

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

No 2

JULY/AUGUST

80P

FIGHTING THATCHER'S THIRD TERM

Socialist

**NO
BAKER**

**NO COVER
NO DEAL**

NO!

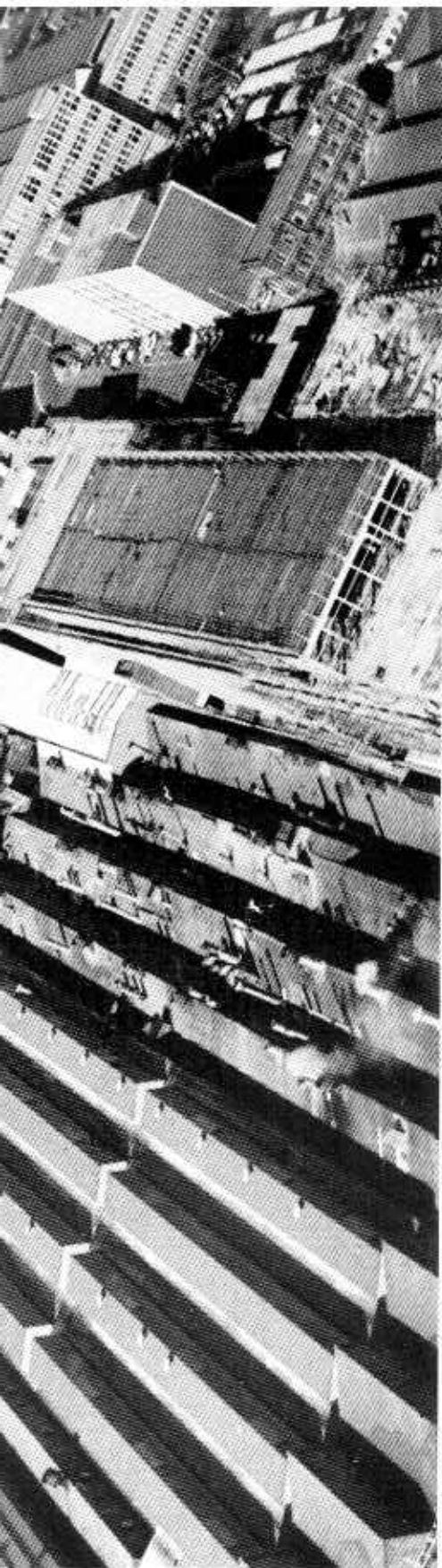
TO

**BAKER'S
BILL**

**The
next move
forward**

INSIDE

**ELECTION ANALYSIS ● END ● SOUTH AFRICA
SPAIN ● NEW TECHNOLOGY**



CONTENTS

UPDATE

- 1** Editorial **2** Italian Communist Party suffers poll defeat **3** NUM conference ignores sacked miners NALGO conference swings left **4** Carworkers fight continues Dates for your diary

5 LETTERS

6

Debating Gorbachev's proposals
Dave Spencer

7

Testing the Tories' plans for schools
Ronnie Held

8

South Africa — the aftermath of the white elections
Charlie van Gelderen

12

Building solidarity in the unions
Interview with Geoff Revell

14

Reagan's hawks gather in the Gulf
John Bailey

15 – 26

ELECTION SPECIAL
Labour's forward march restarted?
Phil Hears

21 – 22

Winning the workers who voted Tory
Interview with Doreen Massey

27

The new face of capitalism
Richard Paine

32

Sunrise or sunset?
Jane McCormack

34

Gonzalez pays the price for austerity
Dave Kellaway

REVIEWS

- 36** From militancy to Marxism Bob Pennington
38 Ain't no black in the union jack Shahid Tilley
39 The decline of Scottish capital Jim Niblock
40 Chronicle of a death foretold David Grant

Socialist Outlook

Issue number two

Published by Socialist Outlook

ISSN 0951-8657

Design by Spencers (TU) Ltd,

1-3 Clerkenwell Road,

London EC1 5PA. 01-241 8845

Typesetting by Spencers, London EC1 &

Dash Typesetting, London SW2

Printed by Spider Web (TU), London N7

Front cover photo:

John Sturrock/Network

Fighting Thatcher's third term

Yes, it really did happen. The predictions made in this magazine and elsewhere of the outcome of Neil Kinnock's election campaign have been borne out. The task for socialists, in the words of the well-worn phrase, is to 'neither laugh nor to cry but to understand'. Only if we understand the scope of the Tory attacks to come, only if we grasp what happened during the election and if we understand the massive potential for a working class fightback can we hope to turn the tide.

Elsewhere in this issue we attempt to explain the election outcome. Among other things we point out the gigantic class polarisation which underlay the election result and how, despite this, Thatcher was able to engineer an election victory, which Kinnock's campaign was unable to overcome. But what are the prospects for Thatcher's third term?

In order to restore the profitability of British capitalism the Tories need to inflict massive new defeats on the working class. The problem in doing so is twofold. First, the world economy is going into a new recession, which will hit the booming finance sectors of the economy, and necessitate even greater attacks on living standards. Second, the Tories have to face a working class which, despite all the defeats it has suffered, is still massively unionised and capable of sustained outbursts of struggle and militancy.

In Europe, the examples of France and Spain this year have shown that there is a general upturn in the levels of working class combativity. In Spain especially, a working class thought to be smashed and demoralised has responded with struggles of near general strike proportions. It is virtually impossible that Thatcher can carry through her third term without encountering working class resistance on a grand scale especially as millions of workers discover that Thatcherism is incapable of providing the kind of generalised prosperity which has been promised for the market economy.

The task for the left, as we argue below, is to link themselves and give leadership to the coming struggles, but also to provide what Neil Kinnock cannot and will not provide — a socialist vision capable of galvanising resistance in the Labour Party and the trade unions. For the fact is that although Neil Kinnock's election campaign was slick and popular with many constituency activists, it offered nothing in terms of a radical way out of Britain's economic and social crisis. Indeed, as many people noticed, there was much in common between the policies of the Labour Party and those of the Alliance. The conclusion we need to draw is the opposite of those who want a new 'left' realignment with sections of the disintegrating Alliance. What is needed is a new left realignment in the labour movement which will reach out to the millions disaffected with Thatcherism already, and the millions more who will desert Thatcher in the future, to mobilise them around a programme of socialist change.

What are the crucial areas of struggle in which the working class will have to confront Thatcher?

Housing has been one of the areas of public spending most devastated by Tory cuts since 1979; now Thatcher wants to hive off whole council estates to private management and ownership, while municipal house-building grinds to a virtual halt. Rack-renting private landlords will be encouraged, while profiteering development of inner-city districts is aimed at dispersing the present Labour-voting inhabitants and supplanting them with Tories. It is clear

from the queen's speech that further immigration legislation is planned as the Tories continue to use racism to divide the working class.

The Tories plan to strip Labour councils of almost all of their powers. New laws will try to compel them to put services out to tender. Politically gagged, ratercapped and tied by even tighter spending controls (and soon the reactionary poll tax) there will be no help for councils faced by financial ruin after borrowing heavily to maintain services.

The growing crisis of the NHS will intensify rapidly, as cash limits force many health districts — especially in the south east — to cut back on numbers of patients and close some major hospitals.

The cut backs in the NHS, the closing down of nurseries as local authorities run out of money, the attacks on education provision, all hit women disproportionately as the welfare state is replaced by privatised care by women in the family. And as the Tories continue to restructure British capitalism to improve its profitability, more and more women are employed as cheap labour in part-time or temporary jobs.

Youth — whether still at school, unemployed or in low-paid work — are also in for another foul dose of Thatcherite medicine. Young people will be literally press-ganged into phony 'training' schemes, and VTS will increasingly replace adult workers in low-paid jobs in hospitals and elsewhere. Thousands of working class kids will face a restoration of second-class schooling as Thatcher moves to impose 'Victorian values' of selection and privilege on education.

Privatisation of virtually every surviving nationalised industry is also part of Chancellor Lawson's plan to sell off every available asset to pay for tax cuts to the rich, despite a growing economic crisis. And of course the trade unions face a new onslaught.

These, together with the production lines and workplaces, will be the battlefields marked out by the Tory determination to reshape not only the economy but the whole of British society. These attacks are being prepared even now: the labour movement for its part needs to prepare to fight back with a new tenacity, recognising that there is going to be no Labour government quickly riding to the rescue.

The cause is far from hopeless: the run-up to the election saw waves of strike action by teachers, civil servants, carworkers and others. These strikes may have embarrassed Neil Kinnock and the TUC leaders who tried and failed to stop them, but they are the sure sign that workers are still ready to fight. Arthur Scargill's speech to the Yorkshire miners' gala drew the biggest applause of the whole day when he called for direct action now to resist the Tory attacks.

In taking their axe to education and to jobless youth, the Tories are risking a political fightback by students and working class and black youth on a scale not seen for many years. The seeds of resistance are being sown.

With all the signs pointing to a further swing to the right by most union leaders since the election it is clear that there is no easy guarantee of success for those workers who take up the fight.

The challenge before the left in the unions, in the campaigns and in the Labour Party is to develop a programme of action to give confidence and leadership to the struggles that do break out. *Socialist Outlook* will be taking up that challenge.

Italian Communist Party suffers poll defeat

THE RESULT of the recent Italian elections is significant in many respects. While the electoral strengthening of the government is undeniable, this was achieved through a squeezing of the minor governmental parties between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists, the major coalition partners. It is therefore not a solution to the long standing crisis of bourgeois political leadership.

At the same time, the Communist Party (CP) suffered a serious defeat, caused directly by its own policy. This was not, however, a defeat of the working class and the oppressed. There has not been any simple shift to the right. The successes of the Greens and of the lists of Proletarian Democracy on which the Lega Comunista Rivoluzionaria, section of the Fourth International, stood its own candidates, represent a positive factor in this context.

The political crisis which led to the early elections came about as a result of the power struggle between the major government partners. Rarely have the degeneration of Italian political institutions and the contempt for the electorate's needs and intelligence been more evident. But, in spite of all this, the CP has been politically paralysed.

As a consequence of its acceptance of capitalist austerity policies and its search for full legitimacy in the eyes of the bourgeoisie as a party capable of 'responsible' government, the CP's opposition in parliament has become more and more fake. It has allowed a government that has always been unpopular in its policies (for example, in the siting of cruise missiles, and the cuts in the sliding scale of wages and in social expenditure) but never strong to continue in office.

The CP's political strategy, together with that of the union leaderships, has been largely responsible for the weakening of workers' struggles, the fragmentation of demands, the



Natta, leader of the Italian Communist Party

disorganisation of movements. It couldn't and cannot provide any answer for the fight back of the working class, the potential for which has recently been proved again in the development of the anti-nuclear mass movement around the demand of a referendum to stop nuclear centres, in the fight of the workers at Alfa Romeo, threatened by Fiat's takeover, and especially by the struggles of the Genoa dockworkers and the teachers, where significant forms of self-organisation have developed. It is the political void left by the CP which has made the success of the governmental parties possible.

The Christian Democrats recouped a little on their poor 1983 result with 34.3%, while Craxi's Socialist Party is awarded a 2.9% increase for good services done to the bourgeoisie, getting a 14.3% share of the vote. The losses of the CP amounted to 3.3% (800,000 votes!). Their share

of 26.6% is a pre-1968 kind of result. A closer look presents an even worse picture: losses are particularly heavy in the big cities (for example, Bologna -4%, Naples -5%, Turin -5.3%) and in working class areas (near Milan up to -6%). The political blow is serious but it is probably too early to assess how the leadership will react or what effect it will have on the party's internal crisis, and how it will affect their bureaucratic control of the workers' movement.

To the left of the CP there were some positive results. The Greens enter parliament for the first time, their vote expressing especially the anti-nuclear mobilisations over the last year, with 969,534 votes (2.5% nationally and very often more than 3-4% in the big cities), thirteen MPs and one senator. Proletarian Democracy increases its vote to 1.7% (642,021 votes) and now has eight MPs (+1) and one senator.

These two results certainly express, although at different levels, a positive radicalisation to the left.

It is difficult to foresee now what will happen in the months ahead. The campaign for the anti-nuclear referendum, the reopening of teachers' mobilisation, and next autumn's budget should be on the political agenda. Certainly the strongest opposition will have to be organised to the attacks that will undoubtedly be carried out with renewed vigour by the new government, regardless of what form the coalition takes.

The working class needs to regain the initiative. The development of forms of self-organisation in struggle and of the opposition to the bureaucracies and their policies within the trade unions, such as Democrazia Consigliare in the communist-led CGIL confederation will be very important in this respect.

MARCO VALSANIA

UPFRONT

EVEN BEFORE the election, Austin Rover management had stepped up their onslaught against the workforce, forcing in new shift patterns, more speed-up and fresh disciplinary action.

The company also unilaterally announced that it will be taking a three-year 'holiday' from making contributions to the pension scheme — saving them 7.2% of their wage bill (£80m).

In response, workers have shown a real willingness to fight back. In the Swindon press-shop, a mass meeting voted to reject a stewards' recommendation to negotiate a new shift pattern, and instead to ban overtime.

At the Cowley body plant, workers — angered by a huge drop in their bonus payments — voted time and again against attempts by union leaders to lift their long-running overtime ban, and staged a half-day strike.

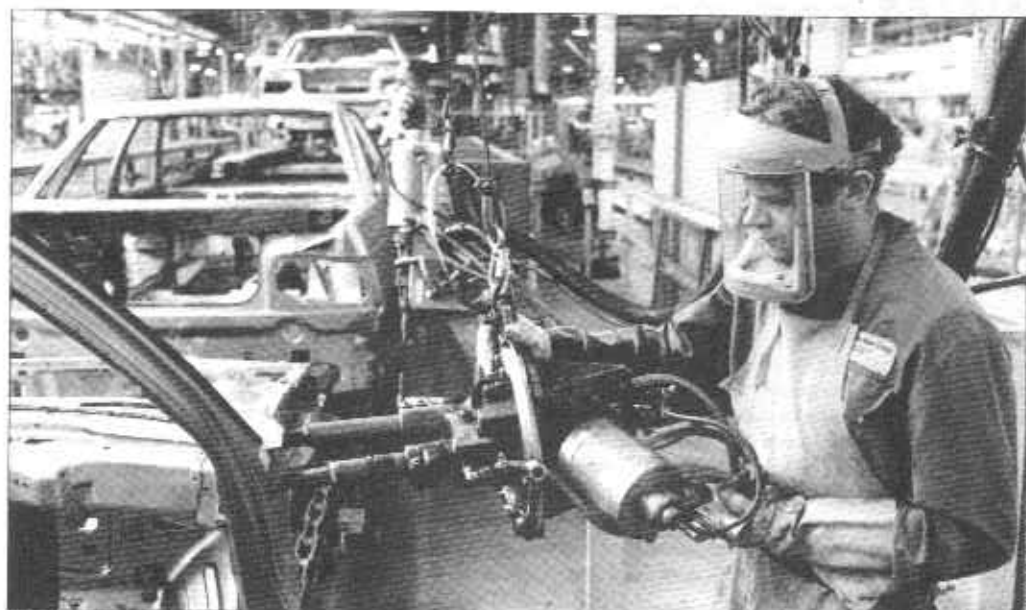
However, the age-old problem of the union leadership has once again brought the end of both actions.

At Swindon, stewards refused to build on the obvious militancy that could have halted supplies of components to Cowley, Longbridge and Jaguar. Instead they insisted that the new shifts were inevitable, and when it came to a ballot for strike action the wording insisted that even if the workers voted for a strike the stewards would still negotiate the best possible deal.

Not surprisingly the strike ballot was lost — and now almost all 1,800 Swindon workers are on three-shift working.

At Cowley, too, the problem of fighting the unscrupulous right wing TGWU leadership in the body plant as well as management proved insurmountable.

Two mass meetings were held. The first heard a stewards' proposal to suspend the overtime ban. Most members thought this recommendation was voted down — and the chair, Tony



Helen Greenhalgh/Reuters

On the line at Cowley

Carworkers fight continues

Williamson, needed physical protection from a storm of protest when he declared it carried. The second mass meeting carried a stewards' recommendation to end all sanctions against the company.

This has stoked up tremendous hostility towards the body plant leadership. This has caused problems since Williamson himself, for years the chair of the massive 5/60 TGWU branch on the plant, finally left the factory

two weeks ago, with six months of his term of office left. The convenor and his right wing supporters proposed that the vice-chair should simply cover his position — avoiding any fresh election.

At the 5/60 branch meeting this was overturned by the membership, who called for an election at the next branch meeting.

Now the right wing — terrified that a left candidate

may win — has been forced to the lengths of calling an unofficial mass meeting in an attempt to overrule the branch decision and call a plant-wide ballot for the vacant post.

With management on the rampage, Austin Rover workers desperately need a break in the bankrupt leaderships that have sold out their struggles time after time

AUSTIN ROVER SHOP STEWARD

Outlook for socialism

'Outlook for Socialism' is a weekend of debate and discussion in London on 13/14/15 November. It will provide an opportunity for socialists to examine and discuss questions like:

- What are the main tasks for socialists inside the trade unions and workplaces?
- What should socialists be doing both inside and outside the Labour Party?
- What can and should socialists do to assist and widen the struggles of the autonomous movements of the oppressed.
- What must we do to help build a united resistance to attacks on civil liberties.

- What are the best ways to aid anti-imperialist and national liberation struggles?
 - What should be the attitude of socialists to Gorbachev and 'glasnost' in the Soviet Union?
- Speakers will include guests from the international socialist movement, members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, rank and file Labour Party activists, members of socialist organisations outside the Labour Party, activists in the trade unions, the women's movement, the black movement, the anti-imperialist campaigns, the lesbian and gay movement and socialists active in literary and cultural fields.

There will be a professionally-run creche; accommodation with socialists in London; access for people with disabilities to all plenary sessions and most workshops as well as food, a social and a bar.

Participants in 'Outlook for Socialism' can get concessionary rail fares to the conference.

Registration for the whole weekend is £10.00 (waged), £8.00 (students) and £5.00 (UB40 and OAPs). If registering before 31 August, £2.00 can be deducted from all of the registration categories.

See the back cover for registration form.

NUM conference ignores sacked miners

THE ENTHUSIASTIC response to Arthur Scargill's hard-hitting speech at this year's Yorkshire miners gala — especially his call for direct action to fight Tory attacks — showed that militancy is still alive and well in the NUM.

However the agenda for this year's NUM conference in Rothesay offers little of substance now that Thatcher's election victory has squashed the life out of resolutions calling for action by 'the next Labour government'!

Nowhere in an agenda focussed largely on defensive demands is there any reference to the miners still sacked and victimised as a result of the 1984-5 strike. There are no proposals on the next steps in the fight for their reinstatement, despite remarkably solid strikes in their support in the few months prior to the election.

These class war casualties had been told to wait for the



Carlos Guevra/Rebex

Imprisoned Kent miner, Gary Hewell.

return of a Labour government: now an emergency resolution is needed to commit the union to further industrial action to secure their reinstatement.

The main issues up for debate at conference are of course pay, the management drive to speed-up, the longer working week and 'incentive' agreements.

The Yorkshire area has tabled a string of amendments calling for:

- increased wages on a

salaried basis to incorporate the incentive bonus scheme into the weekly wage — backed up by provision for a national delegate conference

- an NUM working party to draw up an alternative strategy to management's 'Wheeler Plan'

• opposition to the various incentive schemes — the 'Doncaster', 'Kellingly' and 'Derbyshire' options which are central to the Wheeler Plan.

Notis NUM condemns the Coal Board's attacks on the working day and working week and insists: 'we should stick to the adage of not a penny off the pay, nor a minute on the day'.

None of the three resolutions from South Wales area mentions the controversial Margam proposals or changes in working practices.

However, Scotland Communist Party-led anti-Scargillites continue their

back-stabbing campaign through a resolution for a rule-change next year to force elections and re-election of full-time positions. This can only be an attack on Scargill, since Peter Heathfield will go anyway within two years, and his successor will face regular re-election under existing rules.

There is no doubt that Scargill's continuing firm stand against concessions on the working week and commitment to class action is a major embarrassment to CP and soft left area leaderships seeking to compromise with British Coal bosses.

In this he must be defended by NUM militants, while the further organisation of a fighting left wing rank and file is essential to beat back the renewed management offensive which will take shape under Thatcher's third term.

WILLIAM HEAD
Yorkshire NUM

NALGO conference swings left

THIS YEAR'S Blackpool conference of NALGO, Britain's biggest white collar union, saw an important surge in the influence of the left. Despite the failure of the left in recent years to win seats on the union's 70-person executive, or to construct a viable national movement on the left, its influence at conference was considerable.

The first and major step forward was the decision to ballot NALGO members on setting up a political fund. This move, backed by the national executive, was a direct result of the high court judgement against NALGO's million pound 'Make People Matter' campaign in defence of the public services. The court found that the union had broken the 1984 trade union legislation by financing the campaign out of normal union funds, rather than a political fund, during an election period.

The ballot for a political fund is a major challenge for

the left. The last similar ballot in 1982 resulted in a heavy 'no' vote. Only a substantial campaign will produce a more favourable result this time.

NALGO reaffirmed its determination to boycott the government's slave labour Job Training Scheme, a move which has been followed by the TGWU and may result in the TUC pulling out as well. This would put in question the TUC's role in all MSC schemes.

Policy victories for the left included the adoption of a resolution on Ireland, more radical than the policy of any other union, calling for an end to strip searching, Diplock courts, plastic bullets and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The resolution also called for a united Ireland, as the only just long-term solution, but the executive managed to amend it to include the words 'by peaceful means'.

Conference also decided to

disaffiliate from the Trade Union Friends of Israel, a move spearheaded by NALGO's increasingly influential black members group. Other gains led by the black members group included support for the campaign against the deportation of Viraj Mendis, and a motion instructing the NEC not to employ fascists — a move sparked off by revelations about one of NALGO's branch administrators, 'Strasscrite' NF-cr Paul Kingsley. The conference also decided to affiliate to the National Justice for Miners Campaign.

The biggest left fringe meeting at conference was the 400-strong 'NALGO for Labour' eve-of-election rally, sponsored by *NALGO Briefing* and the *Morning Star*, which featured sacked miners' leader Terry French, executive member Jim White, Mike Hicks of Sogat '82, Wayne Farah of the black members group and Caroline Sikorski

of *NALGO Briefing*.

NALGO members are going to be in the forefront of new Tory attacks on all public services, and in the fight against the privatisation of local government, electricity and water. The biggest weakness of the conference was the lack of discussion and strategy on these crucial issues. It is on these questions, as on the question of pay, that the grip of the national executive is strongest. The left in the union, despite conference victories, will be tested on its ability to organise around these issues.

In doing so, it will be hampered by the lack of a national organised left wing, a result of sabotage of several successive Broad Left structures by the *Militant* and *Morning Star* supporters. But a successful campaign for a political fund could begin to turn this around, and follow up the left's conference victories with more solid organisational gains.

Zionism and anti-semitism

Dear comrades,
John Turkie's article in *Socialist Outlook* No. 1, 'Anti-zionism and anti-semitism', inadvertently highlights the ease with which anti-zionism can slip into concessions to anti-semitism, rather than proving his intended objective of showing a clear difference between the two. The article is spattered with dangerously wrong propositions which are grist to the mill to anti-semites.

'The primarily commercial and artisan character of Judaism, heritage of a long historical past.'

This is a notion which sadly has a pedigree which includes Marx himself (*On the Jewish Question*) and which, if followed through logically, as Marx does in that text, leads to the conclusion that socialists ought to be fundamentally opposed to Judaism 'because of its petty bourgeois essence'. The stupidity of this proposition becomes clear later on in John Turkie's article, when, in arguing against a racial definition of Judaism (and I agree with him on that) he demonstrates the enormous diversity of world Jewry which cannot conceivably have an economic homogeneity any more than a racial homogeneity.

Looking specifically at the context in which John Turkie is making his claim — European Jewry in the period leading up to the rise of fascism, we see a wide diversity in the economic position in which Jews were to be found. The 'commercial character of Judaism' is an anti-semitic myth. John Turkie should know better.

'Zionism capitulates to anti-semitism'

'According to zionism... rather than waste time in a futile fight against anti-semitism, Jews should simply emigrate to a Jewish homeland.'

