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Socialist OUTLOOK

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anti-imperialist movement

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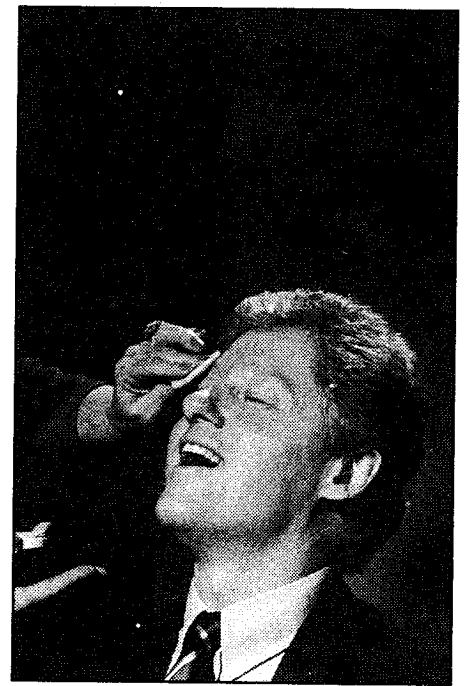
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**STOP
US
TERROR
MACHINE!**

Iraq, Somalia ... Clinton's US offensive

Why we need a new anti-imperialist movement



Clinton: warlord

By Paul Clarke

MORE ROCKETS on Moghadishu, missiles on Baghdad and threats by Clinton to 'annihilate' North Korea. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the United Nations has become a rubber-stamping agency to sanction the latest US military adventures.

The cruise missiles on Baghdad were widely interpreted as an attempt to boost Bill Clinton's sagging popularity at home. But they were more than that. The military offensive of the US worldwide has a precise political objective. It is far from being an outburst of militaristic irrationality.

Tariffs

What is behind the rockets and missiles can be seen most clearly in the recent G7 summit in Tokyo. There Clinton went on a big offensive against Japan, demanding not only that country's tariff walls come down to admit more US goods, but he went further and in effect demanded a restructuring of the whole Japanese economy.

In a TV speech he told the Japanese that their leaders were cheating them by forcing them to buy more expensive Japanese

goods, and that they should end their high-saving and low-wages economy.

The G7 summit was far from being the victory for free trade and growth which the media portrayed. Indeed it was the continuation of the vicious three-way conflict between the US, Japan and the European Community, which is the reason why the endless 'Uruguay Round' of trade talks is never completed.

The US wants Europe to auto-destruct the Common Agricultural Policy to allow in American farms goods; it wants Japan to allow in its manufactures, and indeed to buy American rice and beef. US demands are endless and outrageous - the

Japanese have got to eat more beef, and less fish and vegetables to satisfy US export needs.

Now what exactly has this economic offensive got to do with missiles and rockets? To see that we have to probe a little deeper into the economic offensive itself.

The background is the 25-year decline of the American economy and the rise of Japan and Europe's strongest economy, Germany. American predominance in the world lasted just a few decades, at least as far as its economy is concerned.

Borrowing

In the 1980s Ronald Reagan started a new scheme for dealing with this problem. Huge borrowing from Japan and Europe financed a big expansion of the US economy, but it led to enormous problems.

Budget deficits mounted and the US economy sucked in imports leading to a huge trade deficit. And high interest rates hit domestic industry. Borrowing is no long-term solution.

As a result Reagan and then Bush went for the military option, and this was spurred by the collapse of the Soviet Union. War, in Clausewitz's famous phrase, is the continuation of politics by other means. The US may be failing economically, but by using its military might it can set the political agenda for much of the world.

The frenzied military operations and the reduction of the UN to a public relations agency

of the Pentagon and State Department make the US the key player in many parts of the world. The missiles on Baghdad are part of the fight to drive the Europeans out of Middle East markets.

Part of the political-military offensive is aimed at extracting tribute from other states to finance US global operations.

For example, it is now certain that the US made a substantial profit from the Gulf war, with billions being extorted from Germany, Japan and the Gulf states. The US military machine is being made leaner, fitter and cheaper - and others are being forced to pay for part of it.

Every US military intervention brings droves of diplomats, 'experts' and businessmen in its wake. The 'drugs war' in Latin America, utilising thousands of US troops to do useful things like wipe out the livelihood of thousands of Peruvian and Bolivian peasants, was all about cementing the whole region into US political and economic priorities.

Korea

The intervention in Somalia gives the US clout in the whole of the Horn of Africa. The huge garrison in Korea means the US cannot be ignored in the far east.

US military and political dominance gives absolute control of the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The world's key economic institutions to respond to the economic demands of the

United States.

The timing of the new offensive is not an accident. The 1980s saw a big debate in the US political elite about how to respond to economic decline. The decision was to act now, to engage in a furious offensive, before it was too late.

The US offensive has been helped by the difficulties of its main rivals. Germany has become bogged down in the economic and political costs of rapid re-unification. This in turn has slowed down the European Community economies. Japan is riven with crises over political corruption, and has its own economic recession to cope with.

One thing is certain - the US military-political offensive will be pursued with utter ruthlessness. The collateral damage, the corpses which pile up, are of no account. The balance sheet is staggering: 200,000 killed in the Gulf war was just for starters.

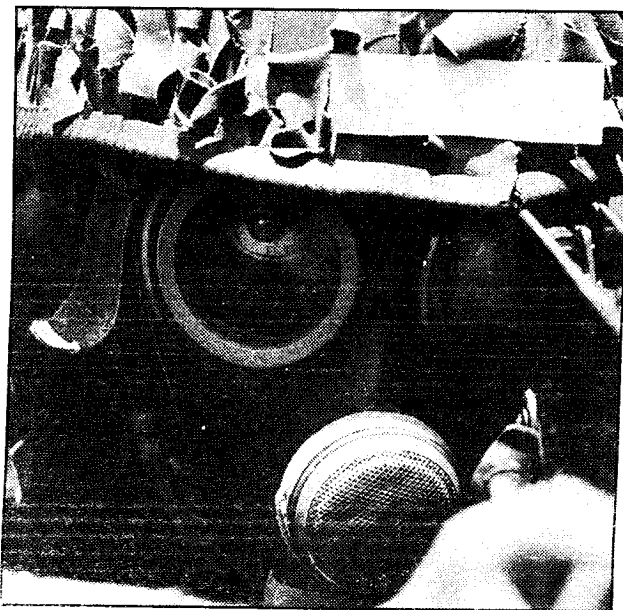
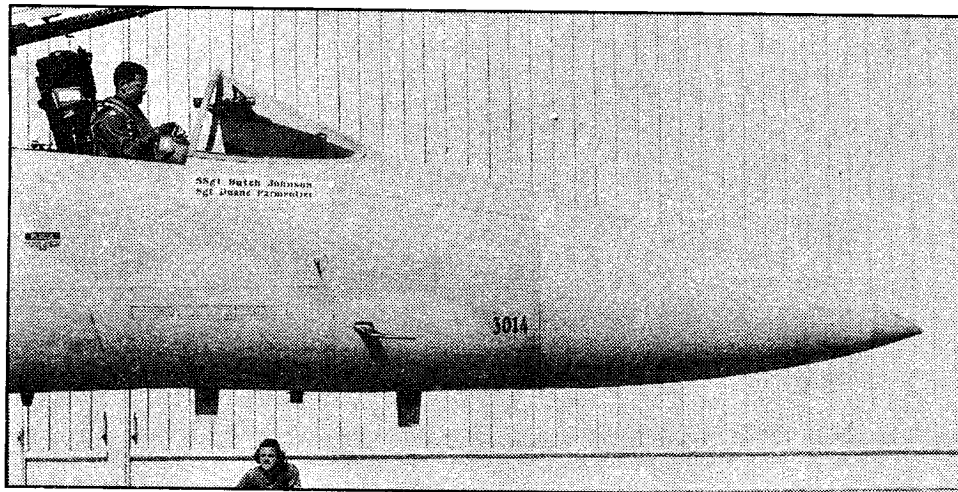
Muted

Internationally the response has been very muted. When Reagan bombed Libya in 1986 there were mass demonstrations. Today there is hardly a murmur. This crisis of anti-imperialism in the West has to be addressed by the left.

During the Vietnam war, and even over the conflicts in Central America, the politics was easier to explain. There the United States was fighting liberation movements, which whatever the criticisms of the left, could be supported. In Iraq and Somalia this is not the case. UN sanction to these operations deepens the confusion.

But attacks on Iraq and Somalia make things a thousand times more difficult for real liberation movements in the third world, deepens the threat to Cuba and is a blow at the possibility of social advance worldwide.

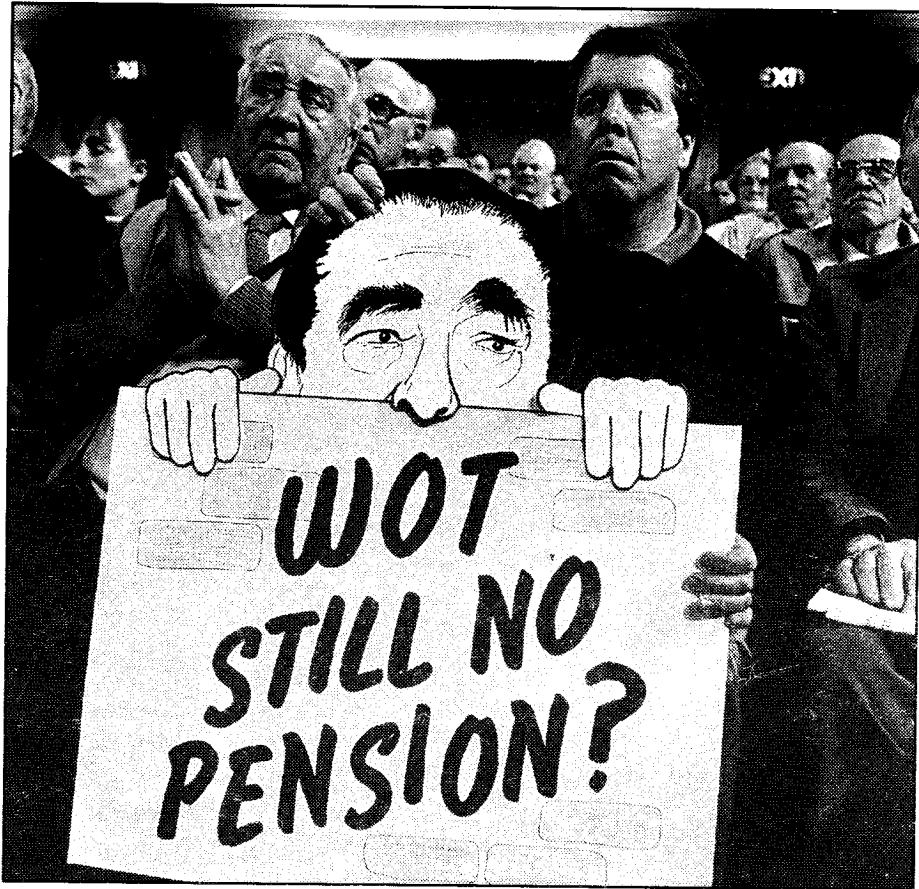
That's why even limited protests against the current upsurge of military barbarism are a crucial starting point for rebuilding a movement which can, as happened during the Vietnam war, place real constraints on imperialism's freedom of action.



COMMENT

Welfare state under renewed attack

Beware of Tory right!



Maxwell pensioners: just the first to lose their pensions

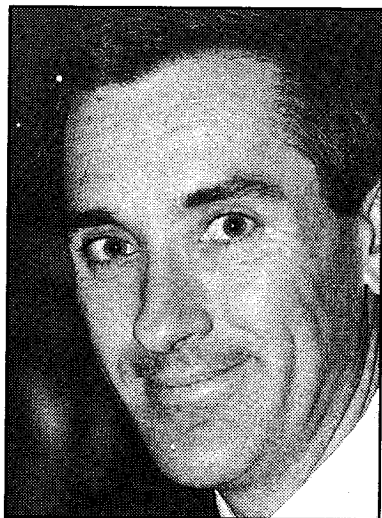
Editorial

JOHN MAJOR is the most unpopular prime minister since records began and right on course to lose the Christchurch by-election. Without doubt this government is seen as extremely weak; but given the total lack of forceful opposition from Labour, it is able to sail right ahead with the most damaging attacks on the working class.

Pensions and unemployment benefit, together with the NHS, were the absolute foundation stones of the welfare state. Now the Tories have them in their gunights.

Taxes

Combined with the huge tax increases which Chancellor Clarke will introduce in the autumn budget, this amounts to a further devastating degradation of the living standards of the poorest sections of the working class.



John Redwood

But behind these attacks, and behind the unpopularity of the government, is something a bit more calculated and sinister than the normal routine of Tory attacks. For this Tory cabinet is not united behind John Major, but bitterly divided.

The Michael Mates affair showed this strongly. A whole section of the Tory Party wanted to get Mates be-

cause of his role as Michael Heseltine's campaign manager.

