

# Workers power

British section of the Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International

## INSIDE

**FIVE YEARS  
SINCE THE  
MINERS' STRIKE  
BEGAN**

See pages 6-7

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## SCOTTISH WORKERS LEAD THE FIGHT

# STOP THE POLL TAX NOW!

**THE CRUNCH** is coming for the Scottish anti-Poll Tax fight.

The Poll Tax levels have been set. In Edinburgh every adult now faces a tax bill equal to £8 a week. Some families will be forced to pay over four times the amount of their current rates. Even pensioners and the unemployed will be expected to find an extra £1.60 a week from their meagre state benefits.

The payments start in April and there are no exceptions. The Tories have threatened to "deduct at source" the taxes of those who cannot or will not pay. They are prepared to get at workers' pay packets, dole cheques and pensions first, in order to collect it. And there is more to the Tax than this systematic robbery. If the Poll Tax succeeds the Tories will have gained a powerful weapon they can use to drive Labour out of local government.

They will come along to every local election with an "unbeatable offer" to slash the Poll Tax—by slashing jobs, services and council workers' pay.

If the Poll Tax gets through in Scotland, English and Welsh workers will be facing it within a year. In deprived Tower Hamlets, every adult will have

to pay between £600 and £1,000 a year.

It must be stopped now. The Labour leaders have long since signalled they will not lift a finger to stop the Tax. "I pay my taxes" says Kinnock, who gets a salary more than four times the size of the average employed worker's.

The local government union leaders are so frightened of breaking the law that they are working overtime to stop resistance.

The Scottish Nationalists fiery talk about fighting the Tax in Govan hasn't stopped them voting to deduct it from social security cheques in Grampian.

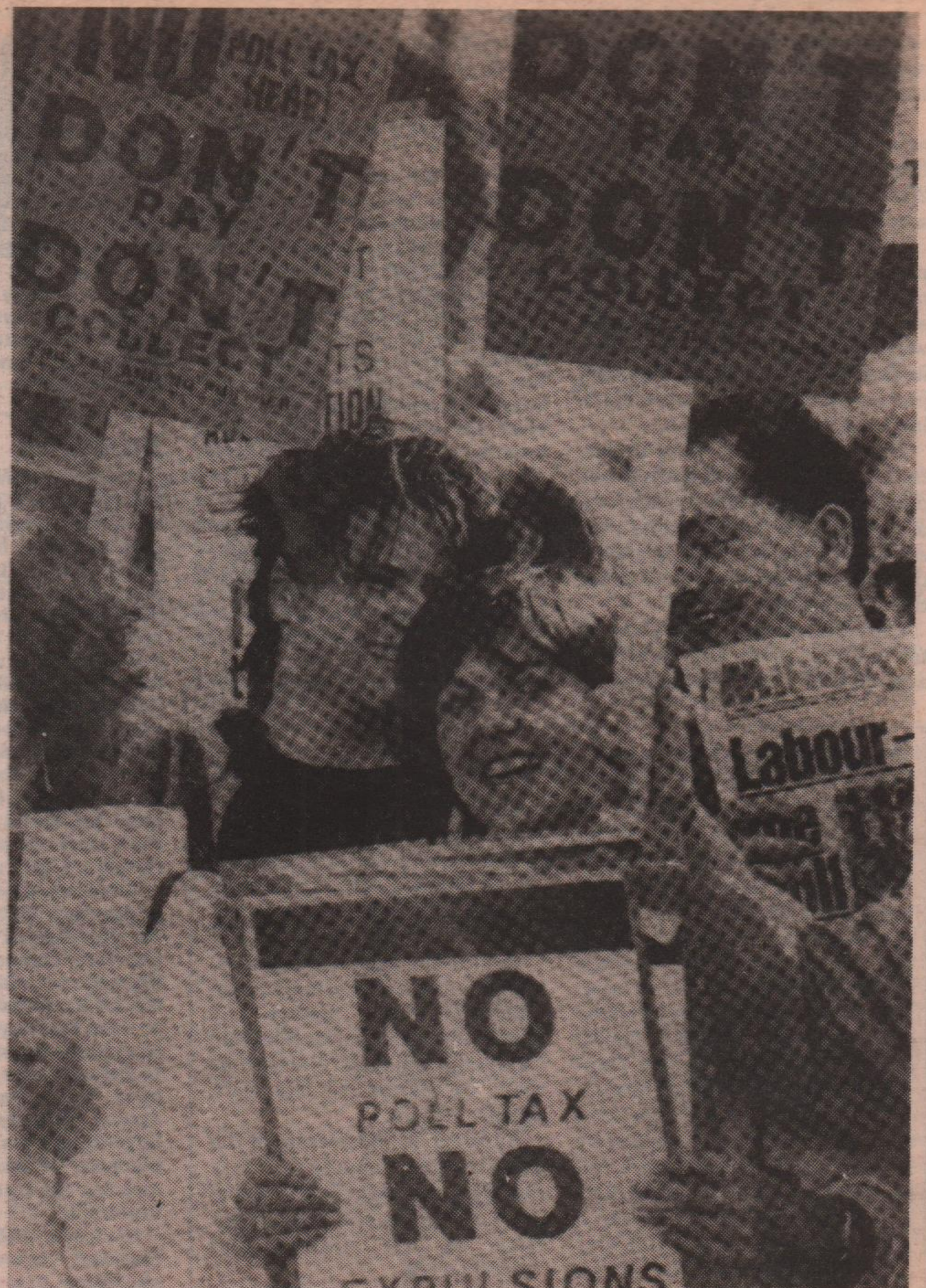
But millions of ordinary workers can't afford to pay. They can't afford to wait for a Labour government. Nobody but them can

smash the Tax.

The many thousands of workers and youth organised in anti-Poll Tax unions must launch a campaign of mass non-payment. This cannot be left to a few politicians, celebrities and bishops, symbolically defying the Tax in committees of 100. It must be the collective action of thousands, the organised defiance of the workers.

Council workers and civil servants should boycott all Poll Tax work and strike to defend anyone victimised as a result. Workers everywhere must strike if the tax is deducted from their pay. That way we can mobilise the forces needed to launch a general strike in Scotland the moment the Tax becomes law.

**Now turn to pages 8 and 9**



AROUND 30,000 students marched through London in pouring rain, on Saturday 25 February. NUS had called off previous demonstrations due to be held on weekdays and opted for a Saturday afternoon instead. This was intended to prevent a repeat of the militant actions taken by students on the 24 November demonstration.

In response to the cancellation of the 1 February demonstration by national NUS, and then by NUS London, students organised in the London activists group called an unofficial march which brought out 2,000 students. On 16 February an official NUS London demonstration only brought out 1,000.

Time after time it has been left to the activists groups to build and organise action. The leadership of NUS presently feel the need to appease the Tories at a time when the union is being investigated. Presently dominated by Kinnockites, the NUS national executive sees the union as one big passive campaign instead of a fighting political body.

### Fees

The issues facing students are becoming increasingly serious. First there was loans. Now there is Baker's talk of introducing fee payment.

All this makes the struggle in the education sector crucial. If the Tories go undefeated on these issues it will mean the exclusion of the working class and poor from a free education of their choice. With so much at stake it is useless to call for such limited action as demonstrations on Saturday afternoons or days of action involving stalls with glossy posters.

This view was shared by many of the students on the 25 February demonstration, who heckled NUS president Maeve Sherlock with chants of "we want a demo, not a disco" and "actions not words".

Baker has no fear of student anger unless it is directed into actions that threaten his stranglehold on education.

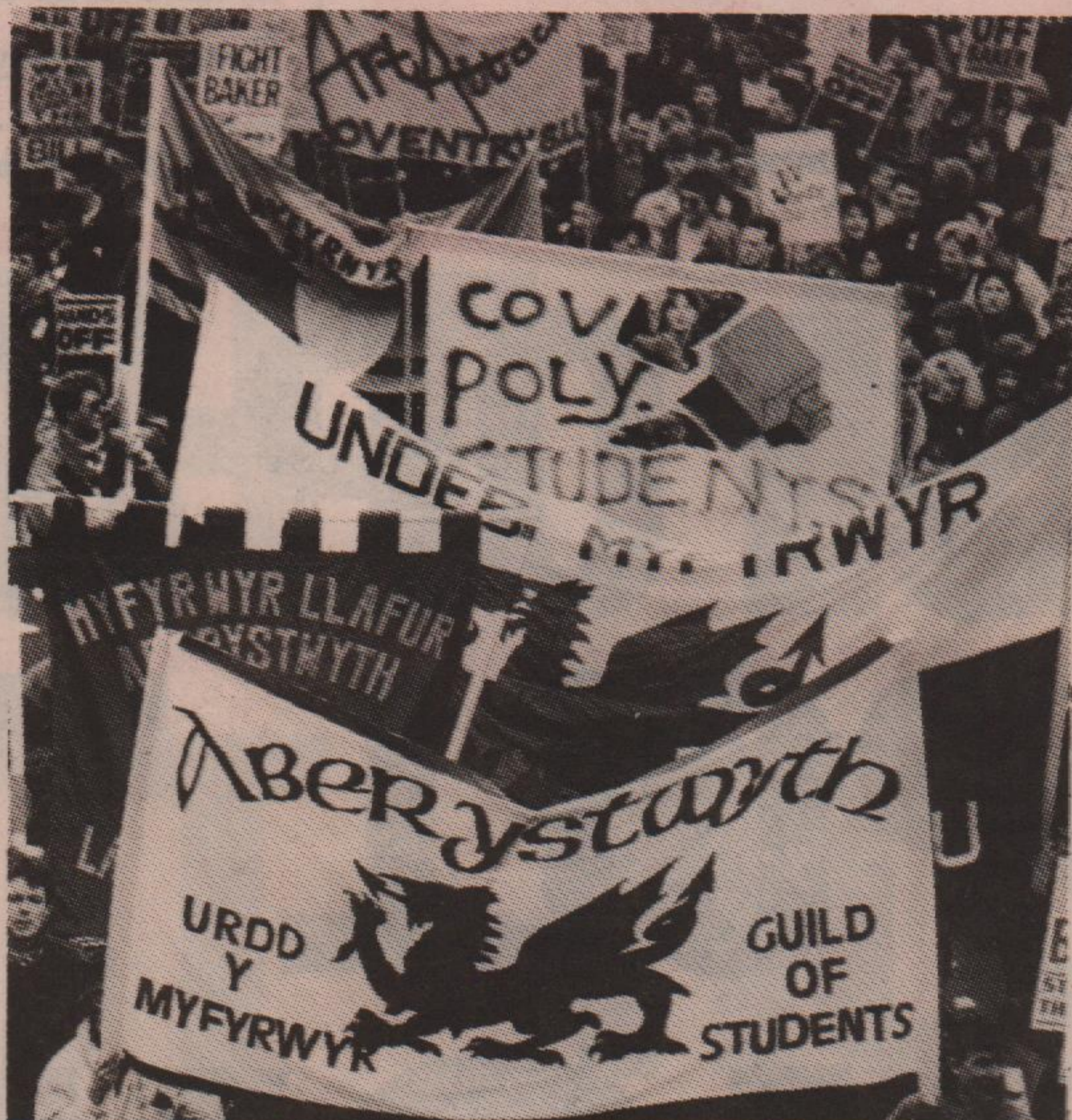
The Tories are presently on the offensive and their Fleet Street friends hush up demos like the 25th, whilst their police thugs attack militant ones.

Unlike 1985 the defeat of the present onslaught on education is not likely to come through demonstrations. Even if this was the case we would face the same legislation in another form a few years later, just as we now face the same legislation as was tried 1985.

The question is a more important one than just defeating one piece of nasty legislation. It is one of fighting for lasting gains that can only be made by taking education into the very hands of those that study and work in it.

Only this strategy will allow us to build a powerful fightback against the Tories. The only action

# No lead from NUS



Jez Coulson/Insight

BY SALADIN MECKLED

that can build up such power is the use of occupations. In the present struggle it is essential that students take up a strategy of occupying and spreading the action to confront the government with a national occupation movement. The activist networks exist to give such a lead where the NUS won't. Such a campaign would put education and its running into the hands

of students and, very importantly, workers. Presently, the only organisation which has consistently been calling for a national occupation campaign led by the activists has been Workers Power through its student bulletins (*Spark*). If you are serious about the struggle in education and you realise that action doesn't end with the struggle against loans, join us and raise another voice for the strategy that can win.■

## Taking the waters

BY A THAMES WATER WORKER

LAST MONTH saw the launch of a £10 million advertising campaign by the water industry. It is part of the Tories' preparation to privatise the ten English and Welsh Water Authorities next November.

The Tories' motivation for privatising this monopoly is primarily financial—they need the £5 to 7 billion likely to be raised from the flotation to enable further tax cuts. They are not even talking about creating a "leaner, fitter" industry after privatisation, because it has already been slimmed down to the bare minimum. This has been achieved through a succession of attacks on staff over the past eight years. The effect of this is that river quality is actually declining for the first time since the authorities were formed.

This is the second time that the

Tories have attempted to sell off water. The first attempt, before the last election, was dropped. Some Tory backbenchers were opposed to the prospect of private companies controlling pollution of the rivers. Given that the water authorities are already by far the biggest polluters of rivers, this proposal has led to widespread opposition from landowners, environmental groups and fishermen.

### Opposition

The second Water Bill, currently going through parliament, is designed to remove this opposition. It creates a new National Rivers Authority (NRA), to police the standards of the water companies. The NRA will be the largest quango created by the Tories with around 6,000 staff. It will be responsible for water quality, land drainage, flood defence, fisheries, navigation and conservation. It underlines the Tories' determination to silence opposition to the sell off. But with the second Water Bill the government has found a new opponent to their plans in the European Commission (EC).

What has upset the EC is a clause in the draft Water Bill which gives the government powers to exempt the water companies from its drinking water standards. This has led the EC Environment Commissioner to warn that any attempt by Britain to sidestep the standards could lead to Britain being taken to the European Court. Such a move would almost certainly result in investors boycotting the water flotation, because of the massive cost of meeting the standards over a short timescale.

Well over 200 water sources in England currently break EC standards. In order to bring quality

# Defend Amir Kabul Khan

ON 2 January this year three Home Office immigration officials arrogantly forced their way into the Birmingham home of Kashmiri Amir Kabul Khan and his family. The intention was to secure the deportation of Amir and the splitting of yet another black family. He was forced to flee into hiding inside the city's Central Mosque.

Amir has been fighting to stay in Britain since 1978, when he originally applied to come here to be with Zahtoon Begum, then his fiancée.

His application was rejected by the Home Office. They had previously refused Amir access to Britain in 1968 denying that he was the son of his father who was living here at the time.

In 1983 Amir again came to Britain, this time for a holiday. He was able to marry Zahtoon, but still he was subjected to state racism. His MP, the right wing Labourite Denis Howell, advised Amir to return to Kashmir and apply (once again) to come to Britain.

This "advice" is all the more contemptible, when over the years, Howell has secured his parliamentary seat in a constituency with a largely Asian population, relying heavily on the Asian vote in the process.

Still worse, with Amir threatened with deportation, Howell has made it known that he will not be associated with any campaign to defend Amir, his wife Zahtoon and their two children. This flows from the Labour Party's past and present collaboration in implementing immigration controls.

The campaign to defend Amir

Kabul Khan has already held a lively public meeting, attended by some 100 people and plans a protest march in Birmingham on 1 April.

We must build for this demonstration throughout the labour movement and black community. The brutal seizure of Viraj Mendis from his "sanctuary" in Manchester shows the dangers facing Amir. Supporters of the campaign must be committed to physically defending Amir from any state swoop on the Mosque.

But such sanctuary, even if defended, will not secure the right of Amir and thousands of other black workers to stay in Britain. With the deportations of mainly Asian people running into several thousand every year, we must build a national campaign pledged to fighting all deportations.

Such a campaign must be taken into, and rooted in, the organised labour movement. It must be won to a position of fighting for the abolition of all immigration laws, removing one of the state's most powerfully divisive weapons against workers and oppressed communities.

It must also organise support for the physical self-defence of black communities against the violence of the state and against racist and fascist attacks.

Messages of support and further information are available from:

Amir Kabul Khan Defence Campaign  
723 Coventry Road  
Small Heath  
Birmingham 10

up to EC standards, the water authorities or their successor companies will have to spend millions replacing or lining pipes and improving treatment works. However several water authorities have admitted that they would probably not be able to meet standards until well into the next century.

This was why Nicholas Ridley announced that the new water companies would be able to pass the costs of meeting the directives directly on to the consumer. Two days earlier he had also announced that the £1.5 billion costs of introducing domestic metering could also be passed straight on to the consumer. These two decisions mean that water prices will increase rapidly after privatisation, not only to provide profits for the shareholders,

but also to meet these massive costs.

Ridley's other recent announcement concerned pensions. He stated that the Water Bill would not include a guarantee of full index-linked pensions for staff of the new companies. This contradicts a statement he made two years ago and has incensed staff in the authorities. It is now possible that industrial action could be won from water workers opposed to the Tory plans. This is the key to stopping Ridley's privatisation. Popular campaigns run by environmental pressure groups will be no more use than similar consumer campaigns run against previous privatisations. Water workers in action must explain the huge dangers to other workers and win class wide action.■

## Sheffield anti-racist demo

A LIVELY demonstration of around 600 people marched through Sheffield on 11 February. The near death of an Asian restaurant workers after an organised attack by five racists on a city centre restaurant sparked off anger in the Sharrow area. Many Asian families in this area have suffered broken windows and a mass racist graffiti campaign from the National Front.

