

Capitalists echo



Stalin's lies

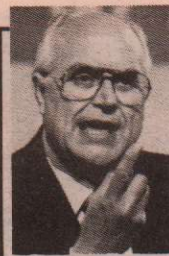
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Soviet workers need a party

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For socialist renewal!



Fudging for Kinnock

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Why Militant is in disarray

centre pages

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

As Major prepares to cut and run:

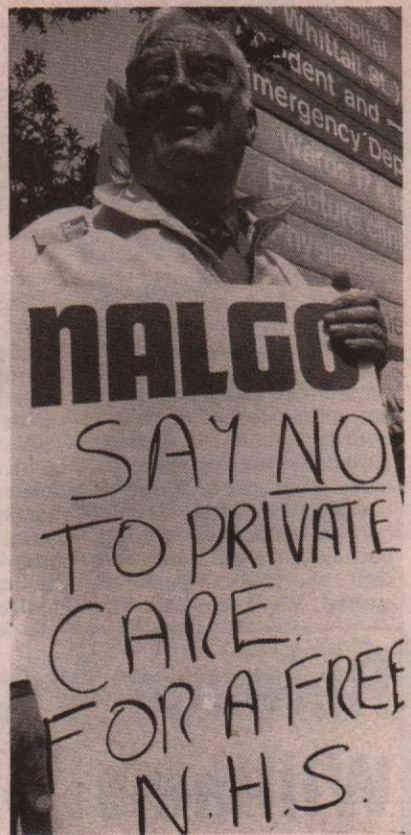
Labour can



After the riots
Two faces
of Tory
Britain page 2



beat the Tories!



The Tories are deeply unpopular. Photo: J Harris

Mobilise for a Labour victory

Behind the Tyneside riots

By Mark Lickley and Nick Brereton

The spark that ignited the Meadowell riots was the deaths of Dale Robinson and Colin Atkins in a stolen car.

In an area with massive unemployment and poverty, crime provides a major source of income to the estate.

Banners reading "This is for Dale and Colin" were widely reported on the night of the first disturbances. Further riots flared in the West End of Newcastle throughout the week, but the violence has been directed at property, not people.

None of the riots have any clear political dimension, though they can be seen as akin to the poor riots in the 1930s. However, in the 1930s there existed an organised unemployed workers' movement; no such movement exists today.

But the dynamics of recession causing a massive army of almost permanently unemployed working class people is similar. Concentrated into the so-called "dumping ground" estates, such as the Meadowell, and abandoned by the authorities, there is both resentment and a lack of positive future for most youth involved in the recent riots.

Police harassment has also been blamed for stoking up the fires in the areas involved. One youth summed it up thus: "People blame us, but the police are harassing us all the time. They just think we are scum. If you live in this place you are treated like rubbish."

"Scotchey [Scotswood] has got a name for itself and nobody lets up. I've been picked up by the police so many times just because I'm out on the street. There's nothing for us to do so we go outside to see our mates and then the police push us around. It's always been like



Prakash Chavrimootoo must stay!

Prakash Chavrimootoo (above with supporters) and her 8 year old son are fighting against deportation. Prakash works for Birmingham Social Services and is a member of NUPE. For more details contact Muhammed Idrish on 021 551 4518. Photo: Mark Salmon

that."

With council cuts getting deeper and deeper through the 1980s, and long-term unemployment widespread, poverty on estates like Meadowell, Elswick, Scotswood and Benwell has been worsening.

Rate capping and now poll tax capping mean the meagre council facilities are closed or cut, as the more politically sensitive areas of the city are prioritised by the Labour Council.

During the recent disturbances, Newcastle City Council met to make £8 million further cuts to comply with poll tax capping, including the suspension of youth work in some areas of the city.

There was also a racist element to the riot in Meadowell, where the shops destroyed were mainly Asian-owned, and some Asian residents were attacked. There were rumours of fascist involvement, but the influence of the BNP seems marginal. The most likely cause of any targetting of Asian shops is a reflection of the racism and resentment that comes with poverty.

Decades of decay and decline

By Sigrid Fisher

The North East is an area in serious decline.

Traditional industries like mining, ship-building, that provided the region and its people with jobs have been destroyed, victims of capitalism's axe, leaving masses of people with no hope and no future.

The only recent initiatives have been in the fields of shopping and leisure — the infamous Metroland in Gateshead stands as a monument to the spend, spend culture of the '80s, in an area where income is often only available through crime.

The derelict site of last year's Garden Festival can be leisurely looked upon by the thousands of people who gained short-term ET work there as they now find themselves back on the dole.

Within this scenario we see one of the greatest tragedies. The North East is traditionally hard-and-fast Labour territory, with strong working class roots. Over the years, as more and

more hardship has rained down upon the local people, with it came disillusionment and depression. Where is the fight?

Where is the political voice in protest? There is no labour movement response to the near-murder of this region over the past decade as there was to the depression of the 1930s.

Instead of trying to compete on the Tories' terms, the Labour Party, trade unions and Labour councils should be fighting for what people really need — jobs, houses, resources to combat the stultifying, soul-destroying state of living in the wrong half of a south-orientated commercial Britain — not implementing the Tory poll tax!

Is it any wonder, then, that when anger finally erupts, anger at constant poverty, harassment and never-ending nothingness in their lives, that what is in fact a political response ends up as little more than rioting "for the fun of it"?

A serious reaction from the labour movement might mean that next time it won't be a riot we end up with, but organised action of the working class to end this system once and for all.

Glasgow march ban

Two weeks prior to the 7th September march called by Glasgow Labour Committee on Ireland to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Hunger Strike in Ireland, Strathclyde Region's Police Panel gave permission for the march despite police objections.

Strathclyde Police recalled the Panel in the light of "new intelligence" (loyalist threats?) and, five days before the event, the march was banned. The police had made it clear that if the Panel had not banned the march, they would have enforced a ban using powers provided by the Public Order Act.

This decision to prevent people exercising their civil rights because of threats by others is a dangerous precedent which has implications for all future demonstrations and marches in Strathclyde. Already one Labour councillor has publicly attacked the decision of his colleagues and has asked for the resignation of

the Chief Constable who it seems cannot police a march of about 500 at 9.30 on a Saturday morning.

Hopefully, many similar protests will follow from all levels of the Labour Party in Strathclyde.

EC soldiers for Yugoslavia?

By Vicki Morris

As EC attempts to bring peace between the warring Serbs and Croats in the former Yugoslavia founder, the proposal is gaining ground amongst leaders of the EC that the West European soldiers — 30 or 40,000 of them — should be sent to "keep the peace" there.

The Croatian National Guard has launched an offensive, using a new tactic: besieging Federal Army bases in Croatia.

USSR: the workers need a party

Anatoly Voronov from the Moscow Socialist Party reports on the current situation

The Moscow Pravda has just printed a statement calling for a new party to defend the interests of the workers.

The declaration was written by Boris Kagarlitsky and other Socialist Party deputies in the Moscow City Council. The statement was signed by a number of ex-Communist Party people.

The signatories are calling for a new political force to rally and unite the workers in the new conditions that are emerging — where society is dividing into employers and employees.

The central role in the creation of this broader socialist force is the Socialist Party.

The purpose of the statement was to gain publicity for the project. The problem for us now is that the atmosphere, the press and the television are all very pro-capitalist. Our problem is to get a hearing at all.

There is a great deal of enthusiasm for capitalism!

Every day Yeltsin becomes more authoritarian. He is moving power away from elected bodies, for instance, Moscow City Council. We are moving towards a more authoritarian rule.

Yeltsin is using Presidential decrees to strip powers away from elected organs. One group of deputies has even gone on hunger strike in protest at a decision of the Russian Minister of the Interior to make a political appointment to the position of the chief of the Moscow militia.

Yeltsin has promised a strategic plan for economic change. But as yet he has done nothing positive.

There are no strikes against the crisis. The general mood in the working class is one of happiness after defeating the putsch.

Yeltsin is using every opportunity to strip the Communist Party. A lot of buildings which used to belong to the Party now belong to the Moscow municipality. Their printing houses have also been taken away.

There is now a ban on all political activity at the workplace. At every factory they had Party rooms — these have now all gone.

Now there are attempts being made to reform the KGB. A lot of KGB officers who passed as diplomats or journalists have been ousted from

the radio, television and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is good!

These actions have all been carried out from above. Bakatin, the new KGB chief, has started to reform the KGB. He is splitting the KGB up into departments to destroy its monolithic structure. Although some people have been removed at the top of the KGB, although Bakatin says he will not make a lot of KGB personnel redundant, and that he wants to protect their jobs.

But the good thing here is that the back of the Communist Party has been broken.

The lie machine



Autumn suggestion? "Let us tell you how much you hate Kinnock", offer the tabloids. Then, when the poor man defends himself, "Methinks the laddie doth protest too much".



Neil merits no mention in the Sun, but then even Honest John gets second billing to the Good News for Ghouls — "there's something for everyone in your Gore-a-day Sun!"



Today's moral indignation — not so much distasteful as plain weird given their record of promoting racial harmony. An unfortunate juxtaposition has fellow mother Di laughing at the headline.

Release Vic Williams!

By Mark Osborn

Vic Williams, the gunner who refused to fight in the Gulf war, was jailed for 14 months by a court martial last week.

Williams deserted from his unit in Germany on 28 October. He spoke at an anti-war rally in Hyde Park before giving himself up on 9 March.

Vic Williams should be released. He should be congratulated for standing up against the imperialist slaughter in the Gulf.

200,000 Iraqis died in a war fought for big business and

oil interests. Working class people had no reason to support such a war and every reason to be disgusted at the murdering barbarity of the US-led war.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Tony Benn appealed for Vic Williams' release, and demanded the rights of all military personnel to refuse to serve on grounds of conscientious objection.

Tony Benn told Socialist Organiser that he will continue to raise Vic Williams' case and expects a lot of support among Labour Party members for Vic's release.

Emergency resolutions calling for Vic Williams' release will be submitted to Labour Party conference.



Mobilise for a Labour victory!



No-guts Kinnock

It looks as if the Tories will call a General Election in November!

They are ahead of Labour in the polls now, and they cannot be confident that things will continue to get better for them. With the economy in recession and unemployment continuing to rise they know that things may get a lot worse.

They might then be forced to go to the voters next year in far less favourable conditions.

The tragic fact is that they could well win this election. Labour under Kinnock may lose the fourth General Election in a row!

Kinnock's performance in opposition evidently disgusts a far wider range of people than the socialist left.

Not only the left sees Kinnock as a hollowed-out man who has betrayed his beliefs in the hope of high office and, therefore, not a man to be trusted.

Even the Liberal Democrats' Paddy Ashdown — whose party has

just moved strongly to the right at its recent conference — can sound effective when he denounces Kinnock's Labour Party as a weak opposition and an unconvincing alternative government.

"We can still beat the Tories and then begin to change the political climate in Britain after 13 years of right wing populist Tory government."

Yet, the Labour Party led by Kinnock is still the only alternative government the labour movement

has to put up against the Tories in a General Election. Putting Labour in is the only chance we have of getting rid of the Tories.

Serious labour movement activists will do everything they can to get Labour elected — even when they grit their teeth over the cringing performance of No Guts Neil.

The Tories are not so far ahead in the opinion polls that they are sure to win.

We can still beat them and then begin to change the political climate in Britain after 13 years of right wing populist Tory government.

Kicking out the Tories despite the wretched leadership of Kinnock and

his friends will take all the effort and energy the labour movement can muster.

The various proposals floating around for the standing of "left wing", anti-Labour candidates are a foolish distraction from this work.

Getting the Tories out and a Labour government in is now the key task facing the left.

Once it has defeated the Tories, the labour movement will be better able to deal with the Kinnock gang, whatever right wing policies they try to pursue.

Kick the Tories out! For a Labour government!

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More Tory savagery

The new government White Paper proposes to create a new crime, "prison mutiny", which will carry up to ten years extra jail time for a prisoner convicted of it.

Ten years additional imprisonment for daring to resist or fight back against the dirty, inhuman, dangerous and degrading conditions which late 20th century British capitalism imposes on the tens of thousands of young people, women and men whom it imprisons in hell holes like Manchester's Strangeways jail!

Many of them are thrown into these reeking, overcrowded modern dungeons for petty crimes against property.

Many — and it is now impossible for the government to deny it with any credibility — are innocent people in jail because the police fabricated "evidence" against them and then went to court and perjured themselves to make it stick.

Once in jail they are in effect deprived of almost all the conventionally recognised human rights of the citizen. Half the 50,000 jail population are young people under 25.

Now, once "inside", prisoners are to be under military discipline. If they behave like normal human beings and fight back it may mean 10 more years!

When it is a matter of reforming the prisons, the government makes feeble twitches. When it is a matter of bringing in new repressive laws, it acts with savage vigour!

This proposal neatly sums up the savagery which is central to our capitalist society, beneath all its much-boasted liberal "tolerance". Not so very long ago in historical time, the ancestors of these Tories used to hang children for stealing bread!

"The emancipation of the working class is also the emancipation of all human beings without distinction of sex or race."
Karl Marx

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Stop these dirty tricks now!

Regular readers will know how much I deplore inside personal attacks on prominent trade union leaders.

So you can imagine my horror on learning that certain letters impugning the integrity of my good friend Bro. Jack Dromey (the thrusting, go-ahead candidate for Deputy General Secretary of the TGWU) are presently being circulated within the union.

The first dates from May of this year, when Bill Morris was standing against George Wright for the post of General Secretary. Region 3 Secretary John Joynson writes to Bro. Dromey, expressing surprise at a document in which Jack's name and photograph are used in support of Bill Morris: "Bearing in mind the initiative you promoted in seeking not only my support but the support of other Regional Secretaries in challenging Bill Morris for the position of Deputy General Secretary prior to the election for that position, I cannot now believe for a moment that the document has your blessing...it must surely be a case of someone using your good name to mislead the membership," writes Bro. Joynson.

How this private correspondence between two leading officers of the TGWU has come to be circulated amongst the membership is a mystery that may never be solved.

Even more deplorable is a recent letter from Tod Sullivan, the National Secretary of the union's white-collar section, ACTSS:

"The actions of Jack Dromey in this present DGS election have made me so cross I have decided to try and put the record straight...at the union's recent Biennial Delegate Conference it was made clear to Dromey that there was little support for him among Central Office officials and little or no support from either of the two groups of lay members and officers which had supported the main contestants during the GS campaign.

"The reason for the lack of support was that Dromey was not trusted by either group because of the way he had offered, at different times, to use his press contacts to campaign for both of the main contestants if they would support him for an executive officer post...

"Dromey, Harriet Harman MP, a couple of regional secretaries, and other Labour Party people believed to be supporters of Gordon Brown MP, met in the House of Commons. What was at stake was the political future of the MPs and their need for Dromey to be the T&G DGS sitting on the National Executive of the Labour Party with half a million votes in his pocket.

"With them pumping his ego, Dromey decided to save the union. Like John Wayne, he feels a man's got to do what a man's got to do!

"The way he intends to do 'what a man's got to do' is to be elected to the DGS's position by the media. He believes that the Sun, Mirror, Express, Mail and the rest of the newspapers win support for him.

"He will ignore the fact that these newspapers have consistently attacked the union movement over the past ten years."

This "dirty tricks" campaign against the man I call "possibly the ablest trade union leader since Jimmy Thomas" may account for Bro. Dromey's disappointing showing in terms of branch nominations: he received only 399 as against the 541 secured by the Broad Left candidate, Jack Adams.

Personally, I think that Bro. Dromey's flexibility, initiative and lack of so-called "principles" are exactly the qualities that are required of a modern, Post-Fordist union leader.

Meanwhile, I very much hope that the disgraceful campaign against Bro. Dromey ceases forthwith!

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

After the

By John McIlroy

The Glasgow TUC had little that was new to say for itself, and still less that offered encouragement to the left.

It witnessed the further consolidation of the influence of the right-wing Shadow Cabinet and their policies of civilised Thatcherism. It confirmed the characterisation of the General Council — right and left — as a conduit pipe for the transmission of Kinnockism into the unions.

Not a lot went on. This September Song had time for nothing but the waiting game. There were more soundbites than substance. Speeches were studded with "social partnership", "workers' councils", "EC-style industrial relations", "enterprise committees". All charm words for class collaboration.

The major debates saw victories for the right. Voting on the two central issues — the future of wages policy the repeal of the Tory employment legislation — had Kinnock's flunkey Tony Blair purring. The important exception, the vote to boycott the Tories' Employment Action Programme, was heartening.

Isolated from the general drift of policy and from any programme to fight unemployment now, taken with the other decisions, its significance becomes more limited. Its application will undoubtedly be subject to fudging by the new General Council.

On the whole, the left remains fragmented and subor-



Laird wields the AEU's block vote (Photo: John Harris)

dinate, lacking any coherent alternatives to waiting for Kinnock and slavishly endorsing every jot and tittle of his disastrous policies.

The limitations of the left were highlighted in the debate on employment legislation. The TGWU Broad Left have correctly made this a central issue in their campaigning. The inadequacies of their approach and the tenuous nature of their control over the union were cruelly highlighted. Ron Todd

managed to convince the delegation by a 7-1 margin that they should vote for continuing restrictions on secondary action, and the right not to belong to a trade union.

