

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

It will be socialism or barbarism!

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The Sun offers £1,000 to anyone who will shop anti-Nazi demonstrators to the police

Police

are the real

'nutters'

THE SUN NEWSPAPER is offering £1,000 to readers who can identify the "riot thugs" from pictures of last Saturday's anti-fascist Unity demonstration in south London. This dirty Tory rag wants you to help "Nail the Nutters". In other words they want you to shop your workmates and friends to the police for cash. On Sunday the Observer used a photograph of a riot cop bashing a protester under the headline "The ugly face of extremism". To us the marcher looks frightened and is protecting himself: the "ugly face of extremism" is the riot cop.

Continued on page 2

THEY STARTED S. LONDON RIOT

AEEU dumps Timex struggle

"Nothing but blackmail. An absolute disgrace"

"YOU can't breathe life into a corpse" said AEEU national official Jimmy Airlie after a mass meeting of sacked Timex workers in Dundee last Thursday (14 October).

The object of Jimmy's philosophical ruminations was unclear. Was he talking about the shut-down Timex factory? Or was he talking about himself?

The Corporal Clott of the army

of labour had just struck again. Faced with the threat of the AEEU leadership to withdraw all support from the dispute, including the pending claims for unfair dismissal, the mass meeting had voted by a majority of just 24 to accept Airlie's latest feat of diplomacy.

Airlie, clearly a former student of the Neville Chamberlain school of diplomacy, had his own version of "peace in our time": capitula-

tion to every single one of Timex management's demands.

In many ways the "deal" proposed by Airlie — which local union officials and members of the strike committee had been informed of only minutes before the mass meeting — was even worse than the "deal" offered by Airlie in June:

- * the consumer boycott of Timex products is to be called off immediately;

- * no further action to damage Timex's interest is to be organised;
- * the strike fund is to be shut down, and none of the £180,000 left in it is to be used to finance activities contrary to Timex's interests;

- * the AEEU must formally

declare the dispute ended;

- * no union money is to be used to pursue claims of unfair dismissal;

- * sacked workers are to receive one week's pay for every year of service — a worker with 30 years' service will therefore receive between £3,000 and £4,000;

- * abandonment of claims for unfair dismissal;

- * acceptance of the "deal" must be unanimous, with individually signed acceptance forms returned to Timex by midday last Friday (15 October).

So great is Timex's faith in Airlie, however, that it is prepared to show some flexibility in regard to the deadline for the return of acceptance forms. High Noon

last Friday was not an absolute deadline: "We (Timex) would take the union's word that its members back the plan in good faith".

"We got the best deal we could," said Airlie after the mass meeting.

The sacked workforce, however, did not share Airlie's enthusiasm. "A gun has been put to our members' heads," said sacked convenor John Kydd. "It was nothing but blackmail. It is an absolute disgrace as far as trade unionism is concerned," said Charlie Malone.

Despite his penchant for the limelight, Airlie made a rapid exit from Dundee. A press conference which he had been due to chair was inexplicably abandoned.

Whilst it is certainly true that the

Timex campaign, focussed on a consumer boycott, was facing problems, the response of the AEEU leadership had been disgraceful.

Rather than attempt to transform the consumer boycott into a workers' boycott, the AEEU leadership preferred to bludgeon the sacked workers into abandoning their campaign.

When Airlie retires from his union position, no doubt to take up a richly deserved seat in the House of Lords, he can look forward to the traditional presentation of a gold watch in recognition of a lifetime of service.

But it will be Timex, not AEEU members, who will be making the presentation.

Would a Bexley ban be victory?

By Mark Osborn

ACCORDING TO the *Guardian* of Tuesday 19 October, Bexley council is to discuss closing down the headquarters of the British National Party, using legal technicalities of planning law if it can.

If the Tory Bexley council hinders the BNP, we will lose no sleep.

However, there are dangers. If the council can close down the BNP HQ a precedent has been set for closing down the offices of other "extremist" organisations — perhaps the ANL, Militant, or Socialist Organiser. The black communities and the left gain much more by a rule that councils or the government cannot shut down political premises than we would by the BNP being forced to move.

In France, in 1973, after violent clashes between fascists and leftists, both the Nazi movement Occident and the Ligue Commu-

niste were banned. The leftists suffered much more than the Nazis.

During the 1930s upsurge of Mosleyite fascism in Britain, the Public Order Act was introduced — and used, over the years, much more against left-wing demonstrators than against fascists.

Socialists who advocate such bans are potentially disarming themselves in face of attacks against the left. Moreover, bans tend to obscure the issues. The BNP could, perhaps, rally people to their defence on the issue of democratic rights, hiding the main question — the BNP's own threat to the lives and democratic rights of black people and labour activists.

Much better for the left would be to rely on the strength of the labour movement and the youth. This is the force, on the ground, which can beat racism and fascism.

Don't look to Tory Bexley council to do the job for us.

Defend Russian socialists

Members of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty were joined by independent socialists and comrades from Socialist Outlook and Workers' News in a protest for Russian workers' rights outside the Russian consulate in London, on Monday 11 October.

The AWL sent a letter of protest to the Russian government demanding an end to the persecution of the Russian labour movement and condemning the treatment of Russian socialist, Boris Kagarlitsky.

The letter condemned Yelsin's actions but made plain that the signatories were not supporters of Ruskoi. Those who signed our letter included: Alice Mahon MP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Joe Marino, leader of the Bakers' Union and members of the Critique editorial board. More on Russia: pages 4-5



Police started South London riot

From front page

BUT WE DO not own the media in Britain and we do not write the headlines, articles and captions. That job is done by the hired servants of big business. Andrew Neil and Kelvin MacKenzie produce stories slanted to serve the interests of the rich and powerful. They "interpret" photographs in the way that suits them and their proprietors.

So, when the Sun names postal worker Jerry Jackson as a "yob" and a "nutter" we defend him. Jackson — innocent or guilty — stands to lose his job.

In the current crazed climate, deliberately and artificially created by the tabloid press, what chance does Jerry Jackson have of a fair trial? None.

What chance do the many protesters who have been charged with serious offences like assault have of a fair trial? None. There is a good chance some will go to jail for a long time — unless working class people stand up for them and protest.

The double standards of our ruling class are staggering. Only a few weeks after the police who lied and railroaded the Birmingham 6 to jail were let free after a judge claimed that the press had prejudiced their chance of a fair trial.

Will Jerry Jackson be let off? No way. Jerry's real crime in the eyes of the police and the Tories is to be a working class man who stood his ground on an anti-fascist march.

Release all the anti-racist prisoners! Drop all the charges!

March on 3 November!

By Steve Mitchell

SUPPORT IS growing for the demo called by Manchester Area National Union of Students in protest at Government plans to charge students tuition fees.

These fees, which could be up to £2000 a year, will force thousands of people out of education.

The National Union of Students has disgracefully refused call any action on tuition fees. These student leaders privately support the Labour leadership's view that "students should pay".

They betray their own union. NUS policy is that

education must be free and accessible to all.

If tuition fees are introduced, those who most need higher education, students from poorer backgrounds, will suffer.

The MANUS call to fight for education as right, not as one of the privileges of the privileged, has found great support among students in Manchester. The demo will be large and angry.

Its other demand is that the Government should stop its planned attack on student unions. The demonstration assembles at 12.30pm on Wednesday 3 November, at All Saints, Manchester. More info: 061-275 2973.

South Africa: Mandela makes promises to business

By Anne Mack

A GLIMPSE OF what the new post-apartheid South Africa is likely to look like was provided by Nelson Mandela during his visit to Britain last week.

Mandela told the bosses' organisation the CBI that no foreign investor in South Africa need fear expropriation from an ANC/National Party coalition government.

So there will be no changes to the capitalist system that has brought terrible racism to South Africa.

A Mandela/De Klerk administration is likely to do very little that will significantly change the lives of the

black majority for the better. Any serious reform would challenge the power of the white capitalist class who run the countries' gold mines and industry.

For instance, even the modest proposal to abolish social discrimination in the payment of welfare benefits and pensions would involve doubling the present level of state expenditure and hence of taxation. Those who gamble on the Johannesburg stock exchange are not going to like that.

But no need to worry. Mandela has already said that there should be no significant increase in public expenditure.

Making our paper more effective

WITH THIS issue we've given Socialist Organiser a new look — snappier, tidier, and, we hope, more readable.

Our paper has important jobs in the months ahead. We will argue the case for a united campaign against racism and fascism, based in the labour movement.

We will follow up the "Keep the Link" campaign which we initiated in the Labour Party and trade unions by campaigning to

make Labour fight against racism and against the Tories.

And, as ever, we will expose the lies and hypocrisy of the Tories and their press.

We in the editorial office can do only a small part of the job. The effectiveness of Socialist Organiser depends also on our readers and supporters.

It depends on our supporters pushing the paper, making it a tool and not just a product — and it

depends on our readers supporting us financially.

We need £2000 by the end of November in order to get our budget straight. Thanks this week to: South-East London AWL, £50; South-West London AWL, £25; Leeds AWL, £15; Sheffield AWL, £117.50; and a Manchester reader, £1000.

Send your donations to: Socialist Organiser, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. Cheques payable to "WL Publications".

Dehumanised Tory brutes!



Major wraps himself in the flag of middle-class vindictiveness

THE MAN WHO wrote that "power tends to corrupt and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely" got it only partly right. Power also tends to rot the brain!

Prolonged power tends to make those who wield it stupid, insensitive and murderous.

The effect of a decade and a half of concentrated power, power so free of serious opposition that in practice it has, between elections, been almost absolute power was on display at the Tory Party's recent Blackpool conference. It is a conference to remember.

Of course, the Tory Party has always, within living memory, had its rank and file who howl at conferences against the poor, against "immigrants", against sexual freedom, against trade unions and against the welfare state. They bay for the rope, the birch, longer prison sentences, more "discipline" in schools, and so on and so on. They have been held in check — most of them, most of the time. Not at Blackpool!

The conference was like a prolonged drunken, howling orgy of Tory backwoodsmen and women exulting in a cosmic debauch of triumphalism, vindictiveness and sheer nastiness.

They howled, these dehumanised brutes, at the prospect of starving young single mothers into celibacy — which would mean starving their small children as well.

They howled with vindictiveness and sadism at the promise that extra prisons are to be built, and even more people sent to them.

But Britain already has the highest per capita prison population in western Europe. Criminologists tell us that this 'solution' will ultimately make the problem worse. They don't want to know!

They want punishment, retribution and the maximum damage to the convicted.

They applauded, these defenders of Britain's great traditions, when they were told that the laws would be changed to remove the right to remain silent for fear of incriminating yourself.

From the Prime Minister down (or up) the ministers — those who run Britain — led the delegates in this great, week-long, public debauch of stupefied, power-drunk, brutal, backwoods Toryism.

Not so long ago public display of the sentiments, feelings, opinions, attitudes, gibbering fears and rancid, bare-faced hatreds paraded before

the TV cameras at Blackpool would have been unthinkable.

Shame and self-interest would have kept it in check. The leaders would have distanced themselves from the crazies. Not so now. They have come into their own.

They don't care about the capitalist chaos whose spirit they embody, or about the tragic waste of human

"The most naked and brutal class government this century has never had a serious opposition."

life all around them.

They feel better for knowing that the poor are being ground down. They plainly see nothing wrong in starving young women with babies — no more than their ancestors saw anything wrong in imprisoning, starving and beating such young women in the Victorian workhouses.

They do not remember — even with

the great urban jungles of America to remind them of it — the old warning against shitting in your own nest. They think their own nests are secure.

But you can't understand these despicable Tories in their 15th year of unbroken rule unless you look at Labour at its own conference the week before.

The reason why these Tory brutes at Blackpool can rule with such confidence, and display themselves in all their backwardness and soul-sickness, and with such crass class self-indulgence and exhibitionism, is that they lack a serious opposition.

They — the party behind the most naked and brutal class government this century — have never had a serious opposition! They think they have nothing to fear.

Official Labour is, under the right wing, more a party of mimics and understudies than a party of serious opposition to the creatures we saw at Blackpool.

Not only does it fail to fight them, official Labour flatters and reassures them by imitating their policies (on law and order, for example).

If the Tories show that power tends not only to corrupt but also to rot your brain, Labour shows that lack of power, combined with the lust for

power on any terms, makes you feeble, timid, unprincipled and flaccid. That's why the Tories hold them mesmerised. Faced with a serious Labour opposition the Tories would not have been able to survive in power this long. If Labour were even a *serious reformist* party, then the Tories would not be able to go on as they are!

The Tory conference and what it displayed is a crying indictment of the Labour Party.

Yet the picture is not entirely bleak. Despite the victories of the right at Labour's conference, the left of the Labour Party made a powerful showing. Politically limited, it was nonetheless a marker for the future, the basis on which a renewal of the rank and file movement in the Labour Party may be built.

If you want to know why you should join the Labour Party and help in the fight against the right wing leaders who cripple the Party — think of this year's Tory Party "Backwoods Spectacular" at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool!

The Labour Party is still the party of the trade unions. Come into the Labour Party. Help the left to fight the right-wing accomplices and understudies of the Tories!

Fight the Tories!

"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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Block vote barons against the block vote

IN ORDER TO GET their way on "One Member, One Vote" at the Labour Party conference, the "modernisers" used every underhand tactic short of stuffing ballot boxes.

The ground had already been prepared even before conference convened in Brighton. Last year's conference resolution, in favour of strengthening Labour-union links, had been completely ignored. A rigged questionnaire had been circulated round CLPs. And the anti-union media had been used to galvanise support for OMOV.

Two trade union bureaucrats had also already made clear their intention of casting their votes in defiance of policy adopted by their union conference. USDAW General Secretary Garfield Davies voted for OMOV, whilst UCW General Secretary Alan Johnson voted for the levy-plus proposal.

At the conference itself a third union delegation, MSF, narrowly voted in favour of ignoring their union's policy of opposing OMOV. MSF General Secretary Roger Lyons sought to justify his union's abstention in the crucial vote by pointing to the fact that the proposal for OMOV was coupled with proposals for increasing the number of women Labour MPs.

In fact, the MSF delegation could have voted against OMOV (in line with union policy) and for resolution 417, on women-only shortlists (in line with union policy). Clearly, Lyons was merely clutching at straws to "justify" breaking union policy.

Other union delegations stuck to union policy despite frantic efforts by the "modernisers" to get them to break their mandates. The NCU delegation, for example met three times to discuss the vote on OMOV.

In total, 17% of the votes cast by the unions in the vote on OMOV were cast in defiance of policies democratically agreed upon by union conferences — without a whimper of protest from the "modernisers" and their friends in the media.

Heavy pressure was also applied to CLP delegates to persuade them to back OMOV. Like the muggers so despised by Tony Blair, MPs pounced upon CLP delegates from their area at the close of conference sessions and sought to rob them of anti-OMOV mandates.

George Hoon, MP for Ashfield, suggested to local CLP delegates with anti-OMOV mandates that they go to the toilet when the vote was called. Glenda Jackson, MP for Hampstead and Highgate, made a dramatic entry, stage right, into a compositing session to demand that her CLPs ignore CLP policy.

In order to sell their attack on Labour-union links to Labour Party members, the supporters of OMOV had to couch their language in terms of support for the very links they were out to destroy.

In their speeches in the OMOV debate, John Smith, Garfield Davies and — however incoherently — John Prescott all stressed the need to maintain and strengthen Labour-union links. And then, illogically, tagged on an appeal at the end to support OMOV.