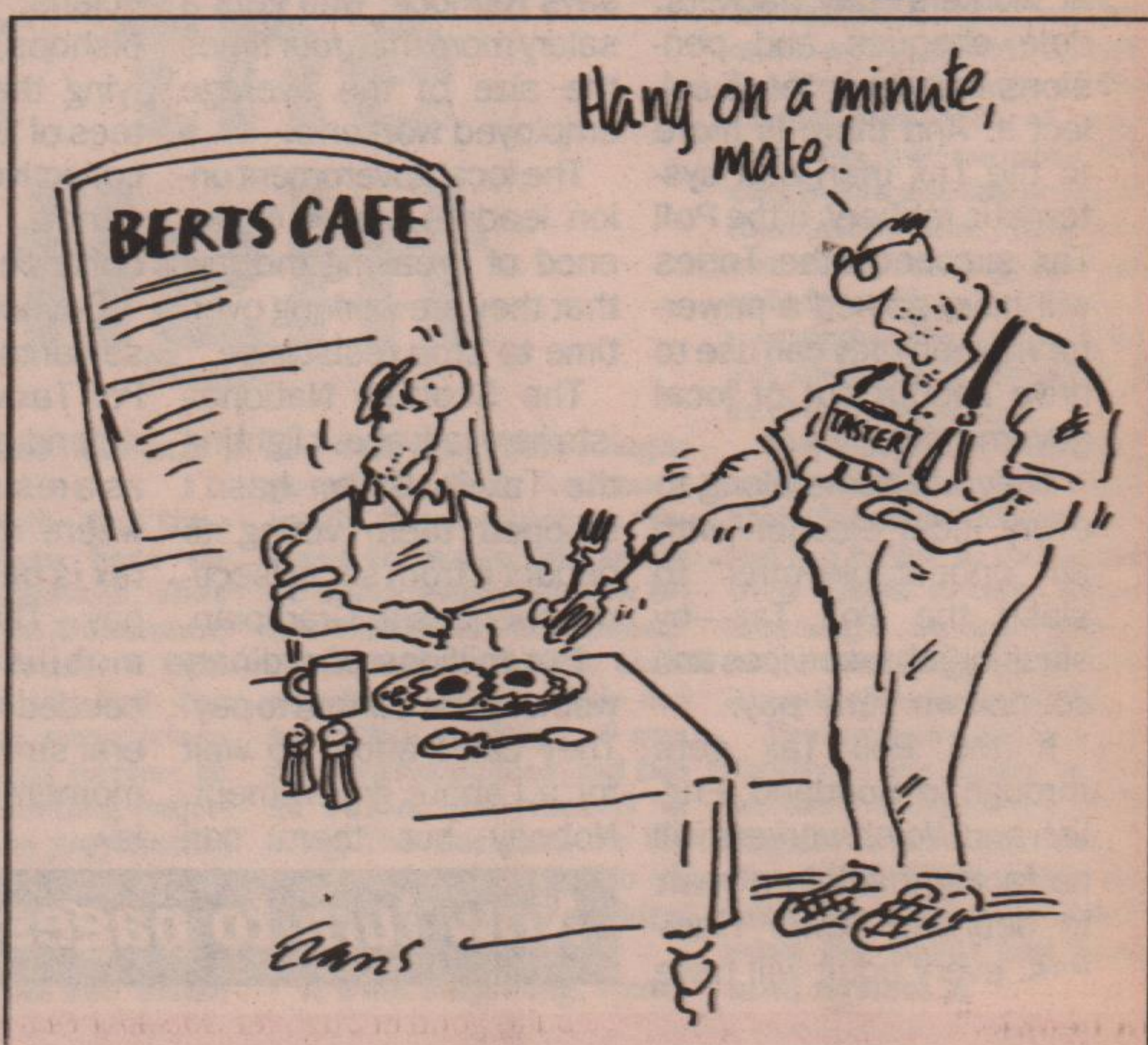
The demonstration, organised at short notice, was sponsored by a local Labour Party ward and received donations from NALGO and student unions. The state aim of the action committee that organised the demo is to build an

independent anti-racist campaign that will actively campaign in the community and take the issues of black self-defence and racist laws into the labour movement.

To date the local labour movement has been able to use a token affiliation to the passive and hopelessly bureaucratic Sheffield Campaign Against Racism as their concession to the fight against racism.

Building on the success of the demo we must demand that they take up a real fight in support of black struggles and against racism in the unions and workplaces.■

## Food for thought



# Satanic influences

Why has Khomeini issued his death sentence on Salman Rushdie?

Until recently Iran appeared to be moving closer to stabilising relations with the imperialist nations of the west. Under the influence of Rafsanjani, speaker of the Iranian parliament and leader of the "modernising" or "pragmatist" faction of the ruling class, increased trade has been coupled with a definite thaw in relations.

Now, ostensibly as a result of Salman Rushdie's novel, *Satanic Verses*, all hell has been let loose. The real reason for this development can only be determined by examining the Islamic regime's internal disputes.

As we explained in last month's issue of *Workers Power*, Rafsanjani has been pushing a distinctive programme to overcome Iran's economic crisis. This involves the wholesale re-integration of Iranian capitalism into the economic orbit of imperialism, encouraging foreign investment, lifting import controls and boosting the growing domestic private sector.

But there is another wing within the bureaucracy of the theocratic state. Commonly known as the "radicals", this fraction has closer links to the militant Shia fundamentalism that gained mass support amongst the urban poor during and after the revolution of 1979.

The demands and aspirations of the Iranian revolution were profoundly anti-imperialist. US imperialism was rightly seen as having exerted an economic stranglehold over the nation's economy and the hated Shah was easily identified as a US stooge and gendarme. Despite blocking the advance of the Iranian working class and setting in motion a counter-revolution which led to widespread repression and war, the Islamic forces that came to dominate the revolutionary movement adopted a fiery anti-imperialist rhetoric in order to maintain its mass base.

In power, they introduced an economic policy designed to exclude imperialist influence, as far as

was possible given the weakness of domestic capital. Thus the economy increasingly relied upon state capitalist nationalisations and an attempt was made at autarchy, or relative economic self-sufficiency. Insofar as this project proved to be utopian, the "radicals" turned to increased trade with the Stalinist states of the Eastern Bloc as a way of stimulating the economy.

Rafsanjani saw this as a root cause of Iran's economic crisis arguing that the Islamic Republic should give up the "short-sightedness... of the early stages of the revolution". And he fought for his "pragmatic" pro-imperialist policy with more than words alone. Increasingly he moved against the "radicals" launching the recent wave of executions as a way of annihilating leftist organisations (such as the Stalinist Tudeh Party) with whom the "radicals" might seek to ally themselves in the inevitable power struggle that will follow Khomeini's death.

*Satanic Verses* could not have come at a better time for the orthodox faction. Able to paint Rushdie's book as a calculated imperialist plot, they have won back significant support in their struggle against the Rafsanjani faction. Khomeini, renewing the death sentence on Rushdie stated that God allowed the book to be published, in order that:

"... the world of conceit, arrogance and barbarism should reveal the true face of its long held hatred of Islam... [the book] should serve as an example to those who thought that if we act in a pragmatic way, the west will humanely reciprocate, and will respect the nation, Islam and Muslims".

The death sentence therefore can only be understood in the context of the radicals' determination to prevent the wholesale revision of their economic and political project. That the Iranian regime now wish to return to their original policy is evidenced by one of the most immediate outcomes of the *Satanic Verses* affair: the renewal of talks between Khomeini and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze.

All of this goes a long way towards explaining the response of the imperialist powers to Khomeini's

## EDITORIAL

death sentence. The condemnatory speeches of Thatcher, Bush and the EEC are hardly motivated out of concern for the welfare of Salman Rushdie; still less have these arch-censors seen fit to trouble themselves in the past with upholding artistic freedom when it represents a political threat. In reality it is the prospect of a revision to statist economics and renewed links with the degenerate workers' states that has spurred their indignant speeches. The rapid deterioration of relations has caused oil prices to leap up. And the imperialists are now threatening a total economic boycott of Iran.

Politics is concentrated economics, and war is the continuation of politics by other means. Where economic sanctions are introduced, the question of military sanctions, however remote, is posed of logical necessity. The *Economist* (25 February) muses as to the most appropriate target for a Libya-style US strike should Rushdie be killed. Imperialism is taking this affair very seriously indeed, as it threatens to undermine their entire project for the future of Iran: the steady encouragement of the Iranian regime's divisions and the safe installation of a pro-imperialist regime after Khomeini's death. With typical hypocrisy they shriek in outrage at the Rushdie sentence whilst coolly turning a blind eye to the mass slaughter of working class militants in Iranian prisons under Rafsanjani's direction and control.

Revolutionary Marxists are bitter enemies of the counter-revolutionary Islamic regime. We denounce the mass executions, the suppression of working class organisations and the denial of basic democratic rights in Iran, just as we oppose the reactionary wave of religious intolerance unleashed in the *Satanic Verses* affair. But we will not align ourselves with the cynical and self-seeking imperialist campaign against Iran. We oppose economic sanctions just as we oppose all imperialist attacks on the semi-colonial world. It is through a programme of revolutionary communism, the strategy of permanent revolution, that the joint stranglehold of Islamic reaction and imperialist domination can be broken, once and for all. ■

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## Mini-state confusion

"Backtracking on programme" ran the headline to an article in *Socialist Outlook* no 12. At first sight this referred to the recent decision of the PLO's ruling body, the Palestine National Council, to recognise the State of Israel and accept a "mini-state" on the West Bank. The article expresses no attitude towards this sell-out, other than describing it as "controversial". But an article by Michel Warschawsky in the same issue shows that it's not just the PLO who are backtracking.

Warschawsky is a leader of the Israeli section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI), the international tendency with which *Socialist Outlook* sympathise. He declares his support for the sell-out, stating:

"While it is correct under the short and medium term relationship of forces, to separate the immediate aim from the long term strategic objectives, and to accept the transitory partition of Palestine and the principle of negotiations with the Zionist government, it remains dangerous and perhaps counter-productive to concede the long term objective of struggle of the Palestinian people."

This is simply a repetition of the arguments of left wingers

in the PLO. It sows the illusion that accepting a mini-state is a step towards the break-up of the Zionist state. In fact it is a step away from it. Warschawsky's argument is a capitulation to the PLO's bourgeois leadership. *Socialist Outlook* raise no criticism of this position. But the USFI's official journal, *International Viewpoint*, has described the Council's decision as a "capitulation" and a "dead end" for the masses! Which is it to be? Perhaps *Socialist Outlook* will clarify this in its next issue. Either way this confirms the inability of the USFI to provide a coherent international leadership. ■

## You must be Juquin!

PALESTINE IS not the only issue causing confusion for *Socialist Outlook*. It is not long since their supporters were writing in *Labour Briefing* that the renovateurs represented a revolutionary alternative in the French elections. They were an opposition grouping that had split from the French Communist Party, standing Pierre Juquin for President.

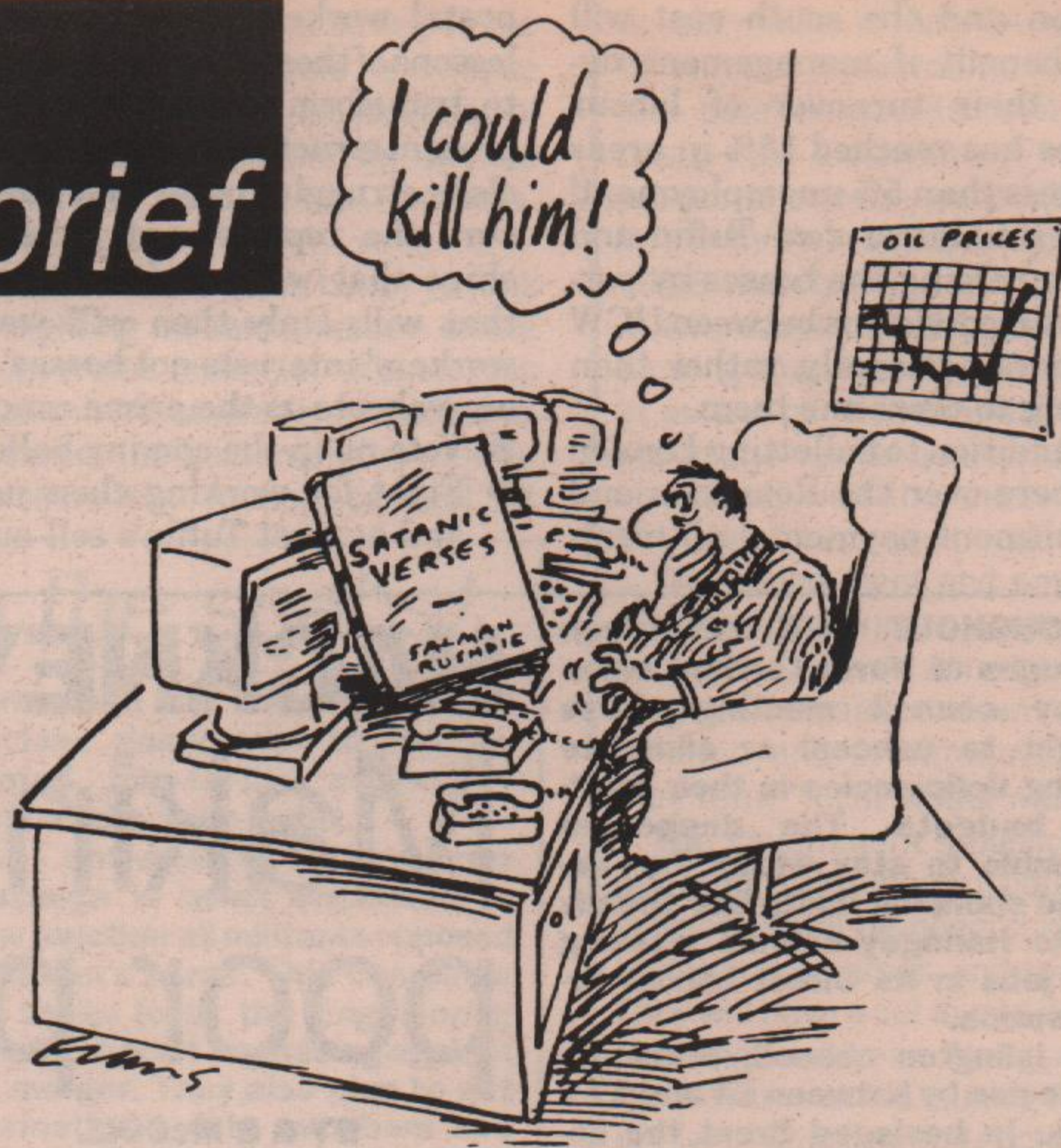
The LCR, French Section of the USFI, decided that they would join with the renovateurs in "reconstructing the revolutionary party". This was quite good enough for *Socialist Outlook*.

But after the election there was a

sudden silence. Juquin disappeared from the pages of *Labour Briefing* and *Socialist Outlook*. The explanation was simple; another of the USFI's get rich quick schemes had failed. While the LCR had planned to cash in on the Juquin "dynamic", happily endorsing a reformist candidate in the hope of launching a "big revolutionary movement", the opposite took place.

Juquin was a flop, the renovateurs split, and Juquin went off to form an alliance with the Greens—taking a faction of the LCR with him! Little wonder that *Socialist Outlook* wants to forget the Juquin affair.

# IN brief



## Jailed for graffiti

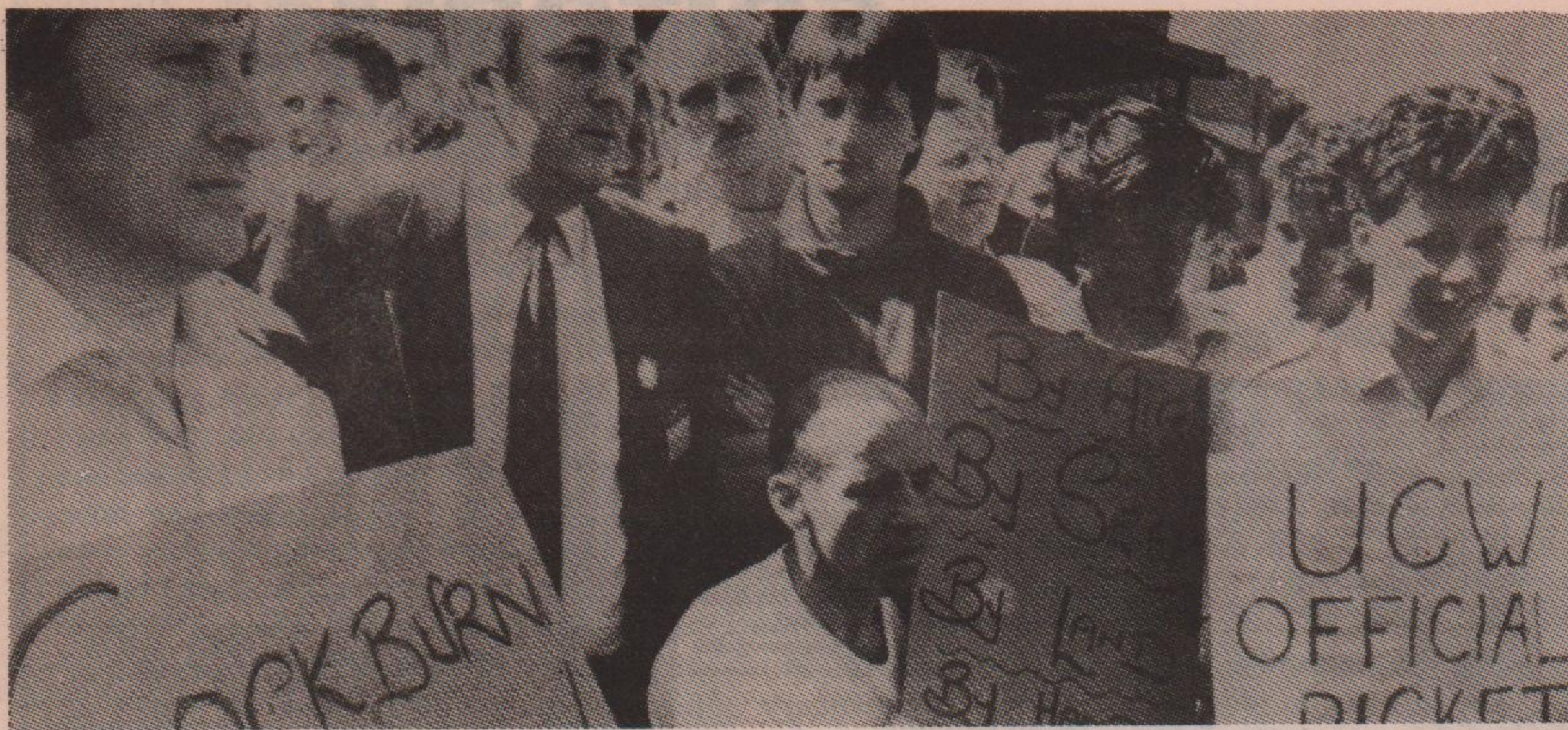
"IT IS no crime to denounce a communist". With these words headmaster Turan Baysal justified reporting a 15 year old schoolboy to the Turkish authorities. His one offence: scratching the names of Marx and Lenin on his desk. The youth was held in prison for three months before being sent to the prison mental hospital for "examination".

