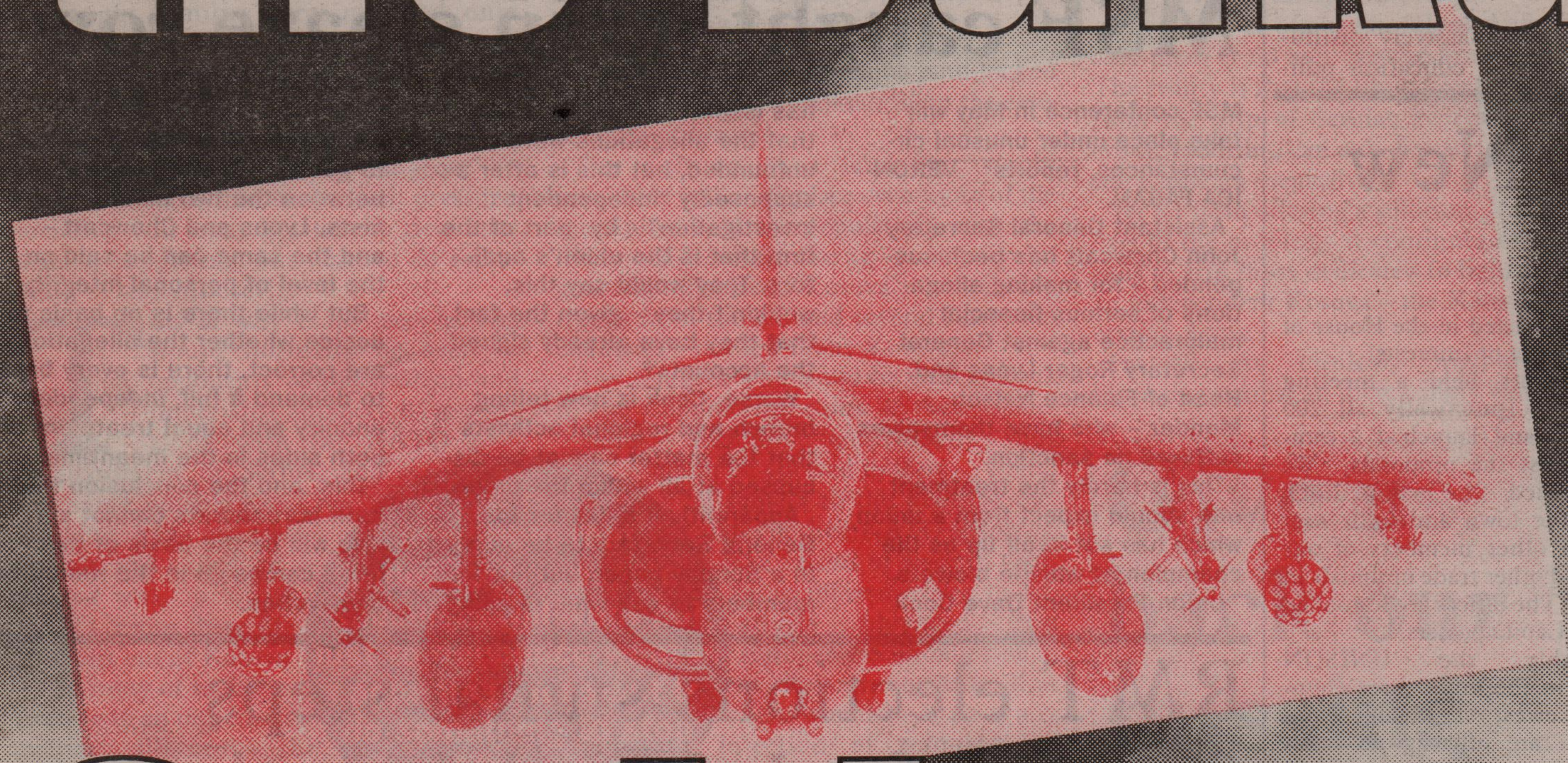


NS24

Socialist Outlook

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NATO out of the Balkans



Serbia out of Kosova!

Fight now for NUT strike vote on pay formula! Let's teach Mr Blunkett a lesson!

By a delegate to NUT conference

THE ISSUE of Performance Related Pay (PRP) dominated the teaching union conferences held over Easter weekend. This issue is at the core of the government's proposals in the Green Paper on teachers' pay and conditions.

The largest teaching union, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) voted to

oppose the Green Paper and to initiate a campaign to boycott appraisal and for a one day strike.

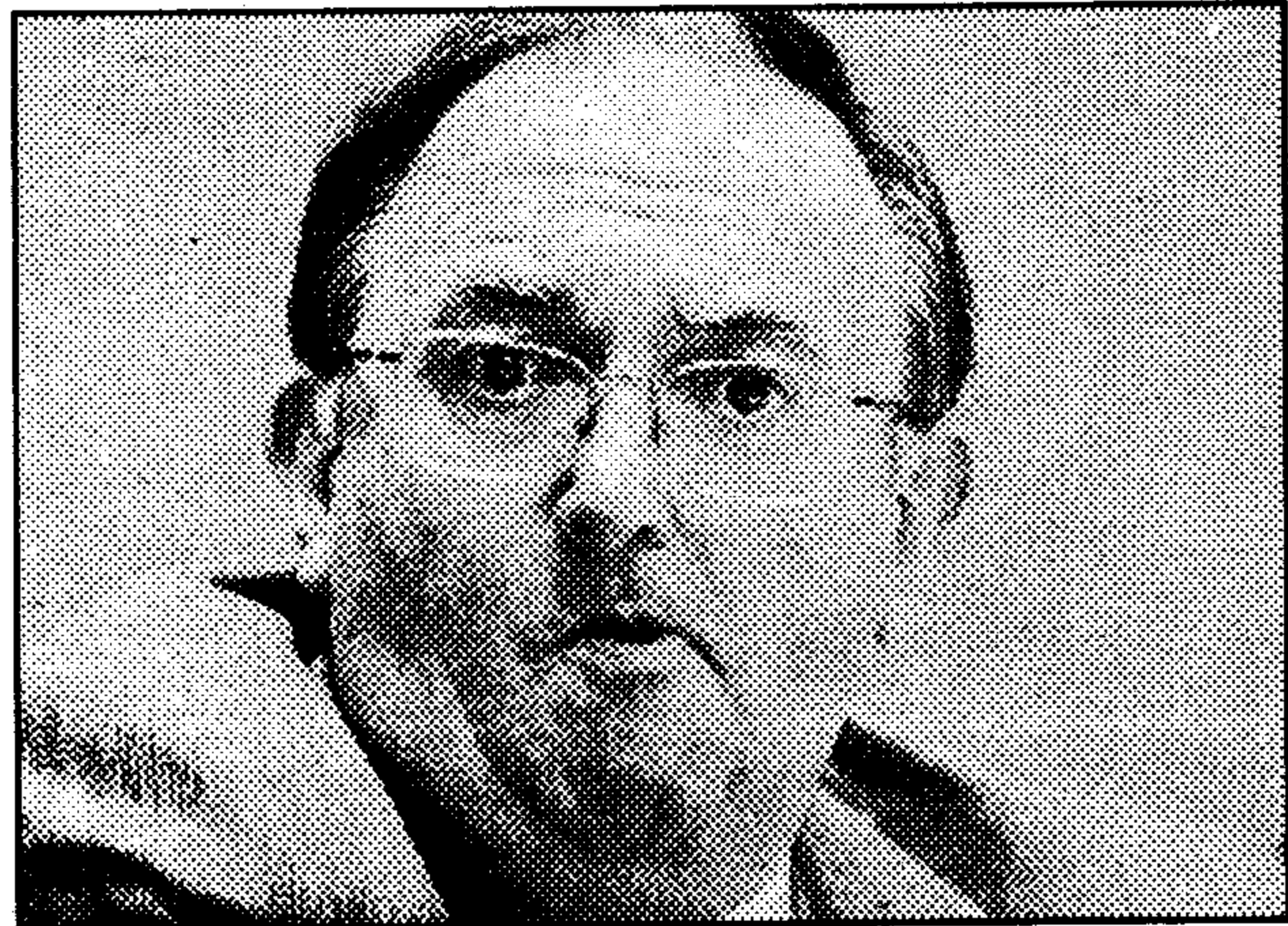
Appraisals are important, as they will be the way that teachers are selected to receive additional payments related to performance. The National Association of Schoolmasters & Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) leadership have taken a

conciliatory position towards the linking of appraisal and pay, whilst the moderate Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) made unusually militant-sounding noises from its conference in Harrogate.

Socialist Outlook teachers are active in the NUT.

The government's immediate aim is to divide and therefore weaken the response of the teachers' unions. In this they are being aided by newspapers like *The Guardian*, which has attacked the NUT's approach.

NUT activists need to reach out to rank and file members of the



Industrial action seems to be the only thing the NUT's dynamic Doug McAvoy finds hard to swallow

ATL & NASUWT as part of our campaign. There are clearly thousands of NASUWT members who are deeply unhappy with any suggestion of linking appraisal and pay.

Education Secretary David Blunkett addressed NUT conference - the same conference that, two years ago gave him a standing ovation. This year, Blunkett got a much, much cooler reception, with only a very lukewarm round of applause from a minority of conference.

Provocative

Blunkett was deliberately provocative, and seemed determined to portray himself as standing up to the 'dangerous militants' of the NUT. He had little, if anything, to offer to delegates.

Teachers are massively disillusioned with the education poli-

cies of New Labour, although around 60% vote for them. Not only do teachers continue to feel denigrated by government, they also are witnessing policies that are more in keeping with Conservative philosophy.

Extra funding has been announced but it is almost invariably linked to some specific limited initiative of the government.

So government funding has been made available to the 25 Education Action Zones (EAZs), but that money has not been felt at the chalkface. There have not been reductions in class size in the EAZ areas which are, by and large, in the most deprived areas of England.

Similarly, teachers have reacted with hostility to proposals for extra funding for small groups of children, whether year 6 booster classes or "bright" kids from the inner-cities. As NUT delegates pointed out, what is needed is increased funding for all schools and decent pay for all teachers.

Running through several debates was the attitude of the union to New Labour. On several issues, EAZs, Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Fairness at Work, the differences were stark.

The left argued successfully for outright opposition to PFI and EAZs whilst, of course, accepting that members working within EAZs or in PFI-funded schools needed union support. In both cases, the union leadership tried to win conference to a position that accommodated to New Labour.

A similar divide was very apparent on the issue of Employment Rights and an Executive Priority Motion on Fairness at Work, however due to time pressures no policy was passed on this issue.

The conference took place in the run-up to the election for the post of General Secretary of the NUT. There are two candidates, incumbent Doug McAvoy and left-winger Christine Blower.

Socialist Outlook supporters are calling for a vote for Christine Blower, as are all sections of the left in the union. Whilst McAvoy clearly remains favourite, an election campaign fought during a period of industrial action may work to the left's advantage.

However, a very careful watch needs to be kept on Doug McAvoy. He is entirely capable of talking left to win re-election whilst simultaneously preparing the ground for a sell-out behind the scenes with Blunkett.

An amendment demanding a special one day conference was unfortunately lost, this would have been a useful way of keeping pressure on the leadership.

Activists in the NUT will return from conference with the task of ensuring a massive yes majority in the vote to strike and boycott appraisal.

The government has tried to head off this action by announcing a delay in the introduction of compulsory appraisals linked to pay. Voluntary appraisals will start after the summer.

The NUT campaign must go ahead, and there is a real opportunity for activists to hold meetings in a very wide range of schools on this issue.

New Labour - New Privatisation!

Andy Richards, Convenor - Business Services Dept. Brighton and Hove Council. COUNCIL TAX and Benefit workers in Labour-controlled Brighton and Hove Council have reacted with deep anger to a proposal to privatise the service. They have voted unanimously for an industrial action ballot if the proposal is not scrapped.

For over a year Brighton and Hove, as a "Best Value" pilot authority, has been working with three other nearby councils on increasing joint working to save money. The ultimate aim was to create a joint processing centre. All along we were assured that we would remain local government employees in a public sector organisation.

Turn-around

Just a few weeks ago there was a sudden turnaround and it was proposed that the joint centre would be run by a company which would be controlled by Capita, a firm long regarded by UNISON members as a bad employer running poor services.

It is also proposed that the joint service be relocated to Falmer, on the outskirts of Brighton, and be run as a call centre.

There has been no consultation with what Best Value jargon calls the 'stakeholders' (the staff and the service users), despite this being supposedly a requirement of the Best Value process. Even most members of the Labour group on the council did not know about this until we told them.

Council leader Steve (Lord) Basam, actually works as a consultant for Capita. He claims to have recently resigned, but the employ-

ment is still listed in the House of Lords Register of Interests!

The workers held a meeting immediately (practically all 200 attended), and launched a campaign against the proposals. We have lobbied the councillors, leafleted the town and built support from other members of our branch and other trade unionists in the town. The offices are festooned with anti-Capita posters.

Regrettably the UNISON branches in the other three councils, Lewes, Tandridge and Wealden, are offering no resistance, but we will try to maintain contact with staff in those authorities who we know to be deeply unhappy with these proposals.

We have done research on Capita and have uncovered a horrific tale of poorly-run services with huge delays in benefit payments and contracts not being renewed because Capita's services have actually cost more and been less efficient than the in-house service.

We have the support of a number of Labour councillors who are angry that they have been left in the dark over this proposal and we hope that there will be at least some opposition in Council. But if that is not enough to stop it we are ready to strike to protect this vital public service.

This proposal represents the largest contract of its kind ever put together, and it is in keeping with New Labour's desire to regionalise benefits processing. If we lose, other public sector workers had better watch out!

For more information and messages of support, phone Andy Richards on 01273-291799 or 01273-416566.

MSF conference in May will take place under unusual circumstances, reports VERONICA FAGAN.

Assistant General Secretary John Chowcatt has been suspended - for making allegations of serious financial malpractice against General Secretary Roger Lyons and Head of Finance Nelson Mendez - who have themselves suffered no sanction.

This is hardly the treatment one should expect from a union which has set itself up as the champion of whistle blowers.

Union President Dave Cook

has issued circulars stating that the allegations were unfounded, but this is after a supposedly "independent investigation" - by part of the firm that is the union's auditors. They would say this, wouldn't they - given the fact that they have already signed the accounts?

Worse, Cook is now telling branch and regional activists that the matter cannot be discussed at all within the union.

Apparently it is OK for the General Secretary to be quoted in a Sunday paper, but not for members to ask what is going

on! Politically it would be difficult to get a cigarette paper between the two main protagonists, Lyons and Chowcatt - and the same can be said on the level of personal integrity.

But while there is no basis to decide whether the allegations are correct, there is every basis to demand a full, independent enquiry and equal treatment of both sides in the meantime.

This, and the conclusion that both bureaucrats cannot survive will be the basis of the left's campaign in the run up to conference.

RMT elections signal steps forward for left collaboration

Paul Fleet

JIMMY KNAPP has been returned as General Secretary of the RMT. After a hard campaign, left challenger, Greg Tucker polled 34% of the vote. His election campaign marked a welcome sign of unity on the left with every major current participating in it.

Despite Knapp's claim to have inflicted a "major defeat for those on the ultra-left", the vote for an openly hard left candidate must be seen as a serious message that RMT members are dissatisfied with the way that the union is being run.

The election for Assistant General Secretary is now to be re-run after irregularities in the ballot papers sent out to members.

The GS vote shows that a serious upset is still within the reach of the left. If the RMT is to be turned into a fighting union it is important that RMT activists redouble their efforts to see Pat Sikorski elected.

We asked Greg Tucker what he thought of the elections.

"I want to thank all those activists throughout the Union who helped me in my campaign. Over the election I was able to travel around the country talking to RMT members. It is clear that many are very frustrated by the way the Union squanders the loyalty and goodwill of members.

"While there is a will to fight back against the attacks being made on us by the privatised companies, too often, our Union is dodging the issues and backing away from standing up for our members.

"What we need is a both a new leadership at national level - I hope everyone will be working to get Patrick elected - and a new spirit in our ranks. The time is right for activists to get together to organise so that our Union can fight for our members' interests.

"We need officials who give a lead, so it is important that when positions come up for election we campaign for candidates who will "organise" rather than "compromise". But we also need the rank and file fighting to hold them to

account. Such organisation amongst ordinary members must be our priority.

"I am glad to say that through the campaign behind my candidature we have been able to lay the groundwork for rebuilding rank and file co-ordination.

"I am disgusted with the way that the AGS election is being run. Head Office clearly failed to set out the ballot papers properly. Members were clearly confused about how to vote. But instead of immediately re-running the election, the Executive tried to close its eyes to the problem and carry on regardless.

"Now that they have been forced to see sense they are trying to blame Patrick for pointing out their errors. This is utter hypocrisy.

"Instead of launching a witch-hunt against Patrick they should be apologising for having wasted up to £40,000 of RMT members' contributions.

"This is just another reason why we need to see a change at the top of our Union."

Why NATO is a problem, not the answer for Kosova

ANY SOCIALIST worthy of the name ought to feel revulsion, outrage and anger at the savagery of Slobodan Milosevic and his regime's reactionary determination to subjugate the people of Kosova.

The Serbian regime's record of support for ethnic cleansing, and the use by Serbian nationalists of the most barbaric methods to drive out other nationalities in Bosnia give additional credence to what sometimes seem to be exaggerated media reports of events in Kosova.

In a humanitarian disaster, hundreds have been killed and hundreds of thousands have become refugees in the course of the Serbian attack. Thousands of Kosovar men have been arrested by Serbian forces; from the experience of Bosnia, we can assume that many have been summarily executed.

This is the latest stage in Slobodan Milosevic's efforts to achieve a 'Greater Serbia', which began in Kosova ten years ago and has caused devastation in all parts of former Yugoslavia.

The exodus of what has become a tidal wave of refugees began before the NATO bombing, and now appears to have evacuated whole areas of Kosova.

The pictures of the crowds of displaced and uprooted people being herded about by hostile soldiers and police in Macedonia, crammed into comfortless camps, and distraught families force-marched onto planes to be flown out to unknown distant destinations have triggered a wave of public sympathy in Britain – as shown by the huge response to the appeal by the leading charities for funds to aid the refugees.

It is inevitable that under such pressure, socialists will want not just to denounce what is happening, but want to *do* something to stop Milosevic.

This is why many people who would normally be seen as opponents of imperialism and imperialist alliances have gone along with the NATO bombardment of Serbia, and why some, notably Ken Livingstone, have gone even further, and called for a ground war, in which NATO troops drive the Serbians out of Kosova.