The super-yuppie Blair purred; "There will be no return to the 1970s, no flying pickets, and no secondary action". Presumably Ron and his successor Bill Morris agreed. The unions are now saddled with proposals that incorporate the Taff Vale decision; place control over

all forms of solidarity action in the hands of an unaccountable undemocratic judiciary; provide for total sequestration of unions' assets; and generally reproduce many of the problems that faced the unions prior to 1906.

Norman, Neil and their assorted honchos were also over the moon with the gargantuan composite on wages policy. This pledged support for a national minimum wage, a National Economic Assessment and co-ordinated wage bargaining. It was agreed that increases produced by the minimum wage would not be taken into account by bargainers to restore differentials. However, there would be no pay norms and no incomes policy.

It is clear, however, despite the vigorous denials, that the carrying of this composite provides a smokescreen of legitimacy for the TUC to prepare the ground for incomes policy — as both John Edmonds, who supports wage restraint, and Gavin Laird, who opposes it, hinted.

The minimum wage is a welcome, if limited, innovation. It is popular, but is likely to affect under 8% of workers and wages not incomes. It will be difficult to police and will only increase hourly earnings to £3.40 — 50% of the average. As Kinnock reassured *The Director*, "we will introduce the 50% level promptly, but any advance on that is going to depend entirely on the performance of the economy...It's likely that any advance will be beyond the lifetime of one parliament."

In return TUC enforcement of the "no knock-on effect" in other negotiations is already a foot in the door for wage restraint. Moreover, Kinnock's latest policy document, *Opportunity Britain*, specifically links the minimum wage with the

Confusion over the anti-union laws

The only way the present edifice of restrictive Tory legislation will be removed root and branch is through legislation introduced by a Labour government.

We may be able to stop it in its tracks or, more likely, draw its sting in individual cases. A generalised movement against the legislation on the lines of 1972 is beyond the movement we have now, rather than the movement we might like to have.

Exactly what a Labour government will do is therefore of burning importance. But the present debate on repeal and replacement is confused. And this confusion is playing into the hands of Neil Kinnock and Norman Willis. We are even down to arguments about what "all", "total" and "anti-union" mean in the slogan *Total repeal of all anti-union legislation*.

The issues are perhaps better put in the context of a Charter of Positive Rights for Trade Unionists and their Unions. We need to emphasise rights — not only for workers, but for their organisations. Kinnockism is quite strong on the former, restrictive on the latter. Yet without the latter the former are difficult to practice. So we need to stress the collective as against Kinnock's worship of the individual. The form is also important. In the UK there has, for example,

never been a right to strike. Legislation instead immunised unions from the impact of a general law by stating that industrial action would not be unlawful in certain specified circumstances. The immunity form buttressed the idea that unions were privileged and "above the law" and justified the judges' interpreting policy and unravelling of the immunities. We should assert the legitimacy of trade unionism by arguing for a right to organise, a right to recognition, a right to 100% membership, a right to strike, and a right to democratic participation for unions members.

This latter is contentious, but it seems to me justified. It will help to get over the problem of ballots. Ron Todd, for example, argues that he is in favour of repeal of the Tory legislation on secondary action, etc. but in favour of ballots, and uses this to vote for the continuation of ballots and secondary action.

Calls for the repeal of the balloting provisions have been similarly and effectively used to identify the left as opponents of democracy. A broad right to democratic participation could also be used to open up wider arguments from election of officers to the ownership of industry.

It could read: "All workers will have the right to democratically participate in their organisation's decision making in such areas as union

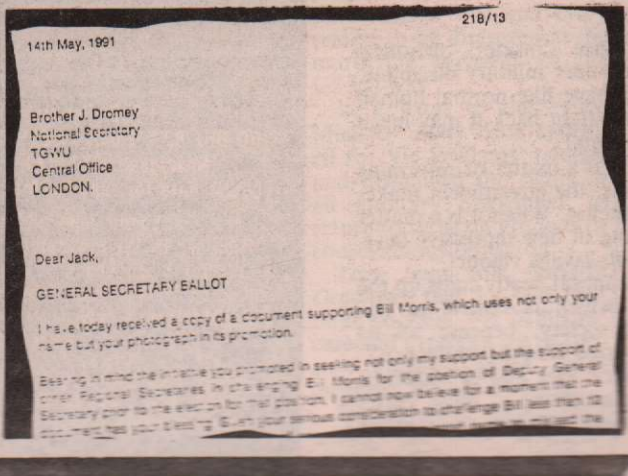
elections and industrial action shall be via workplace ballots, branch voting, postal ballots or a mix of these and other methods."

Support for a right to democratic participation could sharpen up our support for the removal of present restrictions on secondary action and the closed shop by ensuring that the legitimating criterion is always union democracy.

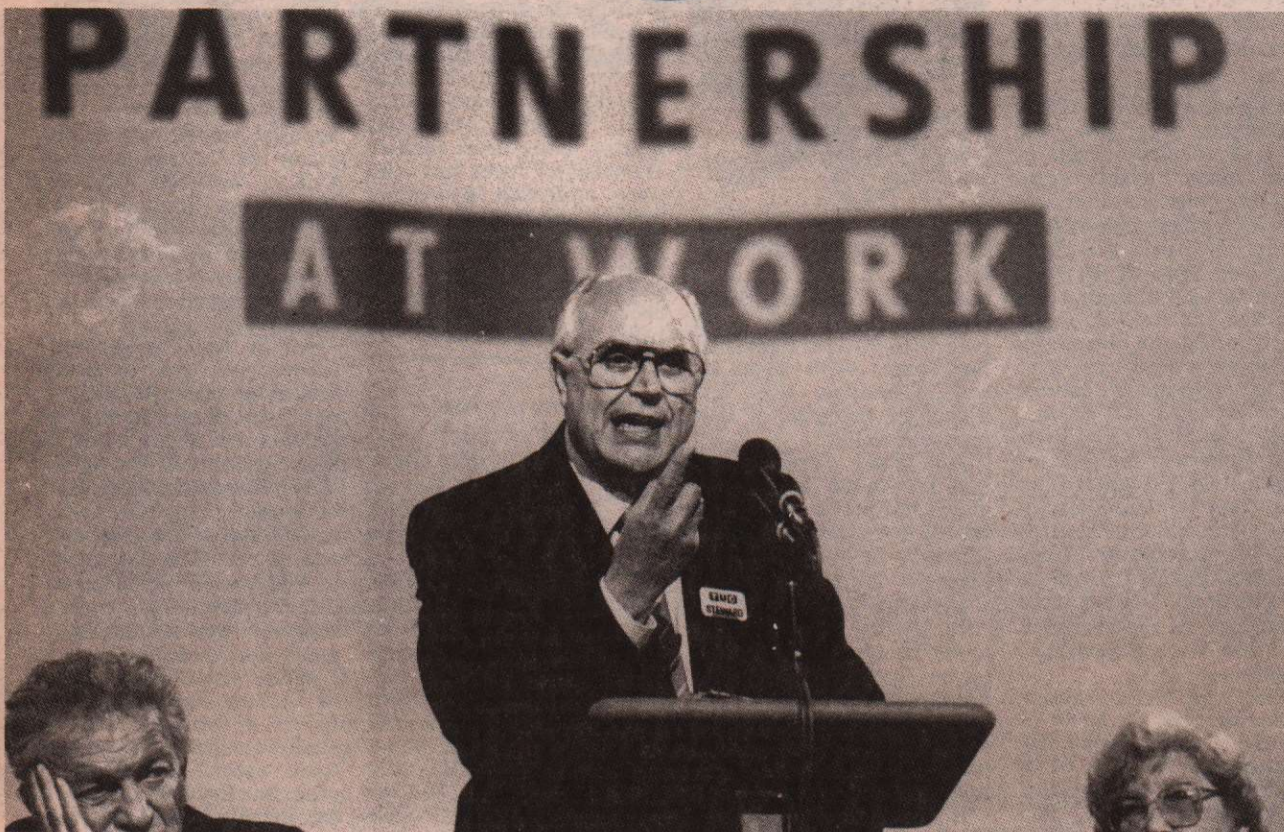
Finally, as well as the content and form of future legislation, we also need to examine who will administer it in practice. Unless we change the present judiciary they will interpret pro-union legislation out of existence. We need to start at the bottom: by electing magistrates and judges as part of a revived local government process. Whilst the appointment of the top judges must be subject to both popular and parliamentary scrutiny.

The election of a Labour government would produce a situation where greater numbers of workers would focus on the repeal and replacement of employment legislation. The leaders of unions such as NALGO, MSF and the TGWU will bargain, and will open up the alternatives once more. The Glasgow vote did not seal things.

We must be prepared for this more open situation. The best way to do this is to campaign in the coming months for a Workers' Charter of Positive Rights.



Glasgow TUC



Norman transfixes Ken Gill and Ada Maddocks (Photo: John Harris)

NEA: "The introduction and annual updating of our statutory minimum wage will be integral to the National Economic Assessment". The NEA itself will be "a crucial means of informing the participants in the collective bargaining process...of what is feasible in the light of Britain's economic circumstances." In other words, the NEA will set norms.

It will say something like this: "In the coming wage round average increases should lie in the range of 4-5% or less". The TUC will then issue advice to affiliates to stay within this maximum when negotiating — not the only minimum is 50% of average earnings. The TUC will set a norm! Co-ordinated bargaining means that the TUC will try to get all wage bargains to take place within a set, limited period, after the NEA, to avoid leapfrogging and comparisons bargaining up the going rate.

As in the 1970s unions which breach TUC guidelines will be threatened with sanctions! At the moment it is all doublespeak and code. But given the level of opposition to wage restraint that exists at all levels of the movement, and the need for Kinnock not to be identified, at least prior to an election, with such a vote-losing policy, Norman Willis, John Edmonds and Co. are undoubtedly feeling pleased with themselves this September.

Their policy is driven by three intermeshed factors. The decline in union membership and consequent financial problems is now very serious indeed. 250,000 more members were lost in the year to December 1990. That's before the recession had really begun to bite and it was the 12th successive annual decrease in membership.

This interacts with the TUC's loss of political influence and the diminution of its function as a co-

ordination of inter-union actions. Deprived of its role as broker between unions and the state, the fiascos over the legislation and no-strike deals have weakened the TUC's internal authority. Many union leaders now openly ask "what is Normal Willis for?" The recent attempt to carve a new niche as a recruiting agent for the unions has also been a failure. More than £1 million was spent to recruit a handful of members in London Docklands and Trafford Park. So the TUC will now do literally anything to get back in the play and, as a consequence, pay any price for the return of a Labour government.

Every nuance of policy is now subordinated to this end. We have to face the fact that the TUC is thus a pliant

appendage of the Labour Party leadership; their entire raison d'être to see Kinnock into Downing Street. If George Woodcock had turned up at Glasgow to ask his famous question: "What are we here for?", he would have been incredulously informed, "To do whatever Neil Kinnock wants us to do".

For the left, the situation is a very serious one. Matters may not change until the general election. How they turn out then will depend on what we do now. Whatever happens in the election the next 24 months will represent a vital watershed in the history of UK trade unionism. The limits of the right's domination provide some encouragement. NALGO remained firm on

the repeal of the legislation. The lash-up on wage restraint cloaks explosive differences. Many unions will balk at the consequences in practice of what they agreed to in Glasgow.

The problems of enforcing wage restraint are greater than they have ever been. A Labour government attempting to implement what the TUC agreed in Glasgow will present important opportunities for the left.

John McIlroy is author of *Strike, Industrial Tribunals, Trade Unions in Britain Today, and The permanent revolution? Conservative law and the Trade Unions.*

The policy that dare not speak its name

The left must now raise at the grassroots of the movement the central question of wage restraint.

Too little attention has been paid to this issue. Yet the TUC's intention to arrogate to itself the power to cut wages in order to receive in return a small modicum of influence with a Labour government is crystal clear. The TUC will do anything to be allowed to even talk to ministers.

In autumn 1990 the six TUC representatives on the National Economic Development Council startled the CBI and Tory minister. In the aftermath of ERM entry, concerned that average earnings increasing at 10% would cause problems for the bosses and affect the value of the pound, the TUC "Big Six" offered talks on pay, productivity, investment and training.

In kee-jerk fashion they denied that they were offering to cut their members' wages...but promised a "responsible" stance on pay bargaining!

This was an offer made,

remember, to Margaret Thatcher, not Neil Kinnock and as such it was preemptorily rejected. It was an offer by the TUC to police pay — made without any consultation with the ordinary trade unionists whose pay they would be policing.

Even as an offer to talk about wage restraint it was in violation of the policies of the unions of the majority of those involved. Yet it is the face of the future. For if the TUC would do this for Thatcher, they would be prepared to shift heaven and earth for Ginger.

Since the start of 1991 Rodney Bickerstaffe (NUPE), Bill Jordan (AEU) Brenda Dean (GPMU) and John Edmonds (GMB) — oh, and I nearly forgot — Ron Todd, have been holding regular meetings with Tony Blair about the development of the NEA and the minimum wage.

Surprise, surprise, the "pariah" Eric Hammond of the EETPU has also been involved. Under the cosmetics and the cant, the essential purpose of these meetings is to address the problem of cutting wages.

Blair recently stated that their

purpose was "to investigate the possibility of establishing a more co-ordinated approach to collective bargaining". But what is the purpose of that? Why co-ordinated bargaining now? What is co-ordinated bargaining for? Why the NEA now? What is that for?

The left has always stood for co-ordinated pay bargaining where it will increase bargaining power and boost wages. But in this particular instance Kinnock's law applies. This coordinated bargaining is intended to stop leapfrogging and ensure that all wage increases are less than the going rate which would apply without co-ordinated bargaining.

Similarly, the left would also support an NEA which examined ownership, profitability, productivity, the rate of exploitation, differences in wealth and income distribution — from a working class viewpoint to increase the income of workers. Here, however, Blair's law applies. The purpose of this NEA, based on the needs of capital not labour, is to ensure that wage levels decline to a point lower than the would were the NEA not operating.

A delegate's diary

By Andy Dixon, NUT executive

Sunday

My union delegation is meeting in Glasgow. I am not going up until Tuesday. They will be deciding how to vote on all the Congress motions and amendments. Why bother listening to the speeches?

Monday

Go to work. Watch bits of Congress on TV news.

Tuesday

Arrive in Glasgow (5.00pm). Socialist principles prevent me attending the "reception" (ie. junket) paid for by my union. (OK, I didn't know it was on and went to Pizzaland.) Must have mislaid my invitation to the Kinnock dinner...Discover that the hotel we are staying at costs £75 per night (bed and breakfast). Hope the members don't find out which delegates arrived by plane two days before the conference started at the Union's expense.

Find out that unelected full-time officials are on the delegation, contrary to what the Union's executive was told last Friday. People say that Todd's speech in the anti-union law debate was better than Scargill's. Good speech, shame about getting the TGWU to vote the wrong way.

Wednesday

Low key "debate" on education. Speakers attack Tory policies but don't mention action taken by education workers to defend jobs, conditions and the service. Classic TUC fudge on pay and collective bargaining. Speakers arguing for and against wage restraint under a Labour government all support the same composite. Good rhetoric about low pay and the minimum wage. The soul of trade unionism is still there somewhere, refusing to die under the welter of "social partnership" slogans and black

curtains.

Why are there so many trendily dressed young men and women posing with large cameras lolling on their shoulders? Sat behind the NALGO delegation who murmur angrily when a good fighting speech on opposing job losses includes the word "forefather". A wander around the Congress exhibition reveals NIREX, Eurotunnel, Scottish Council on Alcohol (with free samples), European Commission, Butlins, lots of insurance companies, British Nuclear Fuels, and the Coronary Prevention Group (useful given the eating/drinking habits of most Congress delegates). The OILC have not been allowed a stall. They are on the pavement outside the conference centre.

Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee fringe meeting is packed. Lots of speakers from disputes. Moving contribution from Judy Cotter of Liverpool NALGO. Tony Benn asked to leave the Labour Party by obligatory SWP floor speaker.

Thursday

Sparks of interest. Clash between NUT and NASUWT over whether teachers should fight to regain the right to negotiate their pay and conditions. NASUWT oppose negotiations and support a review body. Strangely they still vote for the motion calling on the TUC to campaign for negotiating rights.

Motions opposing EETPU activities hostile to other unions and opposing their re-entry to the TUC unless they abide by TUC procedures provokes Bill Jordan into another of his "I love to be hated" speeches. He'll never do it with the panache of Eric Hammond.

Lunchtime: attend launch of Anti-Apartheid Movement "Vote for Democracy" campaign in Glaswegian sunshine. The emergency motion on South Africa is "debated" in the afternoon. Speaker after speakers saying the same things. It's safe to sound impassioned about struggles thousands of miles away. Pity the same bureaucrats can't work up any passion for the struggles of their own members. Fail to complete *Guardian* crossword.

Friday

Nearly over. Last wander around exhibition. Notice John McCreadie (*Militant* supporter and Deputy General Secretary of the CPSA) picking up European Parliament posters. What are his ambitions then? I wonder if he has a Grant or Taaffe position on the Labour Party? OILC still outside the centre with stall.

Last motion taken before I leave (on "inward investment") reveals the topsy turvy world of the British trade union movement. Gill of MSF (a "left") attacks Japanese and other "foreign" firms as anti-union and bringing an "alien culture" to British industrial relations. Todd ("sort of left") seconds the motion but says that British firms can be just as bad and that the TGWU is not racist or nationalist, despite supporting a nationalist motion. Laird of AEU ("arch-right") and a GMB delegate ("new realist right") speak against and make good internationalist speeches arguing that effective trade union organisation is what counts, not the nationality of the employer.

