

# SOCIALIST ORGANISER

FOR WORKERS' LIBERTY EAST AND WEST



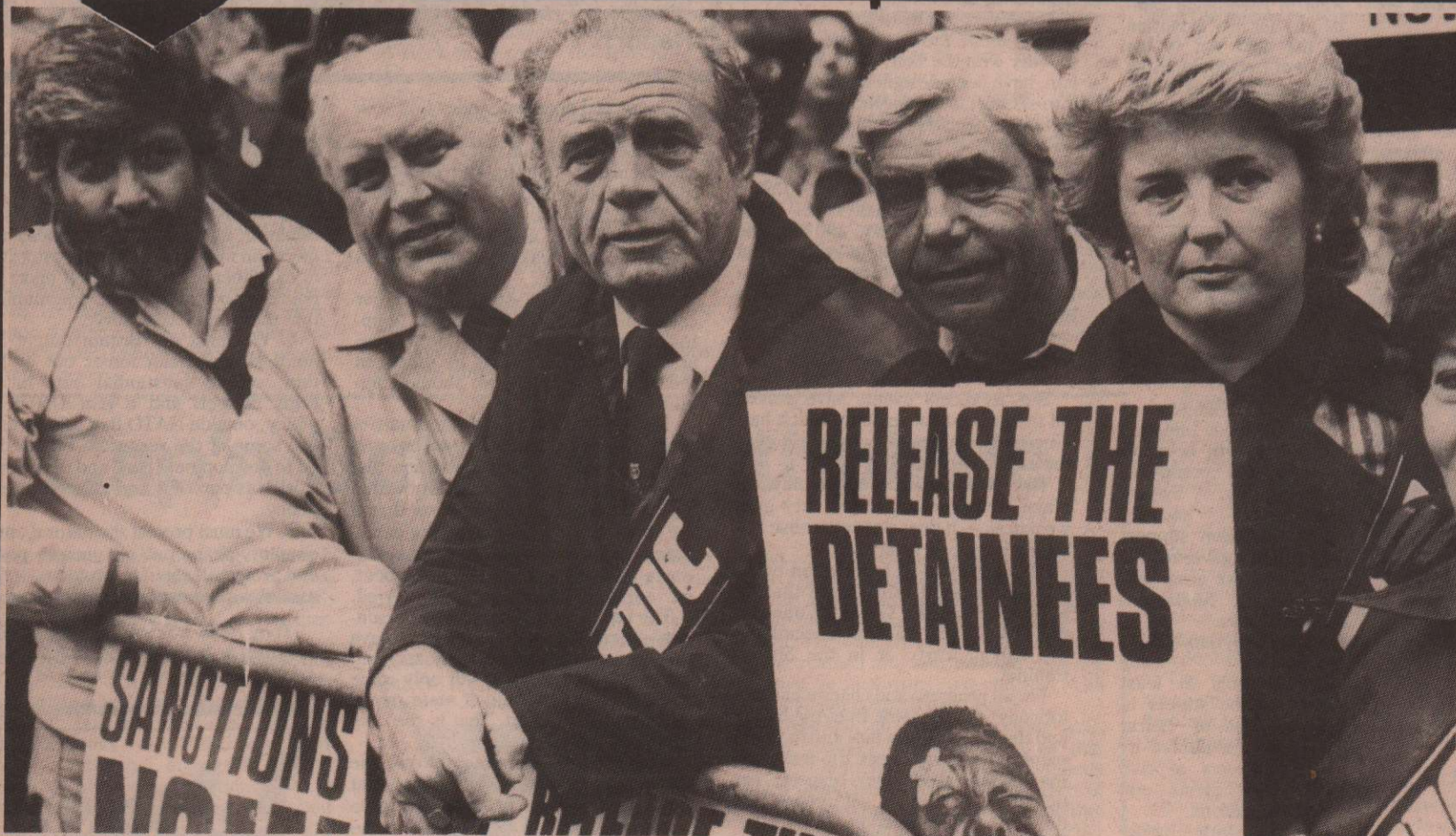
## Sinn Féin on women

Interview with Daisy Mules: see centre pages

**South Africa: TUC calls for action!**

## As Thatcher wobbles, organise the left

# FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!



TUC leaders lobby Commonwealth summit with Philoshaw Camay, general secretary of the Council of Unions of South Africa (far left). Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report.

As the TUC calls on workers to immediately impose their own sanctions on South Africa, the British government continues to stand resolutely against any such sanctions.

On 23 July the TUC called on their members not to use South African goods in the canteen or on the production line. Militants should use the call

to step up the drive for workers' sanctions against South Africa — now.

If we wait for the Thatcher government to act, then we'll wait forever! Thatcher has been ready to confront all 48 other Commonwealth governments, and have a damaging split even with Canada's Tory government, rather than impose even mild sanctions on the Botha regime.

The new measures announced by

Thatcher will, as the Guardian put it, "make very little impact on either the British or South African economies".

The other Commonwealth countries will implement the 'Nasau package' — a ban on fruit and vegetable imports, a ban on air links and a ban on export credits for investment in South Africa. Even this would not be very drastic for British capitalism, but Thatcher won't budge. Why?

British bosses are the main foreign investors in South Africa. The UK's share of total overseas investment approaches 40%. The United States, equally against sanctions, accounts for 25-30%.

Well-known British companies operating in South Africa include Barclays, British Petroleum, Metal Box, Unilever, General Electric, and British Tyre

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Between 1979 and 1981 the Left in the Labour Party carried through some very important reforms, and now, five years later, that very same left, which never disappeared, which is much stronger than it was then, must work both for the election of a Labour government, and for the policies that this country needs.

**By Tony Benn MP**

We have the Campaign Group in Parliament. There are now over a hundred Campaign Groups in the constituencies and in the unions. Now Labour Left Liaison has brought together many groups which have a common interest with us. And of course Campaign Group News is available as a means of communication. We will bring this all together in Campaign Forum which is intended to provide a focus for our common effort.

The British people will soon awaken from the nightmare of unemployment, poverty, injustice, militarism and authoritarianism into which it has been plunged by the crisis in our economy, which the present government has so skilfully exploited for its own political purposes.

And when that moment comes it is important that the Left should be ready with the policies that offer some vision and hope to replace the fear and hopelessness that now paralyze so many people.

For the Left embodies some of the oldest and finest traditions in our history, that have emerged in every generation to renew our society and reform its institutions fundamentally

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# WORLD Brief

## Stripsearching

### To break women

The security forces claim that strip-searching is a security measure. But the only discoveries made during a search are a £5 note, a bottle of perfume and a letter. Even the Prison Officers Association have come out against it.

In fact, strip-searching is used to try and break the resolve of women on remand, that is, women who have not actually been found guilty of anything.

One woman was searched every time she appeared in court for the 9 months she was on remand. She went to court five times a week and was searched four times at every appearance



— a total of 760 body searches. Nothing was found.

Another woman who had had her child in

prison was searched only four weeks after giving birth. She was still bleeding and her breasts were leaking with milk.

## Abortion in Ireland

### Completely illegal

Abortion is illegal throughout Ireland. From the South more than 16,000 women cross the Irish Sea for abortions in this country, often at great financial cost. The Well Woman and the Open Line Counselling Centres in Dublin are fighting against court injunctions for the right to refer women for abor-

tions in Britain. This, the Church and the anti-abortionist groups say, goes against the Irish Constitution which defends the foetus's rights above the mother's.

The 1967 Abortion Act, which gives women in this country some access to abortion, does not apply in Northern Ireland.

Pressure from the Unionist parties prevented it being enacted to cover the six counties. The Northern Ireland Abortion Law Reform Association campaigns for the extension of the 1967 Act to the north of Ireland, but Sinn Fein won't be part of this campaign, saying it legitimises the role of the British state in Ireland.

## Lebanon



### Order imposed

Some semblance of order has been imposed upon war-torn Lebanon — by the occupying Syrian army. A Syrian-sponsored 'security plan' has won support from the government, the Lebanese army and the Islamic fundamentalist militias.

The Syrian-backed Lebanese army now controls at least some of the streets in the capital of Beirut — a city devastated by over 10 years of civil wars, and Syrian and Israeli invasions.

Last month battle-weary Lebanon saw a glimmer of hope for the future: a nationwide general strike united Christian and Moslem factions in closing down shops, banks, leisure facilities, TV stations, newspapers and the international airport.

The strike was in opposition to terrible and deteriorating economic conditions.

## French fascists

### Going badly

Since their resounding successes in France's parliamentary elections this May, things have gone both badly and well, for the fascists of the National Front.

NF leaders have trouble holding on to parliamentary deputies who stood on the NF ticket only to get a seat, and now

want to get back into the ranks of the mainstream right wing.

But in the Ile-de-France region, the mainstream Right has voted through an NF proposal that a new Disneyland project there should discriminate in favour of French and EEC nationals in recruiting labour.

# Fight for socialism!

from page 1

and it is time that we reminded ourselves of those traditions.

The Left draws its strength from a firm commitment to human values which assert that all men and women are brothers and sisters and are entitled to equal rights and has argued for solidarity as the basis for all action and advance.

The Left has also, always, argued for an extension of democracy and for the principle of openness and accountability, in the economy, industry and society as well as in government.

The Left has also been internationalist in its outlook, against imperialism and militarism.

The Left has, for over a hundred years been socialist in its analysis and in its policies.

These are the very qualities which make the Left so relevant to the situation now facing our people, and why we must be sure that our arguments are put forward with passion and clarity.

For many years the Labour Party has been the principal political instrument through which these ideas were expressed, and we now have to re-establish that Left tradition firmly within the party, and through the party in the country as a whole.

Indeed it is the very fact that the Labour Party is, and always will be, a grass-roots socialist party, closely linked to the trade unions — organisations of working people — that have made the rich and the powerful fear us so much.

The methods used by the establishment to neutralise our influence are now very familiar.

What we say is dismissed as dangerous, unworkable, destructive and out-of-touch with the aspirations of the community as a whole.

The levels of abuse that have been poured on to those who are proud to identify with the Left, and with socialism, have been designed to frighten us into silence, or to encourage others to distance themselves from the causes we espouse.

More recently an attempt has been made by the media, to suggest that a major re-alignment has taken place within the Labour Party, and that the Left has been completely isolated and defeated, and is now little more than a raucous rump, which can be safely ignored.

## Popular

But, as recent events have proved, all the popular movements which have emerged in this country in recent years have been of the Left.

The Left has indeed got only one major weakness and it's a very great weakness — it does not yet realise how strong it really is in Britain.

No-one should be too worried by the pronounced shift to the right that has taken place on the General Council of the TUC, in the National Executive of the Labour Party or in the Shadow Cabinet.

For all progress and change has, historically, always come from the bottom and the people at the top, and in Parliament, have always been the last to get the message and in some respects, particularly in respect of peace and detente and cooperation with Eastern Europe, public opinion is already well ahead of the party leadership.

We are bound to oppose policies that will not be effective, or that are wrong, like the policies towards the unions to which Eric referred. We are bound to resist the present attempt to expel good socialists from the party and re-establish traditions of tolerance, but we should know enough about our history to know that all those who are expelled will be re-admitted in time.

Millions of people desperately want to see this government defeated and the Left must see that what we say, and



### A Wapping wedding

Wapping pickets celebrated the Royal Wedding by unloading reels of newsprint from lorries on their way to Murdoch's plant — but the police became literally 'paper boys for Murdoch'. Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report.

do, helps and does not hinder that possibility.

