Jobs, welfare, NHS union rights...

Labour needs socialist policies

Left must stand against Blair and Prescott
Demanding freedom for asylum seekers imprisoned in Britain

500 march close down Campfield

By Nigel Fisher

ON SATURDAY June 4 500 people marched to Campfield detention centre to protest against the injustice meted out to black people under the racist immigration laws. The march was called for the closure of the detention centre, run by the notorious Group 4 and the immediate release of all those imprisoned by the immigration authorities.

A tourist travelling through rural Oxfordshire may find it easy to imagine that the area, on the edge of the Cotswolds, is a haven of idyllic rural peace and that worst aspects of life in Tory Britain are many miles away in the inner cities of London and the West Midlands.

Side road

Tucked away down a side road close to Oxford Airport is Campfield House detention centre -- Britain's concentration camp for black people seeking asylum in a country that likes to pose as a champion of human rights.

Campfield is the flagship of a number of prisons dedicated to the detention of asylum seekers and other black people who wish to come to Britain. The welcome they receive is detention in often unendurable conditions.

Once a detainees under Britiain's immigration laws a person in transit is a criminal, without having been given any kind of trial. The location of Campfield isolates people from communities in Britain and hinders access to lawyers and advice agencies.

Fortress Europe

The regime at Campfield and its sister establishments at Harlaxt in Hampshire and Harmondsworth near Heathrow Airport is Britain's contribution to "Fortress Europe".

At the front of the detention centre the protestors shouted for "Close Campfield down!" showing their solidarity with those inside.

The authorities have instilled a mindset in the windows and elaborate security, including a high wall to prevent the detainees having contact with the outside world. This is undoubtedly assisted by the publicity racist "Conservatives Against Labour's Unfair Ethnic Policies" (CALUPE) campaign. The Tories' low vote shows that by demonising the race card they simply added to the support for the BNP.

The combined vote of the BNP and CALUPE, though, was greater than Labour's, showing the extent of the racist sentiment in the borough.

Mobilisation

The Labour electoral victory in Becton ward was almost certainly secured through the mobilisation of the anti-fascist vote, by the "Equal Rights For All" campaign co-ordinated by Newham Monitoring Project and Council Workers Against the Nazis, which was drawing in forces from a whole number of local organisations.

The lesson learnt from the work carried out by the Anti Nazi League also played a critical role, and the joint activities of the two campaigns was an extremely positive step for the local anti-racist movement.

A post-election meeting called by NAP drew together a number of organisations, all of whom expressed a commitment to continue campaigning over the next period, and developed a wide ranging strategy for fighting racism and fascism, building support throughout the local community, providing support networks for those facing the threat of racist thugs, and for fighting for better housing and resources for all.

Newham poverty breeds racism

By Mark Jasen

DESPITE Derek Beacoxton losing his seat in Millwall during the recent council elections, it is quite clear that the fascist British Nationalist Party have extended their base of support in East London.

In Millwall ward Beacoxton actually increased his vote from the previous by-election, but in the neighbouring borough of Newham the BNP received their highest percentage of the vote in the country. In Becton ward the BNP received 32 percent of the vote, losing by only 56 votes to Labour.

For months leading up to the elections, BNP supporters canvassed and leafleted selected areas in the south of the borough, capitalising on anger felt by local residents at years of neglect and lack at the existing housing and services.

Their racist explanation for local poverty and deprivation was undoubtedly assisted by the publicity racist "Conservatives Against Labour's Unfair Ethnic Policies" (CALUPE) campaign. The Tories' low vote shows that by demonising the race card they simply added to the support for the BNP.

The combined vote of the BNP and CALUPE, though, was greater than Labour's, showing the extent of the racist sentiment in the borough.

STOP PRESS: Asylum seekers in jail riot - At 7.30pm on Sunday June 5 detainees at Campfield rioted in protest at the brutal regime run inside the detention centre by Group 4.

There had been earlier reports of the victimisation of Algerian detainees All Tamaali, due to be deported on Monday June 6. And a Ghanaian woman detainee, in need of psychiatric care had been moved from Campfield a few weeks ago with her hands and feet bound and mouth gagged.

Piers were lit and doors, windows, sinks and other furniture smashed and 10 detainees climbed onto the roof in protest.

According to Home Office figures six detainees are now on the run but campaign outside the centre dispute the figure scale the twenty foot high perimeter fence.

Two ambulances were seen leaving after some de-
Labour rehashes YOP scheme flashe

"THE LABOUR leadership regained the initiative yester-
day in the debate over disaf-
ected youth when it
embraced the principle of a
nationwide Citizens' Service
for teenagers," enthused the
Guardian.

As always it pays socialists to
be wary of anything praised by
the newly-minted Guardian.
Labour's scheme is a timid
rehash of previous failed "job-
creation" packages, like the Cal-
laghnan government's notorious
and maligned "Youth Opportu-
nities Programme".

Summed up by Sir Gordon
Brown of Labour's famously
mis-named "Commission for
Social Justice" as "a form of
civilian national service", the
new scheme is in fact a direct
attack on working class youth.
While the TUC's "demonstrated
universal conscription, the new
Labour scheme would almost
effectively affect the poorest
layers of youth leaving school
without qualifications: the more
prosperous layers of the middle
class who could afford to steer
clear of the benefits system
would not be drafted.

The plan is a cowardly retreat
from a properly-resourced pro-
grame of useful public works.
Some of its newer features have
been shamelessly cribbed from
the out-and-out wage-cutting
programme of the Clinton ad-
ministration in the USA.

For a pretend "wage" of just
£50 per week, youth would be
encouraged to "volunteer" for a
3-month stint on a variety of
"jobs", such as caring for chil-
dren or the elderly, or "environ-
mental" schemes such as
cleaning inner-city waste
ground.

Labour's new gimmick is to
suggest that completing a 3-
month tour of duty in the Citi-
zens' Service would entitle the
still jobless youth to "credits" -

Timid Labour has let the
£500 vouchers, theoretically ex-
pectedly paid in training or
possibly even for housing.

But in the absence of any
provision for "the right to job",
the 3-month slot or even anoth-
er round of extra training,
and in today's dire shortage of
public sector housing, with La-
bour fighting shy of any pledge
to boost the housing budget, it
is hard to see why young people
would take either of these pro-
mones very seriously.

Even Sir Gordon's most op-
timistic projection is that "half
the long term unemployed tak-
ing part in community service
would go on to find a job".

Press gang

What Labour's leaders have
steered well clear of is explain-
ing exactly how far this really
would be a "voluntary" scheme,
and how far youth would be
press-ganged into "volunteering"
by the threat of withdrawal of
benefits.

Indeed Labour is still in con-
fusion as to whether or not it
would reduce the entitlement of
16 and 17 year old school leav-
er to the social security benefits
snatched from them by John
Major's brutal gang. Even gov-
ernment figures show 76,000

Tories set the political agenda on taxing the rich

school leavers have so far been
cut adrift by the Tories with no
job, no training and no income
support to keep them alive.

But instead of seizing upon
this as an issue on which to wage
a real fight, Labour's front
bench are so frightened of promi-
sing to spend any money or raise
any taxation from the rich, that
they retreated like startled
rabbits from the issue as soon as
the Tories spotted the weakness
of their stance and asked the
logical question.

So this again questions the
credibility of the Citizens' Serv-
vice scheme. If it is genuinely
voluntary, then there will inevi-
tably be thousands of justifiably
cynical and disaffected youth
who will opt out.

Will Labour restore their
right to income support? Or will
they copy the Tories in seeking
to compel jobless youth into
phony training "schemes" with
withholding benefits?

Another problem affects
even working class youth. If
the youth who do volunteer are
given real rather than pretend
jobs, whether in the public or
private sector, then inevitably
the danger arises that they be-
come simply a low-paid substi-
tute for employing an adult
worker at a viable adult wage.

Labour argues that to avoid
this problem the scheme would
be carefully run in consultation
with the unions. But with the
TUC and other union leaders
explicitly prioritising "job securi-
ty" above pay, we have another
ground to feel reassured by
this.

The basic reality is that either
the youth on Citizens' Service
would be lumbered on poverty
pay doing marginal jobs which
nobody would otherwise do, or
they will become low-paid skivvies
filling in for the absence of
properly-funded health care and
social services.

Worst way

Indeed it is hard to think of
any worse way to provide con-
tinuing care for children or the
frail elderly than to draft in an
unwilling, cynical and transmis-
seful workforce of untrained and
skilled youth, forced to turn up
on pain of losing benefits, and
who know their maximum span of
work is three months.

While it would mean up the
unemployment figures, Citi-
zens' Service would do nothing
but stoke up increased fires of
resentment and alienation
among youth whom the labour
movement already scandal-
ously ignores.

Instead of this whimpering,
half-hearted attempt to appear
bold without offending big busi-
ness, Labour should map out
a genuine programme of job-
creation through public spend-
ing on massive programme of
public works.

Instead of rewarding reluc-
tant youth for undertaking baby-
sitting tasks by offering "credits"
for housing, why not employ
them in building schemes to
build new council houses and
flats for themselves and for the
thousands of families that need them? The money for this is already trapped by Tory laws in council bank accounts.

Instead of foddering off young
people with slave wages for de-
levering community care to the
elderly, Labour should pledge a
massive expansion of proper care
in the elderly, offering proper
wages, and training thou-
sands of school leavers for
useful careers at health workers.

Instead of pussy-footing with
environmental questions, why
won't Labour pledge itself to
invest in a massive expansion of
public transport and other infra-
structure projects, employing
adults and youth at proper rates
of pay?

