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Royal soap is tops
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For socialist renewal!



For workers' liberty!



The man who invented a new art
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Why millions are jobless
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SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

**Germany:
Jobless
despair
breeds
nazism**

**DON'T LET IT
HAPPEN
HERE!**

The fascists are on the march again. Last week in Rostock, an unemployment-racked town in the north east of Germany, thousands of working class people cheered on Nazi thugs as a refugee hostel was attacked. In ex-East Germany the fascists have found a big audience for their racism. Racism is their answer to the social crisis.

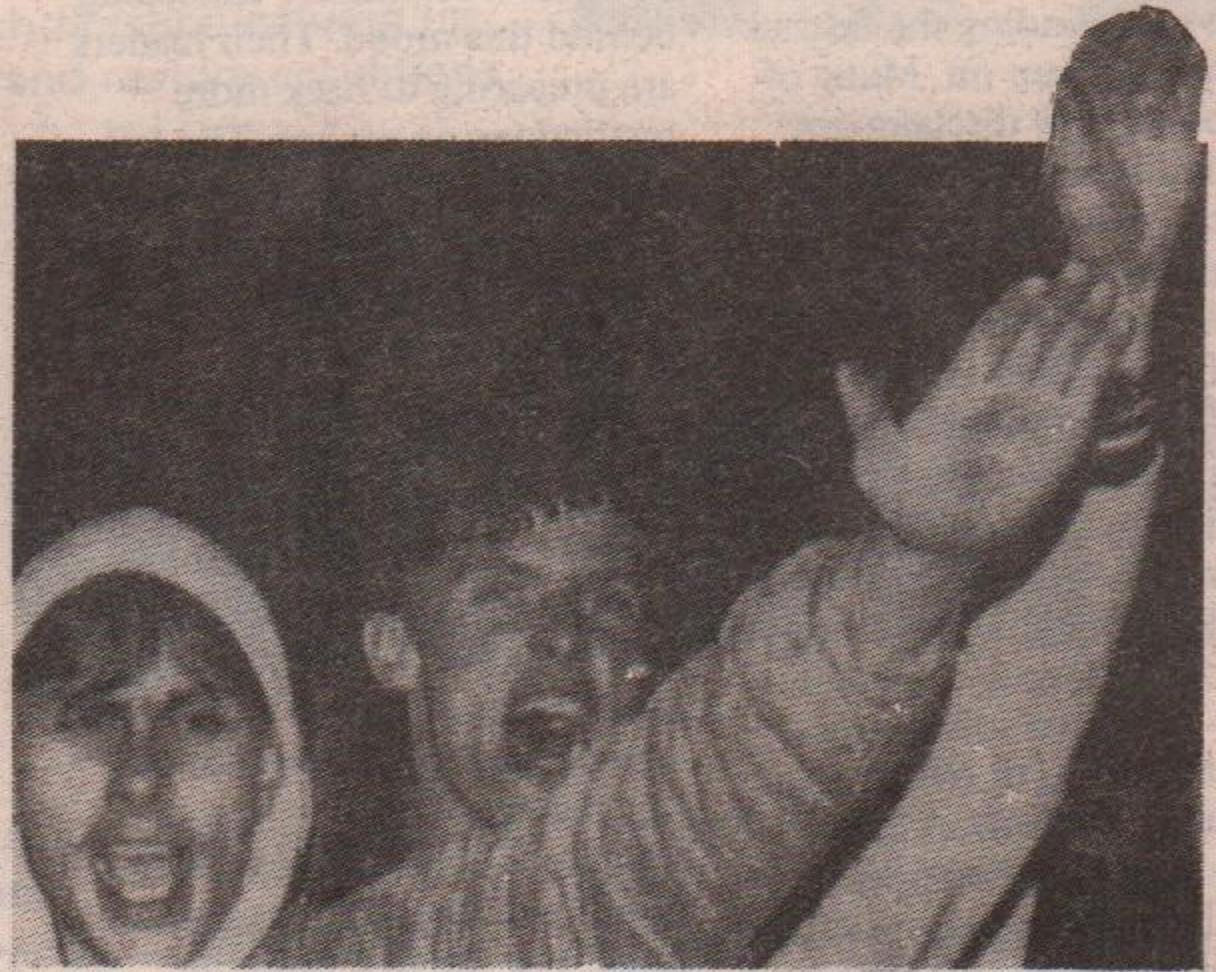
Germany is following France, where Le Pen's fascist Front National is a mass, mainstream political force.

In Germany, as in France, the labour movement is collapsing politically in the face of far-right aggression. The fascists

blame immigrants for the economic crisis and demand an end to liberal asylum laws as they set fire to hostels and beat up black people.

The labour movement condemns the violence but half-accepts the underlying argument that foreigners are to blame.

In Germany the Social Democrats are set to back the tighter controls on refugees - they are being stampeded rightwards after the events in Rostock - and they offer no economic answers to the baffled, desperate, jobless, poverty-hit



Continued on page 2

TUC must fight for jobs!

Mussolini comes to Britain

By Jim Fraser

Alessandra Mussolini, granddaughter of Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini and a leading member of the main fascist party in Italy today, the MSI, is to address a fringe meeting of "Western Goals" at this year's Tory Party Conference.

Western Goals also invited the leader of the French National Front Jean Marie Le Pen to

Britain last December.

The invitation of Mussolini is a further attempt to build European fascist links and a successful visit will give the MSI the respectability and legitimacy of the British Conservative Party, something it does not at present have.

Mussolini comes to eulogise the memory of her grandfather and to whitewash his crimes, to build the myth that he was a benevolent leader who made the

trains run on time.

The visit will not go unopposed: CAFE (Campaign Against Fascism in Europe), which organised the very successful week of action against the visit of Le Pen last December and initiated and led the successful demonstration against the seminar for David Irving on 4 July, has pledged to fight the visit of Mussolini every inch of the way.

Contact CAFE: 071-277 0817.

Black and white unite to fight racism

By Nick Brereton

1,000 people marched on Newcastle's West End Police Station on Bank Holiday Monday in a demonstration organised by the "Justice for Mr Miah" Campaign. They demanded action against racist thugs and an end to police racism.

The demo was a response to a vicious racist attack on pensioner Mr Miah a week earlier, which left him in hospital in a serious condition with a fractured skull. Police took over an hour to

arrive, despite the police station being a quarter of a mile away, and then arrested a Bengali youth.

The United Black Youth Association and Black Youth Movement called the demonstration to show that racist attacks will not be tolerated in Newcastle.

The hard work put in by black activists, helped by Elswick Labour Party activists who distributed 2,500 leaflets on local estates and collected 500 names on a petition, meant a successful demonstration was built at very

short notice.

Justice for Mr Miah Campaign c/o Newcastle Black Youth Movement, 262 Westgate Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4.

Bush threatens Iraq

George Bush doesn't know how to fix the US economy. He does know that blather about "family values" is not enough to win him the presidential election. So he is looking for another vote-winner — killing lots of people in Iraq.

First the Iraqis' reluctance to open ministry buildings to international inspection was seized on as a pretext, then, when the Iraqis backed down on that, their campaign of terror against the Shi'ites in southern Iraq.

Saddam Hussein has been running a campaign of terror against the Shi'ites for 18 months without the US stopping him, and Bush will not do anything decisive for the Shi'ites now, for if they had real autonomy they might secede to Iran and upset the balance of power in the region.

But the Shi'ites' plight can give George Bush a chance to show off the US's military technology.

In northern Iraq, the Kurdish region, in effect semi-independent since the uprisings after the Gulf War, is now being slowly starved of Western aid and military protection, and Saddam is increasing his attacks on it. But acting against Saddam on behalf of the Kurds would offend Turkey, and might draw Bush into onerous commitments.

After Rostock

The fascists could become a major force

Last weekend tens of thousands of anti-racists mobilised to protest about the fascist attacks on asylum seekers in Rostock, east Germany.

Meanwhile Nazis demonstrated in solidarity with the Rostock racists.

Angela Klein from the German socialist group VSP reports from Cologne.

We had a similar but much less serious outburst last year in Hoyerswerda. The events at Rostock have a graver significance because they were initiated by a peaceful demonstration of local people, demanding that the asylum-seekers' hostel was closed.

The Nazi groups then took the opportunity for a physical attack on the hostel.

For the first two days and nights up to 3,000 ordinary people were surrounding the fascists and cheering them on. Many of these people now disclaim any responsibility for the violence.

Political responsibility must fall on all those who did not defend the immigrants. In particular the local and Land (regional) governments are responsible for creating the initial tension by putting the asylum seekers in terribly overcrowded, unbearable conditions.

In the background, of course, is a very explosive social situation. In the ex-GDR two thirds of industrial production has been destroyed and half the working population has no regular job. Much of the housing is bad.

But in addition there is a special problem in the east. In the old GDR there was at least a functioning social structure in which people were less isolated than in the capitalist west. Now all the social links have been broken and people are feeling a tremendous alienation.

Half of the extreme right arrested in Rostock were from

western Germany. Nazis were travelling from Hamburg and Bremen to fight in Rostock.

Left wingers held a small, peaceful rally in Rostock. As they were leaving the police arrested 70. The next night 50 left-wingers were arrested.

The police seem clearly sympathetic to the fascist violence.

Now there are fascist demonstrations in solidarity with the violence in Rostock in towns in the west.

Although the general public and press reaction is that of shock the immediate political response has been to demand constitutional changes to tighten the right of asylum. They are making the immigrants culpable!

This is a very serious, right-wing turn. It seems that the Social Democrats are collapsing behind this mood. Their leaders are preparing to back more restrictions on asylum. The left of the SPD are calling for an extraordinary party congress, but I doubt that they are strong enough even to do this.

Towards the end of this week there have been many, small anti-racist demonstrations right across Germany. The problem is that there is no organised anti-racist force. Worse, the mass organisations — the unions — are retreating in the face of this racism.

There is a danger that the fascists could become a major force. For the first time the opinion polls give the far-right Republicans over 5% in each region of east Germany.

In the east the militant Nazi groups have broken out of their isolation. The hard-core fascists are addressing questions of social misery in the east. They are tapping into the real anger in the east about the terrible social conditions created in the aftermath of unification."



Up to 3,000 people marched on 22 August in protest at two racist murders in Manchester in January this year — Siddik Dada, a 60-year old Withington shopkeeper, was attacked in his shop by a gang of white youths armed with machetes and, three days later, Mohammed Sarwar, a 46-year old taxi-driver, was dragged out of his taxi and battered to death. Wreaths were laid near the place where Mohammed Sarwar died by his youngest son, Azeem Sarwar and his nephew, Liaqat Ali, and by Siddik Dada's son, Jonathan. Photo: Paul Herrmann, Profile

NUS tries to stifle minorities

By Janine Booth

The clampdown on democracy in the National Union of Students continues with the publication of a new "protocol" for members of the union's National Executive.

The protocol has three main elements — an assertion of "collective responsibility", a disputes procedure, and various moves to give the National President even more power.

"Collective responsibility" means, effectively, that political minorities on the Executive have to shut up. All members will have to defend and promote all Executive decisions, whatever they think of them.

Given that decisions over the

last year have included deducting poll tax from staff members' wages, refusing to organise any demonstrations against student hardship, and allowing the Nat West Bank to censor safer sex information, a socialist with any principles would find it very difficult to "defend" or "promote" all Executive decisions!

The protocol concedes that some decisions may conflict with some members' "personal political beliefs", but concludes that the only way out is to resign!

For socialists on the NUS Executive, ideas are not just "personal" but the basis on which they stood and were elected. "Collective responsibility" is an anti-democratic concept in a union which supposedly prides itself on

pluralism. As Rosa Luxemburg said, democracy is for the person who disagrees.

The disputes procedure may seem a good idea, but its structure makes it far from any sort of justice.

The National President alone decides whether a dispute actually exists or not! The President can ban an Exec member from NUS just because she has been accused of a breach of discipline. This procedure will make it easier to launch the sort of witch-hunts we have seen too often recently in NUS.

The President will also be empowered to veto all press releases, and the right to decide which Exec members visit which colleges.

"Liberation campaigns" such as the Women's, Black Students and Lesbian Gay & Bisexual Campaigns are supposed to be autonomous, but now they can carry out their own policies and strategies only so long as the Executive or the President approves!

Currently the LGB campaign has a political disagreement with the National Executive over the safer sex content of the NUS Diary. The new protocol is designed to stop the LGB campaign expressing that disagreement in any way.

The Campaign is not even allowed to communicate with the gay press — President Lorna Fitzsimons will do that for us!

Don't let it happen here

From front page

workers who are attracted by racist scapegoating.

We need a Europe-wide workers' movement capable of offering hope, cutting through despair, and confronting chauvinism and racism. If labour movements think they can gain by caving in to the racists, they are utterly wrong. They sow the seeds of division inside our movement. And the

beneficiaries of increased intolerance will always be the right wing.

In Britain just before the election, Roy Hattersley said the Labour Party would accept parts of the Asylum Bill. He was simply adding to Labour's disgraceful record on immigration rights.

More insidious than Hattersley are the countless Labour politicians who are perfectly willing to sign

petitions against racism but, at the same time are accepting or even creating the social misery upon which racism and fascism can thrive. In dozen of inner-city areas Labour councillors have made millions of pounds of cuts and axed thousands of jobs.

Shorter work weeks? Defence an extension of public services? Training and retraining at trade union rates of pay? Social control over investment? Instead, the Labour and trade

union leaders mutter banalities and tell us not to hope for quick improvements.

It is no surprise that the British fascists spurred on by Nazi successes in Europe, are growing.

The labour movement — and in the first place the TUC, which meets next week — must fight to unite black and white in the fight against racism and the fight for jobs and decent housing for all.

We need a Young Socialists!

Elaine Jones, Left Unity supporter on Labour Students National Executive, has made a call for the Labour Party to revive the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS).

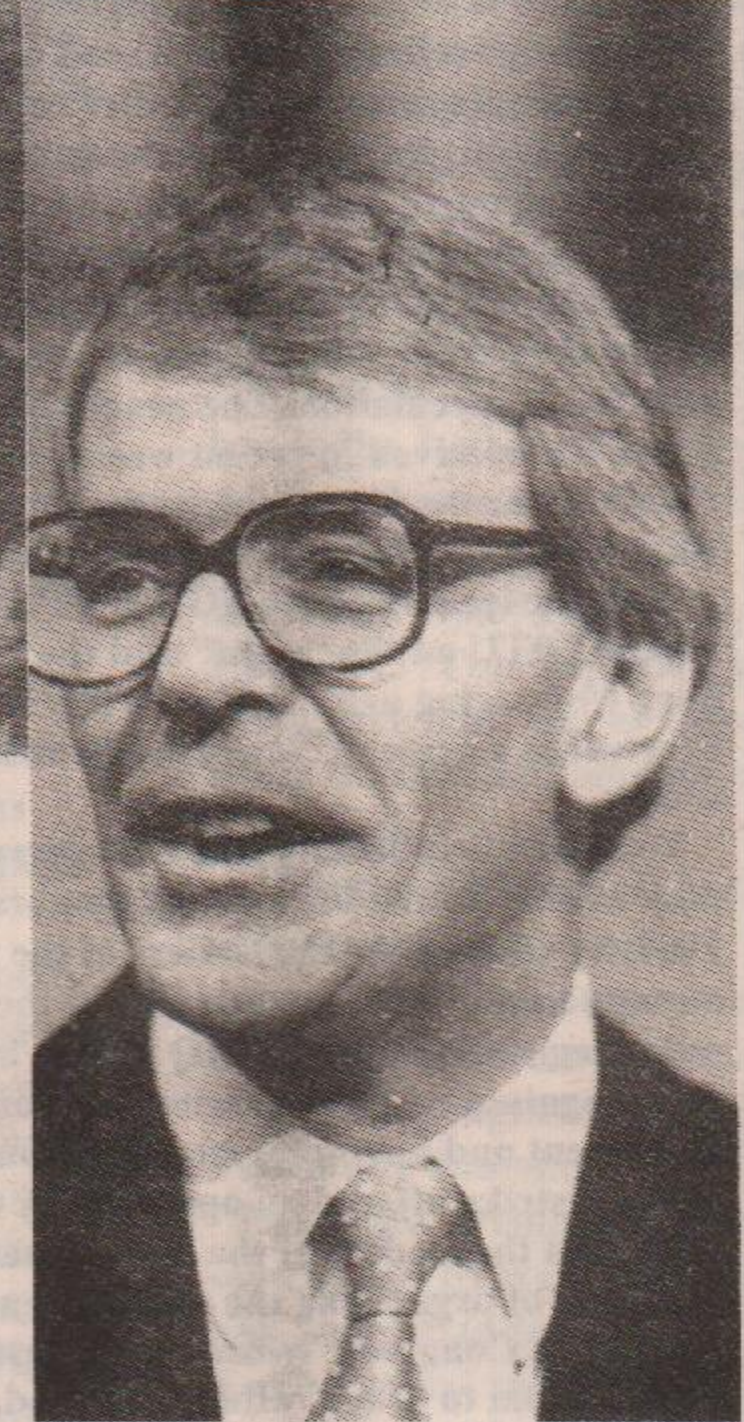
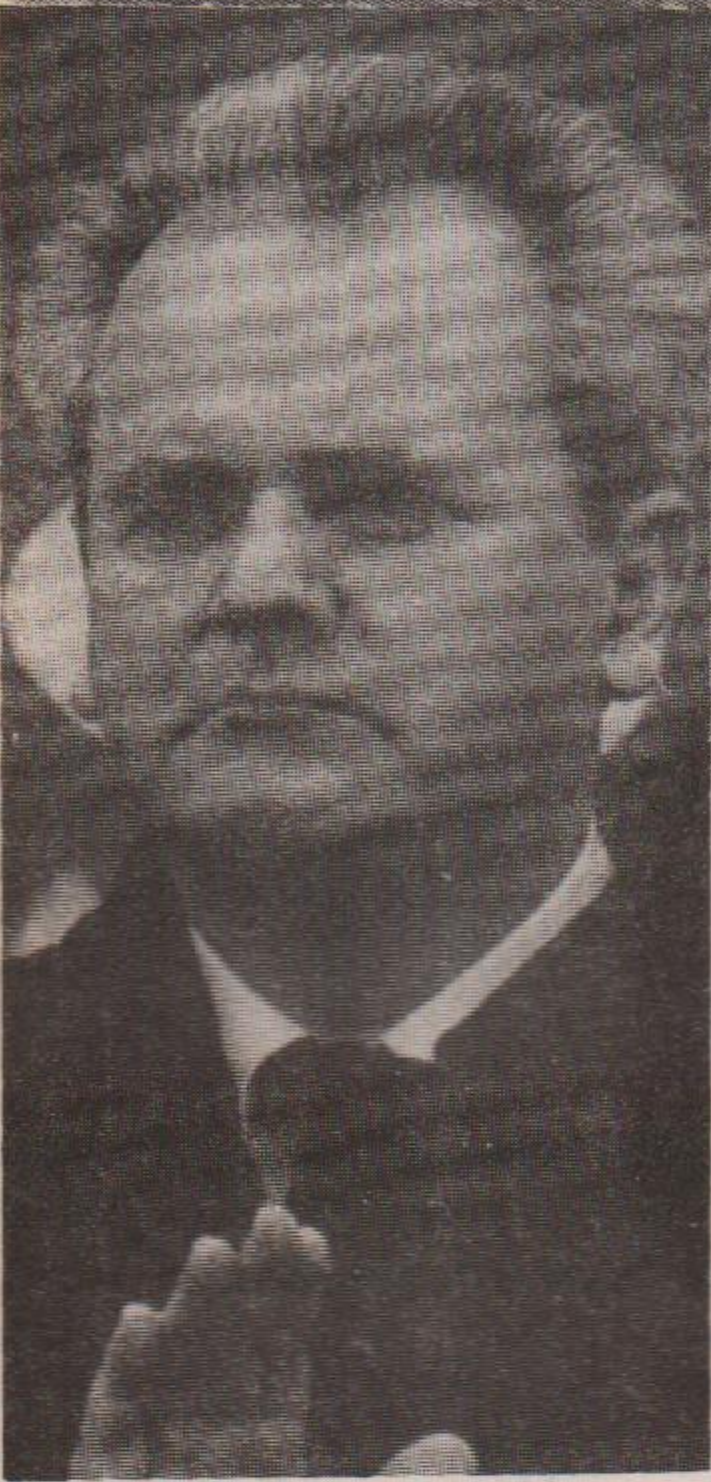
Elaine says, "a campaigning thriving LPYS could be the key to win Labour tens of thousands of votes and boost Labour's failing membership figures by drawing in a new layer of young Labour activists."