The western media's outrage at the repressive use of psychiatric institutions in the USSR does not extend to abuses carried out by their allies in NATO. The youth had breached Article 14C of the Penal Code, which bans communism and carries a five to ten year sentence.

The case is but one illustration of the barbaric methods of Turkish capitalism and its fear of a resurgence of the working class and peasant militancy of 1978-80. But it has led to a popular outcry in Turkey, together with demands for an end to the ban on communists. Socialists in Turkey and throughout the world should derive confidence from this, further proof if any were needed that thousands of Turkish youth nurture the secret desire to complete the business left unfinished a decade ago. ■

But there is always someone who wants to drag these embarrassing skeletons out of the cupboard. Suddenly Juquin has reappeared in *Briefing's* pages, with a new champion—Peter Tatchell! Tatchell, no doubt with the gleeful encouragement of the paper's editor, points out how the "New Left for Socialism, Ecology and Self-management", as Juquin's new organisation is known, has brought together various groups including the majority of the LCR.

It seeks a "red-green convergence". Its political programme? "At the minimum there must be basic bourgeois democracy and this requires the establishment of real powers for the European Parliament! We await *Socialist Outlook's* comment on Juquin's "New Left". ■



Tuffin on picket line

# Stop Post sell out

AFTER SOME 200 hours of "hard negotiating" with the management of Royal Mail Letters (RML) Alan Tuffin and his cronies on the Union of Communication Workers (UCW) Executive Council reckon they have secured a deal that the union membership will find acceptable. It is nothing of the sort!

The very same Difficult Recruitment Area Supplement (DRAS) payments that postal workers struck against last September are now being touted under a new name as something to accept. These payments were originally aimed at (potential) postal workers in London and the south east of England where management

claims the turnover of labour is at its highest.

Of course the terminology has now been altered, from DRAS to Recruitment and Retention Scheme. But the only difference is that lump sum payments (between £450 and £600 paid in five instalments) replace the old offer of payments ranging from £7.50 to £20 per week. The so-called regional pay supplements of between £6 and £15 per week only apply if you happen to live in London or the south east. The remaining regions are not mentioned.

These payments have nothing to do with London weighting. That is a separate issue. The real issue is the abysmally low pay of all postal workers, wherever they live, and management's attempts to divide workers regionally thus preventing them from realising their common interests. Even if the deal is accepted, workers in London and the south east will only benefit if management decides their turnover of labour figures has reached 15% in areas with less than 5% unemployment!

Via this latest deal Tuffin and co. are helping the bosses by perpetuating divisions between UCW members nationally, rather than fighting to overcome them.

In addition to balloting London members over the Retention and Recruitment payments, all mem-

bers are being asked to vote on Scheduled Attendance (SA) rates. These would increase overtime payments from the existing time-and-a-third to time-and-two-thirds (on weekdays) and increase Saturday to double time. Sounds pretty good, huh? But wait! This only applies to postal workers prepared to commit themselves to work overtime as much as several months in advance, thus interfering with their personal lives even more. The bosses' system only "offers" overtime when their profits need it.

Against the continuing misleadership of Tuffin and co militant postal workers must co-ordinate nationally inside union branches to draw up demands which break out of the straitjacket of what management defines as "affordable". Postal workers must once again take up the fight against divisive recruitment payments (under whichever guise they appear) and fight against low pay and long hours in the post. The fight should also include arguing for the right of all casual workers to be given permanent contracts and full union rights.

Tuffin and his cronies have shown how they fight for postal workers' interests—by continually selling them out. Rank and file postal workers should learn the lessons of these sell outs by fighting to transform the UCW from its present structure into a democratic class struggle union that can ensure the replacement of leaderships that won't fight with ones that will. Only then will we see workers' interests not bosses' balance sheets as the prime concern.

- Vote no in the coming ballot!
- Fight for working class needs and against Tuffin's sell-outs!

**THROUGHOUT THE** Labour-run boroughs of North London, emergency council meetings have sought to conceal or eliminate gaping deficiencies in their existing budgets. The desperate scramble to stay within Tory-imposed spending limits has already led to Haringey council slashing 600 jobs in its Direct Labour Organisation.

In Islington council, rents are set to rise by between £4 and £7 a week. In besieged Brent the Labour group will pursue another £35 million in cuts, or impose a final rate increase of over 50%.

The bankruptcy of municipal reformism is clear in Hackney. Last year a six month battle was fought to try and save three branch libraries. This year has already seen the council's services come to a virtual standstill for five days.

After the Home Office had refused the council's application for more than £6 million in funding for ethnic minority social workers, Hackney's finance director seized complete control over the council's spending. Using powers conferred by the Tories' recent Local Government Finance Act this unelected, £30,000 a year bureaucrat clamped a total ban on all but statutory spending.

## HACKNEY COUNCIL Making the poor poorer

BY G R McCOLL

In practice this meant the closure of a Citizens' Advice Bureau, nursery workers rushing to buy milk for children out of their own pockets and Town Hall porters putting up homeless people themselves.

The immediate crisis was resolved only after the council agreed to strengthen its ban on overtime pay, and made a series of capital expenditure cuts. This has only meant postponing more fiscal chaos until the start of the new budget.

The council leadership's next response has been unveiled under the cynical title, "Redirection of Resources". Behind the rhetoric of targetting spending on essential services lies a £30 million package of cuts plus a 17.5% rise in council

# What lies behind Ellis' deal?

BY A CIVIL SERVICE WORKER

"ELLIS IS a bloody liar!" This was the understandable response from one CPSA member after he'd read a leaked document that has been circulating in Civil Service offices in Cardiff. Signed "John Ellis's Conscience" and known locally as Jiminy Cricket's Letter, it details the full pay deal that Ellis is trying to hoodwink CPSA members into accepting.

The pay deals being offered to CPSA and NUCPS members are deliberately complex. Maybe management and union bureaucrats think we are too thick to work out that we are being robbed! But when the details are revealed, it is clear that the overall package represents a real wage cut and introduces regional and performance pay as well. Just to be comprehensive the deal ties civil service pay to outside pay deals for the next four years or more (like the nurses' notorious Pay Review Bodies) allowing management to renege on it wherever and whenever it suits the government. It also puts down set procedures for "the avoidance of industrial disputes".

Ellis claims the deal is worth 4% in October. Not true. Most of us will only get 2-3% in October. The Treasury says the deal is worth "around 6%"—less than inflation and therefore a cut in real terms. "Jiminy" also tells us that "All costs will be met within existing running costs". Increased workloads, and job and pay cuts—great! What Ellis does not tell us, or even lie about, is that the deal also paves the way for full-blown flexible pay. "Jiminy" gloats: "Pay scales can be adjusted where there are special recruitment and retention difficulties on the basis of function, location, skills and responsibilities". Where there are not, members will just have the difficulty of living below the poverty line! Some members may still be tempted to vote for the package for two reasons. One is because the deal does abolish some of the lowest scales for young members.

But these are not concessions. The government is being forced to pay some young civil servants more because of the drop in the number of school leavers.

The second reason is more important though. Without strike action—an indefinite national strike—the Tories are not going to budge. The flames of the abortive pay campaign in 1987 and the all too sporadic and isolated struggles in the face of subsequent escalating attacks have made many members sceptical of the ability to fight and win.

CPSA and NUCPS militants must tackle this scepticism and demoralisation head on. If we don't we'll never overcome it. All branches must use the March balloting period to campaign for a "No" vote. Due to the lies and half-truths of Ellis and his "left" reformist bed-fellows in the NUCPS' bureaucracy this will mean holding meetings in every office and section and setting up rank and file committees to broaden the active base of the campaign. Only if activists start taking up the arguments will the wider membership be convinced of both the need to fight and the possibilities of an effective campaign.

But a negative response is not enough. We need to work out a pay claim and how to win it at a Special Pay Conference. Motions from branches demanding such a conference are needed, but let us be realistic. Ellis isn't going to listen! An unofficial conference, as suggested by the Socialist Caucus, drawing in all branches and rank and file committees against the deal, must be built.

Such a conference would test how strong the left is in our unions and hammer out a strategy for overturning the deal. It should also begin the vital task of building a network of militants, a real rank and file movement that—unlike the present Broad Lefts, though doubtless including many of their members—can shove Ellis, Christie and co aside and really take on the Tories. ■

workers. Attendance and membership are down in many Labour Party wards, and NALGO couldn't even muster a quorum for its AGM despite widespread local publicity about the impending cuts package.

Against such a bitter climate militant activists face the difficult task of reviving the currently moribund Fightback campaign, but this time on a wholly different basis. Instead of expending time and energy on ever more futile battles in the council chamber and Labour Party policy making bodies, such a campaign must seek to build a real base in the council unions, tenants' associations and community groups.

This will mean fighting to strip away the shroud of secrecy surrounding the council's true financial situation and mobilising support for a deficit budget that could meet the needs of the borough's working class and poor. This is the only way of combatting the council's use of the divide-and-rule tactic to undermine unity within the workforce. The only alternative to this hard road is a further erosion of woefully inadequate services, compulsory redundancies and an easier path for the implementation of the Tories' Poll Tax. ■

## Nurses' strike

42 NUPE and COHSE members in a regrading dispute at Beechcroft Mental Handicap Unit enter a third week on strike. Nursing auxiliaries all do the same job. It is unsupervised, involves clinical testing and should be paid on Grade C. Most were graded A and have been working to grade ever since. This resulted in threats of disciplinary action which, together with the upgrading of a handful to Grade B after the appeals procedure, led to all out strike action.

The strikers have successfully involved workers at Badsley Moor Lane Hospital and have a picket at the District General. They are trying to widen support and to get ballots at several Sheffield hospitals, as they believe the unions' agreement to regrading was a huge mistake. Local official, Ken Curran, has persuaded the strikers to accept the management offer to go to ACAS. The strikers, however, are staying out to ensure no loss of momentum as they are convinced the government will not allow the local Health Authority to pay them.

As one of the strikers told Trades Council delegates:

"They are quite happy to pay agency nurses overtime rates to break our strike. They've already spent enough to cover the costs of regrading us all."

The strikers have had a good response from local workers, collecting over £1000 in the first week. But once again NUPE and COHSE are leaving the strikers to fight alone, claiming it is impossible to spread the dispute.

Donations to:  
NUPE Branch Secretary,  
Julie Grant,  
103 West Bawtry Road,  
Rotherham

IN AMONGST the dark clouds of last year's Labour conference there was one small ray of sunshine for the left. Kinnock was cheated of a clean sweep in his "review" of Labour's policy by the unlikely figure of Ron Todd saving the day for unilateralism. From that moment on it was obvious that this year's conference would be used to overturn this remaining obstacle to the "respectable" image of the Party.

Kinnock's campaign started early. His recent pronouncements on Thames TV's *This Week* programme that unilateralism was "no longer Labour policy", reveal his confidence in his policy review finally defeating the left on this issue.

When the review comes out in April calling for "unilateral, bilateral and neutralist" nuclear disarmament, he hopes to confuse and divide the left by appealing to the "reciprocal unilateralists" in CND whilst appeasing the hard-line pro-nukes of Labour's "multi-lateralist" right wing.

Defence of unilateralism must be seen as a blow against the ruling class and their warmongering. The bosses' men at the top of the Labour Party are clear what defence policy they want—they have never been interested in or committed to the unilateralist policy decided by conference anyway. Sean Hughes, Labour's defence spokesman, made clear last week that he wanted Britain and the other nuclear-armed countries to discuss gradual arms reduction.

Always committed to NATO with

# Kinnock disarms unilateralists

BY SIMON MACINTOSH

Its pro-imperialist military policies, Labour is just trying to prove to the ruling class that it will not pursue any policy which might undermine the military might of the imperialists.

At last year's conference Kinnock defeated the left on the policy review. His additional victories on party organisation and membership leave him confident that he can return to conference year after year with little chance of defeat over any issue.

The results of the ongoing policy "review" are presented as a *fait accompli* and offered to conference on a take it or leave it basis—no amendments allowed! Even if there is a conflict between conference resolutions and the review the final decision is left to an court of appeal stuffed with loyal Kinnockites and right wingers.

A campaign must be waged in the Party and, most importantly, in the unions to stop Kinnock's attempts to prettify Labour for the benefit of

the ruling class. A united campaign of all class conscious militants and socialists in defence of unilateralism is a must—aimed at rank and file members, not sympathetic bureaucrats.

But the danger for the left is that the common cause we all have in seeing Labour maintain unilateralism will be turned into an "Alamo" mentality.

Unilateralism, important though it is as an indicator of the balance of forces within the party, must not become the left's last stand, to which all other issues are subordinated.

A victory on unilateralism this year cannot compensate for, to take only the most glaring example, the defeat within the party over legality and resistance to the Poll Tax.

The fight to defend unilateralism should be linked to a wider struggle against Kinnock's plans for a mass, passive party linked to a pure vote-getting strategy. Failure to do this could lead to a false sense of victory or defeat based only on the issue of defence. ■

# Labour's B'stard

BY CARDIFF WORKERS POWER SUPPORTERS

A COMFORTABLE Labour win in a safe seat in a by-election midway through a Conservative term might not be surprising. But Labour's recent defeat by the Scottish National party at Govan was always going to make Pontypridd an interesting contest.

The massive 20% gain by the Plaid Cymrucandidate, getting 9,755 votes and pushing the Tories into third place, showed that Labour are right to be warned by the nationalists.

Dr Kim Howells' Labour campaigners presumably had a nervous eye on Govan when they launched an attack on Plaid Cymru in a leaflet headed "Six good reasons why not to vote for the nationalists". The leaflet was a spectacular own goal. It accused Plaid of being "linguistic zealots whose excesses have led to the second homes arson campaign" and of "setting Welsh speaker against non-Welsh speaker".

Plaid immediately re-issued the leaflet, now re-headed "One good reason why not to vote Labour". Candidate Syd Morgan easily dismissed the "linguistic zealots" tag by reminding voters that he did not speak Welsh! The reason for this mis-aimed shot was found in the passage condemning Plaid for its opposition to the Poll Tax which Labour claimed was taken "without considering the hardships this would cause to many". The Poll Tax was rightly seen by Labour as the one issue which Plaid could—as with the SNP at Govan—take them on and win.

On the subject of devolution Neil Kinnock's miraculous conversion to support for this cause was taken up during the campaign by Kim Howells. Labour's fear of a potential nationalist bandwagon provided another shot in the reformist foot as Kinnock called for three (!) Welsh Assemblies, while Howells thought one would be enough.

But they need not have worried, as opinion polls showed little support for devolution in the constituency. Outside the rural north and west of Wales Plaid's support is small, but with Labour's candidate telling vot-

ers to pay the Poll Tax, they were rightly worried the nationalists might come up with something better.

But Plaid did not offer a real alternative to Howells' cringing on the Poll Tax. Syd Morgan came out against a mass non-payment campaign and distanced Plaid from the SNP's support for illegal acts.

So what kind of MP has Pontypridd elected? Kim Howells' friends in the media like to portray him as some kind of "renaissance man". After growing up on a housing estate in the deprived Cynon Valley, Howells went to art college and then took jobs as a steelworker, a rugby league player and (briefly) a miner before returning to academia to gain his PhD.

In 1982, he became Research Officer of the South Wales NUM. It was in this job that Howells proved that he had the "right stuff" to stand for Parliament as part of Kinnock's new improved "electable" Labour Party. This was not the Howells of 1960s student sit-in's or even of a

brief flirtation in the early 1960s with the Communist Party.

Howells proved himself during the miners' strike, when his TV statements in the latter months of the strike served to undermine the will of militants to "stick it out". He has continued to speak for the "new realist" bureaucracy of the South Wales NUM, mis-leaders who have done *nothing* to stop the massive pit closures and continue to argue for six day working at the proposed Margam development. All this treachery is completely consistent with Howells' view of class struggle. The strike, he says: "should never have happened, but it was the last gasp of the residual optimism in the old fashioned concept of workers' power".

This traitor is quite happy to junk the fighting militant tradition of the South Wales miners in return for his position in Westminster. He presumably thinks the parliamentary road to socialism is a "modern concept". ■

## No merger with the scabs!

MEMBERS OF the AEU wanting to follow the progress of the EETPU merger negotiations get no information from the union. The talks have gone on behind closed doors and its only through the leaking of secret documents that any details have been revealed.

The AEU have presented the EETPU with a blueprint for the merged union, which they propose be called the Amalgamated Electronic and Engineering Union. It suggests that rapid progress be made which means there is likely to be a ballot soon after the AEU's April National Committee.