The answer is simple enough:
Labour's right wing moderni-
ers, in the ascendant, are trapped
in an unspoken economic con-
sciousness with the Tories. Having
rejected any hint of socialism,
even bold reformist policies
such as taxing the rich have
now been ruled out in the quest
for electoral respectability.

"Youth" is their challenge to
the logic of the market system,
Blair and Labour's right wing
leadership team wind up offer-
ning no radical solutions; and by
abandoning radicalism, they
condemn a Labour government
in advance to disappointing the
hopes and betraying the inter-
ests of millions of workers.

Where next from the Carnival?

IT WAS A triumph for the
Anti Nazi League and its
leaders, the Socialist
Workers' Party.

The huge turnout – claimed
as 150,000 by Socialist
Outlook, as 60,000 by the
ANL – Carnival was achieved in
the teeth of opposition and ob-
struction from a multiplicity of
official and union backing.

It reflects the strength of
anti-fascism and anti-racism
among wide layers of white
youth, though in contrast with
last year's festival called by
the Anti Racist Alliance it
also shows much more lim-
lited support for the ANL
among organisations of the
black communities.

However its power to mobilise
in such numbers also carries a
responsibility to develop this move-
ment and go forward: as the
SWP would be the first to say on
any other issue, Carnival alone
are not enough to defeat fas-
sism – it's the racism on which
it feeds.

Unfortunately it seems that
the response to the May 28
success will be for the SWP
and ANL to stand even more
resolvedly against unity with
other anti-racist organisa-
tions.

Independent

Many who attended the Carni-
val were independent of any
political current, but would be
prepared to join other local
and national mobilisations
against racism as well as op-
posing fascist violence.

This is why it is so disappoi-
ting to see that the ANL's
energies are almost entirely
consumed with building it-
self, with little if any effort to
support anti-racist mobilisa-
tions such as the campaign
to close the Campsfield de-
tention centre which was one
of the top items of the Tory
Asylum Act.

Of the tens of thousands of
anti-racists at the ANL's 'bank
holiday' Carnival, only those
who took leaflets from Social-
ist Outlook or Camfield campa-
igners were told of the nation-
al demonstration the follow-
ning weekend.

If the ANL is to realise the
potential it displayed, and not
squander its support, it must
lead practical support to
struggle against racist
racism at work, raising more
devolved political discus-
sions amongst the rank and
file, as well as hitting the rela-
tively easy target of opposing
openly fascist minorities like the
BNP.

As Socialist Outlook's back
page argued at the Carnival,
the task ahead is to cut off the
lasts at the roots – by unit-
ing all those willing to fight
against racism.
A privatisation too far?

By Jon Green

AFTER a two year review of the Post Office costing over £1 million, Michael Heseltine, has called for more consultation in a Green Pa-
per. However it is clear now that the preferred option for both Heseltine and the Post Office Chief Executive, Bill Cockburn, is to sell 51% of the Post Office for £1 billion. This could be a privatisation too far – the Post Office is a very popular public service with wide ranging facilities. Privatis-
ation can be debated. The Union of Communication Workers is very well organised and quite prepared to take strike action to defend jobs and working condi-
tions.

In the last year there were 17,002 days of unofficial industrial action involving Postal Workers. Last month an unofficial walkout in Liverpool to de-

fend a victimised worker lasted 6 days, the longest unofficial walkout since the introduction of the 1991 Trade Union Law. The UCW has enormous in-
dustrial strength. The Royal Mail handles 61 million letters daily, collects from over 120,000 pillar boxes and delivers
to 24.5 million addresses.

The union has already launched its campaign to op-
pose privatisation, "Stand by your Post". So far this has been concentrated at the level of lobby-
ing and postcard campaigns but clearly "Stand by your Post" has to become a real mass camp-
paign led by postal workers.

The UCW conference out-
lines its campaigning approach: "All branches will, in support of the campaign, redouble their ef-
forts to secure the widest possible publicity and sup-
port for our case, including when appropriate a national pe-
dition and lobby of Parliament."

Existing policy commits the un-
ion to a speaking tour, a levy of UCW members of £1 a week, a national Householder leaflet and consideration of strike ac-
tion to combat privatisation.

A successful campaign must be ready to defend the mem-
ders. Despite huge demonstra-
tions in October 1992, the campaign ran out of steam by-
demobilising on the streets and relying on the backbone of "Tory rebels".

Counters closing

Some Tories will oppose pri-
vatization. Their rural voters will be hit hard by the Post Office closures and variations in services which are subsidised by other parts of the Post Office such as free de-
livery of prescriptions and the Post Box.

The UCW will only be suc-
cessful if it unites the labour movement and post office users behind it in mass action on the inside of the Post Office rather than relying on lobbying wet Tories. Every area needs to support the UCW campaign.

Trades Councils defend welfare rights

By Steve Hall, Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley TUC

Question: What have TUC General Secretary John Monts, David Hunt (Minis-
ter of State for Employ-
ment) and CBI Director General Howard Davies got in common?
Answer: All three will be taking part in a TUC organ-
ised Conference on Em-
ployment on July 5 in Lon-
don.

THE CONFERENCE takes place despite unionist opposi-
tion from the National Conference of Trades Coun-
cils, where delegate after delegate condemned the idea as class collaborationist and a betrayal of the unemployed.

As Carol Pass from Doncaster TUC asked: "why are we throw-
ing a lifeline to those who are in crisis?"

Keith Sinclair (Humberside Association of TUCs) argued that "the TUC's money would have been better spent on fight-
ing for the employment rights of victimised trade unions like John Pearson (in Tameside), Amanda Love and Steve God-
finch (in Bristol) and postal workers like Dave Chaplin."

Alas, all this will be ignored by TUC leaders – such is the lack of vision that goes with the long term of Trades Councils when it comes to influencing TUC policy. But many delegates intend to picket the event anyway.

The conference unanimously adopted Oxford County Association's proposal of coopera-
tion with the anti-poverty league and a call from Essex for TUC and national union leaderships to give unequivocal support to all workers in struggle.

Conference called for a TUC Day of Action, on a weekday, to oppose attacks on the welfare state and supporting loc-
al and national campaigns. An amendment called on the Labour leadership to declare support for maintaining universal benefits.

As part of the fight against unemployment, the conference decided to organise a 'Three Na-
tions' march against unemploy-
ment in 1995.

Conference passed a number of other positive resolutions on racism and fascism, Ireland, Kurdistan, Western Sahara, and against Post Office privatisation.

A successful Trade Union News meeting attracted over 40 delegates. Call Wright, a mem-
ber of Bolton Trades Council and Lancashire Women Against Fascism who were denied the possibility of speaking to confer-
ence despite overwhelming sup-
port, brought everyone up to date on the continuing struggle at Parkside, the victimisation of Sylvia Pye (National Chair of WAPC) and issued a call for a nationwide demonstration to stop British Coal's attempts to fill in Parkside's shafts and demolish its headgear.

A number of resolutions, in-
cluding one in support of inter-
national Workers Aid, were ruled out of order on dubious grounds. An IWA meeting attracted a number of Trades Council delegates who now want to get involved.

For further details of the picket of the TUC Conference on Employment phone Paul on 0703 396274.

When is a merger not a merger?

Missing the point on UNISON

UNISON activist and conference delegate GEOFF MARTIN takes issue with the conference report in Socialist Outlook 63. Further contributions are invited.

THE SOCIALIST Outlook report on the first UNISON conference never allowed by without further comment, as it totally fails to deal with the struc-
tural issues in the new union which were bubbling away below the surface down in Bournemouth.

Of course it was a setback that the strategy for fighting the pay freeze through national ac-
tion was defeated.

I also agree that it was a vic-
tory for the left to get the key motions on defence of the NHS through the conference and probably an even bigger victory to get the motion on Owy's Hospi-
tal both discussed and passed.

However, the reporting of the debate on the Affiliated Polit-
cical Fund is miles wide of the mark. If anyone was being divi-
sive over this issue it was the ex-NALGO CP hacks who were determined to get it on the agenda.

EX-COHSE and NUPE member programmes of their tradi-
tion of affiliation to the La-
bour Party and were rightly pushed off at the prospect of be-
ing abolished side by former NALGO members who have never paid into Labour funds.

The issue did become divi-
sive because many ex-COHSE and NUPE activists saw it al-
most as `a last stand for the work-
ing class traditions that they brought into the new union. If you didn't believe me then ask yourself why there were only 200 ex-COHSE delegates at the Conference when there were 600 at the final COHSE bash last year.

The rest have voted with their feet because they feel they've made their stand and have no real stake in the new organisation.

I know that it's trendy to say that the UN is not UNISON in terms of the former partner-
ners. In truth, that's just shorthand for saying accepting the takeover and don't object when the ex-NALGO structure, struc-
ture and agenda are rammed down your throats.

A classic example is the head office finance. Your correspon-
dent seems to think that the de-
to HQ's will be closed, staff

sacked and the image of a take-
over re-infornced once again.

If the left aren't prepared to accept and defend the cultural and class traditions of NUPE and COHSE activists brought into the new union it's left with nothing more than a slightly larger white collar union than NALGO was before the merger.

The potential is there to achieve something much better than that; but the Socialist Out-
look report on the first confer-
ence takes us nowhere.

What do readers think?
Bosnian unions greet IWA Convoy

Savez Samostalnih Sindikata is the confederation of trade unions of Bosnia-Hercegovina. JENNY MEES of International Workers Aid spoke to SULILEJAN HRLE (president), IVAN BULE (member of the union presidency) and KEMAL MULAJIC (International relations department) on May Day in Sarajevo.

