protestant-Irish minority within Ireland. In fact they largely failed to do so. The issue was made more complicated by the fact that the Protestant Irish minority comprised not only a distinct community of all social classes from worker and farmer to capitalist in the northeast, but also a privileged landlord caste spread across the whole island.

"The 'wash-our-hands' approach is illustrated by many on the left to ex-Yugoslavia: the different nationalist leaderships are all to blame, all have chauvinist ambitions, we should advocate peace, reconciliation, and workers' unity across the borders."

Nevertheless, I think, hindsight makes it clear that the failure of Irish Marxists like James Connolly (and of their teachers and comrades in the international movement) to address the issue of Protestant-Irish minority rights more explicitly and steadily was a grievous one. The Irish national movement, having gained enough strength to push the majority of the British ruling class into agreeing to let Ireland go, stumbled and faltered on the rock of the Irish minority. The war of Independence ended in partition, that partition which Connolly had predicted "would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured..."

AFTER OVER 70 YEARS of partition, Southern Ireland is an independent state and Northern Ireland is in chronic communal conflict, kept down to a simmering level of violence only by a heavy British military presence which bears down especially harshly on the Catholic (Gaelic-

tional question



The conflict in Ireland is not just a national struggle between the "Irish people" and Britain. The Protestants, about 20% of the Irish people are the main supporters of the artificially created Northern Irish state.

Irish) community. The conflict is not (as some of the left present it) just a national struggle between "the Irish people" and Britain. The Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, about 10 per cent of the Irish people, are battling against a political set-up which traps them, against their will, in a state which they find alien and oppressive (Northern Ireland). The Protestants, nearly 20 per cent of the Irish people, are the main supporters of that Northern Ireland state. They have made it clear that they will fight, arms in hand — and they are heavily armed — against inclusion in any Catholic-dominated Irish state. They will also fight the British state if and when it tries to push them toward inclusion in a Catholic-dominated Irish state. The great majority in Southern Ireland are opposed to the militant Catholic struggle in Northern Ireland (Provisional Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, gets less than two per cent of the vote in the south). Even if they favour a united Ireland as an ideal — and most do — they do not wish to have the warring communities of Northern Ireland immediately included in their state.

Is it then a question of two nations? Should the Northern Ireland state be defended as an expression of the self-determination of the Protestant-Irish nation? Unquestionably, the Protestant-Irish people of Northern Ireland have acquired many of the features of a nation. They are no longer an appendage to an all-Ireland Protestant-Irish landlord caste, as they used to be to some extent; that caste no longer exists. They are based in a definite territory which is also an economic unit, namely Northern Ireland. Considered statically, the Protestant-Irish are as near to being a nation as the Irish people as a whole were before the

War of Independence. But the question must be considered dynamically. What would be required for the Protestant-Irish to complete their move toward becoming a nation? That they should make Northern Ireland plainly and unambiguously their territory. But the Catholics are a 40 per cent minority in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland could become the territory of a fully-

"The Protestant-Irish are as near to being a nation as the Irish people as a whole were before the War of Independence. But the question must be considered dynamically. What would be required for the Protestant-Irish to become a nation?"

fledged Protestant-Irish nation only by the Catholics submitting and becoming over time, assimilated or marginalised or by the Catholics being driven out. The Catholics, conscious of being part of a big majority across the whole island and conscious also that the border defining Northern Ireland is artificial (there is a Catholic majority on about half the land area of Northern Ireland), will not submit. The only road

toward full Protestant-Irish nationhood is, therefore, communal civil war to drive out the Catholics, which would result in mass slaughter, big population movements, and repartition. It would poison relations between Catholic and Protestant workers for decades to come, and wreck the limited unity which exists today on the trade union level. Socialists or democrats cannot advocate "self-determination for the Protestants" — in short because they are not a nation, in greater detail because their becoming a nation would mean the sharpening of division and privileges rather than their abolition.

A wider framework than Northern Ireland is needed for a democratic solution. The only democratic programme which accommodates the rights of both communities without infringing on the rights of either is that of a federal united Ireland with regional autonomy for the mainly Protestant area, linked in a voluntary confederation with Britain.

Lenin's formula — "A struggle against the privileges and violence of the oppressing nations, and no toleration of the striving for privilege on the part of the oppressed nation" — remains the basis on which support for nationalist struggles can aid workers' unity rather than blocking it.

The other contributors are: Branka Magas, Ernest Erber, Lynne Jones, Bogdan Denitch, John Feffer, Samuel Farber. *New Politics* costs \$24 for four issues. Write to: New Politics, PO Box 98, Brooklyn, New York 11231, USA.

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For class struggle socialism!

In this excerpt from *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels discuss an earlier version of the "reform socialism" which has dominated the mind of the British labour movement all through the 20th century. This "socialism" seeks a better world for the working class, while leaving the main means of production in the hands of the capitalists, and the working class in its old condition of wage slavery. The state — the monopoly of organised force — also remains in the hands of the capitalists. The British welfare state and its Swedish equivalent were the great achievement of this type of socialism, when its ideas were fought for and won by the working class. But, because the capitalists retained state power and economic power, they could claw back what reform "socialism" had won. That is the meaning of Thatcherism in 1980s Britain — the systematic destruction of what Marx would later [1864] call elements of the political economy of the working class which the labour movement had won inside capitalism.

