# SUBJANISER PROPERTY OF THE PRO

Trotsky on China

See page 9



UNILATERALISM OUT, ANTI-UNION LAWS IN

## Kinnock listens to David Owen



abour movement activists ache to kick Thatcher out of office.

Only a hopeless fool or a socialist sectarian as arid and rigidly out of touch with reality as an anchorite monk could live in Britain now and not want Labour to win the next election.

That is the dominant mood in the labour movement now. It is the mood which allows Neil Kinnock and his friends to do what they are now doing in the 'Policy Reviews' being carried out by Labour's National Executive.

What they are doing is little short

of swallowing Thatcherism whole.
Neil Kinnock and his friends have accepted the 'Thatcher Revolution'
— which in fact is a counterrevolution against everything the labour movement has achieved this century.

Labour's goal now, the goal of Neil Kinnock and Labour's leaders, could be summed up as Thatcherism with a human face. It is not socialism, nor serious reform of capitalism, nor even a comprehensive restoration of the fabric of the welfare state torn into tatters by Thatcher and her crew over the last decade.

It is just Thatcherism humanised — if a policy which proposes to keep Britain's nuclear weapons can honestly be said to have anything positively human about it.

Neil Kinnock now sounds so much like David Owen that Owen, the man who ratted on Labour and helped the Tories win the last two elections, has been pouring fulsome praises over Kinnock's head.

SDP MP John Cartwright, one of the Labour renegades who helped Owen make Britain safe for Thatcher, now says he could rejoin

the Labour Party with a clear conscience. The measure of the Labour Party now is that Neil Kinnock could probably welcome Cartwright back in, and David Owen too, with a clear conscience.

Kinnock and his friends have trimmed and reshaped their consciences so that they can more easily live, and, they hope, rule, in a Britain shaped by Margaret Thatcher and the vile brand of Toryism she embodies. They are telling Thatcher that her spirit will still go marching on even after the Tories are replaced by a Labour government.

Thatcher has won her victories for her class for many reasons. One of them was that the combativity of the working class was damped down by slump and unemployment.

Now that combativity is rising again, spurred on by rising inflation and a fall in the numbers unemployed. The dockers, railworkers, engineers and others who are now once more beginning to flex their industrial muscle represent a different response to Mrs Thatcher's New Order.

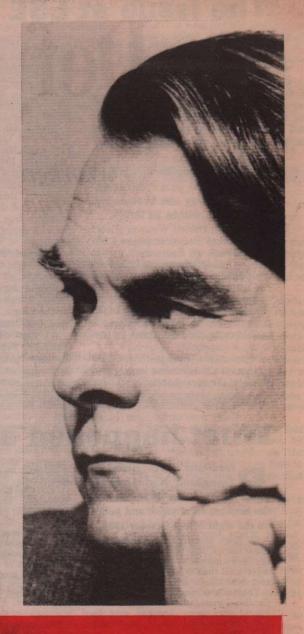
As yet it is a limited response. But it is a far better and more healthy response.

response.

If Kinnock's message to the Tories is that Thatcherism will survive Thatcher, the message of the new mood in industry is 'Don't count your victories until you have won the war'.

More on the Policy Reviews

See centre pages



ORGANISE TO DEFEND LABOUR POLICIES

## **How Winston Silcott** was framed

By John Oyson

he students at the London School of Economics who elected Winston Silcott as their honorary President were not sick, evil or seeking

They were concerned to highlight what Lord Gifford called the worst miscarriage of justice in a British jury trial this decade. Yet leading figures not only in the government but also in the Labour Party rounded on the students, and the National Union of Students tried its best to distance itself from the LSE student union.

It is doubtful whether any of these people have read the Burnham Report, the result of an extensive investigation into the Broadwater Farm trials by Judge Margaret Burnham and Professor Lennot Hinds from the United States. If they had I doubt whether they would have been so quick to

The Report is a damning indictment of the trial and raises serious doubt about the validity of Winston Silcott's conviction for the murder of PC Blakelock. It justifies the calls for a retrial, and it justifies electing Winston Silcott, if only to draw attention to his plight.

The Report highlights inconsistencies and weaknesses in the order of the silcons.

the evidence against not only Silcott but the other defendants: Mark Braithwaite, Engin Raghip and the juveniles X, Y and Z.

All the defendants accused the police of denying them access to legal advice and using threats to try to force confessions out of them.

The court was highly critical of the way the police treated the juveniles and X, Y and Z were all discharged by the court on the murder charge. The others, however, were found guilty.

The prosecution could find no witness to say they can be said.

witness to say they saw Raghip kill PC Blakelock. He had alibi witnesses to say he was at home, but they were rejected by the Jury.

The police interrogated Raghip on 10 occasions for a total of 15 hours, without granting his legal

right to have a solicitor.

Magistrates ordered that he should have a solicitor present during interviews after his bail hearing. There were four subsequent interviews at which no solicitor was present, despite one solicitor leaving his phone number with the custodial officer.

Raghip was described by one solicitor who eventually got to see him as "confused and needing assistance".

The Burnham Report said that statements made under these conditions should not have been

allowed before a jury.

Braithwaite was similarly denied access to a solicitor. He also had alibi witnesses to say he was at a friend's house. The prosecution could bring no evidence to corroborate his alleged admission that he had assaulted an officer with a two foot bar. No witnesses, yet found guilty — life

Silcott's case raises even more doubt since the police were unable even to get a confession, despite numerous interviews. Their only evidence is an ambiguous statement he is alleged to have made in his final interview with police.

He was shown photos of other people and asked "Did you murder PC Blakelock?". He is said to have broken down and replied "You ain't got no evidence. Those kids will never go to court. No one will talk to you. You can't keep me

away from them".

When he was charged with murder he is said to have repeated "No one will give evidence against

Even if this statement was made, (Sillcott denied making it), it alone could never be evidence of murder. But it was adequate for the jury.

There were no witnesses despite the most extensive investigation by police, and the only people who claimed to have seen Silcott on the scene were the three juveniles whose statements were ruled 'not admissable' because of the way the police extracted them.

The Burnham Report concluded: "At best, the statements made by Silcott were ambiguous. Far less than the unqualified admissions which the police were able to secure from the juveniles, the statements are in the nature of a challenge to the police to prove their case against

him.
"The criminal justice system permits a defendant to say to the government: 'You've charged me. Now prove it'. Indeed, that challenge is an explicit and fundamental tenent of a system based on proof beyond a reasonable

"This principle is cynically twisted when the defendants statement, 'You haven't got any evidence against me' is deemed an admission of his guilt".

Murder is a serious business. The victim of murder deserves to have his or her killer brought to some kind of justice, and anyone accused of murder deserves to have a fair trial in which the prosecution must prove beyond any reasonable doubt that they are the murderer. Is there not doubt in this case?

No witnesses despite a massive investigation; no admission of guilt; an alibi; detention without access to solicitors - how much more doubt do you need?

The Burnham report criticises the whole system: "British law does not require corroborative evidence in a case which confession..." rests on a

What governed the jury's deliberations can only be guessed at. The Burnham Report believes a general impression was created by what was both said and not said at the trial that Silcott had been the



Broadwater Farm people demonstrate on the first anniversary of the death of Cynthia Jarrett. Photo: Jez Coulson IFL.

main target of the police investigation. There was strong pressure to convict.

The Press were very hostile towards Silcott and assumed he was guilty. On the second day of the trial, the Sun front page had a photo of Silcott, and the accompanying article began: "This is the first picture of the man police believe wielded the machete which hacked brave bobby Keith Blakelock to death".

No doubt some of the Jurors read the Sun that day.

All Winston Silcott asks for is justice. The courts, however, have continually refused to allow an

The government would like us to forget. The implications of admitting there has been a miscarriage of justice would be serious. Like the Guildford and Birmingham pub bombings the case is too politically sensitive.

The Burnham Report is available from Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign, 12/16 Tangmere, Broadwater Farm

#### The issue at LSE

Jed Marsh reports on why students at the London **School of Economics** elected Winston Silcott convicted of the murder of PC Blakelock in the Broadwater Farm riot - as honorary president of their student union.

t's surprising how one item of business at a student union meeting can become national news within 24 hours.

When we elected Winston Silcott as Honorary President at the London School of Economics it was never intended to promote him as an individual but rather to highlight the issue of his unfair trial.

Since the beginning of the dispute the right wing at LSE have changed their line from labelling Silcott a murder to conceding that he was

made a scapegoat.

Despite this, there is still pressure to overturn the decision largely as a result of the press harassing student

union officials. Much has been made of the letter Silcott wrote to the Independent (on this page) and the fact he said he did not want the Presidency. Really Silcott said it wasn't enough; he just wants

Should he reject the position it still leaves questions unanswered.
The college authorities have threatened the union financially by withholding a cheque, the govern-ment has used the issue to bring up voluntary membership of student unions, and the National Union of Students has put pressure rather than supporting LSE student

LSE student union must stand up for our right to make decisions independent of the government, the press, and especially the college.

The college is frightened of losing sponsorships because of the bad press, but democracy is not for sale!

Whether Silcott is worthy of Honorary President has made way for a new issue - the fight for student union independence and

#### 'The whole system is racist and against poorer people'

Winston Silcott's letter to the Independent (3 May)

he outcry about me (Winston Silcott) being elected honorary president of the students' union at the London School of Economics is very un-

The students have put the hype and propaganda aside which has been mounted against me. Before the police show-trial, during and after, I have been used to serve the propaganda machine. The students have done what sensible people would do; that is look at the facts of the so-called evidence against me which is nil, innuendo only.

What the public don't realise is that by using me as a scapegoat, the real person or people responsible for committing the murder of PC Blakelock are free.

It seems the truth of what took place in the police show-trial against me hurts in certain quarters. was locked up for 30 years and the keys thrown away with no evidence that I have committed or been involved in any crime.

No forensic evidence was produced; not one of the 1,000-plus photographs identified me or anyone who looked like me. There were no witnesses.

I was jailed on the testimony of a

policeman who claims I spoke certain words to him, which I strongly deny. I never even signed the socalled verbal statement, as I know that the pen is mightier than the

All I, Winston Silcott, want is justice, not injustice and lies. Listen, I don't want to be an honorary president; there are other people who can take up the post. I want wrong to be turned to right.

The public should stop being fooled and brainwashed, and should read the so-called police transcript. Then I will leave it up to you, the public, the so-called human race, to make up your own minds about why I am here in prison as the sacrificed flesh.

Common sense is what is needed to look into this show-trial case. Ten to 15 minutes — that's how long the show-trial against me would have taken if I was put on trial by myself, as my solicitors wanted.

This shame of a case will always be a thorn in the side of the British judiciary. I could say the whole system is racist and against poorer people. But like I said, the truth

No-one wants to speak the truth and defend a black man who has been used. I won't further anyone's political career.

HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight. 29 April.

#### What happened at Broadwater Farm

roadwater Farm estate, in Tottenham, North London was the scene of violent battles between local youth and police on the night of 6-7 October 1985.

PC Keith Blakelock was killed during those battles, and Winston Silcott is in jail for his murder — but on evidence no more solid than a police claim that he said something which might imply guilt.

The riot was sparked by the death of Cynthia Jarrett, who died from a heart attack after being knocked over by police raiding her house on the evening of 5 October.

Just a week earlier Cherry Groce had been shot by police raiding her house in Brixton, suffering injuries which have paralysed her. Both Cynthia Jarrett and Cherry Groce were black, and these incidents set fire to long-smouldering

resentment in the black communities against police racism.

There were riots in Brixton on 29 September. There had been riots in Handsworth, Birmingham, on 9-10 September. Broadwater Farm became the third in this series of riots in predominantly black areas.

The immediate response on Broadwater Farm to Cynthia Jarrett's death was protest meetings and two peaceful, though angry, delegations to the local police station. The police fobbed them

Then in the early evening transit vans full of police in riot gear arrived on the estate. A few days before, on 1 October, police had responded to long-standing demands from community leaders for action against drug peddling on the estate with a heavy-handed stop and search operation.

Clashes developed between local youth and the police — and quickly spread into full-scale street fighting.

In the months after the riot, enormous police pressure was applied to Broadwater Farm. In the five days 10-14 October, more than nine thousand police from other districts were drafted into Broadwater Farm. November, there were eighteen police vans on the estate. 271 flats were searched, many having their doors smashed in with sledgehammers.

Further pressure was put on the estate by press coverage claiming that the riot had been organised by "street fighting experts trained in Moscow and Libya"

and the like.

The cops were determined to find retaliation. They found them, and the press ranting helped them get con-victions on the flimsiest evidence.

## How to fight the anti-union laws

#### **EDITORIAL**

ast Friday, a judge ruled the London Underground workers' strike out of order.

Members of the rail union NUR had voted 7-1 for a strike. But the judge said the ballot paper was badly worded.

Port bosses are taking the dockers' union to court to have their strike ruled unlawful too. Their argument is that whatever the ballot papers say the strike is actually political, against the Government's abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme.

Almost every strike is unlawful these days. Workers can and do defy the law — health workers' and postal workers' strikes were unlawful, but never came to court — but defy it we usually must to do anything effective.

