STAND FIRM FOR SOCIALISM

THE STRUGGLE over Clause Four has been one of the most important political fights in the labour movement for years. The outcome on April 29 will set the parameters for the next stage of the fight.

Either Blair can be pushed back and a blow struck for socialism or the scene will be set for further attacks by the right.

Blair is already saying that breaking the trade union link is his next target.

It has been a hard fought battle. Any difficulties involved in the debate have not been because of any inherent strength in the politics of Tony Blair, or any weakness in the campaign to defend the clause.

From a political point of view the campaign has struck a resonant chord from the outset. Collective ownership has rarely been as popular in the general public in Britain as it is at the present time.

Paradoxically it has been the degree of hatred of the Tories within the labour movement and way beyond which has created the biggest obstacles. Blair has presented it as a vote of confidence. Many MPs members think that if they oppose the revision they will strengthen the Tories.

This view is profoundly mistaken.

The way to boost the Tories is to support Blair and get rid of Clause 4. But it has been hard to win this argument after 16 years of Tory rule and the social consequences involved, and with an undemocratic campaign with the whole of the media and the apparatus of the party strongly supporting Blair.

It is this desire to get rid of the Tories at any cost that is behind the overwhelming constituency ballots for Blair's new clause and means he is likely to win around 70 per cent of the constituency vote at the special conference.

The unions have put up more resistance to Blair's formula. Some are already in conflict with Blair's right wing policies.

And it will be the unions which are forced to confront the consequences of a right wing Labour government seeking to maintain the capitalist market at the expense of jobs and living standards. Whatever the outcome on April 29, that fight will go on. Stand firm for socialism!

Keep Clause Four RALLY
Friday April 28, 7.30pm
Camden Irish Centre, Camden Square
(Camden Town tube)
Speakers include Arthur Scargill

Post conference open meeting
The fight for socialist policies now
Sunday April 30, 1-4pm
ULU, Malet St, London WC1
(Goodge St tube)
The successful motion commits the NUT to calling a special one day statewide conference in the Autumn term to plan a serious pay campaign for the first time in years.

Class size

There were major debates on the issue of class size at all three of the teaching unions' conferences held last week. The most surprising thing being that all three have agreed to campaign in response to over the problem of increasing class sizes.

The NUT leadership fought to defeat the strike call and the left will have to work very hard to overcome the sabotaging actions of the executive and Doug McAvay.

The education is a national attack and a national strike will provide an effective and coordinate national response.

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Local action should also be used to build support for the forthcoming national strike. The emergence of FACE over the last few months is of central importance to the new position facing those who work in education.

FACE has successfully brought together parents, governors and teachers in a national united response to education cuts.

The effect of this was seen at the NUT conference with the SWP refusing to participate in the ballot.

In one sad memorable phrase, leading SWP teacher Shaun Docherty stood at an open left meeting, "I will not be influenced by the outcome of this meeting".

The meeting had defeated a tactical proposal from the SWP. There are clear differences within the SWP on this question and every avenue needs to be kept open for the involvement of those SWP teachers who understand the continued need for left unity.

The NUT General Secretary, Doug McAvay, has attacked the decisions of NUT conference, stating that conference was unrepresentative of classroom teachers -- as if he had taught a lesson for decades!

Socialist Outlook teachers will be working with all those who wish to see the NUT conference policies turned into reality.

Mass protests against education cuts influenced NUT delegates, but not the platform.

Blankett affair: no victimisations!

The arrival of Labour's shadow Education Secretary David Blunkett at the NUT conference provided much of the media coverage interest.

Teachers are angry at the right wing drift of the Labour Party, and at Blunkett's failure to give any lead to the campaign against cuts, his attacks on teachers and opposition to strike action and even greater insult.

Unfortunately the way in which the Socialist Workers Party chose to approach Blunkett's visit enabled the media to turn him into a martyr and gave the right wing a golden opportunity to attack the left.

They have done so. The union leadership and the media have both tried to whip up a joint-rightwing atmosphere. The suspension of union president John Hall, that governors should take disciplinary action against NUT members is a disgrace.

Despite our disagreements with the SWP, we have no hesitation in opposing any attempts to victimise those gallantly involved.

And the role of the press, seeking a bad-judged hope of getting key ministers below the carpet, has been scandalous. Reporters hounded and chased conference delegates around and out of the conference hall.

And some have been pursued to their homes after conference.

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HELL hath no fury like a beleaguered union bureaucracy. And few bureaucrats have been as battered as NUT General Secretary Doug McAvoy, who has effectively declared war on the majority of his own union conference.

On Sunday April 23 the Sunday Times carried a witch-hunting (and seriously inaccurate) article on newly-elected NUT General Secretary Roy Leach and Oxfordshire district secretary Roy Leach, who is a supporter of Socialist Outlook.

This was no random decision.

McAvoy — whose salary is more than three times that of most teachers, and whose expenses, at £18,000 a year, are more than the combined expenses of his two assistants — had a ready-made excuse: he had triggered this politicisation of education by slashing £1 billion from school spending. The question which McAvoy cannot answer is how should the unions respond.

Interestingly neither of the other teaching unions which have voted for action against the recent General Secretaries indulge in anything like McAvoy’s witch-hunt attacks.

Parents

They know that the mass local demonstrations, public meetings and lobbying that have mobilised parents, governors and school children across the country, have brought 15,000 onto the March for Fair Education, and that the national day of action did not simply mean a poor showing really defending their children’s education — parents, governors and teachers fighting for education, but Labour’s front bench, who have said nothing that would suggest the right education can be regarded as ‘extreme’.

Tony Blair has been known to make public pronouncements about the need for parents to have more control over their children’s education, while McAvoy has been roundly rejected as an ‘extreme’ voice.

Having done nothing but sabotage prospects of unity with parents and governors, McAvoy then had the gall to claim at conference that the proposals for NUT action on class sizes might alienate them!

The problem with this argument is that any McAvoy’s choices are the result of the NUT’s fight for a living wage, and has also been a founding member of the FACE steering committee, showing that it is possible to link up with parents and win support.

As a new member of the NUT’s NEC Roy will also be in a position to rubbish McAvoy’s bravura lies about FACE, and join a strengthened left.

It’s not the majority of delegates who are out of step, but McAvoy. The proximity of his face to Tony Blair’s backside appears to obscure his view of reality.

NUT members must demand that McAvoy and his coterie of witch-hunters stop attacking and victimising their own members and start doing what he’s paid so lavishly to do — defending the policies of the union.

Can they really all be extremists? McAvoy opposes all forms of action.

Wipe out the Tories!

Major’s policies are driving voters to Blair against the cuts that are devastating education, social services and other key council services.

Labour councils elected on this basis, like Swansea Labour councillors who are already attacking the jobs and conditions of their workforce through competitive tendering and imposing a combination of cuts and new charges in social services.

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Labour movement that has seen the defeat of the Tory government will be much more confident to challenge the pink Toryism of Blair’s half-baked policies.

That’s why, regardless of the defeat on Clause Four on April 25, socialists urge a Labour vote on May 4, and a resolute fight for the policies we need from Labour in local and national government.
Sinn Fein launches new campaign in Britain

By Arthur Haynes

Sinn Fein has announced a new 'peace initiative', aimed at winning support in Britain.

The campaign was introduced by a Martin McGuinness speaking tour, culminating in the Bloody Sunday rally in Manchester, which mobilised 1500 people.

