

Socialist Organiser

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Looters who make up the law

THATCHER'S THUGS

Police plan terror on Britain's streets

THE police had plastic bullets ready to use on Tottenham's streets last weekend. And London's police chief Kenneth Newman says they'll use them — and CS gas — next time.

The police chiefs and the Tories are likely to try to use the current wave of riots to bring more and more of the policing methods of Belfast and Derry to Britain's cities.

Riot

Metropolitan Police are being trained in the use of new weapons and new riot techniques, according to a report in The Observer (October 6). The new tactics, based on Chinese martial arts, are specifically designed to deal with riots — and probably mass pickets too.

Scotland Yard manuals detail methods of inflicting serious pain on people — including the use of truncheons and riot shields.

One new weapon, a long riot stick, has already been used against rioters.

The 'flail' truncheon is designed to be particularly painful. Ten inches long and attached to the finger by a chain, it can be used to hit people on the arms and legs, about the face, or 'thrust like a sword' into the groin.

The new methods infringe Home Office regulations. But the police aren't worried about that.

The Police Act 1984, the implementation of which has been held up because of the miners' strike, gives new powers to the police. Mainly, it makes legal what the police already did illegally.

Under the Police Act the police can:

*Stop and search you in the street and other places, or in a vehicle, on suspicion that you possess an offensive weapon, stolen goods, equipment for stealing, or suspicion of possession of drugs.

*Arrest you for any offence, if you don't give your name and address.

*detain you without contact with the outside world for 36 hours on their say-so alone.

*Strip-search you.

*Subject you to an intimate body search.

*Establish a road block for an unlimited period and search any vehicle.

The Act changes the definition of a 'serious' offence so as to make almost any offence 'serious' — and gives the police the power to search you or your home even if you have done nothing wrong.

The police will be given further powers in the according to the new White Paper on public order. This will give police the power to ban demonstrations on almost any pretext.

Greater Manchester's Chief Constable, the notorious James Anderton, has commented: "Mass picketing — if I may use that popular misnomer — and violent street demonstrations are acts of terrorism without the bullet and the bomb".

He expresses the view of the police hierarchy.

The labour movement must campaign against the introduction of stronger police powers, and for more democratic accountability and control over the police — including operational control.

Limit

Every avenue of accountability that we can exert over the police limits their ability to go on lawless rampage against the working class.

The police are a class force — trained to enforce and define law and order for the ruling class. Accountability can limit their excesses; it cannot change their fundamental nature. We also need an *alternative* to the police. The labour movement and working class communities must find ways of policing our own areas ourselves, as part of a struggle to take control over the whole of society.

THE TORY penalties on councils for 'overspending' are illegal. That is the ruling of the Court of Appeal last week.

Tory legislation discriminates against some (mostly Labour) councils and is therefore unlawful, the Court decided.

As a result, the Tories may introduce 'retrospective legislation' to avoid having to repay more than £1 billion.

The government will appeal to the House of Lords. If that fails to reverse the decision, they will probably rush through emergency laws.

The Financial Times (5 October) comments: "The ruling could undermine the basis for levying all penalties in 1985-6, amounting to £400 million, including those placed on Liverpool... It could result in Liverpool City Council being let off the hook".

While Neil Kinnock whines on that it is not possible to give full support to the sacked and jailed miners because it is wrong to challenge the law, and wrong for a government to legally sanction the class struggle after the events, the Tories get on with the business of the class war.

Councillors breaking Tory regulations are faced with massive surcharges and the threat of jail. But when it turns out that the Tory government, not the surcharged councillors, is breaking the law, what happens?

Are the charges dropped? Do the councils get their money back? No: the Tories just change the rules. Retrospectively, too.

The ruling class and their representatives wage class struggle first, and put the legal niceties second. They do what has to be done to win. Nothing is too sacred to be sacrificed to their cause.

Yet the leaders of the labour movement fall down on their knees in awe at the great God of Tory law. They are paralysed by a legal system that our enemies control and do not shrink from manipulating.

**Oct 10
MARCH
ON THE
TORIES**

Meet just
south of
Central Pier,
Blackpool,
at 12.30.
Move off
1.30. Bring
megaphones
and banners.

Tottenham report page 2



Armed riot cop in Tottenham. Photo: Andrew Moore.

Paddy Dollard reports from the 1985 Tory Party conference.

THEY SAID she was past it. The polls say her party can't win the next election. Newspapers, which have fawned on her for years have openly speculated about how long Mrs Thatcher could continue before the party replaced her.

But they have all been proved wrong. Margaret Thatcher grew by a head at this year's Tory party conference.

In an astounding speech which led Tory Party chair Norman Tebbit to storm off the platform in protest, she turned on the 'fascist' right wing of her own party and tore them apart. She stood up for the decent caring Tory rank and file in the shires and thereby gave them the courage to stand up for themselves.

Mrs Thatcher has emerged as a new woman. She's still tough, but Maggie now has a new tender and caring ingredient to her persona.

The Tebbit-MacGregor faction of the Tory Party tried to move a composite motion proposing that the jailed miners should be left to the normal review procedures of the courts, that the sacked miners should remain sacked, and that the illegal action taken by the government to penalise local councils should be left unpunished and uncorrected, its victims unrecompensed.

Stung to the quick by the sheer injustice of it all, Mrs Thatcher, who has long been thought to be a prisoner of the Tebbit-MacGregor faction, rose in magnificent form and met them head on. They hadn't a chance.

She bitterly denounced the "divisive and disruptive" class justice of the MacGregor-Tebbit tendency — what she memorably described as "the Trotskyist Toryism of tough guy Tebbit" and "its vote-losing advocates of class-struggle doctrine alien to the Conservative Party".

She called them "the mindless money-mad neo-Marxist militant monetarist on the fringes of this great party", "these MacGregorite gorgons of a never-before-seen Conservatism, vicious of visage, vile, vindictive and violent, comatose of conscience. A Conservatism faced with electoral elimination if it does not change".

The wonderful phrases rang on and on in a great torrent. Willie Whitelaw, in the chair, interrupted Mrs Thatcher's speech to describe her as a "historic masterpiece". He said she was in with a chance for a Nobel Prize, if not for peace then for literature.

Rounded

She rounded on those who have illegally penalised councils and told them to stop breaking the law. She told the hard right wing law-and-order brigade not to be stupid: it was right-wing policy that had created Tottenham and Brixton.

The gist of what she said was this:

"What kind of people do you think we Conservatives are? What kind of a party do you think this party is — the once great party which has shaped



"A historical masterpiece... a chance for the Nobel Prize..." Photo: John Harris

KNOCKOUT!

Maggie roasts rabid right

the Britain we grew up in and gave us everything we have had in life.

"Some of you think this party is a party of the class struggle!" she said, glaring at Ian MacGregor who sat near the exit at the back of the hall, looking shifty and cowardly at the same time.

"Well you are WR-O-NG! Of course we know that class struggle sometimes breaks out, and we recognise the class struggle as a fact of life.

"But the true democratic Tory never foments, stimulates, prosecutes or fights the class struggle. We believe in in one nation — passively."

Ignoring the angry chorus of

"Liar! liar!" from the nasty trash-novelist spiv Jeffrey Archer, a large section of the audience rose to its feet at this point, led by the Director-General of the CBI. Some of them spat at those who didn't rise. Scuffles broke out.

Central to everything Mrs Thatcher said was the need to win the next election. "I have a vision", she said, inspirationally.

Denouncing the politics which led to the savage police violence against picketing miners and the waste of the inner cities, she astonished delegates by the sheer breadth and audacity of her non-partisanship and states-

manship. She talked bitterly, glaring at people in the hall, of the casualties of Tory Party policy. "They are to be found among the people whose jobs and services have been lost and living standards beaten down.

"Elections are won in years, not weeks. Do you think people will so easily forget what has been done to them in the last six years?"

"They won't easily forgive or forget the Tebbit Trotskyists whose pontics over six years have led to the grotesque chaos of Tottenham and Brixton".

Decent bedrock people of the Tory Party, she said, don't want to play politics with people's homes and jobs.

Moving

"We must win the next election. Some of you think that's class treachery, huh?", she sneered like Humphrey Bogarde, raising herself to her maximum height in a moving way that made you forget how small she really is.

"Some of you think that this party is no longer the party of Churchill and Gaitskell and Macmillan and er, dare I say it, Mr Chairman, of Edward Heath. But let me say this to

you: There are some of us left in this once great party who will fight and fight and fight again to save the party we love.

"Tebbit and MacGregor want to punish criminal miners? Then prosecute the police too! Dismiss the Chief Constables! Make a full investigation of their tactics! A free pardon for jailed miners!" shouted Mrs Thatcher, as half the Tory conference rose to applaud her. She knew how to talk their language.

"And what about the sacked miners?", asked Mrs Thatcher. "The overwhelming majority of those sacked committed no crime except that they had the guts to fight back against industrial autocracy and tyranny backed up on the picket line by the bully-boy tactics of a semi-militarised national police force which our government organised and put at the service of MacGregor.

"Only think, Mr Chairman, what a falling-off was there in that single act of creating a national police force, what a grotesque departure was that from all that our party has worked for over 3000 years of unbroken British history.

"Those miners were fighting back against nationally-organised brutality deployed wholesale to back up alien, American

gangster style methods of industrial relations. They were fighting for industrial democracy. Yes, Mr Chairman, for democracy. Resisting the brutal destruction of mining communities and the economic devastation of whole areas of our wonderful country by an autocratic power over which they had no control, Mr Chairman, those miners and their wives were exercising their god-given inalienable rights of free-born British men and women to resist tyranny.

Lawless

"To resist", she said with a pause. "To resist the lawless economic tyranny of a MacGregor over the miners even if that tyranny is backed up by the forms of legality which, to its eternal disgrace, this democratic party of ours gives to industrial dictatorship.

"You say the law should be impartial and that the law has spoken already and cannot be contradicted? Those who get the worst of the law in the strike should suffer the forfeit?"

"But that is to deeply undermine the rule of law by branding it irretrievably as class law. It is not to defend the idea of impartial law — it is to destroy the belief of large parts of our population in the existence of impartial law and in the ideal of impartial law.

She paused and turned to Douglas Hurd, the Humphrey Bogarde sneer in place again. "Where have you been lately, Hurd? Dixon of Dock Green is dead. Everyone knows that the police lie through their teeth in court, routinely".

Part of the conference shuffled uneasily, and there were a few shouts of "Shame" and "Pinko liberal".

"You want this Tory government to pick up the tab for MacGregor and the Chief Constables", she said, "to endorse crying injustice, to turn ourselves into fawning curs around brutal class warriors. Well, this democratic party has more self-respect than that.

Bosses

Her face became cold with indignation. "Too many people in this party think that the Tory Party is a bosses' party, and I want to tell them they have got the wrong idea entirely — the wrong idea entirely", she repeated for emphasis.

"There must be no Tory class warriors. Even if we are being battered into the ground we will go down rather than fight back.