There are several laws, which between them outlaw 'secondary' picketing and 'secondary' strike action (ie action by workers not directly in dispute with a particular company); outlaw mass pickets; outlaw 'political' strikes; make the closed shop extremely difficult to enforce; make spontaneous or quickly-decided action impossible by insisting upon the slow process of balloting; interfere in various ways with the autonomy of trade unions. They have exposed unions to the threat of having all their resources and assets seized.

For the most part, the trade unions allowed these laws to be put into effect without serious opposition. The Industrial Relations Act of the early 1970s was made unworkable by trade union action. These current laws seem far more formidable.

When the 1982 Act was introduced, there was small-scale trade union agitation, but absolutely no action. Individual unions had their assets seized without significant or effective solidarity action from other unions or the TUC.

The defeat of the NGA print



Photo: John Smith, Profile.

## Marching to defend jobs

Over 3000 people turned up on the May Day march through Kirkby (Merseyside), giving a huge boost to the Birds Eye workers fighting

the closure of their factory. Unemployment in Kirkby already stands at 23.5 per cent. Three out of four people are on state benefits.

union by Eddie Shah at Warrington in late 1983 was the major turning point. If the TUC had even begun to mobilise, it could have defeated Shah early. He was a small employer. But the TUC left the printworkers in the lurch.

That defeat could have been reversed if the TUC leaders had rallied to the miners in 1984-5. The Tories were still cautious, rejecting David Owen's calls for more use of

anti-union law against the miners. But the TUC did nothing; the miners were beaten; and that consolidated the laws further.

To a large extent the laws are now accepted as a fact of life by the trade unions. Rules on balloting are widely observed; union leaders bend over backwards to avoid legal (and so financial) penalties.

Today the search for ways around the law is, in principle, sen-

sible and necessary. It is understandable if trade unionists, at rank and file or leadership level, look at the mighty battalions that have been defeated by the law, and think twice about risking the same fate.

But looking for legal loopholes and escape routes has extremely limited possibilities for success. The laws are now far-reaching and difficult to bypass.

ficult to bypass.

Unofficial action is more difficult

to hit with the law. There have been lots of 'unlawful' short unofficial strikes without legal action. But serious, long unofficial disputes are a different matter.

The trade union leaders will be pushed (by the courts) to put a stop to the strike. Remember the P&O dispute: just the National Union of Seamen declaring the strike unofficial was not enough. The union leaders have to convince the judge they were actively trying to stop the strike. And an unofficial strike means strikers will not get strike pay where otherwise they might.

where otherwise they might.

Getting round the law by unofficial actions is all right for short protest actions, but no answer in

long disputes.

So very often there is a stark choice: the unions either accept their action will be ruled unlawful, pull out the stops to win, and mobilise solidarity; or they surrender without a fight.

pull out the stops to win, and mobilise solidarity; or they surrender without a fight.

If the unions fight, we can win. A single small union on its own can't beat the courts; but the whole TUC, or several big unions, certainly can. Consider the alarm created by the prospect of two or three big groups of workers striking simultaneously over pay this summer. The unions still have great power, if they will mobilize it.

Victory can never be guaranteed. But at worst defeat after a fight is better than abject surrender. Now there are better conditions

Now there are better conditions for fighting than there have been in a long time. There is a revival in strike activity — the biggest since the defeat of the miners.

The best time to defy the law is when the trade union movement looks strong. Moreover, the union laws are increasingly unpopular: even people who supported their introduction now feel the Tories have 'gone too far'. And in the wake of their Vale of Glamorgan fiasco, the Tories must be worried about popularity.

So the time to defy the law is now. If the Tories can be forced to back down once, the laws will be increasingly useless to them. Such an achievement will not be easy. But the trade union movement has no choice.

## A wage demand to unify

**By Martin Thomas** 

he bosses' paper, the Financial Times commented on Monday 8 May on "the disruptive impact the recent rise in inflation has had on some two-year pay agreements which included a form of inflation-proofing".

Workers at Premier Brands in Birkenhead had got an increase of 9.45 per cent under a deal which had promised them a pay rise of two per cent more than the January inflation rate. At De Smet Rosedowne workers got 8.9 per cent because their agreement committed the bosses to raise wages by the

March inflation rate plus one per

The rise in inflation which makes inflation-proofing of wages so 'disruptive' for the bosses also makes it more important for the unions. The fact that price rises could continue high for some time, or even accelerate, underlines both these messages. Since the stock market crash of October 1987, the risk has been clear of a drastic new slump, which could swiftly wipe out all the limited gains that some sections of workers have made in the last few years.

'Escalator clauses', or a 'sliding scale' — committing bosses to pay rises, preferably monthly, in line with the cost of living — are an old trade union demand. It's time to give them more prominence and more urgent consideration.

A sliding scale cannot replace the

fight for real increases. London Underground workers are fighting for catch-up rises to make good the whittling-away of their real wage levels over recent years; the sliding scale is not a substitute for that fight, either. But it can very well be fought for, and even won, alongside those demands.

Many countries — from Italy to the United States, from Australia to Belgium — had forms of sliding scale for many years, covering maior industries or even all workers.

jor industries or even all workers.

The sliding scale is most relevant today in countries like Poland, where rapid inflation is pushing the working class into desperate poverty. It was a major issue in the recent talks between the government and Solidarnosc.

In the end the Solidarnosc leaders agreed to 'pay for' the government's limited liberalisation by limiting sliding scale pay rises to only 80 per cent of the price rise. Militants in Solidarnosc have protested strongly.

Even where it is not such an urgent and central issue, however, the sliding scale can be important because it is a **unifying** factor in wage struggles. It is a demand that can be raised by and for all workers.

The essential idea is that workers should assert some conscious control over our standard of living, rather than being the helpless victims of market forces which allow

us some gains in booms and then throw us down again in slumps. Control is also important over the calculation of the cost of living index. Official government figures can grossly underestimate the real inflation rate for most workers. Sliding scale agreements should be linked to inflation indexes worked out by the labour movement.

The sliding scale can and should be raised not just as an element for trade union claims, but as a demand for legislation by a future Labour government.

Instead of blathering about how a Labour government "won't be a soft touch for the unions"; Labour's leaders should be committing themselves to safeguard working class living standards by a sliding scale which underpins all wage agreements and also safeguards state benefits against inflation.

Sometimes the sliding scale demand is not very useful. Obviously it has little bite when inflation is low.

In 1972-3 a sort of half-sliding scale — threshhold agreements — was pushed by the Tory Government. The Tories imposed wage controls, and tried to ease them in by saying that workers would get increases above the decreed maximum at the rate of one per cent for each one per cent the inflation rate rose above a 'threshhold'.

The idea of threshhold

agreements was launched not by the Tories but by the TUC, in early 1972; but the Tories then used the formula to try to tie the unions in to wage controls.

The Tories were trying to damp down, obstruct, diffuse and divert a great wave of industrial militancy which had already broken their previous efforts at wage controls and made their Industrial Relations. Act unworkable. To agitate for a full sliding scale in place of their half sliding scale, instead of opposing the whole affair, would have played into their hands.

Times are different today. In fact their threshhold agreements of 1972-3 rebounded nastily on the bosses, producing big wage rises in 1974 as inflation rose to levels that no-one had expected.

Since then bosses have been much more wary about anything like a sliding scale; and its value for workers has been much clearer. Over the years since the runaway inflation of 1974-5 and 1979-80, bosses in many countries have fought hard to get rid of sliding scale agreements dating from the '50s or the '60s.

Working class confidence is reviving today; but we do not have anything like the great industrial offensives of the early '70s. Demands which can begin to knit together unity and map out a solid defensive position are at a premium. The sliding scale is one of those.

'The emancipation of the working class is also the emancipation of all human beings without distinction of sex or race'

Karl Marx

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#### A quiet life in heaven

#### GRAFFITI

per cent of Americans believe in heaven, and 76 per cent believe they have a good or excellent chance of getting there.

58 per cent believe in hell, and six per cent believe they are very likely to end up there (what have they been up to!)

The believers' view of heaven is that it

will be peaceful, and that they will be surrounded by family and friends sort of like one long Bank Holiday

In the Middle Ages most people saw it more vividly. Heaven was a place where you would have a lot to eat and drink, and no work. The easing of hunger and drudgery seems to have made visions of the after-life paler, and even boring. In the words of a Talking Heads

song, "Heaven is a place where nothing ever happens'

Being with God does figure in people's views of heaven, but not much. As one theologian points out, it is difficult for people to visualise as "they've never met God. They don't know what God is like, so it would be hard to imagine having God as a neighbour down

More to the point, I would have thought, who would fancy living next door to a pompous, self-righteous old man, who regularly inflicts pestilence and disaster on those who provoke his

earer to hell than to heaven is Sainsburys. Those laser-scanning tills are now, surprise surprise, to be used to 'monitor productivity' of checkout workers - i.e. make them work

Sainsburys have just announced a minimum work rate of 20 items checked out each minute. They claim that this is simply a guideline, and that workers will not be disciplined for failing to reach target. They even insist that they are not planning to introduce performance-related pay, but it is difficult to see the point of the minimum work rate if they don't plan something like this.

According to the shopworkers' union HSDAW, a woman working Walthamstow branch of Sainsburys has already been threatened disciplinary action if she fails to reach 20 items a minute. Store managers had put up a list of the 25 fastest checkout operators, and urged others to speed up.

The laser scanners have already meant job losses in some Sainsburys

stores, and there is little doubt that the speed-up will mean more. Sainsburys say that they have used increased checkout productivity to transfer staff to other areas. Or more money to the Sainsbury family's pockets?

wo hundred and eighty-six pounds a week better off - that's the balance sheet of Tory tax and benefit changes for those on £1000 a week or more.

Fully half the money handed out in tax cuts has gone to the richest ten per cent of the population. Those on £100 a week have gained the princely sum of £1.65 a week. And a quarter of the poorest thirty per cent are worse off—mainly single parents, old people, and the chronically sick.

Contrast Thatcher's generosity to her well-heeled pals with the way the Government has dealt with the Attendance Allowance, paid to chronically sick people who need help in the home.

You have to be sick for six months

before you are entitled to receive the allowance. A lot of people who should get the allowance die before they can.

ou may not have heard this yet, but democracy is once more under attack by the ultra-left, this time in the unlikely shape of Michael Meacher.

Meacher wants the Labour Party to restore to workers the rights we enjoyed for many decades - the right to joyed for many decades — the right to hold sympathy strikes and secondary picketing and so on. The wild-eyed Meacher even goes so far as to say that Public Sector contracts should only be given to firms recognising unions, that workers should have a say over terms and condition

Outrageous — says the Empress Thatcher!

Outrageous - says Captain Kin-

What Captain Kinnock wants is partnership at work' which is the title of the party's new policy. 'Partner ship at work' proposes to leave Thatcher's anti-union laws in place! The laws which now put the TGWU under threat of being financially ruined and smashed if it authorises a national dock strike; the laws which were used to license militarised squads of police thugs to assualt and attempt to terrorise the striking miners and their families during the Great Strike of

Partnership at what? Yes, you know — like the well-known partner-ship of the horse and its rider. But horses are notoriously stupid.

And Labour-voting workers aren't.

Workers' Liberty no. 11 includes articles long out of print by Max Shachtman on the USSR, and articles on 'post Fordism', the PLO and 'two states'. breakaway unionism, architecture. £1.50 plus postage from PO Box 823, London 4NA.

## Thatcherite policies bring Labour split in New Zealand

#### LETTER

im Anderton, Labour MP for Sydenham (Christchurch) with one of the largest majorities in Parliament has resigned from the New Zealand Labour Party and announced his intention of forming a new Labour Party.

It is no exaggeration to say that this development is the most signifi-cant development in New Zealand since 1916 when the Labour Party itself was formed.

Anderton was for 4 or 5 years in a row President of the New Zealand Labour Party and has enormous public 'recognition' and 'charisma'. In many ways he is an analogous figure to that of Tony Benn in Britain in his approximate place in the

political spectrum.

Certainly Anderton, in British terms would be seen as no more than a centre or centre-right figure but given the fact that the New Zealand Labour Party is by far the most right wing Labourist Party on the planet Anderton is seen in the eyes of the vast majority of New Zealanders as a strong left winger. In essence the ultra-right Labour

government has carried through many of the same or analogous changes that the Thatcher regime has; the only difference being that the Lange-ites have done in 5 years what it has taken Margaret the Terrible 10 years to do.

One top British Tory on visiting New Zealand frankly admitted that New Zealand Labour was "more brutal" than the Thatcher govern-

The result of the unrelenting brutality of the government has been that the Labour Party has fallen 24 per centage points behind the National (Tory) party. At the same time Lange himself has fallen steadily in the poll for preferred leader and about one quarter of the population respond as 'Don't

About 6 years ago membership of the Labour Party was 100,000 but it has now fallen to 14,000. A number of trade unions have disaffiliated from the Labour Party after the issue was put to rank and file polls. In two cases the disaffiliation was carried by 75% of those voting.