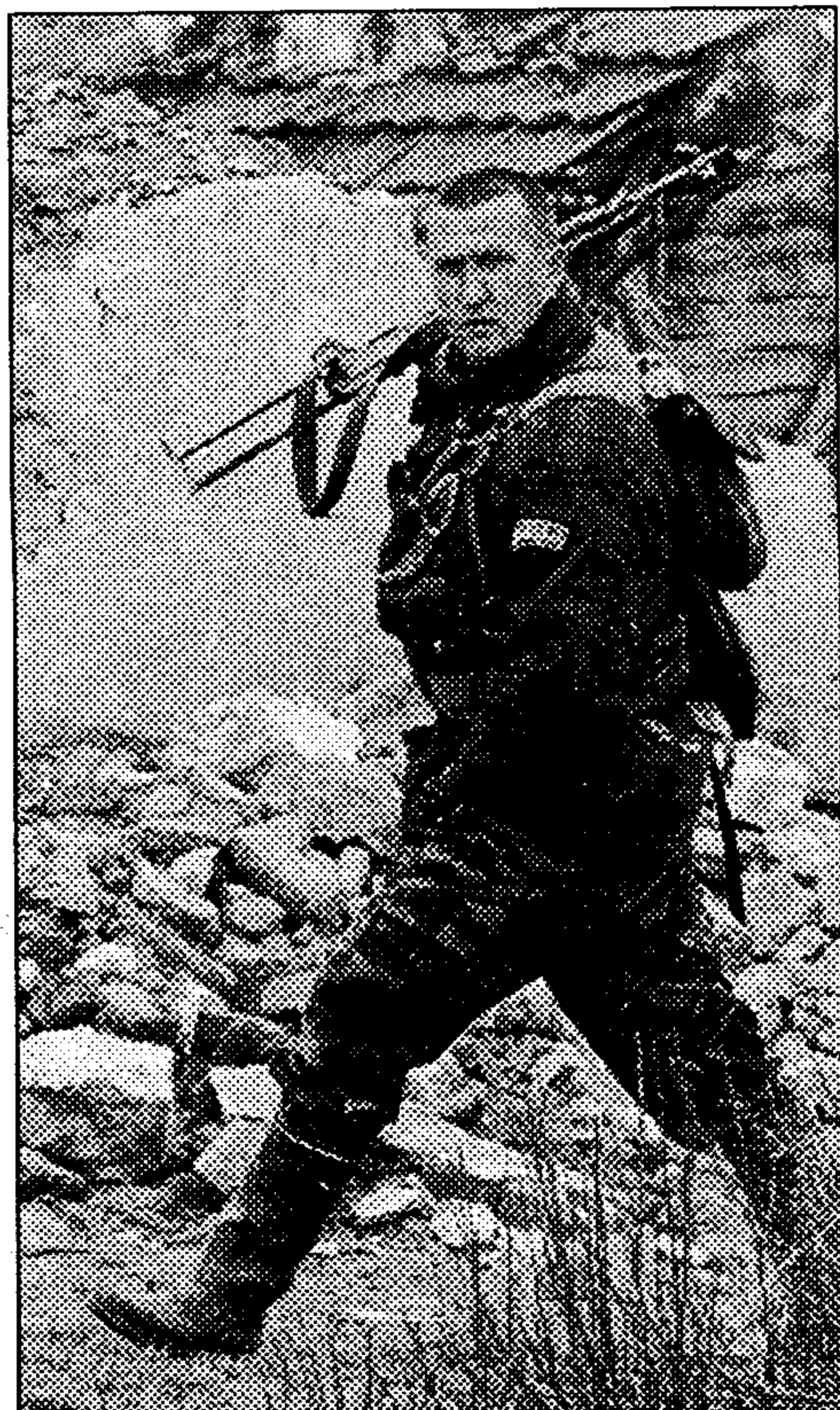
The irony of socialists looking to an imperialist military alliance – the one which brought us the spiralling costs of Trident and the controversial stationing of nuclear-armed US Cruise missiles in Europe – to secure human rights may seem strange enough.

As Geoff Ryan points out (p7) NATO has never taken any stance in support of democratic rights. Nor, as Tariq Ali has argued, (p11) have the leading imperialist powers shown any willingness to support struggles against dictatorial regimes. More often the US has been urging butchers like Suharto and of course Pinochet to crack down on popular movements.

But the idea that the mobilisation of a massive imperialist land army to fight its way into Kosova could in any way win the national self-determination of the Kosovars is even more bizarre.

Even assuming that the angry Russians stood by and allowed this new frontal attack on its Serbian allies, and that the invasion were successfully carried through, the resulting armed enclave would be a profoundly unstable puppet state, totally dependent upon external military force for

EDITORIAL



Serb soldiers (above) are fully-armed, but NATO says no to arming the KLA resistance

its survival – like a grotesque land-locked version of "Fortress Falklands" in the eastern part of Europe.

The fighting of a land war would inevitably kill or displace even more of the remaining Kosovar population, with the likely end result being a massively-guarded "Fortress Kosova", containing troops from the US and several European countries – but few if any Kosovars.

Any refugees who could be enticed back to the smouldering ruins of their homeland – and any "government" they might be allowed to form – would be subject to the political dictates of their NATO sponsors.

The record of western capital in investing even in relatively advanced East European economies such as Poland suggests that there would be little if any injection of resources to rebuild the country or its economy. The best job prospects for Kosovars returning "home" would be serving burgers and refuelling planes and tanks in what would have to be a permanent and huge NATO garrison.

A straightforward military victory is by no means guaranteed, however. This would be no rerun of Operation Desert Storm. As many as 200,000 troops would be required – equipped with heavy armour and artillery – and they would need to fight their way in over difficult mountainous terrain, with long and awkward supply lines, using surrounding countries as little more than a thoroughfare.

The Greek government, the most unreliable of the NATO alliance on the Kosova issue, has from the beginning called for a halt to the bombing. Without Greek support, the only obvious access to Kosova is through Albania, which has already offered NATO untrammelled access to its territory and air-space to prosecute the war against the Serbs – but which as a result



NATO's bombs are already hitting targets in Kosova: a ground war would drive out more refugees

seems destined to become another tame NATO protectorate.

Far from representing a "lesser evil" or the "only way", a land invasion under the banner of liberating Kosova would simply compound the problem, and wind up trampling on the national rights of other peoples throughout the Balkans. It would also represent a huge and open-ended commitment for imperialism: the troops might fight their way in, but they could never be safely withdrawn.

The truth is often painful, and in this case there is no easy answer for socialists. The reality is that the liberation of Kosova from the grip of Serbian repression and ethnic cleansing can only be carried out by the Kosovars themselves.

Yet far from offering a solution, NATO is part of the problem: it continues to reject calls to arm those dedicated to fighting for an independent Kosova – the Kosova Liberation Army.

Instead its clinical, high-altitude blitzkrieg against an increasingly wide and

indiscriminate list of targets in Serbia and Kosova is solidifying Milosevic's support, and making life in Kosova ever less viable.

From the start of the conflicts resulting from Milosevic's ambition to replace Yugoslavia with a 'Greater Serbia', *Socialist Outlook* has supported the right of self-determination for all the peoples of the region.

That is why we call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Serbian troops and police from Kosova.

We also support all efforts to maintain genuine multi-ethnic communities in the Balkans, and any moves towards a socialist federation in the region. A socialist federation can only be established with the will of the people, not imposed from outside or above.

We demand the immediate cessation of the bombing, and the withdrawal of all NATO forces from the region. Support must be stepped up for the multi-ethnic, working-class resistance to chauvinism and racism in former Yugoslavia and across the Balkans.

It is inevitable that under such pressure, socialists will want not just to denounce what is happening, but want to do something to stop Milosevic.

Give us back our missing pages!

TECHNICAL problems at our printers mean that this issue of *Socialist Outlook* has had to be cut down to just 16 instead of the usual 20 pages.

However we are also feeling the financial pinch of campaigning on many different fronts – including the latest mobilisation against NATO's war in the Balkans, building the campaign for the Cologne Euromarch, and sustaining a wide range of campaigns within the trade union and labour movement.

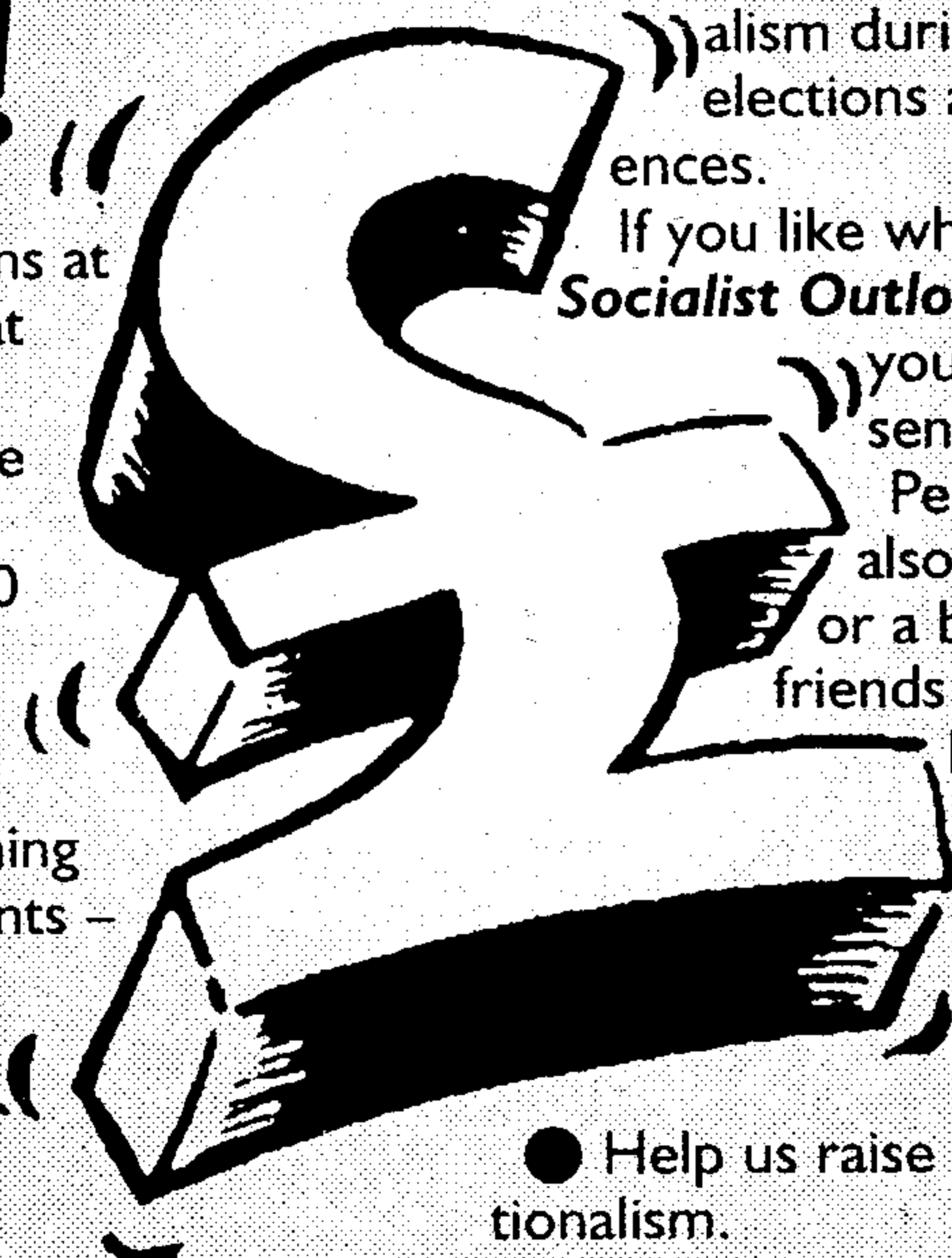
To make matters worse, the laser printer we use for proofing pages of *Socialist Outlook* has died on us, with a replacement costing in excess of £1,500.

We urgently need additional resources to restore the paper to its full size, and enable us to publish more leaflets and pamphlets arguing the case for socialism and internationalism during this summer of elections and union conferences.

If you like what you read in *Socialist Outlook*, please show your appreciation by sending a donation. Perhaps you could also take an extra copy or a bundle to sell to friends or workplace colleagues.

● Help us build the fighting, socialist alternative to Blair's reactionary offensive.

● Help us raise the flag of internationalism. Please rush cheques – for as much as you can afford – to *Socialist Outlook*, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.



New A-Z of "Great British" chauvinism

Welsh Labour plumbs new depths

Ceri Evans

THE ELECTION of Alun Michael as Welsh Labour leader had one immediate and spectacular result - Labour support in the opinion polls dropped by a remarkable 10 percent.

Peter Hain, Michael's campaign manager, was quick to blame this on the leadership campaign, claiming that the party had been "looking inwards ... to an excruciating degree".

In reality, it was not the leadership contest that caused the drop in support, but rather the undemocratic way in which it was conducted, and the consequent outcome.

Most of the 10% transferred their support to Plaid Cymru, leaving Labour on 51%, Plaid on 23% and the Tories on 16%.

The response of the Labour leadership was to launch a vitriolic attack on Plaid, entitled "The A to Z of Nationalist Madness".

This is a truly dreadful document, reminiscent of the worst kind of negative camp campaigning conducted by the Conservatives and the 'No' campaign during the Assembly referendum. It attacks Plaid Cymru for many left-wing policies, which socialists in the Labour Party would equally support, such as the abolition of student loans and prescription charges.

The document reaches the level of farce with the final heading, "Z is for zealots", where Plaid are attacked for wanting Wales to have its own seat at the UN, under the name Cymru, which the document disparagingly



Yesterday's Peter Hain has been replaced by a "new" Millbank droid

points out would fall between Cuba and Cyprus.

While the "A to Z" is quick to attack the Welsh nationalism of Plaid Cymru, it makes no mention of the British nationalism of the Labour Party, which is all too ready to cloak itself in the union jack, to talk of "One Nation Labour", and to parade bulldogs in election broadcasts.

This latest campaign shown clearly what Michael and Hain mean by "a new, inclusive politics in Wales".

According to Hain, "It marks the death knell of the weary, gladiatorial style of British politics, where petty point scoring invariably triumphs over sensible debate".

The "A-Z" is exactly that kind of petty point-scoring and illustrates what the new "inclusiveness" really means: inclusive to the right and the Liberal Democrats; abusive to the left, in this case Plaid Cymru.

Many Labour supporters in Wales were appalled by the blatant stitch-up of the Labour leadership. They should be equally

concerned by the latest turn in the campaign.

This is no basis on which to campaign for the Assembly, it does nothing to foster the debates needed in Wales or develop policies to answer people's real concerns - on jobs, education and the health service.

The antics Labour's leadership have led many people to consider abandoning the Party in disgust. Socialist Outlook supporters believe that this is premature.

Now is not the time to turn away from Labour, when the campaign against the right wing leadership is only just beginning. The events surrounding the leadership contest are only a foretaste of much bigger struggles to come.

It is vital that the left is fully involved in these debates and does not hand victory to the right simply by walking away from the Party at this stage.

This is why we call for a Labour vote in these elections - with the idea of giving Labour a clear majority to ensure it can be held accountable for its actions in gov-

Labour's NEC elections 99 Vote early, vote left!

Neil Murray

THIS YEAR'S election to the Constituency section of the Labour Party NEC is being held earlier than previously, probably in May and June.

Officially this is because the result distracts attention from the key issues at Party conference. The Blair coterie was certainly upset when the victory of four Grassroots Alliance candidates was announced just before Blair's 'shirtsleeves' session with delegates at the beginning of last year's conference.

However, the cynical also believe it is also because party structures will be closed down for most of April, all of May and part of June, due to local, Scottish, Welsh and European elections, thus hindering campaigning. It also helps Michael Cashman, elected last year on the Blairite slate, to stand again as a 'rank and file candidate' just before becoming an MEP in a favoured position on the West Midlands list.

In order to deter interest, the date for nominations was also brought forward to April 9, something not many activists found out easily.

At the time of going to press it looks certain that all 6 Grassroots Alliance candidates - Ann Black, Bill Butler, Liz Davies, Mark Seddon, Christine Shawcroft and Pete Willsman - will get the requisite nominations (and more).

What is unclear is precisely what the opposition is this year.

Diana Jeuda and Michael Cashman, the two successful Blairites last year, are standing again, but it

is unclear whether there are even 4 other Blairite candidates. There is certainly no sign to date of another 'Members First' campaign.

Maybe after last year's debacle and the Welsh leadership election the Blairites have decided they have a better chance if they play things low key. They want to retain the two places they won last year, but given that the NEC is so marginalised from decision-making they can perhaps 'live with' having four oppositions elected.

This seems particularly so as they currently have no real support among other NEC members. Members of affiliated unions should try to ensure that union nominees are willing to challenge Blair and pressure is kept up on NEC members to represent union policy.

Despite this marginalisation, it is important to use the election to mount a campaign around

Labour's policies and lack of democracy, and to organise those supporting the Grassroots Alliance candidates.

Those elected last year have used their time on the NEC to report what goes on at meetings of what is supposedly Labour's top body, and to campaign against many of the policies of the leadership.

Last year's result was a product of serious campaigning by rank and file activists, circulating leaflets, contacting party members, and organising meetings at which the candidates could put forward their arguments.

Despite the elections, activists should look to do the same, but even more effectively, this year.

Last year's result was a product of serious campaigning by rank and file activists

Decision deferred on London Mayor

Pete Firmin

The March Labour Party NEC yet again had no proposals put to it on the procedure for selecting the Party's candidate for London Mayor.

No explanation is given for this, but there are several possible reasons: the leadership do not want bad publicity about carving out Ken Livingstone in advance of the many elections coming up; they have not yet firmed up a loyal candidate; and they are hoping the longer they postpone the issue the greater the chance of it dying a death with the media.

Although there has been speculation that Mo Mowlam may stand, prompted no doubt by Party insiders, Mowlam herself has given no such indication. There are serious obstacles to her standing, despite her general popularity.

For a start, she has no connection with London. She probably prefers to stay in the Cabinet, hoping maybe to be Party leader one day. She also has important unfinished business in Ireland. Rumours have it that the leadership are failing back on Nick Raynsford, the clone who is Minister for London.

Livingstone has done a good job keeping the issue in the limelight. The 1,000-plus public meeting in January was followed by a "Let

Ken Stand" benefit, which raised £10,000, and a series of hard-hitting press adverts. Local meetings are being planned by the campaign across London.

Labour movement and other bodies are being encouraged to step up the flow of resolutions in support of Livingstone's right to stand and ensure copies are sent to him.

As well as passing resolutions supporting his right to stand, organisations should also make it clear that they disagree with his stand on the Balkan's war, (see p10)

Meanwhile, the vetting process for Labour candidates for the Greater London Assembly has shown once again what such procedures are about.

The self-nomination process was claimed to assist in ensuring black and women candidates are fully represented: but many black Party members have been told they failed, again not all of them by any means left wingers.

While the leadership dithers about the best way to exclude Livingstone with the least publicity, Party activists must raise the temperature, pointing out what has happened around the GLA candidates and broadening the support for Livingstone's right to stand.

Is Plaid a left alternative?

Recent events have led many people to consider voting Plaid as a leftwing alternative to Labour.

In response it is not enough to attack Plaid Cymru by countering socialist internationalism to its Welsh nationalism.

Internationalism has too often been used as a cover for the worst kinds of British chauvinism. And internationalist credentials

the Labour Party are

very dubious indeed. It is necessary to look at both the positive and the negative aspects of Plaid politics.

