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Yes to
unity!

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Columbus and Capitalism
**500 YEARS OF
OPPRESSION**

four page pull-out

**socialist
OUTLOOK**

How they hide
the truth

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SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

**Fight racism!
Come to the
Anti-Racist
Alliance festival
2 - 8 pm Saturday 1
August, Brockwell Park,
Brixton, London**

RACISM

The scandal of Tory Britain

Britain is awash with racism. Everywhere, black people encounter prejudice, rejection, hostility.

The police routinely harass and beat young black people.

The press purveys sniggering, prejudice-building, hate-reinforcing racial stereotypes.

Capitalism condemns black people to an especially high level of unemployment, and to the very worst housing.

Everywhere racism poisons our society.

One of the main roots of racism in Britain is immigration law. This is naked race law!

On the basis of that law, the British state day by day operates a cold-blooded system of inhuman racial oppression.

More than 5 people are now deported from Britain every day! They are deported because they are black, according to a law drafted to exclude black people.

People's lives are ruined, and families are torn apart, by these laws. It is now done quietly and routinely, with little public fuss

Continued on page 2



Anthony Adebo: target of Britain's racist immigration laws

**This
man's
crime:
being
black**

NO MORE DEPORTATIONS!

Tempting, but...

POLITICAL FRONT

By Frank Higgins

It is easy to join, and sometimes hard to stop yourself joining, a lynch mob when it is howling in pursuit of someone you hate, and believe should be strung up by his toes anyway, whatever the pretext. Restraint is especially difficult when the tabloid lynch mob is hunting an odious Tory like David Mellor.

Last April he presented himself for re-election as a family man and an upholder of "Tory Family Values". He has a reputation among journalists as a purveyor of dirty propaganda about other politicians: he may have been behind the attempt to "smear" Liberal-Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown during the recent election.

It is easy to cry "hypocrite" and conclude that he deserves whatever he gets. Easy to say: in general I believe in a citizen's right to arrange his or her sexual life without interference, where other consenting adults are involved; but this is a hypocrite, this is a Tory - this is too good a chance to miss!

Maybe David Mellor does deserve what he is getting. But the British people do not deserve to live in the foul, moral, political and intellectual world revealed once more by the spectacle of the tabloids pursuing Mellor, nooses, at the ready.

It is neither public morality nor Mellor's hypocrisy that concern those who hound this Tory Minister: nothing concerns them but to sell newspapers and find new "angles" from which to satisfy public prurience, vicarious mob-aggression and the widespread appetite for soft porn and smut.

Nowadays the tabloids act like a posse of 17th century puritan elders in a New England village, or like a gang of Catholic priests in an Irish town of the 1930s or '40s, attempting to supervise other people's sexual morality and punishing those who transgress with public shame and crushing scandal.

In contrast to the Protestant and Catholic puritans of old, these sleazy tabloid priests of latter-day capitalism are at the same time our chief purveyors of commercial pseudo-sexual smut! Their "expose" of Mellor is just an excuse to display their wares: one of the Sundays this week had two naked "models" sucking each others' toes...

For them all the world's a Jackie Collins soap opera with a disco-music sound track, morality - including moral indignation - for them is no more than a plot device to ring the changes and keep things interesting.

The fact that it is a Tory fat-cat they target in this case does not make it any less degrading for everybody who witnesses it.

However tempting it is to gloat over this Tory's embarrassment, socialists should resist the temptation. We believe that personal relations should be governed by reason and conducted in as much freedom as possible. We advocate the right to sexual self-determination, even for Tories!

No good can come to socialism, even if the press campaign does damage the Tory Government, from the witch-hunting of these hypocritical tabloid vigilantes.

Police harassment: is rioting the answer?

By Jeni Bailey

Why are young people rioting up and down the country? What makes young people fight the police?

The first thing we have to look at is how the police treat young people. The police continually harass young people just for hanging around on the streets. It seems to have become a law that you and your mates can't stand around having a chat without the police picking you up and demanding to know what you're doing and where you're going.

If you're black, they assume that you are either a drug dealer or about to commit a crime.

Then it's down to the station to be "interviewed" until you have confessed all!

Tory blundering fuels bloodbath in ex-Yugoslavia

By Colin Foster

Tory minister Douglas Hurd has declared that Kosovo must not be allowed self-determination.

Kosovo, a region whose people are 90% Albanian, is ruled as a colony by the Serbian government in Belgrade, which abolished Kosovo's previous autonomy in 1988. The Albanians face discrimination, oppression, and police-state terror, and, since the overthrow of Stalinism in neighbouring Albania, naturally wish for unity with Albania.

No, says Hurd! Kosovo must remain under Serbian rule! No more messing-round with state frontiers!

This is the latest in a series of blundering and cynical interventions by Western governments into the politics of what was Yugoslavia.

When the aggressively Serb-dominated government in Belgrade took dictatorial direct rule over Kosovo and Vojvodina (another formerly autonomous region, with a mixed population), the Western governments were silent.

When Slovenia and Croatia, alarmed by Serb imperialism,

Young people will not tolerate this sort of behaviour any longer.

Young people have been given a raw deal by capitalist Britain. 16-18 year olds are not entitled to state benefits. Youth Training places are low-paid, and anyway there are not enough of them. Up to 100,000 young people have no job, no YT place, no state benefits, nothing.

With unemployment growing and community and youth groups being shut down by Tory cuts, there is nowhere for many young people to go except the streets.

Young people are angry at the way they are treated by the Government and the police - so they fight back the only way they know how.

We have to turn the anger

declared independence, the Western governments ignored the fact that Slovenia and Croatia are separate nations, with their own rights to self-determination, and said they must remain under Belgrade rule.

Yielding to the accomplished fact, the European Community has now recognised Slovenia and Croatia as independent states, and would recognise Macedonia, except that Greece objects.

When Serb imperialism began to break up the mixed-community republic of Bosnia, however, the EC responded by suggesting that Bosnia be divided into a jigsaw of Serb, Muslim, and Croat "cantons" (like Switzerland!) This proposal, and the continual talk of EC or UN armed forces possibly going in, had the effect of encouraging the chauvinists on all sides to grab and purge as much territory as they could. The only way out from the nationalist bloodbath in what was Yugoslavia is for the workers of all nationalities to come together on a programme of self-determination for all nations, local autonomy for all minorities, and full democracy.

Lambeth councillors expelled

By Keith Emerson

Four Lambeth Labour councillors have been expelled from the Labour Party for bringing it into "disrepute". Steve Nally has been thrown out because of his involvement in the All-Britain Anti-Poll-Tax Federation. Three further cases ended in two-year suspensions, and two others in six-month suspensions. Four other cases have been postponed.

The expulsions show that the Labour bureaucrats are as eager as ever to pursue and harass the left. In this case, opposition to the poll tax and cuts were enough for the Labour leadership to act.

The councillors were the victims of an orchestrated campaign of lies and slander by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, backed up by interventions by local MPs Kate Hoey and Keith Hill.

Steve French, one of the expelled councillors, told SO that

the expulsions are "a big thing. We are the first people not accused of being Militant supporters to be expelled in six years".

According to Seve, the case presented to the National Constitutional Committee was "chaotic. Part of the 'evidence' used against us was a 'Lambeth Against the Witch-hunt' leaflet. It amounts to being charged with defending ourselves".

The expulsions are a clear indication that the witch-hunt is set to continue. Further expulsions are in the pipeline, with the Sheffield 15 accused of association with Socialist Organiser, and the investigation of Brighton Labour Party likely to end in disciplinary action.

Labour Party members need to oppose these latest expulsions and support campaigns to head off any further attacks on the left.

Contact: Campaign Against the Witch-hunt, 56 Ashby House, Loughborough Road, Brixton, London SW9 7SL.



Working class youth need positive answers to unemployment and police harassment from the labour movement

into a positive force, bringing youth into the labour movement to win from the Government youth rights, affordable housing, jobs with decent wages, the right to state benefits, and an end to police harassment.

Rioting is a pretty primitive form of rebellion, and often hurts the local community rather than constructively solving problems. But many

marginalised youth feel: what else can we do?

If young workers were organised into unions who were seen to be fighting unemployment and for better wages and conditions, then perhaps we would see young people joining other workers in striking, picketing, and demonstrating, rather than rioting.

If the Labour Party had a

real youth section, perhaps we would see the youth campaigning for decent housing and education, and for socialism.

Socialists must be with the youth against the police. But we must also try to channel the real, bitter and justified resentment of young people at the sordid reality of Tory Britain into constructive working-class organisation.

No air strike on Iraq!

George Bush thinks there may be votes in it for him in next November's US election. That is why the US is threatening

to bomb Iraq again, 18 months after the last murderous blitz. Once again they propose to punish the people of Iraq for the

crimes of Saddam Hussein. 18 months ago they could have toppled this butcher and didn't. Hands off Iraq!

Racism: the scandal of Tory Britain

From front page

and no mass-media publicity.

Take the case of Anthony Adebo and his family.

Anthony is a housing worker for the London Borough of Southwark and has lived and worked in Southwark, South London, for four and a half years. He is married with two children and his wife is pregnant. Anthony is a quiet, private person, a devout churchgoer, and well liked by his work colleagues.

Trouble started when Anthony was stopped by the police, allegedly for speeding on the same night that the Asylum Bill was being debated in Parliament. Jubilant police congratulated each other that they had "got one" and held Anthony while running checks on his immigration status. They then accused him of not having the legal right to remain in Britain and started the process to

deport him. since then the threats have been extended to his wife and children.

A campaign to defend Anthony was set up by Southwark NALGO, and this has the support of local churches, community members, the local MP, Tessa Jowell, and a number of other Labour MPs, including Tony Benn and Jeremy Corbyn. Letters of support have been coming in from NALGO branches across the country.

As a result of this effort, Anthony has now been told he will be allowed to stay in Britain until December 1992, until his newly expected child is born. The Home Office say they will deport him then!

Anthony's case highlights the extreme racism inherent in Britain's Immigration laws. Supposedly introduced to prevent Britain being "swamped" by black people, they are used to harass and

intimidate black people. We must fight and defeat that racism.

Southwark NALGO is planning a public meeting round Anthony's campaign in early September 1992. In the build up to this it hopes to encourage all community groups and organisations, trade unions, Labour Parties and labour movement organisations to affiliate to the campaign to defend Anthony Adebo and his family.

Anthony Adebo Family Defence Campaign: 071 525 7414 or 071 252 1411.

Summer SO

Our summer schedule for Socialist Organiser is: Thursday 13 August: No. 531; Thursday 2 September: No. 532; Thursday 9 September: No. 533. Then we return to the regular weekly schedule.

Alliance for Workers' Liberty meetings this week

Public Forums

Wednesday 5 August

"Fighting the racists" South West London AWL meeting. 7.30. Lambeth Town Hall

"The Minority Movement in the trade unions" East London AWL meeting. 7.30. Davenant Centre.

"Kronstadt 1921 - what happened?" Middlesbrough AWL meeting. 7.15 St Mary's Centre.

Thursday 6 August

"The Legacy of Malcolm X" Manchester AWL meeting. 7.30. Manchester Town Hall.

Fighting racism

Saturday 1 August

Anti-Racist Alliance Festival. 2-8 pm. Brockwell Park, Brixton, South London.

Wednesday 5 August

Anti-Racist Alliance rally for justice. 7.30 Manchester Town Hall.