Left is right. Right is left. Which way to Glasgow Central station?

Jimmy's fast exit

GRAFFITI

The TUC was very boring indeed. It must have been because the press were interested in Jimmy Airlie.

Jimmy is an AEU executive member from Scotland. He drew the attention of journalists from the quality papers with his good old-fashioned fiery conference rhetoric: "One of the few present day trade union leaders with any experience of talking to mass meetings of manual workers", was the way Jimmy was described.

But while Jimmy was keen to perform for the cameras, the hacks and the assembled delegates, he wasn't quite so keen to see some of his own manual worker members.

Every time one of the Solidarnosc-style T-shirts worn by members and supporters of the rank and file offshore workers group, OILC, came into view, Jimmy made himself scarce.

You see Jimmy was having some difficulty in explaining the deal he signed the previous week with the oil companies to his own members, most of whom had put their livelihoods on the line for the union.

The "hard man" from the Gorbals wasn't tough enough to explain his actions to his own members. In fact, the windbag preferred to leave by the side door.

It wasn't just Airlie who wasn't keen to see the OILC.

On the eve of conference the committee received a letter from Congress House telling them that their information and fundraising stall had been cancelled.

At "the request of two affiliates" (surely not the AEU and GMB?) the OILC was to be barred from the conference centre. Naturally they protested.

So, in the spirit of modern trade unionism, Congress House came up with a compromise. The offshore workers could have a stall under a different name — the Offshore Information Service — and minus controversial material. The only thing that the victimised, blacklisted and jobless activists had to do was pay the TUC £1,000 for the privilege.

A far cry from last year's standing ovation for the OILC.

Unperturbed, the OILC activists turned up at conference with their stall and set up outside.

Then an attempt was made to "infiltrate" the exhibition hall. But this was repelled by superior numbers of TUC stewards who ripped up and destroyed any OILC material they could get their hands on.

Meanwhile, the TUC let in such committed upholders of health and safety standards and workers' rights as British Nuclear Fuels, Eurotunnel, and NIREX.

An occasion for some fiery conference rhetoric about "labour lieutenants of capital". What do you say Jimmy?

As readers of the *Guardian* may have noticed, there is a faction fight going on in *Militant* which will probably end with it leaving the Labour Party and standing against Labour in a number of seats in the general election.

Maybe some interested members of the public may have bought a copy of the *Militant*

and ploughed through its turgid pages for their side of the story. At first the search could appear to be in vain — but what is this?

Page 6, an article entitled "Labour's first real candidate" about Keir Hardy standing in an election in 1886 as an independent Labour candidate.

Why now? The article is not what it is pretending to be about. Keir Hardy didn't win the election — he got 617 votes, or about 10% of the vote (although not on a full franchise, the article neglects to mention). The key is in the last paragraph of the article: "In days to come the by-election in Liverpool Walton will not be remembered because of the victory of Peter Kilfoyle, but because of those 2,613 votes for socialism".

The message is clear: *Militant* readers, return to your constituencies and prepare to lose!

As the fall of Stalinism in the Soviet Union has grabbed the headlines, another brand of would-be socialism has shrugged off this mortal coil.

On 15 September Swedish "socialism" died quietly in its sleep.

The Swedish Social Democrats have been in power virtually continuously since 1928 and have recently been the favourites of all those who believe that a socialist society can be built around a capitalist economy.

Recently the gloss has been taken off the image with the government attempting to ban strikes, making cuts in welfare and introducing austerity programmes.

The response of the Swedish electorate to this "socialism" that sides with the bosses against the workers has been to vote for the "New Democracy" party, set up six months ago by an amusement park owner with policies that amount to new taxes and cheap alcohol.

It may interest readers of *Socialist Organiser* to know that *Militant's* Swedish co-thinkers stood independent candidates in the election. Their vote was too small to get any seats under Sweden's proportional representation system.

A new series of *The South Bank Show* investigates *Private Eye*. Hasn't

Private Eye been anti-semitic? Cut to Paul Foot, SWP hack and TV personality. No, no, no. People are getting anti-semitism and anti-Zionism confused.

Cut to Richard Ingrams, ex-editor of *Private Eye*. OK, we run a lot of stories about corrupt Jewish capitalists, but there are a lot of them around.

Cut to Auberon Waugh, *Private Eye* contributor and well-known reactionary. Yes, we did some Jewish stuff, we dropped it because it was offending people.

Some people have been getting anti-semitism and anti-Zionism confused, don't you think Paul?



Paul Foot

Bad boys of the bourgeoisie

Private Eye is thirty and Sunday's *South Bank Show* celebrated in suitably back-slapping style.

This was pretty big of present Melvyn Bragg, given that he is a frequent victim of Lord Gnome's mighty organ. On the other hand, it was probably an example of what many of us have long suspected: most of the *Eye's* "victims" rather enjoy being attacked and some go so far as to inform on themselves just to get a mention.

The programme featured *Eye* staff, past and present, and, despite the self-congratulatory tone of the proceedings, reminded us that they're essentially a tightly-knit clique of naughty ex-public schoolboys: Willie Rushton, Richard Ingrams, Christopher Booker and (naughtiest of all) Paul Foot all went to Shrewsbury together.

The public school background of so many of the *Eye's* leading lights may well account for some of its long-standing obsessions: homosexuality, Jews, and anything to do with "tits" and "bums". In fairness, it should be pointed out that

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

cartoonist Michael Heath pulled his "The Gays" strip (which *Gay News* wanted to buy) once AIDS began to cast a shadow over the humorous potential of that particular subject.

And Paul Foot insisted that his "good friend" Ingrams was not so much anti-semitic as "a very strong anti-Zionist". So that's all right then.

Ingrams' successor as editor, Jimmy Somerville lookalike Ian Hislop, seems to be fitting into the *Eye* lifestyle pretty well and has even begun to ape his mentor's bufferish mannerisms (modelled, one suspects, upon Bill Deedes).

A glimpse of a *Private Eye* lunch — where all the real gossip takes place — revealed some interesting guests:

Pamella Bordes, Tony Banks and our old friend Tariq Ali. As Auberon Waugh pointed out, "my diary was the only really reactionary element in the *Eye*: a lot of it was rather left-wing". Ingrams admitted that Waugh's vendettas against individuals (Shirley Williams, to name just one) were motivated by "pure malice" and, perhaps, should have been subjected to a more rigorous editorial blue pencil. Ingrams himself claims to be motivated by a belief in "original sin".

"I suspect the real reason we all buy *Private Eye* is that we all enjoy gossip and innuendo."

None of the *Eye's* big-time enemies would take part in the programme, but archive film of Sir James "Goldenballs" Goldsmith showed him to be a man in the grip of an obsession, ranting about the *Eye* as "a disease...that must be eliminated". Another long-standing enemy, Robert Maxwell, talked of swatting Ingrams "like a fly".

Less powerful (and less

obsessive) critics like Peter McKay and Nigel Dempster (both former contributors who fell out with the clique) made the most telling contributions to the programme. Dempster highlighted the essential snobbishness of Ingrams and his clique, while McKay described Ingrams' reaction to accusations of anti-semitism: "he just said it's because there are so many corrupt Jewish businessmen; it never occurred to him that it might be anti-semitic."

All of which could very easily give an extremely unpleasant image of Britain's only satirical magazine. And yet you and I buy it (or at least read it) most fortnights. Why? The good reason is the occasional genuinely worthwhile exposé and campaign — Gibraltar, Zeebrugge, Colin Wallace, the Birmingham Six; I suspect that the real reason is that we all enjoy gossip and innuendo.

When Maxwell attempted to sue the *Eye* out of existence a few years ago, I declared myself a defeatist. I think, now, that I'd be critically pro-*Eye*. I don't like the clique (especially the lefties like Foot and Ali) but I do enjoy the magazine. Two cheers for Lord Gnome.

Crisis facing women's refuges



WOMEN'S EYE

By Liz Millward

As debate rages about platitudes versus thought!), I will return to a subject about which we can all agree. That is the crisis facing women refuges. I use "crisis" in the sense of "middle east hostage crisis" — an acute situation which has been going on for years.

When it comes to the provision of refuges for women, I am in total accord with the rest of the women's movement. There aren't enough, and they aren't properly funded. For example: Kent women's refuge has had to turn away 19 out of 20 women referred to it.

Last year they received a small grant, and they had to spend it on essential repairs to a move-on house. Nothing was left over for expansion, nothing for extra staff. The refuge is almost entirely run by volunteers, and no-one knows how long they will be

able to keep going.

Another example — a flat I manage used to be inhabited by a couple and their children. Because of his violence she is now in bed and breakfast with the kids and he is still in the flat. In order to be given the bed and breakfast accommodation, the women had to relinquish all her rights to the flat. What this means is that when the flat is sold, the man will get all the profit.

I understand that there won't be much, but the woman should be entitled to at least half, or should be able to stay in the flat.

The woman is not only the victim of her partner's violence, but in any reasonable society, she (and the children) have the greatest housing need. Yet she has been deprived of her home.

But to establish women's rights to housing which is safe from violence demands legal advice, physical protection and support for the woman who has to fight her way through the maze. Women's refuges provide this

help and support — but only to a tiny percentage of women.

One of the problems is that women subject to violence lose self-confidence, so the first step for refuge-workers is to restore that confidence.

This takes time and time is expensive. But without belief in themselves, women cannot go and face the bureaucratic and legal maze that will give them their rights.

Some women's refuges also counsel and help men. Sometimes helping teach them to deal with anger and value women is enough to restore a relationship without the violence and the abuse. Sometimes it prevents future relationships becoming abusive or violent. Such counselling (or referral for help) can break the cycle of abuse which can pass from parent and child through generations.

No-one would argue that this work is without value. But I cannot see any women's organisation prioritising it over supporting abused women, so in the battle for

resources it may have to go.

Women's refuges are a testament to what can be done by and for women. They are also an indictment of a government which mouths platitudes about violence but refuses to fund refuges properly. There is always money available for extra police when young men terrorise urban estates. But the less public violence against women might as well not be there for all the help given to refuges.

Even the police, not generally known for their non-sexist practice, have started to take 'domestic' violence more seriously. The legal profession has produced lawyers prepared to provide emergency services to abused women. There are housing regulations, policies and even laws designed to help women escape violence. But without support from experienced, accessible advisers, most abused women cannot hope to make the laws work for them. Without that help and support, the laws and policies are simply hypocrisy.

Racist attacks in East London



RACE AND CLASS

By Gail Cameron

Asian families are living in fear on the Teviot Estate in Poplar, East London.

Over the past 10 months there have been over 250 racial attacks in the area. Incidents include knife and dog attacks, spitting and abuse.

A teenage boy was knocked unconscious with a baseball bat. Rubbish has been pushed through letter boxes and doors are banged. There are about 30 Bengali families living on the estate, which has 900 homes.

The evidence of this harassment has been gathered

by a local support group who have visited the families every week.

The support group's figure of 250 racist attacks is six times higher than the police's figures. It seems the families have little faith in the police who arrive late and do nothing.

The families want transfers out of the estate. The Tower Hamlets Law Centre complain that the Liberal council's policy consists of occasional transfers, whereupon new Asian families are moved onto the estate without the problem of racism ever being confronted.

The Tory right and the fascists

By John Daly

At the beginning of July a secret three-day event took place in London, presided over by Jean Marie Le Pen, leader of the French National Front (FN).

Ostensibly, it was a convention of the extreme right wing "Technical Group of the European Right" of the European Parliament, one of whose principal objectives is the building of a Europe-wide right wing network, comprising the French National Front, the German Republikaner, and similar organisations across the continent, possibly including Pamyat of the Soviet Union.

Whether Pamyat will actually be included remains unclear, but certainly top leader Dmitry Vasiliev has frequently talked of the need to create an "All Europe Forum".

The British section of such a network would not be the NF and BNP (although they would undoubtedly be linked in with it) but the Tory party's own "Western Goals" group, which appears to be the main driving force for such a network to be extended to Britain, and the Monday Club.

"They play a vital role as a bridging organisation, both nationally and internationally, linking the Tory right and powerful Nazi organisations."

Western Goals' recent take over of the Monday Club has pushed that organisation dramatically to the right, substantially strengthening Western Goals' power base and widening their sphere of influence.

Western Goals is an "entryist" group within the Tory Party, where it has been welcomed with a hospitality never shown to alleged "entryist" groups within the Labour Party. Significantly, not only has there never been any action by the Tory leadership to expel their "entryists", but in certain parts of the country, especially in parts of South Essex, they are defended

even at the expense of the "traditional Tories".

Nor has the Labour leadership attacked the "entryism" of the extreme right in the Tory party. It was Andrew VR Smith, director of WG, who boasted at a press conference immediately following the three day event presided over by Le Pen, that they were building a European network of which the fascist Le Pen would be "the natural leader".

WG organised the fringe meeting at Tory Party conference in 1989 addressed by an FN Euro MP and Commandant Clive Derby Lewis of the South African Conservative Party (widely viewed as neo-Nazi and not to be confused with the British Conservative Party).

It was at this time WG launched itself into print with an expensively produced journal called *European Dawn*, whose masthead included the old fascist sunwheel symbol formerly the symbol of, amongst others, the openly Nazi British Movement.

Its second edition lavished praise on Jean Marie Le Pen and Republikaner Fuehrer Franz Schonhuber, who was in the Waffen SS during the war, as "the only voices of sanity and decency in Western Europe". Other articles vitriolically attacked the Labour Party, and supported apartheid and the brutal military dictatorship of General Pinochet in Chile.

Edited by Stuart Northolt and Smith, *European Dawn* was apparently the successor to *Young European*, and was stated to be "published by Western Goals (UK) on behalf of YEFW".

YEFW is Young Europeans for World Freedom, the European youth section of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), Northolt has been its chairman and Smith its Secretary General.

Northolt also sent out a covering letter with the first edition of *European Dawn* boasting that Major Roberto D'Aubisson of the Arena Party of El Salvador was the guest of honour at a private dinner of the WG executive and had become an honorary patron of WG.

D'Aubisson is one of the organisers of El Salvador's death squads.

More recently, on 20 November 1990, WG held a memorial dinner for fascist dictator General Franco of Spain, presided over by Lord Sudeley. Socialists remember Fran-

Western Goals Institute

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MEDIA INFORMATION BULLETIN

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SOUTH AFRICAN RIGHT-WING LEADER RECEIVES WARM WELCOME IN ENGLAND

The visit to Britain of Commandant Clive Derby-Lewis, leading Conservative member of the President's Council in the Republic of South Africa, has produced a "remarkably warm and positive reaction" from British Conservative MPs and prominent Tory Party members, according to his London hosts, the Western Goals Institute.

As a former South African MP now serving on State President FW de Klerk's key parliamentary advisory body, Commandant Derby-Lewis is a leading critic of Mr de Klerk's policies and believes that white South Africans are being betrayed by the National Party government. During his London visit, Derby-Lewis has already experienced "widespread support" among British Conservatives for his uncompromising stand in defence of white South Africa.

Earlier this week, Derby-Lewis was guest of honour at a House of Lords meeting sponsored by the Monday Club - the largest Tory Party pressure group - and hosted by the Rt Hon Lord Sudeley. He has also appeared in the past week on other Monday Club platforms, most notably alongside prominent Tory MPs such as John Carlisle (the Club's vice-chairman), Teddy Taylor, Teresa Gorman and Tim Janman at a banquet for 200 members of the Club's SW Essex branch. At all Monday Club events, Derby-Lewis has received an extremely warm welcome and was praised time and again for his robust defence of Western values and civilization in Southern Africa.

He received a similarly positive response at meetings this week with Conservative students and local Party activists elsewhere in south-east England, and at a select dinner in Whitehall - organised by the Western Goals Institute, for Conservative Parliamentarians, Parliamentary candidates, councillors and Party officials - at which he was guest of honour. Derby-Lewis has been busy meeting numerous Members of Parliament, of both Houses, as well as political journalists. In addition he was interviewed this week on Channel Four television, and on Sky Television by former Tory Party chairman Norman Tebbit and Labour MP Austin Mitchell on the popular "Target" programme. Among the other notable figures Cdt Derby-Lewis has met on his visit are former Lord Chancellor The Rt Hon Lord Hailsham, historian Count Nikolai Tolstoy, and tennis player Buster Mottram.

Commandant Derby-Lewis, who will be visiting several other European countries before returning to South Africa, commented today: "It's truly gratifying to see the dramatic change in attitudes in this country since my last visit here. The realities of the South African situation have become clearer to British Conservatives, especially after the release of the notorious terrorist Nelson Mandela, and there is a growing recognition here that the de Klerk government is selling out white South Africa to the communists."

PATRONS: GENERAL SIR WALTER WALKER, MAJOR GENERAL JOHN K. SINGLAUB, THE RT HON. THE LORD SUDELEY, MAJOR SIR PATRICK WALL, MAJOR ROBERTO D'AUBISSON

Above: A Western Goals press release announcing WG-organised tour with Clive Derby-Lewis, one of the leaders of the South African Conservative Party. Right: Jean Marie Le Pen: soon to be leader of a European network of extreme right and fascist parties?



co as one of Europe's most brutal dictators, who murdered hundreds of thousands of people, seizing power with the military assistance of Hitler and Mussolini.