In the second excerpt, from *The Poverty of Philosophy* [1847], Marx polemicised against Pierre Joseph Proudhon, one of the fathers of the petty bourgeois strain of modern anarchism, in support of the idea of working class self-action against the bourgeoisie, by way of strikes. Working-class self action, the class struggle of the proletariat, was the answer to both the "bourgeois socialists" and Proudhon.

When the bosses turn to "socialism"!

A PART OF THE bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems.

We may cite Proudhon's *Philosophie de la Misère* as an example of this form.

The socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat.

The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best; and bourgeois socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality, that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.

A second and more practical, but less systematic, form of this socialism sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working class, by showing that no mere political reform, but only a change in the material conditions of existence, in economical relations, could be of any advantage to them. By changes in the material conditions of existence, this form of socialism, however by no means understands abolition of the bourgeois relations of production, an abolition that can be effected only by a revolution, but administrative reforms, based on the continued existence of these relations; reforms, therefore, that in no respect affect the relations between capital and labour, but, at the best, lessen the cost, and simplify the administrative work of bourgeois government.

Bourgeois socialism attains adequate expression, when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech.

Free trade: for the benefit of the working class. Protective duties: for the benefit of the working class. Prison Reform: for the benefit of the working class. This is the last

word and the only seriously meant word of bourgeois socialism.

It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois — for the benefit of the working class.

(From the *Communist Manifesto*)

Yes to working class economic action!

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE, I declare, for strikes followed by an increase in wages not to culminate in a general rise in prices: this is as certain as that two and two make four". [Proudhon, Vol. I, pp.110 and 111]

We deny all these assertions, except that two and two make four.

In the first place, there is no *general rise in prices*. If the price of everything doubles at the same time as wages, there is no change in price, the only change is in terms.

Then again, a general rise in wages can never produce a more or less general rise the price of goods. Actually, if every industry employed the same number of workers in relation to fixed capital or to the instruments used, a general rise in wages would produce a general fall in profits and the current price of goods would undergo no alteration.

The rise and fall of profits and wages expresses merely the proportion in which capitalists and workers share in the product of a day's work, without influencing in most instances the price of the product. But that "strikes followed by an increase in wages culminate in a general rise in prices, in a dearth even" — these are notions which can blossom only in the brain of a poet who has not been understood.

In England, strikes have regularly given rise to the invention and application of new machines. Machines were, it may be said, the weapon employed by the capitalists to quell the revolt of specialised labour. The *self-acting mule*, the greatest invention of modern industry, put out of action the spinners who were in revolt. If combinations and strikes had no other effect than that of making the efforts of mechanical genius react against them, they would still exercise an immense influence on the development of industry.

The Socialists want the workers to leave the old society alone, the better to be able to enter the new society which they have prepared for them with so much foresight.

In spite of manuals and utopias, combination has not ceased for an instant to go forward and grow with the development and growth of modern industry. It has now reached such a stage, that the degree to



The nationalisation of the mines — as has been tragically proven — did not take the industry out of the capitalist system.

which combination has developed in any country clearly marks the rank it occupies in the hierarchy of the world market. England, whose industry has attained the highest degree of development, has the biggest and best organised combinations.

In England they have not stopped at partial combinations which have no other objective than a passing strike, and which disappear with it. Permanent combinations have been formed, *trades unions*, which serve as ramparts for the workers in their struggles with the employers. And at the present time all these local *trades unions* find a rallying point in the *National Association of United Trades*, the central committee of which is in London, and which already numbers 80,000 members. The organisation of these strikes, combinations and *trades unions* went on simultaneously with the political struggles of the workers, who now constitute a large political party, under the name of Chartists.

The first attempts of workers to *associate* among themselves always take place in the form of combinations.

Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance — *combination*. Thus combination always has a double aim, that of stopping competition among the workers, so that they can carry on general competition with the capitalist. If the first aim of resistance was merely the maintenance of wages, combinations, at first isolated, constitute themselves into groups as the capitalists in their turn unite for the purpose of repression, and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them than that of wages. This is so true that English economists are amazed to see the workers sacrifice a good part of their wages in favour of associations, which, in the eyes of these economists, are established solely in favour of wages. In this struggle — a veritable civil war — all the elements necessary for a coming battle unite and develop. Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character.

Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the coun-

try into workers. The combination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

In the bourgeoisie we have two phases to distinguish: that in which it constituted itself as a class under the regime of feudalism and absolute monarchy, and that in which, already constituted as a class, it overthrew feudalism and monarchy to make society into a bourgeois society. The first of these phases was the longer and necessitated greater efforts. This too began by partial combinations against the feudal lords.

Much research has been carried out to trace the different historical phases that the bourgeoisie has passed through, from the commune up to its constitution as a class.