"That's always been the Tory way: that's what is so unforgivable about the chief constables. They wouldn't let the miners stop the scabs. They fought back using all the necessary physical power of the police and ignoring the law when expedient".

Thatcher's ovation was "long and stormy", though many delegates went home that evening bewildered. A few muttered, dazed, "Is this the Tory Party? What party does she think she is in?"

The newspapers the following morning announced that Mrs Thatcher had been committed to a hospital by Dennis, suffering from a "profound nervous breakdown".

Why Tottenham exploded

Mick O'Sullivan lives in Tottenham and works there as a building worker for the council. He told Socialist Organiser about what happened there last weekend.

"The situation had been tense for a number of weeks, and there were rumours last week that a riot would take place.

It was sparked off when police went to search Mrs Jarrett's flat on the Broadwater Farm estate for stolen goods.

It was an operation to pick up specific suspects, rather than a 'swamp' operation. But according to Mrs Jarrett's daughter,

the police pushed over her mother, who was overweight, and then did nothing to get help when Mrs Jarrett collapsed and died with a heart attack.

The news got round, and later in the day the estate exploded.

It is a run-down estate. People mostly live there only if they can't find anywhere else. A high proportion are unemployed — especially youth who have no money, no future, nothing. There's a lot of crime.

The riot was directed against the police. But most of the people on the estate were scared both of the rioters and of the police.

Some of the people who work with me and live on the estate are staying at home today because they're worried there may be more riots.

The division between the rioters and the people who were scared was mostly between young and old — or at least, young males and old. The rioters included both black and white, but there was an element of racism and black/white division in the response to the riot.

What the police said about the riot being provoked by left-wing agitators is rubbish. Look at the estate, and look at the unem-

ployment figures, and you'll see that if anyone political provoked the riot, it was the Tory government.

What I've been saying about it is that the police should get off the estate and the tenants should organise themselves properly to patrol it and keep order.

But there's more to it than that. The Tories are to blame, but the labour movement is to blame too. Capitalism is rotting in Britain, and Labour governments have done nothing to replace it. Now the abscesses are bursting open".

How to win the election

Some people do believe some things they read in the papers. Last week at Labour Party conference Neil Kinnock made no new proposals, good, bad, or indifferent, for improving Britain's rotten society. He merely made speeches about how he would cut any corners to win office.

But this insult to the voters did win him a good press. And the latest opinion polls show a much better score for Labour.

For Kinnock's admirers in the Labour Party that is enough. 'Kinnock can win an election', they say. 'So the left should shut up - unless they want another five years of the Tories'.

Destroy

But what Fleet Street made, Fleet Street can destroy. And besides the voters are not stupid. Kinnock's new glory is not stable.

Kinnock *certainly* ditched the miners and Liverpool's fight against the cuts. He *possibly* improved his chances in the next election. Anyone who thinks that is a fair exchange should reflect on the basic purpose of the Labour Party.

Labour was not founded to provide ambitious waffle-spouters from working class backgrounds with a career route to Westminster and Downing Street, but to be a political arm for the working class.

Kinnock's policy *may* win an election. It will guarantee that any election victory is followed by the most bitter disillusion and probably a quick return by the Tories.

The alternative is not, as Kinnock would have it, sterile restatement of principles. Support can be won, shallowly, by playing the media. It can also be won, more solidly, by arguing policies that serve the interests of the majority.

Majority

Working class people - and they are the vast majority in Britain - know about the decay of the society around them. If all politicians present scarcely distinguishable plans for tinkering with the misery, then reasonably enough they will choose the one whom the media describe as most competent and businesslike at tinkering.

But what if one party should present a plan for abolishing the decay and reconstructing society anew? It has never been tried in Britain on a serious scale - but isn't that what the Labour Party was supposed to be for?



Jackal, donkey or windbag? Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, IFL

Remember: Labour's best opinion-poll score in recent years was in late 1981, at the height of the left's advance. When Labour seemed to promise new hope, it scored over 50% in the polls.

In 1979 the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory organised a distinc-

tive left-wing voice within the official Labour campaign - for Labour, but against the record of Callaghan and Wilson. Our paper, Socialist Organiser, came out of that campaign.

We need the same sort of campaign now.

Don't give up the fight against the right

LAST WEEK'S Labour conference did not go well for the left.

Socialist Worker argued that it was so bad that the only possible course for serious socialists is to pull out and start anew.

Of course, they had the same conclusion when the Left seemed to be winning triumph after triumph at Labour Party conferences, in 1979-81. Then, they said that the left-wing speeches and votes at conference were irrelevant, because they were all far too much to the left to connect with the working class: the only answer was to 'think small' and concentrate on local trade union work.

Now they say that the right-wing speeches and votes are practically all there is to the Labour Party, and that the answer is... to 'think small' and concentrate on local trade union work.

From another angle they arrive at the same conclusion as Neil Kinnock: Marxists, revolutionaries, reds have no place in the Labour Party.

Kinnock says that Labour must respect legality, meaning the right of the bosses' courts to squeeze the labour movement. He says that class struggle has no place in the Labour Party, and that Labour politics

can only mean parliamentary bargaining for the crumbs from the bosses' table.

Not many crumbs, at that: Kinnock has not even promised to restore all the cuts that the Tories have made in social spending.

Socialist Worker agrees. It says that Kinnock is all the Labour left will ever get, and all we can expect.

Kinnock wants to hammer the left. He has given the nod for a small-scale guerilla witch-hunt of 'Militant' supporters and other socialists. He may well be planning a bigger purge.

Alternative

Socialist Worker says: leave the Labour Party, it can't be transformed. They call on the left in the Labour Party, and 'Militant' in particular, to join SW and build 'an alternative' outside the Labour Party.

Of course, Socialist Worker does not support Kinnock. They want to fight the witch-hunt.

But if you want seriously to 'resist the right' - and in the first place that means fighting

the witch-hunt in the Labour Party - then you have to be in the Labour Party.

The job of serious socialists is to wage a battle of ideas in the labour movement, to re-shape and transform the *whole* of the movement - to change the movement's politics.

Retire

To retire from the political wing of the labour movement means giving up on that battle. It means agreeing with Kinnock and saying that for now all the mass of the organised working class in the Labour Party and trade unions can aspire to is small-scale tinkering with the system.

It means giving Kinnock a clear run.

The day may come when socialists cannot remain in the Labour Party because we are all expelled - or when the Marxist left has won such support for our politics that Kinnock and his co-thinkers feel obliged to split the whole movement down the middle.

Lynk's poison

I received a letter from Berry Hill to appear in front of the Executive on a charge of vilification of a branch official at a branch meeting.

What annoys me about this is that for the last 18 months we have heard nothing but poison directed out of Berry Hill at the national president.

Yet these self-same people have the audacity to ask me to appear in front of a disciplinary hearing.

I have the right to appeal to Area Council under the rules that I am being charged. I asked them if they would allow that and they said yes. If I am not satisfied with the outcome of that I have the right to appeal to the National Executive. I asked if they would allow me that and they said not. At which point I walked out.

I won't participate in disciplinary hearings in which they take the part of the rule book to do me under but then deny me the protection of the rule book in the event of my not being satisfied with the result.

Five of us from different pits have faced disciplinary hearings but we have not heard the outcome yet.

I think they want to take us out of the ballot although five votes isn't going to make that much of a difference. But it is a way of effectively

silencing strong opposition at branch meetings. If they were to suspend or expel us we would not be able to attend branch meetings.

There will be one last big rally on the 12th in Mansfield which will be addressed by Peter Heathfield, Ken Gill and others. The ballot will be the week after and it is then that the hard work really starts, because I imagine we'll be talking about forming our own branches in the Notts coalfield.

I think the NCB offer to negotiate a separate pay deal with the scabs in Notts is a load of hogwash. It's a story put about in order to intimidate and frighten people in the Notts coalfield. But it is virtually impossible for them to do. They cannot carry out separate negotiations where half a face team belongs to one union and half to another.

As far as the talk of a new Chairman of the NCB from next year is concerned, Ian MacGregor is there but he isn't. In fact he hasn't really been there for some time. We all know that Downing St is the chairman of the Coal Board at the moment.

I think it's an attempt to put an acceptable face at the top of the Coal Board. But no matter whose face is at the top, the policies are still going to be the same.

On Tuesday morning Paul Whetton heard that he had been suspended from attending branch meetings for six months.

Following a High Court undertaking by Lynk and the other scabs in a previous disciplinary case the suspension involves only attendance at branch meetings and not union membership or the right to vote in a ballot.

As Paul commented: "The punishment shows the object of the exercise - to take us out of

branch meetings."

At the same time Notts NUM members have also just heard that the ballot on 17-18 October will be conducted by branch officials and committee men. The Area EC had originally proposed this, but had been overturned by the Area Council in favour of the existing procedure, where the membership of each pit decides how the ballot is to be run. Now the membership are being told that it's being run according to the EC proposal.

NCB plans more closures

National Coal Board figures for coal production show they are making big losses. Of course, their accounting is debatable. But they suggest that losses are no less in Nottinghamshire than anywhere else. Of 14 pits in North Notts, only five did not lose money in August.

The NCB is threatening further closures if the 'cost structure' of these pits does not improve.

So Lynk's claim that miners

will be safe if they collaborate with the Coal Board is naive rubbish. The NCB will do what it has to boost profits - and a split union will be in a worse position to resist.

At both Cortonwood and Penrhawceibr, workers have voted to accept closure.

Even militant areas have become demoralised since the defeat of the strike and without clear direction from the labour movement leaders.

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Wages

The Economist magazine of Saturday September 21 published an interesting table of bosses' salaries and workers' wages compared internationally.

International comparisons of real incomes are tricky for many reasons — unrealistic exchange rates, different patterns of consumption and different relative prices of various goods in different countries — but some conclusions can be drawn.

The figures for total cash compensation of chief executives of big companies show that the bosses have much the same living standard everywhere in the world.

Brazil's bosses, for example, take home 42% of what US bosses take home. A chart of international price comparisons (based on European middle-class spending patterns) in the same issue of the Economist indicates that the cost of living in Rio de Janeiro is only 30% of what it is in New York, so Brazilian bosses are actually better off in real terms than US bosses.

Brazilian workers in manufacturing industry, however, take home only 9 per cent of what their counterparts in the US get. So Brazilian workers certainly

have a much lower living standard than US workers — not as much lower as the 9% figure would indicate, but still much lower — and inequality in Brazil is far wider than in the US.

The differential between bosses' and workers' incomes in Brazil is four or five times what it is in the US.

West European countries — even notoriously unequal France — have smaller differentials between bosses and workers than the US, and so does Australia. But underdeveloped countries have boss/worker gaps twice (Argentina), three, four or five times the US's — or four to ten times Australia's and Sweden's.

The figures shed interesting light on the notion that all classes in underdeveloped countries form an 'anti-imperialist' bloc, all exploited by imperialism. Brazil's, Argentina's, or Mexico's bosses do very well indeed out of imperialism: they have more in common with the bosses of the US and Britain than they have with the workers of their own country.