Hard faction

Inside the cabinet there is a hard right faction, of whom Peter Lilley and John Redwood are key members – with discreet support from Home Secretary Michael Howard.

The hard right faction sees itself in political continuity with Thatcherism, hence its 'Euro-sceptical' complexion. Its critique of the likes of Major and Heseltine is that they are not nearly right wing enough.

Redwood's speech declaring that single mothers were a major social 'problem' is indicative of the utterly reactionary line of thought purveyed by the hard right. Michael Heseltine's heart attack has probably finished him politically, tilting the balance of power in the cabinet.

Over the past three months it has appeared that a whole section of the Tory press is frantically hostile to the government. The press campaigns

against Norman Lamont and Michael Mates were vitriolic. This has nothing to do with a change of heart, and everything to do with a new right wing agenda.

For the labour movement, these are questions of degree. The whole of the Tory government is reactionary; they all have a totally anti-working class programme. That is ABC.

By-election

But should the Tories become more and more unpopular, should they lose the Christchurch by-election, should they have more ministerial 'accidents', then the clamour to get rid of Major will become more vociferous.

The idea that Thatcherism has run its course, that there are no significant further attacks to be made, is fatuous.

The price of non-resistance will be new and deeper attacks on the working class – and the eventual destruction of the welfare state.

EDITORIAL

New attacks on legal rights

THE REPORT of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, set up in the wake of the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and other high profile police frame-ups, proposes new attacks on defendants' rights.

Among the most reactionary proposals are plea bargaining and restrictions on the right to jury trial.

Plea bargaining in the US has reduced the criminal justice system to a farce. Defendants who refuse to plead guilty and opt for a lesser sentence have a very high chance of conviction, and get harsh sentences.

The system pressurises people, especially those who

can't afford expensive lawyers, to plead guilty.

Jury trials are much more likely to return 'not guilty' verdicts. Giving lower courts the right to decide who can have a jury trial is a massive attack on working class defendants.

Saving money

Both these proposals are aimed at saving money, but also ensuring higher conviction rates. The right to have defence evidence seriously considered is being undermined.

The new attacks go hand-in-hand with the restrictions on legal aid. We are heading to an American system where lower courts are an assembly line conviction machine.

Given the background to the report, spectacular police-frame-ups, it's amazing that the commission proposes continuing with 'confession-only' evidence and says nothing about tampering with forensic evidence.

Videoing police interrogations is supposed to ensure an end to 'confessions' through intimidation. In fact threats and intimidation can occur off camera.

Confessions

Police notebooks with alleged confessions and signatures of the accused at the scene of the crime are not a thing of the past.

A further attack is the obligation for the accused to re-

veal their defence in advance. Disclosure of defence is a step away from the 'innocent until proven guilty' principle, a further attempt to stack the cards in favour of the prosecution.

These new attacks represent a deepening of the already degraded system of 'justice'. The introduction of majority verdicts, together with rigorous vetting of jurors by police and prosecution, has already undermined the position of defendants.

Judges, invariably harsh reactionaries, have been given further power to sway juries



Howard: new attacks on rights

by the majority verdict system.

Restrictions on legal aid further weight to legal system to being one which only the rich can successfully utilise. We need to fight now to beat back this attack on our rights.

Timex strike seeks world-wide backing

By Helen Shaw

TIMEX strikers have been picketing the Timex plant in Besancon in France as part of their campaign.

The strike committee had been told that a new group of workers are being engaged at the French plant at wages and conditions lower than those rejected by the union in Dundee. The French union the CGT is supporting the strikers' action.

In Denmark, trade unionists have formed two support groups, and have invited the strikers to return after the holiday period is over.

Four Timex strikers have also gone to the United States for talks with trade union leaders and to visit workers employed at Timex plants in Little Rock and

Connecticut.

As part of the campaign against Timex, Tony Benn launched the Timex Boycott Campaign on 13 July at the House of Commons.

He was joined by John MacCallion MP, Ernie Ross MP, V C Turner (Pentonville Five) and Ernie Roberts (former General Secretary of the AEU). Messages of support were read out from Timex Support Groups in Oslo, Copenhagen and the United States.

Consumers and workers

The campaign, organised by the Timex Support Groups, has a two pronged strategy, involving both a consumer boycott of all Timex and Timex related goods and companies and a workers' boycott.



The Timex Boycott Campaign is calling on the organised labour movement not to handle Timex goods or materials that directly aid the company's scab operation in Dundee.

Already the TGWU have pledged support for the cam-

campaign at their conference, and the campaign is holding talks with stewards in the shop-workers' union USDAW and UCW postal workers to organise a national boycott.

Further information from: *Timex Boycott Cam-*

paign, c/o London Timex Support Group, LUTURC, 12 - 14 Thornton Street, London, SW9 0BL, Tel: 071 733 5670 or PO Box 90, Dundee, DD2 2YA, Tel: 0382 642382.

Doing the Lambeth twist

By Councillor Greg Tucker

IN A further twist to the witchhunt in Lambeth Ted Knight and other ex-Councillors have been barred from the panel for candidates in the 1994 council elections.

Surcharged in 1986, for fighting against government cuts in local services, the ex-

councillors were barred from holding office for five years. After a massive campaign of support from the labour movement they paid off the surcharge and are now able to stand for election.

However the London Labour Party has ruled each of them out on the grounds that they 'do not have an acceptable public profile for the party' and that they 'do not show commitment to the changed image of Labour in Lambeth'.

Lambeth plods in to count the votes

SOCIALIST Outlook supporter and expelled Lambeth councillor Greg Tucker, along with two other expelled councillors, has been reported to the police by Lambeth Council - for voting at the Council's budget setting meeting.

Under the provision of the 1992 Local Government and Finance Act councillors are forbidden to vote on Council tax matters whilst in poll tax arrears.

Tucker and two other expelled councillors, who have made no secret of their poll

tax non-payment, have always voted against cuts budgets and played an important part in the campaign to defeat the poll tax.

£1,000 fine

Now this stand has resulted in them being reported to the police and they face the possibility of prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000.

This legislation is an attack on the democratic rights of the electorate. People who voted for Tucker, Webb and Hollifield have the right to be represented by them regardless of their poll tax arrears.

Councillors fight Straw 'corruption' slur

By our correspondent

SOME OF the expelled and suspended Lambeth councillors are taking legal action to defend themselves against serious allegations made by Labour's environment spokesperson Jack Straw.

In January, Straw issued a press release following the allegations about Lambeth's Direct Labour Organisations (DLOs). He stated, 'We defer to no one in our determination to ensure that public services operate to the highest standards, that fraud, corruption and mismanagement are rooted out wherever they occur - and those responsible are brought to book. Labour has acted decisively where the evidence has been available.'

'This we did in Liverpool, and in Lambeth in 1991 when 13 members of the council were expelled from the Labour group, and a new leadership was installed, which then ordered the current investigation and report from the Chief Executive.'

When the councillors threatened legal action, Straw offered an apology. He regretted any distress that he may have 'inadvertently' caused saying it was not his 'intention' to suggest that any of the 13 were guilty of illegality.

However, two days after the press release an interview



Jack Straw: 'Trots are corrupt'

appeared in *Tribune* in which Straw said 'I'm damned if we are going to be tarred with the brush of Lambeth, especially as we cleared out 13 semi-Trotskyist councillors. It is since the new leadership has been installed that action has been taken.'

'We'll be using Lambeth to remind people of the error of ultra-left politics. It is no surprise to me that, in both Liverpool and Lambeth, corruption and Trotskyism went hand in hand.' Straw's defence is that he was justified in what he said!

That this statement appeared two days after the apology meant that some of the councillors decided to continue the legal action.

The suspensions and expulsions had nothing to do with corruption. The NEC witch-hunted councillors who voted against poll tax, cuts and the gulf war. They are not only 'not guilty of illegality' but have a record of opposing mismanagement and alleged corruption in the council.

At the National Constitu-

tional Committee hearing considering the case against Cllr Steve French, Larry Whitty declared that he recognised his 'important achievements' in rooting out alleged corruption when French was Chair of the DLO. The local Tories said that they 'could not fault his efforts'. Even the District Auditor (no fan of left-wing councillors), suggests the witch-hunt was part of Lambeth's problems.

His recent report states '...in March 1991 a number of members were suspended from the ruling party. This left the political balance of the council in an unstable situation and has increased the difficulty of managing the authority.'

The councillors are considering libel proceedings to force Straw to make a full retraction which restores their reputations.

Further information from: 'Lambeth Against the Witch-hunt', 56 Ashby House, London, SW9 7SL.

Islington nurseries in class struggle

By Debbie Whitfield Chair Islington UNISON 'A' branch

NATIONAL leaders of newly-merged public sector union UNISON have given official backing to the Islington Under Fives Education Service strike.

It's an enormous boost to strikers, parents and other involved in the public campaign to defend the service.

June's NALGO conference overturned the repudiation of the strike by General Secre-

tary Alan Jinkinson. Branch officers asked for a ballot straight after the conference, but were initially blocked by national officials unsure of conference's decision.

When the result came out, two days before UNISON's launch, the NALGO leaders hesitated giving endorsement.

Hearing nothing really tested the six workers and campaign supporters at Harvist UFEC. Reports, questions and meetings still didn't get an answer. As tension and frustration mounted, a lobby of the union's office was held.

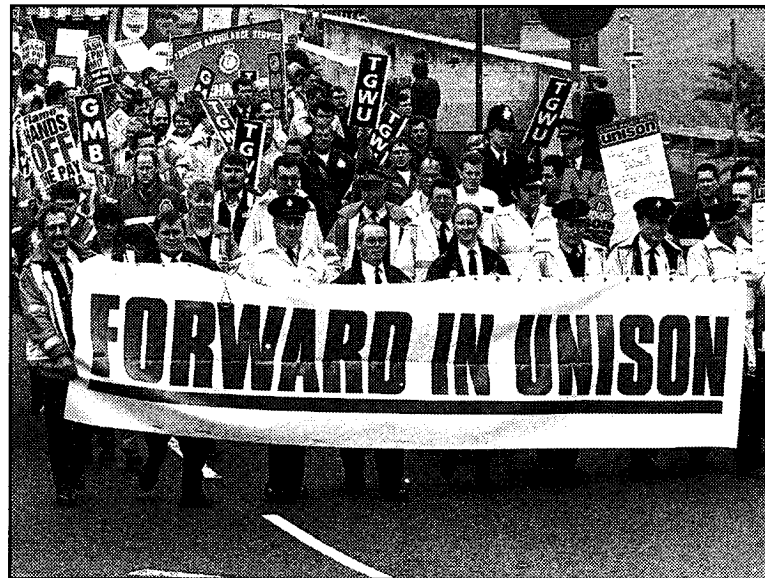
Finally, on July 15 - two

and a half weeks after the ballot and nearly a month after Conference - official endorsement and strike pay was started.

UNISON activists have to quickly taken Islington's experience on board. The policies held dear by NALGO's activists are being swept way by NUPE's tradition.

The ballot was conducted under NALGO's Industrial Action Procedures, which ignored a legal requirement that ballots take place at work.

UNISON's interim arrangement sticks within the Tory laws. At the moment there are no national lay struc-



tures, so if the strike had not been endorsed the branch couldn't have had the decision reversed.

By the time this is printed, a crucial Council meeting will have happened. It's possible

that the decision will be overturned.

At last, the national support of UNISON can be used as a bargaining tool. It will lend strength to this heroic struggle.

NUJ Left at crossroads

By Steve Smith NUJ NEC, personal capacity

THE NUJ Left has pledged to step up its campaign to turn the union towards a more effective fight against the employers derecognition onslaught.

Backing the stand of journalists taking action against the loss of job bargaining rights, the NUJ Left AGM committed itself to vigorously opposing all Tory anti-union laws and building fighting unity with the GPMU and other media unions.

A generalised fightback against media employers was given renewed confidence after the recent one-day strike by London-based Morgan-Grampian magazine journalists, and by the decisions of provincial newspaper journalists at United

Newspapers, led by the *Yorkshire Post* chapel, to ballot for group wide industrial action.

The action at Morgan-Grampian led to victimisation of chapel FoC Chris Wheal, who has been in the forefront of the recent anti-derecognition campaign.

The NUJ Left will be able to build on policy victories made at this year's NUJ Annual Delegate Meeting.

Coordinated

A motion supporting cross-chapel co-ordinated industrial action against derecognition was supported, as was a left initiative to protect the NUJ strike fund from being raided by the right wing to solve the union's cash crisis.

But while the NUJ Left has been making the running on many crucial policy questions, the new realist right-wing have shrewdly counter attacked on

organisational issues designed to weaken the left's influence.

The right scored an important victory by cutting the size of the union's lay-dominated national executive committee, an undemocratic ruse to weaken the influence of lay NEC members against the full-time officials. Crucially it will also get rid of much of the left's one-third of the NEC, which has been a highly effective thorn in the side of new realists.

