JOIN THE COUNCIL CUTS REVOLT!

ALL OUT for March 25!

A NEW MASS movement is on the march, shattering the customary peace of market towns and shire counties.

Angry Tory voters, Liberals, and many with no party affiliation are joining teaching and local government trade unionists and Labour activists in half-day strikes, demonstrations, rallies, pickets and publicity campaigns.

The impact of their protests is making many Tory MPs in marginal and not-so-marginal seats quake in fear for their future. And this in turn piles additional pressure onto ministers.

These are battles that can be won.

The movement is in opposition to swinging cuts looming in education and other council services. The cuts packages are being implemented by county councils, but everybody knows they arise from policy decisions of the Tory government.

Right across the country, councils are reeling under a three-way squeeze, imposed by a reduction in central government funding, by the unfunded increase in teachers’ pay, and by rigid Tory ‘caps’ on the amounts councils are allowed to raise through council tax.

**Jobs at risk**

The cuts threaten thousands of teaching jobs, and thousands more working in services for the elderly, the fire service, the arts, and other council-funded projects.

The revolt has thrown together an immensely broad and disparate cross-section of people: parents, school students, trade unionists, and pensioners.

There is no short-cut formula that can win. The Tory government will be forced to retreat only by a combined and wide-reaching campaign, including strikes and the threat of all-out action by teachers and other unions; local and national demonstrations like that called in London on March 25; and a mounting agitation of local communities on a scale big enough to convince Major that the Tories will suffer irreparable damage if the cuts proceed.

Labour councillors in many areas have so far sadly discredited themselves by debating or even proposing cuts packages in council chambers while protesters demand they join the fight.

They must be told to stop doing Major’s dirty work and come down firmly on the side of the vast majority – fighting back!
Our fightback is spreading right across the country

Socialist Outlook’s AIDAN DAY speaks to REACH, the Secretary of Oxfordshire NUT and candidate for the national executive, about the protests.

SO: What started off the protests?
VARIOUS budgets are on the table at the moment. The Labour Party are proposing setting a budget £7.5 million above cap – that is, the limit set by the government. The Liberals are offering a far lesser spending level, but, and this is important, one that still exceeds the government limit. They suggest going £1.7 million or £1.8 million over cap. This is the amount necessary to fund the teachers pay as well known for its political horse trading. Things are rarely simple on the council. This is because no single party is in a position to run it alone.

There is a three way split between Tories, Liberal Democrats and Labour. Each has a third of the places.

This makes for a political process of constant negotiation – deals have to be struck between the parties to get anything done.

A council meeting was called jointly by the NUT and Labour Party. The uniqueness of this combination is in itself an indication of the broadness of the campaign. It demanded a launch by countywide all Oxfordshire Stop the Cuts Campaign. This body has been meeting every Friday since.

The NUT, UNISON, UCW, Labour Party, Green Party and SWP are all regular attendees. Supporters of Socialist Outlook have an important input. Within three weeks we had gathered 14,000 signatures on our petition. The campaign has been active all over the county – in Backwell, Winceby, Henley, Abingdon and all over Oxfordshire.

We organised a demonstration on January 21. It was the largest march I’ve ever seen in Oxford. There were at least 20,000 protesters in the city centre.

SO: And what about the teachers themselves?
The major development has been the strike ballots by the NUT, NASUWT and UNISON.

The NUT has voted 5-2 in favour of strike action; the NASUWT by an even wider margin – 3-1 in favour. UNISON however came out 3-2 against. This defeat reflected the union’s weak organisation and its increasingly dispersed workforce.

The Oxfordshire NUT strike ballot is now being reproduced all over the country – News on the campaign will be published in a coming issue of the Socialist Outlook.

There has been a big national response – but it lacks a powerful uniting national leadership.

The new campaign, FACE, has established a national steering committee which will help organise support to the spontaneous protests and parents groups that are springing up all over.

SO: What are the prospects in Oxfordshire?
There was a full lobby of the council on February 14. At least three thousand people turned up. Many of them were teachers, but also in evidence were governors, parents and school students.

It is significant that school students are coming of their own accord – they’re not brought along by parents, but demonstrate because they can see what the attack on education will mean for them.

The mobilisation of governors is particularly interesting. Refusing to set cuts budgets is a big tactic. While councillors they cannot be discharged. The obvious role of the local education authorities would be to take over the running of the budget if governors will not do it. If they’re in no position to take on the huge extra workload.

The council made no decision on February 14, but it looks likely that it will make a decision this coming week and eventually cobble together a joint Tory-Green budget.

The position of the campaign remains clear – we are prepared to fight. It is important however that the council challenges the cap ceiling, because if it exceeds the limit then the case goes into a review process.

This will mean that the teachers jobs could be secured for another year, but not much in itself, but important if it’s your job on the line.

It will take all our time to build the campaign.

It is crucial now to build for the national demonstration against cuts in education in London on March 25.

Why school governors are revolting

By an Oxford school governor

WHEN THE TORIES introduced Local Management of Schools (LMS) they unwittingly set up thousands of pressure groups which are now fighting back against cuts.

Governing bodies comprise a mix of parent governors (parents of children attending the school now), teacher governors (teachers at the school), county council nominees (nominated by the political parties) and, co-opted governors (representatives of local business and some from the local community).

Unpaid

All governors are part-time, unpaid, volunteers, with none of the guano payments which ensure the obedience of health authorities and NHO Trusts.

The majority of governors are people who are committed to good education and/or local community. But Tory cuts now call on them to make the most devastating cuts and to destroy the service they have voluntarily defended and worked for.

That’s why governors are now revolting. Strange amalgamations of Tory, Labour, Liberal governors along with the parents, teachers, business and community representatives of all types of school are banding together to form FACE. We will not make teachers redundant, we will not agree to class sizes of over 30, we refuse to make inadequate equipment and not enough books, we will not devastate the special needs support.

But – what can governors actually do?

There has been a lot of publicity given to the governing bodies who have announced they are going to set a deficit budget, spending above the limit imposed upon them. In Warwickshire alone over 90 schools have taken this stand.

Unfortunately the next move shows the hollowness of the power given to the governors: the LEA can simply remove the right of delegation from over-spending governors – and instruct the head teacher to set a balanced budget, making teachers redundant as necessary.

Trap

Setting a deficit budget is still a very strong move by the governors and it would be fascinating to be asked to take the same stand. But we must not fall into the trap of this action alone will prevent the cuts.

A much more systematic fight is needed, involving governors, parents, school students and the local community.

Another action has been whole governing bodies resigning. This is very tempting, since very few governors want to have anything to do with making cuts.

But after mass resignation there would not even be a hiatus waiting for re-elections or nomination: the LSA would simply tell the head teacher to get on with the cuts.

The power of the governors rests in their willingness to implement LMS. If they stand firm and say NO, their power is simply taken away.

Looking for other ways out, the governing bodies have become the focus for campaign groups setting up all over the country to demonstrate, lobby, write letters, send taxes, issue press releases and generally campaign by defending education against the Tory cuts.

We have seen the start of a massive action against this government, which may not be from the traditional activists but may be more effective.

The individual campaigns have now got together to form a national group called Fighting Against Cuts in Education (FACE) which was launched at a 100-strong meeting in Rugby on February 11.

These present were mainly parents and governors, with a few teachers,spanning areas from Devon to Birmingham and stretching west from Oxford to the SWP.

A national steering committee has now been formed to help coordinate the campaign, and FACE has called a national demonstration for Saturday March 25 in London.

We will seek up parents, governors, governors and teachers and school kids in a show of strength.

The aim is to defend the future of education!

Contact FACE on 0685-789184 or 0926-410830

£500m school cuts
LABOUR'S David Blunkett has focused his limit protests at the education cuts on the relatively marginal issue of theunder-funding of the teachers’ pay award. Of course all funding of the pay awards must be demanded. But in most schools the biggest problem is caused by cuts in central government funding and rigid capping of the amount councils are allowed to spend from local council tax.

National figures show that local authority spending will fall this year from £51 billion to just £47 billion – a cut of £4.5 billion. Since 1995.

Since these costs are on employing staff, thousands of teachers are at risk, with the implication of rising class sizes and plimming standards of education.

 Thousands joined Oxford protest on Feb 14

HOME NEWS
**What we think**

**Why Blair won’t lead the fight against cuts**

It would be funny if it weren’t so pathetically reactionary.

As even more evidence emerges of the widening class divide created by sixteen years of Tory policy, Blair prates on as Major once did about ‘one nation’ politics.

And as traditionally Tory-shine counties are convulsed by angry mass protests over cuts in education, social services and other vital services, Blair’s team has nothing of consequence to offer.

Instead they are intent upon a single goal: to beset their internal fight against Clause Four and any lingering aspiration to socialism.

Of course Blair’s crusade against Clause Four is being waged under the misleading banner of ‘social justice’.

If this means anything at all, the recent Rowntree Foundation report highlighting the widening gap in living standards is rich and poor would have offered ideal ammunition for a renewed offensive against the Tories and their system, which breeds and depends upon inequality.

But when challenged by Tory ministers, neither Blair nor his right wing have been able to say what they would do to change the situation, beyond routine platitudes about improved education and training.