The LPYS was smashed up by the Kinnockites in the late 1980s. Now Labour has virtually no functioning LPYS branches and pathetically few young activists.

Elaine Jones has organised a petition demanding a self-governing LPYS with an upper age limit of 26.

Copies of the petition can be obtained from: 71a Graham Road, London E8.

Major meets his friend the butcher



"O brave new world/That has such people in't!" The New World Order erected on the crushed and charred bodies of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis had its first great solemn assembly last week in London.

John Major, as host, welcomed the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, and presided over the diplomacy which gave an official seal to Milosevic's conquests.

Oh yes, the London conference bemoaned the Serb chauvinists' drive to conquer as much territory as they can and purge it of non-Serbs. It made Milosevic put his signature to a list of pious promises.

But the Serb chauvinists still hold two-thirds of Bosnia, a large chunk of Croatia, and all of Kosovo and Vojvodina — and no-one is going to stop them holding those areas.

Perhaps they will negotiate away some of that territory in return for full international recognition of the remainder — the Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic has already suggested such a deal — but the Western "democrats", "peacekeepers", and "statesmen", reckoning that the war has pretty much finished carving up Bosnia now, will be happy so long as they can keep new outbreaks of war small-scale and restore conditions for trade and investment.

What is a statesman, after all, but a war criminal who has got away with it?

No quick fix in Yugoslavia

In the face of the horribly savage wars now raging in what was Yugoslavia, a powerful popular demand for a quick fix solution — any solution — is both understandable and natural. Socialists too feel this. So, in the form of simple

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questions and answers, let us examine once again the issues in the "Yugoslav" wars.

Will the London peace conference end the horrors in what was Yugoslavia?

No. Diplomacy can push the warring leaders into making pious promises: it will not push them into stopping the war. Serbia is left in possession of its conquests. Its leaders — mass murderers and war criminals — are treated as honoured international statesmen.

A lot of people on the left call for massive Western military intervention. *Tribune* (21 August) demands the use of armed force in more than "a 'peacekeeping' role", armed force sufficient to reverse "Serbian hegemony in Bosnia". *Briefing* (September) carries an interview with Misha Glenny demanding military intervention on a scale sufficient to enforce not only "a UN Protectorate running Bosnia" but also "political solutions" in the whole region. Is such massive UN intervention the only answer?

It is no sort of answer. In the first place it will not happen! The wish for a world government settling such conflicts is a reasonable one. The UN is not it. When has the

UN ever acted decisively? Only in situations like the Korean war of 1950-3 and the Gulf war of 1990, when one big power, the US, was able temporarily to get the UN banner for its own imperialist projects.

And then the UN was not promoting peace and harmony, but war and conquest. The UN banner, and the slogans about freedom and democracy under which they fought, were little more than pirate flags of convenience.

We would not trust the US government, or the Russian government, or the British government, or the French government. Why should we trust them any more when they get together and call themselves "Security Council of the UN"?

Could not this crisis be the exception? Could not this be the one time the UN does act effectively for peace? And shouldn't we demand that it does?

The advocates of massive military intervention are quite right to say that, as things stand, the horrors will get worse. War could spread to Kosovo and Macedonia, and then pull in Albania, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece, spreading

death and destruction across the whole region.

The European Community governments know that, and want to stop it: such destruction would be bad for trade and investment.

Maybe this threat is big enough to force them to get together and intervene decisively. Maybe. Probably not, because military intervention on a scale large enough to establish effective political control in ex-Yugoslavia, and able to impose a political solution, would involve huge economic costs and political risks. It might involve a serious war with the formidable Serbian armed forces.

The various big powers would have to reach a stable agreement between themselves on sharing the costs and the risks. Their rivalry and competition makes that very unlikely.

No one big power could afford to intervene on its own, or has sufficient compelling motive to intervene on its own. And a stable agreement between the big powers to do so is unlikely.

But it would be good if it did come off?

Not necessarily. The root of the problem in ex-Yugoslavia is a failure to find an accepted democratic

framework for a complex patchwork of nationalities to live together. Over the centuries, the region that was Yugoslavia has been the crossroads of many peoples on the move and of many wars. Jagged dividing-lines run through it between Christianity and Islam, and between Western and Eastern Christianity. It has been an arena for the intrigues and ambitions of many empires — the

Continued on page 4

"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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Alas, poor Norman

The word is that Norman Willis has finally decided to call it a day. At next week's TUC he will announce his intention of standing down and take the credit for setting up a "root and branch" review of the future functioning and structure of the TUC. The union leaders who have been orchestrating the whispering campaign against him will look very solemn and make speeches saying what a fine fellow he is, what a great loss it will be, etc etc. Meanwhile, TUC Deputy General Secretary John Monks will be busy tying up any remaining loose ends that might impede his smooth succession to the top job.

In the unlikely event of Willis refusing to go quietly, he will be bundled out shortly after Congress.

Resolutions to this year's Congress from the TGWU and the engineering section of the AEU call on the TUC to "refocus" and "radically reassess" its future role. They do not, of course, mention Willis by name. But the implication is clear: the big guns of the movement want big changes at Congress House and Our Norman is definitely not the man to carry them out.

If proof of a plot were needed, it is the noticeable failure of any leading trade union figure to jump in to damp down the anti-Willis speculation. The nearest thing to support that Willis has received in recent weeks was Bill Morris's statement "We have to work with the leadership we have got" — somewhat less than a fulsome endorsement.

With the leaders of the TGWU on the "left", the AEU/EPTU on the "right" and the GMB in the "centre" all busy whispering against him, Willis stands as much chance of survival as a crate of Newcastle Brown at the end of Congress social.

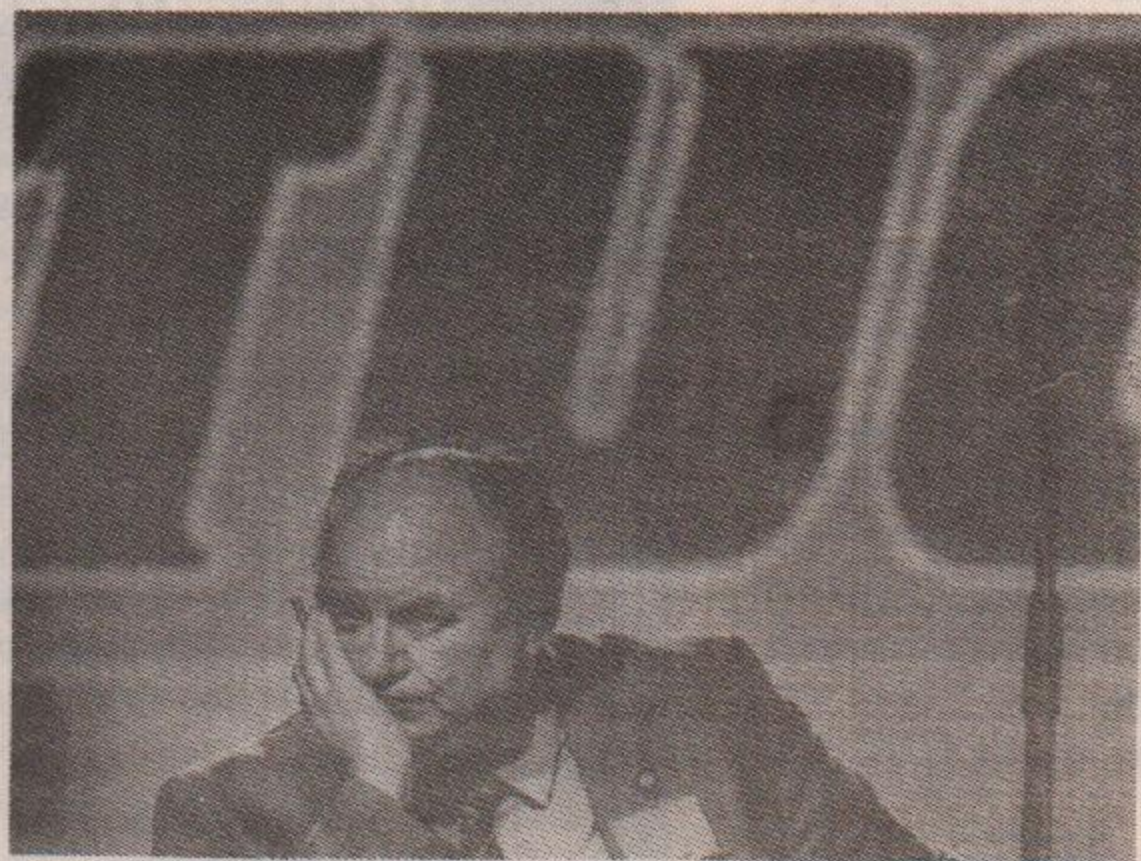
You can't help feeling just a bit sorry for Our Norman: he took over from the broken and demoralised Len Murray in 1984, by which time the leaders of the main unions had already hauled up the white flag in the face of the Tories' anti-union legislation. The GCHQ unions had just been de-recognised without a serious response from the rest of the movement and unemployment was touching 3 million. The miners' strike offered an opportunity to turn the tide, but it was clear that the leaders of the TUC's main constituents had no intention of organising the solidarity action demanded by the 1984 TUC Congress. Willis, whose instinct and training inclined him to fudge rather than lead, attempted to negotiate between the miners and the Thatcher government without avail and without thanks from either side. He played precisely the same role during the 1986-7 Wapping dispute, with the same disastrous results. His desperate efforts to keep the EETPU within the TUC fold were equally unsuccessful, culminating in the 1988 expulsion of the electricians, not for their scabbing at Wapping but over relatively trivial breaches of the Bridlington Agreement elsewhere. No one — on the left, right, or centre — had a good word for poor old Norman.

But could he really have been expected to do any better given the unwillingness of the main union leaderships to co-ordinate any serious opposition to the Tories? We can quibble about this or that particular detail, but essentially the die had been set by the likes of Jordan, Todd and Edmonds. Willis could only work with the material available to him.

The truth is that while the left had many understandable grievances against Willis, it was the hard right of the movement that was most dissatisfied with him. The Jordan/Hammond axis wanted (and still want) a full-scale commitment to out-and-out business unionism from the TUC. Norman Willis (who still on occasions sings "The Internationale" at social functions) could not and would not deliver this. But he had no alternative beyond fairly incompetent fudging, mudding and backroom compromise. He satisfied no-one and has now been made the scapegoat for the continuing decline of the British trade union movement.

Willis was hoping that, if Labour won the last election, his old friend Neil Kinnock would offer him the chair of the conciliation service, ACAS. Like so much else in his career, it was not to be.

Norman Willis was an ineffectual, gutless, bureaucratic buffoon. But if you think he was bad, just wait for John Monks...



Norman to give up not biting yer legs

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

No quick fix in Yugoslavia

From page 3

Turkish, the Austro-Hungarian, the Tsarist Russian, the Nazi, the Stalinist Russian...

There are four main religious groups, 22 ethnic groups, and even two alphabets. The different nationalities crisscross and intermingle in many areas.

Peace is achievable only through consistent democracy, guaranteeing the rights of every community and every minority. The only other way peace could be achieved is by a massively strong state holding down all the nationalities equally, in the way that the Stalinist state held down all the nationalities of the former USSR. But, as the ex-USSR itself shows, that would only "freeze" the conflicts temporarily, and would involve terrible damage in the meantime.

And would an intervention by the big powers establish consistent democracy? It would not. The *Financial Times* (27 August) reports that the London conference ran into difficulty when it discussed a declaration about the rights of minorities in ex-Yugoslavia because "France, Spain, Russia and Turkey, among others, are increasingly concerned that if a blueprint for ethnic minorities is agreed... those principles could eventually be applied to other countries". They are content that Eastern Europe's "minority problems" should be settled — if only peace and stability are restored — as they were settled long ago in their own states: by the domination of the most powerful groups, in the "Yugoslav" case Serbia. Thus they let Serbia keep what it has murderously grabbed, and 'cleansed'.

A big-power intervention would be concerned not about democracy but about re-establishing trade and investment at minimum cost. It would ride roughshod over any minority demand that seemed too costly to grant or weak enough to be suppressed.

The record of the big powers so far confirms that. When the aggressively Serb-dominated government in Belgrade took dictatorial direct rule over the previously autonomous regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina, the Western governments were silent.

When Serb imperialism began to break up the mixed-community republic of Bosnia, the EC suggested that Bosnia be divided into Serb, Muslim, and Croat "cantons" (like Switzerland!) That only encouraged the chauvinists on all sides to grab and "ethnically cleanse"

as much territory as they could.

Now, as Kosovo — which is about 90% Albanian — moves towards war, Tory foreign secretary Douglas Hurd denies its right to self-determination, and insists it must remain under the Serbian authorities who are currently imposing police-state terror there, and may tomorrow decide to "cleanse" the territory of most of its present population.

At each stage the blunderings and the cynical interventions by Western governments have probably made things worse. If they did intervene massively they might save some lives in the short term, but in the not-very-long term they would probably make things worse again.

In any case, we can't trust them. We can't make calling on these cynical, self-serving governments our answer.

Others on the left denounce big-power military intervention as an imperialist ploy to establish a sort of colony. Are they right?

No, they are not right! Which state do they think wants a colony? Why would the other states agree to help it? Why would they want to bear all the heavy costs of colonial administration when they can make just as much profit by free trade?

This line implies support for the Serb chauvinists as representing "national liberation" or "anti-imperialism" against any big-power intervention — in other words, support for *Serb imperialism* in the name of *anti-imperialism*!

What about Western military protection for aid convoys, and sanctions against Serbia. Shouldn't we denounce them as imperialist?

No. We have no confidence in the big powers. But it is utterly false and irresponsible to go from insisting on this to the view that letting the conflict rip in ex-Yugoslavia is preferable to any outside — "imperialist" — intervention.

Aid is better than starvation. Aid convoys made safe by military protection are better than aid convoys destroyed. Socialists cannot positively support or call for sanctions, because we cannot place any trust in the big capitalist governments, and because we do not favour punishing the whole Serb people for the crimes of their leaders.

But if sanctions, diplomacy, and big-power pressure can help end the war — and they might, though we cannot and should not rely on it — then mindless shouting about "imperialism" does no-one any good.



There are no answers in the short-term in "Yugoslavia"

So is Socialist Worker right? It writes (15 August) that: "The solution to the horror of Bosnia-Herzegovina will only come when ordinary people on both sides see through the lies of their rulers..."

Yes, up to a point. The socialist answer is for the working class in the various conflicting peoples to come together, settle accounts with their own chauvinists and tinpot imperialists, and restore a federation, this time with consistent and thorough democracy and under the control of the workers.

But *SW*'s position is falsified and turned into something akin to the idiot "anti-imperialist" line by its pretence that the socialist solution, through action from below, is immediately, or almost immediately, available.

"This is not an impossible dream, despite the bloodshed and misery... In the late 1980s Yugoslav workers, of all ethnic groups, took part in massive strikes... Just last year Serbia's leader Milosevic was reeling under the weight of anti-government demonstrations..."

Working-class unity is indeed not an impossible dream. But it is not quite as easy as *SW* pretends! If workers strike, it does not automatically give them an internationalist outlook. The anti-Milosevic movement in Serbia is big — but it is hardly less chauvinist than Milosevic himself.

Then what can we do? What can the labour move-

ment do practically?

We can help refugees and argue for their rights. We can support sending aid. We can argue for the principles of consistent democracy as the only solution to the horrors. We can give aid to peace movements and independent workers' movements.

All that is limited. But it is real. It is foolish and disorienting for the left to imagine that we can be "inspectors-general of history". We can, if we do our work right, put forward a coherent and scientific programme for action by the working class. We can not undertake to provide quick-fix solutions for all the horrors and atrocities generated by the capitalist powers-that-be while they remain the powers-that-be.

But the big capitalist governments are the only forces powerful enough to bring any sort of short-term solution. Surely we must either rely on them or condemn ourselves to irrelevance?

No: such "realism" would convert us from socialist advocates into advisers for bourgeois governments, in the illusory hope of being more practical and effective (illusory, because the governments won't listen to our advice). It would sacrifice the long-term work which we can and must do, for naive hopes of short-term advantage.

It is as destructive as the idiotic rhetorical "anti-imperialism" which would turn us into mindless slogan-shouters.



It's time for a serious campaign from the TUC

TUC meets in Blackpool

Stop the retreat!

By Gerry Bates

There is plenty for the TUC to discuss next week.

One million public sector jobs could go in the next few years, as the Tories select new areas of public sector work to be offered out to private contractors ("compulsory competitive tendering"). One in six young people are on the dole, and maybe 100,000 of them get no benefits.

Official jobless figures are set to reach three million, as one company goes bankrupt every 90 seconds. Ford has introduced a three day week at Dagenham and Southampton. 2000 redundancies were announced last week at Swan Hunter, Jaguar, and Iveco Ford.

Vicious new anti-union laws are on the way which will impose, among other things, compulsory "cooling-off" periods of seven days before unions can take any action.

And resistance is under way: rail workers, health workers, council workers and civil servants are taking action to defend jobs and union organisation.

Tragically, it is unlikely that any of these issues are going to get the attention they deserve from the trade unions' annual congress.