No one can accuse Anderton of acting too quickly. Indeed many of his own supporters have felt that he has done far too little too late. Whether in the 18 months before the next election the New Labour Party can organise itself sufficiently is open to doubt, but a huge realignment of forces is in the offing.

The Moscow-line Socialist Unity Party under the leadership of Ken Douglas is urging workers to get behind the ultra-right Lange Labour' Party and at the same time pushes its union supporters to campaign for a Compact or Accord (like the 'Social Contract' of evil memory in the United Kingdom).

The largest purporting Trotskyist grouping Socialist Action League, a clone of the American SWP seems to get weaker and weaker and recently suspended publication of its fortnightly paper. None of the other self-described left groups seem to be doing any better.

All, in one way or another, have set their face against directly appealing to trade unionists, preferring instead to concentrate on other forces: Maoris, students, women

> Hector MacNeill New Zealand

#### **Tories raise student fees**

#### By Mark Sandell

he recent government decision to increase University and Polytechnic fees is part of an emerging Tory plan for higher education.

On the one hand they want to increase the number of trained workers coming out of higher education, on the other hand they are keen to cut spending on all education.

Next year University and Polytechnic fees will go up from £607 to £1,600 and the year after fees will again increase to 'actual cost', in four bands for different courses from about £1,600 to £3,200.

These course fees are paid by Local Education Authorities directly to colleges. Central government money for colleges will be cut across the board.

These changes will undermine any

planning of higher education across the country to a great extent emasculating the central funding bodies for Univer-sities and Polytechnics. They are an important move towards the anarchy of the market in education and away from any national plan.

Universities and Polys will start to cram in students to stave off the effect of the ongoing cuts in higher education. More and more students will be accepted onto under-resourced and over crowded courses.

Then as the college increase income through cramming students into courses, central government money will be cut to 'keep pace'.

Tories have indicated that they would be happy to let Universities or Polys charge extra fees directly to students. The current fee increases will be paid by Local Education Authorities; but where will the Local Education Authorities get the extra money? And how long it will be until students have to pay their own fees?

These recent plans are yet another step twoards a US-style higher education system of liberal education for the rich few and cut-price training for the rest in higher education.

Workers in education will also suffer the ravages of local pay, in a system of competing institutions. The danger of local deals in the lecturer's dispute and a recent report from Maggie's own right wing 'Centre for Policy Studies' on performance-related pay, are just two other signposts along this road.

Students and education workers need

to unite to fight off these attacks on public higher education.



## Mothers as little helpers

## WOMEN'S

By Lynn Ferguson

could't take my son to school last Friday. There was no supply teacher available to take the class.

Well, these things happen. Except 'these things' are happening all too often nowadays.

My son's class has had a succession of supply teachers since Easter, when his form teacher left to get married. One class has had no permanent teacher all year - the school has just recieved special permission for the deputy head to teach the class.

For children to be sent home because there is no-one to teach them is, if not a very regular event, at least not uncommon.

The 'crisis in education' was always quite an abstract thing to me until Patrick started school. I'd been a student myself, occupied and demonstrated against education cuts. I knew, from the press, from friends in teaching that the situation in schools was bad. It is after all, part of the litany of terrible things that Thatcher has done, attacked the NHS, attacked local government, attacked education.

But I never really understood until I saw for myself.

Don't get me wrong. Patrick's school is considered quite a 'good school' in our area. Morale amongst teachers is not bad, at least if it is, they don't let it show.

The atmosphere is good. The school isn't physically falling down. There are plenty of books and toys. His schooldays are not unadulterated misery by any means. There is a life to the school, involving staff and parents, which is

But the key lies in the last point. The reason the school keeps its head above water is that it can rely on the

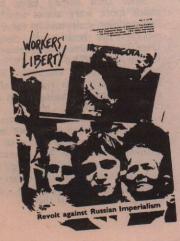
Not only do 'the mums' fun-draise for books and equipment and donate things of their own, but the unofficial shortfall in teaching staff is made up for by mums coming in for a few hours, voluntarily.

I say 'unofficial shortfall' for a reason. A class of fifteen children with a teacher is actually doing quite well. But a class of 5 year olds needs more than that. Children need intensive individual attention to teach them to read. So mums come in to take small groups of children for reading.

Of course, the problem is not simply under-resourcing of schools. Teachers pay is crucial too. In my borough, Southwark, there is a shortfall of 80 teachers. People do not want to be teachers any more working in stressed and inadequate conditions, for chickenfeed. It's demoralising and depressing.

So... mums step into the breach. Mums don't want their kids education to suffer - so they plug the gap. And, when the worst comes to the worst, and there simply is no one to teach their child, well mum can stay at home can't she? Hard luck if she works — she'll just have to take the day off. After all, her kids must come first.

Wouldn't it give the Tories a shock if good old mum stopped helping out and started fighting



## From Carron to Jordan

#### INSIDE THE UNIONS

By Sleeper

t would be hypocrisy to pretend that last week's news of the death of Sir John Boyd, caused AEU activists any great sorrow, let alone loss of sleep. It is said that he was a personally honest man, devoted to his family and kindly in his general demeanour. That may well all be true. But as a trade union official he was a treacherous old

Boyd became a Division Organiser in 1946 and was on the Union's National Executive throughout most of the '50s and '60s. At this time the AEU was led by a vicious old reactionary, Bill (later Lord) Carron. But the left was busy beavering away at rank and file level. By the time Boyd put himself forward as the 'moderate' candidate for the union President's job in 1968, the left was in the ascendant. Shop stewards commit-tees, combine committees, branches and tiees, combine committees, branches and districts in key areas were dominated by militants who had spent years building up rank and file support. In Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield and London a powerful Broad Left ensured the election of left wing full timers. In 1968, this movement put Hugh Scanlon in as President. Apart from lacking the kind of factory based rank and file organisation that supported Scanlon, Boyd's other disadvantage was his close association with the unpopular wage cutting policies of the Wilson government. In 1967 he had been Chairman of the Labour Party.

Scanlon was a former member of the

Scanlon was a former member of the

Communist Party and was still strongly associated with CP politics, as was the AEU Broad Left as a whole.

At about this time, Jack Jones, another CP fellow traveller, won the leadership of the TGWU. The two largest unions in Britain were led by long standing left. wingers: the media long standing left-wingers; the media dubbed Scanlon and Jones "The Terri-ble Twins". Militant trade unionists looked forward to a new Golden Age of principled leadership and an upsurge in rank and file involvement. It was not to

What actually happened was that the Broad Left in both the TGWU and the AEU became Jones and Scanlon fan clubs. More and more Broad Lefts became machines for electing full-time officials. When in 1970 Scanlon was reelected for a second time, his position became secure and he didn't have to worry so much about rank and file sup-

port. But still, the CP influenced Broad port. But still, the CP influenced Broad Left gave him uncritical support. The International Socialists who were the only organised grouping, apart from the CP, within the AEU Broad Left, commented that "to criticise or even question Scanlon was taken as an act of sacrilege like farting in church".

By the mid '70s, both Jones and Scanlon were enthusiastic supporters of the Labour government's Social Con-

the Labour government's Social Contract. In fact it could never have come into being without the support of established 'lefts' like the terrible twins. established 'lefts' like the terrible twins. During this time, a whole series of workers went into struggle against the Labour government's incomes policy, using arguments about 'parity', 'differentials', 'special status' — ducking the real issue of pay because the union leaders were now hand in glove with the Labour government, supporting the Social Contract.

The best known case was the Leyland

The best known case was the Leyland The best known case was the Leyland tool room workers — members of the AEU. They had seen their wages slashed during the years of the Social Contract. They wanted to fight back, but received no support. At plant, district and national level, the AEU Broad left oppositional total makers as 'craftist'.

ed the tool makers as 'craftist'.

The Leyland Combine Committee, controlled by Communist Party members, held a special conference "Against the Social Contract" while the toolmakers were on strike and not only didn't invite a tool makers' represen-tative to speak, but actually attacked the

strikers from the platform.

This sort of behaviour was what en-This sort of behaviour was what ensured that John Boyd, roundly defeated as President in 1968, was elected as General Secretary, when he stood against Scanlon's uninspiring side kick George Right in 1975. That election marked the end of the Broad Left as a force to be reckoned with inside the AEU: it was no longer an expression of rank and file militancy, but a bureaucratic machine for the elction of stooges of the Wilson/Callaghan

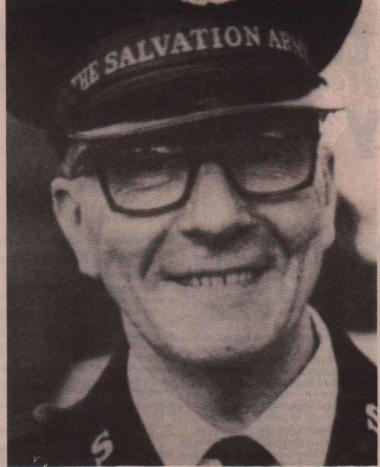
government.

When, four years later, in 1979,
Scanlon retired and a straight left-right
fight took place between Terry Duffy
and Bob Wright for the Presidency
Duffy won quite easily.

All sorts of excuses can be made for

Duffy's victory: the capitalist press gave him fulsome support; sinister organisations like the CIA-founded IRIS (who had backed Boyd) pumped money into his campaign; Catholic Action had pulled actions for him. But the ed out all the stops for him. But the truth is that the rank and file of the AEU had had enough of the Social Contract and wage cuts and the AEU Broad Left had by now become the people who were most closely associated with that

Policy.
With Boyd as General Secretary and Duffy as President, the AEU swiftly lurched rightwards. Amalgamation talks with Frank Chapple's EETPU began.



John Boyd

Two research assistants at the union's head office were sacked for writing articles in their own time, which Boyd described as "calculated to discredit the described as "calculated to discredit the elected leadership of the union". An industrial tribunal found against Boyd (even though he was a paid advisor to ACAS) but still, the two workers did not get their jobs back.

Boyd made it union policy that no strike could be officially supported unless a full-time official had been involved in discussions before the action

volved in discussions before the action started. The justification for this was money: the union couldn't afford strike

money: the union couldn't alried strike pay said Boyd. That didn't stop him awarding himself a wage increase of 28% in 1980.

Probably the most contemptible betrayal by the Boyd/Duffy leadership came in 1979 when the then-boss of British Leyland Michael Edwardes sacked the convenor of the Longbridge plant, Derek Robinson. Robinson was a prominent CP member, who had co-operated whole heartedly with the Labour government's efforts to bail out Robinson as part of a calculated drive to smash the shop stewards movement throughout Leyland. The AEU leaders refused to support the strike action that took place in support of Robinson, an AEU member. Instead, they held their own 'investigation' into Robinson. It formally cleared him but, in fact, gave Edwardes all the ammunition he needed to ensure the destruction of Robinson. No informed

commentator now doubts that Boyd and Duffy worked hand in glove with Edwardes over the 'Robinson affair'. If the Derek Robinson sacking

represented a low spot in the recent history of the AEU then it's worth remembering the 1979 National Engineering dispute: within a few weeks of Terry Duffy's election the AEU leadership was forced to call a series of national strikes involving well over one million engineering workers in support of a claim for shorter hours and increas-

of a claim for shorter hours and increased minimum time rate.

After 1 and 2-day national strikes over 13 weeks, the Engineering Employers Federation caved in on both hours and wages. Neither Duffy nor Boyd, of course, had ever wanted the dispute but once locked into it (by a Broad Left resolution carried on a majority of 1 at the national committee) jority of 1 at the national committee) they pursued the dispute with a surprising degree of determination.

It looks as though something similar could be on the cards this year, now that

Bill Jordan has given up playing footsy with the EETPU.

The left would do well to learn some lessons from the rise of the Boyd/Duffy right wing in the AEU — and to remember that even under the most vicious right wing leadership, rank and file trade unionists can still wage suc-

cessful struggles.

A successful national engineering dispute would not be such an inap-propriate memorial to the CIA funded Sally-Army tuba player.

#### Coup threat in Argentina

By Clive Bradley

rgentina's general election next Sunday, 14 May, looks set to return the Peronists to power for the first time since they were overthrown by the military coup of

Rumours of a further coup in the event of a Peronist victory are widespread, and the bourgeoisie is frantically changing its money into

American dollars.

Why the panic? The political programme of Carlos Saul Menem, candidate of the Peronist 'Justicialist' Par-

didate of the Peronist 'Justicialist' Party, is not very different from that of Eduardo Angeloz of the ruling Radicals. The difference between the two parties is in their social base.

The Peronists are a peculiarity of Argentinian history, a fusion of rightwing (some would say semi-fascist) nationalist politics and the organised labour movement. Juan Peron, who first became president in 1946, managed to co-opt the powerful trade unions to the nationalist state. During his period as Minister of Labour in the early 1940s, as Minister of Labour in the early 1940s, he had dished out concessions to the working class, gaining support to the extent that when he was sacked by the military in 1945 there was a general strike to demand his reinstatement.

Workers' living standards rose — and the trade unions became closely tied to the state. Peronism became the domi-nant ideology of the Argentinian workers, wiping out earlier socialist and anarchist traditions, and remains so to-day. It is a movement which combines reliance on state patronage with militant trade union action under heavy control

from the bureaucracy.