This is no surprise. As his campaign guru of a general, Blair has been ever more explicit in repudiating Labour’s working class base and targeting the prosperous middle class, embracing their illusion that class distinctions can somehow be swept away while leaving capitalism unaltered.

On February 15 Blair went so far as to lay claim to ‘the mantle of one nation politics’, formerly claimed by Tories such as Disraeli, Balfour, Disraeli and for a few months, John Major.

**FACEL**

**Fight Against Cuts In Education**

**National Demonstration**

**London**

**Saturday**

**March 25**

Assemble 1pm Embankment

March 2pm to Hyde Park

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By Ann Hudson

THE TORY policy of encouraging schools to opt out has been pursued at the expense of state education. It is designed to set up a permanent division in education provision between rich and poor.

The propaganda said it would bring choice, diversity and local accountability. Its results have been the opposite.

Opting out actually means opting in to control from Whitehall - all administered by the Funding Agency for School Qua.

In the long term this body is just as likely to be asking for cuts as LEA.

It is not as though there is any evidence to suggest the education is any better. NUT members have pointed out the Grant Maintained (GM) schools are more likely to concern themselves with corporate image and fancy logos in order to attract their “customers” instead of spending it on pupils.

The opt out policy can only be understood in the context of the right’s intention of developing a higher skill base among the small portion of children who will eventually enter the labour market.

Schools in shabby areas attended by well-beved children with middle income parents will enter into a spiral of increasing resources and quality. The rest will get third-rate schools with overcrowded teachers and declining budgets. Average capital spending in GM schools has been three times that in local authorities.

This is why the Tories have been so keen to approve “selection” - another word for exclusion.

Despite this there have been a number of reports of financial cuts in GM schools. It is encouraging to realise that despite the barrage of propaganda the public have not been taken in. The number of GM schools has been small proportion of the overall number. Planned revenue spending on the sector has been halved and the tide of pro-GM ballots has been halted.

Given adequate information parents are able to see the opt out policy for what it is. If only the same could be said of the Labour leadership.

**Cynical**

Of course these Tories cynically used the ‘one nation’ concept as a device to con backward workers to vote for the party of capital, even as ‘one nation’ Baldwin confronted the 1926 General Strike. The Health bill attempted to crush the unions with the Industrial Relations Act.

The sad, tragic fact is that Tony Blair picks up the discarded Tory slogan because, unlike them, he actually believes that class distinctions are now irrelevant.

Denouncing the ‘inefficiency’ of the poverty and deprivation of Britain’s growing “underclass” (presumably the 30 million, 30 per cent of the population who have got poorer since 1979, while the rich have got richer), Blair warns:

“If people feel that in effect they live in different nations within the same country, then the social fabric becomes torn, creating alienation among one group and insecurity and concern among the rest. Even the better off cannot escape its consequences. Inequality therefore is a middle class issue. It is an issue of enlightened self-interest as well as social justice.”

Instead of detecting in the tearing of the social fabric a desperate need for fundamental change, an opportunity for Labour to reach out to millions of exploited, downtrodden and oppressed working class men and women, and advance the fight for socialism, Mr Blair sees it as a threat to the capitalist order - which he supports.

**Politics**

“The ‘inequality’ - a polite word for poverty - is therefore to be fought by ‘New Labour’ not by mobilising and empowering the poor and the exploited, nor by any challenge to the capitalist system which has made them poor even as the Tories stuffed the wallets of the rich.

Instead Labour will make a general appeal to the ‘enlightened self-interest’ of the well-off. Poverty is thus transformed from a radicalising issue for the poor into a conscience question for the middle class.

Of course Mr Blair would not be so rude as to suggest that these ‘self-interested middle class and capitalist layers should pay more tax. His team are so scared of any such idea that they are tongue-tied in opposing Tory cuts in education, health and social security spending.

Nor - as his campaign to kill off Clause Four demonstrates - would he countenance any challenge to the power, wealth and profits of the super-rich.

Far be it from Mr Blair to attempt in any way to undermine private ownership of the means of production, or the fundamental system of production for profit rather than for social need which has brought the current misery to millions at home and abroad.

Voting for a Labour government promised, as Mr Blair intends, to capitalist policies, is therefore unlikely to make any serious difference to the plight of the bottom 30 percent.

So exactly what he expects the ‘middle class’ to do about inequality - even if they were convinced, as he is not, that it is not rationalised?

Maybe millionaire Blairites Melvyn Bragg and Ken Follett would sponsor a few fund-raising lavish lunches, or a series of government-sponsored Pink Nose Days might urge the more philanthropically inclined of the middle classes to donate a few pence to those less equal than themselves.

The abandonment of Clause Four is therefore much more fundamental and significant for Labour’s policies than the mere ditching of a long-ignored form of words or a vision of collectivism: it is a recognition of the Blair leadership’s rejection of any radical challenge to the capitalist system.

**Blankett**

It is no accident that as Blair fights for the end of Clause Four, Education spokesman Blankett, (unsuccesfully) is arguing not to take strike action to oppose educational cuts, but to seek alliances with Tory parents; and Jack Straw embraces the reactionary right of the Tory Party in his defence of racist immigration controls.

As tens of thousands take to the streets to defend schools and old people’s homes, hospitals and fire services, may have already advanced beyond the new limits Blair wants to impose on Labour’s policies.

The fight to defend Clause Four and defeat the right wing Blair offensive in the Labour Party and trade unions is key to the fight for a genuine opposition to the Tories and their bankrupt system, with policies based on the needs of the majority, not the profits of the few.
Nurses’ pay anger erupts

By Terry Smith

BITTER resentment among nurses at the Tories’ miserable one percent pay increase has forced even the scab leadership of the Royal College of Nursing to make angry noises.

Nobody should hold their breath in expectation of the RCN changing its historic opposition to any form of strike action.

But is it clear that UNISON’s rapid rejection of the pay offer and proposal to ballot members for action has attracted support from the RCN’s ranks.

The fight is on for action to challenge the Tory pay rip-off, which was announced at the same time as lavish pay increases for judges, top civil servants and armed forces chiefs.

Under the proposals, nurses would be guaranteed an increase of just one percent (£2.17 per week for a staff nurse), with the option to negotiate up to another two percent locally.

But with Trusts facing tight financial limits, any additional increases above the one percent will depend upon nurses unions agreeing ‘productivity’ deals which use jobs and increase the workload on front-line staff.

These pressures run alongside the process of ‘Skill Mix Re-view’ which is taking a terrible toll of skilled nursing jobs throughout the NHS as Trust bosses seek cash savings by increasing reliance on unqualified and less experienced staff.

In challenging this orthodoxy nurses are also defending standards of care on the wards and would have the overwhelming support of patients and the wider public.

TO OVER 1,000 people attended a remarkable conference on the crisis in London’s health services on February 18 sponsored, among others, by the Evening Standard.

A declaration was adopted which called for:

- An immediate halt to closures of London’s casualty units, beds and hospitals.

- Urgent action to cut London’s budget waiting list for treatment.

- Major upgrading and expansion of GP and community health services in the capital.

- Protection and provision of London’s heritage in medical education and research.

- Formation of an accountable, responsive and representative London-wide health authority.

This platform puts the Evening Standard on the side of the TUC’s March 20 demonstration against service cuts.

Fighting back for welfare state

By Charli Langford

600 people marched through Tower Hamlets in protest against the proposed closure of the London Chest Hospital on February 11.

The hospital serves the area with the highest incidence of TB in Britain.

A local health authority wants to shift its services to the Royal London Hospital in order to cut costs and improve patient care in the city.

The anti-closure campaign has the support of both the Labour and Liberal parties on the local council, and Tony Blair has pledged his support for the campaign. Lynne Featherstone MP has also expressed support for the campaign.

More positively, the local Trades Council also supports the campaign and despite the very short notice period for the march, there was a huge turnout with several thousand people marching in the rain.

Defending education, health and pensions

SUNDAY APRIL 8

11am-5pm

Manning Hall, University of London Union

Welfare State Network conference

From the CRADLE to the GRAVE

Manning Hall, University of London Union

Welfare State Network conference

Manning Hall, University of London Union

MALLET ST, LONDON WC1

Malcolm X

Welfare State Network conference

From the CRADLE...to the GRAVE

Welfare State Network conference

SUNDAY APRIL 8

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Welfare State Network conference

Welfare State Network conference
Racist Euro-sceptics widen the Tory rift

By Harry Sloan

IT'S EASY for John Major to denounce the violence of English fascists at the Ireland match: but his own party is showing more vicious racist attacks than splits over Europe deepen.

Although for a while the debate appeared to be on the desirability of a single European currency, the resignation of Immigration Minister Charles Wardle has underlined the fact that much of the anxiety to protect 'national' borders and independence is motivated by chauvinism and racist fears of immigrants.

The currency issue itself is driving a deep wedge into the Tory ranks. Major is desperately attempting to straddle both horses. He is obviously reluctant to break ranks with the Euro-enthusiasts Clarke and Heseltine, even as he seeks to neutralise any rapprochement with the European right wing that might bring the nine rebel 'whipless ones' back into the fold. But the Thatcherite 'bastards' in his own cabinet, Aitken, Portillo and Redwood are openly seeking to deepen the division.

Lamont

In the background ex-Chancellor Norman Lamont is openly stoking the fires of dissent with a forthright denunciation of further integration in Europe, while another ex-minister, Leon Brittan, calls on Major to turn up the heat on the Eurosceptics.

