

REVOLUTION

THE FIGHTING PAPER FOR WORKING CLASS YOUTH

**While Cherie Blair spends
£2000 on a haircut...
Labour tells young
unemployed:**



**Work for
£40 a week
or starve!**

IN THIS ISSUE

- Bigots batter Irish Catholics
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- BP: Colombian blood for 'British' oil
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EUROMARCH 97 REVO ROCKS AMSTERDAM



BY Fran in Ealing



THE 14TH of June was an historic day. 40,000 workers and youth assembled in Dam square-Amsterdam and marched in the first ever pan-European demonstration.

The "Euromarch" was a protest against the Europe wide increase in unemployment and cuts to welfare that the bosses want us to endure. It was organised to coincide with the inter-governmental conference on how to reach European Monetary Union. Most European bosses want a single currency and a united European bloc so that they will be able to compete with Japan and America more effectively. To do this each country will need to hold down public spending, which will increase unemployment and cut-back welfare. In other words, they want us to pay for it. This means increasing poverty for us, so that the fat cats can get richer.

Revo organised a youth coach which went to the march. We marched, discussed politics and partied non-stop until Sunday evening. We teamed up with Revo supporters from

other countries and flew our red "REVOLUTION" flags and banners high and proud. We learnt chants in other languages and sung the Internationale in several languages simultaneously. It was an impressive display of working class solidarity. It was a shame that the British SWP boycotted it, or it could have been even better.

Solidarity

The crowd assembled at midday and we heard speeches from left wingers and socialists from all over Europe. It was great that they were all talking about internationalism and solidarity, but none of them went further and offered any ideas for the way forward.

When the march finally got moving and the display of solidarity and comradeship was apparent, the way forward became clear. We need more international actions and we need to learn from each other's struggles.

We later made our way to the famous coffee-shops of Amsterdam and on to the all

night Techno party. This was thrown by "Legalise"- a coalition for the legalisation of drugs. Six sound systems, hundreds of young, happy people and no hassle from the drug squads. Our kind of party!

On Sunday "Legalise" organised a large demo and street party. We all marched behind trucks with sound systems. The best part was when we stopped outside the conference. I doubt that Blair and the Euro cronies were nodding their heads and blowing their whistles to the loud music directed at them.

The whole weekend was a great success - an excellent display of international solidarity in action. We sold loads of REVOs, people showed an interest in socialist politics and were open to our ideas. It was a great beginning.

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CAPITALIST SYSTEM AND IT'S MARKET MADNESS,
MILLIONAIRES, MORAL HYPOCRISY AND MILITARISM.**

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Work for dole schemes? NO THANKS! THE FIFTH OPTION IS: FIGHT SLAVE LABOUR!

BY Lee in Kent

DID ANYBODY sit through that long budget speech by Gordon Brown? If you did catch it you probably thought, what a load of boring old bollocks.

Understandable. But Labour has just introduced its welfare to work scheme which is set to make our lives even more of a misery. The Iron Chancellor Gordon Brown said that workfare will provide 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for 6 months or more with a "ladder of opportunities" which will allow us to escape from the misery of poverty by providing us with training and jobs. Smell a rat yet?

The options

So what is this wonderful scheme? Basically it goes like this; after young people have been out of work for more than 6 months we will be placed on a crash course for job preparation called a "gateway". We will then be presented with 4 options:

- We can take a job with an employer who will be encouraged to employ young people from the scheme by being given a subsidy of £75. Of course you still only get paid the same as you would on the dole.
- Work with voluntary organisations and receive an £400 grant
- Work in the environmental task force and learn excellent skills like weeding or cleaning up graffiti and other such urban niceties. Again we'll get the £400 grant pittance
- Go into full time education if we don't have qualifications or certain skills. Again getting that £400 grant but you will also need to find a few thousand more to live on for the year.

This scheme will cost £3.5bn to implement and will be funded by the windfall tax on the excess profits from the privatised utilities. It will be introduced in Jan. 98 in 10% of the country and will go nation-wide in April.

Paul Covey, the director of the unemployed unit said that the Welfare to work scheme is the, "Most ambitious programme to help the unemployed since Clement

Attlee" (The British Labour PM 1945-51 whose government introduced the NHS and nationalised many industries.)

But is it true? Wait, there's more! Brown continues... "New opportunities for young people mean new responsibilities. When they sign up for welfare they sign up to work. Benefits will be cut if young people refuse to take up these options"

Andrew Smith charged with the day to day running of the scheme said that "staying at home and continuing to claim benefits is not going to be an option".

Youth Poverty

As if anyone just sits around in poverty because they're lazy! To end unemployment we need real jobs, not to be starved into a slave labour scheme for pathetic pay. This scheme will not get young people decent jobs or end the poverty trap. The workfare scheme is a cynical ploy to force people in to crap jobs just to make the unemployment figures look better. The Tories tried the same tricks for 18 years.

Worse still, it will provide British bosses with a large cheap Labour supply. That way they can undercut other workers and drive their pay down too. Just what bosses need to boost their profits!

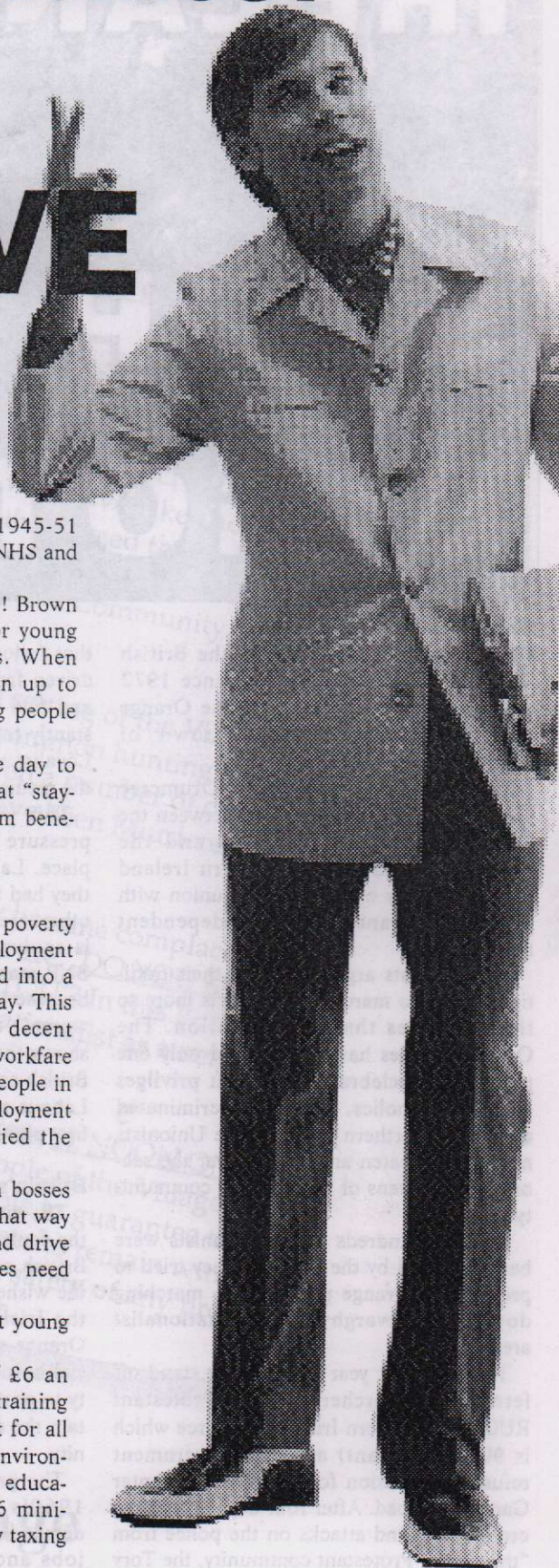
If Gordon really gave a shit about young people this is what he should do:

- Introduce a minimum wage of £6 an hour to be paid to all those on training schemes. A full and liveable grant for all of us in voluntary work, on the environment task force and in full time education, which is equivalent to a \$6 minimum wage. We can pay for this by taxing the rich even more.
- Guarantee a job for everyone. When the bosses say there is not enough jobs for everyone we say divide all the work available between everyone, with no loss of pay for working less. When the bosses say they can't afford to, we should demand to see the accounts.

If they threaten to close down the workplaces we should fight for them to be

nationalised under workers control.

Labour will continue to exploit us just like the Tories did if we don't fight back and ensure these demands are met. ■



IRELAND -

STOP ORANGE BIGOTS

BY Sean in Newham

The biggest mobilisation of the British Army in Northern Ireland since 1972 took place to let the thugs of the Orange Order march through the town of Drumcree.

For the third year in a row, Drumcree became the centre of the clash between the Protestant Orange unionists and the Catholic population of Northern Ireland who are mainly opposed to the union with Britain and want a united, independent Ireland.

The unionists argue that it is their traditional right to march. But there is more to these parades than just tradition. The Orange parades have always had only one purpose: to celebrate Protestant privileges over the Catholics, who are discriminated against in Northern Ireland. The Unionists march to threaten and lord it over the second class citizens of the Catholic community.

In 1995 hundreds of anti-unionists were baton charged by the police as they tried to prevent the Orange parade from marching down the Garvarghy Road, a nationalist area.

This time last year there was a stand off between the marchers and the Protestant RUC (the Northern Irish police force which is 90% Protestant) after the government refused permission for the march to enter Garvarghy Road. After four days of tension, orange riots and attacks on the police from "their own" Protestant community, the Tory government caved in to the pressure from the RUC who were complaining about being caught in the middle and having to face recriminations from fellow Protestants.

Loyalist violence

As soon as the march was allowed to proceed the RUC turned around and attacked the nationalist community. In the violence

that followed, hundreds of Catholics were driven from their homes by Loyalist gangs and two were murdered. Yet we are constantly told that the IRA are the terrorists. Loyalist violence is quickly "forgotten" by the media.

This year Labour gave in to Unionist pressure 3 weeks before the march took place. Labour's Mo Mowlam claimed that they had to let the Unionists march because otherwise they would have got violent. This is equivalent to, for example, letting the BNP march through Brixton or Moss Side because the BNP threatened trouble if they weren't allowed to! It is a disgrace and shows that Labour are just as committed to British colonial rule as the Tories. After all, Labour sent the troops into Ireland in the first place...

Britain's fault

The situation in Northern Ireland is not the fault of the IRA. It is the fault of the British state, who divided Ireland against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people in 1921. The sectarian Orange state was drawn up with an artificial border that creates a Protestant majority to protect Protestant privileges and maintain the oppression of the Catholic community.

The present day 'troubles' began in the 1960's when the Catholics began to demand equality in the provision of houses, jobs and services. Peaceful civil rights marches met violent opposition from the RUC and loyalist gangs. As the situation worsened and parts of Derry and Belfast became no-go areas for the police, the Labour Government sent in the British army to restore 'peace'. In reality, the British army went in to protect the sectarian Orange state and Protestant privilege.

Today there are 18,000 British troops in

Northern Ireland. As every march shows, whenever the Catholic population fights back against the privilege and injustice of the Northern Irish state, the police and the British Army stand on the side of the Unionists.

What we say

When the Orange bigots march REVOLUTION will be on the side of the anti-unionist people. The Orange Order has no right to terrorise Catholics, and parade its supremacy in a sectarian state. We are in favour of direct action and resistance to keep the loyalists and their RUC and army protectors out of Catholic areas. We believe that the British troops should be withdrawn now, the RUC should be disbanded and the Irish people as a whole should be allowed to decide on their future free from the partition imposed by British imperialism.

But steps to defend Irish nationalist areas from loyalists and the British armed forces will take more than mass protests and stand-offs in the face of the RUC and British army. It will require self defence organisations which can draw in the masses and arm themselves with whatever weapons are necessary to guarantee the safety of the nationalist community and give them some control over their lives. These first steps will come up against the might of the British state. Real control will mean taking on this state which has caused so much exploitation and misery and oppression. That will take more than the limited guerrilla campaign of the IRA. It will mean a mass fight for socialism and an end to the poverty and misery caused by capitalism. Only the fight for a socialist united Ireland will break the Protestant working class from the Orange Order bosses and the capitalist system. Then we will have lasting peace in Ireland. ■

A MESSAGE OF HATE FROM A LOYALIST DEATH SQUAD...

NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTS TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The loyalist people of the Village/Donegall have tolerated long enough, the Nationalist Scum that have flooded the area in the recent years. This alarming increase of Nationalists is largely due to the unscrupulous behaviour of greedy landlords who have taken advantage of the loyalist Cease-fire. In their greed they have accepted every nationalist without considering the detrimental effect that it has on the Loyalist Community or the risk it places Loyalists in.

Because of the geographical setting of the Village it has for many years now been a common hunting ground for Republican Terrorists where on a number of occasions many innocent Protestants have been Murdered and many properties destroyed.

Protestants have unfortunately become complacent regarding who their neighbours are, 'DO YOU KNOW WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR TO YOU?' In this Political Climate it is unwise to have a Nationalist as a neighbour and even worse to befriend one.