One resolution, from the Transport and General Workers' Union, is likely to provoke a wide-ranging debate. The TGWU has called for the TUC to launch a "nationally coordinated campaign" of opposition to

the Tories, in defence of jobs, wages, and the public services.

"We must support workers in conflict with the Tory laws, and also put the question of an alternative legal framework at the centre of debate."

TGWU leader Bill Morris may well allow this resolution to be weakened or even withdrawn. But hundreds of rank-and-file trade unionists will be outside the Congress, demonstrating their support for a serious campaign from the TUC.

As well as keeping up the pressure on the General Council to lead a fight, activists in the unions need to hammer out a strategy to help us begin to turn the tide.

Our starting point has to be building the maximum possible solidarity for those in dispute, through official channels where possible, unofficially if necessary.

The anti-union laws must be put at the top of the unions' agenda. We must support workers in conflict with the Tory laws, and also put the question of an alternative legal framework at the centre of debate.

Already conferences of NALGO (soon to be part of the giant public sector union UNISON) have twice adopted the "Workers' Charter" of positive legal rights, first proposed by *Socialist Organiser* and supported by the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee and Labour Party Socialists.

The rail union RMT voted for a similar approach at its 1991 conference. Now prominent trade union lawyers like John Hendy

QC, who has represented the dockers and the OILC, are also calling for a framework of positive legal rights for trade unionists.

Rather than ignoring the question of the law, as it doesn't matter, or pretending that the situation before 1979 was ideal, trade unionists need to take up the argument for positive rights - the right to strike, to join a union, to take solidarity action, to picket effectively, to stop an unsafe job, etc. Such positive legal rights could help the unions gain a stronger base in those sectors which have expanded over recent years but have low levels of union recognition.

Anyone who has ever tried to organise in a non-union workplace with a viciously anti-union employer is only too aware how much a guaranteed legal right to join a recognised union and to go on strike would mean. And it does not need much imagination to see how extending full-time rights to part-time workers would strengthen and build the unions.

What's more, a campaign for positive legal rights for trade unions has much more chance of defeating the "new realists" in the movement than focussing solely (as some left-wingers do) on the need to "defy the law". A campaign for a Labour government committed to positive legal rights for trade unions is more likely to "unshackle the unions" than industrial action alone. In any case, we need to pull together all those activists who really want to fight. The decision of the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee to organise a one-day conference of Broad Lefts, rank-and-file groups, shop stewards' committees, and sections of the official movement, around the slogan "Stop the Retreat!", has got to be supported.

Paddy the Englishman catches on

AGAINST THE TIDE

By Sean Matgamna

When I came to this country in 1954, one of the things that struck me as most strange about the people here was their obsession with the Queen, her husband, and the rest of their family.

It was a year after the Coronation, and the Queen and "Prince Philip" were on a protracted tour of the Commonwealth. Every episode, every stopover, every ceremony, seemed to be headlined, placarded, or given photo-displays in shop-windows in the centre of Manchester.

The radio and cinema newsreels were full of it. You could not escape.

I came to hate and resent all the noisy, insistent, pious Royalty-mongering. In part this was because I was vaguely against "England", or "official" England anyway.

I was old enough to have picked up some Irish school history, and my mother was old enough to have vivid memories to pass on to us of the English Black and Tan terror she had lived through as an adolescent.

We were "Republicans" on principle, against "the Crown". "The Crown" represented the bad England, as distinct from the good(ish) England into which we were fitting ourselves.

But that was not the only reason why I, lacking a proper sense of gratitude to my host country, was intolerant of the religion they seemed to make of Royalty. Another and more immediate reason was that I simply could not understand it!

It seemed very, very strange, when you came to it from outside. So, no doubt, an English Protestant 12 year old in Catholic Ireland would have found strange our obsession with sacred and secular saints and with martyred heroes. But you could have explained to him what our heroes did, or tried to do. What did the Queen do?

We had nothing at home, apart from High Mass, like the routine ritual and ceremonial of the British monarchy. The prime minister, Eamonn De Valera, was a hero, but you would see him, very tall and dark, walking into the chapel sometimes - our town was the centre of his constituency - to take his seat in the crowd with very little fuss.

The British royals, treated as gods, were plainly anything but gods. They had nothing about them even of the kings of old in books,

nothing you could admire, respect, or understand. The mystery and mystique of the British monarchy was really, to the eyes of an unsympathetic stranger, a mystery about the English.

Victor Serge's small son, moving with his father from the USSR to France in 1936, could not at first grasp the idea that the factories they saw were the private property of some individual. What would he do with it all, he asked. Watching a TV dramatisation of the diary of Anne Frank five or six years ago, my own 8-year-old, Thomas, would see a scene like one with signs barring Jews from seats in a park and turn to me - again and again - with one word, "Why?"

Not so starkly or clear headedly, I also asked why. At first the nearest thing to an answer I got, or could work out, was "That's the English". "The English", you know, are odd, subservient to those we rebelled against, and a bit thick.

At home we had had dozens of innocent kids' stories about three stereotyped characters, "Paddy the Irishman, Paddy the Englishman, and Paddy the Scotsman". "Paddy the Irishman" was, of course, the brave and clever one, and "Paddy the Englishman" the fool, or, if you like, the "Irishman", in our stories.

In my childish chauvinism, I saw the strange English idolatry of the Queen as just another "Paddy the Englishman" story, just another anti-English joke.

No doubt it was good to feel superior, and it may, though I do not think so, have been compensatory. I was too much of a Catholic chauvinist to need it!

Today the Royalty-baiting tabloids are motivated by greed. Disgusting beyond words, they are the forces which, using the same sort of techniques as they use on the Royals, made mass public debate on Thatcherism and the left alternatives to it impossible throughout the 1980s. What, in pursuit of profit, they are doing to the British Establishment they support, is an important subject in itself.

But what strikes me as most significant about the savage and degrading baiting of the Royals is that the British people tolerate it. Indeed, there seems to be an insatiable and growing demand for it on the part of those who - to all appearances - used to worship blindly. Otherwise what the tabloids are doing would be impossible.

It is ugly. But so was the world of 1954. Paddy the Englishman - and Bridget the Englishwoman too! are, it seems, finally catching on, growing tired of the great anti-English joke.

Build Trade Union News!

By Trudy Saunders (CPSA and "Trade Union News" editorial committee)

One of the few bright spots in the trade union movement over the last year or so has been the emergence of "Trade Union News", an open, non-sectarian, campaigning paper written by trade unionists and for trade unionists.

The paper has set itself the task of "rooting socialist politics in the workplace", and has identified its three main purposes as reporting what's going on in the unions and industry; mobilising support for disputes and campaigns; and providing a platform for debate and

discussion on the problems facing trade unionists.

TUN's first readers' conference is set for Saturday 10 October, at the Mechanics' Institute, Manchester. As Tony Benn has put it, "The development of the political role of trade unionism is an essential precondition of the change of the political movement from conservatism to a more progressive stance. 'Trade Union News' is a way of bringing this home to working trade unionists who have suffered so badly over the past decade".

If you would like to know more about TUN, then write to TUN c/o 28c Barnsbury Park, London N1 1HQ (tel 071-700 1550)

Dr. Death gets a job

GRAFFITI

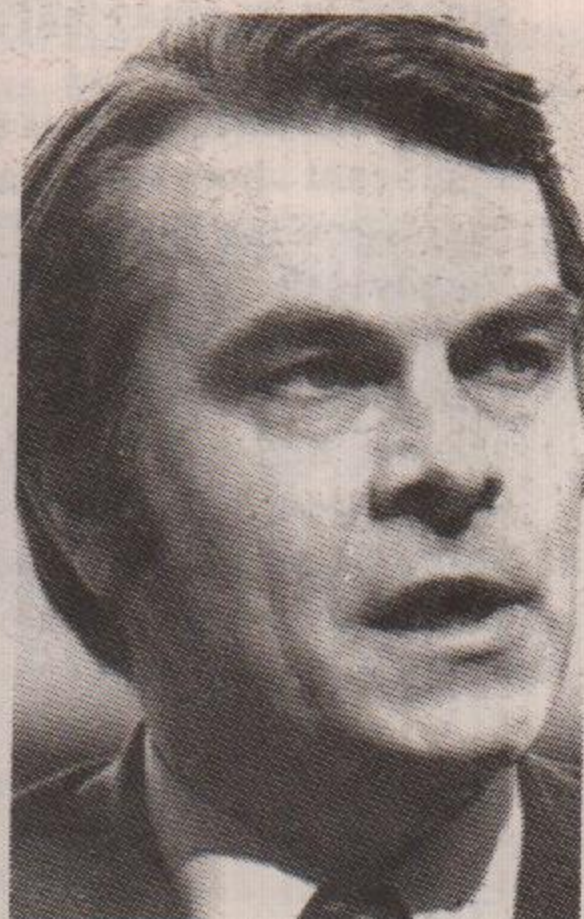
David Owen, or as he is now to be called, Lord Death, has found himself a job at last, having lost the chance to be the Governor of Hong Kong after Chris Patten became unexpectedly available. Now that Lord Carrington has tired of hitting his head against a brick wall Owen is to head the European Community's Yugoslav peace effort. He doesn't get to wear the hat with the plume on and the ceremonial sword, or to be called "your excellency", which must be a let down for him.

Few people can have Owen's unique qualifications for the job of peace broker. When Foreign Secretary Owen insisted on supplies of arms to the Shah's Iran, and the deal made his name, literally - Dr. Death. Owen obviously has a deep commitment to peace and a sensitive understanding of ethnic and national conflicts - the arms supplied were later used in the Iran-Iraq war and in Iran's suppression of its rebellious Kurds.

And after James Callaghan, Dennis Healey and he conspired to order Cruise nuclear missiles without bothering so much as to tell Parliament or even Cabinet, who can doubt his dedication to democracy?

The Republican party has been trying to get back into the race for the Presidency by returning to "traditional values". "I am struck", said George Bush at the recent Republican Convention "by the fact that the other party took thousands of words to make up its platform and left out three simple letters, G-O-D".

God must be on the Republicans' side, because he has sent a man of the cloth, the Rev Pat Robertson, to spread the truth. A recent fundraising letter revealed "the feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practise witchcraft, destroy capi-



Lord Death

talism and become lesbians".

Another Republican attack comes from academic Gertrude Himmel-farb who blames the evils of the world on Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury circle. They were "androgynous, near-incestuous and polymorphously perverse", and there is a link between this "ethos which puts a premium on immediate and present satisfactions and Keynesian economics."

George Bush has also laid into the literary debate, albeit on his own level, comparing the Simpsons unfavourably with the family that every good American strives to be like, the Waltons. Bart Simpson got the last word - "Hey, we're just like the Waltons", the small yellow cartoon character said, "we're praying for the end of the depression, too".

"Freedom for Eric Honecker!". No prizes for guessing that this is a banner headline of the world's most Stalinist would-be Trots, defending the ex-leader of East Germany, or as the Spartacists call it the "East German deformed workers state (DDR)"

With a consistency which the other defenders of the degenerated workers state theory cannot emulate, the Spartacists insist that "....the Berlin Wall represented a defence of the collectivised economy of the DDR, albeit it in a bureaucratic fashion". Precisely how shooting workers trying to get out is defending anything - bureaucratically or otherwise - is unfortunately not addressed by the Sparts.

"On 3 September the people of Easterhouse have a chance to elect a fighting socialist councillor - Christine McVicar is Scottish Militant Labour's candidate for council by-election.

"From the 1920s to the 1940s the east end of Glasgow was a stronghold of the Independent Labour Party....Christine McVicar is a working class socialist in the same mould."

Hang on, this can't be the same ILP that left the Labour Party in 1931, can it? The one that Trotskyists fought to return to Labour? It maintained an independent existence, became semi-Stalinist, shrank, and then finally edged back into the Labour Party under the name Independent Labour Publications. (It still exists today, as a tiny, not very left wing, but "Marxist", talking shop).

Surely this can't be the same ILP that the Militant used to cite every time they needed an argument about why they should stay in the Labour Party.

Windsorado goes down the tubes

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

This is the silly season, when tabloid newspapers traditionally carry front-page headlines like "Phew What A Scorcher!" and otherwise intelligent people read novels by Jackie Collins and Jilly Cooper. In the absence of real news, the doings of soap-opera characters become talking points.

This Silly Season, however, there is some real news (Bosnia, Somalia, Iraq, the British economy) and the latest soap-opera has signally failed to grip the imagination of the nation. Assuming that your average holiday maker does not want to be distressed by the unpleasantness currently taking place in funny furrin parts, what could provide better entertainment than the newly spiced-up format of that long-running soap opera, Windsorado?

No wonder the BBC's "sun, sex 'n sangria" efforts are going down the tube. Windsorado beats it hands down at every turn - marital infidelity, topless sunbathing with "financial advisers", the torment of a sympathetic character trapped in a loveless marriage, a once-great family brought low by the machinations of sinister enemies armed with long-range lenses and listening devices, intimate scenes of toe-sucking... who could ask for anything more?

And then there is the gripping sub-plot of tabloid circulation battles, accusations of covert republicanism, and the machinations of Italian paparazzi and retired bank managers from Abingdon. When the Daily Mirror published its photographs of the Duchess of York in a state of undress in the company of a man who was not her husband, the usual 3.5 million print run sold out and a subsequent 400,000 extra copies were snapped up. On the next day Mirror sales were up by 30,000, outselling the Sun for the first time in over twenty years.

Obviously, The Sun could not be expected to take this sort of thing lying down. Their initial response was to pirate the same photos the Mirror had published, crediting them to the European magazines Hello! and Oggi - thereby hopping to avoid legal difficulties.

But the Sun had a more powerful weapon in its locker.

"Mirror sales were up by 30,000, outselling the Sun for the first time in over twenty years."

Two and a half years ago The Sun had received tape recording of a conversation between the Princess of Wales and a male admirer, containing intimate references to the desperate state of her marriage and her general unhappiness.

In an article in the Spectator defending Rupert Murdoch against charges of republicanism last July, the executive Chairman of News International, Andrew Knight, had referred to these tapes, saying: "Our two big tabloid newspapers have sat for years on documented stories that could

only have harmed the institution of the monarchy". At the time, no one knew what Knight was on about, although he referred to "documented stories of regal infidelities which we hold, deliberately unused, in our safes - and in some cases have actually paid for so that our tabloid competitors may not use them either".

News International's sense of propriety remained intact until the Mirror's publication of the Fergie snaps. Then, it was no holds barred. Out came the "Squidgygate" tapes, complete with phone-in number to be rung if you wanted to hear it all for yourself.

On Monday 31 August, The Sun published the results of its weekend phone poll on the monarchy. A total of 35,868 callers "bombardeed" their lines, with 63% saying that "we do not need a monarchy".

So far, the only result of all this is the reported decision of Her Majesty to finally start filling in her tax returns. But even that is a good start. Rupert Murdoch, Andrew Knight, Andrew Neil et al may or may not be closet republicans. But their battle for circulation has done us all a big favour - and provided a thoroughly entertaining alternative to "Eldorado".

Sexism in sport

WOMEN'S EYE

By Rebecca Van Homan

After watching the Olympics or reading any coverage, you could have been forgiven for forgetting women make up more than half the world's population.

Pick up the sports section of any newspaper and you'd think that the only people in the sporting world were men.

Photographs of sportswomen monitored in the national press ranged from a maximum of 10% of pictorial coverage in The Guardian to 2% in the Sun.

Overall, reporting of women in sport account for 4% of total sports content.

Ian Stafford, Chief Sports reporter for the Mail on Sunday, explains which women the papers cover, "The choice is between, say, a Katrina Krabbe and a Fatima Whitbread as a double-page feature. Krabbe would be picked because she's a blonde with long legs. If it means selling newspapers then we'll do it."

The coverage of the 1988 Seoul Olympics reads as follows.

36% of the events were women's. Only 7 out of the 167 National Olympic Committee presidents have been women. Of the 120 British Press members sent to cover the Olympic games in Seoul, only 2 were women. I don't suppose the situation has changed for the 1992 Olympics.

This reflects a similar pattern of women's underrepresentation in sport.

There are no women directors on the Sports Council and all regional directors

"There are no women directors on the Sports Council and all regional directors and also national centre directors are male"

and also national centre directors are male. There are no women sports editors on any national daily or Sunday papers.

Of the £200 million spent on sponsorships of sport in 1989 £199 million went to

men.

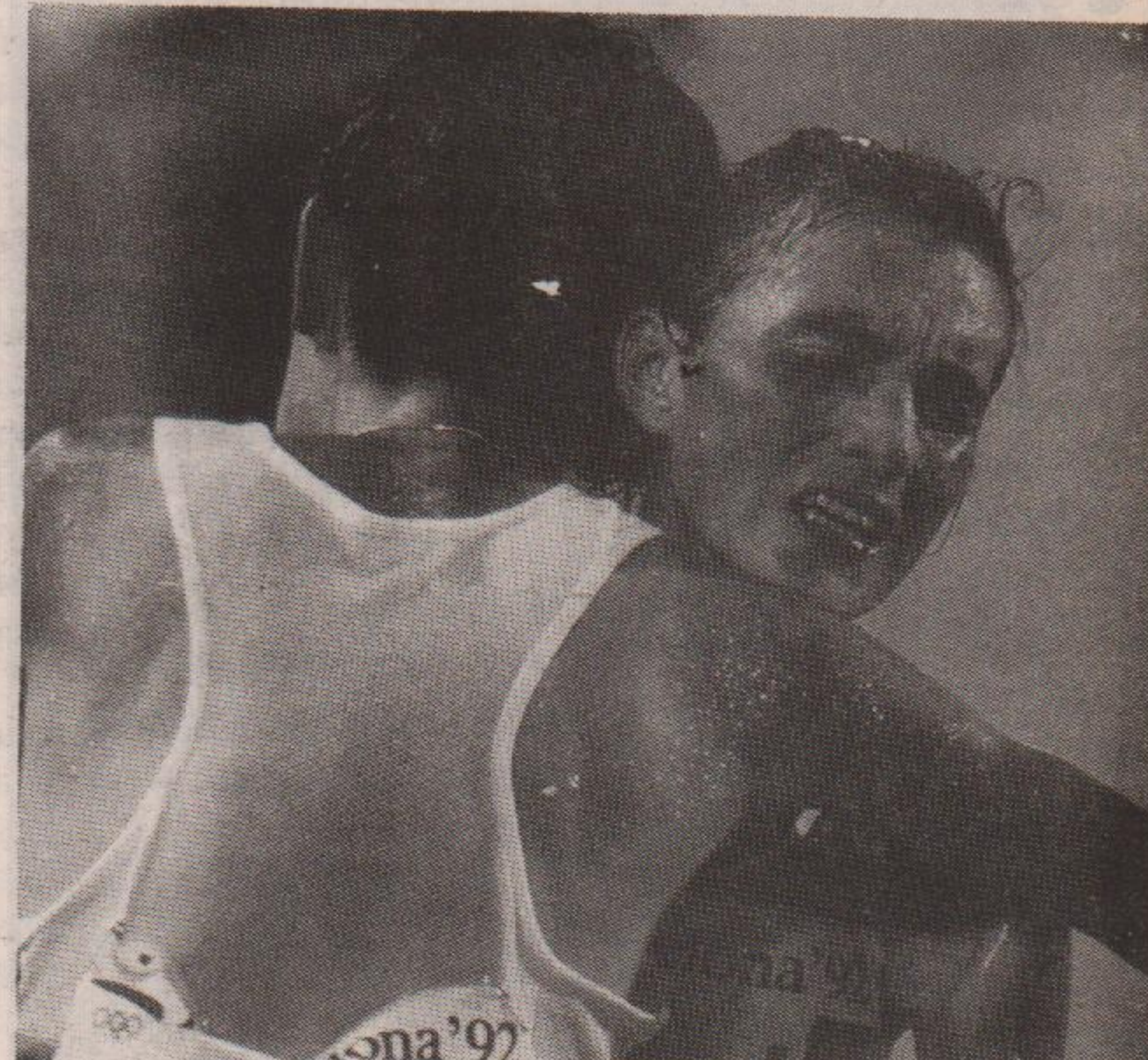
Not one local authority sports centre in the country operates a full time childcare scheme.