The Left knows full well the supreme importance of analysis and debate in the formulation of policy, but we must not allow factionalism or sectarianism to obscure the arguments and we should always speak in language that is clear and plain.

That is why we must present our case constructively, and not be tempted into responding, in kind, to personal attacks made upon us by others in the movement, which we should completely ignore.

The Left has always rejected narrow electoralism, when it has taken over from principle, and we must see that we do not adopt an 'electoralism within an electoralism' which implies that if we could only defeat right-wing candidates and substitute left-wing candidates at every level in the movement, all our problems would be solved.

The Left should always avoid personality politics like the plague, and have no heroes and no scapegoats and remember that success will only come when a strong and united mass movement can be built up. That is the only route we can take.

The Left must now address the nation on the central questions that concern those we represent, and to do so from inside the Labour Party, in the form of clear demands.

## Discrimination

1. We must demand work for all, good homes, lifelong education, a free health service, an end to poverty, and dignity for those who have retired, and be sure that neither the EEC nor the IMF are allowed to prevent us from achieving these objectives.

2. We must insist upon the re-establishment of trade unionism free from all government control, upon democracy in local government, the

public services and industry, all of which will require a genuine socialist transformation with a major extension of common ownership and self-management.

3. We insist upon an end to all discrimination against women, blacks and gays and minority groups, a restoration of civil liberties and we must make the police responsible to the communities that they are there to serve.

4. We must get Britain out of Ireland, all American forces out of Britain, secure substantial cuts in the arms budget, and a real UN peace policy, outside NATO that allows us to use some of the resources released to go to development here and in the third world, as part of a non-aligned foreign policy.

5. We must protect the natural environment, phase out all nuclear power and protect the animal kingdom.

Tony Benn was speaking at a public meeting in London on 22 July organised by the Campaign Group of MPs.

# THE LABOUR PARTY

## Join now

Join the Labour Party!  
Write to 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

# TRIBUNE AND TROTSKYISM

THERE ARE many striking things about the current 'witch-hunt' in the Labour Party.

One is that it is being conducted by the Party and trade union machine against a section of that machine — controlled by Militant, which ran the Party in Liverpool using traditional bureaucratic methods.

By far the most striking thing, however, is that this witch-hunt is in part being conducted by one section of the left against another.

But the left witch-hunters of today are hardly better than the old-style Labour policemen of yesterday.

The weekly paper 'Tribune' best expresses the new approach of these Labour Party police-state democrats. It doesn't argue about the issues — for example the issue of what a future government will have to do.

It makes war on 'Trotskyism' without even a working definition of what 'Trotskyism' is.

There are difficulties, of course. Historic Trotskyism is the set of ideas that Trotsky took over and preserved when the Stalinist rulers of the USSR annexed the Communist International and changed it from revolutionary working-class politics to service for the foreign policy of the USSR.

But Trotsky has been dead 46 years.

## EDITORIAL

On the basis of more or less real adherence to a common stock, vastly divergent groups call themselves Trotskyist. Some, like Militant, call themselves Trotskyist who do not even subscribe to basic ideas of Leninism like the impossibility of a peaceful road to socialism.

To put it briefly, if Socialist Organiser's claim to be Trotskyist — to be in anything like the direct political and doctrinal line of descent from the ideas that Trotsky would have called Trotskyist in August 1940 — is valid, then Militant's claim to be Trotskyist is invalid. And vice versa.



Last week's Tribune

But Tribune has it both ways. Its target, 'Trotskyism', can be attacked for any of the ideas and practices of any of the various different would-be Trotskyist groups.

For example, commitment to parliamentary democracy is the banner around which the Kinnockites have rallied, and the club, wielded like a bishop's crozier of olden times, with which the heretics are smitten.

It is used against Militant. But Militant believes in the possibility of a parliamentary road to socialism! Today it talks of no other road: and a full 20 years ago, in the privacy of small editorial board meetings, the leaders of the Militant tendency insisted against the now editor of SO that we could, and very probably would, get a peaceful transition to socialism in Britain.

The demon 'Trotskyism' is attacked and smeared by identification with Militant, and Militant is attacked and smeared by association with the general stock of ideas of Trotskyism — in this case, ideas that it does not agree with.

It's typical of the whole level of the 'debate'. It is not a debate but an ultimatum: support parliamentary democracy as we define it, or be branded as wrecker.

Take the recent column by Jack Straw MP denouncing Trotsky and the Bolshevik regime for having retaken by force a key fortress on the outskirts of Petrograd in March 1921, at the end of the Russian civil war.

Some of the rebels raised 'anarchist' slogans and presented themselves as



Hostility to Militant should not lead anyone to support the witch-hunt. Photo: Ian Swindale.

wanting something better than the existing workers' regime — in conditions of famine and destruction which made it impossible. But they had taken the key fortress at Kronstadt.

The Russian workers' state gave them an ultimatum and then attacked the fortress. Visiting delegates for the 10th Bolshevik Party congress in Petrograd joined the Red Army and attacked the fortress across the ice, under the guns of its garrison.

That vicious act, says Straw, shows up Lenin and Trotsky.

They would have been true democrats, of course, if they had refused to defend the workers' state and instead let it dissolve into chaos.

But the argument is ludicrous. Jack Straw is not a naive anarchist. He is someone who 'came up' in politics by way of the National Union of Students in the 1960s and wants to be a minister. Like others of his ilk, he has no hesitation about supporting the armed force of the British capitalist state.

Take the idea that you could have a peaceful surrender by the British ruling class if enough people voted for socialism. What's the argument here?

Nowhere, ever, has any ruling class meekly submitted to its own destruction when it had the means to defend itself. The British ruling class does have the means to defend itself. It has an army, a police force, a permanent bureaucracy, etc.

### Democratic

On the basis of the facts of known history, in all times and countries, the idea that the ruling class would surrender to an election verdict is utterly bizarre. It flies in the face of experience and reason. To believe it you have to be very stupid, or not have thought about the question — or be the most blinkered of blinkered dogmatists.

In fact, disguised behind this old 'reform-or-revolution' debate is something else: whether or not socialism is qualitatively different from capitalism. That's what's hidden behind the dogmatic dispute. What really divides us from the Kinnockites on 'peaceful methods' is that we want socialism; they want modified capitalism.

As Kinnock steers steadily to the right, the question is posed to the soft left: how far will you go with him? If Kinnock and his team win the next election, and behave as the last Labour government did, or worse, what will you do then?

The witch-hunt is no answer! But meanwhile it spreads. Others beside Militant supporters are expelled, people who are soft-left or even... Tribunites.

The front page of Tribune last week, with an article by Andrew Wilson protesting against expulsions, shows that this fact may finally be getting through to some of the soft left.

In the USA the wild and irrational witch-hunts known as McCarthyism did not begin with McCarthy. They began with President Truman in 1947 and then expanded to claw in some people who originally backed them and whose anti-communist credentials were substantial.

Labour leftists who have been swung into support for the witch-hunt by justifiable anger against Militant should rethink and reassess — and start discussing the real issues.

## Cap'n Bob's mouthpiece

As everyone knows the Daily Mirror is Britain's leading pro-Labour national newspaper. To be exact it's Britain's only pro-Labour national newspaper. However.

So naturally it was to the Mirror that I turned for a firm line on this whole apartheid/sanctions/Commonwealth Games boycott business. Ringing denunciations of Thatcher's complicity with the apartheid regime; clarion calls for sanctions; warm sympathy for the countries whose boycott of the Games was such a powerful gesture of protest: all this was notably absent from the Mirror's coverage.

And we all know why, don't we? Mirror boss Robert Maxwell, a prominent figure in the Millionaire Tendency of the Labour Party, was the official fund-raiser and self-appointed front man for the Games.

In return, the Mirror, and its Scottish counterpart, the Daily Record, were given the plum advertising sites in the Stadium and exclusive access to competitors and officials.

No wonder Cap'n Bob was not best pleased by the boycott. And being a

newspaper proprietor of the old school, he made sure that his organs became mouthpieces for his displeasure.

Politics must be kept out of sport; the boycotters are only harming their own cause; these are Scotland's games, not Thatcher's; proclaimed the Maxwell press.



By Jim Denham

...and you, the Mirror took it out on Thatcher as well, reporting with glee how spirited oarswoman Joanna Toth pushed her way through security men to give the PM a right good rollicking.

According to the Mirror "it was a day of humiliation for the Prime Minister... she was snubbed by the athletes... pelted with fruit and eggs...

jeered by an angry crowd."

The Mirror omitted to mention that Cap'n Bob was personally responsible for inviting Thatcher (even falling out with Edinburgh District Council over the matter) and had insisted that she must be met with "the courtesy with which her position demands".

Anyway, all's well that ends well. The Sunday Mirror assured us that "the Commonwealth Games have been a triumph despite those worst efforts of those leading Commonwealth politicians who sought to make anti-Thatcher capital by their last-minute wrecking tactics."

Just one small matter, though. The bill.

According to the Sunday Mirror "some 500,000 ordinary people, from children to pensioners, have sent their donations", and "Mr Sasakawa, one of the world's greatest philanthropists, has also agreed to Robert Maxwell's request to contribute to making good the shortfall".

So rush your donations to Cap'n Bob, c/o Mirror Group Newspapers, Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ.

## Good riddance

The resignation of Robert Kilroy-Silk as Labour MP for Knowlsey North has intensely angered Neil Kinnock because he has upset his efforts to bring the left wing activists in the Party to heel. Long before retiring to take the Chiltern Hundreds, Kilroy-Silk took to a posh house in Buckinghamshire, which he considered to be a fitting place to represent constituents who lived 200 miles away.

The Knowlsey North constituency is made up principally of the town of Kirkby — an archipelago of mainly sub-standard housing estates built in the late '50s and early '60s to accommodate Liverpool's overflow population from inner-city slum areas such as Scotland Road.

Early propaganda portrayed Kirkby as a 'New Jerusalem' where workers and their families could cavort with cows in leafy meadows. However, new slums merely replaced the old, and the years of recession have made Kirkby even more of a desert. Unemployment is chronic, housing conditions on estates like Tower Hill are among the worse in the country.

Kilroy-Silk is one of those career politicians who think the working class is duty bound to provide them with a living. On becoming MP in 1974, he enjoyed a cosy relationship with the old corrupt right wing Party in Kirkby. He got on with trying to map out a career for himself in Parliament, while some of them got on with the local business, which — according to what local people believe — mainly involved bent construction deals. Kirkby once voted for an artificial ski-slope which slalomed right down to the local motorway.

After a decade or so in Parliament, Kilroy-Silk began to realise that he was not going to be Prime Minister. Worse still, an influx of activists in the local Party had the gall to criticise him for his performance as MP. These two factors decided Kilroy-Silk to throw in the towel and move onto to pastures new.

He put his resignation down to "three miserable years at the hands of Militant" in his constituency. This explanation is, as Kinnock quite rightly said, "rubbish". There are very few Militant supporters in Kirkby. People simply oppose Kilroy-Silk because they considered him to be a bad MP.

He also had a lot of backing from the Party hierarchy against the attempts locally to ditch him. The re-selection process was suspended last November, and the leading front runner, Tony Mulhearn, has since been expelled from the Labour Party.

Nevertheless, raising the spectre of Militant does make good copy, especially if you're out for a career in the media. Already Silk has a serialisation of his forthcoming book 'Hard Labour' bought up by the Murdoch press for at least £20,000. A very tidy sum for one so hard done by!