The positive aspects are its rejection of the centralist British state, its long-standing anti-militarist and pacifist tradition and its defence of the Welsh language.

More negative is the widely propagated view that policies "made in Wales" will be inherently better than those made "in England", and a consistent failure to identify international capitalism as the real culprit in the impoverishment of the people of Wales.

Other problems include the extremely heterogeneous nature of the party, particularly at local government level, where it often acts more as an anti-Labour bloc than a socialist opposition.

On a European level, Plaid shares with Labour a support for the Maastricht Treaty and the single currency. The contradiction between supporting monetarist policies on a

European level and Keynesian policies on a Welsh level is left unresolved.

As a result, there has been no real debate in Wales on the future of the European Union.

There is also a danger that Plaid will not function as an effective opposition in the Assembly, given their stated aim of trying to "make the Assembly work", in order to establish their own legitimacy among the Welsh people.

United socialists

The other group standing to the left of Labour in the Assembly elections are the United Social-

Plaid shares with Labour a support for the Maastricht Treaty and the single currency.

For Socialist Unity in the European Elections

Dave Packer, London Socialist Alliance.

Today the mood for co-operation among the socialist left by its various component parts is unmistakable. This manifests itself in numerous ways, including on the electoral terrain.

It is therefore a tragedy that the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) and its leader Arthur Scargill, have so far remained silent on all appeals and letters for a united platform in the up-coming European Elections in June (See box for a recent letter).

The political basis of unity of course needs discussion, but we see no grounds for pessimism on this score. We in the Socialist Alliance, which includes a number of far-left organisations, have managed to develop in a comradely manner a joint anti-capitalist election programme and other publicity material and agreed on a broad outline of a campaign.

Much more work still needs to be done, included raising money, but we are all agreed that division on the left only helps our enemies, weakens our cause, empties our pockets and divides our vote.

We consider that in the present right-wing political climate it is essential that the old sectarian reflexes are dumped and that we build constructively on the new mood that exists.

This does not mean abandoning principled debate in a comradely manner or in the appropriate place, on the contrary, we need to raise the level of discussion to meet the challenges before us. But it is essential

that the British left – notorious throughout Europe for its sectarianism – begins to seriously address this historic problem.

Today we must not only build broad based united front campaigns in action, but we need to construct united electoral alliances that can have an impact, raise the banner of socialism and offer a real political alternative to the working class and its allies to the capitalist offensive continued by this "New Labour" government.

Trade unionists, young people the excluded and the doubly oppressed, i.e., the working class, still need an independent voice to represent their interests.

Tony Blair's agenda does not meet the needs of the working class. It combines modernisation of the capitalist state (mainly in the interests of capitalism) with a reactionary social attack and erosion of the historic gains of the working class both here and in Europe.

When combined with the imposition of a bureaucratic internal regime inside the Labour Party, which has effectively evacuated party democracy and accountability, many party members and other socialists in the unions and among the existing far-left, have begun to seriously consider the task of building a new mass workers party.

There are many ideas and strategies to discuss and test out, and even greater objective difficulties to overcome before such a mass workers party can be built.



Newcastle, April 10: the UNISON march against low pay was dominated by the left, underlining the need for unity

Nonetheless, the new mood of co-operation on the left, and the practical emergence of several networks and campaigning alliances – not to be confused with single issue campaigns and movements – have been established, and have taken the discussion forward on both a political and organisational level. (see progress report on the London manifesto for the European Elections in June, in Socialist Outlook no 20, Dec.1998).

At the national level, Socialist Alliances recently held their founding national conference in Birmingham, which adopted a set of political aims and a national constitution.

This followed-on from a series of well attended preparatory national meetings, all of which involved representatives from local groups, individuals and other socialist organisations.

We are still at a very early stage, but reports from the regions showed that some local Alliances are beginning to do serious campaigning activities, as well as emulating the London Socialist Alliance election initiative.

This latter has, over the past several months, been establishing itself in order to stand in London in the European Elections. A successful launch meeting was held in Friends Meeting House at the beginning of the year.

London Socialist Alliance has the support and sponsorship of many experienced trade unionists, campaigners, socialist comedians, media people and film makers such as Ken Loach. More recently in the West Midlands a similar process has been repeated with a slate headed by Dave Nelligan of the Socialist Party.

These developments represent an unprecedented co-operation between left organisations and groups, and are living examples of the mood among activists as a whole.

Unfortunately, despite appeals and letters for unity to the SLP, they have so far refused to be part of any electoral front – or to give any political reasons for their isolationist stance.

One can only draw the conclusion that, as on other occasions,

A platform obtaining 8% of the vote in London could win a seat

In the present right-wing political climate it is essential that the old sectarian reflexes are dumped

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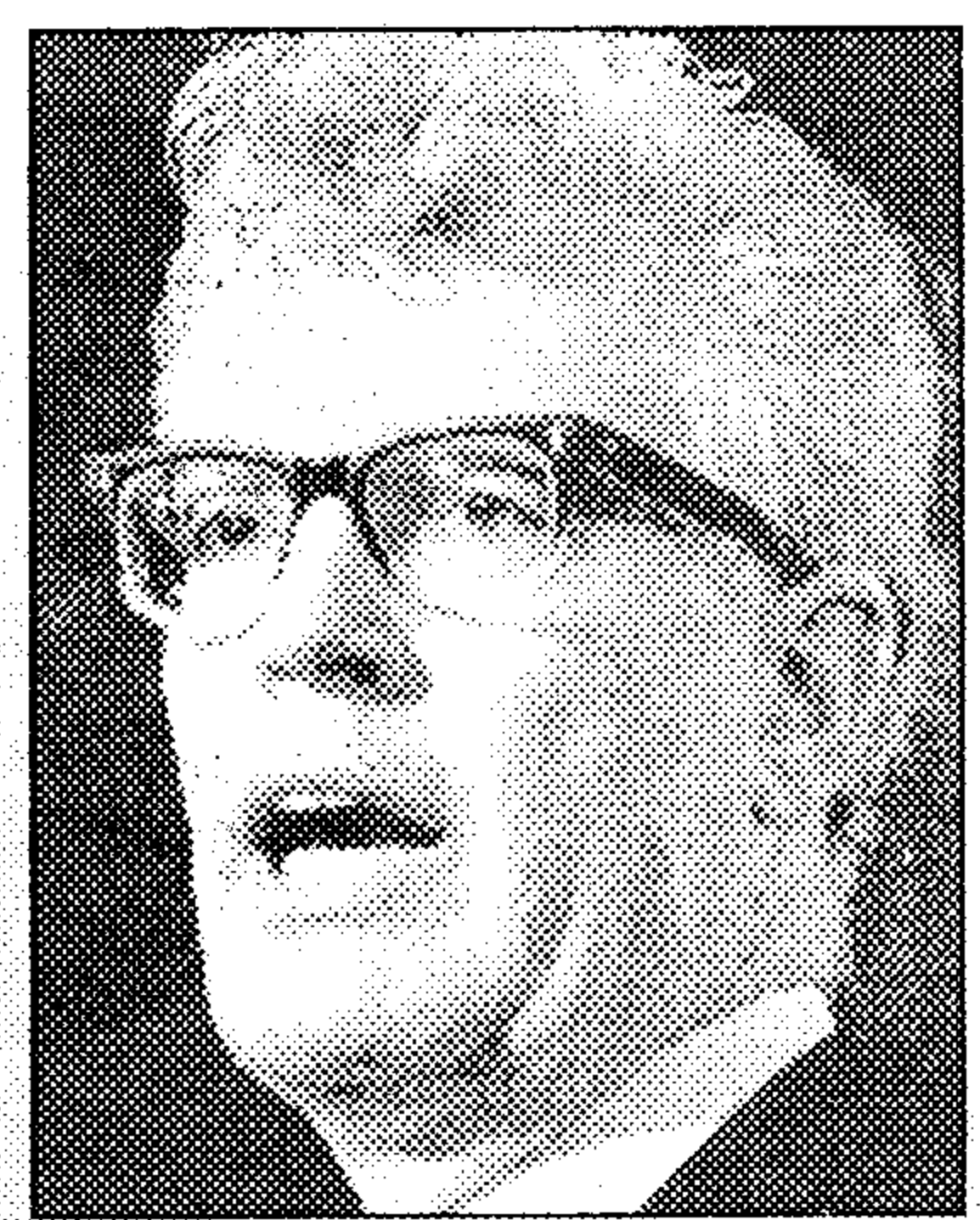
INSIDE COWLEY

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20,000 join demo against poverty wages

Simon Deville
Over 20,000 people marched through Newcastle upon Tyne on April 10, demanding a living wage for all.



Embarrassed: Bickerstaffe agent of young people, who rightly insisted on chanting more militant slogans than those sanctioned by the official stewards.

Although supported by 14 national trade unions, only UNISON made any real attempt to mobilise its membership.

Even within UNISON, it was overwhelmingly the left of the union who were actively trying to mobilise. Given these imitations, the demonstration was an outstanding success, proving that there is a real basis amongst rank and file trade unionists for campaigning against low wages.

UNISON's NEC tried to keep politics off the march. They sent out instructions that no political literature would be allowed, and refused to organise any speakers at all, before, during or after the demo.

Not only could they not in the end keep left placards and newspapers off the march, but Bickerstaffe was mightily embarrassed by the behaviour of the lead contin-

The fact that the rally organised by the Campaign for a Fighting and Democratic UNISON and the SWP was attended by over 2,000 people – with many more turned away – clearly showed that people attended the demonstration because they were interested in the politics.

This demo must be seen as just the beginning of an ongoing campaign to mobilise all trade unionists to fight in the workplaces for a decent wage for all.

Scargill and the leadership of the SLP reject such collaboration on principle, even though the benefits for developing class struggle and rebuilding the left are obvious.

This year's European election will be the first in England and Wales to be fought under a system of proportional representation (though one system will already have been used in the Scottish Assembly elections).

This provides an opportunity for socialists. A platform obtaining around 8% of the vote in the new London wide constituency could win a seat. This is certainly excluded now and in the future if the left remains divided.

We have responded to this

opportunity by establishing an unprecedented alliance which includes the Independent Labour Network, Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Party, International Socialist Group, Alliance for Workers Liberty and the Communist Party of Great Britain.

This alliance should include the SLP. London Socialist Alliance appeals to the SLP to answer our letters and clear the way to a common, united socialist slate for London.

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Build the National Civil Rights Movement

Simon Deville

The six years of campaigning around the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence have had a far greater impact than the Macpherson recommendations themselves.

First and foremost, an understanding of the racism throughout the police and the judicial system has become accepted throughout a wide layer of society.

Whilst many senior Police officers are still contesting the report's findings, most people would now accept that black people are routinely fitted up, harassed, and criminalised by the police.

At the same time there is a general understanding that those at the receiving end of racist violence do not receive the same protection from the law that white people would receive from violent crime.

Whilst there may be differing views on the extent of the problem, the fact that so many people believe that there is a problem gives anti-racists the opportunity to mobilise for a real and lasting change.

Alliance of activists

Equally as important, the long campaign for justice for Stephen Lawrence has created an alliance of activists across the country in a way that has never previously existed. Many of the campaigns and organisations that have worked together over the Stephen Lawrence Campaign met to launch the National Civil Rights Movement at a packed conference attended by over 500 activists at

the end of last month.

Speaker after speaker from various campaigns emphasised the pattern of racism throughout society. Speakers from the Ricky Reel, Michael Menson and Stephen Lawrence Campaigns among others movingly described the horrendous indifference and hostility they had received from the police in response to these racist murders.

Campaigns such as that of Roger Silvester emphasised the need for the NCRM to take up the demands of those killed whilst in custody.

The conference heard how those who resist racist attacks have found themselves prosecuted, such as Satpal Ram, who is serving a life sentence simply for defending himself against racist thugs.

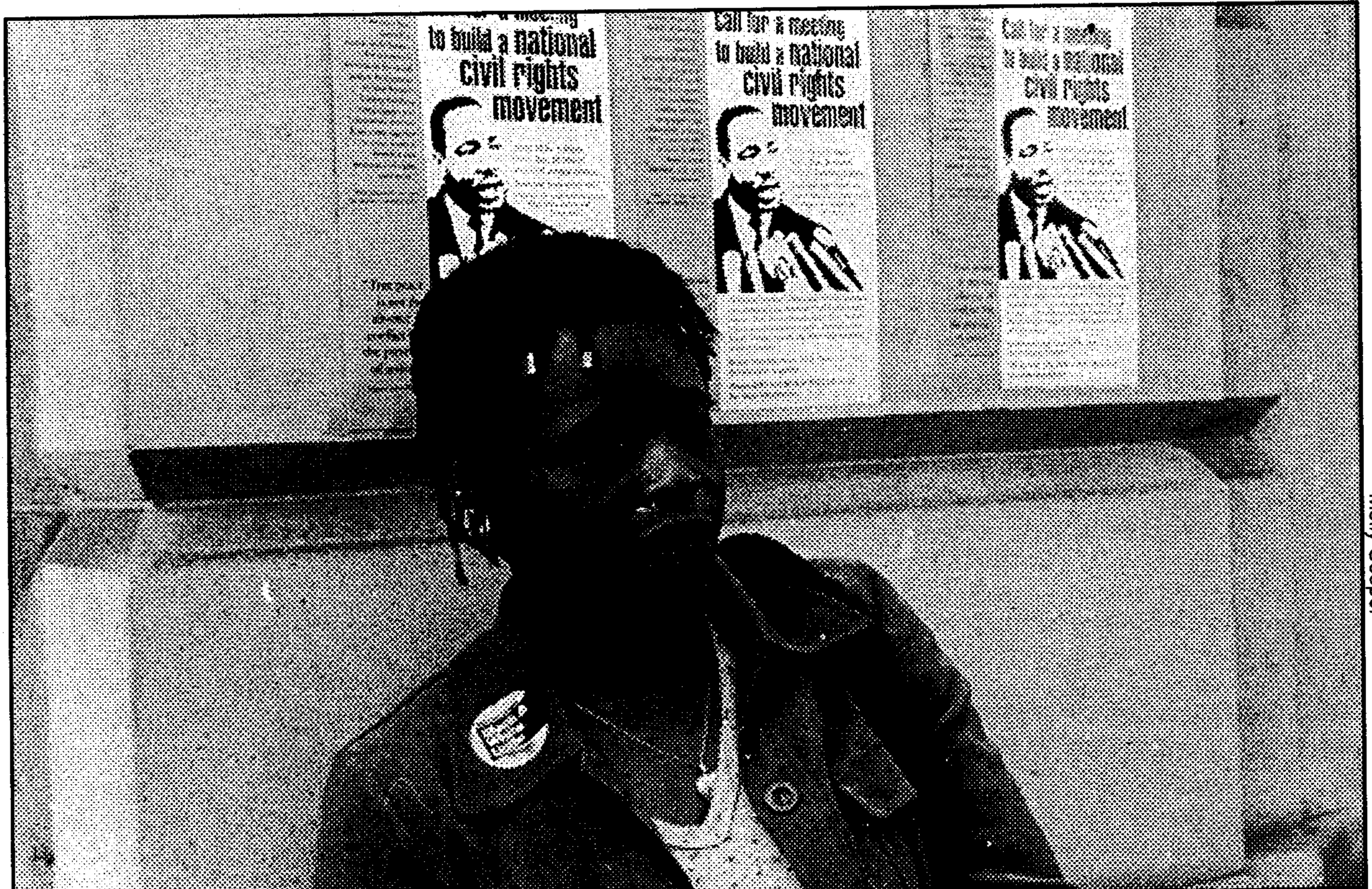
Many other speakers addressed other areas of racism that the movement would need to address, including Britain's Asylum and Immigration laws.

Irish dimension

The conference had an unusually strong Irish dimension, opening with a minutes silence for Rosemary Nelson and others who had been murdered. Rosemary herself had been due to address the conference.

Dianne Hamill explained how the RUC stood by as Robert Hamill was kicked to death by a loyalist mob in Portadown, and how the security forces have refused to prosecute anyone, to carry out any serious investigation, or to conduct an inquiry into these failures.

The conference agreed to establish itself as a national network of campaigns, individuals and com-



Joining the outcry: the sister of Christopher Alder, who died in police custody in Hull, at the Conference

Molly Cooper

The Lawrence campaign has clearly shown to all that the collective strength of all the various campaigns is far greater than the sum of their parts

munities committed to the struggle for racial justice and human rights.

The Lawrence campaign has clearly shown to all that the collective strength of all the various campaigns is far greater than the sum of their parts, and the NCRM has consolidated this working relationship on a far more permanent footing. This in itself is a significant step forward for the anti-racist movement in Britain.

The large attendance meant, however that many questions were left unresolved. It is clear that the NCRM will of necessity take on a wider role than simply as a network of the campaigns.

For example, whilst a specific campaign may make a complaint

against the role of the police, the NCRM also needs to address wider questions such as the lack of accountability of the police, and the lack of any independent complaints authority.

Likewise, whilst the Robert Hamill campaign must address the role the RUC played in his murder, the NCRM must address the wider question of disbanding the RUC.

Linking up

There are many organisations already in existence to campaign around these more general issues of racism and injustice. The NCRM must address how it works with

all anti-racist organisations, campaigns and individuals in pursuing our common goals.

The NCRM must also aim to turn the widespread revulsion at the racism of the police and the Criminal Justice System into action.

All the organisations involved must build campaigns on a grass roots level, whilst at the same time building a national movement, that can organise demonstrations and mobilisations around key issues.

It must, as part of this aim, address how to involve wider layers the trade union movement, political organisations and campaigns into active participation in the struggle against racism and all forms of injustice.

Black motorist stopped 21 times in 26 months

Oxford campaign fights racist policing

A new campaign – the Campaign Against Racist Policing (CARP) – was formed in Oxford last month after charges were brought by the police against a black motorist who had been stopped and searched 21 times in 26 months.

A lobby was organised when Harold Macfarlane, born in Oxford of African Caribbean parents, appeared at Oxford magistrates court on Thursday March 18th, accused of obstructing the police in the course of their duty and of threatening behaviour arising from a stop and search inci-

dent at the beginning of the year.

The police offered no evidence and the case collapsed – the second time Harold Macfarlane had faced that situation.

Whilst he was pleased the case had been dropped, he felt that he had been deprived of the opportunity to expose the actions of the police in public.

Harold Macfarlane's case is an extreme one, but, it is only one of many happening regularly in the Oxford area.

To begin to combat this the Campaign Against Racist

Policing (CARP) has also called a public meeting on 'STOP and SEARCH' and racist policing on April 15th at 7.30 pm. at the Church of the Holy Family hall in Cuddesden Way, on the Blackbird Leys estate.

CARP is calling on the Black community to attend the meeting and in particular black people who have been subjected to stop and search checks by the Thames Valley police. The meeting will discuss how to combat this in the wake of the Lawrence inquiry and what rights exist to deal with the situation when it arises on the street.