Representatives of the city's Labour Council welcomed Martin to the city, and both the Bolton and Manchester TUCs decided to organise fact-finding delegations to the North of Ireland this summer.

Sinn Fein representatives are increasingly worried by the stalemate approach of the British government and the British Labour leadership support for Tory and Unionist intransigence.

The most recent meeting of the network supporting the initiative decided to focus on the bipartisan policy of the present Labour leadership.

Supporters will do as many meetings as possible with Party members and trade unionists, to win support for Irish national self-determination and peace through British withdrawal.

Gerry Adams will do four major meetings in June in Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and London, to be followed by two councillors in each area doing meetings for the next week.

It was also decided to lobby for the removal of the Emergency Powers Act, to mobilise against the renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and to concentrate on the civil rights issues.

The initiative is supported by the Troops Out Movement, the Irish in Britain Representation Group, the Labour Party Irish Society, the Labour Committee on Ireland, the Connolly Association, the Federation of Irish Societies, the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, Women and Ireland, Wolfe Tone Society and the Colin Roach Centre - among others.

The campaign will be centred in part on mobilising the labour movement and the Irish community in Britain.

It is clear that there can be no military solution to the problem; only a socialist solution can mobilise the working class to destroy the partitionist states on both sides of the border.

Sinn Fein has so far chosen the wrong alliances to defeat British imperialism.

In that sense, the ceasefire is likely to achieve no more than previous ceasefires. This however does not diminish the grave responsibility on socialists in Britain to get the troops out and support self-determination.

Raghibir must stay!

The campaign against the deportation of Raghibir Singh gathers pace with a demonstration in Birmingham on April 29. He has never been convicted of any crime, never charged with any offence and no evidence has been presented against him. Despite this the Secretary of State has issued a notice to serve a deportation order.

Raghibir has been editor of the Punjabi newspaper Awaz Gaum International for four years. He lives with his wife Kulwinder Kaur who is a British citizen and his two British born children.

An editor of the paper he has expressed strong views about the situation in the Punjab opposing the policies of the Indian government.

Prison

Raghibir is currently being held at Winson Green prison Birmingham. He is not allowed to know the specific allegations made against him. He is being referred to the right to request bail. He has no right of appeal.

His NIU branch secretary Jeremy Dear said "If the Home Secretary believes Raghibir is a terrorist, let him present the evidence in an open court instead of hiding behind the sinister veil of national security".

Demonstrate Saturday April 29 11.30am Black Patch Recreation Ground Foundry Lane, Snel FC, Rally at 3pm Summerfield Park.

Further info contact Jeremy Dear on 0121 415 5869.
Council elections 1995

What kind of policies is Labour offering?

By Andy Richards

ON MAY 4, much of England and Wales goes to the polls to elect local councillors. All the signs are that the election will be a more than routine one. Electoral "meltdown", particularly since this is the year when a large number of Tory-controlled councils are up for election in their entirety.

In many areas the Tories cannot find candidates; in others they are using various aliases, such as "independent" and "retired newsgam".

The Tory crisis coincides with numerous community campaigns against service cuts and school governing bodies and councils are setting illegal budgets to protect services.

So what does this mean for Labour and why does it matter?

The Labour Party will undoubtedly benefit from the massive anger and hatred directed at the Tories, although their unwillingness to offer serious alternative policies does nothing to help the fightback.

Also it is likely that some Tories will be saved as "New Labour" and the Liberal Democrats cancel each other out.

It is important however that the left gets involved in these elections in order to stop the tide of Blairism in local government. Clearly there is little in the way of radical policies coming from the Leader's office at present.

Prosecutions

Instead of backing the massive community campaigns against the cuts, Blair talks of prosecuting parents of truant children.

Now it is planning to sell off thousands of acres of beautiful downland, and has recently backed away from compulsory redundancies only in the face of a threatened strike by UNISON members.

These developments make it all the more important that socialism within the party get involved in the election campaigns either as helpers or candidates.

There is huge potential for left councillors linking with the campaigns by parents and teachers against the education cuts, and with campaigns to save other council services.

In the long term which organised public meetings to oppose the housing transfer and ran a campaign against the closure of old people's homes in the area. As a result a number of left candidates have been selected as candidates in the elections.

The other important element in the local political scene is that the government has decided that Hove and Brighton are too mellow to become a large unitary authority.

This is likely to mean mass upsurge and possible cuts in services and a threat to the jobs of perhaps hundreds of workers in the present Hove, Brighton and East Sussex authorities.

Counter-weight

A strong left presence in the Hove Labour group will act as a counterweight to the right-wing-dominated Brighton group.

There is scope for the left in central government and it should be campaigning in these elections on a platform of no cuts in jobs and services, no to CCT and an end to attacks on party policy by our leaders.

Defend Preston's left councillors!

By Mike Milne-Picken

THE CAMPAIGN for the local elections in Preston came alive in April when right-wing councillors used the press to launch an attack on the left leadership of the council.

Banner headlines on the front page of the Lancashire Evening Post reported that 14 Labour councillors had issued a press statement dissociating themselves from statements of the left leader of the council, Valerie Wise.

The statement arose when, during April's council meeting, the Conservative group leader accused Valerie Wise of "working to see a socialist republic in Preston."

Wise responded to this public red-scaling by saying that she very much hoped to see a socialist republic in Preston, and the rest of Britain, since it would mean an end to unemployment, poverty and cuts in public services.

This was too much for the local Blair supporters, who issued a calculated attempt to split Labour in the run-up to the elections and knock Labour's chances.

But the Preston council is unusual, if not unique, in having a "hard left" leadership composed of members of the Socialist Campaign Group Network.

With the exception of the Greater London Council in the mid-1980s, led by Ken Livingstone, and the Irish group of its pioneering Women's Committee, she is the daughter of the left MP for Preston, Audrey Wise, who is hated by the left wing locally for her enthusiastic campaigning forClause Four and socialist policies.

While many sections of the party have moved to the right, the Preston left has remained determined by the politics of the Socialist Campaign Group.

The left won majority control of the Labour group last May by 16 votes to 15, in what the press called a "left coup."

Since then the left has sought to open up the council, fight corruption following the "Operation Angel" police investigation of council officials, to win the left-wing councillors, and improve council services and equal opportunities.

The right-wing is credited with many rank and file party members because many of them are under police investigation for alleged corruption.

They have tried to attack the council leadership and sabotage the left's election campaign.

The right axed control of the Preston CLP in March, although the District Labour Party is still led by the left and has unanimously backed Valerie Wise's leadership in public.

As we go to press, it looks as though the left could win a stronger majority on the council.

The defence of the council leadership against witchhunts nationally and locally is an important test for the left after the Special Conference and the council elections.

The BNP is to stand in elections to the Blackpool borough council.

Lancashire was a centre of Nazi activity in the 1970s, but little had been seen recently. Local anti-fascists are moulding the BNP into a political entity.

In January a National Socialist Alliance meeting was attended by over 100 supporters.

Cancelling

So far the election campaign hasn't been going very well for them. They've been having problems getting support out to canvass. Although local opposition is strong, many people are too scared to put Labour posters in their windows for fear of retaliation.

One resident was subjected to a tirade and asked what they were doing. They came to the door and praised the man's leg. "That's my view too," the woman replied slamming the door.

Anti-fascist groups have been regularly leafleting the town.

A mass Labour Party canvass has been arranged for April 23 in support of the local candidates. The BNP has also called for a mass canvass on the same day.