There is an ambiguity here as to whether John Turkie is saying that the logical conclusion of zionist principles is to abandon the fight against anti-semitism or whether he is saying that zionists actually do always abandon this struggle. If he means the latter, he is simply wrong and this is a

particularly pernicious error. To be sure, sections of the zionist leadership may have played a despicable role in relation to the fight against anti-semitism. How many movements does John Turkie support which have leaderships or tendencies within it whose hands are dirty and bloody — many, I'm sure. But on the ground zionists have been actively involved in such struggles, often laying down their lives.

John Turkie is correct to say that there is, ultimately, a defeatist logic in the zionist position. What he refuses to understand is that logic has been imposed by a vast history of persecution, terror and genocide, not by the reactionary ideas of a few zionist philosophers and leaders. History seems to be teaching Jews that, wherever we go and whatever we do, we have no guarantee of survival.

After all, other peoples have been wiped out entirely in history. Clearly we should stand up and fight for our rights throughout the world,

Stop burying yourselves in the Labour Party!

Comrade,

Reading articles by John Lister is like watching a small child playing with building bricks — all the bricks are there, he touches most of them but fails to construct anything. The piece he co-wrote with Phil Hearse in the opening issue of *Socialist Outlook* is no different.

Endless academic articles that claim '... to provide the kind of analytical and political approach that is vital ... for the coming battles against the ... bureaucracy' are no substitute for understanding the dynamics of the 'various wings and layers' of that bureaucracy.

Much of the article was taken up with bald facts without any attempt at understanding how the left or the working class have arrived at the situation that they are now in. Yet without knowing the historical background it is

difficult to assess anything for the future. The historical background of the Labour Party and the fate of socialists within it is there for all to see. It is only by looking at the origins and history of the Labour Party that we can understand its dynamics today.

'The specific feature of zionism which distinguishes it from all other modern settler colonisation movements is that it wanted ... the country itself. The indigenous people were not therefore to be exploited, but totally replaced.'

but the establishment of a secure sanctuary does seem to be a wise precaution. It is the desire for such sanctuary which forms the basis of zionism's near hegemony of Jewish politics. Revolutionary socialism has yet to offer a convincing alternative to satisfy that desire.

These features are by no means unique to zionist colonialism. The colonisation of North America, Australia and New Zealand was similar, only in these cases, the colonialists engaged in a policy of outright genocide rather than displacement and dispossession.

There is, however, a unique feature of zionist colonisation which John Turkie omits to mention — the colonial peoples do not have an imperialist homeland. The absence of any homeland is,

after all, precisely why they are there! The imperialist powers for whom they are effectively a colonial proxy are countries with which most Israelis have no historical connection whatsoever.

This crucial difference between Israelis and other colonial peoples does not alleviate the plight of the Palestinian people one iota. It does, however, have profound implications for their national liberation struggle, both in terms of defining objectives and in how it can be successfully prosecuted.

I am not a zionist. My opposition to zionism rests primarily on the terrible suffering inflicted upon the Palestinian people by zionist colonisation and then by the Israeli state itself. John Turkie is doing no favours for the Palestinian people by associating their struggles with ideas taken, however unconsciously, from the world of anti-semitic myth. Needless to say, he is doing no favours for Jews either.

Dave Landau,
London

The Lister/Hearse article admits that it is possible that socialists will 'seek solutions outside the (Labour) Party' and claims that this is a problem. They do not, however, explain why this is a problem.

It is easy to claim to be a revolutionary socialist, and with a good education you can write miles of polemics, but to BE a revolutionary you must think in terms of organising a fightback that is based firmly in the working class.

The alternatives are quite clear then: stop being a revolutionary or come outside the Labour Party. No amount of pedantic pontification can alter that basic fact.

Some good class fighters will continue to bury themselves in the warmth of the Labour Party and many sectarian academics will carry on their irrelevant sniping, splitting and fusing. Meanwhile I shall continue to help build a fighting socialist organisation — the Socialist Workers' Party.

D. Hammond,
London



END CONVENTION

Gorbachev's proposals

THERE HAS BEEN a creative tension at all END conventions between those who believe in 'detente from below' and those who believe in 'detente from above'. The former stress direct action, extra-parliamentary activity, solidarity with the oppressed across national boundaries. The latter stress dialogue with those political, trade union or other leaders who have state power, access to state power or expectations of state power.

In the early 1980s, the European peace movements grew in protest at the planned deployment of cruise missiles. Peace camps like those at Greenham Common in the UK and Comiso in Sicily caught the imagination. Links were forged with the women's movement, with national liberation struggles, with dissident groups in the Stalinist states, with ecological and third-world concerns. The principle of 'detente from below' gained ground.

With the arrival of cruise in European bases, many peace activists saw the need to take a more traditional, political road and put pressure on the mass parties. The concept of 'detente from above' has gained credence.

The main problem here has been, however, that the leaderships of the European socialist and Stalinist parties have tried to control and to use the western peace movements for their own purposes. Perhaps the most obvious example was Gonzales' Socialist Party in Spain, which fought a general election on the basis of 'no to NATO' then promptly switched its position during the subsequent referendum. Another obvious example is the strategy of the Soviet and Warsaw pact governments to influence the western peace movements either directly or through their agents in the leaderships of the western communist parties. It is hardly surprising that the most radical elements in the European peace movements have been the Greens and even church groups like pax christi who are not prepared to surrender independence or direct action for short term gains.

Among peace activists there is a healthy scepticism towards social democratic and Stalinist leaderships. This was shown last year at the Evry convention, where Audrey Wise, speaking on behalf of the NEC of the British Labour Party, promised a Labour government in 1987 with a full-blown anti-nuclear policy. The majority of British delegates applauded enthusiastically; the rest of the convention looked on silently. A Hungarian independent next to me said: 'oh, I understand, this is before the election. And after the election? Who knows?' Even

The sixth END international peace convention takes place in Coventry this summer from 14 to 19 July. Over 1,000 peace activists are expected from over 30 countries. This is a unique opportunity for us to find out what is really happening in different countries. Previous conventions have been held in Brussels, West Berlin, Perugia (Italy), Amsterdam and Evry (near Paris). Next year's convention will be in Sweden.

Here **DAVE SPENCER**, convenor of the local Coventry convention organising committee, gives some background to the issues expected to be discussed.

the French chair of the convention was moved to say 'perhaps we should keep Audrey as a hostage here in France to make sure that the promises are kept'.

The convention is in Britain this year and must inevitably conduct a post-mortem on the general election and the rôle of the Labour Party and the CND leaders. There is a major credibility gap between the enthusiasm declared by most CND leaders for the Labour Party's defence policy and the actual presentation of the policy by Kinnock and co. The debate during the election was low key and stressed commitment to NATO and to increasing conventional weaponry before anything anti-nuclear. The *Financial Times* commented on the non-nuclear defence policy part of the Labour manifesto, 'it has been toned down to the point where it is almost an apologetic footnote'.

Worse still was the Labour Party's insistence on silence and inactivity from its supporters. Trade union leaders called off industrial and strike action because of the election. The CND leadership cancelled the Essex CND May 15 demonstration and made no public criticism whatsoever of the Labour Party policy.

It must be stated loudly and clearly that the Labour Party campaign was a failure.

The only people impressed by slick advertising and media coverage were the advertisers and the media people themselves. The whole idea of more of the same with some opportunist jettisoning of 'unpopular' policies like anti-nuclear peace policies, must be resisted. After all we already have one Tory party — who needs another? The only way to convince the 'middle ground' is to step up extra-parliamentary activity to show them that you mean what you say. To flatter and patronise people cynically means you get treated with the contempt you deserve.

The major issue at the convention will be Gorbachev's disarmament proposals. There will be different views on what the attitude of the western peace movement should be towards them. Already there have been threats of splits in the END international liaison committee over approaches to the official peace movements of eastern Europe as compared to the dissident independent peace groups — whether, how and where each should be invited to speak. It will be very interesting to assess from informed contributions exactly what is happening in the Stalinist states and how far 'glasnost' is a real or a cosmetic exercise. From past conventions those who want to make the western peace movements into cheer leaders for soviet peace policies will be treated with scepticism.

There is a glaring need for political answers in the peace movement based on the principles of 'detente from below' and independence from the mass parties of social democracy and Stalinism. Peace activists should of course work with and within these parties but we should not tone down our programme on their say so. Our priority must be direct action and solidarity with the oppressed. As Karl Liebknecht said in world war one, 'the only way to peace is by uniting the oppressed against the oppressors' and, again, that 'the chief oppressor of the people is in its own country'.

Unfortunately the bureaucracies of social democracy and Stalinism have too often in the past become part of that oppression. And therein lies the problem with 'detente from above'. For the sake of short-term alliances and influence with these bureaucracies, it ignores or prevents direct action by the oppressed. In the context of the peace movement I take the oppressed to include all those who feel alienated, terrified and angry in the face of nuclear weapons and nuclear power over which they have no control. It is a feeling, based of course on the reality of the international balance of class forces that the world is like the Titanic captured by people bent on self-destruction.

In the first section of the transitional programme of the fourth international Trotsky put the matter sharply, 'without a socialist revolution in the next historical period, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of humanity. The historical crisis of humanity is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership'.

This was written in 1938 before the horror of nuclear warfare. It is a thousand times more true in 1987.



Kenneth Baker, education minister responsible for Tory plans

In the Tories' third term, education is set to become a hotly-contested battleground.

RONNIE HELD looks at the Tories' manifesto commitments.

Testing the Tories' plans for schools

'GIVE TEACHERS back their negotiating rights and peace will be restored in schools.' So ran the message on the front page of the NUT's weekly newspaper on 15 June. Pleas such as these to the Tories sound hollow in the light of their election victory. Hollow also were the words of acting NUT general secretary MacAvoy to the *Guardian* on 13 June: he baldly stated that strike action was to be called off, since protecting state education against the ravages of privatisation and selection were apparently more important! As though the two could be neatly separated! And, typically, the NUT leadership chose to tell the *Guardian* readership their strategy before consulting the membership.

There is no doubt that it has been the teachers' consistent campaigning which made education a key election issue.

Election leaflets published by the NUT make the government record on education 'speak for itself' as their heading states.

During the second period of Tory rule, the government's record of achievement for state schooling is the following:

- they have spent £34 million on 'assisting' middle class parents in getting their children to private schools, whilst giving state schools £750 million less in real terms in 1986/7, compared with 1980-81.
- provided nursery schools for less than a quarter of the population's 3-4 year olds.
- built up a backlog of £2 billion in repairs, so that many state schools are in a chronic state of repair.
- cut spending on school meals by 37 per cent since 1979/80.
- axed 30,000 teaching jobs when over one and a quarter million pupils are in classes of over 31.
- scrapped teacher trade union negotiating rights on pay and conditions, a move comparable to the banning of trade unions at GCHQ, and then announced that 'education standards are falling'.

Their election manifesto presented a series of sweeping, radical 'reforms' so bold and audacious that they have been able to present themselves as the only credible alternative to the havoc which they themselves have created themselves — through rate-capping and attempts to

shackle the curriculum to the changing needs of Thatcher's economic policies.

It is important that socialists acquaint themselves with the precise implications of 'Tory educational reform', in order to start creating an alternative education strategy that is linked to answering the needs and aspirations of the working class, in all its diversity.

So what do the Tories intend to do?

They will establish a national core curriculum. What will that mean?

The right of the Tories to stipulate what will be taught, how it will be taught and how 7, 11 and 14 year olds will be 'tested'. In practice to try to scrap the right of local authorities to determine their policies for schools, one only has to look at the number of times that Brent and Haringey councils came up as an election issue to realise that both names are symbolic of the Tories' hatred of progressive education.

Within five years head teachers and school governing bodies will be given control over their school budgets. What will this mean?

The Tory manifesto puts it clearly, 'they know best the needs of their school'. In other words, the educational policies of local councils will become meaningless. Heads are to be given the task of deciding whether to mend a leaking roof or to buy new books. In reality this is another means of eradicating the effectiveness of Labour authorities and teacher trade unions, in determining the practices and provisions in local schools.

The Tories will increase 'parental choice'. What choice?

The right to choose to send your child to a 'popular' school. The Tory manifesto states: 'popular schools which have earned parental support by offering good education will then be able to expand beyond present pupil numbers'. Apparently, 'these steps will compel schools to respond to the views of parents'. Parents, especially middle class parents, are to be enlisted into Thatcher's elitist project — to check teacher militancy and curb progressive ideas and practices.

They will encourage state schools to 'opt out'. Of what?

Out of local education authority (LEA) control. Part of their ideological attack on

state education is to make the very thought of sending your child to a state school, in and of itself, undesirable.

How will schools opt out?

The manifesto states that 'if, in a particular school, parents and governing bodies wish to become independent of the LEA, they will be given the choice to do so'. This will apparently be done through a parental ballot. If over 51 per cent of the votes call for opting out, then opting out will be granted.

The fact that in practice it will take up to five years for a school to opt out, and that parents will have come and gone from a particular school, means nothing to the Tories. A democratic vote by one set of parents can have lasting effects! Such 'non-LEA' schools will become 'independent charitable trusts' and will receive a grant from the department of education. How much and what the grant will pay for are, again, not explained.

The reality will be that many 'independent' charitable schools, private in all but name, will have to search elsewhere to find money to pay for the types of services that state schools provided as of right: for instance school's psychological services, the additional teachers who work in many local schools serving the needs of students with particular learning difficulties, borough music teachers — who move around schools giving individual lessons to those learning a musical instrument, funding for educational trips, and so on. The implication is obvious: the government do not intend to pay for a fully resourced schooling service.

Opposing these policies will be a mammoth task, both in the Labour Party and the unions. It is the most daring attack yet launched by any government on post-war education services. Apart from continuing the struggle inside the NUT, both to defend state schooling and fight for our rights to negotiate, we will need to take the debate about education into the Labour Party in a way not done before. It is a matter of the highest priority that we open a discussion about what socialists mean by an education for the working class. The conference planned by the Socialist Teachers Alliance on 7-8 November will be an opportunity to develop an alternative education strategy — capable of meeting the Tory onslaught. Put that date in your diaries now!



Quoan Mondel-Reflex

The aftermath of the

Although there was a general tendency on the left and in liberation circles to dismiss the May elections in South Africa as 'irrelevant' (Tambo) — because it was an all-white election, excluding the vast majority of the people of South Africa — its results and consequences cannot be lightly dismissed, argues **CHARLIE VAN GELDEREN**.

THE WHITE ELECTION was of course not so much an election as a referendum. Even the tame Uncle Toms of the 'coloured' and indian legislative chambers were excluded. The white voters were being asked if they would continue to place their future in the hands of Botha and the dominant National Party (NP).

The election was launched in a period of grave economic and political crisis and in the midst of a state of emergency. There is a 16.8 per cent inflation rate and almost stand-still growth. The rand has collapsed and unemployment has reached record levels among whites as well as blacks — estimated conservatively at six million (25 per cent of blacks are unemployed). The average white was better off after tax in 1970 than today, despite a 13-fold increase in the price of gold which accounts for more than half South Africa's foreign currency earnings. A bloated bureaucracy necessary to process the mass of apartheid legislature (pass laws, influx control, censorship and so on) has led to a four-fold increase in personal taxation in less than a decade.

In few other countries would a government with such a dismal economic record voluntarily put its popularity to the test at the ballot box (elections were not due constitutionally for another two years). But this 'election' was not being fought on such bread-and-butter issues. The state of the economy scarcely figured on the hustings. As the *Financial Times* put it 'for many whites "security" and the maintenance of white privilege is more important than prosperity'. For many, of course, the one is the guarantee of the other.

What was at issue was the most effective way of maintaining white-dominated capitalism. Among the white electorate there were three schools of thought. The mainstream, represented by the ruling National Party, believed that severely limited 'reforms' — the three-chamber parliament; trade union rights for black workers (certainly the major reform); tinkering with some of the more irritating aspects of Verwoerdian apartheid such as the mixed marriages act and similar cosmetic measures, would contain the situation.



the white elections

To the 'left' of the governing party were the 'verligtes', those Nationalists like Wynand Malan, Esther Lategan and Denis Worrall and the Progressive Reform Party (PRP) who aligned themselves with sections of big business and wanted the 'reforms' to go a little faster and a little further. None of these 'progressives' was in favour of a unitary state with one-person-one-vote. They all campaigned for the continuance of what is euphemistically known as 'free enterprise' but which in reality, means the continued domination of the economy by the giant monopolies, headed by Anglo-American. To the right of the National Party was the Conservative Party (CP), the Herstigte National Party (HNP) and in the background the openly fascist Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging (AWB). These want to turn the clock back to the days when Verwoerd was king and the 'kaffir' knew his place; to a rigid apartheid in which blacks would exercise 'political rights' only in the so-called tribal 'homelands' and 'coloureds' and indians only in racially demarcated areas. For them Botha's 'reforms' were the

thin edge of the wedge, opening the road to racial equality and, inevitably, black rule.

Botha perceived that the main threat to his base came from the 'right' rather than the 'left' despite the media ballyhoo which surrounded the dramatic journey of Dr Worrall from the South African embassy in London to the hustings of Helderberg. The election result has more than vindicated his judgement. The ruling National Party increased its parliamentary representation from 116 seats to 123. Its gains were largely at the expense of the PFP. The rise of the ultra-right as a threatening force in South Africa resulted in a net gain by the CP of four seats at the expense of the NP and replacing the PFP as the official parliamentary opposition. Had the CP and the HNP not split the right-wing vote, they would have won six more seats.

A feature of the election result is that the english-speaking whites who have hitherto managed to present a 'liberal' veneer and who formed the base of PFP support moved over to the NP in droves. English-speaking seats which were considered virtually

unassailable were captured by the NP and others transformed into marginals. In the words of *Business Day*, a Johannesburg financial daily, 'english voters sacrificing at last the role of keepers of a liberal flame, chose to liquidate themselves as an identifiable political force'.

By playing the racist card, Botha succeeded in uniting the whites.

WHILE THE white electorate rallied to the tattered blood-stained banner of apartheid Blacks registered their protest at their exclusion from the decision-making machinery in the most effective way open to them. More than half-a-million stayed away from work on polling day and nearly double that number the next day to demonstrate what COSATU described as 'the opposition of the vast majority of South Africa's people to the mad, repressive, racist course this government is bent on'. Thousands of students stayed away from schools, colleges and universities in solidarity with the striking workers.

One immediate effect of the triumph of the NP and the emergence in strength of the ultra-right — who won more than 26 per cent of the overall popular white vote, almost double the PFP's share — is to diminish the influence of big business on future government policy. Despite their domination of the South African economy, Botha will now be even less inclined to listen to the blandishments of 'enlightened' capitalists, like de Beer of Anglo-American or to bow to pressure from the multi-nationals. They pinned their post-election hopes on the success of Dr Worrall and his fellow independents

**'even the quisling
Buthelezi is hesitant about
participating in a national
council'**

which, according to a statement de Beer made in London on 4 May would 'increase pressure on the government to make concessions'. Pressure from that quarter is off the agenda for the time being.

In the immediate future, Botha will have to ward off the threat from the die-hards on the parliamentary opposition benches by showing that his 'reformist' velvet glove conceals the iron fist which he would not now hesitate to use. He has received a mandate which he dare not ignore if the NP is to maintain its hegemony over the Afrikaners. This was neatly summed up by UDF leader Allan Bocosak: 'white voters have made their position clear. They support the state of emergency; they support detention of thousands of children; they support the actions of the security forces'.

Opening the newly-elected parliament, Botha made it clear that apartheid was here to stay and warned of an impending crack-down against the extra-parliamentary opposition. If there were still any sections of South Africa's voteless blacks who thought that any real reform, let alone a change of

government could be brought about through the white parliamentary process, these hopes have now been effectively dashed.

Botha has not wasted much time in attempting to put his threats against the opposition — the real opposition — into effect. One of his major targets would appear to be the trade unions. Even before the elections, the police laid siege to Cosatu House, the headquarters of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions. This was followed by raids on other union offices and the harassment of trade union leaders.

Two days after the elections, the striking railworkers' six-person negotiating team was picked up in a Johannesburg raid. On the same day, Themba Nxumalo, general secretary of the Municipal and Allied Workers of South Africa, was stopped at a road block. This was followed by more raids on union offices and arrests in Pietersburg in the Northern Transvaal and Germiston near Johannesburg. COSATU offices in East London were burnt down.

Botha has also made it clear that the group areas act and segregated education — two of the corner stones of apartheid would be rigidly enforced. The so-called grey areas, where white and black have been living peacefully together these past few years, would no longer be tolerated. This was signalled by a raid on a largely black-occupied flat in the central Johannesburg suburb, Hillbrow and the alleged detention of a Hillbrow caretaker who has been prominent in the prolonged campaign against the eviction of black residents in Hillbrow.

Verwoerd's policy of 'independent' black 'homelands' would also be pursued. Botha has given the go-ahead for impoverished KwaNdebele to become the fifth 'black nation', only nine months after the territory's legislative assembly voted against the independence proposals. KwaNdebele is a wholly artificial creation with no traditional tribal ties. It consists of a few thousand acres of desolate farmland, 100 miles north-east of Pretoria. The land was formerly owned by 19 white farmers who were, undoubtedly, handsomely compensated. Now it is 'home' to 250,000 blacks, mostly of the Ndebele tribe who have been forcibly removed there.

There can be no doubt that all sections of the liberation movement face a difficult future in the immediate period ahead during which the state of emergency will become a permanent feature. The single, bleak gesture which Botha has made toward the majority, is the offer of black participation in a national council. Even the quisling Buthelezi is hesitant about participating in this farce. He has stipulated the release of Nelson Mandela as a condition for talks; but this is virtually impossible in the present climate.

Botha was rebuffed even by the uncle Toms. On a visit to the Vaal's Lekoa township in June, where he was offered the 'freedom' of six townships including Sharpeville, he invited the Mayor Esau Mahalatsi and other councillors to sit on his national council. Mahalatsi and his colleagues have been living behind barbed wire in a specially-constructed and heavily guard-

ed compound since they increased local rents in September, 1984. This was the beginning of the nation-wide rent boycotts and the wave of unrest which has continued unabated despite two states of emergency.

Mayor Mahalatsi, aware that he was elected by a derisory microscopic vote and that he was not one of the 'real black leaders' as described by Botha, gracefully declined the state president's invitation: 'we would have great reluctance in participating in the national council', he said. 'We seriously urge you to abandon the idea... the reform you (are pursuing) will be an act of futility... it does not (lead to) the ultimate participation of blacks in parliament on a par with whites'.

In anticipation of strong action against the liberation forces, Botha is clearing the decks. His deportation of media representatives from Britain, USA, Australia and other countries is no simple act of revenge for past activities by these reporters. With state control of radio and tv in South Africa and press reporting severely curtailed by emergency regulations, the regime can conceal the true state of affairs from people in South Africa. It now hopes to bring down the curtain between South Africa and the rest of the world. For President Botha, no news from the dark recesses of the townships is good news.

'the banning of the mass organisations must be in the mind of the regime'

Undoubtedly, the increased authority which the election result has given Botha will be used ruthlessly. While he will keep the trade unions within his sights, he will first train his guns on the political wings of the liberation movement and, in the first instance, on the UDF, the main mass extra-parliamentary movement, and AZAPO. Preparing legislation to ban these organisations which will escape nullification in the Supreme Court may take time. As an immediate step, Botha proposes to use the Fund-Raising Act of 1978 to stop these and other organisations receiving financial aid from overseas. This may not be as effective as the government appear to believe. The liberation organisations enjoy such widespread support that it can get by without overseas aid though, undoubtedly, this will increase their difficulties.

The banning of the mass organisations, however, must be very much in the mind of the regime. It hopes banning them would have the same effect as the outlawing of the ANC and PAC after the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 — a period of relative political calm and apathy. But there is no possibility of this scenario being repeated. The people in the townships and, especially the youth have been highly politicised in the last two years of struggle. Living in a perpetual state of emergency they have become inured to imprisonment and death. It has become so much part of their daily lives that no repression, however severe, will be able to put a

brake on the movement of revolt.

There is a danger, of course, that without organised political leadership this will take the form of mindless violence and anarchy. While this will increase the ungovernability of the townships, it will not create the best conditions to give birth to an alternative government and social system. The problem of political leadership would still have to be solved.