J.M. What is the meaning of this May Day for Bosnian workers.

S.H. In March three of us got out of Sarajevo and visited France, Germany and Belgium. In Brussels we met officials of international union federations – and also you.

We are very glad you made it to Sarajevo. We appreciate it more because you made it on your own and are a symbol of rank and file European trade unions engaged in concrete aid for us.

J.B. In Brussels we proposed a demonstration in Sarajevo as an appeal to the world against aggression, for peace and for respect for labour. This demonstration is very important because we have had no support whatsoever till now.

J.M. What is the role of the trade unions now in Bosnia-Hercegovina?

S.H. Our duty is fighting agression. A lot of workers are on the frontlines. Those that stay behind are engaged in all sorts of tasks. Life is very difficult, just getting enough to eat is a task. But, you saw yourself, in factories still producing people work without pay in unpleasant conditions. Homes have been turned into workplaces. Teachers, medical staff, social workers are essential for keeping society going. Nobody gets any payment and nobody demands it.

The union cannot ask for better conditions and payment for them, that is impossible, we do have duties organising humanitarian aid for our membership. K.M.

For the immediate future our main task is re-building the social and economic infrastructure. Most of our industry and communications are destroyed. Agriculture is in a difficult situation; we have no resources, no seeds. Afterwards our task will be, like yours, defending rights and living conditions of workers.

J.M. Have European unions been active enough providing aid and solidarity?

S.H. No. We got good wishes and nice words but no real help. We need resources for our industry to get going again; we have no spare parts, no raw materials, no fuel.

K.M. In Brussels we proposed every member of the international union federations give a Deutsmark for a BH trade union fund. Do you think this is possible?

J.M. If the leadership organises a broad campaign to explain it to the members it can work. It would be a real act of solidarity. But it is important the members have a say in how funds are spent, and can also engage in direct links with Bosnian unions.

S.M. I agree. Please understand we don’t want to be dependent on aid, we really dislike it, but we have no choice.

We can’t afford to be so proud as to say “we will do it all on our own” because we have nothing, not even food and clothing. Here in Sarajevo everybody would have died without UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations.

But now it is possible to start anew, there is the peace with Croatian forces and the building of a federation with Croatia. We have great hopes.

J.B. We thank you. It is enough what you have already. We know how difficult it is to organise help. Just to come here, to take this May Day so seriously, is important for us.

Oxford’s model resolution on Bosnia

We reprint here the text of a resolution on Bosnia passed by Oxford East CLP, and urge anyone who can to put similar resolutions to their Labour party branches.

2. The effect of the arms embargo is depriving the Bosnian resistance of the ability to fight back.
3. The aim of the UN and Western states involved to do a deal with Serb leader Milosevic which would result in a carve-up of Bosnia, based on ethnic cleansing and so-called ethnic purity.
4. The convoy, launched by the Times, is a response to the largely ineffective measures taken by the international community to bring about an end to the destruction of Bosnian society.”

Bosnia makes mark on French elections

Catherine Samary

THE INITIATIVE should be judged on its merits. It is not only legitimate but useful to introduce a debate on the stakes in Bosnia into the European elections.

Of course there is no "class line" and the organisations want to appeal to all political parties; supporters are as much on the right as on the left. But whose fault is it if rejection of the ethnic carve-up of Bosnia doesn’t mobilise the whole left?

Can we complain about "right wing" discourse when they support the right of the victims of ethnic cleansing to defend themselves?

Political pressures on the Bosnians to give up the fight and accept the plan for ethnic division reveal cynicism or megalomania. Cynicism that anticipates establishing "order" through a Milosevic-Tudjman alliance, legitimising ethnic cleansing in all states involved.

Cynicism that presents those Bosnians resisting such policies as being responsible for the war. Cynicism that justifies violence and massive displacements of people – whilst restricting the right to defend.

Short-sighted because "plans for ethnic division" are, and will be, a source of permanent war. Short-sighted because the breaking-up of Bosnia will signal the same fate for its neighbours.

This is what we have in common with supporters of the "Sarajevo list". But we don’t believe UN recognition of Bosnia means the UN can save multi-ethnic Bosnia.

We don’t think lifting the arms embargo should only be demanded "if the UN doesn’t carry out its mandate". Nor does support for the Bosnian resistance – and its right to have arms – imply uncritical support for the policies of Zbegovic.

Multi-ethnic Bosnia can only be preserved by agreement amongst all its communities. This requires:

1) Punishment of war crimes on the basis of factual evidence.
2) Equality between the peoples, their right to self-determination and guarantees against repression of minorities.
40,000 in Paris greet nationwide march
French unemployment protest gives lead to Europe

By Martin Stewart

On May 28 over 40,000 assembled at the Bastille to meet the national demonstration of 500 against unemployment organised by committees of ACV (Act Together against Unemployment) in cities, towns and villages throughout France.

ACV, formed last October, was a response of the workers and unemployed to refuse to accept the rising tide of unemployment which has engulfed France.

Its aim is none other than a global solution to the problem of unemployment and social marginalisation; their slogan through a cut in the working week and requisition of empty houses for the homeless social crisis.

Co-organised by the major organisations of the trade unions and the unemployed it now has over 200 groups organised across France.

Such a reception and national mobilisation, organised in less than six months by an alliance of the unemployed, trade unions and activists, shows the depth of the social crisis that is affecting both the unemployed and workers.

The march has catalysed a widespread recognition of the urgency to act against unemployment and has helped to encourage a debate about how such a campaign should be taken forward.

The trade unionists have emphasised the struggle against job losses and redundancies whilst the unemployed have pointed to the need for emergency measures such as a massive cut in the working week.

This discussion has been both difficult and useful. As the deconstruction passed through towns on the routes of the march the dialogue has developed and the agreement of the need for common objectives to fight for has come to the fore.

Both the trade unions and the unemployed organisations have recognised in action that the united front on the issue of unemployment has been a valuable gain. There are lessons here for all of us.

Success always breeds self-confidence and the organisations of the unemployed, the MNP (National Movement of the Unemployed and Marginalised) and UNAC (National Unions of Unemployed Associations) have established a timetable for the organisation of conferences of the unemployed and the marginalised for September 30 and October 1 where they will debate how to take the campaign forward.

ACV itself is now debating its future role. Two trends have emerged so far. Firstly, to encourage discussions andopolis between the organisations of the unemployed, farm workers, students and the unemployed.

Attached to such a development is the hope to develop local “solidarity houses” – places where common between workers and the unemployed can be organised.

Thus ACV will be able to push forward the debate at both a local and national level. Secondly that the debate on global solutions does not simply become a party political issue. It

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 הזה be based on the campaigns of workers, the young and the unemployed.

The ACV initiative has given a lead to all the workers and unemployed across Europe. Nobody has to accept the Europe of the bosses and the multinationalists.

The social crisis that affects France is a social crisis that affects the whole of Europe. Such a crisis can lead to a continental alliance between the working class and the unemployed. Such an alliance is imminent in the failure of the western European bourgeois order and its inability to deliver anything to the workers and unemployed in the East Bar Poverty and Fortress European Union. France also shows that the organised intervention by marxists, such as that of the Fourth International in France, can enable such an alliance to reach its full potential.

n BRIEF

Bloody but unbowed

CHINESE bureaucrats' celebrations over US President Clinton's decision to renew China's Most Favoured Nation trading privileges overlapped neatly with the fifth anniversary of the bloody Beijing Massacre.

Dropping the pretence of holding out for an end to human rights abuses in China, Chinese sought to hide behind the powerful US business lobby, which had claimed that disruption of trade could cost thousands of US jobs.

In China runs a massive 23 billion trade surplus with the USA: the business lobby are looking to impose immediate profits but to the longer term strategic issue of the restoration of capitalism in China, which is being carried out under the control of the same Stalinist worker's tanks crushed the democratic revolt of students and workers in Tiananmen Square.

Already the US is China's most important export market and key trading partner: American multinationals want to retain the front place in the race to exploit the opportunities of this vast market and pool of cheap labour.

Having faced down Clinton's empty threats of sanctions, the Chinese bureaucracy turned their attention to a massive police clampdown in Beijing, with roadblocks and identity checks in force around the University and Tiananmen Square itself, to ensure there were no echoes of the events of 1989.

Unfair shares

FIGURES from the United Nations Development Report show that the world's poorest 20 percent of population now share just 1.4 percent of global income. By contrast the richest 20 percent has seen its share increase over the past ten years from 76.3 percent to 82.7 percent.

Nissan losses

THE GIANT Nissan Motors, Japan's second biggest car manufacturer, has recorded massive losses of £1.2 billion in the last financial year – double the previous year's losses.

By contrast Toyota retained the car in front, notching up profits of £1 billion.
Open second front against Major and Blair

Unions must defend welfare rights

By Chris Brooks

FACED WITH the Tory onslaught on the welfare state and the continued ascendance of the neo-liberals in the Labour Party, the left doesn’t just face a crossroads: it faces two decisive choices.

Firstly, it is possible to accept that the labour movement should be silent about the need to forge a labour movement alliance to defend and extend welfare rights.

Secondly, it is possible to ignore the need to regenerate a united current in the labour movement that will defend the movement’s historic principles against any attempt at cuts, bi-partisanship or coalition.

Poverty is a central fact of life in Britain today.

According to the British Medical Journal, death rates amongst the poorest are as high as those of the 1950s. Amongst the under-20s, unemployment runs at over 20 per cent, double that of older workers.