A strong left presence in the Hove Labour group will act as a counterweight to the right-wing-dominated Brighton group.

There is scope for the left in central government and it should be campaigning in these elections on a platform of no cuts in jobs and services, no to CCT and an end to attacks on party policy by our leaders.

Fascists contest North Notts
UNISON delegates say ‘no’ to blank cheque for Blair

The vote by a special conference of UNISON’s Affiliated Political Fund to reject Tony Blair’s new Clause Four threw top Labour and UNISON bureaucrats into apoplectic rage, and opened a real possibility that Blair might lose.

Socialist Outlook spoke to GEOFF MARTIN, Chair of UNISON’s London Region AFFP, who has been a leading campaigner in defence of Clause Four.

SO: Why did UNISON delegates stand firm against Blair’s text?
GM: The key sticking point was the reference in the new clause to providing enterprise, the market and competition. How could a public sector union which has been humiliated over sixteen years on the basis of that very philosophy suddenly sign up to, just because it has come from the Labour leader’s office?

The new clause also comes in the wider context of concern that Labour is dumping policy commitments on issues like the minimum wage, competition, remuneration, rumours that they are going soft on the internal market in the NHS, and the fact that Tony Blair has sent his kid to an open-out school.

All of this had a special resonance with low-paid UNISON members working in those very public services, who want to see something a bit more than that.

SO: These policies won’t come as a complete surprise to many UNISON members up against right wing Labour councils, will they?
GM: That’s right. We’ve already seen in London boroughs which have gone beyond the constraints of compulsory competitive tendering imposed on them by the Tories, and have voluntarily tendered out services they did not need to.

There is a feeling amongst activists in London that we could see the same thing from a Labour government. We are saying that we want this issue dealt with before we get a general election, before we get a Labour government, rather than wait till afterwards.

SO: What are the arguments put up by people trying to defend the Blair clause?
GM: The argument as far as I can understand it has been that we can’t see in support of the leader, rather than any attempt to address the needs and problems of what the clause does or doesn’t say. This is more or less an exercise in giving a blank cheque to the Labour leadership, and there’s no way we can do that. There’s too much at stake: there are already rumours about a Labour government going in hard against the public sector in terms of financial arrangements.

-Blair’s clause reads like an NHS opt-out Trust application, with all its references to the ‘rigours of competition’, ‘enterprise’, the market and all the rest of it. It is just completely alien.

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GM: The argument as far as I can understand it has been that we can’t see in support of the leader, rather than any attempt to address the needs and problems of what the clause does or doesn’t say. This is more or less an exercise in giving a blank cheque to the Labour leadership, and there’s no way we can do that. There’s too much at stake: there are already rumours about a Labour government going in hard against the public sector in terms of financial arrangements.

-Blair’s clause reads like an NHS opt-out Trust application, with all its references to the ‘rigours of competition’, ‘enterprise’, the market and all the rest of it. It is just completely alien.

GM: That’s right. We’ve already seen in London boroughs which have gone beyond the constraints of compulsory competitive tendering imposed on them by the Tories, and have voluntarily tendered out services they did not need to.

There is a feeling amongst activists in London that we could see the same thing from a Labour government. We are saying that we want this issue dealt with before we get a general election, before we get a Labour government, rather than wait till afterwards.
Clause Four hangs on union vote

By Alan Thomsett

The unions have put up the strongest fight in defence of Clause Four. The stakes are high, especially for low-paid and public sector workers who have lost out most heavily to Tory free market policies.

Thinking the result is in the bag, Blair has already begun meeting union leaders making it clear that his right wing project has only just started, piling on and breaking the union link, and claiming that the Labour Party is undergoing a "revolution".

In one interview he expressed admiration for Mrs Thatcher's "de-determination" as a politician and her stress on "enterprise". If unions currently backing Clause Four, particularly UNISON and the TGWU held firm, the special conference vote is likely to be about 60-40 for Blair. Other unions like the GMB or the MSF went for the old clause it could be more tighter.

The decision of UNISON to back the existing Clause was exactly the boost the campaign needed in its fight. The victory was quickly cut across, however, by the CWU whose vote went 9-1 for Blair, and USDAW, despite its large low-paid membership. Thus far there are votes on those yet to decide.

Both the media and the Blair camp are making the most of the CWU's ballot result, claiming this vindicates Blair line. But many of the unions which have changed have failed to hold ballots. It remains, however, a very fluid situation with plenty of pressure still to be applied by the likes of leadership arms are still to be heaped on the backs of those who continue to support Blair.

The TGWU is especially vulnerable. Bill Morris equivocates more every time he goes on TV. As we go to press he is insisting that despite current NEC policy it will be the delegation and its recommendation which will decide - and refuses even to say which way he would prefer to cast the TGWU vote. The left and the Campaign therefore need to keep up the pressure throughout this week to hold onto the existing vote and to extend it by winning the MSF vote and at least an abstention from the GMB.

As recently as the Scottish TUC leader John Edmonds was joining calls for a £4 minimum wage, full employment, and nationalisation of utilities, none of which is compatible with Blair's new clause. At the same time the left must be organised for special conference itself and the events surrounding it.

Earlier in the morning the Campaign is organising a meeting of delegates who are supporting the existing clause to discuss tactics and options inside the conference itself.

The Campaign has organised mass demonstra tion fight over the past six months in defence of the clause, in defence of socialism, and in defence of a crucial reference point in the LP constitution.

Whatever the outcome of this special conference the end of the campaign can be predicted to the charge that Blair policy has that it has been at the centre of the biggest political debate in the Labour movement for decades, and proud that in the course of the

What's so new about Blair's 'New Labour'?

Nigel應May takes a long hard look at the politics of the party before Blair's arrival.

IT HAS BECOME common to hear people on the Left say that if the battle over Clause IV is lost, the Labour Party "will be lost to socialism". They claim Clause IV is the "socialist heart" of the party, representing its "socialist roots". The real nature of the Labour Party is somewhat different however.

The commitment in Clause IV to "secure the full fruits of their labour for the workers" stands in sharp contrast to what Labour does in government. Even the main reforms of what is generally considered the most left Labour government, that of 1945, did not get close to challenging the fundamentals of capitalism.

The introduction of the welfare state, as we know it, was common currency among all the parties of the day. After a second devastating war people were not prepared to put up any more with the poverty and disease of the pre-war years.

The nationalisations carried out by that government were of bankrupt industries essential to the infrastructure of capitalism. The boards set up to manage them consisted of ex-workers directors committed to ensuring they functioned for the benefit of capitalism as a whole. There was not a whiff of "popular administration and control".

Other Labour governments have had their laws. What reforms they have implemented have been within limits acceptable to capitalism. They have been prepared to use strikes against strikers, introduce pay restrictions and anti-union laws. In their foreign policy Labour governments have even more explicitly carried out the requirements of imperialism, although sometimes keeping it secret for fear of opposition in the Party's ranks.

Capitalist policies

In short, every Labour government has been a capitalist government. Even in opposition Labour has kept its fight against Tory governments within clearly defined boundaries. While fighting against the worst excesses of their policy, it has been careful to keep the fight against them within legal, and if possible, parliamentary channels.

From the fight of Poplar councilists in the 1920s to the battle over rate-capping in the 1980s, the Labour leadership has kept a safe distance between the Party and popular resistance.

