

71

Socialist OUTLOOK

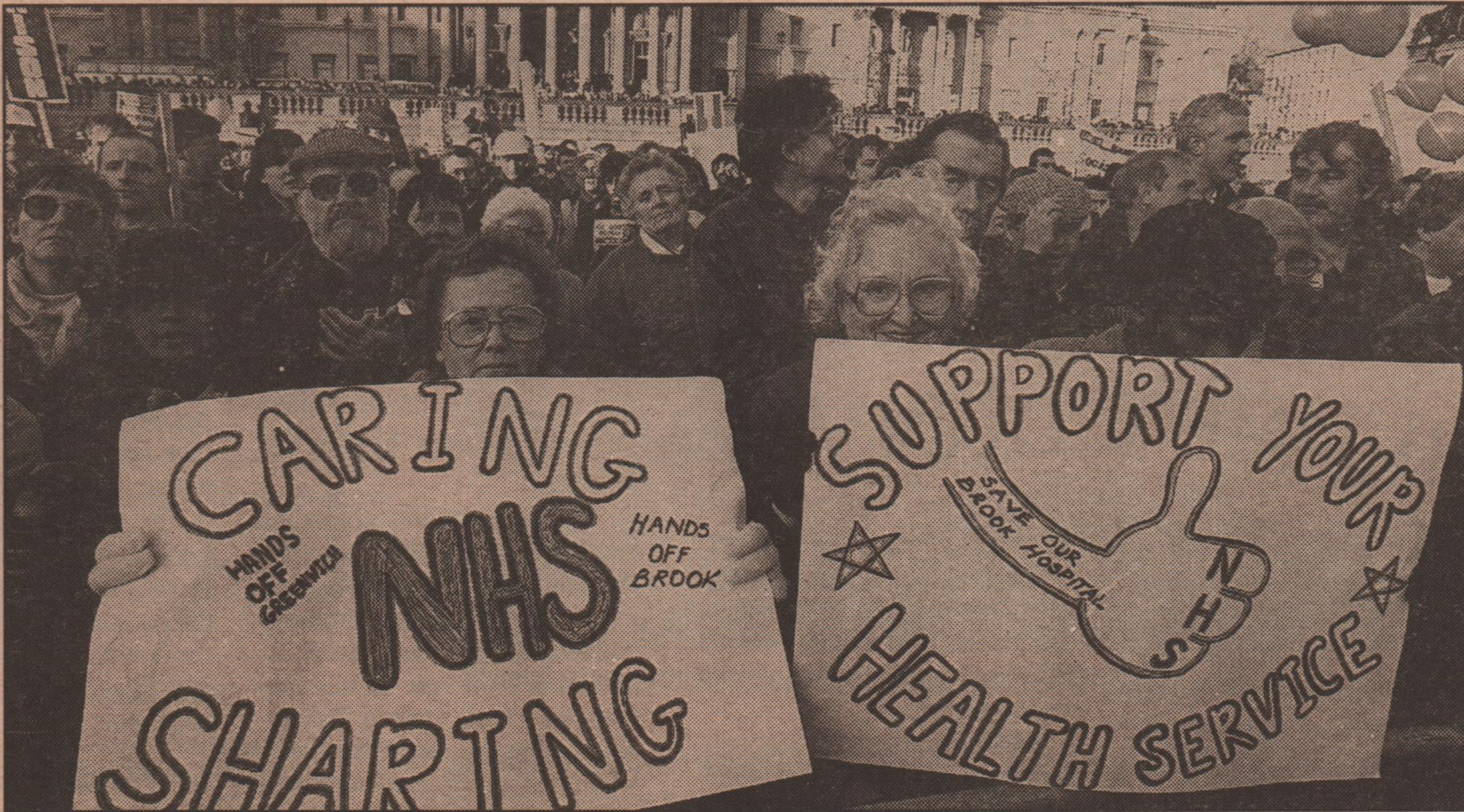
A Fighting socialist
programme - 7-10

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50p ● November 19 1994 ● 30BF ● 5FF ● \$1 ● 2DM ● 1500 lire ● f1



Pensioners face double whammy as health care comes under the axe



£5 billion cuts target: Clarke

Budget threat to welfare state

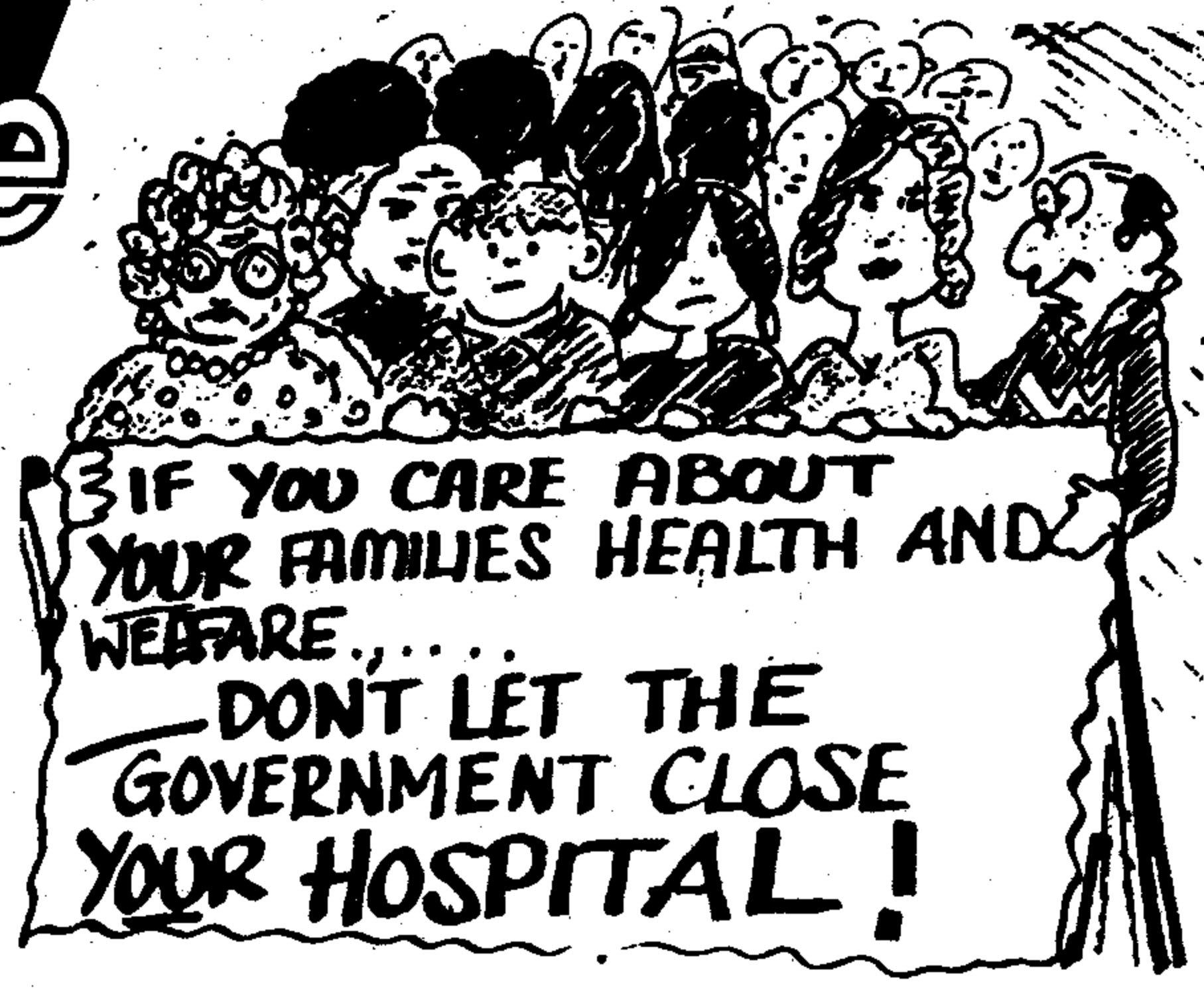
Welfare State Network
**BUDGET DAY LOBBY OF
PARLIAMENT**

defend pensions, benefits and education

TUESDAY 29 NOVEMBER

Assemble 1.30pm at the lobby gate

Defend the Welfare State



IN BRIEF

Hidden housing costs

THE LINK between poor housing and poor health has been underlined once more by a high-powered alliance of health and housing organisations.

The Standing Conference on Public Health argues that poor housing costs as much as £2 billion a year in medical bills, social help and police time.

Cold damp living conditions lead to greater numbers of accidents, illnesses and distress, especially among children.

Labour council wields axe

KNOWSLEY's right wing Labour council has imposed brutal

means-tested charges on day-care centres for people with learning difficulties.

Many have fallen into arrears with the charges, which average £5 per week from poverty-line benefits, and will be confronted with the council's full arrears collection process, which ends with court action and bailiffs.

Under the old system all clients paid a flat-rate £1.50 per week.

Edgware NHS campaigners scent victory

By Harry Sloan

OVER 300 angry residents packed into a public meeting on November 1 to oppose the closure of casualty and acute services at Edgware Hospital in north London.

The meeting, called by the local Barnet health authority as the final 'public consultation', was unusual in allowing a platform space for the local Hands Off Our Hospitals campaign.

After the health authority presentation had been received with stony silence punctuated by occasional heckling, Campaign spokesperson John Lister won rousing applause when he denounced the plans as motivated by government cash cuts.

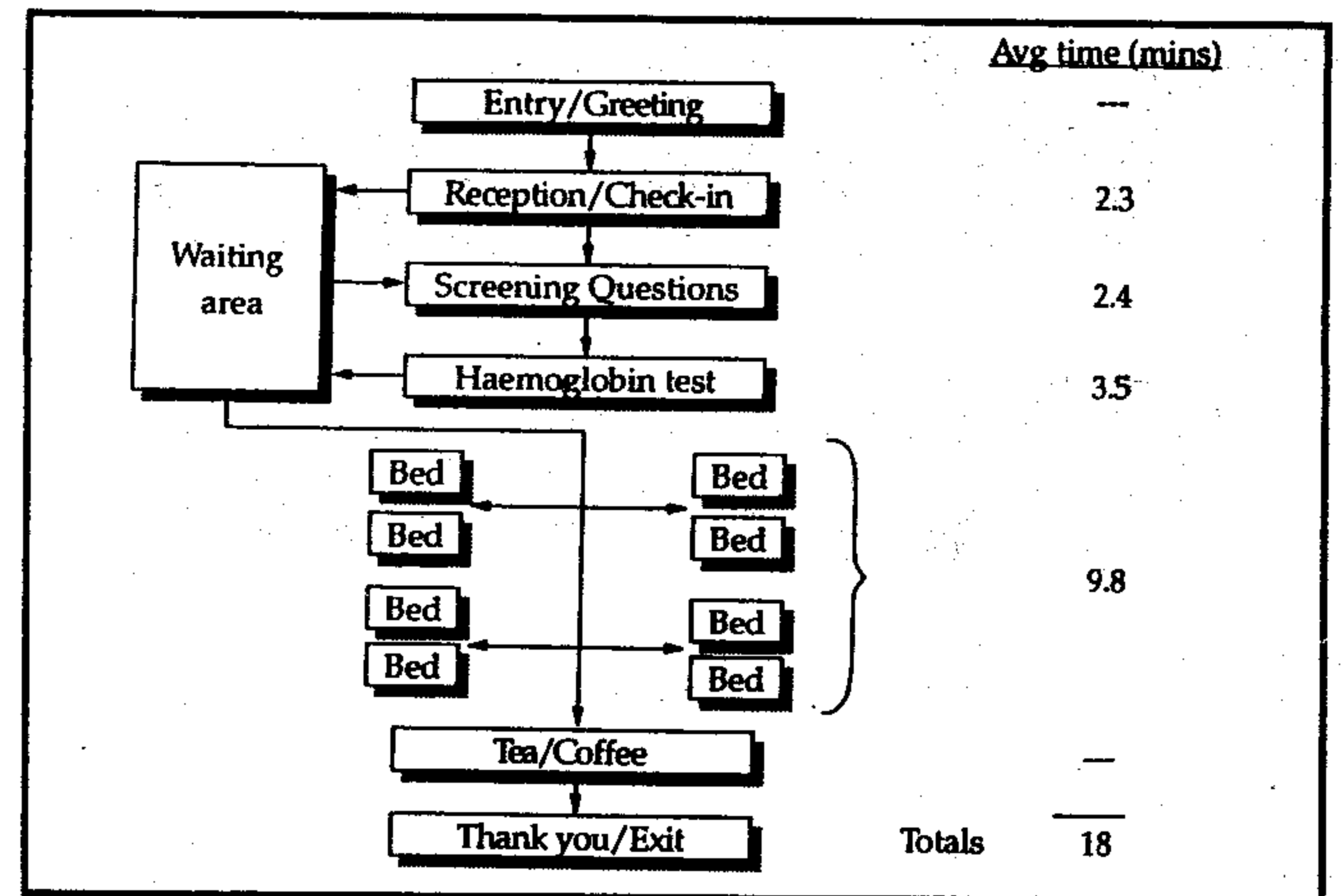
Strong speeches from the floor against the closure plans included the Tory Mayor of Harrow, pensioners and patients

from all three boroughs affected, and a speaker from the local ex-servicemen's club, who won a standing ovation for his bluntly-worded attack on the health authority and overpaid NHS managers.

Campaigners at the door collected several hundred pounds in donations, including a shamefaced donation from the health authority's main speaker!

Near-unanimous

With near-unanimous, all-party local opposition to the scheme - with all four Tory MPs opposed, and only one of the 183 councillors in the three boroughs of Brent, Harrow and Barnet (the chair of the health authority) prepared to vote in favour - there are real hopes that the government can be forced to step in and halt the Barnet plan, giving campaigners a historic victory.



In and out in 18 minutes: accountants target donors

Bloody furious!

By Terry Smith

1,000 people crowded in to a Liverpool public meeting opposing plans to axe the local Regional Blood Transfusion Centre, along with four other regional centres across the country.

The plans, put forward by yet another Tory-appointed quango, the National Blood Authority, have been almost unanimously condemned, with opponents including Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, Oxford University, and hundreds of thousands who have signed petitions circulated by the threatened centres in Liverpool, Lancaster, Oxford, Brentwood and Plymouth.

A detailed response published by the Staff Side of the NBA warns that the cost-cutting plans, designed to slash NBA spending by £10-£12 million from a £135m budget, would break up scientific teams, lose thousands of specialist donors and risk a total collapse of the service.

Hospitals in North Wales, for example could face increased bills for blood supplies of up to £2m a year, bringing elective heart and hip surgery to a grinding halt, or forcing cuts elsewhere.

Among the proposals put forward by the management con-

sultants behind the new scheme was a plan to increase the 'throughput' of mobile blood collection teams by halving the length of time to draw a unit of blood from each donor. In place of the current legal minimum of 17.5 minutes 'bleed time', each patient would get just 9.5 minutes, and be rushed in and out in a total of just 18 minutes!

The same firm suggested savings of up to £500,000 a year from keeping blood at room temperature instead of under refrigeration, though they admitted this would increase the bacteria content of the blood.

Hidden agenda

The hidden agenda behind these proposals is a drive towards privatisation of the blood service, and the sale of cheaper British blood products on the potentially lucrative European market.

But if donors discover they are being exploited, tens of thousands will vote with their feet, creating a potentially devastating shortage of blood for vital operations and other treatment.

The hasty 2-month consultation on the plans has now ended, but the pressure of campaigning must be sustained to ensure that the issue remains in the public eye, and that the proposals are defeated.

Banks kill off 'white elephant' private hospital

By Terry Smith

IT WAS opened proudly by Scottish Secretary Iain Lang - and closed by market forces.

Just six months after it opened, the most expensive private hospital in Britain has called in the receivers.

The Clydebank-based Health Care International conceded defeat when they could not find bankers willing to bail out this year's expected £15 million deficit on the lavish £180 million hospital complex, £30m of which had been underwritten by the Tory government.

Glasgow's Evening Times

has had fun listing all the ways £30m could have been spent to benefit Scotland's NHS.

But while the opposition of the Scottish public to the new hospital project was vocal and predictable, it is hard to see why bankers were prepared even to contemplate such a reckless and ludicrous scheme. In the midst of the rampant sleaze debate, questions are being asked about where some of the money went.