Over 68,000 16 and 17 year olds have no income at all. Living standards for Britain’s poorest are back to the levels of thirty years ago.

Minimum wage

Consider how burning the need is for a minimum wage. Transport union leader Bill Morris has said that a £4-an-hour minimum is essential (at least).

John Prescott - the ‘left’ of Labour’s leadership - says there is no need to put a figure on it.

The GMB’s John Edmonds, has used the Labour need for a “coherent set of values”, like full employment.

But the Party leadership won’t touch it with a ten-foot pole because it means committing themselves to promises on spending which may alienate their would-be friends in the City!

The Labour leadership can see that the economic situation in Europe is such that we can’t maintain the established welfare rights without cutting the profits of big business. Labour’s current leaders just won’t call for it. The bosses won’t give it away.

Edmonds and Morris are right to demand concrete proposals: but they must be forced to turn their words into action.

They must put the resources of their unions behind campaigns against these Tory attacks and for the Labour Party to adopt an economic policy which breaks the economic consensus and defends and extends the welfare state.

There is a wide current of opinion in the labour movement that can be united in advocating real jobs, decent welfare rights and real social justice.

Europe

The remarkable success of the ‘Act together against Unemployment’ campaign in France (ACF) shows how it is possible for the rank and file of the trade union movement to mount such a campaign.

We need to build up local and national initiatives - defending health services and welfare rights, against cuts in local government services and the voluntary sector, against privatisation and for the building of new homes and the creation of real jobs with trade union rights of pay.

We need a broadly-based conference of the labour movement and users of the welfare state to build up a national movement.

The resources and the experience of the whole labour movement can start to forge a broad movement involving trade unionists, young people, single mothers, pensioners, the unemployed and other users of the welfare state.

Trade Unions and union regions need to be organising for marches and working conferences on the issues of welfare rights and full employment.

It’s too important a fight to be left to Labour politicians.

Pregnant and penniless

Panned the numbers living in poverty: the bottom 20 per cent of the population are actually worse off now than in 1979, while the richest 10 per cent have gained an average £13,500 per year.

Some of the poorest and most desperate have to travel to the big cities to beg rather than languish in equal poverty and squatter out of sight.

As queues of those in poverty grow longer, more radical policies are vital

Major outburst begs for challenge

By Jerry Curran

IT WAS NO surprise to see a desperate John Major, his party languishing in third place in national opinion polls and facing annihilation in the Euro-elections, attempt to whip up a populist reaction against the backlash against beggars.

His government has of course done more to create beggars than any other since the 1930s.

Behind the massaged official figures, realistic estimates suggest unemployment at four million. Whole communities have been devastated and lives wrecked by the closure of basic industries.

Social security benefits have been slashed, special needs payments have been axed, and partially replaced by loans from the cash-limited Social Fund.

Over 140,000 households, and countless more individuals are homeless, while council housing has ground to a halt as a result of Tory restrictions on spending. 20 hostels for the homeless face closure as the Tories axe their grants.

In 1984 Major himself cut off social security payments to 16 and 17 year olds - to save £140m from the DSS budget.

Thatcher’s policies have widened the gulf between the rich and poor, and massively ex
Labour Left and the leadership election:  
Let's make a real fight out of it!

By Pete Firmin

NO-ONE can pretend the election for Labour leader takes place under good conditions for the left. Constituency parties are frail, and within them the left is weaker than for a long time.

The One Member One Vote system, compounded by the appallingly short time-table, means discussion will be dominated by the media beauty contest with the real issues barely getting a look-in.

Nomination is entirely in the hands of the MPs. 34 of whom have to back a candidate for them to even get on the ballot paper, regardless of the level of support they may have in the party and unions.

Coronation -

Moreover, with Brown's withdrawal and rumours of Cook and Cunningham likely to do the same, the pressure is on for all other candidates to withdraw in favour of Blair and for the Party to have a coronation in place of an election. With this threat CLP activists should be campaigning for their MP to support a candidate with a left wing candidate.

But the election is an opportunity the left cannot afford to miss. It gives the chance to put forward alternative policies on the issues facing the movement, both internally and externally, to 'those on offer from all the front bench candidates.

Literature can be circulated to all members of the party and affiliated unions, and numerous debates will take place around the country at which candidates (or their representatives) could speak. Yet some on the left are at best reluctant, if not downright opposed, to putting forward a candidate. The Socialist Campaign Group of MPs itself needs to recognise that failing to stand makes them invisible and to stand. He is mistrusted by much of the left but at least he recognises the political significance of this election.

Those who don't like him have ducked out of arguing for the Campaign Group to come up with an alternative candidate, but instead used it as part of the reasoning for not standing at all.

One who could have stepped forward is Ken Livingstone the only Campaign Group member likely to stand.

He is mistrusted by much of the left but at least he recognises the political significance of this election.

Those who don't like him have ducked out of arguing for the Campaign Group to come up with an alternative candidate, but instead used it as part of the reasoning for not standing at all.

Which one is cuddling up to the right wing? Neither offers a left policy

Catastrophe

Briefing also argue victory for Blair would be such a catastrophe that the left has to throw its weight behind a candidate with a chance of winning from the start. Leaving aside whether such a candidate exists, this view underplays the need for a fightback against whoever wins.

Socialist Organiser takes a similar view, while openly displaying its hatred of Livingstone (more latent among Briefing supporters).

Leading Campaigners in the unions to organise around alternative policies, a fine sounding idea, which needs taking up by the left, but which is unlikely to be popular in the context of the election.

The time-table means that the left would have to be established before the election is over, and without a candidate supporting them, those policies would have little purchase.

Arguing that a Left candidate is a non-starter, it throws its support behind Prescott as the candidate to back, because of his support in the unions.

If there is a need to unite around an alternative to Blair, the exhaustivest ballot allows for this without detracting from a left campaign, but it suggests that the problem is that they cannot agree on who this should be.

Many Briefing supporters see Margaret Beckett as their champion, because of the 'cuddled signals' she gave over the trade union link debate, her position against proportional representation and support for women's rights in the party.

Darling

Meanwhile, Socialist Organiser argues Prescott, the 'darling of the union's, has the best chance of defeating Blair.

Of course, the candidates may resolve their dilemma for them, but this confusion is a reflection of the fact that neither offers a serious alternative.

Of course, they might make some left sounding noises during the campaign, but if the left over and done, they will take that as an indication of its inability to actually fight for what it wants.

Build up the Network!

By Pete Firmin

The June 11 Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network conference on Socialism and Full Employment indicates well the extent to which the Labour Left is getting organised.

While the Network has existed for about two years, progress in getting it established has been slow to an unfavourable climate where the Left is weak and divided, even on the need for such an organisation. However, it does now organise several hundred support-
Full employment: what they say

FULL EMPLOYMENT must become a central plank of Labour's economic policy in the run up to the next General Election.

A list of wishes will not win Labour the general election, get to grips with the ravages of 15 years of Tory vandalism, or change the deregulated, increasingly flexible, de-unionised, job market.

As Jeremy Corbyn said in Socialist Outlook last week:

'the problem is that we're not being offered an economic policy that is anything other than demand management within the economy. That isn't going to lead to full employment... it's the one issue which could win us a general election... But if we only half-heartedly put it down and don't add the details of how we're going to achieve it, it will just be laughed at during the election campaign for being a cynical election manoeuvre.'

The forthcoming leadership contest allows us to see where the main protagonists and their backers stand. HELEN SHAW reports.

MEDIA darling TONY BLAIR believes full employment is a Labour goal, but 'no-one is suggesting that there is a quick fix; that you can wave a magic wand; that it's possible to get back to full employment overnight'.

He is sceptical about national solutions: 'international co-operation is replacing the possibility of any country 'going it alone'. He is opposed to the closed shop and in favour of restrictions on picketing and secondary industrial action.

MARGARET BECKETT believes in public spending as 'resources allow' and concentrates on 'supply-side' labour market measures as the basis for economic policy. She wants 'a simpler, fairer, more logical tax and national insurance system' and a 'new social insurance scheme' to replace existing measures.

JOHN PRESCOTT says in his report to the Labour Party NEC in May 94, 'It took the courage of Labour government in 1945 to show Europe the road to economic and social prosper-ity based on full employment and social justice, and it is Lab-our, 50 years on, that has the vision to restore these twin prin-ciples to the national con-science.'

But Prescott has failed to outline how this can be achieved and cannot do so without breaking from the economic consensus on Labour's 'front bench' - which he has consistently failed to do.

TUC leader John Monks 'passionately believes full em-ployment is desirable' and that, 'we shall only tackle the evil of unemployment if we act to-gether - that is what Social Part-nership is all about. I am laying down the challenge and asking people form every walk of life to join a great national coalition for full employment.'

Many of the proposals including a shorter working week, a minimum wage, an end to ralph privatisation are worth fighting for: but what is missing is how these changes would be-achieved. They all have the illusion that it is possible to temper and re-form the excesses of global mar-ket. Blair in particular believes that a programme of education, training and co-operation be-tween government, the unions and industry will eradicate pov-erty, social injustice and unem-ployment.

The fundamental flaw at the heart of all the solutions proffered is a failure to understand that all the gains made by the working class in this country have been a result of struggle such as the miners fight for the nationalisation of the coal in-dustry.

Furthermore the 1945 Labour government introduced the NHS in the face of massive re-sistance from the Tory party and the bosses. But now it appears that Labour does not even have a strategy for defending the gains made with the creation of the welfare state.

Blair dismisses the idea of Labour having a radical domes-tic agenda to redistribute wealth and create full employment and prefers to substitute the legal framework of the European so-cial charter as a mechanism to defend workers rights.