Smith himself even went so far as to try to transform the vote on OMOV into a vote of confidence in his leadership, announcing his threat to resign in time for the Sunday morning papers — the day upon which union delegations met to decide how they would vote at the conference.

In the voting on constitutional reform the TGWU resolution in favour of maintaining collective trade union input into parliamentary reselection was narrowly passed, whilst the OMOV rule change proposed by the NEC was passed by only a slightly larger majority (47.509% against 44.388%).

Even now the "modernisers" were not done with fiddling. Despite the passing of the TGWU resolution, and despite the fact that the OMOV rule change had not gained 50% of the vote, the "moderniser"-controlled NEC declared that the rule change had precedence and should be complemented.

But in any democratic organisation, changes to the constitution normally require 2/3 majority.

And just to provide a fitting conclusion to events, the Labour Party's Chief Press Officer announced the results of the package of votes on constitutional reform to the media before the conference itself had been informed of the results.

OMOV was not won — insofar as it was won at all — on the basis of democratic debate and voting. It was foisted onto the Labour Party by ignoring union conference mandates, browbeating CLP delegates and with speeches laced with hypocrisy.

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

INTERNATIONAL

Russia: socialist unionists in da

By Martin Thomas

BORIS Yeltsin's regime in Russia has jailed socialist leader Boris Kagarlitsky — who was also jailed under Brezhnev — sacked the elected Moscow City Council, on which Kagarlitsky sat, and sacked all other local councils, too.

Opposition papers and parties have been banned. According to Kagarlitsky, the Party of Labour to which he belongs has escaped banning only because the government had refused to register it as a legal party and so had granted it no legal rights to take away.

Kagarlitsky was quickly released — after being beaten up — but many other opponents of Yeltsin remain in jail. Trade union groups which backed the Russian parliament in its showdown with Yeltsin, such as the Moscow Federation of Trade Unions, are under grave threat.

Establishment politicians claim that Yeltsin had to act as he did to block a "communist-fascist" coup. If that were Yeltsin's real aim, he would act differently. He would defend and promote the democratic rights of trade unions and political parties: a dense and lively network of grass-roots working-class organisation is the strongest obstacle to fascism or to Stalinism. He would have dissolved parliament long ago, but with speedy new elections under



Only a ruthless authoritarian state can hold Russia together

democratic conditions, without control by himself over the candidates and the media.

In truth, what Yeltsin is working towards, whether consciously or by blind tac-

tical shuffling, is dictatorship. Only a ruthless authoritarian state can hold Russia together through the social chaos caused by Yeltsin's drive to convert Russia to free-market economics and

open it up for Western investment and trade. Each new crisis pushes Russia a bit nearer military dictatorship.

The parliamentary leaders, Khasbulatov and

How Boris Kagarlitsky was jailed

Russian socialist Boris Kagarlitsky told Renfrey Clarke about his arrest

"AVEHICLE IN which we'd come, and started discussing what to do next. Then another vehicle drove up, and out of it jumped a group of men in civilian clothes with bullet-proof vests and automatic rifles. With them was a militia colonel in uniform. They immediately began beating us. Then they drove us to a nearby militia station.

"When they saw from our documents that Kondratov and I were deputies to the City Council, there were more blows. When they

began questioning me in the militia station, one of them ran constantly at me from various parts of the room and hit me in the head with all his strength.

"In the police station the last driver, who'd been arrested with us, was subjected to a ferocious beating and forced to make a statement that he'd hijacked this vehicle at our instigation. We were supposed to have come up to him with three armed men, showed him our City Council deputies' cards, and forced him to steal the vehicle."

After the driver had been finished with, Kagarlitsky recalled, the other detainees were "worked over with professional thoroughness.

"They were trying to make us confirm these charges, to incriminate ourselves. They bashed my head against a metal grating and against the wall, and several times hit me with a steel rifle-butt. Vladimir Kondratov was beaten much more severely."

A turning-point came on October 4 when a criminal prisoner who had also been in the militia cells, and who had been revolted by the beatings, was released. The man telephoned Kagarlitsky's wife, giving distraught relatives their first clue to the detainees' fate. Soon afterwards, Kagarlitsky recalled, "a squall of telephone calls" from as far off as Japan began descending on the militia station. A

team from the television program *The Individual and the Law* arrived and demanded to conduct an interview; with two automatic rifles trained on him, Kagarlitsky spoke with caution.

Once the television crew had left, the beatings resumed. A former militia captain among the prisoners suffered a broken arm, internal injuries, and concussion. The injuries of other prisoners included concussion, suspected broken ribs, and kidney and lung damage.

Late in the evening of October 4, most of the detainees were released. One of them, however, still had not contacted relatives several days later.

sts and trade

nger

Rutskoi, wanted a slower shift to free-market economics and higher barriers round the Russian economy to insulate it from the world market. They reflected the interests of a section of the old ruling bureaucracy tied up with large-scale heavy industry.

Boris Kagarlitsky and some other Russian socialists had been backing Khasbulatov and Rutskoi in their clashes with Yeltsin on the argument that workers have common interests with "the technocrats" to preserve state industry, welfare, and "Keynesian" methods against the free-market profiteers.

But the "technocrats" are the people who exploited the Russian workers ruthlessly, under an all-stifling state, for over fifty years! Yeltsin does not represent

democracy, but neither did the parliamentary leaders. The parliament was elected in a different political epoch, and in polls heavily controlled by the now-defunct Communist Party. The scant popular support for it shows that it had little remaining democratic vitality.

If Khasbulatov and

Rutskoi had won out in their clash with Yeltsin, the drive towards dictatorship would not have been halted.

Indeed, with Khasbulatov and Rutskoi pushed one way by the pressures of having to deal with the West and a struggle to regularise Russia's fast-growing wild-cat capitalism, and Yeltsin pushed the other by the impossibility of dismantling a vast structure of state enterprise double-quick, the final outcome of victory for Khasbulatov and Rutskoi might be hard to tell apart from triumphant Yeltsinism.

Labour movements in the West have been unable to give the workers' movements in Russia and Eastern Europe solid encouragement about the viability of a democratic collectivist alternative to both Stalinism and market capi-

talism. The Moscow Federation of Trade Unions ended up backing Khasbulatov and Rutskoi; the Independent Miners' Union, backing Yeltsin.

As far as I know, no workers' group in Russia felt confident enough to come out in opposition both to Yeltsin and to Rutskoi, in the name of its own alternative pro-

SOCIALIST DOGGEREL

Boris Nicolaievich

A dialogue

- A Ah, Yeltsin is a democrat,
An honest man, no fool.
He beat the tyrants, Yeltsin did!
- B But where did he go to school?
- A Yes, Yeltsin is a democrat,
In mouthings and in mines!
Democracy's his middle name...
But these are troubled times!
- A Yes, Yeltsin is a democrat:
Synonym for his fame,
Democracy to live at all
Must sign with Yeltsin's name.
- B Yes, Yeltsin is a democrat
— As Mussolini was!
- A Free press, and speech and all of that
Are luxuries because
- A Our Yeltsin is a democrat,
The people's chosen tool,
An honest man that they can trust!
- B And where did he go to school?
- A Democracy's what Yeltsin does
However he may rule!
- B Democracy? Dictatorship?
Where did he go to school?

By Anthony

gramme.

It is vital for socialists in the West to unite to support the democratic rights of the new labour organisations and parties in Russia, whatever our views of their political choices. They need time to explore new political choices.

As long as the new work-

ers' organisations remain intact, with the possibility of growing, learning, and debating, the way is barred to dictatorship and unrestrained exploitation in Russia. If those workers' organisations are crushed, the people of Russia face a future like that of Chile or Brazil under the generals.

"As long as the new workers' organisations remain intact, the way is barred to dictatorship in Russia."

Toned-down return by Bhutto

WORLD OUTLOOK

BENAZIR BHUTTO'S Pakistan People's Party is set to form a government, and has already taken office

in Pakistan's biggest province, Punjab.

Previous PPP regimes have ended in a presidential coup (1988-90) and a military coup (1971-77) — and they

got into power only through crises (death of dictator General Zia in a plane crash, 1988; defeat in the war by which East Pakistan won independence as Bangladesh,

1971).

The PPP was never more than a populist party of reform but even that alarmed the country's ruling elite of army generals, top civil servants, landlords and industrialists.

The current PPP victory, however, looks less dramatic. Bhutto has toned down the PPP's populism, and is likely to continue the outgoing Muslim League government's policy of opening up Pakistan to the capitalist world market.

The losers either way are Pakistan's workers and peasants; but the collapse of the PPP's radical rhetoric should speed the day when Pakistani workers decide that they need to create their own party.

Haiti's military keep power

NO OIL, UNLIKE Kuwait. No vote-catching possibilities for an upcoming presidential election, unlike Somalia.

So, instead of blasting Haiti with high-tech weapons, US troops sailing to the island under the UN flag on 11 October politely sailed away again when faced with armed opposition.

The UN contingent was supposed to prepare the way for Haiti's elected president Jean-Baptiste Aristide to return to Haiti on 30 October.

The old unelected state machine of the dictator "Papa Doc" Duvalier still rules Haiti, ter-

rorising the people and murdering Aristide's leading colleagues. Aristide was forced to flee by a military coup on 29 September 1991, after nine months in office.

Now the ruling mafia are proclaiming themselves anti-imperialists, saying that they are standing up for the rights of Haiti and of black people against US interference.

The mass of the people continue to suffer the worst poverty in the western hemisphere, and by now many even of Haiti's wealthy classes want a clean-up. Whether the US will provide the firepower for this looks very doubtful.

What we say

The hypocrisy of the presses' witch hunt!

THIS PRESS witch-hunt against participation in last Saturday's demonstration against the BNP Headquarters is a dangerous new departure.

The Sun is offering £1,000 reward for every demonstrator identified from press photographs. When did the Sun offer a reward for the capture of a racist thug or a racist murderer?

The fighting last Saturday has provoked a strong backlash against the anti-fascists. Of course, it is media fostered, but it is not entirely media created.

The tabloids seized on the fighting to direct attention away from racism and the looming threat of large-scale fascist movements. What else would you expect them to do?

This is all the more regrettable because of the ANL and YRE's obsession with the BNP Headquarters never made much sense anyway.

The racist and the fascists must be confronted and stopped. Their intended victims must be defended.

It remains true, however, that serious anti-racism now demands of anti-racists that they turn to the labour movement and fight against working class racism and thus help the left turn the labour movement into a force to defeat racism and fascism and the diseased capitalist social system out of which racism and fascism grow. No force exists other than the organised labour movement capable of wiping out racism and fascism.

Class interests come first

THE unanimous support by Western governments for Yeltsin's coup against the Russian parliament and his dictatorial measures shows how cynical and shallow is those governments' official religion of parliamentary democracy. They are very pious, very devoted to the holiness of parliamentary democracy, whenever workers' movements challenge the limits of that democracy. But when important economic interests are at stake — as they evidently think they are in their support for Yeltsin's drive to open up Russia to the capitalist world market — parliamentary procedures become a disposable luxury.

The Establishment's attitude here is a clear warning to us about how they would respond should a revived Labour Party in Britain try to use a parliamentary majority for radical change. Class interests come first. Parliamentary procedures decide only when no vital class interests are at stake. If the Establishment see parliament threatening their vital interests, then they will sabotage it, obstruct it, or disband it — and never mind about constitution and law. No parliamentary majorities we gain can be sufficient in themselves, without the labour movement also being prepared to deal with direct and violent resistance by the Establishment.

The scandal of the Birmingham Six

THE policemen charged with framing up the Birmingham Six, and thus condemning them to 16 years' wrongful imprisonment, have been let off scot free.

This raises some important questions. The Six were framed. These were the policemen who handled their cases. So who framed them? No-one? No-one will now be called to account for it, anyway.

This is a scandalous and outrageous business. The law establishment is now closing ranks. They want to put an end to the probing and exposing of police wrong-doing without which the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four would never have been rescued.

They want to repair the damage which such cases have done to the reputation of Britain's legal system. They want to put the wraps back on.

Three years ago the candid ex-judge Lord Denning expressed the outlook of the legal establishment and explained in advanced what is going on now. It would be better, he said, to leave innocent people to rot in jail than to undermine the credibility of the legal system by releasing them and publicly admitting miscarriages of justice.

Don't they care how many innocent people are now in jail? Don't they care how corrupt the police and their methods are? Their guiding principle now is: let justice perish so long as the legal establishment can remain intact and unquestioned.

Daily stir

WHAT'S THIS? Well-known, right-wing, racist rag, the *Daily Star*, is on an anti-racist crusade against Bernie Grant for his "voluntary repatriation" remarks.

"His call to repatriate immigrants is a nasty piece of racism calculated to stir up more hate. Most of the immigrants who arrived here years ago are valuable committed citizens".

Surely this can't be the *Daily Star*? Had the hack writer of the article missed out on his first tumbler of Scotch and vitriol for that day? Hang on, there's more: "The malcontents — rapists, pimps, drug dealers and those with a massive chip on their shoulder about their roots — were born here. And we're stuck with them, Bernie". That's more like the *Daily Star* (slogan: "the newspaper that cares").

REACH for your sick bag. According to a poll published in the *Financial Times*, Tony Blair is favourite to be PM in the year 2000. An organisation called "Opinion Leader Research" questioned 105 "opinion-formers" — industrialists, bankers and business executives. Blair, it seems, was their favourite among the younger generation of politicians.

It would be wrong to pour scorn on such well-researched findings, but it needs to be kept in mind that Opinion Leader Research is run by Deborah Mattinson, formerly of Labour's Shadow Communications Agency, the group of publicity experts who thought they could win Labour the 1992 election.

IT SEEMS that Peru's imprisoned *Sendero Luminoso* ["Shining Path"] leader Abimael Guzman, aka Chairman Gonzo, has seen a new light since his capture last year. According to the *Guardian*, Gonzo, (whose hobbies include killing left-wingers he doesn't agree with and randomly bombing the urban centres of Peru), has appeared on television backing "peace talks" with Peru's authoritarian president Fujimori (whose hobbies include having unarmed political prisoners massacred and randomly killing the rural population of Peru).

In return, it seems Gonzo has been given certain privileges: smart, casual clothes rather than the *de rigueur* prison dungarees;

GRAFFITI

VIVELA
REBOLUCION

By Cyclops

permission to watch videos; reading material; conjugal visits. Gonzo has dyed his grey hair black and is generally looking a picture of health. The world's second favourite murderous Maoist (still trailing Pol Pot on that one) must have been tortured or brainwashed terribly to betray his cause?

Not according to the International Red Cross, who have been treating him for obesity and psoriasis.

One *Sendero* expert explains his turn thus: the former second-rate philosophy lecturer "isn't a fighter... he's a bureaucrat administering a killing machine that he's created". Maybe Gonzo fancies a quiet life.

FORGET THE pools. If you want a million for no effort at all, own a pile of company shares.

78 lucky shareholders received cheques for more than £500,000 from share dividends from single companies last year.

Top pay-out was to Conrad Black of Belgravia (who owns the *Telegraph*). He collected £19,209,148. Third was Andrew Lloyd Webber of... er... Belgravia, pocketing £15,070,125 from his Really Useful Company. The company already pays him a salary of £1.1 million. The Duke of Westminster does not appear in the list since his profits come from property. However, he does own Belgravia.