The Labour Party is better off without the likes of Golding, Kilroy-Silk and their like. Their actions simply prove critics right who say they are merely out for what they can get.

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## GRAFFITI

## US, IMF, and Poland

The US government knew about General Jaruzelski's plans to impose martial law in

Poland in 1981, and kept quiet about them.

According to Polish government representa-

tive Jerzy Urban, a senior Polish staff officer was on the CIA payroll at the time of the leaked plans. "The US administration could have publicly revealed these plans to the world and warned Solidarity. Had it done so, the implementation of martial law would have been impossible."

A US government official confirmed this to the Washington Post: "We had everything in the plan but the date".

Reagan had made a lot of noise about supporting Solidarnosc. But behind the scenes the US ruling class had different attitudes. Business Week magazine reported in 1981: "Western banks privately applaud martial law because they believe the army's action will end the political impasse that has paralysed the economy."

And indeed the banks have had their way. On 2 June this year Poland joined the International Monetary Fund, and the government has agreed to continue harsh austerity measures.

(Information: Socialist Action/US)

## Ian MacGregor's balance sheet

## Loss

Was Ian MacGregor worth the millions that the government has paid to him and to his former employers Lazard Freres?

On the face of it, no. Coal Board accounts published last week show a loss of £3 billion over MacGregor's three years as boss. That's not counting the other losses caused by the coal strike of 1984-5: the total loss, according to an estimate by Arthur Scargill, is £14 billion over the three years, or £12 million a day.

But the Tories knew what they were paying their money for. And the figures that tell them that MacGregor has done a good job for them are these: 66,500 jobs cut so far, and another 13,000 due to go by March 1987.

## 6500 jobless from met abolition

ACCORDING to government figures, 6,500 people were made redundant in the abolition of the Greater London Council and the metropolitans.

Another 5,000 have temporary jobs with the 'residual bodies' tying up the loose ends. Some, but not all, of them will get jobs with other councils when the residual bodies pack up.



Solidarnosc in action

## Too much?

"SLOWLY the party is winning back the hearts and minds of the people.

"Last year's general election results revealed that the opposition forces numbered only 7 or 8 per cent of the population."

After unspecified "mistakes" (no indication of what exactly they were), everything is now coming right in Poland, according to the Morning Star (1 August). Indeed, its main problem now could be too much democracy.

"Perhaps the biggest danger Poland faces now is that the commitment to discuss, debate and account for actions at every level could

become a barrier to getting on with the job of building the economy."

But the elections still remain elections in which no opposition is allowed to stand. The 'discussions' remain discussions in which you cannot contradict the generals without fear of jail. And the Polish workers' movement, Solidarnosc, remains banned and persecuted.

## Child-beating banned

EVEN in Tory Britain civilisation scores some small victories. On 22 July MPs voted 231 to 230 to ban caning in schools.

## Workers twice as likely to die

## Unequal health

Health is becoming much more unequal. In 1972, the death rate for semi- and unskilled male workers aged 25-44 was 90% above that for professionals and managers. By 1982

it was 120% above. This is the first sharp increase in the gap after 60 years during which it remained stable.

There is a similar but smaller social class-health gap for women, which has been increasing steadily since World War 2.

These figures for different death rates in different social classes are usually published in a regular government report. This year, however, for the first time since 1911, they are buried in a separate publication — 22,000 pages on microfiche, costing £46.

## 19 million on the breadline

The government no longer publishes figures for the total number in poverty.

Little wonder. According to poverty groups, 19 million people now live below the line of supplementary benefit plus 40%. This is a major increase on 1979.

## Why Israel is a settler-colonial state

In reply to Liam Conway: Israel is one of the few remaining settler colonial states in the world, established by driving out another people, institutionalising racism, into every aspect of its functioning. Israel is an apartheid state, supporting reaction both in neighbouring states and worldwide.

## Jews

The fact that it is Jews who are the perpetrators of racism is irrelevant as is the question of anti-Semitism. As long as Israel remains a 'Jewish state' it cannot help but be a racist state constantly at war with the Palestinians.

And because Israel is a state founded in alliance with imperialism, which only survives today by virtue of the

support of US imperialism, to imagine a "smaller non-racist Israel" is to substitute fantasy for reality. Israel is an expansionist state with a strategic role in the Middle East, and a Zionist ideology that imbues both 'left' and 'right' Zionists with the idea of a biblical greater Israel.

## Nation

In so far as Israeli Jews constitute a nation, and that is debatable, it is as an oppressor nation. The question of self-determination does not arise as they are not oppressed as a nation.

Zionism is an intra-class alliance based on the oppression of the Palestinians. As long as the latter are oppressed, either inside Israel or in the bantustan on the West Bank, or both, then the Israeli workers will never achieve even the most minimal class

consciousness.

It is precisely because Israeli Jews are held together by their relationship to the Palestinians and the Arab masses, that a democratic, secular state solution is the most basic democratic demand that socialists should support. It is a demand opposed both by the Zionists and the Islamic chauvinists in the region. In no way is it inconsistent with e.g. language rights for those Liam Conway rightly terms Palestinian Jews. Far from being implicitly anti-Semitic it stands in opposition to all chauvinisms in the region. It may be incompatible with Israeli Jewish nationhood, but then so is the latter with Palestinian self-determination.

Yours fraternally  
TONY GREENSTEIN  
Brighton

## Sanctions are anti-imperialist!

At a time when the British government is breaking its back to avoid the imposition of sanctions against South Africa, it is depressing to see a socialist newspaper back up the Tories' arguments.

Bob Fine's two-part piece, 'The Politics of Sanctions' was, despite occasional lip-service to 'support' for sanctions, in fact a sustained attack on the whole sanctions campaign. It was nothing more than a 'socialist' cover for the right wing.

Fine says of the sanctions campaign that it could have been "at best a useful strategy" (SO no. 276). In other words, it has never even been that.

Worse, Fine chimes in with Tory slanders against the liberation movement. He denounces the ANC for "glib rhetoric"; they "have shown little regard for black workers"; "it's one thing to espouse disinvestment from London or Lusaka, and another to see the notice on the factory gate declaring the factory closed."



The Commonwealth Summit. Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report.

The sanctions campaign is vital because it will weaken the apartheid state and thus hasten its destruction. It is vital for solidarity that we take up the demand for sanctions because it is a demand that arises from the liberation movement itself.

The ANC knows what is needed, and what the black workers want, far better than any of us in Britain do.

Sanctions will make possible the victory of the ANC. And sanctions are supported by black people in South Africa — unless Bob Fine would rather believe collaborators like Gatsha Buthelezi than the 'middle class' Oliver Tambo.

Moreover, what Fine fails to understand, is that the campaign for sanctions is anti-imperialist, because its dynamics run counter to the strategy of British capitalism. Their strategy is to shore up South African capitalism and gently push Botha towards a few reforms to stave off revolution.

The sanctions campaign exposes this strategy, demonstrating the nature and role of British imperialism.

The whole of the left must support the ANC and its call for sanctions unconditionally.

GERRY BATES,  
Glasgow.

Letters are welcome: less than 300 words, please, as we may have to cut. Send to PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

## Class: words and meaning

WHEN WE call Derek Hatton 'Flash Harry', is that a disgrace? In the '60s, when left-wingers would jeer at the dapper, gentlemanly turn-out of the railworkers' leader Sid Greene, was that shameful?

## Trivialities

Is the traditional Trotskyist jibe against the pious 'gentlemen' who lead the labour movement a game with irrelevancies? When Fred Engels bemoaned the fact that the engineers' leader of his day, Tom Mann, was 'secretly more proud of his friendship with the Lord Mayor of London than of his position with the workers', was he descending to trivialities?

I don't think so. And for that reason I think Helen McHale (SO276) is wide of the mark to condemn our jibe at Brenda Dean as a 'lady'.

True, 'lady' (like 'gentleman') is used in a variety of senses — but I don't think any reasonable reader could doubt that SO was using it in the class sense (of which all the others are, after all, derivatives).

COLIN FOSTER,

Islington.

Editor's note: At this point I think I should confess that the use of 'svelte' in the controversial article was illiterate. It was used to mean smooth, sleek, well-groomed. My dictionary says it means, centrally, slender, light, slim. For readers who knew the right meaning, it would make the epithet read like an (inaccurate) comment on Ms Dean's body. Sorry! But it's interesting that none of those who found the epithet offensive have pointed out this misuse of 'svelte'.

## Militant: the truth

In SO (24 July) Steve Revins states: "Militant has never been for an Ulster trade union defence force". As a former Militant supporter I must state categorically that throughout the 1970s and into the '80s, Militant consistently advocated a "Northern Ireland trade union defence force", which was always advanced as one of the answers

to the war. At no time did we extend this to a "cross border" force.

Whether this was right or wrong, or was right but became wrong with changing circumstances is a matter of political viewpoint, but that Militant consistently argued for a "Northern Ireland trade union defence force" is a matter of historical fact.

PETE GILMAN

# Why the inner cities are exploding

**Broadwater Farm is not exceptional. Like many big council estates built in the 1970s, it lacked amenities, the flats had damp and cockroaches, and the lifts were dirty and unreliable.**

The people who live there are working class and poor. 87% of households have a yearly income under £8000. 77% of voters are Labour.

69% of all adults on the estate, and 83% of young black men, have no job.

The estate is 50% black, but that is not exceptional for Tottenham. The whole borough of Haringey has a 44% black population, and Tottenham, its most working class area, has a higher proportion.

Broadwater Farm differs from many other estates mainly in having better tenants' organisation. The Youth Association has organised an office for itself, meals and outings for pensioners, a day nursery and a play centre, an annual festival, and a number of cooperative enterprises on the estate.

But the Youth Association was not and is not some sort of revolutionary organisation threatening the State. In February 1985 it organised a reception for Princess Diana.

## Figures

According to police figures, crime rates on the estate dropped sharply after 1983. The Gifford Inquiry got its own crime survey done by a team who had recently surveyed the neighbouring borough of Islington: 12% of people on Broadwater Farm had had their homes burgled in the previous 12 months, as against 23% in Sussex ward, Islington; 6% had had their homes vandalised, as against 42% in Sussex ward.

Nevertheless, 57% of people on Broadwater Farm thought that crime was a 'big problem' — fewer than the 94% who considered unemployment a 'big problem', but more than the 29% who were similarly concerned about police behaviour.

The crimes they were most concerned about were sexual assaults on women and heroin dealing.

In summer 1985, according to the Gifford report, drug dealing increased markedly on the estate. The tenants' groups wanted the police to arrest the pushers. The police were dubious about going in in force, and suggested that the tenants' groups should invite them in. The tenants' leaders replied that it was the police's responsibility, not theirs.

This impasse was a result of the whole pattern of relations between the police and the estate. The report quotes a local Tory councillor, no less: "The police do not like the youths... The Police, because they are scared, rather than going in twos to investigate crime in the ordinary way, start to go in mob-handed".

And a community worker: the police would usually be reluctant to respond to calls by residents, but every so often

**On Sunday, 20 July, people from Broadwater Farm estate in North London marched in protest against the police harassment which they have suffered since the fighting on the estate in October last year. Martin Thomas reviews the report of the Gifford Inquiry into last October's events.**

"they'd send in the SPG (the special riot squad) and clamp down on everybody, especially black people."

About 60% of the people on the estate believe — on the basis of their own or friends' experience — that the police use threats, falsify statements and are unfair.