Even when it has had to appear to support such fights, as with the General Strike of 1926, it has used its influence to undermine them and, ultimately, to sell them out. Yet at the same time these struggles have enjoyed massive active support from the vast majority of Party members and supporters.

Take the miners' strike of 1984-85. While the Party leadership under Kinnock did as little as possible, Party members turned out in vast numbers on picket lines and demonstrations.

Only after the strike had been lost Kinnock able to express his true feelings, going on the offensive against Arthur Scargill and the left in general. The Clause IV debate has shown that many Party members and trade unionists think Labour should be committed to fundamental change in society.

These contradictions, between the desires of the base of the Party and what the Party actually does in practice, are not simply a product of people delaying themselves, but a contradiction built in to the very nature of the Labour Party.

Hallmarks

Formed by the unions to represent the interests of Labour in parliament, the Labour Representation Committee bore all the hallmarks of trade union politics from the start. Under capitalism, the unions exist to improve workers' conditions within the system. They do not challenge the system itself.

The Labour Party expresses this nationally scale through Parliament. While accepting and administering capitalism it attempts to obtain reforms within the system. It represents the organisational independence of the working class from the bosses' parties. But this is long way from the political independence represented by a socialist programme capable of leading the working class to the seizure of power and the establishment of a socialist society.

Before the battle was won in the unions to establish the present party of Labour many trade union leaders were happy to sit as Liberal MPs.

Although the break to form the Labour Representation Committee represented a recognition of the need for organisational independence and for some policy differences (particularly around the anti-union laws of the day) it did not signify a programmatic break with the rationale of capitalism.

The establishment of the Labour Party as an expression of what the working class represented (and still represents) a significant gain over such countries as the USA, where the working class has to choose between two explicitly capitalist parties.

But the Labour Party never was a socialist party in any meaningful sense of the word.

The adoption of Clause IV by the Party in 1918 was a recognition that there was great sympathy in Britain for the Bolshevik revolution and that many workers sought such fundamental change here. But the leadership never had any intention of introducing this change.

It is these contradictions in the nature of the Labour Party which lead revolutionary socialists to describe it as a bourgeois (i.e. capitalist) workers' party. While based on the organised working class the programme it attempts to carry out is one rooted in trade union politics - bourgeois through and through.
Vietnam victory changed the world

By Harry Sloan

TWENTY years ago socialists and internationals were celebrating the historic victory of the Vietnamese people over the brute force of US imperialism.

The world thrilled to television pictures of the chaotic retreat from Saigon, the helicopters lifting the last US marines from the embassy roof, after years in which the same TV channels had relayed some of the misery and horror of the war.

The US defeat, and the collapse of its vicious puppet regime in South Vietnam, opened up a new period for struggles internationally.

Though they were outnumbered by the huge US war machine, and left to fight alone by the Soviet and Chinese Stalinist regimes, the unbowed resistance of the Vietnamese finally cracked the morale of the US and puppet forces.

Faced with a growing mass mobilisation against the war within the US itself, and the disintegration of its conscript army on the battlefields of Vietnam, the world’s most powerful imperialist nation had been fought to a standstill.

It was left no other course but retreat.

The following 15 years saw US global intervention shuddered by the ‘Vietnam syndrome’, the war-weariness, hostility to large-scale military intervention, and fears of another bruising defeat.

The Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions of 1979, both of which toppled key US strategic allies, were spared the immediate threat of US intervention. The half-cooked effort to free US embassy hostages in Iran without committing substantial forces proved a complete farce, and reinforced the ‘Vietnam syndrome’.

Arms Race

To hide this obvious weakness, in the 1980s, under Ronald Reagan, the military focus shifted from the threat to deploy mass forces of ground troops to the rapid build-up of war technology, escalating the arms race and the economic crisis with the deployment of Cruise and a new generation of ground-based missiles, new, more deadly nuclear submarines, new warplanes, and the ‘Star Wars’ anti-missile defence system.

It was not until the Gulf War that, under cover of the blue flags of the United Nations and a remote aerial bombardment, the USA again felt safe to send large contingents of ground troops into action against a single, isolated enemy.

But while imperialism was weakened by the Vietnamese victory, the taking of Saigon was also seen as a threat to the ‘peaceful coexistence’ with imperialism which both the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies had hoped to maintain.

A hostile Soviet leadership set its face even more resolutely against any form of support for liberation struggles – in Central America, Southern Africa, the Philippines and elsewhere.

It was made obvious from day one of the Nicaraguan Revolution that the Kremlin was not prepared to give the military and economic support to the Sandinistas which the Khrushchev regime had given to Fidel Castro’s 1959 revolution in Cuba.

But another Stalinist regime was also forced to tread carefully after the Vietnam victory. Ho Chi Minh’s government in North Vietnam did not wish to allow the Viet Cong forces which had battled so hard to defeat the USA to take power into their own hands in the South.

It was no accident that the tanks which completed the liberation of Saigon were manned by North Vietnamese regular troops and not by the National Liberation Front.

Ho’s government took control, but did not hurry to export imperialism in the South, waiting until the mass upsurge around the victory had died down, and political control had been firmly established, before moving to unify the country.

The economic and environmental devastation wreaked by a 25-year war on what had always been an underdeveloped country made it quite obvious that there could be no question of building ‘socialism’ in Vietnam alone.

Lacking adequate technological and economic support from the Soviet Union and China, while understandably reluctant to seek deals with imperialism, Vietnam reigned caught in an impossible contradiction.

It is a sorry reflection of this that 20 years after their heroic struggles liberated their country from imperialist rule, the Vietnamese people, like the Chinese workers, denied trade union and other democratic rights, find major imperialist multinationals now eagerly setting up plants to exploit their cheap labour.

A new BMW plant in Hanoi is clearly not catering for a domestic market: it is a key element in the strategy of the German car-makers to cut wages and conditions world-wide.

While we celebrate the fighting spirit, the tenacity and commitment which won the military victory in Vietnam, the full political victory has yet to be won.

We reprint here extracts from keynote articles on the Vietnamese victory written at the time by two British Trotskyists organisations, whose very different traditions have since converged on many issues.

The first is from Red Weekly, paper of the International Marxist Group, then the British section of the Fourth International.

The second is from Socialist Press, then a newly-launched fortnightly paper of the Workers Socialist League, formed after mass expulsions from Gerry Healy’s Workers Revolutionary Party.

WHAT MORE can be said on Vietnam? The red, blue and gold flag of the Provisional Revolutionary Government flies over Ho Chi Minh City. The United States, the greatest military power on earth, has suffered its first ever defeat in war.

The international working class has celebrated one of its greatest ever May Days. Humanity has taken one long stride nearer its liberation.

But as revolutionaries glory in the triumph of Indo-China, we should understand what made such a victory possible:

- first, last and above all else the heroism and will to struggle of the Indo-Chinese workers and peasants
- the solidarity of revolutionaries throughout the world, from the Guerillas in Bolivia to the anti-war movement in the United States, who helped sap the belly of the imperialist monster.
After 30 years of war, during which the most barbaric and sustained bombardment by the world’s most advanced weapons systems failed to extinguish the spirit of revolutionary struggle, the Vietnamese workers and peasants have defeated the puppet forces of South Vietnam and US imperialism.

The greatest blow has been struck against capitalism since the Chinese Revolution of 1949, and a victory blow also at the treacherous Stalinist conception of “peaceful co-existence” and “detente” put forward by the Moscow and Peking bureaucracy.