Women are not given the opportunity to participate in sport at school due to gender stereotyping, nor outside school, due to lack of childcare, time to participate etc.

The bourgeois press also ignores women's achievements or distorts them by relating them to women's

sexuality. Men become "legends" or "driving forces", women, "a perfect 10 in the pool-side beauty stakes" or "nice face, shame about the legs". Liz Mc Colgan's achievements have been clouded by press reports of her being a mother and running two weeks after giving birth.

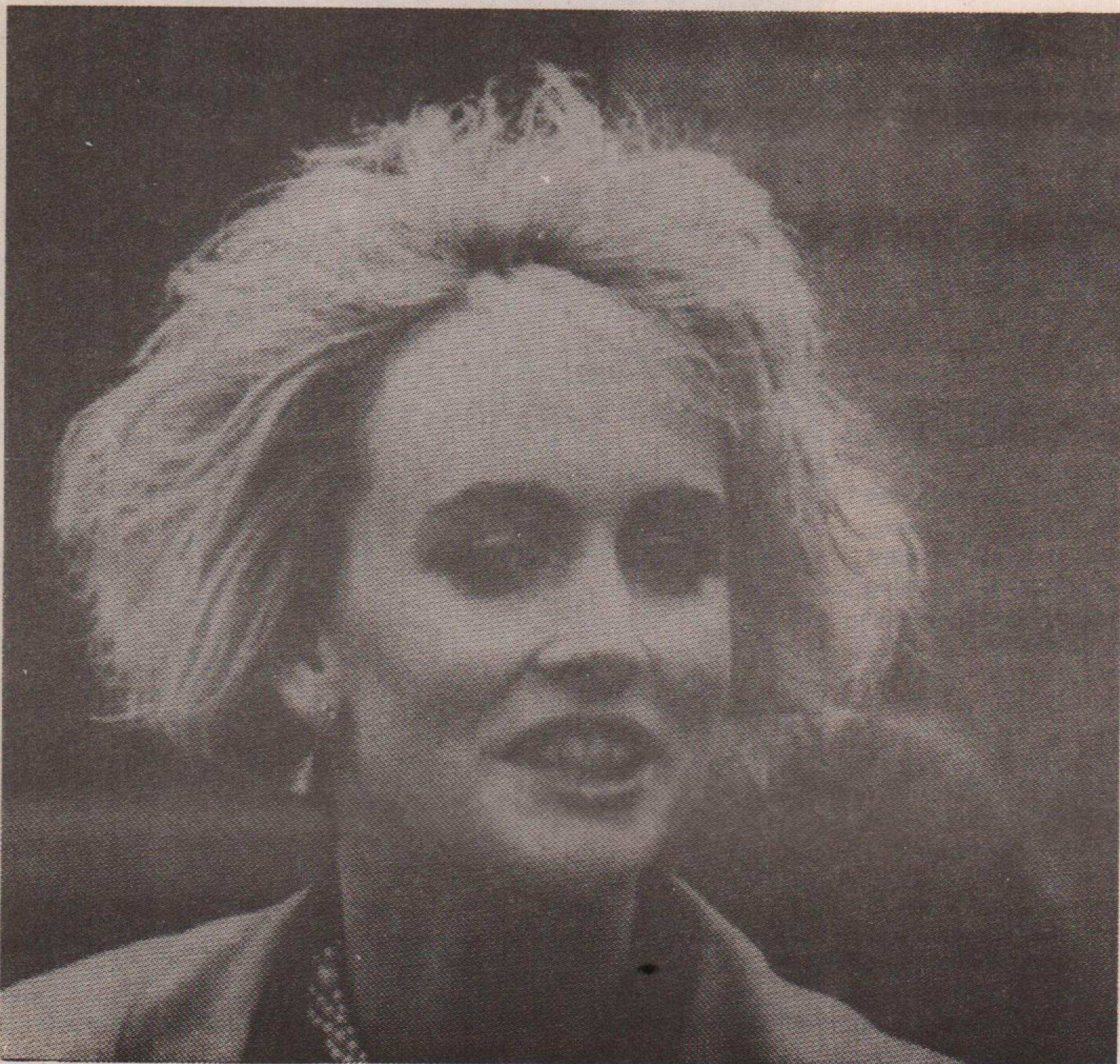
So behind all the razzamatazz of the Olympics, sexism continues to be as strong as ever.



Women are still not given the opportunity to equally participate in sport

Irish students fight for abortion rights

Shauneen Armstrong from the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) spoke to Alice Sharp, National Union of Students Women's Officer.



Maxine Brady, President of the USI, is threatened with jail for defying the permanent injunction obtained by SPUC

Irish student unionists are continuing to fight for a woman's right to information about abortion. We are determined to continue breaking an injunction obtained by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) which aimed to stop us giving abortion advice.

Trinity and University College Dublin student unions, as well as USI, are all under attack. SPUC's main aim seems to be to bankrupt USI with £100,00 court costs.

However, attitudes in Ireland are changing and there is a backlash against SPUC. A recent poll showed 80% in favour of the right to information about abortion and 55% in favour of legal abortions in limited circumstances.

More women are becoming involved in fighting for women's rights. 200 women recently picketed Irish courts after a judge had thrown out several cases of domestic violence. The same judge — judge Flood — also threw out a case of rape within marriage on a legal technicality.

On 6 August 2,000 women marched on a USI Reclaim the Night March, calling on Flood to resign.

South African miners: "between a rock and a hard place"

Lawrence Welch reports on the struggle in the mines in South Africa.

Reports by the Chamber of Commerce that the mines in South Africa were not affected by the recent 2 day strike have been quickly dismissed by Gerry Majatladi, the press officer of the South African National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

Although the reports from the branches were still being analysed, regional reports indicate that nationally, 60-70% of the workers in the whole mining industry had supported the strike, although there were great variations. 90% of the 10,000 diamond workers came out and some 80% of the collieries. The platinum mines, found mainly in the bantustan Bophuthutswana, had a 30-40% turnout.

The support for the actions has two important aspects. Miners came out despite massive intimidation by the mining security people who beat the

miners and set dogs on them. On the other hand, the NUM had negotiated with the employers to allow the workers to take time off without the increasingly common recriminations of sacking.

The organisation of the NUM was vital in building the support for the strike, and a whole series of protest actions in the 2 months leading up to the strike mobilised some 150,000 workers. Meetings, sit-ins, occupations, marches all led up to the strike. The focus of the demand for a democratic South Africa is seen as vital to the goals of the NUM. Since the peak of employment of miners in 1986, there has been a loss of 150,000 jobs with the lowering of gold prices. The NUM's fortunes have been closely tied to this central fact. It won substantial wage rises of 15% in real terms in 1986. Since 1990, with 15% inflation and wage increase of 10-11%, the gains have been wiped out, with wages now at the 1982 level.

The union is caught between a rock and a hard place, pulling back from calling a wage strike this year for fear of repeating the loss of 50,000 jobs that followed

the 1989 strike. (15,000 members were dismissed following the 4-5 November 1991 stayaway).

The employers are all too ready to use any illegal strike action to sack workers rather than following the negotiated policy of retrenchment. While the Harmony mine in the Orange Free State made 6,000 workers redundant they had to pay 40 million Rand (£8 million) to do it.

Despite this the union has 250,000 paid up members with another estimated 100,000 where employers are not respecting the signed stop orders. The bulk of members (200,000) are in the mining industry and 60% of the migrant workforce comes from outside South Africa. 90% of workers are housed in hostels, which need to be distinguished from the local authority hostels in the townships where Inkatha has a strong foothold. Nonetheless, violence is endemic to the system with 30% of all mining deaths being the result of violence (police, mining security, tribal, criminal) compared with 15% from accidents.

Restructuring of the mining

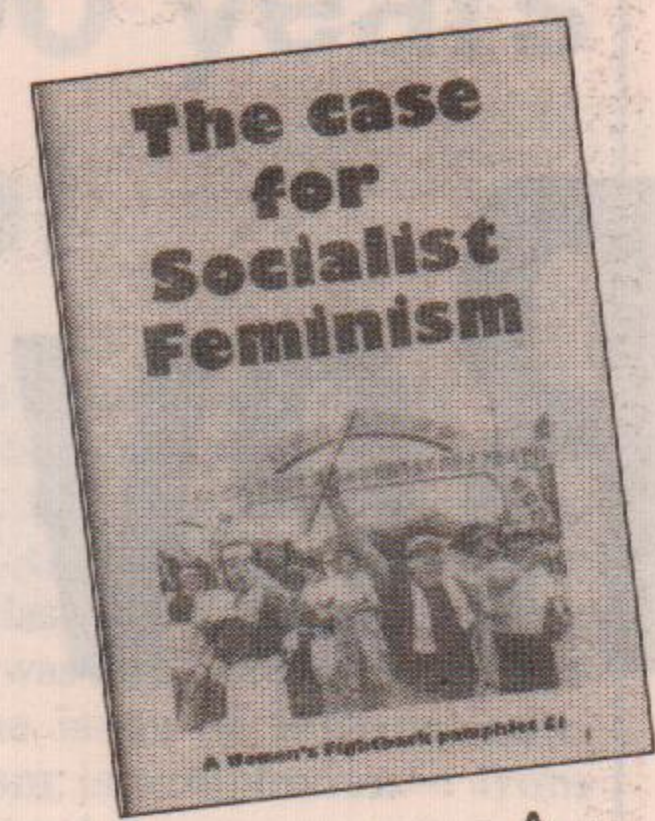
industry is central to the NUM policy, but it is recognised that this cannot take place purely through negotiations with the entrenched employers, whose only aim is "to make" a fast buck as quick as they can".

Key areas in this policy are the fight for a decent wage and living conditions, health and safety; training; the implementation of a humane, people-centred way of running the mines (which have racial domination at their very core); hostel improvement.

The authoritarian and brutal organisation of the mines could not operate under a democratic government, making the political process closely intertwined with the economic demands of the union. Clearly the NUM must keep the needs of their membership in the front of the political process if they are to achieve their aims.

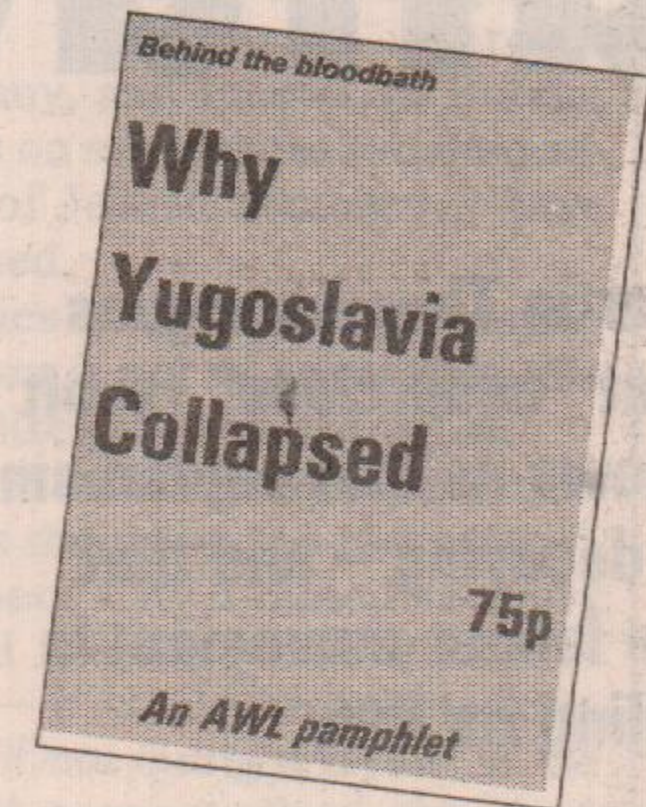
The facts for this article are based on an interview with Martin Nichols of the collective bargaining section of the NUM. Any opinions are the responsibility of the author alone.

Pamphlets from Socialist Organiser and the Alliance for Workers' Liberty

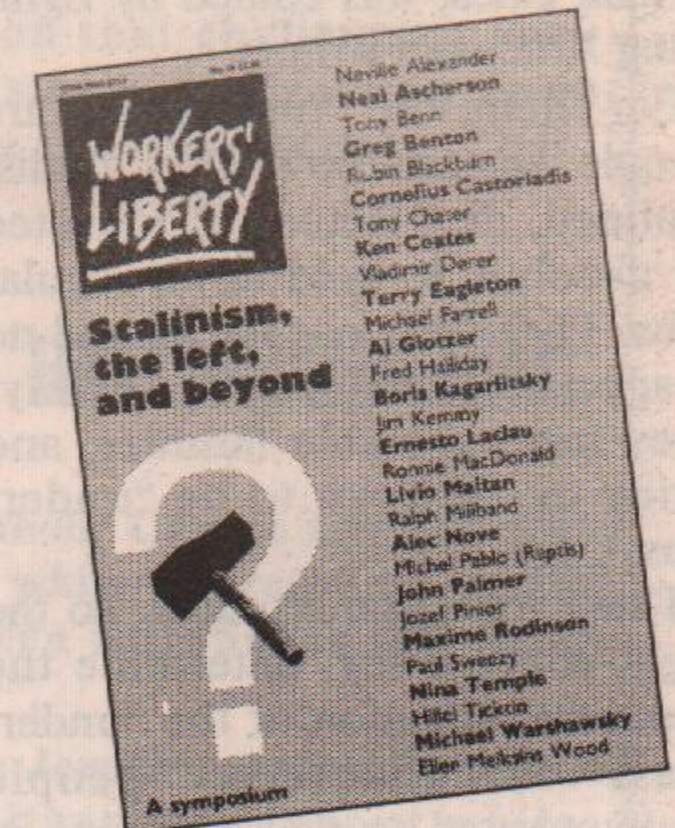


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Are riots more revolutionary than strikes?

Revolt of the underclass?

Martin Thomas argues that "underclass" revolt shows us that capitalism is decaying – and that the labour movement is failing its duty.

The word "underclass", much used in comment on recent upheavals in American and British cities, was coined by right-wing American writers.

For them, the "underclass" are people who are too restless, undisciplined, disaffected, ill-educated or dissolute to hold down regular jobs. They feel no stake in, and no responsibility towards, society; they have unstable families, and bring up children to be "underclass", too.

These traits and attitudes, so the right-wingers say, determine the economic situation of the "underclass". If "underclass" people really wanted to make a living in the regular free-enterprise economy, then they could, but they give up and depend on state welfare, begging, or crime.

The answer is to combat "underclass" traits and attitudes, and force the "underclass" into regular economic activity, by cuts in state welfare payments and drastic

repression of begging and crime.

This right-wing view is elitist – and racist, too, identifying the "underclass" as it does with black people. It is an upside-down view, offering no explanation of why the US, with more meagre welfare and heavier policing than Western Europe, has a much bigger "underclass".

Nevertheless, the right-wing view is an upside-down view of something in reality. Capitalism does create a class "below" the working class, a class of people who not only are jobless, but have lost hope of a regular job.

Some people on the left – *Socialist Worker*, for example – make it a point of honour to deny that anything exists which could be called an "underclass". Yet the reality is there.

This class used to be called the "lumpenproletariat". It is not new. In fact, it is older than the working class. When, in the 16th century and after, vast numbers of people were deprived of their livelihoods by the landlords' land-grabbing and by the break-up of the feudal lords' armies of dependents, most of them could not find jobs in the few emerging capitalist industrial workplaces.

"They were turned en masse", wrote Marx, "into beggars, rob-

bers, vagabonds, partly from inclination, in most cases from stress of circumstances". The governments had the same attitude as the present-day American right wing, passing "bloody legislation against vagabondage... Legislation treated them as 'voluntary' criminals, and assumed that it depended on their own good will to go on working under the old conditions that no longer existed".

A class of people who have to resort to begging or crime is also constantly created and recreated by the most advanced industrial capitalism.

Capital needs a "reserve army of labour", a pool of unemployed workers to draw on. It maintains that pool by constant pressure to cut jobs – through new technology in times of boom, through work speed-up imposed by fear in times of slump.

"The working class, in Marxist theory, is a revolutionary class not only because it suffers poverty and alienation. It is a revolutionary class because its place in the capitalist economic system drives it to organise collectively in an everyday class struggle".

Most unemployed workers do not become part of the "lumpenproletariat" or "underclass". They remain workers, seeking jobs, often being supported by the wages of other members of their families. They are drawn into jobs and pushed out of them as the capitalist business cycle drains and then refills the pool of unemployed.

But the pool is never drained completely. The capitalist cycle leaves a minority behind who can never get jobs, or who give up: that minority has no choice but to collapse into helpless poverty, or turn instead to begging or petty crime of various sorts.



Boredom, frustration and nothing to look forward to fuel youth revolt on Brit

The minority may be made small, in many West European states until recently, where there were relatively good welfare provisions and chances for retraining and education; or it may be larger, as in the more untrammelled capitalist society of the US; but capitalism always produces it.

It is generally worse off than the working class, and that fact has made various socialists and revolutionaries look to the "lumpenproletariat" as a more radical and subversive class than the relatively stolid and staid working class. Thus the 19th century anarchist Mikhail Bakunin looked especially to the sections of the "lumpenproletariat" who had been recruited from the middle class by economic ruin.

"There exists in Italy what is lacking in other countries: a youth which is ardent, energetic, completely displaced, without a career, without a way out..."