But when it is a question of making a precise study of strikes, combinations and other forms in which the proletarians carry out before our eyes their organisation as a class, some are seized with real fear and others display a *transcendental* disdain.

Meanwhile the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is a struggle of class against class, a struggle which carried to its highest expression is a total revolution. Indeed, is it at all surprising that a society founded on the opposition of classes should culminate in brutal *contradiction*, the shock of body against body, as its final *dénouement*?

Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social.

It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be *political revolutions*. Till then, on the eve of every general reshuffling of society, the last word of social science will always be:

"Le combat ou la mort; la lutte sanguinaire ou le néant. C'est ainsi que la question est invinciblement posée." ["Fight or die; bloody struggle or annihilation. That's how the question irresistibly is posed."]

(From the *"Poverty of Philosophy"*)

The state's pet killer

Film

Matt Cooper reviews *The Assassin*

"THE ASSASSIN" is, like many recent Hollywood movies, a remake of a good French film. "Hollywood Remake" too often means shoddy opportunist vulgarisation!

Recently "Three men and a baby" and "Somersby" have fallen far short of their French originals.

The *Assassin* is a pretty straight remake of Luc Besson's "Nakita". Ironically, that film was the French director's attempt to make a Hollywood-style thriller!

There's a lot of cultural snobbery around (to which I am not immune) French subtitles spells culture: Hollywood spells mass produced crap. Remakes in particular are anathema to the cultural snob, particularly when the

director is John Badham, whose previous credits include *Saturday Night Fever*. Such snobbery is mistaken. Not many people go to see subtitled films; a good film deserves a mass audience.

"The state is not interested in making her a better citizen: it wants to imprison her forever in the role of a cold blooded killer."

The *Assassin* revolves around Maggie (Bridget Fonda), a woman alienated by and from society. For her, random and meaningless violence is a way of life. She has no self worth, she has slipped from the gutter into the deepest pits of capitalism's

sewer. She kills a copper in cold blood and is sentenced to death. At this point a shadowy state organisation moves in, and sets about reforming Maggie, teaching her to behave as a good bourgeois woman. But this is no benign Pygmalion; she is offered no redemption. The state is not interested in making her a better citizen: it wants to imprison her forever in the role of a cold blooded killer, murdering for the state.

They get more than they bargained for!

Maggie gets not one but two new identities. In one she is a settled and successful professional woman, Claudia; in the other she is Nina, the state's pet killer, at its beck and call.

Her rebellious spirit is undaunted. Training on the firing range, she is instructed to kill the bad guys and leave the good guys. But she shoots the cardboard cut outs of coppers and crooks alike. The state's definition of good and bad is not one she accepts.

She is given things she has never had before — self worth and emotional as well as material security. But now her alienation is worse than before. She has in her grasp a life previously denied to her, but the alienating force now returns in the form of the state which demands that she performs as an assassin.

Maggie's final rebellion is a groping for some kind of genuine humanity against the devilish and inhuman state to which she has sold her soul. But it will not let her go.

Assassin is thus part of a positive trend in recent Hollywood films. In last year's *Deep Cover* the state was shown as the biggest drug dealer of all. *Jacob's Ladder* showed us a military establishment that tested drugs on its own soldiers and then attempted to destroy the human evidence.

That these films are only fictions, and often not fully believable ones at that, does little to reduce the power of their message: *the state is one of the great forces of evil in our world.*

long life that John D. Rockefeller discovered the uses of "Public Relations" specialists. The PR boys had him photographed singing hymns and playing golf and convinced a lot of people in his old age that John D. was not such a bad old bastard after all.

Rockerfeller's near-monopoly of oil was broken by the opening of new oil fields in places like Texas that he failed to control — and by US government action. On the eve of World War II, the Republican Teddy Roosevelt administration, responding to populist pressure, took action, and the Supreme Court



Bridget Fonda: too much of a victim with a gun

The *Assassin* is a powerful portrayal of a state that devalues human life and acts without scruple or restraint to serve its own nefarious interests.

If you can stand the subtitles, *Nikita* is the stronger film. Bidget

Fonda is too much of a victim with a gun, paled next to Anne Parillard's original dominant *Nakita*, who is savage in her rebellion.

But under the inevitable Hollywood gloss this is a powerful film.

compelled Standard Oil to break itself into pieces.

This is effective political action against monopoly capitalism, crowded the populists, — those anti-monopolists who rejected the socialist contention that you cannot roll the film of capitalist development backwards to an earlier pre-monopoly capitalism and that, therefore, the answer to monopoly is *public ownership*. But it wasn't effective political action!

Within a decade, the fragments into which Standard Oil was divided had each grown to be giant semi-monopolies in their own right!

That's where Esso (Standard Oil of New Jersey), Mobil and Socal among other economic giants of today, came from. You cannot beat monopoly capitalist age by breaking it up! John D., who had shares in all the segments, saw his wealth continue to grow by leaps and bounds.

He lived to be 97, until 1937, inordinately well-favoured even in years.