The right are pressing on with a wholesale attack on the union's branch structure. This is designed to atomise the rank-and-file into workplace chapels with no common structures, leaving them unable to launch any challenge to the right's control at the top.

An attack on the democracy of the ADM will most likely follow: the left must build its strength in readiness for the fight to come.



Police intervene against pickets

Sacked Middlebrook women build rally

By Keith Sinclair

150 TRADES unionists attended the picket at Middlebrook Mushrooms on Saturday 10 July.

The women in dispute were sacked for refusing to work overtime. Despite an attempt to use a sit-down tactic to prevent the scab coach entering, the bus got through. One picket was arrested.

The next major focus for the dispute is the morning of 24 July. The women's union, the TGWU, has called a rally in Selby

for 9.45am on that Saturday.

The T&G has written to all their branches and stewards in Yorkshire urging support for the rally.

There is however no mention of the crucial need to build the early morning picket on the same day. The rally needs to be built into the biggest display yet of solidarity with the women.

A key focus of the day will be the need to convince T&G activists of the need for regular visits to the picket line.

Donations and messages of support to 33 Park Drive, Campsall, Doncaster DN6 9NS.

Vote down UCW sell-out

By a Central London postal worker

THE POSTAL union UCW is selling out the London dispute over staff transfers between sorting offices.

An all-London Royal Mail strike could have spread wider, as bosses tried to transfer work to out of the capital. A high-turnout postal ballot voted to reject management's terms and strike.

Royal Mail is pressing for massively increased productivity in London, the only 'loss-making' area. Royal Mail made a national profit of £252m last year. Faster automated sorting involves huge job losses. the closure of several mechanised letter offices, and large-scale relocation of workers.

Already many long serving staff, seeing job losses and tight-

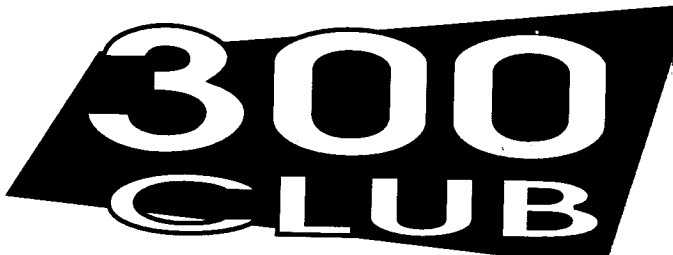
ening discipline and sickness rules, have taken early voluntary retirement on poor terms. The next stage is to move workers from 'over-staffed' offices into unfilled vacancies in local sorting offices and elsewhere.

UCW's London region rejected the terms and pushed the national executive to ballot for strike action.

Four days of negotiations led to a deal with Royal Mail. UCW officers managed to get most London reps to endorse it, though the same money is just presented in different ways, and it includes union co-operation with closures and increased productivity.

Though the deal will probably be accepted in the upcoming ballot, this isn't the end of it. Closures will lead to continual conflicts. Already, over the last six weeks there have been around ten unofficial strikes around the country.

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UNIONS

Ireland: the logjam starts to shift

By Brian Stevens

NOT SINCE the early 1970s has conflict between the Loyalist community in the Six Counties and the British security forces been so intense.

The shooting by troops of Loyalist para-military thugs has been the occasion for the kind of rioting against the military which is more commonly associated with the Bogside and Falls, rather than the Shankill Road.

These conflicts are the symptom of a change in Irish politics which has been gathering pace. Other symptoms include the much publicised handshake between Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams and the Irish president Mary Robinson, the electoral successes of Sinn Fein, and the more up-front attitude of the Irish government, protesting the exclusion order against John Matthews and proposing joint British-Irish sovereignty over the Six Counties.

Why have these changes come about, and what do they mean? Surface appearances in Irish politics can change quickly, disguising underlying realities.

But it is becoming increasingly clear to everyone, including the Protestants, that the Loyalist community in the Six Counties faces huge long-term difficulties in sustaining its dominant position. The first underlying cause is demographic.

Put simply, the Catholic community is increasing in size much quicker than the Protestant community. Resistance to Irish unification has always been premised on the 'will of the majority'.

Within a couple of generations, a short time historically, the claim of the Protestants to be the majority will have eroded.

Mass force

Second, whatever the twists and turns of day-to-day politics, the Republican movement is a mass force which no political settlement can ignore.

The recent local elections saw Sinn Fein getting more votes in Belfast than the 'moderate,' SDLP, and indeed being beaten only by Paisley's Democratic Unionists (DUP).

This indeed is an emergency for John Hume's SDLP, and the recent talks between Hume and Gerry Adams, and the more forceful statements of the Irish government are linked to the realisation that the long-term



Loyalists: losing their majority

military and political stalemate has not weakened the strength of the Republicans.

For all the Major government's talk about 'terrorism', we can be sure that in the more thinking recesses of the Northern Ireland Office there is a realisation that when push comes to shove, one way or another the Republican movement has to be involved in any political settlement.

All these factors are deepening the siege mentality among the Loyalists. The response has been the successive waves of sectarian assassination in the name of the 'Ulster Freedom Fighters', but of course in reality the work of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA).

These have inevitably led to clashes with troops and undercover police who don't stop to ask which side the gunmen are on before opening fire.

The long-term changes in the demographic pattern of the Six Counties pose big problems for British capitalism. Sovereignty over the Six Counties has been an integral part of the functioning of the United Kingdom.

A united Ireland would cre-

ate a new, potentially unstable and unknown quantity on its doorstep.

But standing idly by won't do either. Some form of political settlement must be sought in the long term, and this means a settlement which can integrate the Catholic community.

Maybe the British government won't talk to Sinn Fein directly or openly, but there are plenty of opportunities for delivering messages, via the SDLP and Catholic dignitaries.

Intelligent British strategists will aim to push the Republicans to the right, to integrate them into a new capitalist stabilisation plan.

This means that we can expect sharp lurches in the political situation in the Six Counties in the next period, and new explosions as the Loyalists see the Protestant ascendancy under threat.

Realists know that talk of a stalemate in Ireland is becoming unconvincing: the situation is changing quickly. Realists also know that a colonial power which doesn't win a colonial war has in fact lost it.

World ORDER

Bigots fail in 'Cities of Refuge'

AMERICAN anti-abortionists are getting in practice before their expedition to Britain this autumn. A ten-day, seven-city, campaign of harassment against abortion clinics there has just come to a close, writes Carole Seligman from San Francisco.

The pro-choice movement prepared for the rightists campaign by activating large numbers in the defence of clinics.

In Minneapolis a pro-choice rally drew 4,000 supporters. Over 1,300 volunteers have been trained for clinic defence in that city.

The pro-choice movement has gained new supporters who have never done this sort of work before but were enraged by the murder of Dr. David Gunn, who performed abortions in Florida and elsewhere in the South, by an anti-abortion activist.

Who wins in Japan?

JAPAN'S ruling Liberal Democrats lost their overall majority in Sunday's elections. The Lib-Dems suffered 48 defections by MPs before the election, forming new 'anti-corruption' grouplets.

But observers say that many of those who have left premier Miyazawa's party have themselves been involved in corruption at the top levels of the LDP, and are merely fleeing the sinking ship.

Big losers were the main left wing party, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ). SDPJ leaders have been trying to rid themselves of their 'Marxist' left wing.

French want out of Bosnia

THE FRENCH government has threatened to withdraw its troops from the UN force in Bosnia unless the UN makes air strikes against the Serbs to defend the 'safe havens'.

The UN-enforced embargo against arms to Bosnia has brought the besieged republic close to collapse. Now it seems certain that the ultra-right Croat and Serb bureaucracies will carve up Bosnia. The British government is the other major partner in the UN's operation.

They oppose bombings while their forces remain in the region, fearing that opinions at home would change if British troops were killed.

WORLD NEWS

Macedonia is not Greek!

By Rebecca Flemming

PEOPLE MAY have been surprised to see the reconstruction of an Athenian trireme – the warship with three banks of oars that was the backbone of Athenian military and imperial might in the 5th century BC – plying up and down the Thames over the last few weeks.

It was here on loan from the Greek navy, ostensibly to celebrate the 2,500th anniversary of the reforms of Solon in 594/3 BC which laid the foundations for the birth of Athenian democracy.

Propaganda

But this event was swamped by a wave of propaganda in support of the Greek government's policy towards Macedonia.

The central core of this policy is the claim that "Macedonia is



Definitely Greek: Solon

Greek". The results are twofold. The internal dimension is the pretence that Greece is completely ethnically homogenous.

The fact that there are large numbers of people living in Greek Macedonia who feel themselves to be nationally and culturally distinct from the rest of the population and speak a Slavic language is denied completely.

This denial is supported by an education system that aims to 'correct' this odd dialect and other customs, the threat of imprisonment of anyone who calls

themselves a Macedonian (a threat that was recently carried into practice on a leading Macedonian activist) and official support for growing Greek nationalism, especially in the north.

The external corollary to this is that the Macedonia once contained within the Yugoslav federation is alleged *not* to be Macedonia at all but a Slav usurper of that title with expansionist aims.

The Western powers, including Britain, have endorsed that view in their refusal to recognise the ex-Yugoslav territory either as an independent state or as Macedonia. The region is referred to as Skopje, after its capital city.

This policy has its roots in ancient history. It is part of a continuing battle over the legacy of Alexander the Great, the Macedonian King who had conquered an empire stretching from Greece and Egypt to India by the time he died, aged 32, in 323 BC.

The modern Greek claim that he was a Hellene and his heirs populate modern Greece has long troubled archaeologists interested in a more objective approach to ancient Macedonian history.

But this problem has been thrown strongly into relief by the collapse of Yugoslavia, and the real possibility of a secessionist, nationalist movement developing in Greek Macedonia to reunite a divided people.

A movement which would also impact upon Bulgaria, which has a larger Macedonian population).

The answer of the government has been vicious repression, and the kindling of dangerous Greek chauvinist and religious fires.

This policy has been centrally focused on the fictional Macedonians, but also effects other non-existent minorities such as Albanians. The West has so far been a willing supporter.



In northern Somalia, clan militias have already been marginalised.

control. Morgan is the son-in-law of the hated ex-dictator Siad Barre who was deposed in 1991.

There is an alternative to the UN occupation of Somalia and the murderous raids and attacks on Somalis. Women's groups, clan elders, religious associations and voluntary groups can be key agencies in the distribution of food aid and demilitarisation of society.

In northern Somalia, where an independent Republic of Somaliland has been declared, clan militias have already been marginalised.

We should press for the recognition of the northern Republic. Already Somali exiles and refugees have been collecting money for the rebuilding of schools, hospitals, homes and roads destroyed by Barre.

Throughout this century Somalis in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and present-day Somalia has agitated for union.

Free of imperialist intervention and with democratic governments the goal of a united Somalia becomes much more closer.

Until a workers' and peasants' government is established, however, any 'democratic' order will be unstable.

But even a temporary end to the crisis the warlords and imperialists have created will make it easier for the small Somali working class, concentrated in the Ogaden and throughout the Arab East, to build up a social alternative.

The fugitive warlord, General Farah Aideed is now more popular than ever - a symbol of defiance against the imperialists. UNOSOM II has failed in its stated objectives. Food supply lines are more threatened than ever and the militias which harass aid distribution remain armed.

The UN has been extremely partisan in its dealings with the militias. In the southern city of Kismayo, Belgian paratroopers disarmed Aidid loyalist Colonel Omar Jess.

This enabled a rival warlord, General Morgan, to take

Get UN gunmen out of Somalia!

By Bala Kumar

'THE RESPONSE of the US forces is exaggerated. This act of reprisal was a real

massacre' thundered the Vatican newspaper.

Italy's press echoed this view, forcing their government to make angry noises to the UN over the bombing of

Mogadishu on 12 July.

Thanks to their colonial domination of Somalia, Italy has for some time been aware of growing anti-American and anti-UN feeling.

Yugoslavia – measuring the failure of the British left

Phil Hearse reviews *Yugoslavia – the Acid Test* by Attila Hoare and *Yugoslavia's Break-Up* by Geoff Ryan; both published by Socialist Outlook.

THERE CAN have been few international political events which have found the British far left so floundering as the war in ex-Yugoslavia. Indeed the perversity of the positions adopted by far left organisations boggles the imagination.

Faced with a daily media barrage which portrays the fighting between Serbian Chetniks, the Croat HVO and the Bosnian government forces as tribal rivalry and the battles of equally irrational nationalisms, many

on the left have simply tailed off this analysis, topped off with a 'Marxist' gloss.

It is high time that this failure was subject to a detailed critique, and at last we have one in Attila Hoare's withering polemic. Subtitled *How Militant, Socialist Worker and Living Marxism capitulated to Western Imperialism and Serbian nationalism in the Balkans*, Hoare shows how these currents faithfully reproduced the views of Western governments.