Far from retaining the AEU's "democratic structures" as last year's NC resolution which gave the go-ahead to merger talks proposed, the blueprint calls for the end of the District Committee structures, the end of the policy making lay biennial conference and gives enormous powers to the Executive to overturn conference policy. It also offers the EETPU a

moratorium on the election of officials, going over to the appointed jobs-for-life regime of Hammond's scab outfit.

An anti-AEU/EETPU merger campaign is being organised to draw together all militants opposed to Jordan's plans. This campaign will try to force the *Engineering Gazette* to start organising against the merger. They also plan to get information out to members and organise meetings of rank and file AEU and EETPU members to take action against the merger. A lobby of the April NC has been planned.

Details of the campaign plus support/donations:

Norman Goodwin, Secretary  
Birmingham  
Engineering Gazette Group  
28 Bowling Green Close  
Erdington  
BIRMINGHAM  
B23 5QU

Tel: 021-373 1463

Stop the Merger!

Mass lobby of AEU National Committee  
9-10 a.m. Monday 17 April  
Winter Gardens, Eastbourne



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE ECONOMY

ADDRESSING A recent CBI meeting Employment Secretary Norman Fowler bemoaned the fact that, "the going rate is still a powerful influence. The annual pay round shows little sign of disappearing".

He was giving voice to mounting alarm in government and business circles that pay rises are eating into their profits and that it is continued union strength that causes this.

Inflation hit its highest mark for over six years in January when it reached 7.5%. The bosses are worried about the fact that most workers have not paid the price for this inflation so far by a loss in real earnings. In December inflation was running at 6.8% while average earnings were up by 8.75%. Ever since 1982 public and private sector earnings have managed to outpace inflation. Those in work have secured an increase in real wages.

The increase has been higher in the manufacturing sector than in the public sector. It has recently been most marked in engineering and vehicles. In conditions of increasing output and full order books the employers have been prepared to cough up. In turn this has tended to set "the going rate" that Norman Fowler laments.

But it is also the fact of annual pay bargaining by trade unions that serves to protect and improve pay levels. A recent survey showed that, on average, a union member earns 10% more than a non-union member in a comparable job. The Thatcher years have yet to put an end to trade union negotiated pay rises.

This is bad news for the bosses. While wages in Britain have risen by 20% since 1982, they have actually fallen in the USA and risen by only 3% in Germany. This eats into potential profits. Unit labour costs—the proportion of wages in products' prices—were 1% higher in the three months to December 1988 than in the same period of 1987. Also with clear signs of output slowing down there was a decrease in output per head in manufacturing in the fourth quarter of 1988 compared with the third quarter. Yet wages have continued to rise.

The government and employers are now preparing a wages offensive with the twin aims of holding wage increases down below inflation and of introducing what they term "local labour markets".

The government's public sector pay proposals smack of both. Wage increases will be pegged at below inflation for nurses and teachers. They will have a cut in real earnings over the next year. Alongside this the Government is looking for ways of giving bonuses to teachers and nurses working with particular specialisms or in particular areas. These bonuses will be used to erode national bargaining and increase management's power of patronage over individual workers.

The Post Office has already secured a deal with Tuffin and the UCW leadership that opens the door to regional pay flexibility. British Rail has just announced that it intends this to be the last national pay round it will negotiate with the unions, and that it will not concede a pay increase at anywhere near the inflation rate.

To an important extent the Tories and public sector bosses hope that, by holding pay awards at be-

low the rate of inflation, they can help lower the "going rate" elsewhere in industry. By breaking with national bargaining they are following a trail blazed in the private manufacturing sector in the 1980s. In 1979 42% of all manufacturing workplaces had pay levels that were substantially set by national agreements. By 1986 that was the case for only 26%, and the number has continued to drop.

There have been few signs of wholesale de-recognition of unions in the wage bargaining process to date. Most employers still prefer to negotiate with trade union bureaucrats who can sell pay deals to the members and police them. But there

has been a systematic erosion of collective bargaining, even at a plant level with an increase in individual bonus systems and share holding or profit sharing schemes. And for two years teachers have had pay awards imposed on them under the terms of the 1987 Teachers Pay and Conditions Act.

As part and parcel of its overall drive to push wages down the government also intends to scrap the 26 wages councils that set what are already hopelessly inadequate minimum hourly pay rates for 2.5 million of the lowest paid workers. Already their powers have been eroded and young workers excluded from their scope. Now the Tories intend to completely deregulate the wage bills of super-exploiting employers. Already the average pay for workers covered by the council is only £92.04 a week. Now, in the name of fighting inflation the government wants to set an even lower "going rate" for the poorest paid workers.

On every front, therefore, workers are already facing a major attack on their bargaining rights and wage levels. As growth in the manufacturing sector slows down so the bosses there, as we've already seen at Jaguar and Talbot, will attempt to stem and reverse the pay increases workers have won. And in the public sector the bosses will press on with the drive towards ever greater de-centralisation on pay bargaining as a way of pushing wages down.

For the bosses theirs is a national and co-ordinated strategy to weaken trade unionism's ability to defend and improve wages. It is growing apace and will intensify in the next period. That is why workers must be prepared. We must organise the rank and file to defend all national bargaining where the workers have the greatest ability to deploy organised mass strength against the employers.

We must oppose the decentralised flexibility where the bosses start from a position of greatest strength and where the trade union bureaucrats are liable to come under less organised and collective pressure against the bosses.

And workers must not lose one penny due to inflation caused by the bosses' system. All pay deals must increase real wages and defend them with a sliding scale of wages—an automatic 1% pay rise for every 1% rise in the cost of living, calculated by the workers themselves. ■

Getting rid of the going rate



ON SUNDAY 4 March 1984 the miners at Cortonwood Colliery in Yorkshire voted to strike. Three days earlier, the Coal Board had announced the closure

of the pit on the grounds that it was uneconomic. The pit was to be closed with only five weeks notice.

The closure announcement and the Cortonwood vote, five years ago this month, led to the most protracted and heroic struggle in the history of the British working class. These events ignited the anger of miners, fed up at seeing their industry butchered, and their jobs slashed by the Tory government.

Within days of the Cortonwood vote the strike spread throughout Yorkshire, Scotland, Kent, South Wales and the North East soon entered the struggle. Flying pickets, organised by rank and file militants brought out whole sections of the "moderate" areas like Lancashire and Nottinghamshire. The one year long national miners' strike had begun. The best chance the working class had had for smashing the Tory offensive was there for the taking.

After twelve months the miners returned to work, defeated. That defeat was a watershed. It led to an onslaught on jobs that has reduced the mining workforce from 184,000 in 1984 to around 120,000 today. It led to a split in the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the creation of the scab company union, the Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM).

It emboldened the bosses everywhere to step up their offensive. It strengthened the centre-right "new realists" in the leadership of the labour movement who counselled retreat and practised betrayal in the face of the bosses' attacks. It helped the Tories win a third electoral victory and encouraged them to press ahead with their programme of destroying every post-war gain the working class had secured.



### Privatisation

Five years on from the strike the privatisation of the coal industry is being openly planned by the Tories. The NUM, once the vanguard of the British working class, is discussing its dissolution into the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU).

Yet the defeat was far from inevitable. The remarkable militancy of the miners, their self-sacrifice and endurance during twelve months of bitter class war, provided the potential for a marvelous victory. That militancy was betrayed by the trade union bureaucracy and the cowardly Kinnockite Labour leadership. It was misused and eventually squandered by the NUM's own left lead-

ers like Arthur Scargill and Mick McGahey.

To have defeated treachery and to have overcome the limits of pure trade union militancy the miners needed to be won to a revolutionary communist programme of action, to a new leadership and a new party. This is the most important lesson of the Great Strike.

Not surprisingly it is not the lesson drawn by the reformist leaders of the labour movement of either the Labourite or Stalinist variety. These creatures never wanted the miners to win through the methods of class struggle because they feared the revolutionary potential of such methods. For Norman Willis, Neil Kinnock and Stalinists in the NUM like George Bolton, the lesson of the defeat is that class struggle does not work.

### New realists

One of the chief spokesmen of these new realists, John Lloyd, acknowledged that the strike "had a politically revolutionary dimension intertwined and indissoluble from its quite real industrial objectives." (*Understanding The Miners' Strike*—Fabian Pamphlet) And he advised Kinnock and the TUC to make clear that the labour movement reject this dimension outright in favour of "the democratic socialist route", that is, the election of a Labour government. The class struggle—the defence of the working class' immediate needs by direct action—must be subordinated to this end, and the rule of capitalist law must be observed.

In the name of these "democratic" principles, the labour movement leadership followed up the betrayal of the miners with that of the Wapping printers, the Dover seafarers and countless other groups of workers. To ensure that Labour's democratic image is preserved workers must bend their knees to Thatcher and meekly accept the ravaging of their livelihoods by the Poll Tax, the destruction of municipal housing, the break up of the NHS and the education system.

This is cowardice dressed up as democracy. It represents the willingness of the present leaders of the labour movement to sacrifice every immediate, let alone historic, need of the working class to the electoral requirements of Labour's parliamentary careerists and the bureaucratic interests of the well-paid, highly privileged trade union leaders.

Against this we stand firmly on the traditions of the miners' strike. On its fifth anniversary we salute the militancy of the miners, their defiance of the police and the law, their courageous resistance to everything the capitalists tried in an attempt to defeat them.

The strike began as a fight against pit closures. The NUM rejected the Board's right to shut down "uneconomic" pits. They were challenging the Board's right to

# A YEAR OF



May 1984: the miners on the march!

run the industry according to the logic of profit making. They were putting working class jobs and energy needs before that logic. The Tories, whose long term goal was privatisation of the pits, knew that such a challenge had to be smashed. They fought the strike as a political battle from day one.

The bosses' priority in the first weeks of the strike was to break the power of the flying pickets. In the early days pickets in Yorkshire had a massive impact in the "moderate" areas. In North Notts the big pits were brought to a standstill. In Lancashire the coalfield was effectively closed by the pickets. The Tories responded with a full scale police occupation of Nottinghamshire.



### State of siege

Under the direction of the National Reporting Centre police forces from all over the country carried out a co-ordinated onslaught on the pickets. Their brutality at Ollerton resulted in the tragic death of a young picket, Davy Jones. They established roadblocks to stop car loads of pickets getting through. The Attorney General, Michael Havers, gave them the authority to operate a state of siege:

"Police have the power to stop their [i.e. pickets—WP] vehicles on the road and turn them away. Anyone not complying would be committing a criminal offence, obstructing the police in the course of their duty."

The state of siege had a devastating effect on the ability of rank and file miners to get to Nottingham and influence the men there. The Notts miners were isolated by these tactics and many hardened their opposition to the strike over this period of police occupation.

But the police operation did not stop there. When the miners turned their picketing efforts towards stopping scab coal getting to other industries the police prepared for a direct showdown. It came in late May and June at the Battle of Orgreave.

With Scargill's backing, mass pickets tried to prevent coal getting to the coking works at Orgreave, near Sheffield. Thousands of pickets converged on the plant only to be confronted by thousands of police, armed with truncheons and riot shields and backed up by battalions of mounted police and armoured landrovers.

Pitched battles were fought as unarmed miners daily hurled themselves at the police lines. The brutality of the police reached new levels as miners were mercilessly beaten even when all they were doing was shoving against police lines. On 18 June the key battle was fought and the police won. Scargill himself was hospitalised as a result of the police violence.

As millions of workers witnessed the blatant brutality of the police on the news, the treacherous leader of the Labour Party demonstrated his real loyalty—to "law and order", to the rule of the bosses and their state. Kinnock rushed to be

interviewed on the TV in order to condemn the violence not of the mounted police wielding batons, but of the unarmed miners for their picket of Orgreave.

In the summer that followed Thatcher ordered the police to build on this victory by moving into the pit villages in the militant areas to terrorise the whole community and smash resistance. Armthorpe, Easington, Dunscroft and countless other villages woke up to the sound of mounted police charges. Houses were smashed up, strikers were beaten, even children became victims of this police offensive.

The police offensive was followed through by the courts. Not only were numerous miners framed and imprisoned on trumped up charges, the union itself was subjected to a legal battering. Its conference votes were deemed illegal. Its leaders were fined. In December 1984 its entire assets were seized by the courts. One Herbert Brewer, a member of the Institute of Directors, was appointed by the judges to steal the union's money. When he got it he told the world "I am the NUM".

### Unprecedented

The role of the state in attacking the strike was unprecedented. It proved conclusively that the strike was political. The Tories were out to destroy the NUM and with it the vanguard class fighters of the British labour movement. How did the miners respond?

At a rank and file level the strikers and their families understood the seriousness of the situation and demonstrated in practice the creative energy and potential of the working class. Faced with a DHSS that was denying them any benefits they set about sustaining the strike. Women's support groups developed spontaneously, drawing thousands of women into activity. Initially aimed at organising food supplies, they developed into a fighting national network of women involved in picketing, demonstrating and politically debating the issues of the strike.

Picket organisation was transformed from a haphazard and in-



Orgreave, June 1984: Police adopt military tactics against unarmed and unorganised pickets

John Harris/IFL

# CLASS WAR

Five years ago this month miners in Yorkshire launched a struggle which developed into the longest and most bitterly fought national strike in Britain this century. Mark Hoskisson assesses the real lessons of the Great Strike.

formal affair into a co-ordinated and carefully planned operation, first to try and close down the scab pits and secondly to hit the depots, factories and docks handling scab coal. To win solidarity the miners and women's groups organised an army of speakers to tour other workplaces, attend other workers' picket lines and demos and to help build solidarity groups throughout the country which could raise money and food for the strikers.



## Spontaneous

All of these initiatives came from below. All proved the capacity of the rank and file for struggle and for organisation. But faced with the political problems posed by the dispute this spontaneous militancy was not enough. Against the police lines at Orgreave and the occupation of the villages, pickets, even mass pickets, were not enough.

There was a burning need for the building of trained and disciplined workers' defence organisations. Only such organisations could have secured victories against the highly disciplined and militarily co-ordinated police operations. But the leap from traditional mass picketing to the effective military organisation of workers required going beyond militant trade union consciousness towards revolutionary class consciousness.

Similar problems applied to the need to win solidarity. The strike had class-wide significance. This was reflected in the phrase sincerely used by militants and cynically abused by left bureaucrats, "the miners are fighting for the whole working class". This was true but it posed the need to win the whole class, through a general strike, to fighting alongside the miners.

The bureaucrats ran a mile from such a conclusion. The miners were not armed with the arguments to win other sections to such an overtly political challenge to the government. Indeed, many of the best militants, until late in the day, held onto the sectional idea that the miners could go it alone on behalf of the whole working class.

Only revolutionary communism was able to put the argument squarely—if the miners lose the Tories will have scored a political victory over the whole working class, therefore the whole class must, as we said in the first strike issue of our paper, go "into battle shoulder to shoulder with the miners!"

## Rank and file

That this did not happen, that the miners remained isolated and went down to defeat, was the result both of the treachery of the TUC and of the bureaucratic leftism of the NUM leaders.

The NUM leaders failed to put forward a perspective that could build on the rank and file militancy that began the strike. Indeed in the early days Scargill and Taylor oversaw a deal with the

right wing that led to all pickets being withdrawn from the non-striking coalfields while ballots were held.

With the momentum of a rolling strike halted, the result was votes against action in Notts, Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Lancashire. The NUM leaders observed the federal autonomy of the areas, thus handing the right wingers complete control in their own spheres of influence.

Only workers' democracy—mass pickets and mass meetings addressed by strikers—could have turned the tide in Notts and the other scab regions. But Scargill rejected such a course and played it by the bureaucratic rule book.

It was only after six weeks of the strike that the leadership actually sanctioned national action through a delegate conference. This delay, like the earlier withdrawal of the pickets, proved crucial to the fate of the strike. It allowed the scabs to claim that their actions were legitimate within the framework of the union.

As the strike developed the weaknesses of bureaucratic left trade unionism became more obvious and more dangerous. The battle of Orgreave came at a time when sections of the left leadership were looking to do a deal with MacGregor—the hitman the Tories had specially selected to take on the miners. To his credit Scargill opposed these moves. He placed himself in the front ranks of the Orgreave pickets and used the conflict to outflank the other NUM leaders and prevent a deal being struck.

What he refused to do was organise the rank and file militants

into a force independent of, and capable of really challenging, the rest of the bureaucracy. When Taylor diverted pickets away from Orgreave and when Emlyn Williams flatly refused to send South Wales miners to the picket, Scargill would not openly attack them and break from them. He used Orgreave to pressure them, not to challenge them.

Nor would he organise a concerted campaign to mobilise the whole South Yorkshire labour movement in solidarity action with the Orgreave picketers. Instead of 10,000 engineers marching to the picket line, as he had organised at Saltley in the 1972 strike, only a handful of leftists turned out to support the miners.

This highlighted another major weakness of Scargill's bureaucratic leftism, his sectional approach to the struggle. He readily and rightly understood the class wide significance of the strike. Yet he refused to mobilise his supporters to fight throughout the labour movement for a class wide response—a general strike.



## Opportunities

Throughout the strike there were a number of opportunities to link the struggle of the miners with the struggles of other workers. The most important one was when the dockers launched a national strike in July, and then re-launched it in August. On both occasions the strikes were linked by the issue of scab coal.

Here was the chance to combine the action of two key sections of workers and rally the whole working class behind them. This Scargill flatly refused to do. He publicly announced that the strikes were separate, made no call for a rank and file link up and allowed the TGWU's left-posturing Ron Todd off the hook.

The result was that after the second strike the TGWU struck a deal that allowed scab coal to be

brought in at Hunterston! The same pattern was followed when the pit deputies—NACODS—voted to strike in the autumn. Here was the chance to close down Notts at last. Yet Scargill maintained his stance that the NACODS dispute was their own affair. The result was that NACODS were bought off.