In the light of current events, as from 12 NOON ON THE 1st JULY 1997 the loyalist people of the Village/Donegall Road will no longer be able to guarantee the safety of any Nationalist who chooses to remain within the area, nor can they guarantee the safety of any property where Nationalists are dwelling.

...and message
from the British state to
nationalists fighting back.

STUDENTS £1000 EACH JUST TO GET ON A COURSE?!?

BY Steve in Manchester

DONE YOUR exams? Going to university? As Steve from Manchester explains, students are in for some nasty shocks.

In May on election night, along with hundreds of other Manchester students sitting in the union bar until 4am, I witnessed the most important election victory for the Labour Party in decades. It was a memorable night, one I'll remember for years to come - despite the worst hangover I've ever had! But, with the two paracetamol and fifty gallons of orange juice that followed the election night party came the very real question about what Labour intended to do for students over the coming year.

Student poverty

Students are in debt and education funding is in crisis, because the last Tory government cut taxes for the rich at the expense of education, health and welfare. These attacks affected students in three ways: It removed students rights to claim benefits during holidays and removed their right to housing benefit during term time; it introduced charges for dental treatment and opticians for students; it cut the amount paid in grants forcing thousands of students into crappy low paid exploitative work, and introduced a Students Loan Scheme, from which students are forced to borrow to make ends meet.

Student debt to the notorious Student Loans Company now stands at over £1.5 BIL-

LION, and this amount doesn't even take into account the millions that students owe to the banks. With rents for University Accommodation set to rise by over 40% in the next few years, this debt is set to soar yet again - excluding thousands of working class youth from higher education.

Blairs priorities

During the election campaign Tony Blair argued that his top three priorities would be "education, education and education". After 18 years of Tory attacks, education, along with health and welfare, must be a priority for the new government.

So what is the Labour Party's response to this crisis? Even before the election victory Tony Blair and New Labour refused to consider ending student debt and hardship by increasing taxes for the rich and re-introducing a living grant for all students. Now that they are in government, they have come up with the amazing idea that to solve student debt and hardship... you increase the amount of debt students are in!

David Blunkett, the new minister for education is set to impose a £1000 tuition fee per year for all students in H.E. How are students supposed to pay for this? By borrowing more money! Yeah nice one Blunkett.! The average students already graduates over £4000 in debt.

This whirlwind was taken on advice from the Sir Ron Dearing Committee of Inquiry on

H.E funding which was set up to resolve the funding crises without "burdening" taxpayers.

Give us all your money!

And that's not it. Labour is also considering bringing in an all new graduate tax for when we leave university. This means we'll have to pay extra national insurance contributions for our entire working life.

And to put the icing on the cake, Labour are even thinking about abolishing grants altogether and introduce an "individual learning accounts" instead where the government pays in a credit and we use this to "BUY" university tuition.

When hundreds of students in Manchester cheered at the election night party, it was because they felt that under a Labour government that things were going to change for the better, that Labour would improve the situation of students and education funding - New Labour is promising to make things worse.

Fightback

Students and education workers cannot sit back and wait for Labour to improve things, it simply won't happen. It is up to us to force New Labour to meet our needs, not those of its new found friends in the City of London. At the beginning of next term REVOLUTION will be launching a campaign across university campuses, organising meetings and activities to fight student hardship, for a living grant for all and for a fully funded educational system. We intend to fight until Labour meet our needs - you should be part of it! Get in touch now and help us prepare for the hottest autumn for years!

STOP SCHOOL HIT SQUADS!

BY Tom in Clapham

BEFORE THE Tories got kicked into oblivion at the last general election they drew up a 'hit-list' of schools which are supposedly failing. This list was compiled with statistics and information which was untrue or dated. The list was going to be used to sack teachers and close down schools, so that the Tories could save some money at our expense.

Many people thought that when Labour got in they would just bin the hit-list and save our education system. They were completely wrong, Labour not only kept the hit-list but they even went further than the Tories and said that schools in Hackney, London, are failing. Hit squads are going to inspect the schools in Hackney to try and close them, like Hackney Downs which was closed 2 years ago.

These inspectors and inspecting bodies like OFSTED, who are made up of failed teachers

and people who have no experience of education, go into schools for a week and try to find problems. But their solutions are to sack teachers and close down schools. REVOLUTION says that people of the local community with advice from education workers and students should inspect the schools. These inspections would find that much more money is needed, to pay under waged teachers, to buy books and equipment. It's no coincidence that Hackney is a poor, multi-racial borough. You will not see areas with lots of private schools being branded as failures.

Who's to blame

The government is 'naming and shaming' schools and blaming teachers, parents and students. Instead of properly funding education, they say that the money needed is not available. But it would be if they taxed the

rich to pay not only for education, but also for hospitals and other services.

The only way to stop the hit-squads from doing what they want to do, which is close schools, is by uniting the teachers, parents, students and other school workers in joint strikes, walk-outs and occupations. Links with other schools and colleges are also needed so that if one school goes on strike, then every other school in the area does so too.

REVOLUTION says:

- Abolish hit-squads and OFSTED.
- Local communities to inspect their own schools
- No to hit-lists or league tables.
- Abolish private schools, free education for all.
- Tax the rich to pay for free education
- Unite teachers, parents and students in joint strikes, walk-outs and occupations.

BP on the run



BY Fran in Ealing

ON JUNE 19th REVOLUTION and the Coalition Against BP in Colombia took the Barbican Centre by storm. The occasion was the Cardiff Singer of the World, an event BP sponsors in yet another public relations exercise to give themselves a good image. We entered the Barbican foyer, unfolded the banner and started "informing" the hundreds of concert-goers present that BP sponsors not only music but also murder.

Since our last action at the Tate Gallery the Coalition has grown, drawing in more groups and individuals who want to do something to stop BP's funding death-squads in Colombia. There have also been some very important developments that greatly increase the scope of the campaign.

Colombian trade unions

1) The Colombian trade unionist Freddie Pulecio of the Union Sindacal Obrero flew to London. In a public meeting he spoke about the reality of trying to survive under BP's murderous rule, where it sees trade unionists and peasant community leaders as a

threat to its profits. This is why they hire their own "Special Unit for Security" to protect their operations (in other words eliminate any resistance to them!). Freddie spoke about how, so far, 18 union organisers have been detained by it alone - their "fate" remains unknown.

The link that the Coalition has established with Freddie marks a really important step in our fight against BP. He toured the UK and other countries like Norway where BP also treats Colombian oil. This is creating a co-ordinated international campaign of trade unions and other groups. This could develop into a stoppage of all Colombian oil by the workers involved in these BP plants, which would be the way to really hit BP.