Taken with the revolutionary victory of the Kmer Rouge forces in Cambodia and the rapid and approaching complete collapse of the government in Laos, the Vietnamese victory must be seen as part of the world movement of the working masses now taking place against the attacks and oppression of capitalism.

From this must come an understanding of the continuing international obligations of the new Vietnamese state in the struggle for all working people to achieve a socialist political revolution in the new socialist Mexico and other countries.

The workers and peasants of Vietnam have won a unique historical role in the world struggle. They have shown what can be achieved through the determination of the working class to fight for their freedom.

There are no other credible alternatives except small groups of liberal intellectuals and Marxists.

New features in the emergence of fundamentalist movements asserting an Islamic identity to unify the Somali people, who claim identification with the Arab nation, are being noted.

The US, which has been working to bring about a more stable and friendly regime in Somalia, has cooled off the US government's enthusiasm for a more aggressive approach to the Horn of Africa.

The US military has been struggling to maintain its presence in the region, and there are concerns that a more assertive US policy could lead to increased tensions.

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Military "state of seige" follows general strike

Crackdown in Bolivia

HUNDREDS of trade union leaders, peasant activists and student militants have been rounded up in Bolivia following a government declaration of a "state of siege", reports SIMON DAY.

The CONSTITUTION has been suspended and more than 1000 trade union, peasant and student leaders have been arrested. They are being systematically expelled from their home regions and sent into internal exile. Detention is without trial.

The military have seized all the strategic points in the country - streets, schools, universities and workplaces. A clandestine committee has been formed to resist the repression and organise the protests - street demonstrations, road blockades and the continuing general strike.

National

The crackdown follows an indefinite national strike by teachers against the privatisation of education, for an increased budget and for better wages. Like the rest of Bolivian workers the teachers earn less than £100 pounds a month but have to buy goods at western prices.

The strike mobilised mass support of parents, students, community organisations and other trade unions. It spread from the countryside to the main cities. Thousands walked in so-called "spaghetti marches" through the freezing highlands.

Telecommunication workers and miners have also struck against privatisation. The government action followed a national conference of delegates from factories, mines and peasant unions called by the Bolivian trade union federation Central Obrera Boliviana. The police and military forced their way in and arrested all present.

General strike

A spontaneous general strike has been gathering pace since the beginning of April. There have been regular clashes of demonstrators and police in La Paz. The southern border province of Tarija has declared its independence from the central government.

The militants that have been rounded up in the last week have been sent to some of the most inhospitable regions of the country. Bolivia's "Siberia" up in the Andes mountains and the disease-ridden parts of the Amazon. They are being threatened with sentences of up to 15 years in jail for organising and advocating strikes.

Vicious

President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada has a record of repressive measures. In 1985 days after becoming economic minister he declared a vicious programme of economic shock therapy.

In one day wages were frozen and the prices of goods increased fifteen-fold. He declared a state of siege when the COB launched a general strike. When 15,000 Bolivians marched with the miners for better wages de Lozada used the army to put down the protest.

He is one of the richest people in the country, owning one of the biggest mining companies. He uses the government powers to sell off government industries at knock down prices, directly benefiting from the privatisation drive.

All trade unionists and labour movement activists must demand the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Bolivia. The state of siege should be ended. Trade union and democratic freedoms must be defended against the dictatorial regime of de Lozada.

Send letters of protest to Presidencia de la Republica, Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza Murillo, La Paz, Bolivia. Send faxes to the Bolivian Embassy on (0171) 235 1286.

IWA Bosnia conveys roll on

By Roland Rancx

DURING THE long Bosnian winter, and despite the increased fighting in the Tuzla region, International Workers' Aid has continued its convoys to Bosnia.

This is providing much-needed support to the Bosnian people's struggle against fascism and war. Tuzla, the centre of IWA activity, remains the only large town in Bosnia governed by non-nationalist forces.

Its population of 110,000 is swollen by 60,000 refugees, with tens of thousands more in the surrounding region. Unemployment is about 75%, while many of those in work receive little or no pay.

Union

In a joint project with the Miners Union, several hundred tons of flour and other foodstuffs have so far been distributed by IWA's Bread Programme.

The three Miners Unions in Tuzla merged last year, creating one union with over 12,000 members. Of these, only 3500 are working in the mines; 4600 are fighting on the frontlines, while 4000 are unemployed.

These and their families are the main recipients of this aid. In a separate project in coordination with the Women's Association, some 20,000 women's parcels have been sent by IWA and distributed to women in Tuzla. In addition, money has been raised for the purchase of a marmograph, which has been taken to a hospital in Zenica. Additional food, clothing and other aid has been distributed to refugees in the camps in Croatia.

Other projects being studied include support for the Miners Union in providing working clothes for miners, support for an independent non-nationalist newspaper in Tuzla and for a non-commercial woman's paper, and possibly organizing tours of Bosnian miners and journalists in western Europe.

IWA is demonstrating the reality of international workers' solidarity with the Bosnian people, in the face of the support of western governments for "ethnic cleansing" and the partition of Bosnia.

Europe

IWA continues to gain support across Europe. A new group has been established in Norway, which has already attracted many trade union affiliates.

IWA groups are now active in over a dozen countries. For several months, however, the campaign has not functioned in Britain except to raise funds to pass directly to IWA Europe. Activists from the campaign decided recently to support the work and projects of IWA Europe, and appealed for donations.

Until we establish the British campaign more firmly, any money received will be sent on to IWA groups in Europe to support these vital projects.

Donations should be sent to IWA, c/o PO Box 1109, London NW 2 2JJ. Cheques should be made payable to International Workers Aid.
Zapata rides again

MAGDALENA VILLIERS has recently returned from Mexico. She offers an eye witness account of the rebellion in Chiapas led by forces echoing the legendary revolutionary Emiliano Zapata.

ON THE FIRST day of 1994 Mexico jumped into the news when armed insurgents took over three towns in Chiapas in the extreme southern part of the country. This was the first notice that most people, including many Mexicans, had that the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional (EZLN) existed.

But in fact the EZLN had been working quietly in Chiapas for at least a decade and had built a strong presence among the indigenous peoples, the campesinos and the working class.

The demands being presented by the EZLN are basically the same demands that were made during the Mexican revolution of 1910 by Emiliano Zapata himself (hence the name).

Why, given that the 1910 revolution gave birth to one of the world’s greatest progressive constitutions, have these issues surfaced again?

The answer’s simple - Chiapas is the richest state in the Mexican federation in resources, and the people are poor.

Mexico’s electricity is generalized, mainly from hydroelectric plants - but the price of electricity is the highest in Mexico. Huge amount of coffee, beef, corns, cocoa, spices, minerals and bananas are exported.

The state is lying on a huge, virtually untaunted, pool of oil, but only people who profit are large landowners and multinational companies like Nortec.

Campesinos make up 80 per cent of the 3.2 million population of Chiapas, and many earn only 100 pounds a year. Malnutrition is rife. Few homes that have running water, drainage, bathrooms or electricity.

The terrain is extremely rugged, made up of mountains and jungle, and there are few paved roads. In consequence, the PRONASOL and SOLIDARIDAD programs, which have built utilities, schools and hospitals that serve the people well in other parts of Mexico, have failed in Chiapas.

The ratio of hospital beds has increased - but they are only 8 hours ride away over the mountains. Half of the children are growing up illiterate because the schools are two hours walk from their homes - and anyway they have to work in order to eat.