The hospital cost almost three times as much to build as a district general hospital for the NHS, but has only 260 beds. Yet it also has 21 operating theatres, compared with

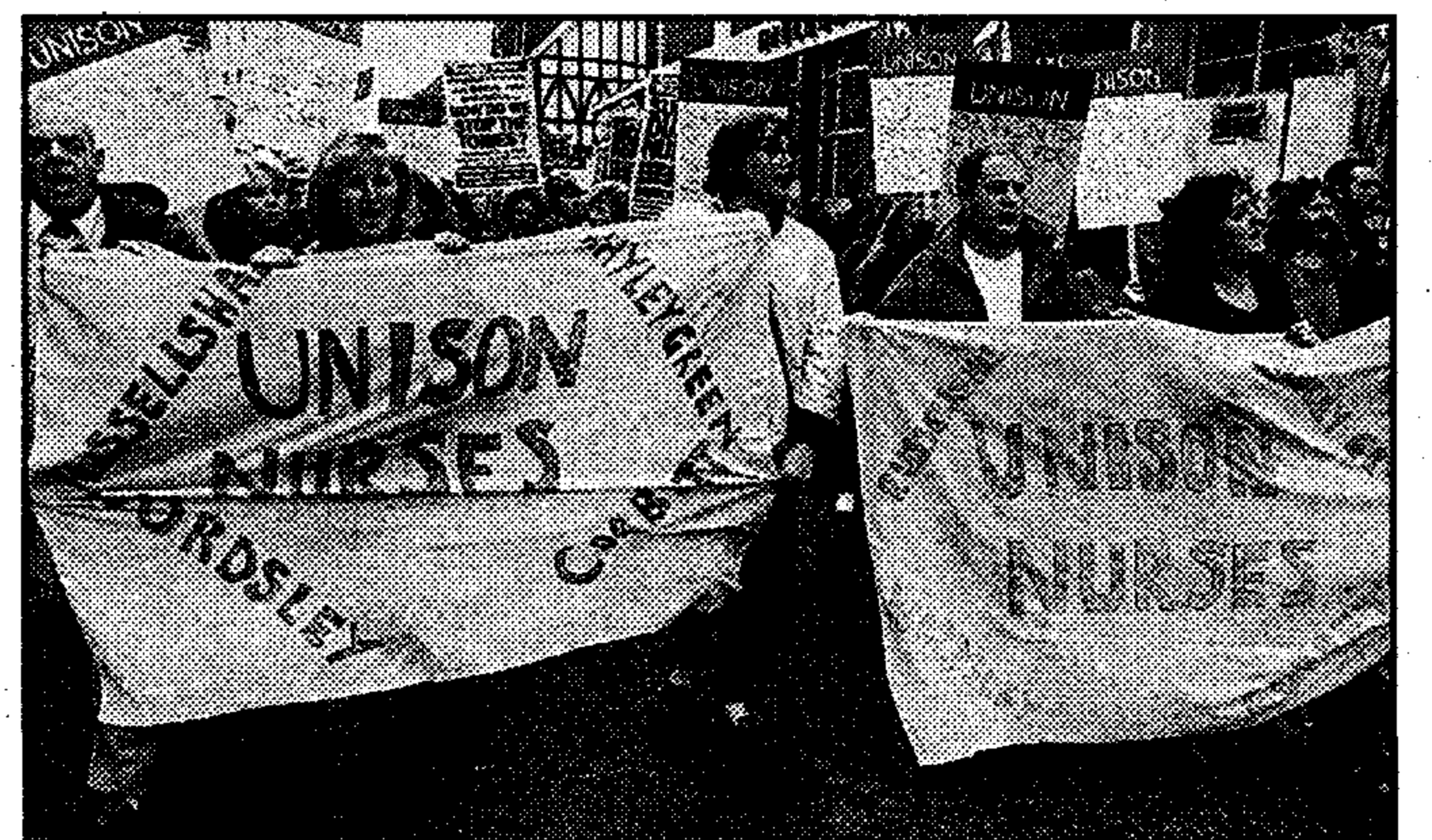
just five in an equivalent sized NHS specialist hospital. There is an attached 160-bed luxury hotel, which always depended upon the success of the hospital.

In theory the Clydebank hospital was to act as a magnet, drawing in lucrative specialist cases from the wealthy elite of the Middle East, Greece and Italy.

But the number of overseas patients using British private hospitals has slumped in recent years to just 3 percent of the British private market. Most of these go to prestigious London hospitals, whose names are already established.

It turns out that to make a

Money no object for private hospitals as NHS is slashed



profit the Clydebank hospital would have needed to attract a third of all the overseas private patients treated in Britain.

Attempts to diversify by pulling in cash and contracts from health authorities in Britain failed to make any substantial dent in the rampant debts of the doomed operation.

When the firm went belly-up there were just 20 patients in the £180m hospital.

As the boss of the Independent Health Care Association told the Financial Times "The trouble is that it is too

big, it is in the wrong place, and it opened at the wrong time".

Now MPs from the Public Accounts Committee are to probe the investment of £30m of government cash in what has become known as the Scottish De Lorean, while Greater Glasgow Health Board seeks to close 1,000 NHS beds.

Like the failed car firm, HCI promised to create jobs. But instead of the projected 1,800, only 400 staff were employed, just 53 of them from Clydebank.

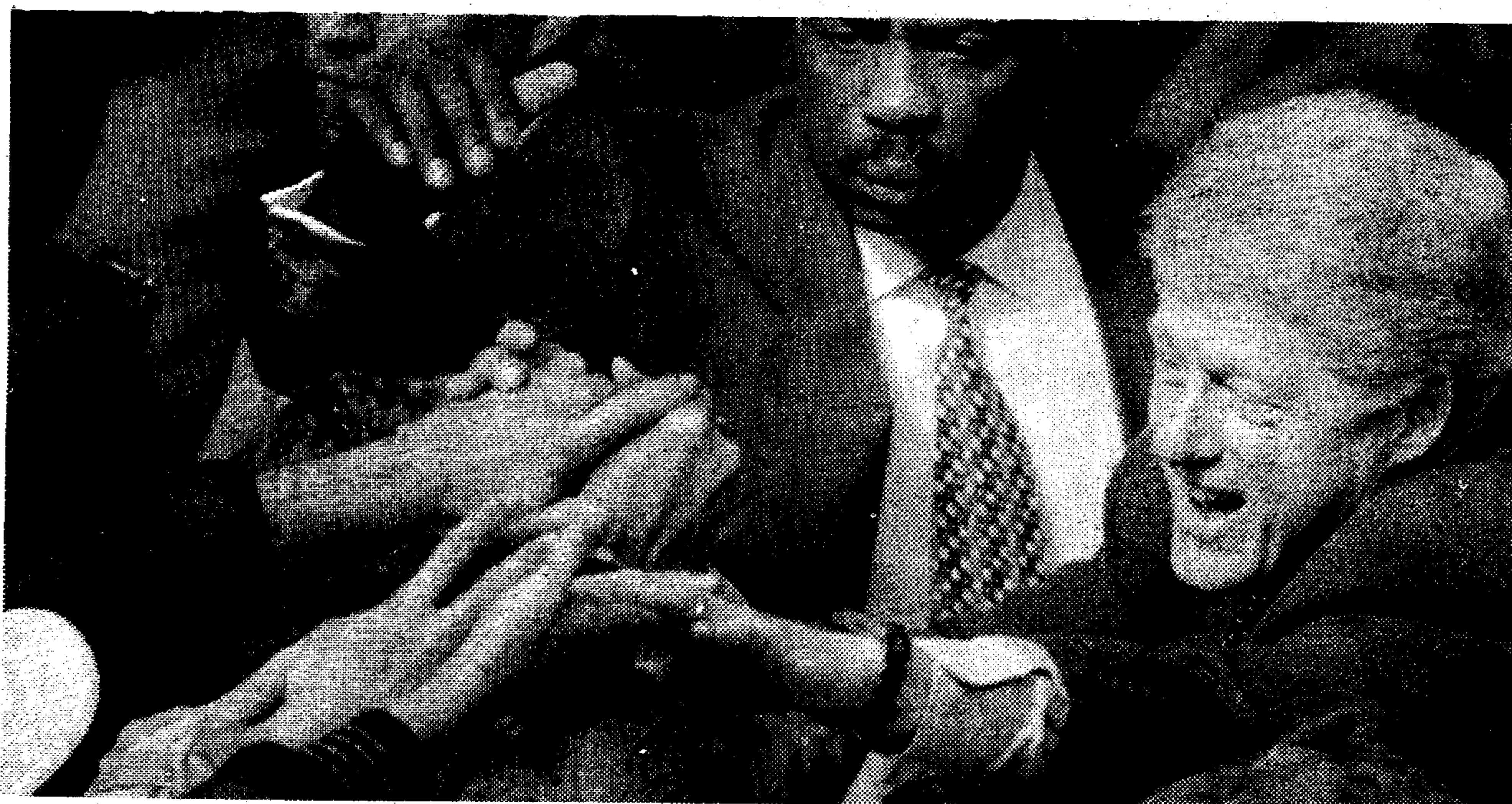
Will Blair follow Clinton's blind alley?

THE CRUSHING electoral defeat suffered by US President Bill Clinton in the November elections should sound a warning note for even the most complacent of Labour's right wing leadership.

While Tony Blair's 'modernisers' set out to scrap Clause 4, sever Labour's remaining link with the working class, and remodel the party along the lines of Clinton's Democrats, November showed that this is no automatic road to electoral success.

There is no doubts that US workers expected to make gains, and have been more willing to struggle for their rights since Clinton's election. There has been a four-fold increase in strike-days during 1994, with unions actually beginning to reverse their long decline in membership.

But the Democratic Party remains as it always was, a *bosses'* party, unambiguously committed to capitalism and to US imperialism.



Reach out and touch somebody: now Clinton is reaching out to Republicans

Coalition

It is an uneasy coalition, with relatively few 'liberals' coexisting alongside a hard core of conservative reactionaries, notably in what were the old Democratic strongholds of the southern states.

When Alabama's right wing senator Richard Shelby announced his defection to the Republicans, nobody would have noticed any serious change of political ideology.

The Democrats embrace the demands of big business on the one hand, and the need to win votes from blacks, hispanics and other oppressed groups on the other.

One result has been Clinton's feeble and half-baked reforms to health care, for which he crusaded during the Presidential elections, only to find his scheme paralysed by the lack of support from his own party in Congress.

And while millions of unemployed and low-paid US workers have seen their living standards stagnate or fall, they have seen Clinton spelling out new plans to get tough on welfare claimants, and

squander a massive \$30 billion on a crime bill that would boost prison-building and put 100,000 more cops on the streets.

Many of Clinton's problems are too easily brushed aside as irrelevant by Blair's coterie of admirers and advisors in Britain.

The architect of Neil Kinnock's electoral defeats, Peter Mandelson, in a complacent assessment in the *Guardian*, puts much of the blame for the setbacks onto Clinton's personal problems (Whitewater, women and the like), and smugly expects Blair to do better.

He also blames Clinton's poor choice of a White House team. But labour activists looking at the lacklustre performance of Blair's toothless front bench, or his even more wretched clique of back-room spin-doctors, will be far from reassured that a similar problem is not in store for a Labour government.

Mandelson repeats his view that Labour should put no policies on taxation until the last minute, for fear of scaring

away voters or making promises that can't be kept. As if two more years of evasions and empty sound-bites could galvanise the enthusiasm of the British working class.

Increased taxation of the rich should be a popular campaigning slogan to appeal to the working class, not a shame-faced confession.

Predictable

What is clear from Clinton's failure – and was predictable from the outset – is that a party tied hand and foot to the interests of big capital can only be as 'radical' as the capitalists will allow.

As Tony Blair touts his timid programme around, gathering plaudits from polite gatherings of British bankers and industrialists, we should reflect that Clinton's failure has not just ushered in a new influx of Bible-bashing Republicans to Congress and state governorships, but opened the door to outright *racist* poli-

cies, like the endorsement of Proposition 187 in California, designed to withdraw schooling and healthcare from the families of 'illegal' immigrants.

As Clinton buckles down to negotiate with Republican leaders on a package of welfare cuts and tax reductions, and seeks new Congressional allies on the 'left' of the Republican Party, we see again that the Democrats, floating free from any roots in the working class movement, function purely as a capitalist party.

The US working class needs a Labour Party that will represent the class interests of workers, of blacks, hispanics, and other oppressed minorities, of women, of youth, and the millions of unemployed.

Come to think of it, so do the British workers.

That's why Blair's 'modernising' offensive against Clause 4 and the very notion of socialism must be stopped before it ends in Clinton-style fiasco.

Workers' control not immigration control

ALL IMMIGRATION controls are racist. This was the conclusion of the Oxford day school of Sunday November 13 held by the Campaign to Close Down Campsfield.

Steve Cohen the main speaker and author of "workers control not immigration control" explained the importance of the issue for the labour movement. He showed how controls started in 1905 against Jewish immigrants and how even progressive leaders like Tom Mann supported them.

He dealt with the internment of Jews in the 1930's and how the first post war controls against black migrants were also supported by sections of the trade union movement – for example, it was TGWU policy.

It emerged from the discussions that in battling against present day immigration controls we are fighting 90 years of ingrained policy.

But there is a whole hidden history of opposition to be discovered

and related – it involves in particular those most effected. Steve Cohen argued that official Labour Party policy of opposing only "racist immigration controls" is totally misguided – it serves only to demobilise resistance.

Junie James chair of the Afro Caribbean Association went through some of the experiences of Oxford people and argued that the immediacy of other issues such as housing made it difficult to get black people involved. This started a lively debate which concluded with an agreement to work more closely with the ACA.

Charles Kukwikila a spokesperson for a Zairian refugee association spoke on the history of Belgian colonialism in the Congo. He stressed that economic migration was the result of imperialist distortion of the world economy and that people should have the right to move in order to survive. The discussion centred on the need for a far better appreciation of the poli-

tics of the countries of the refugees and migrants.

The final session of the day planned for events in the future in particular the picket of Harmondsworth detention centre, the anniversary demonstration on Saturday November 26 and the march to London that starts on November 30.

SUPPORT THE REFUGEES: SUPPORT THE IMMIGRATION PRISONERS

Picket Harmondsworth detention centre

Saturday December 3, 12 noon – 1.30 pm

Called by Ealing Trades Council and the Campaign to Close Campsfield

Economic Policies for FULL EMPLOYMENT and Defence of the WELFARE STATE

National Conference convened by the Campaign to Defend the Welfare State and the Full Employment Forum

Saturday 3 December


Congress House

Great Russell St, WC1

Individuals £6/£3; Organisations £50 - £10 depending on size. Write for details to CDWS, PO Box 188, London SW1A 0SG.

EDITORIAL

DEFEND Clause IV



Socialism is still a new idea

OVER two hundred Labour Party and trade union activists were at the launch of the Campaign to Defend Clause Four.

It was agreed to try to unite all those committed to keeping the clause. It will involve all those in favour of addendums and additions but be centred on retention.

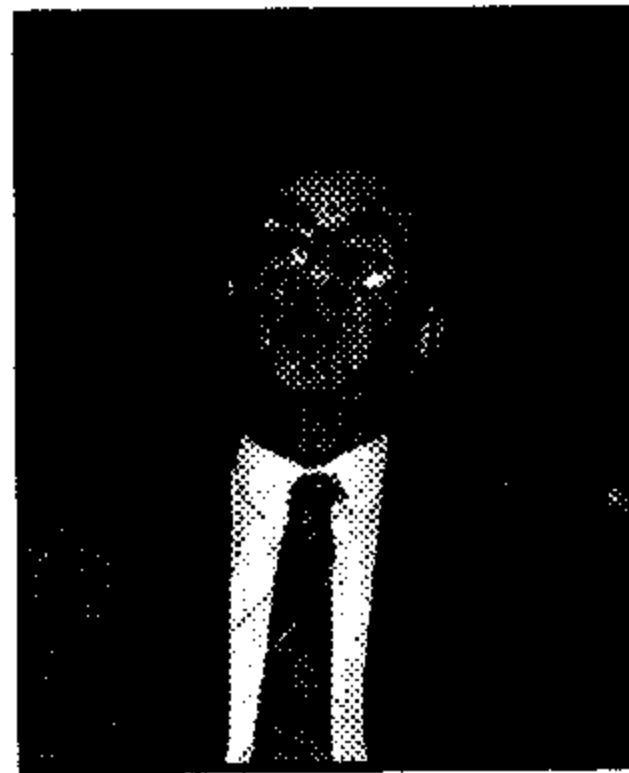
Speakers suggested that giving Blair the opportunity of a face saving new statement of aims and objectives that includes the clause would only be acceptable if

there was a massive campaign for retention.

The officers of the campaign are to be Arthur Scargill, Alan Simpson MP and Doreen Cameron the President of NATFHE.

The first committee will be on Sunday December 4 at 12 noon in the Lucas Arms, Gray's Inn Road, King's Cross open to all supporters — only delegates from labour movement bodies/broad lefts will have votes.

To affiliate: send a minimum of £10 to Defend Clause IV—Defend Socialism c/o NUM, 2 Huddersfield Road, Barnsley S70 2LS.



Stan Newens MEP

We say: No redraft, no retreat

by Dave Packer

CLAUSE FOUR is not a full socialist programme. It does not propose popular control of the market — nationalisation of the banks and the main sectors of production under popular democratic control is a key part of a socialist vision of society.

Socialism is still a *new idea* — one that breaks from the old failed Lib-Lab class collaboration Blair is preparing for us. His proposals are a retreat to the nineteenth century.

It is not the socialists who are the dinosaurs but the backward looking Lib-Labers.

The capitalist class and their representatives in parliament together with their friends in the mass media hate Clause Four — almost as much as they despise the trade union link.

Unfortunately the new right wing offensive initiated at Labour Party conference has more chance of success than Gaitskell's previous attack. This is



Opponents of Clause IV are dinosaurs

because the long years of defeatist "New Realism" have drained the labour movement of confidence.

It is tragic therefore that sections of the erstwhile left have refused to defend the clause. Their "redraft" is totally insufficient. The real problem is that the ideas of Clause Four have never

been put into practice.

State ownership of the utilities and a modicum of wealth redistribution through progressive taxation would be quite acceptable to the anti-socialist right of the party as well as to a number of Liberals.

Formal reference to a "socialism" devoid of all radicalism is no use to any one. It is the content not the word that matters. As they stand both the soft left and Blair options are perfectly acceptable to the capitalist class.

Unlike the original, the redraft has little to do with socialism. The new campaign *Defend Clause Four — Defend Socialism* is right to fight for unamended retention. This should also be the task of left leaders in parliament and the unions.

Defend clause four, *implement* clause four, fight for a socialist alternative.

Clinton clones sow seeds of defeat

By Arthur Scargill

A CAMPAIGN is being waged for the very soul of the Labour Party. This is not new or without precedent.

Ramsey MacDonald wanted to change the Labour Party and its constitution. Hugh Gaitskell wanted to remove clause four. It took a miners' leader and the movement to stop it.

Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, the Clinton clones, want an American-style Democratic Party. Any one naïve enough to think that they will be satisfied with just the removal of Clause Four is living in cloud cuckoo land.

The next step would be "we want a new name; one that is more acceptable; one that doesn't jar; one that is acceptable to the city of London".

History is littered with leaders and leaderships who ignored at their peril ordinary men and women who sought only common justice and a better way of life.

We've got in real terms five million without a job and at least ten million below the poverty line. There are hundreds of thousands homeless. What an obscenity to witness on televi-

sion Labour's leaders greeting the captains of industry, wining and dining them at £300 a head at Labour Party conference.

The thing that concerns me most is the differing views emerging from the left elements within our movement. We have a certain group of MPs and magazines like *Tribune* coming out with new variations. The wordsmiths are working overtime to sell something that they believe will be acceptable to Tony Blair.

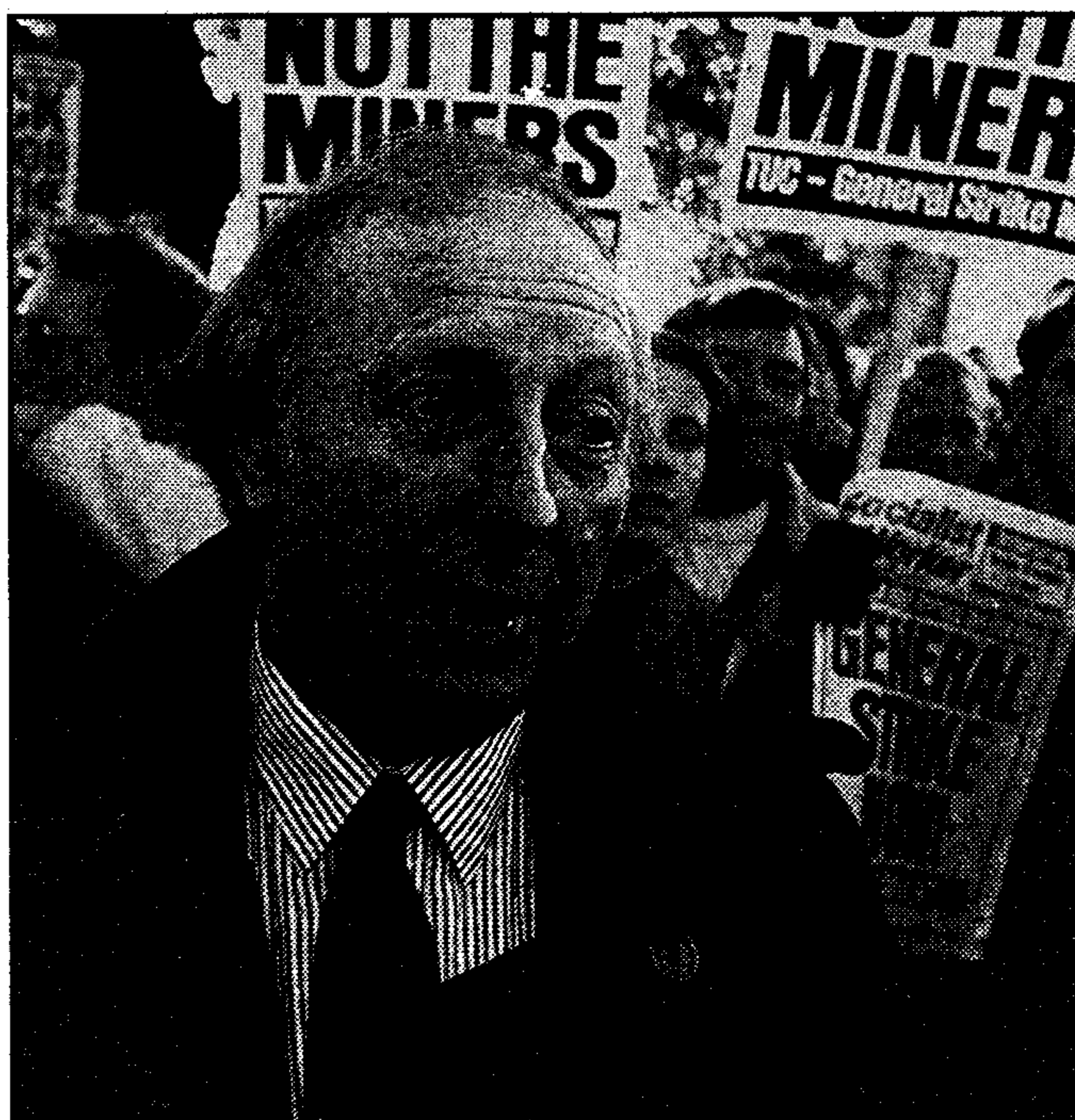
There is no alternative, nor should there be any alternative. It's the very soul of our party that's being attacked.

Down the line

No fancy words. No dressing up of the arguments. Straight down the line defend clause four — defend socialism.

I speak with the full support of the National Union of Mineworkers. We are committed to Clause Four because it is also part of our constitution.

I say to all those inside and outside Parliament, inside the party and the trade union movement "remember the struggle ever since the party was born". It has been on the basis that we are different from parties who support capitalism.



Fully backing the clause: Arthur Scargill

It is Clause Four that marks this party out from the Tories and Liberal Democrats. It establishes a clear identity and one that has seen victory in at least five different general elections.

We should fight to retain Clause Four in its entirety and demand that there are no changes. Not a dot. Not a comma. Not a word.

We should say to Tony Blair

and to the leadership that we not only want to retain clause four but that we want you at the next general election to show our class the same loyalty and dedication that the Tories show to their class. You should help implement the kind of policies that will create an equal society. One where helplessness, unemployment and indignity will be consigned to the dustbin of history.

HOME NEWS

Hear Arthur
Scargill
speak on
Clause IV:

Manchester

Friday
Nov 18

7.30 Mechanics
Institute

Nottingham

Friday
Nov 25

7.30pm
Congregational
Hall, Castlegate

Leeds

Wednesday
Dec 7

7.30 Civic Hall

Support grows for Right to Strike conference

by Toby Stephens

BOTH the London and East Anglian Regional Councils of the Fire Brigades Union will be sending large delegations to the Fight For the Right To Strike Conference being held in Birmingham on 26 November.

John Ryan, a London Regional Council member, reports that Council other members were queuing up to get details when he raised the issue at a recent meeting.

Arthur Scargill writes in the current issue of *Trade Union News*

"I welcome the forthcoming Right To Strike conference, and agree wholeheartedly with its organisers on the need to fight to remove all restrictions on strike action, and to give solidarity to those who challenge the current shackles on the right

to strike.

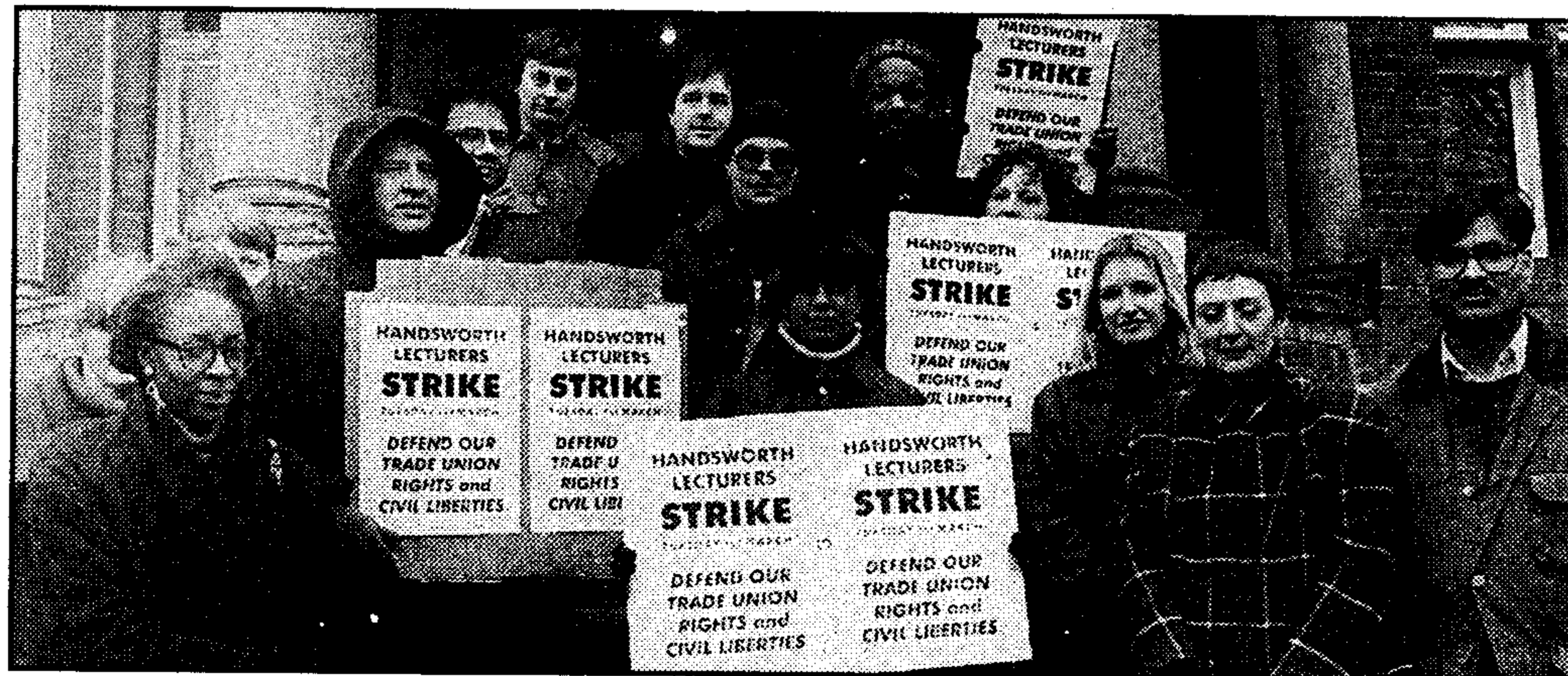
"Such a call is certainly in line with resolutions on anti trade union legislation which year after year the NUM puts forward at the TUC conference.

The NUM's position is very clear. We call for defiance of unjust laws which attack basic rights and trade unionism itself'.

Sponsors

The conference has attracted a whole host of labour movement sponsors including the National Union of Journalists and over thirty National Executive members from the GPMU, NCU, NUM, NUT, RMT and UNISON and many more regional and branch activists.

Moves are afoot for NATFHE, the college lecturers union, to also affiliate nationally. "It has been like pushing on an open door" report the conference organisers.



NATFHE strikers faced new court restrictions on their rights

"We seem to have hit on an issue which seriously concerns many trade unionists, but which most trade unions nationally are doing nothing about."

The organisers hope that the conference will set up a representative committee to campaign to change the anti strike laws, and to support strikers hit by those laws i.e. nearly all of them.

■ **Directions: From Birmingham New Street station take a 45 or 47 bus from Stephenson Square.**

Fight for the Right to Strike

CONFERENCE

Saturday 26 November

10am - 5 pm The Union Club
723 Pershore Rd **Birmingham**

SPEAKERS:

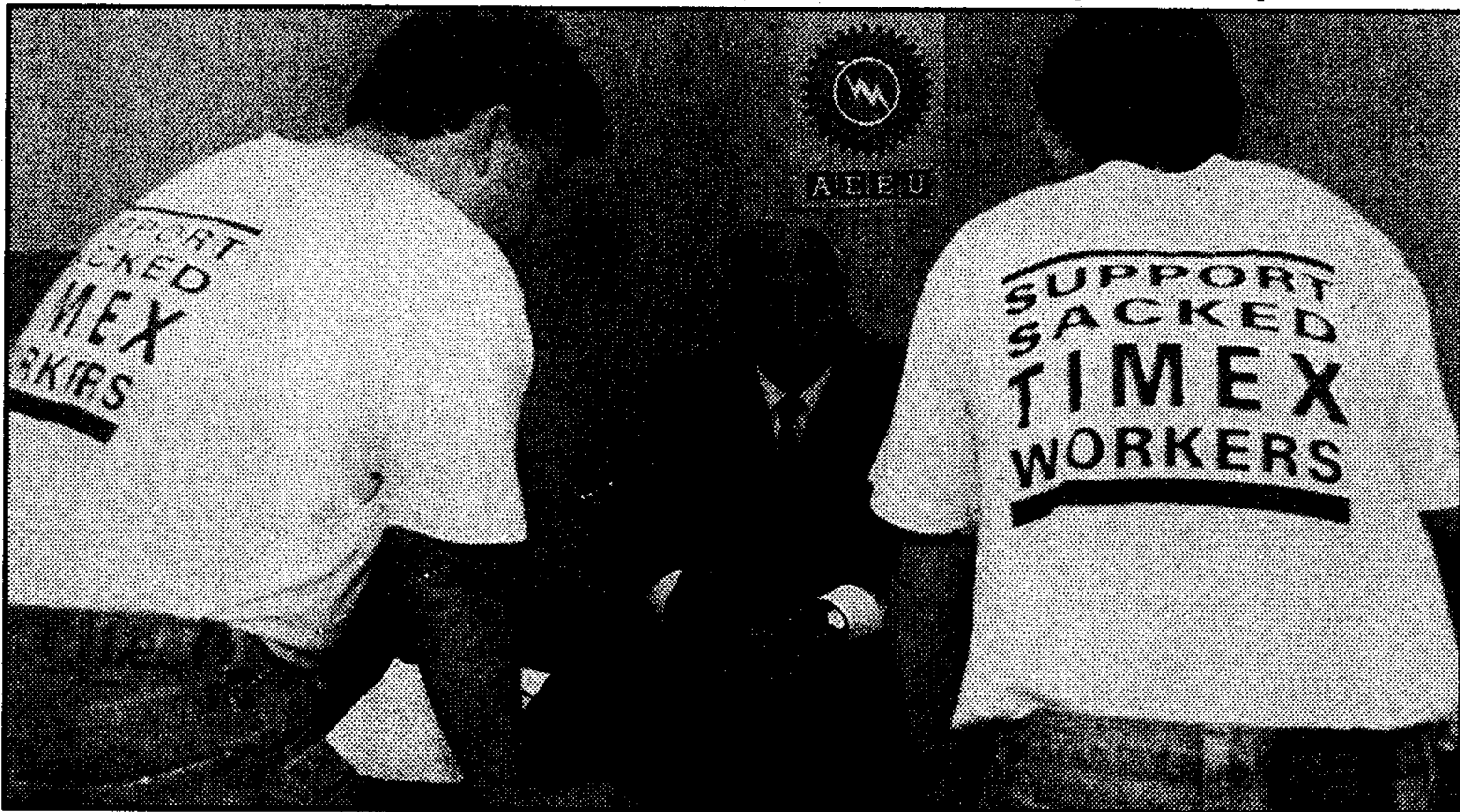
KEN CAMERON Gen Sec FBV

DOREEN CAMERON Pres NATFHE

BOB CROWE Ass Gen Sec RMT

BILL WEDDERBURN LSE

Jointly organised by the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee, Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network, Public Sector Alliance, Trade Union News and the Birmingham, Oxford and Lambeth Trades Councils.
• £20 sponsoring organisations • £8 delegates • £5 individuals • £3 unwaged • Send cheques payable to 'Right to Strike Conference' to PO Box 6498, London N1 1QW.



Lions led by donkeys: Timex strikers faced the law and a right wing union bureaucracy

Protests stamp out Heseltine's PO sell-off

By a postal worker

THE TORY climb down over Post Office privatisation has not resolved many of the problems that remain in the industry.

An early indication of the government's intention will be the money claimed back from the Post Office by Clarke's November Budget. This has risen from £60 million to £213m in the last three years.

Any reduction would indicate a shift in government policy. This is extremely unlikely given current attacks on the public sector. This means the Post Office will remain on the political agenda.

The Post Office board now operates more like a private firm than a public sector company. Each part of the Post Office is now a separate "business" with each aiming to achieve a profit.

Increasing levies imposed by the Treasury have led to a con-

certed management attack on the workforce, with the aim of increasing profits.

The Union of Communication Workers offers 'greater commercial freedom' as the solution. The strategy is based on the BBC deal with Pearson, a multinational media organisation.

For the Post Office it would mean contracts with airlines, and large mail users like credit card companies, to deal with bulk mail for Europe and America. This option only offers a way forward for a business based on profit.

'Partnerships'

The strategy of greater commercial freedom, championed by soft-left Labour MP Peter Hain, has been taken up by Tony Blair. The Labour Party now looks for 'partnerships' between the public sector and the private sector.

Greater commercial freedom in the public sector should be rejected. The mass opposition to

privatisation and Crown office closure is because the Post Office is part of the public sector.

'Commercial freedom' would press forward the rationalisation that has already seen Post Office Counters sell off 750 of the 1500 larger 'Crown' offices since 1988.

The UCW is now preparing strike action to defend what remains of the network. A ballot is being organised on a branch basis, making national action unlikely. Instead the UCW plans a series of rolling strikes with a promise of one day a month for each UCW member called on to take strike action.

This token response will be ignored by management. It also makes solidarity action by other postal workers more difficult as was shown by the signal workers strike.

However the ballot is a step forward, and a strong 'yes' vote will put pressure on the UCW leadership to call national strike action.

Teachers learn lessons and get organised

Roy Leach, Secretary Oxfordshire NUT (personal capacity)

OVER fifty NUT activists representing twenty nine associations and divisions (branches) attended an unofficial pay and conditions conference convened by Oxfordshire NUT on November 12.