WG have also been linked to the BNP. For instance, the BNP was present at a WG meeting at the Royal Commonwealth Society where the speaker was Andreas Treurnicht of the South African Conservative Party. Stuart Millson, a founder member of WG and a close personal friend of Smith and Northolt, joined the BNP in 1986 but now appears to be back in the Tory party.

Similarly, the revisionist historian David Irving, who questions whether the Nazi Holocaust of six million Jews actually happened, appeared last year both at meetings organised by the BNP and at a meeting organised by Gregory Lauder-Frost, vice president of Western Goals, and now the chairman of the Monday Club Foreign Affairs Committee.

WG are especially interested in South Africa, and set up an "African Desk" in 1988. In addition, one of the Vice Presidents of WG is the aforementioned Commandant Clive Derby-Lewis, who is also foreign affairs spokesman of the South African Conservative Party. In June 1989 he and party leader Andreas Treurnicht visited Britain on a WG-organised tour, and later that year he addressed one of their fringe meetings, at the Tory conference.

WG is an organisation with an importance out of all proportion to its size. Their campaign within the Tory party to "combat the insidious menace of liberalism and communism", operating in the

Tory party as power brokers. By targeting opinion formers and decision-makers, they seek to influence events and set the political agenda.

They play a vital role as a bridging organisation, both nationally and internationally, linking the Tory right and powerful Nazi organisations on the continent like the FN, and forging links between the Tory party and the likes of David Irving.

Our response must be threefold.

Firstly, the organisations of the working class must build their own international links. We especially need a network of anti-racist and anti-fascist organisations stretching across Europe, a similar network of immigrant organisations, and a European network of socialist and trade union activists operating at grass roots level.

Secondly, both the immigrant community and the Labour and trade union movement as a whole must be both educated and mobilised into the fight against Nazism in Britain (the former might not need much education, but the latter certainly does), especially against the re-emerging neo-Nazi BNP, and against the development of the right wing network WG boasts about.

Thirdly, the members of the Labour Party must put pressure on the Labour leadership to attack the Tories over their "entryists". If Neil Kinnock were to devote as much energy attacking the very real, very dangerous and increasingly powerful extremists within the Tory party as he does attacking the so-called "extremists" within the Labour Party, democracy in Britain would be in a much stronger position.

NUS: Kinnockites losing support

STUDENTS

By Kev Serton, NUS NEC

At last week's National Executive Committee meeting of the National Union of Students - the first since the beginning of the summer - the Kinnockites found their support dwindling on a number of important questions.

To begin with, Left Unity proposed and won the reversal of a previous NEC decision to arrest the wages of staff members for non-payment of the poll tax.

Secondly, Left Unity supporters proposed a first term national demonstration against student debt and hardship, calling for the restoration of all benefits cut and a minimum grant for all.

This proposal was only narrowly defeated - 9 votes to 10 - illustrating the decreasing base of support for the Kinnockites' reactionary ideas: eg. student demonstrations are an outdated action, and anyway students need to be told they're in debt and badly off before they'll demonstrate. Therefore, you can only organise a second term demonstration when presumably it won't be an outdated form of action!

Then there was the discussion around the Kinnockites' proposal to suspend NUS Kent Area (NUSKA). NUSKA is in financial crisis. Its main funder, the University of Kent SU, pulled out its support towards the end of last academic year. The decision was taken not by a quorate general meeting, but by a clandestine student council. The instigator of this was Paul Hewitt (some people will remember Paul as the Kinnockites' failed candidate for NUS NEC).

Hewitt, out of a job, set about smashing up NUSKA in order to set up a new Area organisation in Kent which he could run. He wasted no time in founding his new area - which is incidentally a "scab" area set up in opposition to the officially recognised NUS Area.

The problem didn't stop there, though. Hewitt, with the support of the right wing Labour leadership in NUS, turned up to NUS training events over the summer, got confidential information on Kent Area's financial situation, courtesy of the NUS National Secretary, Sam Peters, and got a mention as the new Kent area convenor in the South East Region Handbook.

When challenged on their support for the "scab" area, Peters, Twigg and Fitzsimmons denied all knowledge, until presented with various written and printed evidence to prove the contrary, when there were a lot of red faces.

NUSKA's financial problems go back to last year when they were repeatedly denied financial support from the Central Areas Development Fund (CADF) set up to help under- and poorly-funded area organisations. CADF is controlled by the right wing Labour leadership, and, yes, you've guessed it, NUSKA's convenor is Elaine Jones, a Left Unity supporter.



Brighton Tory candidate for council election, Neil Fissler (1991) declares himself "a fascist and proud of it" at the end of the campaign

Why Militant

Dear Dave,

Militant is now in the middle of a profound crisis. It is not only a crisis about your relationship to the Labour Party, though that is one part of it, and immediately the focus of it.

It goes deeper and wider. The collapse of Stalinism has brought sharply into question — I would say shattered and destroyed — the entire world outlook on which *Militant* has stood for the past 44 years. Every key idea specific to the *Militant* as a political formation lies in ruins, the last of them, your ideas about the Labour Party, shattered by your "open party" faction. All *Militant's* theories about the ever-expanding socialist "colonial revolution", all your illusions about the progressive role of Stalinism in developing the economies of underdeveloped countries have now been reduced to the same degree of credibility as the theory that the earth is flat and was created in six days by a benign God four-and-a-half thousand years ago! I will return to this fundamental aspect of *Militant's* difficulties.

I want to discuss *Militant's* crisis with you, Dave. It has been a long time since we talked. As you know, it is one of the things I hold against *Militant* most, the Stalinist spirit of dogmatic intolerance and hatred of others on the left in which it systematically trains its members, inculcating contempt for the ideas of everyone outside your Church of the Lord.

Given the way you are organised, and the schoolroom sort of internal life you have, this means in reality contempt for the ideas of everyone but a tiny group of your own leaders, who give "the line".

You call this "Bolshevik discipline". But the Bolsheviks were never like that. They had more confidence in their own ideas: their leaders were ideologically braver.

The crisis now is caused by *Militant's* turn to electoralism, by the adoption by most of *Militant's* leaders, of a perspective of "one, two, many Waltons."

The turn to electoralism against Labour is undoubtedly the turn to "building the open revolutionary party", a turn to Gerry Healy's old politics. You don't think so?

What is it then? It is not possible to stop halfway down that road, Dave! Already, *Militant's* Walton candidacy has led to this turn. That logic is irreversible, and the youth who now press for "independence" will make sure it is.

The irony of all this is pretty staggering, though, isn't it Dave?

In 1984, when the miners were making the biggest attempt the labour movement ever made to break Thatcher, *Militant* had the leadership of the Merseyside labour movement. Instead of standing up to the Tory government, fighting side by side with the miners, *Militant* left the miners in the lurch and did a deal with the Tories — which lasted just a year, and then, the miners beaten, they came for *Militant*. You also played into the hands of Kinnock.

In 1984 *Militant's* leaders should

"The reality behind *Militant's* big talk about 'Liverpool, the city that dared to fight'. Liverpool dared to fight: *Militant* did not."

have been willing to stand up to the Tory government, letting the logic of the class struggle decide, and if necessary breaking with the Labour leaders.

Large numbers of labour movement activists could then see plainly that Kinnock was playing the role of outright scab against both the striking miners and the Liverpool council. Today, those of them still active are prepared to put up with almost anything from Kinnock because they can now see no way of beating the Tories except a Kinnock General Election victory.

If necessary, if the logic of the class struggle dictated it, then *Militant* should then have broken the Liverpool District Labour Party away from the control of Kinnock and his friends — and appealed for support from class struggle Labour people throughout the country.

That would have been the opposite of the little sectarian, electoralist stunt in Walton which has

now become the occasion for your break with the Labour Party — at a time when the class struggle is at the lowest ebb in 50 years, and the Labour left is weaker than at any time in 30 years!

Both the class struggle and the left in the labour movement are now at such a low ebb because we suffered defeat in the miners' strike, and the defeat, or surrender, everywhere, of those who, in the early '80s, posed as a local government left.

If *Militant* had pursued different policies in the mid-'80s, it might have made a radical difference: *we might have won*.

You say *Militant* was too small, with only a few thousand members? It was small, but it held a commanding position in Merseyside. Merseyside could have been brought in to struggle against the Tories together with the striking miners. The potential leaders of other local government struggles could then — perhaps — have followed Liverpool's lead.

Yet other workers could have been drawn in to a burgeoning and coalescing wave of class struggle — the dockers, for example.

You will recall that on two occasions during the miners' strike the dockers were on the edge of a national strike.

That strike alone might have tipped the balance in favour of the miners and against the Tories. Not the miners but the Tories would have gone down to defeat.

And the dockers would not later have been defeated and the National Dock Labour Board destroyed, as it was two years ago.

I put it to you that such a scenario is not mere fantasy. All the elements were there in the labour movement at that time. All those possibilities were there in the real situation. They only needed a catalyst.

Defiance of the Tory government by Liverpool council might have been that catalyst.

A Liverpool general strike alone — and an opinion poll in 1983 showed that a majority of Liverpool workers would have backed a general strike in support of Liverpool council if it had confronted the Tories, as its leaders promised the great mass demonstration they led through the centre of Liverpool that



When *Militant* had the initiative: on the left is Tony Ateman, a strategist; Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton — who advocated a Tory vote in the Walton by-election. The bearded man beaming Nancy Reagan-like adoration at the back of Derek Hatton's head is Richard Venton, *Militant's* Liverpool organiser.

they intended to — would have decisively ended the isolation of the miners.

Everything in the last seven years might have been different, Dave. Thatcher was not as strong as she seemed, nor were the Tories: they seemed so strong, and looked so invulnerable only after they had beat the miners.

The way in which the panicky Tory MPs ditched Thatcher last year showed decisively that Thatcher was never as strong as she seemed.

And even if the miners, dockers and left-led local government had combined and coalesced their interests in 1984, and had nevertheless still suffered defeat, even then, things would be better than now. The labour movement would have been beaten in a fight, not suffered the demoralising horrors of a major defeat without a fight.

In fact, of course, only the miners fought, while the rest of the labour movement, from the TUC leaders to *Militant* — where *Militant* was in a position to lead a fight, and a crucial one — slunk away instead of fighting.

That is the shameful reality behind *Militant's* big talk about "Liverpool, the city that dared to fight". Liverpool dared to fight: *Militant* did not!

This may seem a very harsh judgement, Dave. It is harsh. But it is a fair judgement, and true to reality.

Militant chose to do a deal with the Tories, left the miners in the lurch, and allowed the mass support in Liverpool for a fight to bleed away slowly. Why people who call themselves Trotskyists did this is a mystery to me. But many things

that happened in Liverpool then are beyond my comprehension, especially the bizarre doings of Derek Hatton, your leader there — and that, Dave, is what he was, whatever place he had in your hidden inner hierarchy.

That was the time to break with Kinnock! If you wanted to make this turn out of the Labour Party, if such an attempt was to be anything other than a politically suicidal desertion of the political labour movement, there was your chance.

It would have been the Liverpool Labour Party backed by much of the working class in the area. After it, others areas might have followed, in an atmosphere of solidarity strikes with the miners. Not only could the Tories have been brought down, but the "Kinnockite Tendency" in the Labour Party could have been stopped in its tracks by the working class movement *Militant* might have unleashed, had its leaders had the stomach for it.

At the very least, — forgetting for the moment about the development of the class struggle, and thinking only about the development of your "revolutionary party" — you would have had a vastly greater number of people around you to build your organisation from, many of them tempered class struggle fighters too.

The truth is that the leaders of *Militant* did "forget all about the development of the class struggle". They hung on to "power" in Liverpool, just like any of the other local government left cliques, in the safest way they could devise — manoeuvring with the Tories.

Like the old routinists of the Second International, *Militant's* leaders put the preservation of their

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MILITANT FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH
Direct from Bogside barricade
Paul Jones (Derry Lab. Party), Young Socialists) Aug. 25

NORTHERN IRELAND
FOR A UNITED WORKERS DEFENCE FORCE

NOW CARRY OUT A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

When reality was brutal *Militant* always took refuge in pipe dreams: the Protestant and Catholic communities are murderously divided on the national question? Pretend that they can be united around minimal trade unionism, which avoids the great political issues!

MILITANT FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH
On other pages: —
Connolly and 1916 rising
Indonesia: army takes over
Cowley: Worker's Courts
Monopolies

To work in the mass party of the trade unions, the Labour Party, *Militant* needed to pretend that it's right wing leaders could be made to bring in a socialist programme. Leaving the Labour Party, they are still advocating "Labour to power on a socialist programme" (it was one of their slogans in the Walton by-election!)

is in disarray



Keep Labour socialist

Militant headline 1987, Labour Party conference. Since when was Labour "socialist"?

own "party" apparatus first, before the development of the class struggle. And like them, even your "apparatus" suffers the consequences of the defeats your own "apparatus-serving" politics engendered.

And now you stride off down the road to the political wilderness long ago beaten by Gerry Healy...

And where does all this leave your once prized "Labour Party perspective", to which a number of generations of your tendency's supporters were recruited?

How did that "prediction" go? There would be a powerful growth

"Of course you denounced Stalinism and advocated 'political revolution'. But you were grotesquely enthusiastic for the expansion of Stalinism."

of a "mass left wing", the right wing of the labour movement would be sloughed off, and after a while "the Marxist tendency" would gain the leadership of the broad political labour movement. Remember?

There was always far too much fantasy and schema-mongering in all this for my taste. You wrapped the rational reasons why Marxists should work in the Labour Party — because it is the political wing of the trade unions, the trade unions in politics — in Old Moore's classic-style predictions.

But even so, you at least understood that the revolutionaries can't at will jump over the mass reformist labour movement and "build the revolutionary party". You knew something about the history of such attempts in the past, and why they all had to end, as they did end, in defeat, failure and the wasting of would-be revolutionary socialists.

And this is all now forgotten? You didn't mean it? The Labour Party has ceased to be the mass reformist workers' party? (That seems to be the underlying drift of your majority's thinking: it is absurd!)

Or was it all just political patter to rationalise an existence in the Labour Party which you found comfortable and profitable — you ran the Labour Party's youth organisation, financially subsidised by the Labour Party for 15 years! — until you got big enough and brave enough to...switch to Gerry Healy's sectarian politics around the cry: "Build the revolutionary party"?

That has to be the retrospective verdict, Dave. I never had much time for Ted Grant's definition of Marxism, as "the science of prediction". But I will venture a prediction: once you start on the Healy road, you will keep going. You may grow a bit in the period immediately ahead; you will rapidly decline and fall apart. Already there is an exodus of your older cadre.

Grant is quoted as saying that Militant's "adventurist" course can quickly, when it fails to result in the hoped for gains, turn into its opposite — prostrate collapse back into the Labour Party. He is probably right about that. He would be the

last man on earth, I guess, to understand that *this* new adventurist turn which he resists is itself the product of all your long years of passive propagandist time-serving in the Labour Party, which is how you spent all the 20 years of great labour militancy, up to 1975 or later, denouncing syndicalism. Now you sally forth...! Lenin, you will recall, was fond of the story of the man who couldn't get anything right: he went to weddings and cried, and to funerals where he giggled...

But the Labour Party is only a part of your crisis, and politically not the most important one. Your entire "optimistic" world outlook has now been destroyed. It was based — since 1947 — on the idea that the expansion of Russian Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the victory of Stalinism in China and elsewhere was the *world socialist revolution*.

Of course you denounced Stalinism and advocated a "political revolution". But you were grotesquely enthusiastic for the expansion of Stalinism.

It must be one of the most shameful episodes in the history of any of the groups calling themselves Trotskyist that from January 1980 to the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1988 Militant supported and, indeed, glorified, Russia's "Vietnam war" in Afghanistan.