The TUC's position was made clear by Monks speech to the RSA on May 26. He vividly outlined the human misery of continued unemployment and lack of job security. In the 50 years since Beveridge's famous report 'Full Employment in a Free Society' he recognised, like Prescott, that little lasting progress has been made and so-ciety is still plagued by the five evils of misery, want, disease, idleness and squalor.

Despite acknowledging the change in the composition of the workforce (more women and part-time workers) and spelling out some of the technological and structural changes in the economy his speech was short on solutions to the global prob-lem of rising unemployment.

The emphasis was on train-ing, creating a flexible and more highly skilled workforce - sell-ing flexibility as a method to trade union members 'more in control of their lives' to have the time to study, care for children, parents or the long term sick. These views are common currency on Labour's front bench.

The problem is that in reality 'flexibility' is central to the Tory offensive and has meant more work for no more money, the proliferation of low-paid casualised jobs, derecognition of unions, no strike agreements and constant fear of unemploy-ment.

Labour must grapple with the complexities of the global mar-ket, the changes in the work-force, the devase of the last 15 years but fundamentally it must present itself as the party of the people, fighting for the interests of ordinary workers, the unemployed, pensioners and young people.

It must bring forward bold policies to tax the rich, cut defence spending and really begin a process which gives people the opportunity to work.

We say: the left should press for fighting policies on jobs

- STOP THE RDG! For strike action, occupations and mass action to prevent any more re-dundancies and closures.
- TAX THE RICH! The Exchequer has been emptied by Tory tax handouts of £25 billion since 1989. Any serious Labour programme for jobs must win backing from workers by promising bold action against those who have cashed in on mass misery.
- INCREASE BENEFITS: pensions and grants to restore cuts imposed by 15 years of Thatcherism, and lift millions of families out of poverty.
- A PROGRAMME OF PUBLIC WORKS to create new jobs on trade union rates of pay, pro-viding improved housing, health, education and infrastructure projects. Unblock the cash frozen in councils' coffers, increase public spending.
- OPEN THE BOOKS of the giant firms announcing increased profits as they dump thou-sands on job queues. Demand their nationalisation, under workers' management.
- SHORTER WORKING WEEK! Demand an immediate cut to 33 hours with no loss of pay, and call further to divide the work available - work sharing on full pay.
- NATIONALISE THE banks, building societies, finance houses and top monopolies. For a planned economy under workers' control.
French anti-racist leader speaks out

Recession breed racism

ON MARCH 19 the TUC organised a demonstration in East London against racism and fascism.

In their publicity leaflets they argued that the fascists feed on the despair created by unemployment and poor social conditions. Unfortunately the TUC does nothing to actually defend jobs, wages and living standards.

However, they are right to draw attention to the links between racism and unemployment. The labour movement should learn from the French experience in campaigning for full employment and in defence of the welfare state.

The major anti-racist organisations (SOS-Racisme, FASTI and MRAP) have all been actively supporting the March for Jobs organised by Agir Ensemble contre les Chomeurs (AEC). AEC, in turn, has understood the need to combat racism.

The need to link the fight against racism with the fight against unemployment is vital. Here we give the views of MOULDOUR AOUNI, General Secretary MRAP.

WHY has MRAP associated itself with the March organised by AEC? Why has an anti-racist organisation got involved in mobilisations against marginalisation?

Finally, because of the demand for one of the most fundamental human rights: the right to work. It is an integral part of the totality of human rights, the same as the right to travel or the right to live with one's family.

It is a concern for everyone living on French soil, whatever their country of origin. It is a condition for citizenship and the right of everyone to live in dignity.

We have to recognise that the plague of unemployment continues to grow. Declaring redundancies has become a common method of management. Making people's lives precarious has become a method of government.

The calling into question of the right to work opens up a chain of attacks on other fundamental rights, such as the right to housing, to education and to health.

Exclusion from such rights affects the whole of society. Racism increases this marginalisation of the most deprived, the poorest and especially foreigners. There is a link between racism and exclusion. Exclusion, marginalisation and precarious existence produce and legitimate racism.

Faced with its inability to provide concrete answers to social problems, of which employment is amongst the most important, the government throws immigration into the field of public opinion.

They have put in place a legal arsenal - the Nationality Code, identity controls, conditions on entry and remaining in the country - which challenges fundamental liberties such as the right to live with one's family, the right of asylum, the right of residence, the right of nationality, the right of free movement.

The suspicion and arbitrariness encompassed in these laws make every immigrant into an isolate, a smuggler, a criminal, a delinquent.

By introducing legislation on immigration as one of its first acts the government has forged the idea amongst a fragmented public opinion that the number one problem of our society is not unemployment but immigration. It cultivates the logic of scape-goats and increases xenophobic sentiments.

Every reactionary social measure introduced by the government and every mobilisation that it has forced them to retreat, has been accompanied by attacks on the rights of immigrants.

Anti-racists must mobilise against the logic of ‘too many’ immigrants and counterpose a logic of ‘not enough’: not enough jobs, houses, spending on schools.

Racism represents a threat to everyone because it grows on the denial of the values of equality, justice, comradeship and solidarity.

Racism divides, offers no solutions and leads to a dead-end.

It sets ‘North’ against ‘South’, worker against unemployed, immigrant against deprived.

More than ever anti-racists need to act together for an active citizenship based on real and living solidarity. We need to set out the road to equality and a better life together.

This is the reason for the participation of MRAP in the mobilisation of AEC in its fight against this filthy scourge ravaging our society and setting in peril the future of democracy.

Cutting off arms to boost the NHS!

By Paul Walker

TAKE A RANDOM sample of labour movement activists and mention the phrase arms conversion and 99 out of 100 will think of Lucas Aerospace and the workers plan.

The other one will mumble ‘waste into ploughshares’.

The trouble with the current politics of arms conversion in the labour movement is that it is effectively a continuation of the defensive response that the Lucas Aerospace Plan was.

The idea of arms conversion, it is (and was) commonly thought, is to save the jobs of military workers who will be put on the dole if we decide to stop exporting military equipment to murderous regimes or cut domestic military expenditure.

This gets the argument fundamentally wrong. It is not cutting military expenditure or ending arms exports that creates employment - it is arms expenditure and exports that create unemployment itself.

There is absolutely no need to be defensive about this. Military manufacture has massively high capital and R&D costs and much lower labour costs.

For every pound spent on military production you get fewer jobs than in normal civil manufacture. It is estimated that for every one military worker it would be possible to get two civil workers - that is an extra 150,000 jobs.

In the labour movement who support military manufacture because of the employment implications are helping to keep this number of people on the dole.

This does not mean that all that has to be done is to stop spending money on tanks and start spending them on the NHS.

It is crucial that the skills of military workers are not lost to the economy. What is required is a re-orientation of the UK manufacturing base away from military production and towards a strengthening of the civil manufacturing sector.

This in itself will make possible more social spending.

This does not mean that every military factory will be converted to civil use. Some will have to close. But it does mean that the skills acquired and notions of production must be extended to the whole economy.

Such a strategy can only be carried out through a rigorous interventionist government which over-rides the single market and corporate interests and encourages the workers in military industry to use their skills to transform the economy and create a new basis for working class solidarity.

This part of the Lucas Plan, worker planning and industrial transformation, is crucial to any serious strategy of full employment and socialisation of the British economy.

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK No. 64, 11 June 1994, Page 10
BRITISH, American and French imperialist leaders are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the D-Day landings as we go to press, amid a fluttering of patriotic flags and platitudes about fighting for democracy.

But how did revolutionary socialists respond at the time to the challenge of a war waged by and between imperialist powers under the pretence of a war for democracy against fascism?

While the Communist Party Stalinists after 1941 followed the reformist Labour leaders in unthinking, strikebreaking support of the imperialist war effort, the Trotskyist movement fought against the odds to uphold a line of working class independence.

Here we reprint extracts and summaries from the varied literature summing up the Trotskyist analysis.

Leon Trotsky - *Who is Guilty of Starting The Second World War?* (Sept 3 1939)

"THE ATTEMPTS to picture the next war as a war between democracies and fascism were shattered against the real march of events. The present war, which its participants started before they signed the treaty of Versailles, grew out of imperialist contradictions. It was as inevitable as the crash of trains which are let loose one toward the other on the same track.

The chief antagonists on the European continent are Germany and France. In the struggle for hegemony in Europe and its colonial possessions, France attempted to keep Germany (not the fascist but the democratic one) in a condition of division and weakness. In this sense French imperialism was the midpoint of German National Socialism.

On the contrary, England, which was interested in breaking the European hegemony of France and its international pretensions, began soon after Versailles to support Berlin against Paris. The arming of Nazi Germany would have been impossible without the direct help of England.

Thus the masked and deep antagonisms between the democracies were a springboard for Hitler.

Diplomatic machinations, juggling with the formula 'democracies versus Fascism', sophisms concerning responsibility, cannot make us forget that the struggle is going on between the imperialist slaveholders of different camps for a new division of the world. According to its ends and methods the present war is a different prolongation of the previous great war, only with much greater rottenness of the capitalist economy, and with much more terrible methods of destruction and extermination.

Consequently, I do not see the slightest reason for changing those principles in relation to the war which were elaborated between 1914 and 1917 by the best representatives of the workers' movement of Lenin's time.

The present war has a reactionary character on both sides. Whichever camp is victorious, humanity will be thrown far behind.