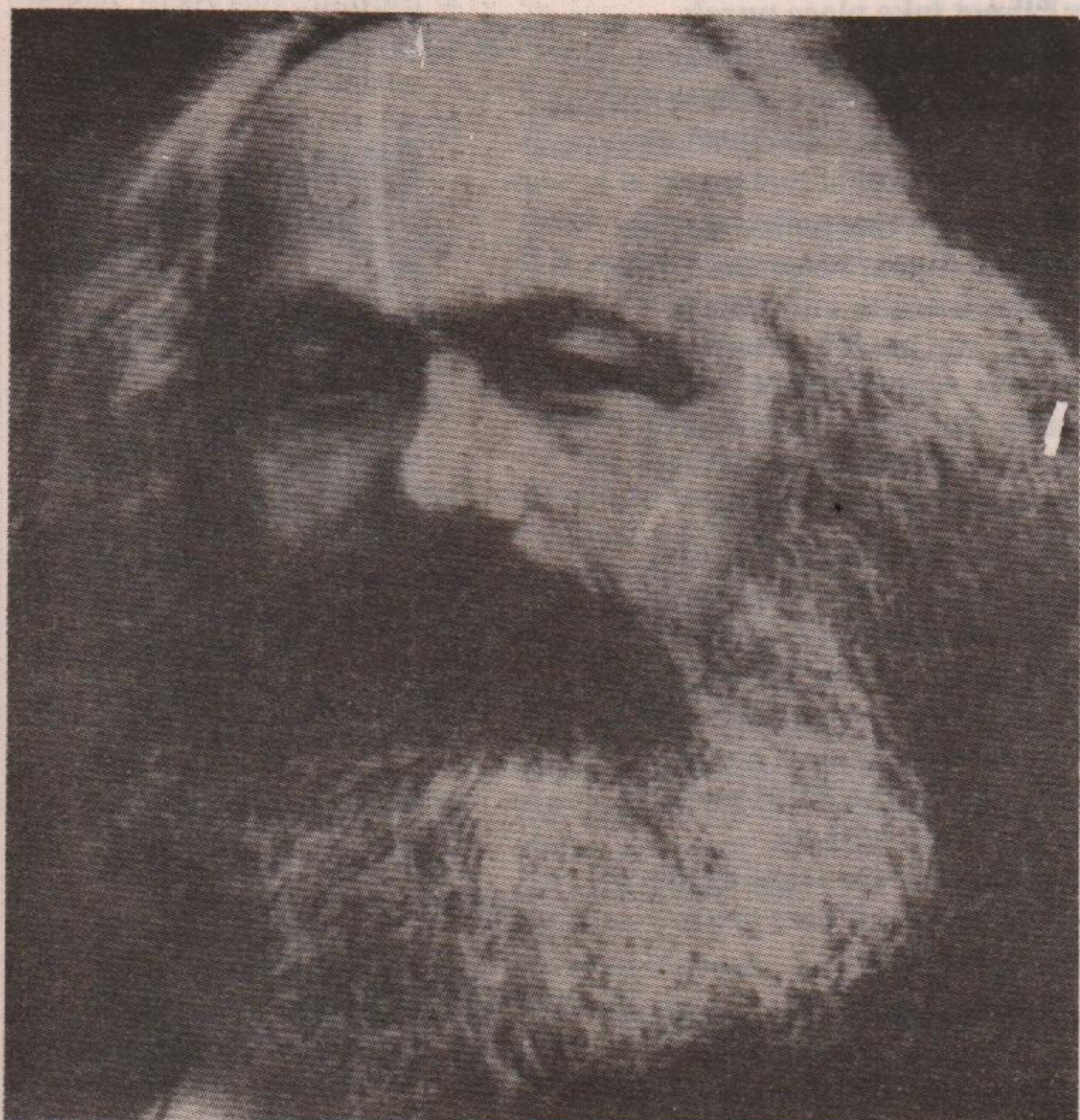
In the 1960s the academic Marxist Herbert Marcuse wrote: "Underneath the conservative popular base [i.e. the working class] is the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders... the unemployed and unemployable... their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not".

And indeed, that "substratum" is usually more ready to rebel spectacularly, to riot and to loot, than the working class. Many European cities in the 18th and 19th centuries saw frequent upheavals of that sort. The Bank of England, in the centre of the City of London,

is surrounded by blank, prison-like walls because when it was rebuilt, in 1792-1827, anything less would have led to the "underclass" ransacking the building site and then smashing all the windows when the construction was complete. Yet Marx and Engels, in the "Communist Manifesto", argued that while the "substratum" "may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian [working-class] revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue".

"To hope that the 'underclass' will lead a revolution is false. That does not mean that socialists should side with the capitalist Establishment against it".

In fact fascist and right-wing nationalist movements have often found an important base in the unemployed, organising them alongside the middle class as a force against the working class. Rioting may be a protest against intolerable conditions, but it does not necessarily help win better conditions: it is almost always purely negative, and may even be



Marx urged unity of workers and the unemployed



...n's estates. The labour movement owes them an alternative

...ed against the working class. ... working class, in Marxist ... is a revolutionary class not ... and not mainly, because it ... poverty and alienation. It ... revolutionary class because its ... in the capitalist economic ... disciplines and unites it, ... it to organise collectively in ... everyday class struggle flowing ... the very nature of wage- ... and points it towards ... active social control as the ... ate goal for that class strug-

... driven not just to oppose ... ecrey capitalism, to seek to ... t down, but to build some- ... better on the basis of the ... ements of capitalism.

... e "lumpenproletariat" is dif- ... erent. In many ways it is ... closer to the small-shopkeep- ... ss than to the working class. ... recruited from the middle ... as well as the working class; ... ys on the working class, by ... for example, rather than ... ng its struggles; its economic ... tions drive it towards indi- ... ally grabbing what it can; it ... ops no stable collective ... isations, and is naturally ... ted to dictators and "strong ... promising revenge and ... t-fix" solutions.

... traits and attitudes ... bed by the right-wing writ- ... the US are indeed fostered ... economic conditions of the ... rclass" (though, contrary to ... ht-wingers' racism, most of ... American "underclass" is ... and most black Americans

Many young people hover between the "underclass" and the working class. As they grow older, either they find places as workers (or small business-people), or the years on the edge of society grind them down into crime or hopeless passivity, illness, and death. While they are young, their future is open: whether they are workers unemployed for now, or become "unemployables", remains to be decided.

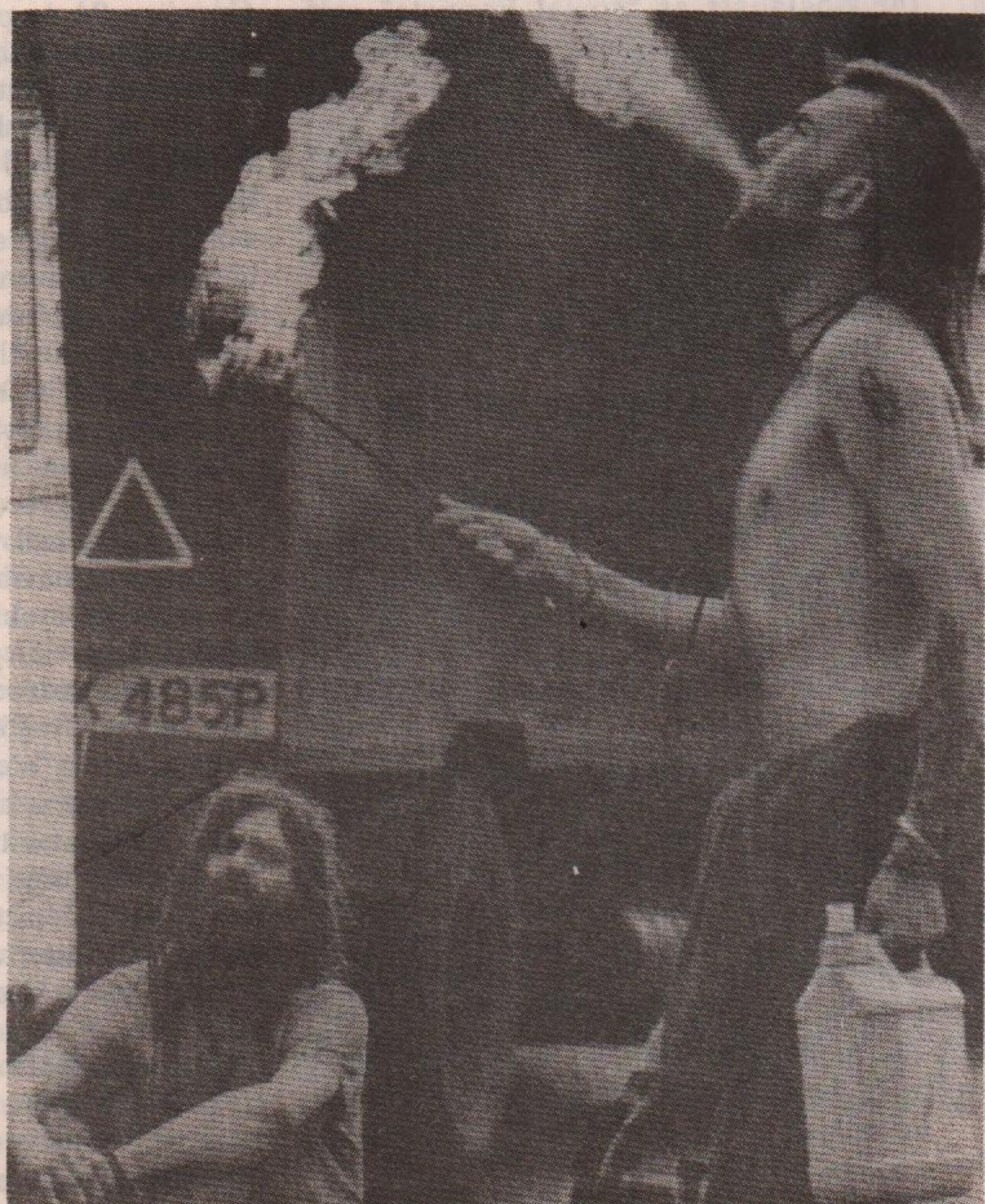
Marx advocated "a regular cooperation between employed and unemployed... by trades unions, etc.... in order to destroy or to weaken the ruinous effects of [the] natural law of capitalist production". Britain in the 1920s and '30s, and the US in the '30s, showed that an Unemployed Workers' Movement organised in close connection with the trade unions can be a powerful force for combatting despair, winning small but important improvements in the conditions of the jobless, demanding new jobs, and strengthening the labour movement.

That is what we need today, in Britain, in the US, and in all the main capitalist countries.

Up to 100,000 16-17 year olds in Britain today face despair. They cannot get jobs. Even the Government's miserable Youth Training scheme has no places for them. They can get no social security benefits. Unless their families can support them, they are forced into an "underclass" existence.

And the labour movement is doing nothing about it. The trade unions do almost nothing to organise the unemployed. The Labour Party has no youth group beyond a tiny sect. There are no campaigns to win relief — housing, benefits, training, jobs — for the young people forced into poverty. Capitalism offers them nothing, and the labour movement offers them nothing, too, except empty rhetoric.

"Underclass" revolt warns us that capitalism is decaying — and that the labour movement is failing its duty.

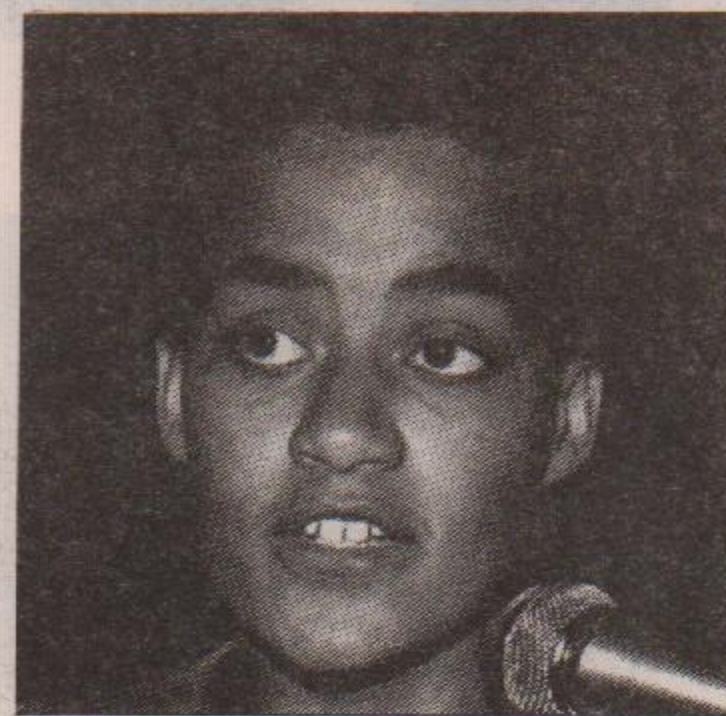


New-age travellers: suiting themselves, not the ruling class

Anti-semitic academic speaks in Liverpool

What a way to celebrate 500 years of resistance!

THE POLITICAL FRONT



By Gail Cameron

In 1492, the year that Columbus reached America, the Jews were driven out of Spain along with the Moors.

In the following centuries, Jews suffered constant persecution in Europe and elsewhere. The climax of that persecution was the Holocaust.

Jews are obviously among the victims of the "500 years of oppression" since 1492. So what did Liverpool's "500 Years of Resistance" campaign do? Sponsor two events at which the anti-semitic American academic Leonard Jeffries is speaking!

Some local anti-racists have recognised the need to criticise Jeffries. But a majority have either denied that Jeffries' New York speech last year [see accompanying article] was anti-semitic, or claimed that the issue of Jeffries' anti-semitism is a diversion — from anti-racism!

On the one hand, we on the Left tell Jews: "Don't run away from anti-semitism by emigrating to Israel! Stay and fight anti-semitism where you live!" And then a lot of us tell Jews that fighting anti-semitism is a "diversion"!

Anti-semitism is reviving, particularly in Eastern Europe, Germany, and France. In Britain, attacks on synagogues and desecrations of Jewish cemeteries have increased.

Jeffries is no fascist. His anti-semitism is not as extreme as that of the likes of Louis Farrakhan.

And we do not advocate that Jeffries should be "no-platformed". Liverpool City Council recently hosted the King and Queen of Spain — it would be double standards, if not outright racism, if the council now penalised the Black organisations which invited Jeffries.

But anti-racists must reject the delusion that challenging anti-semitism is a diversion from tackling anti-Black racism.

Conspiracy theory is anti-semitic

In a speech delivered to a 2,000-strong audience in New York last year, American academic Leonard Jeffries claimed that there was a Jewish "conspiracy" to destroy Blacks, "a conspiracy which had been planned, plotted and programmed out of Hollywood, with people named Greenberg, Weisberg, and Trigliani and whatnot".

According to Jeffries, "Russian Jewry had a particular control over the movies, and their financial partners, the Mafia, put together a system of destruction of black people... It was by design, it was calculated".

The theme of "Jewish control" of Hollywood has been a staple of anti-semites since the 1940s. The "Jewish conspiracy" has a much longer history.

Jeffries attacked Diane Ravitch, US Assistant Secretary of State for Education, as "a sophisticated Texas Jew" who had "blinded us to the attack coming from the Jewish community — systematic and unrelenting".

"The new standard [for school textbooks] is not a Bible Belt Texas family, but a sophisticated Texas Jew [i.e. Ravitch]". Jeffries implied that Jews somehow control America; they can impose themselves as the "new standard" in school textbooks, and they are to blame for the horrors US capitalism inflicts on Black people.

While claiming not to be anti-semitic, Jeffries continued by implying that Jews also controlled the slave trade.

"The Jewish community... became the lifeline of the fallen Roman Empire in the 1500s and 1600s".

"[There was] an alliance between

the Catholic Church and rich Jews selling white central, Eastern and Southern Europeans into Arab slavery".

• "The Jewish community didn't care either way [about whites being sold into slavery]. So rich Jews and the Catholic Church had an alliance for hundreds of years".

• "The new Jewish community in those areas [Amsterdam and Hamburg] continued the slave trade for the Dutch, the Germans and English".

• "In Spain there were the [Jewish] grandees, managing the money of the Spanish throne. In Germany, in the 1600s and 1700s, there were the court Jews, managing the political and economic apparatus of Europe, the Hapsburg Empire, the German states, etc... We have the names. We know who they were, what they were, what they controlled. We know when they set up the Dutch East India Co., the Dutch West India Co., the Portuguese company, the Brazilian company...

"We know who and what documents. We know the family connections. We know that even when they converted to Christianity, they maintained links with their Jewish community brothers who had not converted... And that's why they had a network round the world".

Jeffries ignores the Christian persecution which drove the Jews into ghettos and out of Western Europe in the late Middle Ages, and flits through space and time to find, everywhere and at all times, the same combination of Jews, power, and wealth.

This kind of stuff belongs in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion".

John Heartfield: revolutionary artist & The camera tells

Alan Johnson reviews the exhibition of the work of John Heartfield, currently at the Barbican Art Gallery, London (until 18 October).

During the First World War a Berlin painter, Helmut Herzfeld, anglicised his name to John Heartfield.

He was in revolt against a Germany where friends would greet each other with, "God Punish England". Heartfield went on to develop a new art based upon the manipulation of form and content to make a political point — photomontage.

This exhibition, on the centenary of his birth, is accompanied by a collection of contemporary British political cartoons, animation, puppetry and caricature, featuring Steve Bell, Jacky Fleming, Ralph Steadman, Spitting Image, and the excellent photomontages of Peter Kennard.