Saturday 15 August

500 years of resistance festival. Speakers include Jean Bertrand Aristide, Manning Marable, Daniel Ortega. 12 noon -2 pm. Liverpool University.

Saturday 22 August

Demonstrate against the racist murder of Siddik Dada and Mohammed Saswar. 12.30 Platt Fields, Rusholme, Manchester.

Anti-deportation

William Weeks' campaign meetings are at 7.30 every Wednesday at the West Indian Centre, Westwood Street, Moss Side, Manchester.

Campaign Against the Child Support Act

Wednesday 12 August

Meetings in Newcastle: 1.30 Heaton Community Centre.

7.30 "Gingerbread", 214 Westgate Road

More information from 091-276 0243

T-shirts

France '68 T-Shirts. XL, white, or red. £5 plus 50p from Nic 40 Audley Lane Newcastle.



We must link up with workers in Europe

No to Maastricht! No to little-England nationalism!

Yes to European unity!

Yes to European democracy!

The short road to an understanding of why the British labour movement must favour European unity – even under capitalism – is to think about the available alternatives.

The immediate alternative to capitalist European union is a divided capitalist Europe made up of competing national capitalist states which shelter behind trade-crippling tariff walls. Every one of these states would have all the objectionable features a capitalist united Europe has and will have – and many other objectionable features as well. That Europe existed for too long, and it was devastated two times in the first half of the 20th century by wars between the competing national states.

Socialists of our persuasion – for

example Trotsky – raised the slogan of European unity during World War I as the only answer to the madness of a world in which millions of British, French, German, Russian and other workers butchered each other on behalf of their competing capitalist rulers.

But the socialists who would have built a united Europe on democratic lines were defeated in the years after the war. Imperialism, fascism and Stalinism shaped post-World War I Europe; soon they generated another world war, a world war even more destructive than the first.

After that war, facing the might of Stalin's armies which had already conquered Central Europe, the capitalist class of Western Europe themselves set about creating European unity. In the 1950s they began to unite the economies of Western Europe. The states preserved their formal independence.

Then, slowly, over decades, they inched their way toward a federal political unity, building on the strong foundation of an integrated West European economy.

Today, European unity is an immutable fact.

The political structures of European unity are ramshackle and in places they remain as yet incomplete. A European parliament exists; it is feeble and relatively powerless. Much of the real power in the EC has been siphoned off from the old sovereign parliaments, not to a new representative federal European Parliament but to the Council of Ministers and the unelected bureaucrats who swarm in the unmapped labyrinths of Brussels.

Thus the bourgeoisie has

achieved European unity of a sort – but in a way that has thrown Europe backwards politically by concentrating effective power in Europe-wide structures that lag a long way behind even the bourgeois democracy that had been achieved within a France, a Holland or a Britain and in other West European countries.

Yet it is not possible, even were it desirable, to go back from this situation to the old world of sovereign national parliaments that existed before European economic unity undermined them forever.

"In this struggle for European democracy the working class of Europe can begin to recreate the possibility of a European-wide struggle for working class socialism."

Nor is it possible to unscramble the European economy. Economic integration is too far advanced. That is what creates the need for Europe-wide authorities which the old national, now regional, parliaments can no longer fill and which, in the absence of a proper European parliament is filled by a Council of Ministers and by bureaucrats.

There is no going back. From here, we can only go forward.

The British labour movement must join together with labour movements across Europe and

campaign for European democracy – in the first place for a directly elected sovereign European parliament with full power to legislate for the Bundesbank and for all the other organs of capitalist power and domination. Precisely how such a Parliament would fit in with the many demands for regional autonomy would have to be worked out in specific detail.

In this struggle for European democracy the working class of Europe can begin to recreate the possibility of a European-wide struggle for working class socialism.

Commitment to European unity in no way commits socialists to follow blindly where the bourgeoisie go. They unite Europe in their own way and for their own ends, embodying in the new Europe the horrors, exploitation, bestialities, crimes and waste inseparable from capitalism.

The belief that European bourgeois unity is better than the old bourgeois disunity does not mean giving the bourgeoisie a blank cheque. On the contrary, we say we want European democracy – immediately. We say, for example, that the people should be given a chance to vote yes or no on the detailed bourgeois plans for the future bourgeois Europe enshrined in the Maastricht treaty.

For the last 30 years the British left has talked little but reactionary nonsense on Europe. A good working-class loyal man like Denis Skinner is on this question indistinguishable from an old-fashioned Tory with Thatcherite leanings!

Instead of concentrating on building working class unity in Europe and fighting for European democracy the mainstream left

concentrates on a futile project – as impossible as it is undesirable – of turning the historic clock back allying with the worst little Britishers to try and do it.

People like Skinner scoff at the idea that this capitalist united Europe can be democratised. But Britain *is* in the EC and it will remain there. Either we now unite with other European workers and fight for democracy, or we give up. In effect the mainstream left give up.

If we had had that attitude in the past, then the labour movement would never have won democracy even in Britain!

This "left-wing" anti-Europeanism has done us immense damage. It is time to bury it – along with British sovereignty – and campaign around slogans relevant to our situation: yes to European unity, yes to European democracy! For a directly elected sovereign European Parliament!

"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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GRAFFITI

Mellor: my part in his triumph



John Smith: train spotter, impersonator of bank managers and a man on Peter Kellner's wavelength. What an interesting bloke.

Capitalism will never make the trains run on time

GRAFFITI

Peter Kellner is a fine example of the pseudo-academic dross who float around the British media, popping up on an election special here to point out that there are not as many steel workers as there used to be, then re-emerging in the pages of the Guardian to argue for the modernisation of the Labour Party. Kellner has been dishing out advice to the new leadership of the Labour Party "...the only credible ideology on offer is capitalism", and goes on to add that John Smith should offer a caring capitalism, something which Kellner, the political analyst, calls socialism.

After all, says Kellner "Liberté, égalité, fraternité inspired radicals a long time before anyone thought of nationalising the railways", reminiscing about a golden age when socialism didn't mean class struggle. Er, isn't there a good reason for this? Wasn't Liberté etc. the slogan of the French revolution, 1789? Having approached the bloke in the blue anorak at the local BR station, *Socialist Organiser* has been able to ascertain that the first railway was opened in Croydon in 1803. The first passenger railway was the Stockton to Darlington line in 1825. Peter Kellner may be a bad political journalist, but his history is worse.

If the delegates to this year's Labour Party Conference in Blackpool want to go along with Kellner's sympathy for capitalism they had better get there by car. In order to cut costs in the run up to privatisation BR's has axed the Inter-City service to Blackpool from 28 September - the same day as the start of the Labour Party Conference. So delegates will have to alight at Preston, 18 miles away, and get the local stopping service for the last leg of the journey, on one of BR's very reliable, fast and comfortable "Sprinter" trains, so called because they're OK for the first hundred metres but grind to a halt after that.

Could this be personal? The same day the Inter-City service to Hull will be cut, home of shadow Transport Secretary John Prescott, who will not be enjoying his journey back from party conference.

What's the difference between Howard Davies, the new

Director-General of the CBI and John Smith? Is one the leader of an organisation in favour of spreading some of the fruits of capitalist growth to the working class and the other the leader of the Labour Party? No, don't be so cynical. The answer is that Howard Davies accepted his invitation to address TUC congress this September, John Smith declined the offer.

Taking coats to Newcastle should be child's play compared with exporting vodka to Russia, but that is exactly what French company Pernod-Ricard has just signed a contract to do - 3 million litres of it. The first million have already gone off, the company being wise enough to demand cash up front for all deliveries. It would appear that the problem isn't that Russia doesn't have enough vodka but that there are not enough bottles or spares for the bottling machines.

You may have read recently that the West End's theatres have hit financial trouble - even Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Aspects of Love* has had to close, along with an assortment of other West End shows. There must be a huge crisis, all the quality Sundays cried. Now it comes out that Cameron Mackintosh, owner of the eponymous theatre production company, took home a cool £8.3 million last year. Crisis, what crisis?

Everybody's favourite toy must be the Barbie Doll - every little girl should own one to show them what they should be when they grow up. Blond, pale, slim to a degree denied even to anorexics and well, doll faced. But the most important thing about Barbie has always been her clothes. The world of high fashion can be available to any five year old. She can rehearse how to dress for all the occasions of later life - the date, meeting the husband's boss, and of course the big day itself.

Now Barbie has gone one step better. For \$100 you can buy "My Size Barbie", a three foot Barbie which is "the first Barbie doll you can share clothes with". My Size comes with a maillot, a tutu and a long skirt, all made out of glittery elasticated stuff that fits both the pinched four inch waist of Barbie and a normal three foot kid.

We wait with trepidation for the three foot version of Barbie's boyfriend, Ken.

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

Discretion, as you know, is my middle name. But I now feel that I owe it to posterity to set down the facts about my role in what has become known (unfortunately!) as the Mellor Affair. The more perceptive of the public commentators have already suggested the presence of an unseen guiding hand: they are correct!

Dave (as his intimates call him) has long been concerned about his "image". More than once he confided to me that he felt the public saw him as a piggy-faced, bespectacled nonentity bearing a distressing likeness to

John Selwyn Gummer. Mr Major's decision to make him "Minister of Fun" did nothing to help matters: "now I'm just a buffoon" he told me, "my intellectual prowess squandered in opening theme parks and working out ways of abolishing the BBC licence fee".

The breakthrough came the weekend before last, although even I was slow to realise the possibilities at first. Dave called me, blubbering pathetically about some "inner turmoil" (or was it "torment"?) and how the reptiles of the gutter press were "closing in". Naturally, I insisted upon being appraised of the full facts, and immediately put his mind at rest. "They'll never dare publish," I cried. "These tabloid hacks are too stupid to track you down and, anyway, if they know anything of substance they'd have shown their hand by now. Keep your nerve, my boy, and you have nothing to fear!"

Dave seemed reassured and before parting, asked me one more favour: "I'm absolutely knackered - you couldn't cobble up a couple of speeches for me, I suppose? A theme park opening

and a Rotarians' dinner, I think". Naturally, I obliged. I don't mind telling you that the next morning's *People* came as a bit of a blow. But my facile mind was soon

"Dave" I cried, "the public see you as a piggy-faced, bespectacled nonentity. Whereas you and I know you to be a man of powerful intellect, driving ambition and natural charisma."

at work, mapping out a master plan to turn this apparent set-back to advantage.

"Dave" I cried, "the public see you as a piggy-faced, bespectacled nonentity. Whereas you and I know you to be a man of powerful intellect, driving ambition and natural charisma. All you need is sex appeal and you're made. Look what it did for Ashdown, not to mention Andrew Neil!" I think I can claim, in all modesty, that my scheme to promote Dave as a sort of latter-day Jack Kennedy has already paid dividends. Of course, we've been helped by the character of the young lady - a cut above

your usual extra-marital dalliance, with brains, as well as undoubted beauty. She's already starred in a distinguished production of "The Cherry Orchard" and an outstanding pizza advertisement, so I understand.

There have been a few minor set-backs. My suggestion of bringing Dave's children into the debate to win public sympathy slightly misfired. And Kelvin Mackenzie has shown himself to be a "loose cannon" (no chance of a knighthood now, I'm afraid, Kelvin). But still, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs, as these PR chaps are wont to say.

All in all, a most satisfactory outcome, though I say it myself. Dave's still in charge of old Calcutt's inquiry into press regulation (something Kelvin Mackenzie may care to ponder before he decides to kick over the traces again). Dave has established his new image as a thrusting, dynamic, sexy sort of chap. And should the party tire of its present somewhat dull leadership at any time before the next election - well, I think I know just the man.