The lack of the authentic representatives if the working class and oppressed nations does not consist in helping one imperialist camp against the other, but in teaching the labouring masses of all countries to understand the reactionary meaning of the present war, to raise their own programmes - the world socialist federation of nations - and to prepare themselves to replace the regime of robbery by the regime of general cooperation.

Trotsky's analysis was developed further by James P. Cannon of the American Socialist Workers Party at the time of the US entry to the war after Pearl Harbour in December 1941.

James P Cannon - *A Statement on the U.S. entry into World War II* December 22 1941

"THE MARXIST analysis which determined our attitude to the war up to December 8, 1941, continues to determine our attitude now. We were internationalists before December 8; we still are. We believe that the most fundamental bond of loyalty of all the workers of the world is the bond of international solidarity of the workers against their exploiters.

We cannot assume the slightest responsibility for this war. No imperialist regime can conduct a just war. We cannot support it for one moment.

We are the most irreplaceable enemies of the fascist dictatorships of Germany, Italy and the military dictatorship of Japan. Our co-thinkers of the Fourth International in the Axis nations and the conquered countries are fighting and dying in the struggle to organize the coming revolutions against Hitler and Mussolini.

We are doing all in our power to spread these revolutions. But those ex-socialists, intellectuals, labour leaders, who in the name of 'democracy' support the war of United States imperialism against its imperialist foes and rivals, far from aiding the German and Italian anti-fascists, only hamper their work and betray their struggle.

The Allied imperialists, as every German worker knows, aim to impose a second and worse Versailles, the fear of that is Hitler's greatest asset in keeping the masses in Germany in subjection. The fear of the foreign yoke holds back the development of the German revolution against Hitler.

Confronted with a war for which they refused to take responsibility, what was the attitude of the Trotskyists to conscription? Again the most detailed exposition of the position came in the writings of the American SWP, building on early discussions with Trotsky.

Trotsky, always a fierce opponent of pacifism, had argued strongly for class politics to be taken into the armed forces where the bulk of the working class would be found.

Leon Trotsky - *American Problems August 1940.*

"WE MUST try to separate the workers from the others by a programme of education, of workers' schools, of workers' officers, de-
By Bala Kumar

THERE ARE moments of joy in Africa and one of them was the exiting from power of the Malawian dictator Hastings Kamuzu Banda. In the keenly contested multi-party elections for the Presidency and the legislature, the opposition Unions of Democratic Front led by Bakili Muluzi emerged as the single largest party and has formed the government.

Banda and his Malawi Congress Party (MCP) have governed Malawi for thirty years. He was a rare friend of the Pretoria regime and an ally of imperialism in the region. The guerrilla South African government built Banda a new capital city in Lilongwe and the West were among his staunchest proponents of aid.

But the realities of post Cold War Africa mean that Western governments have little use for their old pawns and stooges.

The pro-democracy movement took off in May 1992 following a strike of 3,000 workers at a textile factory in support of an end to one party rule.

The West reacted by turning off the aid pipeline which had supported the MCP dictatorship. They have nothing to lose.

In the last few decades there aren't any radical movements with an anti-capitalist orientation promising economic change.

The Financial Times commented that all three opposition parties were committed to 'export led growth' to create a 'brighter economy'. It measured its readers that even Chukufwa Chihana nominee of the Alliance for Democracy (Aford) and a veteran trade unionist had been denouncing the hopes of striking workers pressing for better wages.

Ethnic split

In the event the elections represented another feature of the multi-party experience which is the split in votes on ethnic, regional or class lines.

The north supported Chihana and Aford, returning 36 of their candidates, the centre supported Banda and the MCP elected 65 of their candidates and the south supported Muluzi and UDP, giving them 84 representatives in the legislature. In two constituencies fresh elections will be held because of voter irregularities.

The numerical predominance of the south assured Muluzi of a victory, though the strong showing of the MCP surprised many.

Banda had all the advantages of an incumbent president including access to state broadcasting and administrative machinery. The Malawi Congress Party ran a campaign cautioning against their removal and citing Banda as an example of the dangers of change.

The opposition ran their campaign precisely on the theme that "It Is Time for Change". But how much change in personalities has there been then?

A florid stroke during its campaign by labelling the UDP as a party of MCP exiles.

The President used to be a senior member of the Banda regime and implicated in embezzlement and theft during his period in office. He later fell out with Banda and the MCP, strengthening John Tembo.

In reality the new guard of politicians is often the old guard in democratic clothes. Muluzi's vice-president, Justin Edward, a former secretary of Banda.

Muluzi was backed by the urban capitalist class and especially its Asian component who have been frustrated by the monopoly position that two trans-national corporations, Limbe and Lever Brothers enjoy in the mainly agricultural economy.

Conglomerate

One conglomerate, Press Holdings, is indirectly controlled by Banda and his lover Mama Kadzimira. It has holdings in agribusiness, manufacturing and financial services. Its weight in the economy is reflected in the fact that it alone accounts for 20% of the Gross Domestic Product of Malawi.

International lending institutions will be pressing the new government to break up Press Holdings and privatise it more widely. Of course, those capacities were sidelined by the former regime anticipate rich pickings.

One factor that all political parties will have to consider is the Army. It was seen as independent of the MCP within the police. However in December 1993 the Army and the paramilitary Malawi Youth Pioneers clashed when the latter was ordered to disarm.

The MYP were urged in the service of the Banda regime and regularly terrorised people. Fifty people died in the brief period of fighting but subsequent election periods were not disrupted by large-scale violence. If the Army sees itself as custodians of the democratic process it could intervene if there was any back-slide.

It would be ludicrous to say that nothing has or will change from before these elections. Bakili Muluzi has ordered the closure of three prisons where political prisoners were held and tortured. He has ordered the release of all political prisoners and the commutation of all death sentences to life imprisonment. Muluzi have removed one party and replaced it with another. Unfortunately both are bastions of the landed and the rich. This is a marvellous thing to have the vote as any black South Africans will testify.

In future too, if anyone knocks at an untimely hour it won't be the regime but Jehovah's Witnesses, whose sect was illegal until recently, and they may even be invited in.

Fundamentalists bid to break up Yemen

By Roland Rance

THE BREAK-UP of Yemen threatens the failure of the most serious attempt yet at overcoming the artificial borders imposed on the Arab world by colonialism.

Only last year Yemen, the poorest and most populous state in the Arabian peninsula, conducted the region's first multi-party elections, and the first in which women were allowed to vote.

The Republic of Yemen was formed in May 1990 by the unification of two very different states and regimes: in the North, the Islamic, conservative and tribal 'Yemen Arab Republic'; in the South, the left nationalist 'People's Democratic Republic of Yemen'.

Economic crisis had led to new urgency to the traditional calls for reunification. The North's Ali Abdullah Saleh became president, while the last surviving leftist leader of the South, Taibri National Liberation Front, Al Salmi al-Baid, became Vice-President. The widely popular reunification was opposed by many leftists in the South and by Islamists in the North.

Unification was also opposed by Saudi Arabia, which feared a large, populous democratic and strategically significant neighbour even more than it has feared the small, poverty-stricken and isolated southern republic.

This month, General Galt provided the opportunity for Saudi interference. Yemen was one of a handful of Arab regimes which refused to oppose the US-led attack on Iraq. The sole Arab state on

The Sa'di had no virtual allies against a war to have his Eden strengthen or to par the government meet the challenge.

Despite Saudi's agreeing to stop a war on March 26, in February, fighting erupted the following day which Saudi Arabia launched an all-out war on May 4, after talks had failed.

Attempts by the northern army to occupy the South are now going badly. The more developed South has managed to fell one of the naval and air bases, in which they have superiority, and to be turning back the weakening northern army outside Aden.

The possibility remains that the North could make a military breakthrough to overturn the naval gains defended by the South. Whatever the final outcome, the real beneficiary of the conflict will be Saudi Arabia, to which it has discredited Yemen's democracy and the political and strategic threat it could Georgia. There are also newly found oil reserves in a disputed border region.

There is an urgent need for international solidarity, especially from revolutionaries in the region, for defence of the gains of the Yemeni revolution and for the overthrow of the feudal Saudi regime.
Their tributes to Bob

"Our member Bob was also a member of Socialist Outlook, CARF and active in many labour movement and progressive campaigns. He will be greatly missed by the movement as a whole."

Birmingham Troops Out Movement

"Bob served CARF consistently for many years, as treasurer, and then as Secretary. We will all miss his contribution."

Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism

"His consistent support and involvement in many of the major class battles of the last decades have witnessed - the miners, the printers, Burnside's - and the eagerness with which Bob set about anti-racist and anti-fascist struggles illustrate his dedication to the cause of working class emancipation.

This memory will live on in us all and be an inspiration to the struggle that he so unpertinantly gave his life for."

Workers Power

"I met Bob at Ranger Socialist Outlook Summer School '92 in his warmth and good spirits. He was a friendly comrade and a real class militant. The labour movement needs many more Bob Smiths."

Banrow-In-Furness Socialist Outlook Supporter

"I first got to know Bob in the early 1980s when he managed the Other Bookshop in Birmingham; he was the public face of the Fourth International. Bob was through and professional; in what he did on behalf of his comrades and he often faced the dangers alone. Bob was attacked by fascists with iron bars and knives and he fought them off, suffering cuts and bruises.

Bob sustained an active anti-racist and anti-fascist campaign through the 1980s when there were many on the left who thought there wasn't a problem. Bob stood and fought against it. We were right then and we will be right now if we carry on Bob's work to the best of our ability."