But the intervention of Charles Wardle has brought the issue of racism centrally into the debate. He claims that the plans of the European Union to create a 'frontier-free Europe' would prevent British immigration officers checking the passports of up to 15 million immigrants who live in other EU countries.

In fact the 'frontier-free Europe' which Mr Wardle fears could result in hordes of unwanted—probably black—immigrants is the same 'Fortress Europe' which is tightening its internal immigration restrictions to wall out immigrants from non-EU countries. This has led to the closure of Campfield and other immigration prisons designed specifically to deal with those likely to seek asylum. Immediately after Wardle's outburst, right-wing Home Secretary Howard announced new plans for the speedy ejection of 'bogus' asylum seekers.

Straw scandal

With hostility to immigrants now established as the key test of virility for Eurosceptics, and Labour's Jack Straw pledging the party's full support for Major's racist immigration laws, the Tory crisis is likely to have even nastier effects on British politics.

Labour Parties and union branches have been encouraged to denounce Straw's reactionary line and demanding an end to all immigration controls.

Contemptible rulings in Nottingham

Two rulings of contempt of court have been used in Nottingham to impede those fighting racism and fascism. The first case involved Ronald Thomas, a young black man falsely accused of assaulting three white men who had abused him and his wife before attacking him. A leaflet produced by campaigners in his support was handed to a jury, and then used as a pretext for Judge Benson to demand Ronald appear in court a week after his acquittal, on a possible charge of contempt.

In the event the case collapsed. But in January the law of contempt was again wheeled out in the city. Four far-rights from the Combat 18 organisation who had smashed up an anti-racist bookshop were due for trial, and their defence lawyer persuaded the Crown Prosecution Service that an anti-racist rally planned for the preceding Sunday would be in 'contempt'.

The CPS agreed, and intervened to ensure the event was cancelled.

In the event two of the fascists were acquitted, and eleven found guilty only of 'threatening behaviour'. Just one has been found guilty of violent disorder. They face sentencing from the same Judge Benson; lenient treatment is expected.

The implications of these uses of the contempt laws are far-reaching: they offer new ways of deterring people from setting up and supporting solidarity campaigns.

Football: reclaim the game!

By Steve McNeill

WE WILL ignore Wednesday's racist inspired riot at Lansdowne Road on our part.

It is now apparent that the racist paramilitary organisation Combat 18, who in recent times have fought close ties with Ulster loyalists, was chiefly responsible for provoking the violence.

The presence of the fascists will come as no surprise to those of you who have followed the fortunes of the English national team in recent years.

In 1984 during England's tour of South America the fascists directed their bile at black players in the English side. John Barnes and Mark Chamberlain.

England's last game in Dublin saw serious street violence between Nazis and Irish fans. In 1983, 1,200 English "fans" were arrested in Rotterdam after Hoolie hostel and World Cup qualifying game.

On the first day of the season (August 3) Combat 18 thugs in league with the Chelsea 'firm', the Headhunters—attacked Chelsea fans who were handing out anti-racist literature at Stamford Bridge.

Our response should be clear. We have to drive the fascists from the terraces.

The Commission for Racial Equality has issued a report titled 'Let's Kick Racist Out of Football'. The report was a start, and has had some impact in developing an anti-racist culture at football grounds.

However the campaign has not been and will not be sufficient to defeat the Nazis. Millitant direct action will be required to reclaim the game.

A national campaign involving those supporters organised and unorganised (including Red Attitude - Man Utd, Tichraid Al-La - Celtic, When Skies Are Grey - Everton, Marching Alternately - Leeds) who have a track record of taking on the Nazis needs to be formed—and fast.

The ANC strategy of sending middle school classes to give out leaflets outside football matches is pointless. Football fans will not be lectured by people who know nothing about the game.

Supporters have to be convinced by other fans of the urgent necessity of combating the racist menace.

The time to act is now, the far right have got their foot in the door. We have to slam it in their face.
Playing the Orange Card?

By David Coen

Whether the leak by the Times of selected parts of the so-called Framework Document from the London/Dublin talks was a calculated attempt by hard-line Unionist elements in the British ruling class to scupper the emerging deal or just a way of stiffening the British negotiators is not yet clear.

What is not in doubt is the justifiably good move to the party line and increasingly desperate Tory government. Divisions over the EC have begun to bear with other fixations on the Tory right - immigration and devolution, and now the outline of a London/Dublin agreement which appears to concede sovereignty.

At the recent Young Conservative Conference, former junior minister Neil Hamilton called for the Tories to rally to the flag in the next election - not the best moment for Major who needs to throw something to Dublin to sustain the peace process.

Joint sovereignty

In return, Dublin will give up its claim that the North is part of the national territory by changing Article 2 of its constitution. The sticking point is that if the Unionists refused to play ball in any cross-border bodies which come out of the settlement, Dublin is keen to have an override with London. The Unionists see this as a form of joint sovereignty to which they are opposed.

Apart from Major's political weakness and his evident lack of authority in his own party, there is a fear on the Tory right that whatever settlement is agreed in Northern Ireland will imperil the unity of the United Kingdom itself. A devolved government in Northern Ireland will hardly strengthen Major's position in relation to Scottish devolution. It is unlikely that the Tory Party would split over the question of Scottish devolution or over the question of Ireland, but Tory divisions over Europe could easily mean that Ireland was the catalyst for such a split.

Should the Tories be forced to call an early general election and a Labour government be elected, the peace process could collapse from that. It is likely they will argue that whatever deal finally emerges will be a stepping stone to eventual unity - precisely the argument which was used to justify the 1921 partitionist settlement.

Whatever settlement emerges it is unlikely to bring peace any more than did the 1921 Treaty. In the 23 years of direct rule since the Stormont government was abolished in 1972, the inchoate of the sectarian state - discrimination against Catholics in employment - remains almost unchanged.

New Stormont is to be re-established in a new form with the Dublin government playing the role of protector of the Nationalist and the promise of some safeguards within the structures of the devolved government. For socialists, the tasks remain the same. We call for British withdrawal, not for negotiations. We favour peace but point out that any settlement which retains the undemocratic six county state will not bring peace. We reject the idea that British has any progressive role in Ireland.

The British are not about to withdraw and the Northern state will be stabilised by the involvement of the Nationalists in the devolved government.

NORTHERN IRELAND

By Geoffrey Bell, David Coen & Liam Mac Uaid

The British in Ireland, the Irish in Britain, Ireland in the world - all explained in...

IRELAND'S BRITISH PROBLEM

Available for £1.00 from 'Socialist Outlook'.

PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU
Clause Four fight: What's at stake

By Simon Doyle

Tony Blair has thrown down the gauntlet. Ditching Clause Four is his big power play. He is attempting a profound shift in the politics of the Labour Party.

It is a key division in the labour movement. Blair has mobilised all the resources at his disposal - from the Walworth Road apparatus to the Guardian front page - to make the change. That's how important he thinks it is. We must approach the debate with the same seriousness.

Over the past decade the Labour Party leadership have shown themselves to be incapable of providing a coherent answer to the Tories, Kinnock and his cohorts buckled under the right-wing offensive. They had nothing to put in the place of Thatcher's cynical populist demagogy of tax-cuts, privatisation and get-rich-quick. This ideological capitulation reflects something deeper. Reformist parties all over Europe are going through a crisis. The capitalist system is unable to deliver any reforms of significance. More than this, it is demanding austerity in every country.

The crumbs from the table have been getting smaller and fewer - now there's no sustenance left. Parties that have fed from this table are eating hungry.

That's why the battle over Clause Four is one of the crucial decisions to resolve this crisis. He is trying to reverse the working class nature of the Labour Party. He wants to change its very identity.

While the Party has never been a socialist party, and Clause Four is not a programme for socialism, the Clause does give voice to a completely different type of society.

Blair wants it out because it challenges capitalism. He wants to remove all reference to socialism from British politics. This is why we must defend it.

Careerist

In this he is articulating the politics of a new layer in the labour movement - a careerist management layer of characiated mobile phone-carrying media stars who live in a small tightly-sealed world of North London coffee bars.

They can only advance themselves at the expense of the traditional leaders of the labour movement. This is why such big public divisions have emerged - Blair's project necessitates a break with the trade union leadership's role in labour politics. This is the sub-text beneath the war of words.

Thus Blair's dilemma: how to establish a party of a new type while having to rely on the support of those who are set to lose out from the changes. Dumping the trade unions is going to be a long drawn-out process. Changing the Labour Party against the wishes of the membership is going to be similarly fraught with difficulties.

The stage is set for a protracted struggle in the labour movement. Already the depth of the opposition to Blair's attack indicates the strength and potential of the movement that can be built to oppose capitalist austerity, whether it's implemented by Blair or by Major.

It is vital that socialists make this battle their overriding priority in the next year.

It's the way they tell 'em

The Committee of the Northern Region UNISON affiliated Political Fund was graced with the presence of Labour Party General Secretary, Tom Sawyer at its meeting on Saturday 18 February to discuss Clause 4.

The meeting, in the heart of Blair country, was unanimous in its expression of support for Clause 4, though it took no formal vote.