The saving and improving of life

WOMEN'S EYE

By Vicki Morris

I'm uneasy about Rebecca Van Homan (Women's Eye, SO 529) upholding the right of a 16 year old to starve herself to death free from the interference of parents and state.

The right to kill yourself seems to me way down on the list of democratic freedoms still to be won in bourgeois society. It is a qualitatively different thing altogether, not in the realm of "rights" at all.

We would all intervene in someone's suicide to the extent of trying to change their mind by talking them out of it. Then, having failed, how many of us would just sit on our hands while they flashed a broken bottle across their wrists?

Of course, it takes more than a well-intentioned individual to force-feed an anorexic - health authorities,

or the police to break down their door, the judiciary to say "do it" and so on.

These are all parts of the state, but here they do the "right" thing, even while they also, in other matters, do the bourgeoisie's dirty work.

There are many grey areas here. An anorexic falls into a coma at some point and the health service, if they can get there in time, rush them to

"We need laws to help make the lives of 16 year olds freer and more enjoyable, regardless of the 'imposition' of not being allowed to kill yourself."

hospital and save their life. The anorexic won't be in any

condition to say yes or no.

Attempted suicides and depressed people often get better and thank God, their friends, or the state for intervening to save their lives.

Descending further down the slippery slope of authoritarianism? If you can make a law saying 16 year olds have no right to starve themselves, you can also make laws which give 16 year olds more rights: the right to a decent wage if they work, a grant if they study, the vote, the right to abortion and contraception etc. These are rights worth fighting for: if we win then there will be far fewer desperate young people.

In other words, you must separate legislation into sorts of legislation. I think the law about 16 year olds not being able to starve themselves is not "a law about being sixteen". This law about saving lives is a law about humans, about society and collective responsibilities. That it doesn't extend to people over 18 is more to do with the fact that, once you get to the age

where you're expected to go out to work and be a wage slave, capitalist thinking deems you to be on your own - sink or swim.

I don't know much about ethics but I'm sure this isn't just "bourgeois"! It would still be a live issue under socialism. We would be making rules that "imposed" on people in this fashion even then. Laws made now have a class character, but they are not completely inhuman, nor are they wholly based on the needs of the ruling class.

We need laws to help make the lives of 16 year olds freer and more enjoyable, regardless of the "imposition" of not being allowed to kill yourself.

There is some piece of old folk wisdom that says: if you save someone's life, you are responsible for their well being ever afterwards. I would argue for saving people's lives and for redoubling the efforts we, as socialists, already make, to improve those lives in the here and now.



A mass class conflict in South Africa is inevitable

Inkatha/state collusion in South African massacre

Stop the repression!

South Africa is on the brink of massive class confrontation. The escalating state-sponsored violence in the townships, coupled with De Klerk's insistence on a huge white veto in any future constitution, has forced the ANC leadership to adopt more aggressive tactics. The catalyst for these developments was the massacre at Boipatong township on 17 June.

What really happened at Boipatong? This article, based on the evidence of metal workers union members who live in the township, appeared in the South African socialist journal *Quina Msebenzi*.

At around 8pm on Wednesday 17 June, large numbers of police arrived in the township and chased away street patrols of residents' defence committees. Residents patrols were shot upon by police in a caspir [armoured personnel carrier]. Later that night, residents saw caspirs off-loading groups of people at various points on the outskirts of the small township.

Then from more less 10 pm three groups of attackers came in one after another. For a full hour and half, people were being murdered.

The first group would smash down doors, windows and hit and shoot at the people. The other groups would follow, checking that the murderous work was done.

People ran with children to the factories, about 500 metres away. At Cape Gate night-shift workers downed tools and left work hurriedly when they heard what was happening. On their way back they met a caspir and saw the attackers. They then told the soldiers to arrest the attackers who were being escorted to KwaMadala hostel, some 1.5km away from the township. The driver of the caspir was

recognised to be a security guard employed at the Cape Gate factory. The soldiers said that the SADF has no powers of arrest (the SADF does not arrest people, they only shoot people.)

We in NUMSA had a meeting with the bosses in the area, including Iscor on Friday morning. Already on Thursday a stayaway was in progress. Bosses wanted workers to come back to work. But workers insisted that the KwaMadala hostel be flattened and that Iscor, who own the hostel, pay for funeral and damages.

The Iscor reps said that everybody in the hostel was being investigated and that 250 police-investigators were at the hostel. This was almost 48 hours after the massacre. The union wanted to confirm what Iscor was saying. So a union delegation went to the hostel. When we arrived there at midday, we saw the place full of cops. Themba Khosa, the Inkatha Transvaal leader, was talking to the Brigadier Venter. We went closer to the gate of the hostel. The police wanted to go in and search, but Khosa wanted the police to give him the names of the people whom the police wanted to investigate, first.

Khosa complained that the police had closed the hostel-gate since Thursday and that his members were being starved. Khosa then went and addressed his 'members'. The police were still outside. We could see through the gate an impi [Zulu armed force] marching inside the hostel. We saw knobkerries, axes, spears and pipes.

Iscor claimed that some of the people in the hostel worked at Iscor. But there were many women and children in the hostel. After his meeting Khosa appeared with rows of crying children and women and behind them, the impi.

Khosa said the children are hungry. Then Khosa called a press conference. Whilst we were there the Mayor of Alex, Prince

Mokoena, came out of the hostel. We did not know what he was doing there. Khosa left, still the police did not move into the hostel. The union then went back to Iscor and repeated the demands.

On Saturday De Klerk visited the township to express his sympathy. He had to be rescued by the army. Mandela was there on Sunday. The mood of people on Sunday was one of extreme anger. The people called for guns, but Mandela said that this call for guns will lead to accusations and suspicion and would encourage agents of the state. But people at the meeting were singing songs about their cowardly leaders whom they said were 'like lambs while the nation are dying. Uyiketsa konyana bathwu bashwa'.

By Thursday 26th mounting evidence was showing that KwaMadala hostel dwellers and police were directly involved. At the same time ex-Koevoet members, the murder machine of the SADF in Namibia, were discovered at a minehostel in Witbank, and not far away a huge cache of 200 machine guns, bombs etc was found.

The Vaal triangle has been the arena of large scale assassinations. The army, civilian forces, police and factory managers are inter-linked. The commander of the Vaal commando is also the manager of Iscor and attended the union/management meeting.

The residents insist that the hostel must be flattened. The release of convicted murders - the Vaal monster and Shange - convinces people that it is worthless reporting to the police. Nothing will happen even if you were to report.

The hostel will remain a target for the community who will not rest until that threat is out of the way. Now people of Boipatong do not sleep properly at night. People patrol the streets, some are look-outs - standing around fires to keep warm. And the SADF have become a full time protection unit of the KwaMadala hostel dwellers.

More Groucho than Karl

STUDENTS & WORKERS

By Tunde Osho

Nowadays, when you pick up *Socialist Outlook*, you are guaranteed to find outrageously dishonest articles about the socialist news weekly *Socialist Organiser*. Issues 21, 22, 23, 24 and, especially, 25 are cases in point.

Arguments and conclusions have based on quotations taken out of context - or simply invented. Their "Marxist" criticisms of *Socialist Organiser* are Marxist in the Groucho rather than the Karl sense of the term! Even supporters of *Outlook* admit to sloppy "journalism".

The most absurd of *Outlook's* recent claims is that *Socialist Organiser* is increasingly based on students (issues 21 and 25) and that, therefore - this seems to be the message people like me are supposed to get - the *Alliance for Workers Liberty* is not a revolutionary group committed to liberation of the working class! It even goes so far as to claim that the *Alliance for Workers Liberty* tells its trade unionists to become students, an idea not even worth disproving, so absurd is it!

This nonsense just confirms the fact that *Outlook* are very paranoid about their own glaring lack of appeal to working class youth, and their own inability to intervene politically into the National Union of Students. Their 'youth' can be counted on the fingers of two hands.

Socialist Organiser attracts a sizeable proportion of each year's student activists because it intervenes seriously into NUS and offers real strategies for fighting Tory attacks against students. It also tries to turn the movement outwards, raising issues of wider political significance.

This serious attitude has led to *Socialist Organiser* recruiting substantial numbers of enthusiastic youth: the organisation gains vigor from this, while the youth learn from a serious attitude to the labour movement.

"Socialist Organiser's trade unionists, like our student activists in NUS, are respected in the labour movement. This is because we intervene consistently in the unions, and also produce workplace bulletins."

Socialist Organiser's trade unionists, like our student activists in NUS, are respected in the labour movement. This is because we intervene consistently in the unions, and also produce workplace bulletins. We intervene regularly in workplaces, offering intelligent and thought-out strategies for winning disputes and teaching workers to take a wider view than just those issues raised in trade union disputes. We approach student struggles in exactly the same way.

Outlook are unable to argue with us without twisting and misrepresenting *Socialist Organiser's* politics to suit their own purposes. Their recent binge of frenzied attacks and dogmatic and essentially silly arguments neatly sum up their own inadequate politics...SAD!

Workers Liberty Book Service

Book of the month:

Capital volume 1 by Karl Marx. Hardback Moscow edition. £9.95 (plus 70p p&p). Volumes 2 & 3 available at same price. Paperback Penguin edition £10.99 (plus 70p p&p). Volume 2 available at £8.99.

The complete Cannon

The Revolutionary Party 90p (20p p&p); The History of American Trotskyism £10.45 (50p p&p); Socialism on Trial £8.95 (50p p&p); Speeches for Socialism £12.95 (50p p&p); The Struggle for a Proletarian Party £10.95 (50p p&p); America's Road to Socialism £6.45 (50p p&p); Letters from Prison £11.95 (50p p&p); Speeches to the Party £12.45 (50p p&p); The Communist League of America 1932-34 £12.95 (50p p&p); The Left Opposition in the US 1928-31 £12.45 (50p p&p); The Socialist Workers Party in World War 2 £12.95 (50p p&p); The Struggle for Socialism in the "American Century" £12.95 (50p p&p)

Maximum postage £2.50. Cheques made payable to "AWL". Write for orders and a full list to PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Book offer

Sex and politics under the Tories. (See SO 529) Martin Durham's book "Sex and politics" is available for £10.99 post free, from Workers' Liberty Bookservice address as above. Cheques to "AWL".

The squirrel cage of

American capitalism, the most advanced and untrammelled capitalist economy in the world, has created a "squirrel cage" for American workers, in which they run round faster and faster to produce more and more. The system produces more goods - and more stress, insecurity, and exhaustion. Martin Thomas reports.

Over the last 20 years, American workers have lost nearly half their leisure time.

Between 1973 and 1978, their free time was cut from 26 hours a week to sixteen and a half.

Workers have been doing longer hours, getting fewer holidays, working more overtime, and more often holding two or three jobs at the same time. Time spent on travelling to work has also increased.

"Overwork for the majority has been accompanied by the growth of enforced idleness for the minority", as unemployment has also risen, reports Juliet Schor in her new book "The Overworked American".

Faster and slicker technology has led to a faster pace of work, rather than shorter hours.