Supported by both left oppositions within the NUT - the STA and CDFU - the conference marks a significant development in joint left work bodes well for the future.

At present the Left is close to commanding a stable majority at annual conference and can win motions committing the Union to fighting policies on appraisal and Performance Related Pay; over-size classes; increases

in workload, and so on.

However, the right-wing majority on the National Executive resolutely refuses to implement conference decisions.

What action there is is fragmented and isolated, defensive in character and unable to reverse the tide of Tory attacks.

The Oxford conference, recognised that it cannot substitute itself for an absence of national leadership, but agreed on a few useful concrete tasks.

A co-ordinating committee was elected to produce a national newsletter to publicise campaigns and action.

The committee was also charged with establishing a regular series of 'unofficial' conferences and to organise a lobby of the Union's executive to coincide with the publication of the School Teachers' Review body report.

HOME NEWS

Bosnian liberation offensive gathers strength

by Alan Thornett

TWO and a half years after the Serbian Blitzkrieg which occupied 70% of Bosnia and ravaged it with ethnic cleansing the Bosnian army have launched several successful counterattacks.

Over the past two weeks poorly armed but highly motivated liberation forces have retaken hundreds of square kilometres of territory.

They liberated 30 villages to the north of Sarajevo and the town of Bosanska Krupa in the North West. They also retook territory around the North Western enclave of Bihac and mounted a joint offensive Bosnian Croat forces to take the strategic town of Kupres in central Bosnia - their biggest military success of the war.

Following decisions of the Bosnian Serb leadership in Pale to declare a general mobilisation and give Radovan Karadzic unlimited powers to wage war some of this territory has been retaken by Bosnian Serb forces, who despite the rift with Milosovic, remain by far the best armed and supplied.

At the same time the Bosnian Army in Bihac has come under heavy artillery and air attack from the Serbs of the breakaway Krijena region of Croatia.

The arms embargo remains the biggest single problem for the Bosnians. While this remains in force, the gains they make are in danger of being



Alan Thornett (centre left) in Split with earlier aid convoy

rolled back by their heavily armed opponents.

Nor are the Bosnian Serbs hampered by the so-called blockade which the Milosovic regime in Belgrade - imposed as an attempt to get crippling sanctions lifted.

They have been supplying the Bosnian Serbs by the back door and are now under renewed pressure from the Bosnian offensive to do so openly.

Ultimately they will not allow the Bosnian Serbs defeated for lack of arms and supplies.

The unilateral decision of the Clinton administration to pull out of policing the arms embargo is a political victory for the Bosnian government. It may have the effect of increasing the trickle of light arms which cur-

rently get through - although the blockade will continue to be fully enforced.

The US decision represents a remarkable disintegration of Western policy in ex-Yugoslavia, which has been contradictory and shaky at the best of times.

Having lost the vote in the UN Security Council for the lifting of the embargo the US has now taken a step which amounts to a decision to defy a mandatory resolution of the UN itself - which requires the enforcement of the embargo.

In practical terms, however, it will not mean so much - initially at least. US ships will continue to be a part of the embargo enforcement patrols and will stop and search ships just the same.

If they find arms bound for the Bosnian government they will not themselves impound them but hand them over to other forces which will then do so.

There is more behind the US decision than the gains of the right in the recent elections. The US administration has been in favour of the lifting of the embargo for more than a year.

Like other Western divisions over Bosnia it reflects the different global interests of the governments involved.

Britain's traditional links are with Serbia, Germany's with Croatia. US strategic interests centre on protecting their oil supplies, and the Arab regimes of the Gulf. Their main base in the region is Turkey. They cannot afford to be seen to be aiding the final defeat of a majority Muslim government.

This collapse of policy brings the so-called peace process, which is in fact a process of the partition of Bosnia, to a virtual standstill. The Bosnian Serbs are not going to negotiate out of weakness and they are not in any case going to settle for the 49% of Bosnian they have been offered.

All the signs point to all-out war as winter is about to arrive. This winter could well be by far the worst of the war.

The need for international solidarity with the right of the Bosnian people to determine their own future and against ethnic cleansing and for a multi-ethnic Bosnia will be greater than ever.

Solidarity delivers the goods

LORRIES from seven countries arrived at the International Workers Aid staging point in Makarska in Croatia last month, to take part in the IWA solidarity convoy to Tuzla in solidarity with a multi-ethnic Bosnia.

The content of the convoy was as follows:

ITALY: a lorry with 4900 kg of mixed food and a van with 600 kg of rice.

GERMANY: a truck with 5,000 kg of medicines as well as clothes shoes and education material.

BELGIUM: a women's lorry to go direct to the Women's Association of Tuzla with 4,900 kg of hygienic material and clothing.

The regular IWA trucks had 5,000 kg of flour, 360 kg of sugar, 20 kg of rice and 149 kg of oil.

AUSTRIA: campaign sent 1500 kg of hygienic material for the women's convoy and a mammography machine.

DUTCH campaigns sent 9,000 of food and 20 bikes.

SWEDEN: 10,000 kg of flour, 14 pallets with special packets for women, two computers, books for the university and 1,500 kg of sweets for the children.

WORLD OUTLOOK

Who is winning the peace in Mozambique?

by Bala Kumar

As the final votes are tallied in Mozambique's first multi-party elections a permanent end to the civil war remains elusive.

Joaquim Chissano, the incumbent President and Frelimo candidate has a convincing lead in the Presidential race with 60%. His main rival, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama trails with 26%.

The National Assembly contest has been much closer with Frelimo gaining 50% and Renamo 30%.

Western governments and the U.N. have made it clear that regardless of the result, they want a Government of National Unity, with Dhlakama as Vice-President.

So far Frelimo has resisted

this scheme although Renamo will be given a say in Cabinet appointments.

Whenever Renamo has dragged its feet on the peace process, UNOMEZ (UN Operation in Mozambique) has virtually bribed it, drawing from a "trust fund" of US \$10 million set up during the 1992 Rome Peace accords. The U.N. is desperate for success after its disastrous record in Angola and Somalia.

Blind eye

In two years it has spent almost US \$1 billion and has turned a blind eye to numerous accord violations by Renamo.

Renamo's strong performance is a rude shock to Frelimo who believed that its brutal conduct in the war would not be forgotten by the people.

Initially created by the white

racist minority regime in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Renamo was from 1980 funded and armed by the South African Defence Forces in order to destabilise Frelimo which supported the ANC and SWAPO.

Their campaign of terror included murder, torture and mutilation, destruction of food crops and burning of entire villages. Schools and health clinics were bombed.

That continued even after the Nkomati Accords of 1984. Frelimo closed down ANC bases in Mozambique in return for unfilled promises of an end to South African assistance to Renamo.

In spite of this, millions have voted for this party. There is an awareness of the background to the resumption of war in Angola. The belief was encouraged that if Renamo was not

given a sufficient stake in the electoral system, it would resume the war.

Many mistakes were made by Frelimo in their counter-terror campaigns including the use of similar tactics to Renamo. Its conversion from an anti-colonial, anti-imperialist movement into part of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie has also contributed to its unpopularity.

This election scarcely made a mention of the economic and social issues which now pre-occupy most Mozambiquans. The Frelimo government abandoned its rhetorical adherence to "marxism-leninism" and is implementing a structural adjustment programme under World Bank supervision.

There are no differences between Renamo and Frelimo on economic policy, though

Renamo has pressed for a slow-down in the privatisation of state enterprises!

Outside of the gains made in literacy and health - care after 1974, largely eroded by the civil war, Frelimo has never taken the opportunity for a qualitative brake with neo-colonialism and the extension of democratic rights and social control over production by workers and poor peasants.

The strikes that shook towns and cities over August are a premonition of the times ahead for the new government.

Meanwhile as soldiers on both sides are demobbed, many may turn to banditry to support themselves since neither jobs or homes exist for them. Caches of arms have been hidden across the country, and there is always employment in war.

theory+practice

RAISING THE BANNER OF SOCIALISM: PART TWO

A fighting programme for socialists

BY JOHN LISTER

The British working class stands surrounded by the impact of twin bankruptcies.

• Despite the claimed 'miracles' under 15 years of Thatcherite policies, an economically bankrupt British capitalism is in crisis, once more on the rampage against jobs, wages and welfare rights.

• And the politically bankrupt leaders of the labour movement, having thrown in the towel and accepted the capitalist market system, have no answers or policies for a fightback.

The crisis of British capitalism arises from the global convulsions of the market system, even as capitalism struggles unsuccessfully – despite the compliance of the old stalinist bureaucrats – to recapture the lost markets and cheap labour of the ex-USSR, Eastern Europe and China.

The leading industrial powers are realigning into three competing trade blocs – Europe, North America and the Japanese-dominated Pacific Rim.

This not only marginalises billions of workers and peasants in the Third World and in countries

doomed by capitalism to remain dependent and underdeveloped – it also brings new misery to millions of workers and youth in the advanced countries, squeezed dry and discarded by the drive for profit and competitive advantage.

John Major's new offensive against the welfare state is therefore no mere ideological whim, or left-over from Thatcherism: it is a central feature of post-Maastricht Europe, also emerging in other countries as the 'free' market eventually compels all states to match the meanest.

And while the British working class – after 15 years of Thatcherism and the defeatist politics of new realism – has been more intimidated than its continental cousins, the timidity and failure of British social democracy is not an exception but the rule in a world where every mass workers' party (with the marginal exceptions of Cuba and North Korea) has capitulated to the imperious demands of the capitalist market system.

For British workers, the task is to throw off the shackles of the draconian Tory anti-union laws, and unite in action to defend the welfare state – by removing the hated,



internally divided Major government.

Labour's failure even to campaign for a general election spells out the spineless servility of a leadership unable to offer any positive rallying point for the working class, and reliant on the short-sighted, self-defeating tactic of attacking the Tories for increasing taxes.

It is clear from this wretched display that even the election of a Labour government will not in itself resolve any of the problems of

the working class: it would simply improve the chances of workers themselves pursuing the fight, after seeing off the government of the class enemy.

In this situation, in Britain as in many other countries, the strategic task for socialists is therefore to find tactical ways of building united front activity through which a new, broader, socialist current and tradition can be developed.

The work that we and our co-thinkers do – in the unions, in the

Labour Party, among youth, students, the black communities, anti-racist and anti-fascist campaigns, lesbians and gay men, and broad campaigns to defend the welfare state – must lead towards this objective.

We must build support, popularise the socialist programme, take on the political fight of arming the working class to overturn capitalism. We must raise the banner of socialism.

Europe's workers hit back

New tides of struggle

As fiscal deficits grow and the recession bites deeper into the countries of western Europe, compounded by high German interest rates and deflationary policies imposed by the Maastricht process, unemployment snowballs.

Countries like Britain, Italy and Spain are faced with huge deficits and catastrophic cuts in public spending (the richer, more efficient economies, dominated by Germany have fared a little better).

The full brunt of market forces, privatisation, rationalisation, deregulation, and new management techniques, is being felt by the working class.

But the situation is not all gloomy. Even the British media have reported the waves of unrest and worker mobilisations sweeping continental Europe.

French youth have mobilised in militant and often violent demonstrations in every major city, forcing a humiliating climb-down by the Balladur government over its cheap labour policy. Mass struggles have shown the fighting strength of the working class in many other European countries.

Italy has seen general strikes against government economic policies, while mass demonstrations have protested against 11% unemployment, a government wage freeze and moves to cut Italy's generous pension rights.

In Germany, too, there have been repeated displays of growing militancy, embracing building workers, miners, demonstrations of the unemployed, steel workers and engineering workers.

Belgium has witnessed the biggest mass workers' demonstration for many years, against the attempt by the government to impose a 'social pact'.

The Netherlands too has been rocked by a huge demonstration in Amsterdam, the biggest by Dutch workers since the war.

Spanish workers have fought back against austerity plans of the Gonzalez government, with militant regional days of action and a devastating one day general strike in January. The Spanish resistance is one of the few that appears to have found any echo in the upper echelons of the mass workers'



parties, widening the gulf between Gonzalez's 'modernising' wing and the more traditional social democrats headed by his one-time ally, Guerra.

The new militancy has not forced the mass workers' parties out of their torpor and years of class collaboration. In general Europe's social democratic trade

union and political leaders echo the spineless performance of the British Labour Party.

The left in France remains in deep crisis, while the revamped Italian Communist Party, which – after years of failed efforts to secure a 'historic compromise' deal with the Christian Democrats – led the alliance of the left in the

In the November issue of *International Viewpoint*

Struggle after Brazilian elections

WORLD BANK, IMF: Enough! - international appeal and campaign, HAITI - US troops settle in, Radical left breakthrough in DENMARK, TURKEY - convergence in new party, PLUS Michael Löwy on the thought of José Carlos Mariategui. Send a cheque for £2.00 payable to 'Outlook International', PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

Italian elections, failed to present any credible alternative.

This failure of the left to take its chances in Italy allowed the victory of right-wing populism in the form of Berlusconi, and, even more dangerous, the substantial strengthening of the main party of Italian Fascism, which was a component of his right wing alliance.

Eyes right

In every country of Europe racism and nationalism are on the increase. Harassment is an every day part of life for Black people.

Governments – including sections of the former Stalinist bureaucracy – have attempted to use racism and nationalism both for their own electoral advantage and to head off the far-right.

In Germany restrictions on asylum rights were supported by all the major parties, including the SPD. 'Liberal' Sweden has tightened up on asylum rights.

In France four immigrants were killed by the police within the first week of the Balladur government coming to office.

In Britain we have seen the mass detention and deportations of Jamaicans last Christmas, the opening of Campsfield and other detention centres to jail asylum seekers, and the refusal of the government to allow large numbers of Bosnian refugees into Britain.

Expulsions of Romany communities have taken place throughout East Europe. In former Yugoslavia we have witnessed concentration camps and massacres on a scale unprecedented since the second world war.

Alongside official attacks on immigrant communities there has been a sharp increase in physical attacks, including murders. Firebombings of immigrant houses and hostels or of synagogues have occurred in Germany.

In Britain racist murders have taken place in several cities. Even in countries such as Spain – with little recent history of racist vio-

lence – there have been murders of Romanies and immigrants.

Increased official racist measures have not meant a decline in support for the far-right – with the partial exception of France. Pandering to the far-right has, on the whole, led to a stepping up of their activities.

In Russia the ultra-nationalist Zhirinovskiy won 25 percent of the vote. In Serbia, whilst Seselj and other fascists saw a slight decline in their electoral fortunes, extreme Serbian nationalism remains the dominant current.

And now in Italy we have seen the election victory of the populist Berlusconi, bringing fascists into the government.

Whilst this situation gives cause for concern we should not be led into drawing unnecessarily pessimistic conclusions. Fascism is not about to sweep across Europe.

Even in Italy, Berlusconi's election victory opened up new conflicts with his far-right electoral partners, the federalist Northern Leagues and the (now dissolved) fascist MSI.

The fascist vote – largely a product of the social and political crisis and decay of Italian capitalism – far outweighs the MSI's actual membership.

Moreover, the Italian workers' movement remains far from decisively defeated.

Of course even one fascist is too many, and there are now gangs of fascist thugs in every European country. Clearly they need to be combatted. But, for the moment, they remain relatively small, even in Germany, where the historic tendency of fragmentation on the far left appears matched by fragmentation of the ultra-right.

Nor is electoral support for the far-right necessarily a clear vote for fascism: on the whole it is a vote for extreme nationalist solutions. In Russia, whilst Zhirinovskiy may be a fascist (and that is by no means clear) the vast majority of his voters are not.

Two significant obstacles stand in the way of fascist movements coming to power in the foresee-



able future. Firstly, not a single important section of the bourgeoisie (including in Italy) or the would be bourgeoisie of Eastern Europe (including Milosevic) favours such a solution. Secondly, the workers' movement throughout Europe, though on the defensive, has not suffered crushing defeats.

However continued economic crisis, coupled with the inability of the traditional working class parties to combat the bosses' offensive or resolve the crisis, in the interests of the working class will create conditions in which far-right, including fascist, parties can grow.

For the moment, however, the biggest threat to Black people throughout Europe will be the tightening of anti-immigration laws and the actions of racist state institutions, particularly the police.

Sharp divisions

The continuing pressures of the market system have forced a new polarisation across Europe, with the emergence of new militancy from sections of the working class, but also strengthening new reactionary forces on the hard right.

A pattern appears to emerge, suggesting that the European

workers' movement as a whole, though it has suffered damaging setbacks and faces threats from the right, has retained a fighting capacity that has been lost by the British labour movement.

Fifteen years of Thatcherism have certainly taken their toll of British working class militancy: the imposition of draconian anti-union laws – making even the reactionary restrictions on West German unions look liberal in comparison – has run far in advance of anything yet to hit other west European workers.

Also significant in this regard is the impact of the physical destruction of many of the British industrial sectors which provided the unions with their vanguard fighting forces – the docks, the mines, the print, much of engineering.

The British experience offers a stark warning to the workers of Europe: if they do not continue to resist and develop a political response to the post-Maastricht offensive, they too could find their fighting strength attacked and undermined.

A divided bourgeoisie

The leading European bourgeoisies have attempted to erect a 'democratic' facade – a European Parliament with powers to

override national parliamentary authority – to conceal the concentration of bureaucratic power.

At the same time there have been moves to assert centralised control over economic and social policy (Maastricht) and the ill-fated attempt at monetary union.

These moves have triggered divisions in sections of the European bourgeoisie, and some close-run referendum votes, but no crisis greater than the ongoing and deep split in the British Tory Party, torn as it is by British capitalism's historic economic, military and political links with the USA and with the countries of the former empire.

Patriotism is transparently here, in Dr Johnson's memorable phrase, the last refuge of the scoundrel.