Sawyer in his opening speech said, "But Clause 4 is written in legalistic language and that's why Tony wants to change it", but was clearly startled from the back. "So is the anti-trade union legislation - and Blair doesn't want to change that!"
Why nationalisation is not enough

In the current debate over Clause Four socialists have no choice. Against Blair's attempts to remove any commitment to a socialised economy we defend the existing wording. But that doesn't mean there are no problems with Clause Four as it stands. Here GEOFF RYAN looks at one of its weaknesses.

'TO SECURE for the workers...’ begins Clause IV (4) of the Labour Party Constitution. That little word 'for' speaks volumes. It marks a sharp dividing line between reformist and revolutionary socialists.

Inherent in the wording of Clause Four is the belief that socialism is given to, even imposed on, the working class by a government with a majority in Parliament. It does not conceive of socialism being achieved by the self-activity of the working class.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the authors of Clause Four, the Webbs, were such fervent admirers of Stalin in the 1930s.

Clause Four was written as an alternative to the self-organisation of the working class displayed in the Bolshevik revolution.

Socialist Outlook supporters do not reject the need for a socialist government. Indeed, we recognise the need not only for a government but also a state that acts in the interest of the working class.

But such a government and state can only be achieved by the independent activity of the working class itself. They are 'secured' by 'for the workers'.

As revolutionaries we do not believe that any Labour government has ever acted primarily in the interests of the working class.

This is not to deny that Labour governments within have introduced measures that have benefited workers. However, even the most radical of Labour governments - that of 1945 - did not secure 'for the workers'... the full fruits of their industry...". Nor did it try to do so.

Headings

There is a certain irony in Blair's attacks on the forms of nationalisation introduced by Herbert Morrison: they were the policies of the most right-wing of the Labour Party, designed to head off any independent working class activity.

They were precisely an example of the 'mixed' (i.e. capitalist) economy of which Blair is so enthusiastic.

The nationalisations of the Attlee government were carried out to prop up British capitalism. Mining, railways and other industries were brought back to the end of the second world war.

They could only survive under state control. The only profitable industry nationalised was steel - which is why it was the only industry ever de-nationalised by the Tories before the advent of Thatcher.

Railway nationalisation was not nationalised so workers could travel to see friends or keep warm in the winter. They were nationalised in the interests of private capital, which needed a guaranteed supply of fuel and means of transporting goods.

The nationalised industries were run as capitalist industries, by appointed management boards. Neither miners nor users of coal (except for big business) had any say in the decisions of the National Coal Board. Neither railway workers nor passengers 'owned' British Railways in any meaningful sense.

Morrisonian nationalisation had nothing whatsoever to do with socialism; it was state capitalism.

Attlee's government: nothing to do with socialism

Weakened

The bureaucratic, undemocratic and uneconomic nature of the nationalised industries allowed them the luxuries of political power and the desireability of social ownership and added Thatcher to her popularist campaigns for denationalisation.

 Thatcher's success is a condemnation of the failure to achieve any real social ownership by the right-wing of the Labour Party in 1945.

"Common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange" requires very different forms of operating, instead of appointed management boards they should be elected - by those who work in the industry and consumers.

They should be answerable to the working class and recallable if they do not carry out their mandate. Instead of large salaries they should receive the average pay of a skilled worker. Deliberations should be carried out in public, not behind closed doors. Decisions on investment, staffing, service provision etc. should be subject to popular approval.

Such demands are by no means pie in the sky. They were first raised - and put into practice - nearly 125 years ago by the workers of Paris. The Paris Commune of 1871 showed that the working class is capable of running society in the interests of the vast majority.

To believe that the emancipation of the working class can be handed down from on high is a contradiction in terms. It can only be achieved by a working class that acts independently in its own interests.

Any Labour government that tries to introduce such measures would very quickly come up against the determined resistance of the capitalist class - who would not hesitate to use extra-legal methods if they felt their interests threatened.

Resistance to such sabotage requires not only the self-organisation of the working class. It also requires the smashing of the capitalist state machine.

Good for the NHS, good for Powergen

Defence of the welfare state and a demand for the re-nationalisation of key parts of British industry in line with retention of Clause 4 has to be coupled with a demand for an extension in democratic control of these organisations argues JANE THOMPSON.

This is an area where the Labour leadership is on weak ground, and potential splits in the bureaucracy exist.

Labour leaders make vague and contradictory calls for more democracy in the health service, but never talk about it in relation to the NHS.

Labour’s consultation document ‘Health 2000’ for example says: "Market-driven competition can only lead to chaos and demoralisation... Every penny of public money which goes into the profit element of private facilities is money which could be redirected to better treatment and more patient care."

So far as it goes, this is true. But we have to ask - why restrict it to the NHS and not apply the same argument to British Rail, or any other key industries now in the private sector?

None of the post-war nationalised industries and services have ever been accountable either to their workforce or to consumers and local people. Workers have had no real collective control over decision making, and there is virtually no local accountability in funding decisions.

The Labour leadership apparently considers that an increase in collective control over the NHS is possible. But the principles around demands for more democracy within the NHS are exactly the same as more democracy in production of cars, generation of electricity and banking.

Confusion

The positions of nationalised industries and welfare organisations within a capitalist context has often been confused.

A state controlled island of collective ownership in a sea of capitalism is not viable. But this does not mean that sudden demands for increases in accountability in all economic sectors.

In the NHS socialists are demanding control by workers in the industry and the local and community, and this sort of democratic control is what we want to see in other areas of production, distribution and exchange.

It is important to push for the most radical options given for the democralisation of the NHS in Health 2000. The choice Labour offers is between:

1. Some form of continuing ministerial nomination (that is the status quo).
2. Direct election.
3. Integration with local government.

Of course option one is out: no one wants the present network of quangos.

Integration with local government sounds more promising, and would be an improvement on the current situation. However this contains a tacit assumption that the current market-driven "purchaser/provider" split brought in by the Tories will continue.

Option 2, direct election, is the most democratic solution. Staff employed by local health authorities should be employed by the same organisation as staff employed to work in hospitals. Trust hospitals and services should be re-integrated into a de-nationalised NHS and District Health Authority structure.

Local health services should be governed by direct election of health services councillors onto boards that would also include representatives from nursing and other trade unions, medical staff and patients.

Labour should recognise and actively organise against the Tony’s proposed attack on the NHS: cuts in funding, the internal market and the end of national pay bargaining.

Of course Blair is backtracking on the Tony NHS reforms. If Blair has his way, then the market system and NHS Trusts are here to stay.

But others in the labour movement do have a real desire to strengthen democracy in the NHS.

And calls for democracy in the NHS will strengthen arguments for the re-nationalisation of the rest of privatised industries. The fight in the struggle to increase democratic control in the NHS would strengthen our ability to argue in Powergen. The fight for democratic control may start with nationalisation, but does not end there.
Blair follows in the footsteps of failure

HARRY SLOAN looks at the unfortunate fore-runners of Tony Blair’s right wing political programme.

THE LAST attempt to lead Labour into an explicit renunciation of socialist aspiration was that of Hugh Gaitskell in 1959. He too tried to replace Clause Four with a vague text, proposing a “classless society“, and happiness and freedom of the individual.

Just as Blair today tries cyclically to extract women to his cause, hinting that his new text will pledge them nothing, Gaitskell tried to appear radical by criticising Clause Four for making “no mention at all of colonial freedom, race relations, disarmament, full employment or planning.”

In fact Gaitskell was as conservative as Blair. And his policy led to a 25 years of failure to the Labour Party. As Chancellor in the Attlee government, Gaitskell’s 1951 Budget, praised by the Daily Express as a good Tory Budget, together with a right wing manifesto which made no mention of socialism, paved the way for Labour’s second defeat.

The party’s object lack of any coherent political challenge to Tory government riding the post-war “boom” led to three successive electoral defeats in the 1950s. So close were the parties that the economic policies of Tory Chancellor Beaver were widely dubbed “Butskellism”.

As if they had not done enough damage, Labour’s right wing went onto the offensive in 1959 following the Party’s third defeat.

The pace was set by Gaitskell’s crony Douglas Jay, who wanted not only to drop nationalisation but to drop the unions, drop the name of the Labour Party, drop any principle of political independence, and to do a deal, even merge, with the Liberals.

Gaitskell did not openly go this far, but floated the idea of scrapping Clause Four and its 12-point Statement of Aims at a special conference of the Labour Party to discuss the election defeat, held in November 1959.

Chaos

After Gaitskell had spoken for an hour explaining his view, the conference degenerated into chaos. Later in 1960, under increasing pressure from his shadow cabinet and the unions, Gaitskell eventually retreated from his attempt to scrap Clause Four, and even his Statement of Aims was surreptitiously ditched before the 1960 conference.

Gaitskell’s successor as leader Harold Wilson, who had described the attack on Clause Four as “taking Genesis out of the Bible”, led to four election victories with the Clause intact but largely ignored.

But Gaitskell is not the only negative role model advance for Tony Blair. His religious superstitions (reflected in his choice of school for his son), his rejection of any concept of the class struggle and his political pro-nouncements all call to mind Labour’s other catastrophic failure – Ramsey MacDonald.

MacDonald led Britain’s first, completely ineffectual, minority Labour government in 1924. Having taken the entire edifice of capitalism undisturbed, it was ousted within a year.