After a long period in exile, Peron returned to power in the early 1970s, and was succeeded after his death by his second wife Isabela. But then, even radical guerilla organisations like the Montoneros were claiming the Peronist

Some independent working-class politics was emerging by then, although it was sometimes still Peronist-influenced. The workers were very militant. In 1976, to end a deepening political crisis, the army staged a coup. The regime that followed was one of

the most bloody in the history of a con-tinent drenched in blood. Thousands of people 'disappeared', never to be

The Falklands/Malvinas war of 1982, launched to avert a strike wave, proved a military disaster. The military regime fell. Elections were held in 1983, and the Peronists, still led by Isabela Peron, were defeated by Raul Alfonsin's

There have been several unsuccessful coup attempts against Alfonsin, and Argentinian politics remain dominated by the prospect of military intervention. The last junta's 'dirty war' against opposition is a very fresh memory.

And the ruling class is jittery, afraid of the consequences of a Menem victory, not so much for what Menem interved to for the offects on workers' expenses.

tends as for the effects on workers' ex-pectations. There have been big strikes over the last few years, and a growth of rank and file organisation independent to a degree of the Peronist bureaucracy. To the left of the Justicialist Party

stands the United Left, a coalition of FRAL (the Communist Party) and MAS, the Movement to Socialism founded by the late Nahuel Moreno, one of the most prominent figures in post way would be Trotkyism. ost-war would-be Trotskyism.

The United Left calls for wage increases linked to the cost of living; opening the books of the banks; nationalisation of the banks; and suspen-sion of payments on the foreign debt. It also calls for Argentina to seize the Falklands.

It is not the first time the MAS has managed to form an electoral bloc with the CP. MAS literature these days carries almost no criticism of the CP, and simply boosts itself as a participant of the United Left. Generally, MAS's politics tend to be quite right wing and

nationalist-oriented.

Over the past weeks, Latin America has seen an enormous wave of industrial militancy, from Peru to Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. In Brazil, 35 millions workers struck in April, and strikes have continued.

Argentinian workers need our solidarity to ward off any coup attempt. A Peronist victory would hardly be a step forward for the working class, but any attempt to overthrow Menem by the army must be fought.

## Safety goes to the wall

#### WHETTON'S WEEK A miner's diary



or a long time we have been warning of a lowering of safety standards in the pits.

Last Thursday there were two gas explosions at Bevercotes colliery, in Notts, where I used to work. Fortunately nobody was seriously injured, but that

was more luck than judgment.

Not just in the mines, but on the transport system and elsewhere, safety is going to the wall, being sacrificed to profit. We have to make a firm stand.

he safety issue must be a factor in the new wave of militancy in transport, along with the fact that the workers have had their living standards battered down.

We've seen mortgage rates go up, and every time the Chancellor puts one per cent or two per cent on interest rates, it doesn't just mean mortgage payments go up. It means pits shut, businesses become 'uneconomic', and there are closures and threats to jobs.

There is an economic reason behind the wave of militancy; and there is a surge of feeling that we can win.

Workers are drawing the line and making a stand. I think as the mood of confidence builds up it will spread to other groups of workers — just like the miners' strike in 1984 gave confidence

People are talking a lot about a summer of discontent. In fact we've been living in discontent for a long time, and what's happening now is that we're going to express that discontent and turn it

here is the law to contend with. But sooner of later someone will have to say 'To hell with the law!'

If rail workers and bus drivers all walk out together, there is very little the law can do about it. It would paralyse the capital immediately. If workers take things into their own hands and down tools unofficially, then the union can't be blamed, and there is nothing the law can do about it.

People are starting to realise that not God. She is beatable

The Tories are beatable in the polls, and they're beatable on the industrial

'm not surprised that Dr Owen has said that he's prepared to serve in a Kinnock government.

He has not kept his own ship afloat. He wants to get back. But I think it's too late for him. We should let him

I can understand Neil Kinnock's reasons for dumping left-wing policies in the Policy Reviews. He could become Prime Minister after the next General Election. He does not want to deal with bolshy unions and bolshy workers, any

more than Thatcher does.

Much of the Policy Review is about ditching the backbone of a socialist programme — and he intends to keep some of the anti-trade-union legislation so that in the event of workers having a go, he's got some of the laws that the Tories have built up over the years.

Workers have got to spell it out: we're not having it. In trying to woo SDP and Tory voters, Kinnock will alienate a considerable number of Labour voters. Labour will not win that way. He should think again about the Policy

ve watched the Chinese events through the eyes of the British media. And I'm sceptical about what I watch on British television.

For the first time in years, for example, their coverage of the May Day march in Moscow did not concentrate on arms, rockets and tanks, but on the workers. There has been no change in the parade itself, but they concentrated on a different aspect of it.

I can well understand student unrest

in China. But I am suspicious of the movement in the same way I'm suspicious of other movements boosted by the British media — Solidarnosc, the activity in Georgia. I wonder how many people there are in there from the CIA trying to stir up a counterrevolution.

It may well be that Socialist Organiser is right about this. I can well understand the feelings of Chinese students wanting to make progress. But I don't believe anything I hear from the British media, and I'd like to know more before I express a firm opinion.

Paul Whetton is a member of Manton NUM, South Yorkshire. The last 'Whetton's Week' described him, by mistake, as secretary of Manton NUM.

## An alternative **Policy Review**

The Labour Party leadership meets this week to finalise its Policy Review. It wants to move Labour to the right. We outline our ideas for a different direction for Labour

#### 1. Jobs and wages

the 1950s and early '60s Labour's rightwingers used to say that modern capitalism - the 'mixed economy' - could guarantee fairly employment, and so there was no need for socialism. Now they say that no system can give full employment... and so there is no point in trying socialism.

Why unemployment should have become inevitable, they don't say.

The real reason why millions are unemployed is because the economy is run for profit and not for human

Under the present economic system — capitalism — the aim of production is to expand capital, the accumulated wealth of the ruling class. Workers get jobs if it is profitable for the bosses, and not if

Employment therefore expands and contracts in line with the pulsebeat of profits, investments and

In boom periods each capitalist strives for an increasing share of an expanding market. New investment projects are rushed through. Speculation spirals.

But not every capitalist can have an increased share. Eventually the expansion falters. Investment is halted. Projects already underway are revealed to be unprofitable. The slump spreads from the credit system through the investment industries to every sector of the

economy. As workers lose their jobs, the capitalists who previously sold goods to those workers lose their markets. And those capitalists, in turn, sack more workers. The system spirals downwards.

People go short - because "too

much" has been produced! The slump levels out only when enough capital has been written off, and wages have been reduced sufficiently, for profits to be restored. A new boom starts - and

with it the seeds of a new slump. In the Third World, the rapid destruction by capitalism of the traditional economy in the countryside has generated huge and rising unemployment for decades. In the advanced capitalist countries,

it was a bit different in the '50s and

A new framework allowing the rapid expansion of world trade after World War 2, and the growth of a wave of new industries, made booms strong and slumps shallow. Masses of new workers were drawn from underdeveloped countries and regions; more and more women were drawn into wage-work.

Capitalism always made sure that there was a slight surplus of workers over jobs - otherwise workers' bargaining position would be too strong — and in slumps the surplus became bigger. But the real turn for the worse came after the late '60s, when the framework of international finances set up after 1945 began to break down.

Under capitalism men and women do not control our own social life. We are tossed around by economic forces, of human construction but beyond human control — supply and demand, profit and investment, credit and

So capitalism, internationally at

least, has no way to restructure itself except crisis.

The US is no longer superdominant. New industrial powers have arisen. Previously central industries like cars and steel are in the control of the decline; new ones are emerging. The system knows no other way to adjust to these changes other than by the travail of trade wars, slumps,

and deindustrialisation.

The remedy? We must take control of the means of production we have created and run them by democratic planning for need. We must replace the crazy patchwork of national rivalries with a cooperative international system. In place of the rat race, we must run society on principles of solidarity.

The National Health Service is short of staff. Record numbers are homeless. There is a big backlog of repairs to be done on houses, schools and hospitals.

There are plenty of jobs to be done. A planned programme of public investment could make sure that they are done.

We can start now with a fight for workers' control, for unity of employed unemployed, for work-sharing without loss of pay, and for training and re-training at trade union rates of pay.

☐ Take the money from the rich to expand public services! Trident will cost as much as building 550 new hospitals. Tory tax cuts for the rich amount to more than the whole NHS hospital

☐ Expand provision in each area according to a 'people's plan' drawn up by service workers and the local community.

☐ Bring back all privatised ancillary services in-house. End charges on glasses, drugs and dental care.

☐ A statutory minimum

□ Expanded training, retraining, and adult education, with access for all, and with trade-union rates of

Open the books of all public sector bodies and private companies to tradeunion inspection. ☐ Automatic escalator

clauses to increase wages,

benefits, pensions and grants

monthly in line with a working class cost-of-living index; and a fight for real increases, too.

Cut hours, not jobs: worksharing without loss of pay.

Nationalise all the major businesses and banks, with compensation only for small shareholders. Integrate workers' plans for each enterprise with a democratically-decided workers' plan for the whole economy.

#### 2. Europe

he creation of the "Single European Market" in 1992 is an expression of the growing internationalisation of capitalist production.

Increasingly, major enterprises plan investment and production

It cannot be the job of socialists to try to turn back the capitalist clock and return to a narrower national framework for economic life. On the contrary, we must counter the internationalisation of capital with an internationalism of labour.

☐ A "social Europe" meaning the levelling up of welfare benefits and workers' rights across the European Community.

☐ A democratically decided

European plan for industrial reconstruction.

The right of workers and their trade unions to 'open the books' of their employers on all decisions about work conditions, job prospects, strategic investments, mergers and takeovers.

□ Democracy in the European Community: the Council of Ministers and the European Commission to be answerable to the European Parliament, as the elected authority.

□ Europe-wide public

ownership, and democratic workers' control, of the major industrial, commercial and financial enterprises. A fight for a Socialist

United States of Europe — East and West.

#### 3. The Third World

illions of people starve in the Third World because their governments squeeze them into poverty in order to pay millions in debt charges to wealthy bankers in the City of London.

A socialist programme in any Third World country would pro-bably cancel its debt as part of a general attack on capitalism. Most of the money Brazil borrowed to make up its debt went to Brazil's rich, who often funnelled the money straight out again into bank accounts in New York and Switzerland. Why should Brazil's workers pay?

For our part, in the advanced industrial countries where most of the banks are based, we should demand the cancellation of Third World

We need other strategies. Solidarity with the workers' movements, and the construction of international workers' organisations, are the most effective ways to fight international capitalism. But there are hardly any workers, and certainly no powerful movement.

What could a British Labour government do?

It could give more aid. As capitalist governments already do, it could impose conditions on its aid. But instead of insisting that aid. But instead of insisting that Third World governments cancel food subsidies and push down wages, it could call for free trade unions, higher wages, democratic rights, land reform, and cheap credit to poor peasants. It could give aid specifically to opposition movements of workers or of oppressed nations. It could pour resources into developing technologies to help the poor peasants who make up the majority of the world's population.

Internationalism starts now - in building links with Third World workers and making solidarity with the oppressed, and in fighting to overthrow capitalism in Britain.

#### 4. Workers' rights

ocialism can never come just from a blueprint legislated through parliament. Socialism is about the working class taking control at every level, through its own organisation and struggle.

The first step must be to free the trade unions from the Tories' crippling anti-strike laws. We need a Workers' Charter.

☐ The right to strike. The right of strikers and their families to receive state benefits.

☐ The right to picket. The right of pickets to defend themselves.

☐ The right to organise. The right of individuals to join unions, of union officials to get access to workplaces, and of union representatives to have time off and facilities.

☐ The right to negotiate. **Employers should be legally** compelled to recognise unions with majority support and to negotiate with them. Unions should have a right to have protection against unfair dismissal, with tribunals being able to force employers to reinstate them.

☐ The right to safety. The right to information on all risks and hazards, and the right to stop unsafe jobs. ☐ The right to trade union

independence. Unions' decision-making and political activity should not be controlled by the courts.

We also need a broader fight for democracy.

The miners' strike showed that the police enforce the interests not of the majority but of the ruling class. Their rigid hierarchy, their training, their separation from the rest of society, and the personal ties of their upper ranks make sure they

Society could have an alternative, more democratic way of regulating itself — patrols organised and controlled by the labour movement and local communities.

In the meantime we must fight for more control over the existing

Chief Constables and their Assistants to be elected at regular fixed periods.

• Directly-elected Police

Committees to have full operational control over the police in their area. Access to any police station and to police files at any time

for members of Committees. tribunals, Elected completely independent of the

police, should hear complaints against them. • Democratic rights within the police, including the right to form trade unions and the right

not to be used as scab-herders. Far from MI5 being under democratic control, members of the last Labour government were probably themselves under surveillance by it. MI5 and other branches of the secret service

should be scrapped. Labour should also advocate:

Replace the armed forces







 Scrap all nuclear weapons.
 Britain out of NATO, NATO out of Britain.

with a people's militia.