THIS IS ONE variant of the years ahead. But there is another aspect which was not present in the 1960s — the independent trade union movement. Undoubtedly, the government will try to curb the influence and militancy of the unions — as it has shown by its vicious action against the striking railway workers. But they won't find this easy. Even the representatives of big business are aware of the power and strength of the organised trade unions: In the pre-election interview in the *Independent* (5 May), the Anglo-American director, Dr Zach de Beer said that in the long term the most effective anti-government organisation in South Africa was the trade union movement. 'Wherever you are now you are dealing with unions in South Africa. What I have said many times to the government is that if you give people trade union power it is certain they will use it for political purposes. What is remarkable is the restraint the unions used in the first six years but this is changing'.

Another prominent member of the big business establishment, the chair of the major multinational Shell SA, John R Wilson has also warned the regime of the consequences of taking on the unions. 'State pressure on COSATU, he said, could only 'bode ill for the future'. 'The raiding of offices, the banning of meetings and the indiscriminate arrest of hundreds of workers is not likely to crush the unions', he said. 'Rather it will strengthen their resistance and support and will have adverse ramifications for stable industrial relations, the effects of which will be felt throughout industry... violence will not abate under the present repressive conditions.'

He went on to say: 'Sadly though, as violence, high-handed and strong-arm tactics are employed in what is transparently an attempt to crush an increasingly powerful government opponent, one's belief in a negotiated future becomes even more fragile.' (*Weekly Mail*, 22-30 May).

Botha having been rebuffed even by the quislings of KwaZulu and Lekoa seems to have realised that he has to cool the situation. After the attempted vicious repression of the rail strike, the employing authority suddenly caved in. All 16,000 sacked railway workers got their jobs back and union recognition. Despite its victory at the all-white polls, the regime does not feel itself strong enough to take on the organised strength of the workers in open confrontation.

While the trade union movement, as such, is not the ideal vehicle for political leadership — involved as it of necessity is, with the day-to-day struggles for better working condi-

tions and wages — its organised strength and close ties with the liberation movement can act as a shield for the political wing if it is driven underground. The close bond which has been established between the unions and the community organisations in the townships and between the unions and the students will also prove important in disciplining the spreading revolt and guiding it into more fruitful channels.

The birth of an independent working class party would, undoubtedly, be a big step forward but the emergence of such a party with a mass base is not likely in the immediate future. COSATU's proclaimed political platform, with its firm commitment to socialism, provides the framework within which such a party can take shape. It is toward this end that revolutionary socialists must work, inside the unions and inside the mass organisations. There are no short cuts. Parties which can give effective leadership to the working class cannot be created by proclamation.

While the trade unions cannot be a substitute for the political party of the work-

Africa today and the founding of the British Labour Party at the turn of the century. The trade union leaders in Britain took the initiative to form a political party mainly as a defensive response to legislation which threatened the very existence of the unions; especially the Taff Vale judgement.

It was not till 1918, in the wake of the Russian revolution, that the word 'socialism' made its appearance in the platform of the British Labour Party. The British Labour Party was born in a period of relative economic growth and political stability when it was still possible to wrest reforms and concessions from the ruling class. Its purpose was to strengthen the fight for reforms by adding political activity to the industrial muscle of the working class. At no time did it threaten the power and structure of the state, or the social order.

The scenario in South Africa is vastly different. There the unions have come into existence and grown strong in an era of unprecedented turbulence. COSATU's very existence and the close links it has established

their own programme — socialism — conscious of the fact that this programme is the only guarantor of victory. It is by striving to win the others in the alliance to this programme that the working class exercises its leadership. All other interpretations of the 'leading role of the working class' are completely meaningless.

It is significant that at its founding conference at the end of May, the new giant COSATU affiliate, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), clearly spelled out its commitment to a socialist society where workers' control of government and industry was enforced. While it adopted the Freedom Charter as 'containing the minimum political demands that reflect the view of the majority of metal workers' vision of a free and democratic non-discriminatory South Africa' it underlined that the demands of the Freedom Charter could only be realised in the lives of the working-class masses 'through the practical leadership of the industrial working class...' and it recognised the limitations of the Freedom Charter by demanding that it should be supplemented with a 'workers' charter' a demand originally raised by the imprisoned Moses Mayekiso, who was unanimously elected as general secretary of the new union.

In South Africa, the conditions are particularly favourable to the emergence of a working class party with a policy which will safeguard the interests of all sections of the oppressed while remaining firmly committed to socialism. This is because the overwhelming majority of black people in South Africa, that is, the overwhelming majority of the population, are bound with indissoluble links to the working class.

The middle classes form only a small minority of the black people. Indeed, it can be said, that by far the biggest section of the economically active men and women in South Africa are urban or rural workers. The students, who have often been in the forefront of the battles in the townships, are the sons and daughters of workers. In this situation, a thoroughly working class political programme, which has for its objective the overthrow of the capitalist-apartheid state, is also the programme which embraces all the demands of the people as a whole — an end to racial discrimination; equality in law, education and civil society; the redistribution of the wealth of the country, including access to land; a government of the working class with the same inbuilt democratic control from below which has been such a distinguishing feature of the black trade unions in South Africa.

For socialists world-wide the task is to intensify the mobilisation of solidarity with the black people of South Africa. The heady days of student risings in the townships may be temporarily over as a consequence of intensified state repression. Suppression of news may keep South Africa out of the media headlines and off the tv screens. But the struggle is going on, inevitably, remorselessly. It cannot be halted. Victory is certain!



ing class, neither can this role be fulfilled by the populist mass organisations, the UDF, the AZAPO or, for that matter, the ANC.

Although all these organisations never omit to genuflect in the direction of the 'leading role of the working class', they are very vague about the specific meaning of this. It makes good reading in articles and manifestos. In actual practice this has meant calling on the workers to bear the brunt of any struggle initiated by the mass organisations.

This has led, in the past, to friction between the trade unions and the populist organisations. The most glaring example of this was the stay-away in Port Elizabeth and East London in March, 1985, an action which was decided upon by community, youth and political organisations, without first consulting the trade unions. It was the workers who suffered loss of pay; it was the workers who provided the picket lines. But this is not what we mean when we talk about the 'leading role of the working class'.

A workers' party, even if initiated and launched by the trade unions — which is the most likely variant — would not be an exclusively trade unionist party confining itself to trade union politics. There is no comparison between the situation in South

with community, youth and women's organisations, make it qualitatively different to the union which formed the British Labour Party. Its programme is uncompromisingly political and recognises that the struggle for immediate economic demands is not enough. The declared aim of COSATU is an end to racist capitalism. It sees the battle to end apartheid and the overthrow of the social order as a single struggle. What it has not yet done is to forge the political instrument which can effectively lead this struggle — an independent party of the working class.

A WORKERS' PARTY, by itself, no matter how well led, cannot achieve victory. It needs to ally itself with all sections of the people fighting the racist regime. But, in these necessary alliances, the working class does not subordinate its own programme to accommodate that of another class. The defeats of the popular and people's fronts in France and Spain in the 1930s are tragic reminders of the result of such compromises. The 'leading role of the working class' means that, within the alliance, while fighting resolutely for the united objective to defeat the main enemy, the workers' representatives fight for the domination of

BH: *What is Rail Against Apartheid and how was it set up?*

GR: RAA was set up last year by railworkers who wanted to get others more involved in anti-apartheid work.

When it was launched we got a good local response so the next job for us was to make it a national campaign among NUR members. We aimed for something not too ambitious — a June 28 demonstration where we would try to rally more railway workers than had ever attended an AA demo before. But in the meantime it became clear to us that if it was going to become a focal point we had to have more of a link with railway workers in South Africa than we did at that time.

So arrangements were made for us to meet the national organiser of SARHWU last May. SARHWU gave us a small project which was to pay the wages of a district organiser in South Africa — about £2,000 a year. In debating that among railway workers we were also of course raising their consciousness about South Africa.

But, of course, this was all before the state of emergency was declared and before the railway strike. When the rail strike started, in fact, we wanted to drop that project and go straight into fundraising for the strike but we were told by SARHWU to complete the project. So we did, and then decided to invite some of their leaders over here to mark that and begin support for the strike.

BH: *So what happened? How did you end up going out there?*

GR: Well when these people tried to leave they were arrested. Mike Roussos was one. He is in John Vorster Square prison where he was stripped naked and abused during interrogation, and he is still there. Conditions there are appalling. Since the state of emergency 65 of those who have gone into John Vorster Square prison have come out in coffins. So you can see the kind of situation that he faces. And they have rigged up murder charges against him. There is no evidence. They brought a masked man into the room and said 'It is him?' The masked man said 'yes', then they told him it was for two supposed murders that had happened outside COSATU House, and that the people who had committed those murders had done it on instructions from Mike Roussos. For anyone who has met Mike Roussos this was patently absurd. That gave us great concern. The arrests suggested that the importance that SARHWU attached to these international links is matched by the importance the state attached to those links and they wanted to smash them. Also, when you've had personal contact with people out there it gives you an added measure of concern.

So as individual members of the executive committee of RAA, we decided to send representatives of the union out to South Africa instead. So myself and the secretary, Dodie Wepler went.

INTERVIEW WITH GEOFF REVELL

International union solidarity

In June this year South Africa's transport bosses made important concessions to striking railworkers involved in a struggle to defend their trade union — SARHWU.

Members of the British National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) had already established a group called Rail Against Apartheid (RAA) and in May two of their number went to South Africa to make contact with their comrades and offer what support they could. Below, **BRIAN HERON** talks to **GEOFF REVELL**, NUR executive member and chairperson of RAA about the trip and what he learnt from it.

BH: *What was your experience when you were there. How did SARHWU organise the strike that they were involved in at the time?*

GR: The incident that sparked off the strike was the disciplining of a worker who was involved with a freight terminal and who had brought some money back — a very small sum of money about £12 — that he was supposed to pay in late one evening at a certain time. And he didn't — he got back late so he took this £12 home and when he came back he was told that he had committed an offence. He was a SARHWU member. Six months after that offence he was dismissed and it was that incident, it is said, that brought about this massive struggle. This is what the papers say over here but this was not the real reason. In February the general secretary, Umtai Zello, had been arrested while negotiating for superior maize to make the meal in the compound. It's absurd. Of course, it was not just about the sacked worker. That was a spark that set off the tinderbox.

You can't separate the response of those workers from the general unrest that's happening in South Africa. There have been all the activities in the townships. Since the state of emergency was declared,

25,000 people have been detained or are still detained. Two thousand people have been killed. There is massive police repression in the townships. In response to resistance the security forces out there become more and more oppressive. The bosses in the railway industry stepped up their repression which means something — they beat their workers as it is. Against this background, the strike also became an issue of SARHWU recognition. When the union attempted to take up the case of the sacked worker they were told that they didn't represent anybody.

After a week there were 7,000 workers on strike, after a month there were 19,000 workers on strike from a membership of about 22-23,000. The core of their membership is in the Transvaal area. I'll tell you a story that was told to me to give you an idea of how it grew. A group of permanent way workers were working on the side of a track when all these armed white men with guns, pistols and dogs appeared on the bank. One worker went to the white boss and asked who these people were, and was told that they were there 'to stop you going on strike'. These workers were not members of SARHWU, they were members of the staff association — so they asked 'what strike?' They were told the SARHWU strike. When they finished work that day they went back to the compound and called a meeting of all the railway workers in the compound and at dawn they slipped down to the railway station, boarded trains to Jo'burg, went to COSATU House, asked what was going on. They were told, and they all joined SARHWU and joined in the strike! And that is how that struggle has added more and more members to SARHWU.

BH: *You've already mentioned some specific examples of attacks on the union, are there any other examples and how did the union deal with them?*

GR: When 19,000 workers were dismissed the obvious tactic of the employer was that there would then be a drift back to work — maybe they were drawing some lessons from this country, I don't know — but none of those 19,000 people who were sacked made any attempt to go back to work. In fact, their dismissal made them even more determined.

There was lots of support from the black community and different organisations but the employers control the food supply for the compounds and hostels and what they did was to cut off the food. They had

wanted to evict the strikers but a court battle gave them no right to evict, so they cut off the food supply instead. So all these relief organisations began to spring up. You had support groups for the families of the detainees set up, and various religious organisations supported them materially as best they could during the dispute. Of course, the subs weren't coming in to the union so what resources they did have had to be used for legal fees — there were arrests going on all the time among the members — and providing food.

I think there is something which it is important that workers here understand — the bombing of COSATU House by the security force was an enormous loss to them. Everything that they had patiently built up over a number of years was in there — down to the last pen. SARWHU was involved in a massive struggle, forced underground, and still had to build up and run a union with all that entails, administration and so on — but they did it. And they did it because the strike was growing and as it was growing it gave them more confidence. When their leaders were jailed, new leaders emerged and it became the business of the whole black community. By the end of April the strike was the focal point for all people involved in struggle in South Africa to help them. Many people came to see that if this strike was lost SARWHU would be crushed for the third time in its history. It would be crushed by using exactly the same methods as before: imprisonment, murder and so forth.

BH: *What about the structure of the union. How are decisions made? How are leaders elected? How was information communicated to the membership? How was the strike run?*

GR: I think it can be best explained if I tell you what we actually saw. The leadership, the top leadership, who were on the run, would come in to Jo'burg — we're talking about people not just in fear of detention but in fear of their lives. But they come in to the meetings every day. All the stewards meet with the leadership. They bring themselves up to date with the situation, they deal with and come to decisions on how to deal with particular and specific problems which have arisen in the dispute. Then they say 'Is there anything now that the members don't know about?' or 'Is there anything that we need authority on before we make the next move?' When they sort out what they are they have mass meetings — at one o'clock — these meetings are something to behold. With COSATU House gone they have had to improvise. They were using this hall over what looked to me to be a disused shop — about the size of a small supermarket. When I was there I heard hundreds and hundreds of voices singing, people marching from Jo'burg station down to the beginning of the first mass meeting. Because the hall can't accommodate everybody, they packed in as many as possible and the rest go to the

black-only squares and lay down and sleep until this section of the mass meeting has ended. Then the stewards go out to the squares and bring in the next section of the mass meeting. They were singing all these songs of defiance and freedom.

BH: *Do these mass meetings take votes on various questions? And are these votes binding?*

GR: Yes, all the mass meetings have been rolling like that since they lost COSATU house. But in answer to your question, that is how they make their decisions — right down to not very significant things like whether or not to send somebody to Britain. The settlement of the strike was decided at a mass meeting.



The relationship between the leadership and the membership is that they wouldn't do anything without them. Everything has to go before that meeting and they act with the full authority at all times. They never deviate from that. Of course, they would be accountable to that mass meeting. The leadership don't seem to me to have the authority to settle on different terms to that stated by the mass meeting even if they thought they'd got the best deal going.

BH: *Against the background of repression and against the victory for the right in the whites only election and the renewal of the state of emergency, they nevertheless won an incredible victory. Would you care to say something about how that happened?*

GR: Well the strike did cost the South African Transport Services (SATS) money but I don't think that carried great weight because the government would have written such losses off. The point is the strike was growing. There were great demands being made in Cape Town, East London, Durban — they were all threatening to join the dispute. You have to remember as well that SARHWU was gaining members. They tried to confuse the members of SARHWU by putting out statements about what the leadership's demands were.

I went with them to a meeting with eight bishops — I've never met even one before — from all the churches in Jo'burg as observers. And they made the demand that the bishops must monitor these meetings because if they are going to be called liars as a leadership so are the bishops of Jo'burg.

One of these bishops had direct links with the government and they said to the government that if there wasn't a settlement to this dispute as a trade union in the trade union context, they cannot be held responsible for what would happen next. When people have got no income coming in, when the state sets about starving them, they cannot expect to deal with that kind of situation in the common trade union way. So they wanted them to understand that there was going to be big trouble.

It was the monitoring of the meetings that SATS didn't like. They actually subsequently refused to allow it. The most important indication of why the strike was settled, however, lies in the fact that they went back to normal working on June 15 — the day before the eleventh anniversary of Soweto. A growing strike by black workers in the railway industry combined with events on June 16 would have been unacceptable. So the employers granted everything, including releasing the general secretary, Umtai Zello, and the rest of the detainees who are not on murder charges. They've given them their bonus for all the time that they have been on strike. They recognise SARHWU, they are willing to sit down and negotiate with them. And they gave them reinstatement.

But the workers' victory is only temporary. SARHWU is only one affiliate of COSATU, and I believe that because the security forces are stretched, they want to concentrate on attacking COSATU as the federation, because COSATU is growing as well. I don't think they want to give all their energies any more to dealing with one affiliate when you can cut the head off.

I have spoken to people on the leadership since that settlement and they have no illusions at all that the settlement heralds new levels of oppression for SARHWU. They believe that it is important for the state to smash COSATU and they are going to need all their resources to do that. I think that's why they settled.

BH: *Could you say something about the political relationship between unions like SARHWU, other COSATU affiliates, and the liberation struggle in general, in the townships and so on. You have mentioned June 16, the anniversary of Soweto — what would be the connection there between actions taken by the unions in the townships and the other liberation organisations?*

GR: Well, I think there is anyway a general supportive attitude between any group which is suffering from a confrontation with apartheid. And clearly, by joining SARHWU you are in fact joining the liberation struggle. That is there as part of the constitution of the SARHWU. Now because of that, the people who are going to be attracted to joining that union as a way out of an absolutely wretched existence, perceive the union as not just a union that is going to improve wages and conditions, but as an organisation that is going to improve their way of life.

AT THE VENICE summit, Reagan's top aides were at pains to project the image of a rejuvenated hawkish leadership. Never mind Conragate; never mind the misadventure of USS Stark with its 36 dead marines; the White House policy makers picked up the ball and ran as far as they could go. Underneath, however, they knew that only miracles could steer them clear from the thousand and one pitfalls lying ahead. For good measure — just in case the president is named as a Conragate co-conspirator — chief of staff Baker and national security adviser Carlucci are prepared to throw him to the vultures, remarking that the vagaries of an erratic Gulf policy were unavoidable as the 'president's juices are not flowing any longer'. But the president's comatose and slumberous mushiness was a side issue, the US's major objective was to attempt to tap the reserve of hatred against Iran which has lasted since the 1979 hostage crisis.

Despite the mounting tension over the deployment of Chinese-made 'silkworm' missiles by Iran and hard talk of a pre-emptive strike, the histrionics of Reagan's top aides are mere sabre-rattling, a device to soften the blow of yet another humiliation for US imperialism.

Stories of Reagan's forty winks, while popular with most media, cannot in all seriousness explain the rambling state of US policies in the Gulf. Such policies are not the scattered thoughts of an old flake, the president. They are the product of a whole historical period where the US military machine repeatedly finds itself on the verge of humiliation. As in Lebanon in 1982, the death of US marines in the Gulf is another blow to the confidence and morale of US warmongers. But unlike Lebanon, this time, the US administration is jostled by its own clients. The attack by the Iraqi Mirage jet fighter was passed off as an accident, a mere human error. Other theories should not be ruled out, however, in particular that the 'accident' was a brilliant cynical ruse by a ruthless regime desperate to internationalise the conflict with its neighbouring Iran.

Sharp shifts and swings by the Iraqi regime are nothing new. Already in the seventies, as Sadat's capitulation to Israel sharply divided the Arab world and a powerful radical pole emerged based on Syria, Algeria, South Yemen, Libya and the PLO, Iraq became prominent as a major spoiler of the 'Arab dynamic'. First, it boycotted the newly-formed radical alliance on an ultra-left platform, then swiftly sabotaged it by calling for and hosting the Baghdad Arab summit which drew in all the reactionary rulers and defused a momentous historical situation. Having frustrated a development that could have threatened US imperialism's plans for the region, Iraq then set out to bolster its alliance with Jordan and Saudi Arabia. At the same time, it embarked on a systematic suppression of all domestic opposition, communists in particular, strengthened its onslaught on the Kurdish people and finally started preparing the climate for a war against Iran.

It is in this historical context that the Iraqi



Reagan's hawks gather in the Gulf

The Iraqi attack on an American ship in the Gulf once more put the Iran-Iraq war in the headlines. JOHN ANTHONY looks at the manoeuvres of the Iraqi regime and the dilemmas of US policy in the region.



Iranian women mourning those killed in the Gulf war

Ba'athists ended up siding with imperialism on numerous issues while remaining distinct from their other Arab allies — Jordan and Saudi Arabia — whose rulers' fate is more directly tied to US strategic plans for the

region. It is this relative freedom of manoeuvre which allowed Iraq to embarrass with impunity the US administration.

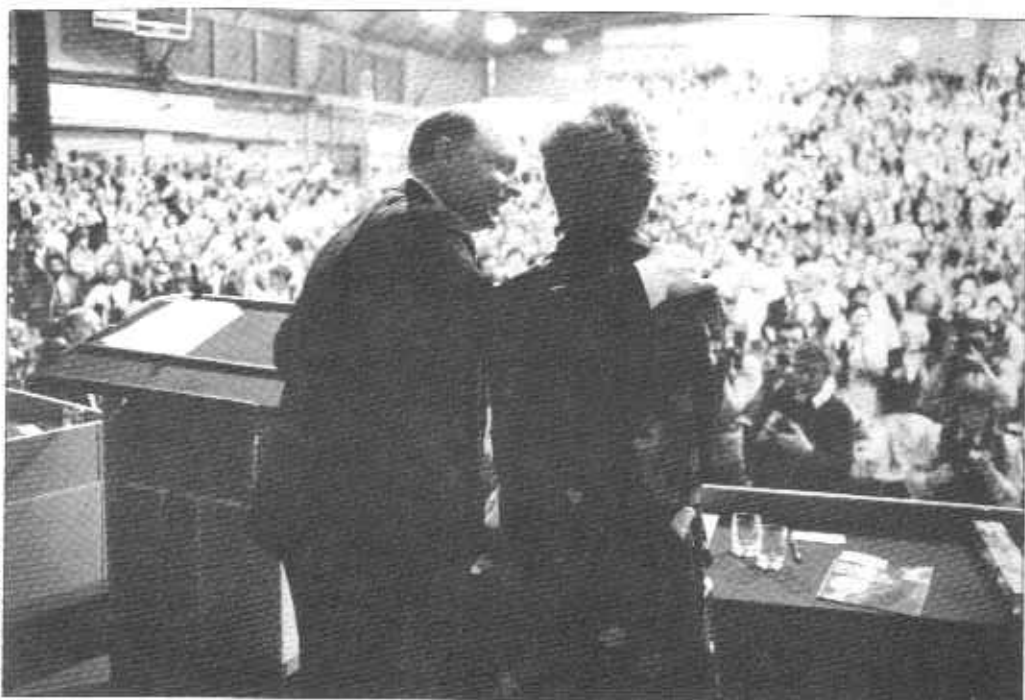
While Saddam Hussein's machiavellian ruse needs some convincing, Kuwait's actions have directly and clearly contributed to the erratic course of US Gulf policies. While formally a natural ally of Saudi Arabia in the Gulf cooperation council — a proxy tool used by US strategists to regulate the region — Kuwait found itself sucked into the conflict between Iran and Iraq. But rather than beg the US for help, as well-behaved clients and allies do on such occasions, Kuwait's rulers set out to involve both superpowers, throwing the White House into a quandary. As soon as Kuwaiti foreign minister Ahmed Al Sabah offered to the Soviet Union the lease of three Kuwaiti tankers, Weinberger rushed to congress to demand permission to reflag Kuwaiti ships despite doubts and lukewarm support from America's allies.

Kuwait's evenhandedness in respect of both superpowers and even to China, who are belatedly considering registering some Kuwaiti tankers under their flag, is a rebuff to US imperialism whose long term policies have always supposed their being the sole beneficiaries of any arrangement in the region.

The recent events in the Gulf highlight the decline of US world hegemony. Historically, this hegemony has been based on economic and political superiority coupled with military strength. The mushrooming of several financial centres and the diversification of markets have brought a relative weakening of US positions. Against their decline in the share of world economy, US strategists have attempted to bolster its military interventions. This is not without problems, as the disastrous defeat in Lebanon, and the messy results of intervention in Central America and in Africa have shown.