And since Major has no long-term strategic alternative but to ally the weakened British capitalism with the superior might of the EU, any tactical ploy of posing as hardline rejectionists could only backfire on the Tories in the longer term, and rapidly degenerate into an ignominious fudge further discrediting the government with its supporters as well as its opponents.

Her Majesty's missing opposition

Labour since Kinnock has been tied hand and foot to the European Union.

For socialists, the fundamental objection to the EU as a bosses' alliance against the European and

international working class retains all its validity.

The grim consequences of the racist Schengen agreements and the proposals to tighten restric-

tions on entry to Fortress Europe are beginning to be seen.

While tactical advantage can on occasion be gained by exploiting the divisions between different sections of the European bourgeoisie (and, for example, demanding superior EU provisions for health and safety or worker representation), the goal must be to **break up** this reactionary alliance. We are against Europe of the bosses, and for a Europe of the workers.

Just as we reject the absurd reformist delusion that socialism within a particular country can be achieved through parliament, so we reject as even more absurd any notion that the European Parliament could be transformed through elections or the activity of socialist MEPs into a Socialist United States of Europe.

In this respect, Euro-reformism, by diverting even further away from any notion of class struggle at home against your 'own' bourgeoisie, is even more pernicious

in the workers' movement than the more traditional reformist politics.

However the growing interconnection of industry and the common dangers and struggles of workers in different EU countries underlines the importance of building genuine international links at the base of the trade unions, and of European-wide campaigns.

Outflanking Tories

Labour's current policies as expounded by Tony Blair's team, consist in a combination of outflanking the Tories on social issues – such as crime – while adapting any Labour commitments on spending and economic policy to minimal levels that avoid challenging or disrupting the free-market system.

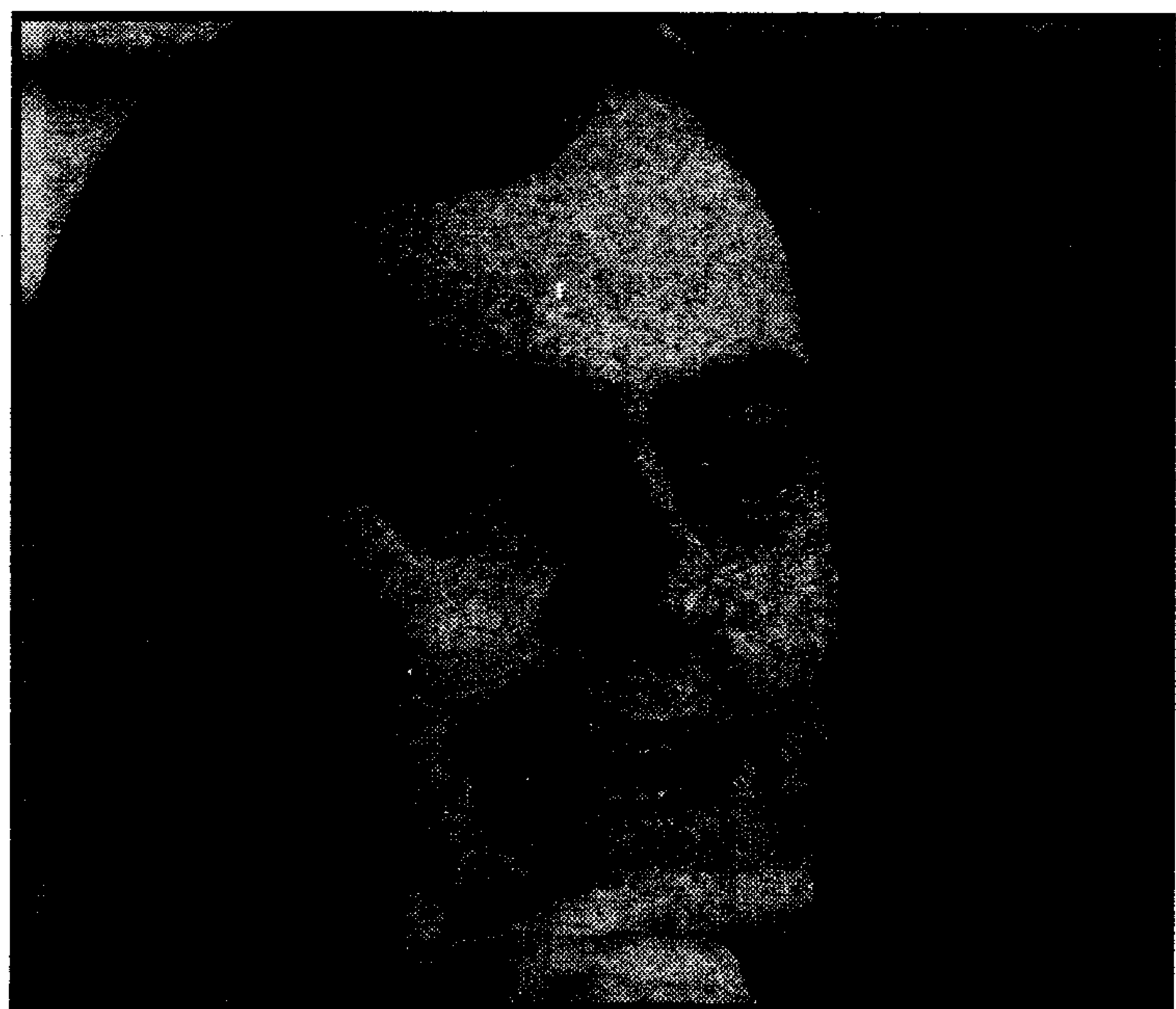
Even Bryan Gould's limited calls for borrowing to finance infrastructure projects and the creation

of full employment were seen as dangerously radical.

Instead we have the wordy and complex efforts to explain Labour's hopes of attracting private finance in to the NHS, transport and other public sector projects.

None of this is likely to enthuse or attract working class voters – or anyone else: its primary objective is to avoid alienating sections of the middle class or the mass media, by creating the image of Labour as a safe pair of hands for the management of British capitalism.

For this reason unanswered questions on the restoration of trade union rights, the rescuing of the NHS, education and the welfare state, the lifting of racist restrictions on asylum and immigration and other contentious issues must be pressed to the forefront now in the run-up to the next General Election, in readiness for the struggles which must immediately follow.



A fighting socialist programme

WE DO NOT call for a Labour vote because of any agreement with Labour's inevitably wretched manifesto. We do not expect to transform a Blair-led Labour government into a socialist or a workers' government.

But we do call for a Labour vote as a class vote against the Tories, and we do work in the mass organisations of the working class for socialist policies to be fought for under a future Labour government.

Despite Labour's total political bankruptcy, we campaign for the return of a Labour government as the best hope of opening up a favourable situation for working class action.

If the Tory government, the iron fist of the employers' offensive, could be defeated and removed, and a government at least pretending to respond to workers' demands were to be elected, the doors would be opened to a new tide of militant action and demands, and a new strengthening of workplace organisation as activists recovered confidence and fighting capacity.

We cannot expect any carbon copy of the great surge of mass action which followed the re-election of Harold Wilson when Labour last took office, twenty years ago in 1974.

The heavy defeats inflicted on the shop floor organisation of the working class and the virtual disappearance of key industrial sectors which had fought the Heath government and remained in the vanguard under Labour—dockers, printworkers, miners and others—mean that there is little in the way of a shop stewards' movement to lead a new fight.

However the election of the Wilson government also encouraged action from sections that had little record of mass struggle: nurses came to the fore, and rail workers discovered a more militant side; the Engineers' union AUEW decided to defy the Tory anti-union law and force Labour to act swiftly to avoid a national strike.

Other campaigns were pushed up the agenda, but without success: victimised Shrewsbury building union pickets remained in jail, surcharged Clay Cross councillors found no reprieve, but the fight was rekindled.



When large numbers of workers begin to take action on their own demands, this creates the best conditions for learning political lessons and discussing the way forward and the kind of leadership needed in the labour movement. The 'armchair socialism' that takes root in periods of relatively low morale can be challenged by a determined agitation around demands and issues which raise the level of the fight.

In 1974 this was restricted by the ultra-left, propagandist slogan

politics of much of the far left; in the 1990s a much greater danger is the weakened forces of the left and the continued dominance of new realism and defeatism in the labour movement.

While the 1974 far left focused excessively on maximum demands of immediate nationalisation and 'socialist policies', the problem now is that after 15 years of Tory onslaught, much of today's Labour and trade union left would settle for almost anything

from a Labour government that was not outright Thatcherism.

The task now, as then, is to link the day-to-day problems and struggles of the working class with the fight for socialist solutions. It was to address precisely this strategic problem that the early Comintern, and later the new Fourth International, turned to the adoption of *transitional demands* which contain this potential dynamic of leading from one phase of the struggle into a new, higher phase.

A transitional programme for today

The central thrust of the 1938 Transitional Programme focuses on almost all the key issues still confronting the working class today.

- Defence of living standards;
- Development of serious class struggle politics in the unions;
- Challenging the bosses' stock excuse of ensuring 'viability' by demands for an end to business secrecy, and the opening of the books and plans of the enterprise to elected trade union committees;
- Fighting for workers' control in the workplace, and in whole industries, leading to the development of a workers' plan for production;
- Mobilising around the demand for the *nationalisation* of separate groups of capitalists, and of banks and the finance houses;
- Defence of picket lines and of working class neighbourhoods;
- The fight against imperialism and war;
- Developing local organisations of working class power to challenge the centralised power of the capitalist state;
- Fighting for a genuine workers' government.

Recognising the need to combat Blair's right wing programme for managing capitalism with a fight for socialist policies, we need to spell out what those policies will be, and we need to step up the fight for them in the unions and Labour Party.

We need to make clear our warning that while the election of a Labour government will open up new possibilities for struggle, its *actions* as it seeks a new compromise with the market system will represent attacks on the inde-

pendence of the unions and the interests of the working class.

Historically, this is nothing new: it is the track record of every Labour government; each has restricted itself to tinkering with the capitalist system.

Key demands from the first days of such a government will be that it stop and reverse the Tory attacks on the workers movement and the oppressed.

This means demanding the *repeal* of the anti-union laws, and of the racist Asylum and Nationality Acts, a lifting of the public sector pay freeze, and replacement of the brutal Social Fund loans schemes with special needs payments. Pensions, state benefits and student grants must be increased to reverse Tory cuts. All privatisation, market testing and compulsory competitive tendering measures must be halted. Tory restrictions on local government spending must be lifted, along with Section 28 and other restrictive legislation shackling teachers to the bigoted values of Back to Basics.

Labour must halt the Tory hospital closure programme, and inject cash to restore services cut in the NHS, schools and higher education.

These policies in themselves go far beyond the timid programme on offer from Blair and co: without massive pressure from the workers' movement it is unlikely that any of them would be carried out.

But a more developed series of demands must also be put forward, which lead the most advanced workers to recognise the limitations and essentially capitalist, pro-imperialist character of the Labour leadership, and the need for an alternative.

- For a crash programme of public works—housing, hospitals,



community care, schools, colleges, transport, infrastructure, energy research, childcare, social services—to create new and worthwhile employment for 4-5 million jobless youth and adults at trade union rates of pay.

- For a shorter working week without loss of pay!
- For a statutory minimum wage to raise the income of the lowest paid, enforced by trade union monitoring in each area.
- Reject Maastricht, the racist Schengen agreements, the EU Common Agricultural Policy and EU subsidies to capitalist monopolies.
- Close and scrap the lethal THORP reprocessing plant: scrap Trident and the British nuclear weapons programme. Begin urgent research into the safe disposal of millions of tons of dangerous nuclear waste already created.
- Troops out of Ireland and the Malvinas. Britain out of NATO. Expel all US bases from Britain.
- Stop aircraft and arms sales to the Indonesian butcher regime:

arm the freedom fighters of FRETILIN.

In theory any or all of these policies could be implemented by a reforming capitalist government in Britain: but in practice each conflicts with the interests of British imperialism, and will be resolutely opposed in practice by Labour in government.

We must also look further ahead at the situation which would confront a new Labour government, and the forces that will drive it into conflict with the working class. Like previous Labour governments, Blair would face an instant flight of capital, unhindered by any restraints since Thatcher's deregulation. Sterling's value would plummet, bringing a rapid increase of inflation as costs of imported goods and materials went up.

The new government would also face mass unemployment, widespread poverty, a built-in massive trade deficit, dwindling North Sea oil supplies and a crumbling infrastructure of housing, schools, sewers, hospitals and transport. Almost all the state-

owned industries have been privatised, on a scale well beyond any reformist scheme for repurchasing the shares.

Under these pressures the temptation for new realists and old-fashioned reformists will be to scrap any progressive policies and dig in to stabilise the capitalist system—by imposing new wage controls, and by offering concessions and guarantees to bankers and speculators at the expense of the working class.

Only a radical socialist programme offers any real alternative.

■ To stem the flight of capital, traditional Labourite efforts at exchange controls have proved impotent—and appear now to have been discarded by new realism. Instead we call for *workers' control* of the banking and financial sector, with the opening of the books to expose the huge hidden deals and swindles, and show the need for *nationalisation* of the banks, insurance and finance houses to control the sharks and speculators.

■ Against soaring inflation, workers' wages and state benefits must be protected by a *sliding scale* of indexed increases to keep pace point by point with the cost of living as monitored by trade union committees.

■ In place of continued redundancies and closures in the name of rationalisation, unions must fight for *work sharing on full pay*, dividing the work available between the whole existing workforce, under the control of elected trade union committees.

■ To generate the increased wealth required to create millions of new, socially useful jobs and increase the living standards of the lowest-paid, pensioners and claimants requires an *expansion* in production, putting the country back to work. But since the capitalist market finds such expansion unprofitable, preferring to divert investment overseas or into speculation, expansion calls for the *expropriation* of key industries and socialist planning in place of free market chaos. Britain's coal mines must be renationalised and reopened, and other national assets maximised.

■ Privatised industries and public utilities (gas, electricity, telecom, water, etc) must be expropriated, to redirect their vast surpluses and productive potential into a planned expansion rather than the pockets of the rich. To build support for this bold step, trade unions must fight for the opening of the books to show the



multi-billion rip-offs involved in privatisation.

■ The development of a workers' plan for production to cater for unmet needs and create new jobs must be seen as the way to prove the need for a socialist, planned economy. Included in this plan should be research and development into alternative sources of environmentally friendly energy to replace fossil fuels and potentially deadly nuclear power plants.

■ Open up new trading links with the developing and underdeveloped countries of the Third World, ending the old imperialist relationship based on inequality and exploitation.

■ Repeal the massive new powers granted to the police by Thatcher and Major. Against police racist and anti-union violence, demand the scrapping of the police, and establishment of

community self-policing. Replace the bosses' courts with their arbitrary, reactionary judiciary with elected, accountable figures and institutions.

These and many other policies relating to the special needs of women workers, black people and ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men, people with disabilities and the elderly, must be fought for and popularised – not as a long wooden list, but singly or in appropriate combinations where the opportunity offers – through agitation and propaganda at the base of the labour movement and in wider-reaching campaigns. They will be opposed not only by Labour ministers, but also by trade union bureaucrats and those who shrink from revolutionary conclusions to the British capitalist crisis.

Our task is to build a current for socialism, a current in the unions, the Labour Party, in community

and broader campaigns, embracing students and unemployed youth, pensioners and claimants. Insofar as the mass movement runs into conflict with the capitalist aspirations of a Labour government, we can gain a hearing and win support for aspects of our programme. In some instances we will be able to turn specific demands from general propaganda into concrete agitation, even make them the central focus of mass action.

At each stage, in sharp distinction to the *Militant* school of politics, we must emphasise that the socialist revolution in Britain requires not just maximum demands on a Labour government, but a working class *mobilised* independently, to fight for its own demands against the employers and the state.

Our alternatives to Labour's class collaboration are alternatives for the workers, to be fought for by the workers. We offer the alternative of class struggle, consciously carried through to the level of mass action to expropriate the monopolies and the banks, seize the power, smash the existing machinery of the capitalist state, and establish workers' power.

That is why our agitation for these policies must be aimed not only at the existing narrow circles of the left in the labour movement, but also into the wider rank and file of the unions and as wide as we can reach into the broader ranks of the working class and the oppressed.