BP on TV

2) There have also been two good TV programs that devastate BP's lies about its business in Colombia. Villagers described the death squad activity of BP and the Colombian government first-hand. They showed how BP pays a secret British organisation called DSL to train and arm their

Special Unit. They also show BP's top men obviously evading questions put to them. Lots of people have seen these, and they're on video and we're showing them around schools.

3) The new Labour government appointed Sir David Simon (Chairman of BP) as Minister for Competitiveness in Europe. We can use this incredible hypocrisy, considering Labour's new "ethical" foreign policy, to attack the government's backing of BP in Colombia and give the campaign a bigger profile.

Meanwhile, the Coalition against BP grows. REVO will continue building the campaign, ruining BP sponsorships of schools, museums, etc. Actions are in the pipeline, so get involved! No hiding place for BP!!

Get in contact and we'll arrange a showing of "OIL AND TERROR" at your school, college or in your area. See the subscription form page 2 for the address, or give us a phonenumber - 0170 357 0388.

Stop Press: David Simon 'forgot' to declare £2 million shares on joining the government. Not just a murdering polluter - a corrupt murdering polluter!

Dead men with Beards

TROTSKY



EVERYONE HAS heard his name. To be a 'Trot' means to be a rebel, someone who wants to overthrow the system.

But how many know what Trotsky really stood for?

The newspapers, journalists and university professors tell us that the collapse of Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe proves that communism doesn't work. But how often do we learn in school, on TV or in the press about the great communist who first warned that the Soviet system would collapse unless it changed?

Official society fears Trotsky for a reason. The whole history of his life proves that revolution is not just a dream but can be made to happen. And that's not all. Trotsky fought against the bureaucrats and the tyrants who took over in Russia. He showed that they were not building a real communist society but a sick caricature of it.

To be a Trotskyist today means to reject the idea that communism has failed. That is why the rich and powerful everywhere are still afraid of Trotsky and his ideas.

Rebel

Leon Trotsky was born in 1879 in what was then the Russian Empire. The country was ruled over by the Tsar, a King who had complete political control. Russia was a backward country. Most of the people still worked as peasants on the land. The majority of them had no land of their own - they had to work long hours and pay off huge debts to rich landlords.

Towards the end of the last century modern industry began to develop quickly in Russia. Huge factories sprang up paid for mainly by foreign businessmen. Some Russian factory owners also emerged - but even they had few if any political rights: the Tsar made all the decisions.

Meanwhile millions of peasants flocked to the cities to get steady work - a modern working class emerged. They soon grew angry as the employers forced them to work long hours in terrible conditions for pathetically low wages. They were bound to rebel .

.. and in the years to come they did.

Trotsky's first taste of political action came when he was at school. One of the teachers kept making racist remarks and constantly picked on Jews and Catholics. Trotsky, who was born a Jew but did not believe in religion, organised a protest. He got the class to stand and boo the teacher. He was soon to learn that direct action carries risks - he was expelled.

But he didn't give up. As a student he got involved in a movement that tried to organise the new class of industrial workers. The South Russian Workers' Union was a great success at first - hundreds of workers joined in the first few months and began to hold strikes against the factory owners. But soon the police arrested the organisers. Trotsky was jailed.

This proved to Trotsky the need to overthrow the whole system of rich owners with their police protectors. In prison Trotsky studied the communist ideas of Karl Marx, which he used to guide his ideas and actions for the rest of his life.

Exile

From lonely exile in Siberia, Trotsky escaped to the West. He linked up with exiled Russian Marxists who were busy organising a new political party of the working class: the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. In London he joined the editorial board of Lenin's newspaper Iskra ('The Spark'), which argued for the Russian workers to raise the struggles beyond the fight for better conditions at work towards the revolutionary overthrow of the Tsar himself.

Trotsky attended the party's second Congress in 1903. He supported the argument that the party should fight for revolution and not just improvements in pay and conditions. As a Jew he also opposed the campaign of the Bundists who wanted the party's special group that agitated amongst Jewish workers to be a completely independent body, and argued instead for unity in a single party.

Part 1: from rebel to revolution...

When the party split between a Majority (Bolsheviks) who wanted a tight-knit disciplined group and a Minority (Mensheviks) who wanted a softer, looser sort of party, Trotsky sided with the Mensheviks, something that he later came to think was a great mistake.

Soon he parted company with the Mensheviks too. They believed that in the coming revolution against the Tsar the working class should let the capitalist class take the lead and create a modern capitalist country. Lenin - the leader of the Bolsheviks - believed that the capitalists were untrustworthy, and that the working class should look to its own strength, build a fighting alliance with the millions of poor peasants, and take the lead in the revolution.

Dress rehearsal

Trotsky went a step further. He developed his theory of Permanent Revolution. Like Lenin he believed that the capitalist class in Russia was too weak to overthrow the Tsar. The industrial workers would have to lead the peasants and do the job themselves. But Trotsky's idea was that by making the revolution the workers would become the leading force in the whole of Russia, and would have to form a government for themselves. Then there would be no question of stopping at the stage of capitalism. A working class government should go on to take over the property of the capitalists and start building a socialist society.

At that time, no other leading socialists in Russia thought this would be possible. But events were to prove that Trotsky and his theory of Permanent Revolution were correct.

In 1905 Russia was suddenly engulfed in revolution. A mass march to hand in a petition to the Tsar was fired on by troops and hundreds were killed. This massacre - Bloody Sunday - sparked off a general strike as workers downed tools across Russia.

The workers set up new organisations to run the struggle. These councils of elected

delegates - the Soviets - were a new and more democratic type of organisation than had ever been seen before. Workers from every factory, office and area elected their representatives, who could be recalled and replaced at any time.

Trotsky was elected as a leading representative of the Soviet in St Petersburg, the capital of Russia. Trotsky called for a shorter working day, elections to a parliament and free speech. And he knew that it would take a hard fight to win these demands. He called for the Soviet to organise an armed uprising to overthrow the Tsar.

Although the 1905 revolution failed, it was not the end of the story. It had been a great dress rehearsal for even greater events to come.

World War I

In August 1914, the capitalist rulers of Europe sent millions of young people off to die in the First World War. Some 'socialists', like the British labour party and the Russian Mensheviks, decided to support "their own" country. Others, like the Bolsheviks, saw that the war was really about which set of millionaires would control the lion's share of the world's wealth, natural resources and markets. They opposed the war, and refused to take sides with any of the Kings, Presidents and generals.