John D Rockefeller's story was told in the first of BBC 2's 8-part series "The Prize", the story of the oil industry. It is being show at 9 pm on Sunday evenings.

As rich as Rockefeller!

Television

By Paddy Dollard

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER was the richest man in the world at the beginning of the 20th century. He ran Standard Oil, which had cornered control of almost the entire American oil industry. At one point he controlled over 90% of the industry!

Born in 1840, John D. was one of the great "robber barons" who raped and pillaged the whole North American continent during the last third of the 19th century. Oil — which then meant paraffin for lamps, and would later mean fuel for internal combustion engines — was first drilled out of the ground on the eve of the US Civil War. As the industry grew, there were at first large numbers of small oil producers, and numerous oil refineries. Not for long.

John D. was a righteous man, all his life an active Baptist Christian and all his life a philanthropist — on a giant scale towards the end.

He saw in the early oil industry exactly what socialists saw in it — chaos and waste and irrationality. He set out to rationalise and organise it — not as social but private property, *his* private property.

He ate up the small companies, and combined the production, refining, marketing and transportation of oil in one huge cost-saving, planned operation.

He fought with the ruthlessness of a general in battle to ruin his prey, forcing them to choose between economic ruin and joining his snow-balling "operation": they could have stock in return for surrender. Amongst those who were ruined in one of his victorious economic wars was John D.'s own brother.

He reached *one* goal common to socialists and robber barons alike — the organisation and integration of an industry. But under his ownership, not that of the workers, and only in one industry, not in the economy as a whole..

Others did the same thing in other industries in the same way — but the overall economy remained chaotic, and the American and other economic giants operated in a world of increasingly fierce competition and international rivalries that would soon lead to World War I.

How did John D. Rockefeller, whose name was the popular byword for riches, appear to his fellow citizens? He seemed to his fellow Americans of that age to be a freak and a villain. He was the most hated man in America, the personification of greed, and of all the other plundering robber barons.

In those days, there was a strong plebeian populism in the USA. The super rich were a new phenomenon. They had not yet learned to sell themselves "like soap powder" to the masses they plundered, short-changed, exploited and murdered.

It was only towards the end of his

Tory corruption: the more things change...

The Tory-Lloyd George-Liberal government, which fell in 1922, was found to have had a secret department for the selling of noble titles for hard cash to hard-faced capitalists who had done well out of the First World War. We print below the comment of *The Worker* on the affair. *The Worker* was launched in 1916 as the paper of the Clyde Workers' Committee, a Glasgow-based rank-and-file trade union body, but was banned immediately by the Government. The paper was re-

launched at the close of 1918. By 1923, when this article appeared, *The Worker* was the official organ of the British Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions, the revolutionary international trade union federation set up in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

WHO'LL BUY an honour? A stinking corrupt honour? "I would not love thee half so well, sweet maid, loved I not honours more." The report of the Commission appointed by the late Government to consider the question of the granting of

Honours has just been published, and displays itself as a very futile document. Not only does the report reflect the moral cowardice of those who drew it up, but it also reflects the inability of Capitalism to deal with political corruption.

It has long been a notorious fact that many wealth nonentities were receiving honours from the Crown without, as far as anyone could see, having performed any social service to justify their existence, let alone justify their receiving an honour. It has also been notorious that those honours were bought in the market with the same nonchalance as an ordinary man would buy a packet of woodbine.

Our "old nobility" were shocked. Titles were becoming plentiful, and there is no use of a title if almost anybody can get one. So a squeal got up amongst "our noble families" as to the debasement of the nobility and the Commission was duly appointed to consider the question.

All the prominent officials of the old parties virtuously denied that anyone had ever been recommended for an honour because he had subscribed to the secret party funds.

Not at all. All the wealthy nonentities elevated to peerages, and so on, had been recommended for "distinguished public service". Look at Sir Robert McAlpine, for example. He never subscribed to secret party funds. He had no pull with his close relative Mr. Lloyd George. He had disinterestedly (if profitably)

erected working-class bug-hutches in various parts of the country and obviously had to be recommended for his great public service of erecting houses and selling them at a profit. Then there was Mr. Max Aitken who made money and became Sir Max Aitken, made more money and became Lord Beaverbrook. Max never subscribed to a political party in his life, and his elevation to the peerage had nothing to do with his work in helping to get rid of Mr. Henry Herbert Asquith.

Max is writing a number of articles on a "Career for your Boy" in the *Sunday Express*. We await with breathless interest on "How to Become a Lord".

Then there was "Willie" Beardmore, who now goes about the country disguised as Lord Invernairn. His great public service consisted in selling munitions at a considerable profit. It is a lie to suggest that he ever heard of such a thing as a secret party fund. No, it is pure public service which has made those men what they are.