It was a war in which the Russians napalm-bombed villages and destroyed crops, using the tactics the US used in Vietnam, and the French in Algeria and Vietnam. A quarter of the people in

What happened in Liverpool

- 29 Mar '84 Budget day for the council. Despite a one-day strike by council workers and a big demonstration at the Town Hall, Labour's 'unbalanced' no-cuts budget is defeated by 3 Labour right-wingers voting with the Liberals and Tories. All other budgets are defeated too.
- June '85 Councillors propose a budget with a 20% rate rise and some financial juggling to see them through the year without a showdown. The council workers' unions say no. The Council sets an 'unbalanced' budget — yet starts no clear campaign for action.
- May '84 New council elections. Labour wins solid majority. An opinion poll shows that 55% of Labour voters would back a local general strike if the Tories intervened against the Council. But the Militant-led Labour Council does not vote through the unbalanced budget. The mass campaign is wound down in favour of negotiations with the Tory government. This is the decisive turning-point when confrontation with the government could have linked up with the miners' strike and given a lead to all other councils.
- Sept '85 The Council announces that it is about to run out of cash and will issue 90 day redundancy notices to all employees "as a legal device". The council unions protest. The council leaders withdraw the notices. The council shop stewards call a ballot for an all-out strike. The vote goes against the strike, 47% to 53%. The council leaders send out the redundancy notices again — some by taxi to bypass a teachers' picket line. NALGO members strike in protest.
- July '84 The council leaders announce a deal with the government. Some of the financial problems are postponed to the next year, and the Council can get through with a 17% rate rise. Militant call it "a 95% victory", but the Tories are quietly satisfied: they have evaded the danger of a fight on two fronts, with the miners and local government at once.
- 11 Oct '85 The Council is forced to withdraw the redundancy notices by legal action brought by the NUT. It proposes another 'legal device' — laying off the whole council workforce from 1-28 January!
- Oct '84 The Council appoints Sampson Bond, a Militant supporter, as its race relations officer, against the strong wishes of the City's Black Caucus. The ensuing row wrecks the Council Unions' Joint Shop Stewards' Committee and alienates Liverpool's black community. Throughout the country — in LPYS branches for example — Militant wages a savage campaign of racist stereotyping against the leaders of the Black Caucus, denouncing them as "Pimps and Gangsters".
- 20 Nov '85 Labour's National Executive sets up a kangaroo court 'inquiry' into Liverpool District Labour Party. This is simply the Kincock faction seizing its chance.
- Mar '85 The miners, defeated, are forced back to work after 13 months. Liverpool Labour Council has not yet said anything definite about plans for a confrontation with the government over the budget for the financial year starting April 1985. Instead, it delays setting a budget — a policy also followed by a
- 22 Nov '85 The Council announces a deal. It gets a loan from Swiss banks on condition that it makes cuts and stays legal in future. It reveals that the required cuts have already, quietly, been made! And it soon comes out that the loan had been negotiated back in August! The entire saga of redundancy notices, taxis, clashes with the workforce etc. is rendered inexplicable. To this day Militant has offered no credible account of what it thought it was doing. Liverpool, the City that Dared to Fight by Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn relies on lies and bombast.
- Mar '86 A court declares that the Liverpool Labour councillors must be surcharged and disqualified because of their delay in setting a budget.

What we are and what we must become

By Phil Semp, Rachel Lever and Sean Matgamna

35,000 word root and branch "internal" criticism of Militant produced in 1966. £5 plus 34p post

WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT WE MUST BECOME

Turn to page 12

Capitalists echo Stalinist lies

By John O'Mahony

"But socialism is dead, darling!" This was one response on the street to the front page of the last *Socialist Organiser*: "Stand up for socialism". And there were many similar responses, sad as well as gleeful.

For sure, if the Stalinist systems were any sort of socialism, then socialism is dead, and it deserves to be dead. It was rotten and stinking for decades before its recent outright collapse.

But Stalinism was not socialism. It was the opposite of socialism.

Throughout our existence, *Socialist Organiser* has championed the underground workers' movements and the oppressed nationalities in the Stalinist states. We have waged war on the idea — held by many in the labour movement — that the Stalinist states were socialist in any sense or in any degree. It is the same idea being peddled now — but from the other side, not by confused would-be socialists, but by bourgeois propagandists who insist that Stalinism was socialism because they want to discredit socialism and bury it.

If socialists hold their course then we will find the collapse of Stalinism and the discrediting of its bureaucratic falsifications of socialism has cleared the ground for a new flowering of unfalsified socialism. *Socialist Organiser* is one of the bearers of the seeds of this new growth of socialism. Fighting the lies that socialism and Stalinism are identical, and that Stalinism was the same thing as the Bolshevik Russian Revolution, we will hasten the new growth of unfalsified working class socialism.

The first thing now is to answer the lies of the bourgeoisie and of the ex-Stalinists.

**The system now
disintegrating in Eastern
Europe was socialist**

No it wasn't! It was a system of extreme exploitation of the workers and peasants, run by a backward bureaucratic ruling class with a monopoly of power. It was that bureaucracy which decreed that socialism meant their state nationalising and controlling everything — not Marx, or for that

matter Lenin.

Far from representing the working class, the Stalinist systems were characterised above all by a savage repression of the working class, and relentless persecution of working-class dissidents, especially workers who tried to organise independent trade unions

**The collapse of the planned
economies in Eastern Europe
means the eclipse of
socialism**

Quite the opposite. It means the renewal of socialism. The disavowal of socialism by the Stalinists will help free socialism from the Stalinist, statist taint which poisoned much of the socialist and communist movement for six decades.

Socialism is a good idea — but it is not just a good idea! It is rooted in the class struggle of the working class. That struggle continues. The collapse of Stalinism has already opened up space for the workers, long suppressed, to begin to organise independently and think for themselves. They will formulate their own ideas.

**"Stalinism was not
Bolshevism, any
more than it was
any kind of
socialism. Trotsky,
who was to die at
the hands of Stalin's
assassins, put it well
and truly when he
said that a river of
working class and
socialist blood
separated Stalinism
from Bolshevism."**

Marxists do not believe that the dominance of socialist ideas is inevitable among workers. The hard truth is that there are great obstacles in the way of workers becoming socialists when they have lived all their lives under a Stalinist totalitarian system disguised as socialism.

We see that now in Eastern

Europe. In the ex-Stalinist states the working class looks to the West and to market economics for its solutions. It mirrors the way in which working class movements in the West have for decades mistakenly looked to the Stalinist East as a model of escape from the peculiar horrors of our own society.

Nevertheless the prospect in all the East European states is for an intensified class struggle.

Many workers, faced with class conflicts, in the new conditions, will move towards a genuine working class world outlook. They will understand that the free market is no acceptable alternative to Stalinism, just as Stalinism was never a genuine working class alternative to the free market.

The rebirth of a mass socialist movement, cleansed of Stalinism, is a certainty in these conditions. It is a hard road from now to then, and it may be a long and winding road, but there is no other road for workers who want to defend their class interests to take.

Just as in recent years we have seen the inspiring development of such working class movements as South Africa's non-racial trade unions and the Brazilian Workers' Party — and Solidarnosc too — in previously more or less fallow areas of class struggle, so we will see the emergence of new workers' movements in the opened-up ex-Stalinist states.

**Leninism bred Stalinism, and
is discredited with it**

This is the central pillar of the edifice of lies now agreed on by bourgeois and ex-Stalinists alike. It is the biggest lie of all.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks led the workers to power. They fought ruthlessly against the bourgeoisie and the opponents of socialism. They smashed the walls of the Tsarist prison-house of nations. Far from substituting for the working class, the Bolshevik party, by its leadership and farsightedness, allowed the working class to reach and sustain a level of mass action hitherto unparalleled in history.

The Bolsheviks based themselves on a system of democratic working class councils (soviets). Their goal was working class democracy.

They never believed that they could make socialism in backward Russia, only that the Russian work-



Leaders of the Left Opposition in 1927

Those who do not learn

Leopold Trepper was the head of the USSR's spy network in Nazi-occupied Europe. Months before the Nazi invasion of the USSR Trepper was sending details of Hitler's preparations to Stalin. They were ignored. On the eve of the invasion Trepper even supplied the precise number of divisions waiting to attack and their positions. All to no avail.

After the war Trepper was imprisoned by the KGB and only released during the Khrushchev thaw. In this extract from his book, *The Great Game*, Trepper honours the Trotskyists for their bitter, unyielding opposition to

Stalin. They were the only people who stood firm, people who could be proud of their past, unlike many newcomers to the cause of anti-Stalinism.

The glow of October was being extinguished in the shadows of underground chambers. The revolution had degenerated into a system of terror and horror; the ideals of socialism were ridiculed in the name of a fossilized dogma

ing class could take power first. They believed they had a duty to maintain their bridgehead for workers' revolution in the most difficult and arduous circumstances.

The Bolsheviks were fallible human beings, acting in conditions of great difficulty. Mistakes they may have made in the maelstrom of civil war and economic collapse are proper subjects for socialist discussion and debate. As their critic and comrade Rosa Luxemburg wrote in 1918, the Bolsheviks would have been the last to imagine that everything they did in their conditions was a perfect model of socialist action for everywhere at all times. But what the Bolsheviks never were was the root of the Stalinist counter-revolution, which amongst its other crimes, murdered most of those who were still alive in the mid-1930s.

When things began to go wrong the Bolsheviks stood their ground. The workers' risings were defeated in the West. Invasions and civil war wrecked the soviets. The Bolshevik party itself divided. One section took a path on which it ended up leading the bureaucratic counter-revolution. The surviving central leaders fought the counter-revolution on a programme of working class self-defence and of renewing the soviets.

Those Bolsheviks (Trotskyists) went down to bloody defeat. Stalinism rose above the graves of Bolsheviks, just as it rose hideously

above the murdered socialist hopes of the Russian and international working class. By the late 1930s Stalin had slaughtered the leading activists not only from the Trotskyist, but also from the Right-Communist and even the Stalinist factions of the Bolshevik party of the 1920s.

Stalinism was not Bolshevism, any more than it was any kind of socialism. Trotsky, who was to die at the hands of Stalin's assassins, put it well and truly when he said that a river of working class and socialist blood separated Stalinism from Bolshevism. The workers in Eastern Europe and the USSR will learn the truth about that now that the possibility of open debate and honest information has been opened up.

**Capitalism is vindicated by
the disintegration of "state
socialism"**

One of the most profound and heartfelt paeans of praise ever written about capitalism will be found in the *Communist Manifesto*, the founding document of the modern socialist movement. Capitalism gave a tremendous boost to human capacity to change and control our environment and thus created the objective possibility of humanity rising above its "pre-history" — out of the social jungle into a classless socialist society.



from history are condemned to relive it

which the executioners still had the effrontery to call Marxism.

And yet we went along, sick at heart, but passive, caught up in machinery we had set in motion with our own hands. Mere cogs in the apparatus, terrorised to the point of madness, we became the instruments of our own subjugation. All those who did not rise up against the Stalinist machine are responsible, collectively responsible. I am no exception to this verdict.

But who did protest at that

time? Who rose up to voice his outrage?

The Trotskyists can lay claim to this honor. Following the example of their leader, who was rewarded for his obstinacy with the end of an ice-axe, they fought Stalinism to the death, and they were the only ones who did. By the time of the great purges, they could only shout their rebellion in the freezing wastelands where they had been dragged in order to be exterminated. In the camps, their conduct was admirable. But their

voices were lost in the tundra.

Today, the Trotskyists have a right to accuse those who once howled along with the wolves. Let them not forget, however, that they had the enormous advantage over us of having a coherent political system capable of replacing Stalinism. They had something to cling to in the midst of their profound distress at seeing the revolution betrayed. They did not 'confess', for they knew that their confession would serve neither the party nor socialism.

Marxists criticise the waste and irrationality and savage inhumanity of capitalism, but at the same time see capitalism as the necessary forerunner of socialism.

Capitalism has not ceased to be irrational and inhuman, nor have market mechanisms ceased to be blind and wasteful just because of the Stalinist experiment in "state socialism". Wage slavery and exploitation have not ceased to be at the heart and root of capitalism. The possibility and even the inevitability remains of capitalism plunging once again into devastating slumps as in the '30s — and there are three million unemployed in Britain alone right now. Capitalism still presides over regular mass slaughters by hunger which are an indictment of any social system.

In the United States, the richest capitalist country in the world, thousands of people sleep on the streets, or get a living only through the drug trade. In the private-profit counterpart of Eastern Europe — Latin America — unemployment runs at 40% in the big cities, workers' living standards have sometimes been halved since the debt crisis broke in 1982, cocaine gangsters rule huge areas, and malnutrition and even starvation are widespread. Capitalism is no alternative at all!

Stalinism was not an attempt to go beyond advanced capitalism on the basis of the achievements of ad-

vanced capitalism which has proved by its failure the hopelessness of all such attempts. It was an experience on the fringes of world capitalism, arising out of the defeat of a working class revolution, and stifling under its own contradictory bureaucratic regime.

Stalinism was part of the pre-history humankind must grow beyond. So is capitalism!

Socialism is discredited because only a free market economy can give a secure basis for democracy. Without it you get state control, and state control inevitably stifles democracy

Marxists do not want any sort of bureaucratic state, neither that of a country like Britain, where the bureaucratic state works in tandem with the bourgeoisie, nor that of the Stalinist systems where the bureaucracy was the sole master of society's wealth.

We advocate a "semi-state" without a standing army, without an entrenched bureaucracy. The Bolsheviks wanted that, too. They could not create it because of the backwardness of the isolated USSR, but it would be entirely possible in a country like Britain,

especially with modern technology.

The idea that only the market system of the West can be the basis for democracy is the idea that only wage slavery for the masses together with the phenomenal concentration of wealth — and therefore power — at the top of society can be the basis of democracy! It is a prize example of the crazy logic satirised by George Orwell according to which war is peace and lies are truth.

Even such democracy as we have in the West owes its existence to decades and centuries of struggle by the working class. Democracy in capitalism is limited, imperfect, and normally not very stable.

Mass self-rule by the producers, dominated neither by a bureaucratic state monopoly nor by the economic rule of the multimillionaires and their officials, is a better form of democracy. It is socialist democracy.

The reason for the economic impasse of the Eastern Bloc is that centralised planning cannot work in a complex economy: therefore capitalism is the only possible system

This argument too rests on the lie that Stalinism — the Stalinist command economy — was socialism.

The attempt to have the state control everything served the Stalinists, not the working class. Marxists never believed that the working class could take power and simply abolish the market: in 1921 Lenin set the goal of Soviet government as that of occupying "the commanding heights of the economy".

Socialism, once the workers have taken power and abolished wage slavery by taking the major means of production from the capitalist class, would — probably for generations ahead — operate through a combination of planning and market mechanisms — within the broad framework of a flexible plan.

There is a vast difference between an economy where the basic strategic decisions are made by democratic planning — which is certainly possible — and one where they are made by the crazy gyrations of the Stock Exchange.

How quickly a workers' planned economy will be able to make its planning more comprehensive, and move towards replacing the market altogether, must be an open question. We do not know now how quickly computer technology will progress.

The Communist Parties have ditched Marxism and Communism, and they should know what they're talking about

The Stalinists rulers in the USSR have created an ideology through which their interests and their immediate political concerns were expressed in stereotyped language derived from Marxism. Marxist analysis has been no part of that ideological process.

Communist Parties like the British CP danced like performing bears to that official "Marxism". In the high Stalinist period, Moscow could say on Monday that Britain and France were democratic powers justly opposing ravenous German fascism, on Tuesday that British and French war-mongering imperialism were ganging up on peace-loving Germany, and on Wednesday that it was Anglo-French democracy against German fascism again — and the CPs would jump accordingly. (They did that between September 1939 and June 1941).

CPs justified Stalin's terror and for decades lied systematically about the reality of the USSR. When told to, they collaborated with Nazis against socialists in Germany in 1931-33; coordinated Nazi-like campaigning against "Jewish Trotskyists" in Mexico in 1939-41, when Hitler and Stalin were friends; organised bloody counter-revolution against the workers in Republican Spain in 1936-7; and so on. The list is almost endless.

Later, the CPs softened up, accommodated more to the societies they lived in, and for a couple of decades past they have occasionally criticised aspects of Stalinist rule. In practical politics, the West's biggest Communist Party, the Italian CP, has long been to the right of the British Labour Party.

These political whores and charlatans can speak neither for socialism nor for Marxism. The best service they can render to socialists and Marxists is to distance themselves from us, the more formally and explicitly the better. The air around us will eventually be a lot cleaner for their departure.

When the Italian ex-Communist Party decides to change its name, what is collapsing is not Bolshevism or Communism but the grotesque counterfeit of Marxism and socialism shaped and moulded by

Stalin, and in part sustained by Stalin's wealth and power.

The collapse of Communism vindicates the reformist "social democratic" model of socialism

Social democracy defined itself historically not against Stalinism but against Bolshevism. And the social democrats were wrong at every point against Bolshevism.

They either supported their own bourgeoisie, even against the revolutionary communist workers, or temporised and hesitated and thus helped the bourgeoisie to win.

It was the social democrats who rescued German capitalism in 1918, and thereby isolated the Russian Revolution. By betraying socialism or dithering in countries like Germany and Italy, the social democrats played the role of historic step-father to Stalinism.

The Bolsheviks did not lead the workers to power believing socialism could be rooted in Russia; they led the Russian workers on ahead believing the European workers would follow. The socialist leaders in the West left them in the lurch, amidst the Russian backwardness, where Stalinism was eventually to grow up.

Whatever about this or that error made by the early Communist International, the international Bolshevik current was entirely right against reformist social democracy.

The reformists' criticisms of Stalinism have often, of course, been correct. They have been right on the same questions bourgeois democrats have been right on.

The disintegration of Stalinism cannot lead logically to the conclusion that reformist social-democracy is the answer — unless we also accept that Stalinism was socialism, and that its collapse therefore shows us that capitalism is the best we can ever hope for.

Reformist social-democracy is not a different strategy for achieving socialism. Socialism is the replacement of wage-slavery and the capitalist system built on it by a different mainspring — free cooperative self-administering labour. What has that got to do with the achievements of social democratic reform?

The fight for welfare-state reforms, and the defence of existing welfare state provision, is indeed necessary for socialists. But socialists cannot stop there. And very often today the reformists do not even defend the welfare state. The fight to defend welfare state provision is often a fight against reformists in power — as it was in Britain during the last three years of the 1974-79 Labour government. The socialism of the reformist social democrats is like the smile on Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat.

Since the 1920s, social-democratic parties have abandoned even a verbal commitment to fighting for a socialist system defined as something radically different from capitalism. They aspire at most to modifying capitalism, with a few welfare measures. In the 1980s, social-democratic leaders in France, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and Italy have become no better than pale-pink Thatcherites.