And the workers of different countries have more in common with each other than they have with their bosses.

Undertake

"Highest death rate in London — put your funeral parlour here".

Hospitals could be advertising like that to sell franchises if the privatisation lobby gets its way.

In what has been described by one of the participants as a "brain storming session" the accountants Touche Ross have developed a plan for opening up hospital premises to commercial

operations including fast food, opticians, hairdresses, banks, building societies and...undertakers.

Manchester Area Health Authority have drawn up a plan based on this idea to save £780,000 a year.

So far Social Services secretary Norman Fowler has refused to comment.



Conference is still male-dominated. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, IFL.

Fighting sexism in the party

By Jean Lane

Women's Fightback produced a daily bulletin at this year's Labour Party conference which we had inserted into the rank and file delegates' briefing, though we had to fight on two occasions to get it in there.

Every day we had a spot in our bulletin called "Quote of the day". The most telling was Thursday's quote, which had been overheard in the coffee bar after Wednesday's debates. "Women support the armed struggle — keeping their arms up in the air trying to get in on the debate".

The debate on Wednesday morning had been on the NUM resolution for amnesty for sacked miners, review of cases of imprisoned miners and reimbursement of NUM funds. Of course it wasn't only women who couldn't get in on that debate. If you weren't a right wing general secretary and hadn't been stitched up weeks in advance to speak then you didn't have a chance.

Breakdown

Another regular spot in the Women's Fightback bulletin was a breakdown of who did speak. We didn't manage to keep up the count for the whole week because our delegates were so taken up with the debates, but the count for Tuesday, I am sure, reflects conference as a whole: Black women, 2; black men, 1; white women, 15; white men, 29.

At the end of conference on Friday, the chair, Alan Hadden, gave his own breakdown for the whole week: Men 188, women 84, and stressed not only that this figure for women was 4% up on last year but also that he had lost sleep over the accusation of biased chairing.

He got a resounding "aaah". Why doesn't someone tell him that all he's got to do to get a decent night's sleep is to give us an equal voice.

But of course the question of equality for women isn't as easily solved as that. Once again the composite resolutions on women's organisation were voted down, despite the fact that the vast majority of delegates were women. The only consolation I had was that all those macho men probably felt the same.

women need to organise not just in the Labour Party but more importantly in the trade unions. One trade union delegate surpassed himself in his honesty. He thought that the idea of women being able to contribute more fully in policy-making was "dangerous". Kate Howard, a delegate and new member of Women's Fightback, answered in the bulletin: "He was right! Your cosy, male-dominated armchair views are under attack."

Not all of the conference was bad news for women, though. For instance, a resolution calling for an end to the conscience vote on abortion and reproductive rights was passed on a card vote by a two-thirds majority. Sam Lloyd, a member of Women's Fightback, who proposed the composite, wrote in our bulletin: "If it was suggested that there would be a free vote for MPs on, for example, housing, there would be an uproar. And rightly so."

Also, another composite proposed by a Women's Fightback member, Kath Crosby, calling for a Charter for Women's Health, was passed.

Kath stressed that it was pro-

posing, not a glossy charter which makes the party look good on paper but does nothing in practice. It is to be a charter, written by ordinary women, women who use the health service and women who are affected by health and safety at work.

Focus

All in all, Women's Fightback provided a useful focus at this year's Labour Party conference with its bulletin, showing that women had something to say on more than just "women's issues" and also proving the need for a working class women's organisation — one which can organise around the constitutional demands for women's representation in the party and against sexism in the labour movement, but also can provide a reason for working class women to want to join the Labour Party at all. Also, an organisation which allows both black and white women an equal voice, something that the leadership of the Labour Party consistently refuse to allow.

In fact it isn't just equality that the leadership refuse to practice. Increasingly and par-

ticularly with Kinnock's style of leadership, the Labour Party is more and more showing itself to be the party that can manage capitalism better than the Tories.

This is not what we need. Elaine Callaghan, a miner's wife from Rhodesia, Notts, pit village told Women's Fightback that Kinnock thinks that sticking up for the miners will ruin Labour's chances in the next election. On the contrary, she says, "not sticking up for us will ruin our chances". Louise Christian emphasised this point after Wednesday's miners' debate. "A Labour Party that tinkers with the system is no use. The system needs to be changed."

Fight

Women's Fightback is about fighting for women's equality and improving women's voice in the Labour Party. But, more importantly, it is for increasing the representation of women on a socialist basis. We want more women on the platform at conference. But not just any women. We want women who will represent and fight for the working class, who will be prepared to change the system, not tinker with it.

We won the miners' vote

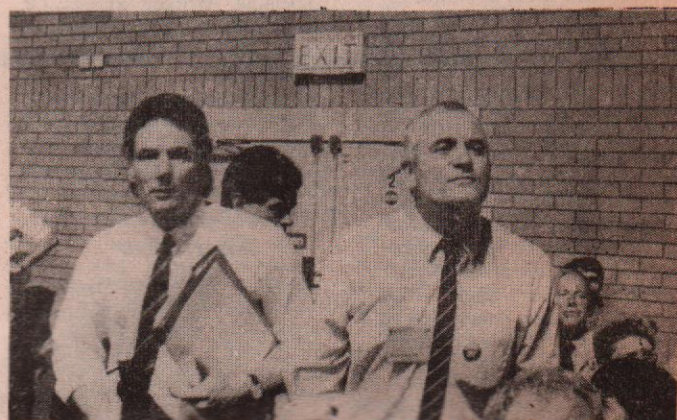
By Kath Crosby, delegate from Putney CLP

I was to get to speak on the women's composite on Tuesday.

All day Monday I felt sick, and thought I should have a valium to calm my quaking nerves. I had a brandy on Tuesday morning. But what if I fall down drunk? Or what if I can't speak? What if I faint?

The only consolation I had was that all those macho men probably felt the same.

But come the debate I got up, spoke and even enjoyed it. I was not the only woman to do so. The vote was 15 to 84 in favour of the women's composite. It was a victory for women.



Derek Hutton and Tony Mulhearn. Photo: S. Cagnoni, IFL.

Neil Kinnock? Or maybe it's because I had to fight my way past them to follow Eric Hoffer out when our leader attacked Liverpool Council.

But anyway, it wasn't such a bad conference. We won some of the votes. Best of all, we won the miners' vote.

We've got to organise

Eric Heffer MP

(speaking at the Labour Left Coordination conference fringe meeting)

I read this morning a document called the 'Labour Activist', and it said that the left is now stronger in the Labour Party than it has ever been.

There were two questions in my mind when I read that. Who are the left? And how on earth can anybody who is serious make that kind of statement after this week?

When Neil first became a Member of Parliament, he joined the Tribune Group. I used to look at these younger Members and I felt positively moderate in comparison with the things they were saying. I remember Eric Varley being like that.

The same with Neil. I remember a meeting with the Right to Work youngsters in the House of Commons. I and Neil and some other MPs came to meet them, and they were demanding a general strike.

I said we shouldn't demand things that were not practical, and I didn't think a general strike was really the slogan at the moment. And Neil out-flanked me.

I began to wonder — was I, under the aristocratic embrace of the House of Commons, moving to the right? I've been called a dinosaur by a few papers this week, but I've remained theoretically and practically in the movement precisely where I always stood — never a raging revolutionary although I think I am a revolutionary in the best sense of the word, but never somebody who's given way on basic principles.

But this week I've seen a whole group of people who have moved to the right but who still call themselves on the left.

We have to define what we mean by the left.

I don't mind being called the hard left, I just think we're better calling ourselves the genuine left, those in the Party

who genuinely, passionately believe that socialism can only be achieved on the basis of the struggle of working people to get rid of the capitalist system. To me Clause IV is the essence of our Party's view.

Now I read all about this stuff that we can transform society by getting better television and all that sort of thing, and that we can get in this bank and that bank — when it comes down to it we can only transform society when we own the means of production, distribution and exchange, when we have forms of democratic control, workers management, and when we take control of the economy.

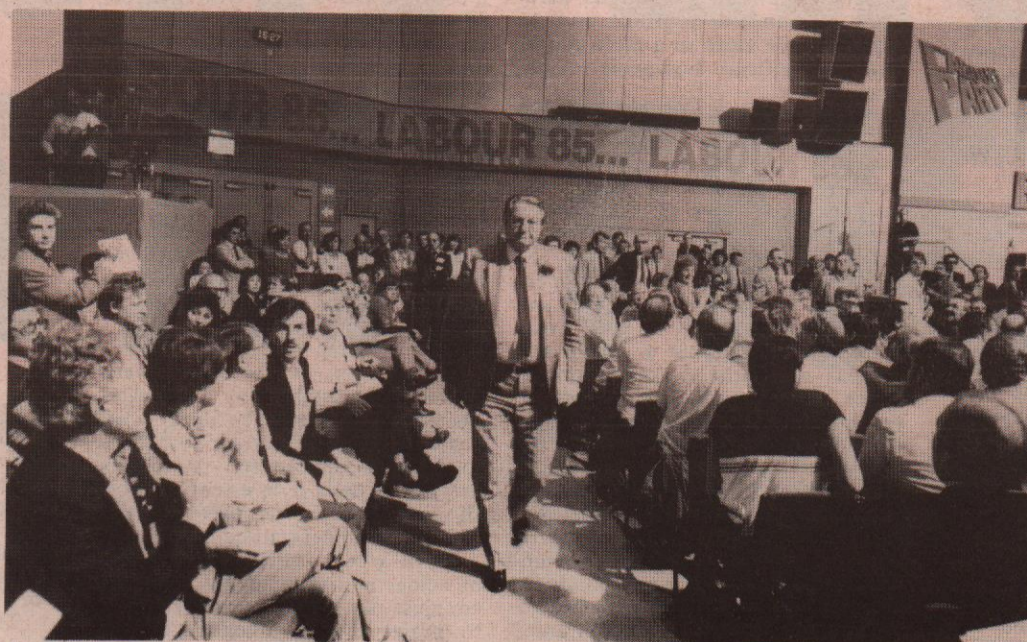
The truth is that the state, our state, is a capitalist state, designed to defend private property and the capitalist system. And the police is the police force of the capitalist society. The police operate as part of the state apparatus in defence of capitalism.

All that is being set aside, on the basis of the argument of practical politics. But if we had started out on that basis, nobody would have been convinced they could do anything, and we would never have had a Labour Party or a socialist movement.

I've heard the argument that we ought to put up somebody to fight the deputy leadership. I'm not ruling it out, but I'm not sure that's the way forward at the moment.

I think we should be working out the sort of socialist policies we want and then going out in the Party and fighting for them. Not getting into a hassle about leadership at this stage.

We've got two years until the next general election and I do want a Labour government. I do even want a lousy Labour government. That's better than a Tory government screwing us into the ground. I get annoyed when I hear some people say



Eric Heffer walks out on Kinnock. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report.

that the people on the left don't want another Labour government. It's a lie. I do not know any people on the left who do not want a Labour government.

But we must agree with Arthur Scargill when he says that power without principle is impossible to us socialists. We want our principles to be carried out.