IT IS A great tragedy that Gregory Lauder-Frost, well-known Nazi and ex-vice chair of Western Goals (who organise banquets for Le Pen), has wound up in prison for accidentally walking off with £111,000 of Riverside Health Authority's money. A tragedy, that is, for the inmates of Ford Open Prison where he has ended up.

It seems that he managed to con the prison authorities into letting him run history classes for the other inmates. They have now been cancelled following complaints that he was showing 1930s German Nazi propaganda films. Honest criminals one, Nazis nil.

How I helped the dream come true

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

in the months to come.

Charlie and the "intellectual" (one Robin Harris, it turned out) were, it was obvious, broken men. "Her stuff's unpublishable. It would split the party, ruin Major and probably get her sued for defamation into the bargain! But she won't listen. She won't accept any of our re-writes", they blubbed pathetically. A quick glance through the manuscript and a brief listen to the cassettes was sufficient to convince me of where the two scribes had gone wrong. They had attempted to expunge all traces of Margaret's legendary sense of humour. Rib-tickling descriptions of colleagues and contemporaries had been completely lost. Of course, with my legal training I realised that some of the more "colourful" language might have to be "toned down" a bit. Thus Nigel Lawson could not be called "a pompous fat fool" as Margaret would have wished: instead we settled upon "He has many qualities I admire but a rudimentary grasp of economics is, unfortunately, not amongst them." Similarly,

Geoffrey Howe could not be described as a "treacherous little shit", but I think most readers will get the message from "this quietly-spoken but deeply ambitious man eventually proved less loyal than I had hoped." The foreigners proved tricky as well. More than once I had to remind Margaret of the draconian race relations laws that, by some oversight, she had never got around to rescinding. I persuaded her that calling Helmut Kohl a "sausage-eating Kraut bent, like all his race, on world domination" might not be a good idea: "Thoroughly provincial in his manners, but most certainly not in his political and economic ambitions" puts the point across well enough, I think.

Finally, our efforts were crowned with success and the completed manuscript delivered to Mr Murdoch's people more or less on time. The agreed 3½ million was paid into a Cayman Island account, there to garner a healthy rate of interest that will ensure the continued success of the Thatcher

Foundation. Naturally, I refused to even raise the sordid matter of payment for my own efforts — though I gather Charlie and the "intellectual" core were given a 'cut' out of pure charity.

One thing still puzzles me, however. That smarmy oik Andrew Neil — the character who edits Mr Murdoch's *Sunday Times* — paid £750,000 for exclusive rights to the book. He assured us that they wouldn't start publishing until after the Party conference, so as not to spoil Margaret's planned "kiss and make up" routine with Major. To ensure that no one else got their hands on the book all the printing was to be done under top security, supervised personally by Sir Norman Fowler and his peerless Group Four people. Yet somehow that nasty little leftie rag the *Daily Mirror* got hold of a copy and published all the best bits in the very week of the conference — thus ruining the best laid plans of poor Mr Major and his minders. Neil was furious and Central Office not exactly best pleased.

I ventured to ask Margaret how this could possibly have happened. "Traitors are everywhere", she replied, adding with an enigmatic smile: "it must have been someone with a long history of stabbing colleagues in the back and leaking to the press." I wonder who she could possibly have in mind?

No still means no



WOMEN'S EYE

By Jean Lane

A MALE graduate from King's College, London, is on trial for rape. He had a long-term friendship with a woman student which, according to newspaper reports, was a close personal and physical relationship but not sexual. She consented to kissing and intimate physical touching but she said "no" to sexual intercourse.

After a Christmas party they went back to her room drunk. She says that she fell into a drunken stupor and woke to find him on top of her having penetrative sex. He says that she is lying; that she was conscious, knew what he was doing and had initiated it, that he had repeatedly asked if she was sure because she had never wanted to go so far before.

Short of someone walking in at the crucial moment and being an independent witness, as happened recently in the case of the lawyer found guilty of raping an unconscious woman, we only have his and her words to go on. Legal history has almost always given his words more weight. His word is more likely to be believed by most of our judges. The fact that she went to drunken parties at all puts her in the category of "brazen hussy". Going in for heavy petting, in the eyes of the judicial system which allows judges to slap

men on the wrist for killing their wives who are guilty of 'nagging', puts women beyond the pale and makes them 'fair game'.

Whatever the rights or wrongs of this case it has fuelled a debate in the media about the language, especially the body language, of sex. Are signals being misread leading to misunderstanding and consequent misplaced rape allegations? Has feminism, as one national paper put it, "clouded the issue", making women feel that it is all right to be liberated about physical contact in the bar and still say "no" to penetration at the last minute in the bedroom? Does "no" really mean "no"?

One male student at the University of London, a Mr

Thomas Harding, told one of the papers that, as far as he was concerned, "no" did not always mean "no" but was an integral part of seduction. "I have slept with women who said that they didn't want sex but I have persuaded them". The question begging to be asked here is Why? If they said they didn't want sex why didn't he just take them at their word and look elsewhere unless it is to get what he wanted? This is not misreading body language. This is refusing to hear the actual spoken word. This is an ignorant man. His

friend, Matt Hensen, is another. "No", according to him, is part of the female's "complicated sexual psychology". Very convenient, Matt.

Why won't they accept the word "no"? Why do they feel the need to "persuade" at all? Are their feelings uncontrollable? Of course not. These are men who, when they hear the word "no", think "I'll make her change her mind". For what? This is not intercourse. That word suggests something between people. Sex, to Thomas and Matt, seemingly, is something they do to people or get from them.

Feminism has not clouded the issue. The opening up of women's thoughts and desires to public scrutiny has allowed women to feel more confident

about saying "no" for whatever reason and at whatever point along the way between bar and bed that she chooses, and rightly so. Since long before feminism was a concept women have changed their mind at the last minute.

It's just that now they are braver about saying it aloud instead of going along with unwanted sex for fear of the consequences of saying "no". Even if it was not a case of her changing her mind, but a cold and calculated decision

to wind a man up, "no" does mean "no".

I ask any man reading this article what would he do if he was lying naked next to a naked woman who wrapped her arms and legs around him in a hot and steamy embrace, kissed him on the mouth, smiled and said "I don't want to"? Go ahead anyway with the convenient assumption that she can't really mean it? Go ahead anyway because if she brought him this far she deserves what she gets? Or turn away and bite his lip or masturbate? The first two are rape. The third is the only way to behave if you consider the person you are in bed with to be a human being with rights, freedoms and feelings equal to and as important as your own.

Contrary to popular myth, men can stop. They do not have to go all the way once they have an erection for fear of their willies dropping off. They do have control. Whether they exercise it or not is where the question of rape comes in.

Contrary to another, somewhat less popular, myth, not all men are rapists. I do not believe that, e.g. in the King's College case, it is automatic that the woman should be believed over the man. The fact that, till now, the law has almost wholly seen it the other way round, i.e. that women have almost automatically been disbelieved and treated with prejudice, shows the law to be wrong. You do not correct the situation by reversing the prejudice. We want equality in the law, and we want it by levelling up to the best standards, not levelling down to the worst.

"Sex, for some men, is something they do to people or get from them. This is not intercourse."

The racists must be stopped!

By Rosie

KENNETH HARRIS, a black man from Ilford, East London, suffered horrific injuries when he was attacked by three white racists early on the morning of Monday 18 October.

Kenneth was with his white girlfriend, Lynn Woodward, as they stopped to buy milk at a BP petrol station. The racist thugs jostled Lynn and then turned on Kenneth. He was stabbed with a screwdriver and then run over with his own car.

Kenneth Harris is now in hospital. His injuries included a fractured skull and a punctured lung.

The police arrested two men at the scene. They have not released the names of those arrested.

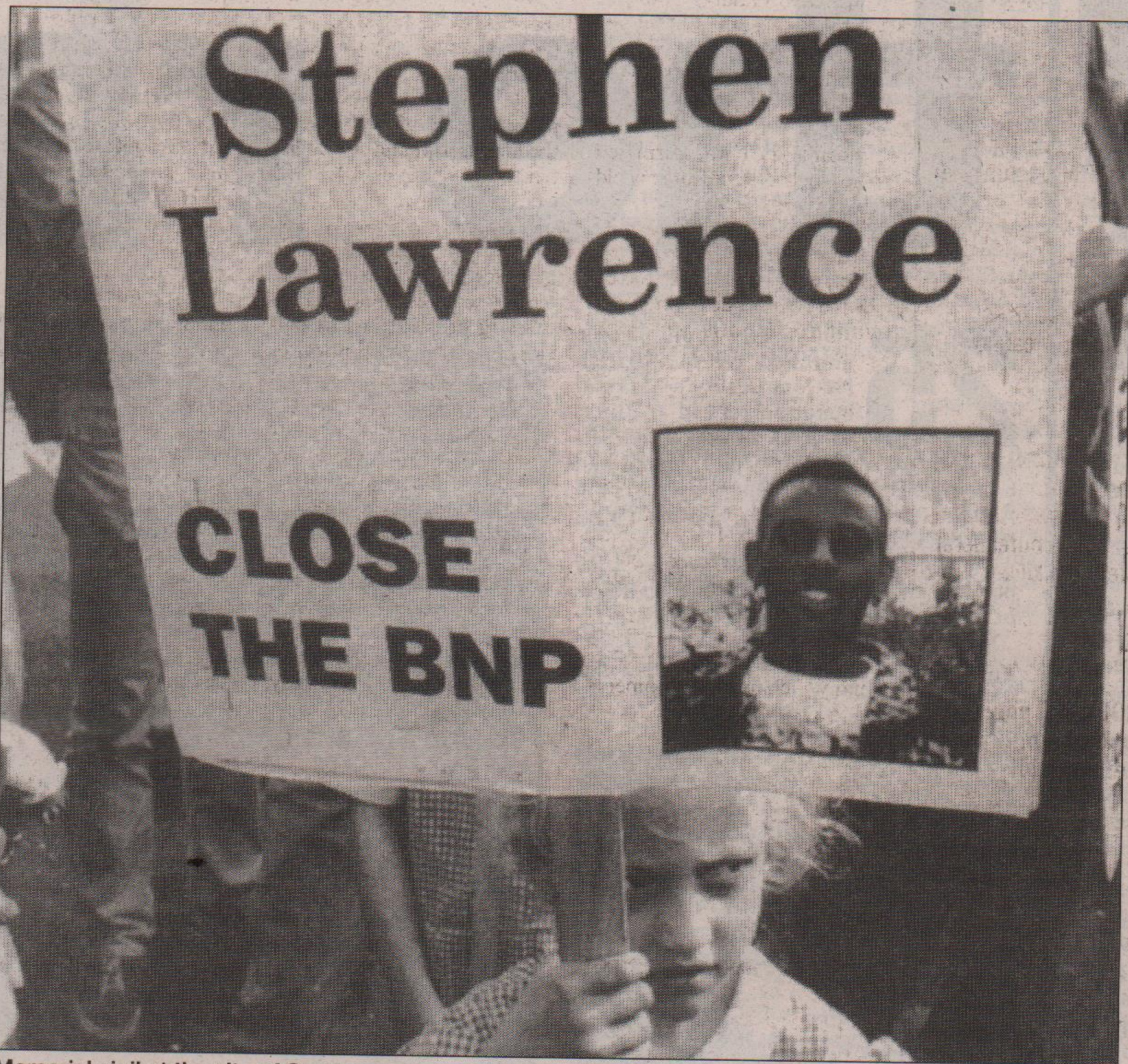
This attack is further evidence of the increasing levels of violent, racist attacks which black people face.

The number of reported racist attacks during 1992 in London was 3,227 — up 45% over the past five years.

Obviously these figures vastly underestimate the actual extent of racist violence. One reason is that black people believe that reporting incidents to the police is a waste of time. Another is that black people fear the police.

The police are drenched in racism — they are responsible for many racist beatings.

So when you hear the police crowing about the arrests they made on Monday, put it in context: the police do not tackle racism, they are part of the problem.



Memorial vigil at the site of Stephen Lawrence's murder in Eltham

Bent coppers: bring 'em to book!

THE COPPERS accused of framing the Birmingham Six have got away scot-free without even a trial. The judge in their case, Justice Garland, said that media coverage of the case made a fair trial impossible. This shows the vile hypocrisy of the British courts.

The Birmingham Six were arrested during a huge anti-Irish media campaign following the Birmingham pub bombings in 1975. The six were beaten and terrorised by the police into admitting to the bombings because the police desperately wanted some "Irish monsters" to serve up to the media.

They stole 16 years of life from the Birmingham Six, who were innocent. To convict them, 18 coppers gave false evidence!

How many more police were involved we will never know but every single

one of them now goes free!

There is much media howling for vengeance against criminals. How do they respond to this? With muted calls to bring the police to justice, and with complicit silence.

After the pub bombings, and after the Tottenham riot, the press presumed the guilt of those on trial. Now the Birmingham Six and Tottenham Three have been cleared. But those who beat them and terrorised them and stole years off their lives won't even face a trial.

The tragedy is that for every case like the Birmingham Six where the police are exposed, there are thousands which remain hidden.

The standard police method is thuggery, lies and frame-ups. That is why the courts do not act against the police even when their guilt is spectacular-

ly clear for all to see.

In the week that Justice Garland let these police thugs go free, Home Secretary Michael Howard told the slaving delegates at Tory conference that the Tories will end the right to silence for people under arrest.

This will make it easier for the police to force false statements out of prisoners. As they did with the Birmingham Six and the Tottenham Three.

The message from the judges and the Tories is clear: they don't want justice, they don't care if the innocent are convicted!

It is time Labour stood up against the Tory law and order brigade! Labour should expose the police for the boss-class thugs they are — specialists in harassing and framing working-class youth. Tony Blair's disgusting and pathetic attempts to climb

on the Tories' law and order bandwagon must be opposed by the labour movement.

We must take a stand for justice and against police abuse!

Youth for Justice

YOUTH FOR JUSTICE is a campaign started by Youth Fightback, the youth organisation of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

- Youth for Justice demands:
- The right to live free from police harassment.
 - An end to prosecutions based solely on confessions.
 - An independent and elected police complaints body. (Complaints against the police are currently dealt with by a powerless complaints authority who rely on... the police).
 - 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 Terrorism Act.
 - Disband the Special Branch and Special Immigration Police. (The Special Branch are the British political police).

Contact us for a speaker or for more information about our campaign: Youth Fightback, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Banned for resisting harassment

THE STUDENT union Executive at Manchester Metropolitan University has upheld a decision banning Tracy McGuire from the union.

Last term, Simon McKeowan, then a student union Executive member, abused, harassed and pushed Tracy in the union bar until she hit back at him.

The next day the union Executive banned Tracy from the union for life, and ignored her allegations

against McKeowan. Now the Executive has thrown out her appeal.

Tracy has been subjected to yet more intimidation, being filmed by BBC2 TV cameras making a docudrama in which McKeowan will figure as a "typical student".

Women at the college are organising for an emergency Union General Meeting to get the ban lifted.

Youth Fightback is...

... 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.



North West anti-racists organise

SINCE THE ELECTION of a BNP candidate in Tower Hamlets, the fascists are a lot more active in the North West and in Greater Manchester, with new branches of the BNP cropping up.

In Oldham and Rochdale racist gangs have attacked groups of Asian youth; there was another racist stabbing last weekend in the city centre.

BNP graffiti and flyposting are appearing everywhere, including Hulme and Moss Side and inside the student union buildings at UMIST and Metropolitan University.