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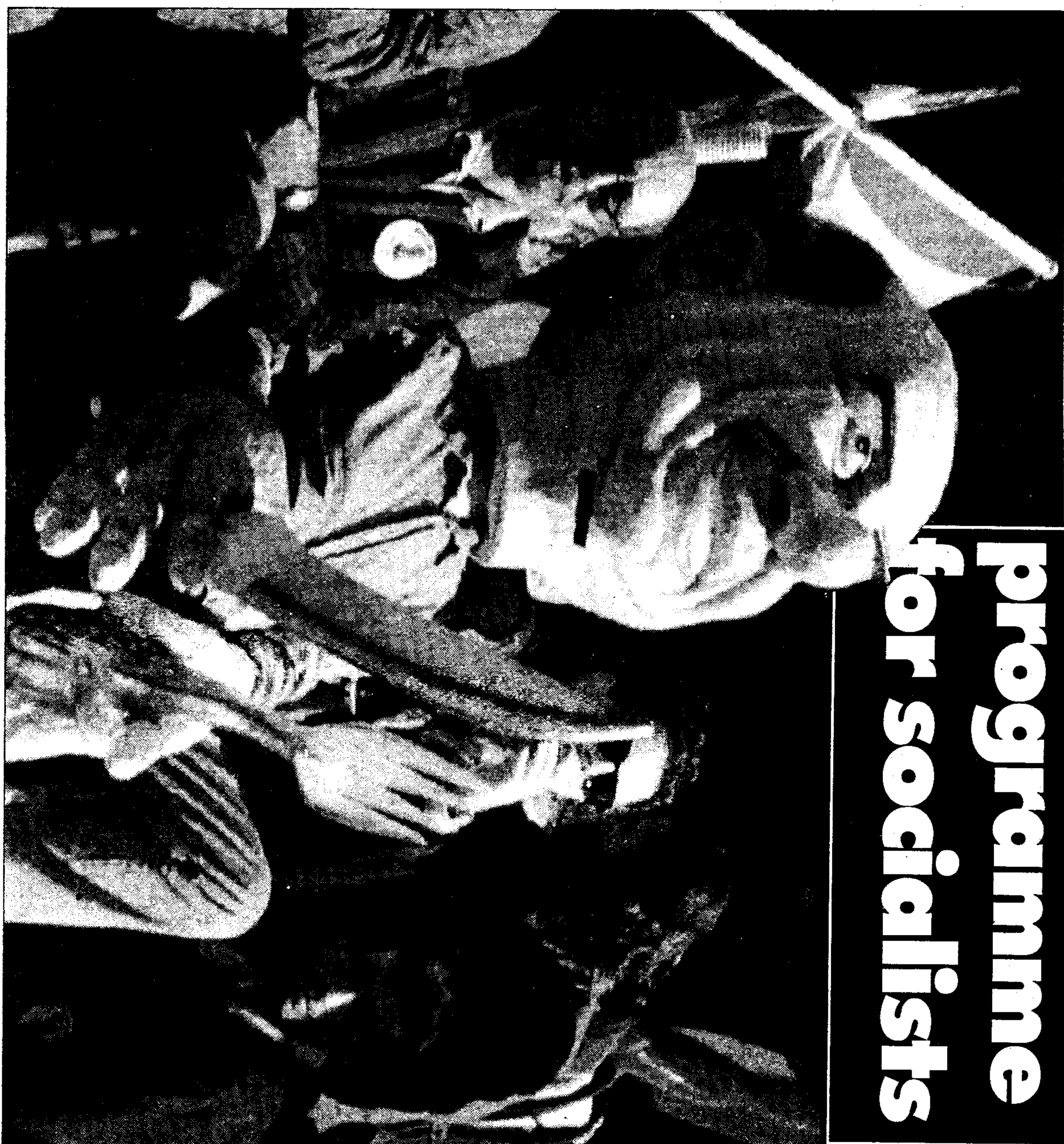
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Document of Brazilian Fourth Internationalists

Workers Party left wing weighs up election setback

FOLLOWING THEIR narrow defeat in Brazil's 1989 presidential elections the Workers' Party (PT) believed that outright victory in 1994 was possible, and that it would represent a "qualitative leap forward for the Brazilian popular democratic movement" in their struggle for central government.

But though the PT significantly increased its initial vote, in comparison with 1989, it was not enough to prevent defeat at the first hurdle. In contrast, incoming President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, forged an alliance which succeeded where the PT did not.

In the face of PT timidity Cardoso was able to present himself as the more credible alternative to the corruption and fraud which had characterised the Collor's administration, without for all that proposing any changes in economic direction.

In excerpts from the document below, the national committee of the influential Socialist Democracy tendency (which identifies with the positions of the Fourth International) of the PT opens the post-election debate with a critical examination of the Party's mistakes and the necessity for these to be corrected quickly.

The full text is available in the November issue of *International Viewpoint*, the Fourth International's English language review, available from "Outlook International", PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU, price £2.00.

THE BRAZILIAN people, and the Brazilian left have suffered an important defeat. The bourgeoisie are now better placed than before to advance their project of "development" for a third of the population (and increasing the exclusion of the other two thirds); they want to make Brazil part of the neo-liberal "normality" of present-day capitalism.

However, neo-liberal adjustment is a long and conflictual process. It will meet with widespread social resistance. The role of the PT in the organisation of this resistance will be crucial to preventing Brazil becoming aligned with the dominant international economic, social and political bosses.

Decisive test

These elections have been not just a great battle but a decisive test for us. We have ended them on the defensive, having committed many mistakes. The PT

turned out to be incapable of winning central government on the basis of Lula alone. It underestimated the degree of resistance which would be shown by the bourgeoisie. It also neglected aspects such as building the Party, the ideological battle, co-ordination and encouragement of the social movements and the linking of our work in municipal apparatuses with the global political battle.

Given the structure of Brazilian society and the existing conditions of class struggle, we will only win central government with a much more cohesive and better organised party, which has the support of a larger, more active and more politicised social movement.

We cannot minimise the defeat by pointing to how many deputies were elected... This is because the potential for intervention in the political battle which they represent can only be achieved by a strengthening of the Party and the social movements.

Central role of PDSB

The most important factor in our defeat was the Brazilian Social-democratic Party [PDSB - which despite its name is not linked to a popular democratic movement, and is situated half-way between social-democracy and liberalism]. Led by Cardoso it built a solid conservative alliance.

A resolution passed by the PT's 8th national meeting defined the PDSB as a party where neo-liberal ideology predominated, but which also included some progressive sectors. The latter have turned out to be marginal in importance. Their party has undergone a qualitative change, moving from the centre to the right to strengthen the leadership of the Brazilian bourgeoisie.

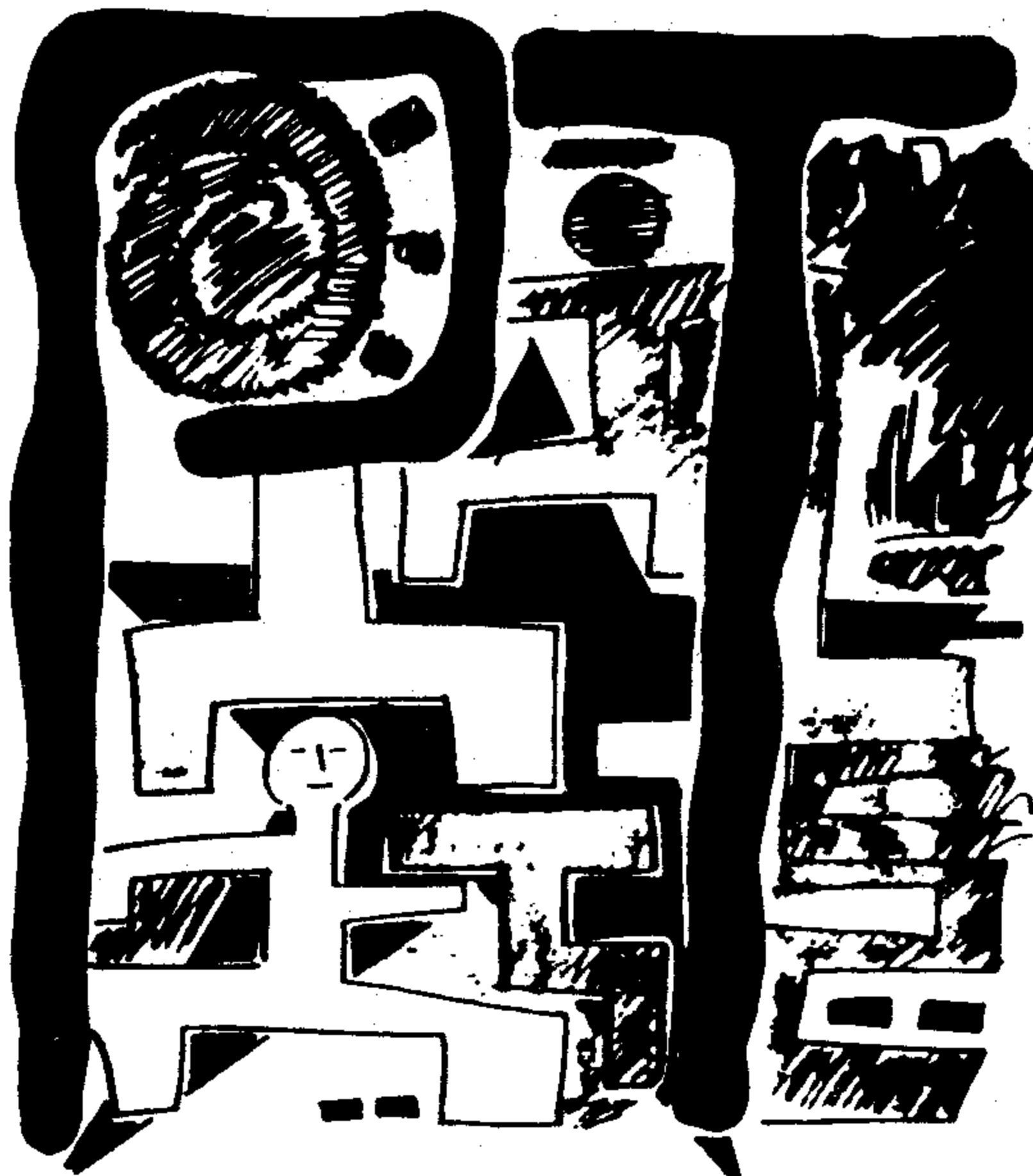
Today the PDSB represents the modern, dynamic and pro-active right, with the most coherent anti-popular project and the ability to take the initiative.

The PT must stand in clear opposition to the new government if we are to gain support for our programme. It will be an even more dangerous adversary than the previous government, due to its more organic links with the bourgeoisie and its greater legitimacy in the eyes of a party which is larger and more influential than that of Collor. From now on [the PDSB] is to be regarded as a right-wing current even more dangerous than the traditional right.

Mistakes made by PT

Throughout May and June the PT believed that the political situation was more favourable, when this was not the case. The bourgeoisie were completely occupied in forming an alliance.

O MEU 1.º VOTO É PRO



Faça o título - vote PT aos 16

But in the PT a triumphalist atmosphere prevailed. Speeches predicted a first-round victory, and increased the pressure for our campaign to be stretched to the maximum at the earliest possible moment. Much energy was wasted in preparing for a future Lula government.

The campaign carried out by most of the party was not within the framework of the resolutions made at the 8th and 9th national meetings - which were centred around structural reforms, the confrontation between the different projects for society and the proposal of a democratic revolution in Brazilian society.

Our campaign wavered between the line agreed at the last two national meetings and a (vain) attempt to present the party as a party of the poor while also trying to engage the confidence (or at least the neutrality) of the rich. This wavering was decisive in demobilising militants.

Yet Cardoso also denounced the social system - even the calamitous state of public healthcare, which he himself helped to create.

However we were incapable of putting forward a Lula proposal for fighting inflation at the most favourable moment, when he was ahead in the opinion polls and the currency had not yet been changed. We did not recognise inflation as one of the most important issues of the campaign.

This underestimation was coupled with differences and errors of analysis concerning the short-term effect of the introduction of the new currency. The predominant vision foresaw a number of short-term problems for the Real, notably that it would lead to recession and a serious loss of purchasing power.

Up until the end of July, and even into the beginning of August, it counted upon

"The PT was incapable of putting forward a Lula proposal for fighting inflation at the most favourable moment, and did not recognise inflation as one of the most important issues of the campaign."

a change of opinion on the part of the population when they received their salaries for July (the month when the Real was introduced).

This was the main point of conflict between the left and right wings of the party. It is completely untrue that, under the leadership of the left, the PT would have had only a narrow policy on alliances! In these elections all possible alliances were made. Where alliances were not made, this was because those with whom it was proposed that we should ally did not want an alliance with the PT, or alternatively would have imposed unacceptable conditions.

There was also discussion of the type of alliance where we would abandon our political project and place ourselves in the position of subordinate partner to bourgeois hegemonic currents.

The confusion in our relationship with the PDSB challenged the entire project of the PT. Yesterday's "ally", rapidly transforming itself into today's enemy was a decisive factor in disarming us. Cardoso was already the main proponent of PDSB entry into the Collor government and became Lula's chief adversary from the moment when he became Finance Minister. He gained in strength before our very eyes, yet the PT did not combat this, continuing to treat him as a privileged partner.

Affirming the necessity to broaden our appeal amongst the middle class, by moderating our proposals, ignores the figures.

Majority

We have lost because, once again, we have been incapable of addressing ourselves in a meaningful way to the majority of the electorate, the "shirtless ones", the unorganised popular mass which brought Collor to power in 1989. It was this majority of the excluded who, deceived by the Real, allowed Cardoso to be elected.

The electoral battle has revealed a dilution of the socialist perspective of the party. Equally it has shown that the party has only a fragmented and partial understanding of what is meant to be the centrepiece of our programme: universal citizenship for all.

The real majorities, women and black people, and important minorities, such as lesbians and gay men and youth, did not appear in the project which we put forward for society. Finally, the concessions made to conservative forces, such as the Catholic Church and the armed forces, revealed an ambiguous approach.

The relationship between the party leadership and the deputies in the federal parliament is an old problem which has never been resolved. During the debate over revision of the Constitution, the leadership put forward the party line in the face of opposition from the parliamentary party.

This cost us a great deal of effort and a long and devastating argument in the press. The impetuous declaration made in the media by front-ranking deputies had a negative effect upon our campaign at critical moments.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Quay struggles: the rise and fall of the dock workers

They knew why they fought. Unofficial Struggles and Leadership on the Docks 1945-1989, by Bill Hunter

Reviewed by Keith Sinclair, Secretary Hull Trades Council

RADIO Humberside has just reported the "success" of the DSS in catching workers claiming the dole whilst working on Hull Docks. This is the reality of life in 1990s dockland.

Hull's docks have returned to the pre-war days - no job security, no union rights. The details may be different, but we are back to a time when workers scramble for the right to a day's work with low wages and appalling conditions.

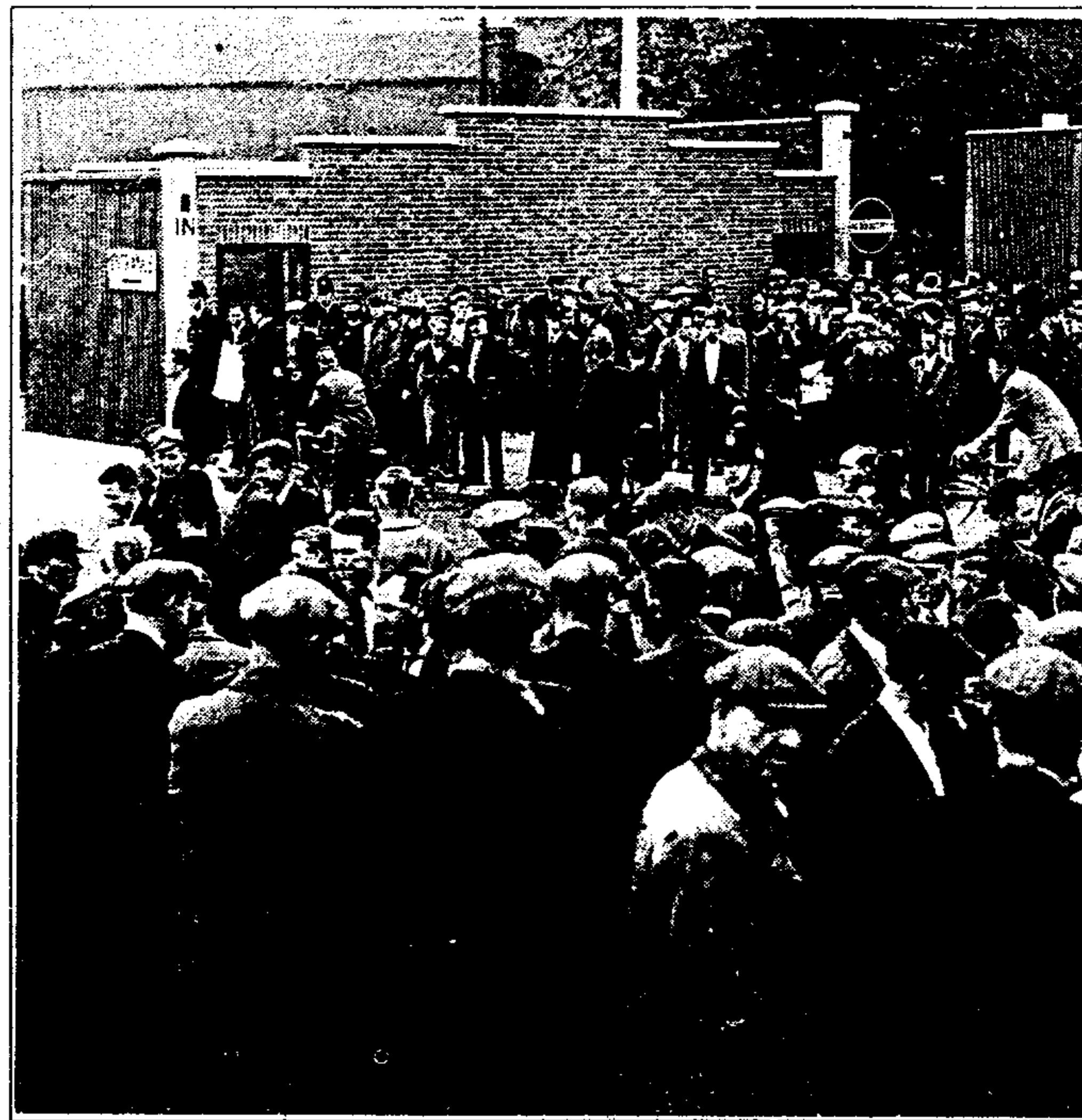
The struggle of Britain's dockers for decent wages and conditions is a vital chapter in the history of the British working class.

The early battles to establish trade unionism on the docks have been well documented. Less well covered has been the post-war fight to improve the pay and conditions of dockers.

War

Bill Hunter's book covers the period from the end of the second world war to the defeat of the 1989 strike against the abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme. He explains how many dockers returned from the second world war determined to improve conditions on the docks.