What is needed is a programme of international teachers and doctors.

Gave that Mexican university students get virtually free tuition in exchange for a (paid) year’s work for the state, this could easily be provided.

The EZLN has articulated the cries of the people, but the uprising is far from confined to an elite political group. The slogan that has emerged in “Sonos todos Marcos” - “We’re all Marcos” - a reference to the pen name of the EZLN leader.

When the Federal Army thought it had secured the EZLN in a remote part of the mountains, it was unable to discover where any of the Zapastas were - everyone is a Zapastas.

The military presence is very large, with machine gun emplacements at the entrance to every village and town. Harassment is still widespread. It’s a way used to Chiapas - my bus to Mexico City was stopped and searched by machine-gun toting soldiers, not just once, but four times in three hours between midnight and 3.30 am.

At least 15,000 people were forced out of their homes by the Federals in March to March 1995, when an amnesty law was passed enabling them to return home without army reprisals. Of course, the harassment hasn’t stopped, but it is a bit muted now, especially since Archbishop Samuel Ruiz, a liberation theologian, has taken several human rights violations to the Supreme Court, unmoved by assassination attempts.

And then there’s the Caravan for Peace, organized by non-governmental non-UN organisations, to watch over the people’s return home. (Not a very safe activity – the Federals opened fire on the group a few days ago)

Unfortunately for the Mexican government, the EZLN has not disappeared, in spite of the Federal army harassment and other actions, including the bombings. Instead its support has become so strong and widespread across the country that the Zedillo regime has been forced to concede some of the EZLN’s first demands and to open talks on other issues, including agendas for indigenous peoples and women’s rights and the dire economic situation.

For more information, contact the Mexican Solidarity Group or the Mexico Committee for Human Rights, both based in Casa Latina America, Kingsgate Place, London NW6.

South African workers betrayed

By Charlie van Goldenen

IN THE DECADES of struggle against apartheid, every section of the South African liberation movement emphasised the “leading role of the working class”.

It was the militancy of workers which eventually compelled South African capitalism to change course.

The alliance of powerful black trade unions which emerged in the 1970s against apartheid heightened the ruling class. It feared the transformation of the struggle for national liberation into an anti-capitalist struggle. It was this fear that drove the ruling class to seek an accommodation with the leadership of the liberation movement, particularly with the ANC. The agreement was that the ANC army, the Communist Party alliances and the COSATU bureaucracy would all honour an implied “social contract” and work with the ANC in order.

The ANC led government is now delivering as agreed.

A proposed new labour relations bill will severely restrict the rights of workers - ranging on all the promises made in the Freedom Charter and in numerous speeches from the leader of the ANC.

The bill is scheduled for debate in parliament in June.

Several workers’ organisations have attacked the state’s Workers’ Organisation for Socialist Action, arguing that it is fighting against the bill.

The main provisions of South Africa’s draft Labour Relations Bill include:

1. Workers are allowed to strike only after 30 days have passed by, or after the dispute has been mediated.

2. Workers must give 48 hours notice of their intent to strike.

3. Lockouts are permitted.

4. Picketing is allowed on the premises of the union leader.

5. Either the strike is illegal or the union that it seeks to use is not recognized.

6. Strikes over layoffs, layoffs and recognition of union jurisdiction are outlawed unless they go first to the Labour Court arbitration process.

7. Strikes are prohibited in “essential services” such as those concerning health and safety.

8. Strikes are also prohibited in services requiring continuous maintenance.

9. The employer deems work is needed.

10. There is no obligation for employers to recognize or bargain with unions.

11. Arbitration is by government-appointed commissioners. The workers have no right to reject arbitrators they think are biased.
Our morals are not theirs!

"In an epoch of triumphant reaction the various democrats, social democrats, anarchists and other representatives of the 'left' exude twice as much morality, in the same way as people sweat twice as much when they are afraid".

So begins the first of the two pungen essays that form ‘Their Morals and Ours’, a short book by Leon Trotsky published over fifty years ago.

ENZO TRAVERSO marks the recent appearance of a new French edition. The translation is by Charles Mullette.

WITH THE CLOUDS of war gathering over Europe and the show trials in the Soviet Union, many left-wing intellectuals in the 1930s were persuaded that the horrors of Stalinism were an inevitable product of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Trotsky’s was a tightly-constructed counter-argument refuting the facile equation of communism and fascism, Bolshevism and Stalinism, Trotskyism and Stalinism.

He presents Stalinism not as a logical consequence of Bolshevism “unanimism” or godless communism, but as the historical product of an isolated and suffocated revolution in a socially backward country.

In his view, there can be no question of “elementary rules of morality developed in line with the growth of humanity as a whole and necessary for the life of the whole collective”.

He does not reject the Enlightenment notion of a universal human morality, but emphasizes that it exists in the concrete reality of a society divided into classes. To put it another way, history obliges morality to take on class features and, in the epoch of imperialism, the universal ethical ideal is embodied by the revolution.

To the accusation that the Bolsheviks followed a Jenoctic or Machiavellian amorality expressed in the phrase “the end justifies the means” he answers that historical materialism does not recognize such a simplistic divide.

For Marxism the end is commu- nism, human freedom, the abolishment of the domination of one person by another and the restoration of a human community in harmony with nature. This implies that not all means are acceptable and that some must be ruled out because they can only act as obstacles to the achievement of the desired end.

“One would have hoped that Trotsky would have established the necessary distinction, specifying which means are and are not permissible.

Unfortunately he insists on the historical legitimacy of means that have seemed very dubious, even harmful.

A serious problem arises when Trotsky defends all the political and military measures employed by the Soviet regime in the 1918-1921 civil war which followed the October Revolution.

In the name of the defence of the revolution he justifies the summary executions by the Soviet secret police, the establishment of censorship, the outlawing of counter-revolutionary parties and even the imposition of the de facto dictatorship of a single party and the taking of hostages and the execution of family members.

If we take seriously Trotsky’s own stated principle, according to which the goal of socialism implies an ethically-based restriction on the methods of struggle, Victor Serge’s objections seem justified: “the degeneration of Bolshevikism began when the Cheka won the right to decided people’s fate behind closed doors”.

Trotsky draws on the authority of Marx and the experience of the workers movement to show that some acts of “revoluting barbarity” were necessarily inscribed in the conditions of civil war.

But he does not consider whether summary executions, secret trials, censorship and the banning of all the anti-Bolshevik parties might not have fostered the rise of Stalinism and the authoritarian regression of the Russian Revolution — whether there are means which are politically and ethically illegitimate for attaining the goal of human liberation.

With the benefit of hindsight and without wishing to idealise or make ahistorical comparisons, we can say that the Sandinista revolutionaries in Nicaragua proved Serge right.

In this extremely poor country, economically strangled and the victim of imperialist military aggression, not only did the revolutionary government not carry out executions of hostages, they also abolished the death penalty, permitted total freedom of expression to the counter-revolutionary camp and even permitted the social reintegration of Contra prisoners.

In fact some of the noblest pages in the history of the workers’ movement, such as the Warsaw ghetto uprising of Spring 1943, were inspired by this simple moral principle: the primacy of the human dignity.

Whole generations of men and women have been inspired to struggle for socialism for moral reasons. Socialism cannot therefore escape the need to define a ‘code of ethical behaviour’. Class morality cannot embody universal human morality if it does not recognize that certain means are unacceptable.