However, in order to prevent any "wrong uns" from being honoured, the Commission recommends that the Prime Minister appoints three members of the Privy Council to examine the names of those about to receive honours. But the Prime Minister is the person who suggests the honours. Yet it is left in his hands to suggest three of his friends in the Privy Council to scrutinise the names of those recommended for honours. This farcical arrangement is described as ensuring politi-



Lloyd-George: sold honours to his friends just as the Tories do today, as we have seen in the case of Nadir

cal purity. As the *Manchester Guardian* neatly puts it:

"...But, as the Report accepts earlier, apparently without effort, the statement of some of these pure souls that nothing of the sort has gone on before, this need only mean that in the future, as in the past, party agents and new candidates for honours will go through some kind of internal metaphysical gymnastics by which a huge gift of money on one side and the gift of a peerage on the other will be made to appear to the parties themselves as phenomena wholly unrelated to one another. The two will be like five shillings which an Irishman has been known to place behind a milestone, with no

discoverable motive, and the jar of illicit spirits which he finds behind the very same milestone later in the day although the five shillings are, at any rate for publicity purposes, neither "directly nor indirectly associated" with the whisky."

To our mind, however, the prime corruption of Capitalist politics is not that a few rich ignoramuses are able to buy tawdry honours. It is that they are able to buy politicians and direct policies. Even if the honours system were abolished, the prime corruption would remain and will only disappear when the workers have wiped out Capitalism and all the moral and political rotteness associated with it.

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Why you should be a socialist

WE 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 gold-miners, 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.

FROM 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.

The real lessons of the Burnsall defeat

By Jim Denham

THE STRIKE at Burnsall Metal Coatings, Smethwick, is over. None of the strikers' demands — for union recognition, equal pay and improved health and safety — have been achieved. A scab workforce is now in place and none of the strikers have been reinstated (though, in truth it should be added, that few if any of the strikers actually wanted reinstatement). In other words, it has been a comprehensive defeat, despite a few positive incidental developments.

The question is, was it an avoidable defeat? Predictably, there have been cries of "sell-out" from sections of the left. *Socialist Outlook* supporters have accused the GMB officials who ran the dispute, of handing victory to Burnsall's management. If mass picketing and secondary action had been organised, the strike could have been won, according to *Socialist Outlook* and others.

Note to our readers:
Socialist Organiser is taking a break next week. The next issue will be out on 22 July

The first point to be made about this criticism is that for the first two months of the strike, *Outlook* supporters (who are now the harshest critics of the GMB's handling of the dispute) sat silent in the strike meetings (which were initially open to all "supporters") apparently agreeing with the officials. Then, suddenly, in January, the *Outlook* line changed to one of near hysterical attacks upon the GMB. This sudden volte face has never been accounted for.

Furthermore, no alternative strategy was ever fleshed out by the GMB's critics. Mass picketing? *Outlook* et al did not propose a Timex-type mass mobilisation outside Burnsall (presumably because they realised that it wasn't a realistic proposition) but put out half-hearted and ambiguous calls for "set piece" (i.e. token) mass picketing.

The truth is that the GMB calculated that obstructing the road outside the Burnsall factory for a few hours would do nothing to hurt the company, but would certainly bring the union into conflict with the law. They opted to stay within the law. The GMB's approach was excessively

cautious certainly, but this was not crucial to the outcome of the dispute.

Secondary action? The first thing to be said about this proposition is that as Burnsall is a metal-coating operation, there are no Burnsall "producers" to black/boycott. In practice, it would be extremely difficult for workers at, say, Jaguar, to distinguish between components coated by Burnsall and identical components treated by another (probably non-union) metal coating firm. However, the union would have been culpable if it had simply used this as an excuse for doing nothing.

The truth is that the union did approach stewards at the unionised plants (Jaguar and Land Rover) that traded with Burnsall, asking them to find ways of organising a boycott of the firm. The response was not encouraging — not because of fear of the law, but because of poor morale on the shop floor.

However, at the major unionised customer — Jaguar — success was eventually achieved as a result of pressure from one or two individual stewards combined with pressure on the management from the GMB

nationally.

In the last month of the dispute, the GMB sent a leaflet calling for boycotts to stewards at all Burnsall's major customers. There was no response.

The union's strategy was avowedly "legalistic": to find ways of organising a boycott of Burnsall short of open defiance of the law, and to drag the employer through industrial tribunals. Both of these activities were pursued with some vigour and some limited success. In the end, it wasn't sufficient. But no-one (including *Outlook*) ever suggested that open defiance of the law on mass picketing or secondary action, was a realistic proposition in this dispute.

The criticism amounted to whinging over minor details and hysterical (often dishonest) attacks on the individual officials with responsibility for the dispute.

It should be noted that the Burnsall strikers (19 in all) were mainly Asian women, many of whom did not speak English and none of whom had any experience of trade union organisation prior to joining the GMB in June of last year. They were vulnerable to manipulation by bureau-

crats and irresponsible "outsiders" alike.

In the event, the GMB played reasonably straight with them, using profession interpreters at meetings to ensure that the union's strategy was clearly understood and that maximum debate took place.

Others did not deal with the strikers in an honest or straightforward manner: the leadership of the Stalinist "Indian Workers' Association", for instance, told the strikers that had they joined the TGWU instead of the GMB, the dispute would have been conducted with greater militancy and vigour, up to and including defiance of the law.