Trotsky opposed the war and attacked those who backed it as traitors to the working class. Even when the numbers of people opposing the war seemed to be no more than a handful he stood firm. This courage paid off - for as the war dragged on millions of workers and peasants grew poorer and poorer, more bitter and exhausted. Eventually they brought the war to an end themselves, by rising up against the war-mongers.

Revolution

The Russian workers were the first to rise. In February 1917 demonstrations and riots in St Petersburg (then re-named

Petrograd) turned quickly into an uprising that forced the Tsar to resign. Soviets sprang up all across Russia. A new government came to power, made up of a coalition of capitalist ministers and representatives of other parties, including the Mensheviks. They used very revolutionary phrases, but they refused to pull Russia out of the bosses' war, refused to give land to the starving peasants, and refused to let the workers run the factories themselves.

Trotsky was now able to put his theory of permanent revolution into practice. He opposed the new government and said that the workers' Soviets should seize power themselves and set up a workers' government. Lenin argued the same line and convinced the Bolsheviks to raise the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!". Trotsky now realised that the Bolsheviks were the only revolutionary party in Russia and joined them. By October 1917 he had once again risen to a position of great influence in the Soviet, and together with the Bolsheviks convinced them to take power.

On the night of the 24th October, armed workers and soldiers loyal to the Soviet moved to take control of all the key points in cities across Russia. In Petrograd the mass of the working class were so ready for revolution that there was scarcely any resistance. A new Soviet government was installed. The world's first successful workers' revolution had taken place.

International

Soviet Russia was about to make the first ever attempt to introduce the socialist system. But Trotsky and Lenin realised that their success depended on one thing above all else: socialist revolutions in other countries. We live in an international economy. As Trotsky warned with increasing urgency, without the revolution spreading, the workers' republic in Russia would be isolated and would eventually go down to defeat.

• In the next issue of REVOLUTION: Trotsky's fight against Stalinism.



While the world warms... earth summit does nothing

BY Lisa in Hackney

MANY OF us remember the hype of the first ever "United Nations" (UN) Earth Summit in Rio, 1992. It was to be the first time the heads of the world were finally going to admit to the seriousness of global environmental degradation, in particular Global Warming. Targets for reductions in pollution and greenhouse emissions were set, controls on deforestation and vague commitments to increasing aid to the "3rd World" which would help stop the environmental destruction caused by poverty.

The recent UN Earth Summit came and went without the same hype and promises from the global leaders. It's no wonder why: most of the targets set five years ago at Rio are not even close to being met. In 1992, 125 national leaders agreed to reduce CO2 emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 - but emissions have never been higher and continue to grow. 130,000 species have become extinct, largely through continuing deforestation. And "aid" has shrunk overall.

This time round, US president Bill Clinton wouldn't even agree to setting any targets for the cutting of greenhouse emissions. The only thing the summit was united on, was agreeing to agree to do nothing.

Global Warming

According to Tony Blair himself, if emissions continue to rise at the current rate, global temperature will have risen by between 1 and 3.5 degrees by the year 2100 and sea levels will have risen by a metre. This is a huge rise in temperatures, considering that the last ice age occurred with an average drop in temperature of around 4 degrees. Scientists generally agree that the initial affects of global warming are already being seen, with increasing unpredictable and unusual weather patterns: floods, droughts, cyclones and irregular temperature patterns.

Unfortunately the Earth Summit is a

farce. After all, the leaders of the richest (imperialist) countries have almost entire control over what is decided - and even if they do agree to do something, there is nothing in place to make sure they actually do it, no matter how small a change. It's just a talk shop where world leaders can attract media attention for doing absolutely nothing.

We need real Earth Summits, where workers and youth can see what is really going on with the environment, and do something about it. The World leaders don't want to do anything because it would make them spend some money, which they don't want to do because they are rich, lying bastards who only care about themselves.

Real change will only come when ordinary people can control the polluting factories and stop them polluting, and this will only come with a Revolution.

Manchester airport Grounding progress?

BY Kuldip in Acton

THE FOCAL point of this summer's environmental protest has been the proposed 2nd Runway at Manchester Airport. The £170 million development has angered eco-warriors and local middle class NIMBY's (not in my back yard) alike. One group which has been largely absent from this debate however, is the North-West's working class.

First, it is a basic democratic principle that only the area's people can decide if a second runway is needed. This means that small self-appointed minorities making the decision is wrong, be they the tiny elite that owns and runs the corporations and controls the state, or protestors who for their own ideological reasons have chosen to block something.

The protests

Many of the environmental protesters on the site are deep-greens, and oppose the runway because they want to stop all development and go back to a small-scale, green utopia that never existed. This is a hidden

agenda and doesn't come out in t.v. reports. And the local middle classes want to save their countryside without allowing a regional debate on what is best for the area. Some said it was alright but should be put in a working-class area!

We're socialists, so we view development from a democratic, working class perspective. They must balance the countryside and increased pollution against the North-West's need for better transport links jobs and decide whether to let it go ahead. And the global trend of destructive development for profit can only be reversed by the world's majority, working people. By not seeing organising among them as the first priority and bypassing them by D.I.Y protest means inevitable failure.

Way forward

So how do we square the circle of our environment versus our other needs? We believe a democratically-planned economy run by us to meet our needs is the only way

forward. Then environmental concerns wouldn't be side-stepped in the pursuit of profits- we wouldn't screw ourselves over the way corporations do. Scientists would be free from ties to business, so we'd have info that was actually objective. We'll need a revolution for that, no question.

We don't support the campaign because we're not opposed to development in general. We say defend the protestors against attacks by security and the police and call for all charges against them to be dropped. But for future campaigns, the only way forward is to hold an open debate involving the working class, and to build a workers' enquiry, involving environmentalists, to find out the facts. This would encourage people to get involved, and voice their opinions on local issues. In the process we will be taking the initiative away from the bureaucrats and money men and taking the first steps towards regaining control of our lives.

SCIENCE: FRIEND OR FOE?

BY Tom in Clapham

AS A REVOLUTIONARY scientist, I am often asked whether or not science is a good thing. Many people would say that it is good, while others say it causes major problems. Both have valid arguments. On the one hand, without science and its practical application, technology, we would live in a very primitive society. Whereas some, like Reclaim The Streets (RTS) would say that technology, especially cars and roads, will lead to the total and utter destruction of the environment.

No technology

Many in RTS want to stop technology in its tracks and turn the clock back to a world before modern technology and development. This could only happen at the expense of the majority of people. Loads of people would die without current drugs and technology. This is not the way forward into the future and it is not an effective way of dealing with the environment. The only way to protect the environment is to let workers take control of the polluting factories, after kicking out the fat, polluting bastards who own them, and use the most modern technology to stop them industry from harming the environment.