Take the question of arming the Bosnian resistance to Serb and Croat aggression. Douglas Hurd, in an infamous statement, opposed arming the Bosnian resistance on the grounds that this would 'only create a level killing field' (as opposed to the very uneven killing field which currently exists). This statement was reproduced almost word for word by writers for the SWP and Militant.

Right now a flotilla of Western navy boats in patrolling off the Bosnian coast to prevent arms shipments into ex-Yugoslavia. This does nothing to prevent supplies getting to Serbia, or indeed Croatia; its sole effect is to disarm and weaken the Bosnian resistance.

Self defence

Militant's main statement on this question, written by Peter Taaffe, supports the right for communities under attack to defend themselves – but then argues that Marxists could only support giving arms to carry out such defence to 'democratically elected workers committees'. Since such committees of course do not exist, then the right of communities being ethnically cleansed to defend themselves remains a worthy principle with no concrete application!

One of the most common

misconceptions about the conflict is the idea that the Western imperialist states are anti-Serbia or anti-Milosevic; hence the RCP's portrayal of Serbs as the 'niggers of Europe', victimised and demonised on all sides.

Attila Hoare robustly deflates this view, together with the quasi-Stalinist positions which underlie this, and much else in the far left's analysis.

The sad fact is that a big part of the British left has a simple analysis which is crude and outrageously wrong: Croats during the last world war were pro-Nazi *Ustache*, but the Serbs were the anti-Nazi partisans. Today, in strict continuity with this, the Croats are pro-imperialist reactionaries, while the Serbs are reactionary what's left of progressive Yugoslavia.

This type of thinking, a far-rago of historical untruths and crackpot contemporary analysis, pervades so much of the left

which prides itself on its militant 'anti-Stalinism'.

Geoff Ryan's pamphlet is a systematic analysis of the origins of the Yugoslavian crisis from the foundation of the 'second' Yugoslavia after the victory of Tito's partisans.

As Ryan shows, the left cannot come to terms with these events without a firm grasp on the role of the national question and democratic tasks in the contemporary world.

Indeed it is a crystal clear symbol of the impoverishment of the bog-standard, lowest-common denominator 'Marxism' of the SWP and Militant that anything a bit more complicated than the workers lining up one side and the bosses on the other leaves them utterly bereft.

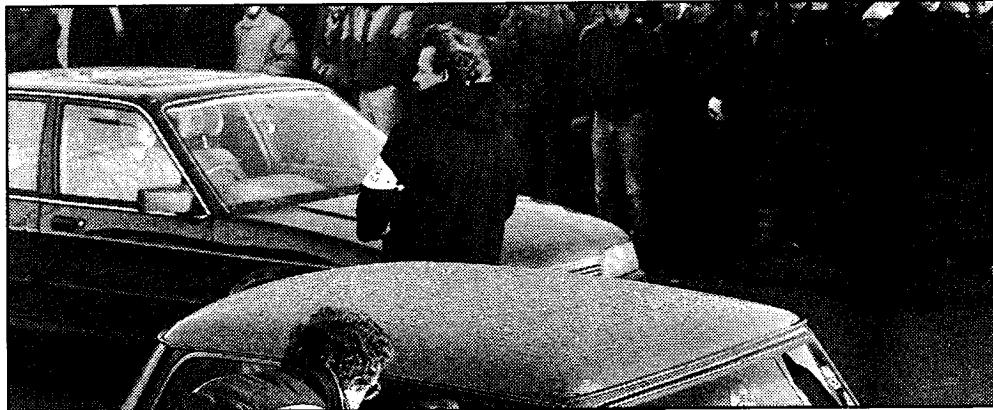
Attila Hoare pamphlet £1.50, Geoff Ryan pamphlet £1.00. From *Socialist Outlook*, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU. Add 36p postage.

WORLD NEWS

New ways of screwing the workforce – and ways of fighting back

MILLIONS of British people are facing a revolution at work – the so-called ‘new management techniques’ (NMTs). There are many faces to this new way of working – ‘flexibility’, short-time and part-time working, de-unionisation, quality circles and ‘just-in-time’ production. But they all have one goal: to squeeze every possible ounce of labour out of the working day, to make do with fewer workers and to boost profits at a time of crisis. Here we publish excerpts from talks on this topic by ANDY KILMISTER, CELIA DIGNAN and a car worker, made at a recent Socialist Outlook day school.

ANALYSIS



The old days – good or bad? Rover pickets at Solihull

Repress, Restructure, Reform, Revamp The four Rs of NMTs

By Andy Kilmister

THERE ARE four basic elements of the NMTs, which combine into an overall strategy for the bosses to revolutionise the production process. They are an attack on trade unions, a restructuring of the workforce, changing working practices, and then an ideological offensive.

The assault on trade unions has been sharpest in the printing and publishing sector, where there has been derecognition and an attempt to destroy the NUJ.

In other sectors, derecognition has not been the key thing, but there has been an attempt to empty union recognition of all of its content. This includes no strike agreements, compulsory arbitration, personal contracts and performance related pay.

This goes down to the most petty and arbitrary things like attacking facility time and the union dues check-off system.

Restructuring of the workforce involves forcing down labour costs through the creation of a ‘core workforce’ and a ‘periphery’ workforce, using part-time workers, temporary workers and sub-contracting.

These things have been used for a long time in catering, hotels and retailing. Now we’ve seen it coming into the public sector and manufacturing.

The third element is what people think of first with the NMTs, namely changing working practices through things like team working, quality circles and so on. But this varies a lot in different industries.



In the motor industry the question of ‘team working’ has been absolutely central; despite its name, it in effect tries to increase responsibility on each worker, and attempt to force her/him to identify with the interests of the company.

But in the public sector team working is not so central. What is central is the whole set of ideas to do with ‘quality’, ‘customers’ and ‘flexibility’. This revolves round the idea that workers are the ‘customers’ of other workers, and those ‘customers’ have the right and the duty to criticise the quality of work of other workers in the organisation.

This links with the ideology of the NMTs which revolves round ideas of quality, flexibility and choice – plus a whole set of ideas about management, including ‘total quality’ management and so-called ‘human resource management’.

You now have thousands of managers up and down the country who are being schooled in these techniques, including many people who never thought of themselves as managers. Thousands of people in the health service, education, local government and other sectors are being taught they have to think of themselves as managers

and take responsibility for scrutinising the work of others.

Of course all these things don’t happen in every sector at the same time. Managers are very careful about what they introduce; but they now have a coherent set of practices to draw on to revolutionise production and working practices – all at the expense of the workers.

Why we have to resist

By a car worker

THE IDEOLOGY of the NMTs is very detailed and very developed. In the forefront of this ideology are Cardiff University lecturers Dan Jones and Gareth Reese, who began their work on the car industry.

Jones’ book, *The Machine That Changed the World*, claims the NMTs are leading to the end of capitalism! (Now they have got \$5m to do re-

search on another book, which shows much importance the bosses place on this question).

It is clear that the Tories are deeply involved in promoting research on the NMTs – for example small businesses can get money to bring in experts to make changes on these lines.

Most people don’t see this offensive, but every day of the week there are seminars and courses for managers, business people and trade unionists and even MPs addressed by these NMT ‘experts’.

Dan Jones has lectured to people in the NHS. We now even have this ideology being introduced into the police, the ‘customer’ there being private enterprise, whose property needs to be defended! They want limited contracts for the police and to move away from annualised pay rounds to individual contracts.

It may sound ridiculous; but it is linked with the ideology of ‘consumer choice’, which underlies the various ‘Charters’ – consumer charters, passenger charters – which the Tories have introduced.

The argument is that the consumers and customers come first, and if there are problems in society it is because ‘customers’ are not being adequately supplied by workers.

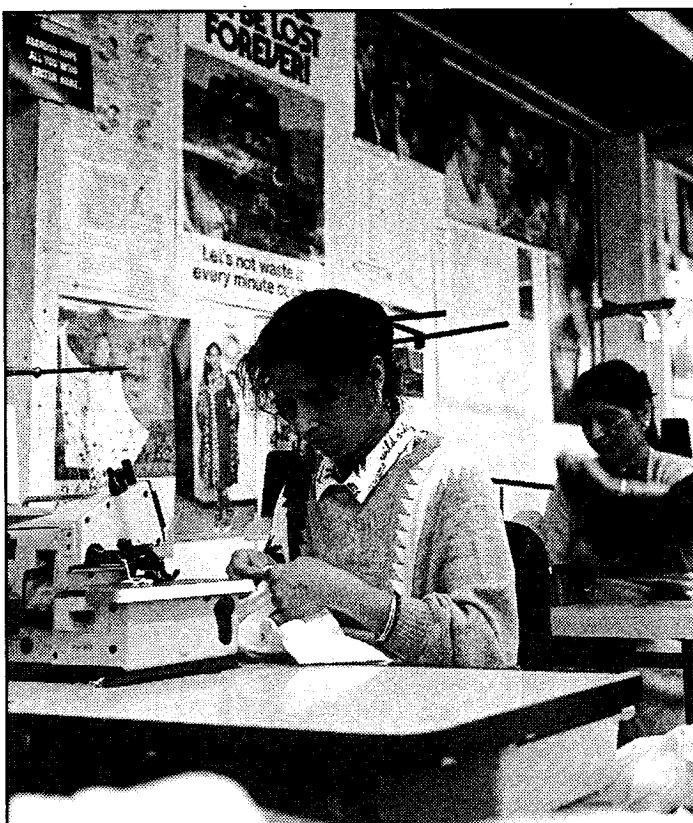
The ideology of the NMTs is accepted completely by the Labour Party, with its notions of ‘individual rights’ as opposed to the collective rights of workers.

The ‘customer’ ideology stretches right down to the factory floor. At Rover where I work, the next person on the track is your ‘customer’, who has to check your work. You are the ‘customer’ of the person on the track before you, and you have to check their work. And you are told somehow the machine you run is ‘your’ machine, and you are responsible for every detail of it – its cleaning, maintenance and so on.

One new thing is the utilisation of the NMTs to deal with the problems of economic crisis, especially though the ‘flexibility’ of labour. The crucial thing here is the ‘flexibility’ to be able to put people on and off the workforce.

So there is a huge expansion of short-term contracts. The last 1000 people taken on by Rover have been on six-month contracts, something virtually unheard of in the motor industry until a few years ago.

It has to be said though that the NMTs can only work if the bosses have either no union or a compliant union working with



Old style sweatshop methods spreading everywhere

them, or at least not opposing strongly.

The concept of team work, continuous improvement and 'quality' relies on compliance and co-operation from the workforce. This enables them for example to get rid of inspection and to rely on each worker inspecting their own work and that of others. They can get rid of a layer of maintenance workers, relying on production workers to do the maintenance for them.

Flexibility

The same applies to flexibility of labour, workers agreeing to do a thousand and one different jobs at a moment's notice: without co-operation it would fall to bits.

And the same goes for all the aspects of 'just in time' production which enables companies to reduce their stocks to a minimum, often closing whole areas of factories in the process.

Such a system can only work with the agreement of the workforce, which means the agreement to work harder, with less breaks, taking more individual responsibility for the interests of the employers. In other words, the NMTs are vulnerable if workers refuse this system of self-exploitation.

While having no trade union at all is one way of achieving compliance, often it is better to have a compliant union, which can actually mobilise the workers for the bosses' objectives.

To do this people have to be persuaded that they are benefitting from the NMTs, and they offer sops, especially to the 'core' sector of the workforce. For example in Rover we were given 'jobs for life', but of course that doesn't include the increasing number of people who will be hired on short-term contracts.

'Jobs for life' means our sons and daughters won't get permanent jobs. And for the core sectors of workers they start to introduce the most draconian disciplinary measures: at Rover you are disciplined if you have more than three days off a year for any purpose whatever. The sops they offer you, always have another side to them, to tie

you closer to the company's interests.

The problem is, how do we resist these things? It is difficult because they are always brought in with a threat, increased by mass unemployment. The threat to close a plant or workplace is always a devastating threat.

When they brought in 1000 short term workers at Rover, we were told, well if you object, we won't employ them. And these people are desperate for a job - 2500 people applied.

So it takes a very determined leadership to oppose the NMTs, and at a national level we just don't have that. The TGWU which I'm a member of says you should accept these measures if they 'make the company competitive'. Once you accept this idea, you are powerless to resist.

But however difficult, the NMTs have to be fought. We have to resist, because they are a mechanism for fantastically stepped up exploitation.

Look at Japanese industry, look at how hard they are forced to work, and see how young the industrial workforce is - because the older workers are finished by this kind of work regime by the time they get into their thirties.

Resistance

There are many forms of day-to-day resistance, but the key time to fight is when the new management techniques are being brought in. Because even if you lose and the NMTs are brought in, you are in a stronger position to fight later if you have explained to the workforce what this means.

The NMTs are about taking every single moment of your working day and squeezing something into it, to get every single possible moment of work from you. So the bosses constantly come with new proposals for work changes, and this gives you the space to resist and to fight back.