In October 1985 these feelings were heightened by the police shooting of Cherry Groce in Brixton, the riots which followed there, and a police stop-and-search operation on Broadwater Farm on 1 October which selectively stopped blacks. There were a lot of rumours in the area about a riot being planned, though there is no evidence that anyone did anything towards planning a riot other than talk big about it.

On 5 October Floyd Jarrett — a young black man and member of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association, though he didn't live on the estate — was arrested for driving a car with an out-of-date tax disc. The police went to town on him, hauling him into the station, and then driving round to search his mother's house (not on the estate). They burst into the house without knocking — using Floyd's keys — and jostled Mrs Jarrett. She fell over. She was already very ill, and the fall killed her.

## Shocked

People on the estate were shocked. But their first response was not to riot. In the afternoon of 6 October, tenants' leaders met the police — getting a stonewall in response to their questions — and there was an angry, but not explosive, demonstration outside the local police station.

In the early evening there was a meeting on the estate. From it, youths set out to demonstrate outside the police station again. Before they got out of the estate, they met three police vans. The youths — according to eyewitnesses — banged on the vans with their hands, but not with weapons.

The police jumped out and drew truncheons. Soon there was a full-scale battle — riot shields, barricades, petrol



Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report.

bombs. The fight continued for hours, until rain started around 11 pm. During it a policeman was stabbed to death.

For three months after that night, police saturated the estate. "You could not move without seeing a policeman in riot gear," as a local Methodist minister told the inquiry.

359 people were arrested, almost all from the estate, which has 1800 adults. 162 were charged. Those arrested were taken to police stations anywhere in London except the local one, and held incommunicado without access to solicitors, family or friends.

One 17 year old youth, after being held for 2½ days, made a 50-page confession about what he had supposedly done during the riot — but the prosecution had to be dropped when it was proved that he had been out of London on the night of the riot!

Another black youth who was arrested had all his clothes confiscated and was told that he had been identified by his jacket. In court a cleaning ticket was produced which proved it wasn't possible for him to be wearing it on the

night of the riot.

One black carpenter who works for council on the estate was peeling 'I love the Met' (Metropolitan Police) stickers off his car when police harassed him. He swore at the police. A few days later, six or seven police grabbed him, insulted him, and threw him into a police van, where they kicked him. Council unions organised a demonstration in protest when he was taken to court and he was acquitted. A case against the police is now in progress.

At the same time, a local (white) Labour councillor demonstrated the racist bias of the police by driving several times slowly round the estate with a photo of his cat in place of the tax disc on his car. He was never stopped.

Lord Gifford — a Labour peer — and the other members of his inquiry reckon that all this can be avoided by more consultation between senior police and tenants' leaders — more 'community policing'.

Since, according to the report, five members of the inquiry took fees of over £12,000 each from the council (the sixth, a Catholic Bishop, took no money), I suppose they have a vested interest in the idea that more committees, consultations, and inquiries will solve all social ills.

Yet the evidence they present indicates the opposite. The local police chief, Chief Superintendent Couch, is in fact a keen advocate of 'community policing'. But so long as working class communities suffer the sort of economic oppression faced by Broadwater Farm, and so long as the police force is organised as a hierarchical force for the defence of private property with no democratic accountability, conflicts like October 1985 will not be exceptional.

'The Broadwater Farm Inquiry': Report of the Independent Inquiry into disturbances of October 1985 at the Broadwater Farm Estate, Tottenham. The Inquiry was commissioned by Haringey council.

## East Enders force-fed pork pies

By Cheung Siu-Ming

The Chinese community in Tower Hamlets is outraged by the scurrilous front page article in the East End Advertiser of 18 July, which alleged that a 'barbaric' Chinese gang was kidnapping and slaughtering people's dogs and cats for food.

Local Chinese take-aways have suffered racist taunts and abuse as well as loss of trade.

The paper carried the story despite the fact that the allegations have been proven groundless by both the RSPCA and the police. A photograph of a hanging dog was used — taken from a video shot in South Korea in 1982.

## Fabrication

The RSPCA press officer claims that the paper's quote of an unnamed RSPCA inspector was "absolute fabrication". Even the Limehouse police Chief Superintendent wrote to the paper and local organisations, stating that the story "had no foundation in fact".

Ms Elly Wong of the Chinese Association of Tower Hamlets issued a statement describing the article as "irres-

## Race & Rclass

possible and baseless" and attacking the paper for inciting racial prejudice.

But the paper persisted in implying that the original allegation had some truth. The Chinese Association has lodged a complain to the Press Council.

The police have told the Parliamentary Home Affairs committee that they have virtually no cases of racial harassment against the Chinese. This totally contradicts the everyday experience of the Chinese families running take-aways and restaurants.

## Narcotics

Some years ago a programme on the narcotics trade provoked a protest by an activist in the Chinese community who paraded outside Thames TV with a placard saying 'I'm a heroin courier!'

Perhaps the East End Advertiser would be interested in carrying a real story about the hard drug smugglers in the Far East — the British traders who grew it in India, sold it in China and got British gunboats to defend their right to Free Trade in the Opium Wars of the 1840s.

## Put resources into the estates

Diana Minns, chair of housing on Haringey council, told SO

"The Report's analysis of the police action at Broadwater Farm is, so far as I can see, as near to the truth as anyone will ever get. I also think the Report is important for what it says needs to be done on estates like Broadwater Farm. It shows that the action that Haringey has taken already — albeit late — like the setting up of Neighbourhood Offices, are a guide for other estates and also for other authorities with such large

estates.

I'm reasonably satisfied with the report. It's a bit woolly in parts, but that's probably inevitable with this kind of report. It reads very well. It does pin down what happened chronologically.

In part it does put the blame on the Council — the Council did use the Farm with too little sensitivity. We're now putting resources in, and I hope that the new resources will help.

But it's not just a lesson for

Broadwater Farm. It shows that only local authorities can redress the shortcomings of large estates. The government would like to break them up and privatise them, but that's not an answer.

I think the formula in the Report — a local office with decentralised services, both housing and others — proves that local authorities are the best people to be putting resources into such estates.

# WOMEN IN IRELAND



Photos Camerawork

# Sinn Fein and women's lib

Women's liberation in Ireland is a very complex issue. Nearly every aspect of women's oppression — violence, discrimination in jobs and education, lack of financial independence, lack of contraception and abortion rights and so on — are inextricably tied to two all-pervading themes: the power of the Catholic church and the national question.

Any long-lasting solution to women's oppression in Ireland must not only deal with the capitalist economic system but must be able to take on both these giants.

The practice of strip-searching women prisoners in Armagh and now Maghaberry prisons is one of the most striking examples of how the issues of women's oppression and the national question are intertwined.

Daisy Mules of Sinn Fein sees strip-searching as "an act of violence, very strongly akin to rape. It is not for security — all that's ever been found is a £5 note, a bottle of perfume and a letter — but is aimed at women on remand to try and break them and force confessions". She argues that Sinn Fein would see it as a winnable campaign and urges British people to continue taking up the issue.

Another issue which people thought

**Daisy Mules of the Sinn Fein trade union department speaks to Michele Carlisle about women in Ireland and Sinn Fein's policy. She discusses strip-searching; the recent divorce referendum in the South; abortion [Daisy Mules moved a successful resolution at the last Sinn Fein conference for a woman's right to choose]; and the relation between women's liberation and the national question.**

to be winnable was Garrett Fitzgerald's Fine Gael attempt at constitutional reform in the South to allow divorce in cases when a marriage had broken down for at least five years.

The people of the South voted by two to seven to reject this change. Thousands of women will be affected by this result, with no rights to maintenance or help, no right to remarry, no right to a home and no way out of a violent marriage. In the Republic, the only divorce available is a state annulment, which renders the children of that

marriage illegitimate, and is very difficult to get.

"The Divorce Referendum was a more tragic event than even the abortion amendment," says Daisy Mules. "It was a bigger setback because it affects more people — mostly women. It commits many women to lives of misery, women who cannot leave their marriages because they have nowhere else to go."

"In Irish law a married woman does not have the right to a house or a home.

Her home is her husband's home. So if he decides to run off to Timbuctoo and she stays in Ireland, her home is in Timbuctoo. It's a nonsense, but that's the law".

The anti-divorce lobby emphasised the effect that divorce would have on the family and, hypocritically, on women. The Catholic Church claimed that it wasn't giving an 'official line', but in reality it was clear that all good Catholics were expected to vote no. The result was a great victory for the

Church.

The Referendum has also been used by Unionists as justification for partition. "Before the Divorce Referendum we heard Paisley ranting about a civil war in the North. He's used the result of the Referendum quite cleverly because it has let him off the hook. Now he says they don't need a civil war because there will never be a united Ireland."

Of course, Paisley himself is opposed to divorce, just as he is opposed to abortion. Sinn Fein is one of the few political groups in Ireland with anything resembling progressive policy on abortion rights.

However, Daisy Mules would be the first to admit that the policy is confused and contradictory.

1. Sinn Fein is opposed to the attitudes in society which compel women to have abortions.

2. Sinn Fein rejects the use of abortion as a form of birth control.

3. Sinn Fein accepts the right to abortion when the woman's life is in danger.

4. Sinn Fein accepts a woman's right to choose.

"This is a very muddled policy. But for Ireland it was a very progressive step. It has caused a lot of potentially dangerous dissension and has forced people to reconsider Sinn Fein and what sort of movement it is."

The policy is likely to be challenged

# nd eration

at this year's Ard Fheis. The Sinn Fein Women's Department, of which Daisy Mules is a member, will be proposing a compromise position which they hope will accommodate more people.

"If we go too fast too quickly we'll end up splitting the movement. We could forge ahead with the correct line and lose half our members. That doesn't help Ireland and it wouldn't be totally fair to those people who have been holding the movement together. Hopefully, through dialogue we will change people's ideas. But I don't think we'll get agreement on abortion in Sinn Fein, ever."

Daisy admits that the compromise "may seem a cop out to British feminists. But Ireland is very different and we have to develop as our conditions allow us to."

Abortion is not the only women-specific issue which Sinn Fein has discussed in the last few years. Lesbian and gay rights are fully accepted and Sinn Fein has supported the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association. There is progressive policy on childcare provision, but women still tend to run the home while their husbands are the political activists.

"That's something we're still trying to change," says Daisy Mules. "there may be a man who talks about sacrificing his family for the movement. We say, well what about your partner, perhaps she wants to sacrifice something

for the movement?"

Sinn Fein has its own Women's Department, which meets autonomously and can recommend policy. "We get comments about how it's sexist to have a women only meeting, but that happens in Britain, so it's not unusual."

"In terms of leadership, women are at the fore, women are there. They are as politically conscious as the men. It's just the practicalities of being able to get up at night and go out to a meeting which make it hard."

## Armed

"Women have always been involved in the armed struggle, throughout the history of Ireland, but their role has been played down by the media. For women to be involved changes people's perceptions — the armed struggle then has to be seen as political and not merely aggressive."

There are a number of independent women's organisations in Northern Ireland, working around very specific issues such as rape crisis, battered wives refuges, etc.

Daisy herself is involved with setting up a Rape and Incest Survivors Centre in Derry with a group of women from all religions and political backgrounds.

"We would never raise the national question in the Rape Crisis Centre. It's

not relevant. What's relevant is that women are being raped and children are survivors of incest."

"At the beginning people will be very cagey about where you lived and what you did. As we've progressed we've been more open. They know I work for Sinn Fein and I know that one of them works for a Loyalist grouping. The trust has developed between us as women, working for a particular aim. We'll never agree on the national question. Not now, but maybe in the future...."