The only model of socialism restored to its proper shape and colour by the disintegration of Stalinism and the open disavowal of socialism by the Stalinists is the only model of socialism that ever deserved the name — the fight to organise the working class as a clear conscious force, a class for itself, to break bourgeois state power and abolish wage slavery, and establish a comprehensive, democratic self-rule throughout society.

Why Militant is in disarray

From page 9

Afghanistan — about five million people! — were driven over the border as refugees.

And you supported Russian imperialism's bloody war! Your preposterous dogmas led you to define it as the expansion of the "world socialist revolution".

You wound up accepting, advocating, defending and glorifying the inevitability of Stalinism in most of the less developed countries as a progressive stage in the movement of the world toward socialism. As late as 1978 — yes 1978! — Ted Grant looked forward to a Stalinist officers' coup in Portugal! (See the article in the Summer 1978 edition of your magazine.)

You don't want to accept that this was the implication of what you said and wrote? I don't blame you, Dave! But you will find that it is the unavoidable conclusion from what your organisation wrote. I analysed all this in a pamphlet some years ago, and there you will find all the relevant quotations from your organisation's articles and pamphlets.

But it was worse than that. The Mandelites and those who have had — again and again — ridiculous illusions in Tito and Mao or Castro usually need to tell themselves lies about it. They needed pretences and fantasies about what went on in these Stalinist states. You told yourselves a large part of the truth about them. You knew and said that they were totalitarian societies where the working class was ruthlessly oppressed. And still you supported them, still you crowded in triumph for every advance by Stalinism (in Afghanistan, for example).

The "autonomous movement of the productive forces" was at work in the world, you said, like Adam Smith's hidden hand, inevitably creating Stalinist states which had

an immensely progressive role to play — like the bourgeoisie in the time of Marx, developing the means of production — in most of the world.

And now? The "autonomous movement of the productive forces" — once the Stalinist political centres of command and terror have broken down — prove to be capitalist in direction!

You have been forcefully reminded of the basic Marxist truth that the working class can only take power consciously, and not through any "autonomous movement of the productive forces".

Your picture of a world in which capitalism is dying and a form of workers' power exists in large parts of the globe is shown to have been delirium, fantasy, political fool's gold.

What is left of *Militant's* "world outlook" now? What can be left of the political authority of leaders who have peddled such self-evident gibberish — reactionary gibberish! — for nearly half a century? Ted Grant's political authority is in crisis — to use the term Lyn Woods used when he talked to the *Guardian* reporter — not only, and not fundamentally, where the Labour Party is concerned. But what about the authority of people such as Taaffe and Walsh who have run the organisation for a quarter of a century?

Now, your "world outlook" — spun out of ridiculous pseudo-Trotskyist prettifying glosses on Stalinism — was never either coherent or intellectually worthy of respect. At one and the same time a *Militant* supporter could sing the praises of expanding — Stalinist — "world revolution", euphorically cite the "successes" of nationalised property as socialist successes and denounce Stalinist totalitarianism!

You called your theory "workers' statism", but the terms of your actual theory were the opposite of the theory Trotsky had



Militant believed that "the planned economy" existed mystically apart from the decrepit societies and the irrational social relations created by the Stalinist ruling class. What will they say now?

propounded for the USSR in 1940 using the same name tag. You described Stalinist societies in which the nationalised economies were not in antagonism with the bureaucracy but were *its own form of property*, created by itself, for a long transitional stage of history. In fact you described Stalinist societies — with the exception, perhaps, of the USSR, where, you said, conditions were now objectively ripe for a working class "political revolution" — in which the bureaucracy had a necessary and progressive function in the economy and was not at all the "cancerous growth" Stalin's bureaucracy was for LD Trotsky's "degenerated workers' state" theory in 1940.

Under the workers' state name tag you actually described a new form of class society in which the bureaucracy had the role of a progressive ruling class. You described the sort of society Shachtman described (and I believe accurately described) except that you believed it was progressive. The "workers' state" name tag was merely your way of saying it was "post-capitalist" and progressive.

In fact, for Stalinism, you had exactly the politics of Bruno Rizzi

against whom Trotsky polemicalises in *In Defence of Marxism*. Rizzi considered both fascism and Stalinism to be "bureaucratic collectivist" societies, and that they were progressive, moving towards socialism.

In a way, that fact alone sums up *Militant's* political and theoretical level: having a theory which in its historical evaluations, political conclusions and terms of reference was almost identical to Rizzi for Stalinist Russia, and thinking you had the theory Trotsky expounded *against Rizzi* in 1939!

You called it "permanent revolution". But from your "Bruno Rizzi" version of "workers' statism" you went on to incorporate what you called "Bonapartist workers' states" into your programme as an inevitable stage of development for most of the world, in the place where the Mensheviks had placed the bourgeois revolution.

Coherent, properly worked out, or intellectually respect-worthy this stuff surely never was, Dave. But it was quite powerful as a political artefact. If you didn't think about it, it would explain the world to you and your own place in it as a Trot-

skyist. And now, it is gone where the Berlin Wall went!

What is left of your world outlook now? It is in tatters. And it is in this condition you set out on Healy's road to "build the revolutionary party"! Physic, heal thyself! Before you appeal to working class people to join this party, tell them first what you now stand for. Tell yourselves what you stand for.

Demand that your leaders — on both sides of the present dispute — tell you how they could have been so wrong on everything for so long!

Your tendency was built through routine propaganda activities within the protected environs of Labour's youth movement: and it is now quite plain that it was built on myths — the myths about "Labour's mass left wing" and your predestined place within it, and *Militant's* peculiar myth about "the world revolution" ever-expanding by way of a "colonial revolution" that would inevitably — even in Portugal at the end of the '70s — produce progressive Stalinist "deformed workers' states".

Probably it was inevitable that people with such a political record on the big questions would bungle things as badly as they did in Liverpool in the mid-'80s — and in Walton recently, where their stupid adventurism gave the Kinnockites the excuse for a new purge, and may well cost Dave Nellist and Terry Fields their seats in parliament. Some strategists!

This letter is overlong, and I must finish. Dave, for decades *Militant* has lived cut off from dialogue with the left. You poisoned the youth with bile and hatred against all the rest of the left. You affected disdain, and indifference, while your internal bulletin published vicious political misrepresentations, and often libels, of other left wingers — which their victims were not even supposed to know about, let alone have the change to reply to.

You should break with the hermit habits of the "Exclusive Brethren", Dave, and develop contact and dialogue with others of us on the left. In *Socialist Organiser* and the Alliance for Workers' Liberty we have long been grappling with the questions now placed brutally on *Militant's* agenda by the collapse of Stalinism in the USSR.

You have built an organisation akin to a religious cult, not a healthy political party. Now some of those who built it find it turned on them. The organisation is starting out on a Healyite adventure, its ideas in shreds and tatters.

God knows what this organisation will now mutate into. But it won't — it can't — evolve into a serious revolutionary force in the British working class movement. For there to be any hope of that, you must first settle accounts with your history and draw up an honest political balance sheet of what you are, now that all your old ideas have collapsed, like your "perspectives" for the Labour Party.

Sean Matgamna

Danger in numbers

In 1985, 17 Americans were killed by terrorists, out of some 28 million who travelled abroad. The response was a massive drop in US tourism — the 1 in 1.6 million chance of being killed scared millions into staying at home where they ran a risk of 1 in 5,500 of dying in a car accident, 1 in 20,000 of drowning or 1 in 68,000 of choking to death. Clearly they would have been safer abroad!

For John Allen Paulos, in his book *Innumeracy*, this is one example of the mathematical equivalent of illiteracy, the inability to comprehend, compare and interpret numbers.

Understanding of probabilities is a particular area of weakness. Paulos shows how to calculate numbers of choices and probabilities in an attempt to help the reader overcome this. For example, a restaurant menu might offer a choice of four starters, seven main courses and three desserts. The total number of possible three-course meals is $4 \times 7 \times 3 = 84$. This illustrates the multiplication principle: the number of choices or possibilities at each stage are multiplied together.

This can lead to some astronomical numbers. Consider the number of possible 7-figure telephone numbers. There are ten possibilities for each figure leading to $10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$ which gives 10 million possible numbers. Even if 0 and 1 are excluded for the first place, there are still 8 million.

Or how many ways can eight world leaders line up for a group photograph at a summit meeting? The choices decline as the leaders line up — 8 for the first place, 7 for the second and so on. So the number is $8 \times 7 \times 6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 40,320$.

In how many arrangements will Bush and Major be together? The answer is 2

LES HEARN'S



SCIENCE COLUMN

$7 \times 6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 10,080$. Suppose the leaders line up at random. What is the probability that Bush and Major will be together? The answer is $\frac{1}{4}$ or 25% (10,080 divided by 40,320), illustrating that seemingly improbable events can have quite a high probability.

On the other hand, even quite improbable events will happen from time to time. Consider the chance of getting poker hands with four aces. The number of 5-card hands is $52 \times 51 \times 50 \times 49 \times 48$. Since the order of the cards is unimportant, this number must be divided by $5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1$, giving a total of 2,598,960. Of these, 48 will be 4-ace hands, since the fifth card can be one of the remaining 48.

The probability of 4 aces is therefore 48 divided by 2,598,960 or about 1 in 50,000. While it would be unwise to

bank on getting such a hand, there must be several of these dealt every year in the many thousands of poker games that go on.

Lack of appreciation of the latter sort of fact leads innumerate people to mistake coincidence for what it is — the operation of probability. So is there any significance in the fact that President Lincoln's Secretary was called Kennedy and President Kennedy's Secretary was called Lincoln? No, says Paulos.

How about discovering that two people in a room share the same birthday? Should not this have a very small probability — say 1 in 365 squared, or about 1 in 100,000? Paulos shows that you only need 23 people for a 50% chance of two with the same birthday. How can this be?

The number of possible combinations of birthdays for this group is 365 times itself 23 times, a colossal number. The number of combinations with no birthday in common is $365 \times 364 \times 363 \dots \times 343$, a not quite so colossal number. The latter divided by the former is just under $\frac{1}{2}$ or 50% and is the probability that no two in the group share a birthday. Therefore, there is an above 50% chance that two will share a birthday.

Other seemingly improbable events can occur too, and fool the innumerate. Suppose a firm of stock market advisers gave you six consecutive correct tips about the movement of market prices. They then ask for £1,800 before sending you their next valuable piece of advice. Would you give it to them?

The trick works like this (and is illegal, I think). The firm sends 32,000 fancy letters to investors, 16,000 "predicting" a rise, and 16,000 a fall, in the coming week. Next week, they send 16,000 letters to the investors who got the "correct" information, 8,000 "predicting" a rise and 8,000 a fall.

After 6 predictions, 500 investors will have received 6 correct pieces of information. If they all send back £1,000, that's £500,000, a profit of quite a size for the outlay of about 64,000 letters.

Paulos has a lot to say about the

misuse of mathematics to fool the innumerate. Various pseudo-sciences are hauled into the dock, such as biorhythms, a concept invented by a friend of Sigmund Freud, Wilhelm Fliess. He proposed that our lives are governed by cycles of 23 and 28 days, observing that any number can be obtained by suitable combinations of these. Thus, $6 = (23 \times 10) + (28 \times 8)$. So any life event will coincide with some combination of these "cycles". Freud was very impressed with this, even believing that he would die at 51 ($23 + 28$). In the event, he was able to hang on for another 30-odd years.

In fact, any number can be made from a combination of any two other numbers, if these do not share a common factor.

How about psychic powers such as dreaming of the future? Paulos shows that such dreams can occur quite commonly by chance. Suppose I dream in 10,000 is accident-predictive. The chance of a non-predictive dream is a massive 9,999 in 10,000. But in one year, the chance is 9,999 in 10,000 times itself 365. This gives a 96.4% chance of a non-predictive dream but a 3.6% of a predictive dream. In a country the size of the UK this means some million such dreams per year!

Paulos, a university lecturer, ruminates at length on the causes of innumeracy. The main fault seems to be in the education system, he thinks, which I think begs some questions. His suggestions for improvements include the use of more games and the teaching of estimation techniques.

Most of the book is quite entertaining and useful, and I am sure readers will agree that innumeracy is an obstacle in people's understanding of threats to their health, the results of government policies, of the claims of advertisers, of the behaviour of mortgage interest rates, and so on.

Innumeracy — Mathematical Illiteracy and Its Consequences, John Allen Paulos. Penguin, £4.99 (about £5 to the numerate).



Spike Lee's latest A film with attitude

Film

Belinda Weaver reviews
Jungle Fever

Jungle Fever is the wrong name for Spike Lee's new movie: Six characters in search of an author would have been more apt.

The film is long and rather talky, but it doesn't have any plan or plot. It's just a hotch-potch of scenes that don't add up, with a couple of dramatic set pieces thrown in.

Ostensibly, it's about two lovers, Flipper and Angie, who cause a stink in both their communities (Harlem for him, predominantly Italian Bensonhurst for her) because he's black and she's white.

But the Flipper and Angie story is a dud. They never come alive as characters, so we don't know why they get together or why they split up. Their fling is just an excuse for airing different attitudes about inter-racial romance.

The film is all attitudes. Lee seems to want to raise issues — that's good — but he doesn't have a clue how to do it. Flipper's brother, Gator, is a crack addict, and the story is as much about him as it is about Flipper and Angie. Lee is obviously down on crack, and the whole drug scene, but he has no answers. What happens to Gator is no solution at all.

Flipper and Gator are meant to be two sides of a coin. Flipper, the successful architect, whose wife works as a buyer at Bloomingdale's, has struggled into the black middle class. In contrast, Gator has turned to drugs and petty crime, the world that sucks in and wastes so many black men. But Lee doesn't deal with why the brothers turned out so different. He shows their home, and their intolerant father, but he doesn't develop anything from what he shows.

The best parts of the film are two scenes. In one, Flipper's wife, Drew, and her girlfriends talk about black men. In turn angry, amused, forlorn, wry and despairing, they

mourn their fate. They want to date black men, but with so many lost — to drugs, to crime, to jail — there aren't enough good ones left to go round. They don't want to date white men; they see that as a betrayal, and they're mad as hell about black men chasing white

"Lee seems to want to raise issues — that's good — but he doesn't have a clue how to do it."

women. But what choice to they have? One woman proposed the "rainbow" option — go out with any man, Chinese, Hispanic, whatever, so long as he was nice. The women didn't agree, but it was the most interesting scene in the movie.

The second good scene is where Paulie, Angie's rejected Italian boyfriend, tackles the regulars in his cafe. They're always complaining, he says, but they never do anything. They don't vote, they don't participate, they just sit

around bellyaching and spoiling his day. They're ignorant, and sexist, and racist, always threatening to spill over into violence, violence that's pointless, as pointless as the lives of the crack addicts Gator hangs around with. It's good to see someone saying these things on screen, but again the scene isn't part of anything bigger.

Scene after scene comes over as interesting but there's no integration. Paulie's difficult relationship with his widowed father lurches on to the screen for a bit, then fades out. Likewise Angie's relationship with her widowed father, who beats her and throws her out when she begins seeing Flipper, is shown, but not examined. Lee can't seem to get inside Angie and make her real. The black characters have more life, but one can't believe they exist once the camera is turned off.

Some of the scenes are striking. The crack house where Flipper looks for Gator is a convincing picture of hell, and the blasted streets with their aimless youths hanging out alongside drug dealers and dope addicts shows how tough it must be to grow up black in New York. But Lee needs something to knit the good bits together. Maybe he needs more attitude, not less. If it took a more definite point of view, *Jungle Fever* might be a better movie.

Richest girl in a crazy world

Television

By Paddy Dollard

Woolworth stores were among the earliest multi-department stores dealing in low priced goods. Their stores are still dotted around our cities.

Armies of "shopgirls" were employed. Vast profit was made and accumulated. Eventually \$60 or \$70 million dollars of this — in today's

money, thousands of millions — was passed on to the founder's granddaughter, a teenager called Barbara Hutton.

The founder of Woolworths arguably did, by pioneering improved methods of shopping, make a contribution to society, and deserved reward. Not the vast millions the shopgirls made for him, but some reward in recognition of his organising work.

Barbara Hutton never, in almost 70 years of life, did any work. Any one of the vast army of Woolworth's girls did more work in a single morning than Barbara Hutton, who got her millions from their work, did in her entire life! Capitalism...

On a personal level her life could have been a parable invented by a vindictive Christian moralist to prove that money does not necessarily make you happy. She was, it seems, miserable for most of her life, drunk and drugged, surrounded by mercenaries — including all but one of seven husbands! — and knowing it.

In fact her life was a parable showing up the absurdities of the way we organise our economic lives under this system.

The Richest Woman in the World was a plastic mini-series. Even so, the reeking aching futility of Barbara Hutton's existence came through with remarkable clarity.

Abolish MI5! Books

By Laurens Otter

Reading *Smear* (Stephen Dorrill's and Robin Ramsay's just published, full length analysis of the various evidence of MI5's dirty tricks against the Wilson government (1964-70 and 1974-76) one question above all strikes me: why don't the authors — who have radical reputations — openly advocate the abolition of MI5? Because of their politics, that's why. They want a return to Wilsonian corporatism.