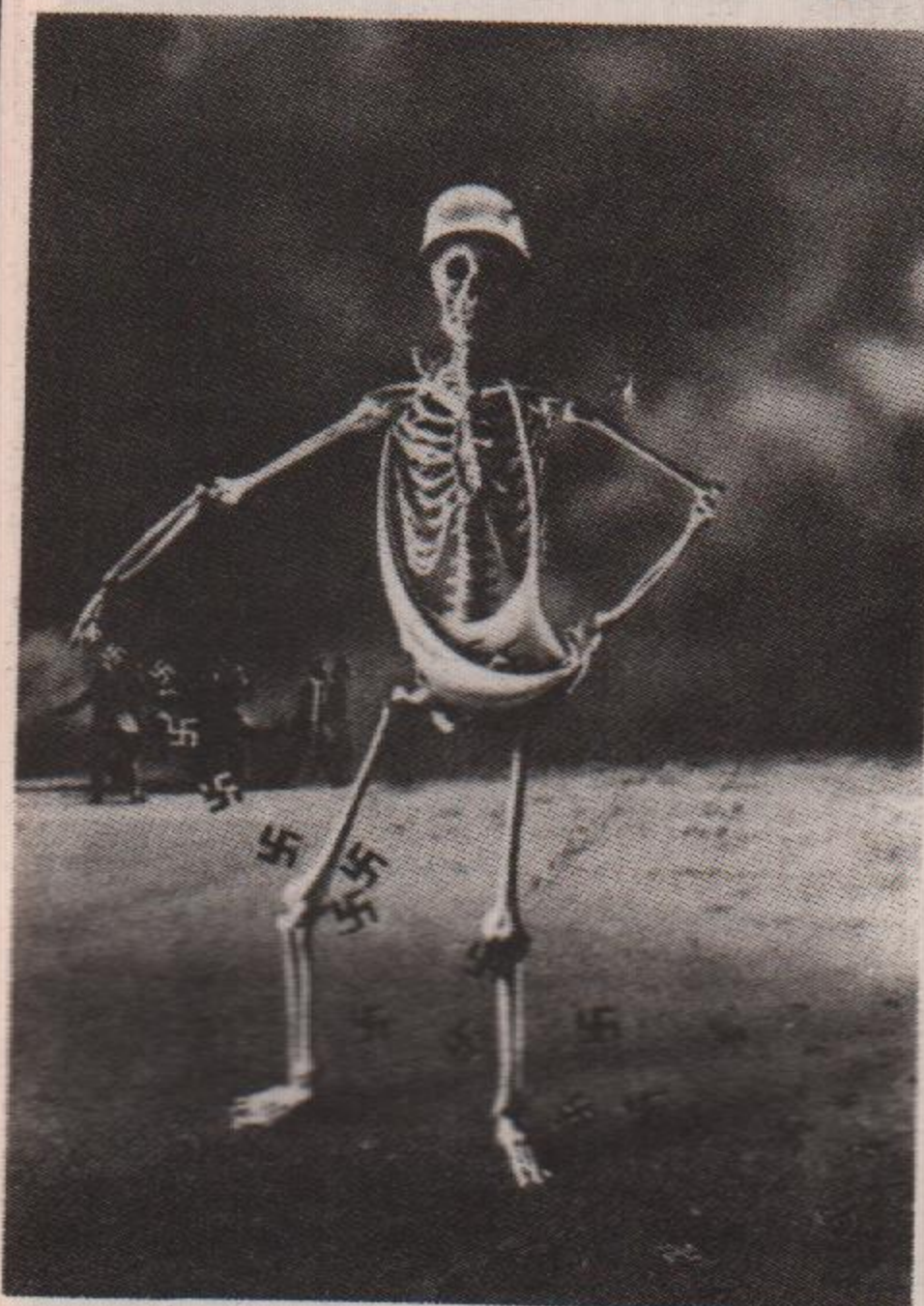
Initially photomontage was seen by Heartfield and his friends in the Berlin "Dada" movement as a gesture against the art establishment.

Dada lasted from about 1916 to the early twenties. Repelled by the collapse of European society into the carnage of the first world war, Dadaists expressed total rejection of the capitalist society which had produced the war and the safe, institutionalised art of capitalist "high culture".

They sought not lofty elevation from, or a passive depiction of, society but an anarchic, wild and explosive presence which might ignite revolt.

Dada became more explicitly political in the starving and revolutionary Germany of the post war years. Heartfield was a founder member of the Communist Party. "Dada stands on the side of the revolutionary proletariat", read the poster at the one and only "Dada Fair" in Berlin in 1920.

The current exhibition reconstructs the room in which Heartfield and Grosz exhibited at the Fair and it alone is worth the admission price. A Prussian military figure hangs from the ceiling with the head of a pig. Otto Dix's disturbing painting "45% employable" depicts demobbed and crippled



"Where this sower goes through the land, he reaps hunger, war and fire". From AIZ, March 1937



"War and Corpses — the last hope for the rich". From AIZ, 1932

workers. The titles of the works give the flavour: "It's Time You Opened Your Mind. Clear It For The Claims Of Our Times". "Cut With the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer Belly". "Dada is the Wilful Subversion of the Bourgeois World of Concepts".

In the 1920s and 1930s Heartfield introduced photomontage into the Communist Party's press and publicity. It became more than an anti-art joke. The CP critic Louis Aragon wrote of this transformation: "As he was playing with the fire of appearances, reality took fire around him.. John Heartfield was no longer playing. The scraps of paper that he formerly manoeuvred for the pleasure of stupefaction, under his fingers began to signify".

Week after week he produced razor-sharp anti-Nazi images for the Communist magazine Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung (Workers' Illustrated Paper or AIZ). The AIZ reflected a movement of worker-photographers two and a half thousand strong by 1930, and based on the idea that "you need the eye of a certain class" to use the new cameras and lenses and printing techniques for social depiction.

One of Heartfield's photomontages shows Hitler giving the Nazi salute and in the same motion accepting a wad of bills from a giant, anonymous and suited figure with the caption "Millions Stand Behind Us". The montage, referring to a claim Hitler had made days before about the Nazis' popular support, presents the viewer with "a critical narrative presented visually". A new perspective has been created, a vantage point from which the view can feel emboldened and the

enemy diminished.

After Hitler's victory in 1933 Heartfield fled to Prague, then in 1938 to London. The victory of the Nazis was the result of the criminal policy of Moscow which depicted the Socialists as "social Fascists" and blocked the Communist-Socialist alliance which could have defeated Hitler. Heartfield had followed this policy, and produced photomontages, for example, depicting the SPD as tigers.

"Dadaists expressed total rejection of the capitalist society which had produced the war and the safe, institutionalised art of capitalist 'high culture'."

In England he did work for Picture Post, but found nothing in the British labour movement to compare to AIZ. He was even interned briefly in 1940.

He returned to East Berlin in 1950. Initially he was out of favour — in the years of

"Socialist Realism", photomontage was defined as "bourgeois" — but later he became an "official" artist of the Stalinist dictatorship, until his death in 1968.

According to a friend (writing in the *Guardian*, 24 August), in private Heartfield made "frequent and loud" criticisms of the Stalinist regime. In public he made none.

He remained silent during the Berlin Rising of 1953 and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He seemed happiest working on stage sets with Berthold Brecht but he would turn in the propaganda when the regime requested it.

The fearsome clarity of his earlier work was replaced by tired images of Western imperialism or Soviet achievement.

The video which accompanies the exhibition is a disgrace. "Going home to the Germany he had worked for", his work is portrayed as having a "continuity" and we are asked to mourn the fall of the Berlin Wall and to view sympathetically a work Heartfield produced in 1959 portraying an East German frog leaping over a barrier only to be eaten by "a capitalist snake", as showing his "prophetic awareness".

The fact that a tyrannical state shot any "frog" which tried to jump is ignored. The earlier work depicts the truth and exposes tyranny. The later work is in the service of a tyranny, and is itself ideology, masking the truth.

This assumption of a continuity in Heartfield's work, from the revolutionary work of the 1920s to the Stalinist pieces of the 1950s, is only another version of "Marx led to Lenin led to Stalin", of course.

The exhibition guide tells us that, "His pol-

artist-revolutionary

a different truth

itics now appear historically specific (1917-1991), linked to the utopian promise of the Russian Revolution. Yet the way he expressed his politics – the fearless embrace of montage based machine art, and his explorations of dangerous outlets that lacked the safety of the gallery or museum – still present a challenge”.

This view seeks to gut the politics from Heartfield's art, leaving only the forms by which that art was carried. But form and content cannot be so easily separated here, and the political grounding of his art cannot be pushed aside.

“According to a friend, in private Heartfield made “frequent and loud” criticisms of the Stalinist regime. In public he made none.”

As Brecht said, “less than ever does the mere reflection of reality reveal anything about reality”. Photomontage plays on the paradoxes and borderlines which exist between the “true” and “untrue”, the obvious and hidden, the visible and invisible. It plays on the contradictory character of our consciousness of these relationships, inviting us to think critically about our own assumptions.

So, while at one level we all think “photographs tell the truth” we can also recognise in a photomontage that the manipulation by the artist has created another, deeper, “critical truth”.

Peter Kennard – probably the most well known contemporary photomontage artist – writes of Heartfield that “He realised that by connecting two clicks of the camera shutter he could create a third meaning, that would make invisible connections visible”.

But the difference between Heartfield's time and ours is enormous. Now the potential of photomontage to create what Kennard calls “an international picture language” is most often put at the service of capitalist advertiser, selling commodities in the market place.

Satire, wit and irony have been appropriated and depoliticised by the advertisers, or toned down (as in *The Late Show*) to a world-weary cynical you-can't-do-anything-but-laugh-at-the-world, ever-so-clever “radicalism”: “don't mourn, skit!”

And the creation of good political photomontage depends on the artist having good politics. How can the artist “make invisible connections visible” if they cannot see them themselves?

It was not just Heartfield's personality, or his “cleverness”, but his Marxism which gave him the critical vantage point from which to dissect the rise of Nazism. It was his location within the workers' movement, albeit a Stalinist-led movement, which gave him the sense of an alternative to the society he lampooned.

Without that photomontage can become

the sneer of the cynical individual, and not the confident, puncturing wit and anger of the agent of revolutionary change.

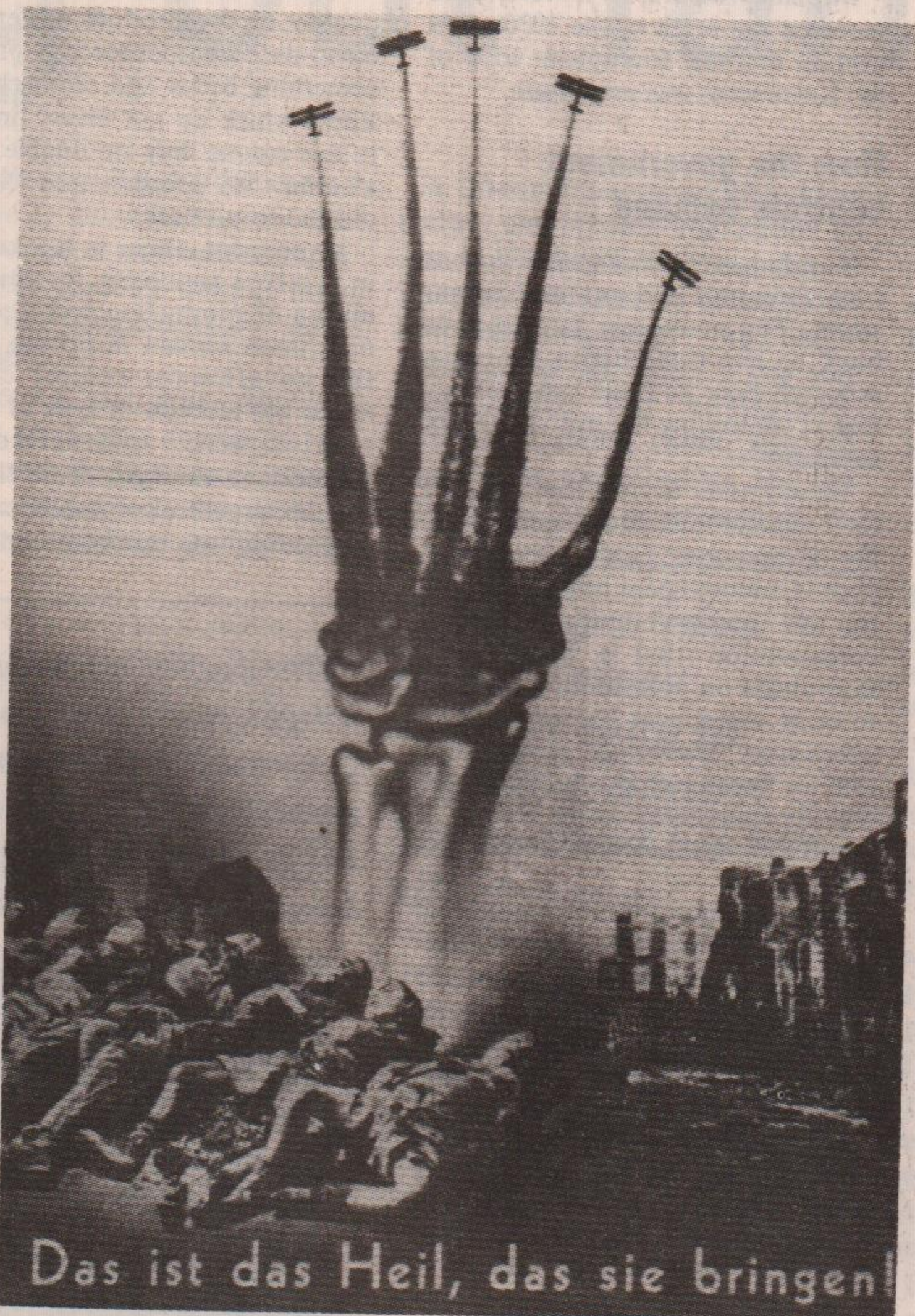
The political context in which Heartfield worked – the wave of hope created by the October Revolution – has long disappeared. Today, the backwash from the collapse of Stalinism has pushed perspectives of radical social change to the margins.

So Peter Kennard's work is often stranded in the *Guardian*, accompanying clearly unsympathetic articles. Even when his work is publicising a campaign, the targets of his work can seem so stupid, but so monumentally powerful, that today's audience is likely to retreat to the “sanity” of their private worlds.

While Kennard has a highly developed ability to debunk myths and to explore the “invisible connections” of capitalism (with his image of the bayonet impaling the slice of bread, for example) he rarely points to an alternative. The mass radical workers' movements of that time were to Heartfield's savage indictments of capitalism and Hitler like the back-stop to a pitcher – a directing force, ensuring he wasn't just firing off into the air. Contemporary artists work without such a political back-stop.

The fact that the critique of capitalism is so much more developed than the alternative to capitalism conditions the art that can be produced and the way that art is received.

Trotsky once wrote that “The political writing of a class hastens ahead of stilts, while its artistic creativity hobbles behind on crutches”. But what of art when politics is itself on crutches?



“That is the salvation that they bring”. From *Volksillustrierte* (the new Popular-Front name for AIZ), June 1938



Peter Kennard's anti-nuclear poster produced for the GLC in 1985. The Barbican censored his work in 1989

The Cutting Edge exhibition has created a storm of protest. The Spitting Image Room, a parody of Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, shows Thatcher's last Cabinet. Thatcher, with crown of thorns is surrounded by Heseltine readying her cross, Howe sharpening a knife, and so on. Denis Thatcher is drunk, under the table.

Church leaders have called it “sacrilegious” and have called for Christians to boy-

cott the exhibition. If, despite this advice, you still decide to go, look out for the puppet of Maxwell with a fish sticking out of his pocket.

The poster advertising The Cutting Edge made by Ralph Steadman has been banned by the directors of the London Underground “because of its violent nature”.

Amongst the many images in the collage is a figure of a man with no head, a few splashes of a blood-red

colour, a gun.

The Barbican have this information displayed at the entrance to the exhibition and are clearly seeking sympathy. Perhaps they should be reminded of the Peter Kennard exhibition at the Barbican in 1989. The management covered over two pieces depicting the Chilean Army in action when it realised the Chilean Finance Minister was to address financiers in the building.



“The meaning of the Hitler salute: a little man asks for big gifts. Motto: Millions stand behind me!” From AIZ, October 1932. Heartfield was satirising Hitler's claims to represent the mass of the people

Why 30 million are jobless – and how new jobs can be created

The roots of depression

In the second of three articles Peter Kenway argues that the key to solving the present crisis is the social control of investment.

What has led to thirty million people being unemployed across the advanced capitalist countries? Capitalism – and, in particular, the way in which capitalism has operated since the second world war.

In this article and the next I am going to suggest what can be done about it: social control over investment and higher public spending on infrastructure, education, social services and benefits. This should be financed through higher taxation, especially (although not only) on high incomes and incomes from profits. In one sense, these are no more than the common currency of almost any socialist, or even social-democrat who is not wholly seduced by the supposed superiority of 'the market'.

My purpose here is not therefore to say something new about what should be done, but rather to explain why these are the things which need to be done; to try to show that these are logical responses to the manifest shortcomings of the world we find ourselves in; to try to show why socialism, far from being dead, is instead vital for the future.

This is not a slump – yet

Some have called the present economic situation a slump, but I would not do so, for two reasons.

A slump – a sudden, steep and profound collapse in the level of economic activity, by say 20 per cent or more – is certainly a possibility. The most likely cause of it would be a collapse in international trade such as happened in the 1930s.

I think we should save the word 'slump' to describe what would happen then, not least because "the remedies being offered by nationalists within both major parties are the very things which could turn what we have today into a slump."

We have now suffered nearly twenty years of slow growth and high and rising unemployment in Britain, as elsewhere. During that time we have witnessed three recessions: 1974/5, 1980/1 and 1990 till now. The present recession is now the longest of those three, and although neither 1991 nor 1992 will have been as bad as 1980 when output fell by 4 per cent, the length of today's recession means that it will turn out to have the worst of them all. It is, I think, quite properly called a "depression".

The real point about all this talk of percentages and names is to emphasise that today's crisis is not just a recent thing. It cannot all be blamed on wrong policies pursued today (as Labour critics of the government suggest); nor on Chancellor Lawson's 'boom' of 1987-8 (what Tory critics of the government say); nor even on the last thirteen years of Tory waste and mis-management (Labour critics again).

Instead, the roots can be traced all the way back to the manner in which capitalism has been run in countries such as Britain and the US since the second world war. The ultimate fault is the failure of Keynesianism.



For a generation Keynesianism was triumphant, managing to support a half-decent welfare state. Ultimately, though, it failed. Healthworkers at Charing Cross hospital on strike this year. Photo: John Harris

The success of Keynesianism

Keynesianism – named after John Maynard Keynes, a scion of the British establishment who was born in the year Marx died and who died at the end of the Second World War – was a doctrine for the management of the economy by the bourgeois state. There was absolutely no suggestion that any of the fundamental institutions of society should be altered, but the state, and states working together, were instead to act to overcome the inherent shortcomings of capitalism, shortcomings which had been revealed in the starkest possible terms in the slump of the 1930s.

The basic idea of Keynesianism as it became capitalist conventional wisdom after 1945, was that the government should act to maintain a certain level of effective demand (expenditure) in the economy. When it appeared that the economy was slowing down, the government was supposed to boost demand. Contrariwise, the government was supposed to damp down demand when the economy appeared to be growing too strongly.

"The remedies being offered by nationalists within both major parties are the very things which could turn what we have today into a slump".

For nearly thirty years Keynesianism appeared to be spectacularly successful, not only in smoothing out the natural cycle of capitalism but also in maintaining a satisfactory, if not spectacular, rate of growth.

In those years, unemployment was on average less than half a million, and the rise in unemployment experienced as boom turned to recession

was a mere three hundred thousand. At the time, such a rise was held to be something shocking, not just by Labour but by Conservatives too.

For a generation, Keynesianism was triumphant, combining what was best about capitalism (innovation, growth, rising standards of living sufficient to support a half decent welfare state) while eliminating its worst features.

But since we are, as it were, once more on the brink of the 1930s, it is evident that the triumphant tone of the Keynesians was premature.

How the government controls demand

The failure of Keynesianism has both economic and political dimensions. The economic failure goes back to the difficulties faced in accomplishing its basic task, namely that of controlling the overall level of expenditure.

Economists divide the nation's total expenditure into a small number of categories: public expenditure (that is, money spent directly by central and local government), personal consumption (that is, spending by individuals on everything from milk to cars), investment (expenditure on machinery, buildings, equipment, that is, means of production) and exports (purchases made abroad of goods and services supplied from the UK).