"A women's movement, unless it tackles the fundamental question, the national question, won't ever succeed. Three or four years ago there was an all-Ireland women's meeting with about 1600 women. It didn't come up with anything dramatic, but at least it happened. But the thing that comes up all the time is the national question". Some Irish women are very wary of the British women's movement and British feminists. "There is an overriding fear of another form of imperialism being forced on Irish women. That is an understandable reaction. Irish women have to develop their own liberation, because we have different issues against us."

"Sinn Fein would support the women's liberation alongside national liberation. We don't see one following from the other. They have to happen at the same time."

## Eric Heffer MP: 'Unite labour!'

Let me make one thing absolutely clear. The Campaign Group of MPs wants to see a Labour Government elected at the next General Election.

We want to see a Labour Government based on a socialist programme which will do what it says — which will reverse Tory policies and repeal Tory legislation, especially anti-trade union legislation, which will end the counter-revolution carried through by Mrs Thatcher and the Tory government, which will tackle unemployment — understanding it as a product of capitalism, take back into public ownership the industries privatised, at government which will build house for rent — on a big scale — and rebuild the economy with investment publicly controlled and which will set us clearly on the socialist path — a path which for some years has been interrupted and diverted.

The danger today is that some in the movement — some in very high places — believe you can win elections by stealth and by accepting the ground rules set by the Tories, by retreating from socialist policies — by being more concerned with image than content.

### Fudge

They believe that instead of uniting the Party around clear socialist policies and objectives, Labour should compromise on its policy — that it should retreat and fudge issues. They believe success is gained by attacking sections of the Left which will, they hope, placate our political enemies. The truth is, if you do that, our opponents want more.

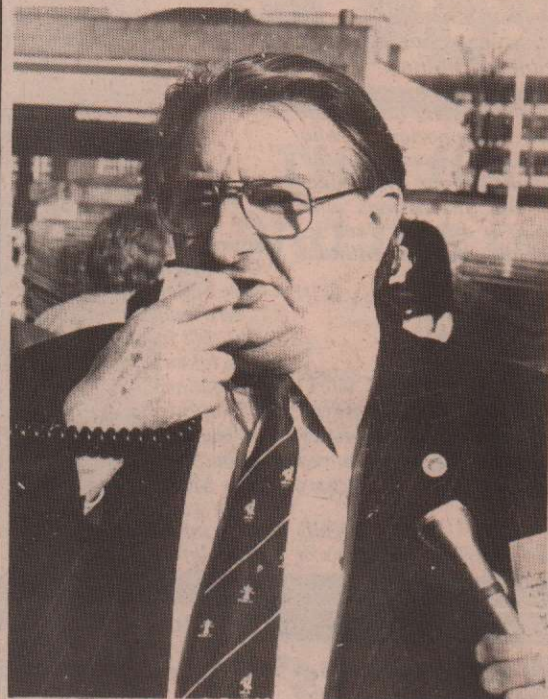
Our political enemies are never satisfied. They would only be satisfied if Labour repudiated socialism altogether.

It may work for a short time, although even that is doubtful. It has certainly been proved not to be attractive to Labour supporters at Newcastle-Under-Lyme. That by-election has made the point for us. The Liberal was CND and they picked up the votes which we should have got. Right wing policies, right wing attitudes do not pay off.

If people think that we are little different from the SDP/ Liberal Alliance then they vote for them — they certainly do not vote over-whelmingly for us.

I hope that lesson is clearly taken on board, and if not, we must make absolutely clear to the voters that he that wins the election will be that way.

The Party does not win votes if it is not bold.



We did not lose the last election because our policy was too bold, too socialist, but because of the split away from the party by the right wing, by those who created confusion by forming the SDP and because of the divisions which were shown up during the election itself. I believe the TV spectacular of Jim Callaghan lost millions of votes because of his attack on our defence policy.

The fact is that there is a retreat on policy. There are policies being developed which are wrong. They must be halted and changed.

The document 'New Rights — New Responsibilities' regarding industrial relations has some positive parts to it, but they are overshadowed and lost sight of by the legal proposals on ballots and the establishment of a legal tribunal. What the movement is being offered is a type of In Place of Strife which was rejected by the movement in 1969.

That document also had some good material in it, but that too was spoilt by the legal proposals.

### Negative

The Left on the NEC did not approach this question in a negative way. We put forward positive proposals which would have changed the document. Apart from one amendment the others were all rejected. We wanted the ILO Convention 87 added. It was defeated. We wanted Closed Shops to be written in clearly. It was defeated. We wanted all employers to have to recognise and negotiate with trade unions. That amendment was defeated. We wanted the clause on the legal tribunal deleted. Our efforts were defeated in the end we had no alternative but to vote against the document.

In the end the document was carried — 17 for, 8 against and 1 abstention.

I regret to say that some of the so-called soft left voted for the final document. Tom Sawyer abstained.

Some of the trade union NEC members firstly voted for an amendment moved by Tom Sawyer to remove the word Statutory from Clause 59. Then they immediately voted for an amendment by Neil Kinnock which put it back into the clause in a slightly different way, but meaning the same thing.

Today, I am afraid that some on the NEC cannot see the wood for the trees. Since last year's Party Conference we have seen a number of good comrades expelled from the Party. Supporters of the paper Militant, but also non-Militant supporters. We have seen a number of Parties suspended and the trend continues.

Comrades in Liverpool who carried out Labour Party Conference policy — this cannot be stressed enough — and who are faced with surcharges, bankruptcy and disqualification from office have been expelled, and others face expulsion.

The Party is going back to the days of the Proscribed List, of the expulsion and disbandment of groups because they are supposedly "a party within a party".

We heard that cry when Sir Stafford Cripps and Nye Bevan were expelled before the Second World War and when the Socialist League was disbanded. We heard it during Gaitskill's days when the Bevanites were forced to disband and again Nye Bevan threatened with expulsion and was saved by one vote. Clement Attlee. We shouldn't be going back to those days.

Now we hear it again. Good comrades who have fought and are fighting for socialist policies should not be expelled. They should be supported, especially those who carry out conference policy as the Liverpool comrades did.

# How not to defend the YS

The Labour Party Young Socialists' Summer Camp, held in the Forest of Dean, was smaller this year than for many years. Less than 400 youth attended.

An unfortunate side effect of the decline of Militant is the decay of the LPYS.

Socialist Organiser and Youth Fightback supporters who attended had to use much of the time organising our own educational and discussions and those made it a useful week — little thanks to the Militant leaders of the LPYS.

## Official

Some of the 'official' workshops could have been useful. We would have liked to participate more than we were allowed to — but that's YS democracy for you!

We were systematically denied room to put our views or

to reply when our politics were distorted.

Particularly annoying was a debate on South Africa: Militant versus a speaker from the Kinnockite leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students [NOLS].

## 4 per cent

The NOLS speaker ignored the Militant and launched a scurrilous attack on Socialist Organiser, using a stolen discussion bulletin.

We had to make life uncomfortable for the chair even to get one token speech in reply to the allegations. We calculate we got 4% of the discussion time.

The whole structure of these debates needs to be changed. It is a Militant tradition to import right wingers for debates, rather than take on any of the groups to their left in the LPYS.

Lies can be expected from the right wing, but we were surprised by the invited speakers from South Africa. These speakers, who support Militant's ideas, slandered other socialists in South Africa, such as the Cape Action League and the New Unity Movement, caricaturing them as tiny groups of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who have no connections with the workers' movement, and just organise "cocktail parties".

## Festering

Those of us on the British left who argue for solidarity with these socialists were described as "flies festering in the sides of the labour movement."

In counter-attack we pointed out that one of our comrades had been at a New Unity Movement "cocktail party" attended by 5,000 workers. We suggested

that some of the Militant rhetoric was disturbingly similar to that of their adversaries in the Stalinist movement.

Of the other subjects up for discussion perhaps the most important was Ireland. Our position as advocates of a free federal united Ireland was duly distorted.

## Defend

We might have expected the proposed witch-hunting changes to the LPYS age limit, etc., to have caused some comment. But no! No doubt Militant are planning yet more use of the law courts to 'defend' the YS, rather than actually build a serious campaign.

SO/Youth Fightback want to organise a real campaign to defend the YS. And real defence will mean a challenge to the present sectarian and undemocratic leadership.

# Activists' DIARY

**THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER**, Campaign Group News rally, 'Campaigning for Socialism'. Speakers include Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, Joan Maynard, Eddie Newman. 7.30pm, Free Trade Hall, Peter St., Manchester.

**Socialist Organiser meetings**  
MANCHESTER. Sunday August 17. 'Nuclear Power'. 7.30 p.m. Town Hall.

**IMPLEMENT PARTY POLICY**  
Petition now out reminding the Labour leaders of the 1985 Labour Party conference resolution on the miners and stating 'We believe that the Labour Party should actively campaign for the above rightful demands in the run-up to the next General Election'.  
Copies from G. Scott, 34 Newcastle Ave., Horden, Peterlee, Co. Durham.  
JARROW 86. March from Jarrow to London (Trafalgar

Sq), October 5 to November 2. 'A project designed to help the Labour Party back to power'. Original sponsors and affiliates include Neil Kinnock, Tony Benn; Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire NUM. The route will pass through 23 towns and cities. The organisers are asking for offers of help, sponsorships, affiliations and donations. Contact: Jarrow 86, The Electric Press Factory, 39 Cookridge St., Leeds LS1 3DW.

**NATIONAL JUSTICE FOR MINeworkers CAMPAIGN**  
The South-East Region Steering Committee has just opened a London Office, where sacked miners will be based for campaigns, meetings, etc. The office is at Hammersmith Unemployed Centre, 190 Shepherds Bush Road, London W6. Tel: 01-603 1831.

**CAMPAIGN GROUP NEWS**. July/August issue now out, concentrating on 'Preparing Party Conference'. Articles from CLPD, WAC, etc. Also, Eric Heffer and Dennis Skinner on 'NEC retreats on union rights'. 30p. Contact: The Campaign Group of Labour MPs, c/o Alan Meale (Secretary), House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

# Fighting FUND

This week we gave the sellers a confirmation on our last major purchase in our re-equipment programme — new typesetting machinery. It is conditional only on a report from the removal firm on the feasibility of moving the bulky machines into our first floor premises.

We've already spent a full £15,000 (£15,476.13 to be exact) on setting up our new offices, so this purchase — costing £7,000 — is being done on the basis of loans from our supporters who have access to credit. Our thanks to those who have contributed so far: we still need a few more loans.

And we need more fund-raising to cover the money already spent and future repayments on the loans. North London SO is organising a fund-raising trivia quiz evening on 30 August; and thanks this week to Ivan Wels, £40, and Jean Lane, £22.

Donations to SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.



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

Socialism can never be built in one country alone. The workers in every country have more in common with workers in other countries than with their own capitalist or Stalinist rulers. We support national liberation struggles and workers' struggles world-wide, including the struggle of workers and oppressed nationalities in the Stalinist states against their anti-socialist bureaucracies.

## We stand:

For full equality for women, and social provision to free women from the burden of housework. For a mass working class based women's movement.

Against racism, and against deportations and all immigration controls.

For equality for lesbians and gays.  
For a free and united Ireland, with some federal system to protect the rights of the Protestant minority.

For left unity in action; clarity in debate and discussion.  
For a labour movement accessible to the most oppressed, accountable to its rank and file, and militant against capitalism.