A negative balance sheet coupled with today's new realities, such as the emergence of numerous non- or even anti-communist forces hostile to the US, is forcing a major rethink of other long-term tactical considerations. In instances where brutal force proves counterproductive, US strategists are now prepared to substitute selective negotiations. A conciliatory line has emerged among the most pragmatic sections of the US administration who are hoping to build new alliances and test new clients by putting on offer the only resource that has been strengthened by Reagan's economic policies — military technology.

This line remains shaky and uncertain, however, and in time of crisis, the hard line militarists resurface with a vengeance. Their doctrine is simple and easy to grasp. There are allies and enemies — allies kept in line through diplomatic and economic pressures and enemies who must be destabilised whatever the cost, either by secret operations or, in the last resort, by open military intervention. In the case of the Iran crisis today, it is the voice of the hard-liners that rings out louder and clearer.



Carlos Cour / Agence

Neil and Glenys Kinnock in the honeymoon period before June 11

Labour's forward march restarted



The results of the election are a major blow for the working class. **PHIL HEARSE** argues that close analysis of the shifts in voting and of Labour's one million increase reveal what future campaigning priorities should be. Labour must fight for the most oppressed both inside and outside parliament if the Tories are to be finally defeated.

FOR THOUSANDS of socialists attending Labour Party socials on election night, a profound disappointment and sense of gloom descended as soon as the results started to come in. Within half an hour of the first result, it was clear that Thatcher was headed for another runaway victory. Not that many had been expecting a Labour victory — none of the polls gave reason for that. But there did seem a possibility of a hung parliament, or at the very least a small overall Tory majority which would have led to an

embattled and weakened new Tory government. In order to pick up the pieces after the severe electoral defeat and resume the fight, the left needs to analyse what happened and why.

The result is, of course, a major blow to the working class and the oppressed. The Tory victory, albeit with a slightly reduced majority, was the result which the ruling class had pulled out all the stops to achieve. Immediately there is a sense of demoralisation in the labour movement which will make it temporarily more

difficult to generate working class resistance to the attacks of the Tory government and the employers. However, the arithmetic of seats lost and gained — Labour won an additional 20 seats — obscures the real meaning of the election results in terms of the shifts that have taken place.

The result represents, above all else, a class polarisation, which benefited both the Labour Party and the Tories at the expense of the SDP/Liberal Alliance. This class polarisation,

however, has occurred in an uneven way. While Labour piled up votes among the most oppressed sectors of the population and the most deprived regions, Thatcher was able to consolidate the Tory vote in an important sector of the working class, especially in the south east, south west and east Anglia.

The regional significance of the result is very marked. While Labour lost three seats in London (despite an ove-

As compared with 1983, Labour won an extra 1½ million votes, with its percentage of the vote going up from just over 27 per cent to around 31 per cent. The important question to answer however is why Thatcher and the Tories were able to limit Labour's advance, and to maintain their own vote in sectors of the working class. The answer to this is twofold. First, Thatcher was able to convince a section of employed workers in areas of

tax incentives to home owners secured Thatcher's support in this sector.

Overall, the Tories won the argument on the economy. They managed successfully to portray Labour as a party that would increase taxes and let inflation rip. Labour's own election campaign seemed to be arguing the case for increased taxes on employed workers to help the unemployed and boost the health service and other social services. Thus while Kinnock won the high moral ground of 'compassion' and generosity to 'less fortunate neighbours', which of course won support among many of the most oppressed, many employed workers were not convinced that this could be put into practice without a reduction in their own living standards. Second, as we discuss below, Labour's right-wing campaign failed to maximise its potential vote.

At first sight it seems paradoxical, and in some sections of the left even very unpopular, to say that in a time of acute capitalist crisis millions of workers voted Tory because they believed that their living standards would continue to increase under Thatcher. But the regional pattern of vote makes such a conclusion inescapable. If the working class votes for the Tories were explicable merely by ideological factors, and not by material ones as well, then the rebuff for the Tories in the areas of high unemployment, and its relative success in the more prosperous south would be inexplicable.

It is worth remembering in this context that something like 40 per cent of the working class have voted Tory throughout the twentieth century. Thatcher in this election was able to limit Labour's inroads by deepening divisions inside the working class — a process which the Labour campaign was unable to overcome.

Labour's election campaign was a culmination of the last four years in which Labour and TUC leaders have consistently opposed any working class challenge to Thatcherism. According to 'new realism', strikes and mass action are seen as a threat rather than the mainstay of resistance.

Margaret Thatcher had set out through conscious action between elections to consolidate a material base of support among the middle class and some employed workers; Labour's leaders had no comparable strategy to mobilise and organise the most oppressed.

THE ELECTION'S biggest losers are the Alliance, whose seats were reduced from 26 to 22, with the SDP reduced to a rump of only five seats in parliament. Only one of the original 'gang of four' — David Owen — is still in parliament. The main architect of the



Going on and on and on...

ral increase of one per cent in its vote there), the Tories were wiped out in major cities like Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool and Leicester, and suffered a complete rebuff in Wales and especially, Scotland. Seventy four per cent of Labour MPs now come from constituencies north of the Midlands, as opposed to only 21 per cent of Tory MPs. This regional divide will itself have important political consequences, which we can discuss below.

relative affluence that security and future prosperity lay with the Conservatives. During the last two years, despite the rise in unemployment and the overall bleak economic outlook, some sections of the working class have maintained and even increased their living standards. Income tax reductions (from 33 per cent to 27 per cent since Thatcher came to power) have been popular among important groups of workers. The Tory policy of giving

SDP split from Labour, Roy Jenkins, was soundly defeated in Glasgow Hillhead and will not stand for parliament again. For an alliance which sought to hold the balance of power in a hung parliament, which had equal television time with the other two main parties, and which proclaimed that 'the time has come', it is a massive defeat that puts in question their whole political future. Why did this defeat occur?

The Alliance were victims of the class polarisation. Before the election the ruling class cranked up an enormous reactionary offensive, and put its resources into securing a Conservative victory at any cost. Despite the Labour leadership's shift of policy to the right and its attempt to present itself as a 'respectable' alternative government, nonetheless no section of ruling class opinion favoured a Labour government. The reasons for this are obvious. Vital sections of the capitalist class, especially those involved in finance and banking, have been doing well under the Tories. Industrial productivity has increased from its low point in 1981-2, as the rate of exploitation of the working class has risen.

Labour is still tainted, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, by the recent experience of Bennism, by its anti-nuclear policy and by the overall impression of the strength of the Labour left. No serious bourgeois commentator will back a party which puts in question Britain's nuclear deterrent, a central part of British capitalism's foreign policy and world status. Most of all, in a period of economic and social instability, the ruling class wants a stable and reliable government — and that means Thatcher's Tories.

Such was the scale of the reactionary offensive, that a substantial part of the Alliance vote shifted to the Tories. On the other hand, Labour was able to present itself, successfully, as the only credible alternative government. In hundreds of seats there was a swing away from the Alliance either to the Tories or Labour, depending on the region and the previous character of the Alliance vote. This election disproved, however, the thesis that the Alliance vote was basically an 'anti-Tory' or 'left of centre' vote — the thesis employed by pro-coalitionist advocates of 'tactical voting'. On the contrary, in many places where the Alliance vote declined, it went disproportionately to the Tories. There are real grounds for doubting, therefore, that Labour might have won the election had there been a straight run-off with the Tories.

There will now be a wide debate about the future of the Alliance. In the Alliance itself, the debate is centering on whether the SDP and the Liberals should fuse into one party. For the ruling class, the debate is more funda-

mental. The huge media 'hype' and tactical support to the Alliance when it was formed in 1982 reflected its function for the ruling class: the Alliance was at the same time a mechanism for keeping Labour out of power and pressuring the Labour leadership to move to the right. The similarity of many Alliance policies to those in Labour's election manifesto has received much comment. Has the Alliance, or rather the SDP component,

election comfortably. This pressure is, of course, exactly the project of the ruling class in relation to the Labour Party. If this project were to be successful, then the possibility for the ruling class of ditching the Alliance and returning to a stable two-party system would be posed. That prospect remains a long way off. However, the political polarisation of the election dealt such a heavy blow to the Alliance that a destabilisation of its strategy to



Dermot Donnan/Reflex

Time for a solo — but from whom?

now fulfilled its purpose? After all, a fused party of the SDP/Liberals would be organisationally dominated by the Liberals, who are stronger both in parliament and on the ground. Would a fusion result simply in a return to the position of the Liberals as a small third party?

David Owen observed before the election that if Labour had ditched unilateralism and thoroughly purged the 'hard left', it would have won the

become a major third party seems inevitable.

THE DISPARITY between the overall increase in the Labour vote of a million-plus, and the increase of only 20 parliamentary seats, reflects the fact that Labour piled up votes in the most deprived areas where it was already strong. Increased majorities in

Scotland after Doomsday

THE TORIES' legitimacy in governing Scotland collapsed dramatically, confirming the Doomsday predictions as Labour surged ahead. The Scottish electorate declared open season on the Tories, who fell like tenpins, mostly to Labour but three to the SNP and two to the Alliance. The Tories now have only a rump of 10 seats in Scotland to Labour's 50 out of 72.

Had the SNP vote increased more substantially, strong pressure would have developed on Labour. In the event, a certain breathing space exists for Labour to press for limited devolutionary concessions from the Tories. But if the Nationalists have been held at bay (for the time being) the real problem for Labour is its own success; how will it use its increased support to protect the Scottish working class from Thatcherism?

Meeting three days after the election, Labour's Scottish executive responded by moving some way towards a real labour movement-led campaign. Centrally placed were demands for a Scottish Assembly, for dropping the community charge (poll tax), for an end to privatisation measures in Scotland and for increased funding for health and education.

An Assembly bill to be presented to parliament after the summer recess will provide the focal point. A mass rally is also planned for Glasgow Green, Saturday 29 August, involving trades unions, local authorities and other opposition parties. Bill Speirs, chairperson of the executive, pledged: 'If a satisfactory response is not going to be made by the government, the Labour Party will initiate a programme of action aimed at making the government come to terms with their impossible position.' Beyond the assertion that 'there are wide forms of political activity to demonstrate the people of Scotland's wish for constitutional reform' and a ruling-out of 'civil disobedience', no further measures were proposed.

Campbell Christie, STUC General Secretary, went a little further in his call for 'a radical campaign of resistance to Conservative policies imposed by London'. It's also likely that several of the new influx of Scottish Labour MPs will be more prepared than their predecessors to take a harder pro-devolution line.

When similar positions were put after the 1983 election, the right-wing leadership of the Scottish Labour Party sat it out and made no effective opposition to Thatcher as government policies continued to devastate employment and the social services. Those local authorities that took a stand in Stirling and Edinburgh collapsed as the LCC moved right after the miners' strike.

Today, however, Labour has won this election in Scotland on their promise to establish an Assembly immediately. Inactivity by the leadership on that promise would provoke a revolt in the ranks, or a complete loss of credibility for Labour leading to a resurgence of support for the SNP.

The spectre of separatism has haunted the Scottish Labour Party ever since the sudden growth of the SNP vote in the 1974. The right wing responded by levering the Party into line behind strictly limited objectives: a Scottish parliament should have its powers curtailed; legislative control should be confined to areas such as education, health, local authority finance and fishing. These positions were reaffirmed by the executive's post-election meeting.

It is absolutely precluded, however, that the Tories will concede even these measures of devolution unless the Party organises a mass campaign on Scotland's right to its own Parliament; and such a campaign for self-determination cannot be limited to secondary issues. Home rule is meaningless without responsibility for policy on the economy, defence or foreign relations. Alternative education, health and local finance policies for instance, are only possible as part of an alternative economic policy.

When the *Glasgow Herald* in its editorial of 5 June says 'an Assembly will not transmute base metal into gold', this is obviously so. But it certainly can transform the political situation in Scotland and become the focus of opposition to Thatcher. That's why the Tories will only concede an Assembly under the pressure of a massive Labour-led campaign. Limiting in advance the powers of that Assembly, therefore, will scupper Labour's chances of building effective opposition to the Tories.

Does establishing an Assembly mean taking the first step towards the 'slippery slope' of separation? Yes and no: the north/south divide doesn't run parallel with the Scottish/English border. Not only are there no Tory MPs in Glasgow — they've also been kicked out of Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. A Scottish Assembly that organised resistance to the Tories would be likely to gain increasing support from the English labour movement.

The alternative for Labour in Scotland is to sit it out despite having five out of every seven MPs. The left in the Party must make sure that, if the leadership goes for this option, they commit political suicide themselves and don't take the rest of us with them. This means quite simply that the left must become the most consistent advocates of a Scottish parliament that reflects the aspirations of the electorate. The powers of this body and its relationship to Westminster are questions that must be settled democratically in the course of political struggle, not decided in advance by the Executive of the Scottish Labour Party.

The thousand and one problems raised by the constitution of a Scottish Assembly must not be used as an excuse for fudging and manoeuvre to oppose campaigning for it, or to sidetrack the issue into a Royal Commission. Labour fought this campaign as 'the only party capable of providing a Scottish assembly' (Neil Kinnock, Donald Dewar, et al) and they should not be aided in their attempts to wriggle out of this commitment by confused elements on the political left, who are 'not interested in Scottish devolution, but British revolution'. Kinnock and Dewar must be kept to their word. They have the legitimacy to demand an Assembly and organise a campaign to force the Tories to concede it.

Those who reject this position, those who raise spurious arguments about the abstract unity of the British labour movement, or the need to build an alternative to Labour, or the sovereignty of Westminster being sacrosanct, are in effect the same people who are prepared to let Thatcher rule the roost unchallenged for the next five years when the basis for a real challenge has emerged in Scotland.

Jim Niblock & Tony Southall

dozens of seats in the north did not yield extra seats, but the crushing of the Tories in northern industrial towns was remarkable: there are now no Tory MPs at all in Manchester, Newcastle, Glasgow, Liverpool and Leicester. The results in Liverpool, where the anti-*Militant* crusade had been enormous, were striking. *Militant* MP Terry Fields substantially increased his majority in Broad Green. Pat Wall won Bradford North from the Tories, despite his association with *Militant*. Eric Heffer, defeated in last year's elections to the Labour NEC, had a nine per cent swing in his favour in Liverpool Walton, taking nearly 65 per cent of the vote.

In the mining areas the Labour majorities were substantially increased, and Alan Meale even won in Mansfield, where the Nottinghamshire-based UDM advised its members to vote against Labour. In



Doris Doran/Relief

Bryan Gould, the rising star of Labour's front bench

the Midlands the results were more mixed, and the negative effects of a right-wing Labour council were certainly felt in Birmingham. But in Coventry there was a substantial swing to Labour, the biggest being in the constituency of *Militant* MP Dave Nellist.

All these results of course represent a working-class swing to Labour in areas of high unemployment and social deprivation. But perhaps the most remarkable results came in Scotland. Of 72 Scottish MPs, 50 are now Labour, and only 10 are Tories. In this election the SNP were not the beneficiaries of the anti-Tory tide, losing three seats to Labour and gaining two from the Tories. The result of this of course will be a widespread feeling in Scotland that the governmental question in Scotland is likely to come to the fore, and the campaign for a Scottish assembly, with powers to raise

its own taxes and implement its own laws, will become a focus of opposition to the Tories.

In these areas at least the Labour campaign was able to mobilise an enormous rejection of Thatcherism. However, in some of the London inner-city constituencies, like Perkhams and both Hackney constituencies, the voter turnout was only in the region of 55 per cent, as opposed to a very uniform national rate of around

'the arithmetic of seats lost and gained obscures the results' real meaning'

75 per cent. This was repeated in inner-Birmingham constituencies. It shows that some of the poorest sections of the working class, especially black youth, were disaffected with the whole electoral process and saw the election as irrelevant to their interests. That itself is an indictment of weaknesses in Labour's campaign.

YOUTH BETWEEN the ages of 18 and 25 were the only age group in which Labour beat the Tories. Overall Labour won about 39 per cent of the youth vote as opposed to 36 per cent for the Tories. But here there is a sexual disparity. While more young men voted Tory than Labour (42 as opposed to 37 per cent), among young women under 25 the Labour lead was remarkable — 42 per cent for Labour as against only 31 per cent for the Tories. On a sex/age basis, young women were the only social category in which Labour beat the Tories. This Labour lead among the youth of course reflects both youth unemployment and the fact that the Tory proportion of the vote increases the higher you go up in the age range (with a slight decrease among pensioners). But it seems unlikely that the sexual disparity simply reflects the addition of the categories 'youth' and 'women'. It seems to reflect a specific radicalisa-

'Labour's right wing campaign failed to maximise its potential vote'

tion of young women around a wide range of social issues.

Labour's overall gain among women was 4.5 per cent, as opposed to only two per cent among men. But despite this gain, the Labour campaign fell down badly in attracting the maximum number of women's votes. In fact, the Alliance made the theme of women's rights more prominent in

their campaign than did Labour. The Alliance had more women candidates than the Labour Party (although of course a lot fewer elected); made specific proposals to boost women's rights — for example they proposed that all public bodies should have 50 per cent women on them within ten years; and held one of their morning election press conferences around the theme of a better deal for women. The spectacle of David Owen proclaiming a better deal for women may have been less than credible to some of us, but it did expose the lack of campaigning on this issue by the Labour leadership — a failure which undoubtedly cost many votes.

The election campaign waged by the Labour leadership was undoubtedly the slickest and most 'professional' campaign waged by the Labour leadership for decades. Concentrating on TV presentation and the presidential-style build up of Kinnock as a



Piers Coombes/Relief

Bernie Grant, newcomer on Labour's backbenches

credible leader, it owed its inspiration not to socialism but to American-style packaged politics. Radical it wasn't. The 'high' point of the celebrated party political broadcast which concentrated on Kinnock and his family, was the conference speech excommunicating *Militant* and the hard left.

It is not true to say, as did Ken Livingstone, that the Labour manifesto was the 'most radical since 1945'. It was less radical than that in 1983, or indeed in 1974 when Labour promised a 'fundamental shift in power and wealth to working people and their families'. It was a campaign that not only had no anti-capitalist content but also failed to convince many workers that Labour would increase living standards. In addition the campaign was undemocratic in the way it was controlled from the top, as Scargill's revelations about being kept off Labour platforms demonstrates.

KL: General election results have always followed a definite geographical pattern — highlighting the disparity between prosperous and non-prosperous areas. But this election seems to have deepened this process?

DM: The north/south, Labour/Tory political divide is not new. It has been plotted since the early 1950s. What has happened this time is the deepening of a divide that was already getting worse. It's not simply north-south though. There is an almost equally sharp divide between urban and industrial areas on the one hand and more rural areas on the other. Labour is clearly strengthening its hold in the urban and industrial areas, with some obvious exceptions. And the Tories are consolidating their domination of less urban areas and more rural parts of the country. This is true within both north and south so you get divides within the regions as well.

Why do you think this is?

It seems that it's to do with the general prosperity of an area and whether people feel, almost, that their area is going up or down economically. That's not just how they feel about employment either. It involves factors like housing. If you're a council house tenant in the south, the temptation to buy your house, and what you would make out of buying it, is a completely different ball game from if you are a tenant somewhere in the north. So a lot of the politics that the Thatcher government has implemented have had quite different effects in different parts of the country and they are going to tempt people over to her politics in different ways.

What happened this time is not simply a class divide. There were the geographical polarisations. But also the best predictor of how people voted seems to have been whether they thought they were doing, or going to do, reasonably well out of Thatcher. It's a kind of very immediate self-interest and that's where your council house tenant, for instance, comes in. The same stratum of the population will feel differently in different parts of the country precisely because of the overall economic feeling in their areas.

So you could say that some sections of the employed working class have done well under Thatcher?

Yes, particularly if they are home-owners, though Labour did pick up votes amongst both working class and middle class home-owners over 1983, so some of that effect appears to have been muted. All in all it's quite a complicated picture. You've got class and social structure criss-crossed by what's going on in a given area economically (not just in terms of employment). Then this is criss-crossed by the differences between local political culture. What worries me is that, because of the way local areas are organised, quite large stretches of the south are losing the whole notion of a political culture constructed around socialist ideas.

Over the past eight years employment and manufacturing in the West Midlands have declined faster than in many other regions. Yet there was still strong support for the Tories in the election in Birmingham and the West Midlands. How do you account for this?

It's almost as though the Midlands have become the battle ground between north and south. In 1979 one of the crucial sections of the vote that Thatcher seems to have picked up was the trades unionists — male, skilled and semi-skilled — in the West Midlands. That was a real triumph for her. At the time it was put down to things like the winter of discontent (the fact that these trades unionists were consumers of those disrupted



Winning the workers who voted Tory

Britain's changing political geography and class structure, clearly reflected in the general election results, carry massive implications for Labour's future prospects.

DOREEN MASSEY, professor of geography at the Open University and a former director of the Greater London Enterprise Board, discusses the issues with **KATHY LOWE**.

services and not the low-paid workers themselves) and to the promise of tax cuts.

De-industrialisation had not hit the West Midlands in quite as severe a form then as it has subsequently. So Thatcher gained enormous ground in '79. In this general election she has not noticeably strengthened that position but neither has Labour won it back. That's what is awful. Labour's vote amongst skilled workers as a whole nationally went up by its national average percentage as far as one can tell. So Labour's position among them has been consolidated this time round. Yet it is still astonishingly low and still low compared with, say, 1974.

Why hasn't Labour been able to re-conquer this lost ground?

Lots of reasons. Some segments of the population, as we touched on earlier, think they are doing reasonably well out of Thatcherism. Fundamentally, what Labour did in this election was to strengthen its traditional bases. Interestingly, its growth of support in the heartlands has been mainly among women who are now voting Labour as much as men. Now that's an achievement. However, overall, Labour is left with a situation in which it is a party of the have-nots. That's where you come up against the skilled worker problem such as in the West Midlands.

Labour's election campaign came across as seeming to say that Labour would take money from employed workers to help unemployed. Wasn't this a problem in winning the support of better paid workers?

It's true that in the end Labour's campaign was mainly about redistribution. The argument focussed on collecting taxes to pay for services particularly for those who are losing out under Thatcherism. That ought to

be done. But until Labour has a project for organising the economy in a different way, a way that does not produce the polarisations in society, we will never get workers who are doing relatively well under Thatcherism even listening to us. Those people, and those who have lost a feel for the old socialist traditions, need a much more positive vision for the future than Labour has ever presented — something a lot more challenging to capitalism.

In London, the 1.6 per cent increase in Labour's vote was below the national average increase. Do you think this is related to the changing class structure of London or was it more to do with the campaign against the so-called 'loony left'?

I think it's both. London didn't do as badly for Labour as the rest of the south. The percentage increase in Labour's vote was higher than its increase in the south west, south east and east anglia. On the other hand, because large chunks of London are inner city areas, and because of factors like the inheritance of the GLC, it should have done better. To explain this, I think we have to stand out very strongly against a generalised notion of a 'London effect'. We also have to look a lot deeper than simply saying that the London Labour vote suffered because of the campaign against the 'loony left'. In Battersea, Putney, Fulham, Bow and Poplar and in Newham South it didn't. As far as one can tell, in these constituencies it was changes in the social structure which were the main cause.

These changes relate to Thatcher's economic strategy, a strategy that says forget manufacturing industry, let it go as the international division of labour will take it, focus on the City and on producer services for industry, broadly defined. This has had an enormous impact on the social structure of London, leaving many people marginalised and the old labour movement decimated while a large swathe of the population now enjoys a lot of money.

Another important element in the election in London was the GLC. The GLC did give a kind of coherence to London and to Labour politics in the middle of Thatcherland. I think that if the leaders of the Labour Party were really radical they would have defended the GLC a lot better than they did. And they would have run an election campaign on a London-wide basis for the re-institution of metropolitan government — not necessarily for Ken Livingstone — but for a set of policies and politics that have proved popular. It is clear, however, that the Labour leadership doesn't like those policies and it backed off from that.

What sort of future do you see for London with its areas of great wealth and the City on the one hand and the largest numbers of unemployed of any industrialised city of Western Europe on the other? Will there be generalised prosperity for London or do you think it is destined to become more like New York with heavily guarded enclaves of spectacular wealth and huge areas of deprivation?

I found it quite astonishing that Thatcher started her election campaign in the Isle of Dogs in the London Docklands Development Corporation. She clearly believes that is a success. She sees the inner city problem as a problem of property development. Her kind of strategy is going to lead to a highly divided population; we can see it happening already.