Leicester Socialist Outlook Supporter

Birmingham honours Bob Smith

ONE HUNDRED friends and comrades honoured Bob Smith’s memory at a special meeting on May 28, celebrating his commitment to the struggle for socialism, and pledged to continue the fight for a socialist world.

Marian Braithwaite introduced the meeting. Feeling the deep loss of her friend and comrade, she emphasized how Bob would want us all of us to be a part of the fight to end racism and sexism, capitalism and imperialism globally. Bob was a trade union activist who was committed to women’s liberation.

This year Bob was standing for election to his union’s National Executive. He spent many hours working to develop the policies of his union in a socialist direction.

During the last period of his life Bob worked very hard against low pay. He played an important role in attempting to establish a union at Burnside’s where the workers were predominantly Asian women.

Bob was also involved in the main battles in defence of trade union rights, culminating recently in the struggle to defend the jobs of the workers.

He was deeply upset by the attacks by Birmingham’s Labour administrators on low-paid workers.

While looking through her photo album, added Marian, she noticed Bob on the protest outside Birmingham’s International Convention Centre against Utah getting the Olympics because of its hostility to women’s rights to control their own fertility. Over the years Bob involved struggle to defend women’s rights.

Shirley Jothi, from Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, in a moving and inspiring speech emphasized Bob’s commitment to building an anti-racist and anti-fascist movement that would confront racists and fascists wherever they appear. She explained that Bob was never sectarian and seriously attempted to build a united movement.

For the last period of his life Bob was working in the Trade Union Club, attempting to ensure its survival. Birmingham’s Troops Out Movement wrote "his job at the Union Club will be to fight hard to fill with someone with such commitment, friendliness and good humour."

Barbara, the manager of the Club spoke about the short time she knew Bob and how their friendship meant a lot to her. One of Bob’s favourite words, ‘fantastic’, had become one of the most used words at the Club.

Bob used it to encourage involvement in the Club.

Bernie Hynes from Leicester Socialist Outlook remembered how back in 1982 Bob introduced him to the Fourth International’s review International hexapod.

Bob Smith

Burnside: one of many strikes backed by Bob united movement.

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Bernie Hynes from Leicester Socialist Outlook remembered how back in 1982 Bob introduced him to the Fourth International's review International hexapod.

"He was proud of the Fourth International and had a collection of photographs which included a photo of comrades in the Mexican PRF. To Bob, the International was a living manifestation of what workers could and should achieve. He would often talk about this to me and about building the FI in Britain," added Hynes.

Alan Thornton from Socialist Outlook’s editorial board spoke last. Thornton gave an overview of what Bob stood for. He sketched recent developments and struggles in western Europe and the increased commodification of the working class in Germany, Italy and France.

He pointed out the importance of internationalism and how Bob was proud to be in an organisation that was defending Bonn’s ethnic cleansing.

At the meeting unveiled a portrait of Bob with the plaque to his memory which read: ‘Bob Smith: A Loyal And Trusted Friend’. After Banner Theatre’s moving singeing of Beloved Comrade, which pledges the continuation of the struggle, the evening ended with a rousing singing of the Internationale.

Bob Smith

Regular readers of Socialist Outlook and CARF would remember Bob Smith, a member of Socialist Outlook and CARF who was an active member of the Fourth International and active in the trade union movement.

Bob Smith died shortly before his 50th birthday. Bob Smith was a committed member of the Fourth International and active in the trade union movement. Indeed, Bob would have been insulted by praise from John Major. He would have felt he had somehow failed in the fight for the interests of his class.

Bob was a revolutionary socialist. He opposed everything the Tories stand for. He

Bob Smith

Afterwards

Bob Smith

Following Bob Smith's death, we were left with an empty feeling. We would never have had the chance to pay our respects and offer our condolences. Bob Smith was a dedicated member of the Fourth International and active in the trade union movement.

Indeed, Bob would have been insulted by praise from John Major. He would have felt he had somehow failed in the fight for the interests of his class.

Bob was a revolutionary socialist. He opposed everything the Tories stand for. He

Bob Smith

The money raised will be used to support work Bob devoted himself to as you can see.

PO Box 1109, London NW 2 UB

FEATURE
No government warning, but
Motorway is bad for Hackney’s health!

By Eileen Gilsch

FIfty HACKNEY residents came to the Lower Clapton Health Centre on May 24 to hear about the impact of the M11 Link on health in the borough. Patrick Field, for Hackney Alliance Against the M11 Link, explained how this road would decant traffic into the borough, increasing an already high level of pollution. Des Walkers, manager of air quality for Hackney council, has been working for years to get Hackney’s own system for monitoring air pollution and has finally succeeded to introduce techniques for measuring the main pollutants – carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and ozone.

Limits exceeded

The statutory safe limits for these gases are frequently exceed and are not shown in the government’s figures, so Hackney needs its own monitoring programme. The predicted future increase in the number of cars will result in increased emissions which cannot possibly be compensated for by reducing the level of emission per vehicle. This underlines the importance of reducing the number of private vehicles and organizing efficient public transport.

A spokesperson for the City and East London Health Authority, Ann Mackle (a consultant in Public Health), came armed with extensive statistics on the relation between pollution and health, with special reference to asthma.

Frustrated

Gene Foder, one of the doctors who staff the Health Centre, thought that further information was superfluous. Doctors are frustrated at having to treat more and more children with asthma. (Dr Foder himself has an asthmatic child.)

They know the part that air pollution plays and they see that the government, through its road-building policy, is exacerbating the problem. The M11 Link is unacceptable.

A lot of discussion was generated by the speakers’ presence.

New health professionals are lending strength to the anti-M11 protests

By Peter Purton

THIS YEAR’S Lesbian and Gay Pride march (June 18) celebrates 25 years since the explosion of the modern lesbian and gay movement after the customers of New York’s Stonewall bar took to the streets in resistance to a police raid.

For the first time for many years the metropolitan police have conceded a high profile route through London’s west end. Tens of thousands are expected to join the march, and even larger numbers will gather in Brockwell Park for the festival which follows.

The Pride committee has become a Trust, and has ‘contracted out’ the organisation of the march to direct action group OutRage.

OutRage has been part of a strong lobby for a more political event this year, but it has lost the pure carnivalesque of the last.

But their brand of politics are not to the taste of many on the left, and those who want to combine celebrating Pride with some progressive politics, a labour movement anti-racist contingent is being organised by the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights and other organisations.

Contingent meets under Marble Arch 11.30am.

Socialist Outlook

Facing mass unemployment, rampant unemployment, a lack of laws, and war on hard-won education, health and welfare services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis – an avoidable crisis created by the historic failure of its official leadership.

Socialist Outlook exists to fight for a new type of working class leadership, based on the politics of class struggle and revolutionary socialism, to tackle this crisis. Such a socialist class, driven and politically united by its own crisis, is the only basis for the kind of leadership that can save the working class and organise the fight against the TORY high command.

The TORY strategy has been to shackle the unions with legislation, and to fragment and weaken the resistance of the working class and organised workers, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time, using the full power of the state.

In response, most TUC and Labour leaders have embraced the defeatist politics of “reformism”, effectively proclaiming total surrender on every front, while decrying any pretence that they offer a socialist alternative. Every retreat and concession they have made to the employers and the government has simply fuelled and encouraged the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form taken by the politics of reformism, seeking no more than improved conditions within the framework of capitalism.

Socialist Outlook rejects reformism, not because we are against fighting for reforms, but because we know that the needs of the working class – for full employment, decent living standards, a clean environment, peace and democracy – can never be achieved under capitalism.

Nor, as we argued long before the collapse of Stalinism, could these demands ever be achieved under the bureaucratic, dehumanised, and degenerated workers states and degenerated USSR, whose regimes survived only by repressing their own working class.

We are a marxist-leftist, based not on the brutish totalitarian parodies of state marxism, nor on the talk, breathless version of ‘marxism’ beloved by armchair revolutionaries, but the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Our socialist politics is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change. We fight to mobilise and unite the masses of the working class – the overwhelming majority of society – to topple the corrupt and reactionary rule of capital and establish its own class rule.

We struggle against fragmentation by building solidarity, working to link and unite the various struggles of workers, the unemployed, of women, of pensioners, of the black communities and ethnic minorities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth – and of those fighting imperialism in Ireland and throughout the world.

Socialist Outlook is all about an internationalist current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises co-thinkers in 40 countries worldwide.

Secularism

Unlike some other groupings on the British left, we do not believe a mass revolutionary party can be built simply by proclaiming ourselves to be one. Too often this degenerates into sectarian posturing. Bearing and abstention from the actual struggle to take shape within the labour movement, playing into the hands of the right wing. We do believe that the demand of women, black people, lesbians, gays or the national demands of people in Scotland and Wales should be left to the working class to achieve.

The oppressed must organise themselves and fight for their demands, and are a main part of the struggle for socialism.

But propaganda alone, however good, will not bring socialism. The fight for policies which can mobilise and politically educate workers in struggle, must be taken into the unions, the Labour Party and every campaign and struggle in which workers and the oppressed fight for their rights.

To strengthen this fight we need united front campaigns on key issues such as fighting racism and fascism – in which various left currents can work together for common objectives without having to maintain free to debate their differences.

If you agree with what you see in Socialist Outlook, and want to join with us in the struggle for socialism, readers’ groups meet in towns across the country. Contact us now, get organised, and get active!

☐ Please tell me more about Socialist Outlook
☐ Yes, I want to become a Socialist Outlook supporter

Name
Address
Phone

Send to Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU
WANT YOUR event included? Send details by June 17 to What's Happening?, P.O. Box 3109, London N4 2UJ.