We want Labour Party and trade union members who support our basic ideas to become supporters of the paper — to take a bundle of papers to sell each week and pay a small financial contribution to help meet the paper's deficit. Our policy is democratically controlled by our supporters through Annual General Meetings and an elected National Editorial Board.



# Les Hearn's SCIENCE COLUMN

# Irradiating food

This week's Science Column is contributed by George Davey Smith, an SO supporter who has agreed to write on a variety of scientific topics. Other supporters are welcome to submit articles for the column, too.

Although food has been commercially irradiated since the First World War, there was little interest in it until 1953 when the US President, Eisenhower, launched the "Atoms for Peace Programme". This was a campaign to direct public attention towards supposed benefits of nuclear technology whilst the development of nuclear weapons continued behind this smoke screen.

In the UK at present, irradiation is only used to produce sterile food for transplant patients. Food irradiation involves the use of ionising radiation — the potentially damaging x-rays and gamma-rays — to increase the shelf life of food. At low doses, sprouting and ripening of fruits and vegetables can be delayed, whilst at progressively higher doses insect pests are killed, then yeasts, bacteria and viruses inhibited. At very high doses, food can be completely sterilised. In this way, contaminated or spoiled food could be made supposedly safe for human consumption. Other "benefits" include an increased yield of juice from grapes, the artificial ageing of spirits and various ways of increasing the bulk, water and air content of bread. These "improvements" would only increase the manufacturer's profit margin.

## Preventable

Properly controlled, radiation doses should not be high enough to create radioactive food. Direct contamination by the radioactive source should also be preventable. However, the history of the safety and honesty of the nuclear industry suggest that self-regulation alone does not guarantee safety. The quality of food is definitely reduced by irradiation. Vitamins are destroyed above and beyond the destruction caused by normal storage and cooking. This will be of most harm to families already on barely adequate diets because of poverty or long and unsocial working hours. The general quality of food — feel, texture, smell and taste — seem to suffer. Milk, fish and meat fare worst. Even the supposed benefits to fruit and vegetables aren't uniform — more seem to be worsened by radiation than made better. Nor will the use of additives be reduced by food irradiation.

The following is the appetising menu for meat, gamma-ray style:

1. Cut into portions; 2. Dip into a dilute solution of sodium tripolyphosphate (a chemical

used for cleaning grime off walls, also a purgative); 3. Film wrap; 4. Vacuum pack film-wrapped portions in a bulk container; 5. Refrigerate at 0-5 degrees Celsius; 6. Irradiate with a dose of 1-2 kGy; 7. Ship and store at 0-5 degrees Celsius; 8. Remove from container for display no more than half an hour before display.

Another worry is that chemicals created in the food by irradiation — "radiolytes" — may be harmful. Little evidence has been found in tests though one US company was convicted of reporting fraudulent results of safety testing to the government.

## Aflatoxin

However, irradiation has been shown to increase the amount of aflatoxin (a liver cancer-inducing substance produced by fungi) in grain.

Also at risk are the workers involved. The safe limits of radiation exposure in the UK have been set at 50 millisieverts (mSv) per year at work or 5 mSv per year as a member of the public. Why radiation is less damaging to someone engaged in making money for somebody else has never been explained. These limits were set according to recommendations by the International Commission on Radiological Protection, a body which links to the nuclear power industry.

Recent evidence suggests that these limits are set too high. Internationally the UK has some of the least stringent regulations and they are going to be relaxed further this year.

Who would benefit from food irradiation? The food industry would have more durable and profitable products to market. The nuclear power and nuclear weapons industries are keen to off-load their waste products, caesium-137 and cobalt-60, as sources of radiation. Also benefiting are the producers of irradiation plant, Isotron Ltd., and the isotope manufacturing company Amersham International. The "independent" government advisory committee on irradiated foods contains directors of both these companies.

The committee recommended almost complete deregulation of food irradiation. Consumers were given to the end of July to submit comments on the report and some opposition was stimulated by newspaper stories of illegal importation of rotting, bacteria-ridden seafood, irradiated in Holland. Meacher has attempted to have the consultation period extended, but it appears that our dinners will soon be glowing in the dark.

\*For further information, read the London Food Commission's report "Food Irradiation in Britain". £2.50 plus p&p from LFC, PO Box 291, London NS1DU.

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Helen Shaver (left) and Patricia Charbonneau in 'Desert Hearts'

# Desert hearts

It's Reno, Nevada — Divorce Town, USA — in 1959. Patsy Cline's on the soundtrack singing of lost or painful love in Donna Deitch's film 'Desert Hearts'.

Off the train steps Vivian (Helen Shaver), a cool New York English Lit. professor, seeking a divorce because she's tired of who she's been. She wants a different kind of future.

## Divorcees

She gets it. On the way to the dude ranch run for prospective divorcees by Frances (Audra Linley), Vivian meets Cay (Patricia Charbonneau), a potter and casino worker who also happens to

Belinda Weaver reviews 'Desert Hearts', a film by Donna Deitch now showing widely in London.

be gay.

Cay has been looking for someone who "counts". She perseveres in her choice of sexuality in the face of small town gossip and the disapproval of Walter, her half-brother, and Frances, her adopted mother.

When Vivian befriends Cay, she also meets hostility. Despite difficulties, Cay and Vivian fall in love and go off to a shared future.

A positive film about a lesbian

romance is to be welcomed, but Desert Hearts isn't wholly satisfying. Though taken from a novel, it seems shorn of plot. Characters remain, but they are either incidental to the story (Cay's friend, Silver) or suggest a subplot which never develops (her half brother, Walter).

The film also fails to resolve the issues it raises. Vivian fears the effect of a lesbian affair not just on her emotions (which have been ordered

and controlled) but on her reputation. (She's a respected scholar). In the days before women's liberation and the growth of the gay movements, this is not a small or petty anxiety.

Similarly Cay's outburst that Vivian is "just visiting the way I live" comes to nothing.

Quarrels or disagreements seem just like dramatic devices to keep the ending uncertain, rather than genuine expressions of different personal conflicts.

While the film is a bit thin on plot, it is a first — a film where homosexual love is not just a "phase" before heterosexual love comes along, and where the women enjoy their love relatively free from guilt.

# If you're a man...

IF YOU'RE a man you'll need a fair amount of nerve to read this book.

If you're a woman you'll need even more to act on it. Emmanuel Reynaud (please note, it's a male author writing about the sexual identity) deals with the patriarchal system and its origins. He brings the varying applications of this through the full gamut of human expression, from religious conditioning to social excuses.

## Defining

Reynaud starts with sexing, defining the reality as a dual process, biological and social. His premise for further discussion is that subsequent to the biological identification at birth male and female roles are decided by political expedience.

The refrain, threaded through the entire book, is the question "Why should a man want to give up all the

Heather Thomas reviews a new book about how society defines the roles of men and women.

material, psychological and emotional advantages that he enjoys as a result of the division into sexes? Why would an oppressor give up the dominant position of his own free will?"

Unpleasant issues are dealt with here — the ones the liberated male gives lip service to, but ignores in practice just as effectively as his less open-minded counterpart. Man and his penis domination, his acceptance of physical superiority as a fact, rape as understood if not acceptable release for the 'pressured' man.

Reynaud believes that men alienate their minds from their bodies, perceiving their actions and thoughts as separate; mental activity being a pure and superior pastime — thus allowing themselves to be excused for physical excesses like selfish sexual interaction

and rape, on the basis of physical need.

Into this transparently self-gratifying formula Reynaud adds the male vision of woman as a 'natural' being with no delineation between mind and body, i.e. "the poor little woman can't help her irrational reactions". The conviction that men hold the intellectual and logical reins to the universe.

Reynaud feels that men are determined to accentuate the physical differences in order to fully benefit from the emotional and small 'p' political advantages.

## Emphasis

Note that Reynaud does not use soft and acceptable words like 'apt to' or 'prone to'. The emphasis is on determination of the male.

Reynaud's section on rape is in most part the familiar one, but does introduce a few more thoughts — if you feel you know a sexually liberated male read the thoughts of rape fantasies.

Most challenging, interesting and downright bloody enraging is the analysis of the self-sacrifice of women in return for security and family protection. The complicated manoeuvres

employed by male society to achieve the triumph of the working house slave are impressive. Need I say pathetic?

Let me put it into simpler terms — ask yourself... When did I become a man/woman? On what basis do I assume men to be physically superior? Do I believe that men and women are emotionally different from nature or from environment?

Do I believe that the capacity for logic varies from male to female? As a male, when I do the housework, do I see myself as 'helping'? Do conjugal rights exist?

It's not an easy book to read. Each paragraph is a thoughtful exposition of different facets of the problem. The style, after the rather turgid introduction, is that of a chatty lecturer. The asides contain some of the best gems — pay particular attention to the section about men amongst men.

Be glad if you're a woman but be prepared for self-criticism. Women conspire in their own fate too. Man or woman, if you thought you'd got it sussed you're up the proverbial creek.

'Holy Virility' by Emmanuel Reynaud. Pluto Press.

on the

**Box**

## The flag and the pub

Tracy Williams is on holiday. This week's guest columnist: Mick Ackersley.

Chauvinism — unreasoning and extreme nationalism — was the theme of Alan Berry's play 'The Queen's Arms' on BBC1 last Sunday night.

It is April 1982, on the eve of the Falklands war between Britain and Argentina. Argentina had been negotiating the transfer of the Falklands (for the Argentines, the Malvinas) islands, inhabited by British people, 400 or so miles off the Argentine coast in the South Atlantic. The talks are stalled.

Suddenly the Argentines invade and take over the islands.

Discredited after six years of butchery and repression against their own people, they desperately needed a foreign 'triumph'. So they didn't wait to negotiate possession of the islands: they grabbed them.

They gambled that Britain wouldn't do anything.

But General Galtieri reckoned without Mrs Thatcher. Mrs Thatcher too needed to distract people's attention from mass unemployment and misery at home.

She struck heroic Churchillian postures and mounted a counter-invasion. The freak British-Argentine war of 1982 followed. A wave of largely nostalgic patriotism washed over Britain.

The 'Queen's Arms' is a rundown pub with an alcoholic landlord, an ex-paratroop sergeant, who can't normally muster enough interest to get out of bed.

The pub is kept afloat by a prissy, industrious Irish barman, Dermot. He is Catholic, good-willed, sour, motherly, long-suffering, compulsively peaceful and agreeable, and much put upon by the man he calls 'the guv'nor'.

You could call Dermot a creep, and other characters do. But he's better than that. The character has some dignity and integrity of his own.

Dermot runs the Queen's Arms — until the Falklands war revives the ex-para sergeant, who is perhaps a symbol for Britain itself. The pub becomes a Union-Jack-bedecked hive of unreasoning British chauvinism.

The barman, who has lived in England since the age of 17, goes along, probably sincerely, though uneasily.

But he can't go along all the way. For he doesn't have the qualifications: he's not British!

The nightly celebrations become more drunken and enthusiastic as 'our boys' reoccupy the Falklands. Dermot becomes the target of unfriendly comments about Ireland and the IRA.

No use him protesting that he abhors 'the men of violence'. The 'guv'nor', dressed in the paratroopers' red beret, wearing his medals and his best sergeant's voice, pontificates in the bar: "There's no soldier as good as your paddy — for shooting from behind".

Finally one night Dermot is given the bum's rush and sent packing for 'his own safety', his money and cards to follow.

The main problem I found with 'The Queen's Arms' was that it didn't have a single decent English character. Not one of the pub's regulars seemed to hold even a little aloof from the chauvinist debauch.