Some categories can be influenced by the government much more easily than others. This is obviously true of public expenditure, which the government can control directly (although it always has trouble with local authorities spending too much or too little), but it is also true of consumption by individuals, the level of which can be directly and quickly altered by raising or lowering taxes.

Investment and exports on the other hand are not directly under government control. But investment is the most important category of all!

Investment must continue at a

steady and sufficient rate if the economy is to remain capable of producing a sufficient quantity of goods and services at a price which makes them attractive and of a quality which is good enough to rank with similar goods available from producers abroad. This is not all that it takes for a country to remain 'competitive' on world markets, but it is an crucial part of it.

Without adequate investment the quality of the product suffers: the up-to-date competitor can produce something better and often cheaper. Firms which do not invest find that in due course they are unable to sell all that they produce and they are obliged to cut back.

Investment, then, is the key, but in a mixed economy, in which the means of production and decisions over them remain in private hands, the government cannot control either the amount or type of investment directly. Indirect control, Keynesians thought, came through the direct control of public expenditure and private consumption.

"The social control of investment does not automatically mean socialism, but the need for it puts socialism back on the agenda".

The best inducement to persuade firms to invest was the prospect of a strong and steadily rising market for the goods which would be produced with that new investment. The way to stimulate investment was to stimulate consumption.

This worked, but only at a cost, because to provoke consumption first meant that society consumed more before it produced more. The rise in consumption unmatched by production simply sucked in imports

(goods and services produced overseas) and the need to finance that burgeoning deficit in foreign trade (imports exceeding exports) obliged the government to raise the rate of interest (to get foreigners to lend British capitalists money). This choked off consumption, and the new investment brought little benefit since the extra demand which firms had anticipated simply failed to materialise.

What really mattered was steady investment over a long period of time in order to ensure a gradual expansion of the means of production. Marx's word for this process – 'accumulation', suggestive of the careful acquisitiveness of the squirrel garnering stocks for the winter – is so appropriate here.

What we are suffering from today is the consequence of some two decades of accumulation which has been both insufficient and intermittent. The stock of up-to-date machines, factories and so on, is insufficient. Jobs when they come, as in the boom which occurred between 1986 and 1989, are for the most part private sector service jobs, whether in fast food outlets, domestic service, estate agencies or the City of London, the call for which can (and did) vanish as rapidly as it appears.

Social control over investment

The deep and prolonged recession which we are now suffering is a result of the necessary belt-tightening following the burst of gluttony in the late 1980s. The tightening is made far worse by the recessions in Germany and the US and the financial contraction in Japan. But its severity is home-grown.

The root of the problem and therefore, in my view, the root cause of the eventual failure of Keynesianism, lies precisely in the fact that the means of production and investment decisions are for the most part in private hands. A sustainable recovery from not only this depression, but also the two decades of slow growth, requires sustained accumulation.

The 'arms length' relationship between the state and firms which is to be found in the UK and US (Canada and Australia too) has failed to work: much more direct social control over the means of production and its accumulation is essential.

'Social control' by no means necessarily means socialism. It is no coincidence that the countries which have continued to thrive economically in the last two decades have been the former West Germany and Japan. In both of these, investment decisions are far more subject to social control (of a non-socialist sort).

In Germany, banks play a central role within the industrial structure, making long-term finance available for long-term benefit. In Japan, the dense interweaving of many big corporations, including with banks, means that there too, decision making is essentially socialised, albeit by and for the bourgeoisie.

The key to a sustained recovery is to be found in a sustained spell of accumulation, and the key to that is the social control of investment. That is the lesson to be drawn from the failure of Keynesianism. The social control of investment does not automatically mean socialism, but the need for it puts socialism back on the agenda.



Catherine Deneuve plays Belle de Jour

Acting out fantasy

Cinema

Belinda Weaver reviews *Belle de Jour*

Luis Bunuel's *Belle de Jour*, made in 1967, and recently re-released, is the story of a wealthy, middle-class housewife who works afternoons in a Paris brothel.

Severine, who's called Belle de Jour in the brothel, has a handsome doctor husband, a smart flat and a maid, but she's miserable. She's like a child with her husband, and their sex life is nil. Severine rebuffs him, settling down alone at night in her narrow bed with relief.

Beneath her mask-like calm, Severine is constantly on the boil, however — anxious, restless, and tormented by sexual fantasies of degradation and punishment.

So strong do her desires become that she seeks out a brothel, and starts to work there by day. She finds there the release she needs to get on with her life.

If it were a man's story, it wouldn't be remarkable. Married men use prostitutes for sex all the time. But in making a 'nice', middle class woman like Severine take to whoring, and by casting icy, beautiful Catherine Deneuve in the role, Bunuel guaranteed his film shock value.

It doesn't seem so shocking today. Severine's surrender to her fantasies, her acting out of imaginary scenarios of humiliation and rape, seem — and are — a release to her. After a few sessions with her customers, criminals among them, she can finally cosy up to hubby, and the stage is set for a happy ending.

"Making a 'nice' middle-class woman take to whoring, Bunuel guaranteed his film shock value".

It's not exploitative. Were it a Hollywood film, we'd see every detail of Severine's days in the brothel; we'd actually see her pawed and subjugated by men. But Bunuel keeps the door closed. When it opens, the camera focuses on Severine's well-being. She seems happy, released, not oppressed.

This may seem unsound to some, but fantasies generally are unsound. Rape fantasies are top of the charts for many women, which doesn't mean those women want to be raped. There

is a huge chasm between fantasy and fact.

Severine goes further than fantasy, but it helps her. It liberates her. Far from being degraded, she ends up fulfilled, able to climb out of the trap her fantasies had built around her. Whatever she's up to, she is doing it on her own terms.

Of course, her wanting to be degraded is a sign of her oppression; she finds it incomprehensible — and repellent — when a male client at the brothel seeks humiliation and domination. But Bunuel isn't interested in why Severine turned out that way; he just wants to show it.

And to shock. Shocking the bourgeoisie was always one of Bunuel's favourite games; it's the theme of many of his movies. *Belle de Jour* is about all the smutty thoughts behind the respectable faces of the bourgeoisie. It's about the corruption lurking behind beauty and glamour and righteousness.

Severine doesn't just work in a brothel. As a child, she turned her nose up at Communion too. She's a secret rebel, masquerading as a frosty, middle class saint. Shocking the Church was also one of Bunuel's games. In *Belle de Jour*, he got to do both.

A book you should read

Books

Mark Sandell reviews *Spartacus*, Howard Fast's novel about the great slave revolt in Imperial Rome on which the film *Spartacus* was based

The Roman Empire was built on military conquest and on the enslavement of the defeated. As the empire stabilised, trade in slaves and the work of slaves became a major part of the economy. Rich Romans would have a large number of 'domestic slaves' and vast armies of slaves working on their farms and mines. Others got rich training slaves and making them fight to the death for the entertainment of the Roman citizens.

At Capua in 73 BC, in the heart of Roman Italy a slave revolt defeated some of the best sections of the Roman army and for a while threatened the destruction of Rome. Spartacus led this revolt.

In Fast's account Spartacus was a third generation slave from Greece. Bought from a hellish desert mine by a Gladiator owner in Capua, Spartacus is trained as a Gladiator, as the slaves forced to mutilate and kill each other for the titillation of the free citizens were called.

Spartacus leads a revolt in the Gladiator school. The highly-trained and confident Gladiators are able to act like an armed revolutionary party, and they become the core of a 50,000 strong army of freed slaves which sets out to free all the slaves in Italy and destroy Rome.

Fast tells the story through the eyes of both the leaders of the slave revolt and the rich and powerful of Rome. He captures the horror of slavery so that you understand the slaves' passion for freedom.

The slave army holds its property in common. They fight to end all oppression. This communist army inflicted many great defeats on the mighty Roman army. This hotch potch of ex-slaves ranging from cooks to gladiators won because of their training and leadership — but most of all they won because they fought as a class for a better world.

It took three years to defeat the rising. The Roman ruling class, terrified by the revolt, had to destroy the memory of the revolt. They poured out vitriolic propaganda, they crucified over 6,000 captured slaves in a double line running many miles along the Rome-Capua road. There remains no full history of Spartacus for, unlike Rome's imperial wars, this class war was too dangerous to remember. The victors write history.

The tragedy of the Spartacus revolt was that it could not win its utopian aims. Spartacus wants to destroy Rome and return to the Golden Age of Greek myth. But it is not possible to turn the tide of history back to primitive communism.

History is class struggle, the exploited continually fight exploitation but, until the industrial revolution, the resources did not allow for the possibility of material equality.

Where Spartacus could not turn history back, we face a world rotten ripe for socialism. For the first time in history the revolution of the exploited, the modern wage slaves of capitalism, can force history forward to a real golden age of equality based on abundance and liberation.

The exploited have a rich hidden history of struggle. Socialists should never forget the magnificent Spartacus revolt. The novel is out of print. Get it from your library.

Periscope

BBC 2, 8.10 pm, Wednesday 9 September

The Un-Americans — Part 2 of a three-part documentary on the McCarthyite witch-hunt in the USA.

The persecution affected not only film directors and writers but also tens of

thousands of workers.

Trotskyist workers in car factories had to run out of the premises after work to avoid being beaten up by the employer's thugs.

Blacklisted for one joke, an electrician couldn't get work for 20 years. Other workers were harassed for decades by the FBI.

The politics of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty

We live in a capitalist world. Production is social; ownership of the social means of production is private.

Ownership by a state which serves those who own most of the means of production is also essentially "private".

Those who own the means of production buy the labour power of those who own nothing but their labour-power and set them to work. At work they produce more than the equivalent of their wages. The difference (today in Britain it may be more than £20,000 a year per worker) is taken by the capitalist. This is exploitation of wage-labour by capital, and it is the basic cell of capitalist society, its very heart-beat.

Everything else flows from that. The relentless drive for profit and accumulation decrees the judgment of all things in existence by their relationship of productivity and profitability.

From that come such things as the savage exploitation of Brazilian goldminers, whose life expectancy is now less than 40 years; the working to death - it is officially admitted by the government! - of its employees by advanced Japanese capitalism; and also the economic neglect and virtual abandonment to ruin and starvation of "unprofitable" areas like Bangladesh and parts of Africa.

From that comes the cultural blight and barbarism of a society force-fed on profitable pap.

From it come products with "built-in obsolescence" and a society orientated to the grossly wasteful production and reproduction of shoddy goods, not to the development of leisure and culture.

From it come mass unemployment, the development of a vast and growing underclass, living in ghettos and the recreation in some American cities of the worst Third World conditions.

From it comes the unfolding ecological disaster of a world crying out for planning and the rational use of resources, but which is, tragically, organised by the ruling classes around the principles of anarchy and the barbarous worship of blind and humanly irrational market forces.

From it come wars and genocides; two times this century capitalist gangs possessing worldwide power have fallen on each other in quarrels over the division of the spoils, and wrecked the world economy, killing many tens of millions. From it come racism, imperialism, and fascism.

The capitalist cult of icy egotism and the "cash nexus" as the decisive social tie produces societies like Britain now where vast numbers of young people are condemned to live in the streets, and societies like that of Brazil, where homeless children are hunted and killed on the streets like rodents.

From the exploitation of wage-labour comes our society in which the rich, who with their servants and agents hold state power, fight a relentless class struggle to maintain the people in a condition to accept their own exploitation and abuse,

and to prevent real democratic self-control developing with the forms of what they call democracy. They use tabloid propaganda or - as in the 1984-85 miners' strike - savage and illegal police violence, as they need to. They have used fascist gangs when they need to, and will use them again, if necessary.

Against this system we seek to convince the working class - the wage slaves of the capitalist system - to fight for socialism.

Socialism means the abolition of wage slavery, the taking of the social economy out of private ownership into common cooperative ownership. It means the realisation of the old demands for liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Under socialism the economy will be run and planned deliberately and democratically: market mechanisms will cease to be our master, and will be cut down and re-shaped to serve broadly sketched-out and planned, rational social goals.

We want public ownership of the major enterprises and a planned economy under workers' control.

The working class can win reforms within capitalism, but we can only win socialism by overthrowing capitalism and by breaking the state power - that is, the monopoly of violence and reserve violence - now held by the capitalist class. We want a democracy much fuller than the present Westminster system - a 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 struggles of workers and oppressed nationalities in the ex-Stalinist states of Eastern Europe and in still-Stalinist China.

What are the alternatives now? We may face new wars as European and Japanese capitalism confronts the US. Fascism is rising. Poverty, inequality and misery are growing.

Face the bitter truth: either we build a new, decent, sane, democratic world or, finally, the capitalists will ruin us all - we will be dragged down by the fascist barbarians or new massive wars. Civilisation will be eclipsed by a new dark age. The choice is socialism or barbarism.

Socialists work in the trade unions and the Labour Party to win the existing labour movement to socialism. We work with presently unorganised workers and youth.

To do that work the Marxists organise themselves in a democratic association, the Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

To join the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, write to PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

ORGANISING

Alliance for Worker's Liberty Meetings

Thursday 3 September

"How to Save the Earth"?

Manchester AWL debates the Green Party. 7.30 Town Hall.

Saturday 5 September

London AWL "Cannon School"

on the revolutionary party. Reading list, venue and other details from Mark, 071-639 7965

Sunday 6 September

"The legacy of Malcolm X"

North London AWL Forum. 8pm. Queen's Head, Acton Street, London WC1.

Speaker: Dion D'Silva

Monday 7 September

"Malcolm X"

Sheffield AWL meeting. Details: 0742-334857

Wednesday 9 September

"The slump - why it happens and what to do about it"

London AWL Forum. 8pm Lucas Arms, Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

Thursday 10 September

"The legacy of Malcolm X"

Liverpool AWL meeting. 7.30 Caribbean Centre. Speaker: Gail Cameron

Student demonstrations

Demonstrate against student debt outside Tory Party Conference

Brighton Wednesday 7 October. Organised by SANUS. Details from Garry Meyer 0273-671057

Fight student debt

Manchester on Wednesday 4 November. Details from MANUS 061-275 2973.

Conference of the left

Saturday 17 - Sunday 18 October Winding Wheel, Chesterfield. Organised by Chesterfield Labour Party and the Socialist Movement.

Labour Party

Rally for Socialism

7pm Thursday 10 September Manchester Town Hall. Speakers

include Tony Benn, Jeremy Corbyn, Bernie Grant and Alice Mahon.

Chinese Solidarity

The Alliance for a Better China is organising a conference on Saturday 12 - Sunday 13 September at Imperial College London. Details from 0865-736303.

The Chinese Solidarity Campaign will hold its AGM in London on Saturday 3 October.

Details from CSC, 68 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1. Phone 071-836 8291

New workplace bulletins

The Alliance for Workers' Liberty produces a number of regular workplace leaflets. A new bulletin is being launched at the start of September for civil servants working in the British Library in Central London. Workers at the library face a management offensive.

If you can help the production or distribution of this bulletin please write to the AWL, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Genetic mix and match

SCIENCE COLUMN

By Les Hearn

(Concluding an occasional series inspired by Dr Steve Jones' 1991 Reith Lectures on genetics)

In his final lecture, Steve Jones looked at the history of human interference in human genes. Sometimes, this has had the aim of "improving" humanity in some way. Nowadays, it is more likely to be intended to benefit individuals.

Jones points out that most common has been a crude attempt to favour the Y over the X gene. Thus in Inuit society a century ago, there were twice as many boys as girls. This was because girls were killed at birth or allowed to starve when food was scarce. Something similar is happening in modern China, where state pressure to have one child per couple conflicts with the desire to have a son. Undoubtedly, many girls are killed at birth.

But there are other reasons for favouring fetuses of one sex. Many genetic diseases are caused by faulty genes on the X chromosome. Some males have no compensating spare X. Those with one copy of the gene suffer the full effects (of haemophilia, Duchenne muscular dystrophy or whatever) while their female siblings are healthy. Few would blame parents of one affected child opting for abortion of further male fetuses.

Back in the 19th century, armed with the insights of the Darwinian theory of evolution, scientists and others claimed a spurious scientific justification of their chauvinistic prejudices. Jones refers wryly to the founder of his place of work, the Department of Genetics at University College, London as a particular culprit. This man, Francis Galton, Darwin's cousin, argued in his 1869 book "Hereditary Genius" that ability, even genius, was inborn and that families with a high concentration of

geniuses tended to have fewer children. Hence, the quality of future generations would inevitably fall.

This led Galton to found the "science" of eugenics whose aim was "to check the birth-rate of the unfit and improve the race by furthering the productivity of the fit by early marriages of the best stock". This, incidentally, was largely the aim of the birth control pioneer Marie Stopes.

An early eugenic experiment was the foundation by the poisonous anti-semitic Elisabeth Nietzsche of a colony

"Genetic health depends on matings being between people as little related as possible."

of "pure" Germans in Paraguay (on the suggestion of Wagner). Hitler himself wept at her funeral in 1935.

The colony, Neue Germania, still exists, featuring in a TV documentary recently. It sheltered several fugitive Nazis after 1945. Blond, blue-eyed and convinced of their superiority, the inhabitants are nevertheless poor, inbred and diseased. This is because genetic health depends on matings being between people as little related as possible.

Even the "land of the free" had its eugenics programme, with some 25,000 Americans sterilised to prevent their passing on feeble-mindedness or criminality! Recent US presidents are living testimony to the ineffectiveness of this movement.

The number of defective genes in circulation is astronomical. About 250 million people worldwide carry a gene for a serious blood disorder (thalassaemia or sickle-cell anaemia). In Britain, some 2 million carry a gene for

cystic fibrosis. However, only about 1 in 2,500 babies are born with CF. This is because they need to receive a CF gene from both parents, who must therefore be carriers.

Genetic diseases can be very common in some areas. In Cyprus, so many have thalassaemia that proper treatment would consume half the health budget.

There are several responses to the problem of genetic diseases. One is to screen fetuses for defective genes.

Perhaps 100 genes will be capable of identification within a few years so the problems associated with screening will have to be confronted soon. One problem is with the reliability of the tests. Few tests are 100% accurate and lives could be blighted by incorrect information.

Such information is capable of misuse too. Screening for sickle-cell anaemia genes in Americans of African origin often compounded the racism to which they were already subject. Carriers found themselves further discriminated against in jobs and insurance, though they had no extra health risks.

Nevertheless, many find knowledge of their genetic status valuable.

Screening of the new born will increase as treatments for genetic diseases are developed. Already, babies with phenylketonuria, which leads to severe mental retardation, can be treated by the simple expedient of eliminating the amino acid phenylalanine from the diet. Perhaps CF will soon be treated by "infecting" the sufferer with viruses carrying the healthy gene.

Jones is optimistic that the burden of genetic disease will decline naturally as human societies intermingle more. Many faulty genes spread because single copies conferred protection against diseases such as malaria. The victims with a double dose paid the price for this protection. With modern medicine and hygiene, the diseases are dying out but the genes remain.