MAY
Fri 10
EDINBURGH miner's gala and festival march from Regent Road at 10.30am details: 041 332 4648

WEDS 15
DEFEND London Weightlifting! Lubby NUT executive 4.30pm Hamilton House Mableton Place WC1

FRI 17
NARICAGUA Health Fund benefit with Robb Johnson 8pm The Lord Hemmiker The Grove Stratford E15

SAT 18
LESLIE AND GAY Pride Parade Queen Victoria Park to Brockwell Park details 071 737 6903
VIVA AFRICA: live music with African artists, poets, speakers & dance from Alban- bany Theatre Douglas Way Deptford SE8 4AG tickets 081 582 4446 booking office £3/£2

SUN 19
NO M1 LINK benefit folk evening 7.30pm Heathcote Arts Grove Green Road Leytonstone E11 tickets £4/£2

FRI 24
OPENING of Cities and Sustainable Development Global Forum 1994 in Man- chester tel. 061 234 3471

SAT 25
WHAT'S LEFT summer confer- ence with John Edmonds, Alan Simpson, Dawn Primoroski, John Prescott, Peter Hain, Barbara Castle and oth- ers Conway Hall Red Lion Square tickets £7/£5 from 'What's Left', Tribune, 308 Gray's Inn Road, WC1X 8DY

McLIBEL day of action details 071 837 7557

MANCHESTER International Peace festival opens details: Ol- ive or Linda on 061 234 8255

ANTI-Apartheid Movement Extraordinary Meeting FOCAULT anniversary confer- ence 9.30am-5.30pm ULU Malet St WC1 details 071 809 5068

MON 27
PROTEST opening of McLIBEL trial 9.30-11.30am High Court The Strand EC1

TUES 28
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discus- sion: Ireland: peace or capitula- tion? with Liam Mac Uaid 7.30pm Stationer's Park Community Centre Mayfair Road off Weston Park N8

WEDS 29
END disruption of Unions Meets Socialists! Lobby of Hackney Council 6pm Town Hall

SCOTT Inquire: More Ques- tions Than Answers? with Lord Healey, Richard Norton taylor, Rosemary Hollis & John McNaughton 7pm Westminster Central Hall SW1

JULY
SAT 2
LIBERATION! Committee meeting 11am London

PSYCHOLOGY POLITICS RE- SIGNSSTAINING conference 10am-5pm Ayleton Building (By Piccadilly BR) Manchester Metropolitan University workshops on gender, heterosexism, eurocentrism & racism, institutional abuse Guest speakers from South Africa, psychiatry system survi- vors movement details: Lisa Denny 061 247 2535

OXFAM Global Village Fête 2pm-8pm Battersea Park Live music, International Co-operative day third world fair trade fair, Chil- dren's festival and Oxfam 5km run

SAT 9
MINER'S gala Durham

TUES 12
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK dis- cussion: Permanent Revo- lution. 8.00pm, Unicorn pub, Church St, Manchester

THUR 14
McLIBEL Support Campaign weekly meeting 6.30pm London Greenwood 5 Caledonian Road London N1 details: Dan 071 229 5296

Fri 22 - Fri 29
INTERNATIONAL Youth Camp Arezzo Tuscany Italy All-in price £150 leaflets, posters and details from Liberation, PO Box 1109, London N4 2EU

TUES 26
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discus- sion: Racism & fascism: the politics of despair, with Tony Benson 7.30pm Stationer's Park Community Centre Mayfair Road off Weston Park N8

AUGUST
Tues 9
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK dis- cussion: Democracy and the United Front. 8.00pm, Unicorn pub, Church St, Manchester

Thur 25-Mon 29
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK Summer School: ANALYSING RA- CISM AND FASCISM. Residential school in Ab- erythystwyth, en suite rooms, plenaries, workshops and full social programme. £90/£30. Details from Socialist Out- look, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UJ

Ralph Miliband: 1924-1994

by Quintin Hoare

Ralph Miliband's unexpected death last month leaves a void on the socialist left in Britain comparable to those left a generation earlier by the loss of Isaac Deut- scher or in 1985 by that of Raymond Williams.

Born into a Polish Jewish immi- grant family in Belgium, Ralph arrived in Britain as a refugee from fascism in 1940. At LSE in 1941-43 he studied under Harold Laski, who pro- vided not just an important stimulus for the concern with problems of pluralism and the state that Ralph was to elaborate in books (notably The State in Capitalist Society) and essays throughout his life, but also something of a role model, as a 'public intellectual', combining theoretical work with active in- volvement in a wide range of causes.

The last years of World War 2 Ralph spent in the British navy, one of a generation of young servicemen who pas- sionately experienced the war as anti-fascist and wanted a bet- ter post-war order.

In the late forties and early fifties, back at LSE and by now a Marxist - albeit a singularly undogmatic and independent minded one - he was involved briefly in an attempt to provide a socialist think-tank for the Bevanite wing of the Labour Party. The experience and its failure, were to convince him once and for all that the Labour Party could never be trans- formed from within into an in- strument for socialist politics. They were also to provide the emotional charge behind his first enduringly influential book, Parliamentary Socialism, with its seating contempt for the servility of the labourist tradi-

Ralph remained a stubbornly independent figure, respected by - and relating, sympatheti- cally but critically, to - social- ists of different hues: Labour left, Communist, Trotskyist.

In the late fifties he was an editor of New Reascence, al- though unlike most of his col- leagues he had never been a CP member. Disagreeing with the decision to submerge the jour- nal into the original New Left Review, and uncertain in par- ticular where the group that took over NLR in 1963 might take it, he and John Saville founded Socialist Register in 1964 as 'the first of a series of annual volumes of socialist analysis and discussion'; its thirtieth issue was being printed at the time of his death. The venture aimed to be 'committed' without narrowness, to 'present a wide range of ideas and arguments'; to 'place some emphasis on events in Britain, but...give each volume a pro- nounced international charac- ter'.

The thirty volumes - with contributors ranging from Deutscher, Mandel, Lieberman, Sedgwick, Lowry or Wood to Thompson, Kokowski, Cott, Bell, Magdoff, Gamble or Clay - stand as a lasting monument to Ralph's lifelong fidelity to those aspirations.

The qualities for which Ralph will be remembered and held in affection included integri- ty, modesty, intellectual hon- esty and passion, seriousness of purpose, tolerance of alterna- tive views, hatred of oppression and injustice, humour without malice, an understanding of the foibles of man and the limits of man and the limits of man's mind. (The title of his last book, Socialism for a Sceptical Age is eloquent.)

A warm family man, he was immensely proud of the achievements of his wife, Marion and sons David and Ed- ward. He will be sorely missed by a wide circle of friends and political comrades.
NO to bosses’ racist Europe!

IT’S NOT ONLY the traditional popular British hostility to the European ‘Common Market’ which makes a low turnout almost inevitable in the Euro Elections on June 9: it is also the vacuum and almost indistinguishable platitudes served up by all three main political parties.

Since none of them has anything useful or concrete to say about the real problems facing the British workers’ movement, there is an understandable reluctance to get too involved in giving careerist Labour Euro-candidates a leg-up onto the lucrative Brussels gravy-train.

The satisfaction of seeing Major’s squallid gang take another electoral kicking will be enough to persuade a minority to go out to vote: but few will do so with any enthusiasm.

Since Labour under Kinnock caved in to swing-largely behind the European bourgeois bandwagon, British voters have been offered no option: each party to one degree or another backs the reactionary Maastricht Treaty and advocates participation in the expanding apparatus of the bosses’ European Union.

Ironically it is Major’s team which now stands most aloof from the dismantling of the welfare state and the building of an imperialist fortress. It is waging a war on its own workers and youth, an economic war against its Japanese and American competitors, and an all-out war against the Third World.”

Like our Fi-e co-thinkers we call for:
- a Europe-wide programme to abolish unemployment through a shorter working week and mass programmes of useful public works.
- opposition to all forms of racism and ethnic purification, and recognition of the right to national self-determination.
- an emergency action to stop the human disaster affecting the countries of the Third World: immediate cancellation of the debts of countries of the South and East.
- elimination of nuclear weapons and units from Europe, together with US military bases. The Europe we want can only be built through the struggles of millions of working class people, forging strong international links and practical solidarity.

In calling for a Labour vote on June 9, we do so to maximise the blow against the Major government, and as part of our fight to strengthen the British working class movement and its ability to take action in its own defence and in defence of others.

No to the bosses’ Europe: yes to a Europe of workers’ solidarity!

Campsfield detention centre: protesters fight Fortress Europe process, seeking to paper over the deep-going divisions over Europe in their own ranks by posing as defenders of ‘democracy’ – in the form of the right of British capitalists to veto or opt out of any measure that might restore any of the rights the Tories have stripped from the British working class.

Back door

Labour opportunistically hints at the possibility of winning rights not through struggle in Britain but through the back door – the bureaucracy of the European Parliament.

This ignores the reality both of Maastricht, with its limits on public sector social spending, and of the emerging Fortress Europe, underpinned by the reactionary Schengen agreements, designed to clamp down on immigration.

The mass racist detentions of asylum seekers at Campsfield and other British detention centres are a much better guide to life under Maastricht than pipe-dreams of the Tories being forced by Brussels to concede Dutch-style unemployment benefit or Italian pensions.

Socialist Outlook has consistently argued against Maastricht and the apparatus of the bosses’ Europe, for a completely different approach.

We agree with sections of the Trotskyist Fourth International across Europe, who have denounced the European Union:

“The EU is above all a super-market, a super-bank and a super-power! The EU means both the

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