The question is, will her strategy in London be at all translatable to other cities? A few urban development corporations, an attack on public sector housing and education. What is that going to do to the cities of the north? It won't produce the Isle of Dogs effect because private capital is just not as interested in these cities.

But it will break up politically the bases Labour has, without producing gains for the middle class. The two big items on the agenda, it seems to me, are how the hell do we win anything in the south and how does Labour defend the bases it still holds, particularly the inner cities?

There has been a lot of discussion about the sunbelt strip — the western corridor stretching from east anglia to the west country where new electronic and computer industries are centred. Many of the workers in these new firms are not well paid yet there was a high vote for the Tories in these areas. Isn't this a paradox? Is it related to the low level of unionisation in these industries?

There is low unionisation and also high unemployment in many towns of the area. I think we have to make a distinction between the smaller towns and the more rural parts of the sunbelt strip — and the towns. What I find most difficult is that we didn't win towns such as Slough, Basildon or Harlow — manufacturing towns with, in many cases, local Labour councils. Although Labour's vote went up in those places it didn't go up enough to win. Also, a swing from SDP to Tory there was often evident. We just have to sit down and think why. It relates to what we were saying before about the need for new economic strategies for the future.

In 1955 the Tories won 50 per cent of the vote in Scotland. What is the significance of the dramatic long-term decline in support for the Tories there?

Before we get too excited, the percentage that the Tories hold in Scotland, 24 per cent, is higher than Labour's percentage in the south east, east anglia and the south west. So to talk about a wipe-out of the Conservatives in Scotland is a bit over the top, particularly as there are four parties in Scotland. Nonetheless in terms of representatives in parliament they do look extremely weak. Also Scotland is a different nation, with its own political and cultural history and its own institutions welded together in a different way. It therefore presents a different kind of political problem from, say, the absence of Labour in the south east for any future Labour government.

The highest percentage of the vote regionally for Labour is now in the north. It isn't in Scotland. I hope that the Scottish MPs, as well as raising quite legitimate questions about the Tories' moral authority in Scotland, will lead a battle that Labour people in the north and in Wales can also be part of.

Do you think it will ever be possible for Labour to win the south or ever to assemble a majority given the changing class structure you've talked about and the decreasing number of manual workers?

Yes I do, but I don't think it means moving right. In many ways it means being more radical, certainly as far as economic policy is concerned. Economic policy this time didn't hold together. For example people aren't interested in another National Investment Bank that is going to fill in the gaps that the private sector cannot fill. We have to show that there are ways in which an economy can be revitalised which don't involve the polarisations of Thatcherism. If Labour sticks to the strategies of this time I don't think there is a way of winning. But that's not to say that in principle the socialist project couldn't win the support of a majority of the population. Of course it could.

● Doreen Massey is the author of *Spatial Divisions of Labour* (MacMillan), *The anatomy of job loss with Richard Meegan* (Methuen), and a contributor with Hilary Wainwright to *Digging deeper: issues in the miners strike* (Verso).

continued from page 19

Who's new in the house?

THE NEW parliamentary Labour party is the most left wing ever. It can overthrow Kinnock and replace him with a left wing leader. I know, I read it in the *Daily Mail*. The trouble is Ken Livingstone and sections of the 'left' seem to believe it too.

So what is the reality? Will we see a new left wing in parliament dedicated to the overturn of society as we know it? Unlikely. A quick glance at the people on the list of '101 damnations' shows that half the people on it want to see the other half expelled. People who have supported the witch hunt and imposition of a candidate at Knowsley North like Michael Meacher and Tam Dalyell are on the same list as those they would like to see thrown out of the Labour Party, never mind parliament, like Dave Nellist and Pat Wall.

Others on the list include leading LCC supporters like Ken Livingstone, who sees his role as reuniting the *Tribune* and Campaign groups.

Others in the 101 who were successful include dedicated Kinnockites like Keith Vaz, new MP for Leicester East, and Joan Ruddock, now representing Deptford.

The class struggle wing of the Campaign group of MPs will undoubtedly be strengthened by a few new additions — Bob Cryer, returning unscathed from the winelakes of Strasbourg, and Pat Wall, at his second attempt, also representing Bradford; and at least two of the new black MPs, Diane Abbot and Bernie Grant, are likely to both join and at least shake up the group.

But it is the soft left to centre *Tribune* group that will benefit most from the new intake of Scottish LCC-influenced Stalinists led by George Galloway, the undoubted shift to the right of 10-20 of the previous Campaign group, and several of the new London MPs. The *Tribune* group will, of course, act as loyal defenders of Kinnock and the new-style, image-conscious party.

While there is no doubt that the 'loony left' came up on the doorstep throughout the country, the biggest danger now could be that sections of the left themselves believe in it.

The 'moderate' and right-wing character of the campaign disarmed Labour in the face of Tory attacks, and was a material factor in Labour's defeat. Defence is a good example. Kinnock adopted the strategy of saying as little as possible about it, while the Tories hammered the theme that Labour would 'leave Britain defenceless'. But where was the Labour attack on wasting £15 billion on the Trident missile system? Where was the attempt to mobilise popular outrage against spending billions each year on defending the sheep in the Malvinas? Where was the attempt to show that resources wasted on useless military hardware could be used on socially useful projects? Of course, there could be no such attempt, because Labour had promised to spend all money saved on nuclear weapons on conventional defence!

But despite the banishment of radicalism, or any reference to socialism or real anti-capitalist measures, there is no doubt that this campaign strengthened the authority of Kinnock as leader of the Labour Party, to such an extent that he is less vulnerable as leader of the Labour Party than Thatcher is as leader of the Tories — at least for the time being. No matter what criticisms the left makes of the campaign, the conclusion that many in the Labour movement will draw is that, within limits, it worked and was credible. After all the Labour vote went up; more seats were won. It is easy for the Labour leadership to present the outcome as the 'first step' in the defeat of the Tories, which will be rounded off with a resounding victory at the next election. This is going to lead to a very difficult situation for the left in the Labour Party.

'despite the attacks on them, Labour's left MPs were not defeated'

The balance sheet that the right wing will draw is that the campaign was on the right lines, but that Labour was still too much hampered by the 'loony left' image, especially in London, and by a non-nuclear defence policy which cost several percentage points of the votes. Roy Hattersley has within days of the election already drawn this conclusion. It seems inevitable therefore that the outcome of the election — a Tory victory plus strengthened authority for Kinnock's leadership — will lead to new attempts to shift the policy of the party further to the right and to further marginalise, and even drive out, the 'hard left'.

A first stage of this will be a campaign to reverse the constitutional gains made inside the party in the



early 1980s. Selection of parliamentary candidates by a postal ballot of all Labour Party members, rather than by local AGs, seems likely to be the first move. In the longer term, some alteration in the non-nuclear defence policy is likely, but this will take time. The witch hunt against the left will not, however, be slow in coming. The Kinnock leadership will use every bit of its authority to attack the left.

One paradox of the inner-party situation is however a new influx of left-wing Labour MPs. A small group of these, like Pat Wall, Alan Meale and Mildred Gordon, can truly be said to be of the hard left, while another much bigger group is soft left of one kind or another. The election of Ken Livingstone, and to a much lesser extent David Blunkett, creates a new situation inside the parliamentary Labour Party.

Livingstone will undoubtedly present himself as the new leader of the Labour left, as well as pushing forward his project for breaking down the divisions between the 'soft' and the 'hard' left. Of course greater unity on the Labour left is desirable in itself, but the question is whether it can be achieved on the basis of class struggle politics, without the hard left tamely tucking in behind a new accommodation to Kinnock.

THE LABOUR right will no doubt try to exploit the fact that the Labour vote only went up by one per cent in London, and that three London seats were lost. This result came after a ceaseless



Peter Coombes/Rediffusion

liance challenge. Where Labour lost seats, there were particular local factors. In Waltham Forest the disastrously high rate rise imposed by a Labour council certainly lost the seat. In Battersea and Fulham, the lost seats could well be due to social changes in these constituencies — a result of gentrification and an influx of 'yuppies'.

Despite the attacks on them, left-wing MPs in London were not defeated. In areas where there are left Labour councils, the Labour vote held up — with the exceptions of Waltham Forest and Ealing, Hilary Benn being hammered in Ealing North because of another giant rates increase. In Camden, there were swings to Labour in both the local constituencies, as there were in several other left-wing boroughs.

The point remains, however, that London, although having areas of great prosperity, also has the highest number of unemployed people of any city in Europe. Labour should have done better and the fact that it didn't must be partly due to Labour's failure to counteract the savage media campaign against the 'loony left'.

The main responsibility for this lies with the Labour leadership, which not only failed to defend left wing councils against a barrage of press lies and distortions, but on numerous occasions joined in with their own reactionary attacks.

The carefully leaked 'Hewitt letter' was just the most obvious proof that

media campaign of several years' duration against the 'loony' London left-wing Labour councils, and their anti-racist and anti-sexist policies. This campaign reached a crescendo in the weeks leading up to the election, and without doubt influenced the vote.

But the pattern of the vote in London is complex and contradictory. In some Labour constituencies the majorities increased — for example in Islington North, Jeremy Corbyn's nearly doubled. In Islington South Labour held on against a strong Al-

Unionist vote drops

THE ONLY REAL losers in the north of Ireland seats were the leadership of the Official Unionists and the Democratic Unionists. They saw their total vote drop considerably and suffered the embarrassment of losing Enoch Powell's seat in South Down to the constitutional nationalist Eddie McGrady of the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

The SDLP now have three seats at Westminster whereas at the 1983 election they had only one. They failed, however, in the main aim of their election campaign — to unseat Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein in the West Belfast constituency. Adams percentage vote actually increased from that of 1983 and there was also a swing from the SDLP to Sinn Fein in the North Belfast constituency. Overall, the Sinn Fein vote fell 2.4 per cent, a decline which can be attributed to nationalist voters in South Down plumping for the SDLP candidate in an attempt to get Powell out, and divisions within Sinn Fein over the choice of candidate in another rural constituency. The general pic-

ture on the nationalist side is of Sinn Fein slightly increasing its support in Belfast working class areas but dropping votes elsewhere.

The drop in the unionist vote reflects a double dissatisfaction amongst unionist voters. The first was considerable anger within the ranks of Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party over the insistence of their leader that the party continue its alliance with their old rivals in the Official Unionists. DUP members and voters have been taught for twenty years to distrust the more upper class Official Unionists both because of their supposedly shaky unionism and their conservative economic and social policies. Now the person who has been teaching that lesson — the more 'populist' Ian Paisley — has been the strongest advocate within the DUP of a united front with the Official Unionists over opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. But that this opposition has itself run into something of an impasse provided the second reason for a growing lack of confidence in the unionist twin leader-

ship amongst their normally rabid supporters.

But just as the unionist leaderships faced something of a crisis they have been thrown an amazing life-line in the bizarre figure of John Stanley, the new second-in-command in the north of Ireland in the Thatcher government. Stanley is a former minister for the armed forces and as such favours, according to the *Irish Times*, 'more stringent military action against the IRA.' But the really extraordinary facet of Stanley is that he is an evangelical protestant and as such is of the same religious ilk as Ian Paisley. The final insult to northern Irish Catholics is that Stanley replaces Nicholas Scott who is a Catholic and has been the chief target of Ian Paisley's ire for the last five years. Many unionists will be thinking that the loss of the rather unreliable Enoch Powell is more than offset by the arrival of Stanley. A new attempt to set up a devolved parliament in the north of Ireland is now likely to follow.

Geoff Bell

Labour scorns the women's vote

WE NOW HAVE the highest-ever number of women MPs — a total of 41 compared to 23 elected in 1983 (which later rose to 28 in by-elections). Out of these 21 are Conservative, 17 Labour, two Alliance and one Scottish National Party. But how much does this really mean for women? The SNP's radical rabbi, Julia Neuberger claimed that this was the 'first election in which women's issues are being taken seriously and have actually got into the manifesto.' Labour's Diana Jouda was just as excited, 'it's extraordinary. Something has changed; it may be as simple as that expediency requires that women be taken seriously, but there is no question that it's happened. Yes, we've got women on the agenda at last.'

But though getting more women into parliament undoubtedly reflects something, women can be forgiven for not popping the champagne corks just yet. The ruling party is set on taking things in the opposite direction. Unlike the other parties, the Tories did not target women as a group at all in the election because, as vice-chairman, Emma Nicholson claimed 'we're treating women as equals!'

The record of the Tories in government shows what a lie this is. This government abolished the universal maternity grant, imposed a tax on workplace nurseries, and child care allowances. It has been taken to the European court 11 times on issues like equal pay, retirement and married women's access to the carer's allowance. While its European counterparts in West Germany, for example, pay some lip service to feminist rhetoric the Tory Party doggedly reject any notion of equal opportunities at work and Nicholson admits that such ideas 'have not really formed a part of our thinking'.

Women may have succeeded in getting women's issues onto the agendas of the opposition parties but it would be overstating the case to say that these issues were put clearly before the voters. The proposal for a ministry for women for example undoubtedly reached some and one poll showed over 60 per cent of women in favour. But the same poll also showed that 90 per cent thought it was being put forward by the Alliance.

In fact the Alliance are opposed to such a policy proposing instead a ministry of justice (similar to the *ministère du droit de l'homme* which the right wing French government set up in place of the Socialists' ministry for women). The Alliance put forward a programme for strengthening the equ-

ality legislation, for contract compliance (whereby employers with government contracts are forced to comply with certain targets for equality), for paternity leave, equal educational opportunity and so on. But the main plank of their platform for equality was to emphasise the demand for 50 per cent women on all public bodies. In other words equality is to be achieved from the top, hardly, when it comes down to it, a real alternative to Thatcherite policies.

The Labour Party's programme on the other hand, did have the makings of such an alternative. Even the Trade Unionists for Labour booklet given out to Labour canvassers as a guide included all the main planks of this and yet most Labour Party activists probably did not realise what was in it. There was the demand for a national minimum wage, for equal pay and conditions and job security for part time workers, contract compliance, for nursery places for all three and four year-olds, for well women clinics, for parental leave and for a ministry for women's rights even with a suggested figure of 10 million for its budget.

Noticeably dropped from this list was any demand for abortion rights, a lynchpin of women's struggles in the labour movement for over a decade and therefore all the more frightening for the Labour leadership.

Nevertheless this programme, if implemented, would have very far reaching effects. Perhaps this is why the election campaign itself on these issues was so especially anodyne. An article in *Labour Party News* entitled Listening to Women was at pains to point out that any programme would take a long long time to implement and did not even mention the more attractive parts of that programme at all.

While it is true that all Labour press conferences had at least one woman on the platform, the overwhelming impression from the party political broadcasts, apart from the one on women, was of grey-suited men sporting red roses. It was as if the Labour leadership believed that the only way they could show they were a match for Thatcher was to wheel out the men. The caring side was dealt with by Glenys and shots of Kinnock going one better than most politicians, not just kissing babies but also changing nappies.

In the aftermath of the election defeat pundits inside and outside the Labour Party have been quick to argue that results prove that the Tory vote will not budge. Labour's campaign was slick and professional, the

argument goes, and still they did not win. If we examine women's voting patterns however, we find that the Tory vote is budging and, who knows, if the campaign had been a little less slick and a little more definite in putting forward the policies on women, it might have budged even more.

Labour have a great deal of catching up to do where women voters are concerned. It was the Tories who gave women the vote and the Tories who had the first woman MP and now have provided the first woman prime minister. The Tories have therefore always had the lion's (sic) share of the women's vote and still do today.

Yet since the late 1950s the Tories share of the women's vote has been steadily declining. The shift is not as dramatic as in the United States but it is there. Women are now no longer more likely to vote Tory and just as likely to vote Labour as men. According to the *Times* of 13/6/87, in this election Labour nearly halved the Conservative's lead among women of 20 per cent to 11 per cent, a 4.5 per cent swing. This was particularly true among young women where the Tory lead was reversed to an 11 point Labour lead.

Labour did better among older and younger women than it did among older and younger men. Much of this change has occurred through weaknesses on the Tory side. According to one poll taken in April this year the main issues which the majority of women saw as important were education and the national health service. Given these figures it seems almost criminal that women were not more targeted in the Labour campaign. A further poll taken in April shows that the Tories still have 53% of their support from women, the Alliance 54% and Labour only 50%.

So, in relation to women the lesson we must clearly draw is not that the Tory vote will not budge nor that we must aim for the middle ground by improving Labour Party political broadcasts. The way to accelerate the increasing trend of women turning away from the Tories is to put forward Labour's policies loud and clear including on abortion rights and to actually organise to defend women from attack under this next term of a Tory government. Women are 52 per cent of the voting population and are just as likely to vote as are men. It is about time that the Labour Party woke up to this fact and rather than purporting to 'listen to women', actually did something about it.

Jude Drury



Dawn Dorman/Reelase

THE ELECTION RESULT condensed in a single snapshot the whole preceding period of political development. The defeat of the 1984-5 miners' strike was the basis on which the Tory advance was made. The miners' strike was the key test of the last Tory government, which it passed only because the leadership of the labour movement failed it. Even if the miners' strike had ended with a compromise, without an outright victory for either side, Thatcher would have been decisively weakened. The defeat of the miners' strike, of the printworkers' strike and of subsequent struggles, has also conditioned the outcome of the political changes inside the labour movement.

If Thatcher was the main winner of the miners' strike, then in a lesser way so was Kinnock. The defeat of the miners strengthened the grip of the right wing in the trade union movement and the bureaucracy as a whole, and dealt a blow to the left leadership in the labour movement, particularly that associated with Benn and Scargill.

Thatcher has now been given *carte blanche* to press ahead. It goes without saying that bitter new attacks on every section of the working class are in the pipeline. Those who were influenced by Tory tax cuts are now going to find VAT increased on all goods, maybe including food. The unemployed, especially the youth, are going to be met with draconian new schemes to make them work for their dole.

Every sector of the welfare state will come under renewed attack, especially the health service. Major new powers will be taken to divest local authorities of their functions, which will increasingly be taken over by national government. Privatisation of local government services, water and electricity will proceed immediately.

All this will translate itself into renewed attacks on jobs, living standards and trade union organisation. Every part of the working class will feel the effects of Thatcher's victory both in the workplace and in their pockets. This is especially so because not only are the Tories and the class which they represent determined to crush the strength of the working class and 'eliminate socialism' in their quest for a privatised, totally free market economy, but the depth of the economic crisis, and the impending new world recession compel them to do so. Thatcher's victory is a victory for the City spivs, for every petty boss and bureaucrat and for every police thug.

If the whole of the organised working class is now pushed onto the defensive, then so is the left of the labour movement. In the unions 'new realism', the philosophy of class collaboration and single-union deals, will

receive a new boost. The trade union bureaucracy will back the right in the Labour Party in a new witch hunt against the left, attempting to scapegoat the left for the electoral defeat. In a situation in which it is more difficult to launch working class struggle, it will be more difficult for the left to resist these attacks.

One, more positive, factor in the new situation, however, is that it is hardly credible any more to argue in favour of holding back a fight in order to wait for the next Labour government. For workers faced with privatisation, redundancy and closure or speed-up, there is no prospect of rescue by the next Labour government. Workers faced with such attacks will either fight now, or go down to defeat.

The open question is whether the electoral defeat proves such a major blow to working class morale and confidence that such a fightback against Tory attacks cannot be mounted. No doubt there is an immediate demoralisation and disappointment, but it would be wrong to expect one of the most massively trade-unionised working classes in the world meekly to bow down in front of these attacks.

In this article we have gone into some detail about what happened in the election itself. There exists an ultra-left belief that elections are 'irrelevant', but in our view elections do reveal something important about the relation of class forces at a particular point in time. The Tory victory does set the framework for the class struggle to come, but it cannot, in itself, determine the outcome of that struggle.

A major new round of struggle inside the Labour Party is inevitable as the right pushes home its attack. The hard left cannot shirk that struggle, and must determinedly resist disillusionment about participating in the debate within the Labour Party. But in the next period of hard struggles the hard left can only create the basis for extending its influences if it can make itself a material factor in the outcome of working class struggles. If Marxists and others on the hard left have nothing to offer in the way of solidarity, perspectives and leadership in the coming struggles, then they will not be able materially to modify the relationship of class forces.

That is the perspective that the left must set itself; to base itself firmly on the struggles of working people, of youth, women and black people. Through building these struggles and by fighting to lead them, the left can assemble the forces to strike back. Thatcher's election victory was but one act in a prolonged drama of class conflict which has been raging in Britain since the late 1960s. In this drama, we have hardly reached the interval — the finale is along way off. ●

☞ Kinnock is embarrassed by and opposed to most equal opportunities, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory policies which he feels may alienate sections of the white male working class. This endorsement of Tory propaganda has compounded the problems created by Kinnock's capitulation to the Tories over rate-capping and the abolition of the G.I.C.

FOUR BLACK Labour MPs were elected, a major breakthrough for the representation of black people, and a testimony to the success of black sections inside the Labour Party. Bernie Grant's vote in Tottenham held up, despite the major press campaign against him and his notoriety for his criticism of the police after the Broadwater Farm uprising. Obviously, black people in Tottenham voted for him in large numbers. Diane Abbott won in Hackney North, after a vicious racist campaign against her, as did Paul Boateng in Brent South; Keith Vaz defeated the Tory rightwinger Peter Bruinvels in Leicester South.

Politically Vaz, Abbott and Boateng are on the soft left. Nonetheless, the winning of seats by black MPs will rightly be seen as a step forward by black people, and aid the fight to link the labour movement to anti-racist and black struggles. It is unlikely that such a breakthrough would have been made without the fight waged by black sections, in the teeth of opposition from the Kinnock leadership. The declaration of continued support for black sections made by Bernie Grant after his election is a promising sign that the election of black MPs will not be the end of the struggle for black representation of black people in the labour movement.

The good, the bad and the ugly

THE LEFT wing line-up in the 1987 general election ranged from the abstentionists (who saw the whole affair as an occasion for sideline comments, stunts and poses) through varied degrees of opportunism and principle to the outer right wing fringes of the cross-class 'designer voting' Communist Party.

The problem for the abstentionists — especially those running propaganda candidacies — was that the most class conscious workers saw the election as a serious matter: a crucial opportunity to throw out the most savage bosses' government since the 1926 general strike. 'Left' protest votes — at most a rare occurrence in freak British by-elections — would be few and far between.

The Socialist Workers Party recognised this. Their election slogan 'vote Labour but build a fighting socialist alternative' represented an instinctive desire not to fall too far out of step with the mood of most trade union militants. But of course it left two glaring questions unanswered:

● Since the SWP recognises every election the political centrality of the Labour Party, why does it abstain between elections from any political fight for alternative policies and leadership inside the labour movement?

● Just who or what does their 'fighting socialist alternative' actually fight against?

'Socialist Worker says vote Labour without illusions. Be prepared to fight. Be prepared to argue.'

Fair enough: but there is fighting and arguing to be done by Marxists inside the Labour Party. Supporters of *Labour Briefing*, for example, spelled out a bold socialist alternative to Kinnock up to and during the election. Even SWP theoretician Chris Harman admits that 'vast numbers' of Labour Party members fought inside the party for solidarity for the miners. What help were the SWP?

To be a serious revolutionary it is not sufficient to seek an easy niche in a relatively small 'party' like the SWP ('made up only of those who want to overthrow the system in its entirety'): it is necessary to fight the much harder battles to take revolutionary policies into the mass organisations and living struggles of the working class.

One grouping which does not even pretend to be interested in such a fight is the Revolutionary Communist Party. Yet much of the RCP's 'leftism' is barely skin-deep bravado.

Their 1987 election intervention, thinly disguised as 'the Red Front' of 17 candidates showed yet again how



Doris Doran/Reflex

No socialism please, I'm Kinnock

disoriented and remote from working class politics the RCP has become.

An arrogant, schoolmasterly text lectured workers on the similarity between Labour and Tory policies, and insisted:

'Once this simple fact is grasped (!), it follows that supporting Labour makes no sense.'