Science and technology greatly improves peoples lives and working conditions. Imagine having to do a days work with no machines, it would take much longer than a day. People thought that when machines and computers could do most of the work, than the working week would be drastically reduced, but the problem with this idea is that the people who own the machines are the bosses who either find more work for people to do or they sack workers as they have technology to do work. If the workers owned the technology, then the working week would be cut, without reducing wages or sacking workers.

Health & Safety

The question of science and safety comes up a lot. Is genetically engineered food, for example, safe. The answer is that we often don't know (although it most probably is or could be). If the person who controls these things is someone who is trying to save money by cutting corners and endangering

peoples safety, then these products will not be safe. If the person who controls the genetic engineering of food is making giant soya beans and not saying on the label that it is genetically modified, because they think less people will buy it, then people who are truly worried about it will consume the food without knowing. The way to stop things like this is to have full investigations into the safety and effects of products such as these. The only people who could run these investigations properly are the workers and youth who use these products, alongside the best scientific researchers. And all the results should be announced fully and openly.

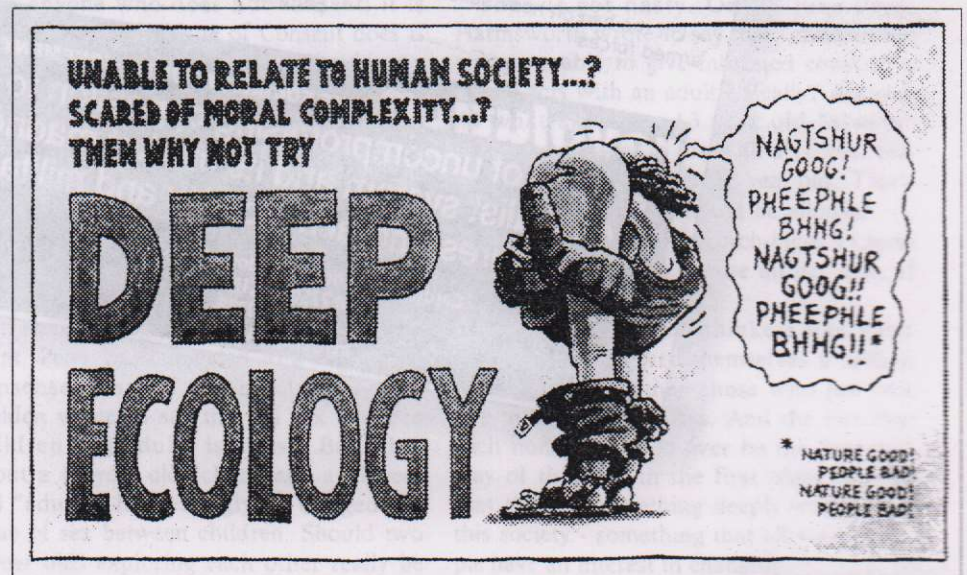
What about xenotransplantations, cows which make human blood and Dolly? If it is found that organ transplants from pigs are safe, or that milk that contains human blood proteins is safe, then it will be welcomed as a new source of donors which can be used for medical purposes and drastically reduce hospital waiting lists. Dolly, the genetically cloned sheep, now a year old, could make a path towards helping infertile parents have healthy children. But real changes will only happen if we have control of the hospitals and laboratories which produce and use these medical improvements. Modern medications and medical technology have to be available to everybody, not just the rich who can afford to go to private

hospitals and have the new and best treatments.

The future

Space exploration: should the millions of dollars be going into space research when millions of people can't even get enough food to live on? Well where the money really needs to come from is the millions of pounds that the the big company owners get each year for doing nothing but destroying peoples lives. Or should we move to another planet if we completely stuff up our own environment? Exploring and even moving to other areas of the universe will be great steps forward for the development of human society. We should not be afraid of them. We've just got to make sure that all of this will be based on a new form of human society - that is democratically run by the working people of world.

As revolutionaries, we can not be against science, technology or development, like RTS so often are. Science is the only progressive way forward. But we also need to have control over it and test the safety of developments. We have to take the factories and laboratories from the rich elite and run them ourselves. The way forward to a better future is to use science and technology to develop our world around our needs, under a socialist society.



PRIDE 97 Marching against prejudice

BY Anna in Hamstead

THERE WAS a huge show of support at the Pride march on July 5. The march started around one in the afternoon and there were trains waiting at Victoria station to take us to the festival on Clapham Common. A lot of people standing along the sides cheered us on, including a few suprised and confused tourists. The march was mostly young and had more men than

women, but we made more noise! It was more of a parade than a march, with many people really dressed up to celebrate, and it was very lively, with lots of noise and all of us happy to be there. It was a great day for us to be able to express ourselves and gave confidence to those who are just coming out. It could have been more political, though, for instance it should have adressed

the long term concerns of our community, such as our representation in education, parenting and the workplace, and how we can defend ourselves from bashers. But I'm definitely going next year.

REVOLUTION

Three out, gay MPs, a gay Cabinet Minsiter and a massive Labour majority. So what are they waiting for?

If they were committed to ending discrimination, there would be no need for delay, consultation exercises, "ifs", "buts" or "maybes". They would simply legislate now to:

- Equalise the age of consent for gays and straights
- Repeal Section 28 of the Local Government Act, and ensure that homosexuality and heterosexuality are presented as equal in the education system

- Outlaw discrimination on grounds of sexuality
- Lift the ban on homosexuality in the armed forces

- Establish equal rights for lesbian and gay couples in housing, parenting, adoption, pensions and all walks of life.
- End the discriminatory ban on 'public' expressions of lesbian and gay love.

These changes are too important for us to wait for the Cabinet to decide if and when they happen. We have a real chance of getting every legal disability that we have suffered for so long removed. But only if we fight for it and put the government under maximum pressure.

Direct action is not "out of date", "boring" or "a thing of the past". It is the only way to make sure that we finally win our rights. We should force Labour to act now, with a massive campaign of marches, lobbies, petitions and protests.

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Child Abuse and the Age of Consent

PETER AND THE WOLVES

BY Richard in Dalston

PETER TATCHELL is a brave man. In 1983 he stood for parliament and only lost after a vicious anti-gay campaign. Since then he has been fighting for rights for lesbians and gay men, and has never been afraid to speak his mind, even when it makes him a hate figure in the right wing press.

Last year he wrote an article for *REVOLUTION*, which supported our own view that young people should have the right to have sex if they want, even if they are "under-age". Peter recognised that young people can suffer terrible oppression by their families and at school just for expressing their desires and having sex. But he also recognised that young people can be exploited and manipulated by older people and forced into having sex.