Think

Do you remember the old comrade last year who got the merit award? He said that when the Press praise our leaders, then they'd better think seriously about where they are going. That's what I say to Neil.

When all the press can say how marvellous it was, and the Mail can have an editorial praising the Labour leader it shows what Michael Foot said in the second volume of the Nye Bevan book — some people think a

good Labour leader is someone who stands up and fights his own members.

Of course comrades make mistakes in struggle. Of course the NUM leaders made mistakes. I thought so at the time but I didn't say anything about it because workers were in struggle.

I'm an old-fashioned socialist and I take the view that when working people are in struggle I don't do anything that will hurt them and work against them in that struggle. It's the same with my comrades in Liverpool. I wouldn't say they're exactly right on every issue but they're in struggle. They need assistance by the movement. The entire movement needs to rally to help those comrades. That's why I walked off the platform because they're good, honest working class people in struggle.

You don't attack your own

people, whatever you might think, and you certainly don't attack them in the way they were attacked so that it plays right into the hands of the class enemy.

We have to sit down and talk among ourselves and work out some clear ideas in relation to policies, we need to go out and campaign for those policies, and we have to have co-ordination among the various groupings.

You don't get anything unless you organise. It's an old lesson.

It was a failure of one of the greatest socialist leaders that ever lived, Eugene Debs. He was a great leader, a marvellous man, nobody could fault him in any way except he didn't bother too much what was going on in the party machine.

We've got to talk, we've got to organise, we've got to work out what sort of policies we should organise on.

What Labour decided

*To reimburse the NUM for fines incurred during the strike, and called for a review of cases of sacked miners.

*Not to recognise Black Sections.

*To support campaigns of 'non-compliance' in local authorities.

*To oppose nuclear power.

*To campaign for lesbian and gay rights.

*To call for serious action to end Third World famine.

*To oppose the withdrawal of troops from Ireland.

*To commit Labour MPs to defending reproductive rights, and for a Charter for Women's Health.

Victory

The next Labour government will lower the age of consent for gay men to 16 — if Conference decisions get into the manifesto.

For the first time in its history the labour movement as a whole is now committed to campaigning for the rights of lesbians and gay men. Both TUC and Labour Party conferences have passed resolutions calling for lesbian and gay rights.

The resolutions at Party conference were passed overwhelmingly with the support of many trade unions, and despite opposition from the NEC. The only speaker against — who raved about God — was booed by delegates.

We need to make sure the Labour leaders turn this paper commitment into action.

Support for black sections grows

By Marc Wadsworth (Black Sections)

We almost trebled our vote in support of Black Sections and that came about as a result of substantial support from the Constituency Parties and backing from two more major unions — the NUR and NUPE. The NUM stayed with us.

That must be seen as a victory. We are winning the arguments at rank and file level. All that stands in our way now are the reactionary leaders in the Party and the trade unions who are failing to listen to their grass roots.

We will continue with our strategy of fighting to include Black Section delegates in all the processes of Party decision-making, including the selection of parliamentary candidates, as well as opening up Black Sections in Leicester, Birmingham, London and Liverpool, and continuing to forge direct links with black community groups.

Andrew Ward, Report.



Black Sections: Conference turned them down again.

The left is disorganised

By Alan Fraser, delegate from Basingstoke CLP

The first sniff of conference for me was when I attended the composite meeting on the miners' amnesty.

I argued in favour of having a composite for full amnesty, not just a review. It could complement and strengthen the NUM resolution, not weaken it.

The NUM delegation, which included Arthur Scargill, insisted that a second composite would weaken the NUM resolution, and that the NUM delegation would oppose our composite.

They also argued that the right wing would use it to switch trade union block votes to vote against the

NUM resolution.

It was soon clear that with very little support in the composite meeting and the refusal of the NUM to support us, I reluctantly withdrew our composite in favour of the NUM resolution.

Then conference erupted on Tuesday afternoon during Kinnock's speech.

Eric Heffer immediately left the platform in disgust and many CLP delegates were outraged and began booing and leaving their seats.

Afterwards it was clear that many CLP delegates just had not grasped what Kinnock had done. The conference was buzzing.

Despite all the good resolutions being carried during the rest of the week, the strong impression I had of

conference was that Neil Kinnock knows where he is going, is fighting and confident, the left is both disorganised and does not really have its own perspective.

The left needs to act on three main things. 1. How we can carry forward and extend the cooperation that existed amongst the serious left at this year's conference.

2. How we can launch a campaign for a Labour victory based not on appealing to the middle ground by disowning our own class, but on working class policies decided by conference. 3. Let's not forget the arguments we used a few years ago. It's no use having the policies without having the structures to press for them, and representatives to fight for them.

Focus on election

By Patrick Murphy, delegate Stockport CLP

Militant believe the whole week is a victory for them... (Beam me up, Scotty).

As a delegate on the conference floor, perhaps the most depressing thing about last week was the way the whole event was stage-managed.

Many good militants joined the Party during the miners' strike. But many active members have become confused and demoralised since the defeat of

the strike. Kinnock has given a lead to the confused, while trying to drive the good militants out.

The focus now will be on the next election. We have a choice. Either we leave the Kinnockites to win a 'professional' campaign, or we show that our politics and methods have more to offer.

If we want the next Labour government to be one that defends the working class, we have got to regenerate the left now.

Win arguments

By Trudi de Heney

I think that after this conference the left can be clear now what the problems are.

There has been a lot of talk about the role of the leader and whether you can fight on an individual basis. My view is that you cannot afford to put your hopes for a genuine left Labour government on one individual.

That person is always infinitely open towards moving to the right.

What we have got to do is strengthen our base so that there is so much pressure on the person in that position that they simply can't move

from the policies we've decided.

The conference hasn't been a defeat for the left but there have been some setbacks, particularly in the debate on the women.

In the other areas I don't feel too pessimistic. I don't think anybody thought the motions supporting Black Sections would get through. It has only been debated at conference for two years. It is now permanently on the agenda.

We've got to go back to the trade union branches and win the arguments.

Marx on permanent revolution

The leading class

Discussing South Africa, Marxists use the term 'permanent revolution'. What we mean by this is that there is no dividing wall, no great gap between one 'stage' and another, which separates the present struggle for equal rights from the working-class struggle for socialism.

The workers — specifically the black workers — can take the lead in the struggle for equal rights, and entwine and merge it with their own class struggle. In this way they can rally the rural poor behind the working class.

'Permanent revolution' also means that there is no Chinese Wall between revolution in South Africa and revolution in the rest of Africa — that the struggle is international.

'Permanent revolution' is known today as a 'Trotskyist' idea, and indeed it was Leon Trotsky who developed the concept into a rounded theory, first for Russia then for China and other underdeveloped countries beginning industrialisation. Politicians following the Stalinist tradition — like the ANC in South Africa today — counterpose a theory of 'stages' according to which socialist revolution is a whole different 'stage' from the present ('national democratic revolution'), and therefore the workers must for now suppress all socialist demands and go along with the middle class.

The term 'permanent revolution' was however coined not by Trotsky but by Karl Marx in a manifesto written for the Communist League (an international but mostly German-based group) in March 1850. The conditions of Germany 135 years ago were obviously very different from those of South Africa today: industry and the working class were very much less developed. However, these excerpts from the 'March Address' convey well Marx's basic ideas of working class initiative, independence and self-reliance.

While the democratic petty bourgeois want to bring the revolution to an end as quickly as possible, achieving at most the aims already mentioned, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less propertied classes have been driven from their ruling positions, until the proletariat has conquered state power and until the association of the proletarians has progressed sufficiently far — not only in one country but in all the leading countries of the world — that competition between the proletarians of these countries ceases and at least the decisive forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the workers.

New

Our concern cannot simply be to modify private property, but to abolish it, not to hush up class antagonisms but to abolish classes, not to improve the existing society but to found a new one.

(...)

1. At the moment, while the democratic petty bourgeois are everywhere oppressed, they preach to the proletariat general unity and reconciliation; they extend the hand of friendship, and seek to found a great opposition party which will embrace all shades of democratic opinion; that is, they seek to ensnare the workers in a party organisation in which general social-democratic phrases prevail, while their particular interests are kept hidden behind, and in which, for the sake of preserving the peace, the specific demands of the proletariat may not be presented.

Such a unity would be to their advantage alone and to the complete disadvantage of the proletariat. The

proletariat would lose all its hard-won independent position and be reduced once more to a mere appendage of official bourgeois democracy.

This unity must therefore be resisted in the most decisive manner. Instead of lowering themselves to the level of an applauding chorus, the workers, and above all the League, must work for the creation of an independent organisation of the workers' party, both secret and open, alongside the official democrats, and the League must aim to make every one of its communes a centre and nucleus of workers' associations in which the position and interests of the proletariat can be discussed free from bourgeois influence.

(...)

During and after the struggle the workers must at every opportunity put forward their own demands against those of the bourgeois democrats. They must demand guarantees for the workers as soon as the democratic bourgeoisie sets about taking over the government. They must achieve these guarantees by force if necessary, and generally make sure that the new rulers commit themselves to all possible concessions and promises — the surest means of compromising them.

Analysis

They must check in every way and as far as is possible the victory euphoria and enthusiasm for the new situation which follow every successful street battle, with a cool and cold blooded analysis of the situation and with undisguised mistrust of the new government.

Alongside the new official governments they must simultaneously establish their own revolutionary workers' governments, either in the form of local executive committees and councils or through workers' clubs or committees, so that the bourgeois-democratic governments not only immediately lose the support of the workers but find themselves from the very beginning supervised and threatened by authorities behind which stand the whole mass of the workers. In a word, from the very moment of victory the workers' suspicion must be directed no longer against the defeated reactionary party but against their former ally, against the party which intends to exploit the common victory for itself.

2. To be able forcefully and threateningly to oppose this party, whose betrayal of the workers will begin with the very first hour of victory, the workers must be armed and organised. The whole proletariat

must be armed at once with muskets, rifles, cannon and ammunition and the revival of 'the old-style citizens' militia, directed against the workers, must be opposed.

Where the formation of this militia cannot be prevented, the workers must try to organise themselves independently as a proletarian guard, with elected leaders and with their own elected general staff; they must try to place themselves not under the orders of the state authority but of the revolutionary local councils set up by the workers.

(...)

3. As soon as the new governments have established themselves, their struggle against the workers will begin. If the workers are to be able to forcibly oppose the democratic petty bourgeois it is essential above all for them to be independently organised and centralised in clubs.

Even where there is no prospect of achieving their election the workers must put up their own candidates to preserve their independence, to gauge their own strength and to bring their revolutionary position and party standpoint to public attention. They must not be led astray by the empty phrases of the democrats, who will maintain that the workers' candidates will split the democratic party and offer the forces of reaction the chance of victory.

All such talk means, in the final analysis, that the proletariat is to be swindled. The progress which the proletarian party will make by operating independently in this way is infinitely more important than the disadvantages resulting from the presence of a few reactionaries in the representative body.