The spontaneous militancy of the miners and their families could not on its own transcend the bureaucratic sectionalism of the left leaders of the NUM. Only if that militancy had been organised into a rank and file movement, a co-ordinated network of militants, could the limits of pure trade union militancy have been overcome.

## Mobilised

Such a rank and file movement needed to be mobilised around a revolutionary action programme against all bureaucratic backsliding and for a general strike to secure the miners' victory, defeat the use of the law and repulse the Tory offensive. It needed to fight for real workers' democracy inside the NUM and real workers' control inside the mining industry as an answer to the bosses' policy of closures.

The condition for building this type of movement was the existence of an influential revolutionary organisation, a party, as an alternative leadership to all shades of reformism. This condition was missing.

Its absence proved particularly decisive in the second half of the strike. In retrospect the key turning point of the strike was the TUC Congress in 1984. This paved the way for betrayal. No rank and file movement, no revolutionary leadership existed to stop this betrayal. Scargill's go-it-alone strategy ran into difficulties and the militants paid the price for his sectionalism.

Prior to the Congress, Scargill had told the TUC to keep its nose out. The left sounding justification for this was that he wanted to prevent a 1926-style betrayal.

His refusal to call for official solidarity action organised by the national unions and TUC allowed left-talking leaders to obstruct rank and file initiatives. In the ISTC, in the NUR and the TGWU militants who were refusing to handle scab coal were left isolated and open to victimisations by their leaders' failure to make the actions official.

This refusal to initiate meaningful joint action extended to the TUC. They were being let off the hook by Scargill. The Stalinist influenced leader of ASLEF and chairman of the TUC, Ray Buckton, expressed the opinion of the whole bureaucracy perfectly when he said:

"As far as the TUC are concerned, when the miners ask us for help their request will be seriously considered".

He might have added, "and when they do my help will be given on TUC terms," for that is exactly what happened.

## Forced

In order to sustain the strike the NUM were finally forced to ask for TUC help. They asked for money and for the blacking of scab coal. The TUC duly obliged, but with the proviso that all action taken be under their supervision. The NUM, including Scargill, accepted these strings, proving his failure to break from the bureaucracy. He claimed that:

"In supporting the NUM with physical and financial solidarity, Congress has placed itself squarely behind our campaign to secure a speedy and victorious end to the

dispute".

In reality the TUC were moving in to organise the final betrayal of the strike.

After Congress mass demonstrations and mass picketing were wound down. Many militants became integrated into support groups whose sole function had become collecting money and food. While such activities were absolutely necessary, they were no substitute for solidarity strike action with the miners.

There was no increase in blacking. Todd, Basnett, Knapp, Buckton et al refused to order effective action. Any action that did take place was generally down to the individual or small groups of militants. On their own they could not turn the tide.

Then, when the NUM's assets were seized, when the courts made clear that independent, militant trade unionism was intolerable in Thatcher's Britain, when the urgent need for a general strike was posed, the knife went in. The TUC's promise of support was shown up for what it was. As the *Guardian* reported:

"The TUC flatly told Mr Scargill yesterday that it could not take action to assist the NUM which would lay them open to contempt of court charges."

In the aftermath of this betrayal the forces ranged against continuing the strike grew ever stronger. The Board stepped up a back-to-work campaign. The TUC took over negotiations and got the NUM to accept a clause which "recognises that it is the duty of the NCB to manage the industry efficiently"—that is, a clause giving them the right to close "uneconomic" pits.

Then, under the leadership of the South Wales and Scottish Stalinists and Labourites like Kim Howells, a return to work was proposed at the delegate conference on Sunday 3 March 1985. It was passed by 98 votes to 91. It did not even make a return to work conditional upon the reinstatement of the hundreds of miners victimised for their heroic actions on the picket lines during the strike. After a year the battle was over. The miners had lost.



## Defiant

Their return to work was defiant. Their organisation had not been smashed. The Tories had been obliged to spend £26,000 per miner to defeat the strike. Thousands of miners, their families and others had been radicalised by the year of struggle. But it was a defeat and its effects have, gradually, taken their toll.

We repeat, however, that the real lessons of the strike are not that class struggle is useless, or outdated. We leave such twaddle to those, like Kinnock, whose chief aim in life is to teach the workers servility before the capitalists. No, the real lesson of that momentous year was that the working class has the power, the energy and the will to fight. But it is led by reformists who either do not know how to take the fight forward towards victory (Scargill) or do not want to (Willis, Todd, Kinnock and company).

Our job, therefore, is to build a revolutionary party as an alternative to these leaders; to turn the justified hatred workers feel towards the Tories and the bosses into revolutionary class consciousness; to ensure that in the struggles of today and those in the future we go forward to our great goal of destroying the Tories and their hateful profit system altogether. That is the revenge that every miner who did battle in 1984-5 deserves. Nothing less will do! ■



Women's support groups: not always confined to the kitchen

John Harris/IFL

# WHERE WE STAND

WORKERS POWER is a revolutionary communist organisation. We base our programme and policies on the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, on the documents of the first four congresses of the Third (Communist) International and on the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International.

Capitalism is an anarchic and crisis-ridden economic system based on production for profit. We are for the expropriation of the capitalist class and the abolition of capitalism. We are for its replacement by socialist production planned to satisfy human need.

Only the socialist revolution and the smashing of the capitalist state can achieve this goal. Only the working class, led by a revolutionary vanguard party and organised into workers' councils and workers' militia can lead such a revolution to victory and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism.

The Labour Party is not a socialist party. It is a bourgeois workers' party—bourgeois in its politics and its practice, but based on the working class via the trade unions and supported by the mass of workers at the polls. We are for the building of a revolutionary tendency in the Labour Party and the LPYS, in order to win workers within those organisations away from reformism and to the revolutionary party.

The misnamed Communist Parties are really Stalinist parties—reformist, like the Labour Party, but tied to the bureaucracy that rules in the USSR. Their strategy of alliances with the bourgeoisie (popular fronts) inflicts terrible defeats on the working class world-wide.

In the USSR and the other degenerate workers' states, Stalinist bureaucracies rule over the working class. Capitalism has ceased to exist but the workers do not hold political power. To open the road to socialism, a political revolution to smash bureaucratic tyranny is needed. Nevertheless we unconditionally defend these states against the attacks of imperialism and against internal capitalist restoration in order to defend the post-capitalist property relations.

In the trade unions we fight for a rank and file movement to oust the reformist bureaucrats, to democratise the unions and win them to a revolutionary action programme based on a system of transitional demands which serve as a bridge between today's struggles and the socialist revolution. Central to this is the fight for workers' control of production.

We are for the building of fighting organisations of the working class—factory committees, industrial unions and councils of action.

We fight against the oppression that capitalist society inflicts on people because of their race, age, sex, or sexual orientation. We are for the liberation of women and for the building of a working class women's movement, not an "all class" autonomous movement. We are for the liberation of all of the oppressed. We fight racism and fascism. We oppose all immigration controls. We are for no platform for fascists and for driving them out of the unions.

We support the struggles of oppressed nationalities or countries against imperialism. We unconditionally support the Irish Republicans fighting to drive British troops out of Ireland. We politically oppose the nationalists (bourgeois and petit bourgeois) who lead the struggles of the oppressed nations. To their strategy we counterpose the strategy of permanent revolution, that is the leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle by the working class with a programme of socialist revolution and internationalism.

In conflicts between imperialist countries and semi-colonial countries, we are for the defeat of "our own" army and the victory of the country oppressed and exploited by imperialism. We are for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. We fight imperialist war not with pacifist pleas but with militant class struggle methods including the forcible disarmament of "our own" bosses.

Workers Power is the British Section of the Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International. The last revolutionary International (Fourth) collapsed in the years 1948-51.

The MRCI is pledged to fight the centrism of the degenerate fragments of the Fourth International and to refound a Leninist Trotskyist International and build a new world party of socialist revolution. We combine the struggle for a re-elaborated transitional programme with active involvement in the struggles of the working class—fighting for revolutionary leadership.

If you are a class conscious fighter against capitalism; if you are an internationalist—join us!

## Fighting the Poll Tax in England and Wales

### Cardiff

CARDIFF AGAINST the Poll Tax (CAPT) was formed at a packed public meeting in December 1988. It has already started to grow into a community based campaign with local groups in a number of areas. One of the most militant groups—in Cathays has already been attacked in the press by a Labour city councillor. It must be doing something right!

Workers Power supporters were involved in setting up CAPT and had to cope with the inertia of the local Labour and trade union leaders as well as the misleadership of the so-called "left".

At the initial planning meeting an unholy alliance of Militant and the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) argued that we needed many small community based campaigns not a city-wide one. But the meeting voted two to one to set up a city-wide campaign and to argue, at its launch, for tactics which included illegality.

Prior to launching the public campaign we sent a delegation to the Oxford Poll Tax conference. But we seemed to be the only people arguing for breaking the law as a way to beat the Tax.

At the public launch Mick Pearson, a NUPE member, told how a group of socialists and trade unionists had built for the meeting with a street petition calling on city and county councillors to defy the Poll Tax.

After this CAPT activists set about building local groups. In the Cathays, Grangetown, Roath and Canton dis-

tricts of Cardiff mass leafletting brought together small but determined groups of local people to fight the Tax. Amongst the local groups, composed often of previously unorganised residents, the idea of breaking the law to fight the Tax is not a problem.

But for these so-called socialists and communists of the Trades Council the reverse is true. The Trades Council held a delegate conference on the Poll Tax on 11 February. Whilst CAPT had organised to get delegates it was defeated in its fight for a class struggle strategy of defiance.

The Trades Council Steering Committee against the Poll Tax is to be run on "consensus". That means there is no official strategy, just a tacit commitment to avoid upsetting the SLD and Plaid Cymru members who nominally oppose the Tax.

There is a real danger now of the "official" labour movement and the unofficial local groups conducting two parallel but separate campaigns. In the name of the "broadest possible campaign" the Labour and union leaders are prepared to embrace the Liberals and nationalists whilst giving working class people who will suffer most from the Tax the cold shoulder.

But CAPT is fighting back with a new leafletting campaign, and a series of actions culminating in a city-wide demonstration on 1 April, two days before the Poll Tax is introduced in Scotland. ■

### Birmingham

IN BIRMINGHAM there has not yet been widespread organisation against the Poll Tax despite the undoubted anger that exists.

At a public meeting at the end of last year, activists heard a representative of the Strathclyde Anti-Poll Tax union urge a mass campaign of non-payment. In contrast Sid Platt from NALGO and the West Midlands' TUC refused to call for non-payment whilst saying he personally would not pay the tax.

Since then a handful of local anti-Poll Tax groups have been set up, but they have yet to draw in significant support from local residents. The anti-Poll Tax campaign initiated by Church Vale Residents' Association however shows the importance of

mobilising already existing forces around opposition to the tax.

The danger is that the few viable local groups will ignore the task of linking up on a city-wide basis and refrain from a head-on fight with the local Labour and trade union leadership.

To combat this danger Workers Power supporters are campaigning around a resolution to Birmingham Trades Council from the MSF which calls for a city-wide anti-Poll Tax committee formed on a delegate basis. This should provide the forces for a campaign to link and strengthen local struggles with the efforts of those in the Labour Party and unions who really want to fight against the Tax. ■

### Sheffield

OVER TWENTY local anti-Poll Tax groups exist all over Sheffield. They are vibrant, working class based campaigns whose work at present consists of meetings, petitions and leaflets aimed at providing information on the Poll Tax.

A recent meeting of the local campaign in the Crookes area, for example, attracted over 140.

In addition to this there is a NALGO Against the Poll Tax and a city-wide campaign. Whilst this was initially set up under the influence of the CPGB it has recently moved left. It is formally committed to a policy of illegal defiance and has organised a petition and lobby for the next city council meeting calling for non-implementation.

Unfortunately, the Council Labour

Group's line on the Tax can be summed up as "pay it"! Having gone along with the cuts for years only a campaign of workers' action will force the Labour council to resist.

Sheffield Trades Council, whilst formally supporting the city-wide campaign, is content to leave the activists to run it. Workers Power supporters have been organising support for a resolution to the next Trades Council calling for a delegate based labour movement conference against the Tax.

Without such a conference, which should set up a delegate based campaign to meet regularly, the local labour movement will remain the passive spectator of the current upsurge in local activity. ■

TOWNS AND cities all over England and Wales are seeing an upsurge in activity against the Poll Tax. Despite the differing levels of struggle the same problems emerge time and again: the lack of co-ordination between local groups and the danger that the spontaneous anger of working class residents will fail to force the traitors who run the unions and Labour Councils to act.

No to passiv



# BUILD COUNCILS OF ACTION



These are not just organisational but *political* problems. Many local anti-Poll Tax groups are led by those who think mass non-payment alone can stop the tax. Much of the information put out by such groups concentrates on the effect the Poll Tax will have on individual ratepayers—massively increasing the money they pay for local services.

But the Poll Tax is not just aimed at making individual workers pay more for services. Labour Councils will have to levy an astronomical Poll Tax to provide decent services. The Tories are relying on this

to demolish Labour's hold on local government. The Poll Tax is a devastating attack on the whole working class.

Anti-Poll Tax groups need to combine agitation for non-payment and non-registration with a fight for *workers' action*. The preparation for the introduction of the tax, the drawing up and sending out of tax demands and the overall administration of tax collection will be handled by council workers. Bills will be delivered by postal workers. Civil servants in the courts and social security offices will be expected to process forms

deducting the tax from workers' incomes at source and sending in the thugs from private firms of bailiffs.

Anti-Poll Tax groups need to fight for these and other sections of workers to *boycott all work connected with the tax*. Unless these tasks are taken on board, the union and council leaders will be able to squander every opportunity for generalised resistance.

At present, many city-wide campaigns are dominated by the left and attract few local workers. This fact leads many, including *Militant*, to argue that city-wide campaigns aren't needed.

Meanwhile, the SWP argue the opposite: that the Poll Tax struggle hinges solely on the actions of council finance workers in NALGO. So they have written off non-payment and other forms of illegal direct action by ratepayers as "impossible".

In fact neither non-payment nor non-collection alone can stop the tax. We need a general strike to do that. And to organise this kind of action it is vital to draw the anger and activity of the local groups into an alliance with organised trade union resistance.

**We need a council of action in every town.**

This means an organisation comprised of delegates from every locality, trade union branch and workplace. It should meet regularly, hammer out a strategy to fight, take democratic votes, and stick by majority decisions.

At present the initiatives to commit trades councils to launching delegate based Poll Tax campaigns can be the first steps towards councils of action. But most trades councils represent very few workers. The fact that most do not even take delegates from stewards' committees, let alone tenants associations, means we need much wider and more representative organisations to forge a united struggle against the tax.

### Dignitaries

The last thing we need is "Committees of 100", with self-important dignitaries defying the tax symbolically while the working class suffers the consequences. Even hundreds of "Committees of 100", will leave resistance passive and atomised. A committee of a hundred *delegates*, each representing a workplace or an estate, is another thing altogether.

Those who say that *Workers Power* "wants soviets [workers' councils] as a precondition for setting up the campaign" (*Labour Briefing* 11.1.89) are well wide of the mark. But to the crime of wanting to see the embryos of workers' councils set up in the Poll Tax campaign, we plead guilty.

Workers' councils and councils of action are not the invention of revolutionary Marxists. From Russia in 1905, Britain in 1926 to Poland and Iran in the last decade workers have reached for this form of organisation which breaks down routine sectionalism and bureaucracy.

Councils of action can build the type of generalised struggle necessary to defeat the tax. At the same time they can demonstrate to millions the superiority of real, *workers' democracy* over the fake capitalist democracy so beloved of Kinnock and the union leaders. In this way, they can develop from organs of struggle against the Poll Tax into organs of struggle against capitalism itself. Defended by a workers' militia and led by a revolutionary party, they can both break the might of the capitalist state and form the basis for working class power. ■

## IN DEFENCE OF MARXISM



# WHY A GENERAL STRIKE?

DO WE really need a general strike to beat the Poll Tax? Is a general strike really possible in today's climate? These questions crop up time and again in the struggle to build a fighting movement against the Poll Tax. *Colin Lloyd* takes on the objections.

THERE IS one overriding reason why we need a general strike to smash the Poll Tax: nothing else can stop it. None of the tactics put forward as magic solutions by the Labour, Stalinist and centrist leaders are sufficient. Non-payment, non-registration, non-implementation by councils and council workers; even at their most effective these tactics can only bring the struggle to the point where the whole working class has to measure its strength against the Tories.

Every one of these tactics can be sabotaged by using the law: anti-union laws against workers who refuse to implement, surcharges for councillors who do the same, stiff fines and "collection at source" for those who refuse to pay.

### Mobilising

This does not mean we should abandon such tactics altogether. In fact the fight to build local campaigns at present revolves around mobilising real forces around non-registration, non-payment and non-collection. But it means fighting with a clear idea of what will be needed once the Tories mobilise their laws, bailiffs and police against illegal acts of resistance.

General strike action, which stops the wheels of industry and the flow of profits into the bosses' bank accounts can bring any capitalist offensive to a halt. Even many of those who argue against the slogan of the general strike realise that some form of mass action is needed. They talk grimly of "committees of 100 becoming committees of 10,000" and of mass anger becoming "uncontrollable".

But they refuse to raise the call for a general strike because it is "impossible". "If you say that only a general strike can beat the tax, we might as well give up now—we'll never get one" they argue.

Revolutionary Marxists don't deny that the balance of class forces in Britain is bad, and getting worse. Each successive defeat of a section of workers has weakened the fighting strength of trade union organisation as a whole. Whilst trade union, and even in some areas shop steward density is being maintained, unofficial union activity is at a very low level.

### Anger

But not only are there signs of its tentative revival in the car industry, the Post Office and the NHS. Thatcher's onslaught on the basic fabric of working class life has generated a deeply felt anger amongst whole layers of the working class who remained passive observers of the trade union battles of her first two terms.