RAPE vs SEX

To stop rapists threatening and pressuring children into sex, Peter wrote in *REVOLUTION*:

"sex involving young people under the age of 14 should not be prosecuted, providing both partners consent and there is no more than three years' difference in their ages. This element of flexibility takes into account the fact that some young people experiment sexually with each other from an early age. They shouldn't be treated as criminals. Restricting sex involving the under 14s to partners with a maximum three-year age difference would protect very young people from being manipulated by those much older."

Peter's article in *REVOLUTION* drew a very friendly response from our readers and supporters . . . which says something about what young people really think about the subject.

Youth in control

REVOLUTION has always thought that the current Age of Consent laws do nothing to stop the horror of child abuse, most of which goes on in secret, either in repressive care homes or within the family.

The way to stop the organised abuse of children in homes is to open these secretive and closed institutions up to the light of day, allow the children in care to have some control over the institutions themselves, for them to be treated like real homes rather than prisons or young offenders institutions, in all but name. Youth-only meetings in the homes, an effective way to challenge

abuses, and democratic community-based inspections, could drive out the abusers altogether, instead of leaving them in total dictatorial control able to exercise authority and terror to satisfy their desire to rape and abuse.

As for abuse in the family, we believe that steps have to be taken to break down the isolation and separation of family life from the rest of the world - to break down the barriers that allowing abuse in the family to go undetected for so long and take place in a climate of fear where it is the abused child, not the abusing adult, who is made to feel that they have "done something wrong" or that they will be punished if anyone finds out.

Age of Consent

In neither case do Age of Consent laws help protect young people. How could they? There is already a law against sex with anyone who does not consent: it is called rape. All the Age of Consent does is make young people criminals for having sex that they *do* consent to.

Peter has continued his campaign - but needless to say not everyone has been as appreciative as *REVOLUTION*. He wrote to the *Guardian* on 26 June to say that "not all sex involving children is unwanted, abusive or harmful."

Hate campaign

In response to this completely sane statement, Peter was subjected to a barrage of nonsense, hysteria and bigotry. Andrew Holden wrote to say that all sex between children and adults is abuse. But what about a 15 year old "child" and a 17 year old "adult"? Interestingly he dodged the issue of sex between children. Should two 9-year olds exploring each other really be illegal?

There is already a law against rape. All the Age of Consent does is make young people into criminals for having sex that they *do* consent to.

One nutter (Ian Flintoff) thought so. He wrote in to say that the Age of Consent should be raised . . . to 27!

Then it got nasty. On 28 June Peter Harnsworth wrote to say that "children are always unable to give informed consent to sexual acts with an adult." Really? Always? At what age? Is a 13 year old "always" unable to consent to sex with a 16 year old, or a 15 year old with an 18 year old? That's all that Peter thinks should be allowed . . . but none of this stopped arch-bigot Victoria Gillick writing in to accuse all gay men of wanting to rape boys!

Once again radical thinkers like Peter Tatchell have proved themselves a million times more sane than those who just trot out "official" prejudices. And the fact that such nonsense could ever be the "normal" way of thinking in the first place tells us that there is something deeply wrong with this society - something that all young people have an interest in changing.

WHY WON'T LABOUR SCRAP RACIST LAWS?

ANYONE HOPING that the long era of Tory racism is now over should get ready for a nasty shock.

Tory Michael Howard deported Abdul Onibiyo 2 years ago. He sent him back to Nigeria, even though Abdul's life was in danger there. Abdul was a campaigner for democracy against the Nigerian military dictatorship of General Abacha. The regime kills its opponents, like environmental campaigner Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was executed for opposing Shell's destruction of Ogoniland.

At the time Labour protested about the heartless deportation. Jack Straw said he would "do what I can to help the Onibiyos".

But now Jack Straw is no longer in opposition. He is the Home Secretary. And he is refusing to let Abdul, who is in hiding, come back to safety in Britain.

What a heartless hypocrite!

The Labour Party won millions of votes from black people at the last election. It claimed to be against the racism of the Tory years. But now it is betraying its promises. In government it is using the same racist system of immigration laws that give white immigrants from the Commonwealth an easy ride but keep out hundreds of thousands of desperate black refugees and asylum seekers.

REVOLUTION demands an end to all racist laws

- let Abdul and all asylum seekers into Britain now
- scrap immigration laws - they are all racist
- stop arming and supporting repressive dictatorships

At Haggerston School, East London, a campaign has started against the deportation of two people whose children are at the school. The Nanga and Lema families are campaigning together, with support from teachers, local people and school students.

One school student told the meeting that she thought it was "terrible that people are being sent back to countries in Africa where there are wars going on", and suggested getting her whole class to go and see Tony Blair to explain to him why he should stop the deportations. This is a brilliant idea!

If you want to help ring
REVOLUTION on 0171 357 0588.

join a union! RESPECT is due...

BY Andy in Brixton

"GOD, IT'S ABOUT TIME! Our boss doesn't know the meaning of the word." "Yeah, let's get some respect!" You get the same response again and again when you go into a workplace to talk to workers about their rights.

We're members of Revo and also of the T&G, one of the largest trade unions in Britain. The striking Liverpool Dockers and Magnet workers are members, and it organises a large number of really diverse areas, from the petrochemical workers and the car industry with its huge factories of thousands of workers all the way down to restaurants and shops. It also represents a lot of administrative workers.

But for 18 Tory years the union bureaucrats didn't keep up with recruiting and actually lost huge numbers of members by not backing T&G workers who were sacked or forced into taking strike action. As a result the T&G has shrunk from over 2.5 million workers down to 900,000.

Now a young organisers initiative is aiming to turn that around. Restaurants and shops are sectors with the least unionisation and some of the worst conditions. They have a lot of young workers, and the best people to meet them and talk to them about rights and unions are people who are of the same age and work in the same kinds of places. Some members of the campaign

are paid T&G organisers but most of us are volunteers and do it after work or school.

respect at workzone

We're focussing on the West End of London. We want to organise all the shops and restaurants, from Pizza Hut all the way up to the really posh ones- they've all got the same crap wages and conditions. Every week we go into workplaces with union leaflets and give them out to the workers. Sometimes the boss gets really nasty and tells you to get out or you've got to dodge the security at big places, but that just makes you realise how scared they are of their employees getting in a union and how important organising is. It's good to stand up to a manager - it shows workers you're serious and that these assholes who boss us around aren't all-powerful.

We've had some good talks about problems, and several phonecalls from people interested in joining, after only 3 weeks of doing it. It's a good laugh, too. We're going on all summer, so there's lots of time to get involved. If you want to fightback and build organisations that are for us, not them, give us a call!