Although the German workers cannot come to power and achieve the realisation of their class interests without passing through a protracted revolutionary development, this time they can at least be certain that the first act of the approaching revolutionary drama will coincide with the direct victory of their own class in France and will thereby be accelerated.

Independent

But they themselves must contribute most to their final victory, by informing themselves of their own class interests, by taking up their independent political position as soon as possible, by not allowing themselves to be misled by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeoisie into doubting for one minute the necessity of an independently organised party of the proletariat. Their battle-cry must be: The Permanent Revolution.



Black workers in South Africa

ON THE AGAIN

YOUNG BLACK men and women in South Africa have entered a new stage of struggle.

For over a year now black students have conducted a very effective boycott of schools in defiance of the 'Bantu education' which is meant to prepare blacks for a life of unskilled inferiority.

They have taken on the armed forces of the state, showing a relentless courage — stones against canisters. They have suffered terrible casualties in terms of police killings, assaults, detentions and torture.

Boycott

They have taken a leading role in organising community politics, including the consumer boycott of white shops in protest against the Emergency, the killings and the detentions.

They have been the major force within the multi-racial United Democratic Front and within the black consciousness front around AZAPO and the National Forum. They have borne the brunt of the state's attacks, notably in the case of the banning of COSAS, the UDF school student body, and the harassment of its leaders.

The high profile and energetic politics pursued by the students raises the question of the role of students in the larger liberation movement, and in particular of the relation between students and workers.

What kind of politics and organisation are the students pursuing?

How integrated are they with the struggles of black workers?

The first thing to say is that black students do not of course form a homogeneous mass. Some have oriented to black consciousness, scornful of the liberalism and white influence they see in the UDF student politics.

Some have oriented to the politics of the ANC, especially through COSAS and SASO, the UDF college student organisation.

Within the colleges and universities there is hot debate between the student bodies affiliated to the UDF — NUSAS for whites and SASO for blacks — and those affiliated to black consciousness, especially AZASM.

Other students, both black and white, have played a key part in the development of the independent trade unions.

General

Beneath this diversity there are nevertheless some general characteristics of student politics in South Africa.

As in other societies, there is often considerable tension between students and workers. While unions emphasise structured grass-roots organisation and strict accountability of leadership to a well-defined constituency, student groups emphasise mobilisation and activism, spontaneity, leadership by example.

From the unions' point of view, students often appear to be rushing them into action for which they are not prepared. From a



Soweto, 1976...South African youth take

student point of view unions often appear slow and reluctant to take up political challenges, confined within the realms of economic piecemeal reform in the workplace.

Trade unions have often found the methods used by students insufficiently rooted in their constituency, too reliant on spontaneity, too coercive in individualistic ways, too formalistic in their claims to represent the community.

The burning of black councillors and their homes, the killing of black policemen, the setting up of People's Courts dealing out rough justice against collaborators and boycott-breakers — and the loose notion of 'collaboration' which threatens to spill over and brand trade union organisers themselves as 'collaborators' — riots in the townships against the South African Defence Force and the police — these methods often appear dangerously undisciplined and self-defeating even to the most radical workers.

In some areas, like Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage, the tensions have come to the fore, with extreme hostilities developing between

in South Africa, Bob Fine looks at the struggle of students.

THE FRONT LINE FIGHTS APART THEID



on the police.

many trade unionists on the one side and many students on the other — a tension exacerbated by the unemployment looming ahead for many students.

In other areas, students and workers have managed to come together. The most notable example was the Transvaal stay-away in November last year. It combined student, worker, and general popular demands, and its organising committee included representatives of both students and workers.

Liberation

The general problem is however illustrated by the views on education put forward by workers and by students. A principal student slogan revolves round the theme of 'No Education Before Liberation'. This was originally intended as a revolt against 'Bantu education', but has since slipped into a more general anti-education stance, or into a romanticism about learning only from the struggle.

In the 1950s the ANC complemented its campaigns against the state schools with their own alternative programme of night schools. Today the unions have set up an

impressive array of alternative educational courses for shop stewards and organisers. They see this as an integral aspect of trade union democracy and workers' control.

The students, however, today, do not go in for alternative education schemes. Instead they idealise spontaneity and learning through politics.

If the period of struggle before liberation were short, 'No Education Before Liberation' might perhaps make sense. But if Oliver Tambo of the ANC is right when he says that liberation is ten years away at an optimistic estimate, then the 'No Education' slogan turns its back on a vital field of cultural preparation for the liberation movement. It can become a recipe for philistinism and backwardness.

Many of the students' parents, and especially their mothers (many live in one-parent families), see education as a way out of the ghetto. They are often seen as conservative by their children. However, their concern for what they see as the developing brutality among their children and their lack of education cannot be dismissed so

simply.

Revolution needs an educated working class. The state has done its damndest to deny black people an education. It would be ironic if just at the moment when economic and political circumstances have opened up a small chink for black education and for the acquisition of skills by black people, black students themselves were to abstain from the whole struggle for education.

The state is clearly doing its worst to suppress the most organised sections of the student movement. My own impression of the now-banned COSAS leaders is that they are an impressive group. COSAS's formal position is that the enemy in South Africa is the system of exploitation and not whites as such. Capitalism, not colour, is seen as the cause of black oppression.

And COSAS has abandoned its earlier student vanguardist notions. Students, they say, are a specific group and have to play a limited role in the broader struggle. Their role is to support the struggle of workers, especially on the trade union side.

The problem is to translate these policies into practice. Many of the difficulties in the

way of a student-worker alliance are complicated, in my view, by a tendency within the ANC to celebrate, hail and claim the credit for the largely spontaneous militancy of students, rather than give it form, shape and direction.

Oliver Tambo's strategy of 'making South Africa ungovernable' puts students more than any other group on the front line. The ANC does not sufficiently use its authority to organise a channel for student struggles.

There are two related dangers. There is a limit to the courage of even the black students of South Africa. How many times can they come back with stones against high-powered rifles?

And there is a risk that the students could turn their anger inwards, embarking on a search for ever more collaborators within the black communities.

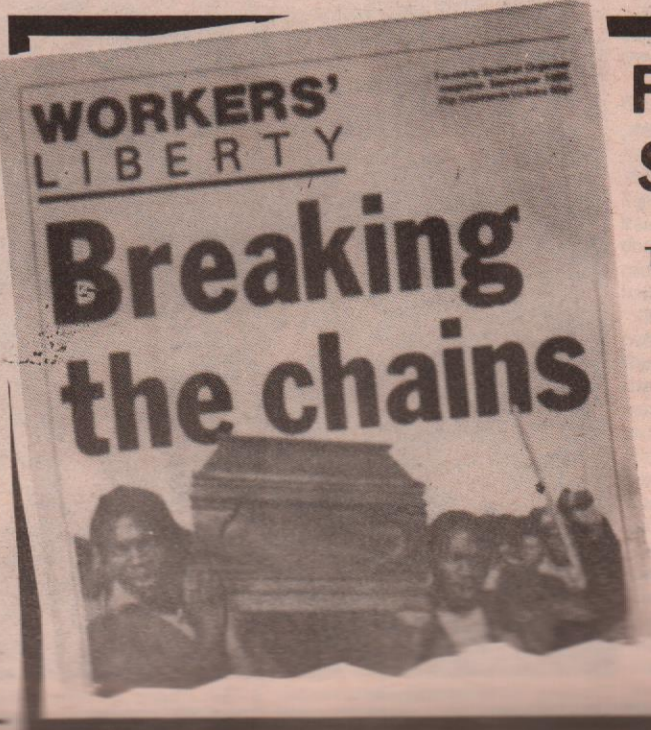
Confront

The struggle can be confined to the black townships, and not directly confront the white state.

Solidarity between students here and students in South Africa is a matter of urgency. Links can be made with the unbanned student organisations, perhaps in the first instance with the student organisations for higher education — NUSAS and SASO in the UDF, and ASASM in the National Forum.

Concrete solidarity is needed, and the first step towards establishing it would be to make contact and find out as directly as possible what, solidarity black students want, what oppression they face, and what strategies of resistance they pursue.

Recently clear evidence has come out showing the systematic physical and psychological torture of young detainees, often as young as 12 or 13 years old. The student movement in this country could play a great role in making common cause with black students for a democratic education system as an essential part of a future democratic South Africa.



FROM
SO

The first issue of Workers' Liberty magazine is a special issue on S.Africa. 75p plus postage from 214 Sicket Court, London N1 2SY

The waste in education

In 1978 51 per cent of those who applied to get in universities in the UK found a place.

In 1984, only 44½% found places. Or, in other words, 11,400 people were rejected who would have found places if the opportunities had been the same as in 1978.

According to World Bank figures, the UK has a smaller proportion of youth in higher education than any advanced industrialised country except Switzerland, and a lower proportion than many Third World countries too.

In South Korea now more than 60% of youth go on to higher education. In Britain it's about 15%.

The Tories' cuts in education are probably irrational in the long term even from a capitalist point of view. They want to pare down public spending and build a lean, competitive system — but the university of Tokyo now produces more engineers than the whole British education system!

The waste in human terms caused by penny-pinching and

backwardness in the education system is, however, far worse than the waste in capitalist terms.

Many youth come out of 11 whole years of schooling with nothing more than a smattering of literacy, basic arithmetic... and a conviction that all higher learning is not for them. Those who get further often end up unemployed even after university degrees. Their courses give them neither a broad general culture nor specialised job training.

More and more, British education looks like a giant child-minding scheme rather than education. Students progress not from ignorance to knowledge but from the bright enthusiasm of the primary school child to the resentful apathy of the 16 year old facing YTS or the dole. Teachers are overwhelmed by the struggle to keep going from day to day.

And those who fail one of the hurdles — CSE, O level or A level, are generally out for good.

The whole system needs to be shaken up and re-designed — from the bottom.



Jez Coulson, IFL

Students and Labour

Inadequate grants, insufficient accommodation, poor job prospects, cuts in courses and colleges — students have plenty of reasons to fight back.