The need to turn that anger into action is recognised by every active anti-Poll Tax fighter. And no-one who recognises that need should start by ruling out the general strike. The class struggle doesn't develop in a straight line, step by step. Those who argue that to turn the tide we first have to rebuild the sectional, workplace organisations, and only then worry

about the big questions facing workers, ignore the experience of every major class upsurge of the century.

Precisely when the "normal channels" are blocked; when peaceful protest, sectional trade union action or electing a Labour government are not immediate or viable answers to a burning question, workers begin to look to the most radical answers.

But there is nothing spontaneous about the path from this moment to the general strike. That is why even a minority of activists, arguing and organising for the general strike can be decisive.

This brings us to the argument raised by many in the Poll Tax movement and in the miners', steel and print strikes before it. "Okay the general strike is necessary, even possible, but we can't go around shouting for a general strike every day."

Here we need to make an important distinction. We can and must prepare the way for a general strike by arguing for it in union conferences, on workers' doorsteps, in the Poll Tax campaigns themselves. Even addressed to the relatively few who will be listening this remains a call to action, not simply a "good idea".

But the moment to launch the call for a general strike, when militants go to their unions, and leaflet their workplaces with the call for a strike now, does not happen every day. It can and must happen at the crucial moments when the Poll Tax is introduced: when councillors or council workers come under legal attack for non-collection, when whole estates are landed in court for non-payment.

### Focusing

The general strike flows not only from the scale and nature of the attack. By drawing unorganised and organised workers together, public and private sector workers, it is the only sure way of focusing the anger of all those affected by the tax into effective action.

And once under way the general strike poses another question: who rules society? Every general strike in history has seen workers' strike committees and councils of action begin to take over the running of society itself. General strikes demonstrate to millions of workers that they wield the greatest weapons in society, that working class power is not an impossible dream but a goal within sight.

A general strike is not a revolution, but it puts revolution on the agenda. For this reason many, including paradoxically many so-called revolutionaries, fear the general strike slogan. They argue it is unrealistic, not necessary and too far ahead of the masses. But it is realistic—more "realistic" than waiting for Kinnock to win an election. It is necessary because none of the solutions offered by reformism, Stalinism or centrism short of the general strike can win.

And for both these reasons it is a demand that thousands of workers can be won to, leaving the cautious "revolutionaries" of the British left not too far ahead of the masses, but way behind. ■

## ve protest!

**The Poll Tax**  
Think it's wrong, sign here.

Local Protest against and anger that this measure causes because it's unfair. An will pay the same as a cause most of us will council services. because it allows an to demand personal takes decisions away elect and gives them s, because Poll Tax h to collect as rates. st will tell the Govern- bring ment

This is your chance to register your protest against Poll Tax. Your name can make the difference. When you join with the many that have already declared themselves, you make sure that a concerted cry of protest is heard throughout Britain.

If you'd like to be included, or want further information, sign your name. Fill out your details and send the whole advertisement to the address below. We'll add your name to our campaign.

Labour says that tax should be fair and based on ability to pay. Poll Tax is an outrage. Join us in fighting it.

**Labour**

*Neil Kinnock*

Tax is undemocratic, unjust and fundamentally wrong. Please add your's National Protest.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

(please tick) £50 to help with the Poll Tax campaign. (please tick) I would like to join the Labour Party. Return this entire advert to: The Labour Party, Room 311, FREEPOST, London SE17 1BR. Thank you.

**The Poll Tax PROTEST**

Neil Turner/Insight

# LD CILS TION!

# THE LONGEST WAR

## SINN FEIN ARD FHEIS

THE 1989 Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (conference) took place after a year of set backs for the republican movement on both military and political fronts. The IRA's campaign against Crown forces was, in *An Phoblacht's* words "marred by the deaths of civilians". It was marred too by the deaths of no less than 14 IRA fighters at the hands of the British state.

On the political front the Sinn Fein leadership had pinned its hopes on the building of a pan-nationalist alliance with Haughey's Fianna Fail and Hume's SDLP. But despite the activities of Britain's murder squads, its brazen cover-ups, censorship and rigged justice, the pan-nationalist alliance failed to materialise. Instead 1989 opened with all the best cards in the hands of Thatcher and Tom King.

Constitutional nationalism has not been lured into a bloc with Sinn Fein. On the contrary, Thatcher and King have consolidated their own links with Haughey and Hume. The secret talks between the SDLP and the unionist parties revealed that the Tories are well along the road to launching yet another constitutional initiative in the North with the full participation of Dublin and the SDLP.

In this context Gerry Adams' speech to the Ard Fheis showed a republican leadership falling back on to well rehearsed left rhetoric. Adams called for the building of a mass 32 county anti-imperialist movement. This should fight not only British imperialism but "the ruling clique in Ireland who uphold above all the interests of British and multi-national capitalism in Ireland".

Workers Power's fraternal organisation the Irish Workers Group (Irish section of the MRCI) have argued consistently for a fightback by the entire Irish working class on all fronts: against imperialist and Free State repression, unemployment, cuts, low pay and women's oppression North and South. But this is not what Adams means by a mass 32 county anti-imperialist movement.

Adams speaks of national and social oppression being "two sides of the one coin"—the capitalist system. Sinn Fein's concrete proposals for a mass campaign, however, leave out any reference to the only class force that can actually challenge capitalist rule—the entire Irish working class.

A mass anti-imperialist movement which really fought national and social oppression would place organising workers for direct industrial action against the major planks of exploitation and oppression North and South at the centre of its activity.

Despite its rhetoric about capitalism the Sinn Fein leadership will not do this. In the North the guerrilla fighters conduct the armed struggle against British rule while nationalist workers are left to passively support the military campaign and the fight for social reforms at the ballot box. In the whole island Sinn Fein believes that the mass movement must embrace all forms of "social, economic and cultural oppression"

under the slogan of "national self-determination".

The first duty of British workers is to oppose the imperialist occupation of the North and support the right of self determination for the whole Irish people. But Irish workers cannot achieve real and lasting national independence without confronting the question: "which class will rule in a united Ireland?"

Like all petit bourgeois nationalists Adams tries to avoid the question. "National rights", Adams says, can solve the problems of all Irish workers, not just the besieged minority in the North. This can be done, he claims, by building a "new democracy now".

What this means in practice was demonstrated at the meeting called to launch the new campaign. Pro-capitalist right wingers like Kevin Boland, and Southern trade union bureaucrats like Phil Flynn were key signatories to the "new democracy" call.

Flynn, a Sinn Fein member and General Secretary of the LGPSU was the architect of the "Programme for National Recovery". This was the agreement between the unions and Fianna Fail under which Haughey has launched his savage attack on Irish workers' living standards.



Adams—left rhetoric

The high hopes of an alliance with Haughey and Hume are now dead. But the cross class alliance and the refusal to fight for workers' action remain at the centre of the new initiative.

Having failed with the organ grinders Sinn Fein is left talking to the monkeys. Nationalist writers, nationalist feminists, cultural activists, clergy, folk singers, community workers and, as a minor component, trade unionists are targeted by Sinn Fein for a political dialogue. But the Adams leadership has nothing new to talk about.

British workers must use the current wave of repression and censorship against Irish republicans to re-launch a mass solidarity movement with all those fighting imperialism in Northern Ireland. But they should harbour no illusions in the socialist rhetoric of Sinn Fein.

Despite the heroism of its military fighters and civilian supporters the Republican movement remains at an impasse. The task is still for revolutionary communists in Ireland to fight for workers' action as the key to the struggle against imperialism and to win the best fighters to the building of an all-Ireland revolutionary workers' party. ■

# Solidarity with Khomeini's victims

*Workers Power interviewed a member of the Campaign Against Repression in Iran. While we disagree with the campaign's exclusion of the Tudeh Party, Workers Power is committed to building CARI as a labour movement based solidarity campaign. We urge all unions and Labour Party branches to affiliate to CARI*

**WP: What is the background of the Campaign Against Repression in Iran (CARI) and what are the aims of the campaign?**  
CARI: We want to build a campaign that is mainly oriented to the labour movement in Britain. Our campaign does represent the aspirations of the Iranian left in Britain and we are not shy about that fact.

There are many other campaigns which present themselves as broad based and which comprise many different currents of opposition to Khomeini's regime. But these groupings often include pro-Shah and bourgeois elements. If these triumphed as a result of the overthrow of Khomeini frankly we would not want them back. The overthrow of the Shah was a positive result of the Iranian revolution.

Therefore we did not want to mix up our campaign with such counter-revolutionary elements. So CARI is a left campaign and not ashamed of that. It is a campaign that tries to service the Iranian left.

**WP: What do you mean by service the left?**

CARI: Organising activities which will help the left currents who are being attacked by Khomeini's regime inside Iran. We hope to strengthen those struggles inside Iran which we consider to be in the interests of the working class and its allies. Obviously we try to be as broad based as possible, but within the framework of emphasising working class issues and orienting to the British workers' movement.

**WP: What sort of issues?**

CARI: We take up and try to support struggles by the working class against the effects of capitalism, against the repression of working class organisations and strikes. We support the struggles for democratic rights, by women for example, and we support the struggles of nationalities, like the Kurds, who are being attacked by the regime.

**WP: Does CARI involve a broad range of the Iranian left?**

CARI: Not as wide a range as we would like, to be honest, but it is the most broadly based left solidarity campaign that exists in exile today. Rifts within the left came about after the revolution and they have not yet been resolved. Campaigns and currents exist around the Tudeh Party [pro-Moscow Communist Party], the Mojahedin and others.

The differences between these campaigns are quite important. For example the Tudeh was, until recently, pro-regime. It helped the regime repress other sections of the left. Even though it is being attacked itself at the moment it has maintained links with the regime. The Mojahedin linked up with the Iraqi regime itself during

the war. We cannot support these types of campaigns.

**WP: Does this mean that you exclude the possibility of a united front with the Tudeh Party and its campaigns?**

CARI: Yes. It would not be an effective united front. They are a real security risk. If we had a meeting with them one Tudeh Party member might participate. But ten potential supporters of the campaign would stay away because they know that the Tudeh Party will betray them. Some of its leaders are still pro-regime. This would undermine an effective united front.

**WP: We accept the problems of security, but you are in danger of sectarianism. If the Tudeh are being repressed then, despite their past crimes, we would defend them.**

This would prove to Tudeh members that the revolutionary left, unlike their own Stalinist party, are the real defenders of the workers' movement.

CARI: No the Tudeh Party is discredited on the Iranian left. Its pro-regime stance in the past means that it has lost a lot of support. Of course we defend it against repression. We do not support the regime's attacks on it. But this does not mean that we can take the risk of engaging it in a united front which will expose militants to potential repression if the Tudeh party once again makes its peace with the regime.

**WP: But another problem, in terms of building a solidarity movement in the British labour movement, is that many workers, influenced by the Communist Party or its fragments, will ask why they should support CARI instead of the Tudeh sponsored solidarity campaigns. By arguing for a united front we can undercut these objections.**

CARI: When we approach British workers we are clear that we do not say to them, support us, not another campaign. That would be sectarian. We explain to them what our campaign is about, why we are not united with Tudeh campaigns, or the Mojahedin's campaign for that matter.

We say support us even if you carry on supporting the other campaigns. By being honest and by patiently explaining the positive things we are doing and the political differences that separate us from the Tudeh Party, we believe that we can win people over to us.

Our reason for being so firm on this point is that we recognise that while solidarity from the British labour movement is vital, the backbone of any campaign will come from the Iranian community in exile. If we united with the Tudeh Party we simply would not win

many people from this community.

**WP: The present round of executions obviously poses the need for increased solidarity and CARI has helped organise a series of actions protesting against the Iranian regime. How do you explain the news situation? Does it indicate that the regime is facing a serious crisis?**

CARI: There is a serious political and economic crisis in Iran at the moment. The oil money that kept the regime going during the war is declining. The situation is so serious that the regime is increasingly unable to afford to pay for the food imports that the country needs. The result of this is that the masses themselves are finding it ever more difficult to get hold of the basic necessities. Added to this is that the regime has had to subsidise the urban poor, the unemployed in the cities. This sector of society has grown. For example Tehran has swelled from a population of four million at the time of the revolution to eight or nine million today.

The countryside has been devastated and the war with Iraq has resulted in terrible damage to the cities and to the nation's infrastructure. The costs of reconstruction for the regime are enormous. In this situation the country's capitalists are hoarding, not investing. Inflation is rampant. And all of this has political consequences.

The regime needs to find more money. It is doing this not only by attacking the living standards of the masses, but by cutting the budgets of the so called revolutionary institutions. In particular it is trying to cut its expenditure on the revolutionary guards, the Pasdaran, a force which now numbers 300,000. But this is a powerful force and attempts to weaken it are provoking opposition, with the danger that sections of it will link up with the "radicals", or at least sections of them, within the regime itself.

This is the background to the present round of executions. The dominant faction of the regime, led by Rafsanjani, is carrying out repression to prevent a possible link up between the Tudeh Party, any dissident factions within the Pasdaran and the "radicals".

At the same time though the regime is trying to improve its image with the West, in order to get credits and aid to assist with the process of economic reconstruction.

This creates the situation in which democratic rights are under fierce attack and efforts are being made to make Iran look like a stable country no longer wracked by revolutionary turmoil and no longer dominated by the "revolutionary institutions" like the Pasdaran.

The divisions within the regime are being sharpened as a result of this situation and there is every possibility that the crisis will develop further. For these reasons it is vital that the struggles of the working class and its allies are given all the support possible.

For more information contact:

**CARI c/o,  
BM (CARI),  
London WC1N 3XX**

IN THE last week of January the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) dropped a bombshell into the negotiations over Central America. In a dramatic reversal of their previous positions they declared their willingness to declare a ceasefire and enter the campaign for the Presidential elections due to take place in March.

Their conditions were that the elections be postponed until September to give them time to organise, that an independent electoral commission be organised to oversee the elections and that the army be confined to barracks during the campaign.

The proposals were immediately rejected outright by the Government and the right wing parties which dominate the National Assembly. The President and Christian Democrat (CD), Jose Napoleon Duarte, rejected the proposal to postpone elections as "unconstitutional". Fidel Chavez Mena the CD candidate in March said likewise.

### Not negotiable

The extreme right wing Alianza Renovadora Nacionalista (ARENA) declared "the state of law is not negotiable". Of course the fact that the workers' and peasants' "constitutional rights" are violated every day by the Army and ARENA run death squads counts for nothing to these hypocrites.

However within a month all these parties had reversed their positions, suddenly discovering that the constitution was more flexible than they had thought. For in the intervening period Washington had spoken. Once the State Department had declared the FMLN's proposals "worthy of sub-

## EL SALVADOR

# Guerrillas turn to popular front



Leaders of the neo-fascist ARENA—party of the death squads

BY JOHN MCKEE

stantive and serious consideration" these so-called independent parties rapidly toed the line. With serious talks now underway there is just the possibility of a significant change in the political situation in El Salvador.

What led the FMLN to reverse its previous policy? Since the armed struggle began in earnest in 1980 the FMLN has called for boycotts of all elections and done its utmost to sabotage them militarily. From its low point in 1983-84, when the movement looked on the verge of defeat, the FMLN has recovered its ground, and even the USA admits it now controls almost half the country. But while the guerrillas have achieved successes it has been at an enormous cost.

The economy is virtually collapsing due to the civil war and economic sabotage. It has only been kept afloat by American dollars. Between 1980 and 1986 the per capita GNP fell by nearly 17%. Real wages are estimated to have fallen by 50% in the same period, with over 50% of the population being unemployed or only partially employed. The army bloated with US military aid running at over \$600 million a year (105% of El Salvador's budget!) has grown ever more powerful, expanding from a force of 10,000 in 1980 to over 50,000 today. It is estimated that 70,000 people have died in the civil war so far, and now the death squads are more active than at any time since the early 1980s.

### Strength

Two factors influenced the FMLN's decision. First was the growing strength of the extreme right. The ARENA party, notorious for its role—along with the army—in organising the death squads of 1980-83, defeated the Christian Democrats in the 1988 Assembly elections and is now the dominant party in the legislature. All the indications are that this neo-fascist party will win the Presidential elections in March if the FMLN launches another successful boycott.

Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, the real leader of ARENA, has been taking a backseat recently. His image as the organiser of the as-

sassination of Archbishop Romero of San Salvador in 1980, makes this necessary. His "respectable" frontman and candidate Freddy Cristiani has been visiting the US and European capitals explaining how much he admires Pinochet and... Margaret Thatcher!

The second factor influencing the FMLN's decision is the growing war weariness of the masses and the unpopularity of the economic sabotage policy. It is these factors that led the FMLN to abandon its long held demands for participation in any transitional government and the integration of the "two" armies.

The new US administration is clearly looking for some way out of the state of affairs in El Salvador which could leave it facing an ARENA President whose party has declared "total war" on the opposition. Such an outcome or the emergence of a military/civilian junta could lead to a loss of Democratic support in Congress and with it the massive military aid programme to El Salvador.

### Support

The FMLN has announced its support for the candidate of the Convergencia Democratica, Guillermo Ungo of the FDR, who also has the support of the Socialist International. The Christian Democrats have offered places for Ungo and others in their cabinet should they win the election. In short the FMLN/FDR is preparing a popular front with the Christian Democrats courtesy of Washington. The scene is set for the USA to throw its weight against ARENA, and behind a Christian Democracy revitalised by the prospects of a coalition with the leaders of the "popular forces".