That's not how it would have been in life. You'd get pockets of pure poisonous chauvinism, I suppose, but not without disagreement in a previously quiet, decent pub.

After all, a lot of people in Britain were against Thatcher's war, and large parts of the Labour left were openly defeatist, some even pro-Argentine.

## What is capitalism?

By Martin Thomas

So far in this column I've looked at how human nature is moulded by society, how it changes in times of revolution, and how socialists can organise now to affect the outcome of those times of revolution.

Now I want to backtrack and define some basic concepts. To start with: what is capitalism?

Except maybe in the earliest societies, what society produces has never been shared out equally. The Marxist explanation of this is that equal sharing demands that everyone should have enough — and, until the arrival of modern technology, human societies did not produce sufficient for everyone to have enough.

In societies which shared equally, everyone would be poor and crushed by the struggle for existence. Where a minority managed to get more than their share, they would have the wealth and the leisure to be able to develop new methods of production — and new methods of war. So unequal societies would vanquish equal societies.

But there are different sorts of unequal society. In capitalism the inequality is the end result of the operation of the market. Everything is up for buying and selling. In earlier societies buying and selling played a smaller role. The working people had to pay tribute of one sort or another to overlords.

### Dues

Either they had to work so many days a year on the lord's land without reward; or they had to hand over a share of what they produced on their own land; or maybe they had to pay an equivalent in money.

With the development of capitalism, in one way the position of the working people seems to become better. They no longer have to pay feudal dues or tribute. Their labour power is bought and sold on the free market.

But there is another side to it. The workers have first been reduced to the condition where they have to sell their labour power. They have been driven off their little patches of land. They can no longer produce the necessities of life for themselves, because someone else — the capitalist — controls the means of production.

This goes together with a change of technology. In agriculture the peasant household producing largely for itself is replaced by the capitalist farmer, using larger areas of land and more machinery and inputs, specialising more. And the traditional handicrafts are replaced by machine production in large factories.

While the position of the working people changes, the nature of wealth also changes. Wealth in feudal and pre-capitalist societies is fixed, like the lord's estate. Capitalist wealth is fluid and mobile. The capitalist can put his money into producing bibles one day, bazookas the next. This makes capitalism much more dynamic than previous economic systems.

And capitalism does seem to be a more fair and equal system. The old feudal privileges have gone. Everyone has an equal chance in the rat-race; everyone's money is as good as the next person's. Yet capitalism is a society of classes. One class owns the means of production; another class is divorced from the means of production and has to sell its labour power. Next week we'll see how and why.



Proper training must be provided

## A woman's experience on a demolition job Pt.7

# How to deal with the sexists

**I left the yard half way through the one year scheme, having found a full-time job. I was lucky.**

Most of the men I was working with will now be on the dole and in a year's time will be back on another one-year scheme.

Me, I really enjoyed learning new skills. It was creative, useful work and should be treated with more respect.

All the men I worked with were skilled or good at something or other. Some had worked in industry for years before becoming unemployed. And the work was good.

Now they are unemployed again. It's such a terrible waste! These are men who should be building houses, and they are now on the dole, while thousands go homeless or live in rat-holes.

But there are other kinds of waste too.

There are millions of women who don't even know they are capable of such work, and who are never given the opportunity to find out. And if my case is anything to go by (and I'm sure it is), when women do push their way in, it's such a horrible experience in terms of sexual harassment, that they are likely to get out again, quick.

### Isolated

My experience was not a one-off isolated case. It was not one particularly nasty man giving one woman a hard time. Sexual harassment is suffered in one form or another by thousands of women in all kinds of work — in shops, offices, factories, hospitals.

And thousands of women lose their jobs, their right to work, as a result of it.

At the Socialist Organiser summer school I gave a talk on my experiences and all the women at that workshop had a story to tell. One of the women had worked in a shop. Her boss had chased her round the shop, blocked her way in the store room, touched her up,

**Jean Lane concludes her series on her experiences as a woman worker on a demolition job with a discussion of how sexual harassment in such 'men's jobs' can be combatted.**

etc., etc. And she couldn't tell him to get his hands off because she would have lost her job!

Because my job was considered "men's" work and because I was isolated, my situation was particularly bad. But wherever it occurs, sexual harassment must be dealt with.

### Objects

As long as women are treated as, and portrayed as, sexual objects, and as long as women are possessions of men, there will be men like Alan around. What can we do? We can make life difficult for them!

We can change our working conditions and make sure that the Alans of this world get their come-uppance sooner and more efficiently than happened in my case.

### Witnesses

\*For a start no woman should be put on a building site on her own. She must always be with other women. Even if an employer had a good policy on dealing with sexual harassment, an isolated woman finds it hard to come forward with her complaint, and she has no witnesses.

\*Secondly, there should be separate

## When the Queen's man sacked the Labour government

By Belinda Weaver

Who says the Queen has no power?

In 1975, the Queen's representative — the Governor-General — kicked out the elected Australian Labour government.

### Caretaker

The Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, worked in cahoots with the Liberal (read Tory) Party leader Malcolm Fraser, who was then appointed caretaker Prime Minister by Kerr.

It was the first Labour government for 23 years and big sections of the

ruling class were not prepared to tolerate even a mildly reformist Labour government.

The sacking was "explained" by the right wing as a "solution" to a constitutional crisis. The Liberal/National Party coalition who had control of the Senate (Upper House) were refusing to pass money Bills. Thus the Labour government was about to go broke — unable to pay public service salaries or pensions and benefits.

However many Liberals were un-

washroom and changing facilities for women on sites.

When I went for my interview I remember my prospective gaffer (who was looking uncomfortable at the thought of my getting the job) said, "there are no separate toilets or anything like that, you know". At the time I just shrugged my shoulders, eager to let him know that such trifles would not put me off. On reflection my response should have been, "Why aren't there?"

Have you ever been in a workplace where there are no toilets for men? If women can do the work then provision should be made for them, even if there are no women there at the time.

If women can't do the work, then the work shouldn't be done. It's either too dirty, too hard or too dangerous — conditions to which no-one in this day and age should be subjected.

\*Thirdly, it makes no sense to have a policy of positive discrimination (PD) for women to get such work without:

\*providing PD for good training so that women can apply for the job in the first place;

\*without providing the hours and facilities (such as creches) to free women to do the work;

\*without back-up policies and agreements for dealing with sexual harassment at work.

Finally, the unions in the construction industry should be taking all these issues up. What little I saw of my union rep didn't inspire me with confidence to take my case there at all.

### Organise

As more women get into the industry they are going to have to organise as women within their union and force them to take issues like sexual harassment, recruitment of women and safety at work seriously.

I can just imagine one of my old work mates reading this and thinking to himself, "god, if these are the conditions in which women are coming into the industry then they can just stay out. We didn't ask them and we don't want women to come in anyway. We don't get any special treatment, why should they?"

But actually they would directly benefit from it. When women in America started working in the coal mines they fought for safer work practices from which both the men and the union had to admit they benefitted.

From what I saw during my short experience, men in the construction industry work under dirty and unsafe conditions and they are largely non-unionised and poorly paid. In the building industry there are more deaths and injuries than in any other industry.

Women who go into building suffer these conditions, as well as a special affliction of their own — the daily battering from men's sexist attitudes.

So women will have to fight to change those conditions. And of course the improvement of women's conditions can only improve the men's as well. But the women are going to have to organise to get this done.

That's why it's so important that women are not left isolated on individual sites — apart from the personal grief she would suffer, that is.

So, the next time any woman who has read this series of articles gets whistled and shouted at as she walks past a building site, look a little more closely as you are sticking your fingers up you may see a woman under one of the hard hats who is probably receiving much worse treatment for longer periods of time. And she is badly in need of support and encouragement.

happy and were ready to cross the floor. Kerr stepped in to get rid of Labour just in time.

### Polarised

The Governor-General, though not elected, has wide constitutional powers as the Queen's representative. History shows that they can be used. The sacking polarised Australian politics, giving birth to an Australian republican movement which called for an end to ties with Britain and with the British Crown.

# Beware a sell-out!

By a SOGAT member

**ANOTHER DEAL** is imminent for printworkers. Print union leaders, including EETPU general secretary and scab-herder Eric Hammond, will shortly sit down with Murdoch to thrash out a settlement of the seven month old dispute.

The settlement will be heralded by the 'new realism' crowd as a triumph for trade unionism, but it will give the sacked workers nothing.

Trade union recognition and jobs must be part of any deal that she signs, Dean has promised. But what she means by trade union recognition and jobs is not what the strikers mean. Dean thinks that trade union representation can be covered by a five member negotiating team, to meet once a year and almost certainly to be appointed by the national executives of the five print unions, subject no doubt to Murdoch's ratification. Goodbye to shop floor representatives, to independent trade unions, welcome to bosses' unionism.

Such a set-up leaves members without union protection, vulnerable to constant attacks by management on their rights, conditions and pay, with no-one to represent them in their day-to-day struggles. What Dean is doing is not much different to what Hammond has done: suck up to the bosses, safeguard your own positions, and sod the membership. Faceless bureaucrats won't encourage union loyalty. By signing any such deal Dean will be signing SOGAT's death warrant. Who is going to pay dues if they can't participate in decision making.

And jobs? Maybe a couple of hundred in the machine room where Murdoch is really feeling the pinch. There will be nothing for the clerical or RIRMA members, who have been solidly behind the strike from the beginning. The only thing Dean will negotiate for them is a clear passage to the dole queue.

Of course such a deal may not be accepted, but it won't be Dean's fault. The ultimate humiliation for the print workers is the fact that Hammond's scab army will get the final say, particularly to any deal they feel threatens their jobs. A deal to be proud of, Brenda.

All print workers must fight such a sell-out, not just for strikers but for those still working in Fleet Street, because if Murdoch wins we can kiss good-bye to unionism in the print. All the bosses will be pushing for a similar deal and if Dean fights them, like she has fought Murdoch, the print unions will be destroyed.

But we haven't lost yet. We can win. That means all branches, particularly the London ones, sending clear messages to Dean that they won't buy bosses unionism. Demonstrations at Wapping must be stepped up. We mustn't accept Tory anti-union laws, dictating to the working class. And Fleet Street must step up the fight to come out in defence of their right to organise, their right to recognition and their right to picket.



The strikers' answer to the writs: a women's mass picket. Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report.

WILL TORIES PAY UP?

## A deal for teachers?

**A deal may have been struck that puts an end to the teachers' pay dispute. According to a deal worked out at a conference in Coventry at the end of July, teachers will receive a £750 pay**

**rise in January.**

At a meeting of the local authority employers' panel of the Burnham pay negotiating committee on Friday 1 August, all but one of the five Tory representatives voted to endorse the agreement and to call for the government to fund the pay rise.

The deal would create a new main salary scale of £9,600 to £14,500 for teachers in England and Wales, with premiums of perhaps £2,000 a year for special responsibilities.

This pay scale would allow a teacher currently on Scale 2 to increase her or his salary by 32% over eight years. A single scale, to replace the present multi-scale system, has long been a demand of the left in the National Union of Teachers.

But the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers opposes the deal, wanting a higher pay maximum.

According to the Financial Times (29 July) the agreement includes, for the first time, contractual guarantees of class size, minimum non-teaching periods for teachers, and a commitment by teachers to cover for absent colleagues.

Teachers are, however, not yet clear what the unions have agreed on their behalf. In particular, it is not clear what has become of government proposals to replace the present one-year probationary period with a three-year one.