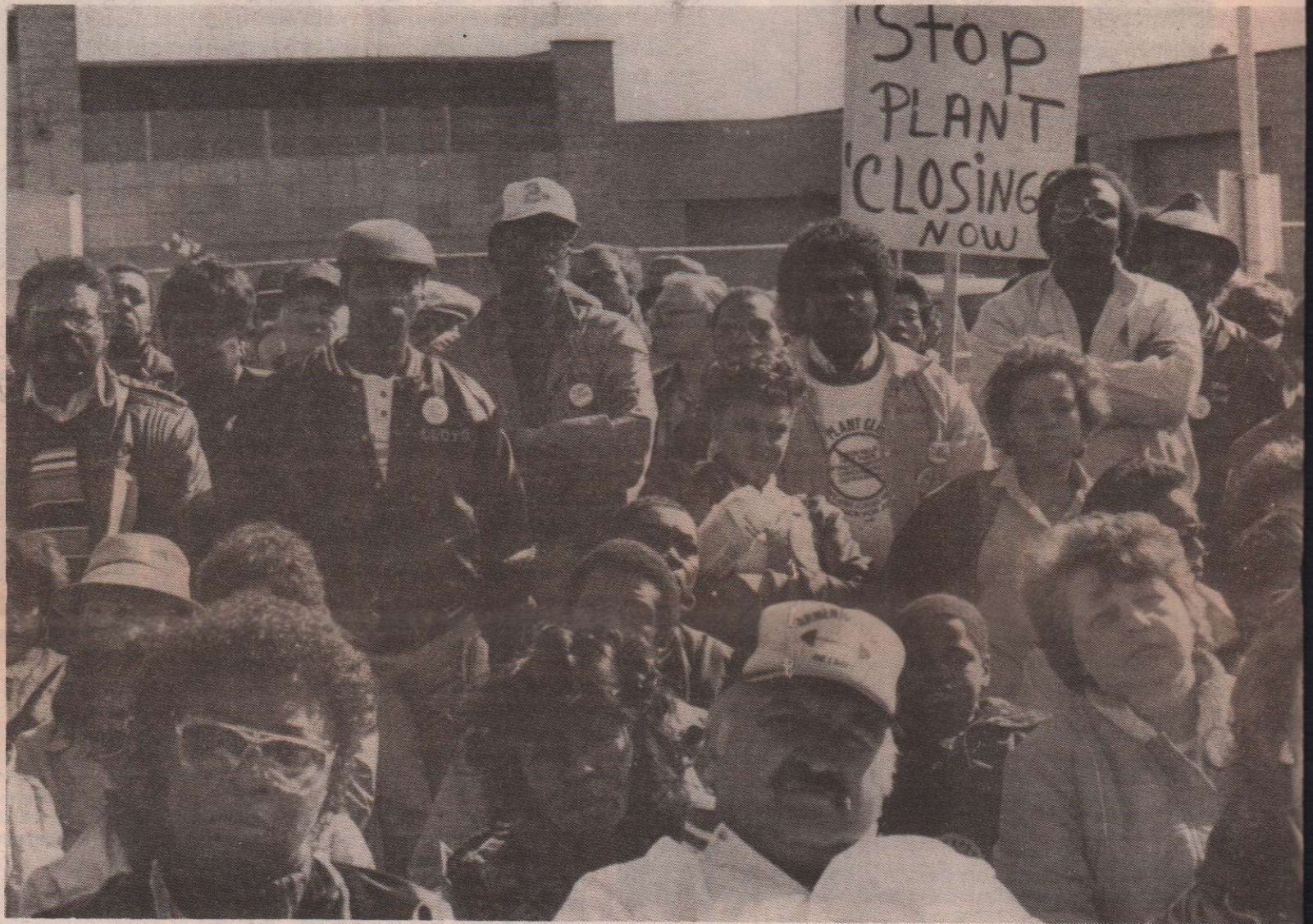
The majority of Americans sleep an hour or more less per day than they should, a fact reflected in the exhausted faces of the commuters in American cities' trains and subways.

59 per cent of them report "high stress" at least once a week, and the most stressed are assembly-line workers.

The amount of time spent by the average American father in playing or talking directly with his children is measured in minutes per week. Between 1960 and 1986, the average time American parents had free to spend with their children went down by 10 hours a week.

Exhaustion and stress also gut even the remaining hours of leisure time. Americans spend more hours watching television - which is generally the lowest-energy, most inert form of leisure - than people in any other industrial country except Japan and the ex-USSR, countries with longer work hours than the US.

And Americans, with their longer work hours, spent three to four times as many hours a week shopping (for items other than food) as West Europeans do. America has 16 square feet of shopping mall for every child, woman and man, and the boss of a shopping centre in New York explains: "The fact is that shopping is the chief cultural activity in the United States".



American workers have been less able to resist the attacks on their wages and conditions by the bosses because their trade unions are weaker. But they

American capitalism, the most advanced and untrammelled capitalist economy in the world, has created a "squirrel cage" for American workers, in which they run round faster and faster to produce more and more.

They consume more, too. Although real wages in the US have been stagnant for the last twenty years, a big increase in the number of women going into wage-work has pushed average household income up, except for the very poorest.

American workers now consume about twice as much as they did in 1948. They are certainly not twice as happy. Surveys asking people whether they are happy show a peak in 1957, and a decline since then.

Bigger houses, more electronic gadgets, slicker cars and more clothes do not compensate for increased stress, tiredness, and insecurity, and decaying public services.

The main cause of overwork in America is longer hours of wage labour. Capitalism has an inbuilt drive towards longer hours of wage labour. US workers have been less able to resist this than West European workers because their trade unions are weaker.

Work hours in the Middle Ages were usually shorter than today. The working day was often long, but it was flexible, with long

"Exhaustion and stress gut the hours of leisure time. Americans spend more hours watching television - which is generally the lowest-energy, most inert form of leisure - than people in any other industrial country except Japan and the ex-USSR, countries with longer work hours than the US."

breaks, and people generally worked no more than 120 to 180 days in the year.

In the 19th century, under early industrial capitalism, working hours were stretched enormously, up to 3500 a year. Only dogged struggles by the trade unions reduced hours to a more

sustainable level, eventually winning the eight-hour day.

In America, working hours were systematically reduced until World War 2. From 1948 to around 1970, they changed little, and since 1970 they have increased.

The average American manufacturing worker now does 320 hours - or two months! - more work per year than the average worker in West Germany or France, where working hours have continued to decrease, although very slowly. The difference is due to the greater strength of trade unions in Western Europe than in the US.

For a given country, at a given time, the weekly or monthly wage is set by the "cost of production" of labour-power, or the minimum necessary to provide a "living wage" for the average working-class family.

The boss who has to pay that wage for the week or month then has a direct interest in getting as many hours as possible of labour in that week or month, and making the labour as intense as possible.

"Piece-rates", where workers are paid per amount produced, seem to do away with that pressure for longer hours. In fact they do not.

The boss will, and because of the profit-drive must, constantly strive to set the piece-rate at a level which demands the maximum effort from the workers in order to gain a living. "Underpay makes overwork", as Schor puts it.

New and more powerful machinery produces pressure for longer and more intense labour: the boss wants to run the expensive machinery as near as possible to 24 hours a day, and can use the pace of the machine to dictate the pace of the workers.

With the scope that capitalist technology creates for increased rates of production, it is often profitable for bosses to pay higher-than-minimum wages and get more work effort for it. Those higher wages create what Schor calls an "employment rent" - an incentive for the worker to keep their job, even at the cost of strain and exhaustion - and thus enable bosses to push workers harder. High unemployment increases the "employment rent".

As Marx put it, "The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of its reserve, while, conversely, the greater pressure that the reserve by its competition exerts on the employed workers forces them to

capitalism

only in the last 20 years or so, as the net result of a 68-hour average increase for men and a 145-hour average decrease for women.

There is no capitalist boss driving people to long hours of housework. But, so Schor argues, capitalism does have an inbuilt tendency to keep housework hours long.

Between around 1870 and 1930, she recalls, "a movement... attempted to socialise domestic work, through the establishment of day-care centres, public kitchens, and community dining clubs...."

"[Feminists] called for kitchen-

"The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and vice versa, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists..."

less houses organised like hotels, with individual living spaces and common eating areas. They supported commercial laundry services and professional childrearing. Communitarians and socialist-feminists built model villages in which women shared housework..."

But that movement was defeated, ultimately because individual housework is cheap for capitalism. So long as housework is organised in tiny individual family units, the scope for technology is limited. Much less attention is given to designing kitchens for maximum efficiency than to designing factories.

The gadgets which have come into kitchens have usually meant the same hours of housework producing a higher standard (more frequently washed clothes, for example), rather than shorter hours.

Then advertising drives people to get more and more gadgets, and do more and more housework.

The most overworked Americans are women with full-time waged jobs who are also housewives, especially if they have small children. They work on average some 80 hours a week, constantly harassed, constantly short of sleep.

When asked, 84% of Americans said they would trade 40 per cent, or more, of any future pay rises for more free time. Yet, evidently, the system works to keep them racing round the squirrel cage of work-spend-work.

Hours of housework, Schor reckons, have remained pretty steady throughout this century. They have been cut back slightly

That frantic work-spend-work cycle, argues Schor, is a product of capitalism, not of human nature. For the individual to escape it is not easy.

Jobs with shorter hours are not easy to find. If they can be found, they usually have much shorter hours, with worse conditions and fewer rights, being designed by the bosses for workers who have another member of their family working full-time.

Stepping down to a lower standard of living means losing a home and losing a place in life that you have been used to.

Individuals are ratcheted round the work-spend-work cycle, and often come to accept its values and priorities as their own. But, argues Schor, it is a matter of workers being made to want what they get, not getting what they want.

For some part of history, the capitalist work-spend-work cycle played a progressive role, raising the productivity of labour and broadening people's horizons. It was progressive compared to the sluggish poverty of the medieval peasant. But now, when technology has advanced enough to enable everyone to have a comfortable life without long labour, it is destructive.

It is time for a new way of organising society, where people control and limit their economic affairs rather than being controlled and limited by the economy.

As Marx put it, "The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production..."

"With [the] development [of humanity] this realm of physical necessity expands as a result of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which can satisfy these wants also increase. Freedom in this field can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature... achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature.

"But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis.

"The shortening of the working-day is its basic prerequisite".

This article summarises the research presented in a new book, "The Overworked American", by Juliet Schor.

Amendments vital for Labour Conference

CLPD

From the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has circulated model amendments to Labour Party Conference resolutions

This year CLPD's suggested resolutions on the link with the unions, policymaking and leadership elections fared well. However we understand our resolutions on Mandatory Reselection (opposing "trigger ballots") and on First Past the Post fared badly. A large number of amendments is essential if these subjects are to be debated.

According to Walworth Road, publication of the Resolutions Booklet is to be delayed by almost a fortnight on the National Executive Committee's instruction. The pretext - that, by waiting until the 18 July conference, the names of the winners could be removed from the list of NEC nominations and model ballot papers for Constituency Labour Parties - is feeble. This information could have been sent subsequently. As it is, the NEC has made it more difficult for CLPs who usually decide on their amendment in July. CLPs should not allow the NEC to thwart them submitting an amendment. If it's not possible for branches or General Committees to meet in August, the decision can be delegated to the Executive Committee Officers. CLPD is prioritising:

Defense of mandatory reselection

The NEC's trigger mechanism would end any accountability of the Parliamentary Labour Party to the Party outside Westminster. Massive submission of our amendment is essential to show that the Labour rank and file does

not tolerate the concentration of power in the hands of a parliamentary elite.