Local campaigns have kept up the pressure on the police

Naked Aggressive Terrorist Organisation

Geoff Ryan

In two weeks time Nato will celebrate its fiftieth birthday in Washington. Nato leaders hope by then to be celebrating victory in the Balkans. Present at the birthday party will be the three newest members of Nato: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was founded in April 1949. During the Cold War Nato claimed to be fighting on behalf of 'the Free World'. From its very formation that claim was a lie. Among the twelve founder members was Portugal.

The fascistic regime of Salazar ran one of the most oppressive states in Europe and fought some of the most brutal colonial wars in Africa. The right to self-determination of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau was clearly not part of Nato's concept of a 'free world'.

Nor was Portugal an exception. Although Spain did not formally become a member of Nato until the 1980s, as early as 1950 Nato was regularly in discussions on mutual military aid with the fascist government of General Franco.

Nato was the military accompaniment to the Marshall Plan – not least since the author of this plan, General George Marshall, was a key military figure in the Truman administration. The devastation of the Second World War had left western European economies seriously weakened.

In France, Italy and virtually all west European countries except



Labour's leading Cold Warrior, Ernest Bevin, was an architect of the anti-communist NATO alliance

Britain and Ireland, (and obviously Portugal and Spain) Communist parties had come into government at the end of the war. For the US this was an extremely worrying situation. Economic recovery was only possible on the basis of vast amounts of American capital. Economic aid, however, went hand in hand with political and military measures.

At American insistence the Communists were pushed out of government in France. In Italy the US waged a massive campaign to prevent victory for the Communist Party - Socialist Party (PCI-PSI) electoral alliance

in 1948. Huge amounts of money were sent to the Christian Democrats, arriving on ships announcing 'a present from America'. The US made it plain that in the event of a PCI-PSI victory such 'presents' would immediately stop.

The Catholic Church threatened excommunication for anyone who voted for the Communists or Socialists. US warships patrolling off the Italian coast made more tangible threats.

A number of Mafiosi, of whom Lucky Luciano is merely the best known, were released from US jails and sent to Italy to aid the anti-communist campaign. Not surprisingly Frank Sinatra, and a number of other American entertainers, added their voices to the anti-communist chorus.

The British Labour Party and TUC also did their bit to prevent a left-wing electoral victory. The TUC played a central role in breaking up the united trade union federation that Italian workers had created after the fall of Mussolini, while the Labour Party was instrumental in engineering a right-wing split from the PSI.

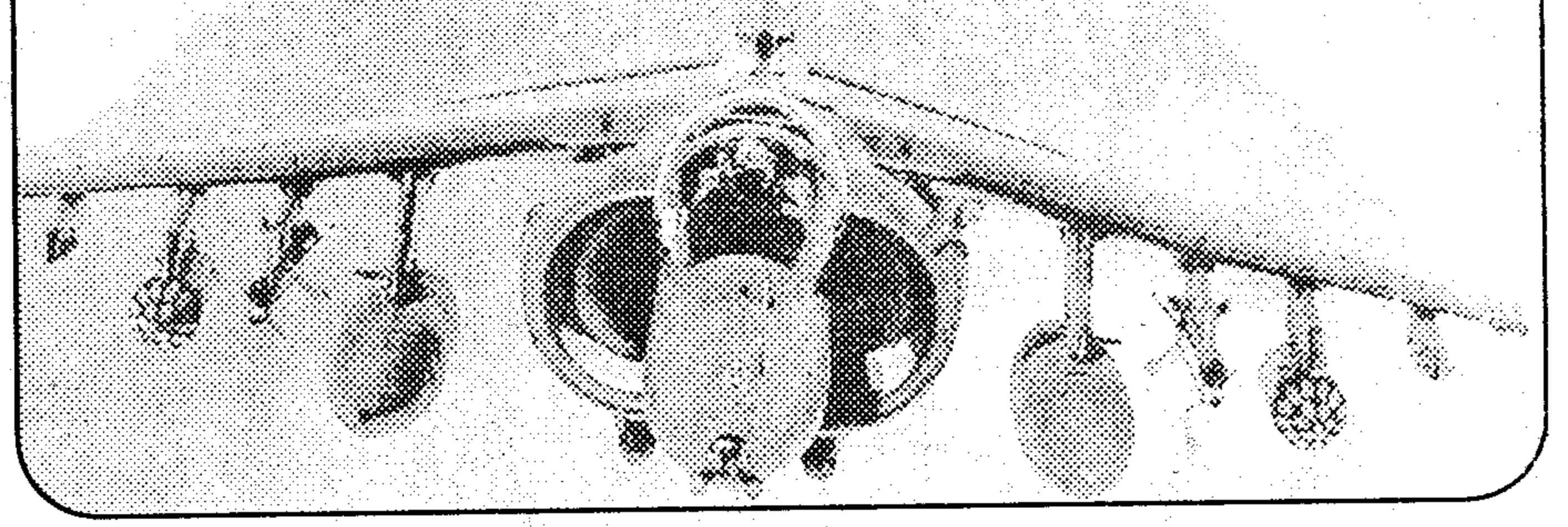
Old Labour

The Labour government played a central role in the establishment of Nato. Labour was in the forefront of setting up the Brussels defence Pact in early 1949, which within a few weeks had been transformed into Nato.

The severe post-war economic crisis meant Britain could no longer function as the world's policeman. In 1947 Attlee's government had been forced to announce that its troops could no longer continue to suppress the developing revolution in Greece (while Stalin for his part was also doing his utmost to sabotage the revolution). The virulently anti-communist Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin demanded that the US step in. President Truman duly obliged.

It was the economic and military weakness of the western European states that allowed Truman to side-step strong isolationist tendencies in the US. But equally Truman had to take into account a Soviet Union that had emerged as a rival super-power, and strong Communist and Socialist movements in the west. American capital was necessary

NATO out of the Balkans!



Serb tanks threaten Kosova: but NATO's bombs and tanks will only ever be used to secure imperialist interests. NATO refuses to arm the KLA to enable them to fight back.

to rebuild shattered economies: but Europe could not be rebuilt in America's image. Unfettered capitalism, especially if it was seen as US domination of the European economies, was likely to lead to massive working class struggles. Welfare states were, therefore, the order of the day throughout western Europe.

Nato was the military counterpart to this. Marshall aid was designed to allow the European economies to develop to head off working class demands and isolate communists and socialists.

Nato was designed to allow the Europeans to defend themselves, with American backing, against perceived Soviet threats by preventing military conflicts among the European powers. (Such threats were, of course, the product of fevered anti-communist brains, but were, nevertheless, seen as real by many people).

Throughout the Cold War Nato did, indeed, remain primarily a defensive alliance. It was not involved in trying to regain eastern Europe for capitalism. When Soviet troops invaded Hungary and Czechoslovakia, Nato issued instructions that its troops should not interfere.

The end of the Cold War has changed all that. Without the Soviet 'enemy' Nato has had to rethink its role. It is no longer an organisation of states pledged to defend one another if they are attacked: it has adopted a more aggressive stance and greatly expanded its field of operations.

But that is not simply a result of the military collapse of the Soviet Union. Today capitalism feels itself triumphant. The dominant capitalist power, the United

States, no longer needs to rebuild shattered European economies. Welfare states are obstacles to unfettered capitalism.

The new, aggressive, role of Nato goes hand in hand with a new aggressive capitalism. While the US was, perhaps reluctantly, dragged into Nato in 1949 today it is absolutely determined to impose its policies and needs on its European 'partners'.

Shortly before Nato's attacks on Serbia the US was engaged in a trade dispute with Europe over sales of bananas. The war in the Balkans may have removed that dispute from the headlines but it hasn't eliminated it.

Similar economic disputes are bound to arise in future as the US tries more and more to impose its vision of uncontrolled capitalist competition on the rest of the world.

In the past the Europeans have been largely content to let the US run Nato. Only France has occasionally protested. However

the EU now has its own agenda – it would like to expand to the east.

Alongside that goes an expansion of Nato. The US, however, is essentially worried about the cost: that is why they limited the expansion of

Nato to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic – against European protests.

The US is, after all, only interested in defending the interests of US capital. It uses whatever vehicle it feels best defends those interests. Sometimes this is the UN, sometimes Nato, sometimes direct American intervention.

The latest awesome display of military power in the Balkans is above all a warning to anyone who dares to challenge the interests of US capital.

The US is, after all, only interested in defending the interests of US capital.

NATO bombs only boost power of Milosevic

From "Voices of democratic Serbia", a group of activists who participate in the pan-European Marches against Unemployment

"BOMBING will only strengthen the present disastrous regime. The military intervention will be misused by the regime's media to create a "stampede" of xenophobia and give additional impetus to the fast-growing extreme forms of nationalism.

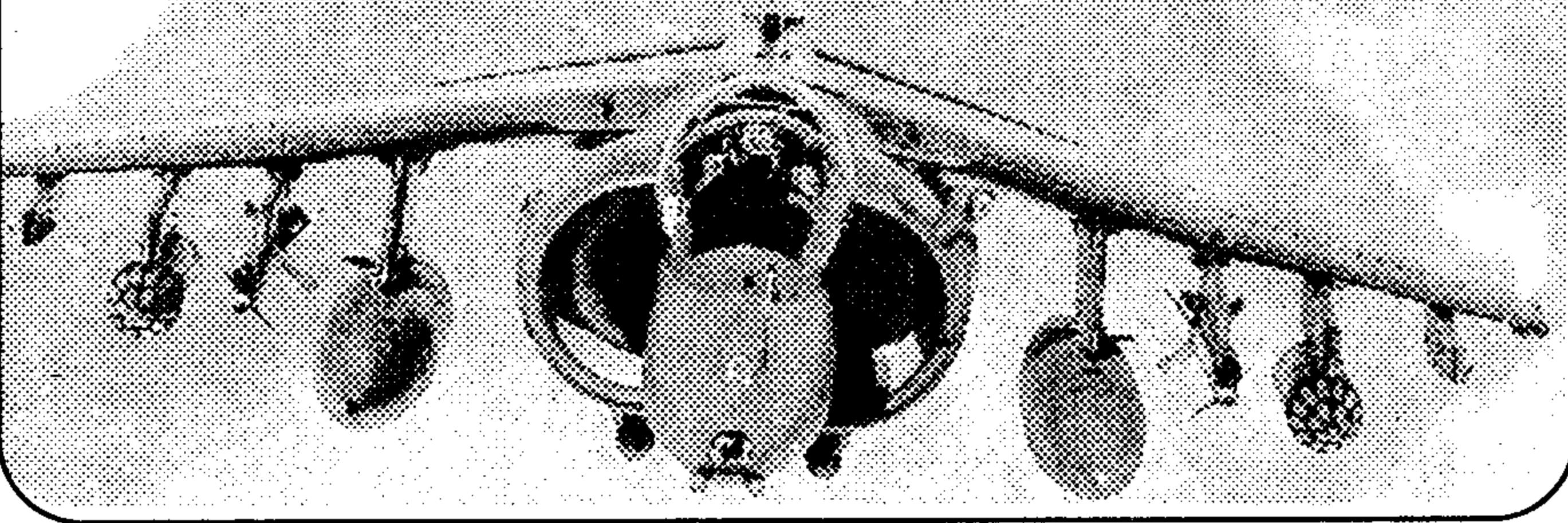
The UN sanctions only helped the Milosevic clique to accumulate greater financial and property power over the rest of society.

Human suffering and disaster will continue. Evil cannot be opposed by a negative action of bombing and more sanctions.

A better strategy would be to engage positively in improving communication and free media in Serbia, and by greater support to democratic forces and individuals inside the country – those groups which kept alive solidarity and support with similar groups in the other ex-Yugoslav republics, even during the most dramatic moments of the recent wars.

The only effective way towards a real democratisation is not through diplomacy "from above", with bombing and hi-tech action from a distance."

NATO out of the Balkans!



The Kosova Liberation Army (left) may be outgunned by Milosevic, and under pressure from NATO: but Kosovars can only achieve genuine independence if they win self-determination through their own struggles.

Imperialists shed crocodile tears: socialists demand

Independence for Kosova!

Jim Lowe

Socialist Outlook has, ever since the beginning of the break-up of Yugoslavia, supported the right of the peoples of ex-Yugoslavia to self-determination.

This does not mean that we actually supported the break-up. Unlike the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia was not a 'prison house of nations'. Nor does it mean that we have always advocated independence for the former Republics of Yugoslavia. However, whenever there has been a clearly expressed desire by a majority in the former Republics we have supported their right to independence.

Our attitude has been in total contrast to that of the western leaders. Right from the beginning of the crisis in Yugoslavia the west attempted to maintain its territorial unity. Their entire strategy has been to maintain the status quo.

In Kosova it was patently obvious even before the war that the majority of the population want independence from Yugoslavia. Even if that were not the case it is highly unlikely, to say the least, that after the mass expulsions and murders Kosovars would want to be part of the same state as Milosevic. Yet Nato still refuses to recognise the right of the Kosovars to independence. That is not surprising.

The US and the EU - including Germany, despite what some on the left would have us believe - rejected the demands for independence by Slovenia and Croatia. Germany only gave recognition at the end of 1991 - after the war in Croatia had ended. The EU did not follow suit until January 1992.

The US did not recognise Croatia and Slovenia until April that year, when it also recognised Bosnia-Herzegovina and Mace-

donia.

Put simply, Nato has only recognised the right of self determination when it has had absolutely no other option. It has never once supported anyone exercising that right.

True, Tony Blair has recently stated that it may be necessary to reconsider the Rambouillet agreement, under which Kosova remained part of Serbia. But this is at a time when Nato is waging war against Serbia, and is no doubt intended to rally public opinion in Britain around the military campaign.

If Blair is serious about this belated recognition it is welcome - but proves exactly our point that it has had to be forced on a Nato government.

More importantly it contrasts with the plan for the future expansion of the EU and Nato to the east put forward by German Defence Minister, Joschka Fischer. Fischer's plan envisages the maintenance of current borders for the next 20 to 30 years.

The government of Greece can certainly be expected to oppose Kosovan independence. Since Greece is the least reliable Nato power in the war against Serbia, anything that is likely to weaken Greece's half-hearted support is going to be stamped on. Blair will no doubt end up supporting Fischer's proposals.

Despite all the crocodile tears shed over the brutal expulsion by Milosevic of the Kosovan Albanians, the west has no intention of accepting any real independence for Kosova, whether or not it remains part of Yugoslavia.

This was absolutely clear at Rambouillet

where Nato insisted that the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) must disarm. After the KLA's initial refusal to sign the Rambouillet agreement it was bullied into reversing this decision by the US. So much for the right of representatives of the Kosovars to self-determination.

If Nato was really interested in self-determination for Kosova they would have massively armed the KLA. Instead the Albanian population are expected to put themselves under Nato 'protection' - after having first been threatened with military violence if they fail to do what they are told by the US.

We have already seen in Croatia and Bosnia what Nato (or UN) protection means. UN troops were sent to Croatia at the request of Slobodan Milosevic.

The United Nations' Protection Areas guaranteed Serb control over areas that had been 'ethnically cleansed' of their Croat inhabitants. In Bosnia UN troops stood by while Serb forces carried out the massacre at Srebrenica.

Milosevic's renewed war in Kosova is a direct result of the Dayton agreement imposed by the US, which saw the introduction for the first time of Nato troops into the Balkans.

Dayton did not only legitimate the de facto division of Bosnia into two 'entities', nor did it simply reinforce Slobodan Milosevic's position as the west's chief broker of any 'settlement' - a position that would have been seriously weakened if Nato hadn't acted quickly to prevent the defeat of Serb forces in Bosnia by the Croatian and Bosnian armies.

It also guaranteed that Kosova would remain part of Serbia and Yugoslavia - despite the overwhelming hostility of the majority of Kosovars to Serbian rule.

Ignoring the wishes of the Albanian majority at Dayton led to a renewal of Serbian oppression in Kosova. That is exactly what we predicted at the time. If it was obvious to us, it is difficult to believe that

Nato leaders could not also foresee such consequences. We can only conclude that in order to bring the war in Bosnia to an end Nato was willing to allow Milosevic, 'a man with whom they could do business', a free hand in Kosova.

But Dayton also had another consequence. For many years the Albanians of Kosova had pursued a strategy of passive resistance to Serbian rule. Nato's willingness to reward Serbian aggression with the partition of Bosnia suggested to a number of Albanians that a more militant strategy might pay. The willingness of the west to reward Milosevic gave birth to the Kosova Liberation Army.

Almost up to the start of Nato attacks the KLA was portrayed in the west as a terrorist organisation. Today, for their own cynical reasons, Nato occasionally recognises the KLA as representing the Albanian majority in Kosova.

But the KLA has also been left in no doubt as to its very minor status. Nato envisages Kosova being turned into a 'protectorate' in which all major decisions will be taken by Nato forces - not the KLA or any other representatives of the Albanian people. 'Protectorate' and 'self determination' are totally contradictory conceptions.

Milosevic could decide to end the war by proposing partition of Kosova. In Nato's eyes, the KLA would once again become a terrorist organisation, an obstacle to peace.

Of course we can understand why Kosovars have supported Nato actions, and why they may well welcome Nato troops - just as we could understand why many Catholics welcomed British troops in the North of Ireland in 1969. But any Nato troops in Kosova would be a serious threat to Kosovar self-determination.

Just as Irish Catholics quickly found that British troops were not there to protect them, so Kosovars will learn that Nato has no intention of defending their rights. On the contrary: Nato guns would very rapidly be turned on those they were supposed to be 'liberating'.

Kosovar independence can only be guaranteed by the Kosovar people themselves. That means arming the KLA - not allowing Nato troops to prevent self-determination.

Kosovar independence can only be guaranteed by the Kosovar people themselves. That means arming the KLA - not allowing Nato troops to prevent self determination

Anti-Milosevic democrats caught in Belgrade crossfire

[Belgrade, 5 April 1999]

The twelfth night of bombing smashed buildings in central Belgrade, the headquarters of security forces, some barracks, factory plants, fuel stores, and some bridges nearby etc.

We have heard that the TV pictures of the Kosovo civilian exodus are horrible, encouraging people abroad to support NATO intervention "to stop ethnic cleansing". But as people in Yugoslavia do not see these pictures, conditions are very hostile for those of us who consider ourselves the "democratic forces" of Serbia.



We are exposed to various dangers and threats. The nationalistic, xenophobic homogenisation of

street life is increasing. It has reached an early stage of militancy, with "spontaneous masses" smashing the windows of foreign cultural centres, embassies, offices of western airlines, and Macdonalds restaurants.

Suspicious neighbours are looking for "spies" - a wartime psychology is at work. Anyone who tries to develop an alternative scenario has no chance to say even a word against the leader and the clique who actually produced all this.

This morning the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, commenting last night bombing,

said "In Serbia now, we have 11 million Milosevics!" Frustration and desperation are increasing.

A state of war has been proclaimed. All free media are censored and harassed. The rest are engaged in vulgar propaganda. A growing number of people are consulting Internet news sites and short wave radio stations like the Serbian and English broadcasts of Radio Free Europe and the BBC. But this is just a drop of information in a sea of ignorance, irrationality and disorientation.