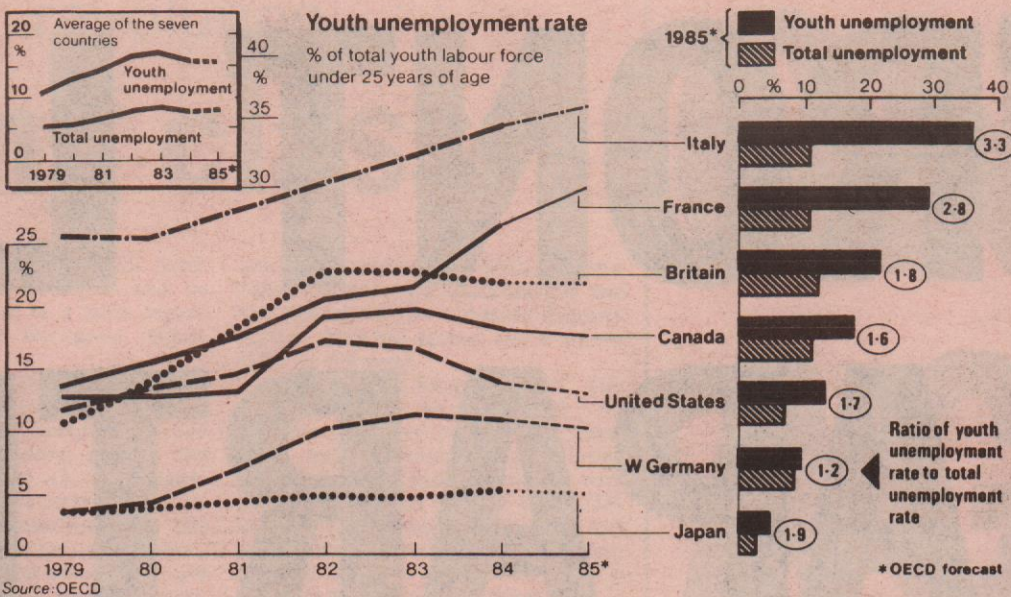
This fight is only part of a more general battle against unemployment and cuts in education, housing and public expenditure. The force waging that battle is the organised working class.

The organised working class is also the force which can change society. To do that it will of course need different leaders and policies. But those different leaders and policies will not drop from the sky. They will emerge only from a struggle within the labour movement.

Both for their immediate struggles and for any hopes of changing society, students therefore need to ally with the labour movement. The way to do that is to get active in Labour Clubs, Labour Party Young Socialists branches, and the Labour Party, and to support every workers' struggle.



Student demonstration, London, 1984. Photo: Andrew Wiard



YTS cheap labour

From April 1986 the Tory government plans to expand their Youth Training Scheme from one to two years.

Somehow they hope to double the scheme in this way but spend only 38% more on YTS. The result can only be to reduce still further any element of real training in the scheme, and make it just cheap labour.

The government is planning to get rid of the 'Mode B' schemes run by voluntary groups, local authorities, and colleges, and have only schemes run by employers. The 'Mode B' schemes often include more real training and are less dominated by profit considerations; they also give black youth a much better chance than the employers' schemes. In January 1985, 40% of Asian YTSers, and 44% of Afro-Caribbeans, were on Mode B schemes, as against 23% of white YTSers.

All this makes the official Manpower Services Commission's promises to improve YTS schemes — in training, health and safety, and equal opportunity — empty words. As it is, in January 1985 30 per cent of all employer-run YTS schemes fell short of MSC standards. The only way this figure is likely to fall is by the MSC reducing its standards or turning a blind eye.

The Tories are still talking about making YTS compulsory, but they are hesitant. They have great difficulty getting their present number of YTS places, let alone what they would need if

every 16 and 17 year old had to be on YTS. (As of 1984, 25% of 16 year olds were on YTS). And to force huge numbers of unwilling youth into the schemes could make them unmanageable.

But already many youth get their supplementary benefit docked for refusing or dropping out of YTS schemes. And that will continue.

YTS is mostly cheap labour rather than training. According to official figures, 30% of YTSers do work similar to ordinary employees, and 40% help ordinary employees do their job. Most YTS schemes lead to no recognised qualification.

Where YTS schemes do lead to a useful qualification, this is usually for one of two reasons.

Improve

Sometimes trade unions have managed to improve the quality of the schemes. Elsewhere employers use YTS as a cheap substitute for the first year of their apprenticeship or training schemes.

YTS is cheaper for employers than regular training. And they can use it as a filter. At the end of the year — or two years — they allow chosen youth to continue on the rest of the training programme, and the others can be thrown out with no questions asked.

Only 30% of YTSers get a job with the same employer at the end of their scheme; 40% get no job at all. (MSC figures from

1984).

From the point of view of the Tories and the employers, YTS has two purposes. Expensive traditional systems of apprenticeship and training can be scrapped and cheaply replaced. And young workers' wage rates generally can be forced down.

In both respects YTS has had some success. Apprenticeships are vanishing fast. A number of big employers now take on school-leavers only through YTS. And in 1984 youth wages began to fall seriously behind adult wages.

But a fight back is possible. Trainees can be organised. And in a number of companies the trade unions have won important gains for YTSers.

The basic pittance of £26.25 a week is frequently topped up. YTSers in Massey Ferguson get £83.41 a week; in Hackney and Sheffield councils, £52; in ICI Gloucester, £50; in the British Airports Authority, £38.43.

Fares, cheap canteens or free meal vouchers, and free clothing have been won for YTSers elsewhere. In some companies the trade unions have equal opportunity clauses which cover YTSers.

Organise, and we can defeat the Tories' plans and win real training at decent wages!

(Most of the information in this article is taken from Labour Research July 1985, and Bargaining Report June 1985. From Labour Research Dept, 78 Blackfriars Rd., London SE1 8HF).

A

Martin Thomas looks at the Campaign Group economic policy

EVERY YEAR — and especially since 1979 — the left does battle with the right wing at Labour Party conference.

It is not a bad thing. The right wing leaders of the Labour Party support the established system, and without battle against them Labour would never do anything worthwhile. A party out to change society needs debate and controversy, not the 'hail the leader' show which suits the Tories or the SDP.

But one thing is bad. It is a very long time since Labour had any fierce debate on economic strategy. Labour Party democracy, women's rights, black sections, nuclear disarmament, all draw passionate arguments, and rightly — but on the overall framework of economic strategy the leaders have a much easier ride.

As a result the policy is very poor. This year the National Executive (NEC) argued that the centrepiece of Labour policy should be a National Investment Bank. It's another scheme for coaxing capitalism into growth, not much different from the National Enterprise Board of the 1970s or the National Plan of the 1960s, and not likely to be more successful. In the shadows beside it stand wage controls.

As usual, the Marxist left said the NEC policy was futile tinkering, and we were in a small minority. But this year there was also a voice of dissent from the broader left.

'Urgent'

The Campaign Group of Labour MPs published a pamphlet, 'A Million Jobs A Year'. On the title page the MPs stop short of definitely supporting the pamphlet's arguments, and say only that they "merit urgent consideration"; six MPs in the group refused to sign even that endorsement. Nevertheless, the pamphlet appeared. Economic strategy was made an area of mainstream debate.

Unfortunately the contents of the pamphlet are not such dynamite as you might think from the MPs' cautious approach.

It is written by Andrew Glyn, a supporter of 'Militant' and a Marxist. Yet the arguments are not at all Marxist. They are radical Keynesian.

Glyn says that "A Keynesian expansion is one which is not accompanied by such controls, at the level of industry and economy, as are necessary to secure success". But only the most milk-and-water Keynesianism rejects far-reaching state controls on the economy.

Keynes himself, a convinced Liberal until his death in 1946, advocated a "somewhat comprehensive socialisation of investment", and thought that his policies would kill off the private capitalist, the "rentier".

Glyn advocates state controls over financial institutions, export of capital, prices and imports. In addition large companies must be state-controlled. Glyn would prefer to do this by nationalising the top 250 monopolies, but also offers two alternative methods: compulsory planning agreements, or stacking company boards with government and union nominees who would outvote shareholder interests.

This array of controls, Glyn argues, would enable a Labour government to expand the economy to full employment and

million jobs a year



Unemployment contributes to the riots. Tottenham, 1985.
Photo: Andrew Moore.

'import substitution' (replacing imports by British-manufactured goods).

As proof of the possibility he cites Britain's war economy, which expanded employment by 3.4 million in 1938-42; and the post-war Labour government which increased civilian employment by 3 million in 1945-8.

He could also cite several Third World capitalisms — military-ruled Brazil, for example, which increased its industrial workforce from 13 million to 25 million between the early 1960s and 1975, and made the country an exporting power in several goods which it previously had to import.

The Third World countries don't get full employment because their countryside expel labour even faster than industry grows: but Britain doesn't have that problem.

Glyn is right to stress that

there is no technical difficulty about giving everyone a decent job: it is a political question of how the economy is organised. But his programme is effectively state capitalism, not socialism.

Brazil has vast resources. Post war Britain was the world's second most advanced industrial power, with big captive markets in its Empire, in a world hungry for exports. In both cases the working class was kept under strict control.

Could modern Britain — heavily integrated into the world economy, but as a third-rate industrial power, a net importer of manufactured goods — carry out a similar national expansion? Could 'socialist modernisation' make its production competitive with South Korea's and Japan's, despite improved wages, conditions, and workers' rights also advocated by Glyn?

Probably not.

And what social force would carry out Glyn's programme? During World War 2 the British capitalist class had no choice but a siege economy. Third World capitalists are 'nationalists' by economic necessity. But British capitalists today are not narrow nationalists. Their business is world-wide.

And the working class? So long as the working class sets its aim narrowly as national expansion for Britain, it will not be able to lead society. And when and where the working class does triumph, its programme will necessarily be different from Glyn's package of state controls.

As techniques of state control there is indeed not much difference between nationalisation and compulsory planning agreements. But for working-class control of the economy, common

ownership is irreplaceable.

A shorter working week, a vast expansion of education and re-training, re-designing of technology, socialisation of housework — these measures, mentioned scarcely or not at all by Glyn, would be simultaneous with the expansion of jobs under a system where the working class controlled the means of production instead of being subordinate to and used by the rhythm of the expansion of those means of production.

Immediate political pressures mean that working-class rule would either spread over several countries or perish. Workers' power in one country alone in present-day Europe would be only a passing phase. A socialist economic programme cannot sensibly be devised 'in one country'.

As Third World experience proves, a nationalist state-controlled system of the type advocated by Glyn would have a capitalist content within the forms of planning. State enterprises would conform to international competition. Workers would be subordinated to the expansion of capital in the form of bureaucratic empire-building rather than traditional free enterprise. The present ruling class would not be broken up — Glyn mentions only higher taxes on top people — but would continue to dominate the state and economic management. They would, apparently, still draw their dividends and their capital gains, alongside no doubt new incomes from corruption.

A lot of the limitations of the pamphlet, I suspect, are self-imposed. Andrew Glyn would probably have preferred to write something more radical, but has bent over backwards to devise a scheme that could 'realistically' be put before Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley for implementation.

Implement

He gets the worst of it both ways. Kinnock and Hattersley will not implement this programme — indeed, not even the whole of the Campaign Group will so much as recommend 'urgent consideration' of it. If a few bits of it should get implemented — some price controls, miscellaneous import controls, exchange controls — they will do nothing progressive.

But all the careful moderation and realism has deprived the programme of the sweep and fire that could rally the rank and file.

Scattered through the pamphlet are references to 'mobilisation', 'access to information', 'full involvement of employees in relevant decisions', 'active support'. None of them is bold enough to convey unambiguously the idea of more than SDP-type industrial democracy and consultation, or working class activity at a higher level than demonstrations, rallies, meetings and trade union negotiations.

The recommendations thus remain a blueprint for Westminster and Whitehall rather than a programme for action by the working class.

Read this pamphlet. Discuss it. Take advantage of the fact that it has broken the freeze on debating economic strategy in the Labour Party. But take it as the first word of that debate, not the last.