Democratic rights for

· Workers' control of the armaments industry, and conversion of the bulk of it to socially useful production under workers' control.

Four-fifths of all judges come from public school and Oxbridge backgrounds. Their background, training, and way of life makes them hostile to the working class. JPs and

All judges, JPs and magistrates should be elected.

End vetting of juries.All legal representation to be paid for by the state. Wealth should not determine whether you get a fair trial.

At present local councillors can be brought to court and surcharged and disqualified for carrying out the manifesto on which they were elected, if — in the opinion of an unelected official auditor — that is financially irresponsible. Central Government can break many of its own laws with impunity.

 Autonomy for local councils. • The right of each citizen to effective redress against central government through

the courts. Within the civil service real power lies with the top ranks, who are flesh and blood of the ruling class. Many go on from the civil service to top jobs in finance and industry.

The Official Secrets Act should be abolished; a Freedom of Information Act introduced; and top civil service jobs made elective and paid workers' wages.

 Abolish the House of Lords and the monarchy. Remember: a Labour government was sacked in a 'coup' by the Queen's representative, the Governor-General, as recently as 1975 in Australia.

 Give MPs full access to official files and documents. Annual elections on a fixed

· A legal right to meetings in work time to hear the different political candidates and debate the issues. Equal TV

and radio time for all parties except fascists.

 Democratic control of the media. The right of every political tendency with a certain minimum of support to publishing

broadcasting facilities.
All these ideas should be tied together in a Bill of Rights.

And they need to be linked with a programme to help the liberation of women and other groups which have suffered centuries of oppression.

All discrimination against lesbians and gays should be banned by law.

For women's liberation ☐ Stronger equal-pay and sex-discrimination laws. Full

rights for part-time workers.

Dublicly-provided nurseries, under community control, available free of charge at all

 Legal and financial independence for women. ☐ Free and freely available contraception and abortion: a

woman's right to choose! ☐ Special programmes of access to education, training, and jobs to ensure real

equality.

A campaign to make the abour movement habitable for women and to win real equality for women within the movement.

For racial equality ☐ End deportations, scrap immigration controls.

☐ Full equality for black people and immigrants. Special programmes of access to education and training to ensure real equality.

Labour movement support for black community selfdefence against racist attacks.

☐ A campaign to recruit black people to the labour movement using material in appropriate languages and to purge racists from all positions in the movement. Support for black workers' right to have their own caucuses and sections.

## **Apartheid state** threatens to hang 25

These articles from 'Solidarity', the paper of the Cape Action League (a socialist group in South Africa), explain how 25 people face the death sentence in a case similar to the Sharpeville Six

n November 13 1985, in the rural township of Paballelo, Upington, a policeman fired into an unarmed crowd, hitting a young child.

As a result of the events that followed, 26 people are on trial for murder in an Upington courtroom. They have already been convicted, and 25 of them could be sentenced to death for the murder of a policeman under the doctrine of 'common purpose', like the Sharpeville Six.

On Tuesday November 12 a crowd of mainly youth had gathered on the streets. Police on casspirs asked them to disperse.

These police told them to call a formal meeting in which they could discuss their gricumpass. This they

discuss their grievances. This they did the following day.

About 4500 people gathered at the sports field to discuss high rents. People were under the impression that the state was going to address their grievances, and many stayed out of work to attend the

meeting.
While the people were discussing, the police arrived and instructed the crowd to disperse within ten minutes. After about four minutes they started shooting tear gas, and the crowd scattered.

A policeman, alarmed by the crowd, fired out of his house, and an eight year old boy was shot. The

crowd became upset and stoned his house, chasing him as he ran out. He was killed.

Now the state says the 26 people it has brought to trial are responsible for the policeman's death because they had "common pur-

This doctrine says that in a situa-tion where a crowd of people come together for a particular purpose, and an incident, such as the death of a person, results from the actions of that group, the whole group had a common intention or purpose to kill and any individual can be charged.

In our law courts we cannot question whether the judge or the magistrate can use this or that law. Today, it is evident that the South African judicial system does not defend the interests of the ordinary

Instead the judges, the magistrates and the prosecutors, pass judgement in the interest of the government and big bosses. They

clearly defend the system.

It appears that the South African government intends using the Upington 26 trial as it did the Sharpeville Six, to intimidate the masses. They want to scare people into passivity.

They want to prevent communities, workers and youth from organising resistance against higher rents, low wages and all other forms

of oppression and exploitation.

The lives of the Upington 26 could be the lives of millions of other black South Africans. The only thing they have in common is the poverty and oppression experienced by the black working class in South Africa.

37 percent of Paballelo's

residents are unemployed. As in many other townships, people there

have nothing to rejoice about.

A campaign has been launched for the release of the Upington 26. We need to organise lawyers, parents, everyone to act against this injustice. Who will be next?

Twenty five people may be hanged in the near future if found guilty of murder in an Up-ington courtroom. Although the state has produced no evidence that any of the accused were responsible for the death of a policeman, they may all be hang-

ed! How is this possible?
In 1988 people all over the world were shocked and angry because a South African court sentenced the "Sharpeville Six to death, although the state failed to prove the guilt of any of

Using the principle of 'Common Purpose', that is, that they had been part of a crowd responsible for a councillor's death, they were all found guilty. Only after intense resistance by the oppressed and interna-tional pressure did Botha bow and change the sentence to life

While this was a victory, it was a small one, as these comrades were not guilty of any crime, and some of them were not even at the scene! Yet now twenty five people face death at the hand of the South African

What these 'trials' prove is that there is no justice under this government. We know that the State and courts act together to enslave the oppressed. We know that these 'trials' are intended to scare us into bowing before the jackboot of oppression. We know the bitter taste of their iustice!

Our comrades from Sharpeville, at Delmas, those suffering in detention, have shown we will not bow to their laws and that we will never stop our struggle in the battle for truth. We also know that the only real justice will come when those who are now oppressed rule this country.

#### WHERE WE STAND

Socialist Organiser stands for workers' liberty East and West.
We aim to help organise the
left wing in the Labour Party
and trade unions to fight to replace capitalism with working class socialism.

We want public ownership of the major enterprises and a planned economy under

workers' control. We want democracy much fuller than the present Westminster workers democracy, with elected representatives recallable at any time, and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges. Socialism can never be built

in one country alone. The workers in every country have more in common with workers in other countries than with their own capitalist or Stalinist rulers. We support national liberation struggles and workers' struggles worldwide, including the struggle of workers and oppressed na-tionalities in the Stalinist states against their own antisocialist bureaucracies. We stand:

For full equality for women, and social provision to free women from the burden of housework. For a mass working class-based women's movement.

Against racism, and against deportations and all immigration controls. For equality for les

For a united and free Ireland, with some federal system to protect the rights of the Pro-

testant minority.

For left unity in action; clarity in debate and discussion.

For a labour movement accessible to the most oppressed, accountable to its rank and file, and militant against capitalism.

We want Labour Party and trade union members who support our basic ideas to become supporters of the paper — to take a bundle of papers to sell each week and pay a small contribution to help meet the paper's deficit. Our policy is democratically controlled by our supporters through Annual General Meetings and an elected National Editorial

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## Poll tax protest called for 1 July

#### **LABOUR** PARTY

he TUC has called a demonstration - or at least a 'national event' against the Poll Tax in Manchester on Saturday 1 July.

It's a welcome initiative, but remember 8-9 April. What was special about 8-9 April? It was supposed to be an official Labour Party weekend of action against the Poll Tax, but even a couple of weeks before it Labour Party headquarters at Walworth Road couldn't say what action was planned. There was little action.

Trade union branches should pass resolutions on the following

1. We welcome the TUC's call for a national protest against the Poll Tax in Manchester on 1 July.

2. We call on our union executive

a) urge the TUC to organise this 'national event' as a mass demonstration, with full national mobilisation and publicity;

b) campaign strongly for the demonstration among our own members:

c) urge the TUC and Labour Party leaders to call a further mass demonstration against the Poll Tax

abour Party conference motions have to reach Party headquarters at Walworth Road by 21 July.

Since many Constituency Labour Parties will miss June meetings because of the Euro-elections, some will discuss their conference resolutions this month.

Socialist Organiser is urging support for two model motions. When moving these, you should vary the wording slightly, because two identical motions count as one when they are counted to see which proposals have enough backing to get debated at conference.

orkers' Charter: This conference welcomes Michael Meacher's statement on 23 April committing Labour to restore legal protection to working class solidarity action (sympathy strikes and 'secondary' pickets); and deplores statements issued to the press in the name of the Party denying that commitment.

Conference notes that Composite 18 passed by last year's Party conference called for a workers' charter which "should repeal all anti-trade union law introduced since 1979" and legally establish the right to strike and the right to picket peacefully.

Conference instructs the National Executive Committee to include in Labour's workers' charter:

 A legally recognised right to strike; to picket effectively and in whatever number we choose; and to take other industrial action.

Legally enforceable rights for unions to gain access to workplaces to organise; for workers to join unions; and for unions to gain recognition.

• The right to stop the job whenever health and safety are threatened.

• The right of workers and their unions to be actively consulted and fully informed by employers on all decisions about work conditions, job prospects, strategic investments, mergers and takeovers.

The right to trade union independence. Unions should have the right to determine their own democratic procedures free from control by the courts.

• The right to employment free from discrimination on grounds of

gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or political persuasion.

• Full-time rights for part-time

urope: Conference believes that the creation of the "Single European Market" in 1992 is an expression of the growing internationalisation of capitalist production.

Increasingly, major enterprises plan investment and production internationally.

Conference believes it cannot be

the job of socialists to try to turn back the capitalist clock and return to a narrower national framework for economic life. On the contrary, we must counter the internationalisation of capital with an internationalism of labour.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Committee to ensure that Labour's policy on "Britain in the World" includes the following commitments:

• A 'social Europe', meaning the levelling-up on welfare benefits and workers' rights across the European

As an answer to unemploy-

ment: a 35 hour week with no loss of pay, publicly-provided training and retraining at trade union rates of pay, and a democratically decided European plan for industrial reconstruction.

• The right of workers and their trade unions to be actively consulted and fully informed by employers on all decisions about work conditions, job prospects, strategic investments, mergers and takeovers.

· Democracy in the European Community: the Council of Ministers and the European Commission to be answerable to the European Parliament as the elected authority.

· Europe-wide public ownership, and democratic workers' control, of the major industrial, commercial and financial enterprises

• A fight for a Socialist United States of Europe — East and West. · Efforts to co-ordinate action on these policies with other working class movements in Europe.

specially important among the many other model motions circulating in the

Labour Party are ones from the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Labour CND, and the Campaign for Solidarity with Workers in the Eastern

One of CLPD's model motions calls for conference resolutions to take precedence over the Policy Reviews wherever there is a clash. This motion is vital if any other motions are to mean anything; otherwise Neil Kinnock can junk any and every policy, no matter how clearly and repeatedly conference votes for it, by saying that the Policy Reviews override it.

Labour CND's model motion reaffirms unilateral nuclear disarmament; and the one from Solidarity with Workers in the Eastern Bloc demands support for the workers' and students' struggles in Eastern Europe and China.

For copies of these model motions, write to SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA, with a stamped addressed envelope.

he Campaign for Israeli-Palestinian Peece, launched after the recent successful speaking tour in Britain by Israeli socialist Adam Keller, has put out an appeal for affiliations.

"The Campaign for Israeli Palestinian Peace" it says, "exists to promote a 'two states' settlement based on the full recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. We aim to develop solidarity both with the intifada and with Israeli radicals who are fighting for a just peace".

Affiliation costs £10 for organisations and £5 (£2 unwaged and students) for individuals. Contact CIPP at 94 Loudoun Road NW8.

### Left students win in London

#### **STUDENTS**

By Robert Read

he left has taken control of the largest Area in the National Union of Students.

The recently formed 'Broad Left' won all but two of the positions in the Executive at the NUS London

Conference on 6-7 May.
Louise Holloway, co-President at the School of African and Oriental Studies, was Broad Left candidate for convenor. She beat Louise Van Der Straten by 13 votes to 17 and Geoff Ellingham of the Greens beat Stefan Hannigan for Treasurer.

We won all the other positions

unopposed, the Democratic Left faction of Labour Students who have run the Area into the ground, laid down and played dead. Elected as Education and Academic Affairs Officer was Socialist Student sup-porter Jenni Bailey (Barnet College of Further Education), the only black woman candidate in the elec-

Unfortunately, the Broad Left did not divide its votes properly in-

Tuesday 6 June London Against the Poll Tax

the 'block of five' elections for Executive Officers so Socialist Student supporter Paul Albert (President of Barnet College), who was the only FE student for these positions, was not elected. The SWP, who stood outside the Broad Left got elected, along with Stalinist Phil Woodford.

The conference also passed a number of policies much more radical than previous years'

We called for a first-term demo on loans, along with a 24 hour shutdown of education by students and workers. Policies passed on housing, sexual abuse, the environment, transport, and Access, Benefits and Cuts, will give the new Exec a basis for broad campaigns.