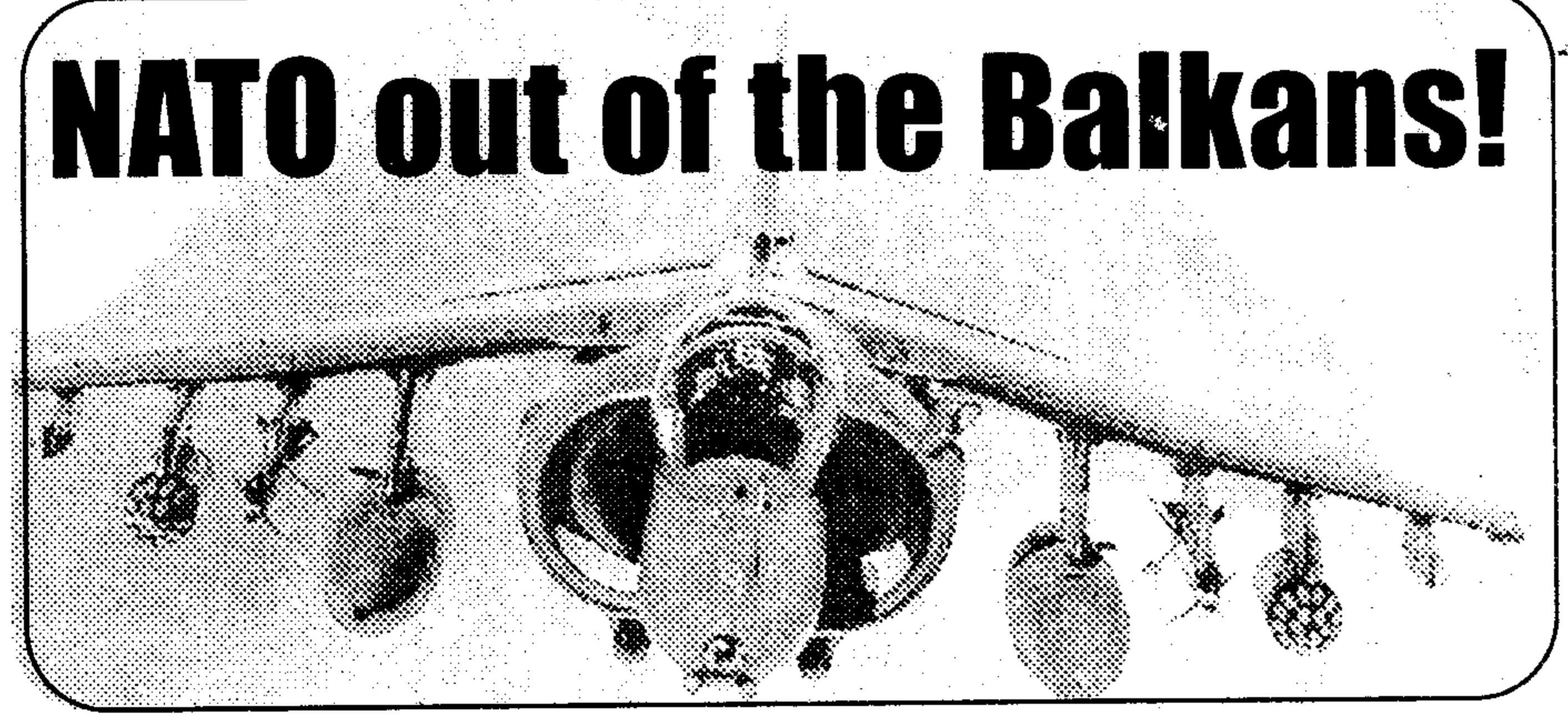
The human suffering in Kosova is coupled with a growing frustration

of the democratic forces in Belgrade. We are helpless. Any meaningful sign of resistance would place us in great danger.

The opposition newspaper 'Republika' has just been printed. This "newspaper for civic self-liberation" cannot be sold in the streets or kiosks. If we are lucky, the postal service will agree to deliver it to subscribers.

The only way out is an immediate ceasefire on all sides, followed by an international conference hosted by the European Union or the United Nations.

French socialists organise opposition and demand: Stop the bombings, self-determination for Kosova!



NATO out of the Balkans!

Australia
A US WARSHIP which was due to arrive in Melbourne on April 7 was diverted to Hobart, amid fears for the safety of the crew.

The USS Princeton was ordered to change course after concerns that the crew may be targeted by members of the Serb Community in Victoria, protesting about NATO bombing in Yugoslavia.
Demonstrations have recently been staged outside the US consulate, ABC Radio and The Herald-Sun newspaper offices.

Italy

60,000 demonstrated in Rome on April 4 - the main slogans were against NATO intervention but Refundazione were able to organise a significant intervention around the demands for Kosovar self determination.
On April 8 the three trade union federations called a demonstration in Bari which was attended by 100,000.

Greece

The Greek government is the only NATO power to have consistently opposed the bombing. However the big mobilisations in Greece against the bombing owe much to pro-Serb and anti-Albanian sentiments. Nevertheless sections of the left, including the Greek FI section have been able to intervene.

THE FOLLOWING letter was signed by 25 prominent French socialists including Catherine Samary and Daniel Bensaid of the French section of the Fourth International, and published in Le Monde, March 31.

WE DO NOT ACCEPT the following false dilemmas:

- "Either support the NATO intervention or support the reactionary policies of the Serb authorities in Kosova?"
The NATO bombing raids, which made necessary the withdrawal of OSCE personnel from Kosovo, created more favourable conditions for a ground offensive by Serb paramilitary forces, rather than preventing it.
They encourage the worst forms of ultra-nationalist Serb desire for revenge against the Kosovar population.
They consolidate the dictatorial power of Slobodan Milosevic which has muzzled the independent media and succeeded in uniting round it a national consensus which must, on the contrary, be broken if a path to peaceful and political negotiations on Kosova is to be opened up.
- "Either accept as the sole possible basis for negotiation the "peace plan" drawn up by the governments of the United States and of the European Union or bomb Serbia?"
No long-term solution to a major internal political conflict can be imposed from outside by force. It is not true that "every attempt was made" to find a solution and an acceptable framework for negotiations.
The Kosovar negotiators were forced to sign a plan which they had initially rejected, after they were given reason to believe that NATO would become involved on the ground in defence of their cause.
This is a lie which fosters a total illusion: not one of the governments which have supported the NATO air strikes are willing to wage war against the Serb regime to impose independence for Kosova.
The strikes will perhaps weaken part of the Serbian military machine, but they will not



The bombing raids triggered a fresh Serbian offensive, but NATO won't arm KLA

weaken the mortars which are being used to destroy Albanian houses, nor the paramilitary forces which are executing UCK (Kosova Liberation Army) fighters.

NATO is not the only, nor above all the best, foundation on which to base an agreement.
It would have been possible to find the conditions for a multinational police force (including Serbs and Albanians) within the framework of the OSCE, which would oversee the application of a transitional agreement.
It would have been possible to enlarge the framework of the negotiations by including the Balkan states destabilised by this conflict: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania.
One could at the same time have defended the Kosovars' right to self-government of the province and protected the Serb minority in Kosova; one could have sought to respond to the aspirations and fears of the different peoples concerned through links of cooperation and agreements between neighbouring states, with Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania.
No such attempt was made.

We do not accept the arguments with which it has been sought to legitimate the NATO intervention:

- It is not true that the NATO air strikes will prevent the conflict spreading to the region, to Macedonia or Bosnia-Herzegovina: they will on the contrary encourage this.
- They will further destabilise Bosnia-Herzegovina and no doubt endanger the multinational forces responsible for

enforcing the fragile Dayton Agreement. They have already fanned the flames of conflict in Macedonia.

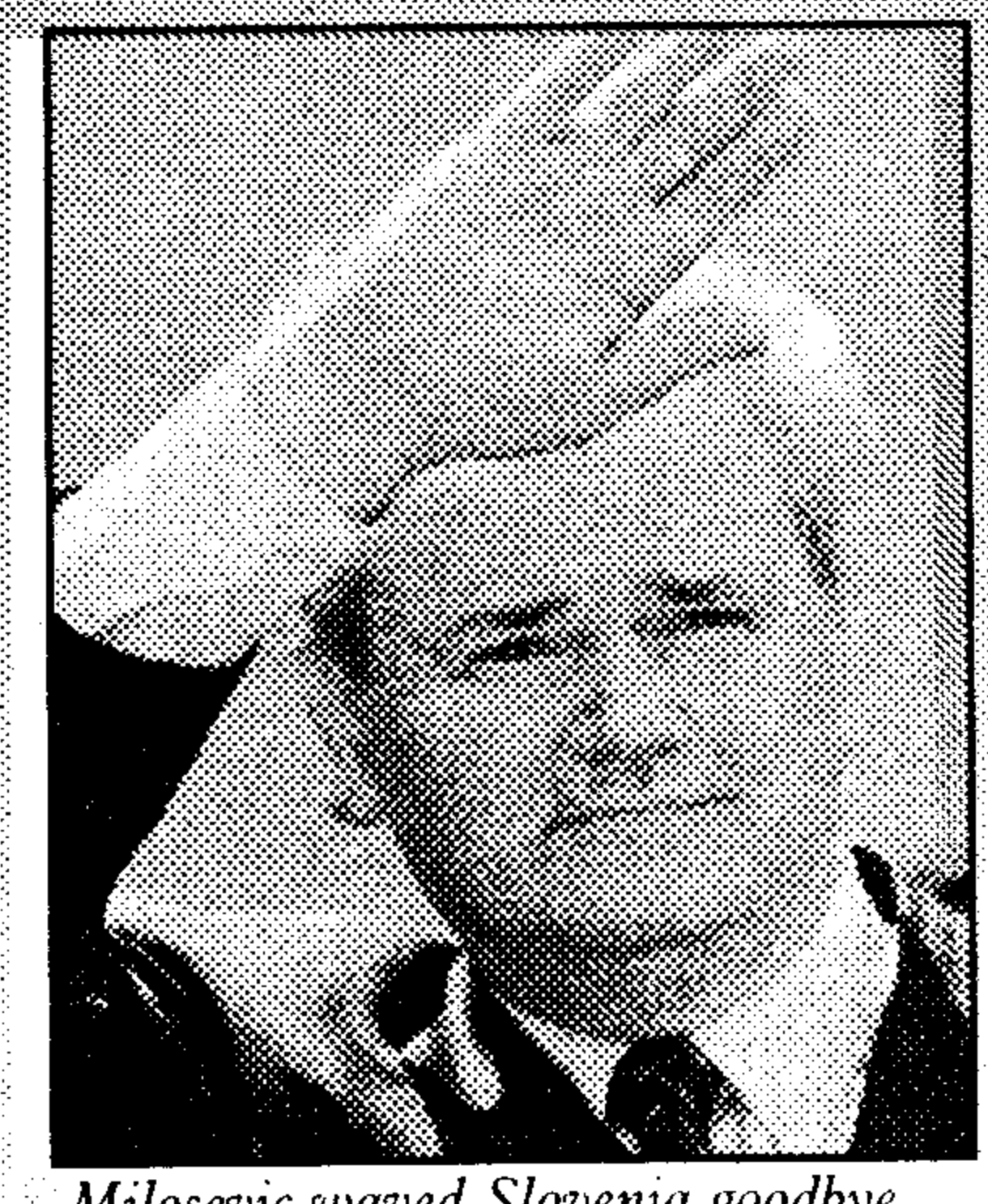
It is not true that NATO is protecting the Kosovar population or their rights. Nor is it true that the bombing of Serbia is open-

ing the way to a democratic government there.
The governments of the European Union and of the United States perhaps hoped that this demonstration of force would force Slobodan Milosevic to sign their plan. Does this reveal on their part naïveté or hypocrisy? Whatever the case, this policy is leading not only to a political impasse, but also a legitimatisation of the role of NATO outside any framework of international control.
For this reason, we demand:

- an immediate end to these bombings;
- the organisation of a Balkans conference in which representatives of the states and all the national communities in these states would participate;
- the defence of the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, on the sole condition that this right is not obtained to the detriment of another people and through the ethnic cleansing of territory;
- a debate in parliament on the future participation of France in NATO.

Learn lessons of Slovenia

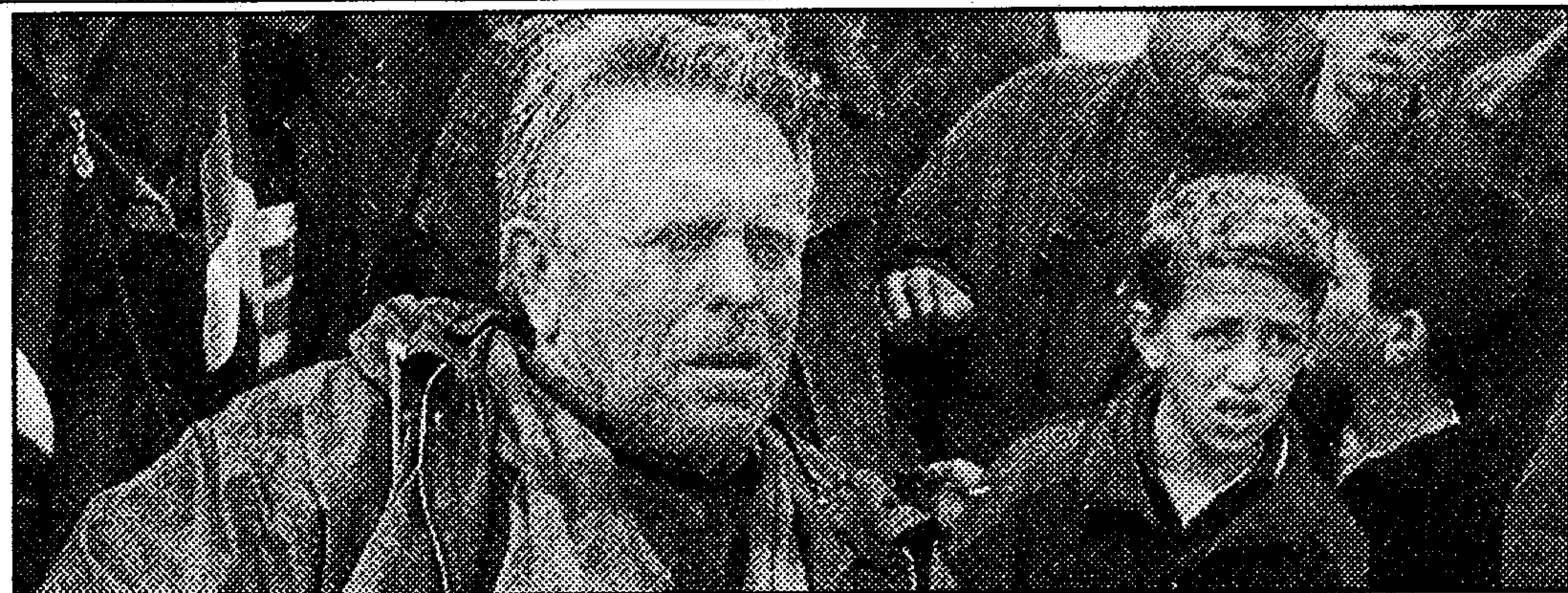
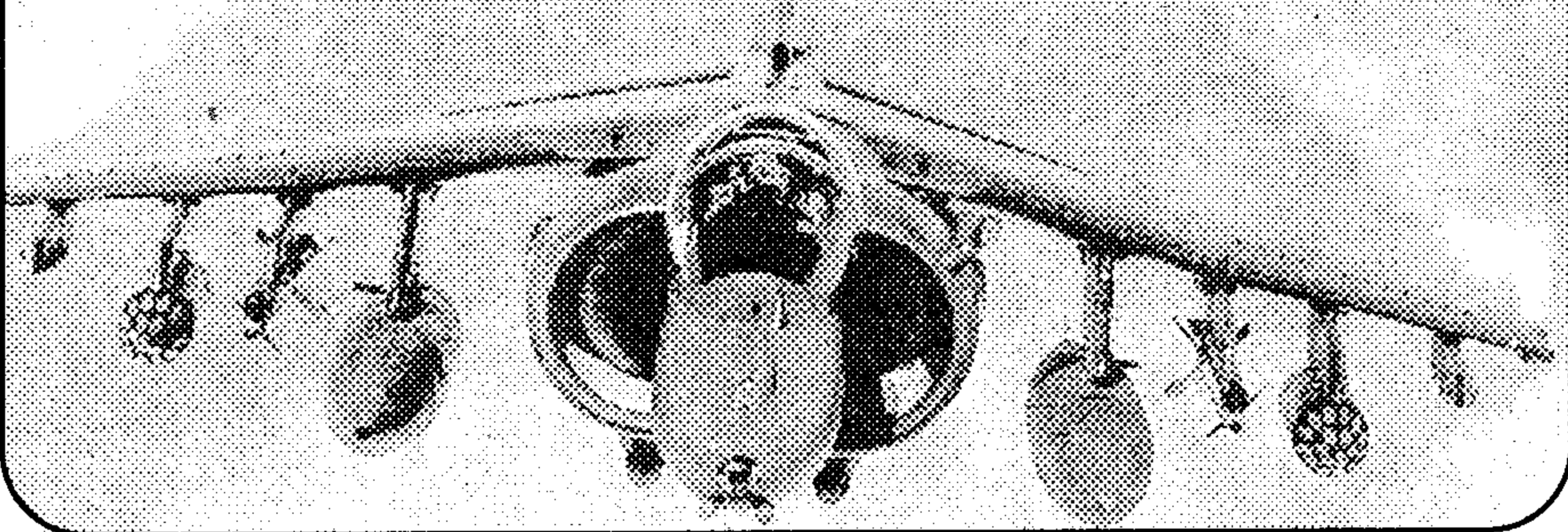
Jim Lowe
ON THE LEFT there are all sorts of confusions about the break-up of Yugoslavia. Much of the Left has been supportive to various extents of Slobodan Milosevic. They claim that Germany deliberately set out to destroy the Yugoslav state by encouraging Slovene and Croatian secession.
This is essentially the view of Tony Benn who also makes the bizarre claim that Kosova has been "part of Yugoslavia for centuries".
Since the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes only came into being in 1918 (the name was changed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929) such a claim defies all historic accuracy.
Hostility to Croatian nationalism is widespread, with memories of the war time fascist Ustashe often being invoked as explanations for why Milosevic went to war with Croatia in 1991.
Among all the conflicting views on the responsibilities for the Yugoslav crisis lie two glaring omissions. Firstly it is not understood that from 1990 onwards Milosevic was intent on creating a Greater Serbia. Secondly the role of Slovenia is ignored.
To a large extent these are not even two different questions. The reality is that far from opposing Slovene secession, Milosevic welcomed and encouraged it. Only about five per cent of the population of Slovenia were Serbs. Milo-



Milosevic waved Slovenia goodbye
sevic had no interest in their fate. Consequently, when Slovenia took the first steps to independence the military intervention by the Yugoslav Peoples' Army (JNA) was very half hearted.
Not all JNA officers, of course, were in the know. Many of them still believed in a state of the South Slavs. General Adzic protested about the lack of troops available for fighting Slovene secession - to no avail.
Milosevic was certainly willing to launch brutal assaults against the much more populous Republics of Croatia and the Bosnia. Vast quantities of arms were made available to military and paramilitary formations. Heavy weapons were on hand.
There is only one possible explanation: Milosevic had no intention

to keep Slovenia within Yugoslavia because it got in the way of his aim of a Greater Serbia.
The Slovene leaders engaged in a cynical manoeuvre with Milosevic which allowed them independence after a token display of hostility from Belgrade. Troops were rapidly withdrawn from Slovenia - into Croatia.
The Slovenes were almost certainly aware that Milosevic would not let Croatia go so easily. They were equally aware that if Slovenia left the Yugoslav federation Croatia would not stay.
Yet all the while the Slovenes were making preparations for their exit they did not inform President Tudjman of Croatia what they were doing. Nor did they warn him of Milosevic's determination to build a Greater Serbia. They simply washed their hands of any responsibility.
Indeed, the evidence suggests that Tudjman had very little intention of quitting Yugoslavia - independence for him was simply a bargaining point to achieve a stronger position for Croatia within a revamped Yugoslavia.
Slovenia's determination to leave pushed Tudjman into declaring Croatia independent.
Unfortunately for Tudjman, and even more so for millions of people throughout the former Yugoslavia, he found that Milosevic was willing to use the utmost brutality to achieve his Greater Serbia

NATO out of the Balkans!