*'A Million Jobs A Year', by Andrew Glyn. Verso Editions, £1.

The causes of the dole queues

Officially Britain has 3¼ million unemployed. In fact, according to the TUC, it has four to five million.

The advanced capitalist countries have over 30 million unemployed between them. There is no prospect of this figure falling seriously. If — or rather when — the US dives into a full-scale slump again, and the Third World debt crisis explodes once more, the figure will increase.

The Third World capitalist countries have no reliable figures for unemployment, but estimates range round 500 million. 25 per cent of black South Africans, for example, are estimated to be jobless.

Why?

The Tories say that workers have priced themselves out of jobs. Wages are too high.

But unemployment was lower when wages were rising fast in the 1950s and '60s. Since around 1970 real wages have stagnated or fallen in the US and risen very slowly elsewhere, but unemployment has multiplied.

If you compare different countries, usually the ones with higher wages have lower unemployment. Britain has lower wages than the US, West Germany or Japan.

Unemployment is not caused by high wages. Both unemployment and pressure to reduce wages are caused by capitalist crisis.

Technology

A lot of people say that unemployment is caused by new technology. But capitalism has been introducing new technologies continuously ever since the steam engine, and on the whole employment has expanded rather than declined.

Detailed studies can find only a few thousand job losses, among the millions in Britain in recent years, caused by new technology. In fact productivity in most advanced capitalist countries, and especially in Britain, is rising very slowly. Unemployment mostly reflects lower production, not higher production with fewer workers.

And if you compare different countries, those with most new technology, like Japan and Sweden, generally have lower unemployment.

The most idiotic theory of all is Jeffrey Archer's, according to which people are unemployed only because they are too lazy to get jobs. How does he explain the hundreds of applications that firms have often had even for low-paid, dead-end jobs? And was it something in the water, or in the atmosphere, that made workers throughout the advanced capitalist countries suddenly start to turn idle around the end of the 1960s?

The real reason why millions are unemployed is because the economy is run for profit and not for human need.

Under the present economic system — capitalism — the aim of production is to expand capital, the accumulated wealth of the ruling class. Workers get jobs if it is profitable for the bosses, and not if it isn't.

Employment therefore expands and contracts in line with the pulse-beat of profits, investments and markets.

In boom periods each capitalist strives for an increasing

share of an expanding market. New investment projects are rushed through. Speculation spirals.

But not every capitalist can have an increased share. Eventually the expansion falters. Investment is halted. Projects already underway are revealed to be unprofitable. The slump spreads from the credit system through the investment industries to every sector of the economy.

As workers lose their jobs, the capitalists who previously sold goods to those workers lose their markets. And those capitalists, in turn, sack more workers. The system spirals downwards.

People go short — because

'too much' has been produced! The slump levels out only when enough capital has been written off, and wages have been reduced sufficiently, for profits to be restored. A new boom starts — and with it the seeds of a new slump.

In the Third World, the rapid destruction by capitalism of the traditional economy in the countryside has generated huge and rising unemployment for decades. In the advanced capitalist countries, it was a bit different in the '50s and '60s.

A new framework allowing the rapid expansion of world trade after World War 2, and the growth of a wave of new industries, made booms strong and slumps shallow. Masses of new workers were drawn from underdeveloped countries and regions; more and more women were drawn into wage-work.

Capitalism always made sure that there was a slight surplus of workers over jobs — otherwise workers' bargaining position would be too strong — and in slumps the surplus became bigger. But the real turn for the worse came after the late '60s, when the framework of international finances set up after 1945 began to break down.

Forces

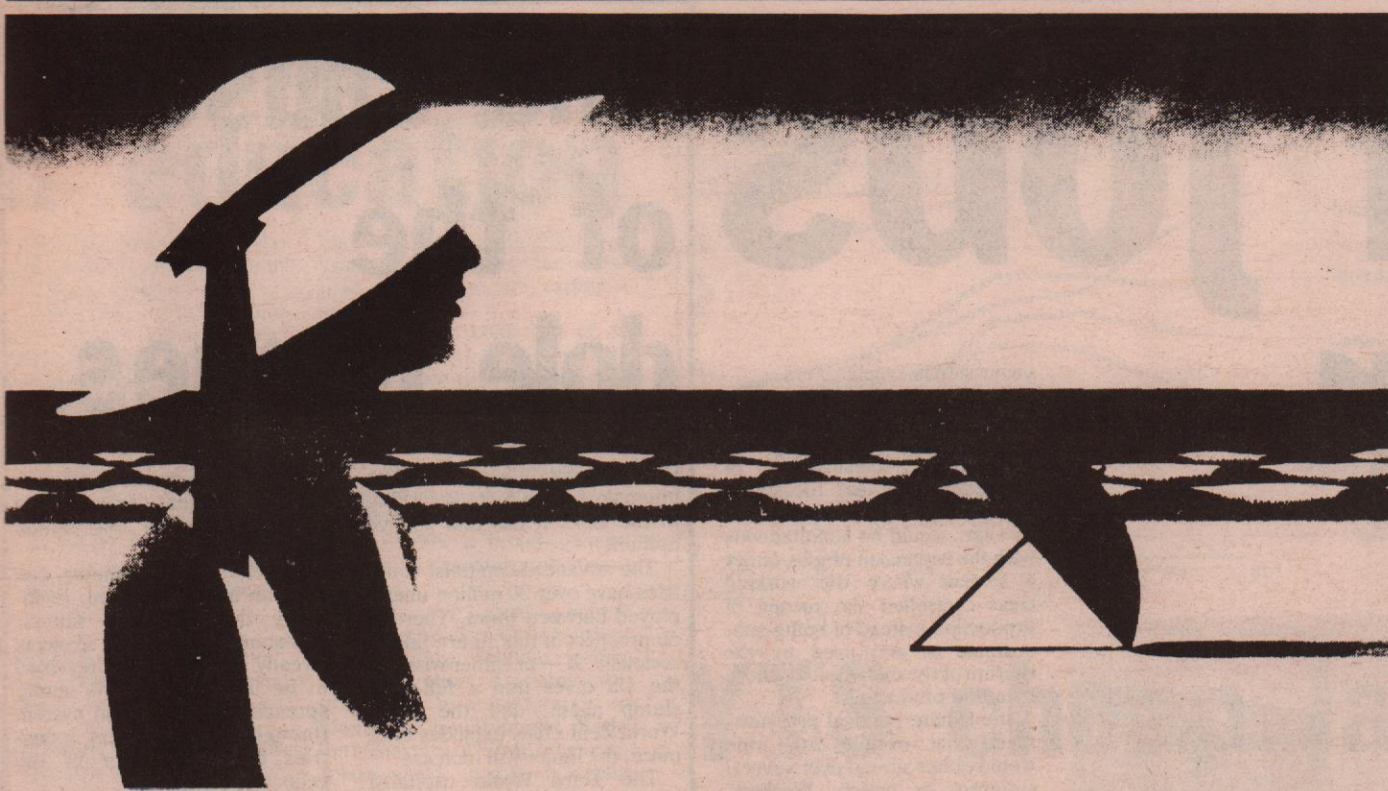
Under capitalism men and women do not control our own social life. We are tossed around by economic forces, of human construction but beyond human control — supply and demand, profit and investment, credit and liquidity.

So capitalism, internationally at least, has no way to restructure itself except crisis.

The US is no longer super-dominant. New industrial powers have arisen. Previously central industries like cars and steel are in decline; new ones are emerging. The system knows no way to adjust to these changes other than by the travail of trade wars, slumps, and de-industrialisation.

The remedy? We must take control of the means of production we have created and run them by democratic planning for need. We must replace the crazy patchwork of national rivalries with a co-operative international system. In place of the rat race, we must run society on principles of solidarity.

The struggle for jobs can be brought to completion only by the working class taking power in society. But we can start now with a fight for workers' control, for unity of the employed and unemployed, and for work-sharing without loss of pay.



A story of decay

Colin Foster reviews
'Tender is the Night'

BBC is currently serialising a screen version of Scott Fitzgerald's novel 'Tender is the Night' — a naive, sprawling, but eloquent story of the decay of capitalism between the wars.

Giant

The US came out of World War 1 as the young giant of capitalism. It boomed while the old empires of war-shattered Europe wallowed in crisis. Ford cars, 'flappers', jazz, escalating Stock Exchange speculation — it

was the biggest, brashest party in history.

The US working class had little part in the celebrations. But they were silent. After all, their wages were higher than in other countries, and industry was generating more and more jobs.

Crashed

In 1929 the New York Stock Exchange crashed and the great hangover began. The US became a country of hungry shanty-towns, unemployment movements and mass strikes, public works programmes and fascist rallies, on the road to World War 2.

Scott Fitzgerald's life curious-

ly paralleled the curve of US capitalism. From the shabby-genteel middle class, he suddenly became rich and famous in 1920 when his first novel, 'This Side of Paradise' was a best-seller. He was 24.

On the strength of his new wealth he married Zelda Sayre — who previously had refused him because of his lack of funds — and from 1924 lived mainly on the Riviera, spending fantastically, drinking more and more, and working less and less.

'Tender is the Night', his fourth and last completed novel, took him nine years of increasingly laboured effort, from 1925 to 1934.

Patient

His life turned sharply downwards in 1930, when Zelda went into a mental hospital. She soon became a permanent patient. Fitzgerald returned to the US and became a lonely, broken-down man, scratching a living by scribbling for magazines and the movies. He died in 1940.

Like almost everything Fitzgerald wrote, 'Tender is the Night' is about himself (though the main character, Dick Diver, is also partly modelled on a friend, Gerald Murphy). He aims, as he put it, to "show a man who is a natural idealist... giving in for various causes to the ideas of the haute bourgeoisie, and in his rise to the top of the social world losing his idealism, his talent, and turning to drink and dissipation."

The novel opens with Dick, an American student in Zurich in 1917, talented and charming. Out of generosity, idealism, vanity and love, he marries Nicole Warren, an heiress but a mental patient.

The brilliant Divers become a focus, a warming flame, for the moneyed Americans on the Riviera. But bit by bit Dick drains himself.

He ends with a whimper. Nicole leaves him for Tommy Barban, a man who announces this creed: "I'm a soldier. My business is to kill people. I fought against the Riff [Moroccan anti-colonial rebels] because I'm a European, and I have fought the Communists because they want to take my property from me".

And Dick? "In the last letter she had from him he told her he was practising [medicine] in Geneva, New York. She looked up Geneva in an atlas and found it was in the heart of the Finger Lakes section and considered a pleasant place..."

Nicole represents in part, of course, the old patriarchal myth

of the femme fatale. But she also represents a whole class — the rotten wealth of the leisure class.