First Past the Post

Proportional representation would mean no more Labour governments. Further, the leadership's flirtation with "electoral reform" contributed to defeat on April 9th. The Party must ensure there is no repeat performance at the next general election.

Mandatory women only-shortlists

Amendments on this subject are vital if Conference is to be allowed to vote on a constitutional amendment which would make it mandatory to have a women-only shortlist whenever a Labour-held seat becomes vacant.

Public ownership

The Party's economic policies were once again not credible with the voters. Even if we had won on Labour's puny proposals were quite inadequate for ending the recession.

Please make a special effort to get your CLP to choose one of our amendments. If your General Committee meets in early August, branches may not be able to consider amendments. But your GC may take proposals from the floor. Some GCs will not meet until after the closing date (14.8.92). In this case, the EC, or possibly just CLP officers, may be empowered to act on the GC's behalf. The chances of an amendment being submitted are however better if submitted by a branch.

Please note that the amendments must reach Walworth Road by first post on 14th August.

Text of the model amendments is available from CLPD 10 Park Drive, London, NW11 7SH.

Mandatory reselection amendment

The amendment on Mandatory reselection is especially vital.

Resolution from Cunningham South CLP on Parliamentary Selections reads as follows:

"The conference supports the regular accountability of Members of Parliament to their Constituency Labour Parties and reaffirms the 1990 annual conference decision to uphold the provision in the party constitution for a mandatory reselection procedure once in the lifetime of every parliament in which party branches and affiliated organisation have an automatic right to nominate the candidate of their choice and fully participative in the selection process.

Conference rejects the so-called "Trigger ballot" mechanism which would:

a. cause needless division to be exploited by the media and our political opponents;

b. remove a key democratic right

from trade union branches; c. negate the aim of increasing the opportunity for women members to become prospective candidates in winnable seats.

Conference opposes any attempts to weaken the role of trade unions, Constituency Labour Parties and urges the continued encouragement of trade union branch affiliations."

Amendment:

Add at end: "Conference notes that the NEC's proposals for trigger ballots would not allow local trade union branches the right to participate in them. Conference also upholds the decision of the 1990 Annual Conference that trade union branches should retain a share of the vote at CLP level in the selection of Labour's parliamentary prospective candidates."

Please note that the resolution from North East Derbyshire can be amended in the same way.



Outlook's idea of serious debate

Dead end factionalism and the class struggle

AGAINST THE TIDE

By Sean Matgamna

Why, regular readers of Socialist Organiser may (like me) have been wondering, did Socialist Outlook recently take to publishing Gerry Healy level smear attacks on us?

In the ridiculous piece by "Ben Wolfe" (another pseudonym of brave Phil Hearse, I think) in Outlook no.25, for example, to which I replied in the last SO, they accused us of "fingering" a full-time elected union official, Patrick Sikorski, to the bosses of the London Underground.

Unhappy members of Outlook have explained to us exactly what has been going on. In fact, that "fingering" article was written to paper over major differences inside Outlook about their trade union work, and specifically about recent events on the London Tube.

It seems that the majority of Outlook's Political Committee - including Phil Hearse! - now agree with what SO has been saying about the Tube dispute. A division, and by all accounts a quite bitter one, has developed. On one side are the friends of Carolyn Sikorski, who is secretary of the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee and also runs Outlook's trade union work. On the other is the majority of the Political Committee.

Carolyn Sikorski was accused by the PC of abusing her powers as Outlook trade union organiser for factional ends after she and others had circulated a document critical of the PC - "How Socialist Organiser attacked our trade union work and the Political Committee supported them" - to Outlook trade union activists.

The document's title tells the story. It accuses the PC of having adopted a critical attitude to Outlook's work on the Tube and in the RMT only after Socialist Organiser had publicly criticised that work. It complains bitterly that the PC merely took up our criticisms.

To placate Carolyn Sikorski and her friends, and to differentiate the PC majority from SO, the Outlook PC decided that they would publish a "reply" to Socialist Organiser's criticisms of what Outlook had done and said on the London Tube.

Given that Outlook were themselves split on the issue, writing a reply to Socialist Organiser would be a tricky job, calling for a literary miracle worker able to make bricks without straw - to find and proclaim distinctions where there are no differences, to discuss without discussing, and to polemicise in such a way that none of the real differences are dealt with.

Phil Hearse knows how to do these things! He, you will recall, wrote a memorable piece on SO a couple of

months ago, in which, as I proved in SO, he used invented quotations and lyingly attributed them to SO.

Hearse went about his work in grim earnest. He had written the earlier piece under a weak and weedy, non-totemic, pseudonym, "Paul Clarke", and had been called a wimp for it. The first thing to do was to get rid of that and - like a Red Indian brave preparing for the warpath - put on a new pseudonym, one fitting the grim earnestness of his task.

Paul Clarke? Bah! Too soft! Not fierce enough! "Ben Wolfe" - son of the wolf - that's better!

Wolf? But wouldn't Leopard or Lion be even better - stronger, braver? "Urbemensch Leopardi"? "Desperate Dan de Leon"? He toys with the possibilities, but finally decides: no, moderation in all things. "Ben Wolfe" it is. That'll teach them to call me a peaceful, plodding, pompous herbivore!

But now he must perform! The first thing is to pack the article with abuse and repetitions of stuff we had answered already, like the nonsense about SO supporting Boris Yeltsin and positively wanting capitalism in Russia. He can fill much of the page with this dialogue-of-the-dead jeering and heresy-hunting. But, after all, he must eventually cover the London Underground affair. What can he say about that?

At first he wrote a piece which tried to defend Outlook's real line on the Underground. After objections from, it seems, Alan Thornett, and phone calls "to Paris", the paragraph defending the real line was cut from Hearse's article. Now what can he do?

He can't just go straight down the line and flatly deny the facts of what happened on the Underground, can he? At best he can try to confuse things a little by telling the reader that District Council secretary Patrick Sikorski advocated strike action at an early stage in the affair, and accusing SO of suppressing the fact. That was at a small committee meeting, and at the bigger, later, decisive meeting of the District Council on 28 May, Patrick Sikorski did the opposite.

Hearse makes the best of that, lying by omission. But the advocate is in an impossible position. He dare not tell the truth about what happened, or express his own opinion. He must brand the truth - what he knows to be true, and what he assesses as we assess it - as lies. Going on about Yeltsin is no solution.

But now Philip Ben Wolfe, master of the vulpine philippic, has a brain wave, or rather a flash of memory. He remembers the days when hordes of young Healyites would corner an IMGer like himself and demand "answers" about the latest pseudo-scandal that Healy had concocted. Why, they would ask, did Ernest Mandel back the Stalinists in Hungary in 1956? Why did Joe Hansen help poison Trotsky and then hide his death-mask for 30 years?

Why did Livio Maitan kick an inoffensive French poodle off the sidewalk last time he was in Montreal? Why did Tariq Ali give such miserable tips to

the hard-pressed waiters at the Ritz?

Those were the "burning questions of the hour". We want answers, comrade!

Philip, when he was a wolf cub, might have wanted to discuss Cuba, or the Healyites' sources of money, or their attitude to the British labour movement. Some hope, in face of the dozens of charges the Healyite youth would parrot at him: scab, capitulator to imperialism, anti-communist, agent of capitalism, and, yes, fingerman for the right wing!

That's it! SO fingered Patrick Sikorski! Of course they did. They mentioned him, didn't they?

That's the way to stop discussion about what the RMT District Council leadership did! That's the way to unite Outlook, those who agree with SO and those who support the District Council leadership. The issue, comrades, is not the strike, it is "fingering". Gerry Healy knew a thing or two!

But he did not, comrades of Socialist Outlook, know how to build a serious Marxist organisation.

Of course, the big scandal in this affair, according to every key idea of Trotskyist politics, is the behaviour of the Outlook majority leadership. They would have a right to keep silent about the Underground affair for the moment, provided they set about sorting it out internally. They would, I suppose, have had a right to express their general solidarity with their RMT faction by praising them in general.

But they do not have the right - not while politics is something higher than the noise made by grunting supporters of competing rugby teams - to cover for their mistakes in the RMT. They do not have the right to publicly misrepresent the issues. They do not have the right to lyingly, or half-lyingly, misrepresent their own opinion on the matter in the way that Phil Hearse, writing on behalf of the PC, does.

They do not have the right to abuse, misrepresent, and try to smear SO for saying things which they themselves believe to be true about the Underground dispute.

Nobody but a political child or a hypocrite will say they do not have the right to defend themselves against the criticisms of a competing organisation; and nobody but a hopeless dead-end factionalist, for whom nothing but the faction/organisation matters, will say that the right to self-defence can come before the duty to fight the class struggle honestly and seriously. That, among other things, means not to suppress or distort the truth about incidents and episodes in that struggle, even and especially when you have to be silent about it for a while.

The Underground workers now have to fight the Company Plan. To do so they need clear criticism of the cover-ups of the District Council leadership. Outlook's attitude amounts to saying that they will go along with it - cover up the cover-up - for the sake of factionalism against SO.

It is a blow against the immediate trade union struggle as well as against Marxist clarity among socialists - clarity without which, as this affair proves once again, the trade union struggle must flounder blindly.

How Outlook tried to cover The issues

PLATFORM

Trade union policy is a make or break question for socialists whose lode star is the working class. The dispute between ourselves and Socialist Outlook on trade union policy in the London Underground where some Outlook supporters threw away a two-to-one majority for strike action against the devastating "Company Plan", is therefore very important.

Yet we have found ourselves involved in the very worst sort of controversy - one with disloyal and unserious opponents.

We criticised what some of their trade union comrades did and said during an important class struggle experience. They might have replied by telling us that we had got these or those facts wrong and therefore had misrepresented or misrepresented what they did and said. They might - admitting that our reports were true - have

"Instead of discussing the reasons why their comrades did what they did, the leaders of Outlook tried - to put it in blunt English - to lie, or half-lie, about what happened. They did not deny it boldly. They quibbled."

argued that we radically misunderstand the political situation in the country and in the labour movement which made it right to do what some of them did.

They did neither of these things. Instead of discussing the reasons why their comrades did what they did, the leaders of Outlook tried - to put it in blunt English - to lie, or half-lie, about what happened. They did not deny it boldly. They quibbled.

They refused to condemn what some of their people did. But they also refused to defend them. Nor would they let them defend themselves in the pages of Outlook.

To avoid discussing the issue in dispute - what they did on the Underground - they tried to short circuit all real discussion by throwing a big dollop of Gerry Healy-style pseudo scandal into the dispute with the spurious tongue-

in-cheek accusation that we had "fingered" an elected full-time union official by linking him with "Outlook".

The same man had felt secure enough to put his name and his trade union credentials on an article in "Briefing" last year. An *Organiser* supporter who is also an elected RMT official regularly puts his name to articles in *SO*. If "fingering" - and not our criticism of their performance - was what worried them then they would not have drawn extra attention to it, five weeks after our comments appeared. They would have told us of their concern, knowing we would try to respect their worries.

In fact Outlook's leaders behave like this because they agree with us on the issue! They go for the Healy-style pseudo scandal because the alternative is to say they share our viewpoint.

In all this nonsense the viewpoint of one group of Outlook supporters has gone unheard - those who admit what happened on the Underground and want to defend what they did there. To get their viewpoint you have to go to bulletins given a limited circulation amongst Outlook supporters.

On this page you will find one such document, abridged.