Kosovar refugees are being driven out by Milosevic: but a NATO invasion would not win them freedom

Anti-war action

Glasgow

Candlelit vigil against the bombing organised by the local Serb community in George Square at 10 pm on April 10.

April 11: main demonstration starting Blythswood square at 12.30 speakers included Tam Dalyell.

Protest outside the army and air force recruitment offices in Queen street at 12.00 on Thursday April 15.

London

Over 600 people crowded into a meeting at Friends meeting House on March 30 to hear Benn, Paul Foot, CND and Kurdish speakers oppose the war. Since then there have been packed meetings in many parts of London - 200 in Lambeth, 150 in Islington, 100 in Hackney, 30 in Brent among others.

April 11: Between 5000-10,000 people demonstrated in Central London against the war. A small but important contingent of socialists marched behind a banner demanding Nato out of the Balkans, Independence for Kosova, Open the Borders. This was important given the presence of vitriolic Serb nationalists on the march who booed when a letter was read out from an oppositionist in Belgrade and the fact that speakers such as Benn failed even to mention the atrocities against the Kosovars.

Manchester

A wide range of activities are being co-ordinated by Greater Manchester against War in the Balkans

April 16: Mass Lobby of foreign minister Tony Lloyd's surgery, 7pm Newton Heath

April 24: North West Regional Demonstration 11.30 Platt Fields to Albert Sq

STREET STALL in Market St every Saturday at 2pm

For further information about activities in the North West contact <http://www.mawith.freeserve.co.uk> or phone 0161 881 7352

Bradford

60 people met on 8 April to kick off Bradford's campaign against the war. Speakers included Alice Mahon MP, Rachel Julian from Yorkshire CND, Paul Russell, (Bradford College NATFHE), by Jo Cardwell of the Socialist Workers Party and Socialist Outlook supporter Paul Hubert.

The local Committee to Stop the War will be holding weekly organising meetings to carry the process forward.

Leeds

Public meeting last week attended by around 70-100 people has established a committee against the war. Main forces involved are Green Party, CND and the SWP, with some UNISON input. There have been two vigils, and there is a meeting next Tuesday to plan further activities.

Brighton

An alliance between the SWP and the peace movement is organising a public meeting next Wednesday. Speakers to include *Socialist Outlook* supporter Andy Richards.

Left divided on Kosova struggle

Alan Thornett

The NATO bombing campaign in Serbia and Kosova has been met with some dire responses from important figures of whom we would normally expect better.

Ken Livingstone and Michael Foot, for example, not only support the bombing but call for NATO troops to be sent in. They argue that opposition to ethnic cleansing can only effectively be carried through by these means.

Tony Benn on the other hand correctly opposes the intervention, but refers to the struggle of the Kosovar people for self-determination as a "civil war".

The far-left is mostly on the right side as far as the bombing of Serbia is concerned and opposes Milosevic's dirty war in Kosova. Being on the right side in the bombing, however, whilst providing the basis to campaign against it, does not mean there is a common view on a solution to the war or as to the strategic aims of NATO or US imperialism — which ultimately controls NATO.

In fact there are widely diverse views on these things on the far left which need to be discussed.

The SWP is an example of these

contradictions. To their great credit they are playing an important role in the mobilisation of an anti-war movement.

They have called meetings in many places across the country and invited all to get involved. This has provided a service to all those who oppose the war.

The SWP see the bombing campaign as the central issue, and seem to have a good analysis of the role of NATO and of US imperialism in the region.

The weakness of their approach to the war (as far as this can be gleaned at the present stage from their publications and the speeches of their leading spokespersons) is on the national question, which is the political core of the problem.

They do support the right of the Kosovars to self-determination, (though this is not prioritised in their propaganda). But when this right is exercised in the demand for immediate independence now (as it is by 80% of Kosovars) the SWP are less enthusiastic.

We are told that independence "is not the immediate issue", or that it is "very difficult because of the ethnic mix in the region", or

that arming the KLA would "make things worse".

They are left with little between their immediate demand for the ending of the bombing and their ultimate demand for a socialist society to be achieved by "workers' unity across the Balkans".

Socialists, of course, are in favour of worker's unity across the Balkans. We are also in favour of it across Britain, or across Ireland: but that does not in itself resolve the issue of the denial of legitimate national rights.

It is true that the demand for independence now for Kosovo is fraught with political problems, not least who should deliver it.

The KLA, and most Kosovars will call for NATO troops to establish and protect an independent Kosovo — something which we should oppose. But we cannot refuse to support the call for independence on the basis that our enemies might support it as well.

We have to support the Kosovan people in their demand for independence, and be in favour of them having the means to achieve it. Anything less denies a solution

to the problem, and would simply leave the ethnically cleansed in the refugee camps for the foreseeable future.

At the opposite end of the spectrum of opinion in this is the Alliance for Workers Liberty. They seem to be soft on Nato, and argue that the overwhelmingly most important issue in the situation is the ethnic cleansing by the Milosevic regime and the resultant plight of the refugees.

The AWL argue that Serbia is "sub-imperialist", and that it is the actions and aspirations of Serbia which are the key factor in the situation, not the actions of NATO or US imperialism. They argue that the absolutely key demand therefore is Kosovan independence now.

The AWL oppose the NATO bombing (on the basis that it is not effective in protecting the Kosovars) but argue that it is a very secondary issue. They deny any overarching agenda of US imperialism to strengthen its role in the world though this kind of military intervention and deny any policy of NATO to strengthen its influence in the Balkans region.

While the priority for socialists needs to be mobilising opposition to the war, this can only effectively be done by answering those who are genuinely concerned about the horrendous situation of the Kosovan people.

Socialist Outlook took a position of support for Kosovar independence before the imperialist offensive — our conviction that this is the right position for socialists has been further strengthened by the events of these last weeks.

The far-left is mostly on the right side as far as the bombing of Serbia is concerned

"In the sky, NATO: on the ground, Milosevic"

Extracts from a letter from Stasha Zajovic - Women in Black, Belgrade 28 March

SINCE YESTERDAY there's been euphoria for the shooting down of the ultra-sophisticated aeroplane the F-117. Everybody, in the media and in the street and in the bomb shelters (which I never go down but people tell me) celebrate this.

Radio Belgrade plays anthems about "Kosovo - sacred land", with Partisan songs from the Second World War instead of advertising spots.

We saw a group of people of Romany origin (gypsies) demonstrating their loyalty to the state in front of the US embassy with the slogans "We will give our lives, but not surrender Kosovo", "Kosovo is Serbia", making complaints against the Albanians in Kosova. Here the logic of the oppressed is obvious — to be with the strong. It's awful.

The TV has shown for the fifth time in recent days the film 'The



A fuel dump ablaze near Prishtina as a result of NATO's bombardment Battle of Kosovo', and the programming is nearly all of this type.

Yesterday I was trying to get a telephone line, and eventually I was lucky. I heard horrible things from friends in Prishtina, and will try to repeat them.

"Nobody sticks their head outside, not even to the door. Yesterday I opened the door for five minutes and was terribly scared.

"Nobody who wants to live dares go in the street. We have nearly no

communications within the city, the telephones hardly work. Food is scarce, and I wonder 'until when?'

"Near my house there was an explosion, breaking all the windows. I am repairing what I can. I don't sleep. Part of my family has moved somewhere else, I stay here as "guardian of the house".

The woman is a student of medicine, who has stayed looking after her father who has a heart condition.

She asks me "What are they saying? What are the predictions?"

I stay quiet. At the end, we exchange words of consolation, support on both sides. Another tells me:

"Gangs are going round the streets, they are people released from the prisons, paramilitaries, who knows ... They break into houses, move out the people, kidnap, massacre ... Already there's no food left - except we have 50

kilos of flour (a big family)."

At the end the man with a resigned voice: 'I won't give a penny for my chances if they come, I can't do anything.'

He quoted me what somebody had said these days:

"In the sky, NATO: on the ground, Milosevic".

What cynicism! What a trap!

What am I to say now when in today's patriotic concert two singers, Rambo and Bajaga took part — singers who in the years before always spoke for peace? One of them, Rambo, even performed in the concert for Sarajevo we organised in April 1992.

Let me go back to the testimonies from people in Prishtina:

"I don't have any tranquillizers, I don't have more heart medicine. What can I do without these?"

This is a woman who has always encouraged me, comforted me with hope, now her voice is breaking as, on the point of crying, she thanks me for calling.

"This is an area of gloom. We don't have help from any side.

They have now left the gangs to do whatever takes their fancy.

The police have requisitioned all the trucks and big vehicles; people mainly fear the paramilitaries."

Double standards throw doubts over NATO's motives in Balkan war

"THE AMERICAN President, his English factotum and various European politicians, not to mention the overwhelming majority of the liberal media, tell us every day that Milosevic is Hitler. In order to crush such a leader it is necessary to wage war.

That Milosevic is a brutal leader has never been in doubt. But is he alone?

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu is an equally brutish politician, who defies UN resolutions and regularly bombs targets in Lebanon.

And what of Milosevic's counterpart in Croatia, Franjo Tudjman? He has authorised the ethnic cleansing of Serbs and, on occasion, Bosnians. He presides over a regime which has rehabilitated wartime fascists who collaborated with the Nazi occupiers during the Second World War.

But Netanyahu and Tudjman are on "our side", and that's all that

counts.

"Our side" has practised atrocities on a large scale in the second half of the century. In the name of freedom and democracy the Anglo-Saxon powers have backed dictators much worse than Milosevic (who, we should remember, is an elected politician) and helped them to power on every continent.

The Indonesian dictator, Suharto, was being armed by Britain and America right till the day he was toppled by a popular uprising which received no support from either Washington or London.

Indonesia, admittedly, is a far-away country, not visible from a Tuscan vineyard, but what about Turkey? It can certainly be sighted by a New Labour MP sunbathing on a Greek island.

What successive governments in Ankara have inflicted on their Kurdish citizens is as bad as, if not

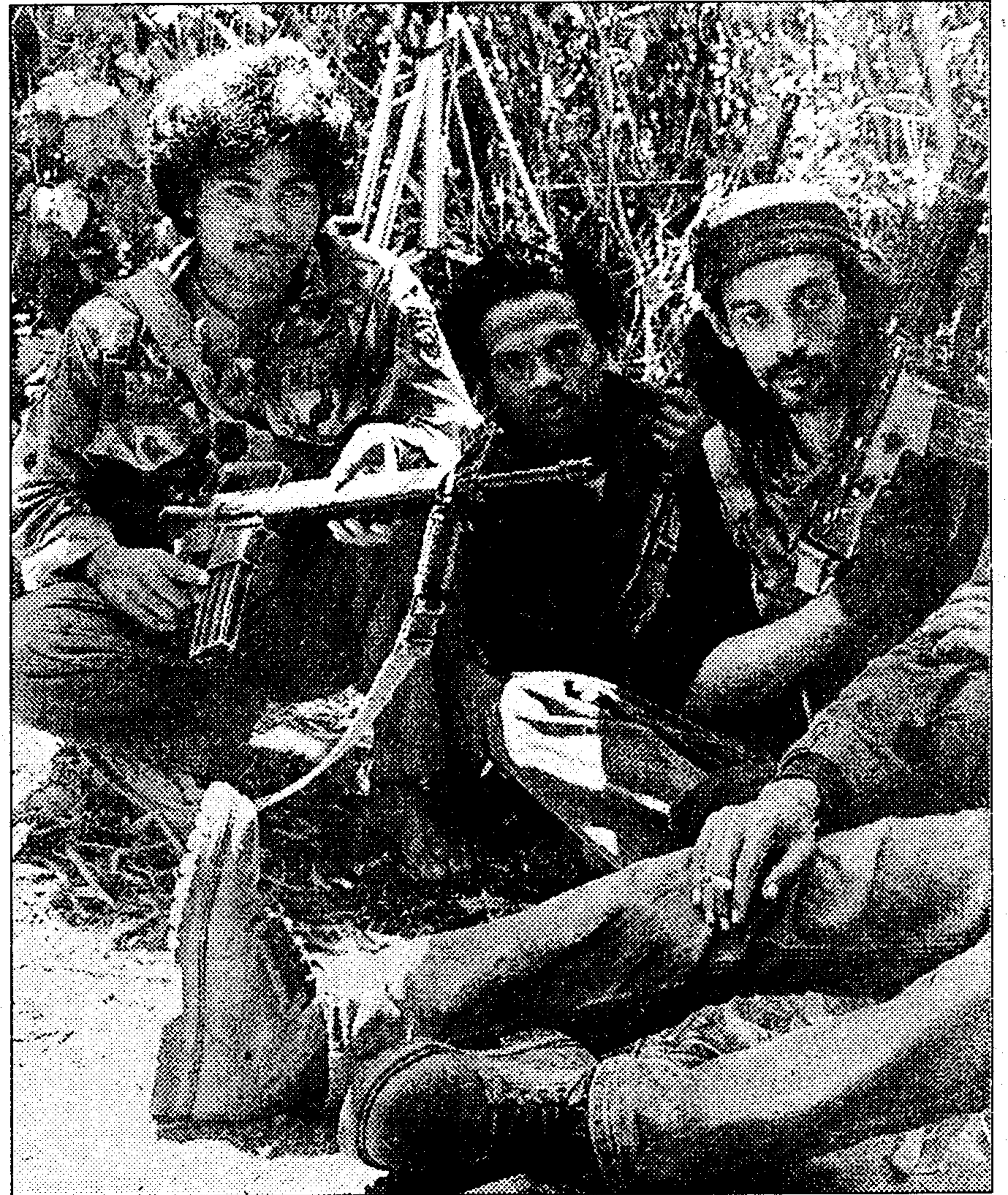
worse than, the treatment meted out to the Kosovars.

The argument used by the Turkish authorities is exactly the same as that employed by the Serb leadership.

In torturing, maiming, killing and denying autonomy to the Kurds they are simply defending the unity of the Turkish state. How many TV viewers are aware of the fact that this is still taking place or that Turkey is an important member of Nato?

It is the blatant double standard that compels any critical observer to look for the deeper reasons that underlie this conflict."

(An excerpt from Tariq Ali, writing in the Independent, March 28)



East Timorese guerrillas - fighting on against Indonesian military repression

Violence escalates in run-up to East Timor freedom vote

THE ANNOUNCEMENT last month that the people of East Timor are to be allowed to vote on whether to accept "autonomy" as part of Indonesia or press for independence has triggered a new round of violence.

Indonesia's president Habibie had declared three months earlier that he would let the former

colony have independence if they rejected his offer of autonomy, and in March the UN was involved in hammering out a means of seeking the popular will.

But what appeared to most democrats to be a step forward to the long-awaited liberation of East Timor from the brutal 23-

year rule of the Indonesian military has inflamed new anger in the pro-Indonesian paramilitary squads on the island, backed by the Indonesian army and police.

The simmering threat from these forces has boiled over, reaching a peak in the brutal massacre of East Timorese refugees in a Catholic Church on April 6.

It now seems that as many as 300 may have died as gunmen opened indiscriminate fire on 2,000 unarmed Timorese who had sought sanctuary, with large numbers of bodies reportedly removed by army lorries to conceal the scale of the carnage.

This, after five months of mounting indiscriminate attacks

on Timorese civilians by the paramilitaries has now forced Jose 'Xanana' Gusmao, jailed leader of the independence movement to call on his followers to resume the armed struggle.

Of course there are no signs of NATO or UN action to support this effort by the Timorese to break the bonds of oppression.

EU structure opens door to permanent corruption

THE RESIGNATION of the European Union's 20-member executive last month, after a damning report criticised several Commissioners, including Jacques Santer, the President of the Commission - over allegations of fraud, nepotism, mismanagement and corruption - represented one of the most severe constitutional crises to face the institution since its inception.

The report was compiled by a commission of five "independent experts" appointed by the European Parliament in a rare challenge to the Commission's powers.

The various Parliamentary groups led by the Socialists (by far the largest) had called for the Commissioners to quit and threatened to table a motion of censure if they did not step down.

Since then the Commission has been reappointed on a temporary basis, and ex-Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi nominated as the new President of the Commission at a recent crisis meeting in Berlin.

The appointment of Prodi, however, and the some strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament against those of the Com-

mission which may result from this affair, will not resolve the problem, which is rooted in the institutions of the EU itself.

The project of the EU is to construct a European superstate with enough economic muscle and centralised political control to challenge the might of North America and the United States.

Right from the outset this has had a lack of democracy at the core of it, a factor which has been known as the "democratic deficit". The EU has been constructed as a top-down institution, which can function without any real pressure from below.

Toothless

This means not only having a toothless European Parliament - with the real power in the unelected European Commission and the Council of Ministers - but it also means having an unelected European Central Bank which can equally act outside of any democratic control.

It means strengthening big business and the multi national corporations who have nothing to do with democracy and are not doing to do with it.

Such a system is custom-made for corruption. The idea that the appointment of Prodi and the culling of a few commissioners will change the situation is an illusion. The lack of democratic accountability builds the possibility of corruption into the system.

And the situation is getting worse all the time. The Single European Act of the mid-1980s, the Maastricht Treaty of the early 1990s and the Amsterdam Treaty all increased to powers of the institutions of the EU over the member states - not least through the introduction of the Single European Currency.

Not one of those Treaties, however, increased the democratic control over those institutions by the populations of those countries. No wonder the turnout in European elections is so low.

But it is not just to stop corruption that democracy is indispensable. It is indispensable if the social conditions created and exacerbated by European capital - 20 million unemployed, 50 million below the poverty line, job insecurity and low wages and the scourge of racism - are to be tackled.