But anyone looking to the RCP for a revolutionary programme would be more than disappointed. A skimpy four-point text put forward no fighting policies whatever to mobilise, organise or give leadership to the working class. There was not one word from the Red Front in defence of health, education, housing or social services; no policies to defend jobs or wages; no calls for expropriation or nationalisation; no reference to socialism or revolution; no demands for workers' control or even strike action (indeed no policies for the trade unions); nor was there even an explanation of the role of the capitalist state and the need to smash it: instead the timid Red Front 'favour the widest extension of civil liberties and equal rights for all'.

So after all the swaggering, the RCP ran on policies to the right of many Tribunites, and as relevant to the working class as the Monster Raving Loony Party!

The increased majorities for candidates associated with *Militant* — Terry Fields and Dave Nellist — and the strong showing by John Bryan in Bermondsey were the outcome of campaigns which certainly stressed old-fashioned 'class issues'; but which gave as little voice or control to local Labour activists as Walworth Road campaigns did elsewhere.

Meanwhile *Socialist Organiser* ('vote

Labour, kick out the Tories') was barely even critical of Kinnock, reducing itself to retailing turgid anti-Tory propaganda while explicitly renouncing any intention of presenting a socialist alternative to the party programme. Editor and guru John O'Mahony set the tone in a lengthy article which concluded:

'For now (Neil Kinnock and his team) stand against the Tories for the interests of the working class. When a Labour government begins to act against those interests, we will have to fight it. Right now every serious socialist should use the remaining week of the election period to do everything he or she can to kick out the Tories and put in a Labour government.'

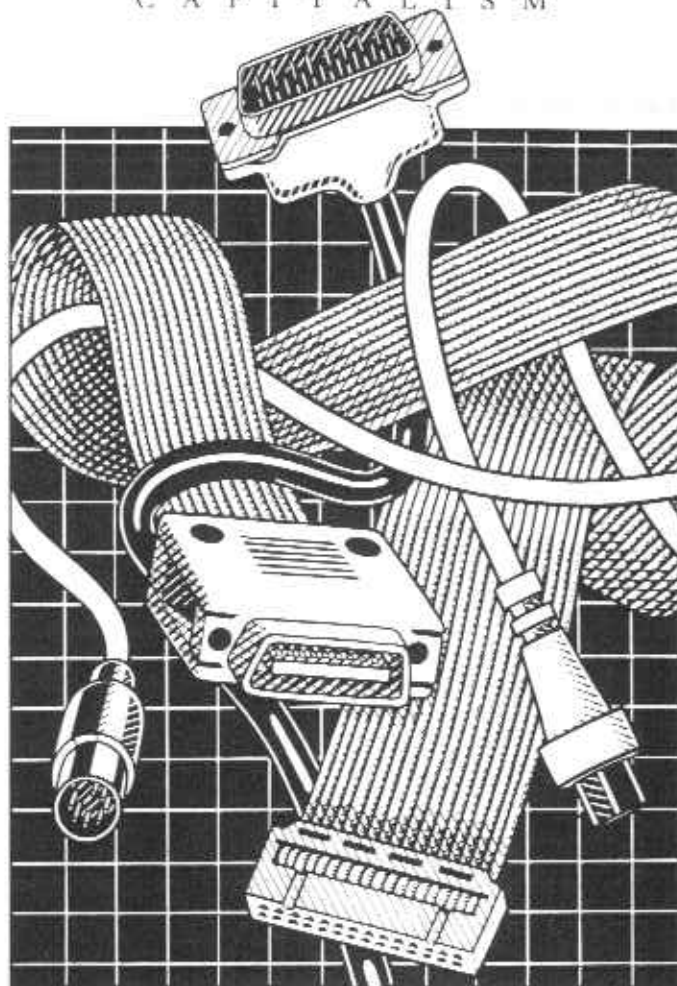
Socialist Action has certainly evolved rapidly to the right since the days of the miners' strike, when it was the most slavish supporter of every pronouncement by Arthur Scargill. It has come under new influences since it started carrying briefcases for some of the Campaign group of MPs: the Campaign group's union links include bureaucratic opponents of Scargill, like the NUM Scottish area's Eric Clarke. This has helped colour the whole politics of *Socialist Action*, whose election slogan 'vote Labour in every constituency' was shared with *Campaign Group News*.

It may seem strange that a paper regarding itself as part of the hard left should feel obliged to devote such prominence to a polemic against tactical voting; but no doubt *Socialist Action* knows its readers and supporters well enough to recognise what message was most needed.

Meanwhile the Communist Party, which long ago expelled all those who still thought they were communists, and which opposed class action throughout the miners' strike, continued its decline with an advocacy of cross-class tactical voting in *Marxism Today*. Predictably the handful of CP candidates, redundant leftovers from the none-too-glorious history of their collapsing party, won only a handful of votes each.

The central issue highlighted by the events of the last eight years remains the acute political crisis of working class leadership. It is in this context that the slogan of *Labour Briefing* ('vote Labour — and fight on'), coupled with an alternative socialist manifesto, and the slogan of our magazine's first issue ('vote Labour, but fight for socialist policies') correctly spelled out the tasks ahead.

Harry Sloan



The new face of capitalism

'The world's largest data processing service company' — that's how US-based multinational, Electronic Data Services (EDS), with an annual turnover of around \$1 billion, describes itself.

RICHARD PAINE examines EDS — its history, its image, its attitude to employees

and trade unions. EDS is also at the forefront of aggressive management techniques, and other companies are following in its footsteps. The technological changes EDS and others are implementing, and the way they are doing it, will affect every one of us.

EDS WAS FOUNDED in Dallas in 1962, by H. Ross Perot with \$1,000. Today it has assets of over \$400 million, and employs about 25,000 people across the world.

It is the largest processor of private health claims in the world. More than 600 banks now use EDS computer services — again the single biggest company in this field in the world. It services commercial insurance companies in the same way. It has major contracts with the US government and military.

It is involved in joint ventures with Daewoo and Lucky Goldstar in South Korea, with Suzuki and Isuzu in Japan, and with Olivetti in Italy. It recently bought French software house SPI (600 staff, \$44 million turnover). A planned joint venture in the USA with British Telecom only just failed to get off the ground at the end of last year.

In Britain EDS employs well over 1,000 workers. It runs the computer operations of London Regional Transport, BUPA, Airplus (a new credit card company in the American Express

tradition). It manages the facilities data of the national nursing board, and is developing the Midland Bank's accounting systems.

But key to its recent development — in a market EDS management reckon to be growing at 30-35% a year — were two moves in 1984.

The first was a contract in the UK with Unilever for a £2.5m private digital communications network. EDS then took over Unilever's own computer services subsidiary, and then won a reported \$5 billion contract to computerise the private communications network linking Unilever's worldwide operations.

The second was the complete takeover of EDS by the giant US-based multinational General Motors (GM) in a \$2.6 billion deal the same year. EDS took on board GM's vast 'health care benefit program'.

It gradually took over GM's own worldwide computer

operations, forcibly transferring the staff to EDS. And it is responsible for developing all GM's information transfer systems across the globe.

What is a 'data processing service company'?

EDS contracts to computerise or update, and run, the data processing operations of its clients. There is no need for them to have their own DP departments, EDS will do it all.

EDS offers more than modernised office and factory systems: more important are the communications facilities that go with them.

The most significant role for EDS in GM is its development of the factory of the future, the 'Saturn project'. Not only will the machines in a particular GM factory be communicating with each other (via GM's MAP, or manufacturing automation protocol), but they will be talking to other machines in other GM factories on the other side of the world. Communication will be digital, via GM's own satellite capabilities.

GM's aim is to deliver their cars to the buyers within a week to ten days — so destroying Japanese manufacturers' cost advantage: Dealers will be connected (and effectively tied) to GM's own engineering, design and manufacturing operations, in a paperless system run by computers. Everything will be integrated into this automated information network. Centralised computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing will eliminate many manual, clerical and engineering tasks. GM estimates that this world factory environment will need only a third of the labour of more traditional plants.

Computerised supervision of all operations will provide an unprecedented degree of monitoring and control over workers.

**EDS's new system enables GM
'to know what doctor prescribed what
drug for what employee in what plant
on what day'**

*D. Linderman, EDS vice-president,
insurance group*

GM's worldwide operations will be treated as one factory. Management will be able to detect workers' resistance and move production literally at the touch of a button — 'electronic scabbing'. But each physical location will be a 'profit centre', encouraging intense competition with the threat of closure permanently hanging over them.

The most insidious feature of this network is that such a vast and efficient communications system will be in the hands of private capital. And it will be paralleled by similar private systems developed by other multinationals.

The long-term aim of GM's takeover of EDS is to provide it with a launching pad to sell similar systems into this huge world market.

These developments are no longer on the drawing board, no longer figments in the imagination of company directors. They are happening now. The 'liberalisation' of Britain's telecoms network in the early 1980s was carried out specifically to allow these developments — and others — to take place. And over the next two years the network will be further liberalised to allow inter-company communications on the same basis. This pattern is being repeated throughout the capitalist world.

EDS HAS AN aggressive public image. Best-known was the company's 1979 raid on Iran. Two EDS employees had been jailed whilst developing the computer system for Iran's social security system. A team of EDS executives, led by a former Army commander, were sent to rescue them, a mission accomplished by inciting a crowd to storm the prison where the EDS men were held. This semi-military operation became the subject of Ken Follett's best-selling book *On Wings of Eagles* (later turned into a film starring Burt Lancaster).

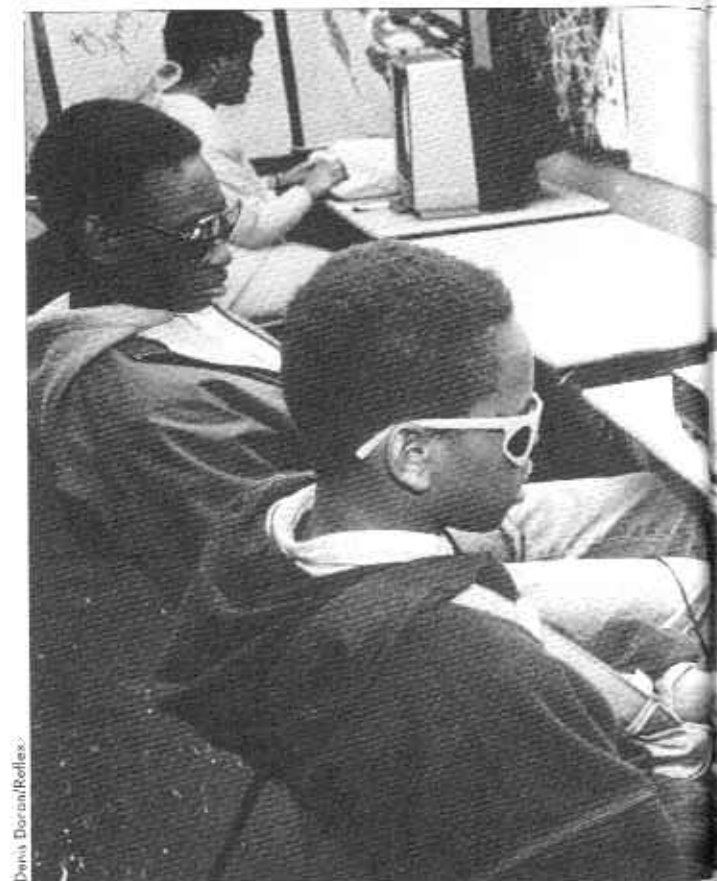
EDS chair Ross Perot revelled in the macho and racist glory. But the experience led to policy changes. No longer did EDS operate on a project-by-project basis. From then on it turned primarily to Western Europe and to developing its own subsidiaries.

Concerned with winning business and making profits, EDS shares other multinationals' disregard for any liberal notions of ethics. In September 1986 the *Guardian* revealed that EDS had instructed US staff to lie to immigration officials in order to work on EDS projects in Britain without work permits. These 'temporary attachments' were authorised by Lana Lewallen, in charge of the project at BUPA headquarters.

An ex-employee of EDS, working at BUPA at the time, confirmed to me that this was the case: 'I remember the day my manager's permit arrived, about a year after he started work at BUPA. We celebrated it.'

So why break the rules?

Partly it's just contempt for national boundaries interfering with international commercial operations. EDS got caught and it



Dennis Doran/Rolles

didn't pay — they later withdrew their now-publicised bids for contracts to build a central government data network to replace the existing police national computer.

But it also reveals the semi-military hierarchical structure of EDS as a company. EDS policy at one stage was to employ ex-military personnel, and military attitudes permeate its management techniques.

EDS is anti-union, like many other hi-tech giants (of which the largest, IBM, is the classic example). At EDS all employees have to abide by an eight-page code of conduct (whose basic principles are 'honesty and integrity'). This includes items like: 'casual clothes are not appropriate. EDS male employees may wear moderate, neatly-trimmed moustaches, but beards are discouraged... All matters concerning remuneration are confidential and can be discussed only with an authorised manager...'

Graduate recruits onto EDS's systems engineering development (SED) training programme are subject to further lengthy

restrictions. 'Ladies', for example, aren't allowed to wear trousers, or patterned tights, or boots, or backless shoes... And male SED trainees are *not* allowed to have beards!

Most EDS employees are recruited onto SED. The ex-employee I spoke to described how he was approached at a 'jobs fair'. Chat on Thursday morning, interview in the afternoon, second interview on the Monday. The job offer was made there and then with the requirement for an immediate answer. At that stage the potential employee is shown the 'code of conduct' and the contract. The interviewee said 'yes', and started the following Monday. This is his story.

'EDS' stated attitude towards trade unions was that an individual could join. This was discouraged, however. At the interview they were more concerned with personal attitudes than skills or aptitude for the job. They tend to take people from a non- or anti-union background, particularly new graduates with no experience of a working environment.

'As for the hours of work... the contract states "37 1/2 hours per week, and as and when reasonably required"'. Initially I

your salary with a colleague is gross misconduct and grounds for dismissal.

"Team spirit" is encouraged — "we're all in this together, guys" — with weekly team meetings generally after working hours. We had weekly SED group meetings too after working hours to discuss problems. That was good though, because we got away afterwards!

CONFIRMING that, whilst EDS may go to some extraordinary lengths, their management technique is not exceptional. BP subsidiary Scicon — Britain's biggest software house — was transferred to a holding company in the USA six months ago, a move 'essential to gain true world status.'

Scicon management has just 'asked' its employees to work an extra two and a half hours per week without extra pay (taking them to 37 1/2 hours) — in return for four days extra holiday.

Wonder what would happen if an employee refused?

The SED programme consists of three phases, effectively all probationary. In theory phase I, on-the-job-training, is six to nine months. In fact it lasts 12 to 15 months. When the employee is considered suitable — entirely at the discretion of the manager — then s/he goes on phase II. It's about phase II that EDS has had its worst publicity. But the pressure has already been built up long before that.

'There is no other word to describe the way they treat you but terrorising you. When my 12 months were up in August, I was due for assessment. After eight months I'd been told "we'll have to delay phase II until September. We need you; you're an expert in the system". But in August I was told "Maybe you'll go on phase II in January". In September my manager said "I don't think you'll ever be ready. You don't understand what you're doing. Take the weekend, come back on Monday and tell me if you want to resign."

'This of course made me more determined to stay and prove myself. So on Monday my manager put me on daily assessment with set objectives. If I failed one, I would be "terminated". In fact they didn't assess me. And throughout this whole period I was performing well.

'In mid-September my manager called me in and told me I was going on phase II in October. And I did.'

Before going on the ten week course which is phase II, the employee has to sign three promissory notes.

These 'become effective if the employee resigns or is dismissed ... for gross misconduct before the end of the ... time periods; after commencement of phase II'.

For leaving, under these conditions, within 24 months the employee has to pay EDS £4,500, between 25 and 30 months £2,250, and between 30 and 36 months £1,125.

Until recently the promissory notes were seen as little more than a threat. Turnover at EDS is (understandably) high, par-



worked from nine till six with an hour for lunch. But I was criticised for leaving at 6pm, and lost marks on my three-monthly assessment. As there are no automatic wage rises I was less likely to get one. Within a few months I was starting at 8am and finishing sometimes at 9pm or 10pm, with a shorter lunch. One weekend I was there (working at BUPA HQ) from Friday morning until Tuesday morning with a break of just four hours. We were only paid of course for 37 1/2 hours, although occasionally staff got a little brown envelope with £40 in for good deeds done.

'And holidays... in theory we were allowed 20 days. But they were difficult to take because permission for pre-booked leave was often withdrawn at the last minute.

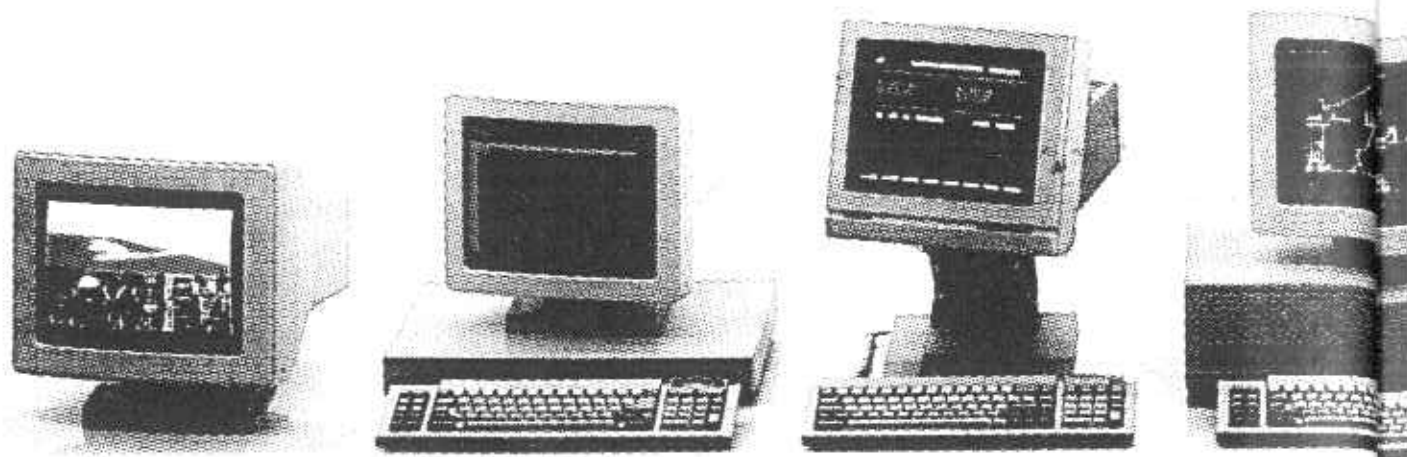
'I never had a wage rise in the 15 months I was there, and the salary (£7,800) wasn't brilliant for the computer industry. EDS say they have an "open-door" policy and any staff are free to discuss problems with their manager. That works as long as you toe the line, do your "voluntary" overtime... Discussing

SPENDING on 'information technology' — the computerisation of information storage and communications — should enable British industry to get rid of 750,000 jobs in the next three years.

That's the verdict of a new report produced in association with the CBI and the British Institute of Administrative Management. Good news for their members, and a mockery of Labour's IT strategy which claims it will create jobs. Investment in IT under capitalism is designed specifically to destroy jobs and consolidate management control.

ticularly during phase II. But at the end of January this year, in a case brought by EDS against two ex-employees, a judge ruled that EDS was 'reasonable' to enforce them.

This has deep implications — not least in that it was welcomed by leading Tory Party members, and fits in with reported ministerial opinion.



The two programmers in question had completed phase II successfully. But more recently EDS has lodged another case against an employee who had left *during* phase II. Given the nature of phase II, any judgement in that case in support of EDS will further reinforce a regime TASS has described as 'bordering on slavery'.

Phase II is a 10 week course at EDS's residential premises in Harrow. There are 13 courses each year, with 20 people on each. Basically it's a computer-programming course... but with a difference.

'First of all, you are told that if you don't pass the course, you lose your job.

'Lectures are nine-five, with an hour break for lunch, seven days a week. But assignments would take until 11 or 12 at night, sometimes until one or two in the morning, and occasionally non-stop through to the next day.

'The assignment marks are scaled; outstanding; above average; average; below average; unacceptable.

'The rule is that an "unacceptable" mark leads to "conditional" status, and if any of the next three assignments are "below average", you're sacked.

'In fact I got a "below average" on the fifth week and was put on "condition". For my next two assignments I got an "outstanding" and an "above average", but on the third one (after I had had six hours sleep in three days), I made one simple mistake in a programme and was finished.'



REMEMBER, EDS is a major multinational, not a back-street sweat-shop. Their industrial relations methods go beyond even those pioneered by Japanese big business. And other companies are following in their footsteps.

Of course things aren't always as 'straightforward' for EDS. They had particular problems after the GM takeover in integrating existing staff in GM's computer division worldwide into EDS. For a start these areas were often unionised. In Vauxhall in Britain TASS organised 200 of GM's 300 computer staff prior to takeover in 1984.

A German trade unionist, speaking to an international GM/EDS workers' meeting organised by the Transnationals Information Exchange in Amsterdam in October 1985, described what happened at Opel:

'EDS researchers ran around the OPEL plants for six weeks. Their analysis's main conclusions were that German data processors are not efficient; the equipment is old and not effective; management systems are obsolete.

'It was clear to everybody that these conclusions had already been written before the researchers had even put one foot inside OPEL.'

The same thing happened at Vauxhall too.

'In December 1984 we (TASS) organised the first EDS meetings. These were very well attended and everybody was determined not to sign the EDS contract.

'Then Vauxhall management started to organise meetings for all employees (also attended by EDS management) to show the "Ross Perot video" to promote EDS' way of working. This

'This horrible 10 week training programme... It's cold. The pay is lousy. And the hours are real mean'

G. Stuart Reeves, EDS vice-president, recruiting and development

was crucial. At first our members did not attend these meetings.

'We had the same problem as in Germany: the non-union signers (we didn't have a closed shop) pulled in the union members. ... A hard core of 60 was still resisting. EDS intimidated heavily: "sign within seven days or our offer will be withdrawn".

'We have since lost 50% of our members. Those remaining don't want to be identified ... (although) many are sympathetic to the union.

'EDS management has consistently refused to meet TASS reps. It does not recognise TASS.'

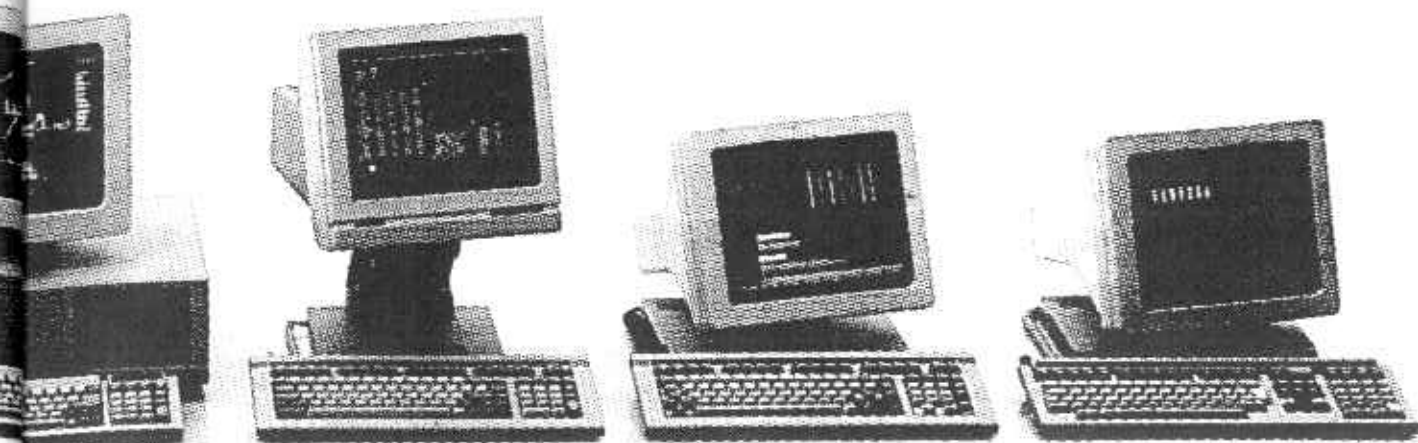
In some other countries, such as Belgium, legislation in theory prevented EDS from refusing to recognise trade unions. But they did so all the same. Their recruitment policy reinforces this:

'Almost all new EDS employees in Belgium are young people without any kind of trade union tradition.'