Anti-fascists haven't been idle. We sent 30 coaches to the Unity demo and are organising meetings.

Glyn Ford MEP organised a public meeting two weeks ago in Hyde. Over 300 local people heard Ray Hill from Searchlight.

BBC North West covered the meeting, but gave 40 seconds coverage to us and 3½ minutes to the BNP Regional Organiser! After the broadcast, 250 people phoned the BBC asking how to join the BNP: this goes to show how important No Platforming of fascists is.

An Anti-Fascist Unity committee has been set up which meets every Monday in Longsight to plan action. Trade unions and Labour Party activists are involved, and we have got trade unions to organise their own meetings. UNISON plans a meeting on 7 November in the Town Hall.

One of the reasons why the BNP won in Tower Hamlets is they seemed to be able to answer and explain problems that most of us face: unemployment, bad housing and poverty. Their "answers" were a tissue of racist scapegoating and right-wing gibberish, but people believed them.

If we are to win against the fascists we must put forward the socialist answers and not let the BNP get away with blaming everything on black people.

The tragedy of Bernie Grant



RACE AND CLASS

By Mark Osborn

THE CONTRAST between Keith Vaz and Bernie Grant is illuminating. The first time I bumped into Vaz was at the 1984 Labour Party conference. Vaz was in the bar in an expensive suit and was interested in me because I had a delegate's badge and he was looking for votes — he was standing for the National Executive, if I recall. Later that afternoon conference defeated Kinnock on the key question of the day: the miners' strike. Vaz, quite unabashed, made it clear that his election was the main thing.



Anyway, I next saw Vaz the following day on conference floor. He had swapped his natty, fat-cat solicitor's suit for a pair of jeans and a Black Sections T-shirt and was making a fuss at the front — followed by the press.

Vaz is a career politician, not very interested in politics. You may have seen him on TV after the BNP victory in Millwall. Having been asked by the presenter why Labour lost to the BNP he answered "I have no idea".

Bernie Grant became an MP because of the same ferment inside the Party around black representation during the early '80s. He is altogether a more respectable man than Vaz.

Grant is somewhat politically unstable but he has a backbone and has been on the right side, as one of a small group of Labour MPs, on issues like the Gulf War and the witch hunt.

The man has a long history of involvement in the labour movement — of working with whites as part of a common struggle, so how did Bernie Grant come to talk of voluntary repatriation and conditional return? How could it come to this — talk of packing-up and leaving?

I hope you saw Darcus Howe's *Devil's Advocate* show on Channel 4 last week. Howe questioned Bernie Grant with devastating effect.

The first things that struck me were how upset Grant was and how utterly contradictory his statements were. For example: "Black people have no future in Britain... Our future is in Africa and the Caribbean" was quickly followed by "I don't want to go".

I think the explanation is quite simple. Grant is a man who feels defeated by the pressure of racism in Britain. He is watching the rise of the far right across Europe. He has seen the election of a BNP member in Millwall. He knows that the police killed Joy Gardner.

He is under pressure from the Labour right in his own constituency Labour Party.

Grant's programme of asking the government to help black people leave to go "home" is a policy of defeat, despair and pessimism. It expresses his own feeling of defeat, despair and pessimism.

It is also a policy which is utopian. I am reminded of the old Lenny Henry joke — "the National Front want to give me £3,000 to go home? Well I think that's great, because it's only £10 on the train from here to Wolverhampton".

Black people will not leave to "help build up a country in Africa", as Grant wants, because for the big majority home is Britain. For the youth in particular most were born in Britain. They have no choice but to stay and fight racism.

Of course I believe that everyone should be able to live where they want. If people make a personal decision to move to another country, fine, that's their business — the way it affects our political programme is to advocate that no immigration controls should stand in their way, and that immigrants should have real and legal equality wherever they choose to live. But Grant is doing something entirely different. He is giving up on the fight here, accepting racism is impossible to defeat, implicitly abandoning millions of black people to racism they will continue to face after others have gone.

Watching him on *Devil's Advocate* and understanding the reason he talks this way make me feel sympathy for a decent man.

Nevertheless, on the level of politics, hostility to racism, and black and white unity in the struggle against it and for socialism, is all I have to offer him.

Youth and Lab

Unite ag the racis

25,000 mostly young people marched on the British National Party's national headquarters in Welling, south east London, on Saturday 16 October. The 'Unity' march had been organised by the Militant front, Youth Against Racism in Europe, and the SWP's Anti-Nazi League.

The demonstration was met by over 3,000 police, many in riot gear and some on horses or with dogs. Many roads were blocked off.

The police had denied the anti-nazis the right to march past the BNP's building. They had even closed the route which they had earlier said the march must stick to.



The Anti-Racist Alliance demo had many union banners and placards, but few marchers. Photo: Garry Meyer

In such conditions, with tempers high after Dereck Beackon's victory in the Millwall Council election and the recent increase in the number of racist attacks, the scene was set for a confrontation.

The police ensured that the violence happened. They engineered it.

They attacked the marchers to break the demonstration up. Later, in Clam Field at the end of the march, riot police scattered what was left of the demonstration by charging and battering those who strayed too close.

Over 60 protesters were injured and, according to the police, 31 were arrested. Some are held on the serious charges of assault and violent disorder. Police are now poring over a video recordings to identify and charge demonstrators. Those arrested should all be released and the charges dropped! There must be no witch hunt of other demonstrators on the basis of police videos!

At the same time in central London the Anti-Racist Alliance had organised a TUC-backed demonstration to oppose racism. 2,500 demonstrators heard TUC general secretary John Monks and a number of Labour MPs denounce increasing levels of racist attacks.

Monks joined ARA national secretary Marc Wadsworth in calling for the Tories to ban the BNP.

Despite the fact that this event was a tenth the size of the 'Unity' protest, there were a large number of national trade union banners on this march and this is a very significant matter for all those who believe that the key to beating the racists and fascists is to mobilise the labour movement.

Saturday saw a tragic separation of the youth and the labour movement. How did this split occur?

The roots lie in the competition of various sects and cliques for profile and dominance.

After the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence earlier this year, three protests were held on consecutive weekends by various groups looking for new recruits. We saw the disgusting spectacle of these organisations — ARA and the SWP-ANL amongst them — competing for the backing of Stephen Lawrence's family for 'their' project. This is not the way to fight racism and fascism!

Clearly what is needed is one, united, democratic campaign to replace the existing, stupid sect-led and sect-fomented divisions.

And we must challenge some of the politics of the existing organisations. In particular, the single minded concentration on the BNP must be replaced by a more balanced approach: we need to confront the everyday, non-fascist racism of the police, racism in housing and racism in employment as well as the strutting picturesquish exhibitionistic racism of neo-nazis.

But we must rely on our own strength, aiming to destroy the far-right threat by mass mobilisations of workers and youth rather than by calling on the Tory government to ban the BNP. Such bans won't defeat the fascists. Hitler's Nazis organisation was for a while banned in Germany. It grew bigger. Fascists need to be wiped out, the nurturing



Above and right: the police deliberately provoked violence at the Unity demonstration. Photos: Richard Love

mass racism which sustains it dug up by the roots. State bans will not do that. Only a roused, active and militant labour movement can.

And we should remember that a ban against the BNP could well be a precedent for bans against the left as well as allowing the fascists to rally support on the basis of defence of democratic rights.

Above all the left must not allow a division to grow up where the youth give out leaflets and oppose the fascists on the streets while needlessly separating themselves off from — and so having no effect on — the labour movement. Socialists must educate the youth to look to the workers' movement and ask the unions and Labour Parties to turn to the youth.

90 "How to Beat the Racists" pamphlets were sold at the Anti-Racist Alliance march and 300 were sold on the "Unity" demonstration.

Available from the Alliance for Workers' Liberty

HOW TO BEAT THE RACISTS



95p + 28p postage

From: WL Publications, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA

Cheques payable to 'WL Publications'

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Keep the link: All is not lost

By Tom Rigby

JOHN SMITH won an important victory at this year's Labour Party conference with the introduction of "One Member, One Vote" in the selection of parliamentary candidates.

But all is far from lost.

The self-styled "modernisers" — those who are out to destroy Labour-union links and throw back the development of the British labour movement by a full century — have still got an awful long way to go before they can hope to reach their ultimate goal.

Their victory — on a limited range of issues — did not destroy at one fell swoop the character of the Labour Party as a union-based Party. There is still trade union representation at all levels of the Party, from CLPs and DLPs through regional conferences to national conference.

Moreover, to get their way, the "modernisers" had to surrender a number of hostages to fortune which they may come to regret in the months and years immediately ahead.

Supporters of OMOV repeatedly — and dishonestly — claimed that their proposals were geared to maintaining and strengthening Labour-union links. Smith also pledged that this year's conference marked "the end of the programme of constitutional reform."

The "modernisers" also sold their attack on the unions as a means to strengthen the rights of individual Party members in the CLPs.

What happens when the rank-and-file of the Party realise that the reforms pushed through by the modernisers have removed their right to send amendments to Party conference, transferred policy making from the conference to the NEC and the National Policy Forum and undermined reselection by the introduction of a "trigger mechanism"?

And then there is the supposed commitment of the "modernisers" to increasing women's representation.

What happens when women members of the Party discover the real agenda pushed through by the "modernisers": downgrading Labour Women's Conference to a two-yearly event, and election of the Women's Division of the NEC by OMOV rather than by the Labour Women's Conference?

Finally, there are the policy commitments, albeit only on paper, made by the "modernisers" in an attempt to bribe delegates voting for their constitutional reforms: renationalisation of water and the railways, scrapping anti-union legislation, the right to solidarity action, full employment and a national minimum wage.

What happens when the "modernisers" come back to ditch such commitments in order to reduce the Labour Party to being the palest version of pink Toryism?

It may well prove to be the case that "the modernisers" have stored up trouble for themselves as a result of the tactics they employed

to win on OMOV. It is up to the left to make that possibility a reality.

As the conference bulletin of the "Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network" put it the day after the OMOV vote: "We must not be demoralised. We nearly won yesterday. We can still save Labour from the wreckers."

In the aftermath of the Brighton conference the priorities facing the left are:

- Calling to account the leaders of those unions (USDAW, UCW and MSF) whose conference policy decisions were ignored. The fight for democracy must be stepped up in the unions.

- Strengthening Labour-union links at rank-and-file level, by setting up workplace branches, winning new union branch affiliates to CLPs, and insisting that all Party members are also union members where eligible.

- Using the new cut-price recruitment schemes to conduct recruitment drives amongst trade union members.

- Initiating Labour Party newsletters for circulation round all CLP members. New members recruited by the "modernisers" are likely to be "sleeping members" for use only at selection time and in NEC elections. The left should provide them with the political arguments and draw them into the active life of wards and CLPs.

- Campaigning to win new affiliations to the Labour Party at national level by currently non-affiliated unions.

- Supporting workers in struggle, in both local disputes and national conflicts. This will strengthen Labour-union links, and show up the "modernisers" for the bosses' lackeys they are.

- Reaffirm the policy commitments (scrapping anti-union laws, full employment, etc) made at this year's conference.

- Stepping up the campaigning for a national minimum wage. This should be 2/3 of the male manual average.

- Organising in defence of universal benefits and a major uprating of all benefits. The Commission on Social Justice will produce the final report before next year's conference. The Labour Party must not be bounced into abandoning support for universal benefits.

- Improving political education at all levels of the Labour Party. The low level of political understanding displayed by many CLP delegates allowed them to be emotionally pressurised into supporting OMOV.

- Building up the "Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network" as an organised campaigning-based Broad Left in the Party, including a closer relationship with the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, paving the way for a single bulletin of the left at next year's conference.

- Building the Alliance for Workers' Liberty. With large sections of the left sloshing around in the waters of political and theoretical incoherence, demoralisation and sectarian indifference, the role of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty is more vital than ever before.



Vomit? Move? EMOV? GMB General Secretary John Edmonds learns to read.

The left and the Isra

The Israel-PLO deal has posed a question to all socialist groups: do we want peace between the Palestinians and Israel, and if so on what terms? Some socialists answered yes, some no.

Chris Reynolds reviews the "Trotskyist" press.

"OUR HAPPINESS is mixed with heavy concerns", wrote the Israeli Revolutionary Communist League (Matzpen) in its leaflet on the Israel-PLO agreement which we reprinted in *Socialist Organiser* no.572.

The same attitude to the agreement — a cautious, critical welcome, while asserting the continued need to fight for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and Palestinian self-determination — was voiced by several other socialist groups internationally, including us.

The French weekly *Lutte Ouvrière* headlined their 17 September issue, "The army of occupation has had to retreat before the stones of the intifada", and wrote in an editorial: "That a hope of peace appears in the Middle East, that Israelis and Palestinians can mutually recognise their rights to existence, can only be welcome."

"When the Jews, capsized and traumatised by what had happened during the Second World War, felt the need, at the end of that war, to create for themselves a country, a nation, and a territory, no-one who lived through the period or has imagined it... can reproach them."

"On the other hand, that the Zionist leaders drove hundreds of thousands of Palestinians out of their country in order to do it — that is contestable, and, of course, contest-

ed by those who were the victims...

"For 45 years, Israel has had to live arms in hand. Because of that, the Arab states have not been able to prevent it existing. But the Israeli leaders have also used their weapons against the Palestinians. And there are two victims, the Palestinian people and the Israeli people, for no people which oppresses another can itself be free."

"Today... there is a little hope in Palestine, and that is all for the good. But for that hope to be realised, it is necessary, there as elsewhere, that profit loses the power to rule the planet".

Another French weekly, *Rouge*, took a similar line. Their majority

"Would refusal by the PLO to sign the agreement, and a continued intifada, foreseeably lead to a better deal for the Palestinians?"

editorial statement (23 September) described the agreement as "a first retreat" by Israeli oppression faced with the Palestinian uprising, the intifada.

To solve the conflict, *Rouge* declared, "Arabs and Jews in Palestine [must] see each other mutually recognising their rights to live free and in security... the Israeli forces should unconditionally evacuate the territories conquered in 1967... a Palestinian state, democratic and enjoying all the attributes of sovereignty... should establish itself".

Whether the agreement could open the way to this depended on mobilisation, which *Rouge* pledged itself to support.



Intifada fulfilled or betrayed?

The German fortnightly *Sozialistische Zeitung*, like *Rouge* and *Socialist Organiser*, printed comment by the Israeli Trotskyists of Matzpen.

Its columnist Jakob Moneta agreed: "Nothing is more important for the future of the Palestinian people than transforming desperation into hope".

A minority on *Rouge* wanted to condemn the agreement. "The Palestinians have the right to a sovereign state and, wherever they may be, the right to self-determination" (23 September). But the agreement gave only limited autonomy and "the aim of the agreement is that the PLO should put a definitive end to the intifada..."

THE CONCERNS expressed here were shared by all of us who welcomed the agreement critically. Whether they should lead us to condemn the agreement depends on assessment.

Will the agreement actually stop Palestinian national struggle, or give it more confidence and open possibilities for channelling it more productively?

Would refusal by the PLO to sign the agreement, and a continued intifada, foreseeably lead to a better deal for the Palestinians?

Or were the chances of that sufficient for socialists to take responsibility for opposing a chance of more peaceful development and calling for continued violence?

MOST SOCIALISTS WHO condemned the agreement, however, did so on different grounds. For them, any peace with Israel was ruled out.