We gave full support to the LSE student union's adoption of student union's adoption of Winston Silcott as Honorary Presi-

Sadly, there was no international debates; but following a guest speaker from the Campaign Against Repression in Iran, an indicative vote called on the Exec to affiliate to CARI.

Women within the Broad Left are now organising for NUS London Women's Conference to ensure the election of Jacqui Prendergast, who is standing against the scab can-didate Sarah Colbourne from Campaign Student and Socialist Action.

Jacqui beat Sarah by 15 votes to 5 in a closed Women's caucus at the

now go out and do the campaigning work which this year's Exec has failed so spectacularly to do.

## **ACTIVISTS'**

Wednesday 10 May 'Hands off Guys' march against NHS White Paper, From Guys Hospital (Melior St) to St Thomas's Hospital, 6.30. Contact Richard Excell, Southwark TU Support Unit, 01 582 0996

Thursday 11 May Haringey Labour Briefing. 'Defend Salman Rushdie'. Speakers include Martha Osamor. Brabant Rd TU Cen-

Saturday 13 May Lutte Ouvriere fete (three days). Near Paris. Contact Clive, 01 639

Saturday 13 May
Democratic Rights Convention Planning Meeting. Red Rose Club, 129
Seven Sisters Rd, London. 1.00 Contact Reading Matters Bookshop, Box 35, Wood Green High St, N22. Saturday 13 May

Namibia Emergency Committee. National Mobilising Conference. Birmingham. Contact NEC, c/o 13 Mandela St, London NW1 ODW.

Wednesday 17 May
South London SO: Beat the Poll Tax.
Walworth Town Hall, Walworth Rd

SE17 7.30.

Saturday 20 May

Bristol District Labour Party day school on 'Defeating the Poll Tax'.
Filwood Social Centre, 10.30. Contact Pete Crack, 0272 772218

Wednesday 24 May

Bristol SO: 'Dockers against the

Tories', speaker John O'Mahony Saturday 27 May Newcastle SO: 'Socialist Feminism

 is it a contradiction in terms?'
 Rossetti Studio, near Trent House pub, 7.30

Saturday 27 May March Against Section 28. Hove Town Hall 2.00. Contact 0273 671213/676471.

Saturday 3 June Gorbachev and the European Left conference (two days). ULU, Malet St, London WC1. Contact Gus Fagan, 30 Bridge St, Oxford OX2

demonstration. Assemble at Central Hall Westminster, 12.30. Wednesday 14 June
Northampton SO: 'Where we Stand'. Speaker: Ray Ferris. 5.30 Saturday 17 June Socialist Conference Third Conference (two days). Octagon Centre, Saturday 17 June
'Time To Go' Show (two days). City
University, London
Friday 23 June
Manchester SO: Debate on Ireland Manchester SO: Debate on Ireland with Geoff Bell (Briefing) and John O'Mahony (SO). Millstone pub, Thomas St, 7.30

Saturday 8 July
Workers' Liberty Summer School (two days). Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19

Friday 3 November
History Workshop Conference

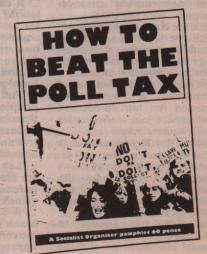
History Workshop Conference 1989. Salford University. Contact

Helen Bowyer, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4UX (061-736 3601)

Saturday 11 November Socialist Conference 'Building the left in the unions'. Sheffield. Broad Left selection meeting.

The new Broad Left Exec must

60p plus 13p postage from SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA



## Why 'Communism' in China has meant a police state

"They're not Communists, but feudal old guys", a Chinese worker was recently reported as saying about China's ruling bureaucrats.

Yet men like Deng
Xiaoping were
revolutionaries in their
own way. They spent
nearly 30 years in battle
against the imperialist
powers which dominated
China and against China's
landlords and top
capitalists. They led a
huge revolution, based on
the struggles of millions of
peasants, in 1949.

Their present position is not just the result of old age and the privileges of power. The totalitarian regime, the stifling of free political life, against which China's students and workers are now protesting, was initiated straight away after the revolution in 1949.

Why? The decisive transformation of the outlook, social affiliation,

he peasant movement has created its own armies, has seized great territories, and has installed its own institutions. In the event of further successes — and all of us, of course, passionately desire such successes — the movement will become linked up with the urban and industrial centres and, through that very fact, it will come face to face with the working class. What will be the nature of this encounter? Is it certain that its character will be peaceful and

At first glance the question might appear to be superfluous. The peasant movement is headed by Communists or sympathisers. Isn't it self-evident that in the event of their coming together the workers and the peasants must unanimously unite under the Communist banner?

Among the Communist leaders of Red detachments there indubitably are many declassed intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who have not gone through the school of proletarian stuggle. For two or three years they live the lives of partisan commanders and commissars; they wage battles, sieze territories etc. They absorb the spirit of their environment. Meanwhile the majority of the rank-and-file Communists in the Red detachments unquestionably consist of peasants, who assume the name Communist in all honesty and sincerity but who in actuality remain revolutionary paupers or revolutionary petty proprietors. In politics he who judges by denominations and labels and not by social facts is lost. All the more so when the politics concerned is carried out arms in hand.

The true Communist party is the organisation of the proletarian vanguard. But we must not forget that the working class of China has been kept in an oppressed and amorphous condition during the last four years, and only recently has it evinced signs of revival. It is one thing when a Communist party, firmly resting on the flower of the urban proletariat, strives through

and political character of the Chinese Communist Party leadership took place between the 1920s and the 1940s.

In 1927-8 the Chinese workers' movement was crushed. False policies by the Chinese Communist Party, imposed on it by Stalin, contributed to this defeat. A revolutionary opportunity was missed.

The Communist leaders fled the cities and establised themselves in the countryside. There was no real central state power in China at that time. By mobilising the peasants for rent reductions or land reforms, the Communist Party was able to win local power in sizeable areas and build up a formidable military machine.

That was the start of the process which led to the revolution of 1949. It also transformed the revolutionaries. Divorced from the working class, placed at the head of big military

are truly Communists or only take the name, assume the leadership of

a peasant war without having serious support from the pro-

letariat. This is precisely the situation in China. This acts to augment

to an extreme the danger of con-

flicts between the workers and the armed peasants. In any event, one

may rest assured there will be no

In Russia, in the period of civil war, the proletariat was already in

power in the greater part of the

country, the leadership of the strug-

gle was in the hands of a strong and

tempered party, the entire comman-

ding apparatus of the centralised

Red Army was in the hands of the

workers. Notwithstanding all this,

the peasant detachments, incom-

parably weaker than the Red Army,

often came into conflict with it after

it victoriously moved into peasant

different and moreover completely to the disadvantage of the workers.

In the most important regions of

China the power is in the hands of

bourgeois militarists; in other regions, in the hands of leaders of

armed peasants. Nowhere is there

any proletarian power as yet. The

trade unions are weak. The in-

fluence of the party among the

workers is insignificant. The pea-

sant detachments, flushed with victories they have achieved, stand

under the wing of the Comintern.

They call themselves "the Red Ar-

with the armed forces of the Soviets. What results consequently

is that the revolutionary peasantry of China, in the person of its ruling

stratum, seems to have appropriated to itself beforehand the

political and moral capital which should by the nature of things

belong to the Chinese workers. Isn't

it possible that things may turn out

so that all this capital will be

directed at a certain moment against the workers?

Naturally the peasant poor, and in China they constitute the over-

whelming majority, to the extent they think politically, and these

comprise a small minority, sincerely

and passionately desire alliance and

friendship with the workers. But the

peasantry, even when armed, is in-

ie, they identify themselves

In China the situation is radically

guerrilla sectors

dearth of bourgeois provocateurs.

and administrative machines, and educated in the ideas of Stalinism, which were increasingly the ideas of an exploitative bureaucratic ruling class, these "Communists" moved very far from the ideas of workers' liberty.

In the article from which we publish extracts here — "Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" written in 1932 — Leon Trotsky commented on this transformation at an early stage.

Trotsky did not anticipate that the Maoists would take full power in China, crush the old capitalist class, and establish their own totalitarian state. Another 17 years of great changes in world politics were to pass before that could happen. Yet as early and 1932 Trotsky was able to highlight some of the factors and processes that would later prove decisive.

the workers to lead a peasant war. It is an altogether different thing when a few thousand or even tens of thousands of revolutionists, who

Occupying in daily life an intermediate, indeterminate, and vacillating position, the peasantry at decisive moments can follow either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. The peasantry does not find the road to the proletariat easily but only after a series of mistakes and defeats. The bridge between the peasantry and the bourgeoisie is provided by the urban petty bourgeoisie, chiefly by the intellectuals, who commonly come forward under the banner of socialism and even communism.

The commanding stratum of the Chinese 'Red Army' has no doubt succeeded in inculcating itself with the habit of issuing commands. The absence of a strong revolutionary party, and of mass organisations of the proletariat renders control over the commanding stratum virtually impossible. The commanders and commissars appear in the guise of absolute masters of the situation and upon occupying cities will be rather apt to look down from above upon the workers. The demands of the workers might often appear to them either inopportune or ill-advised.

advised.

Nor should one forget such 'trifles' as the fact that within cities the staff and offices of the victorious armies are established not in the proletarian huts but in the finest city buildings, in the houses and apartments of the bourgeoisie; and all this facilitates the inclination of the upper stratum of the peasant armies to feel itself part of the 'cultured' and 'educated' classes, in no way part of the proletariat.

Thus in China the causes and

Thus in China the causes and grounds for conflicts between the army, which is peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership, and the workers not only are not eliminated but, on the contrary, all the circumstances are such as to greatly increase the possibility and even the inevitability of such conflicts; and in addition the chances of the proletariat are far less favourable to begin with than was the case in Russia.

The Russian Narodniks used to accuse the Russian Marxists of 'ignoring' the peasantry, of not carrying on work in the villages, etc. To this the Marxists replied: "We will arouse and organise the advanced workers and through the workers we shall arouse the

peasants." Such in general is the only conceivable road for the proletarian party.

The Chinese Stalinists have acted otherwise. During the revolution of 1925-27 they subordinated directly and immediately the interests of the workers and the peasants to the interests of the national bourgeoisie. In the years of the counterrevolution they passed over from the proletariat to the peasantry, ie, they undertook that role which was fulfilled in our country by the SRs when they were still a revolutionary party. Had the Chinese Communist Party concentrated its efforts for the last few years in the cities, in industry, on the railroads; had it sus-

tained the trade unions, the educational clubs and circles; had it, without breaking off from the workers, taught them to understand what was occurring in the villages — the share of the proletariat in the general correlation of forces would have been incomparably more favourable today.

favourable today.

The party actually tore itself away from the class. Thereby in the last analysis it can cause injury in the peasantry as well. For should the proletariat continue to remain on the sidelines, without organisation, without leadership, then the peasant war even if fully victorious will inevitably arrive in a blind

#### A film about growing up

**Belinda Weaver** reviews 'The Year My Voice Broke'

mall towns are pretty much the same anywhere; people who are 'different' get a hard time. "The Year My Voice Broke" is set in the southern tablelands of New South Wales in 1962, but it could be any small town in Australia, or in England or in America. Only the details are

Freya is sixteen. Bold, assured, a free spirit, she hates the confining morality of smalltown life which encourages and applauds promiscuity in men, while condemning it in women. When she falls for Trevor, a football-playing school mate, she a football-playing school mate, she can't see any reason why she shouldn't go to bed with him. What's stopping them, after all, except other people's disapproval. Freya is used to that. People have always thought her wild.

But the townspeople view unmarried sex rather differently from childish pranks. In their eyes, Freya has crossed the thin line between be-

has crossed the thin line between being a 'nice girl' and a slut. She's fair game now for any man, they think, whether young, old, married or not. If a girl 'does it' with a man outside the protection of marriage, then in the eyes of the twonspeople, she no

longer deserves respect.

Only Freya's friend Danny thinks differently. Danny cherishes a hopeless passion for Freya, his former childhood playmate who has grown up faster and left him behind in the uncertainties of adolescence. adolscence.

Danny, a slight, sixteen year old boy whose father runs a pub, is the film's narrator as well as the main character, so we get his thoughts and comments on what's going on both before and after it happens.



William Dafoe as an agent investigating the murder of civil rights in another recent release, Mississippi Burning'.

Danny is different from the rough and tumble boys in his school class. Unlike them, he's a thinker and a dreamer, and he's sensitive too.

He wants to protect Freya because he loves her, but realises he's helpless. Freya has to make her own mistakes.

Growing up films are usually pretty tedious, dealing as most of them do with some dreary boy's masturbation fantasies. But this one isn't. It's touching and funny and real.

There are many laughs in the film, but it's moving too, since it deals with everyday things — growing up, growing away from people, making painful decisions, leaving home — in a totally unsentimental way. It's certainly better than anything Hollywood has ever done about growing up.

## The Shores of Amerika

#### By Mick Ackersley

n the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich there is a darkened, centuries-old globe showing the world as it was known to the learned in the late 15th century, before Columbus sailed to the Americas.