This hasn't stopped TASS representing remaining members now working for EDS on an individual basis. TASS defended the two who lost their cases against the legal enforcement on the promissory note. More recently EDS settled out of court with TASS prior to an industrial tribunal hearing. But they are currently waging a losing battle.

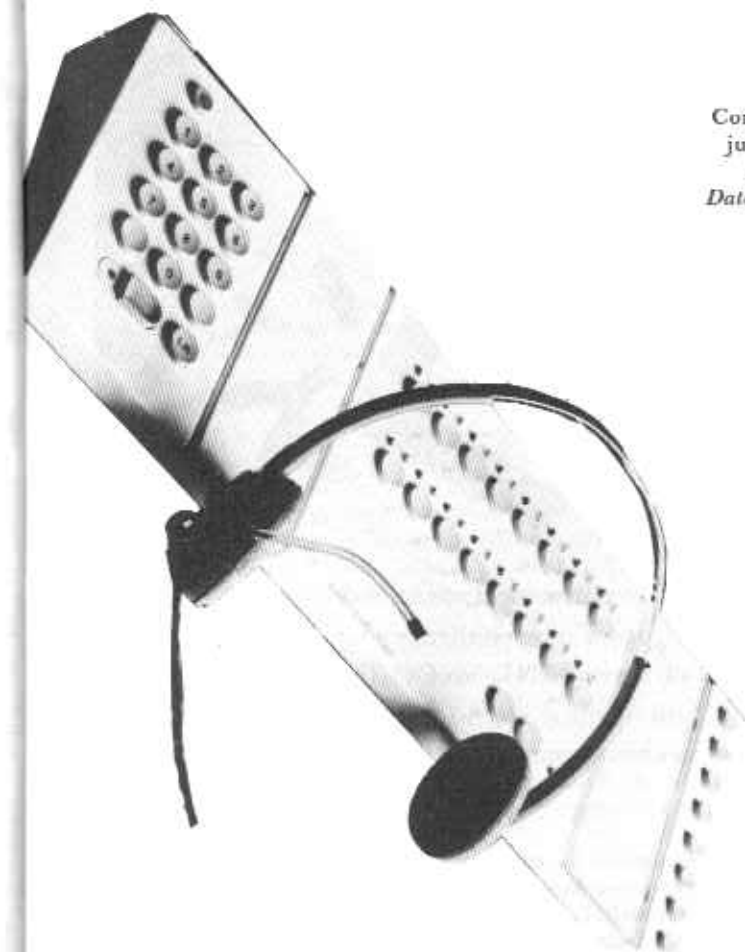
EDS MANAGEMENT techniques are currently seen as extreme. But they are not new, and they will be repeated with increasing frequency over the next period in other companies.

But the press coverage in particular has tended to concentrate solely on the 'no beards' type of story. This has obscured



VIEWERS MAY have been impressed by Norman Tebbit — appearing on the BBC's local election round-up on 7 May — clutching a portable micro-computer linking him with Conservative central office. But computer buffs were puzzled by just what the model was. It turned out to be a new BT product, not yet on sale. A BT spokesperson told the computer weekly *Datalink*, 'This is slightly embarrassing...'

(Quoted in *Datalink*, 11.5.87)



what EDS and similar companies make their profits from.

Communications/computing is at the very centre of current developments in the capitalist economy worldwide. EDS' personnel policy is an important and in many ways complementary support to the technological system it is developing.

H. Ross Perot was recently removed as chair of EDS and from the GM board, apparently after disagreements with other GM directors and an involvement in the 'Trangare' scandal. Some observers have predicted a relaxation in EDS policy. The evidence points to the opposite. The company has told its workers 'nothing is to change'. EDS British management has initiated the further promissory note court action referred to above. And SED trainees have just been told that a third of those attending the next three phase II courses will be failed and dismissed.

Workers' frustration and dissatisfaction is increasing, not decreasing, in companies like EDS. The labour movement must be pushed into responding actively and positively. And this response — including major, militant recruiting campaigns — must be international. Hand in hand with this, perspectives must be developed for harnessing the vast potential of these developing technologies for the working class, and indeed for the whole of the world's population. ●

A joint workers' response to the crisis in telecoms — job loss, privatisation, and new management techniques — has been long overdue. For a year now a group of rank-and-file telecoms trade unionists from BT and the manufacturers have been meeting and discussing their problems and possible common responses in a telecoms union forum.

Three issues of a joint newsletter — *Telecoms Voice* — have now been produced, the latest specifically targeted for the general election. Thousands have been distributed through GEC and Plessey telecoms factories, with limited circulation in BT. The re-election of a left-led executive in the NCU now gives a real opportunity to extend this work into the NCU membership.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Readers of one of this magazine's forerunners — *Socialist Viewpoint* — will know of the successful rank and file international telecoms' workers meeting in Amsterdam in December 1986.

A second conference is now in the stages of preparation, organised by the telecoms union forum. Aimed for April 1988 in Britain, in addition to reports and discussions from workers around the world, the conference's specific focus will be on developing an international workers' response and plan for telecoms.

THE RECENT announcement of a further 1,500 job losses at the Scott Lithgow shipyards on the Lower Clyde and the eventual acceptance of mass redundancies at Caterpillar are the latest in a series of major blows to traditional industries and consequently employment levels in Scotland. Scotland, however, need not fear industrial decline and decay, according to the Scottish Development Agency (SDA):

'It is indicative of the Scottish nature that a country which for years led the world in the heavy industries of steel work and shipbuilding is now at the forefront of new technologies. Today, after 30 years of research and development, Scotland is the base for many internationally renowned electronics companies. The skills which once triumphed in the days of heavy engineering have been redirected into the areas of semiconductors, information systems, defence and industrial electronics... The Agency believes that the capacity of the electronics industry to create wealth is a crucial factor in the economic regeneration of Scotland and its development is therefore a fundamental component of our strategy.'

The SDA presents a picture of extensive job creation, upgraded skill levels and transfers of 'state of the art' technologies from overseas multinationals; yet there are doubts over the electronics industry's ability to provide new jobs in significant numbers or even to sustain existing jobs. Worse, there is little evidence of any great upgrading of skills within the industry; and there is little indication that Scottish firms are making any inroads into the more advanced, high-tech and prosperous sectors of the industry, which are dominated by large, multinational capitals.

The SDA also place great emphasis on the flexibility, reliability and co-operation of the Scottish workforce, arguing that there are few labour problems in Scottish electronics. Yet many companies in the industry do not recognise trade unions, and are under no pressure from the agency to do so. Workers' problems are highlighted by the fact that according to the SDA those companies which do recognise trade unions have few criticisms of trade union activities; on the contrary, many companies have welcomed the co-operation of the trade unions — even where that has meant the breaking down of traditional craft demarcation in the quest for flexibility, acceptance of the use of secondary labour (on the promise of protection for the primary labour), short term working and so forth.

Electronics appears to be the home of the 'new realism' in industrial relations in Scotland — a far cry from the traditional image of Red Clydeside. Electronics companies certainly play an important role in providing employment in Scotland, particularly jobs for women; but what are the facts behind the hype of the development agencies? Trade unions with workers directly or indirectly employed in the industry, should be aware of the direction of its development.

Since today's electronics industry itself is the destination of much of its own most sophisticated production, we must look at the possible effects of changes in technologies on employment levels, skills and unionisation.

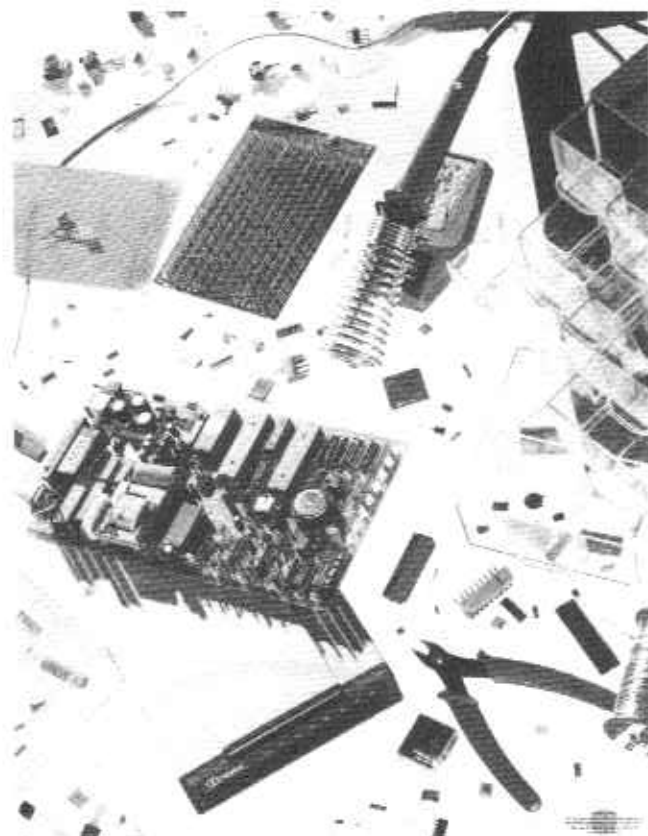
In many respects, the very idea of the electronics industry as a cohesive whole exhibiting similar characteristics is misleading. The industry roughly splits up into six sectors:

- Consumer, 2.5%
- Subcontract, 7.5%
- Semi-conductors and other components, 17.5%
- Information systems, 22.5%
- Defence Electronics, 25.0%
- Industrial, Commercial and Telecommunications, 25.0%

Each of these sectors is quite distinctive:

- Defence electronics dates back to the establishment of Ferranti in Edinburgh shortly after the second world war. This sector is dominated by a few large British companies (for obvious reasons), and is similar in many respects to many parts of traditional manufacturing industry. The work requires a large proportion of skilled designers, engineers, programmers and craft workers — consequently there are few women workers in the

Sunrise or sunset?



The rise of the electronics industry in Scotland poses new challenges for the labour movement. **JANE McCORMACK** argues that unions must attend to the needs of women workers in particular as part of a strategy for the industry.

defence sector. In recent years rapid technological change has affected the role of skilled craftspeople by promoting moves towards multiskilling.

- The industrial, commercial and telecommunications sector contains a mix of British and foreign owned companies, and older and newer firms, although older firms predominate; employment levels have fallen substantially with automation. Skill levels vary, with women a large proportion of the workforce.

- Information systems and semiconductors are dominated by large (mainly US) companies, and it is in this sector that we see many of the alternatives to traditional management practices and industrial relations. Skills have become more divided in recent years, between programmers and designers on one hand, and many semi-skilled — mainly women — workers on the other.

- Subcontracting and consumer electronics involve small, mainly Scottish firms, carrying out mostly semi skilled assembly work.

However, most of the sectors have one feature in common: falling employment levels. With the possible exception of semiconductors and subcontracting, each of the sectors is on a downward trend in employment from a peak of 49,000 jobs in 1970. The most widely quoted figures tell us that 42,000 people are employed in electronics in Scotland, that is, 9.9% of all

manufacturing employment. However, we must be cautious about these figures for two reasons:

- All published figures come from the SITA and the Scottish Office, and given their interest in selling the industry abroad, they are likely to be optimistic;

- Electronics has increased as a proportion of manufacturing not only due to new electronics employment, but also due to decreases in employment in traditional manufacturing industries. In the decade from 1970 to 1980 employment in the industry fell by more than 10,000, a net decrease of 22%. This was not solely a Scottish phenomenon — job losses occurred in the industry in Britain as a whole and in Europe. Rationalisation, alongside a general economic recession and a world over-production of micro-circuits were a stringent reminder that electronics is not exempt from technological and market changes.

The growth in employment from the early 1980s onwards is mainly due to the influx of semiconductor fabrication companies like Motorola and National Semiconductors. However, even large increases in investment in semiconductor production will lead to fewer jobs than similar expansion would have brought a few years ago, and since 1985 there have been reports of a slowdown in semiconductor production, with layoffs, redundancies and compulsory shutdowns taking place in the USA and in Britain.

What is most common across all of the sectors is the trend towards the replacement of labour by automated production, bringing further loss of both jobs and skills. Management argue of course that in order to compete in the world market it is continually necessary to keep up with 'state of the art' technology, whatever that may cost in terms of jobs losses and skills. Consequently, in many companies there is a conflict of interest between the design and development jobs (mainly held by men) and the mainly female production or assembly jobs.

Further, in many companies there is a trend towards putting out peripheral, less skilled activities to subcontractors, keeping only highly skilled core functions within the parent plant. The savings arise because subcontract companies tend to offer wages and conditions which are vastly inferior to those offered for the same work in the large companies. Large producers are thus able to reduce their own employment costs while purchasing the same product at a lower price elsewhere.

Until recently, many people assumed that the electronics industry was a barren area for trade union recruitment. Recent research, however, has shown a rather different picture. While only a small number of electronics plants are unionised (which is also true for Britain as a whole), almost two thirds of the workforce in Scottish electronics work in companies where trade unions are recognised. This figure is roughly similar to that for UK manufacturing as a whole.

On reflection, this is not so surprising — one quarter of electronics employment is in defence, which has been (up until now at least) dominated by unionised, skilled craftworkers. Similarly, many of the plants which are now classed as electronics plants were once mechanical engineering firms, which tended to be unionised, and which in the transition from electro-mechanical to electronic production processes, have retained union recognition.

The split between unionised and non-unionised plants is also related to the nationality of companies and the date of their location in Scotland. The bastions of non-unionism are the semiconductor industry (which is US-dominated and non-union worldwide), large American producers in the information systems sector (like IBM and Hewlett-Packard) and the smaller Scottish companies involved in sub-contracting and component production.

These sectors present major problems for the labour movement. Not only are their current employees not unionised, but employment in the non-unionised plants is growing three times faster than employment in the unionised plants. The recruitment problem is likely to be exacerbated in the future rather than overcome, unless serious attempts are made to organise these plants. The smaller size and more recent establishment of the Scottish companies has affected the ability and desire of

unions to organise them. However, the less favourable terms and conditions they offer provide potential opportunities for union recruitment.

On the other hand, the large American companies involved in computer and chip production have been in many respects successful in 'buying off' unionisation. They tend to operate a no lay-off policy where possible, pay higher wages and salaries than other firms in the area, offer substantial financial and non-financial benefits, offer single status working conditions (same toilets and canteens for management and workers), and encourage management to be more flexible and responsive to the needs of the workers (or employees, as they prefer to call them). On many issues, these companies are willing to offer in excess of what the trade unions are able to gain. Where few opportunities for alternative employment exist, particularly employment which offers the same pay and conditions, most workers will not rock the boat by struggling for trade union recognition.

A purely wages-and-conditions approach to recruitment on the part of the unions holds little attraction. There are more fruitful avenues for advance, not least in terms of collective representation. In many big electronics companies, employee representation and grievance and disciplinary procedures are left to individuals, with the workers having little support in any conflict with management.

The unions may be better rewarded if they stress their representation role further; and also if they take up some major issues which they appear to have ignored. In the USA and Canada, gains in organising electronics workers have been made around fights on health and safety. In Scotland, fights on health and safety are noticeable by their absence. Yet substantial evidence exists that electronics production involves the use of high levels of carcinogenic substances, which cause short term illnesses and can be fatal in the long term.

There is another important issue which must be tackled if unions are to make any advances in Scottish electronics. As pointed out earlier, many semi-skilled electronics workers are women. Some of them have been far from passive, as the occupation of the Plessey plant in Barhgate in 1981 showed.

However, many companies seek out young women with no previous industrial experience in order to pre-empt trade union organisation. To overcome this, the unions must actively commit themselves to the needs of women workers. This means a break from the past: as one trade union official pointed out: 'It's harder to organise women, they don't go to the pub at lunchtime and talk about terms and conditions.' Maybe the unions should be recruiting outside Tesco's at lunch breaks?

The unions must face up to new problems too: while employment in electronics is falling, there are some new jobs being created, mainly as technicians. If semi-skilled women are to have any access to these jobs, they need their trade union to campaign for their retraining in the necessary skills at the company's expense. This means opposing any management attempts preferentially to allocate these jobs to men, most obviously the time-served craftsmen whose skills are becoming increasingly redundant in the industry. This could mean a real conflict between potential or actual union members.

The unions have failed to present any coherent response to the challenges of the industry. While in principle other unions are unhappy with the collaborationist strategy adopted by the FEPU, they can see few alternatives. Most have adopted the 'Waiting for a Labour government' strategy — as if this would do anything to resolve the crisis of the industry.

Of course, the strategy is suspect in another respect — semi-skilled production jobs are rapidly being automated out of existence, with job losses unchallenged in most cases by any form of collective working class resistance. The jobs which are left will be even more difficult to unionise. The problem is not only one of recruitment — it requires that the unions, having achieved recognition rights, do something for their members. If the unions wait too long, the problem will be solved for them, and the opportunity for labour to influence the future development of what is and will continue to be a crucially important industry will have disappeared. ●

AFTER A SPRING which saw the highest level of mass action by students, workers and peasants since the death of Franco in 1975, the 10 June European, local and provincial elections saw a sharp fall in the ruling PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers Party) share of the vote. It lost five percentage points and 40 per cent of its local councillors thereby losing its overall majority in many big cities. This was clearly a sanction by a part of the social democratic party's electoral base against the government's austerity politics.

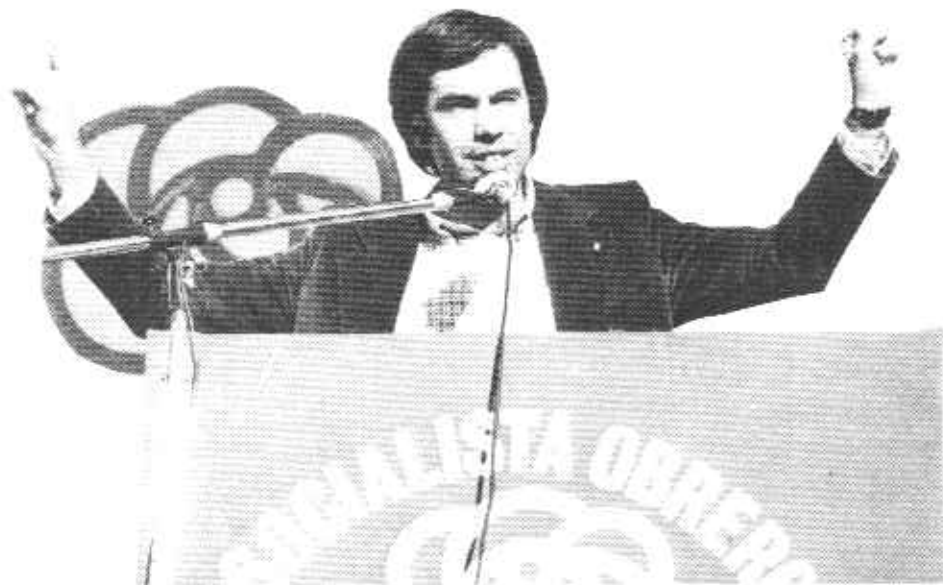
In areas particularly hit by workers' struggles and tough police reaction its vote went down even further: in provincial elections in Cantabria it fell nine points and in Asturias fourteen points. The Communist Party led-IU (Izquierda Unida) gained one and a half points in the European elections and increased its representation even more at local level. Significantly the CP got its biggest increase in the Asturias region. The centrist bourgeois force, the CDS (Social and Democratic Centre) led by former prime minister Suárez and moderate regional 'nationalist' parties took most of the support lost by the PSOE. The biggest bourgeois opposition party, the right wing AP (Popular Alliance) actually lost one and a half points.

So after uninterrupted success since 1982 it seems that the triumphant onward march of one of the most right-wing social democratic parties has been halted. Today it has to discuss coalitions to govern the towns with forces to both its right (CDS, regionalists) and left (IU) and to fine tune its vicious anti-working class economic policy through national negotiations with the trades unions and employers organisations for a three year social contract up to the 1990 parliamentary elections.

Early this year the government faced a student revolt partly inspired by the French example. This was followed by militant actions taken by steelworkers, shipyard workers and others whose jobs were directly threatened by the second wave of industrial reconversion being steadfastly pursued by the government. Nearly 30,000 jobs were to go in the two worst-hit sectors. Occupations, the temporary kidnapping of managing directors, the barricading of roads and town-wide or regional general strikes led to serious clashes with the police and in the first week of May a young worker died of injuries sustained in earlier clashes at the hands of the police. Airport workers, railway workers, bank workers, medical staff also began to take militant action against the government's policy of a five per cent wage limit, its attacks on working conditions and cutbacks in the welfare and state sectors.

Pressure built up particularly inside the Communist led Workers Commissions (CCOO) for a state-wide general strike to get the government to change course. A vote on this was defeated in the CCOO executive thanks to the opposition of forces from both the eurocommunist and stalinist wings of the Spanish Communist movement. To an extent, sections of the Workers Commissions had supported these struggles in order to

Gonzalez pays the price for austerity



The recent elections in Spain were a considerable setback for Spanish social democracy and its unpopular austerity programme. **DAVE KELLAWAY** looks at the alternatives for the workers' movement.

establish a more favourable relationship of forces with a government that has deliberately marginalised left forces outside the PSOE. The endemic CCOO faction fighting between pro-Camacho forces who still support the mainstream CP and pro-Carrillo forces who have split is an obstacle to effective unity. It is boiling up today over who is to replace Camacho, when he retires.

'the triumphant onward march of one of the most right-wing social democratic parties has been halted'

Regional and nationalist divisions also make workers' unity difficult to achieve. Division is also stoked up by the government which has used its power and resources to favour the UGT (General Workers Union), the social democratic dominated trade union confederation, against the CCOO. However the November 1986 national trade union elections held in every workplace resulted in

a victory for the CCOO in the decisive larger factories.

Nicholas Redondo and the UGT leadership then had to adapt to the pressure of the new struggles and step up their verbal criticism of the government. Much talk ensued in the Spanish press of a rupture in the Spanish socialist family. Before the elections, however, Redondo called for a vote for the PSOE saying it was the only 'solid political force for progress in Spain today.' At the same time the UGT leadership continued to reject any effective unity of action with the other trade unions. Redondo rejects the five per cent wage limit but does not exclude sacrifices and austerity in any new social pact as long as all social forces share in it and some concessions are made (*Cinco Días*, 1 May 1987).

The Spanish press is now full of Gonzalez's proposed three-year social contract. He has defended his economic model as 'well worked out and well implemented' but accepted 'some modifications were necessary' (*Cinco Días*, 15 June 1987). Redondo and Camacho express doubts about such an agreement unless the government makes a turn in its economic policy. Both unions accept the principle of such social contracts and have indeed signed them in the past (Moncloa Pact, AES pact) but the recent struggles oblige them to adopt a tougher negotiating position, particularly in the case of the CCOO whose leadership voices its scepticism much more strongly. Nevertheless a few cosmetic concessions could lead one or other or both of these leaders to try and sell a new social contract to their membership.

Despite the announcement of negotiations for a new social pact many labour conflicts remain unresolved — bankworkers have

been out and medical staff continue their action. There is no guarantee that the pact will 'cool down' the situation.

Government spokespeople are downplaying the significance of the fall in its support on 10 June, pointing to its still substantial lead and the weakness of any credible governmental alternative. Even with this setback, the PSOE's national vote at 40% dwarfs the IU's 5.43 per cent. The rise of the CDS in this election to 10.12 per cent is compensated by the more rightist AP's decline to 24.5 per cent.

The PSOE's strong position today has been helped on its left by the collapse and fragmentation of the Communist Party and mistakes of the revolutionary left since 1975, and on its right by the bourgeois parties' division, weakness and lack of a post-Franco 'modernising' approach. During the election, calls were made for a bloc or unity between the AP and the CDS reflecting concern in bourgeois ruling circles that a continued erosion or sudden collapse of the PSOE does not leave a dangerous vacuum.

This explains why unlike in France or even in Britain, the Spanish social democrats, with a tough austerity policy, have won two successive elections, brought Spain into the EEC and, for good measure, kept it in NATO.

'a student revolt partly inspired by the French example'

No wonder a leading banker, Pedro Toledo, has appreciatively commented: 'I have to say that the socialist government's economic management on the major questions has proved sound. I do not think any government to the right of the PSOE would have carried out any other economic policy'. (*Cinco Dias*, 30 April 1987). This policy has meant a rise of 35.6 per cent in profits in 1986 over 1985, well over three million unemployed (20 per cent, the highest in Europe), eight million people officially defined as poor, and a deterioration in workers' conditions and statutory rights. International investors have placed Spain second in the table of the most profitable places to invest.