This arrant nonsense was peddled by people who just happened to be prominent T&G members, and know very well that the Midlands Region of the T&G is every bit as right wing and as cowardly as the GMB.

Nevertheless, this kind of dishonesty had some effect on the strikers — and also on people like *Socialist Outlook*.

In fact, there are (two) serious criticisms that can be levelled at the GMB over their handling of the dispute — but they are not the ones raised by the IWA or

Outlook:

1. Why, given the obvious difficulties that confronted this dispute from day one, did the GMB not release an officer to deal with it on an exclusive, full-time basis?

2. The GMB knew that Burnsall's management had a "rational" reason for resisting union recognition: they operate in a highly competitive, non-union industry.

Why then did the GMB (and their prospective merger partners, the T&G) not use the dispute as a springboard for a general unionisation campaign throughout the metal-coating industry?

Had these questions been addressed by the GMB (and T&G) the outcome of the Burnsall dispute might have been different. But one thing is for sure: calling upon 19 especially vulnerable workers in Smethwick to simply "defy the law" when the entire British trade union leadership has acquiesced before it, was not realistic or useful.

The prospects of eventually unionising Asian workers in sweat-shop industries like metal-coating, depend upon an honest and realistic assessment of the lessons of the Burnsall dispute.

The Industrial Front

There are signs of life in the EETPU: last month's conference in Blackpool saw the chair overturned for the first time in 30 years! Time for all electricians and plumbers to get back into the union.

The occupations at **Springfield** and **Harvist** nurseries in Islington are now entering their eighth week. They need your support! To send messages or offer help phone 071-923 0263 or 071-609 4576.

The **printworkers** are still locked-out at both Arrowsmith in Bristol and Revell and George in Manchester. Both groups of workers were taking action against their bosses as part of the GPMU's national wage campaign. Donations/messages of support to: Arrowsmith c/o Mike Vine, 45 Leinster Avenue, Bristol; Revell and George — picket line: Cow Lane, off Oldfield Road, Salford or contact Manchester GPMU, Graphic House, Mosely Road, Manchester.

UCW London ballot

After the yes vote for action against the terms for movement of postal staff in London, UCW district officials are in negotiations with Post Office management. The dispute is sure to go to national negotiations and is unlikely to be progressed until next week.

The cause of the dispute is office closures and the terms on which staff are compulsorily transferred — the present compensation terms are considered insufficient. But the root of the matter is the surplus of staff London-wide and the threat of part-time staff being offered part-time working.

The ballot majority was close, and the turnout high. Many postal workers voted against management policies (regardless of the details) and against the threat to their working lives.

The issue of staff surplus is not a localised one and cannot be dealt with by local action alone. A London-wide strategy is needed to meet the postal management's policy in the run up to privatisation.

A good conference for railworkers!

By and RMT conference delegate

WHEN A conference begins with the first vote being to remove the President from the chair, and succeeds without debate, then you know it bodes well.

The issue was a resolution from the track workers grades conference condemning the minority of the Executive Committee who, along with the President, prevented further strikes last April over BR redundancies. Jimmy Knapp had ruled that the resolution was not "germane" to a particular grade and therefore refused to allow it onto the AGM agenda.

Appeals to the Standing Orders Committee produced a majority report saying that it should be allowed and a minority report from Jimmy Knapp and one other saying it shouldn't be. President Dan Loughlin ruled the majority report out of order and so the conference voted him out of the chair.

Over an hour was then spent arguing over which report to adopt. The vote was that the resolution should be allowed.

Throughout the week the top table lost on every issue and only found themselves on the right side when they supported doing something — like fighting privatisation.

On the Picadilly Four where the guards reps were sacked for leading unofficial action in defence of a local agreement last year, the EC was condemned for having obeyed the injunction by backing off from a planned strike in their defence. By way of compensation the EC were instructed to pay 3 years pay to each of them if their Industrial Tribunal hearing were unsuccessful.

Before the debate Jimmy Knapp had copies of 2 letters distributed from the union's solicitor claiming that if the AGM were to uphold the

appeal against the EC decision to comply with the injunction then the union would be in contempt of court, and deliberately so. There could be unlimited fines they said, jail, sequestration and the inability of the union to function (and of course no-one to pay the solicitor's bills). We upheld the appeal.

Another long argument involving Standing Order majority and minority reports was around whether we could decide on the most recent EC decisions on finance involving, despite a cash crisis, very generous pension contributions from the employer (us) to union officer pension funds and very generous redundancy terms — including if deselected. A Presidential ruling was again overturned and a majority eventually said we could decide.

The effect of so much hand to hand fighting over the meaning of particular union rules and the power of the AGM was to push some issues off the agenda — including the track grades resolution condemning the President and the Magnificent 7. So we voted for all these to be on the agenda of a Special General Meeting soon.

The privatisation debate got most publicity. This time Jimmy Knapp was with the majority because he supported the idea of a high profile campaign leading up to a ballot for industrial action.

Knapp ruled out a strike against privatisation as such as this would be illegal but said it must be around defending railworkers pay and conditions.