On it there is only sea, and no other

land, between Europe and the coast of Asia or 'the Indies'. Columbus knew that the world was round, but he vastly miscalculated its size and its distances, and therefore did not see the possibility of an enforce the proscibility of the size of the procession.

distances, and therefore did not see the possibility of an unknown land mass between Europe and Asia.

Columbus landed on the islands of Hispaniola (Haiti and Santa Domingo) and Cuba, never on the mainland. He died believing he had found a way westward to the Indies, and not

knowing that he had found a new, unanticipated, world. It was Amerigo Vespucci who sailed up the coast, in about 1500, and mapped it as a new, unexplored, continent. Thus: America.

The globe at Greenwich shows with couch accuracy the world as it was

rough accuracy the world as it was known to Europeans before Columbus and Vespucci sailed — a world without America. Yet America was nevertheless there, looming across the future of hymerhind. future of humankind.

He trusted, Josef, misnamed it 'Amerika'.

"America, O America, my new found land". John Donne.

To sail out of Old Necessity into the warm lands Of Freedom, and settle in our Amerika; To find a world with neither slaves nor ruling brigands.

To seek and shape and make our own Amerika!

Brave Vladimir Columbus has sailed out west Into the stormy unknown much-charted seas To find our Amerika. He goes to test and quest For land out there. The others bide and shirk. He

His chance and takes it: his strong craft could sail to

And back again; his crew have been through the hardest schools;

The map-makers have done their work — now practice will tell

The true mariners apart from the wishful fools

Who stand on the shore and dream of the unfound

Afraid to launch their craft out on the raging main, Though they too know the next new world is now at

And must be found and won: chains to lose, a world to gain!

And Vladimir knows this tide will go, if they stand In frozen fear, and strand them there on the shores of Europe:

So, with straining sails and bodies stretched and broken, his band

Of heroes fought the waves and winds until the ropes

Had lumps of flesh clinging to them, and the waves Dim red with spilled blood, and the dead floated

thickly On that bitter saragasso sea; until, hushed In awe and terror they came to America, logically

There where it should be. But in fact it was a world Unknown, uncharted, almost undreamed of, they'd

A raw unripe land. But bold Vladimir unfurled His red no-quarter banner there on that bleak cold ground.

They'd found an unexpected place, an Atlantis in Reverse, set down in the wide sea between the old World and Amerika, and thought it was the unseen Land: though lost, they thought they'd set the future

In that barren place! — Less free of Old Necessity Than our old world; where want which withers human life

Was sharper, keener, stronger, more savage; where no

Of God could be built amidst the inescapable strife:

The wars of all against all; the battle for place; The war of those on top to stay where they are, there: The savage war of the haves, that war without grace, To keep down the have-nots — class war stark and

"Amerika, O Amerika, my new found land!" Vladimir never knew it was not Amerika, He died unsure what land it was they'd found, and a brigand

They organised the strong people they had found

And Josef told them they lived in Amerika And that they were free, unlike the people of care And sorrow back there. And then Josef made

A place of slavery such as Europe never was. Those who resisted slavery, Vladimir's crew too, Were defamed as warriors in slavery's cause And killed in millions like beasts in Josef's private

As the waves of death engulfed the people, the land blushed

Dim red with spilled blood, and the dead were piled And deep as the bitter saragasso sea. Hushed

With awe and terror, the people bowed to the big lie; And to rule by the Brigand King, their would-be

God, 'Our Sun' Who curbs all that moves and thinks, plying the butcher's knife:

Who rules as an ignorant Killer-Pope, turning the gun

On Spartacus, and on Kepler too, cauterising life.

So the Promethean heroes who outfaced Blind nature won an old, and not a new world; And Josef disgraced our Amerika; displaced The maps and stole the name on that red unfurled

Banner for that bleak land where he enslaved and maimed.

And we stand dreaming on the shore; becalmed, coward band -

Our own Amerika unknown, unfound, unclaimed -Chained by bleak Necessity's iron countermand.

And some who'd sought escape because our world is

Turned back again, and grew to hate that savage

That false Amerika, and loved again our old ghoul, And they curse those who quest still, as a mad malicious race.

And there are those who say no such place can ever

No other Amerika is hidden in a far sea; There is no Amerika beyond Amerika; That it can not now be. But we shall see, we shall

That our Amerika still looms before humanity, It will rise like the Indies out of the rough sea. It will rise like the Indies out of the rough sea!

And we will sail from old Necessity to the Land Of Freedom; we will conquer our own Amerika! We will build a world with neither slave nor ruling

We will seek and shape and make our own Amerika!

Amerika, O Amerika, my unfound land.

Asked who his heroes were, Marx said "Spartacus and Asked who his heroes were, Marx said "Spartacus and Kepler". Spartacus represented the elemental revolt of the slaves; Kepler was the struggle for knowledge, for science. Kepler lived in the 16th century and spent his life working over the observations made by Tycho Brahe in an attempt to prove Copernicus's contention (from the late 15th century) that the Sun, not the Earth, was the centre of the solar system. A half-medieval man, who earned a living as an astrologer, Kepler went wrong again and again because he believed that the Earth had to go round the Sun, if it did, in a perfect circle, because God created the movement and everything to do with God is perfect. Thus he sought a everything to do with God is perfect. Thus he sought a perfect circle, where in fact the movement of the Earth round the Sun is elliptical. He persevered, and eventually worked it out. A hero more truly befitting our own condition than Karl Marx's!

## Anti-social behaviour

#### LES HEARN'S SCIENCE COLUMN

he increase in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere is well-known, as is its possible effect of warming the Earth. Less well-known is that CO2 is just one of several gases capable of having a greenhouse effect (GHE).

Others include:
• nitrous oxide, formed when fuels are burnt in, for example, car

· chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), better known for destroying the ozone

· ozone itself, when formed in city · halons, used in some fire ex-

tinguishers; · methane, main constituent of natural gas but released from a wide

variety of other sources too. Together, these gases have as much effect as CO<sub>2</sub>. Clearly, tackling the GHE means cutting down

on all greenhouse gases.

The main problem in this is methane. Through present at a very low level in the air, it is far more effective at keeping in the sun's warmth — 25 times worse than CO<sub>2</sub>. Growing at 1% per year, methane may overtake CO<sub>2</sub> as a greenhouse gas in just 50 years.

So where does methane come

from? It seems a major source is the

insides of cows! To be more precise, the source is the activity of methane-producing bacteria in

Two billion years ago, such bacteria were the dominant form of life on Earth. Then, the atmosphere contained little oxygen. But as the modern type of photosynthesis got under way and oxygen levels rose, the methane producers, to whom oxygen is a deadly poison, were forced into oxygen-free refuges.

Such refuges were stagnant swamps and bogs, the muddy bot-toms of ponds and lakes, and... the guts of herbivores such as termites and cattle. There, they digest cellulose, releasing food for themselves and their hosts, and

releasing methane.

Cows release about 200 grams of methane (1/3 cubic metre) per day in their farts. Since there are some 1300 million cows on Earth, about 100 million tonnes (Mt) of methane are 'released' by them per year.

Other sources of methane in-

· leaks from coal mines, oil fields, rocks and gas pipelines;

• emmissions from the 6.5 million square kilometres of bogs, marshes and rice paddies (up to 150 Mt from the latter alone); • emmissions from the rear ends of

termites (5 Mt); the burning of forests and

• rotting rubbish tips (70 Mt per

The total is about 500 Mt per year. Much is removed by oxidation but perhaps 50 Mt are added to the atmosphere net per year.

## Slaves' charter on the Tube

his is a slaves' charter. It is a blank cheque for management. They can force you to do whatever they like."

That's how one tube driver described the London's Underground bosses' new 'employment package' put forward last Tuesday 2 May. "Talk about a £30 pay rise is a load of

rubbish. What they have offered us is a 30 page document which smashes all our conditions, abolishes all the old agreements and introduces flexible

The bosses' proposals include:

No extra payments for anti-social hours, Sundays and Saturdays or Bank

Holidays.

• Drivers and guards to be required to work half an hour overtime at the end

of shift without payment.
• 74 hour week over a fortnight. This could mean working five hours a day for one week and then flat out for 9 or 10 hours a day the next.A new qualification certificate to be

applied for at least every 3 years. This certificate could be withdrawn at any time by a crew manager who can then use the re-examination procedure as a victimisation tool.

Book on and finish at any location management want. This will allow them to get hours of extra unpaid overtime as drivers and guards will have to return to their home depot in their own time.

· A new grievance procedure which ex-

cludes trade union representation until the very final stage.

 New transfer arangements which will allow department managers, guards and drivers to the other end of London and then get them sacked within a week for

not getting in to work.

"Everything management have dreamed up over the last 4 or 5 years is

in this document. It is a slaves' charter. "What's more the pay offer is not a guaranteed rise by any stretch of the imagination. It comes in parts and not everyone will get everthing and anyway it still doesn't give us enough or compensate for what we've lost.

"We would all rather resign than accept the document."

cept the document"

Tubes, buses, rail: link up!

he NUR is set to go to court this week to attempt to lift the injunction outlawing the all out tube strike which was due to start this Monday 8 May.

The strike ballot was in opposition to managements' attempts to impose the

'Action Stations' package.
Under the proposals all demarcations will go and workers will have to do whatever they are told. Managers will have the right to hire and fire people on the spot. New 'unsatisfactory attendance' procedures mean that time off dance' procedures mean that time off sick is a disciplinary offence — even with a doctors note! This will frighten people into coming in while they are ill and thus cut safety.

Managers will be able to put their favourites in the best jobs after promo-

tavourites in the best jobs after promo-tion based on seniority is abolished and staff will have to pass psychology tests to prove they are 'passenger friendly'. Whatever happens in court, another unofficial strike of drivers and guards our pay is likely to take place next Mon-day, 15th, and should coincide with the first one day strike by London busworkers over their pay claim. What is needed is co-ordination at

rank and file level between busworkers, tubeworkers and railworkers in the tubeworkers and railworkers in the capital to put together the various strands of unofficial action. The transport workers have tremendous power. They can paralyse the capital's transport system and put huge pressure on the employers, leading up to official all out indefinite action.

#### **Engineers move towards strikes**

NALGO's executive yesterday rejected the employers offer of a 6.4% pay rise. A lobby at the NJC pay negotiations has been called by Islington NALGO for 9.30 Wednesday 17th May at Belgrave Square SW1 (tybe) (igotation) (tube: Victoria).

IN BRIEF

Unofficial action is on the increase in the **construction industry**. On Tuesday 25 April over 1,000 steel erectors went on strike in London for £12 per hour. The erectors have formed their own London-wide shop stewards committee.

Meanwhile UCATT officials plan to

discipline stewards at the Isle of Grain Chunnel precast yard after a successful strike for 'failing to follow

15 Kurdish and Turkish rag trade workers in Hackney have been sack

ed for wanting to join the May Day march in London. Their bosses in-sisted that they work the Bank holiday as compulsory overtime on basic pay. The NUTGW is fighting for their reinstatement.

The Tory anti-union laws backfired last week when Peter Dawson, NATFHE's appointed General Secretary of 10 years standing, lost the ballot introduced under the new laws to a candidate to his

left, Geoff Woolf.

BBC TV and radio programmes
were again disrupted this week as
journalists and technicians embarked on a two day strike over their pay

he leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (Confed) seem set to call a series of strike ballots in key companies in pursuit of their national claim, which include a demand for a cut in the working week to 35 hours.

Some local officials are talking about a ballot of the Confed's entire member ship; but according to the Financial Times Confed leaders are likely to target the better-organised military contrac-tors like British Aerospace, Ferranti and Rolls Royce, which have full order

The employers could well respond with legal action, attempting to get the ballot declared unlawful on the grounds that the dispute is a national one with the Engineering Employers' Federation

and not with their particular companies.

Building action from the bestorganised sections first could be a useful
way of developing the campaign.
However, that will only happen if the
unifying elements in the Confed's
original eight point claim are all brought

out.

The claim included not only the 35 hours demand, which has particular appeal to the better-organised sections, but demands for increases in pay, shift premiums, overtime premiums and limitations on overtime which have more appeal to less well organised

groups.

The Confed leaders cannot be trusted. An emergency national conference of Confed stewards is vitally needed.

#### **Jordan admits** defeat

he AEU-EETPU merger is off. Bill Jordan the rightwing President of the engineers has been forced to accept the unanimous decision of the union's policy-making National Committee to stop the merger talks with the electricians.

Jordan had threatened to go for a ballot on the issue over the heads of the NC, but the majority on the executive did not have the stomach for such a battle with the union's activists, who are clearly set against any link up with Hammond.

However, we can't rule out the possibility that Jordan could return with some modified merger plans in the near

This is an important victory for the left in the AEU — and in the unions as a whole. It will help weaken and divide the right wing proponents of 'business

#### Railworkers vote for action

By a railworker

ritish Rail's decision to impose the 7 per cent wage increase on us is a gambit calculated to diffuse action.

They hope that the difference between their 7 per cent and the unions' claim is so minimal that no-one will vote for action to win the difference, and noone will be sufficiently motivated by the other issue on the ballot paper, the defence of the Machinery of

defence of the Machinery of Negotiation.