The authors show that bankers, press barons, civil service, military and MI5 and Tory politicians (hereinafter BPCMT) conspired undemocratically against Prime Minister Wilson, and that their behaviour made the Labour government impossible. Of course they did!

The history of British politics is full of such things. Not just socialists, nor even the pretend socialists of the Labour Party, but the Liberals Grey, Gladstone, Lloyd George, even Asquith, took it for granted that they were confronted by the enemies of democracy and, though not always successfully, behaved accordingly.

But this book carries no suggestion that Wilson should have known that this was inevitable. That he could have turned the tables, in some if not all cases, had he waged a strong governmental and propaganda campaign against the BPCMT.

The fact that the bankers — with the complicity of Maudling and other leading Tory politicians — immediately tried to destabilise the pound when Wilson took office was hardly unprecedented. Had Wilson ever bothered to study the history of the Labour Party (or indeed of the latter Liberal Governments) he would have known it was coming. He should have warned electorally that "enemies of democracy in and around the Tory party" would so act, and so hung the treason label around the necks of the "patriotic" party.

Though the authors only touch on it there is abundant evidence (and it was available in 1964) that MI5 was, during World War 2, more interested in gathering information about pre-war anti-fascists than it was in following up those who had been sympathetic to the Nazis; that throughout the war it had harboured in its own ranks people with pre-war fascist connections, that these were not regarded as security risks in anything like the way that former socialists (let alone communists) were regarded in and after the Cold War.

The fact that the press barons, etc. consistently misrepresented all Labour actions was hardly anything new. Wilson had seen it happen for years and he, like his predecessor Gaitskell, had not been above benefitting from such misrepresentation when it was directed at the rebel (unilateralist) left.

Had Wilson been sufficiently radical, he would have spoken openly about the undemocratic way the press is controlled: after all it was not a socialist but Tory Prime Minister Baldwin who compared the power of the press lords to "the prerogative of the harlot in every age".

Given the consistent record of attempts to destabilise the Labour government, the connections with Smith — that is proven treasonable activity — as well as what is known of the wartime activity, of the record in Northern Ireland, and the allegations of Peter Wright, it would seem that the very least that supporters of a future Labour government, on anything like the same lines as the last, ought to demand is that such a Labour government abolish MI5 and similar agencies.

If the Russians can advocate abolishing the KGB, cannot the British make the same demand?



Karl Marx in August

(Tune: "Joe Hill")

I dreamed I saw Karl Marx last night,
I saw him standing there,
His hair jet black, no longer white,
And eyes with a young man's stare,
His eyes had a young man's stare.

I saw Marx youthful, angry there,
I said in my surprise:
"But you grew old, white beard and hair..."
And then Marx said: "All lies!"
And then Marx said: "All lies!"

"A ghost to comfort those who'd lost
Their spark, themselves half dead:
They made me old, grey with disgust,
But I'm young again!" he said.
"I'm young again!" he said.

"Alive again, you see I'm back,
My spirit never fled,
I'm strong and bold, vigorous, black,
And again, I'm young!" he said.
"Again, I'm young!" he said.

I dreamed I saw Karl Marx last night,
He stood before me there,
His hair jet black, no longer white,
Fierce eyes and a young man's stare,
Fierce eyes with a young man's stare!

SM

Jean Rook lives

LETTERS

So Jean Rook is not dead. She has simply been reincarnated as Liz Millward in the Women's Eye column [SO 498].

Using typical Daily Express logic, Liz informs us that low wages, bad work conditions and the lack of rights at work for women can happily be laid at the feet of the victims — for it is women themselves who are to blame.

"The fight (for women's liberation) is held back by women who won't take responsibility for themselves"... there might have been an excuse in the past for women to "be kept" by men — but the days of the "family wage" and the male oppression which forced women to stay at home as domestic slaves have long gone — "things have changed" says Liz.

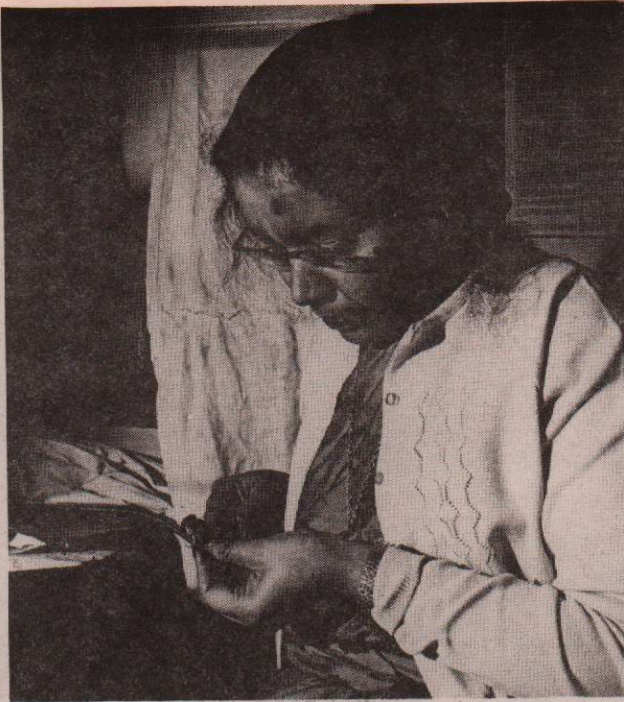
Unfortunately, Liz, things have not changed. Women's wages are far lower than

men's, the chances of advancement far fewer than those of men and the type of work available to women (in these liberated days!) simply reflects their domestic role and is often repetitive and boring — no wonder some women (the more liberated, perhaps) want to escape this daily drudge.

Unfortunately, for many women, the only "escape" is marriage, domestic service and childbirth — and all to men who simply expect "their" women to stay at home and service their needs.

I would expect a socialist feminist to put the blame for women's oppression where it belongs — not with a tiny minority of "Beverly Hills wives" living a life of luxury from men's earnings — but at the feet of capitalism which does maintain a family wage, which forces women into the home as a reserve army of labour and as a free domestic servant for the labour force.

The women's liberation movement, for socialists, was not simply "the fight for the right to work, for decent



"Work available to women reflects their domestic role — no wonder some women want to escape".

wages in decent jobs", it was for liberation from work — from domestic slavery, from the double burden of domestic duty and full time wage slavery, for the socialisation of all domestic work.

Socialism is about freedom from all oppression, to lay the blame for sexism at the feet of those most oppressed by it, is more suited to the Tory tabloids than to a serious socialist paper.

Lesley Smallwood, Leeds

Bad faith

At the risk of extending a controversy that is already bidding for the Neil Kinnock Prize for Political Flatulence, I feel I must reply to Laurens Otter's repeated attempts to represent the Balham Group as Vestment and Incense freaks instead of revolutionary internationalists — to the great delight, no doubt, of all the opponents of the Trotskyist movement.

The argument hinges on two propositions: first, that Reg Groves never abandoned his religious convictions during the time he was a Communist and a Trotskyist, and second, that this was the political persona of the Balham Group, in spite of the overwhelming majority of its members, who were never religious.

The first point can be disproved by innumerable examples of Reg's writing during that period, from which I shall select only one:

"The ruling class began to see the importance of the working class 'receiving in school or in places of worship that religious instruction that is necessary for knitting together the inhabitants and classes of a great country', and to this end, to the task of winning the workers away from revolutionary ideas... some secured a 'softening' of the most glaring examples of the class character of church life and doctrine; others tackled education and issued instructive periodicals; others tinged their Christianity with Socialism in order to secure the confidence of the workers." ("The Dotage of the Hammonds", in *Labour Monthly*, November 1930, p700).

All the evidence is, in fact, that although Purkis returned to his religious views when he broke with the group in 1934, this did not take place in Groves' case until the Second World War, when he became involved with various pacifist bodies.

The second proposition is even more easily refuted. When Reg died in May 1988, his oldest surviving friend, Harry Wicks, attended the funeral and was shocked to find that it was a

wholly religious one. He wrote: "I have no quarrel with comrades or their families embracing the Church in the evening of their life, but to conceal it from one's personal comrades so thoroughly in my view was unforgivable on Reg's part. Both Roma Dewar, Hugo's sister, and Rita were amazed, to put it mildly — so much so that Roma declared to me that she had never heard of the Catholic Crusade and Reg's connection with it." (Letter to Ted Crawford, 2nd June, 1988).

One final point. I have always found it fascinating how people who make such a parade of their own faith are so quick to ascribe bad faith to others. I do not know to which members of the board of *Revolutionary History* Laurens refers when he speaks of those with "a more definite regard for historical accuracy than Al Richardson" — we all feel that we are committed to it.

But on the question of his correspondence with Sam Bornstein, I must inform him that although Sam did show me at least one of the letters before he died, none of his political correspondence in fact remains with us, contrary to his wishes.

Six months before he died he handed on his political correspondence to comrade Clarence Chrysostom, but shortly before he went into hospital asked for it back to verify a few facts about which he wanted to write before returning it. At that point he died, and his literary executor, a supporter of *Militant*, refused to return it to us, containing as it did numerous embarrassing facts about that political tendency.

It is no doubt now mouldering in the files of Hepscoot Road, a sort of political/historical black hole into which large numbers of documents have vanished.

Whether you are an atheist or a believer, it is far better to carry on historical and political argument on the assumption that your opponent holds his views in good faith, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, otherwise the real content of the discussion becomes side-tracked.

In the presence of the above facts, can I request that Laurens now abandon his campaign to smear the pioneer British Trotskyists with the accusation of religious obscurantism?
Al Richardson, London

Women are not responsible

In her article "Women who regard Men as a Meal Ticket" Liz Millward seems to be suggesting that there has been (ie. since her mother and grandmother's generations) an enormous cultural change in attitudes towards women. Is it therefore a fact that capitalism no longer keeps women oppressed?

Ms Millward's terminology throughout her article, using words like 'mad' suggest that women as individuals, not the society in which they live, have the ultimate responsibility to change. This shows a distinct lack of understanding with regard to the limited choices open to all women.

It is implicit within the article that women are no longer discriminated against in the job market. The elaborate structure of women's disadvantage in capitalist society is ignored. Yet, it is a fact that women who do find work are relegated to low-paid, non-union covered jobs. Also,

within the job market there is a lack of regard for the special needs that women may have, such as maternity, periods and childcare. "Refusal", (Liz Millward's word, not ours) of women to work is not the central issue regarding the assumed lack of women in the work-place.

The idea that women 'sponge' off a man while men go out and do all the hard work is, if nothing else, misleading.

Many women do not even see their man's wages, let alone have a 'common pot'. Women in many cases do all the cooking, cleaning and household administration whether they have children or not. The second woman that Liz Millward mentions who is "reasonably educated and childless" whose boyfriend "pays for everything" is in all likelihood relegated to this role.

Liz Millward fails to recognise the underlying questions, ie. not only who brings home the bacon but who cooks it?

Mandy Jones, Allison Perkin, Colchester

East and West: no difference!

I have read your coverage of events in the Soviet Union with interest. But why always the insistence that if the USSR wasn't better than capitalism, it must have been worse [editorial, 5th September]?

This seems to me to lead to two serious political mistakes. One is that Western capitalist society has something desirable about it. The other is that when workers in the East look to the market, they are not entirely wrong to do so.

I am not arguing that the countries of Eastern Europe

were anything but miserable places. Of course the experience of workers in say Leningrad and Birmingham is different. In the former, many basic services were heavily subsidised but there was no democracy and no choice. In the latter, there was more democracy and choice of a sort but increasingly less in the way of services.

In both cases, workers are now being hit hard by economic crisis. In both cases, the solution is to fight for real socialism. Was there really any qualitative difference between the exploitation of the West and that of the East?

F O'Connor, Islington

Disorder in Militown

OVER THE EDGE

By Stanley C Raptis

Jobs. Hooligans. A breakdown of law and order. Youngsters running riot. Old people afraid to leave the shelter of their homes.

These are just a few of the expressions used to describe the violence which has wracked the bleak and delapidated inner-city housing estate of Militown in recent weeks.

Militown was built immediately after the war. It is a typical example of Fabian-style, unimaginative bureaucratic planning at its worst. To make matters worse, little or no modernisation has taken place in Militown since it was first built.

Ted, a South African immigrant who has lived on the estate since its construction, painted a horrifying picture of a total collapse of respect for authority in Militown:

"Young people today have lost all respect for their elders. The abuse you get from local yobs is a disgrace. I have regularly suffered the indignity of being called senile and mentally unstable.

"When I go to a meeting in the local community centre, it's just a slanging match. They don't listen to your arguments, they just shout you down. The tenants' association has been taken over by an unrepresentative clique. Such behaviour is entirely alien to the democratic traditions of Militown."

But local youths tell a different story.

Tommy is one of the many young Scots who migrated to Militown in the late 1980s, a time of large-scale migration brought about by the earlier introduction of the poll tax in Scotland. According to Tommy:

"Life in Militown is just plain boring. It does my head in. If people like Ted had their way, we'd spend all our time hanging around on street corners selling the local community newspaper.

"Ted's idea of a good time is to go to a Labour Party meeting! I ask you — what kind of life is that for youth in the 1990s? Youth round here want to get a buzz out of life, but Ted just doesn't understand. I think he's lost his marbles, just like that other old geezer, Gerry what's-his-name.

"The councillors round here are all Labour and they're bloody useless. We used to have a National Education Centre in Militown but now it's shut down, along with a lot of other youth facilities.

"I stole a book from the local library before it got burnt down. It was about American politics. When I read it, I was gobsmacked. I couldn't tell the difference between them Democrats and our Labour councillors. That's why me and my mates are into standing our own

candidates in next year's elections."

Tommy has found an unlikely ally in Peter, the editor of the local community newspaper ("Militown — The Dullest Paper for Neighbours and Youth"):

"I've lived in Militown as long as Ted. Ted's problem is that he does not recognise that the world has changed. I notice this every time he complains about the newsagent not stocking the "Daily Worker".

"We want to use our paper to promote more positive images for local youth. We've just run a series on Lesley Mahmood, a really upbeat lass from Liverpool who we hope will be a role model for local youth. But poor old Ted just denounced the series as the worst piece of deception he had ever read in a community newspaper.

"Of course, I don't deny Ted's contribution to Militown in years gone by. And there's certainly no question of evicting him from Militown completely. But no-one can be allowed to stand in the way of the pressing need for an urban regeneration strategy, even if it means Ted leaving his maisonette on Sunset Boulevard to make way for the New Turn roundabout."

Particular concern has been caused by the alleged role of the police in the recent disturbances. Some locals have expressed the view that the violence in Militown has been provoked by heavy-handed policing.

Comments by P.C. Kilfoyle, a local officer who has been singled out for particular criticism in Militown, lend weight to such accusations:

"What do people in Militown expect? None of them pay the poll tax — and then they complain about the state of the local services! Mark my words, Militown is a breeding ground of intimidation, corruption and violence.

"And the community workers are just as bad as the rest of them. I remember one of them in particular, a bloke by the name of Derek. Money was always going missing from the local community centre when he worked there. The last I heard of him, he was mixed up in shady land deals.

"If I had my way, I'd evict every last resident in Militown. Militown should be razed to the ground and replaced by a nice new Wimpy housing estate, full of 2CV-driving owner-occupiers. That's the kind of people me and the boys are really concerned about looking after, not that Militown crowd."

Militown is a prime example of the social disintegration caused by 12 years of Tory rule. Its residents have been abandoned to a life of despair by the Tory government, whilst the cutbacks ordered by the Labour-controlled local authority have pushed the residents of Militown to breaking point.

The rioting now convulsing Militown could prove to be the beginning of its final collapse.

Tunnocks victory

By John Pike

The 500 strikers at Tunnocks Bakery in Uddingston went back to work on Monday 16 September after winning an 8% pay rise.

They accepted by 4:1 last Friday. The settlement is twice the rate of inflation. After four weeks on strike this represents a serious, if partial, victory over the management of Boyd Tunnock: "He is not in the best of moods in there, but he'll just have to get used to it. We've certainly hurt him in the pocket", a steward told SO on Monday.

The workers were demanding a 10% rise. Part of the reason that this was not achieved must be down to the delay in the delivery of strike pay from the TGWU. It seems that some TGWU officials were reluctant

to endorse the strike from early on, believing 6.9% was an adequate settlement.

Both they and Tunnock himself underestimated the tenacity and strength of the women involved in the strike. An earlier, derisory, offer of an extra 69p a week was decisively knocked back at a mass meeting. This was followed by lively mass pickets involving over 300 strikers which forced a major climbdown.

The effective organisation of the strike on the ground through food parcels, 24-hour picketing, street collections and support from local Labour Parties and workplaces all contributed to this success.

The strike bulletin, "Taking the Biscuit", produced by SO supporters also helped, and SO supporters have been invited back by strikers to sell the paper outside the factory.

Less successful was the intervention of the SWP, which



seems to focus on distributing inaccurate information and driving a wedge between strikers and their stewards. But this was only a minor nuisance.

The victory is doubly important in Lanarkshire, devastated by the years of Tory rule, and can act as a model of how to tackle the employers.

Certainly it can teach a thing or two to those who argue that strikes are out of date or that women workers don't have the guts to fight back.



'Taking the Biscuit'. The Tunnocks strike bulletin

Merseyside fire service victory

By Dale Street

Communications Technicians employed by the Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority (MFCDA) returned to work last week having secured complete victory in their seven week long strike.