The top table were also defeated over the calling of the referendum ballot on redundancies in May. Having voted for action alongside the miners in March and voting with our feet on two days strike in April the calling of a referendum ballot on BR's so-called promises of 'not foreseeing' redundancies in the next 24 months was an abrogation

of leadership.

Knapp's defence was that the RMT was under pressure at joint coal and rail union meetings to take action to support the miners. They agreed to synchronise and so met BR to demand guarantees on job losses. He said we had to create a dispute to give the necessary support. Since then the NUM members have retreated and NACODS never got the necessary two-thirds for action. Neither of those unions are criticising us, he said. He had hoped that the action would create a stir in the British trade union movement but had been disappointed. The London bus strike has also begun to crumble and we were having problems in some areas. We had gone back united and gone as far as we could without ourselves suffering serious damage. He was proud of the RMT and we should applaud ourselves.

Nonetheless the conference upheld the appeal saying that we should have fought on our own account.

We voted to tell the EC that they should not have signed for BR's miserable "Bargaining Machinery" last July especially when they had been told to resist it at the '92 AGM. Though the new Bargaining Machinery was designed to facilitate privatisation BR also now wanted out, as the government had decided to sell-off BR in a different way.

We also voted to work within Europe for better conditions and wages, against the Maastricht Agreement, for disengagement from Northern Ireland as part of a commitment to a new settlement there to meet the needs of all the Irish, for defence cuts and the scrapping of Trident. We also said that coal, rail and BT should be re-nationalised (where privatised).

It was a good conference for railworkers showing a commitment to meet the attacks not far away or already with us. But while the AGM is the sovereign body of the RMT Knapp has ignored its decisions before or wriggled out of them. The problem now is to keep the pressure on. We must fight back against every attack — like the imposition of 1.5% by BR; like the trampling on conditions of service; like the redundancies while giving work to contractors.

NUPE leadership prepares "compromise"

From back page

the idea of postponing any decision of the method of parliamentary selection until after the boundary commission review has reported. So potentially letting Smith off the hook.

• Worse of all the NUPE leadership are known to be preparing a 'compromise' proposal on registered supporters which would abolish any collective say whatsoever for trade union branches in the selection of MPs.

Smith is far from beaten yet. If compromise is to be accepted then it can only take the form suggested by Bill Morris of the TGWU: a code of practice which would maintain the right of trade unionists in branches to vote on the selection of MPs.

Contact "Keep the Link" c/o 120 Northcote Rd, London E17 7EB. For speakers and more information phone Tom on 071-277 7217.

TGWU conference report

TGWU Branch delegate, Dale Street, reports from Bournemouth

DESPITE BEING backed by the unions GEC, proposals for electoral reform and the introduction of PR were defeated on the second day of the TGWU BDC.

The question of electoral reform was the key debate to have taken place at the conference by the time of writing (Tuesday 8 July).

On the other issues discussed so far, only Northern Ireland provoked any controversy. A resolution advocating a British declaration of disengagement and participation by Sinn Fein in constitutional talks was overwhelmingly defeated.

Resolutions supporting the T&G/GMB merger, a major

house-building programme and a campaign against homelessness, and better training of union reps to combat New Management Techniques, were passed unanimously.

Opposition to the Tories' anti-union legislation and support for Labour-union links will not be debated until later in the week.

However, the massive support which exists for maintaining and strengthening Labour-union links is already apparent.

On the opening day of the conference, scarcely a speech went by without a reference to keeping these links. Every reference was greeted by stormy applause from the floor of the conference.

John Smith is unlikely to receive an equally enthusiastic reception when he addressed the Conference on Wednesday.

Civil Service:

Pressure grows for all-out action against Market Testing

By Mark Serwotka DSS Sheffield

LAST FRIDAY'S strike by DSS and DH workers against Tory "Market Testing" plans to contract-out large parts of civil service work was a major success.

Even the most experienced union activists have never witnessed before such a massive majority for action or such a well supported strike.

The way forward now is to

build for all-out action across the entire civil service.

A 3 or 4 day strike in the DsHSS now would be a step towards all-out strike action in the section.

The Tories are on the ropes, let's finish them off!

• Home Office CPSA and NUCPS members are balloting for strike action against "Market Testing" on 16 July. DoE/DTP unions are balloting on 30 July.

Socialist Campaign Group Supporters Network Rally
1993 Labour Party NEC elections — elect the socialist slate!

Tuesday 20 July 7pm

Grand Committee Room, House of Commons

Come and hear Dennis Skinner Tony Benn Ken Livingstone
Diane Abbott Alice Mahon Jeremy Corbyn Dawn Primarolo
and other Socialist Campaign Group MPs

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Scottish TUC too busy for solidarity!

Tories prepare to smash student unions

Now is the time to fight!

By Elaine Jones, Executive, National Union of Students

TORY EDUCATION SECRETARY, John Patten has unveiled Tory plans for smashing the National Union of Students. These plans, outlined in a new White Paper, boil down to this: the Tories intend to stop local student unions running, or supporting, any campaigning activity, and they intend to destroy the structures of the National Union.