Cologne 99

International demonstration, May 29

The European Marches (organiser of the mass demonstration in Amsterdam in 97) is calling another major protest (50,000 or more) in Cologne in June to coincide with the Heads of Government Summit of the EU under the German presidency.

Marchers will set out from every region of Germany and from other European cities including Prague, Luxembourg, and Paris, to converge on Cologne for the demo. There will be a (1,000 strong) march from Brussels to Cologne. Across Europe unemployment, job insecurity, social exclusion and poverty are growing. The demands will be:

* A guaranteed job for all, and a decent standard of living.

* For an immediate massive reduction of working hours, coordinated on a European level, without loss of wages or purchasing power.

* Opposition to compulsory part-time work, child labour, and social dumping.

* Opposition to the enrichment of the minority and the impoverishment of the majority.

* Yes to the redistribution of wealth.

* Opposition to all forms of exclusion and discrimination, including those based on gender or race. Yes to the full right of asylum for the persecuted.

* Defend the welfare state. Yes to social rights in all areas (housing, education, health etc.) with the necessary funding.



I/we wish to be a part of the mobilisation for the marches and demonstration in Cologne on May 29.

Please send me/us all information about the campaign as it develops, along with information as to how I/we can be involved. I/we enclose a donation to help start the campaign.

Name

Organisation

Phone

Address

.....

Donation £.....

(Cheques: Cologne 99)

Send to: Cologne 99, c/o Leeds TUC Centre, 88 North St, LEEDS LS2 7PN

Rosemary Nelson murder

The smell of collusion

THE MURDER of Rosemary Nelson has been presented by the British and their supporters as yet another example of bigotry and hatred which supposedly infects the Irish of all persuasions.

The jeering graffiti and the public glee which followed her death are certainly strong evidence of the almost limitless capacity for bigotry within Orangeism. Yet Orange bigotry is only part of the story.

Socialists and Republicans in Ireland are well aware of another reality - the institutionalised sectarianism of the state forces which is becoming more and more difficult to hide:

- * the long history of RUC collusion with the loyalist death squads

- * the case of Robert Hammill, where the RUC sat and watched as a loyalist mob beat him to death

- * the revelation that RUC officers had themselves issued death threats against Ms Nelson

- * the fact that even the lickspittle complaints board had been treated with open contempt by the RUC

According to the republican leadership, this institutionalised bigotry can be resolved. The peace process will lead to a gradual desectarianisation and democratisation of the Northern statelet.

But there is a level of reality ignored by almost everybody - the overwhelming evidence of British interest in maintaining and supporting sectarianism in



Rosemary Nelson

the North. After all, it has all happened before.

Pat Finucane, a solicitor killed by loyalists, was publicly set up by a Tory minister shortly before his death. A British intelligence officer organised the intelligence for his killing. The RUC admitted later that they had details of the murder in advance and did nothing.

International human rights organisations, including sections of the UN, have called for an enquiry and been publicly attacked by the British. The Northern Irish bar stood aside as recently as last month when British bar associations called for action in the Finucane case.

Even today, the Robert Hammill case ends with the RUC exonerated by the courts and no one held accountable for his very public murder. Protestors in Portadown are savagely beaten but the RUC members accused of threatening Rosemary Nelson remain on duty. The FBI and the Kent constabulary acclaim the primacy of the RUC when called in to lend weight to the RUC investigating itself.

While we support calls for genuinely independent enquiries into the RUC's behaviour we know that no enquiry by itself will lead to real justice. Even

where British soldiers have been convicted of murder they have been released. Nor will the Patten commission will not lead to the disbandment of the RUC. It is the political cover to allow the retention of the force in what is supposed to be a new beginning.

We already know the truth. The RUC is a brutal and sectarian force. It cannot be reformed. It must be disbanded.

All those representatives who declare opposition to sectarianism must be forced to put their money where their mouths are.

RUC must demand that they resign from the Assembly rather than take part in a political charade that would have us believe that the sectarian state has been reformed.

If not, they will be revealed as complicit in the sectarianism the RUC has been guilty of since its creation over 75 years ago.

Rosemary Nelson, shortly before her murder, said that Portadown was not so much a place as a poisonous atmosphere. Partly

of the death squads and the barely disguised collusion with the state forces.

Rather than deal with this, the British blame the residents of the Garvaghy Road, and talk of a clash of cultures.

- For a mass campaign to disband the RUC.

- For a boycott of the Assembly if the RUC is not disbanded.



Through Irish Eyes

A column from Socialist Democracy, Irish section of the Fourth International

Observing Unionism

David Coen

A SENIOR policeman from South London is promoted to a job in Fermanagh; the police pick up several members of Combat 88 including two soldiers, and columnist Andrew Marr denounces the "internal exile" by which certain people from Northern Ireland are forced to live in England.

Perhaps surprisingly, there's a connection between these three events - aside from the fact they were all covered in a single issue of the *Observer*.

Supt. Jonathan McIvor was a Chief Inspector at Plumstead when Stephen Lawrence was murdered. Now he is an RUC Divisional Commander in Fermanagh and told his local paper that he had been vindicated by the Metropolitan Police Inquiry into the way Stephen Lawrence's death had been handled!

Of course, he omitted to say that both he and the Police Inquiry had been criticised in the McPherson Report. McIvor's experience in dealing with black people in South London should be just perfect for handling uppity nationalists in Fermanagh.

The arrest of two soldiers as suspected members of Combat 88 should be no surprise. C88 has close contacts with the Loyalist Volunteer Force - and several members have used their military training in racist attacks, Lenny Henry and Dawn French being among the victims. The dogs in the streets have known for years that the British have used Loyalist murder gangs to kill Nationalists.

A Fermanagh based group, Victims of Injustice. Campaigning for Equality [VOICE] has a list of 12 murders in the area going back over 30 years in which the state was involved.

A new edition of Sean McPhilemy's *The Committee* is available in the US in May. It details the close links between the British Army the RUC and the Loyalist death squads. Recently, a leading loyalist has claimed it was their campaign that brought the Repub-

licans to the negotiating table. It is no surprise that these close links between the army and the far right should extend to England.

By far the most disturbing of these strands was Marr's article. With the help of that tireless Labour Unionist, Harry Barnes MP, and, initially at least, trying to preserve some semblance of liberal "impartiality" by some mild rebukes to the loyalist UDA, he reserves most venom for the Republicans, blaming them for the "exile" of hundreds of people.

The campaign for an end to the "Irish Fatwas" (the "fatwa" word should go down well in the US) is backed, according to Marr "British and Irish MPs, journalists from Left and Right" andhere a possible source of the "campaign" reveals itself, former MI5 asset and IRA man, Sean O'Callaghan.

Now, it is not unusual for journalists on big national newspapers to be MI5 assets, and it is even less unusual for journalists to pass off Intelligence (sic!) briefings as their own work.

Leaking is part of psychological warfare and has been well worked by the British in Northern Ireland. However, Marr is an unlikely MI5 asset: after all he spent several years editing the Independent which broke from that house journal of spooks and Tories, the *Telegraph*. He is too smart just to recycle "securospeak" and more likely wrote the article to help the "peace process".

Instead Marr, who no doubt sees himself as a decent liberal, either off his own bat, or at the behest of others, attacks the republicans. The strategic aim of the Unionists and a large part of the British establishment is to force the Republicans to surrender or fight a new war on terms which could see them obliterated.

Marr may not be consciously part of this manoeuvre, but what he appears to be doing is softening up the largely Labour-supporting *Observer* readership for one of these outcomes.

His closing paragraph is chilling in its myopic, little Englander rhetoric: "But for the past 30 years our political life in the United Kingdom has been coarsened and degraded by the Irish conflict- the twisting of judicial process, the corruption of policing, the huge sour expense of spirit and money, the sly corrupting of our civic order as we half acknowledge that thugs may rule some villages and that some people are fated to live by lesser rules"

Marr perhaps forgot the exile of the Nationalists in Portadown, driven out of their homes by the loyalists around Drumcree or the attacks in other areas. He ignored the well established links between the bombers in Dublin and Monaghan in 1974 and the British security forces. He could have written about the emerging links between the British Army, the RUC and the loyalist death squads.

I don't remember a single article by Marr in which he criticised banning orders under the PTA under which people could be legally sent to another part of the "United Kingdom".

He appears unable to understand, for all his concern about what happens in "our backyard", the fact that Nationalists want the RUC disbanded or that to hand over weapons is like Kosovans relying on the Serbs to protect them.

Northern Ireland was a creation of British imperialism and is sustained by it. The "coarsening" of political life in Britain is a direct product of that. Marr's closing sentence, even though he doesn't mean to, proves once again Marx's dictum that a nation which oppresses another can never itself be free.

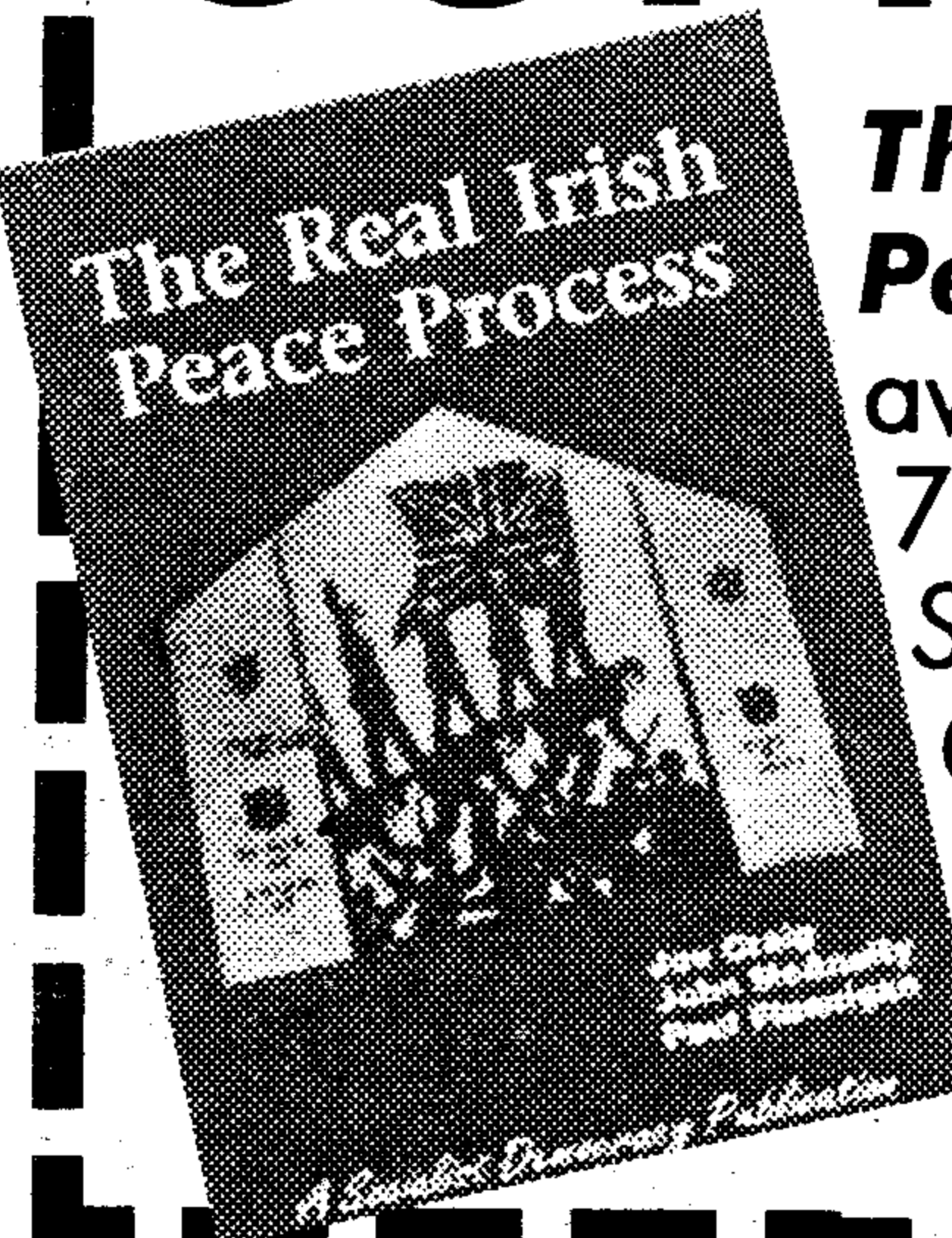
International human rights organisations, have called for an enquiry and been publicly attacked by the British

Marr appears unable to understand that to hand over weapons is like Kosovans relying on the Serbs to protect them

OUT NOW!

The Real Irish Peace Process

The Real Irish Peace Process available (£6 plus 70p p&p) from Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109 London N4 2UU



Britain, Dublin demand entry fee from Republicans

Where's Plan B?

John North

The Good Friday "Hillsborough declaration" setting out the latest spin on the pacification process in Ireland has been presented as the final triumphant step in the implementation of the political settlement in Ireland.

It was left to David Irvine, leader of the ultra-right Progressive Unionist Party, itself the mouthpiece for the death squads of the Ulster Volunteer Force, to spell out the reality.

The new declaration should be supported by unionism because it represented the opportunity to blow out of the water the nationalist family which linked Sinn Fein to southern capitalism and US imperialism.

In practice Irvine's observation comes after the fact. Finish has already been called on the fairy story of the "Nationalist family" on which the entire Sinn Fein strategy was based. They are left bereft of any strategy, with the choice of open capitulation or repression and marginalisation by their erstwhile friends.

The grim reality of this long Good Friday was telegraphed in February, when the Northern Stormont assembly met and endorsed a report outlining the new partitionist structures. In an interview with the Sunday Times, Irish premier Bertie Ahern, the titular head of the nationalist family, indicated that Sinn Fein would have to surrender weapons in exchange for seats in the new government.

The Good Friday agreement nowhere requires this, and Sinn Fein have been clinging desperately to the assurances from their erstwhile partners that they would stand by the letter of the agreement, but that was then and this is now.

For all Sinn Fein's illusions, the core of the pacification process is the restabilisation of partition. The heart of this is the unionist basis on which the British occupation rests.

The key task of the agreement is to stabilise that base with the aid of Southern capital and the Catholic middle class in the North, in spite of Unionism's constant longings for a full-blooded sectarian repression of the nationalist population.

Today that means preventing the "Faulknerisation" of Unionist leader Trimble. (Faulkner was a previous unionist leader who agreed to the Sunningdale settlement in the early 1970s, only to lose majority unionist support).

Trimble, for his own survival, needs the political defeat of republicanism to be made explicit, hence the significance of decommissioning - an act which has no military significance but massive political impetus.

The wording of the Hillsborough declaration, which called for the nomination of ministers followed by an act of reconciliation involving putting weapons



Don't ask Tony the way forward, Gerry: he's lost, too!

out of use, was an attempt by capitalism and imperialism to provide a soft landing for republicanism - allowing the republican leadership to claim decommissioning as a voluntary act following a recognition of their place in the new structures. There were even hints that there would be minor changes in troop deployments to sweeten the pill.

The republican street graffiti: "Not a bullet, not an ounce (of Semtex)" and the subsequent statements from the Sinn Fein leadership are a clear rejection of these calls for surrender.

They immediately, however, bring to mind the question asked by Bernadette McAliskey at the beginning of the process: "What's Plan B?"

It is quite clear from the leadership statement that Plan B is a plea to save the peace process. The republicans are not involved in a process of constructing an alternative to the peace process but in civil disobedience within the process.

This strategy is likely to prove difficult. On the one hand, the British and southern capitalists will turn a deaf ear to these pleas. On the other, it will be difficult to mobilise their base to demand the implementation of the sectarian structures that they accepted only with the greatest difficulty.

In so far as the process faces a crisis it does so from the right. The marching season is under way. Orangemen are determined to assert their supremacy on the Garvaghy Road and intimidate and humiliate nationalists across

the six counties. The British don't even pretend to have the aim of protecting nationalists, and constantly attempt to present the intimidation as cultural divergence, with nationalists under an obligation to come to an accommodation.

A savage sectarian campaign of intimidation, including the murder of Rosemary Nelson, is under way. Needless to say, this is not even an issue in the decommissioning talks.

The unionist right will mount a strong campaign in the coming European elections and the British will have to come up with further shifts to the right to try and conciliate the Frankenstein monster they have created in Ireland and to protect Trimble's base.

To some extent, the latest declaration adds to the instability in the sense that it leaves open the prospect of endless demands for capitulation from the republicans even if they capitulate now.

The great transitional structures that would lead to a united Ireland have faded away to be replaced by Mickey Mouse committees like inland waterways and food safety. Stormont looms larger than ever and even more clearly than ever it will be a sectarian bear-pit, but all the structures that were supposed to transform it are evaporating.

The choices are being presented to Sinn Fein quite starkly. They can wear suits in the new Stormont or they can be the victims of the sort of witchhunt being aimed at Republican dissidents,

yet even now many in the leadership cling to the reformist illusion that they can turn dross into gold.

This illusion is summed up most clearly in the laughable expectation that Chris Patten, Tory grandee, will propose any fundamental reform of the RUC.

In Britain evidence of police racism in the investigation of Stephen Lawrence's death has caused outrage. In Ireland, evidence of the routine involvement of the RUC in sectarian killing produces only indifference. Police threats to the solicitor Rosemary Nelson in the run-up to her murder are brushed aside.

Nothing could make the reality of the pacification process clearer. The murder of Rosemary Nelson carries a simple message: things are not getting better but worse.

The forces of sectarianism and the state will join to prevent even the most basic of legal representation.

The pacification process has reached a stage familiar in many other parts of the world. Illusion is replaced by a growing sense of a terrible reality. The peace process bumps along the bottom - quite clearly having failed but with many of the oppressed clinging on desperately for lack of an alternative plan B.

Plan B remains what it has always been - not in pacification structures, not in capitalist influence, but in mass and class action. What we need to do right now is build a socialist movement that can make these alternatives a reality and end the dependence on the twin illusions of militarism and reformism.

The murder of Rosemary Nelson carries a simple message: things are not getting better but worse.

The great transitional structures that would lead to a united Ireland have faded away to be replaced by Mickey Mouse committees like inland waterways

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Stand up now, Diggers all!

Dave Bangs

Recently, as a "The Land Is Ours" activist, I had to give a short talk about ourselves to a town Community Forum who were thinking of taking direct action against an unsustainable housing development.

The Chair afterwards suggested that any action should be linked to the 350th anniversary celebrations of the Diggers, and asked me to tell the Forum about the Diggers.

I extemporised, and as I did I found (to my own stupid surprise) that I had to swallow hard and blink back tears. How did the Diggers story evoke such strong feeling?

And why, on April 3rd, so long after these near-forgotten events, did 300 or so land activists, anarchists, Marxists and other radicals, old and young, gay with wacky costumes, march through the revolting subtopia of Weybridge to commemorate their failed piece of direct action?

Some words of Gerard Winstanley, the Diggers' leader, may illuminate. "The earth (is) a common treasury of livelihood to all mankind, without respect of persons" "The earth is to be planted...by the assistance of every family and as everyone works to advance the common stock, so everyone shall have a free use of any commodity in the store-house".