Socialist Worker, for example, argued (4 September) that "Arafat... is likely to be disappointed" about

the deal being a "step to the establishment of a separate Palestinian state" — but its highlighted argument was: "The proposals do nothing to solve the basic conflict — the fact that Israel is built on land stolen from the Palestinians".

There is only one way to undo that fact — to drive the

Israeli Jews from the land where they live, and to install instead the Palestinians whose parents or grandparents used to live there.

The Argentine "Morenist" paper *Solidaridad Socialista*, in an article prior to the deal, spelled out the same attitude to Israel more fully.

Israel, they wrote, "is an enclave, that is a territory usurped from its original population and peopled by immigrants at the service of an imperialist power..."

"Because Israel is not a normal country, but an enclave, it cannot be modified. The State of Israel cannot change its genocidal nature... It must be destroyed and replaced by a Palestinian state..." (16 June).

For *Socialist Worker* and *Solidaridad Socialista*, in other words, the Israeli Jews have none of the national rights which belong to other nations whatever their historical crimes. They are imperialist agents.

Workers' Power (October 1993) echoed this attitude.

"The first element of the betrayal lies in the PLO's... recognition of 'the right of Israel to live within secure borders'..."

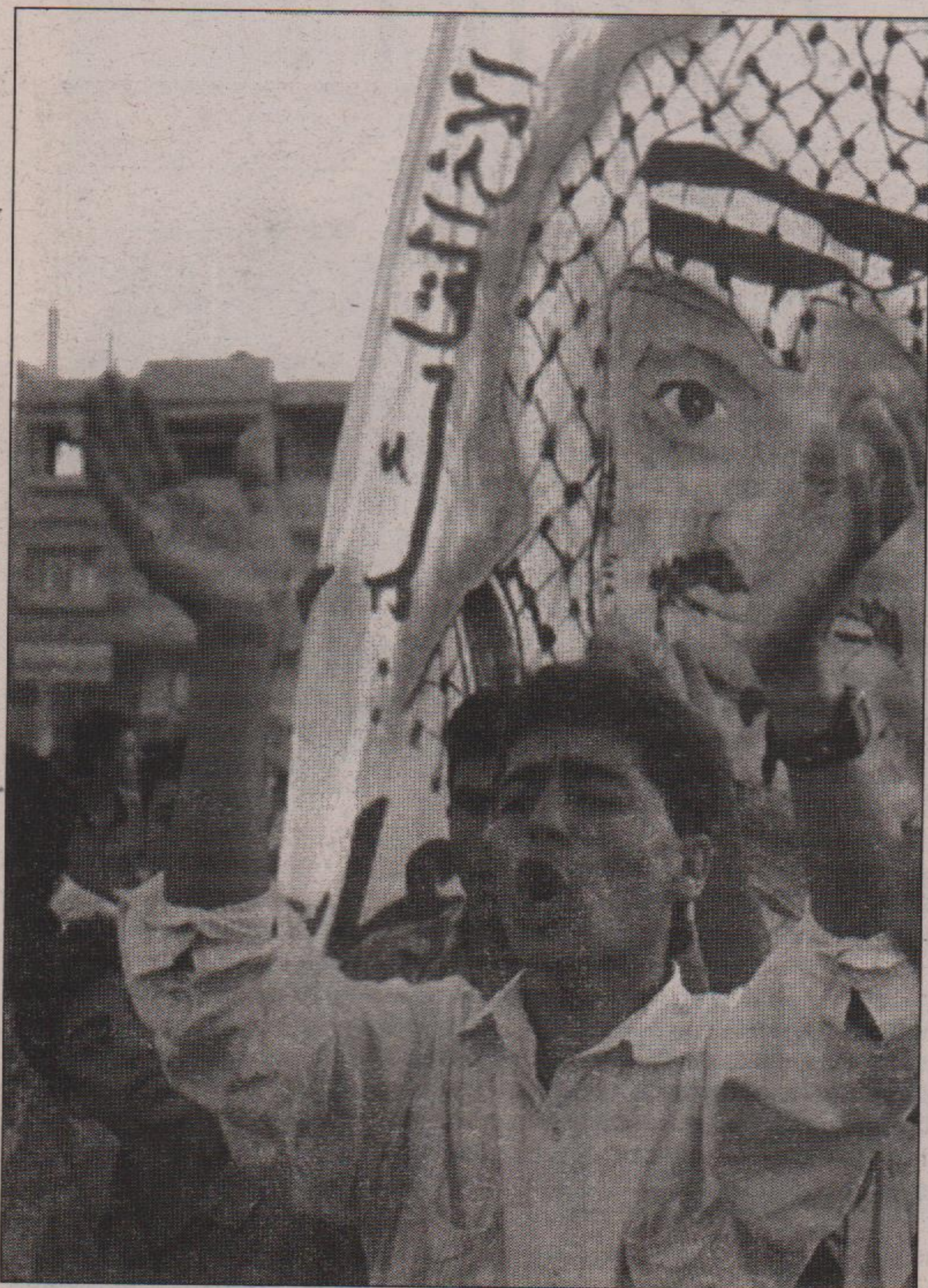
Socialist Action USA (unconnected to the same-name magazine in Britain) concurred: "the Palestinian masses will gain little, if anything, and they will lose what is most important to them today — the hope of a radical change in their lot" (October 1993).

The French weekly *Informations*



Two faces of Jewish opinion: mocking Rabin (left); celebrating the agreement (right)

el-PLO deal



The agreement has strengthened Arafat against the fundamentalists

Ouvrières has a history of responding to the Israeli-Arab conflict by abstract calls for Jewish-Arab unity and a joint Jewish-Arab constituent assembly (i.e. a parliament with full powers to set up a new structure of government). But its issue of 1 September used this abstract internationalism to demand the conquest — or at least “disappearance” — of Israel.

“The only democratic way out which can bring peace in this region passes through the disappearance of the state of Israel and through the Palestinian Constituent Assembly, building up the Palestinian nation with its two components”. *IO* condemned the “liquidation” of Palestinian aspirations “as defined in the 1964 Charter” which demanded Arab reconquest of Israel.

MILITANT ALSO, BUT IN a different way, denounced the agreement in the name of abstract Jewish-Arab unity. Declaring (10 September) that the agreement was “a sham” — it “amounts to a Palestinian bantustan” — they counterposed, not a different national programme, but... socialism for the whole region. “Within a socialist federation of the Middle East, a socialist Israel and a socialist Palestine could coexist”.

Under a screaming headline, “Intifada betrayed”, *Socialist Outlook* (18 September) offered an odd mixture of the line denouncing peace with Israel on principle, and the more reasoned line of the minority on *Rouge*, denouncing this particular agreement.

“The PLO leadership group intends to make peace with Israel in return for almost nothing”. So a continued intifada would win much

more? *Outlook* seemed to suggest that the uprising was on the verge of creating a workers’ state. “In class terms, the intifada represented a new stage... It is based among the poorest and most deprived... It is opposition to this class struggle that creates the common interest between

“Why Israeli Jews’ national rights should deserve defending against the revolutionary working-class authorities of a future socialist federation, but not against the vicious Arab regimes of today, no-one can explain.”

Israel, the PLO leadership, the Arab regimes, the USA and the World Bank”.

This makes sense only if *Outlook* think that the Islamic fundamentalists in the West Bank and Gaza represent a revolutionary working-class threat to all those powers-that-be!

The fundamental guiding attitude unvoiced here — except in dismissive offhand comments on the possibility “even of a Palestinian statelet on Gaza and the whole of the West

Bank” — was that *Outlook* wants nothing short of the destruction of Israel.

This they explain not in their articles but in a recent open letter to the AWL. Illogically, they combine it with occasionally advocating self-determination for the Israeli Jews within a socialist federation of the Middle East.

Why the Israeli Jews’ national rights should deserve defending against the revolutionary working-class authorities of that future socialist federation, but not against the vicious Arab regimes of today, no-one can explain.

Outlook must want to combine some “theoretical” lipservice to Israeli-Jewish rights with a practical attitude, for today, which chimes in with the “anti-imperialism of idiots” of papers like *Socialist Worker*. For the mouse, no animal is more important than the cat!

FINALLY, THE agreement was welcomed by two of the socialist weeklies which support the destruction of Israel and its replacement by an Arab (but “democratic and secular”) state covering all Palestine west of the Jordan. Indeed, their welcome was much less critical than ours.

The *American Militant* (no relation to British *Militant*) hailed “a victory for Palestinian fighters” which “opens up new political space for Palestinian fighters to advanced their struggle for an independent state” (27 September).

Green Left Weekly, in Australia, declared that the agreement “opens the road to the establishment of an open PLO presence in the West Bank and Gaza, and the establishment of the interim government of the democratic, secular state of Palestine proclaimed by the Palestine National Council in November 1988” (8 September).

Both these papers arrive at their conclusions by echoing the official explanations of the PLO, not by independent socialist reasoning. *Green Left Weekly*, however, has been carrying in its correspondence columns a lively debate on the basics of Israeli-Arab conflict, taking up all the same themes as the debate which *Socialist Organiser* has tried to promote on the British left. Let’s hope that reflection on the differing attitudes to the Israel-PLO deal will turn other socialists towards this debate.

More from the AWL...

Arabs, Jews and socialism

New reprint • £3.00 plus 28p p&p. Cheques payable to “WL Publications”. Available from: AWL, PO Box 820, London SE15 4NA.

EP Thompson did not move to the right

By Laurens Otter

YOUR FIRST OBITUARY note for EP Thompson is, I think, inaccurate and unfair on two counts:

1. It assumes that EP Thompson was in a leadership position for those who left the CP in 1956, and was responsible for the way that large numbers moved;

2. Despite your bureaucratic collectivist analysis of Stalinism, you still talk as if the CP was in ‘56 leftist and so accuse EP Thompson as having led in a rightwards direction.

People came out after Hungary in numerous groups. Very few groups were directly in touch with more than, say, thirty to forty people. The *New Reasoner*, which had existed for a while undercover within in the CP, did certainly have a larger contact list than others. But it was established within the party as a faction, and as many of those who left had earlier been opposed to it. So that would have been a mixed blessing. Even the links the *Reasoner* group made with the group that would produce the *Universities and Left Review (U&LR)* were only formed after both had left the CP. If there was a single person who might have been the figurehead for the whole secession — which I would doubt — it was, on the strength of his former position on the *Daily Worker*, Peter Fryer.

Each group came out with its own history, its own likes and its own dislikes.

For example, the U&LR Club was leafleted in Autumn 1957, by an ex-member of the Oxford University CP, protesting because he had been expelled by Ralph Samuel, whom he denounced as an hard-line and authoritarian Stalinist, quite unsuited to be running a club for dissident communists! Ralph himself admitted to having been a hard-line member who certainly did not — before leaving the party — share EP Thompson’s humanist views.

The Nottingham Marxist Group and the Leeds group that became the ILP’s youth section both published pamphlets in which they stated that they had been undercover sections of the Healy Group (which had also had members amongst the London YCL, and probably elsewhere). Both the Nottingham and the Leeds factions (though not the East London group) were expelled by Healy for leaving the CP prematurely. (Ellis Hillman claimed, though Bob Pennington denied, that Healy had in fact supported Russian tanks and had been out-voted in his group on the matter).

There were industrial sections that didn’t know members of youth sections and vice versa; there were people who had been dissidents (as EP Thompson had) since the Slansky affair (1952) and perhaps earlier; and people who had expelled such dissidents: there were people who were primarily acting in the peace, the cooperative or the Colonial Freedom movements or in similar campaigns and had been told by the party to play down their party membership.

... people who had held ... apparently know no ... narrow circle of party

... in no way could such a disparate movement have been used (assuming that was desirable) to “regenerate

a real communist tradition.” This can be easily demonstrated by the fact that “Forums” — bringing together the bulk of those who left the CP — had been formed all over the country early in ‘57, but he had fallen to pieces within a year. Their members melted away, either to drop out of politics, or to turn to one or other of the many new groups that were struggling for their attention.

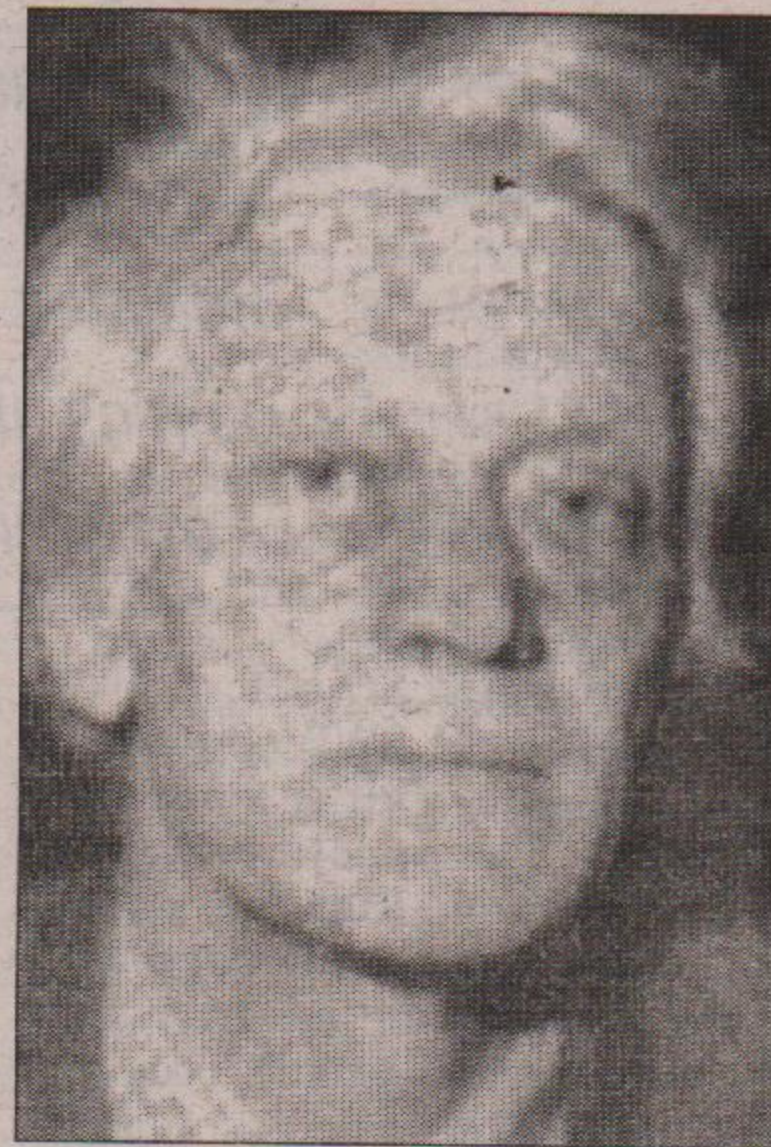
But more important, your obituary assumes that despite its Stalinism, the CP was in some sense a leftist body and that EP Thompson’s move to (admittedly reformist) “Socialist Humanism” was a rightward move. The CP was not left wing.

Right up until 1960, the CP denounced calls for unilateral nuclear disarmament as a Trotskyist plot to split the peace movement. Though it was very active within the Movement for Colonial Freedom it opposed all attempts to commit the MCF to a policy of immediately withdrawing British rule from all remaining colonies.

When the CP campaigned for multilateral nuclear disarmament it campaigned almost solely against American bases and was prepared to pander to racism; I heard a CP speaker argue that “it was all these American blacks over here that one must oppose.” Subsequently, in CND, when I tackled CP members about this, though there were many that denied that their party could have even sunk to such a level there were others who said that “of course one had to use any method that might achieve the desirable end.” Right up into the ‘60s, the CP used to pander to racist anti-German sentiment, hoping thereby to win support against NATO.