The National Dock Labour Scheme of 1947 led to improvements for dockers. However the Transport & General



1955: Liverpool dockers travel to support London strike

Workers Union representatives on the Dock Labour Boards were remote from the rank and file.

Of particular interest is Bill Hunter's account of the "prison break" of Northern dockers to join the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union (NAS&D) in the 1950s. Thousands of Northern dockers left the TGWU to join the NAS&D. Hunter outlines the build-up of frustration of the dockers at the TGWU's bureaucracy.

He explains clearly the anger that was directed at full-time officials, who were seen to have more in common with the employers than the workers who they were supposed to represent.

One interesting question Hunter does not deal with are the differences between the Merseyside ports and Hull. On Merseyside, the unofficial leaders were clearly influenced by Trotskyism, indeed the Birkenhead Port Workers Committee voted to affiliate to the Fourth International in 1951. The posi-

tion in Hull differed in a key respect, the role of organised Trotskyists in 1954 was on a much lesser scale.

The early seventies saw the struggle against the Tory Industrial Relations Act. It was a time when union strength was growing and the miners defeated the Tories in both 1972 and 1974. Dockers came into conflict with the legislation when they took action against the threat of containerisation.

Pentonville Five

In 1972 the "Pentonville Five", dockers' leaders, were jailed. Seven dockers had originally been accused. It is indicative of the times that, in clearing two of the dockers, the court's president stated

"We have not the slightest doubt that both will be as astonished, and perhaps a little hurt, to hear that we cannot be sure that either has broken the Court's orders". Support for the "Pentonville Five" was tremendous. The pressure from the ranks led to the TUC

general voting council to call a one day general strike.

Throughout the seventies and early eighties, the dockers were one of the best organised and most militant sections of the working class. Dockers showed solidarity to workers in dispute both this country and internationally. In Hull, for example, they responded to calls for international solidarity on Chile, Spain and South Africa.

Solidarity

I remember, in 1977, receiving a letter from a dockworker who was a member of the Swedish section of the Fourth International. It asked Hull dockers to refuse to handle a ship. Swedish dockers came across to Hull, solidarity action was delivered and the Swedish dispute won.

In 1972, the national dock strike continued after the release of the Pentonville Five against the spread of containerisation. The Jones-Aldington report was the outcome. It was a sell-out.

As Hull docker Terry Turner wrote, at the time, "I think the Special Committee has not done enough and that Jack Jones should not have called for a dock delegates' conference until greater guarantees about registered dockers' futures had been given".

The aftermath of the Jones-Aldington saw the reduction in the number of registered dockers from 60,000 to around 9,000 by the late eighties.

During the miners' strike of 1984-85, there was a very real opportunity to open a 'second front'.

Members of the Iron & Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) were used to unload iron ore going to Ravenscraig. At Immigration on Humberside contract labour was used to unload iron ore for Scunthorpe steelworks.

It was decided to call a na-

tional docks strike from 9 July. All 13,000 registered dockers came out, as did a significant number of unregistered dockers. The dockers were in a very powerful position.

The involvement of ACAS, however, led to an agreement. Attempts to build a fighting unity with the miners were hampered. A victory on the docks could have changed the balance of forces in the miners' strike, ultimate defeat of which made it so much harder to fight in 1989 when the Tories came for the final abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme.

On 7 April 1989, the Tories published a Bill to abolish the Dock labour Scheme. It was met by unofficial action in a number of ports. The rank and file leaders were preparing to fight to defend the scheme.

However the union nationally had made no serious preparations for a fight. The TGWU hesitated and the employers pressed their advantage, threatening the union and individuals with court action.

Abolished

Having failed to build on the spontaneous action, the TGWU re-balloted and got a three to one majority, but the result came after the scheme had been abolished.

Tilbury stewards were sacked, never to return to work. Previously solid ports crumbled. Hull and Southampton returned to work. The strike was broken, and with it the last remaining power of organised dock workers.

Bill Hunter's book is an important contribution to recording the history of dockers. It is recommended to anyone wanting to understand the processes that have been at work in Britain's ports over the last half century and how workers have organised to fight the bosses.

A painful antidote to fundamentalist poison

Taslina Nasrin's novel *Lajja (Shame)*, published by Penguin Books, India, reviewed by K. GOVINDAN

"I detest fundamentalism and communalism," begins Taslima Nasrin in the preface to this book.

The feeling is mutual, and so this book is banned in Bangladesh, and a courageous woman has been forced into exile in Sweden, away from the mobs demanding her death.

Lajja, or Shame, brought Nasrin to notoriety because of the rage she expresses at the



Courageous: Taslima Nasrin

persecution of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh, following the destruction of a Muslim mosque in Ayodhya,

India by Hindu communalists in December 1992.

In revenge for anti-Muslim riots in India, Hindus in Pakistan and Bangladesh were attacked and killed, temples, homes and shops were burned, and gang rapes committed.

The book reads at times like a straight report on acts of violence that took place in Bangladesh, and it is a historical record of those anguished days.

However, through the experiences of a fictional Hindu family, the Duttas, it is also a meditation on the post-colonial history of Bangladesh.

Hindus participated in the anti-colonial struggle, and fought alongside Muslims to liberate East Bengal from the

Pakistan army in 1971.

Yet the belief that secularism and a multi-ethnic, multi-religious nationalism would prevail and guarantee protection for the mosaic of minorities across South Asia, has evaporated.

Transformed

To underline this point, Nasrin shows the transformation of one of the main characters, Suranjan Dutta, who from being an atheist and a member of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, begins to identify himself as a Hindu.

No one is spared from the poison of communalism - not the ruling party, nor leftist groups; and not even Suranjan Dutta, who once de-

nounced talk of Hindus leaving Bangladesh for India, counted more Muslims than Hindus as friends, and did mass work for his party among Muslims.

As painful as this book is to read, it must have been doubly so to write. *Lajja* is a book that speaks to the condition of minorities everywhere, and is an admission of the 'collective defeat' of those who would defend their rights.

Nasrin, though, is far from pessimistic. She pledges herself to uniting secularists and humanists in the fight against religious extremism and bigotry, and dedicates her book to 'the people of the Indian subcontinent'.

She has many friends and allies in that good fight.



Helena Bonham-Carter stars with Branagh in this glitzy remake

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, directed by Kenneth Branagh

By Aidan Day

Don't mess. Do what your told. The present order of things is natural and proper. This is the message of Branagh's latest.

It's a dog's dinner of a film. While claiming to be true to Shelley's original it manages by a small number of plot shifts to turn her intentions upside down, suck out the politics and smother all the radicalism in liberal cant.

When it came out in 1818 the author dedicated the book to her father William Godwin the anarchist philosopher. Mary was also the daughter of pioneer feminist Mary Wollenscraft. Both were influenced by the group known as the English Jacobins. She grew up in an atmosphere bathed in the intellectual and political aftermath of the French revolution.

The novel was a product of its time. But you wouldn't know it from the film. Branagh has managed to lose everything that's important, and transform the work into a piece of conservative liberal individualism. As a rendering of Shelley's intentions the film is a gross distortion.

When the company men of

Frankie goes to Hollywood

Hollywood were looking out for another big money maker to follow Bram Stoker's Dracula this story must have seemed ideal. But whereas Coppola at least tried to address current issues like AIDS and sexuality, Branagh chooses to ignore the tremendous potential of the text to highlight the modern misuses and abuses of technology in favour of a lightweight morality tale.

The film concentrates on the character of Frankenstein — played by Branagh. He is obsessively concerned with his creation. But once brought to life, the scientist wants nothing to do with it.

In the original this is a key theme — new life needs nurturing and tenderness. In line with Godwin's political thought, Mary Shelley emphasised the dire results of abandonment and mistreatment in contrast to the huge potential for love and fellowship that lies within people.

Branagh's approach is dif-



Hard at work producing a real horror: Branagh as Frankenstein

ferent. He uses the tale to show how foolhardy are those who try to change the world. Although sympathetic, the lead character is demonstrated to be totally misguided in his desire to mess with the unalterable laws of nature. This is hammered home in the — completely altered — final scene.

It is the belief in "a vision" that is his undoing. Presumably we should conclude that such things are to be rejected — belief in nothing is preferable. Instead of action we should emphasise responsibility. This reflects a strong trend in the British intelligentsia away from radicalism towards passivity in the face of reaction — Tony Blair is one of its many spokespersons!

Mary Shelley wanted to describe the impact of a technology that runs out of control and the truth of Godwin's belief in the capacity for happiness that lies in collective responsibility.

Branagh ignores all this. The problem for him lies not in the terrible treatment and conditions but in the very fact of creation.

Just in case we missed it the

first time the early "birthing" scene is repeated again at the end of the film with a new creation. This gives the director a second opportunity to run around the studio bare-chested pulling on chains and jumping off giant steaming copper containers. The glistening perspiration shows off how well defined his stomach muscles are — aside from this the ten minutes is of little value. Indeed the plotting throughout is very poor.

The whole film is shot in a rather irritating music video style. The camera never stops moving, and whenever possible it revolves madly around its subject. The cuts are short, abrupt and a little frantic.

This is a useful technique for increasing the dramatic pace of a movie, but becomes extremely tiresome when sustained for an hour and a half. Continuity is sacrificed in favour of movement for its own sake.

Trying to get Frankenstein to compete with Hollywood blockbuster thrillers is a mistake — the product looks a bit too much like the Duran Duran wild boys video.

All the disquieting depths

of the novel disappear. Not even De Niro's efforts can rescue it.

It was inevitable that the best boy Branagh would be upstaged by his antagonist; and so too that this reviewer would pay due homage to De Niro's proficiency. He achieves admirably that most difficult balance between sympathy and terror.

Even when his character is out of his head with blood lust and revenge, visiting violence on all around, there is appeal in his expression. As in Taxi Driver and Cape Fear the mistreated outcast holds motives that are noble and — to an extent — attractive. It is to the detriment of the film that Branagh does not give some of the wonderful soliloquies of the book to De Niro. They would have improved the rather obvious Americanised dialogue no end.

This film must go down as a missed opportunity. It is not often non-Hollywood directors get whopping great budgets to make films — Branagh has wasted his. A novel of substance and significance has been rendered as glitzy froth. A shame.



Badly cut: Branagh's gross distortion

REVIEWS

Never mind the politics, feel the width?

By the Editorial Board

MILITANT last week carried a full page article by Phil Hearse, previously editor of *Socialist Outlook*, and Cathy Kirkham, previously a long time supporter of *Socialist Outlook*, announcing their sudden decision to join Militant Labour.

In making this abrupt exit they are abandoning the principled politics they have defended for over two decades, turning their backs on the Fourth International, and collapsing into the politics of *Militant*. They have pushed serious political questions under the carpet, adopting an attitude which can best be summarised as 'never mind the politics, feel the width'.

They insist that the future of the far left in Britain will be decided between the two organisations currently the largest, the Militant and the SWP, and claim that it is therefore necessary to be in one or other of them.

This same superficial argument in the early 1970s would have led them to choose between joining the SWP and Gerry Healy's WRP. In other words, the same logic applied then would have led not only to no International Marxist Group, but to no Militant, either!

Hearse and Kirkham say they reject the SWP because it is "a large propaganda sect", based on "habitual sectarianism and narrow minded factionalism" and with an "authoritarian internal regime".

Expulsions

But Militant Labour, they have been assured – (by Militant!) – is different from this. It has, they tell us, a 'democratic' internal regime, an 'open' debate, and the ability to contain differences. They have clearly not spoken to anyone recently expelled from the organisation!

They admit they do not have 100 per cent agreement with Militant, and say that Ireland and the national question in ex-Yugoslavia are examples of difference.

But these are not incidental questions. Ireland is a central factor in the British revolution itself. Militant's historic accommodation to British imperialism on Ireland is one of the scandals of the British left.



Ted Grant, expelled Militant editor: he may be gone, but the politics linger on

Nor is the national question in Yugoslavia a minor point. It is one of the central questions of European politics, which has already left 200,000 people dead, 3 million refugees, and 70 percent of Bosnia occupied by Serbian forces. Yet here, reflecting a campist position on the break up of Stalinism, Militant accommodates to greater Serbian nationalism.

But it is inconceivable, even given their willingness to downplay programme and ideology, that these are the only serious differences that Hearse and Kirkham have with Militant.

On the surface Militant Labour appears very different from the old Militant tendency before the split which led to the expulsion of Ted Grant, Alan Woods and others – and the organisation's exit from the Labour Party. But it is not clear that all the changes are for the better.

Nor, despite these changes in tactics, is it clear that there has been any fundamental change – or any change at all – in Militant's political programme.

Is Militant Labour saying, for example, that its previous position of insisting that there could be a parliamentary road to socialism in Britain is now wrong?

Under that fanciful scenario, we were told for many years by *Militant* that a

Marxist dominated left-Labour government would use its parliamentary majority, through an 'Enabling Act', to expropriate the bourgeoisie.

If Militant Labour has now rejected that line, then this is real progress, but we have yet to see any evidence of it.

Will Militant Labour now drop its conception of the police and the army as merely workers in uniform, and adopt a Leninist understanding of the role of the capitalist state?

Will it develop a revolutionary programme based on the development of dual power, the fight for a workers' government, and the revolutionary overthrow of the state?

Programme

Other programmatic issues are also at stake. Militant does not share the Fourth International's understanding of pluralist socialist democracy, of the unity of the sectors of the world revolution, or of the self-organisation of the oppressed.

Although they have improved their positions on women's and black oppression from their previously awful economism and workerism, they still have some way to go.

Militant has a fundamental difference over the key tactic of the united front.

They fail to see the real dynamics of the construction of a revolutionary international based on real international experience.

It is impossible to build a real international (particularly for Militant which is a very British organisation) on the basis of transplanting one set of national experiences and tactics onto every national situation.

The strength of the Fourth International is that it has built a programme based on the needs of the working class, not their reactionary prejudices.

Of course we think numbers are important, internationally and in Britain. In fact we think it is very important (though it should be remembered that the Militant have suffered the biggest relative decline of any of the far left organisations in Britain).

But numbers are not everything.

Trotsky taught us that principled politics are important as well; and we have seen that without that foundation stone, organisations far larger and more influential than Militant (the POUM in Spain in the 1930s) have played a seriously disorienting and damaging role in the class struggle.

We think these comrades have made a big political mistake.

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

Bob Smith Fund passes £6,000

By Duncan Chapple

OVER SIX THOUSAND pounds has now been donated to the Bob Smith Memorial Fund.

Friends and comrades of Bob, a Birmingham supporter of *Socialist Outlook* who died in April, set themselves the goal of raising £7,000 to help produce a memorial volume on the fight against racism and fascism and to gain new facilities for *Socialist Outlook*.

The Fund will close next week. Already the Fund has

provided a new central heating system, improved the security of our building and bought a new A3 laser-printer which will eliminate the time spent pasting-up *Socialist Outlook* and *Liberation!*.

This is the final issue of *Socialist Outlook* to be produced using the old technology.

Supporters of *Socialist Outlook* are going all out to make up the remaining thousand pounds of the fund drive, much of which has already been pledged.

The final thousand will secure the publication of the memorial volume in January

and to allow us to refurbish meeting rooms and offices in the *Socialist Outlook* building during the December publication break.

This has been the most successful *Socialist Outlook* fund drive.

Our first-ever banquet was held at the *Socialist Outlook* conference on 22 October raising hundreds of pounds for the fund and adding to the comradesly and professional air at the conference. Members of the Fourth International in continental Europe and North America sent in donations.

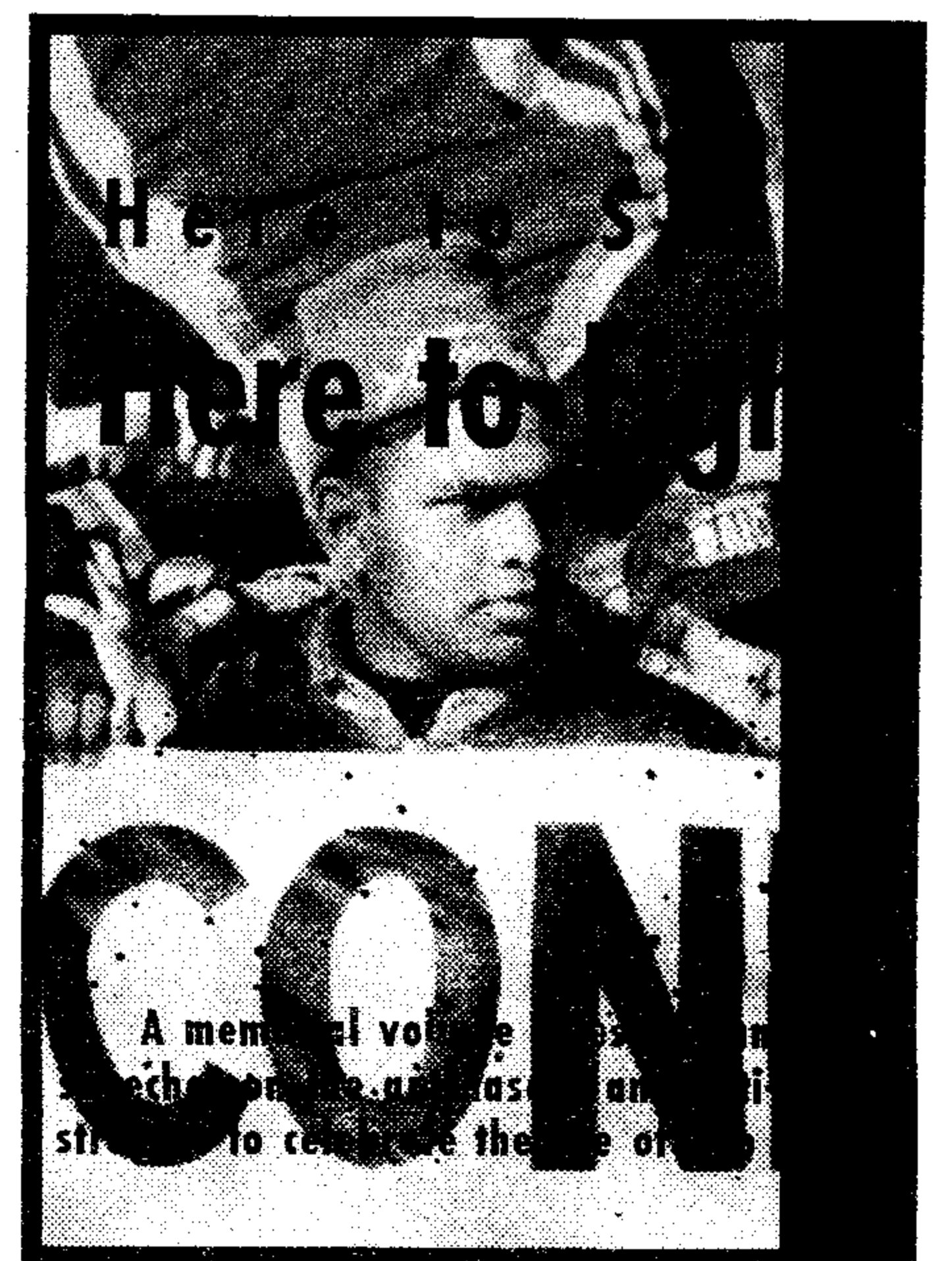
Most readers' groups are

close to meeting their targets, while comrades in Bob's home town of Birmingham have sent in 214 per cent of their target!