Patten finally announced his plans, just as students are going on holiday. He has opened "consultations" with college authorities, and these consultations will go on until the 2 October — just before most college years start again! Tory democracy!

The Department of Education Consultation Notes make clear the Tories' aims.

At present in most colleges everyone is automatically a member of the students' union. Unions are run by elected officers who are accountable to regular open meetings of the membership. These meetings decide union policy.

Student unions can run campaigns on issues concerning their college, national government policy, and on questions of international politics.

Most student unions are affiliated to the National Union of Students. Whether or not to be in NUS is decided by the union as a whole on a democratic vote or referendum.

Students have consistently voted to stay in NUS even though it has been appallingly led in recent years because students are at the sharp end of Tory government attacks and know that they need a national union to defend themselves.

The "Consultation Paper" distinguishes between a few 'core services' that unions will still be able to fund and "non-core services" that they will have to stop funding. Core services? Sport, Catering, Internal Representation (which means a few students on college boards) and Welfare (which means giving advice).

Student unions, the Consultation Paper states, will be confined to "operating within current systems rather than campaigning for changes in national policies". So students who have no benefit rights cannot ask their union to campaign on their behalf!

The document is clear and explicit: "Campus unions should not undertake expenditure on political activities".

Not content with that the Paper demands changes in the way these shells of unions would operate.

It demands cross-campus ballots with a 33% quoracy in all elections. Try that at an FE college with five sites and a very small budget!

It proposes that General Membership meetings should cease to have a say in student affairs. Executive bodies will replace them.



Caption

The Tories clearly want to tear the campaigning heart out of student unionism. Their plan reeks with the stench of this undemocratic government. It is becoming obvious that the Tories want to push college authorities into introducing student fees. That is why they want to destroy student union structure that could — with proper leadership — help us unite for a fightback against the savagely elitist Tory drive for student fees.

That the Tories do fear such a fightback by students will be clear if you ask yourself the following question: why else are they trying to rush through this White Paper and get the "consultations" over with before the end of the summer vacation?

Tragically, the rightwing dominated NUS leadership have not fought but grovelled to the Tories. They voluntarily dumped much of NUS politics in a futile attempt to placate the Tories.

The Tories were not placated. What will the collaborationist NUS leaders do now? Whatever they do, one thing is sure: students can't rely on them!

Student activists must start the campaign now to defend our unions. We should unite all those who want to fight.

We must get out to rank and file students and convince them that, despite the appalling leadership of NUS, it is the most important means students have for the defence of their rights and potentially a bulwark against student fees.

We must channel the anger that students feel against a government that has impoverished

and undermined them and is now attacking students even further.

Mass action, demonstrations, occupations and building links with the labour movement — that is the only strategy that can defeat the Tories! It can stop the union wrecking and transform our union from top to bottom.

We must prepare for this battle now. If the belly-crawling NUS leaders will not give a lead in this unavoidable fight, then militant rank and file students must act without them. Time is short!

A PART FROM SOME lunchtime factory gate meetings in Dundee, last Thursday's promised Scottish TUC Day of Action in support of the Timex workers was virtually non-existent.

The Day of Action had first been announced by STUC General Secretary Campbell Christie at a demonstration and rally held in Dundee on 19 June.

In the following week and a half, however, the STUC abandoned the idea of a Day of Action on the grounds that it was too preoccupied with other issues, such as Rosyth.

The Timex workers themselves are now focussing on two issues in the ongoing fight to save their jobs in the aftermath of the company's announcement that it intends closing the Dundee factory by Christmas.

On the one hand, they are stepping up their campaign for a consumer boycott of Timex products, with delegations of sacked workers visiting America, Denmark, France and Germany.

On the other hand, they are investigating the possibility of a worker buyout of the Dundee plant. The AEEU is backing the idea and the TUC's Unity Trust Bank and the Co-op Bank may be willing to provide financial backing.

Worker buyouts of workplaces facing closure have generally been the tactic of the last resort. If it is a straightforward choice between closure and a buyout, then it is hardly surprising that workers opt for the latter.

But right now the pressure must be maintained on the STUC to call and co-ordinate a proper Day of Action over unemployment and the 1.5% pay limit.

Such a Day of Action could bring together Timex and Rosyth workers facing job losses, civil servants facing Market Testing, and local authority workers facing the 1.5% pay limit.

NUPE leadership prepares "compromise" on link

THE VAST BULK of both Labour Party members and trade unionists support the maintenance of the links between the two. This has been shown repeatedly at union conferences over the summer and even in opinion polls of party members and ordinary trade unionists.

Unfortunately that does not mean that the links are safe.

• John Smith is continuing to "fought it out" in public and warning the unions through the pages of the *Financial Times* that he will not compromise.

• John Edmonds sensing a major defeat for Smith at this year's conference has taken up

Continued on page 15

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SOCIALIST Inside this week
MANIFESTO
 Behind the hype
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Buses, rail, pits, public sector

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