"All offices in a commonwealth are to be chosen new ones every year"...

There we have it. Though working within a society still entangled in medieval ideas, in which the new working class was small and unorganised, the Diggers formulated a collectivist, class-based theory and a strategy for putting it into action.

For a year they maintained a land occupation against all the thuggery of the landlord class, negotiated and polemicised with their enemies, and sought out alliances with rank and file soldiers, city radicals, and other like-minded rebels.

They represent a pinnacle of achievement which the modern communist movement still only rarely equals.

Political background

When the Diggers founded their communist colony, around April 1st 1649, the English Revolution had reached its highest point. For nearly 7 years the forces of the big bourgeoisie and modernising landlords had fought a civil war against the discredited absolutism of King Charles.

Through a long process of political differentiation the most radical elements of the bourgeoisie, small freeholders and independent craftsmen, had forged a "New Model Army", under Fairfax and Cromwell, whose discipline and élan had swept aside the moderates and crushed the Royalists.

In a model of democracy not to be equalled again till the Russian Revolution in 1917 the rank and file soldiers elected "agitators" delegated to form soldiers councils, who thrashed out new, democratic political theories.

In January 1649 King Charles was beheaded. Fierce clashes took place between the left-wing democrats - the Levellers - and the conservative army generals and Parliamentarians. In March both monarchy and House of Lords were abolished.

Diggers in action

In this time of hope, the Diggers seized their chance. Through all the exactions and economic ruin of the war, they argued, the poor have stood firm with the rich against kingly tyranny. But what had they gained?

"For kingly power is like a great spread tree. If you lop the head or top bough and let the other branches and root stand, it will grow again and recover fresher strength".

Church lands, Royal Forests, and royalists lands had been confiscated by the Commonwealth, and about one third of all land still remained as waste and common, Winstanley estimated, even after centuries of clearance and cultivation. If these resources could be appropriated by the landless poor, then everyone would get a livelihood.

The relationship of forces did not allow of a frontal attack on all private property. That would have been political suicide. But there was an ongoing class conflict over the appropriation of wastes subject to common right. Cromwell himself had defended commoners in the Fens.

So, whilst making a general theoretical case against all private property and all buying and selling, Winstanley and the Diggers seized the land over which the landlord class had the weakest authority: the commons.

The Digger colony, on St George's Hill, Walton-on-Thames, soon had 20 or 30 adherents and may well have had 2 or 3 times that number. They planted corn and vegetables and used the landlord's timber on the common to build their huts.

Soon the stir they caused brought them into contact with Fairfax, the laid-back army com-

mander. He left them alone.

Not so the local ruling class, though, whose privileges were more directly threatened. The Diggers were systematically harassed by the landlords' enforcer gangs, who illegally imprisoned them, beat them up, trashed their crops, tools and huts, and stole their cattle and timber, so that "those diggers that remain have made little hutches to lie in like calf-cribs".

The Diggers were not acting alone, though. Other Digger groups started land occupations at Iwer, just across the Thames, Kent, Wellingborough, Herts, Beds, Notts, Leicestershire, Middlesex and Gloucestershire. Undercurrents of democratic and communist thinking were probably strong amongst both rural and urban poor, fresh with the confidence of a rising revolutionary wave.

The Diggers were forced to abandon St George's Hill after action for trespass and further brutal attacks, and moved to another common in the next parish of Cobham. Here the local Parson Platt, a Parliamentary supporter and Lord of the Manor, led a new campaign of harassment, which finally forced the Diggers to abandon their experiment in April 1650, one year after its commencement.

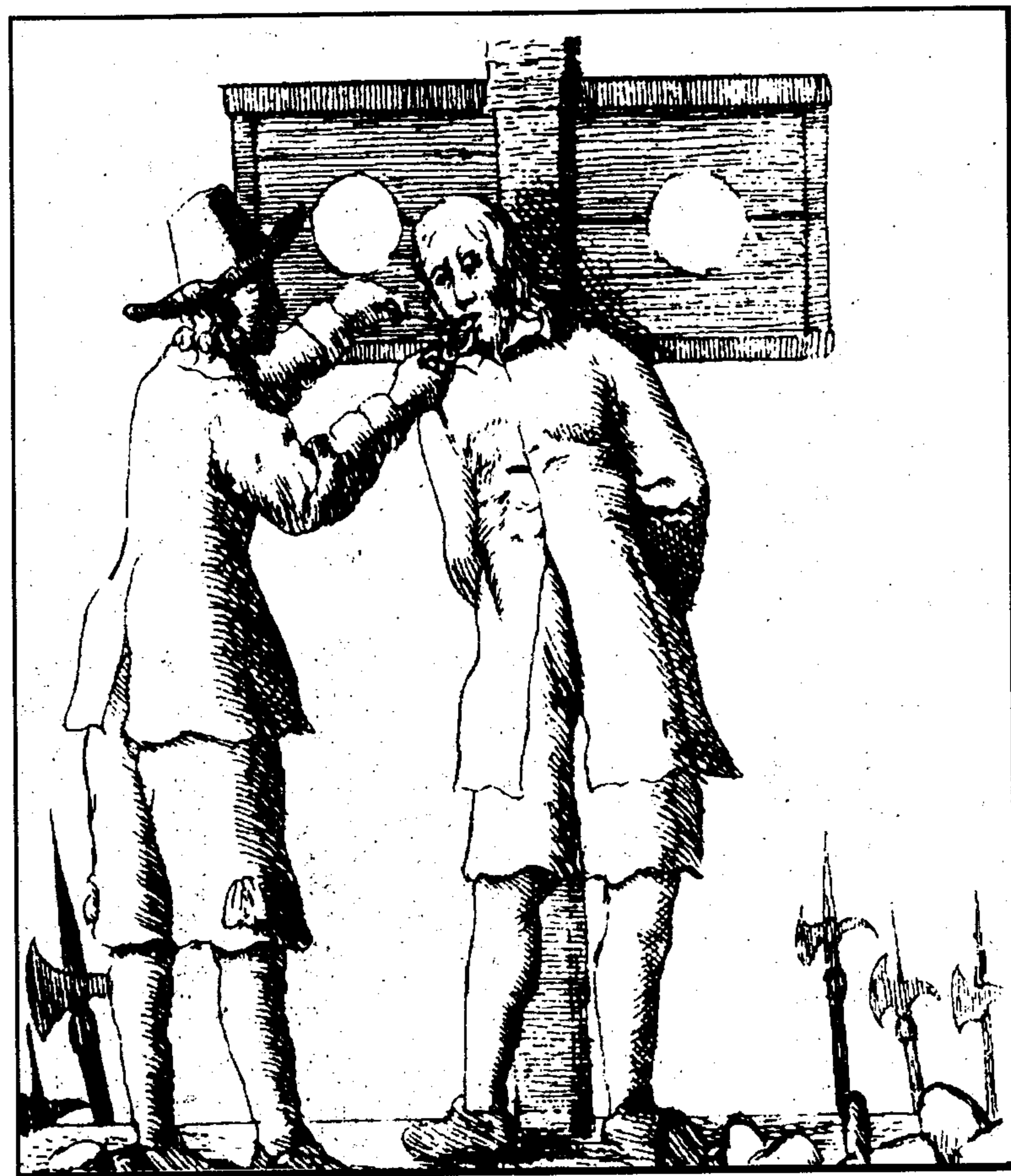
In that year the political tide had already moved decisively against the revolution's far-left wing. During April 1649 five regiments had mutinied, refusing to take part in the war in Ireland (which their best representatives argued was unjust).

At Burford the mutinous Leveller regiments were routed and 3 leaders shot against the church wall. In 1650 the first Act was passed to curb the freedom of the left-wing sects. The limits of freedom were already being constructed.

The ideology of the Diggers

The Digger movement was not dead yet, however. Winstanley did not publish his best work, the communist programme called "The Law of Freedom in a Platform" till 1652. By this time his thought had matured towards a thoroughgoing revolutionary, democratic, collectivist materialism.

Of the capitalist freedoms of the new Cromwellian plutocrats - "in the free use of trading, and to have all patents, licences and restraints removed", and "to have ministers to preach...without being restrained or compelled" - he says: "all these and such like are freedoms: but they lead to bondage and are not the true foundation-freedom. True commonwealth's freedom lies in the free enjoyment of the earth".



Men were to work collectively, but to take only according to the private needs of their families. Public store houses were to be created, overseen by annually elected officials, for the free distribution of goods. Other officials would be elected to control trades and education, and to act as dispute peacemakers. Both military officers and judges were to be elected. The Parliament was to be annually elected, too, and was to guarantee social ownership and defend the new republic in war.

For Winstanley was no pacifist. He had supported the successful war against feudal monarchy. Winstanley believed profoundly that people are peaceful, co-operative and naturally loving towards each other, but he knew that the new republic would have to "beat down all that arise to destroy the liberties of the commonwealth".

Though, like all seventeenth century revolutionaries, his discourse was couched in biblical terms he approached very nearly to an explicit atheism, reducing God to the spirit of reason within all things. He believed that scientific discovery and its inventions would ease the cause of human liberation, and that what knowledge brings is all that we can know.

Priestly divinity was pure bunkum, "for many times when a wise understanding heart is assaulted with this doctrine of a God, a devil, a heaven and a hell, salvation and damnation after a man is dead...he...cannot attain to it: for indeed it is not knowledge but imagination.

The Diggers today

The Diggers' programme for the collective cultivation by the poor of the commons and the confiscated lands of the ruling class was a powerful and rational solution to the needs of the expanding population. Instead, though, newly liberated capitalist agriculture was to unleash 2 centuries of landlord-led enclosure that was to

utterly pauperise the rural working class and drive them by the millions into factory wage labour and colonial emigration.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century the economic struggle for the preservation of rural common rights merged with the new, urban-led struggle for the protection of the commons as space for recreation and the enjoyment of nature.

The Diggers would no doubt be the first to laugh with us at the irony that modern socialists struggle desperately for the preservation of those last remaining commons (that they sought to cultivate) as reservoirs of wild nature against the "improvements" of productivist agriculture.

In Britain now, land struggles are focused against over-production, not under-production, and for the restoration of nature's place, not for its further taming and eradication.

Many in the old social democratic and Marxist left correctly see the place of the Diggers as the founders of modern

collectivism. But in their practice they have not taken on board the re-birth of the politics of land in its new matrix of the struggle for the preservation of nature and the creation of a sustainable system of exploitation.

Many of the new land activists see the Diggers and Winstanley only as a sort of original direct actionist, reclaiming the pure life of the cultivator against the evils of "industrialism".

But the Diggers were far, far more than that, or just the "precursors of the New Age Travellers" as Marion Shoard, the radical countryside campaigner, calls them.

On St George's Hill today lives General Pinochet, protected by high walls and top security. Those Chilean communists and socialists who chant at his gates for his extradition are the true heirs of Winstanley, as is every fighter - woman and man, black and white - who struggles against oppression and for a new world based on collectivism, equality and loving comradeship.

At Burford the mutinous Leveller regiments were routed and 3 leaders shot against the church wall. In 1650 the first Act was passed to curb the left-wing sects.

At Burford the mutinous Leveller regiments were routed and 3 leaders shot against the church wall. In 1650 the first Act was passed to curb the left-wing sects.

OBITUARY

Bernie Hines

OUR COMRADE Bernie Hines has died suddenly at his home in Leicester. He will be sorely missed. Here we reprint four short memories of Bernie.

Anti-fascist fighter

Bernard Hines died on March 31, in his early forties. Comrade "Bernie" was an outstanding socialist and internationalist, who was active nationally in Britain and Ireland, and locally in the labour movement in his home town of Leicester. During the 1970s Bernie played a leading role in fighting the National Front, which in the 1970s came within 60 votes of winning a seat on Leicester council and enjoyed 25 percent of the vote.

As secretary of the Leicester Anti Nazi League and later Inter-Racial Solidarity, Bernie fought tirelessly against the NF, at one time leafleting nearly every house in the city!

His house was frequently attacked by the NF, but he was never intimidated by fascists.

Bernie's mother was Austrian, and he frequently spoke of his hatred of fascism, and how in Graz in Austria the Nazis had hung trade unionists from the trees for people to pass on their way to church.

Ultimately in 1979 the fascists faced a pitched battle in Leicester when they attempted to march through the city - and then faded away. Bernie continued to fight racism wherever it

appeared.

He was a member of the International Marxist Group and a faithful supporter of the Fourth International in later years.

Bernie was also a leading member of the Troops Out Movement, helping to organise the Bloody Sunday commemoration in Leicester in 1982, which went ahead despite being banned.

He often visited Ireland, assisting Republican prisoners and their families.

As a life-long trade unionist in the Gas industry, Bernie was a prominent member of Leicester Trades Council, and worked all-out for the National Union of Mineworkers during the miners' strike for nearly a year.

Bernie also organised Anti-Apartheid events, including a picket of the Tigers rugby ground during the Apartheid era.

Bernie sacrificed his whole life to the cause of humanity and socialism. In January 1999 he was speaking with enthusiasm about the gains for the USFI in the Philippines.

To the end he was an outstanding Marxist and a fighter for the working class.

Paul Winstone, Vice Chair, TGWU General Branch, Leicester



Bernie was a consistent fighter for troops out of Ireland

A blow to UNISON left

Our paths crossed only a few times in the context of UNISON, but Bernie struck me as a deeply committed and principled trade unionist.

Despite some sharp differences between Workers Power and Socialist Outlook supporters in both tactics and strategy towards the unions, the deaths of Bernie Hynes and Paul Wozny have robbed of us of two sincere socialists fighting to transform UNISON.

In a very real sense, the best tribute that those of who knew Bernie through UNISON can now pay him is to redouble our efforts to build an effective challenge to the bureaucracy that currently dominates Britain's biggest union.

George Binette, Camden Unison/Workers Power (in a personal capacity).

Victimised UNISON militant

I had particular cause to work closely with Bernie Hynes last year when he faced serious victimisation by management as a result of his trade union work - he was a UNISON steward at British Gas.

Management withdrew recognition and instigated disciplinary action for using company facilities to communicate with union members. Despite this Bernie was re-elected as a staff representative, with 90% of those balloted indicating support.

Management still refused to recognise Bernie.

Bernie was hampered in fighting his case by the lack of support from the UNISON Regional Officer, backed up by national officers who Bernie saw as in collusion with management.

After internal company procedures were exhausted, and the de-recognition upheld Bernie fought an Industrial Tribunal case and was partially exonerated.

I was impressed throughout

Bernie's ordeal at the hands of both management and union bureaucrats, which dragged on for several months at the way he continually tried to involve and encourage the members he represented at every stage

He was determined to continue building opposition to British Gas management's plans to drive down pay and conditions across the industry.

Pete Firmin, Socialist Outlook

Tireless supporter of trade union struggles

Throughout his adult life Bernie Hynes was a staunch fighter for the rights of working class and oppressed people. But in the course of his many battles he never lost his sense of humour.

I first met him in 1984 in the midst of the miners' strike, where he was centrally involved in support work for the "Dirty Thirty" - the striking Leicester-

shire miners.

His easy-going personality and tireless work in the labour movement, both as a long time steward in his own union and in support of other workers in dispute, endeared him to all grass-roots militants he came in contact with.

He will be particularly remembered in the Leicester Irish

community and amongst Troops Out movement activists throughout the country for his unflinching support for the Irish Republican movement.

Unfortunately towards the end of his life he was hounded by certain people in the bureaucracy of his own union, UNISON, who to their eternal shame connived with manage-

ment to remove him as a steward even though he received the continued support and confidence of his fellow workers.

Despite this Bernie's fighting spirit remained undimmed up until his death. He will be sorely missed.

Mark Shotter, Nottingham Socialist Outlook

WHAT'S ON

April

Saturday 17

CENTRAL LONDON: Hands off Birmingham UNISON Branch! Lobby the UNISON NEC. 1 Mabledon Place, Euston

CENTRAL LONDON: Demonstrate against sanctions on Iraq and against NATO bombings. Assemble 1 pm Hyde Park Speakers Corner. Rally in Trafalgar Square 3 pm

SOUTHAMPTON: An evening of music, food, politics and comradeship to celebrate the life of Paul Wozny. 7.30 pm at the Polish Club, 507 Portswood Road, Southampton

Sat April 24

SOUTHALL, WEST LONDON: Who Killed Blair Peach? National demonstration against racism, organised by the Blair Peach 20th Anniversary Committee, assemble 1 pm at Dominion Centre, the Green, Southall. Rally at Southall Park

Regional demonstrations against the war, including North West - Manchester: Platt Fields, Rusholme to Albert Square Rally. MSP CDU conference University of London Union, Malet St, 11-4pm

May

Saturday 1

CENTRAL LONDON: Reclaim Our Rights/May Day Organising Committee May Day Demonstration. Assemble 12 noon at Clerkenwell Green, March leaves 1 pm, Rally 3 pm at Trafalgar Square

Monday 3

HEATHROW, West London: Luffhansa Skychefs. Mass picket 9 am to 1 pm at picket line on Faggs Road. Assemble opposite Green. Mon-5 mins walk from Hatton Cross tube

Saturday 15

CENTRAL LONDON: Freedom for Ocalan. Freedom for Kurdistan. Assemble 1 pm: Malet Street WC1 (Russell Square/Euston tube). Rally in Trafalgar Square 3 pm

May 29

COLOGNE DEMONSTRATION against unemployment, social exclusion and racism. Ring 0181 800 7460 for transport details

June

Saturday 12

CENTRAL LONDON: Reclaim Our Rights Conference. 11 am to 2 pm NATFHE Head Office, 27 Britannia Street, off Grays Inn Road, Kings Cross

May 1: Reclaim Our Rights/May Day Organising Committee May Day Demonstration - Assemble 12 noon at Clerkenwell Green, March leaves 1 pm, Rally 3 pm Trafalgar Square

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Socialist Outlook

Blair Peach killed 1979 ... Rosemary Nelson dead 1999 ...

**They're
still
getting
away
with
MURDER!**



Victim of a conspiracy? Rosemary Nelson had complained about RUC



20 YEARS ago, Blair Peach, a teacher, attended an anti-fascist demonstration in Southall, West London. During the protest, against the National Front, Blair was knocked unconscious and killed by the police. He was 33.

A quarter of a century later, the Metropolitan Police are still covering up the facts of what happened on that day. There has been no public inquiry and no police officer has ever been charged with his murder.

Two decades later, the police are still covering up. In the north of Ireland, the investigation into the recent murder of civil rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson is being kept within the police force. And police remain stubbornly silent on the murder of Robert Hammill by loyalist thugs while RUC officers watched. (see page 6)

In England, too, a mounting series of suspicious deaths in custody have been met by a wall of silence, and only the tenacious fight of the Lawrence family forced a public inquiry into the bungled investigation of the racist murder of their son Stephen.

The Blair Peach memorial demonstration will reinforce the call for a public inquiry into his death as part of the fight to make the forces of the state accountable for their actions. (DETAILS: What's On, page 15)

National Demo: APRIL 24, 1pm, Southall