The danger facing the workers and peasants of El Salvador is that after many years of struggle they will now have to pay the price for the bankrupt strategy of their leaders. Not only will the popular front leave power and property in the hands of the capitalists and landowners. It will be under constant check and supervision by the Washington backed armed forces. Like all popular fronts it will be a noose round the neck of the masses in El Salvador, not a way out of poverty and repression. ■

## SOUTH AFRICA

# The case of Winnie Mandela

BY JOAN MAYER

PRO-APARTHEID forces in South Africa are making the most of the accusations against Winnie Mandela and her bodyguard, the "Mandela football team". The National Party government wants to see the Mandela name discredited. It aims either to dampen the overwhelming pressure for Mandela's release or to create a climate in which he could be released without sparking a renewed onslaught on apartheid by the youth and workers.

The majority of anti-apartheid leaders from trade union, democratic and youth movements have now distanced themselves from Mrs Mandela. This appears to confirm that Winnie Mandela's bodyguard is implicated in the abduction and murder of other black youths.

Whatever the truth, socialists should oppose the apartheid state's use of the murder to send its armed police on yet more raids into Soweto and to further persecute Winnie Mandela. She has been subject to banning and internal exile and lives in constant fear for her life. The present events bear all the hallmarks of a feud stirred up by the dirty tricks department of the South African security services.

It is no accident that the scandal

has broken now, when the National Party government has Nelson Mandela imprisoned in a house, in what is supposed to be a stage of "controlled release". The Nats are keen to get the spring elections out of the way before having to make any further significant moves towards liberalisation.

These events hold lessons for the movement against apartheid. The "mother of the nation" personality cult around Winnie Mandela protected her from criticism that was being voiced both of her lifestyle and the thuggery of the football team by the working class community in Soweto.

Community leaders should be subject to election and recall, not inherit their positions. The black working class in South Africa needs to develop its own revolutionary leadership through building its own party.

Such a party would lead in building action committees in townships and factories in which workers can democratically decide on policies and action, elect their own representatives and form their own militia.

This is the way to counter the feuding and divisions which have seriously weakened community organisation in the current period. ■

## Salvadorean militant's visit

DEATH SQUAD activity continues unabated against the workers' movement in El Salvador. In our article on the El Salvador Communications Workers Union, ASTTEL (see *Workers Power 112*, December 1988) we reported that Jesus Rosales Vazquez, an ASTTEL militant, had been abducted. Since that article appeared the comrade has been found stabbed to death.

We also reported that Jose Mazariego, a leading figure in ASTTEL and in the UNTS—the national trade union centre—had also had a number of death threats made against him. Since that time the comrade has been forced to live in a semi-clandestine manner as threats to his life have been received at his home and the UNTS office where he works.

This comrade has been invited by the National Communications Union to visit Britain as part of a European tour on behalf of his union. Several meetings have been arranged so far across the country. Further details can be obtained from the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign (01-704 9849).

The campaign is asking for letters of protest about these death threats to be sent to:

Colonel Mauricio Vivez Vides Casanova  
Presidente de ANTEL  
San Salvador  
El Salvador  
Telex 20 107 PB SAL

General Eugenio Vides Casanova  
Ministro de Defensa  
San Salvador  
El Salvador  
Telex 20 446 PB SAL

## Mayekiso tour

KHOLA MAYEKISO, an officer of the black South African union NUMSA, is in Britain for a speaking tour between 5 March and 2 April.

Khola is the wife of NUMSA General Secretary Moses Mayekiso—accused of treason by the apartheid regime. His trial is due to resume in April. The South African government held Moses in jail from June 1986, when he was detained,

until he was bailed last December.

Meetings and events are being organised by regional TUCs, and these will be an opportunity to learn about the workers' struggle in South Africa and discuss solidarity work. There may still be a chance to organise further meetings—contact the TUC International Department (01-636 4030) for further details.



# the MRCI

## NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

GRUPPE ARBEITERMACHT

### Anti-fascist conference in West Germany

The growing strength of fascist and neo-fascist organisations in West Germany shown by the recent success of the Republicans in the Berlin city elections, where they won 7.5% of the vote, demonstrates the importance of building an effective anti-fascist campaign. A big step towards this could have been taken at the national Action Conference Against Neo-fascism and Racism, held in Bremen on the same weekend as the Berlin elections.

The conference attracted over 800 people and a wide range of organisations. This showed the mounting awareness of the importance of opposing the fascists but also ensured considerable differences over the strategy to be employed against them. For example, the various Stalinist-influenced parties and groups, the Volksfront, German Communist Party and Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany all favoured a rigorous enforcement of the constitutional ban on fascist organisations while the Greens opposed this because it would confirm the supporters of the fascist groups in their opposition to democracy!

The Gruppe Arbeitermacht (GAM) the West German section of the MRCI, who participated in the conference opposed any reliance on the state to ban fascists. It pointed to the way such bans in the past had actually been used to gag the left while the right continued to receive tacit protection. Against such a strategy, the GAM concentrated on the need for effective measures to prevent the fascists from mobilising, to protect their potential victims, especially in immigrant communities, by self defence groups and the formation of a united front of groups committed to stopping the fascists.

In the end the conference committed itself to a combination of empty slogans—"Together against neo-fascism and racism"—and ill-defined actions. Everything about the conference and the movement around it underlined the importance of the continued intervention of the GAM in this milieu to win comrades, not only to effective anti-fascist action but to the only political strategy that can eradicate the soil in which fascism grows, socialist revolution. ■

IRISH WORKERS GROUP

### Self-determination conference

THE IRISH Workers Group participated on 18 February in a national "planning meeting" of "prominent individuals" from the left and republican movement. It was organised by Sinn Fein members in Dublin supposedly to lay the basis for a new mass movement against the British presence in Ireland. The Sinn Feiners argued for a propaganda movement whose aim should be to persuade the southern petit bourgeoisie and the trade unions that their social grievances were the result of national oppression and could be addressed by the slogan of "National self-determination". By this means they believe they can create popular sympathy in the South for the building, later, of a mass nationalist movement to overcome the isolation of the anti imperialist struggle in the North East.

The IWG rejects this purely propaganda perspective of how national oppression can be linked to the class struggle in the south. (see report on Ard Fheis page 10). But the IWG also rejects the economic perspective of the Cliffite Socialist Workers Movement (SWM) who argued at the conference that imperialism was no more a factor in the class struggle in Southern Ireland than in any other European country! Nevertheless the IWG initiated a block with the SWM delegates to turn the conference towards the perspective of a united front for action against every concrete aspect of repression, with the overall goals of winning British Troops Out Now and the disbandment of all the security forces of the six county sectarian state.

This joint resolution was carried, with some republican support, 17 for and 13 against. The Sinn Fein representatives however insisted that this decision was not compatible with the main resolution carried which called for a series of conferences amongst different interest groups under the general theme of "national self-determination". On a further vote, Sinn Fein had its way and the resolution was defeated. ■

### HUGO BLANCO

HUGO BLANCO, a well known socialist and leader of peasants' organisations in Peru has been seized by police and charged with armed subversion. Blanco, a central committee member of the PUM of Peru, was arrested on 9 February during a police onslaught on a strike of the peasant organisation (CCP) of Huacali. Blanco, along with 200 peasants are being held in Pulcalpa prison. Urgent letters/telegrams from trade unions and labour movement organisations protesting the arrests and demanding their release should be sent to:

Alan Garcia, Presidente de la Republica  
Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza de Armas, Lima, Peru

The Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International

The MRCI  
Arbeiterstandpunkt (Austria)  
Gruppe Arbeitermacht (Germany)  
Irish Workers Group  
Pouvoir Ouvrier (France)  
Workers Power Group (Britain)

Fraternal groups:  
Poder Obrero (Peru)  
Guia Obrera (Bolivia)  
These groups are in the process of discussions with the MRCI with the aim of becoming affiliated sections.

# Stalinist retreat in Kampuchea

Gorbachev's global retreat in the face of imperialist pressure is having an impact in Indochina. Arthur Merton explains what the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea will mean for the Indochinese masses

TEN YEARS ago the Vietnamese army invaded Pol Pot's Kampuchea. The murderous nightmare that Pol Pot's regime had plunged the country into had seriously threatened Vietnam's own precarious stability.

The Stalinist regime in Vietnam did not overthrow Pol Pot in order to liberate Kampuchea, as many on the left, particularly the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, claimed. They did so to install a regime, under Heng Samrin, amenable to Vietnamese interests and in order to secure their dominance within Indochina.

For this reason it was necessary to oppose the Vietnamese invasion and explain the necessity for a political revolution, by the Kampuchean masses themselves, in order to oust the Pol Pot gang.

The barbarity of this regime was itself a product of Stalinism, of the policy of "socialism in one country". The mass killings, the total collectivisation of agriculture and the evacuation of the cities were part of a coherent, albeit deeply reactionary, programme of reconstruction on the basis of economic autarchy. A more "moderate" style of Stalinism was no answer for the Kampuchea masses.

We argued in 1979 that the Vietnamese Stalinists would be prepared to abandon Kampuchea to imperialism if it suited their bureaucratic interests. The small country, ravaged by the effect of US imperialism's merciless bombardment during the Indochina war of liberation, could only secure real and lasting national liberation through political revolution and the transition to socialism.

We have been proved 100% right. Vietnam has set September 1989 as the date for the withdrawal of its last troops. In the meantime the Hanoi Stalinists are working overtime to stitch up a deal, both with the imperialist backed ASEAN countries, and with the coalition of imperialist and Chinese backed Khmer forces that oppose the pro-Vietnamese regime in Phnom Penh (the Kampuchean capital).

The Vietnamese withdrawal should be understood in the context of the world wide retreat of

Stalinism being orchestrated by the Kremlin. From Angola to Afghanistan, the Soviet bureaucracy is seeking a rapprochement with imperialism. A pro-imperialist settlement in Kampuchea is very much part of the Soviet game plan.

The Soviet Union underwrites Vietnam's fragile economy to a massive degree and finances a large part of its military budget. This is one more reason for forcing a Vietnamese pull out as well as a means of putting pressure on Hanoi to speed it up.

Gorbachev is also set on healing the Sino-Soviet rift. China has always backed the anti-Vietnamese Khmer coalition. The coalition's figurehead, the former ruler of Cambodia, Prince Sihanouk, and Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge organisation both receive Chinese aid. As the first summit between China and the USSR since 1959 approaches in May the Gorbachevites are keen to get a compromise settlement in Kampuchea that would appease the bureaucrats in Peking.

### Wheeler-dealing

The Vietnamese and the regime they sponsor in Phnom Penh are embroiled in this wheeler-dealing. They are executing their own version of *perestroika* inside Kampuchea. Under the leadership of the 37 year old Prime Minister, Hun Sen, Kampuchea has moved dramatically along the "marketisation" road.

In July 1988 a package of "reforms" went through legalising numerous forms of private enterprise. A new investment law was passed to attract foreign capital with the immediate result that Japan, Thailand and Indonesia started moving money in. One government official candidly explained:

"We must try to develop a strata of businessmen to build our economy, while the state tries to protect the poorest people."

So much for the transition to socialism! The Vietnamese and Kampuchean Stalinists are eagerly fulfilling the Thai prime minister's recent injunction to transform Indochina "from a battlefield into a market place".

At the level of foreign policy Vietnam and Kampuchea have been busy as well. Hun Sen was welcomed in Thailand and Indonesia. The Vietnamese deputy foreign minister made a recent unscheduled visit to Peking. The Indochinese Stalinists are going along with the Gorbachevite foreign policy retreat.

The outcome of the present negotiations could well result in the restoration of an imperialist backed regime in Kampuchea. Both China and the Soviet Union have called for a provisional government headed by Sihanouk. They have both supported the installation of a United Nations "peace-keeping" force to oversee the transition. Both proposals are in accord with ASEAN's and imperialism's objectives.

There remain some important obstacles to this outcome. The Khmer coalition of Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front want to get rid of the Hun Sen regime prior to any elections. Vietnam and Hun Sen fear that this will strengthen the ability of the heavily armed, albeit now weakened, Khmer Rouge, to reassert its power.

Hun Sen and Hanoi rightly, in their own terms, fear this will disrupt the chances of the existing regime and Vietnam retaining any influence inside Kampuchea. They are therefore opposing both the resignation of the government in advance of elections and the permanent presence of an international "peace-keeping" force. Moreover, once the Vietnamese withdraw there is every possibility that old feuds between the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann will re-emerge.

The transition, then, could well prove a stormy and violent one. In this situation it is vital that the masses, not only in Kampuchea, but throughout Indochina, chart a course that is completely independent of and opposed to, the plans of the Stalinists. They must fight against the restoration of capitalism in Kampuchea by taking the road of political revolution against their bureaucratic rulers under the slogan of a free and equal Socialist Federation of all Indochina. ■

## Repression in Turkey

A FLOURISHING holiday resort with every modern convenience and burgeoning trade links with Western Europe—that is the vision Premier Turgut Ozal has of Turkey in the 1990s.

But the new "democratic" Turkey is no holiday camp for the workers and peasants who live there. An average wage of £25 a week and inflation at 84% see to that.

So does a legal system based directly on Mussolini's model. Any political or trade union resistance is instantly crushed and all socialist organisations are outlawed. Since Ozal came to power five years ago the staff of various socialist and progressive publications have been sentenced to an estimated 5,000 years imprisonment.

Two socialist leaders, Nihat Sargin and Haydar Kutlu, who returned to Ankara to found an avowedly "constitutional" social demo-

cratic party were arrested immediately they left the plane, along with their lawyers. They have been tortured and are still in prison awaiting trial. A similar fate was awaiting another group of trade unionists and political figures who returned from exile in Western Europe before Christmas.

There is widespread detention and torture of political and trade union activists. On top of this there is the plight of the ten million Kurds who live in Turkey. They are banned from campaigning for their independence. And when Iraq began its genocidal chemical attacks on Kurds near northern Turkey last year, Ozal was quick to ensure that the border was sealed leaving many thousands to die at the hands of the Ba'athists.

This might hinder Turkey's acceptance into the EC a little but Margaret Thatcher will do what she can to calm the troubled waters.

Human rights, a favourite topic in other quarters of the globe, was absent from the agenda during her visit to Ankara in April 1988.

This hypocrisy is hardly surprising and its motivation not difficult to find with the prospect of losing valuable contracts to the USA and East Asia at the back of her mind.

Turkey's entry into the European imperialist's club is not a matter of concern for British workers. In or out of the EC this "democratic" regime will continue to repress the Turkish and Kurdish working class. But a victory for those workers would be a blow for Turkish and British bosses alike.

We must raise the need for solidarity with our Turkish and Kurdish sisters and brothers rotting in Turkish jails. Links must be built with Turkish trade unions and those in struggle. In this way we can help put an end to Ozal's holiday plans. ■

ON 8 MARCH 1988 thousands of Palestinian women marked International Women's Day by demonstrating against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. They were met with live ammunition, rubber bullets, tear-gas and brutal beatings from the Israeli soldiers.

Since the beginning of the current uprisings in the Occupied Territories in December 1987, at least 60 Palestinian women have been killed and over 3,000 detained. During the first six months of the *intifada* an estimated 728 women had miscarriages as a result of tear-gas or beatings.

The participation of women in the street demonstrations, the strikes and the boycotts of Israeli food has proved essential in the continuing struggle. The existence of women's organisations and committees in the territories for over ten years laid the basis for what many describe as the "backbone" of the *intifada*.

With thousands of men detained or exiled, with women and men forced to travel daily into Israel proper to work, the women in the towns and villages play a vital role in ensuring the survival of the community.

### Literacy

The women's organisations have arranged production and distribution of local food in a situation where the Israelis have tried to force the Occupied Territories to become dependent on food imports which they control. Literacy campaigns for women have been organised to increase their participation in the political struggle.

Provision of services locally such as health care, nurseries and welfare for the families of prisoners have been essential as the Israelis have denied Palestinians access to hospitals and Israeli welfare provision.

The mobilisation of women for these activities, combined with the increased visibility of women and girls in demonstrations and street fighting has led to women raising broader social questions concerning their own oppression.

Amal Wahdan, a founding member of the Palestine Federation of Women's Action Committees, explained during an interview how the struggle has effected women who previously adhered to strict Muslim traditions:

"More women who had been covered are now coming out. All of these things are tied together: we have to fight against social tradition and simultaneously against the Occupation. The *intifada* is the greatest opportunity for women to show men what they can do. In the Territories their participation is growing, although there is intense harassment. Women are not afraid to stand up and say no. Women are beaten, insulted and their houses are demolished. Women are fighting the *intifada* day by day." (*Race and Class*, Vol 30 No 3, January-March 1989)

### Restrictions

When women become active in political struggles they face many obstacles. The Islamic traditional values are particularly strong in Gaza where many women have to struggle against backward ideas and restrictions placed on them by their families and communities. Through the creation of women's organisations such ideas and practices can be challenged by women collectively.

The Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees was founded on International Women's Day 1978. Many of the political organisations of the Palestinian

## PALESTINIAN WOMEN

# "...fighting the *intifada* day by day"

For 15 months Palestinian women have been in the front line of the uprising against Israeli occupation. Helen Ward looks at their struggle for liberation



Jez Coulson/Insight

liberation movement have their own women's organisations, both in exile and within the Occupied Territories.

Whilst these groups have successfully mobilised women, many are still concerned about the eventual outcome of their heroic struggle. All too often where liberation struggles have secured victories against imperialism, the leaders of the newly created "independent" state turn against the masses who have brought victory. For women in Algeria and in Iran for example, traditional values

were reinforced and the mobilised women pushed back—into the home, behind the veil.

Women must organise to prevent this. They must ensure that their demands are fought for as part of the struggle for national liberation. They also have to organise opposition to those nationalist leaders whose compromises with imperialism will leave capitalist exploitation and oppression in place. The present strategy of the leadership of the Palestinian struggle, the PLO, poses just such a danger for women.

Whilst the militant fighters of the West Bank and Gaza have revealed both their own tenacity and potential power, and their total irreconcilability to the Israeli state, the leaders of the PLO are busy trying to negotiate a two-state solution. This would leave Israel intact and set up a separate Palestinian state in areas of poor land and little industrial development.