In it things are said about "Organiser" supporters which are not true. Some of the things referred to are completely unknown to us. Others are tendentious versions of real events. Thus the orderly raising of some disputed points is described as "wrecking" a meeting; a verbal altercation between a slightly built 5 foot 1 inch *Organiser* woman and a well-built 6 foot Outlook man becomes "physically preventing one of our comrades from attending a workshop" with "screamed abuse".

This is reality filtered through the minds of people who effect wimpishness because they think it is "politically correct", and because it allows them to exaggerate to the point of lying with a good conscience.

Nevertheless, Socialist *Organiser* readers are entitled to know what they have to say, as they themselves say it.

The discussion will continue in the next Socialist *Organiser*.

Tubeworker

No. 5 17 July 1992 Socialist Organiser's Central Line bulletin

No news is bad news

They say no news is good news - which might be true about some things, but it's certainly not true about the Company Plan. Just because everything's gone quiet again, it doesn't mean that it's gone away. In fact, rest assured that it's still very much here.

Our unions, both RMT and ASLEF, have been meeting with management over the past few weeks getting presentations of management's detailed proposals and starting negotiations. We've had the Company Plan hanging over our heads now since last November. Because of that, there is a danger that "familiarity breeds contempt" - we've all heard how bad the Plan is, what it's going to mean in terms of job cuts, conditions etc., etc., but... everything seems to be carrying on as normal. So what's all the fuss about?

That's like sleepwalking towards the edge of a cliff! We need to stay wide awake! We also need to remind ourselves of a few things. First off, we need to remind ourselves how bad the Plan would be for us.

swallowing this hook). A figure of 25 grand for drivers is often thrown about. Two things about this: first, a similar thing happened on British Rail where they've got a "Driver restructuring initiative" - big changes in conditions and agreements in return for a salary increase - the rumour was 20 grand, in fact it turned out to be 13 and a half! The point being, there's no sense, from management's point of view, in saving loads of money in productivity if you just hand it straight back to the same people in a big salary.

The second thing is this: say management offer 25 grand for selling all our condition would it be worth it? The answer has to be NO! The average driver is on 21 or 22 grand now. For a few grand more, we'd be selling our souls to the Company. The Company Plan needs "Company Men" and "Company Women". We've got lives and families and interests outside of the job.

'Tubeworker': telling the truth

up the truth

in the Underground dispute



Tubeworkers have tremendous power: 1989 strikes paralysed London

"How Socialist Organiser attacked our trade union work and the Political Committee supported them"

[A discussion document circulated among Socialist Outlook supporters]

Only after Socialist Organiser No.525, dated 4 June 1992 carried a major article attacking the orientation of the LUL RMT District Council in the current dispute against the Company Plan, did the PC challenge either the articles carried in our paper or the report made by Cde Westland to the PC itself.

The PC minutes for 26.5.1992 indicate that there was no alternative position put to Cde Westland's report and no resolutions challenging the line or facts of the articles carried in our press. Our concluding piece on the current round of the dispute was in Socialist Outlook No. 21 dated 16 May 1992.

Then without any contact being made with Cde Westland the National Secretary [Alan Thornett, it seems: SO] placed an item on the PC dated 8.6. 1992 on the London Underground dispute and the debate with Socialist Organiser (SO). Nothing wrong in placing any item on a proposed agenda. But as the SO had the "decency" to phone our national office to warn them of the fact they were going to publish an attack, it would not have been amiss for our National Secretary to discuss this not unimportant development with me.

The Socialist Organiser's rapidly accelerating political degeneration is well known. Our press has correctly noted this and has had a political debate on the issues. In the face of irrefutable facts Socialist Organiser could not effectively defend themselves with the usual bluster and abuse. To insulate their cdes from facts and the real world a counter-attack was necessary.

As a result the Socialist Organiser have launched a systematic campaign of harassment, abuse, personal attacks and physical disruption of our organisation and in particular its trade union work.

In addition to the articles on the LUL dispute, which amount to personalised red-baiting which fingers a well known militant and could materially assist in his victimisation, the Socialist Organiser physically prevented one of our cdes attending a workshop at the recent Socialist Campaign Group Conference and disrupted the business of that work-

shop with their screamed abuse just outside the door; disrupted and effectively wrecked our end of NALGO conference contact meeting attended by 30 people and have circulated in the CPSA left a leaflet attacking Cde Jamieson for alleged "undemocratic practices" in the SMTUC and "Unshackle the Unions" Campaign.

These activities cross the bounds of debate and are contrary to the norms of the workers' and socialist movement. They are in the rotten sectarian tradition of Healyism. This campaign will continue up to and including the SMTUC Conference because the Socialist Organiser want to wreck this most successful of all the projects of our organisation. This project gives us a firm base in the mass organisations of the working class - the trade unions. We achieved this because the trade union cdes ignored the "let's be nice to everybody" approach and fought tooth and nail, together with key independents, to get and keep control of the SMTUC, so as to defeat and marginalise the left-sectarian and propagandistic politics of the Socialist Organiser.

We must now ask why our leadership, instead of seeing this factional attack as one from an organisation seeking to smash up our work in the trade unions, wanted to continue to debate with these people and not defend our cdes from this attack in our press.

We must further ask why, having supported the content of the attacks on Cde Westland our leadership then voted to close the debate with the Socialist Organiser in our press but at the same time accept an invitation from them to debate them at their Summer Public Event.

Not only has our press failed to defend our trade union cdes and their work in the class struggle, our leadership has now effectively endorsed the content of the attacks by going to their public event. The attacks on our LUL cdes will continue, because they will know that the official position of our organisation is to agree with them. Why? Because we'll say "don't be so nasty in the way you put it but seeing as you've touched all the right nerve endings of the British far-left, yes we agree he is part of the problem of the historic crisis of leadership and

no longer part of the solution."

This is a severe problem for the organisation because in this period revolutionaries who want to build a base for class struggle in the working class mass organisation - the trade unions - have to both build and strengthen the unions as well as introducing socialist politics. This is contrary to the overwhelming majority traditions of the British far-left which solely concentrate on programmatic interventionism and on denouncing all those who get leadership positions. This will be the subject of a further document for the pre-conference discussion.

Initially it was decided at the full PC (8.6.1992) that in order to address the attack on our name as well as continue the debate with Socialist Organiser that Cde Clarke draft a response for inclusion in their press.

Cde Westland discussed the relevant passages with Cde Clarke. They were:

"The attacks on us in Socialist Organiser No. 525 raise a much more serious issue. A member of the LUL London Transport District Council of the RMT is named as a supporter of Socialist Outlook. The author of this article knows full well that this is tantamount to denouncing this person to management since the author signs her/himself as a "Central Line Guard". And for good reason. In the present atmosphere open identification of alleged political loyalties of militants can have serious consequences. Socialist Organiser should stop such witch-hunting attacks, and repudiate the "Central Line Guard" for this fingering operation." And:

"Lack of seriousness on trade union issues is reflected in the position taken by Socialist Organiser on the recent Underground dispute. No serious militant thought the proposed strike could have been won in the post-election situation. Whether or not to go ahead with it was an entirely tactical question. For head bangers of the SWP type the issue was simple; for serious militants the balance of forces had to be weighed. Despite all the attacks, the rank and file leadership on LUL has a remarkable record of defending the workforce; only a couple of hundred jobs have gone out of a workforce of more than 20,000 since 1979. This

has not been achieved by knee-jerk "more-militant-than-thou" policies. I agreed with this.

At the PC on 15.6.1992 the National Secretary announced that the second passage had been withdrawn as a result of a phone call to Paris and a discussion with Cde Clarke. The first passage could stand and individuals would be free to defend themselves personally in a letter to Socialist Organiser. So the terrain was settled. The content of the Socialist Organiser attacks was agreed - only the method was objectionable.

At no point during the rest of the debate did anyone in the PC majority question the underlying assumption and content of the Socialist Organiser attacks ie that we had a case to answer.

The reason is self-evident. If you agree with Clarke's initial position, then there is no case against us and we made no "mistakes". Only if you agree with the deletion, and therefore with Davies' position have we a case to answer because supporters of this position believe that principles were at stake, were breached and that the Socialist Organiser attacks outlined in Socialist Organiser 525 were valid...

Cde Gill [Another Outlook member who works on the Underground and produced an alternative document on the episode] wants to have it both ways. He wants to get the facts right because he has to talk to the serious militants on LUL. But he restates principles in a similar way to someone reminding themselves of the true faith as they pass the church each morning:

"For the record, however, in my view it was probably a wrong tactical decision not to go ahead with a one day strike" and a few lines later:

"It was risky, but the union should have said to the membership - 'The Company plan is make or break, you voted two to one, result, let's go for it!' Even if we lost, as we probably would have, we would have taken the chance to have a go at the Plan and we would have strengthened

democracy".

For sure we fight for democracy and accountability in the union. For sure we have advocated strike action in the LTDC against every single one of the attacks from management over the last 13 years.

But the demands of this situation are that Cde W is being accused by Socialist Organiser of crossing class lines and selling out.

The demand of this discussion is does Cde W have a case to answer?

If he does then there is only one course that is suspension pending a hearing for expulsion.

The case can't be fudged by voting for the general line of Cde Gill's whole assessment and then for each of the individual statements of principle at the end.

The case can only be met by either voting for the assessment which clears Cde W of all the attacks made by Socialist Organiser and then defending him unreservedly as in the original Clarke draft, or voting against the line of Cde Gill's assessment and saying that a strike should have been called because there had been no satisfactory fresh mandate and Cde W was a party to a breach of proletarian principle.

What Cde Davis did was vote for the assessment and then state in his resolution that there has been no proper fresh mandate and therefore a principle had been broken.

It can't be met by voting for the assessment and then voting down the following resolution put by Cde W to the PC.

"No serious militant thought the proposed strike on LUL could have been won in the post election situation."

"Whether to go ahead with it was an entirely tactical question in which the militants had to weight the balance of forces".

The vote was 2 for, 3 against, 5 abstentions, 1 no vote.

Is it credible that six people on the leadership (the majority) were unwilling to come to an assessment?

The position must be reversed. Westland 25.6.92.

The real fingerman

In the dispute on trade union policy on the London Underground, the leaders of Socialist Outlook could agree on nothing except the need for a common front against Socialist Organiser.

Some, like Alan Thornett, agreed with us. Others disagreed with us. All of them hated us. So they took refuge in the smear about us "fingering" Patrick Sikorski.

This reminds me of a little bit of "fingering" - deliberate, spiteful, peevish, real fingering - a few years ago. With the Labour Party witch-hunt in full swing, in 1984, Alan Thornett publicly identified the editor of Socialist Organiser, John O'Mahony, as "Thomas Carolan", a leading member of the Workers' Socialist League. He thereby identified Socialist Organiser, which was then still a paper of Labour's dwindling hard pressed left wing, as a paper really run by a Trotskyist group.

Naming O'Mahony as Carolan served no purpose for Thornett except "fingering". The impulse was to "expose", "identify" and scandalise O'Mahony as the villain who had opposed Thornett, the self-proclaimed "worker leader" inside the WSL, and to smear SO as widely as possible on the left as the paper of the "bureau-

crats" and other villains he was then insisting we were.

As I wrote to Thornett in a letter then: "You are a subjective man, Mr Thornett, as I learned unpleasantly during your period as a contributor to Socialist Organiser.