To begin that process we need the maximum information from day one from the trade union side on what the NMTs actually mean, to stop the bosses' information and propaganda monopoly.

How bosses attacked media unions

Life beyond all recognition

By Celia Dignan

WE'VE CERTAINLY had our share of the NMTs in the journalism, broadcasting and printing industries in the past ten years, especially through the introduction of new technology. 'Flexibility' is an idea very familiar to us.

We've seen jobs previously done by our colleagues in the print industry done by journalists and sub-editors through direct inputting. And we've seen the increasing use of short-term contracts.

In fact in sectors like broadcasting it's virtually impossible to get a permanent job now thanks to short-term contracts and the increasing use of freelance workers.

One indicator of the state of things is that Reed Business Publishing recently introduced a computer which enables them to check the number of key strokes each of their writers and sub-editors has made in a given time.

But the key to all this has been the assault on the unions and union derecognition. The NUJ has probably suffered the worst consequences of derecognition, but it's a growing phenomenon throughout industry. A survey by Labour Research on 1988-92 found that 28 TUC unions had experienced derecognition, but topping the list were the media and print unions, the NUJ and the GMPU, with 41 cases. They were followed by NALGO and the AEEU with 26 cases and the TGWU with 18 cases.

But the NUJ figures don't include provincial newspapers. If you include them, you see the print and media unions have suffered over half the derecognition cases. In fact one third of all NUJ chapels (branches) have been de-recognised. The worst sector is the national newspapers, but it has gone right down to small local publishers with just one local paper and it is widespread in the magazine and book publishing sector.

This massive employers' offensive really started in the mid-1980s and was intimately linked to the introduction of new technology.

Again, it's no accident that the era of derecognition beginning around 1987, coincided with the introduction of new technology into national newspapers, starting of course with the News International dispute at Wapping. This new technology, enabling journalists and sub-editors to do the work of typesetters and compositors, led to the massive wave of redundancies among the print workers.

While newspaper proprietors competed with one another to get the cost benefits of new technology, journalists were suddenly given, by definition, more control over the production

process, because suddenly they were the ones who had the power to stop the presses.

So from the employers point of view it was essential that journalists' union power was destroyed. So having smashed the print workers, often with the compliance of some of the journalists, they could then turn their attention of the NUJ, breaking up collective agreements and house agreements.

When management talk about derecognition of unions they usually talk about personal contracts, which they claim gives them a 'closer relationship' with their employees. Thus, they claim, it is not appropriate to have collective negotiations. But of course an individual can't really 'negotiate' with a big company: in reality personal contracts are just imposed.

Of course, when collective negotiations are abandoned, then equal opportunities go to the wall; women and black people lose out.

This has also hit new people coming into the industry; though old contracts are torn up, established workers have often been kept on the old conditions, but new entrants have suffered.

This immediately creates a 'divide and rule' situation among employees.

Pay increase

Research last year showed that chapels which kept collective agreements in every case had better terms and conditions in terms of redundancy, maternity and so on. But also a much larger number of workplaces where the chapel is recognised got a pay increase last year.

While derecognition has become an epidemic for the NUJ, this is not the same thing as de-unionisation. In fact union membership is going up, and many of the de-recognised chapels are very active.

There are many forms of 'guerrilla' tactics which de-recognised unions can use. One example is mass personal grievances. Very soon the employers catch on that it's very difficult and time consuming to deal with hundreds of personal complaints, and that they have to start dealing with the union again.

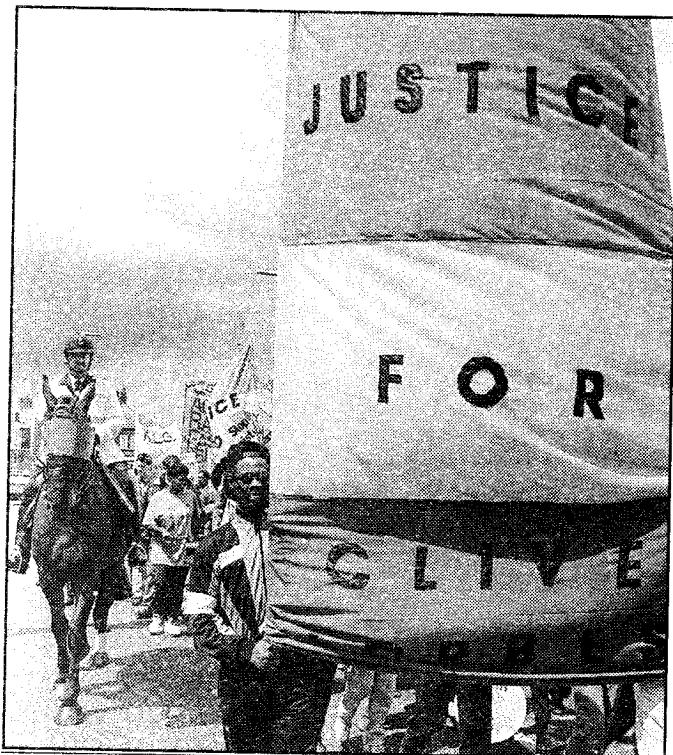
So some employers have started to utilise limited derecognition, de-recognising the union for the purposes of pay negotiations and basic conditions, but dealing with the union on many day-to-day issues.

Thus in many places it has been possible to hold union organisation together in very difficult circumstances. But whatever tactics are used, in the end industrial action is needed to win back union recognition, including industrial action across the industry.

The union leaderships' strategy of going to Industrial Tribunals and appealing to bodies like the ILO has failed. Only collective action will defeat derecognition and reverse it.



ANALYSIS



Wanted: justice for Clive Forbes and his family

Birmingham marches against race violence

By Jack Starkey,
Birmingham
Campaign
Against Racism
And Fascism

A SUCCESSFUL demonstration was held 10 July for Clive Forbes, the victim of a brutal and totally unprovoked racist attack in Birmingham.

The demo went from the scene of the attack, the Wyrley Birch estate where Clive was beaten by iron bars and thrown from a third-floor balcony. His injuries are appalling and he is still in intensive care. He suffered brain damage and needs operations to correct his smashed leg.

Tremendous support was given to the demonstration by the community as it went through Erdington.

Despite showers, spirits

were high and a good collection for Clive's family was taken.

The rally at Salford Park demanded both that Clive's attackers be found guilty of attempted murder and the maximum sentence; justice for Clive and his family, nothing less.

Birmingham's council is still refusing to rehouse Clive's heavily pregnant partner Yvonne who is terrified to return to the estate.

They only had a maisonette and no houses are available. The council supposedly has a policy for victims of racist attacks.

Friends have moved furniture out and Yvonne is staying with family. Obviously, she wants a home for the baby, and Clive on his return.

His mobility will be greatly restricted and he will need easy access. A house is an essential requirement in this case.

Socialism or Barbarism On the Eve of the Twenty-first Century

Manifesto of the Fourth International

'Internationalism is not a simple moral imperative; it is an immediate tactical and strategic necessity. The Fourth International today is an irreplaceable instrument.'

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Trotskyist beats Le Pen in court fight

French NF is fascist - it's official!

Recently French National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen took PAUL ELIE-LEVY, a member of the LCR, French section of the Fourth International, to court for accusing him of being the spiritual heir of Hitler. Here Paul outlines the case and how Le Pen was beaten.



Ideological heir of Hitler: FN leader Le Pen

Le Pen decided to launch his regional election campaign with a big rally in Nancy. This meeting followed the publication of the '50 Proposals of the Front National' against immigration.

About 50 organisations supported the proposal of the anti-fascist alliance *Ras L'Front* for a demonstration. Over 8,000 people supported the demo, the biggest in Nancy since May '68.

I was one of the speakers and I said that 'Le Pen is the spiritual son of Hitler, Mussolini and Petain.'

Expensive

Three months later Le Pen announced he was taking me to court. He decided on a civil action because it would be much more expensive for me and is much more complicated. We decided to fight at two levels.

On the political level we organised a conference in Nancy followed by a big rally, with representatives from every anti-racist organisation in France. The day after this rally Le Pen's lawyer postponed the court case!

At a judicial level we chose two lawyers: one from the Radical Left in Nancy, the other Henri Leclerc of the *Ligue Des Droits D'Homme*.

The case was finally heard on 14 May this year. Le Pen claimed I was an ogre with 50 heads and accused me of indoctrinating Jewish people. On the 14 June the court decided that Le Pen must pay me seven hundred pounds plus costs, rather than the twelve thousand pounds he was demanding from me.

This was the first time that a court has accepted that Le Pen can be compared to fascists.

Although he has now appealed he has not been able to organise a single public meeting in Nancy since January 1992.

However the F.N. increased its electoral support by three per cent in the last elections. Although they lost their only MP they gained 30% of the vote in some areas and, in the second round, won 49%. Some people think they must try extreme-right solutions because of disillusionment with the other parties.

The F.N. bases itself on poverty and unemployment. At a local level they have organised sporting events, social events and try to raise support and practical help for injured workers.

I don't believe that we can control the growth of the far-right solely by anti-fascist activities. The growth of poverty and unemployment means we have to work at grass roots level and base struggles on 'equal rights' for immigrant workers. Unfortunately there is less support for this than simple anti Le Pen campaigns.

Fascist party

The FN is not a big party; it is mainly an electoral party. It has few members and is very closed; it is a fascist party, though not all its supporters are fascists.

Its ideology is that of historic right-wing French colonialism, in Algeria, Vietnam etc. Its members frequently come from ex-military families or French Algerian settlers.

Some of the support for the main right-wing parties, the RPR and UDF is racist and the government's actions prove that. Their first decision was the

Pasqua law against immigration. That is one promise they have kept!

In several regions they have semi-official pacts with the FN. But the government parties are not looking for an alliance with Le Pen. They won't do so unless it is absolutely necessary, because it would cause them problems.

More votes

However they haven't succeeded in limiting support for the FN. Although Le Pen appeared to lose votes compared to the local elections the FN have three per cent more, than in the last Legislative elections, despite losing some support to Pasqua.

Immigrants are now much more worried about their status. Their right to marry French citizens, to be joined by their families are all under attack.

An Algerian woman, six months pregnant, has recently been refused permission to marry the father. There is increased opposition but this is not yet translated into activity.

We need more contacts between all the anti-fascist and anti-racist movements in Europe and should think about some common initiative around the next European elections. The idea of a European anti-racist festival is very good.

The recent attempted visit of Le Pen to Britain and Ireland was a big defeat for the extreme right because the British and Irish people served an exclusion order on him.

All he could do was have a semi-legal press conference - not a very glorious episode for the would-be Fuhrer!

No life on Death Row



Former Black Panther leader MOUMIA ABU-JAMAL has been on death row for 11 years, in Huntingdon prison Pennsylvania, after being convicted on a trumped-up murder charge. This is a letter he sent to the French magazine Politis explaining his situation.

THERE IS NO life on death row. There is but existence where one eats, sleeps and excretes; where one leaves a room of brick to enter a cage of steel, to receive visits from ones loved ones behind a plexi-glass screen, unable to touch or be touched.

Death row is not an abstraction, but a startling reality where about 2700 people await death ordered by the state by a myriad of means. These include hanging, electrocution, the gas chamber, lethal injection and the firing squad.

Some states allow the condemned person to choose their method of extinction. In Pennsylvania, where lethal injection was recently adopted, approximately 147 men and two women await legal liquidation by the state. I say 'approximately', because the number rises steadily, sometimes by two a week.

The city of Philadelphia alone accounts for 55 per cent of all death sentences in Pennsylvania; 82 per cent of all those accused of murder are black, despite blacks being only nine per cent of the population of Pennsylvania.

The population of death row is 60 per cent black. The state of Pennsylvania can

pride itself on there being three communities where the black population is the majority: Philadelphia, Pittsburgh – and death row.

Conditions in death row are much worse than people imagine. Twenty two hours in one's cell (often 23), and then a couple of hours in a steel cage of 8 feet by 14 – sarcastically called by the inmates the 'greyhound track'.

Meals are taken in your cell; there are no special facilities for study or religious services, or for educational activities of any nature.

Visits are an exercise in mutual humiliation. Each time I enter the visiting room I find my daughter Samiya in tears because of the cruel window which divides the room in two. She puts her little hands on the glass and shouts 'smash it'.

But I can't take in my arms and console her. The glass is unbreakable: our hearts are not. All three of us, Samiya, her mother and me, try not to cry.

Inhuman conditions

Because of these inhuman conditions, visits are hellish for those who visit and those who receive them. And because of that many of those on death row refuse their families access, by deliberately not putting their names on the list of authorised visitors.

As a prelude to the destruction of the flesh, the authorities try to destroy the spirit of the condemned with daily denials of the most elementary decencies.

My request to do a correspondence course in psychology was routinely rejected despite not costing the state a

penny – as a 'security risk'.