The joint union pay claim is for a 'substantial increase' just like it is every year. No-one has put a figure on it, Talk is of the rate of inflation (7.9%, officially) or the 'going rate' (maybe a fraction more).

Most railworkers are not at all clear about the Machinery of Negotiation. What is it? What does it do? All they see of it is their local LDC rep, and since it's year difficult for LDC reps to achieve

very difficult for LDC reps to achieve anything, many railworkers see the

whole thing as a waste of time.

The Machinery is the laid-down procedure whereby changes to our conditions, hours or wages have to be conditions, hours or wages have to be agreed by our representatives, and changes to the working of the railway system have first to be put to our representatives for consultation. We don't have much say — but it would be a lot worse if we had no say at all.

This could be the last year of national pay bargaining, if British Rail get their way. From next year it will be regional and local pay rates. You will even be working alongside someone in the same trade but on different money.

The union leaders are all over the

The union leaders are all over the place with this campaign. They need to talk about the Machinery of Negotiation in a way relevant to ordinary railworkers, and to set a 'substantial' pay claim worth fighting for — 15 per cent should be our demand.

Vote yes to defend the Machinery and to get a decent pay rise!

#### **Branch leaders** overturned By Tony Dale

anchester NALGO branch executive were censured by a two to one majority at a branch meeting last week attended by 400 members.

For a number of years the Manchester NALGO branch had been totally controlled and dominated by the present leadership. The background to this revolt was a dispute over Saturday morning opening of neighbourhood offices.

In exchange for working one Saturday every fortnight the Council have of-fered the reception staff a reduction in the working week by 1 hour. This derisory offer, combined with members dissatisfaction with moves to spread an already overstretched service more thinly, lead to the revolt.

The branch officers have tried every The branch officers have tried every manouevre in the book to try to get the deal accepted. They called a ballot tying rejection of the offer to widespread strike action. These proposals for industrial action were put forward with the sole aim of getting a 'No' vote.

That goal was achieved by a 2:1 majority and a low 33% turnout. The branch meeting condemned the options presented to the membrship in the

presented to the membrship in the

The meeting rejected the terms and the result of the ballot. This branch meeting was a clear mandate for continued rejection of the offer.

### **Dockers** start ballot

alloting for strike action started on the docks this week. The result should be known by 19 May.

It is not at all certain that strike action

will follow quickly. The signs point to the union leaders delaying action. Bill Morris, who is standing in for Ron Todd as leader of the TGWU, told the Welsh TUC that he intended to delay action as long as possible in order to allow sufficient time for negotiations. The TGWU's earlier commitment to na-tional negotiations only with the port employers appears to be weakening.

In Southampton, stewards have met with the employers to discuss local ar-rangements after the abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme. In a recent letter to the employers Morris talked about developing negotiations both nationally and locally.

All this delay is dangerous. It is understandable that the TGWU leaders should want to reduce the danger of a legal assault by the employers, but there is now a real danger of the dockers losing momentum.

It is in the employers' interest to drag on negotiations and to allow the aboli weaken the TGWU leaders should call

In the meantime, rank and file dockers need to set in operation plans for making contact with non-registered and overseas dockers for solidarity actiion, and develop similar contact with railworkers and other transport

## **Busworkers** defy threat

n attempt by Central Scottish Buses to break a solid strike by 800 busworkers failed dramatically last Monday

The busworkers have been on strike for the past four weeks over the imposition of new rosters and the sacking of 4 shop stewards. They were threatened with mass dismissals if they did not return to work by 8pm on Monday 8

In fact only four out of 800 workers reported for work as the bosses' deadline passed.

The drivers at Central Scottish were on strike for 8 weeks earlier this year in a dispute over new rostering proposals. Four weeks ago as the union planned to ballot on a second strike because the management had broken an agreement to negotiate over the new rosters, the

four shop stewards were sacked. Strikers have on a number of occasions picketed out both Buchanan Street and Anderston bus stations; and on each occasion no other bus drivers from rival companies have crossed the picket line. The lesson of this is clear, solidarity action by all Scottish bus group workers can defeat the bosses' attacks and force the reinstatement of the sacked stewards.

#### **Bus strikes** planned

rom the response at pull-ins last week it looks certain that London busworkers have voted for a series of fortnightly oneday strikes starting next Monday 15

They are demanding £5 per hour minimum and a 35 hour week.

This is a good start but it will not be sufficient to win.

Busworkers need to build for an allout strike and link up our action with that of the tube drivers and railworkers. The first step in this direction will come when tube drivers strike alongside busworkers next Monday 15 May.

#### Fire down below?

#### By a West Midlands **FBU** member

fter several years of relative quiet, the firefighters are being forced into the limelight again.

The formula that ended the national firefighters strike of 1977/78 guaranteed wages comparable to the upper quartile of male manual workers, to qualified firefighters. This has ensured

qualified interiginers. This has ensured fairly healthy increases in wages each year but also a relatively quiescent and inactive union membership.

Thatcher supported the 'formula' settlement as leader of the Tory opposition in 1978. No doubt she now calculates that enough time has passed to renege on her past position.

on her past position.

Of course, the whole concept of national wage negotiations between unions and local authority employers sticks in the gullets of the Tory cabinet. Both Douglas Hurd and his lapdog junior Minister, Lord Ferrers are under clear instructions to dispose of the pay for-

mula by whatever means necessary. The firebrigade union have been invited to 'negotiate the abandonment' (!) of the formula and told if not, legislation can be expected. This would clearly mean the abolition of the National Joint Council (the present national

negotiating machinery).

Many firefighters have expressed surprise that the government have left it so long before making their move. It has been a clear government intention for some time. It is possible they have only been held back by the public embarrass-ment of having to please firefighters following the series of disasters of re-cent years starting with the Grand Hotel

Firefighters have many things going for them. By today's standards they have a relatively strong and democratic union, a tradition of mutual support, loyalty and discipline. The workplace branch structure is ideally suited to organising a dispute. There are good links with other unions at rank and file level in many areas, and finally there is strong economic leverage. The full fire losses for the 1977/78 strike have never

been published but were massive.

The Armed Forces firefighters are now better trained but cannot hope to replace the whole fire service. Unlike 1977, most senior officers are now in the FBU and not the scab National Association of Fireofficers. Today's officers were the young firefighters of the 1977/78 strike and remember the battle that was fought then.

Well over half of today's firefighters have joined since the national strike and have been used to the benefits of the pay formula without having had to fight for it. Many of them will need convincing of the need to defend the pay formula

and other hard won conditions.

The FBU leadership under Ken
Cameron, whilst announcing to the
press that they are ready for a strike,
have done little to mobilise the membership and at the same time are planning to negotiate with Ferrers.

Firefighters need a clear lead: the public call for strike action whilst preparations for negotiating the abolition of the scheme are under way can only sow doubt and confusion. Bluster will not be enough.

**Build the action to beat Moodie** 

## Ellis fiddles while jobs burn gereni Io

DSS workers walk out as officials attempt to sabotage jobs campaign

By a London DSS **Moodie striker** 

gainst a backdrop of increasing Tory attacks on the civil service, members of the clerical grades union CPSA are meeting to discuss policy at our annual conference in Blackpool.

Delegates at the DHSS section conference pushed through an emergency motion criticising the right-wing Section Executive for their undemocratic and biased running of the recent ballot on the Government's 'Operational Strategy' (computerisation of Social Security offices with 20,000 job losses).

In the ballot, workers were forced to choose between accepting 'Operational Strategy' or going for an all-out strike with no preparation. They narrowly accepted the

But the debate and vote at conference clearly showed that union members had voted against an immediate unprepared all-out strike, rather than for 20,000 job cuts.

The following day, DHSS delegates passed an emergency motion calling for a ballot on paid strike action in the first London 'cluster' of Social Security offices to be affected by 'Moodie' (relocation of benefit work to other areas of the country) and for an all-London reps' meeting to be called at the close of conference.

On Monday 8th, delegates and observers to the full union conference heard reports of more and more London 'Moodie' offices voting to join the unofficial oneday strike on Tuesday (see report).
Conference floor protests forced
the National Disputes Committee to
meet to decide whether to support a ballot for paid all-out strike action in the first 'cluster'.

They deferred their decision pending a meeting of the Section Executive, and right wingers on the Section Executive quickly started questioning the validity of the emergency motion.

On Tuesday 9th the Section Executive recommended a strike ballot - but not along the lines of the motion passed at Section Conference. Instead, they wanted to ballot all offices in Greater London on an unpaid all-out strike. There are many non-Moodie' offices in Greater London, and this is an obvious attempt to sabotage action.

We attempted to force the National Executive to allow a striker from the Ealing cluster to address the full conference. Union president Marion Chambers refused to allow it and threatened to close the conference down.

As I write, we don't know what the National Disputes Committee will say about the Section Executive's call for a strike ballot.

A striker will address the NDC, he will be arguing for them to implement the terms of the emergency motion. Tomorrow, Wednesday 10th, Conference delegates will be attempting to force through the same thing. If however, we fail and the NDC agree to the SEC's recomendation then we will have to begin a massive campaign to

organise for a successful yes vote.

If the NDC refuses to even support the SEC's position then activists will have to build unofficial strike action through the 'Moodie' offices and then the rest of the Lon-

don DSS. Meeting for all London reps to discuss fighting 'Moodie': Tuesday 16 May, 6.30, at the Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC1.

#### The battle is on

nofficial walkouts greeted the arrival of 'Regional Support Teams' when they appeared at Ealing DSS office in London this Tuesday 9th May.

The walkouts included all the offices in the Ealing 'cluster' including Southall which has been described as a weaker office. In fact after reps held a meeting to get over the arguments the vote was 40-0 for strike action with just 2 absten-

Support for the action spread further afield. 10 out of 11 offices came out in London North and other non-Moodie offices joined the action as well. Walkouts took place as far away as Manchester.

One striker summed up the mood well "We've done this to give the DHSS Section Executive a kick up the backside and get them moving".

#### new phase.

China: build a

solidarity

By Cheung Siu Ming

campaign!

fter the vast and largely

peaceful demonstrations

in Beijing on 4 May, the

struggle in China has entered a

The regime has made one further concession by allowing largely ac-curate reports of the events in the Chinese news media. One section of the march consisted of Chinese journalists shouting 'No more lies!'

Premier Zhao has made reassuring noises to overseas financiers about the "reasonableness" some of the students' demands. There is still some speculation that Zhao, who is on the reformist wing of the bureaucracy, might be scapegoated like Hu Yaobang two years ago. However, the hard-liners must have been thrown into some disarray when they learned last week that the threat of outright repression failed miserably to dent

the demonstrators' audacity.

And the regime's low-profile tactics may have had some success. The demonstrators do not have another clear focal point for protest, and the promise of some con-cessions has divided the student

The large majority of students, it seems, have returned to classes, to await the regime's response to their demands, and militant minorities like the Beijing students have been left somewhat exposed.

Nevertheless it would be mistaken to think that the whole wave of protest will now gradually wind down. Students returning to classes are developing their newlyformed organisations, and debating the lessons of recent events.

They have stepped back because they realise that they do not have the strength, political clarity, or organised links with the workers to win a head-on confrontation with the regime. Although severely em-barrassed and lacking any credibility among the masses, the Chinese Communist Party still has enormous reserves and a massive repressive apparatus.

It will bide its time and aim to carry out a mopping-up operation later against the new layer of stu-dent leaders, just as it has done

The key task in the coming period for the students is to maintain and build their independent organisations, and to encourage groups of workers to do likewise

Socialists outside China can give many forms of support. Twinning student unions overseas with their Chinese comrades is the most obvious one.

The Campaign for Socialist Democracy in China is contacting Chinese student societies and student unions in the London colleges, with the aim of building for a public meeting and developing solidarity

Labour Party and trade union branches are urged to pass motions of support, invite speakers, and send donations to the campaign, which could do with some funds.

The campaign can be contacted c/o CIAC, 68 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 (01-836 8291).

## College joins tabloid witch hunt

Chris Rose was arrested on Monday 8 May for a protest stunt when Princess Anne visited his college.

The bodyguards who grabbed him soon found that what he had with him was nothing more alarming than a water pistol - but he was arrested and has been suspended from college. Chris tells the story.

was arrested about 100 yards away from Princess Anne, brandishing a water pistol, after I had shouted the words, 'Education for the masses, not the ruling classes!"

I was arrested for possession of a firearm and attempted breach of the peace, kept in a cell for three and a half hours, strip-searched, and questioned. I was released later along with another protester, Joseph Hughes, who had been arrested almost simultaneously on another part of the campus without my knowledge.

The story was all over the tabloid press on Tuesday 9th. The viceprincipal summoned me to his office and suspended me from the college, which means I can't sit my finals, I have to move out of my room, and I mustn't set foot on

A total over-reaction! And I've SEVI been released without charge to appear at the police station on 19

The college should not be allowed to witch-hunt in such an outrageous way. Is it a coincidence that Joseph Hughes, who was arrested in similar circumstances but has never been involved in political activity on campus and is not a socialist, has not been suspended?

Messages of support to: Chris Rose, c/o Royal Holloway and Bedford New College Student Union, Egham Hill, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX.



Tabloid hysteria

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