If injustice and oppression justify revolt and taking up arms, a revolutionary project for human emancipation leaves no room for massacres and torture. These means work against the desired end.

Even so, fifty years after it first appeared, Trotsky’s work still retains a certain freshness.

If socialism needs to be thought through anew, the necessary “re-foundation” will have to be both ethical and political. After all, our morals are not theirs.

Trumping the Tory race card

"In his 1992 book of the same title, Aldous Huxley considered the possibility of brainwashing through sci-fi. He wondered whether, by the year 2001, the ruling class might use drugs or hypnosis to control the general public."

What could be more predictable than the Tories reaching for the race card when their fortunes bit bottom?

Steve Cohen’s support for immigration controls in his new pamphlet reviews the 2000’s and beyond.

WHAT COULD BE MORE PREDICTABLE THAN THE TORYs REACHING FOR THE RACE CARD WHEN THEIR FORTUNES BIT BOTTOM?

Steve Cohen recounts in Still Resisting how the TUC and trades councils opposed the agitation of John Smith for the 1901 Aliens Act, Britain’s first immigration law. Jews fleeing from anti
Danger: sectarians at work!

Socialists In The Trade Unions, by Alex Callinicos. Bookmarks. £3.50.

Reviewed by Keith Sinclair

The Socialist Workers Party has produced a new handbook aimed at “activists who want to make the unions fighting organisations”. Given that Socialist Outlook shares that laudable aim, it should be possible to recommend the book. However, despite certain strengths it is a disappointment — although not a particularly unexpected one.

The book is based on a useful section that demolishes the argument that the unions are finished. Callinicos uses up-to-date statistics to prove that the rumours of the unions’ death have been greatly exaggerated.

The government’s own Employment Gazette quotes: “The decline in union membership overall since 1989 can thus be accounted for almost entirely by the decline in manual membership.” Callinicos effectively makes the point that the working class contains far more people than some would have us believe — CPSA members in the EDS or school office workers are as working class as the few remaining car workers in Cowley.

There then follows a section on Rank and File organisation which is interesting as it gives an inkling of why the book has been produced — the recent turn of the SWP to creating “a network of Socialist Worker sellers” in the workplaces.

Callinicos contrasts the SWP’s policy of “rank and file” to the work of the Communist Party and National Minority Movement in the 1920s.

Key tasks

He argues that the questions involved in building a national rank and file movement can wait for the future, meaning activists should carry out the following four tasks: build strong sectional organisation, prioritise solidarity work, work with and against union officials — and selling Socialist Worker! What’s omitted from the list of tasks is also very important.

What about union branches, for example? Nor is there any mention of the need to link together militant branches. Joining the SWP is the only option they are given.

It is necessary to try to unite serious activists now in the unions — we cannot wait until everyone sees the need to build a revolutionary party.

In most unions there are some sort of broad left or other left type of organisation. Those formations are important, even if in some cases they are not as effective and open as they might be.

Organisations like the Socialist Teachers’ Alliance (STA) represent a real gain and can play crucial roles in struggles, as they did in the Anti-SATS Campaign, and can again in the fight on class sizes.

Yet the SWP “new line” has been accompanied by a gradual withdrawal of SWP teachers from active participation in the STA at a national level.

It isn’t half sectarian, mum! SWP is splitting from Broad Lefts to ‘build the party’

Swp civil servants have also withdrawn from involvement in some of the sectional Broad Lefts in the CPSA.

The book ends with nine pages of lists of useful addresses. If a civil servant in the CPSA wants to contact their union headquarters they will find the number.

They will look in vain for the address of the CPSA Broad Left!

There is no mention of any of the attempts that have been made to build links across the various unions such as Trade Union News or the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee.

Rationalisation

The book is therefore a rationalisation of a fundamentally sectarian turn by the SWP.

It is a turn away from working with the rest of the trade union left, in favour of building the SWP — to the detriment of the wider movement.

It will divide the left in those areas where the SWP have any influence. Nevertheless, the task of building the left and unifying it is in action will go on — with or without the comrades of the SWP.

Defending October, but abusing our history


THIS BOOK is more about the defence of the Russian Revolution by the Bolsheviks than a defence of it against those who oppose it today. It is unlike a previously unpublished speech by Lenin on the Bolshevik invasion of Poland with out of print articles by other Bolshevik leaders.

There are better introductions to the thought of the Bolsheviks: Alan Woods and Ted Grant’s excellent £1.50 book Lenin and Trotsky: what they really stood for is a case in point.

So is Trotsky’s The First Five Years of the Communist International, a more extensive collection.

Sadly, Richardson’s book lacks the kind of explanatory material that makes utopi-malarious with the detail of the debates in the Bolshevik party so poor.

Nevertheless, this collection gives inspirations of the dreams, aspirations and pressing tasks of the revolution. Richardson’s introduction presents his views on the present day defenders of the Bolshevik tradition and our attempts to understand Stalinism.

Workers’ state?

He dismisses the debate between these, like us in the Fourth International, who consider the USSR to have been a degenerate workers’ state and those, like the Socialist Workers Party, who consider it to have been a capitalist state since the 1920s.

This debate is crucial for understanding the tasks of revolutionary Marxists for the bulk of this century. Was it right to have deposed North Korea against

on the US — as the Fourth International did — or not — the position of the fore-runners of today’s British SWP?

Were the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, for instance, progressive anti-capitalist struggles, or minor political fights within the capitalist class?

Richardson adds the slanderous suggestion that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International supported the Soviet bureaucracy during the Kruschev-Brezhnev period!

Richardson should know better. The FI has unsensitively advocated anti-bureaucratic revolution against the Stalinist regimes during the last 50 years.

Socialist Outlook can provide readers with a vital antidote to Richardson’s tract.

Yeltsin’s coup prompted the publication of Fallacies of State Capitalism — a volume of essays by the Fourth International’s Ernest Mandel and Socialist Worker edi-

for Chris Harman. This 125 page book is now on sale half-price just £2.00 plus 50p p&p. Send your cheque, payable to Socialist Outlook to PO Box 1108, London N4 2UJ.
What we fight for

Up AGAINST MASS unemployment, rampant employ- 
erism with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-
working public services, the working class in Britain 
faces a real crisis—an avoidable crisis created by the 
historic failure of its official leadership.

Socialist Outlook exists to build a new type of working 
class leadership, based on class struggle and revolu-
tionary socialism.
The capitalist class, 
driven by its own crisis, 
and politically united by 
its need to maximize profits 
at the expense of the workers, has had determined, va-
quished leadership by a bru-
tal Tory high command.
The Tory strategy has been 
always to divide the unions, 
and to fragment and weaken the resistance, al-
lowing them to pick off iso-
lated sections one at a time. 
In response, the TUC and Labour leaders have 
embraced the defeatist polit-
ics of "realism", effec-
tively total surrender, while 
debasing the potential of be-
ing a socialist alternative. 
Every retreat encouraged the 
postion of wage cuts, 
prices, conditions and un-
employment.

Realism is the latest 
form of reformism, seeking 
"only improved conditions 
within capitalism, not 
against the制度", not against 
reforms, but because we know 
that the crisis could demand 
orders can only be achieved 
under socialism, that is under 
the control of the working 

As a Marxist, we 
want to see a better life 
which only by resisting the 
workings of the world.

We are a Marxist, 
that industrial and state 
amination, not on the 
nameless, faceless version of 
"marxism" beloved of anar-
chair academics, but the 
real reformist tradition 
ought to be a left-wing 
London, and 
Trotsky.