Because I have refused to renounce my beliefs in the teachings of John Africa, or to have my hair cut, I have been subject to an even more restrictive regime than the others on death row. I'm not allowed to buy food at the prison shop, use the telephone (on death row you are entitled to one 10 minute call a month) and I'm not allowed any books, with the exception of legal books and a book on religion.

Also I'm not allowed the prison 'wage' (those on death row get \$15 a month to compensate for the fact they're not allowed prison work for which a small sum is paid).

At the end of October 1992 a new regime took effect for those on death row, much more restrictive than before: only one visit a month, only one hour a day in the 'cage' – 23 in your cell, no more purchases in the shop with the exception of two packets of cigarettes a month, no papers, magazines – nothing.

The new regime is a return to the politically repressive system of the 1950s. The judicial system is becoming more reactionary than in the Reagan-Bush era. In general the judges think the state is incapable by definition of committing injustices in its prisons, and that the courts must submit to the 'professional judgement' of the prison authorities.

The state has its hands more and more free in its campaign of repression against Afro-Americans (often with the assent of black bureaucrats); it is more and more free to do anything it wishes against members of unpopular parties – or against those sentenced to death.

The Constitution, universally venerated as the founding document of great liberties, remains a far-off and untouchable talisman, accessible only to those capable of conducting the rituals (including the financial ones) necessary to invoke it.

Persecuted

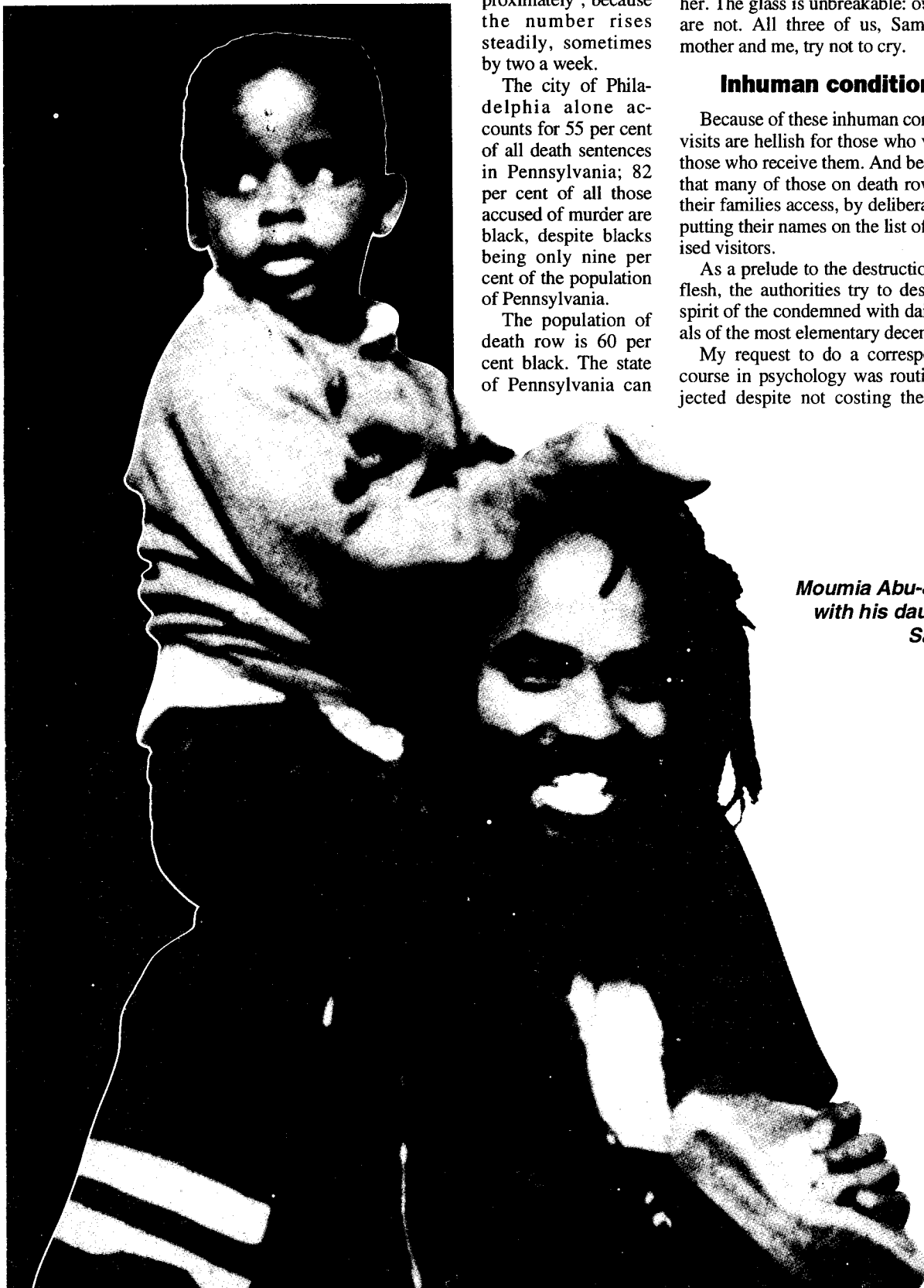
In the state where this document which proclaims universal liberties was drawn up, those who even demonstrate once for unpopular causes are persecuted.

Members of MOVE, the movement founded by John Africa which I support, who have been free on parole for several years, have been thrown back in prison solely for refusing to renounce their beliefs and political convictions.

The retired judge Thurgood Marshall, an advocate of 'humanist law', once said that not having the mechanisms to impose rights is the equivalent of not having any rights at all.

In Pennsylvania on paper people have a plethora of rights – to practice the religion of their choice, the right to freedom association and of the press, and the right not to be subject to cruel and inhuman treatment.

In the prisons of Pennsylvania these 'rights' are semi-invisible, or on the point of disappearing. 'Rights' are the whims of the state and its power. As far as the Constitution is concerned, it's worth no more than a torn page in a magazine or a piece of toilet paper.



Moumia Abu-Jamal with his daughter Samiya

FIGHTING RACISM

The English revolution

The masses enter stage of history

EARLIER this year 200 people heard Tony Benn and Peter Purton of the *Socialist Outlook* editorial board speak on the English Revolution. Here we publish the second part of Peter Purton's talk which outlines the role of the masses and the emergence of radical and revolutionary movements.

THE ENGLISH Revolution went through traditional phases. In the beginning the propertied classes were united in opposing King Charles' attempt to impose an obsolete royal absolutism on an emerging capitalist country.

But in the process of challenging the monarchy, they unleashed a massive popular movement which initially served as a battering ram for the parliamentary leadership. But this movement quickly came to develop its own political ideas. It began to take the process much further than the propertied classes wanted to go.

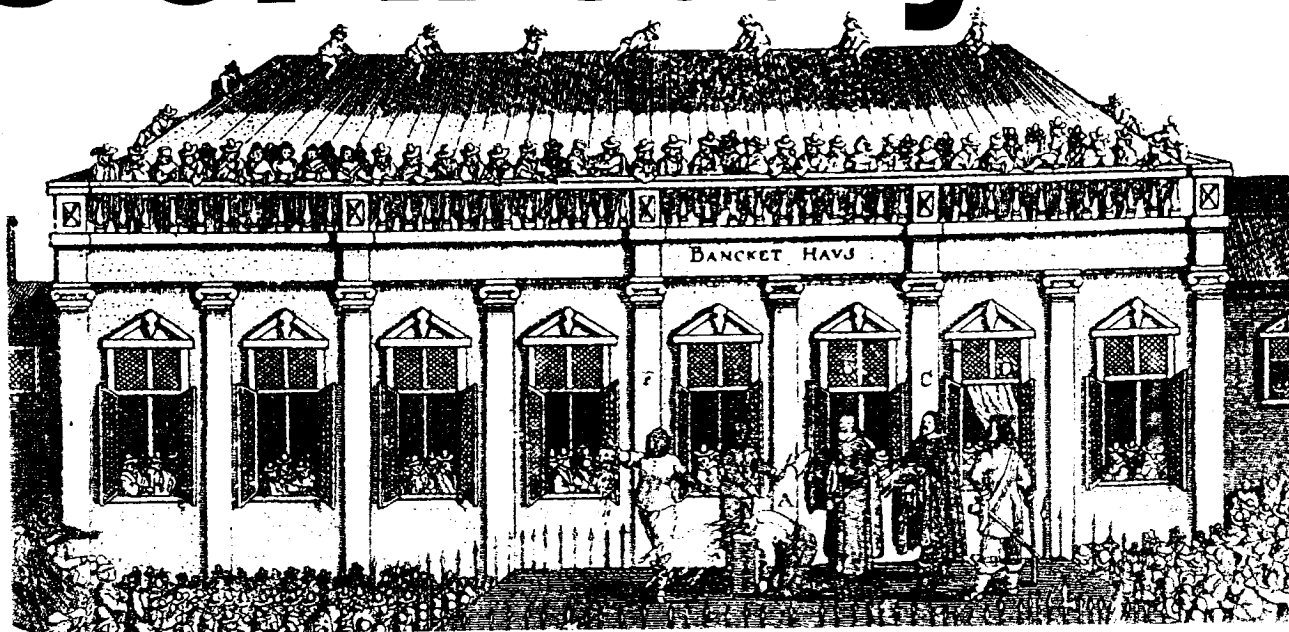
From the beginning of the combat with the King, when the Long Parliament took up the cudgels in 1641, the gentry divided and divided again over the question of how far to go. The first acts of the parliament, such as removing Charles' unpopular ministers were carried overwhelmingly.

Yet a short few months later, with the presentation of more radical demands, such as removing Bishops who were the King's most loyal supporters from parliament and placing the appointment of militia commanders under parliamentary control the majority in the House of Commons was tiny. A very significant minority of members were deserting to the King's side.

Streets

Behind this split was the central question – the role of the common people in the political process. A critical role was played by the popular masses. Their mobilisations on the streets of London repeatedly tipped the balance.

In many other towns the common people determined the political map at the outset of the fighting. And later, as the revolution unfolded, movements devel-



A mass spectacle as the old regime is violently ended: the execution of King Charles I

oped which put together unprecedented political programmes. The most important were the radical Levellers and early communists like the Diggers.

There was no modern working class, so who were these people? The teeming hundreds of thousands of London were craftsmen and artisans, clothworkers, apprentices, seamen, dockers, builders, petty traders, shopworkers, printers and domestic servants.

Many were fighting their own battles inside oligarchic company structures dominated by merchants or else the traditional guilds.

The guilds were not like trade unions today but were closed professional associations involving everyone from master to apprentice, i.e. both boss and worker. In the countryside they were agricultural labourers or cloth workers operating from their cottages. Then there was the peasantry itself.

In the long hot summer and autumn of 1641 it was the continuous mobilisations of the masses of London which prevented the House of Commons from retreating from its programme of radical reform.

It was the masses that drove Strafford to impeachment and his appointment with the executioner, and who thwarted the King's attempted coup of arresting the five leading members of parliament.

It was the masses who drove the parliamentary leadership to the evermore radical measures which eventually drove the King to war. Their methods appear familiar to us – mass petitions, popular demonstrations. But these were demonstrations unconcerned by formalities of law and playing by the rules.

The period from 1647 to 1650 was the high point of popular radicalism in England. In the end the bourgeois/gentry, divided though it was into many competing factions, united in defence of the social order. They feared the people more than the return of the monarchy.

Not for the first or the last time, it was fear of the people which began to drive gentry members of the Commons to the King's side.

The outbreak of war in August 1642 saw the popular masses once more play a vital part. In town after town the common people took to the streets to shut the gates against the King's Commissioners and to force their local leaders to declare for parliament.

Now this was a very peculiar war because at the start neither side had an army. Although parliament, through its control of the Navy, London and the South, had access to far greater resources, in the short term the forces which rallied to Charles had far greater military training.

Probably the most decisive battle of the whole war took place very early on at Turnham Green. Dashing Prince Rupert was leading the King's advance on London after getting the better of the first battle of the war at Edgehill.

In November 1642 he stormed Brentford, which was held by a couple of regiments made up of butchers and dyers. He went on and ransacked it and spent the night at Syon Park.

Militia

The trained band of London, which was a militia composed of London workers and apprentices, turned out in sufficient force at Turnham Green to dissuade the Royalists from continuing their advance the next day and earned precious time for parliament to organise its forces.

The war, however, went badly for the Parliamentary side for the first year. Their generals were aristocrats who didn't really want to beat the King, fearing for the social order. They showed this by resisting popular clamour for arms and training.

In the end, as is well known, a certain Oliver Cromwell went off and organised his own army in East Anglia, composed of Puritan yeomanry and trained his famous Ironside cavalry.

At last in 1644 the radicals in parliament won a majority for the creation of a

new professional army. And it was this 'New Model Army', commanded by Cromwell and Fairfax which rapped up the fighting at Naseby in 1645.

The army became a highly politicised force. But Cromwell and the other generals were also landowners and however radical they were in confronting the monarchy, reforming the Church or abolishing the House of Lords, there was a limit.