In what way was the CP leftist? In what way did EP Thompson “lead people to the right” when he left? No doubt he didn’t embrace the sort of Leninist policies you would like. It is absurd to think he might. For several years before he left the CP he had been, on the basis of Marx’s humanist essay and on Gramsci’s and Lukacs’s idea of party organisation, publishing a critique of the simplified Leninist pattern of party building. His first publication on emerging was a critique of Trotsky.

He did endeavour to create a movement which allowed for rank and file activity and initiatives, independently both of reformist and Leninist party bureaucrats. It was what was needed.



EP Thompson

"Marxism '93" Better jaw- jaw than war-war!

THE SWP HAS STILL not replied to the letter from the Alliance for Workers' Liberty protesting about attacks on our comrades at the SWP's "Marxism '93" event this summer when Jason Bonning and Mark Sandell were beaten in two separate incidents by SWPers, amongst them Rahul Patel, organiser of the Anti-Nazi League. It is plain that they do not intend to reply.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty is continuing to circulate accounts of the affair in the labour movement. We have just issued Sean Matgamna's "Open Letter to Tony

Cliff" on this matter as a pamphlet. For the information of readers, we print below the account of one of the incidents outside "Marxism '93" from *Republican Marxist Bulletin*. One of their comrades witnessed the incident.

These comrades are in their own way loyal SWPers. They consider themselves an expelled faction of the organisation. They have no political sympathy with *Socialist Organiser* on the Middle East. They agree with the SWP, not AWL. But they are honest people. They know what they saw and they understand the significance of it.

SWP and Zionism — fighting spills onto the London streets!

OUTSIDE Marxism '93 — the final rally — a minor fracas took place involving a comrade from *Socialist Organiser* and some SWP comrades. The *SO* comrade was knocked over and got kicked a few times when he was down. One of our comrades intervened to help "cool" the situation.

Apparently the *SO* comrade (Mark) was petitioning the Central Committee urging them to investigate an allegation of violence by SWP organiser (Rahul P) when the petition was snatched from him and the fracas began.

This violence is an extension of a political dispute mainly within the National Union of Students over Israel. The SWP is opposed to Zionism and the state of Israel. *SO* believes that this makes the SWP objectively anti-semitic. This is nonsense. Neither does opposition to the Irish Catholic Republic or the Orange statelet of Northern Ireland, make you anti-Irish. The SWP is not anti-semitic. The allegation is quite ludicrous. It does however tend to make the SWP comrades somewhat annoyed at

what they consider to be slanders. No doubt this is made worse by the fact that the SWP has a sectarian habit of ignoring other Marxists. Many SWP members lack the education that polemics against other Marxist trends bring. They prefer to cocoon themselves in meetings where they only debate with people who agree with them i.e. themselves.

"There is no excuse for socialists, SWP or anybody else, to use violence in the socialist movement. It indicates a lack of politics and a lack of discipline."

To understand the causes is not to excuse the violence. There is no excuse for socialists, whether SWP or anybody else, to use violence in the socialist and working class movement. It indicates the immaturity of the SWP, a lack of politics and a lack of discipline.

The damage to the party's reputation is further compounded by the tendency of the leadership to ignore any criticism. The SWP Central Committee should investigate the facts and consider what disciplinary action is appropriate and make an open and honest statement to make sure it doesn't happen again.

From *Republican Marxist Bulletin*, No 21, September 1993. (RMB, PO Box 3140, London E17 5LJ).

What's left of Peter Hain?



Dale Street
Reviews What's
Left? The Future
of Labour

Peter Hain
Tribune pamphlet

"CLASS IS still the most important source of injustice and social conflict in Britain. Until the private ownership of capital is abolished, a fair society is as far away as it has ever been," writes Peter Hain, currently Labour MP for Neath.

Nationalisation by itself, he continues, is not enough: "Nationalisation without workers' control simply becomes a form of state capitalism working to the whims of private capital."

Unfortunately, however, the trade union movement is failing to fight for workers' control. The unions are "fundamentally conservative", they play a "fundamentally moderate role," and "actually prop up modern capitalism."

They should "start pressing for workers' control and begin striking for political objectives." It is in sit-ins which pose the question of workers' control "rather than in official strikes that the real potential of industrial action can be seen."

As regards the Labour Party, it is a blind alley. In most parts of the country it is run "on the hierarchical, reactionary lines of Tammany Hall politics." It has opted for "an exclusively parliamentary strategy." It "never has been and never can be a socialist party."

The quotes are taken from Hain's book *Radical Regeneration*, written in 1975, when — oddly enough! — Hain was still a member of the Young Liberals.

Hain's more recent work *What's Left? The Future of Labour*, published a few months ago by *Tribune* is rather more moderate in tone. But who could expect a Labour MP to share the angry radicalism of a Young Liberal?

To be sure, *What's Left* is well to the left of the Labour leadership's pink Toryism.

Hain attacks the self-styled "modernisers" for their spinelessness, their backroom machinations, their hostility to Labour-union links, their idolisation of Clinton, their covert support for electoral pacts, and for the damage they have inflicted on the Labour Party.

In doing so, however, he excuses the witch-hunt of *Militant* and the shutting down of Labour's youth section: there was a "legitimate concern at the centre of the Party to remove the Young Socialists from the influence of extremist and entryist factions."

Hain's alternative to the political agenda of the "modernisers" and the top-down "statism" of traditional Labourism is an appeal for "more radical policies", the celebration of Labour's "socialist values", "positive and aggressive campaigning" and "links directly with grassroots extra-parliamentary action."

In advocating such an alternative Hain claims inspiration from the tra-

dition of anarchism in general and Spanish anarchism in particular:

"In such key moments as the Spanish Civil War, anarchism stood most uncompromisingly of all against both Bolshevism and fascism."

Of course, Hain has yet to implement the programme of the Spanish anarchists in his own constituency: burning the churches, shooting the priests, and distributing land to the peasantry of Neath.

Hain's knowledge of history is also less than perfect: the Spanish anarchists joined a bourgeois coalition government, which played into the hands of the fascists by seeking to dampen down militancy. Hain also confuses Bolshevism with Stalinism.

The anarchists so admired by Hain, with the Russian anarchist Kropotkin singled out for particular praise, would wince at some of the "radical policies" advocated by Hain in the latter part of his pamphlet. So too, would the Peter Hain of 1975.

"We need to reform workplace practices to achieve full employment, higher productivity, investment and justice," writes Peter Hain (1993).

But Peter Hain (1975) attacked such proposals for the reform of workplace practices. They were "a more efficient means of extracting the surplus from labour... workers would be given a greater stake in the industry and there would consequently be more incentive to increase productivity."

"Industrial democracy is essential to mobilise a common purpose between worker and manager," writes Peter Hain (1993).

But as Peter Hain (1975) put it: "Such a scenario (for workers' participation) would be less disturbing if there was a real unity of purpose between workers and managers. But under capitalism there is not."

"Given the constraints upon public borrowing and much more pressing investment priorities, wholesale renationalisation (of industries privatised by the Tories) is out of the question," writes Peter Hain (1993).

SUCH MODERATION was despised by Peter Hain (1975): "Despite much sabre-rattling on nationalisation, there is no evidence to suggest that Labour is prepared to go beyond token gestures against the major financial, property and business institutions."

"High productivity, investment and wealth (are) needed for economic success... To build a strong real economy will require a shift in resources from consumption into industrial investment and skills training," writes Peter Hain (1993).

Peter Hain (1975) had other concerns:

"Domestic politics seemed bogged down in a welter of trivial bickering... People in Vietnam were being slaughtered while British politicians argued over the best means to secure higher productivity."

But for all the differences between Peter Hain (1975) and Peter Hain (1993) there are nonetheless certain continuities: both are anti-Marxist and argue for a vaguely defined "participative democracy" and "socialised economy" rather than a democratically planned socialist economy.

The stress on a participative democracy and decentralisation of power



Peter Hain

flows out of a legitimate rejection of the "top-down-socialism" (which was never socialism anyway) practised by Stalinism in the Soviet bloc and post-war Labour governments in Britain.

But decentralisation is no more inherently socialist than is nationalisation.

This becomes particularly clear when Hain (1993) argues in pro-capitalist terms for a different banking system to achieve "future economic success."

"The national clearing banks must be decentralised... Such devolution of banking is vital for industrial restructuring and manufacturing competitiveness, because it brings the sources of capital finance close to industry."

At a more fundamental level, Hain's alternative policies are not a programme for the socialist transformation of society but a programme for the modernisation of British capitalism — a programme of reforms "to halt the decline of the British economy," as he puts it.

Hain is not following in the footsteps of Peter Kropotkin but in those of Harold Wilson. Wilson won the General Election of 1964 on the basis of the "big idea" of "the white-hot heat of the technological revolution."

Although couched in socialist rhetoric, his programme was one of modernising British capitalism. Hain's "big idea" is participative democracy, empowerment, local control, and "socialisation." But what lies beneath the often radical language is merely a programme for revitalising British capitalism.

The merits of *What's Left?* lie in its criticisms of the "modernisers" and its role in provoking debate.

But the final verdict on Peter Hain (1993) should be left to Peter Hain (1975):

"Parliament is basically powerless when up against the might of organised capital... that is why the Young Liberals argued that those Liberals who merely wished to tinker with the system, to increase a civil liberty here and improve a social policy there, should join the Labour Party, which is at least an established party of government."

"When we examine Labour's 're-discovery' of socialism, we find that it is being spearheaded by middle-class intellectuals. And many of the younger MPs and workers who have led the re-discovery are university graduates, often with posh accents."



Bob (Bruce Jones)

Stamford Hill fights back



Paddy Dollard
Reviews Wall
of Silence

BBC 1
Sunday 17 October

LAST SUNDAY'S thriller, *Wall of Silence*, which was set amongst the Hassidic Jews of Stamford Hill, was criticised by some Jews before it went out as likely, in these times, to stir up anti-Jewish prejudice and hostility. They may know what they are talking about, but my guess is that they are mistaken. More likely, it will have the opposite effect.

It humanised people normally cut off from those not of their religious persuasion by unusual customs, unusual dress and a marked communal self-sufficiency. *Wall of Silence* showed the common human qualities behind the 18th century Polish style of dress, the unfashionable beards and the unfashionably intense concentration on the religion around which their lives revolve. That is surely good.

There was one episode in which a gang of fascist thugs attacked people entering a synagogue and found themselves unexpectedly facing ex-members of the Russian equivalent of the SAS, highly trained in the martial arts, jumping around in their sect clothes like extras from *Fiddler on the roof*! They kicked the stuffing out of the fascists. That was a heartening sight!

A thriller is a thriller, and this was quite a good one.

Unseen heroes



Matt Cooper
Reviews Raining
Stones

Directed by
Ken Loach

WHEN KEN Loach directs a film from a Jim Allen script you can be pretty sure of four things. The film will be a powerful and sincere exposure of the society in which we live; it will never overstep

the line into crude, slick propaganda; it will be critically acclaimed; and it will never be widely distributed. It will get its main British exposure before a smallish Channel 4 audience.

Yet Loach makes films that are eminently accessible. Often savagely witty, his films confront the state of the nation starkly in ways that your average cinema release does not even attempt. *Raining Stones* is no exception.

Loach returns to the pithy realism of his previous film *Riff Raff*. Again he uses the public as a supporting cast and as a backdrop for actors

who know the characters they are playing from their own experience. This makes for a film that feels real simply because for the people appearing in it, it is reality.

The film starts with Bob Williams (Bruce Jones) and his mate Tommy (Ricky Tomlinson) seriously worrying a sheep on the moors near Manchester. The sheep is to be captured, slaughtered and sold to supplement their dole. That all they end up with is a bit of worthless scrag end is a recurring theme of the film.

Bob is no rebel. Above all a family man, he strives to make sure things are OK for his wife Anne (Julie

Brown) and daughter Colleen (Gemma Phoenix) — sometimes clumsily and ineptly.

Colleen has reached the age when good Catholic children attend their first Communion, and much of the film revolves around Bob's attempts to find the money to pay for Colleen's outfit.

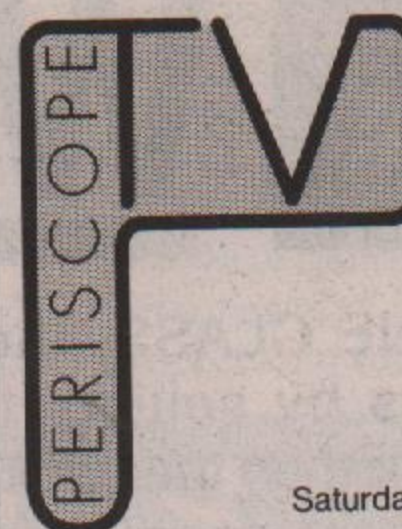
At heart Bob favours all the "family values" that the Conservatives extol. This is central to the film because Bob, pushing middle-age and on the dole, simply cannot play the role of provider and nurturing father he feels duty bound to play. His desire to do the right thing for his family leads it to the brink of destruction.

All of this may sound dour and depressing, but the film is executed with wit and sympathy. Grim humour is used to fend off the sentimentality into which a film like this could so easily slip. It leaves you no room for pity — only for anger.

This is not a big "P" political film. No solutions are offered (least of all by the Labour councillors who occasionally walk in and out of the film). *Raining Stones* is a portrayal of a personal fight for survival in Tory Britain, which turns into resistance despite Bob's ingrained ideas.

The strength of this film lies in its uniqueness. Loach stands alone in portraying the working class in Britain now. That makes *Raining Stones* a must. Miss this moving film at your peril!

The art of our betters



Minnie Ryan
previews
Civilisation

BBC 2
Saturday 23 October 2.10pm

CIVILISATION, LORD Clark's famous 1969 13-part series is being shown by BBC2 on Saturday afternoons. This is a splendid survey of high art from the fall of the Roman Empire to the 20th century.

It has, of course, been criticised because it is white, male and Eurocentric in its main concerns. But that is just another way of saying that it is bourgeois and that it deals mainly with bourgeois culture, which has been very much white, male and Europe centred.

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The Red Flag

(Written to the tune *The white cockade*, usually sung to the tune *Tannenbaum*)

The workers' flag is deepest red
It shrouded oft our martyred dead;
And 'ere their limbs grew stiff and cold
Their life-blood dyed its very fold.

[chorus]
Then raise the scarlet standard high;
Beneath its folds we'll live and die,
Though cowards flinch and traitors
sneer.

We'll keep the red flag flying here.

Look 'round, the Frenchman loves its
blaze,
The sturdy German chants its praise;
In Moscow's vaults its hymns are sung,
Chicago swells the surging throng.

[chorus]
It waved above our infant might
When all ahead seemed dark as night;
It witnessed many a deed and vow,
We will not change its colour now.

[chorus]
It suits today the meek and base,

Whose minds are fixed on pelf and
place,
To cringe beneath the rich man's
frown,
And haul that sacred emblem down.

[chorus]
With heads uncovered swear we all
To bear it onward till we fall;
Come dungeons dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.

[chorus]

Jim Connell, 1889

rep
time,
manage

WORKERS' LIBERTY

Meetings

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Thursday 21 October

"Unity against the racists"

Speakers: Sab Sanghera and Clara Buckley

7.30, Napier Arms, St. John's Hill, Clapham Jncn.