If carriers tend to marry outside their home communities, offspring with genetic diseases will quickly become very rare indeed.

Guards' ballot looks set for 'yes' vote

Showdown on British Rail

By a rail worker

Since the RMT buckled under and accepted the basics of BR's new bargaining machinery, local managers have been "trying it on", attempting to scrap all sorts of local agreements and procedures. Rail workers in many areas don't know what has hit them. In Manchester guards at

Piccadilly station have shown the way to react. A local agreement says that guards do guards' work; only if no guards are available can a trainee driver be asked to do guards' duties.

Nonetheless the Trains Area Manager instructed a trainee driver on Thursday 20 August to do the job of a guard. This led to a walkout. When the guards

refused to return to work four stewards were sacked. As a result more guards walked out. This action shut down local services and disrupted Inter City ones.

RMT officials then instructed the guards to return to work pending a ballot.

As we go to press the ballot result was set to be announced.

Local activists are confident of a

big yes vote and expect solid support of Manchester Piccadilly for the strike.

As one local RMT activist put it: "The guards have grown up with each other and we can expect all picket lines to be honoured." Rank and file ASLEF drives are also expected to back the action even though they have not been balloted.

Once the ballot is won the fight needs to be spread. This issue affects not only guards at Manchester but a generalised attack on rail workers' jobs and conditions.

National leadership must be pulled back from their current policy of capitulation and made to lead the fightback for all rail workers.

Tubeworkers can still stop the Plan

By a Central Line guard

London Underground bosses have released details of how much they are prepared to buy out all our conditions, and it is not much!

They have produced tables showing the new salaries and grades they propose, with a percentage breakdown of "winners" and "losers". Even taking the figures at face value, some grades clearly lose out, for example, Signal Engineering, where 66% are losers.

And in management's "best case" - traincrew, where 92% are said to be winners - the figures do not bear scrutiny.

Drivers and guards are both to get 5% increases - but the figures quoted are for average salary. For many train crew, because of the depots they work at or the shift they work, 5% on average pay will mean less money.

And that 5% is in return for:

- unpaid meal reliefs,

- flexible rostering,
- remote booking on and off,
- the loss of two weeks' holiday,
- Sunday becoming part of the normal working week, and more.

The same story is repeated in grades across the Underground. The headline figures are meaningless. As soon as you look at the strings it's obvious there are no winners, only losers.

Even management's own figures show that they reckon to add only 4% to their total wage bill in return for destroying our job security and conditions.

There have been weeks of intensive negotiations between management and unions in Joint Working Parties (JWPs) covering all grades of tube workers, on the basis of the bosses' proposed Company Plan.

Some JWP discussions are continuing, but the traincrew and station JWPs have concluded their meetings. In all cases, however, management

have not moved an inch from their initial positions, exposing these "negotiations" for the sham they are.

Any further discussion will now take place at the new Central Negotiating Committee stage. The CNC is also set to discuss the "issues of principle", for example PT&R, job licensing, medical standards, probation, and redeployment. The discussions are to start on 7 September. Management's proposals on these issues are at least as bad as their productivity changes.

The Company Plan has nothing to offer tubeworkers! Management will be pushing for agreement as soon as possible. The unions must respond quickly, with a massive and united campaign for rejection of the Plan and for a yes vote in a ballot for action against it.

RMT achieved a two-to-one majority for action while balloting alone earlier this year. A united campaign would achieve a far more decisive mandate for action.

A Burnsall tour

London tour of Burnsall's strikers starts 7 September. Burnsall's mainly Asian workforce have been on strike for over 2 months. Success is possible, public support in the West Midlands is high, Burnsall's business operations are being damaged and even the Health and Safety Executive has vindicated the strikers' concerns over safety. A victory for the Burnsall strikers would be a boost for all trade unionists and workers, but especially for black and immigrant workers. The key to this success is solidarity, including financial support for those that are sacked. Burnsall strikers will be visiting London from 7 September onwards. They are looking to speak at as many meetings as possible - branch meetings, community groups, Labour Party wards. If you would like to invite a speaker to your meeting, then phone 0721 249 8086 or 081 806 3109 (evenings - ask for Mark).

Library workers fight market testing

By a CPSA member

Civil Service unions in the British Library are commencing their ballot on a one-day strike, as the first step of a campaign against market testing of library jobs.

The Department of National Heritage sent in the consultants Ernst and Young, over the heads of library management, to identify areas of work that could be market tested. The result: 60% of all posts are at risk.

The CPSA branch has organised a meeting, open to all London-based Civil Service union members, on Wednesday 16 September - two days before the planned strike action. As a so-called "fringe body", outside the mainstream of the Civil Service, the British Library's dispute could become isolated and the open meeting is an attempt to break out of this. The government's plans for contracting out of public-sector work could decimate the civil service. Every victory for the government will encourage them to push ahead further and faster. A united fightback is needed urgently, to prevent individual workplaces being picked off one by one. Unfortunately - but predictably - the national leaderships of the Civil Service unions show no sign of mounting this fight-

back.

Send messages of support/requests for more information on the British Library dispute to: the trade union side office, The British Library, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH.

London Council round-up

Greenwich ballots for wider action

Greenwich NALGO have balloted 237 housing and benefit workers for indefinite strike action.

The closing date for the ballot is 8 September, and union activists expect a big yes vote. The strike is planned in support of nine workers who have been on strike for nine months after being made compulsorily redundant.

The union's defiance has pushed management into asking to open negotiations.

Islington steps up the action

Islington NALGO is confident of a yes vote in a ballot of 500 workers in neighbourhood offices to join its strike against the once-left Labour council's attacks on jobs, conditions, and services.

200 Housing Benefit, housing advice, lettings and poll tax workers have been on strike since early July, and the whole NALGO branch has joined a rolling programme of eight days' selective strikes.

The fight is also being taken into the local Labour Parties. Send messages to: Islington NALGO, 2 Orlestone Road, London N7 8LH.

Pergamon strike ends after three years

By Steven Holt (NUJ Book Branch)

After 39 months of struggle, first against Robert Maxwell and then against the new owner of Pergamon Press, Dutch multinational Elsevier, the Pergamon NUJ chapel has voted to end the dispute.

The majority vote to accept Elsevier's offer of £85,000, to be divided equally among the 21 strikers, is an unsatisfactory end to the strike because it seemed likely that Elsevier could be forced to cough up more money and maybe even some jobs.

The strikers were sacked for a one-day strike at Pergamon's Oxford offices in protest against Maxwell's refusal to follow the negotiated agreement on disciplinary procedure (Maxwell preferred instant sackings). Their campaign for reinstatement was in many ways a model of how a small group of workers can put pressure even on powerful multinationals.

The Oxford Labour Party motions condemning Maxwell and calling for his expulsion from the Labour Party, and therepeated

demonstrations at Labour Party conferences, were damaging to Maxwell's reputation as publisher of the Labour-supporting *Mirror*. Trade unionists internationally boycotted Maxwell products, and more recently Dutch and Belgian workers have put pressure on the new owners, Elsevier.

Solidarity from printers in Britain that could have won the strike in days was blocked by Thatcher's anti-union laws.

NUJ General Secretary elections

Vote for Miles Barter!

By Steven Holt (NUJ Book Branch)

Many months ago the National Union of Journalists' then newly elected General Secretary, right-winger Steve Turner, was sacked by the union's National Executive for disobeying NUJ policy in favour of merging with the Irish Print Union (IPU).

Since then the IPU has changed its mind about merger, and the NUJ has been run by Acting General Secretary Jake Ecclestone. Ecclestone has proved no more willing to obey demo-

By cutting the strike pay to a mere £40 a week, and on occasion withholding payment even of that, NUJ Acting General Secretary Jake Ecclestone placed the strikers under great pressure to accept any offer from Elsevier. The strikers need not be ashamed that they have been forced into a poor settlement; instead, they should be congratulated for maintaining the strike for so long and at such a level of activity.

cratically determined policy than was Turner, and has been even worse at supporting strikes: for instance, he has withheld strike pay from the Pergamon strikers. Cost-cutting measures have lessened rank and file activity without denting the union's debt.

The NUJ can only survive by serving the interests of its members, in dispute where necessary, and thus recruiting new members and retaining its present members. Miles Barter is the NUJ Left candidate in the election for a new General Secretary, and he has a good record of standing up for the interests of media workers.

Labour Party moves to enforce ban on 'SO'

Ten Labour Party members, active now or recently in Sheffield Central Constituency Labour Party, have been called before the Labour Party's National Constitutional Committee on 14-17 September.

They are charged with association with 'Socialist Organiser', and the investigating team recommends expulsion. Five other cases have been dropped

for various reasons.

'Socialist Organiser' was banned by Labour's National Executive in July 1990, as a sop to maverick right-wing Labour MP Frank Field. The platform swung the big union block votes to ratify this ban at the October 1990 Labour Party conference, despite two-thirds of the CLP delegates voting against.

The "Sheffield 10" are the

first people to be brought up for expulsion under that ban.

Important precedents will be set in their case. Although anyone can see that 'Socialist Organiser' is a much more open newspaper than 'Militant', with a wide range of contributors in the paper and at events we sponsor, some right-wingers will want to establish a precedent that anyone who even writes in the paper, or attends

the odd meeting is open to expulsion.

The "evidence" consists mostly of two poison-pen documents written by opponents of SO in the ultra-factional world of student unionism, lists of signatures applying to Sheffield University Student Union to set up SO Societies and book SO stalls, articles from SO and leaflets advertising SO and AWL meetings.

Workers fight agency status

By Mike Loates, LCD PRFD Branch, London

As the dust settles after the Tories' election victory, the implications of their plans for the future of the Civil Service are becoming apparent.

All departments and agencies have begun to expose jobs to "market testing", the first step towards "contracting out": in other words, privatisation.

However, alongside this comes news of further departments being subject to the possibility of becoming agencies. The Lord Chancellor's Department, which runs the County and Crown Courts in England and Wales, has informed Civil Service Unions they are to carry out a preliminary study to consider whether the Court can become a formal, announced agency candidate. The Lord Chancellor will make the decision by the end of the year.

Agencies are the first step towards privatisation and the break up of the Civil Service, and therefore severely curtail the Civil Service Unions' national pay and conditions bargaining power. However, giving agency status to the LCD is startling because of the sensitive nature of the work ie administration of law. Not even the USA has considered privatising its justice system.

Although CPSA (the largest Civil Service union) policy is to oppose agencies, in practice they have, in the past, given in to their creation without a fight. In LCD, a section circular distributed to all members makes it clear they will not oppose agency status. It is therefore up to ordinary LCD members in their

unions to fight against the department being turned into an agency.

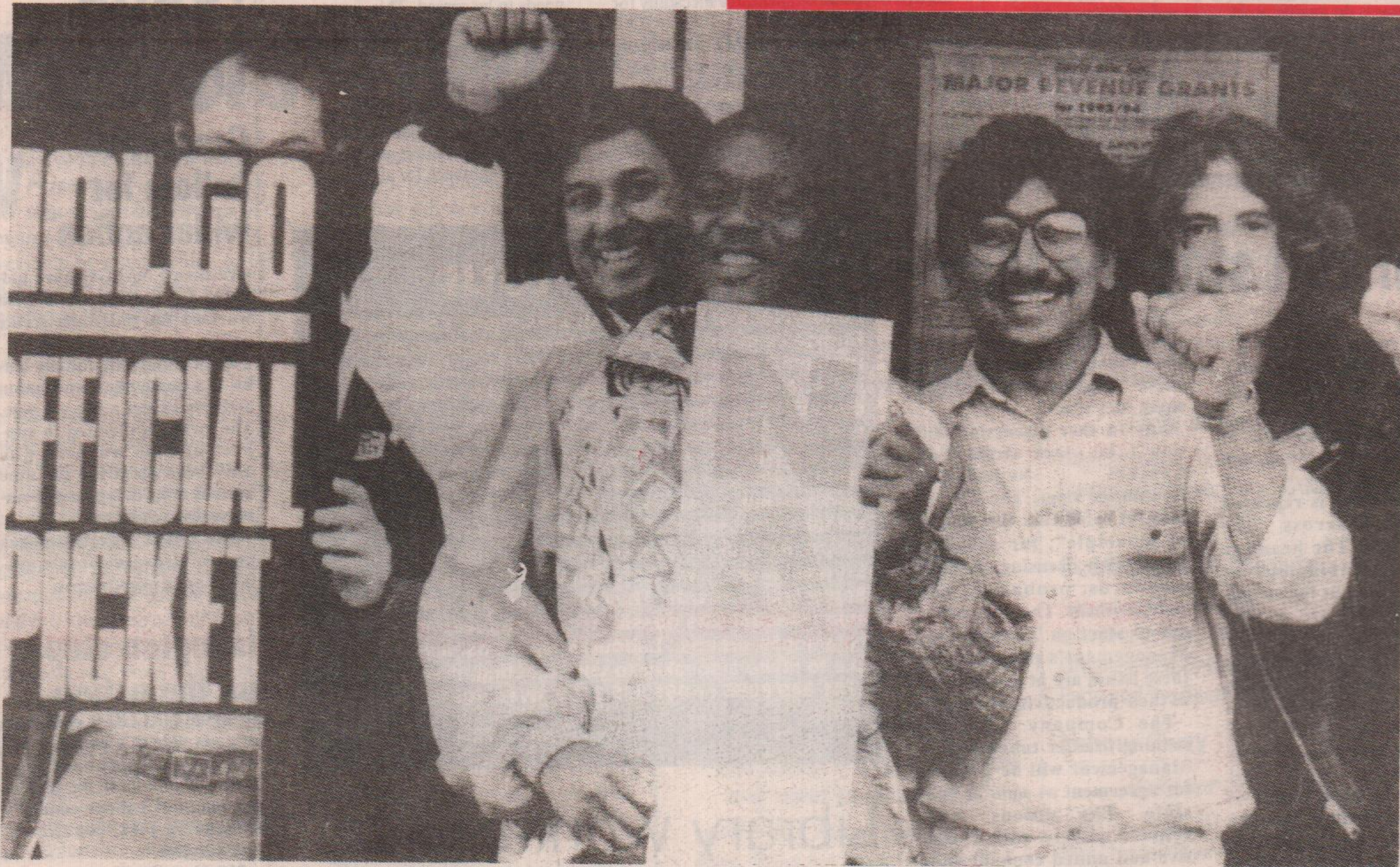
The LCD Campaign Against Agency Status has been set up by rank and file members to lead the fight. The campaign is broad based and multi-union. The first meeting will be held in London on Saturday 26th September. We hope to prepare and distribute leaflets and circulars to all LCD branches, and request branches to affiliate to the campaign and send a delegate to the meeting.

We believe we have two advantages in this campaign: firstly, we are campaigning before the agency decision, in theory, has been made, and therefore we can hopefully influence the outcome. Secondly, we intend to contact various court users, such as the law profession and the judiciary - two powerful pressure groups - to explain the dangers of agency status and canvass their support.

The Public Trust Office, part of the LCD was scheduled to become an agency in 1993. This has already been delayed due to rank and file union pressure and the threat of strike action. We can extend this to all of LCD. With full support, we can both protect our members' futures and the service we give to the public.

If you have any contacts in the Lord Chancellor's Department, please ask them to get involved in the Campaign. If you have any advice or assistance (examples of the detrimental effect of agency status upon members would be helpful), require further information or want a copy of the branch motion on affiliation, please contact Mike Loates G37, PRFD, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2. Phone 071-936 6982.

Autumn fund drive for socialism



The Newham strike is crucial for all local authority workers

New twist to anti-union laws

Judge bans Newham strike

As *Socialist Organiser* goes to press, Newham NALGO strikers are set for confrontation with the courts.

On Tuesday 1 September a

judge gave Newham council bosses an injunction making the four week old strike illegal. The union is going to court on Wednesday 2 September, the day we go to

press, to ask for the injunction to be lifted while an appeal is heard.

The judge declared the strike illegal on the grounds of a letter which the NALGO branch chair wrote to members before the strike ballot took place, urging a yes vote for strike action.

The law demands a ballot - and then when the bosses do not get the decision they want, the judges step in and change the rules!

If the appeal fails, then, one striker told *SO*, strikers will demand that the NALGO National Executive continues to back the strike, bringing the union into confrontation with the law.

The Newham strike is a cru-

cial dispute for local government workers. The Labour council in Newham is using the Tory anti-union laws against a union fighting to defend three poll tax workers sacked six months ago. The council is also refusing to guarantee that there will be no compulsory redundancies.

The all-out strike has already forced council bosses to offer to re-employ the three sacked workers. But the use of the courts has outraged the strikers. Messages of support to, and information from, Newham NALGO, 081-519 0799.

• More on the anti-union laws and the TUC: inside, page 5.

Socialist Organiser and the Alliance for Workers' Liberty are raising extra funds to continue our expansion programme. We are setting a £5,000 target for donations and fundraising by the end of January '93.

Over the past year members of the AWL and supporters of *Socialist Organiser* have raised thousands of pounds in additional income. We have used the money to buy new equipment to produce the paper and to pay for extra staff. The results can be seen in the improved quality of our newspaper and the better organisation of our work for socialism.

Yet again we are appealing to members and readers for help. The period up to Xmas is crucial. This will be the final leg of our recent period of fundraising. By the end of next January the bulk of our debts for new equipment will be paid. We will be well set up for an upturn in the class struggle with new machinery and organisers in place.

How you can help

There are two practical ways of helping your socialist paper: Join our 200 Club (see box) and pledge a small, regular amount.

Make a small donation. Send cheques/postal orders, payable to "Workers' Liberty" to AWL, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

We welcome small and large donations. Any help from readers is a positive step in the fight for socialism.

Keep the Link!

An organised campaign has been launched to "Keep the Link" between the Labour Party and the trade unions.

Its appeal calls for keeping a collective trade union voice at Labour Party conference, in local Labour Parties, and in elections for Labour Party leaders and Labour parliamentary candidates. It has already been signed by Arthur Scargill, by Peter Heathfield, and by many others.

A working groups, comprising representatives of *Socialist Organiser*, the Campaign for

Labour Party Democracy, Trade Union News, Labour Party Socialists, *Socialist Outlook*, and *Socialist Action*, is organising a meeting in Blackpool for Sunday 27 September (the day between the compositing meetings for Labour Party conference and the conference proper), to set up a proper campaign committee.

Get your trade union body or Labour Party to sponsor the appeal and send a representative to the meeting on 27 September! Contact "Keep the Link" c/o 120 Northcote Road, London E17 7EB.

200 Club

Our 200 Club is a monthly draw for £100. Entries are made by paying in £1, £2, £5 or £10 into the 200 Club. For each extra £1 you stand an extra chance of winning the £100 prize.

Entry forms are available from *Socialist Organiser* sellers or from 200 Club, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

The winner of the August 200 Club draw was S Holt, London.