That limit was the popular involvement in political power and the question of property rights. They needed the army to purge and control parliament but they didn't need the Levellers.

So they astutely outmanoeuvred them, broke up their power bases and finally crushed them by force at Burford in 1649.

The period from 1647 to 1650 was the high point of popular radicalism in England. In the end the bourgeois/gentry, divided though it was into many competing factions, united in defence of the social order. They feared the people more than the return of the monarchy.

But what frightened them so much? The Levellers were the largest popular movement. Their leaders proposed a programme which at its widest included universal male suffrage, abolition of the House of Lords, the election of judges, magistrates and parish priests.

They proposed the abolition of the tithe, religious freedom, the abolition of indirect taxes in favour of income tax, the ending of enclosures in the countryside, methods for tenant farmers to purchase the land. And in addition they proposed the reform of the judicial system including ending imprisonment for debt.

This was a radical programme for the time. It included elements which would make today's Shadow Cabinet blanche.

In the Putney Debates of October 1647, the highest ranking Leveller, Colonel Rainsborough argued:

'Really I think that the poorest he that is in England has a right to live as the greatest; and therefore truly sir I think its clear that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own con-

The Party of Cromwell, republicans and religious independents played out the game with great skill. They used the strength of the army and the people to purge their opponents, and then purged the army of its most radical elements, while seeing through a programme of reforms in the interests of their own class. ...The way was cleared for the evolution of a thoroughly bourgeois state. But it was one in which the quaint trappings of a feudal monarchy were left in place.



Oliver Cromwell: turned on radical leaders

sent to put himself under that government.

'And I do think that the poorest man that is in England is not at all bound to that government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under'.

To which Henry Arden, Cromwell's son-in-law, and a stout defender of the propertied gentry responded at once by going to the heart of the matter. 'Where will you end? And why you should not take away all property?'

The heart-felt cry of the bourgeois of all time crying wolf when ever anyone calls for reform. Where will it all end? What about my property?

Rainsborough knew this argument though, unlike many people around today, and he knew the answer too, because he replied, 'As to the thing itself, property, I would feign know how it comes to be the property of some men and not others'.

And on the question of legal right his colleague John Wilde also had the truth of it: 'Our case is to be considered thus, that we have been made under slavery. Our very laws were made by our conquerors.'

'And whereas it is much spoken of in the chronicles I conceive that there is no credit to be given to any of them. And the reason is that because those that were our lords and made us their vassals suffered nothing else to be chronicled.'

What a shame our own TUC doesn't share the Levellers understanding of the role of the law over the question of the pits.

However, it was the property question which derailed the Levellers politically. They were not a homogenous movement and the strong sections among them, because of their own origins amongst craftworkers and yeomen, defence of the right to private property was as vital to them as to their opponents and on this matter they split.

In the end they supported the property qualification for the right to vote. I should add that the title of Leveller was laid on them by their opponents.

The Levellers advanced demands which embraced both urban and country masses. If the Levellers were best placed because of their strength among the rank and file of the army they weren't alone.

One contemporary counted 199 religious or political sects in 1646. The Seekers and the Ranters were the libertarians of the age. The met in city taverns to smoke tobacco and to experiment in new lifestyles - communal living, free love, insolence to all authority.

My favourites are the Diggers, rightly known as the true Levellers. Under the guidance of a failed draper born in Wigan, Gerard Winstanley, the Diggers were genuine early communists. They combined theory with practice, 'Words and writing were all nothing and must die for action is the life of all' Winstanley said.

On April 1 1649 they occupied common land at St Georges Hill near Walton in Surrey and began to cultivate it in common. Winstanley theorised a whole alternative programme in a wonderful book called 'The Law of Freedom'. The experiment was broken up by the army.

We've seen this great dynamic popular movement bursting the bounds of accepted politics and morality, driving the House of Commons before it to overturn the monarchy and set up a Republic in the end unable to impose its will.

The power resided with the gentry and the Palace of Westminster. And though parts of the army were steeped in politics, the officers, ultimately, remained in control.

Property

And in particular - although only the Diggers represented a full programme for the propertyless masses - the threat to property was a terror of the new rulers. Starting as early as 1644 the conservative majority in the House of Commons wanted to start negotiating with the King and continued until 1648 to try to demobilise the army.

The Party of Cromwell, republicans and religious independents played out the game with great skill. They used the strength of the army and the people to purge their opponents, and then purged the army of its most radical elements, while seeing through a programme of reforms in the interests of their own class.

We've already looked at the outcome, from the point of view of the restoration of Charles 2nd in 1660. In so many ways this was a predictable compromise.

The way was cleared for the evolution of a thoroughly, bourgeois state. But it was one in which the quaint trappings of a feudal monarchy were left in place.

The Crown itself, the House of Lords, the great estates and political power of the surviving nobility all remained because of the cowardice of the parliamentary leaders.

It would seem true today that the monarchy is more likely to self-destruct than

to be abolished. Yet this seemingly harmless throw back is actually the pinnacle, the capstone of class rule.

It encourages deference and respect for ones betters, myths of polite English ways of doing things, sitting atop a constitutional settlement which oozes lack of real democracy at every level. Some very painful lessons have still not been learnt to this day.

When it comes to the crisis, property owning classes will go to any lengths to preserve their economic interest. Those who rely on such forces for political reform or expect fundamental social advance without destroying this corrupt political system can expect no different outcome.

One participant in the English Revolution did not have these illusions.

Gerard Winstanley who believed that God is actually reason in every human being and that heaven had to be created on earth wrote to the new republican government: 'Thou hast made many promises and protestations to make the land a free nation

'And yet at this very day the same people to whom thou hast made such protestations of liberty are oppressed by thy courts, assizes, sessions, by thy justices and clerks of the peace, so called, bailiffs and committees are imprisoned and forced to spend their bread that should save their lives from famine.

'And it's all because they stand to maintain their universal liberty and freedom which not only is our birthright but which thou hast promised to restore from under the former oppressing powers which had gone before and which like-

wise we have bought with our money in taxes and bloodshed.

'All of which thou hast received at our hands and yet thou hast not given us our bargain.'

Winstanley was clear what was needed: 'Take notice that England is not a free people until the poor that have no land have the free allowance to dig and labour the Commons and so live as comfortably as the landlords in their enclosures.

Tyranny

'For the people have not laid out their monies and their blood so the landlords, the Norman powers, shall still have its liberty and freedom to rule in tyranny, with its lords, landlords, judges, justices, bailiffs and state servants.

'But that the oppressed might be set free, prison doors opened and the poor peoples hearts comforted by universal consent of making the earth a common treasury that they may live together as one house of israel united in brotherly love.

'And truly you councillors and powers of the earth, know this, that wheresoever there is a people thus united it will become the strongest in the world. Whereas on the other side pleading for property and single interest, divides the people of the land and the whole world into parties and is the cause of all wars and bloodshed'.

That Norman power still crowns our bourgeois state. I say follow the course of the true Levellers, trust in no strength but our own and complete the work of the English Revolution!

Under the guidance of a failed draper born in Wigan, Gerard Winstanley, the Diggers were genuine early communists. They combined theory with practice, 'Words and writing were all nothing and must die for action is the life of all' Winstanley said.

OUR HISTORY



Fingers deep in the gravy among the Henley Regatta set: whose till produced the cash?

Fingers In the TILL

Our regular look at the word of business and finance by INSIDER DEALER

Hitting the buffers

I WAS extremely sorry to see Jacques Attali, who has received a £150,000 pay-off from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, rumbled after a two-year ride on the gravy train.

Established in April 1991, EBRD has so far spent £200 million on kitting out its super de-luxe London offices and running costs, and only half that amount on what it was supposed to do, namely helping eastern Europe get back to capitalism.

Attali spent a fortune hiring private jets to destinations well served by scheduled services.

On one of the few occasions he slumped it he was reimbursed twice for the same first class trip to Tokyo. In addition, he ran up what were called 'significant amounts of private expenditure on his corporate credit card.'

His dismissal was most unfair. After all, if they sacked every executive who fiddled his expenses, there would be damned few business leaders left. Tough luck old boy, although the golden handshake should tide you over until you come up with another number.

Food for thought

A PANAMANIAN-flag gas tanker, in UK waters recently, displayed a notice from the

skipper to the crew headed 'Filipino Feeding Scale'.

It read as follows: 'Gentlemen, please find below the feeding scale which has been given to me by the UK catering agents. You will find you are being grossly overfed at the present time and I will be requiring the cook to work closely to this scale.'

It went on to list what the ratings were entitled to every week - four kilos of rice, 0.75 kilos of fish etc. Underneath the captain added: 'What is being served in the officers' mess is of no concern to you. If you feel you are not being served the amount on the scale please feel free to speak to me.'

Naturally, I instantly slapped a 'buy' recommendation on shares of the company concerned.

Billion dollar men

AS THE continuing revelations over Conservative Party funding have mercifully dried up of late, it's probably safe to let you Trot bastards in on a bit of gossip.

The Kuwait Investment Office's Spanish operation is currently under investigation by the Kuwaiti parliament after mysterious losses of a trifling \$5,000 million. As part of their defence, former KIO officials are claiming that some £200 million was used to buy political support in the West after the Iraqi invasion in late 1990.

Hush hush slush

JUDICIOUSLY-placed back handlers ensured that key votes on the United Nations security council went the

right way, it seems. And in what city was the slush fund based, you ask? Why, London, naturally.

Meanwhile I hear it said that the Omani government's likely move to save Swan Hunter shipyard by chipping in with an order for four motor boats may not be entirely unconnected with past arms contracts secured by one Mark Thatcher, son of the Glorious Leader herself. I'll keep you posted.

Stoney - not broke

MICHAEL Stoney, former treasurer of Mirror Group Newspapers, has been arrested and charged with conspiracy to defraud and false accounting over his role in the Maxwell affair.

The conspiracy to defraud charge alleges that Mr Stoney conspired with Robert Maxwell and his son Kevin to defraud MGN by obtaining a £50 million revolving credit facility from Bankers Trust Company in the name of MGN, but then diverted the proceeds.

Two false accounting charges allege that he cooked the MGN books by omitting, or concurring in the omitting of, the receipt of £50 million on 21 October 1991.

Stoney was remanded on conditional bail with a single surety of £50,000. He was ordered to surrender his passport, but allowed to take a one-month family holiday in Miami.

Card sharp

GERMANY'S far-right Republikaner Partei faces legal action from the country's state-owned telecom company after illegally selling 5,000 phone cards bearing a portrait of its leaders, Franz Schoenhuber. Issued to mark Schoenhuber's 70th birthday, the cards sold for DM70 but were only good for DM12 worth of calls.

WHERE WE STAND

Facing mass unemployment, rampant employers equipped with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-won education, health and welfare services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis - an avoidable crisis created by the historic failure of its official leadership.

Socialist Outlook exists to fight for a new type of working class leadership, based on the politics of class struggle and revolutionary socialism, to tackle this crisis.

The capitalist class, driven and politically united by its own crisis, its requirement to maximise profits at the expense of the workers, has been given determined, vanguard leadership by a brutal class-war Tory high command.

The Tory strategy has been to shackle the unions with legislation, and to fragment and weaken the resistance of the working class and oppressed, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time, using the full powers of the state.

In response, most TUC and Labour leaders have embraced the defeatist politics of 'new realism', effectively proclaiming total surrender on every front, while ditching any pretence that they offer a socialist alternative. Every retreat and concession they have made to the employers and the government has simply fuelled and encouraged the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form taken by the politics of reformism, seeking no more than improved conditions within the framework of capitalist rule.

Socialist Outlook rejects reformism, not because we are against fighting for reforms, but because we know that the needs of the working class - for full employment, decent living standards, a clean environment, peace and democracy - can never be achieved under capitalism.

Nor, as we argued long before the collapse of Stalinism, could these demands ever be achieved under the bureaucratically deformed workers states and degenerated USSR, whose regimes survived only by repressing their own working class.

We are a marxist current, based not on the brutish totalitarian parodies of state marxism, nor on the tame, toothless version of 'marxism' beloved by armchair academics, but the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Our socialist alternative is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change. We fight to mobilise and unleash the power of the working class - the overwhelming majority of society - to topple the corrupt and reactionary rule of capital and establish its own class rule.

We struggle against fragmentation by building solidarity, working to link and unite the various struggles of workers, the unemployed, of women, of pensioners, of the black communities and ethnic minorities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth - and of those fighting imperialism in Ireland and throughout the world. *Socialist Outlook* is above all an internationalist current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises co-thinkers in 40 countries world-wide.

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

Nor do we believe that the demands of women, black people, lesbians and gays or the national demands of people in Scotland and Wales should be left to await the outcome of a socialist revolution. The oppressed must organise themselves and fight now around their own demands, which are a part of the struggle for socialism.

But propaganda alone, however good, will not bring socialism. The fight for policies which can mobilise and politically educate workers in struggle, must be taken into the unions, the Labour Party and every campaign and struggle in which workers and the oppressed fight for their rights.