"Your self-indulgence has turned you into an ammunition boy for the right wing and the Kinnockites as they embark on a new drive to witch-hunt the Marxists out of the Labour Party. For example, at the Labour Party conference no less a personage than the [right-wing witch-hunting NEC member] John Golding sidled up to John Bloxam and asked him gleefully, and perhaps threateningly, if he had 'seen Socialist Viewpoint'.

"As Trotsky once told another malice-driven man, Martin Abern, personal hatred plays a diabolical role in politics. Or would you, Mr Thornett, dispute that it is 'diabolical' for a supposed Marxist to act the fingerman for the right wing and help them, on the eve of a new round of witch-hunting, to frame up Socialist Organiser and brand it as a publication put out by a democratic-centralist revolutionary organisation? I emphatically protest!"

Sean Matgamna

The forgotten holocaust

Television

By Jack Cleary

"And who remembers the Armenians?" asked Adolf Hitler, discussing his plans to massacre the Jews of Europe. It was a rhetorical question. He knew the answer.

A mere 20 years after 1915, when the Turks had massacred one and a half million Armenians, there were few who "remembered the Armenians". Hidden History, (BBC, 27 July) did.

The bourgeois revolutionary "Young Turk" reformers decided to wipe out all the Armenian people under Turkish rule so as to make their state "pure" in race and secure from disruption by Armenian demands for national rights.

They did not, like Hitler, build modern factories of death. Consistently more primitive, they buried people alive, threw them down ravines, drove them into the Syrian desert to die.

It was the first ethnic holocaust of the 20th century. It received amazingly little world attention. If it had received the attention it deserved, then Hitler might have found it more difficult to mount his own mass slaughter a few years later in which 6 million Jews died. To this day the Turkish state denies - despite massive evidence - the massacre ever happened!



Enver, a leader of the 'Young Turks'. The Young Turks ruthlessly oppressed minorities. They were responsible for the massacre of the Armenians. Enver proclaimed "We are all equal. We glory in being Ottoman".



Your worst fears

Cinema

Paul Cooper reviews *Alien 3*

Officer: Sergeant! You'd better get down here. There's something in the dog compound.

Sergeant: What is it?

Officer: I don't know, but it's weird and it's pissed off!

That was a scene from John Carpenter's "The Thing", made in the early eighties and much quoted by David Fincher, the director of *Alien 3*. Like Carpenter's film, Fincher's has a very weird and pissed-off monster that has a novel way of popping-out for lunch. It eats its way out of your stomach.

Both films use dry humour to contain and balance moments of terror. Fincher's scriptwriters have some perverse moments. Having collided, a child molester and a rapist being chased by the Alien have an argument over the safe way to hold a knife in such situations. It is symptomatic of the film that the humour doesn't really work.

Alien 3 is unremittingly tense

and morbid in its atmosphere. Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) the heroine of *Alien 1* and *2*, escorts us through a penal colony composed of murderers, rapists and child molesters, who are only slightly less traumatised by the only woman on the planet than they are by the other Alien who has crash-landed.

Ripley, ignoring orders, goes into their canteen:

Ripley: Do you mind if I sit here?

Prisoner: Lady - I rape and kill women - you're a threat to the brothers... we don't want you here.

Ripley: I guess I must be making you nervous.

She calmly sits and eats. Ripley's character in *Alien 3* is probably the strongest depiction of a woman as hero/leader in popular culture. Unlike *Alien 2*, it makes no concessions to surrogate family values (or does it?)

In the first five minutes of the film both her lover and her "adopted" child (Shrimp from *Alien 2*) are killed. It's the first of many "rules" that will be broken.

This may explain why the

film, after only two weeks, has collapsed at the box office in the America, and is not enjoying the success of *Alien 1* and *2*.

Like many sci-fi and horror

"Like many sci-fi and horror films, *Alien 3* mobilises in the audience deep-seated fears and anxieties about the world and ourselves. In *Alien 3* they range across cancer, AIDS, death, science and very topically for Americans, Japan."

films, *Alien 3* mobilises in the audience deep-seated fears and anxieties about the world and ourselves. In *Alien 3* they range across cancer, AIDS, death, science and very topically for Americans, Japan.

There is pleasure in doing this for an audience as long as the anxieties, once mobilised, can be safely resolved by the devices of the story and the fate of characters. Hollywood has

strict "rules" about this. This what "formula film" really means.

Alien 3 breaks and bends the rules too far. The fate of the characters, the goodness and badness of people, are not resolved for the audience in the way popular film demands.

For example, I still can't make up my mind as to whether the ending was happy or not. I felt uncomfortable, I wanted things sorted out. I was left with something deeply ambiguous instead. Maybe that's good.

The film taps into another deep-rooted fear when it makes the monster able to make men 'pregnant'. It deposits an egg in the abdomen, then the foetus erupts out of the body - erect and penis-like. Ouch! Films like this may be part of a large genre of horror and sci-fi films in which a patriarchal popular culture tried to find images, symbols and metaphors which help men deal with deep-rooted insecurities to do with masculinity and sexual difference.

Watch carefully the fate of Ripley and the alien in the last third of this film. Be scared!

INDUSTRIAL FRONT

Alcan: a total victory!

By Jim Denham, TGWU

It couldn't have come out any better if we'd dreamed it", was how one TGWU steward described the outcome of the five week Alcan strike.

The workers marched proudly back to work on 16 July, having secured full union recognition, a 3.5% rise on the basic rate, 2.5% shift allowances, and a commitment from management to negotiate on shift patterns imposed last year.

Alcan is one of the largest engineering companies in

Britain, and for many years its 36 plants have been strongly unionised by TGWU, MSF, and the AEU (now AEEU). Last October, however, the management at the Birmingham Kitts Green plant announced they they were changing pay and conditions (including changes in shift patterns that would lose workers around £40 a week) without negotiations.

The unions would be recognised for "consultation purposes" only.

The workers agreed to sign the new contracts with a note stating that they were signing "under duress".

At about this time the majority of the senior stewards, including the convenor, took voluntary redundancy because of pressure and harassment from management. New stewards and a convenor were elected, but they were relatively inexperienced. With the unions effectively de-recognised and an inexperienced team of stewards, management felt very confident.

In March 1992, a new recognition agreement was drawn up between the company and full-time union officials. The "agreement" gave major concessions to the company, but the shop stewards decided that it

was better than nothing. A mass meeting was held and the members agreed to the new arrangements.

However, the company then refused to sign the agreement that they had negotiated! That was the last straw for the Alcan workers.

In June the hourly-paid workers held a ballot for action. The vote was 93% in favour of striking.

Although inexperienced, the stewards set about organising the strike with energy and efficiency. A 24 hour picket rota was drawn up, weekly mass meetings were organised, and contact was made with Birmingham Trades Council.

The Trades Council threw its full weight behind the dispute, sending out a mailing to all affiliated branches and local shop

stewards' committees. The Trades Council secretary liaised with the Alcan stewards to produce regular strike bulletins on the Trades Council's equipment. Those bulletins were used to give information about benefit entitlements and other practical advice to the strikers - and were also given out to the public, other trade unionists, and staff grades not involved in the strike.

Contact was also made with the unions at most of Alcan's 36 other plants throughout Britain, and delegations came from Glasgow and South Wales.

T&G branch secretary Martin Walsh comments: "We got tremendous support from workers throughout Birmingham and further afield. Contract cleaners and transport drivers honoured our picket lines, often risking



The week's effort has had some...
 Other plants visited the week include:
 ■ The Valor
 ■ SSI Carburetors, Erdington
 ■ I.M.I. Wilton
 ■ East Birmingham Hospital
 ■ Tucker Eyelet
 ■ Perry Barr
 ■ Cadbury, Bourneville
 ■ Jaguar Cars, Castle Bromwich
 ■ Ford Rover, Lode

Olympic threat wins strike

The IFJ and International Committee of Entertainment and Media unions' call for a boycott of the South African Broadcasting Corporation at the Barcelona Olympics has brought victory for striking mediaworkers in South Africa.

Some 1,200 workers represented by IFJ-affiliated Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA) had been on strike for nearly two months.

The agreement includes big wage rises, better minimum rates and guarantee of no victimisation of strikers.

Victory came as an international campaign by the International Committee of Entertainment and Media Unions and the ICFTU was shifting into high gear.

"This is an excellent example of how international solidarity can bring intransigent and bullying employers to the negotiation table", said Aidan White, IFJ General Secretary. "The determination of the South African broadcasting workers has been an inspiration to media workers around the world. Their tenacity has won them an important

and, we hope, lasting victory which should give all media workers, black and white, confidence for the future."

The IFJ meeting in Brussels on July 16 called for a ban on cooperation with the SABC at the Summer Olympics if the company did not settle. British TV and film technicians (BECTU) and journalists (NUJ) unions held a joint press conference in London on July 20, and the Spanish UGT also committed its support.

Tube: return of the Plan

By a Central Line guard

They say a week is a long time in politics. Well, that is certainly being proved true on the London Underground at the moment.

Since the RMT threw away its two-to-one mandate for strike action against the Company Plan in May, the pace of events has stepped up dramatically.

Tube bosses were given a clear message by the union leaders - "we're not serious about fighting the Plan - and the bosses have acted accordingly."

Management immediately set in motion Joint Working Parties (JWPs) for all the different grades of workers - traincrew, station staff, permanent way, etc. - to negotiate through the details of the Company Plan as they affect different grades. At the same time management unilaterally served notice of termination on the old machinery of negotiation, thus utterly contradicting the assurance they had just given to the RMT that they would abide by the old machinery in negotiating the Company Plan. That assurance was the figleaf that the RMT leaders used to justify calling off the strike.

This week, despite the fact in March they had refused to sign up for the new machinery because it "fell short of a number of fundamentals", RMT put its name to the inadequate machinery.

The new machinery, for example, has no role for union branches. The "functional committees" (covering grades across the Underground) have no standing role; and there are not even any "functional committees" for the engineering department, which includes the permanent way, signal, and workshop staff.

Clearly, if it is a toss-up between tube workers getting a machinery that is able to represent their interests properly, and RMT's full-time officials getting their feet under the table with tube bosses, then tubeworkers' interests go out of the window.

Understandably, the machinery is scarcely foremost in the minds of most tubeworkers faced with massive changes in their working conditions. One reason why this farce over the machinery is important, however, is that it demonstrates the willingness of RMT head office to sign up blindly to deals, regardless of the consequences for its members.

The JWPs have been meeting

constantly, with management putting on the pressure, pushing for continuous meetings - not just every day, but all night as well! The bosses say they want agreement by the end of August!

None of the JWPs have so far reached agreement. However, some of the signs are very worrying. RMT reps on the traincrew JWP have proposed alternatives to the bosses' package which include flexible rostering, Sunday becoming part of the regular working week, and remote booking on and off - many of the features which outraged traincrew when they were proposed by management last November.

If agreement is not reached at the JWPs, then outstanding issues will be referred up for head office level "negotiation" - or rather capitulation.

Management are trying to take advantage of the demoralisation following the strike being called off. RMT, ASLEF and TSSA leaders seem to be only too willing to play along.

While ASLEF has promised their members a vote, RMT have so far agreed only to 'consult' members over any final agreement.

Underground NEC rep Bob Crow has actually stated that he is opposed to RMT members being allowed a ballot on any package!

This must be fought. The Company Plan represents the most massive change in conditions on the underground ever. To refuse members a vote would show utter contempt for both tube workers and union democracy.