Another source of difficulty for the PSOE arising from the elections is the further consolidation in support for Herri Batasuna which won 1.88 per cent of the vote and got a European MP elected with a third of its votes coming from outside Euskadi. It increased the number of councillors in towns like Bilbao (+2), Pamplona (+2), Vitoria (+1) and San Sebastian (+1). This is a positive result too for the sectors of the revolutionary left like the ICR (section of the Fourth International) which actively supported the Herri Batasuna (HB) campaign throughout the Spanish state in the teeth of a boycott by the mainstream left. Perhaps this result was helped by HB holding meetings outside Euskadi in support of workers' struggles like the one held in Reñosa — the town where the police killed a striker — which attracted 300 people. Along with EFA's continued military capacity — during the election it blew up the

Taragona oil refinery — the Basque national question is still a thorn in the side of Gonzalez.

Spain today shows that even after years of relative social peace with only isolated struggles there can be sudden explosions of workers' resistance. Furthermore a social democratic government will use both repression and attempts to incorporate the trade union bureaucracies into social contracts in order to end any resistance. The wave of struggles do provide a basis for developing a

more structured left challenge to the PSOE leadership. Despite the bitterness of hundreds of PSOE cadre who have lost their jobs in local councils as a result of the party's decline, however, and the calls from Izquierda Socialista (a left social democratic current) for certain party leaders' heads to roll there is still no effective challenge yet developing inside the PSOE (*Republica*, 17 June). Realignment outside the PSOE is hampered by the fragmentation of the Communist movement and the weakness of the revolutionary left.



The legacy of Antonio Gramsci

Advertisement

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST REVIEW

Summer issue out now!

- * Gramsci's Marxism — Livio Maitan
- * Luxemburg and Lenin — Paul Leblanc
- * Lessons of Grenada — Laurent Beaulieu
- * Liberation theology challenges Marxism — Michael Lowy
- * Resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism — Salah Jaber

Subscribe!

A subscription for three issues costs only £8.50.

Send all subscriptions and enquiries for bulk rates to: IMR, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France. Cheques payable to 'P.E.C.'

BOB PENNINGTON

IN THE SIXTIES and seventies, writing books on the problems of industrial relations became a growth industry. Ex-Labour cabinet ministers, one-time union bureaucrats, 'learned' academics and needless to say Fleet Street journalists, all jostled each other in the queues outside the publishers to get in on the act. The price for their 'expert' opinion was the rate for the job, which naturally was a hell of a lot more per hour than the troublesome workers they were writing about ever hoped to get.

Their conclusion varied. One lot might favour a more enlightened management — they were the employers who consulted you before they gave you the sack. Others opted for tough management. But almost without exception, they all came down against the extremists — that 'bloody-minded minority' — who they insisted were leading the sane, sensible and essentially moderate British worker, down the thorny path of class conflict. It seemed to escape their notice that ever since there had been bosses and workers, class conflict has gone on.

Now from the other side of the track, Alan Thornett, 25 years a car worker at Cowley, Oxford, and 21 of those a shop steward, has written about building the union in the car industry. Unlike the former authors he makes no concessions to academic detachment or so-called impartiality. He is a committed 'trade unionist, a socialist and a Marxist' who knows that the class struggle determines what goes on in industry and society, and insists that what determines the outcome of conflict between management and state is the reactions and attitudes of individuals to the class struggle.

He rightly pays tribute to what I suppose Messrs Kinnock and Hattersley, would now describe as the 'loony left'. These are the people who 'built and

Alan Thornett, From Militancy to Marxism, Left View, £9.95.



Trimshop women join the strike, July 1959

1956: crossing a picket line

developed the trade union movement in the Morris plant at Cowley'. As he says: 'Some of them are still there today, fighting the same fight and defending the same principles... who faced and face every day, not just the pressures of the track, but both the struggle to organise and the attacks from management'. He chronicles how these 'unsung heroes' organised the union in the plant. It was never easy. Victimisation was like a Damoclean sword that hung permanently over their heads. In the thirties when the place was owned by the union-hating William Morris, joining the union was almost tantamount to asking for the sack.

Nor were the early post-war years exactly halcyon days for trade unionism. It was 1956

before management were forced to stop using redundancies as a means of arbitrary sackings. A strike in the British Motor Corporation, albeit at Cowley and Longbridge only supported by a minority, but given the powerful boost of a boycott of BMC cars by TGWU dockers, forced the bosses to the negotiating table. Management was then forced to concede seniority and agree to consultation before sackings took place.

But positions like shop steward and convenor still remained high risk occupations, people like Frank Horsman the TGWU convenor were victimised, and although the workers took strike action, the national union leaders accepted a solution that whilst stopping him losing employment meant he was

employed in the body plant next door, reducing his effectiveness as a trade union militant.

He was not the first, nor would he be the last to pay the penalty for the collaborationist practices of the paid officials. Thornett shows how time and time again the union militants on the shop floor did not just need to keep their eyes on the management, but also needed to keep glancing over their shoulders at what their officials were getting up to. He points out how 'They were happy for the branch to spearhead the initial union organisation of the plant and send them thousands of pounds every month from membership dues; but when this resulted in a militant fight with management they were not so keen.'

The officials wanted

From militan

REVIEWS

Strikers 1956



Oxford Mail

ncy to Marxism

consultation and negotiation with the employers, which meant they saw their role, not as representing the workforce in taking over control of conditions in the factory, but as mediating between capital and labour.

What emerges from the story of Cowley and this holds true for every other workplace, be it factory or office, is that the unremitting battle against management, and the struggle to bring the unions under the control of the members is a herculean task. It is not something that can be left to chance, nor can it be dependent on either workers or stewards spontaneously reaching the right conclusions. Even militancy, desirable and necessary as it is, on its own is not enough. There remains always in the author's words 'the constant need to link the

day to day struggles on the shop floor to the struggle for a socialist programme'.

Thornett recognised that need quite early in his trade-union life and it was not long after starting work at Cowley that he joined the Communist Party. It was not long either before he realised that the Communist Party did not base itself on the methods of the class struggle and he also began to recognise that many of its members in the unions, particularly those in full-time or leading positions, were themselves enmeshed in the union bureaucracy.

Unlike many who have left the Communist Party he did not finish up sat behind the desk in the personnel office or make his accommodation with reformism. Instead he joined the Socialist Labour League at that time the largest and most

significant of the Trotskyist groups. What appealed to him about the SLL, and the same thing appealed to quite a number of other serious worker militants at that time, was its determination to turn its intellectuals and students towards building a base in the workers' movement. Furthermore its insistence that the crisis for the working class was a crisis of leadership, accorded very much with his own experience and that of the other stewards in the factory. They only had to look at Transport House and the antics of the Labour leadership to know that was certainly correct.

In time he was to leave the SLL not because he rejected Trotskyism, but because he was convinced it was not serving the interests of the working class and had become bureaucratically degenerate. Despite its malformations and its undoubted sectarian and ultra-left practices, the SLL had provided access to the *Transitional Programme* and the works of Leon Trotsky. This meant that Alan and the SLL members in the Cowley plant were able to educate themselves and were not disarmed when faced with a political offensive from the employers, or the Tory and Labour governments. Nor were they drawn into the trap of the class collaboration advocated by the union officials.

This enabled them to lead a fight at Cowley against wage restraint, and against anti-trade union laws whether they originated from Labour's Barbara Castle or Edward Heath's Tory government. Unlike many militants who could not counter the bosses' arguments that falling sales and rising costs meant redundancies, the Trotskyists at Cowley would demand 'open the books' and call for a 'shorter working week with no loss of pay'.

Being Marxists they did not restrict their campaigns to factory issues or the issues of British politics. They recognised the threat of imperialism and supported the liberation war of the

Vietnamese peoples against the USA, and attacked the complicity of the Wilson government in this shameful war. Unlike the reformists, the Trotskyists in Cowley did not tell the workers 'leave things to us' they argued for the workers to take the authority into their own hands. Naturally this earned them the undying hatred of the bosses, the union bureaucrats, the right-wing Labourites and the press — such policies bear the hallmark of subversion.

Eventually, an unholy alliance between the media, and the union officials, assisted by the bosses, was used to undermine the militants at Cowley. In 1982 Alan Thornett was framed and sacked. Today management is back in the saddle and thanks to those 'reasonable' people who believe in 'realism' the unions are weakened, the workload has been intensified and the threat of victimisation is again in the air.

Cowley stands as a testimony of what can be achieved by political organisation on the shop floor and equally it bears testimony to the treachery of the union bureaucracy. This is why *From Militancy to Marxism* is a book to be read. It shows the potential that existed during the upsurge of militancy in the sixties and seventies, and brings out how that militancy was diverted and eventually betrayed by the labour bureaucracy, thus making Thatcher's anti-union crusade all that easier. For the working class the price of TUC 'realism' is indeed a heavy one.

Furthermore the book shows that employers can be defeated and the bureaucracy can be swept aside, providing the marxist movement has won a base in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly in the workplace and in the unions. Unlike the 'experts' who want to interpret industrial relations, this book is a serious attempt to show how — with the methods of the class struggle and the use of marxism — we can actually change them, so the working class can rule society.

'There ain't no black in the union jack'

SHAHID TILLEY

Paul Gilroy, *'There ain't no black in the union jack'*, Hutchinson, £7.95.

IN THIS BOOK Paul Gilroy analyses Britain in the past two decades through the prism of 'race' and racism. On the way, he explores the 'crisis in Marxism' which is highlighted by, and possibly produced by, the rise of 'new social movements'.

Jettisoning the dominant view of racism which constructs black people in a 'problem/victim' couplet, or carriers of a discrete and fixed cultural baggage, he constructs a more political definition of 'race'/racism as a process intrinsically linked with post-war political and economic crisis. 'Race' is brought in from the margins where it is presently thought by sections of the left to be 'bad ideology' and explored in its relationship to the rise of the new right and the authoritarian state. The notion of race and 'black criminality' is analysed as a key component of the drift towards authoritarian statism. Race underpins much of the 'common sense' around which industrial and national decline is understood not only by the establishment but also popularly.

The fusion of nation/race popularised by the ideologues of the new right has become so dominant that Labour's 'new realists' jealously want to reclaim the popular patriotic flag. Kinnoch, and theoreticians such as EP Thompson and Raymond Williams are casting around for a 'left' and 'fairer' patriotism that will appeal to all that is just and good in the English/British tradition. But for black people and Irish the relationship between the union jack, racism and imperialism is too close for comfort. And, as recently in France, the tainted language of patriotism is bound to fail paving the way for a further shift to the right.

Gilroy relies on this analysis of nation and race to explain the success of the of the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) in denting the electoral support of the National Front by labelling the latter as Nazis against whom Britain fought the war. All good Britons could not be Nazis. The danger of such arguments in playing upon nationalist resonances was that the discussion of race was pulled away from the centre. It also rendered anti-racism vulnerable to fascists such as Tyndal to announce their opposition to Nazism and their affirmation of patriotism. Gilroy contrasts the strengths of Rock Against Racism — deemed to be a more appropriate response to racism in its down-up development and its distance from the opportunistic language of patriotism. It also allied with and encouraged genuinely anti-nationalist movements/youth cultures to develop (punk music, for instance).

The book also critically regards the anti-racist efforts of the Greater London Council (from 1981 to 1986). Its 'equal opportunity' programmes developed in relation to administration and only applied successfully within bureaucracies were hastily generalised by their foisting onto the wider community with insufficient preparation or any understanding of the complexity of the world outside county hall. Propaganda which defined racism as power plus discrimination not only alienated many black people but also white Londoners — the vast majority of whom did not have any power.

This book's central weakness is its striking 'strategic silence' on the labour and trade union movements. There is no discussion of the potential to be gained from socialist militants working within them. What in reality has



been their failure to cogently oppose the forces of the radical right after the collapse of the relative consensus politics of the post-war period is diagnosed as intrinsic to the labour movement. The bureaucratic and corporatist nature of the labour movement are seen not as the facets that need to be challenged but held to be so deeply embedded that any opposition is deemed to be hopeless task.

This coupled with Gilroy's conception of the left as 'reductionist' or 'economistic'

belies the work of significant socialist currents within both the labour and trade union movements who have refused to privilege 'shop-floor' struggles at the expense of others such as anti-racism, women's equality and peace.

In fact the formation of both the ANL and RAR was initially secured by socialists active either in the trade unions or political parties. The ANL was a comparatively successful project in its attempt to challenge the rise of the National Front. Formed as a united-front against fascism it was a broad based alliance operating under the banner of 'they shall not pass'.

Anti-fascist demos forced voluntary organisations, churches, Labour parties and unions to the left in challenging the state over the political presence of fascists marching on the streets. In contrast, the Communist Party's more anti-racist and popular-front orientated campaign 'one race the human race' which focused on the divisiveness and racist ideology of fascism was a failure.

Gilroy also fails to provide a sufficient explanation for the failure of anti-racist and black autonomous politics to cohere into mass movements over the past decade. In fact their slide into fragmentation must be understood within the context of intra-class divisions, the rightward shift in British politics and the failure to build a socialist bridgehead within the labour and trade union movements on the question of race. The bitter harvest of this has been the rush into the restrictive politics of 'equal opportunity' within, and of, local government services; the employment of a professional layer of 'ethnic specialists' whose aim is to culturally sensitise the increasingly coercive welfare state in its relationship to black clients; the consolidation of black churches or groups often

along reactionary and dead-end axioms of religious fundamentalism and 'black capitalism'. The substantive agenda for black liberation and anti-racism (an end to state oppression, improved housing, health, education and employment) have been put on ice for the time being.

Linked to this partial retreat is the pernicious rise in the politics of the 'hierarchies of the oppressed' (where one 'oppressed group' attempts to gain a larger share of ever decreasing and meagre services at the expense of another) which in reality is a logical extension of many existing 'equal opportunity' programmes.

The other danger of Gilroy's analysis which privileges social movements which are often 'against the state' is the question of criteria. If historical materialism and the class struggle as methods of analysis are to be severely restricted in their applicability, as the book seems to suggest, then by what other criteria do we judge the progressive nature or otherwise of autonomous struggles? Even the 'traditional' left, for instance, is uncertain as to what its position should be on state funding for religious schools.

Many reactionary, as well as progressive, groups want to

define their own boundaries of solidarity and identity in their specific attempts to deconstruct modernity.

Autonomous movements need to be interpreted within the framework of class struggle. So often they promise radical challenge to the values of modern capitalist society only to collapse back, especially in times of crises, into the class from which they originated.

Gilroy is correct to emphasise the importance of progressive autonomous movements outside the boundaries of corporate structures. But for these to succeed there is a need to unite their strengths of

mobilisation and spontaneity with socialist currents within the labour and trade union movements locally and nationally. This would provide a stronger foundation on which to build broader working class alliances to expand the bases of struggles and reduce the vulnerability which is often associated with the isolation of autonomy.

While the book is flawed there is much in it which is challenging for the left. In particular, it offers a timely critique of many 'anti-racist' and 'equal opportunity' initiatives and instead will help to develop a coherent and critical strategy for fighting racism. ●

The decline of Scottish capital

JIM NIBLOCK

John Foster and Charles Woolfson, The politics of the UCS work-in, Lawrence and Wishart, £9.95.

FIFTEEN YEARS after the event, it may seem strange to comment that this is a timely publication. However, the relevance of the book becomes clear as the authors — both expelled members of the British Communist Party — seek to go back to the future by re-establishing the political authenticity of the party line at the time of the work-in.

As such, they polemicise against the new euro-communist orthodoxy. But it is indeed ironic, and indicative of the crisis of the CP, that the appearance of this book should coincide with the two main leaders of the work-in — Jimmy Reid and Jimmy Airlie — expressing themselves to be opposed to the politics that they stood for at the time of UCS. In May of this year, Airlie as leader of the AEU in Scotland pressurised the Caterpillar workers into calling off their occupation. Reid joined Rupert Murdoch's staff at the *Sun* in June.

Still, the authors cannot be blamed for this and both clearly remain unshakenly

committed to the politics of the 'anti-monopoly alliance'. But then, what is interesting and so timely about the book is not so much its politics but the historical analysis of the factors which led to the UCS struggle.

The authors trace the erosion of Scottish capitalism's independence and the consequent decline of its influence at the level of the British state. Scottish industrial capital was based on the maintenance of empire; shipbuilding, steel, coal and heavy engineering accounted for forty per cent of the male workforce at the turn of the century as against twenty-five per cent in Britain as a whole.

The dozen or so families that controlled these sectors (Colevilles, Lithgows, Yarrow, Tennants, Stephens, Weirs) were based on the Clyde and, through inter-marriage, combined holdings in all these spheres. Their grip on the Scottish economy was unchallenged. On a British scale they were able to dominate shipbuilding and a number of heavy engineering sectors. But the disintegration of Britain's imperial role after the second world war left these leading sectors of Scottish capital in a particularly vulnerable position.

Although weakened, heavy engineering remained

dominant in Scotland. It used its political influence to fight against the introduction of a strip steel mill to service the consumer durable goods sector. But eventually even the likes of Coleville, who had a monopoly of steel production in Scotland based on shipbuilding plate, was forced to capitulate when faced with the threat of an outside company being brought in to set up the strip steel mill. The establishment of Ravenscraig combined with the Roots car plant at Linwood marked an attempt to shift the balance away from heavy industry.

In practice, heavy industry was in irreparable decline and the much vaunted 'new growth industries' did not emerge to permanently replace it. By 1960 the Tory vote began its inexorable slump. By 1964 the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) began to emerge as a credible force.

Towards the end of the 1960s, Sir William Lithgow attempted to reassert the control of heavy industry through 'Oceanspan: A maritime-based development strategy for a European Scotland 1970-2000'. Most Scottish Tories accepted this project and in 1969 Douglas-Home headed a Conservative Party commission which reported in favour of an

elected Scottish assembly.

But the Tories were more concerned with entry into the European Economic Community. The Oceanspan project for an integrated steel complex at Hunterston clashed with EEC membership which would see demand for steel contract. With their main project for industrial revival sacrificed to the capitalist rationalisation of European steel production the Scottish Conservatives exposed their lack of political influence at the level at which it mattered.

Under the stimulus of EEC membership Scottish capital rapidly concentrated and sought refuge by integrating itself ever-more-closely into the British state. The price it paid for this was the severing of its localities which in turn weakened Tory roots in Scotland. The drive towards centralism during the Thatcher period, together with attacks on local government, have called into question the credibility and possibly even the very existence of the Scottish Tories.

A timely (and pricey!) book even if all it does is remind us of what yesterday's 'heroes' have descended to. The authors' political conclusions leave a lot to be desired but their analysis makes this book worth the read.



Rupert Everett and Ornella Muti in 'Chronicle of a death foretold'

Chronicle of a death foretold

DAVID GRANT

CENTURIES OF ruthless exploitation, first by the Spanish and Portuguese colonialists and later by successive imperialist powers, have seen the peoples of South America literally worked to death, annihilated by force of arms, starved as slaves, brutalised and crushed by wage-slavery, 'disappeared' in their thousands as opponents of regimes bequeathed and supported by imperialism. Acceptance of death on such a scale as an inevitable, commonplace occurrence has become woven into South American culture and society to the point where it seems natural and immutable.

The novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez are saturated with the inevitability this provokes at the level of social consciousness; peopled with

characters whose fatalism, predictive powers, surreal confusion of history and current reality combine with a stoic resistance to the life which has conspired to confront them. His detached objectivity borders on a lack of compassion for people whose lives are a living hell.

But it is precisely this objectivity which is the political strength of Garcia Marquez's writings. His characters make history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing. The ideas and institutions which constrict and crush them are those of the church, the state, a borrowed 'compradore' ideology of the 'local' ruling classes — a savage combination, cynically exploitative where not still mystically feudal. The emotional turmoil of his characters is made all the more real by his sharp-edged objectivity. Marquez's



characters never resolve the contradictions of their lives through individual effort.

Strange then that director Francesco Rosi should transform the rich and complex raw material of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* into

a rather disappointing film. The use of a 'detective' format seen in Rosi's previous films and the eminently cinematic qualities of the Colombian location should have combined with the theme of Marquez's novel — the complicity of a whole village in a murder for 'honour' — to great effect.

The film could have been a searing indictment of the values which caused the social paralysis that allows the death — so foretold that even the victim knew of it — to occur. Unfortunately, it is politically soft. Many of the biting observations from characters in the novel are absent from, or lack significance in, the film. Most importantly, the complexity of the emotions and motivations of Marquez's women characters are flattened into predictable (and therefore somewhat reactionary) stereotypes.

Thus, Angela Vicario, the woman whose 'honour' is 'redeemed' through murder and death is seen in a vicious fight with her sisters. This is in marked contrast to the passage in Marquez's novel which sees Angela and her sisters discussing ways in which she can utilise the predictably drunken state of her future husband to keep her secret love affair hidden.

Yet the film opens promisingly enough. A paddle steamer chugs slowly away from a glass-fronted cityscape. Slow tracking shots follow the steamer on its journey up the sluggish river — black smoke belching into a harsh white sky. The music carries an ominous note as the steamer approaches the village — isolated in space and time — a microcosm of the continent in which the tragedy is to be played out. The river and its human cargo are the only source of change for a town that 'never changes'.

But the film lacks the savage irony of the novel and even goes for an ending which is ambiguously close to happy. Fans of Rosi and Marquez will be disappointed. Those who have still to discover their respective work should not let this film prejudice them in seeking it out.

£10,000 for a monthly SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK was launched in May but will become a monthly in the autumn. We think that a monthly journal is the very minimum that is needed, given the urgency of the political situation and the speed of events. But to have a regular monthly, with the range of coverage that we want and our readers expect, we need money. We need money for full time staff. We need money for typesetting and printing equipment. We need money to improve the quality of our design and production, and the range of coverage.

Our fund drive is being set at £10,000 to be raised by the autumn. Given the strength of our existing support, and the potential that the new magazine has, we think this figure is extremely modest. We are asking all our supporters, and all those who sympathise with our objectives, to help us achieve our goal.

You can do three things immediately. If you don't already have a sub to the magazine, then subscribe. Even if you buy the magazine regularly, a subscription is more useful to us than a regular one-off sale. It gives us cash upfront, and it works out cheaper for you.

Second, you can send us a donation. There are not many millionaires on the left, but then there are not many who cannot afford to send us something.

Third, you can take out a standing order to our special development fund.

SPECIAL OFFER £3.00 OFF!

Socialist Outlook offers all new subscribers a copy of Alan Thornett's new book *From Militancy to Marxism* for £3.00 off!

SUBSCRIBE!

Annual Subscription rate: (10 issues)

- * £8.50 for inland subscriptions
- * £17.00 for inland multi-reader subscriptions
- * £18.00 for overseas airmail subscriptions (US \$25.00)
- * £54.00 for overseas airmail multi-reader subscriptions (US \$75.00)

Name

Address

Post Code

Subscription to start from issue number

Yes, I want a copy of *From Militancy to Marxism* at the specially discounted rate and enclose a cheque for £15.45 for the book and my one year subscription.*

I enclose a cheque for £..... for a one year subscription to *Socialist Outlook*.

Make all cheques payable to *Socialist Outlook*.

Please return to: Socialist Outlook, PO Box 705, London, SW2 5UN.

* Book offer only applies to inland subscribers.

.....
Please complete this form and send it to: Socialist Outlook, PO Box 705, London SW2 5UN.
We will process it and send it on to your bank.

Your Bank

Bank Address

Your Full Name

Your Bank Sorting Code

Your Account Number

Your Address

Please pay the Co-operative Bank PLC, 1, Islington High Street, London N1 9TR (sorting code 08-90-33) for the account of Socialist Outlook Fund (account number 50338823) the sum of:

..... (in words) (in figures)

on the day of (month) 1987 and thereafter every month until countermanded by me.

Signed Date

OUTLOOK FOR

SOCIALISM

CAXTON HOUSE 129 ST JOHNS WAY LONDON N19

1 4 & 1 5 N O V E M B E R

87

DETAILS FROM

PO BOX 705 LONDON SW2 5UN ☎ 01 737 7862