In 1929, with more MPs, he again formed a minority Labour government, which again failed to deliver any significant gains for the working class.

Instead, in 1931 a run on the pound induced a financial crisis in which MacDonald was persuaded by bankers to stabilise capitalism by imposing a massive package of spending cuts, including cuts in dole payments. This was opposed by the TUC and split his cabinet. Urged on by the Tories and Liberals, MacDonald caved to form a Coalition National Government to lead these cuts on the working class.

Although he was expelled from the Labour Party as soon as the coalition was formed, the party was massively discarded. The ensuing general election in October 1931 saw Labour reduced to a rumble of just 52 MPs.

MacDonald’s commitment to the capitalist order was nothing new. He had elaborated its views in some detail in a series of books and pamphlets. He was a Fabian, an evolutionist rather than a revolutionist, and an avowed opponent of any concept of class struggle.

“Socialism is based upon the gospels,” he proclaimed. “It is an excellently conceived and resolute attempt to Christianise government and society.”

MacDonald, like Blair, regarded himself as something of a daring innovator in repudiating any class awareness whatsoever:

“There is an old and a new school of socialism. We belong to the new school. ... We have no class consciousness ... our opponents are the people with class consciousness ... But in place of class consciousness we want to evoke the consciousness of social solidarity.”

Shambles

As Leon Trotsky asked, as he looked in horror at the shambles of Fabian socialist “theory”: “MacDonald ‘wants to evoke’ a consciousness of social solidarity. With whom?”

Trotsky went on to explain the socialist ABC:

“The solidarity of the working class is the expression of its internal unity in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The social solidarity that MacDonald preaches is the solidarity of the exploited with the exploiter, that is, the maintenance of exploitation.”

Trotsky’s scathing views of Fabianism ring true even today: “It can without exaggeration be said that the Fabian Society, which was founded in 1884 with the object of ‘arousing the conscious conscience’, is nowadays the most reactionary grouping in Great Britain.

“Neither the Conservative clubs, nor Oxford University, nor the English bishops and otherpriestly institutions can stand comparison with the Fabians. For all these are institutions of the enemy classes and the revolutionary movement will inevitably burst the dam they form. But the proletarian itself is restrained by precisely its own top leading layer, i.e. the Fabian politicians and their yes-men.”

Yet it is from this same MacDonald/Fabian/Christian socialist school of politics that Tony Blair now draws his call for ‘one nation’; who cannot hear Blair’s ready voice in the confused words penned by his treacherous fore-runner 70 years ago:

“Socialism is no class move-

ment. Socialism is a movement of opinion, not an organisation of status. It is not the rule of the working class; it is the organisation of the community.”

Tony Blair’s 1995 version of the same view is to argue that:

“Socialism is a belief about society.”

MacDonald also argued against any form of trade union struggle.

“The trade union has the same limitation imposed upon him as the capitalist – he cannot advance his interests at the expense of his society. It cannot be over-emphasised that public doles, Populism, strikes for increased wages, limitation of output, not only are not necessary, but may seduce and irritate the policy of the socialist movement.

“Socialism calls men to give unstinted service in return for a reasonable reward measured in terms of life ... The socialist therefore makes some sacrifices upon some recent developments in the conflicts between capital and labour. This is contrary to his spirit; he believes they are both immoral and uneconomic and will lead to disaster.

“It is only when the worker by brain or by hand does his best for society that he will create in society that sympathy and support without which the labour movement will never attain its goal.”

All this is bad enough, and familiar in today’s speeches and half-mad barbary from Blair’s front-bench team. But in a sense, Blair is retracing even from the Fabianism of MacDonald. Clause Four itself was drafted by Fabians, and the younger MacDonald paid little service to the call for nationalisation – by the capitalist state – in terms that would frighten the daylights out of today’s Labour leaders:

“The nationalisation of production is just as necessary to democracy – and just as inevitable – as democracy is to mature into fullness – as the nationalisation of the sovereign authority by the oppressed is the personal right of kings to rule. We must look upon production as a national function, and not as a task assigned to a class of separate individuals pursuing their own ends.”

Spark extinguished

Following in the footsteps of Labour’s legendary failures, Mr Blair is seeking to extinguish any spark of radicalism from the Party’s politics, to make it a party fit for entrepreneurs, the prosperous middle classes and those with least interest in social change.

In doing so, he is turning his back on the working class and especially on the low-paid, the unemployed, the pensioners, and single parents who have lost out to heavily while the rich have done well.

Blair’s repudiation of any socialist or radical politics make it clear that the Labour Party led by him would follow MacDonald’s example in 1931, and reserve its attacks for the working class while grovelling to big business and the rich.

Although no socialist program will be on the agenda of Labour’s special conference in April, a rejection of Blair’s attack on Clause Four would offer an important first step in the fight to turn Labour back towards its roots in the working class and trade union movement.
Crucial stage in Clause 4 fight

THE CAMPAIGN to defend Clause Four enters a key stage this month. Labour's NEC on March 15 will announce their new Clause Four. This is the culmination of the so-called 'consultations' on Clause Four. Labour movement bodies must make sure that they return their questionnaires to Waller Road by 3 March.

The lack of democracy in the process must be exposed to win over those in the centre. Blair has no mandate for changes, despite John Prescott's claims.

Last month Prescott said, "Tony Blair... was elected on a mandate. Quite large votes were voted for him to make sure that he wanted to continue the modernisation of the party..." Blair has said that new Clause Four must be approved by "80% of Labour party members". But is this truly democracy or a new form of the old privy council?

The CAC is not scheduled to meet until the morning of the conference. The latest Young Labour conference gave a flavour of what might go. Diana Jeffs told USDAW's young delegates that they would end their career in the union if they voted for new Clause Four. Jezda said last November, "We mustn't let ourselves be in the position where whatever comes from the NEC is a take-it-or-leave-it... people are going to feel bullied if this happens..."

Honest Diane was speaking at the Tribune event to launch their re-write of the Clause.

The Tribune MPs' project has gone down the pan like a stew... The Tribune newspaper is now a staunch campaigner for Clause Four. It is said that Peter Hain accepts Neath CLPs pro-Clause Four line. The Socialist Campaign Group last month. Even they were not trusted to fix the conference properly. They were railroaded into accepting that the special conference will have just one 'take it or leave it vote' on new Clause Four. The CAC is not scheduled to meet until the morning of the conference.

Model resolution

Clause Four campaigners should support the passing of the model resolution reproduced on this page.Whilst we should support the Clause full stop, there is nothing unscripted in supporting those who demand a democratic vote at the conference. This tactic (the Gaskell get out) was best advocated by Stan Newns MEP at the launch of the new Young Labour conference. The NEC must be convinced of the need for Clause Four. The CAC is not scheduled to meet until the morning of the conference.

Guidelines - Clause Four campaigners should support the passing of the model resolution reproduced on this page. Whilst we should support the Clause full stop, there is nothing unscripted in supporting those who demand a democratic vote at the conference.

This tactic (the Gaskell get out) was best advocated by Stan Newns MEP at the launch of the new Young Labour conference. The NEC must be convinced of the need for Clause Four. The CAC is not scheduled to meet until the morning of the conference.

POMOV ballots must be opposed. They attack collective decision making and the union link. But, where the right is victorious we must argue against postal ballots and for 'all members' meetings to debate and vote on the issue. The NEC's balloting paper must be replaced for one which puts all the options. The left must ensure that the detailed work of composing motions and winning CMLC meetings is carried out for all regional conferences and for all members' meetings. Pro-Clause Four fringe meetings need to be organised at each conference.

The Blair road-show have been craven stink pits. Audience have been hand picked and only Blair's point of view has been put. Nevertheless, Clause Four supporters should try to intervene at these events. Blair's guests may not give a fig for socialism and common ownership but we should attempt to expose the lies by asking questions on the procedure.

Prayer

Comrades yet to join the campaign may be relying on the power of prayer to win the day. For them I have good news. The Christian Socialist Movement Executive has voted to retain Clause Four and for the April conference to be cancelled.

Lord Soper has said: "It does not matter for me that some of the words in Clause Four could be expressed differently. What matters is that there is an absolute need to confront the capitalistic system under which we suffer."

Diane Abbott has discovered that three-quarters of Labour's reserve fund has now been spent. Defend Clause Four, Defend Socialism do not have such reserve funds. Genuine supporters of the campaign must join up. This is not a moralistic point. It is an objective point. We cannot hope to beat Blair without resources that subscriptions generate.

Join the Campaign to Defend Clause IV!

As we get nearer the 29 April Special conference the Campaign to Defend Clause IV will be going all out to secure victory on the day. To help us achieve this we desperately need funds.

Send £10 minimum to 'Defend Clause IV', 2 Huddersfield Road, Barnsley, S70 2LS.

Write to the same address to order campaign badges (£10 for 25) and Ken Loach's video in defence of Clause IV (£5).

The Vacuum Group of MPs now seem keen on their 'defend and extend' position. There is no room for such 'tactics' in this battle.

On 100 CLPs have declared their support for Clause IV. Only a handful have declared for a re-write. But the question in the CLPs is still to be decided. Many Blairites will be attacking POMOV ballots in their Clause Four. The NEC cannot impose these, but has a strong reg-ulation and will kindly provide address labels and ballot papers.