The strikers, responsible for

maintaining the local fire service's communications system, had walked out on strike in July 17th in pursuit of a long-standing demand over regrading.

The strike had been provoked by management's insistence upon making a regrading of their posts conditional upon the Communications Technicians working the first two hours of any overtime without pay.

Despite the impact of the strike, the Chief Fire Officer

refused to negotiate and demanded that the action be called off before any resumption of negotiations.

The Chief Fire Officer's hard line approach was backed to the hilt by some of the local Labour councillors who sit on the Labour-controlled MFCDA.

Other Labour councillors on the MFCDA, however, backed the strikers, as did local Labour Party organisations, whilst financial support from local

NALGO and FBU branches in particular enabled the technicians' strike pay to be topped up.

Under the pressure of the impact of the strike and the amount of support given to the strike, the Chief Fire Officer eventually backed down and opened negotiations. Within a matter of hours the demand for regrading without strings had been accepted.

Jon Riley, secretary of the NALGO MFCDA branch, commented: "This victory has secured justice for the strikers. It's taken seven long weeks to do it, but it was nonetheless well worth it — both for the strikers and the whole branch who showed tremendous solidarity throughout."

Southwark ballot

By Roy Webb, Stewards Convenor, Town Clerks, Southwark NALGO

White collar workers in the London borough of Southwark are to ballot this month for strike action to stop the council imposing draconian new redundancy proposals and disciplinary and sickness codes.

If the vote is for action then there will be two days of strike action in the first week, followed by an all-out strike if the council refuses to budge.

Redundancies at BT: time to fight back

By Maria Exall, BT engineer, Westminster NCU

The threat of redundancies at BT is fast becoming a reality. Talks between senior BT management and national officers of the NCU are taking place, and there is great pressure to come to some agreement within the next few weeks.

Management are keen to make the union cooperate with staffing cuts: their plan is for a Telecom company with a smaller workforce limited to certain areas of provision. This is partly a consequence of government policy to increase "competition" within the telecoms industry, and

a lot to do with the narrow point of "profitability" against the interests of workers and consumers.

Although many local branches objected to the NCU entering into talks about any sort of redundancy scheme, some parts of the union encouraged the NEC to negotiate for enhanced terms for older workers who wished to leave, though this was to be strictly voluntary.

Those who said that it was impossible to negotiate any voluntary scheme that would remain voluntary are being proved right. The scale of the staffing cuts, the ambiguity of the NCU leadership on this issue and the lack of confidence amongst the majority of the workforce could result in disastrous terms.

Rumours are of targeting

workers under the age of 45 and no improved terms for older workers. It is vitally important that we fight for our job security.

The recent acceptance of a pathetic pay deal of 7.3% when BT profits are sky high is an unfortunate reminder of the hard struggle necessary to regain workers' confidence and will to exercise their power.

Accepting an inadequate pay deal is nothing, however, compared to massive loss of jobs that will result if we do not take a stand against redundancies. The bottom line must be no compulsion and no targeting. With the basic trade union principle of solidarity on our side we can meet these threats.

NCU activists should push for resolutions and letters to the executive calling for a special conference on jobs. If the executive won't act, the London engineering council which has started a campaign needs to take responsibility for coordinating branches on this issue.

We do not have to accept management's plan for our industry. Together we will win!

What can your branch do?

What happens in your union branch is affected by the agreements it has won with various employers locally and nationally.

Such agreements may be negotiated nationally in the bigger industries or locally for smaller firms. So the branch officers you elect may be involved in pay bargaining and other associated conditions, or you might get told by your Head Office what pay agreement has been reached.

Also, national agreements will often provide for negotiations, and sometimes consultation, on the local application of national agreements.

All of which boils down to saying that you will have to find out exactly what powers and rights your branch has before setting out to improve matters for

THROUGH THE MAZE

An introduction to the unions



By Rob Dawber

the membership. For example, there is no purpose served berating your branch secretary because your job description isn't clear enough when it is not s/he who negotiates it.

This can, of course, be very frustrating. In the RMT, for example, the

branches not only have no power in negotiations, they are not even recognised by BR! The only people BR talk to locally are the Local Departmental Committees and Staff Reps elected to represent groups of workers in elections conducted by management.

The only grip the union has is that those standing for election and those voting must be union members. But that doesn't mean they have to even attend their branch meetings and so find out what union policy is.

In this situation the activists (on the left) try to make the branch as strong and as relevant as possible to the workplaces but have to recognise that effectively it is only a "post box" for complaints, claims, etc. to be sent off to Head Office to be dealt with.

At the other extreme, small firms may deal ex-

clusively with branch officials for all negotiations on pay, working conditions, holidays, pensions, sick pay, bonuses, etc. and only with a full-time official when either side calls him (it's almost always a him) in because agreement can't be reached. Therefore what you have to say in such a branch can have much more impact on the lives of your members.

Generally though the greatest effect is achieved in the bigger unions in the national industries. You may feel like a big fish because the pool is small, but a workforce taking action in a small firm is more easily isolated — alternative suppliers can always be found. However (change of metaphor) a small cog in a big machine can produce a more lasting effect when the right pressure is applied in the right place.

Rob Dawber is the secretary of the Sheffield and Chesterfield District Council of the Rail, Marine and Transport Union.

Vote yes to CPSA/NUCPS merger Why the NEC are wrong to oppose merger

An activist in the PSA demolishes some of the arguments that the CPSA leadership are using to oppose merger with NUCPS

The NEC: The interests of CPSA members in the workplace, including our EO members are [not] the same as managerial grades HEO and above.

We say: The majority of NUCPS members are either EOs or basic Support and Specialist grades, with whom the NEC rightly does not see any problems. Our struggles would be immeasurably strengthened by CPSA/Support Grade/EO unity. Such unity will be far easier to achieve in one union, with one set of policies, and all members exposed to the same arguments. Do not reject merger with these grades because of other Executive grades.

Merger would also stem the dreadful loss of good and experienced members that CPSA suffers after every AO-EO promotion. EOs — including those in CPSA — do not have different interests to HEOs, that is why the majority of EOs are committed members of the NUCPS.

There is no fundamental difference in function between EOs and HEOs which places the latter in a more antagonistic relationship to other CPSA members.

There are a whole range of vital issues on which CPSA and NUCPS members have similar interests and policies: national pay bargaining, equal opportunities, proper staffing levels, privatisation, pensions and severance terms, conditions in agencies, decent accommodation.

If the NEC were being honest, they would transfer all LCD HEOs/SEOs/PRINS to NUCPS. In fact, they are hostile to any such suggestion.

The NEC: We don't need a merger to achieve unity. We already work with all unions, including NUCPS, in the Council of Civil Service Unions, to present a united front to the employer.

We say: In truth the CPSA

works more closely with the NUCPS than with any other civil service union. It is in our common interest to do so — the same common interest which should unite us in one union.

But our present unity with the NUCPS is too weak, enabling senior management and union leaders time and again to divide us. The 1987 pay dispute resulted in a dreadful and demoralising split between the unions. Recent years have seen major disputes in DSS and PSA in which the two unions have at different times struck without the other but for the same objectives. Two unions means two decision making processes and two bureaucracies — a recipe for divide and rule tactics. We do need a merger for unity.

The NEC: We don't want managerial grades dominating our union.

We say: The proposed merger constitution provides stronger safeguards for the representation of basic CPSA grades than CPSA's own LCD and DE section constitutions! This protection should undoubtedly be strengthened within the merged union.

The NEC: you will have less say in the [merged] union, less control...and fewer rights.

We say: Annual conference in the merged union will continue to be the sovereign body, setting policy and determining the union's constitution.

The real argument is over whether the entire membership of the merged union should be able to elect the entire NEC. The draft constitution provides for election of the NEC by three constituencies (Administrative, Executive and Support/Specialist grades). Mechanisms to ensure CPSA grades' representation in a merged union are essential if we are to avoid Executive grades dominating the NEC. Whether the mechanisms be reserved seats, but with all the members able to vote for all candidates or constituencies, is a matter for debate and experience rather than opposition to merger.

The NEC: the merger terms are not the best ones possible. We say: the NEC should indeed have negotiated better terms but they are a sufficient basis for merger.

CPSA/NUCPS merger will create real unity, improve our organisation, and strengthen our industrial muscle.

Vote for the merger!

WHAT'S ON

Thursday 19 September

"Is Socialism possible?", SW London SO meeting. 7.30, Lambeth Town Hall. Speaker Jill Mountford
"After Stalinism can there be socialism?", Nottingham SO meeting. 8.00, ICC, Mansfield Road

"Why you need socialism", Brighton SO meeting. 5.00, Basement, Polytechnic. Speaker Mark Sandell

Friday 20 September

"Stand up for real socialism". 1.00, Richmond College. Sponsored by Left Unity. Speaker Mark Sandell

Saturday 21 September

Campaign Against the Witch Hunt, National Working Conference. 1.00-5.00, Manchester Town Hall. Speakers include Terry Fields, Socialist Campaign Group MP

Monday 23 September

"Into the dustbin of history — Stalinism and the USSR", SO London Forum. 7.30, Lucas Arms, Gray's Inn Road. Speakers from SU and UCU fitted

Tuesday 24 September

"Is socialism dead?", Northampton SO meeting. 5.00, Nene College. Speaker Paul McGarry

"Justice for Dessie Ellis", 7.30, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London. Speakers Paddy Joe Hill (Birmingham Six), Ken Livingstone MP

Thursday 26 September

"Fighting racism", Leeds SO meeting. 7.30, Coburg Pub

Saturday 28 September

"Stop the purges!" meeting at Labour Party conference, 7.30, Middle St Primary School, Brighton. Called by Friends of Brighton Labour Party.

Sunday 29 September

"Our history", North London SO meeting. 7.30, Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Road. Speaker Cathy Nugent

"Unshackle the Unions", fringe meeting called by LPS and SMTUC. 7.30, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Stain, Brighton. Speakers include Dennis Skinner, Peter Heathfield

SOCIALIST ORGANISER

Help us raise £10,000

Socialist Organiser is a weekly breath of fresh air. Not only does Socialist Organiser stand up for socialism against the capitalists and their press, but Socialist

Organiser is distinct on the left.

Week in, week out, Socialist Organiser provides a unique analysis of events. Moreover, we actively campaign, using our socialist paper as a focus for

fighting for the interests of the international working class.

In the recent past we have been central to campaigning for democracy in China, and opposition to Stalinism in the Eastern Bloc.

After the collapse of Soviet Stalinism we are actively fighting the anti-socialist triumphalism of the bourgeoisie with an initiative "Stand up for Real Socialism".

Right now we are pushing not only for the election of a Labour government, but for the Labour Party to commit itself to repeal all the Tory anti-union laws. We want this anti-working class legislation replaced by a positive set of rights for workers.

Our paper has been central to both fighting the bosses and to struggling for a militant, democratic, labour movement.

Because we are working class socialists the Kinnock-led NEC of the Labour Party banned our paper — without trial. Our response was to campaign for the rights of free speech inside the party; we expanded our paper, relaunched last September, and organised a sales drive to increase our sales and the influence of our ideas.

We have refused to back down and are well placed to expand further.

Comrades all over the country realise the importance of our ideas and are organising new sales in streets, shopping centres, pubs and colleges right across Britain. We are also organising a fund drive. We aim to raise £10,000 before the end of the year.

This £10,000 will be used to buy new equipment for the production of our paper. The result will be a better socialist weekly — something we think is well worth fighting for.

Already, this week, £643.67, or 6% of the total, has been received. Thanks this week include: £70 donation from readers in Liverpool; £31.50 from East London badge sales and £56.80 from supporters in South London who raised the money by selling food at a local carnival.

How you — our readers — can help

Your socialist paper needs your help. Can you help us raise the £10,000 the paper needs? Could you

- Take out a subscription to the paper. Perhaps you could take a few extra copies to sell locally.
- Make a donation, no matter how small — all commitment is welcome.

Enclosed is a donation*/subscription* for Socialist Organiser.

Name.....

Address.....

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Return to Socialist Organiser, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Subscription rates: £25 for a year; £13 for six months; £5 for 10 issues.

* Delete where necessary.

Support our 200 Club

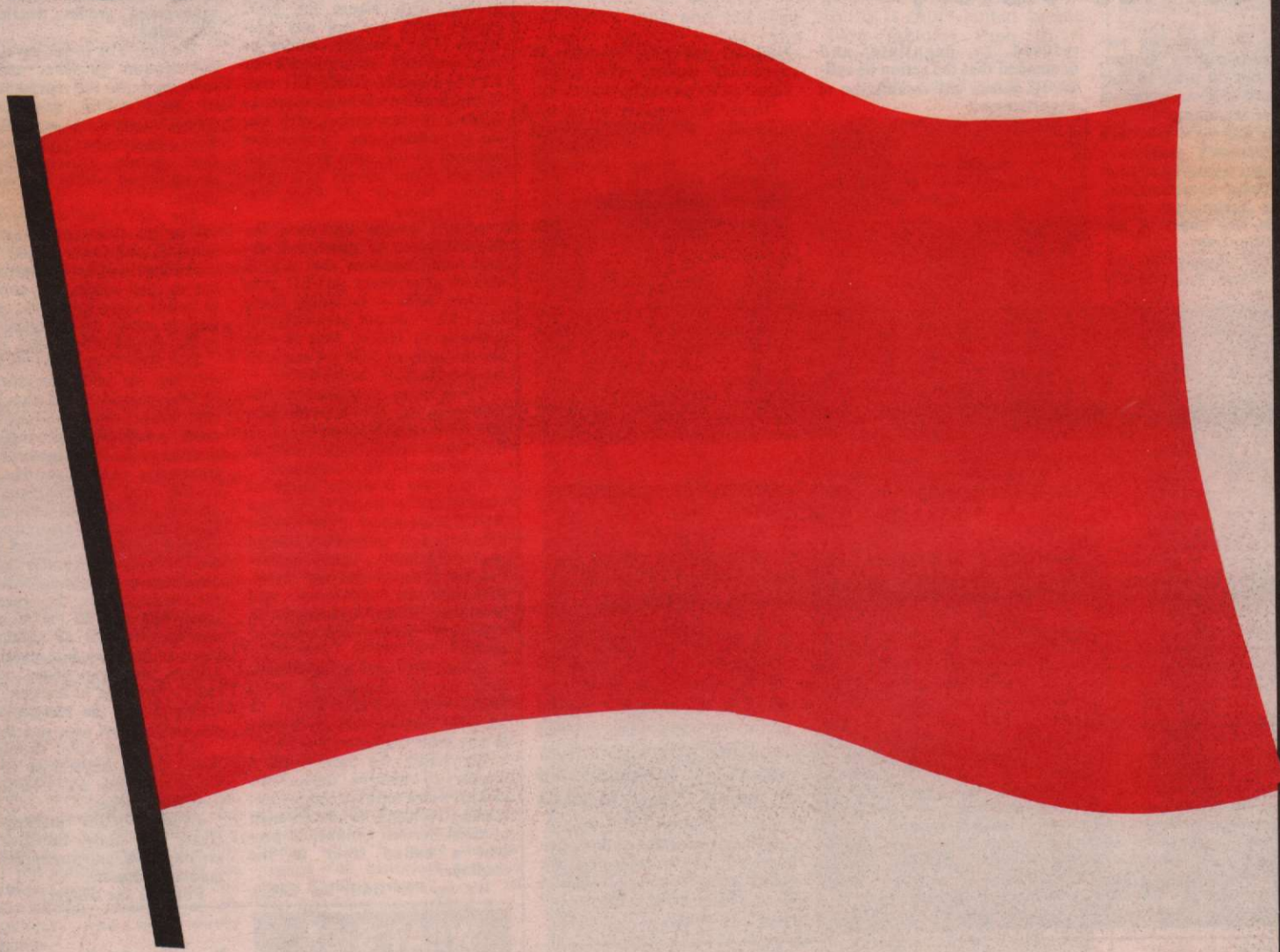
We are looking to substantially increase our regular income in order to expand our activities in the General Election period.

You can help — and at the same time stand to win £100 in our monthly "200 Club" draw.

You can join the "200 Club" by paying £5 per month into the club funds. Each month the winner in the club draw receives £100, with the difference going to Socialist Organiser.

This month's winner is Liz Millward from South London.

Stand up for real socialism!



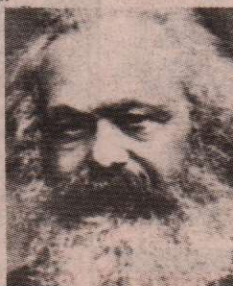
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"An oligarchy of private capital, the enormous power of which cannot be effectively checked even by a democratically organised political society"

Albert Einstein

The capitalists are trying to do to socialism what Stalinism did for four decades — bury it under a mountain of lies and misrepresentation. We say that Stalinism was the opposite of socialism! If you agree, join us in standing up to those who are again trying to bury socialism. Sign our declaration. Wear our badge. Join STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM.



"The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself"

Karl Marx

- Make a donation to STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM.
- Get your labour movement organisation to add its name to the declaration.
- Buy one or more STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM badges. (40 pence each, 10 for £3)
- Attend our STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM conference: 10.30 — 5.00, Saturday 2 November 1991. Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, London. Major speakers, creche, food, social.

For more details and to add your name to the STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM declaration.....

Contact: STAND UP FOR REAL SOCIALISM 56 Kevan House, Wyndham Road, London SE5

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