LEEDS

Thursday 21 October

"After 'Unity' — what now?"

7.30, Adelphi pub

YORK

Wednesday 27 October

"How to fight racism and fascism"

1.15, Room G045, York University

Monday 1 November

"Labour Must Fight"

Details: 071-639 7965

LANCASTER

Wednesday 27 October

"Russia in crisis — what should socialists say?"

Speaker: Mark Sandell

1.00, Students Union

MANCHESTER

Thursday 28 October

"How to stop the fascists"

8.00, Unicorn pub

BIRMINGHAM

Saturday 6 November

"Lessons of Millwall"

Speaker: John Molony

7.30, Queens Tavern

LONDON

Saturday 30 October

Dayschool

Discussions on Trotsky on black nationalism • Trotsky on fighting fascism

Details: Mark on 071-639 7965

LETTERS

Playing Olympic Games with our services

Manchester Council set about the first Olympic bid for this city before the miners had even lost their strike in 1984-5.

The whole philosophy of the Council shifted away from fighting the Tories and their privatisation, cuts and poverty. Council leaders started walking, hand-in-hand with Tory Ministers and senior (very right-wing) International Olympic Committee members, around the newly cleaned streets of Manchester.

Manchester Council's philosophy has been to close sweet little Pets' Corners in public parks (and to plan selling-off the parks themselves). It has been to knock down housing to build dream stadia — each one a mausoleum to the municipal leaders' memories. It has been to clear the streets of the litter which mustn't be seen by the IOC — and the "litter" includes drug users, homeless people, working women, people with HIV disease — all so as to present a shining, white, clean thoroughfare for the important visitors.

Government money to back the Olympic bid has found its way into the private developers' hands, while local urban projects and community centres and swimming pools have closed.

All this is at a time when Manchester is Poverty City UK, when people's needs are huge and when the campaign to defend the welfare state is vital.

The defence of universal benefits cannot be waged with one hand while setting out Olympic bid 2000, (sorry, 2004, sorry 2008) with the other. Olympic bidding is not possible, under the existing "international community" circumstances, at the same time as defending local communities and their right to housing, transport, employment, community care, health and well-being.

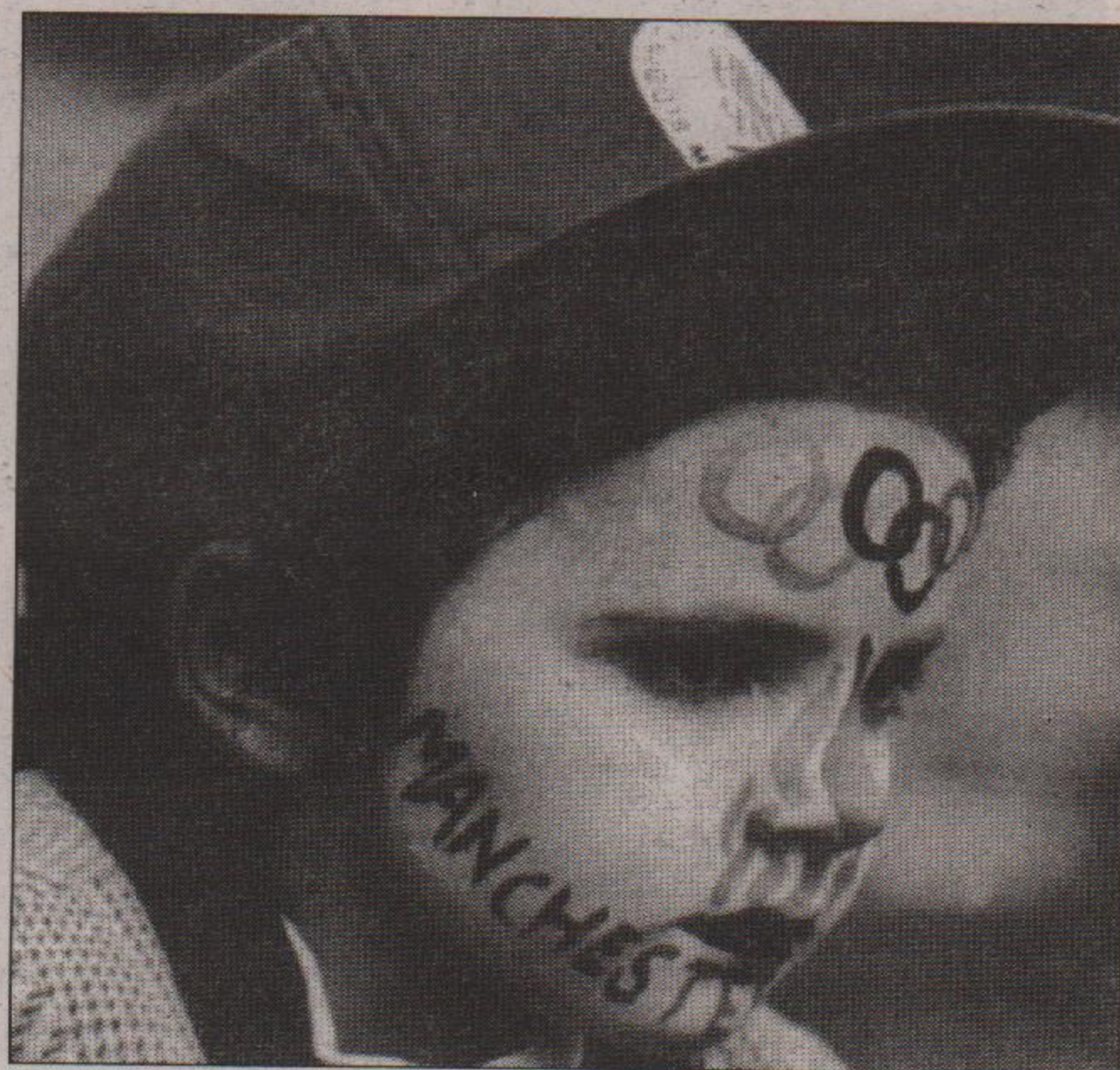
Indeed, a truly international community might secure a purpose-built Olympic presence, on otherwise unused land which it could reclaim, to be available for all its sporting games.

But the "international community" we have got is too

busy bombing Iraq, killing Somalis, and leaving Bosnia to its own internal devastation.

Who gains from the present Olympic system? A recent *Observer* showed how the Olympics owes as much to the private playing fields of Eton as to Olympus, and how they have been developed on private business principles ever since. The business community in Manchester is rivalled in its eagerness for the bid only by the multi-nationals who have gained from previous games. Although many millions of people — in this city and country and around the world — enjoy watching the sporting events, they are not themselves the winners in any way.

One northern council leader said to his Greater Manchester Council leader colleagues in 1985: "what do you think Olympics are? It's not a bloody fair on local village green!" Ridiculed as an old-fashioned, northern stereotype, this still represented the instinct of basic community values of an organised labour movement, formed



Ordinary people are never the winners from Olympic bids

by working people and their own association through trades unions and local Labour parties, with a purpose of advancing the living standards of the working class and creating a fairer society for all. In contrast, Manchester Council leader,

Stringer, his party leader Smith, and Mr Sports-Above-All-Major have all been holding hands for the last two years in their own Olympic Game. It is time now that they should hold hands for one last time so as to leave the podium together with their wooden spoon. It is time for us to reject all of them in their entirety.

We should be setting about the real Olympic challenge. This challenge is clear. It is the challenge of fighting cuts, fighting discrimination, fighting poverty.

And since Thursday 16 September the challenge could not be clearer, even for the combined short-sightedness of Stringer and Smith, Ashdown and Major. It's about fighting fascism. And it must be located, exposed, driven out and expunged from our society. That is the challenge, not for 2008, 2004 or even 2000. It is the challenge for now.

John Nicholson
Manchester

Don't stereotype single mothers

ALISON'S article in the last *Youth Fightback* (16 September) was good in denouncing the Tories' crusade against single parents. But, unintentionally I guess, it gave a lot of ground to Tory stereotypes.

It read as if all single parents are women who have children at 16 because of "a few drinks, a bit of carelessness" or "rather than have a boring life". Such women need support rather than scapegoating, but they are a small minority of single parents.

Only 19 per cent of single parents are under 24. The major-

ity of single parents are separated, widowed or divorced women.

In 1991, four out of every 100 women aged 15 to 19 had babies. That is less than in 1970, when it was seven out of every 100.

7.7% of births in 1991 were registered by only one parent. That is an increase over 1980, but only a small one: then it was 6%.

There are more single parents than there used to be not because teenagers are feckless but because marriages and relationships break up more often. They break up more often

because of poverty, insecurity and unemployment, and because women are more assertive and independent.

As for the teenagers who have children "rather than have a boring life", I doubt whether they exist!

Single mothers are not necessarily "problem parents". They and their children need nurseries, and they need supportive friends, neighbours and family to help both parent and child escape isolation. They need the same things as two-parent families, only more so.

In fact they get nursery cuts.

They get isolated in lonely high-rise flats. They get effectively penalised by the tax and benefit system, so that unless they have high-paid skills they lose money by going out to work part-time, or, often, even if they go full-time.

They get a dog-eat-dog society where the social upbringing of children is relentless privatised, thrown onto isolated individuals.

They need help. They do not need, or want, stereotyping as feckless, helpless victims.

Rhodri Evans,
London



Why you should be a socialist

TODAY ONE CLASS, the working class, lives by selling its labour-power to another, the capitalist class, which owns the social means of production. Life is shaped by the capitalists' relentless drive to increase their wealth. Capitalism causes unemployment, the maiming of lives by overwork, imperialism, abuse of the environment, and much else.

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty fights to convince and mobilise the working class to overthrow capitalism. We aim not to create a new labour movement, but to transform the existing workers' movement, trade unions and Labour Party.

We want socialism: public ownership of the major enterprises, workers' control, and democracy much fuller than the present system — a workers' democracy, with elected representatives recallable at any time, and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

We stand:

- For social planning, for a sustainable use of natural resources.
- For full equality for women, and social provision to free women from the burden of housework. For a mass working-class-based women's movement.
- For black and white workers' unity, organised through the labour movement, to fight racism and the despair which breeds racism. For labour movement support for black communities' self-defence against racist and fascist violence; against immigration controls.
- For equality for lesbians and gays.
- In support of the independent trade unions and the socialists in

Russia and Eastern Europe. We denounce the misery caused by the drive to free-market capitalism there, but we believe that Stalinism was a system of class exploitation no better than capitalism.

- For a democratic united Europe; against the undemocratic and capitalist European Community, but for European workers' unity and socialism, not nationalism, as the alternative.
- For a united and free Ireland, with some federal system to protect the rights of the Protestant minority.
- For the Palestinians' right to a state of their own, alongside Israel, and for a socialist federation of the Middle East with self-determination for the Israeli

Jews.

- For national liberation struggles and workers' struggles worldwide.
- For a workers' charter of trade union rights — to organise, to strike, to picket effectively, to take solidarity action, and to decide their own union rules.
- For a rank and file movement in the trade unions.
- For left unity in action; clarity in debate and discussion.
- For a labour movement accessible to the most oppressed, accountable to its rank and file, and militant against capitalism.

We can stop rail privatisation!

RAIL

By a railworker

THE LEADERSHIP of the rail unions should organise co-ordinated national strike action to defeat privatisation.

It's true this action would be outside the Tory anti-union laws but

on this issue that is not a reason for not striking.

The vast bulk of the Tories' own supporters in the south-east commuter belt oppose the idea. The policy is deeply unpopular while strikes to oppose it are not. Therefore, potentially illegal strikes with the prospect of sequestration (the seizure of union funds) is worth risking.

But the union full-timers have encouraged us to focus completely on Parliament. They tell us that this is the only battle ground that matters. They tell us that the amendment that matters is the one from the Lords that allows BR to also bid to run trains. If privatisation is about competition why shouldn't BR be allowed to compete? They are right — within the terms of

the bill it is ludicrous and illogical to limit competition. But they should take off their blinkers.

We don't want amendments and concessions, damn it. We want the whole thing stopped in its tracks. And that won't happen in Parliament.

To do that we have to organise and focus our attention where it should always have been focused

— on the ground.

Everyday, in every depot, local agreements are being torn up. As are the national agreements, and it will get worse. If the national full-timers are allowed to run true to form they will soon sign the last part of the new 'bargaining machinery' and get rid of the National Promotion, Transfer and Redundancy (PT&R) agreement.

It's already been eroded anyway.

We have to organise to fight back on the ground in every depot. The model here is the Vigilance Committees of the 1930s which organised resistance to attacks and defence of national conditions.

And we have to put pressure and demands on the national leaderships of our unions to take off their blinkers.

Vote yes to keep SATs boycott!

TEACHERS

By Liam Conway, Notts NUT

THE NATIONAL Union of Teachers is to re-ballot members for a continuation of the SATs boycott. This is good news indeed. The teaching unions have come a long way since their initial euphoria over the Dearing Report, a report that still leaves much of the testing intact and retains the loathsome league tables.

Originally the NASUWT hailed the report as a victory and accused the NUT leadership of extremism for even considering continuing the fight over SATs. Now it seems that they too have decided that Dearing may not be all it's cracked up to be.

So what's brought this sudden change of heart? The NASUWT, have discovered that teachers are not just concerned about

workload but are opposed to SATs on educational grounds. After declaring that the workload issue was solved by Dearing, the NASUWT, the 'recruit members first, ask questions later' union, are being forced into line by their own members who, like most teachers, want to see the SATs finished off for good.

The NUT on the other hand was unconvinced by Dearing from the start but believed that through negotiations the government would see the writing on the wall and come to heel. Will they ever learn?

The NUT leaders certainly got a rude awakening when the Tories made it clear that when the boycott was dropped they would expect schools to hand over all the 1993 test and assessment results. Worse, the government was not even prepared to discuss any alterations to the 1994 testing arrangements.

But whatever the reason, and pressure from below seems a plausible explanation,

the importance of the NUT re-ballot cannot be overstated, even if it does result from a ridiculous rule that forces us to re-ballot after 6 months.

In fact, in this case, the re-ballot will be a blessing in disguise. It should bring the whole issue back into public focus and shatter the illusion of peace created by that nice Mr Dearing.

SATs remain the keystone of Tory education policy. Without them it will be more difficult to reintroduce the selective, competitive regime the Tories really want. The NUT's negotiations with the government show that the Tories are prepared for a fight in defence of their ideas. So let's give them one.

By boycotting the SATs teachers are standing in the frontline; defending the comprehensive system of education. Having forced the government into retreat it's time to finish the tests off completely. The re-ballot makes such an outcome possible.

BT workers face redundancy by appraisal

By a Central London BT engineer

BT management's procedures on appraising workers are meeting resistance from workers worried that they will be assessed out of their jobs.

At present several NCU branches are boycotting the current round of appraisals until assurances are made that there will be fair assessments rather than targeting for redundancy.

There is very little promotion in BT, yet the NCU and management have recently agreed a new scheme. There was a hidden agenda — appraisal then reassignment into a surplus group, and from there just a short step to compulsory redundancy.

Local union branches await the results of national negotiations, but anything less than a commitment not to follow through realignment of staff on the basis of appraisals will be acceptable.

Otherwise every year at appraisal time we will be reapplying for our own jobs.

Several leaked management instructions make clear that line managers are having pressure put on them to mark down staff in order to reach a certain percentage of redeployment.