Our starting point must be that no union has a mandate to agree to worsening our conditions. Any package that signs away our conditions must be voted out.

A campaign to throw out the appalling deals we are likely to be faced with could be the foundation to rebuild the confidence of tubeworkers to take the action necessary to throw out the Plan in its entirety.

Rail: the time to fight is now!

By a railworker

The Tories have decided that they are going to privatise British Rail. No matter what, they will do it. The problem is, they don't know how.

Everything else the Tories have sold off has first been made profitable while still under state ownership. Only when workers have been beaten down has the enterprise been privatised.

On the railways, the bosses have had some successes in breaking "restrictive practices". Many of the changes proposed in the early '80s with the support of the then NUR's General Secretary Sidney Weighell have now been brought in.

Weighell's successor Jimmy Knapp has overseen the introduction of flexible rostering, Driver Only Operation, the Traincrew concept, privatisation of BR workshops and Traveller's Fare, and a host of other changes designed to produce the elusive excess of income over expenditure. But still BR is not making profits.

The Tories have produced a "White Paper" of just 21 pages that sketches in the barest outline of what a private enterprise railway system will look like. They explicitly state in this document that they are looking to private enterprise to come up with ideas on just how it will be done.

Meanwhile British Rail has been preparing for the big day by restructuring its management into a shape that had been agreed with Thatcher for privatisation.

They have done away with Regions (modelled on the old



Jimmy 'sell-out' Knapp

railway companies formed in 1922, with Scotland run separately), and formed instead "Sectors": Inter-city, Network South East, Provincial Services, Parcels, and Freight.

Each has its own dedicated locos, wagons or carriages, depots, track, and workers. You have to pay to use any other sector's property, so we have locos travelling 100 miles past other sectors' depots to refuel at their "own".

BT spent at least £100 million bringing in this system, and now the Tories produce their "White Paper" saying they want to do privatisation in an entirely different way. The plan is as follows:

- A "Track Authority" will be established to run the basic infrastructure: track, signals, overhead power supplies, signal boxes, timetables.
- A holding company will run rail services until privatisers take them on. Which services, in what groups, for how long, the government wants privatisers to suggest. They expect to end up with 30 to 40 different companies.
- A regulating authority will ensure that no one capitalist screws the other capitalists too badly by getting on top and

pushing them out.

● Stations will be sold off or leased unless those operating the services want to take them on. In a lot of cases these are prime city centre sites.

● Freight and Parcels will be sold off in bits if necessary.

● The Public Service Obligation (PSO) Grant that currently comes from the Government to keep essential services going will continue, except that now it will be given to the pirates to fulfil "broad objectives for service levels, service quality, and fares". They will pass it on in payments to the Track Authority, whose costs are currently 45% of all BR's. The PSO is still at more than £600 million despite cuts. Will this scheme work? That depends on us, the workforce, keeping our heads down and letting it happen. Whatever else, the aim is to worsen already bad pay rates and conditions by breaking up any centralised bargaining machinery.

Despite being told repeatedly by successive RMT Annual General Meetings, Knapp still refuses to fight against BR's grade-by-grade attack on our conditions. The leadership seems mesmerised by the attacks, and makes the excuse that we must save our fight for the big issue of privatisation.

But if we don't fight now, there won't be anything left worth fighting for, and there will be no "big fight" in the future.

● Stop press: It looks as if the RMT executive is poised to accept BR's new machinery of Negotiation. This is a disaster. The new machinery is designed to facilitate privatisation, and if the executive do accept it they will be in breach of RMT conference policy.

The Industrial Front

donations to: GMB, Will Thorne House, 2 Birmingham Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3HP.

Sheffield NALGO members struck on 28th July supporting residential workers' struggle for fair grading and adequate training. The 180 striking residential workers have been taking action for three weeks and the solidarity strike must be built on by further support from other council workers.

2,000 DoE civil servants struck on 15 July against relocation to Docklands. The strike was a great success and must be built on by further action to beat the transfer plan.

600 jobs are set to go in a cuts package announced by the Royal London Hospital Trust. 3 wards are to close with another three run-down to "minimal care" levels. A day of action is planned for Thursday 30 July.

The strike for union recognition, health and safety and equal pay at Burnsalls, Smethwick continues. Send messages of support and

British Library up for grabs?

It pays civil servants to read the Guardian these days. You might just find out that your workplace is in line for contracting out.

That's how it was for staff at the British Library recently, when a Guardian article gave the first indication that our jobs were at risk. When management were challenged, they admitted that the Library was to face market testing, but insisted that the Guardian had

Painted too bleak a picture. No real cause for concern, they stressed.

Well, it's now plain that there is very good reason for concern. Over 60% of staff at the Library's two sites, in London and at Boston Spa in Yorkshire, are at risk from market testing.

Unions are still attempting to get full information about the time-scale we are faced with, and other details of the

market-testing process. Meanwhile, the buzz-phrase of the Library's Chief Executive, Brian Lang, seems to be, "We're all in this together".

Funnily enough, we haven't see his post listed as one of those that may be contracted out. We'll believe that we're all "together" on the day Lang joins the industrial action which will surely have to come, if this attack has to be defeated.

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

The education counter-revolution

More hospitals to close:

The Tories are liars!

By Colin Foster

One or another of the big South London teaching hospitals, Guy's and St Thomas's, is to close.

At the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, about 500 jobs are to go and wards will be closed.

The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson women's hospital in North London is again under threat.

All across the country, wards and hospitals are being closed, and services are being cut back.

Dental care on the NHS has been practically abolished by Government cuts pushing dentists to pull out of the NHS.

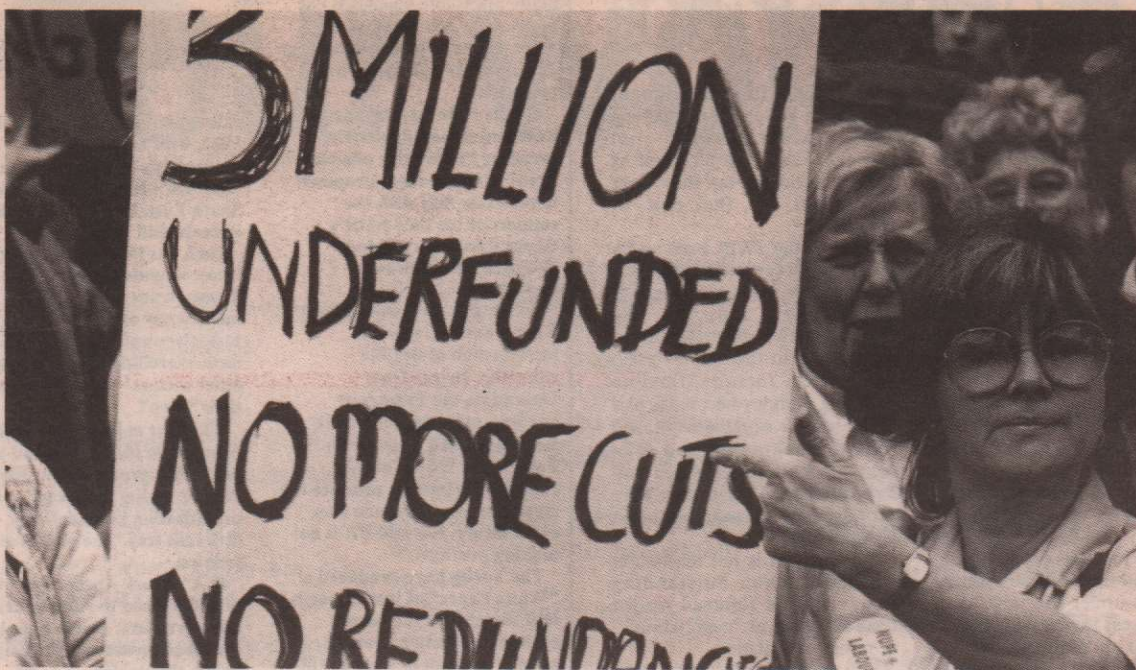
Now the Tories are to make £16 billion cuts from their previous plans for public spending in 1992-4. Health spending is bound to suffer.

The Tories' election promises that they would maintain the National Health Service were lies.

After their brief lip-service to the NHS during the election campaign, the Tories are pressing ahead with their programme: expand the "pay-or-die" market element in health care, and cut back the free NHS service to minimum pauper provision.

The plan to close Guy's or St Thomas's - at a time when the long waiting lists are ballooning again, after the pre-election drive to make them look better - is justified on the grounds that too much high-tech medicine and teaching is concentrated in London.

Maybe it is. Maybe more teaching hospitals and high-tech units



should be built outside London. But the Tories' answer, instead, is to shut down existing hospitals in London, abandoning their buildings, dispersing their equipment, and throwing their staff on the dole!

The Tories are vulnerable on the Health Service. That is why they felt they had to make their election promises.

A united fight back by the labour and trade union movement could force the Tories to stop their cuts. The Labour Party and the TUC should start now, by organising a national day of action; and if they don't move, local Labour Parties and Trades Councils should take the initiative.

"We need to unite health workers across London"

By an MSF member, Guy's Hospital

The threats to close either Guy's or St Thomas's hospital have got to be resisted.

For a start the regional health authorities figures are fiddled. St Thomas's is really a central London hospital not a South East Thames one. What's more with Westminster already closed where will all the MP's go when they have their heart attacks?

Already you can see the danger signs at both hospitals. One floor of the nursing block of St

Thomas's is already occupied by private offices. The building itself is rather too close for comfort to the new Waterloo International rail terminal and built on a prime riverside site that must be an inviting target for property developers.

The warning signs at Guy's are different. It looks like management want to reduce the sphere of operation here to have health care only.

All this just goes to show the need for a co-ordinated London wide fightback by health workers. A cross-London, all union day of action would be a start.

By Gerry Bates

The Tories plan to make schooling both more regimented and more unequal.

Their latest "White Paper" says that schools should be transferred, piecemeal but steadily, from Local Education Authorities to central government control. Eventually all schools will have their own budgets set by central government.

At present schools are offered extra money if they "opt out" from local authorities to central government funding. That bribe will continue for a while, but it is bound to disappear when all or most schools are centrally-financed.

Schools will face the same inadequate financing, the same cuts and closures, as at present, but imposed by remote Whitehall bureaucrats rather than by local councillors who are at least elected and movable by local pressure.

The Tories also want to have businesses "sponsoring" schools. Though it is not in the White Paper, they will continue the present pressure for parents to pay for school equipment (and sometimes even for basics like teachers' wages).

The direction is clear. Schools in well-off areas will have lots of money from businesses and from parents (and relatively well-paid teachers). Schools in working-class areas will have cash-strapped pauper education (and low-paid teachers).

The Tory plans, currently shelved, for education "vouchers" - schools becoming free-market "sellers" of education, with parents "buying" with money or with vouchers handed out by the state - would fit easily into this framework.

Schools which "fail" will be put under "direct rule" by teams of Government-appointed gauleiters ("education associations").

According to the Tories, schools will be encouraged to "specialise" in order to provide variety and choice. It is hard to see how this will work when the centrally-dictated National Curriculum takes up 85% of school time. Probably the better-off schools will have all sorts of "extras", while schools in working-class areas will "specialise" in minimal job training.

The Tories will also apply more pressure for Christian religious education in schools. (Education minister John Patten has said that increased rebelliousness and crime are due to people no longer believing in Hell!) This can only increase the pressure for separate Muslim schools, and thus for racially-segregated education.

SAVE THE NHS!