Socialist Outlook readers are asked to contribute to the fund drive.

£100 could provide new software to allow us to make more striking and colourful front covers. £50 will print an edition of *Liberation!*. £5 will secure your pre-publication copy of the memorial volume.

● Send cheques and postal orders, payable to 'Bob Smith Memorial Fund', to PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.



UNISON officials queue to get out

By Tim Wilson

MORE than a third of the 1,700 officials and administrative staff employed by public sector union UNISON have reportedly applied for voluntary redundancy, while the union remains wracked by financial crisis and organisational incompetence.

Over 600 have applied to leave on enhanced redundancy terms available only to the end of the year. The union, which is projecting a £20m deficit next year and is slashing its departments' budgets by 25%, was looking for 400 to go, at an estimated cost of £10 million.

Whole departments have opted almost en bloc to take the money and run, while large numbers of demoralised regional officials and secretarial staff are also queuing to leave rather than risk compulsory redundancy on minimal terms next year.

The financial crisis is cruelly exposing the complete organisational fiasco of the merger of the three component unions COHSE, NALGO and NUPE in 1993.

While each Region has been saddled with surplus 'associate' Regional Secretaries, and there are platoons of national officials, the most basic bureaucratic arrangement of all is still missing: there will be no centralised financial administration until 1996.

The present finances are a total shambles. Nobody knows how much money is actually coming in. A visitor to one of the union's four head offices found unbanked cheques in a drawer totalling several million pounds, while employers have been complaining that large cheques for subs deducted at source have not been paid in.

At local level the confusion over structures and much poorer representation for many members has run alongside sharp increases in subs for former COHSE and NUPE members, and exacerbated a culture clash with ex-NALGO that is most sharply felt in local government.

Though a current of rebellion and possible splits has been fanned by small unofficial networks of ex-NUPE activists, the rumours of a pending breakaway led by Rodney Bickerstaffe are wide of the mark. There is no easy escape.

There is no obvious way the merged assets of the union could now be disentangled, leaving any splitters with the limited choice of merging with yet another large, bureaucratic union, such as the GMB or TGWU.

For the left in UNISON, the only way forward is to reach out, form links across all three merged unions, and fight tooth and nail for an accountable structure that will end the catastrophic blunders of the top-level bureaucracy.

No AGM for Liverpool

FOLLOWING an unofficial strike in July 1993 the Liverpool branch of UNISON has been prevented by the General Secretary and the NEC from holding its annual general meeting.

Without branch meetings or AGMs, the branch has been unable to defend its 6000 members in the face of a massive £35m cuts package by Liverpool council, or allow them a voice in the running of the union. Even though nine of the most senior officers of the branch have now resigned, no meeting to replace them can be convened.

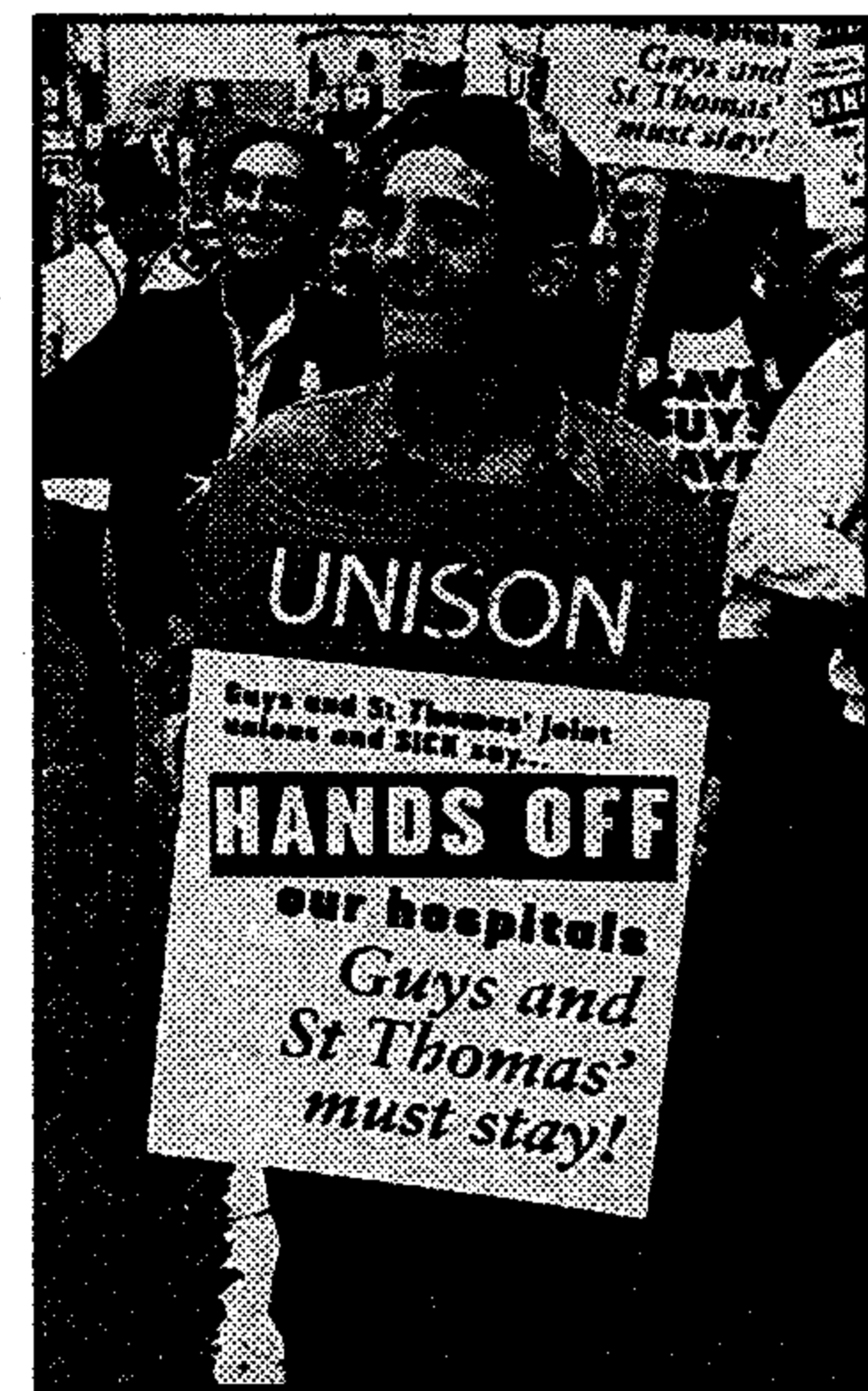
The strike, in the Fairfield Day Centre, was against ra-

cism. But the four stewards involved were subsequently accused by branch secretary Judy Cotton of sexism and intimidation, and were charged accordingly.

National officers are trying to proceed with disciplinary hearings against the four stewards.

After walking out of the first hearing because the union was refusing to disclose the evidence against them, the stewards won a High Court injunction against continuing the hearing, on the grounds of breaches of natural justice and of the union's own rules!

Whether UNISON will challenge the injunction, or drop



the disciplinary action is still unclear.

More details from Unity in Liverpool, c/o UNISON Office, Foster House, Canning Place, Liverpool L1. 051-225-4552.

For a fighting, democratic UNISON

UNISON, is Britain's largest union, with members throughout most of the public sector, and must play a role in building the fightback for the welfare state and against job losses and privatisation.

However since the merger of COHSE, NALGO and NUPE last year, full-time officials have effectively had a free hand to do as they please - and true to form they have failed to lead or organise against any attacks, cutbacks or job losses, and accepted pay deals without reference to the membership.

The only activity taken up

with any enthusiasm by the national leadership is witch-hunting left activists and branches that take action, like Sefton and Liverpool.

In fighting back, organisation in branches and regions is vital, but if the left is to have a national impact, national organisation is also needed.

That's why several regional left caucuses are calling for a national conference under the umbrella name of Campaign for a Fighting, Democratic UNISON. The title might not be catchy, but it spells out the tasks ahead.

If the left in UNISON is to survive it must be democratic

and accessible to working class, women and black militants.

The best chance for this at present is the CFDU. All serious UNISON activists should lend their support and help build its December 3 conference.

CFDU Conference

Sat. December 3

10am-4pm

Swathmore Centre
4 Woodlands Square

LEEDS 3

Details Glen Kelly,
081-464-3333



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 un-

ion 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 pension-

ers, 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.

Sectarianism

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 towns across the country. Contact us now, get organised, and get active!

- Please tell me more about *Socialist Outlook*
- Yes, I want to become a *Socialist Outlook* supporter

Name

Address

Phone

Age

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

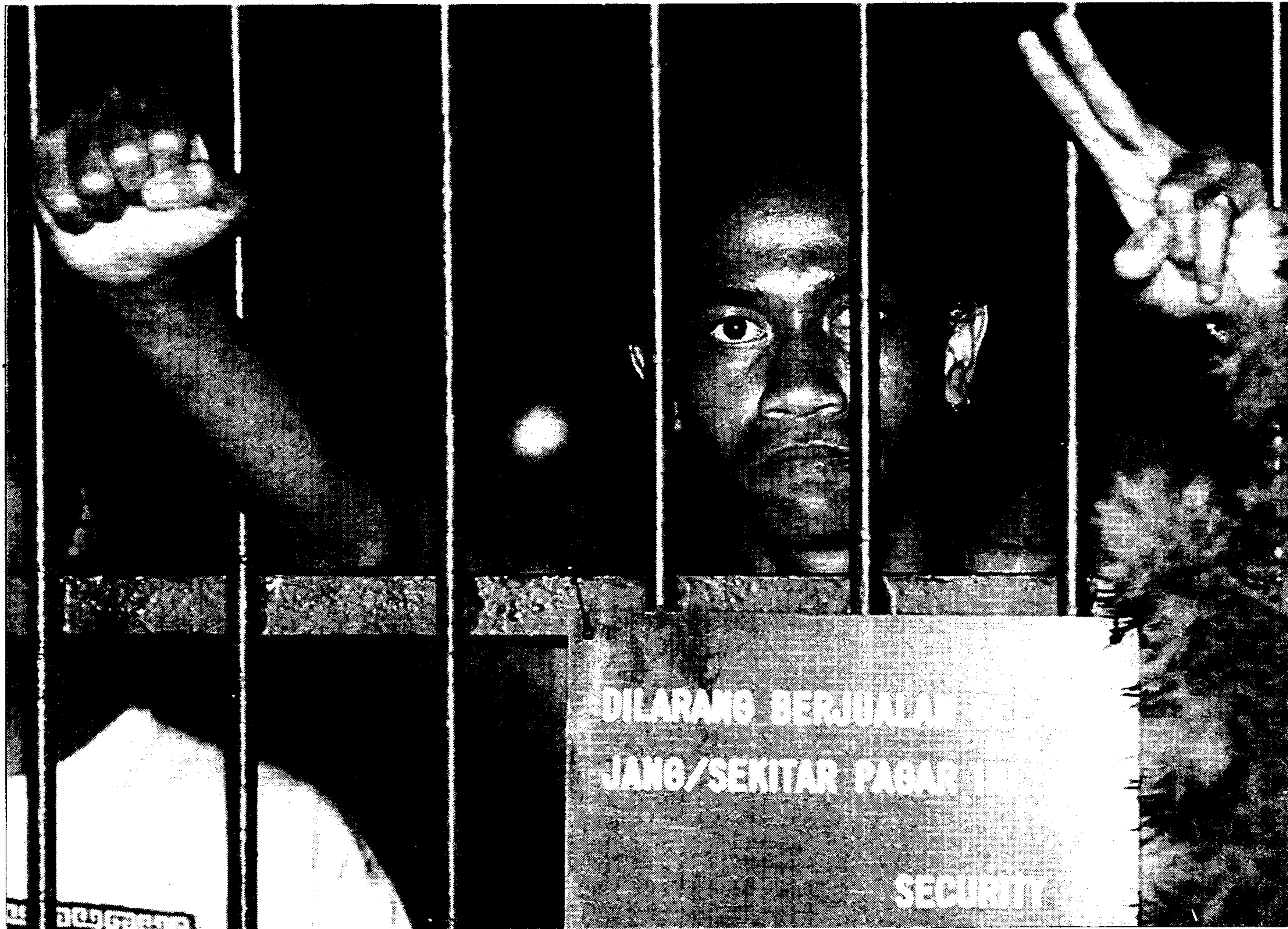
TRADE UNION NEWS

Socialist OUTLOOK

Defend the
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Lobby
Parliament
Nov 29

While British arms fuel Timor slaughter

Students defy Jakarta junta



Students occupy part of the US embassy in Indonesia, as mass struggles grow against Suharto dictatorship

ARMED guerrilla fighters from the FRETILIN liberation front are out on the streets of Indonesian cities after thousands of youth and students clashed with troops in Dili, capital of occupied East Timor, and students occupied the US embassy in the Indonesian capital Jakarta.

Four demonstrators were killed by troops in Dili, but the defiance grew as rioting spread to other cities Indonesian flags were torn down and replaced by FRETILIN flags in towns includ-

ing Baucau.

30 East Timorese students, literally risking life and limb, are still occupying the grounds of the US embassy in Jakarta, as we go to press.

The occupying students are demanding the release of the leader of the East Timorese resistance, Xanana Gusmao, and an end to Indonesia's 20-year occupation of East Timor.

Outside the embassy compound, hundreds of Indonesian students and workers demonstrated in support of the East Timorese inside.

In Dili, a huge demonstration took place. Thousands of youth unfurled banners calling for independence, and clashed with Indonesian military and police in hand to hand fighting on the streets of the capital.

The hotel containing the world's press, who are there because of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation conference now being held in Jakarta, was surrounded by the crowd, ensuring that media could have no doubts about the nature of the Indonesian occupation of their country.

Dili has now been sealed off by Indonesian security forces.

Meanwhile in North America, throughout Europe, Australasia, and in Britain, the November 12 Day of Action marked a significant increase in international solidarity with the resistance in East Timor and the mass democratic movements rapidly developing to challenge Suharto's military dictatorship in Jakarta.

At the Indonesian embassy in Grosvenor Square, central London, hundreds gathered to support the international action.

At British Aerospace plants in

Warton, Lancashire and Stevenage in Hertfordshire, over 100 protesters, mostly youth, trespassed onto the grounds to draw attention to the intended sale of Hawk ground attack planes to Indonesia.

Across Britain there were over 40 street events drawing the public attention to dictatorship in Jakarta and its genocide in East Timor.

In the first week of November Sukmaji Indro Thayhono, a leading human rights campaigner, on the British leg of a European tour organised by the European Network Against The Arms Trade, explained that the Suharto regime used the weaponry supplied to it by Britain to terrorise the population into submission.

He also explained that the regime was becoming more desperate in the face of the emergence of an independent mass trade union movement, the SPSI, and a rapidly advancing democratic movement.

A crackdown, including the banning of the SPSI and the closing down of critical sections of the free press is already in force - further repression is planned.

Only last week, Muchtar Pak Palian, a leading trade unionist was jailed for three years on trumped-up charges linked to the mass strike wave of May this year.

The situation could not be clearer - British arms manufacturers and John Major's government are helping supply the Indonesian ruling class with the tools to do the job.

The relationship between the British ruling class and their Indonesian allies has never been closer. A massive £6 billion arms deal is on the cards, which matches the growing amount of British capital and 'aid' flowing into Indonesia.

The British left, with honourable exceptions, has been painfully silent on Indonesia and East Timor. It is now time to build the mass united front campaign on this issue.

All labour movement, student and other internationalist organisations should follow UNISON and the FBU and sponsor the coalition "Stop The Hawks - No Arms to Indonesia".

■ AN ACTION PACK is available for the coalition for the price of £1 - all cheques payable to Stop the Hawks. Write to Stop the Hawks c/o NPC, 88 Islington High Street, London N1 8EG. Call 071-281-0297 for details.