Ten Questions to Tony Blair's 'road-show'

1. How much money has been spent on the consultation process?
2. Only one affiliated Trade Union holds its annual conference before the special conference. Surely the NEC's choice of date is not democratic?
3. Clause IV special edition of Labour Party News has 13 articles. Only two of them support last year's conference policy of rejecting Clause IV as it stands. Is this democratic?
4. Your leadership manifestos made no reference to your desire to abolish Clause IV. Would it not have been more honest to have done so?
5. Is it proposed that there will be just one "take it or leave it" vote at the special conference. Would it not be more democratic to allow the special conference a range of options? Surely delegates should have the right to vote to retain Clause IV as it stands, to add a new statement to it or amend the proposed new Clause IV?
6. On 12 June 1994 you stated on 'Breakfast with Frost': "I don't think anyone actually wants the abolition of Clause IV to be a priority of the Labour Party, indeed. I don't think that anyone is saying now looking ahead to the next two years in the run up to an election, that it is what we should focus on."

Why did you say this if you intended to abolish Clause IV?

7. Why haven't the views of those who wish to retain Clause IV been represented on road-show platforms and in the video?
8. The questionnaire does not include the direct question: Do you want to retain Clause IV as it stands? Why did you vote against this question being included?
9. Was it a dignified act of a confident leader to call MEPs (who support the conference policy of the last year to retain Clause IV) "inflatable and incompetent"? Why are you using Party funds to overturn conference policy while criticising those who use their own resources to support our constitution?
10. Why has the special conference been called on the last weekend before local government elections?

This is a special supplement to Socialist Outlook newspaper, which appears fortnightly. If you agree with what we say, why not try a trial subscription - five issues posted to you for just £3.00. Send your cheque to Socialist Outlook at PO Box 1199, London N4 2BU.
Indonesian workers enter centre stage

By Will Dunning

There has been a huge upsurge in the number of labour disputes and strikes in Indonesia’s major industrial cities in 1994. The independent union SBSI has come under extreme pressure from the authorities. Another independent union, the PBPI (Centre for Indonesian Workers Struggle) has also emerged.

Many of the SBSI’s important leaders have been jailed, the union’s bank accounts frozen and visitors to the SBSI office har- assed. The PBPI has kept its office open but its regional development has been stalled. One of its central leaders Muchtar Pakpahan has recently had his jail sentence increased by the Indonesian authorities.

In November 1994, in Central Java, workers’ committees set up the PBPI. The union organises 15,000 workers and puts bread and butter issues at the top of its list of demands. Signifi- cantly, it calls for the military to be kept out of industrial disputes.

The development of these organisations points to a more militant attitude in the Indonesian working class. Between 1993 and 1994 strikes increased from 360 to 1,130 a year. This means that there were no fewer than three strikes a day.

It can only be a matter of time before the emergent democracy and trade union movements begin to challenge the Jakarta Dictatorship.

Solidarity with East Timorese struggle is working class task

Victory for ‘Stop the Hawks’ Four

By Alan Greenow

The Warton Four, put on trial for “going equipped too commit criminal dam- aged” at the BAE site in Warton, Lancashire, walked free from the court room at the end of January as the case against them collapsed.

At the end of the prosecution case at Preston crown Court the judge John Appleton ruled that three of the defend- ants had no case to answer. BAE then advised the prosecution that the wanted the case against Chris Cole not to con- tinue.

The Four, Katherine Whilham, Rachel Jolliss, Mi- chael Dane and Chris Cole had planned to use the trial to put BAE on trial for “committing to commit genocide with the in- donesian regime in East Tim- or.”

Campaigning at Warton

Such a strategy clearly placed BAE in a difficult posi- tion. They had no desire for the facts of the matter to be brought out in court in the full glare of publicity. Had the trial gone ahead the defendants were to bring forward John Pil- ger as a key witness.

The ruling can only further turn the screw on BAE and open the way to mass action against BAE sites.

Death squads appear in East Timor

By Mathew Sutton

A wave of terror has swept troubled East Timor in the first two weeks of February with hooded gangs roaming street and burning houses and attacking locals opposed to Indonesian rule. The gangs are operating with the conniv- ance of the Indonesian mili- tary.

Most observers believe that the death squads, comprised of East Timorese pro-integration forces dressed in black, are organised by the intelligence operation run by Labeo Mente, an official believed to run the territories largest spy net- work.

Two death squad members were captured by the local popu- lation in mid-February in Dili. They claimed to have been recruited by the military an offered substantial payments for each night of the attacks on pro-independence ac- tivists.

The appearance of the death squads is an attempt by the Indo- nesians to divide and rule inside East Timor.

The development of the mass civil resistance against the Indo- nesian occupation has embar- rassed Jakarta over the last few months with displays of courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

Stop the Alvis tank deal

By Paul Walker

Over 60 trade unionists, stu- dents and peace campaign- ers attended a public meeting co-organised by Coventry Trades Council and Campaign Against the Arms Trade in early Febru- ary. Earlier in the day demon- strators protested outside the Alvis plant on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Coventry.

The meeting was addressed by Jose Ramos Horta, the ex- ternal representative of the CNRM, the East Timorese re- sistance. Ramos Horta had spoken to a meeting of 300 in London on the previous night. Both these meeting represent yet another increase in cam- paigning activity and interest in the campaign to stop arms deliveries to the Indonesian dictatorship.

In London, on March 7th, Alvis will be holding an AGM. CAAT and the British Coalition for East Timor are organizing a protest outside the AGM which will open at 12 noon at the Savoy Hotel on the Strand. The Coventry meeting led to the creation of a Midlands campaign to stop the Alvis tank deal. Its first meeting will be on 22nd February. The aims is to organise a broad campaign using diverse tec- tics to make sure that the Alvis tanks never leave the fac- tory. Labour movement sup- port for the campaign is vital - if you want to get involved contact Wil at CAAT on 0171 261-0297.

International Viewpoint re-launched from Prague

By Adam Novak

INTERNATIONAL Viewpoint, the monthly review of the Fourth International, has resumed publication after a one-month break to set up new printing and distribution facilities for the magazine here in Prague.

The magazine will continue its much-deserved reputation as a forum for those in struggle around the world, deepening its coverage of the work of revolution- ary organisations around the world.

The February issue of IVfocu- ses on the Zapata revolts in Mexico. As well as an interview on the strategy of the EZLN sub- commander Marcos provides an article “Basement Mexico” outlining the special features of the social crisis facing Mexico. Maxime Durand explores the economic crisis of the country and how it lies in with the NAFTA trading bloc and relations with the USA and Canada. Olga Odgers traces the cultural roots of the Zapata myth among the maya Indians. There is a reprint of a joint decla- ration of Mexico’s Indian or- ganisations.

IV also takes a hard look at market reforms in China and Viet- nam and examines the re- sponse of the Russian left to the Chechen crisis.

In March IV asks “what’s left?” in a survey of western Europe’s Communist parties.

We analyse the potential of the PDS in Germany, Refounders of Italy, Portugal’s traditional- ists and the Realists of Spain. To mark International Women’s Day we have a dos- sier on women and fundamen- talism. Activists around the world have prepared reports on the Christian right in north America, Catholic fundamentalism in France and the fight against Islamic fundamentalism within Europe’s immigrant com- munities.

We also interview the leader of one of Africa’s largest and most dynamic 5th-left coalitions, the PADS of Senegal. Paul Larun explains the roots of the Chechen crisis and we detail the increasingly tense situation in Sri Lanka.

International Viewpoint costs £22 a year from ‘Outlook International’ PO Box 1109, London N4 2UW. Single issues cost £2 from the same address.

International Viewpoint costs £2/$22 a year from ‘Outlook International’ PO Box 1109, London N4 2UW. Single issues cost £2/$2 from the same address.
'Regionalisation' freezes third world out of global economy

Not so Free Trade

By Bala Kumar

When 18 Heads of State met in Bogor, Indonesia on November 5th last year for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit, it seemed that another trade pact to rival North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and the European Union, had arrived.

This talk of regional economic communities seems strange in the wake of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the new World Trade Organisation both of which are formally committed to eliminating protectionist controls and barriers to trade among states.

These competing pressures towards globalisation and regionalisation were evident in the run-up to the Summit and its final Declaration. The United States is anxious to increase its access in the region. Japan runs a substantial trade surplus with the newly industrialising countries of South East Asia.

Tourism among Asian countries has grown four times as fast as that between Asia and the United States, leaving the latter on the sidelines.

Thus the main goals of the Declaration include liberalisation measures aimed at making the region a trade area by 2020 while the advanced capitalist countries continue with their trade barriers by 2010.

Regionalisation has become a conduit towards dominance of the global economy by its main players particularly the United States.

An alternative view was sketched by the Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. He has moaned an East Asian Economic Caucus led and centered around Japan.

He believes that this will increase intra-regional trade and investment flows. It is part of his "Look East" policy : Asian countries have more to gain from the experiences of Japan and South Korea than conforming to a Washington devised growth model.

Ultra-nationalist

These ideas have been spelled out in a book Mahathir has co-authored with ultra-nationalist Japanese politician Shintaro Ishihara called The Asia That Can Say No, currently a best seller in Japan.

The authors use Japan to argue that the Asian leadership and counterbalance US influence in the region.

They urge Japan to become more active in military operations worldwide, accepting that US military dominance prevents significant challenges to its economic hegemony.