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

If you agree with what you see in *Socialist Outlook*, and want to join with us in the struggle for socialism, readers' groups meet in many towns across the country. Contact us now, get organised, and get active!

YES, I agree with much of what I have seen in Socialist Outlook, and want to know more about readers' groups in my area.

Name

Address

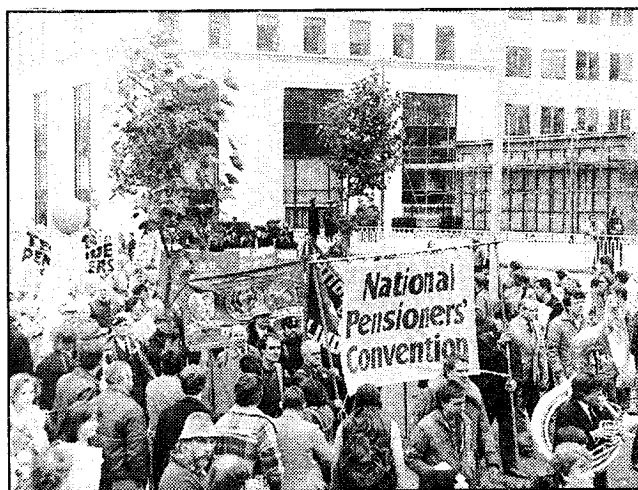
Phone

Send to: *Socialist Outlook*, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU

What's HAPPENING

WANT your event included? Send details to *What's Happening*, P.O. Box 1109 London N4 2UU.

As usual, we skip two issues this summer. The deadline for our next issue is 13 August. We return to the fortnightly schedule on 10 September.



Pensioners lobby Parliament Thursday 29

JULY

Wednesday 21

WORKERS Aid for Bosnia meeting 7.30pm Conway Hall Red Lion Square WC1 Holborn tube
ARA lobby of Bexley Council 6pm Civic Offices The Broadway Bexley Heath BR details 071 278 6869

THE RISE of the fascist right - Crisis in Germany and Italy Socialist Outlook public forum with Phil Hearse 7.30pm Union Club 723 Pershore Road Selly Park Birmingham
'THE NEW wave of anti-union attacks' - *Socialist Outlook* public meeting with Celia Dignan 7.45pm Queen's Head 66 Acton St WC1 Kings Cross BR

Thursday 22

SWANSEA Workers Aid for Bosnia public meeting 7.30pm Community Resource Centre The Strand by British Telecom
WORKERS Aid for Bosnia weekly organising meeting 7.30pm details 081 694 9799

PROTEST arrests of anti-Nazi protesters! 9.15am Victoria Courts Birmingham

Friday 23

WORKERS Aid for Bosnia meeting 7.30pm Northgate Community Centre Crawley INTERNATIONAL Youth Camp opens Jönköping southern Sweden tickets £187 including coach, meals & entrance

Saturday 24

MIDDLEBROOK Mushrooms rally 9.45am Selby RALLY on the tenth anniversary of anti-Tamil riots 1pm Portland Place W1 Oxford Circus tube organised by the International Federation of Tamils.

NUJ Left meeting 11am Queen's Head 66 Acton St WC1 Kings Cross BR

Sunday 25

TIMEX Strikers Comedy Benefit with Jo Brand John Hegely Mark Hurst and others Hackney Empire 291 Mare St E8 doors 7.30pm show 8.30pm £8/£7 Box Office 081 985 2424 details 071 733 5670

Monday 26

WEEKLY mass picket Revell and George 6am Cow Lane off Oldfield Rd Salford
WORKERS Aid for Bosnia meeting 7.30pm Colin Roach Centre 10a Bradbury Street N16

Tuesday 27

DEFEND the Bosnian people! Haringey Miners Support Group video showing 7.30pm Asian Community Centre Duckets Lane by Turnpike Lane tube
Workers Aid for Bosnia meeting 7.30pm Big Lounge Four Crescent Road Kingston-upon-Thames

SHOWING of Geoff Bell's film Why Britain should withdraw from Ireland 7.30pm Kingsbury Road Community Centre Erdington Birmingham

Wednesday 28

WORKERS Aid for Bosnia meeting with Geoff Ryan and Ken Livingstone MP 7.30pm Leary Constantine Centre Duden Hill Lane Willesden

Thursday 29

NEW world slaughter! Iraq, Somalia, Where will US imperialism strike next? Socialist Outlook public meeting with Phil Hearse 7.30pm Oxford Town Hall
PROTEST VAT on fuel! national lobby of Parliament

Friday 30

SOCIALIST Campaign Group Supporters Rally

7.30pm Mechanics Institute 103 Princess St Manchester

Saturday 31

REGGAE revival disco in support of the Burnsall's strikers Queen's Head Soho Road Birmingham
DEMONSTRATE for restoration of democratic rights in Nigeria! 10am from Tate library, by Lambeth Town Hall to Trafalgar Square details Cllr Yomi Buraimoh-Igbo 071 978 1449

OXFORD Socialist Outlook party 6pm onwards Southview Old Botley tickets £3/£1.50 children free food and glass of wine

AUGUST

Sunday 1

NATIONAL Conference on the anti-black Families Act Marcus Garvey Centre Lenton Boulevard Nottingham NG7 organised by National Black Caucus tickets £5/£3 details 0602 700896

HARINGEY Socialist Outlook social 3pm till late details 081 888 3421

Tuesday 3 & Wednesday 4

PICKET the committal proceedings of Stephen Lawrence's murderers! 9am Thames Magistrates Court Bow Road tube. Called by Stephen Lawrence Family Campaign

Saturday 7
HOPED-FOR departure date of Workers Aid for Bosnia convoy

Sunday 8

ARAFEST 2pm-8pm Burgess Park south London details and stall bookings 071 837 3797

SOCIALIST Movement fundraising cycling day details 0272 227768
NORTH London *Socialist Outlook* bridge tournament details 071 263 8289

Saturday 21

DEMONSTRATE against fascist terror in Germany! 1pm Piccadilly Gardens Manchester

Saturday 28

SOCIALIST Outlook summer school opens north Wales tickets £95/£35

OCTOBER

Saturday 16

CLOSE down BNP HQ! National demonstration called by ANL, YRE, Rolan Adams & Rohit Duggal Family Campaigns
NATIONAL demonstration called by Stephen Lawrence family Central London

Saturday 30 & Sunday 31

SOCIALIST Conference Chesterfield, freephone 0800 581611

Burnsall strikers embarrass Edmonds

By Bob Smith

BURNSALL strikers made a trip to the GMB's London headquarters on 14 July to demand official union support is restored to the dispute, the 52 outstanding Industrial Tribunals and the court cases of 12 supporters facing Public Order Act charges arising from scab attacks and police harassment.

GMB General Secretary John Edmonds refused to meet the strikers or to make a future appointment.

Instead assistant Dave Hewitt was sent to the striker's impromptu press conference, to say the dispute was 'considered unwinnable' and that he

would give no guarantees on the legal position. The strikers will continue the dispute despite the GMB leadership's contempt and treachery.

The Birmingham Support Group called on the union to justify the closure of the dispute, demanding they still defend the strikers industrial tribunals, court cases, and distribute donations to the fund.

The strikers had been out for 54 weeks when the GMB closed down the dispute without consulting them or calling for a vote.

They only received their union cards and found out where their branch met (indeed, that they had one) on the day the strike was ended. Throughout the dispute the union has shown contempt for the strikers, who are mainly black (11

are Punjabi women), and their culture. Rarely was a translator available. The documentation was entirely English.

With brutal treachery like this, it is difficult to see how women, blacks, youth, and low paid workers can be tempted into trades union membership. Which has fallen from over ten million to under six million since 1979. With treachery, no wonder membership declines.

A new strike fund, obviously separate from the GMB, is to be set up.

Birmingham Support Group 021-551 4679 meets every Monday
Indian Workers' Association, Soho Road.

London Support Group 071-713 7907

Socialist Movement Network

Sixth SOCIALIST CONFERENCE at The Winding Wheel Chesterfield Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 October 1993

THE SOCIALIST Movement/Network presents a weekend of non-sectarian discussion, debate, information, ideas (... and fun). Looking beyond the Age of the Individual and the Free Market, the theme of the conference will be **Opting In ...**

● **the fight for democratic public services**
● **and a sustainable and equal economics to pay for them.**

Confirmed speakers so far:

TONY BENN MP, new book - *Common Sense*
MOSES MAYEKISO South African National Civic Organisation

HILARY WAINWRIGHT, new book - *Arguments for a New Left*

Plus many activists from trade union and community campaigns to defend and improve public services; and socialist, green and feminist economics working on alternative economic strategies. Space for self-organised workshops. **Creche**. Disabled access.

Food and bars. Saturday night benefit for the Chesterfield Labour Club Appeal.

Socialist Movement/Network 1 Newton Street Manchester M1 1HW or Freephone Answerphone 0800 581611.

HOME NEWS

Socialist OUTLOOK



Can the bureaucrats smash the link?

Smith and union chiefs agree

Ganging up

against workers

JOHN SMITH'S ambition fundamentally to undermine Labour's links to the unions came a step closer to fruition this month when a meeting of the party's working group appeared to give him everything he wanted.

Statements after the meeting by TGWU and GMB leaders – who had been represented at the meeting – that the document was just a 'basis for discussion' were a lame apology.

The aim of the Labour leadership, 'one member one vote' (OMOV) remains intact.

In the meantime they are prepared to accept a 'compromise', which will involve a 'levy plus' arrangement, giving members of affiliated unions the right to vote in the party if they pay a supplementary fee – making them the equivalent of 'full party members'.

Establishing such a system, which would require unions to maintain immensely complex registers of their various categories of members, would take a long time. Publicis-

ing the arrangement and persuading any measurable number of workers to pay up a supplement on their union dues would take even longer.

It would probably prove impossible to run: in practice the 'levy plus' system seems to be being deliberately set up to fail – a mere staging post to OMOV.

In the immediate term, because of the delays in setting it running, 'levy-plus' is a certain recipe for conducting the next round of parliamentary selection on the basis of 'one member, one vote' – the system publicly opposed by both GMB and TGWU leaders because it undermines the principle of union affiliation.

GMB leader John Edmonds, together with Arthur Scargill, has rightly identified the link between Smith's obsession with breaking the union link and the utter failure of the Labour leadership to effectively campaign against the Tories.

But unlike Scargill, Edmonds and his fel-

low right wing union leaders bear the main responsibility for successively backing Kinnock and then Smith in their conception of what the Labour Party ought to become.

Indeed the fatal flaw in Edmond's critique is that he has no real alternative.

Moreover it is obvious that Edmonds and his ilk are concerned only to protect the personal influence of top national bureaucrats. This is why they concentrate only on national policies and the election of the party leader. They are ready to sell out on the more localised process of selecting MPs, which affects ordinary union members.

Meanwhile Smith is undermining the stated objective of his campaign: that Labour must become a 'mass party' on the model of the million-strong German SPD.

While Smith struggles to break the union link, Labour's individual membership is falling, in some paces drastically.

There is no need to look far to discover why: the millions of people bitterly opposed

to the Tories are totally underwhelmed by Labour's performance, its lack of campaigning, its lack of a clear alternative programme, its capitulation to the Tories on the most fundamental economic questions.

Every concession Smith squeezes out of the union leaders in the arm-twisting before Labour conference is a blow against building a real mass party which fights for a working class alternative.

The danger now is that the strong mandates agreed by the union conferences will not be respected, and a compromise on Smith's terms will be agreed – striking another blow against democracy.

The Tories are looking on in undisguised glee. Smashing up the Labour Party as a party with strong *organised* links with the unions was always part and parcel of the Thatcherite agenda. Now they hope to sit back and let Smith do the job they failed to do with their legislation on union affiliation.

It is up to the left to stop them!

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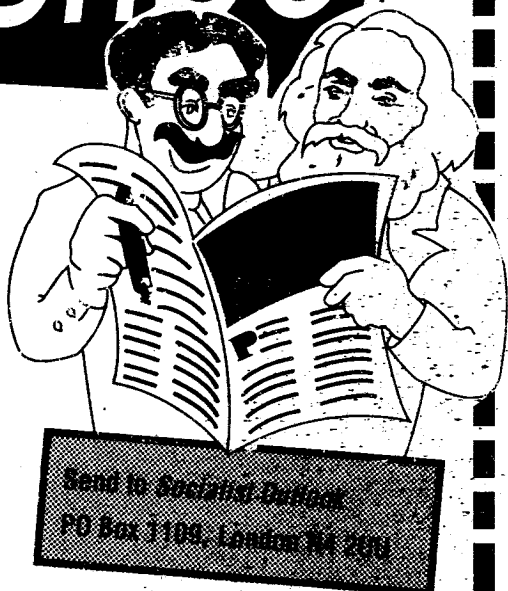
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