Our socialist 
alternative is not based on parlia-
mentary politics or illusions 
and political change.

We fight to mobilise 
and win the power of the 
working class to topple 
the corrupt and reac-
tory rule of capital and 
establish its own class 
rule.

We struggle against 
fragmentation by build-

ing unity, to unite the various 
struggles of workers, the 
unemployed, of women, of 
people of colour, of 
communities, of lesbians 
and gay men, of students, 
of youth — and of those 
fighting imperialism in 
Britain and worldwide.

Socialist Outlook is 
above all an internationalist 
in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth Inter-
national, which organise 
in over 40 countries.

Unlike some other 
groups on the British left, 
we do not believe 
that a mass 
revolution can come in a 
dual form, by proclaiming 
ourselves to be one. 

This development into sectarian 
fragmentation and 
abandoning of struggles in the 
labour movement, plays into 
the hands of 
wing right hands.

But while a section of 
the working class, 
black people, 
unemployment, 
and against the 
should be 
left-wing activists. 

The oppressed must organise 
for themselves, to fight 
for their demands, which 
are a part of the 
struggle for social 

But propaganda alone, 
however good, will not 
be brought to life. 
Up for policies which can 
mobilise and politically 
and workers in struggle, 
be used to 
the unions, 
Labour Party and 
the campaign 
and against the 
pressed for their 
right.

To strengthen this 
we press for united 
campaigns on key issues 
such as racism and fascism 
— it is they 
connect with 
common objectives and 
remaining free to debate 
conflicts. 

If you agree with what 
you see in Socialist 
Outlook, and want to join with us in the 
struggle for socialism, 
readers' groups meet in 
town across the 
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organised, and get active!

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Contact us now!
SOCIALIST OUTLOOK No. 82. April 29 1995, Page 15.

To advertise your event in Socialist Outlook write to 'What's Happening'; PO Box 1109, London N4 2U0 by Friday May 6.

APRIL

Weds 28
CLAUSE 4 and the struggle for socialism Birmingham Socialist Outlook Forum with Alan Thornett 7.30pm Queen’s Tavern
Fri 28
WORKERS’ Memorial Day ‘Remember the dead: fight for the living’. Fight for safe working conditions. Leafleting and demonstration in London. Details: 0171-276-0438. KEEP Clause Four rally with Arthur Scargill 7.30pm McMamara Hall Camden Irish centre by Camden tube.
Sat 29
DEMONSTRATION in Manchester against deportations called by Okolo Family Defence campaign 12.00 noon All Saints’ Park Oxford Road.

LABOUR Party special conference lobby 11.30am Queen Elizabeth Hall London SW1. Bring your banners.

MARCH to stop the deportation of Raghbir Singh. Assembly 11.30am Black Patch Recreation Ground Smethwick, West Midlands for march to Winson Green prison and rally at 1pm Summerfield Park Dudley Road. Details: 092 6124 1856. MUMIA ABU-JAMAL benefit concert at Hove Town Hall, tickets Jim 01273 671873.

Sun 30
THE FIGHT for socialist policies now. Post conference open meeting sponsored by Defend Clause Four. 1-4pm ULU, Malet St, WC1. MOZAMBIQUE Angola Committee AGM 11am-3.30pm 22 The Irvines 6-8


Sat 20
NOTTS WELFARE State Net work demonstration details Sat 0115 9695298.

Sat 27
DAY OF ACTION by Campaign to Close Campfield AFRICAN Liberation Day march 1.00pm Kennington Park London SE1. Rally at Trafalgar Square Details: 0117 594 7729.

MAY

Mon

WHAT NEXT after Clause Four? West London Socialist Outlook Forum 7.30pm Ealing Ws.

Mon 8

Sat 13
SOCIALISM, Social Democracy and revolution Socialist Outlook Day School London. Speakers include Francois Vercammen, United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Tickets £5/£3 from Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109, London N4 2U0.


Thurs 7-Sat 9
SOCIALISM beyond the market: CSE 25th anniversary conference details: John, Phillip or Mary (0191) 232 0602.

Sat 9
CRIMINAL Justice: the Bill a day conference sponsored by the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers.

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

The current issue of International Viewpoint features two major doses. SAMINA FELLAH opens a review of women and fundamentalism in Algeria, the USSR and France to show important global trends. FRANCOIS VERCAMMEN introduces a selection on the Western European Communist parties. More to come.

Women and Fundamentalism

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK DASCHOOL

10.30am - 5.00pm, North London, Saturday 13 May Reform or Social Revolution?
Nationalisation or expropriation?
Revolutionaries and the Labour Party
Socialist Outlook is holding a special day of discussion and debate for defenders of Clause 4, open to Socialist Outlook supporters and those sympathetic to our ideas.
For tickets, send a cheque for £6 waged, £3 unwaged to Socialist Outlook Fund, PO Box 1109, London N4 2U0.

FEEDBACK

revisionist?

ROY Budditt (letters, April 8th) seems to completely ignore what my article in S.O. 79 was about.

It wasn’t an attempt at an outline of a programme or strategy for achieving socialism, whether national or international. It restricted itself to a small - though not unimportant - part of that: the issue of whether socialism can be achieved by parliamentary, peaceful means.

Roy’s point - that socialism in one country is not possible - is true but beside the point. It is perfectly possible to agree that socialism has to be international and still believe that it can be achieved through parliament - witness many left Euro-MPs.

Pointing out that other imperialist powers would interfere against a workers’ state in one country certainly emphasizes the need for the revolutionary International and for close links between workers’ organizations across national boundaries, to extend the revolution and to defend it by arms against its internal and external enemies, but again there is many a left reformist, who would demonise the CIA, US imperialism etc, but still thinks that Britain is somehow different and that fundamental change can be brought about here without resort to arms.

It is this which I sought to address, not the wider issues Roy accuses me of missing.

Neil Murray, Upney

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SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

THROW OUT TORY RACISTS!

You're invited to join the June 8th demonstration against racism and fascism in London. Socialists will be marching from Sheppards Bush Green to Marble Arch.

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Search the database for more articles.
SUPPORT THE TEACHERS!

THREE conferences of teaching unions over the Easter holidays decided to ballot their members on industrial action against rising class sizes.

This is a vital stand in defence of the quality of education, at the very point where Tory cuts are forcing governors and education authorities to contemplate classes as large as 40 or more.

But the teachers’ fight for education has been met by hostility from NUT General Secretary Doug Mckay. And Labour’s David Blunkett has not only opposed any form of industrial action, but responded to campaigns demanding a legal maximum of 30 in a class by promising that a Labour government would limit class sizes - to 40!

The thousands of parents and governors who have rallied behind campaigns against cuts in school budgets must now show their support for teachers who take action.

Labour and union right wingers claim that strikes and other action would ‘alienate’ parents, while in fact it is their failure to offer any kind of lead which has held back the development of a nation-wide fightback.

It has been left to the parents’ and governors’ campaign, Fight Against Cuts in Education (FACE) to give a national lead.

FACE is confronting all council candidates with demands that they support the ‘pledge’ to campaign for more cash to education and a legal limit to class sizes, arguing that any candidate who fails to sign the pledge should be opposed.

By the same logic teachers who take action to secure the FACE objectives must be supported - and the fight stepped up to make Tony Blair’s ‘New Labour’ take up the struggle to save our schools.

Vote Labour: fight for socialist policies