Mahathir succeeded in negotiating an opt out clause, from the APEC timetable for removal of barriers to trade but may yet be tried to compromise as the Asian market for Malaysian manufacturers is saturated and he has to "Look West" once more.

There's more than squabbles about profits on Mahathir's mind. He is notoriously sensitive to criticisms about his style of government and its labour rights record.

Japan has no compunction with trading with human rights violators, but lobbies in Western Europe and the United States could threaten Malaysian exports.

Talk of free trade remains exactly that.

French 'Socialists' aim to lose elections

By Christian Picquet

The selection of Lionel Jospin as the French Socialist Party's candidate for the forthcoming presidential elections brings to an end the era of Mitterrand. There is little for the left to celebrate in the choice however.

Jospin owes his success to three principal factors. First, his reputation for moral probity and his ministerial experience made him a more likely candidate to win through to the second round than his rival Henri Emmanuelli.

Second, his criticisms of the Mitterrandian system of power beweaver half-hearted, gave him the advantage of being less tainted by the calami-


Scholarly, Michael Lowey, Arke Hennings, Michel Crous-


WORLD OUTLOOK

Mitterrand: his successor, Jospin, aims to come second in elections

Socialist governments. He has always refused to do this, jus-


The programme confines itself to the institution of a 6 year presidency, the accep-


This moderation is in line with the platform adopted by the party's National Bureau, which rejects any break with monetarist austerity, making "acceptance of the market economy" and rejection of "public account deficits" into veritable dogma. The pro-


WORLD OUTLOOK

Mitterrand: his successor, Jospin, aims to come second in elections

Scholarly, Michael Lowey, Arke Hennings, Michel Crous-


The platform also promises a "new social contract between the state and its social partners" to "maximise productivity gains and divide the surplus from growth between employment, wages and the reduction of working hours". It, as seems probable, Jospin benefits from the support of the Radicals and the ecologi-


The avoidance of the siste-


Coup de ballet: Cristian Picquet is a central leader of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International.
Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary

By Joseph Ryan

February 22, 1995 marked the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. Gunned down as he was about to give a speech at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem N.Y., in 1965, his death was a devastating blow to the black liberation movement. One of black America’s most dynamic, articulate and principled fighters was cut down just when it needed him most.

While he was alive Malcolm X was slandered and vilified by politicians, big business, and the media because he called capital- ist society in America by its name: racist. If he were alive today he would have to level the same charge.

Over the last few years The New York Times has published articles about the life of Malcolm X, carefully omitting his condemnations of capitalism and the role of the Democratic and Republican parties.

Different tune

The Times editors, however, sang a different tune at the time he was killed.

“He was a case history, as well as an extraordinary and twisted man” the Times pontificated. “His ruthless and fanati cal belief and violence...marked him for fame, and for a violent end...”

He did not seek to fit into society or the life of his own people. The world he saw through those born rimmed glasses of his was distorted and dark. But he made it darker still with his extrapolation of fanaticism. Yesterday someone came out of that darkness that he spawned and killed him.

But what made Malcolm X a candidate for assassination was not “his exaltation of fanaticism” but his uncompromising opposition to U.S. capitalism and the connection he was making between the struggle for black emancipation and the need for fundamental social change.

Indeed far from refusing to “fit into the life of his own peo ple” he sought to organise his people around a programme of action to fight politically against racist oppression. The logic of his positions led inexorably to revolutionary conclusions and this was why he had to die.

In the early 1960’s, Malcolm X’s ideas about which road to take for black equality and freedom represented the left-wing of the civil rights movement. And his strategy for getting there was constantly evolving and expand ing - as significant today as it was in 1965. Malcolm X first came into prominence as a dynamic and eloquent spokesperson for the Nation of Islam. He was the Nation’s most effective speaker and talented organizer, and was responsible for that organisation’s rapid growth in the early 1960’s. In early 1964, however, Mal colm X broke with the Nation of Islam. There were many reasons for this painful schism, but the main one was the Nation’s ab straction from the Black struggle for civil rights.

Malcolm X was a product of his time and he was deeply influ enced by revolutionary events on a world scale — the struggle of the colonial revolution in Af rica, Asia and Latin America and the massive civil rights struggles against “Jim Crow” racism in the United States.

Malcolm X believed that political organisation and action was the most effective means to win Black liberation. Malcolm X’s bottom line was: “We are Black Americans who will only get their freedom by fighting for it.”

The U.S. government is a racist government and an enemy of Black people.

The strategy of slow reform, the programme of the liberals - black and white, Democrat and Republican - is the road to be trayed and defeat, not justice and equality.

Black people must rely on their power, control their own struggle, determine their own strategy and tactics, and select their own leaders.

Malcolm X’s nationalism was that of an oppressed people who were seeking self-determination in a society that had consigned them to parity status. One legacy of Malcolm X’s powerful message is the fact that even today the Nation of Islam is the most powerful Black nationalist organisation in America.

Popular

What made Malcolm X so popular with Black America - and so dangerous to the ruling rich - both before and after his split with the Nation?

African Americans have the right to self-defence in the face of racist attacks.

“There can be no Black-white unity until there is Black unity.”

Malcolm X was labelled a “Black racist” because he disagreed with the “two-wheel cheque” approach of Dr Martin Luther King and other more “ac ceptable” leaders of the civil rights struggle.

“If we react to white racism with a violent reaction,” he said, “to me that’s not racism. It’s racism...My reaction is the reaction of a human being reacting to defending and protecting himself.”

He exposed the double-talk of the liberals, who cautioned Black people to “go slow” and be non-violent, “they want you to be non-violent here, but they want you to be very violent in South Vietnam.”

In his last year Malcolm X changed his approach to the mainstream civil rights organisations. He traced his differ ences with Martin Luther King and other leaders of the civil rights movement as subordinate to their common struggle against racism in America. He declared that he was willing to work with anyone in a common struggle and form a Black united front against the racist ruling class.

Gratuitously, the assassinations of both these central Black leaders cut short this promising alli ance, which would have become a powerful combination for so cial change.

Malcolm X connected the struggle of Black people in America to the revolutionary events taking place all over the world:

“We are living in an era of revolution and the revolt of the American Negro is part of the rebellion against oppression and colonialism which has characterized this era.”

Final year

During the last year of his life Malcolm X made two separate trips to Europe and the Middle East that expanded his political horizons considerably.

On his return from the second trip, he announced that he and his organisation, the Organisa tion of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), planned to petition the United Nations to take up the question of Black struggle in the United States as a human rights issue similar to the fight of the Black majority in South Af rica. Such a project was like a dagger pointed at the throat of the US government.

Malcolm X was an implac able foe of both the Democrat and Republican parties. “Any negro who registers as a Democrat or Republican is a traitor to his people.” “One is the wolf, the other is the fox. No matter what, they both eat you.”

From a firebrand who focused against white America, Malcolm X became a remorseless prosecutor of capitalist Amer ica. “Capitalism used to be an eagle, but today it is more like a vulture, sucking the blood of people. You can’t have capital ism without racism.”

Ultimately the system of exploitation that propelled Malcolm X’s leadership will create many another revolutionary fighter in the working class.

• Joseph Ryan edits the US fourth International monthly, Socialist Action.
WHERE WE STAND

Facing mass unemployment, rundown workplaces equipped with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-won education, health and welfare services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis — an avoidable crisis created by the habitual 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.

The capitalist class, driven and politically united by its own crisis, its requirement to maximise profits at the expense of the workers, has been in command, and the guardian leadership by a brutal class-war 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 oppressed, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time, using the full powers of the state.

In response, most TUC and Labour MPs have rejected the defeatist policies of 'new realism', effectively proclaiming total surrender on every front, while ditching any pretence that they offer a socialist alternative. Every section and concession they have made to the employers and the government, for the sake of a 'return to normality' and the encouragement of the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form taken by the politics of reformism, seeking to buy, if not more than improved conditions within the framework of capitalist rule.

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.

For, as we argued long before the collapse of Stalinism, such demands can be achieved under the bureaucratically deformed workers states and degenerated USSR, whose regimes survived only by repressing their own working class.

We are a mass party, based not on the bureaucratic parties of state socialism, nor on the tame, toothless version of 'maximisation' defended by university academics, but the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Our socialist alternative is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change. We fight to mobilise and organise the power 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, the movements of women, of pensioners, of the black communities and ethnic minorities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth — and all those, fighting imperialism in Ireland and throughout the world.

Socialist Outlook is above all an international current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises co-operators in 40 countries worldwide.

Unlike some other groupings on the British left, we do not believe that a mass revolutionary party can be built simply by proclaiming our 'realism' to be one. Too often this degenerates into sectarian posturing and abstraction, the unfortunate struggle taking shape within the labour movement, playing into the hands of the right wing.

Nor do we believe that the demands of women, black people, left people, and gay or the national demands of people in Scotland and Wales should be left to await the outcome of a socialist revolution.

The oppressed must organise their own class, fight new around their own demands, which are part of the fight for socialism. But propaganda, 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 the campaign and struggle in which workers and the oppressed fight for their rights.

To strengthen this fight we press for united front campaigns on key issues such as fighting racism and fascism — in which various left currents can work together for common objectives while remaining free to debate their differences.