For the oppressed peoples living in the Occupied Territories such a "solution" leaves them still without their land, with an economy still thoroughly controlled by the

Israeli bosses, and with the US backed Israeli state fully armed on the doorstep, ready to intervene if any struggles threaten their economic or military interests.

For the working class and peasant women of Palestine the creation of a mini-state is no solution. The key problems they face are the lack of land, the lack of industrialisation and decent employment.

Health care, nurseries and social provision of welfare are essential for Palestinian women. With a small, impoverished and isolated state the resources for these will simply not be there. It would remain economically exploited by Israel and the USA.

Women organising co-operatives for food production and distribution in the current state of occupation believe that they are creating the "socio-economic infrastructure" which would be the basis of a self-sufficient mini-state. But with Israel intact, self-sufficiency would at best be the generalisation of poverty rather than the production of greater resources.

### Struggles

Women in Palestine need to link their current struggles to a programme for real national liberation, an end to the Zionist Israeli state and the creation of a secular workers' state of Palestine. They must guarantee their own interests through a relentless struggle against Islamic fundamentalism.

In the women's and neighbourhood committees, women can organise to ensure that the Palestinian masses—the working class and the landless peasantry—are not sold short. Women can fight to maintain the independence of these committees and will be crucial in creating a new working class leadership for the Palestinian struggle. ■

## IRELAND

# Left union leader bought off?

IRISH TRADE unions have had a dramatic year. First IDATU, the shopworkers' union, and most militant of the Irish unions, was suspended. Their General Secretary, John Mitchell, was expelled from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. His crime? Being too active in opposing discrimination against nationalist workers in the North.

Then, in November last year, the IDATU executive summarily sacked Mitchell for his militant leadership. A "Campaign for the re-instatement of John Mitchell" was organised, publishing a statement which ended "I have never walked away from a fight or betrayed my principles". Then things changed. Mitchell was offered a substantial amount of "his members'" money to drop the campaign. He accepted!

As a face-saving exercise, he is now trying to organise a vague campaign for trade union democracy. Despite Workers Power's sis-

ter organisation, the Irish Workers' Group, publicly challenging Mitchell, he has refused to reveal the sum he has pocketed and the conditions of acceptance. The affair illustrates an important point about the nature of trade union bureaucracy.

From being a do-nothing union, policing shopworkers on the bosses' behalf, over the last six years of Mitchell's leadership IDATU began to officially back and even encourage strikes. An all-out strike was organised throughout Dunne's stores, the biggest chain in Ireland, against handling South African goods. IDATU also got fifteen of Woolworth's eighteen stores out.

Tactics developed from picketing to simultaneous occupations, booting management out of the stores. And this militancy brought results. Wages, conditions and compensation offers were considerably improved. In answer to pessimists who can see no answer to the

difficulties of organising shop workers in Britain, the involvement of part-time women workers in IDATU is one example of what can be done.

Under Mitchell IDATU also supported a united Ireland, organising nationalist shopworkers in the North and campaigning against both discrimination and the complicity of other unions with discriminatory practices.

All this burst the hornet's nest of reaction in the ICTU bureaucracy. IDATU was suspended and Mitchell eventually sacked. The reason the bureaucrats were able to get away with this is clear.

As the Irish Workers Group have correctly argued for years, Mitchell never fought to transform IDATU as a whole, to base it on its rank and file membership, with officials elected and recallable, and paid the members' average wage.

Instead Mitchell's base was a few "left" officials in the union. Not one of them has stood by Mitchell. They were easily shut up by the threat of losing their cushy jobs. Mitchell still has not learnt his lesson. His fight for re-instatement was not taken up vigorously amongst the rank and file.

Relying on the election of left officials is not enough. A fight needs to be launched for thoroughgoing rank and file democracy throughout the Irish unions and for class struggle unionism, North and South. ■

"THE SOVIET army didn't start this war: they walked into the one we already had going." The PDPA member who said this was right. A civil war was raging in Afghanistan before the Kremlin sent in its troops. Nine years on, and with the Soviet troops now withdrawn, that very same civil war is still going on. It is poised to enter its most decisive and bloody phase.

In 1980 when the Kremlin launched its invasion *Workers Power* recognised that the entry of Soviet troops had not changed the fundamental character of the internal Afghan civil war. In that civil war it was the duty of revolutionaries to make clear which side they supported, which side we would call on the international proletariat to actively solidarise with.

On one side of this war stand the motley crew grouped in the Mujahedin. They are led in the main by landowning tribal chiefs and divided between "moderates" who want to resist all change and the "hard liners" who compete with each other over precisely which century they want to take Afghan society back to.

### Saudi money

Right now the Prime Minister of the provisional government established by the Mujahedin, is the extreme reactionary Abdur Rasul Sayaf, a member of the Wahhabi sect backed by Saudi money. The Mujahedin chiefs are sanctioning the public stoning to death for women accused of adultery in their refugee camps. These are the "freedom fighters" that, astonishingly, the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP), calls on workers to support.

A victory for these national "freedom fighters" would not result in liberation for the Afghan people. In fact, that "people" is divided along national lines already. The Mujahedin is mainly based on the most numerous, Pushtun, population group in Afghanistan. Their triumph would intensify the oppression of the other minority peoples such as Baluchis, Tazhiks and Uzbeks.

At the moment the coalition of forces within the Mujahedin is beset by tremendous frictions. So sharp are the divisions that the recent attempt to hold a conclusive general council of tribal chiefs (a *shura*) was wrecked by them. If they could overcome these divisions they would, as *Socialist Worker Review* has rightly said: "... probably produce a reactionary fundamentalist government well to the right of Khomeini. And this time it would be an American client." (February 1988)

### Democratic reforms

Ranged against this armed imperialist backed reaction have been those elements supporting the regime of the PDPA. That regime was established in 1978 on a programme of democratic reforms. A Stalinist party, the PDPA, came to power in a coup that depended on its base in the officer ranks of the armed forces. It was, however, a coup that was initially popular among Afghanistan's small working class—numbering 150,000 in the mid 1970s—and the teachers and students in the cities.

Initial attempts to implement a programme of reform from above immediately met with resistance from the landlords and mullahs. The regime announced its intention to abolish bride prices and arranged marriages, to create new secular schools at which children would be taught their own language first and to carry through a land reform programme.

In a society where 40% of the

## AFGHAN CIVIL WAR

# SWP: Whose side are you on?

The SWP have hailed the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan as a "blow against imperialism". John Hunt looks at the reactionary implications of this "state capitalist" analysis.



Mujahedin with a captured Russian tank

population were landless and only 20% of those with land had enough for subsistence, the land reform measures were central to any programme for meeting the immediate needs of Afghan peasants and nomads. But the Stalinist PDPA neither mobilised the rural masses in independent organisations to fight the landlords, nor did they provide the material means for implementing the reforms that they decreed from Kabul.

Decree number six abolished debts to richer farmers and landlords. But it did not touch the far more considerable debts of the peasants to the merchants and moneylenders. This was because the PDPA saw their "revolution" as a strictly anti-feudal one and did not wish to offend the powerful merchants of the bazaars.

Decree number eight placed a limit on land ownership. But it did not provide the peasants with the seed, implements and cash necessary to make land reform a reality. The majority remained tied to the landlords in sharecropping arrangements within the old tribal bounds.

In this situation the landlords were able to mobilise tribal structures in many areas, into "a reactionary vendee" (i.e. a popular mobilisation for counter-revolutionary ends), as *Workers Power* described it in 1980.

The pressure of reaction, backed from the start by Pakistan and the USA, intensified the historic splits within Afghan Stalinism. Some, like Amin for example, wanted to increase the pressure of reform in order to make a direct transition from feudalism to "communism". Others, like Babrak Karmal and Najibullah, wanted to slow down the whole process of modernisation.

The progressive side in the Afghan civil war was itself riven with armed strife that threatened to destroy it and its regime. It could not countenance workers' democracy to resolve these divisions, since such democracy would have

threatened its own rule. Therefore, in classic Stalinist fashion, it resolved differences by bureaucratic-police measures and shoot outs.

It was in the context of the PDPA's own disarray that the USSR intervened militarily to preserve a buffer state for itself in Afghanistan. In so doing they stifled the PDPA regime and its supporters, forcing them to jettison even their pretence at carrying through a reform programme. The land reform was halted as a result of Soviet pressure, but this succeeded only in emboldening the reactionary landlords and leaving the peasants with no reason whatsoever to support the regime.

### Shooting war

However, the Soviet troops, in the context of a real, shooting, civil war, provided a degree of physical defence for those remaining forces committed to taking Afghanistan into the twentieth century. In other words, the invasion did not alter the fact that the civil war was between the forces of progress, even though led by Stalinists, and the forces of feudal reaction.

Yet, in 1980 the Socialist Workers Party immediately joined in the chorus demanding Soviet withdrawal. *Socialist Review* announced: "We say the Russian troops should get out of Afghanistan." (*Socialist Review* 1980:3) and they've been saying so ever since.

What was the correct line to take on the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of Soviet troops? From the very start we recognised that the Soviet troops were not there to defend, let alone extend, the democratic programme. Far from it. We recognised the troops were there to defend the Soviet bureaucracy's perceived self-interest in the region. That is why our first response to the intervention made it clear that:

"An independent force must be welded out of the tiny Afghan pro-

letariat and the scattered forces of the poor peasants. That force must at every step jealously guard its independence from Karmal and the Soviet Armed Forces (SAF). Its aim must be the revolutionary overthrow of the Karmal regime and the Soviet occupying forces." (*Workers Power* 12, February 1980)

It was in fighting for a leadership that had broken with, and learnt the lessons of, Stalinism, that the key to defeating the forces of reaction lay. We did not entrust that job to the SAF.

For the SWP, though, there was never any alternative to Soviet withdrawal and a victory for Islamic reaction. Back in 1980 they declared that "we don't join in the hymns of praise in the press for the 'freedom fighters'." (*Socialist Review* 1980:3) Yet this never got in their way of actually urging their victory. As they said more recently, the nature of the Mujahedin "shouldn't lead socialists to see Russia's defeat as anything but a boost for our side". (*Socialist Worker* 11 February 1989) As the towns are surrounded, as Kabul starves, as all those even faintly in favour of modernising Afghanistan face a horrible death at the hands of reaction, *Socialist Worker* calls a Russian withdrawal "a welcome blow against imperialism". And:

"Socialists everywhere should celebrate it for that reason. But it will not lead to even a mildly 'progressive' government, and it will not bring peace." (*Socialist Worker Review* February 1989)

To call for Soviet withdrawal, with its inexorable logic of supporting those who were fighting to force that withdrawal and advising PDPA supporters and workers to join in that fight, could only open the way for a victory for reaction. It could only weaken the chances of organising the progressive forces to challenge both Stalinism and Islamic reaction, since it would pave the way for the physical destruction of those forces.

As long as the SAF afforded "the progressive forces in the Afghan

civil war a degree of immediate physical defence from the barbaric 'justice' intended for them by reaction" (*Workers Power* 100, December 1987) it would be suicidal to turn one's guns on the Soviet troops.

This suicidal road is precisely what the SWP advocate for Afghan workers and peasants. But then again the SWP, safely ensconced in modern, bourgeois democratic Britain, do not have to pay the price for such a policy. Their self-satisfied disregard for the concrete problems posed before the progressive forces in Afghanistan is a clear indication that this British sect has no need for real proletarian internationalism.

We suspended the call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops until that moment when the Afghan workers and peasants could both effect that withdrawal and defend themselves against reaction. We warned of Soviet plans to carry out precisely the kind of treacherous withdrawal that has left the PDPA's militias surrounded and beleaguered. *Socialist Worker* has been resigned to a right wing fundamentalist regime from day one.

### Blinded

The SWP is blinded by the fact that it sees the USSR as an equal and identical imperialist power to the USA. As a result it doesn't care whether Afghanistan becomes what it expects it to become, an American client. Afghanistan as a US and, more importantly, Saudi client can be used as a base for an Islamic crusade against Soviet Central Asia. It can be used as a means of destabilising Iran. But the Russian withdrawal is somehow "a welcome blow against imperialism". It is a funny blow that will lead to the strengthening of imperialist influence in the whole region if the Mujahedin come to power.

The SWP is further blinded by the fact that it doesn't really think anything progressive, or anyone progressive, can exist in as backward a country as Afghanistan. All socialists should welcome the withdrawal they say. And what will come after it? A "cycle of misery" can only continue we are told:

"It won't be broken until genuine socialist revolutions in more advanced countries provide the resources to overcome its economic backwardness." (*Socialist Worker* 4 February 1989).

*Socialist Worker* urges us to celebrate the prospect that:

"The different ethnic groups will fight each other. The fundamentalists will fight the warlords and the warlords will fight each other." (*Socialist Worker Review* February 1989)

And the PDPA regime comes toppling down into the generalised misery and barbarism that the SWP have no alternative to. What a callous disregard for the fate of millions in Afghanistan and other backward countries.

### Bankrupt

The message of this for any Afghan revolutionary is indeed a bankrupt one. It is to give up or get yourself slaughtered. It is a reactionary one that offers no means whatever of stemming the tide of reaction and fundamentalism in Afghanistan.

As true metropolitan chauvinists, blinded by their anti-Sovietism, the SWP condemn the defenders of Kabul, the PDPA militias, to death and destruction until the day the western workers take power and come to their rescue. This, as Lenin pointed out a long time ago in relation to backward Russia, is Menshevism. ■



# Workers power

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- Women in the *intifada*
- Solidarity with the victims of Khomeini
- Unilateralism

British section of the Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International

# FIGHT RACISM NOT RUSHDIE

**KHOMEINI'S DEATH** sentence on Salman Rushdie has raised the controversy over *Satanic Verses* to new heights.

Seventeen lie dead on the streets of India and Pakistan as protests against the book are crushed. Imperialism has launched a diplomatic offensive against the "radicals" in the Iranian regime. The Tories and the gutter press have unleashed a torrent of racism against Britain's Muslim communities.

But on the question of the book itself workers should not hesitate to defend Salman Rushdie and vigorously resist the campaign to ban his work.

We should defend the right to criticise religion, to poke fun at its sacred cows and totems, just as we defend the right to practise any religion freely.

Labour MPs like Max Madden have cynically tried to boost their votes amongst Muslims by calling for Britain's blasphemy laws to be extended to all religions. This and any other attempt to increase the state's powers of censorship should be rejected.

No worker, whatever colour or creed, has any interest in strengthening the bosses' right to say what we are allowed to read or think. We should reject too the hypocrisy of politicians and the media who condemn Iran for "interfering in Britain's affairs".

Britain has interfered in the affairs of half the globe to secure imperialist profits for the bosses. From the Middle East to Africa to Ireland, British forces have used the most barbaric methods of torture and summary execution to shore up imperialist rule.

But the most dangerous product of the Rushdie affair is the racist backlash that has been carefully fostered by the Tories.

The *Sun* and *Star* have demanded that British Muslims accept "our" tradition or leave. Home Secretary Douglas Hurd—the man behind the public onslaught against the inner city youth in 1985—has the nerve to preach "non-violence" to black people.

The purpose is clear: divide and rule. The tactic British imperialism used from India to Ireland is alive and well in Britain today.

Workers must resist the attempt to set white against black, Christian against Muslim. The strength of Muslim feeling expressed against the book reflects the deep anger, particularly of Asian youth, at the racism that blights their daily lives.

It is the Labour Party and trade unions' failure to fight racism that pushes black youth into the arms of the reactionary zealots in the black communities.

For black and white workers alike the fight against racism must go hand in hand with the fight against religious bigotry of every kind.

- Defend Rushdie!
- Death to racism!

See Editorial pg3



**JAGUAR WORKERS** and Talbot workers have both been at the receiving end of the employers' drive to push down wages in the car industry. And both groups of workers have said no to wage cuts and deteriorating conditions.

Jaguar workers have twice now rejected an insulting deal worth just over 4% over two years. With inflation running at 7.5% this would mean a very real cut in living standards.

Jaguar management point to the decline in luxury car exports to the USA as the reason for the offer.

They have the nerve to say brazenly that they will make up for their low profits by savings in the workplace. And by that they mean that the workers will have to foot the bill.

Talbot workers rejected a deal which was worth more. It was another two year deal, worth nearly 16%. But the strings attached

enraged the workforce. Under the deal, management wanted to introduce a monthly attendance allowance which would be automatically forfeited if a worker missed one single day in that month.

The danger is that such signs of rekindled militancy among Midlands carworkers will be derailed by the trade union leaders. They think they have discovered in the ballot an ideal means for turning votes for indus-

trial action into their exact opposite.

This is not the first time Jaguar workers have rejected this package. They did so back in December, and with a massive 80% margin against. But the trade union negotiators took this as an excuse to take their thumping majority back to the negotiating table and organise no action.

They claimed the employers would now see sense

## CAR INDUSTRY Link the pay fight

and thus they let the anger go off the boil. And as a result the employers refused to budge and made no concessions on the offer. In February the bureaucrats had to ballot their members again. They did so with a package of one day protest strikes, not the all out action needed to bring the company to its knees. And they did so after two months of ducking out of a fight.

It's not surprising, there-

fore, that the proportion rejecting the offer and endorsing action had dropped to 54%. And in this drop the bureaucrats found another excuse for retreat. Speaking in the language of the Tories' new code of practice, the bureaucrats, the employers and the press all announced that this was not a convincing enough vote for action. And the bureaucrats scurried off for yet more talks to hatch a deal with Jaguar.

The lessons of this must be learnt. Carworkers must stop the union officials using the ballot to delay and then derail action. Mass meetings should reject wage cuts and organise an immediate all out strike.

That action must be kept tightly in the hands of the workers themselves until Jaguar surrenders. That's the action that could defeat this deal. And that's what the ballot has been used against.■