"Nicole was the product of much ingenuity and toil. For her sake trains began their run at Chicago and traversed the round belly of the continent of California; chic factories fumed and link belts grew link by link in factories; men mixed toothpaste in vats and drew mouthwash out of copper hogsheads; girls canned tomatoes quickly in August or worked rudely at the Five-and-Tens on Christmas Eve; half-breed Indians toiled on Brazilian coffee plantations and dreamers were muscled out of patent rights in new tractors — these were some of the people who gave a tithe to Nicole and, as the whole system swayed and thundered onward, it lent a feverish bloom to such processes of hers as wholesale buying, like the flush of a fireman's face holding his post before a spreading blaze. She illustrated very simple principles, containing in herself her own doom, but illustrated them so accurately that there was grace in the procedure..."

In many ways Scott Fitzgerald never grew up. His whole life he remained childishly self-obsessed, snobbish, and sexist with a bemused image of women as mysterious and wonderful creatures.

Snob

He was fascinated by the rich, with an edge of hostility as a self-made snob resentful of those bred to wealth and as a man guilty about his own self-dissipation. His social philosophy was veneered by a Marxism impressed on him by intellectual awe in face of his friend Edmund Wilson, the resulting mixture being well-expressed in a letter to his daughter:

"My generation of radicals and breakers-down never found anything to take the place of the old virtues of work and courage and the old graces of courtesy and politeness. But I don't want you to live in an unreal world or to believe that the system that produced Barbara Hutton can survive more than ten years, any more than the French monarchy could survive 1789".

But like Boswell or Pepys, Dickens or Henry James, Fitzgerald would never have been the fine writer he was without his classiness and conceit. To adapt his own phrase, he told the story of bourgeois decay so graphically and in so agonised a way that there was poetry in the procedure.

Five million runners

A striking feature of our society in recent years has been the urge towards fitness and the discovery of the enjoyment of exercise. According to one estimate* there are some five million runners in Britain at the moment, an astonishing figure.

Cynics have been quick to note how tracksuits, etc., have become fashionable, but this is in itself a proof that healthy lifestyles are not just a passing fad. Health Education News pointed out recently that those who wear fashionable sportswear without expending the effort to keep fit are nevertheless trying to associate themselves with a lifestyle that they admire. Elsewhere, HEN evidences public interest in health in its coverage of this summer's health fairs and "fun runs". People are heeding the Health Education Council's advice to "Look After Yourself".

But why should people need to be told to look after themselves? Perhaps part of the answer lies in the division of labour that results in some getting little or no exercise, while others get unbalanced exercise.

The resulting boredom and stress leaves many without the inclination to undertake exercise, instead laying them open to the encouragement to indulge in various unhealthy habits such as smoking, drinking and eating lots of junk food.

Out of the five million British runners, some two million are women. Overcoming the discouragements of myth and male chauvinism, women's athletics has exploded into prominence of late. At competition level, women are now able at last to compete in all track events, having previously been excluded for a variety of bizarre reasons.

The result has been a drastic closure of the gap between male and female records. Most striking has been the progress of the women's marathon record. The gap has dropped from 40 to 10% in just 15 years.

Some experts think that the narrowing will continue until women catch up men, at least in the longer distance events. Most however believe that anatomical differences place a limit on this catching up. We will now look at these arguments.

1. Body fat. Women carry up to twice as much fat as men (relatively speaking). In running, this is simply a weight to be carried around. However, where the weight is supported as in cycling and swimming, the buoyancy of fat and its insulating properties are a distinct advantage and women already outdo men in long-distance swimming (e.g. cross-Channel).

Even in running, fat may be an advantage in endurance races since women's muscles seem better able to burn it.

2. Shape of hips. Broader hips tend to make running less efficient with energy wasted as the heels are kicked out. Knees are also prone to damage. This can be overcome by training to run differently.

3. Sweating. Women's sweating mechanism seems less efficient, leading to overheating. However, their greater capacity for radiating heat from the skin may be an advantage in humid conditions.

4. Heart and circulation. Men seem to have relatively bigger hearts and more blood. Therefore, they can get more oxygen around their bodies. However, women's muscles seem more



Science

efficient at using the oxygen they get.

These arguments show that the question is still open and that women may catch up with men, depending on the event and the conditions, and assuming, of course, that they want to.

Most people run not to compete but for health and enjoyment and one very tangible effect of regular exercise is on body weight.

Overweight is very common in Britain (which is after all the most unhealthy of the industrial countries), largely because of a high intake of refined foods with a large energy content. With little of that energy being used, it is simply stored as fat.

Useless

Often the same companies that promote unhealthy foods have a highly profitable sideline in "diet" foods and there is a lucrative market in books peddling one or other generally useless diet.

But overweight can be easily reduced by regular running and less refined foods, as several interviewees in the Running supplement* testified. Comments like "I eat what I like now" were typical.

One myth persists that exercise is bad during pregnancy, and that childbearing marks the end to an athletic career. This is no doubt a consequence of the male medical view of pregnancy as an illness.

In fact, apart from women with a history of miscarriage, exercise such as running can be very beneficial. Examples of such benefits are: less risk of varicose veins, piles, toxæmia, insomnia and depression; shorter and easier labour; fewer complications during labour and less need for forceps and Caesarean births; faster recovery after birth (including less stretch marks).

Their running also improves after birth. This may be because running during pregnancy is like gradual resistance training, making the heart and blood system more efficient.

Many athletes have shown such improvements, including Ingrid Kristiansen who broke the marathon record 18 months after the birth of her son.

*Information from "Running for Women" — supplement to the October issue of Running magazine. Running magazine has organised a network to put women beginners in touch with experienced women runners, who will help them get started. For details, write to Sisters Network, Running Magazine, 57 St Mortimer Street, London W1P 7TD.



Songs of
liberty and
rebellion



Sweating song

'Sweating-song', written by T. Maguire on the occasion of the Jewish tailors' strike in Leeds in 1888, and republished by the Jewish socialist paper 'Workers' Friend' in the early 1900s.

Up in the morn, at break of day,
To the Sweater's den we go;
We sweat our health and strength away,
And pale and sickly grow,
That the sweaters may dwell in mansions fair,
And wear the cosiest cloths;
While our children starve in hovels bare
Where the sunlight seldom goes.

Chorus:
So we strike for our babes,
We strike for our wives,
Together we stand or fall,
Determined to win true
manly lives,
For the workers one and all.

Surely a man has a right to live,

If he be honest and true,
If for his bread he'll freely give
The best his hands can do,
Why should he toil starving while,
Driven and bullied by men
Who never were fitted for honest work,
But are fit for a sweating den?

We hope with best of all good men
Better days yet to see,
When hand in hand all over
the land
United we all shall be,
When every worker in every
trade,
In Britain and everywhere,
Whether he labour by needle
or spade,
Shall gather in his rightful
share.

Socialist Organiser

Demonstrate against apartheid

Anti-Apartheid
demonstration.
Saturday 2
November.
Rally in Trafalgar
Square, London.



EEC CUTS AID

A SPIT IN A STARVING FACE

Europe's capitalists are freezing food aid to Africa next year.

European finance ministers are cutting £130 million from the food aid budget for 1986. Britain's Treasury Minister, Ian Gow, one of the strongest supporters of the freeze, has justified it with the claim that the African famine has been eased by the summer rain.

In fact, according to the Ethiopian government six million more people will die in that country alone next year, despite summer rains, unless more food is delivered.

Displacement of farmers, and lack of both seeds and oxen, mean that better rains will do little to improve the disastrous situation.

Labour Party conference passed a resolution moved by SO supporter Patrick Murphy calling for a campaign for more aid, defeating a platform call for it to be remitted. Now let's see Labour campaign — at every level.



An insult to the jobless

Trash novelist and Tory vice-chair Jeffrey Archer says he knows what unemployment is like.

"I was unemployed, with debts of £400,000" he says. "And a lot of it is getting off your backside and finding yourself a job".

There must be literally millions of unemployed young people who can identify wholeheartedly with having debts of £400,000.

Times were indeed hard for poor old Jeffrey. He had to sell both houses and his Daimler, and write his first terrible book in a dirty garret...well, free bed and board given to him by an old Oxford friend, anyway.

And "getting off his backside" to look for work was not so bad, with so many friends in high places.

Archer's insensitive comments have caused the Tories — anxious to put over an image of concern for the unemployed — some embarrassment.

And caused *him* some embarrassment too. Quizzed on TV AM about his claims that young people were unemployed because they are "quite unwilling to look for work", Archer began to psychoanalyse himself.

"One of my problems," he confessed, "is that I am a bouncy person who loves life".

He must have paid his debts off, then.

Liverpool: build a fight to win

Kinnoch and the union bureaucrats have joined the Tories and the press in their attack on Liverpool council.

The difficulties Liverpool now faces, in continuing the fight to defend jobs and services, have been made far greater by Kinnoch's speech at Party conference. But the Council's own tactics are not helping.

The tactic of issuing 90-day redundancy notices to give "the Council and the JSSC time to build a massive campaign on Merseyside" is, quite simply, wrong.

The defeat of the all-out strike call inside Liverpool's JSSC — however jerrymandered by the right wing leaders of some union branches — did make new tactics necessary. But are 'delaying tactics', of any sort, the right ones?

There is little real difference between issuing redundancy notices and 'capitalisation'. Both can be claimed to 'buy time' (either three months or six) to build a fight.

But both undercut the fight here and now, highlighting divisions and disagreements. Both are tactics that centre on preventing the Council from acting illegally — and staving off a crisis.

The JSSC vote showed one thing we all know — that a very large number of council workers do not trust their employers, and are not prepared to be 'their' front line troops.

Despite Liverpool's best efforts the collapse of almost every other Labour council in the face of rate-capping makes that widespread cynicism inevitable.

Liverpool's achievement, so

far, has been its ability to persuade so many that the joint fight can and should be carried out.

Starting from that achievement the next steps should be obvious. The councillors must be prepared to take a lead — and show they are prepared to take the same risks as council workers.

But last week's Militant had the strange statement for a Marxist newspaper that "The legal position of the council, therefore, was such that it had to

issue 'redundancy letters' ". Why 'has to'? Surely better to give a clear lead than kow-tow to the law.

If the City Treasurer won't sign the cheques, put the councillors *directly* in charge of the Council, refuse to pay debt charges and contractors' bills. Keep on paying the workers instead.

If the banks refuse to lend — spend what the council has in its balances and refuse to pay debts to them — pay the workers.

It would then be down to the

Tories to try to stop the Council backing its workers, to try to prosecute the councillors, to remove them from office.

That — not the legalism of the 'redundancy letters' — would be the best way to re-start the campaign derailed by the JSSC vote — now.

That is a strategy for overcoming the divisions and cynicism by proving that the Labour councillors in Liverpool are different — they want to fight to win, not delay and muddle through.

FUND DRIVE

Barring last-minute hitches, we should sign the lease for our new premises this Friday, 11 October, and immediately start work in preparation for moving in.

We need to rewire the premises, remove asbestos, replace some flooring, add new plumbing, and do a great deal of other work. It will all cost a lot of money.

So our fund-raising needs to shift gear immediately! Put the issue of fund-raising top of the agenda at your next local Socialist Organiser meeting, review your plans, and speed them up.

Send reports and donations to Socialist Organiser at 214 Sickert Court, London N1