If you agree with what we say in Socialist Outlook, and want to join us in the struggle for socialism, readers' groups meet in towns across the country.

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Socialist Outlook welcomes readers' letters. Send them to Feedback, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU. Letters over 300 words may be edited.

Wrong on CWU

YOUR REPORT on the Defend Clause IV Campaign Steering Committee meeting could not be more wrong when it talks of the situation "in the telecoms union NCU".

This does not reflect the report given at the meeting and talks of a union that no longer exists! With the merger of the NCU and UCW into the Communications Workers' Union, some of the old NCU Broad Left were hoping that the union would cast its vote in three parts - the clerical and engineering sections of the NCU always voting against Clause IV.

Their hopes were that this would mean that the NCU engineering sections (where the Broad Left is strong) would cast its vote for Clause IV, and were not terribly concerned that this would mean the clerical vote would go with Blair, as, very possibly, would the UCW's.

However, the new unions executive is in the process of scrutinising this misguided coincidence. Wanting to cast all of the union's votes for Blair's change, the joint General Secretaries, Alan Johnson and Tony Young, are pushing that the ex-

Weal exporters

WHATEVER the current protests against live exports and in favour of meat class dischannelling with the social order, the issue is important in its own right. Animal welfare is not just an eccentric British past-time as Alaid Day (Socialist Outlook 78) seems to suggest.

Whether or not animals have rights from a Marxist viewpoint, they are conscious and sentient (mammals espe-

cially). Cruelty to animals is all too real. And if the goal of socialism is to create a world free of exploitation, oppression and needless suffering, then the abuse of animals for private profit should be of concern to Marxists.

Live exports are of no bene-

fit to society. They benefit only rich consumers, super-

markets and the markets in the meat industry chain.

The meat industry illustrates starkly how under capita-

lism all the constraints — human health, rational land use — are over-ridden by the drive for profit.

Adam Hartman, Manchester

Labourism

I WISH to take issue with Jul-

ian Menzer's letter "Soft on Marxism?" (Socialist Out-

look 77).

The case for most of his letter seems to be overstated at least. He accuses Ellen Monroe of saying that Marxism is not a genuine traditional social democratic, coll-

ectivist framework in a "struggle about Marxism". However, it is the predominant ideology amongst those opposed to the 'Trots', as he quite rightly quotes Davis Marquand saying this at an LCC conference. Moreover, he says it is a dogmatic taking place 'amid the evidence of the lamentable iniquity of soc-

dal democracy'.

I would not dispute some of what Menzer goes on to write about Marxism and social democracy, but he oversimplifies con-

siderably, for instance when he says that the Labour 'tradition-

alist' defend's 100% class collabora-

tionist idea of collectivism. What, of all them? While we have important differences with the likes of Arthur Scargill, Dennis Skinner and many of the activists who want to defend Clause IV, I do not help the argument to describe them as dyed-in-the-

wool capitalist collaborators.

But the main problem with Menzer's letter is that it is hard to find a reason why Marxism should defend Clause IV given his negative assessments.

All sense of the latent contra-

diction between such commit-

ments as Clause IV and social democracy is missing.

We are left with the statement 'Marxists work in the Labour Party and defend Clause IV only in order to produce better condi-

tions for denouncing reformism'.

"So we work in a campaign to defend and ..." or in order to denounce those who honestly defend it.

The real point comes with the statement that we work in the La-

bour Party 'to produce better condi-
tions to denounce reformism'.

Just on the right side of ambi-

guity to avoid the accusation of ultra-leftism. This is a big question. What would be the best outcome? To defend Clause IV in order for us to be able to denounce reformism?

All the ultra-left are hoping Blair wins (despite having to pay lip service to the campaign) so that it becomes all the more easy to denounce and expose reformism, if only politics was so easy.

Pete Firmin, Brent
What's HAPPENING

To advertise your event in Socialist Outlook, send details to 'What's Happening', PO Box 3109, London, N4 2UU by first post on Friday 3 March.

FEBRUARY
Fri 24
CLAUSE 4 London rally
7.30pm Conway Hall WCl.
Sat 25
DEFY the Criminal Justice Act - anti-M17 demo noon
George Square Glasgow.
Sat 25/Sun 26
GREATER London Labour Party Conference ULO.
Sun 26
CLAUSE 4 steering committee meeting.
Mon 27
SYLVIA Pye national appeal meeting with Tony Benn, Sylvia Pye and Sue Wilson. 7.30pm details 0181 520 5237.

MARCH
Weds 1
WEST London Defend Clause 4 rally with Tony Benn, Bob Crowe (RMT), Ealing Town Hall. 7.30pm organised by Ealing Traders Council.
Sat 4
CLAUSE 4 debate hosted by Leeds Fabian Society.
LEFT Forum '95 opens SOAS Thornhaugh St WC2 weekend tickets £5/E3.
Fri 10 - Sun 12

Sun 12
CLAUSE 4 Socialist Outlook forum with Steve French, Leicester.
Weds 15
NEC meeting to discuss new Clause 4.
Tues 21
MASS lobby of Southwark College governing body 5.00pm - 6.00pm Waterloo site The Cut SE1.
Thurs 23
SOCIALIST Outlook Clause IV forum with Steve French, Brighton.
Sat 25
FULL Employment conference 13am - 5pm Congress House Great Russell Street WC1 tickets £2/free.
APRIL
Sat 1
GROUNDSWELL - a national forum for unemployed and claimants groups. 11am - 5.30pm East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street Oxford, DXA 1HU. For details write to Oxford Unemployed Workers & Claimants Union at the Community Centre telephone (01865) 723750 Fax 724517.
Sat 1 - Sun 2
LABOUR Party Women's Conference, Derby.
Sat 8
'FROM the Cradle to the Grave' Welfare State Network Conference on education, pensions and the NHS.
11am University of London Union, Malet St WC2
Sat 29
DEMONSTRATION in Manchester against deportations called by Unite Family Defence Campaign.

Supporters' bulletin expanded

THE LATEST issue of our supporters' bulletin is mailed out this week to an expanded audience.
The bulletin was launched in September 1992 as a service to supporters of the Fourth International. It helps to keep our friends and comrades overseas up to date with the work of Socialist Outlook and other Fourth International currents.

Dates set for 'Outlook for Socialism'

EVERY TWO years Socialist Outlook hosts a weekend of debate and discussion in central London to give an internationalist and revolutionary perspective of world events.
This year's school will be held on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 November, the week of the anniversary of the 1917 socialist revolution in the Russian empire.
The theme of the event will be 'Socialism for the 21st century'.

Supporters' dayschool on 13 May

SOCIALIST Outlook is holding a national supporters' dayschool on the revolutionary socialist alternative to social democracy.
The school, to be held in London on Saturday 13 May, will be an important opportunity to discuss and develop the theoretical conclusions from the struggle to defend Clause 4. Socialist Outlook hopes to draw together a range of those involved in the campaign and sympathetic to our stance through the important struggle. It will be a unique chance to look at the rightward drift in social democratic parties and the substantial support building up on the left wing despite the continuing employers' offensive.
If ordered in advance, tickets for the dayschool cost just £6 (waged) or £3 (unwaged).
To buy tickets send a cheque or postal order payable to 'Socialist Outlook Fund' to PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

New Summer School dates

SOCIALIST Outlook's summer school takes a new turn this year. Normally the school looks at an area of revolutionary activity: women's liberation, trade unions, the anti-nuclear fight and so on. This year's school is on the role of revolutionary organisations and their political programmes of action.
Discussions will cover the role of revolutionary marxist newspapers, of organising radical youth, the demands of women and the specially oppressed, the history of the revolutionary tradition and more.
Last year's school was our best attended and, as every year, drew Fourth Internationalists from Ireland and many other countries.
Places have to booked early for the popular summer school, held outside Aberystwyth, Wales from 25 August to 28.
To book your place, send your £35 deposit cheque to 'Socialist Outlook Summer School', PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

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Shame of Labour’s surrender

Straw bends to racist Tory right

WE HAVE got used to Tony Blair’s Labour leadership failing to fight the Tories.

But it is impossible not to be startled as well as revolted to see Shadow Home Secretary Jack Straw sail into battle against Labour MEPs on behalf of John Major’s reactionary immigration laws.

His intervention to defend the status quo, which has led to the shameful imprisonment of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers, the misery of countless separated families, and a rising tide of deportations, comes as the right wing of the Tory Party is again playing the racist card.

Winston Churchill is back, with new claims of ‘tides’ of immigrants, minister Charles Wardle has resigned in protest at weakening immigration checks, and the racist and fascist far right is making sinister inroads into the crumbling inner cities and industrial wastelands of Major’s Britain.

But Straw denounces Jacques Santer, president of the European Union commission, for being determined to ‘destroy British control of its own immigration policy’:

“Our position has always been that the issue of border controls and immigration policy must be for the UK government alone to determine, and not for European institutions,” he declared.

Britain, he boasts, in a statement that could have been made by any right wing Tory Euro-sceptic, is ‘an island with a different history’. He condemned Labour’s Euro-MP for supporting free movement across borders for EU residents and legal immigrants.

Socialists oppose immigration laws, whether they are ‘British’ or the ‘Fortress Europe’ policy of the EU. Not so Jack Straw. Is this the real, face of ‘New Labour’?