The present situation is confusing. The status of appraisals already done is unclear — they may be withdrawn and the whole procedure rerun under different instructions. Different union branches are issuing different instructions on how to undermine appraisals and most NCU members are unaware of what is happening nationally.

We need a clear line to come from national headquarters that does not compromise job security. The BL-led NEC must clarify the situation as soon as possible and offer support to branches. A campaign against compulsory redundancies must be started.

Strike beats tube bosses

From back page

THE BALLOT result — a 4 to 1 majority and a 60% turnout — was excellent. It further strengthened our confidence and gave management a real shock which made them start to offer concessions. They had confirmed the sackings at appeal but an industrial tribunal had ordered Pat's contract to be reinstated, pending a full hearing, on the grounds that he had been sacked for trade union activities.

Management offered Pat £19,500 to drop the case and agree to no publicity. Naturally, he turned them down. Then Ray was offered a station assistant job and Pat a guard's job — but both on other lines.

And this was after Arthurton, LUL's managing director, had said he would die in a ditch before Pat ever worked on the Underground again! As the Tubeworker bulletin asked "Where's the ditch?"

As the strike date neared, both Ray and Pat held out for full, unconditional reinstatement. Management fed their lies to the Evening Standard. There was a grossly inaccurate full page attack on Pat Sikorski — "Red Guard causes strike misery... He (Pat) seeks the downfall of everything!... He'd have the lads out if he thought it was the wrong colour toilet paper." The whole thing was so over the top that it was counter-productive.

Thursday 7 October, the strike day dawned. And what a day it was! About 2/3 of Central Line traincrew are in RMT, and of those only a handful came into work. Also, and very courageously, members of ASLEF traincrew refused to cross picket lines despite threats and instructions from their union to do so.

Management tried to claim a 40-50% service, but their own statistics revealed only a 28% service.

The next one-day strike set for 14 October would be even better supported. And an Underground-wide ballot was about to start.

Management scuttled to ACAS with their tails between their legs.

By Tuesday a deal was signed.

The main points were:

- A review of disciplinary procedures by unions and management to create a new disciplinary procedure.

- An independent arbitrator to review Ray and Pat's cases. The decision to be binding on LUL and RMT.

- A review of all case going to industrial tribunal giving all these people a chance to get their jobs back.

In return for this the Underground-wide ballot was called off.

The independent arbitrator is an attempt to save face by management. It is accepted that he will recommend unconditional reinstatement for Ray and Pat. Management will then say they are "abiding by arbitration" rather than giving in! The review of procedure and of those others sacked is important.

This dispute was about everyone sacked since the Company Plan came in. There are 31 cases going to industrial tribunal from the Underground.

It marks a real turning point. Since the Company Plan management had gone as they pleased with no real hindrance. Many tubeworkers were demoralised. Views such as "We can't go on strike anymore or they'll just sack us all" were commonplace.

Were! Because that's all changed now. The dispute, although limited to traincrew on one line, has shown that the management can be beaten and indeed humiliated.

As the Tubeworker bulletin put it about LUL management "They've forgotten one thing, it isn't... the 'vitaly important managers' who make the trains run — it's us — and it's also us who can make them stop."

The Company Plan was trumpeted by management as "a new dawn for the Underground". Well, that was a false dawn. We've just seen the real one. The revival of militancy, however limited, by a key section of transport workers opens up a new day, not just for tubeworkers but for us all.

Industrial round-up

PRINT

SEVEN MACCLESFIELD print workers, members of the GPMU (Graphical, Print and Media Union) have been sacked for defending their trade union rights.

The sacked men, aged from 28 to 62, had worked for Harvest Printers Ltd for periods ranging from 8 to 16 years. The seven include the Father of the Chapel (FoC) and the deputy FoC. They have been picketing the company's print works since 27 July.

Please send donations to Harvest Seven Support Group, 98 Crompton Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 8EB. Cheques payable to "Sacked Harvest Workers Fund".

• Visit the pickets at Park Mill, Park Street, Macclesfield or telephone them on 0850 747771.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By Fiona Monkman

A ballot for strike action over the government's 1.5% pay limit

has been lost by a majority of two-to-one, among Unison members in local government. The original claim aimed to tackle low pay — 45% of all white collar staff are now on low or poverty wages. The settlement represents half a pint of lager a week for the lowest paid workers. The union's national leadership attended no meetings or rallies to urge members to fight. This sort of campaigning would have been essential.

The failure of the TUC leadership to organise a public sector-wide fightback left local government workers isolated in attempting to reverse a central plank of government policy.

The defeat in the ballot can also be seen as a reaction to the uncertainties of cuts and redundancies in councils across the country.

The feeling of powerlessness can and must be turned around. With the government threatening even further attacks on pay next year, a united fightback by

public sector workers is essential.

Strike on 5 November

CIVIL SERVICE

By a NUCPS activist

OVER 100 delegates attended the second unofficial civil service joint union market testing conference earlier this month.

It showed the possibilities for building a genuine broad-based campaign on the issue.

Right now the key task for activists in CPSA, IRSF, NIPSA and NUCPS is to win a huge majority for the one-day cross civil service strike scheduled for 5 November.

Beyond that we need to push for an escalation of the action, seizing on all the available local action and sectional openings and then link these to the need for a campaigning leadership which is prepared to organise effective national action to defeat the Tory attacks.

Post bosses take union to court

POST

By Gerry Bates

FOR THE second time in a week Royal Mail management have issued injunctions against local branches of the postal workers' union UCW.

The injunction, served on workers in Manchester and Mount Pleasant in central London, are designed to stop rank and file postal workers resisting management's attempts to undermine existing agreements, and defending terms and conditions.

As one Manchester Amalgamated branch member explained:

"At Mount Pleasant they organised an overtime ban. As a result Royal Mail took them to court

and got an injunction restraining any form of industrial action in the post office that is organised without a ballot. This applies to the whole union nationally.

"In Manchester we are back in court on Friday (22 October). All we've done is explain to members what the existing agreements are and people in the delivery section are sticking to them."

These latest legal attacks should be seen in a wider context.

"Management want to achieve total flexibility," the Manchester activist explained, "but we are trying to stop them imposing changes as and when they see fit, especially in relation to their attacks on the first delivery. They are using the new technology to try and get people to work themselves out of a job. The

aim in the end is to cut down the number of full-time workers, and massively increase insecurity. Eventually they want a workforce made up of people on part-time with temporary contracts. It's already virtually impossible to get a permanent contract anywhere in Royal Mail."

Immediately, the Manchester branch is involved in a legal battle over whether or not they have called industrial action. They simply insist that they have explained to members what the existing agreements mean. "People have been asking us 'what are the agreements, what should we be doing?'" If the case is lost then the implications are potentially very serious. It would mean that postal workers must always work "as instructed", thus

undermining all agreements between the union and management.

These developments should be seen as an integral part of Royal Mail management's offensive against the second delivery. The best way to fight back and defend jobs is to start the campaign now in defence of the second delivery and for the shorter working week.

• The UCW recall conference last week rejected attempts by the leadership to push through both the indoor and outdoor productivity schemes, but attempts to pin down the EC on starting the shorter working week campaign were defeated by a narrow margin.

Nevertheless, massive anger exists on the issue of hours and jobs. There is a big gap between the leadership, who want to sell jobs

NHS
Emergency Day
Enough is Enough
20 November
Called by UNISON

Assemble: 11am, Jubilee Gardens, Belvedere Road, London SE1. Nearest tube: Waterloo
March: 12 noon, rally: Trafalgar Square

SOCIALIST

Witch-hunt in Wallasey

ORGANISER

VICTORY!

Strike beats tube bosses

By a Central Line guard

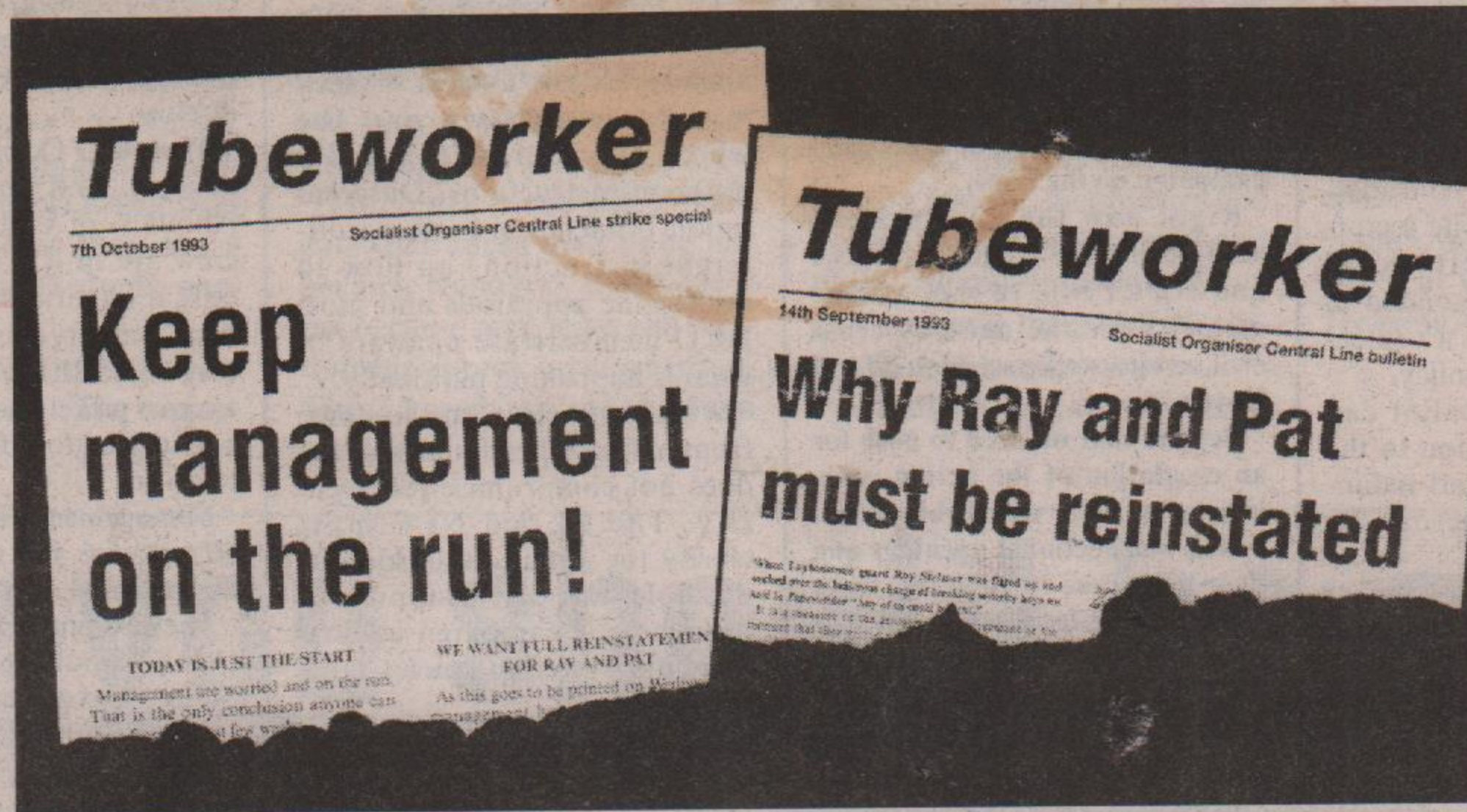
THE LEADERS OF the TUC and Labour Party are constantly telling us that strikes and active unions are things of the past. The fear caused by mass unemployment and the legal shackles of the Tory anti-union laws are supposed to make effective trade unionism impossible.

Well, train crew on the London Underground have proved them wrong. A campaign of strike action on the Central Line has won the reinstatement of two sacked union activists.

This struggle has recently come to a head. In July, guard Ray Stelzner was sacked despite there being no evidence against him for allegedly breaking security tags on his train. His driver was also charged with the same offence but was acquitted on the same evidence, or rather lack of it. This caused a great deal of anger and resentment.

There were a couple of rank and file meetings on the Central Line to defend Ray, at which unofficial action was discussed, but then, following management threats and disclaimers from RMT and ASLEF head offices, discounted in favour of trying to get an official ballot to win Ray's reinstatement.

This led to the second victimisation when



guard Pat Sikorski had an argument with the Leytonstone Train Crew Manager after the Manager had removed notices defending Ray from the RMT noticeboard. Pat was sacked on the ludicrous charge of threatening behaviour.

Pat, a prominent supporter of *Socialist Outlook*, is Secretary of the RMT's London Transport District Council. He is in effect the most senior lay official of the union on the Underground. If management got away with sacking Pat then no one's job would be safe.

A ballot of Central Line traincrew had been proposed to win Ray's reinstatement. The aims were now enlarged to unconditional reinstatement for both Ray and Pat.

Because of the Tories' latest round of anti-union laws the ballot had to be fully postal.

To counteract this there were members' leaflets and meetings. RMT General Secretary Jimmy Knapp came down to speak to meetings at both ends of the line. At the Leytonstone meeting 150 or more people packed out the room to give a massive boost to the campaign and everyone's confidence. A support group was set up which did excellent work, leafletting traincrew and plastering stickers all over the place — ensuring that no

one could claim not to know what the rate was about. It made many traincrew realise that this was something out of the ordinary run of ballots — over a pay claim or whatever.

Continued on page 15

LOL DUFFY, Paul Davies, Liz Williams, Mick Cashman, Gail Cameron and Cate Murphy have been suspended from holding office or representing the Labour Party. They are accused of bringing the Party into disrepute or belonging to a proscribed organisation. What are the real reasons?

Lol Duffy stood as Labour's parliamentary candidate in Wallasey in 1987, and increased the Labour Party vote by 39%. Lynda Chalker hung onto her seat by 279 votes. Her previous majority had been 6,708 votes.

Lol Duffy stood as a working-class socialist who had been imprisoned for leading an occupation against the closure of Cammell Laird shipyard in 1984.

Speaking at a public meeting alongside Dennis Skinner, Betty Heathfield and workers involved in local disputes he said, "We prop up this system. We work for it, we make it go. But it's not our system, is it? It's theirs. When it falls apart, like it is now, we take the cuts and the pain, we tighten our belts, we take the weight of it on our shoulders. I think it's about time we took control of it once and for all. Let's run it our way for the benefit of the majority. That's what socialism is all about — ordinary working people taking control."

Paul Davies dared to stand against Frank Field for the selection of a Labour candidate in Birkenhead. The other thing he did wrong was to win the selection. Field immediately declared that he would resign and fight a by-election if the Party leadership did not restore him to his 'rightful' place as Labour candidate in Birkenhead. The leadership backed Field and re-ran the selection process. Field had told the local paper in 1987 that he did not advise votes in Wallasey to back the Labour candidate!

Since then Field has run a vendetta against the left wing in Wallasey, and the Labour leadership have gone along with it. The six are being victimised for being left wing CLP and union activists — nothing else!

All six have consistently worked for the election of a Labour government despite the attacks on them. Don't let the Labour leadership get away with their abuse of power!

Send messages of support and copies of protest resolutions to the NEC to: Wallasey Socialist Campaign Group Supporters, Flat 2, 51 Egremont Prom, Wallasey, Merseyside, L45 7QZ. Phone 051-638 0133.

Rally and lobby of Parliament
Save our Railways
Tuesday 26 October 1993
Central Hall, Westminster
2.30 onwards

HOW TO STOP RAIL
PRIVATISATION
PAGE 15

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