T&G young organisers campaign: 0181-809-4977 ask for Nova, Oliver, Louise or Dave.



Diana's hypocrisy

Landmines and the arms trade

DI MADE A BIT of a splash recently. She was swanning around the globe doing the biz, squeezing lots of babies, looking very sad at refugee hospitals...and making speeches against the international trade in land mines. Yes, somehow sandwiched into her punishing schedule of soirees and £10,000 shopping sprees Di had a change of heart on the arms industry. Was this the beginning of Red Di? We were expecting her phone call at the Revo office any day, but then Di's Commie phase didn't last too long. She quickly backed down, saying it wasn't fitting for royalty to be "political". (nobody's told her yet!)

Ethical weapons

Then Robin Cook, the Labour government's new foreign secretary, said on May 12th that he wanted to inject a new "ethical dimension" into foreign policy by supporting people who are fighting for democratic rights in the third world. The focus was on states that make wars abroad and repress their own people internally. He said there would be a review of arms sales from Britain to these regimes and announced an immediate ban on land mine sales by British companies.

Why wait?

This might have been a good start. So why not ban arms sales right away? In reality, Cook has said the review will take a long time and people shouldn't expect too much

from it- he is firm on keeping lucrative arms contracts in place no matter where they're going, and for two reasons. Firstly because arms exports are an important source of profits for the likes of GKN and Vickers, and the ruling class wants to keep these going so it has its own home military industry and a source of weapons that it controls. Britain is an imperialist country, and they need arms for intimidation or wars against third world countries, like the Gulf War, so that they can keep all the property and resources they own abroad. Ultimately they're there to be used against us, too.

Power & property

Secondly, they prop up regimes that protect their property abroad, like Iraq before it invaded Kuwait and threatened the other petro-monarchies (i.e. their oil fields). And that's the logic of the British ruling class- if you serve their interests, they'll sell you arms, if you go against them they'll use arms to smash you, either way they make you or break you.

In addition, Britain spends billions on its armed forces, to use in N. Ireland, for example, which Robin Cook has no intention of getting rid of.

And the biggest joke of all? British companies haven't manufactured mines for years, and there aren't any exports worth speaking of to ban. The only reason these hypocrites are supporting a ban is because they aren't making any money off them.

THE RECORD:

Nigeria:

- Hundreds of millions of pounds in weapons and loans to buy arms
- Ruled by a junta, supported by Shell, that has openly executed dozens of pro-democracy activists and has massacred thousands of the Ogoni people.

Saudi Arabia:

- Spends £2 billion a year in arms
- Is ruled by a brutal monarchy that allows no political opposition and massively oppresses women.

Algeria:

- Robin Cook just let an arms shipment go ahead
- Has the worst human rights record in the world
- Government paramilitaries are responsible for tens of thousands killed since 1992, slitting the throats of whole villages and using blowtorches to interrogate people.

Indonesia:

- Buys Hawk Jets and armoured personnel carriers from British Aerospace and DKN
- Has a dictatorship that invaded and continues to bomb East Timor and smashes up pro-democracy rallies and demos at home.

Turkey:

- Gets tanks from Vickers to oppress the Kurdish minority.

Kenya:

- A one party dictatorship and another satisfied Vickers customer.
- The list goes on and on....

REVOLUTION

IN MANCHESTER!

BY Max in Manchester

IN THE LAST month a new group of REVOLUTION supporters has been set up in Manchester. We held a meeting to get it off the ground. We decided to elect two people to get things organised: a REVOLUTION organiser to keep in touch with people and someone to plan direct action.

We decided to get started by campaigning against BP's links to death squads in Colombia. We have been handing out leaflets in the city centre to let people know what's going on and have collected loads of names and addresses on a petition. Now

that more people know the bloody reality behind BP's corporate image, we are going to get them involved in a summer campaign.

We held a public meeting about BP and showed the World in Action programme that exposed their use of secret security agencies to train up the deadly police in attacking protesters. We had a good discussion between socialists and some anarchists and greens at the meeting, which was very constructive.

Next we will be targeting BP buildings

and sponsorships in the North West for direct action... watch this space!

Also we are going to step-up sales of REVOLUTION in the centre of town. These have been good so far, especially during the election. Now we are going to sell at the festivals and anti-racist events that are coming up this summer...

If you want to get involved with REVO in Manchester, ring Max on 0161 257 2495.

REVOLUTION

THE FIGHTING PAPER FOR WORKING CLASS YOUTH

NO RETURN TO THE BACKSTREETS! FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND!



BY Adam in Coventry

THERE HAS BEEN a lot of media hype recently about fertility, unwanted pregnancies and abortions. The rubbish in the press against "lunch-break abortions" is an example of the shit that working class women have to put up with. Another was the case of a woman in Scotland, who had to fight a legal battle against her ex-partner for her right to an abortion. The anti-abortionist bigots obviously didn't care about her needs. As if needing the signatures of two doctors and then waiting on a long NHS waiting-list for an abortion isn't bad enough. Of course, the rich don't have to worry about all that because they can just pay for their abortions and other medical services without the usual queues and legal restrictions.

Church Baddies

In Britain, the campaigns against abortion are predominantly led by the group Life. The organisation, linked to religious orders, is completely against abortion on demand and

is even opposed to the use of contraceptives. The only "life" which they wish to see is enclosed in the family unit and obeying the laws of the land - it is an organisation which reinforces the oppression and exploitation within capitalism. In the USA anti-abortionists have even attacked pregnant women and killed health workers (So much for being in favour of life!). Here, Life continues to campaign against women's rights, harassing people seeking abortions and family planning.

Take aside

At Warwick University, recently, Life supporters managed, through lies and the lack of informed debate, to change the Student Union's previous Pro-Choice position for one of "neutrality". Luckily, after a long campaign by both male and female students, we were able to change the position back. It is important that we have a firm position - not a "neutral" one - so that women are defended against the physical

and mental pressures that anti-abortionists impose. In Britain, it was the active struggles of working women and men that got abortions legalised in 1967. Many women died in Britain before abortions were made legal. Around the world 500,000 women still die each year because of unhygienic and unsupervised, illegal abortions. This is another huge reason for fighting for a woman's right to a legal abortion on demand.

What we need

REVOLUTION has always fought for women's rights. As well as free abortion on demand, we want to see free contraceptives and medical care for all, regardless of age. Full child-care is also necessary for women who do want to have children. And women must have the same working rights and pay as men do. Combining these demands against women's oppression, with the struggles of the working class, will ultimately be the only way of achieving liberation for working men and women. ■