Another big question mark over the agreement is the willingness or otherwise of the government to pay its cost, estimated at £2.9 million.

ISLINGTON

## Evict these fascists!

Islington's Anti-Fascist Action's (AFA) first march against racist and fascist attacks was a success. There was a high turnout from the small and often very isolated Asian community. Around 150 people who had come out to watch the march as it passed along their streets ended up joining in, once they had read our leaflet and talked to people on the march.

The march was intended as a show of strength against the fascist group living at 35 Avenell Road, N5. It was also intended as a show of solidarity between black and white people in a united front against racist and fascist violence.

The march of 350 people were protesting the beating up of Bengali children to and from their way to school, break-ins at local schools which have been daubed with racist slogans, midnight attacks on the homes of local Asians, and a number of petrol bomb attacks.

It is no coincidence that there has been an upsurge in these attacks since the fascists moved into the area.

As the march on 27 July passed 35 Avenell Road, thugs giving the Nazi salute and calling out 'Sieg Heil'

hung out of windows and posed at their front door, protected from the crowd by a ring of police. They tried to look intimidating, but only succeeded in looking ridiculous and pathetic as they shouted threats from behind police lines.

These thugs include the notorious Ian Stuart, Petra Smitts from Holland and 'headcase' Nicky Crane who has a horrific record of criminal violence against black people.

Local opinion was summed up by a white old age pensioner who lived in the street: 'They are scum, and they should be repatriated — back to the sewer'.

AFA lobbied Islington Council on Thursday 31 July, calling on the council to drive the thugs from their squalid hideout.

BOYCOTT SCAB BEDS

## Support Silentnight

For over a year, workers at Silentnight beds in Sutton and Barnoldswick have been on strike, demanding the right to work, decent pay, and the right to be in a trade union.

Originally, workers at Silentnight tried to join the Transport and General Workers' Union, but were threatened with the sack. Eventually, the management agreed to accept the furniture union, FTAT.

But in February 1984, the management tried to regrade women workers. A successful strike defeated this manoeuvre; and the workers joined FTAT. Management were forced to agree to abide by the Bedding Federation agreement on negotiated piece rates and wage increases.

In December 1984, however, 88 Silentnight workers were made redundant. Then in 1985, the workers were asked to do without a wage rise. Despite the workers' agreement, boss Tom Clarke sacked 52 more of his workers.

There was a work-to-rule, as the workers demanded the wage rise they had previously been prepared to sacrifice. When the company suspended the workers, they began their strike. It was 10 June 1985. By 25 June, the strikers

had been told that they no longer had their jobs.

The strike has received wide support, and has done some damage to Tom Clarke. The company's turnover dropped this year from £78 million to £71 million.

Co-op shops account for one-third of Silentnight's market; but as yet the majority of Co-op boards are keeping up their contracts with Tom Clarke.

The national board of the Co-op Wholesale Society has decided to continue trade with Silentnight.

So the campaign to boycott Silentnight, and get Co-ops to adhere to the boycott, is vital to the strike. It will be taken up at the TUC Congress later this year.

The Silentnight strikers need all the help they can get from the labour movement.

For speakers on the dispute contact Terry Bennett, 22 Garrick Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 8JA. Telephones: 0282 603055; 0282 814556; 0282 843694.

To adopt a family, telephone 0282 813662. Treasurer, Mrs Ann King, 10 Rainhill Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire.

**More on South Africa**

Workers' Liberty special on South Africa: 75p plus 18p postage from SO, PO Box 823, London SE15

**WORKERS' LIBERTY**  
**Breaking the chains**



Black workers and the struggle for liberation in South Africa

**SOCIALIST STUDENTS INNOVATIONS**

**Zionism is not racism**

Third and final part of a SSiN leaflet put out at Glasgow University

The third assumption running through the arguments of those who spoke for SWSS and the Labour Club was that Zionism simply equals racism. Since organised racists should be 'no platformed', it follows, with inexorable logic, that Zionists should be banned, as happened at Sunderland Polytechnic.

(The SWP is now, after the event, distancing itself from the 'ban the Zionists' position, however illogical that may be from their point of view, as that position flows logically out of their core argument).

Now it is true that the state of Israel pursues racist policies and is heavily based on racist institutions. However, the racism of the Israeli state no more invalidates the right of a Palestinian-Jewish nation to exist than Britain's vile racist immigration laws invalidate the British people's right to self-determination.

Furthermore the 'Zionism is racism' resolution passed at the UN in 1974 arose from the experiences of the Palestinian Arabs in the Middle East. It had very little to do with the attitudes of Diaspora Jewry, who, in the majority, are Zionist in a very minimal habitual sense.

The Jewish student who, brought up as a 'Zionist', joins a Jewish Society out of a vague sense of belonging can hardly be written off as a 'racist', can she?

What we on the Left should say to Zionist Jews is this: although Israel plays a villainous role in the Middle East, we recognise the right of the Palestinian Jews to self-determination; we expect a similar recognition of Palestinian Arab rights; meanwhile, regardless of what you think about the Middle East we will help you to combat anti-semitism and will try to eradicate it from our ranks — ranks that we hope you will join.

Unless we take such an approach, most Jews will remain wedded to Zionist ideology.

Unique in all the world, it would seem, judging by the General Meeting, the SWP finds in Israel a working class (putatively) bereft of any socialist purpose. Turning its eyes away from the real possibility that Jewish workers could break with the Zionist Histadrut in action, Glasgow University SWSS seems to look to the armies of the bourgeois Arab states as the agents of social transformation in Israel.

Leon Trotsky — who favoured Jewish self-determination in a socialist world — would recoil in horror at such attitudes. He would surely have argued that a 'two-states' solution was the only conceivable path to working-class unity, and thence to socialism.

**Socialist Organiser supporters were shocked to hear of the death last Saturday of Tracey Bowns, eldest daughter of Albert and Anne Bowns, leading militants throughout the miners' strike at Kiveton Park, South Yorkshire.**

**Tracey was killed in a fire that gutted the Bowns' house in Kiveton Park.**

**Socialist Organiser sends its condolences and solidarity to Albert, Anne and the rest of the family.**

# SOCIALIST ORGANISER

## Support Notts NUM on 6 September

PEOPLE tend to think that the miners' strike is over and that's an end to it. But for those 500 sacked and those still lying in prison, the issue is far from dead.

We still urgently need to get the issue raised in the labour movement. We must bombard the Labour Party and the TUC with resolutions; we must collect money for the campaign and for the sacked and jailed miners' dependents. Although

the Receiver has now gone, the miners' union is still in very severe problems with sustaining our victimised miners.

In the few weeks the London office of the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign has been open, we've only done a few meetings, and I must say we are finding things difficult. Of course it is a bad time. We have to wait for the information to get to branches before they will invite a speaker, and in August a lot of branches aren't meeting.

I'm sure we will eventually get a response, given the support we received from London during the strike.

In Notts, we've now got the details fixed up for the September 6 NUM demonstration in Mansfield. We want people to come along and show their support for the National Union of Mineworkers on that date.

There is an NUM in Nottinghamshire, and we're alive and kicking!

Notts pits are very quiet right now, not least because most of them have just completed their fortnight's holiday. Of course the Coal Board, day in and day out, is still trying to feather the UDM's nest and stamp on the NUM. But the lads' response has been magnificent.

Last week the Employment Appeals Tribunal decided it was alright for the

# Tebbit says cut the dole!

Live on £29.50 a week? Then you are "a little too comfortable", according to Tory leader Norman Tebbit.

Speaking on the Jimmy Young TV programme on 27 July, Tebbit called for cutting benefits to the unemployed in areas where there are fewer jobs.

"Some people find life in the safety net a little too comfortable. It is not unusual for people to take jobs and leave themselves worse off than they

would have been on benefit."

Tebbit's parliamentary salary is over £29.50 a day, take home, and the going rate for City whizzkids in today's Tory Britain is about £29.50 every two hours.

### Low Wages

But the spread of low wages, and high taxation on low incomes, has left a lot of workers little better off than the subsistence minimum provided by

social security. The latest estimate is that 19 million people — 35% of the population — live on or below the poverty level of supplementary benefit plus 40%.

For Tebbit, that proves not that wages are too low, but that the dole is too high. And he wants to prove that the dole queues — now over four million, if it weren't for the government fiddling the figures — are long not because of the chaos of the profit system, but because of some sudden

mysterious rise in general idleness.

Tebbit completed his attempt to appeal to the 'I'm all right, Jack' psychology among conservative middle-class people and better-off workers by denouncing moral decay which came from 'sloppy Hampstead suburbs'.

Tebbit's dole cuts are not likely to come immediately, if only because of the huge administrative problems they would create. But they sum up the arrogant, mean-spirited, dog-eat-dog philosophy of this government.



Protest outside Commonwealth Summit. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report

## TUC calls for action

### From front page

and Rubber (Dunlop).

They make huge profits out of the super-exploitation of black workers.

In addition, one Tory MP in four has some financial stake in a company with South African investments. Shamefully, three Labour MPs have a similar stake in apartheid.

Thatcher, as always, sticks with her

class. The labour movement should fight for its class — internationally. We cannot wait for this government to impose effective sanctions. Trade union action can and should be organised immediately to boycott South African trade.

Trade union action could be coordinated with trade unions in South Africa. The South African independent, non-racial unions in the Congress of South

African Trade Unions (COSATU) support the call for sanctions; but equally, of course, they are in the front line of redundancies inflicted by companies — as a result of the severe recession, or as a result of sanctions in the future.

Co-ordinated trade union action could be more effective in helping specific struggles against South African bosses, rather than just making a general moral protest. We can

take action in support of trade union recognition, higher wages, against detentions, and so on.

Jointly, British and South African workers can fight against the bosses who exploit us all. Multinational capital is very 'mobile' — it can be moved from country to country very quickly. International labour movement action is the only way to deal with it effectively.

### Whetton's WEEK

Coal Board to give a pay rise to UDM members only at the Ellistown pit in Leicestershire, overturning a local tribunal decision that had backed the NUM objections. I'm never surprised about anything that comes out of a law court! The last thing we expect out of them is justice.

Last week's court decision on picketing at Wapping was just like what happened to us during our strike. The government is saying to employers, 'have a go', and the courts are saying, 'once you've had a go we'll back you with the necessary judgements in court in order to enable you to win.'

I'm not at all surprised by the decision. I'm just hoping that the rank and file will respond by turning out onto the streets saying, 'That's a bad law and we're not having it.'

The press is full of MacGregor and stories about Coal Board profits. I think they're cooked books — I wouldn't even believe the date on the front of them!

And then MacGregor goes on TV and says that not one single man has left the mining industry except by voluntary means. Tell that to the 500 sacked lads and those lads lying in prison! There was nothing voluntary about that, and no hand-outs. It was just vindictive viciousness.

The equation is thousands of jobs on the one side, and profit on the other. That's the way they work.

Last week Mr Concannon announced his decision to retire as MP for Mansfield. He could see the writing on the wall. Our lads had started to take control of Mansfield CLP, and he knew he had problems. So he got out while the going was good.

I've no doubt that the NUM will be attempting to put forward a candidate, and I would hope that that person will begin to win back some of the traditional support that Concannon has trampled on over the last few years. I look forward to a good NUM candidate going to the House of Commons and very forcefully raising the case of the sacked and victimised miners there.

Paul Whetton is secretary of Bevercotes NUM, Notts.

**YOUTH fightback**  
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Murder most Fowler p 13

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