

# Workers power

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**CASH FOR QUESTIONS, QUANGOS, THATCHER ARMS DEAL ...**

# CORRUPTION?



**TORY POLITICIANS don't like job culture. They despise beggars, single mothers and claimants. They dislike young ravers, travellers and people who go on noisy demonstrations.**

Good behaviour and moral righteousness are the standards Tories set for all of us. If we break their polite code of conduct we belong behind bars.

Continental scroungers claiming British dole, lager drinking inner-city youth, black drug dealers—these are the stereotyped enemies of good behaviour and law-abiding decency on whom the Tories declare war every time they mount the conference rostrum or rise to give a Rotary Club after dinner speech.

But if you watch what the Tories do, instead of listening to what they say, you quickly realise that there is one set of moral standards for us and another for them.

**The Tories are the biggest bunch of lying, thieving, scrounging yobs in Britain.**

□ Mark Thatcher, son of Margaret, netted £12million in his role as middle-man in the 1980s Al-Yamamah arms deal between Saudi Arabia and British Aerospace. While Maggie claimed she was "batting for Britain" to secure the deal, her son raked in the readies.

□ Jeffrey Archer, life peer and key Conservative Party fixer, had to be stood down from the job of party chairman because

he was caught, with his wife Mary, bending stock market rules over "insider dealing".

□ Last year Tory Minister Michael Mates was revealed to have sent Cypriot businessman Asil Nadir a wristwatch inscribed: "don't let the bastards get you down". The "bastards" in question were government officials investigating Nadir for corruption. Nadir took Mates' advice and jumped bail, fleeing to Cyprus and escaping British courts.

□ Now inquiries have revealed a growing list of MPs and Ministers who accepted "cash for questions". Junior Ministers Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith charged £2,000 a time for their two minute parliamentary questions designed to boost the Al Fayed brothers' fight against Lorrho for control of Harrods department store. Hamilton, laughably, is the minister in charge of "business probity". The Tories are hypocrites. They accuse the unemployed of sponging, the workers of excessive pay demands and young working class people of being yobs.

But the Tories are up to their necks in law breaking, cheating and bribery.

When it comes to making

# It's their way of life!

money the Tories don't care about nationality. They never miss the opportunity to insult "foreigners". But they will take bribes from rich Egyptians, Cypriots and Saudis. The same Tories who vote again and again to isolate Britain from Europe will poke their snouts in the trough at the Paris Ritz with no qualms.

When it comes to corruption the little England Tories are true internationalists. They don't care what currency the cash comes in, as long as it

comes to them.

These liars, cheats and scroungers run the country. They cut our hospitals and services in the name of curbing extravagance.

They send single mothers to jail for non payment of fines and evict them for non-payment of rent. They employ an army of dole snoopers trained to cut off benefit to anybody suspected of working on the side. Yet they spare no expense on themselves.

Tory corruption is not just a

case of a few bad apples. The entire capitalist state is one big hospitality lounge for the ruling class to get on with their back-slapping, secret-handshaking and money laundering. It is a system designed to exploit us, rule us and fool us. It carries on working only because *our* leaders do nothing about it: because they let every struggle—against pit closures, the rail strikes, the campaign against the Criminal Justice Bill—be fought separately, without their backing, leading

to defeat, sell out or compromise.

It is time to turn the tide against the Tories. That will not be done by Tony Blair making polite comments twice a week during the (cash-for) question time slot in parliament.

It will be done by focusing every fight—over pay, cuts, civil rights and racism—into a fight that can bring down the Tories and the profit system which oozes corruption, sleaze and ruling class yobbery from every pore. ■

**CAPITALISM—CORRUPT TO THE CORE**

## FIGHTING DEPORTATION

# Victory for Rahman Family!

**V**ICTORY! THE Rahman Family have won their fight to stay in Britain! After a long struggle against deportation the Home Office recognised the scale of support won by the family and granted them leave to stay. Thousands of names have been gathered on petitions. Dozens of trade union branches have affiliated to the campaign and provided financial and material assistance. Many community organisations have given their support. Aziz Rahman has become a familiar figure, addressing countless meetings to mobilise support for the family and generalise the campaign into one against racist immigration controls in Britain.

The campaign was so effective that, at the hearing, one Home Office representative was heard to say, "I hate cases like this. Normally you just need a thin file. With these you need a whole filing cabinet." The Chair of the Tribunal admitted that the picket of the appeal was the biggest demonstration she had ever seen against a deportation.

The Home Office have granted the appeal on "compassionate" grounds. They accepted the medical reports from Rosemina Rahman's consult-

ant. They knew she had a serious medical condition a long time ago, but they didn't care. It wasn't medical science which won the case, it was class struggle.

The family's campaign has shown how to fight the racist immigration laws. From the beginning the Rahman Family Campaign understood the need for militant working class and community action to win their case and to oppose all racist immigration laws. Under the slogan "Solidarity not Pity" the Rahmans have fought for mass action, not special pleading, and urged the workers' movement to take up the fight for a national campaign against immigration laws.

The Campaign organised a huge demonstration through Bolton where they live, and a national conference, Communities of Resistance, which brought together many black and anti-deportation campaigns to discuss strategies for fighting racism and oppression.

The Campaign shows that the fight can be brought into the labour movement. All too often desperate victims of the deportation system fight their cases as individuals. The Rahman Family were determined to fight their

case as part of the fight against the entire system.

Ultimately, if a single campaign does gain the kind of mass support that the Rahmans mobilised, the Home Office has a simple solution. It can grant the individual right to stay, finding some compassionate reason.

That is why we need a unified

national campaign against all deportations, committed to the repeal of all immigration laws. We need a campaign to smash the racist laws which try to make black people in Britain second class citizens, laws which stigmatise them as "aliens" and ultimately legitimise racist violence. ■



## "We need more victories..."

**W**orkers Power spoke to Aziz Rahman after news of his victory came through:

"It's unbelievable" he said. "I'm very tired, but delighted. Without the campaign there was no chance of winning. Because the campaign was mounted by the labour movement, because it was supported by all the political organisations and individuals, the Home Office has given us the right to stay. I want to thank all groups. I want to thank

you, Workers Power who have been very supportive throughout the campaign. Workers Power mobilised many comrades for the public meeting, the vigil and picket of my hearing.

There were other groups but Workers Power's mobilisation made it a success. I also want to thank Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, Steve Cohen and Socialist Worker.

The Home Office asked for an adjournment of the case because they

had no arguments against us. It shows that their motivation was simply racist. If my wife Rosemina had been a white South African or Australian we would never have had any problems.

Immigrants should be allowed to stay in Britain. They come because of poverty, war and oppression in their own countries. They have suffered from the denial of democratic rights like in my own country, Djibouti. They are not criminals to be

locked up in Campfield prison camp.

We need more victories. We must demand the government scraps these racist immigration laws.

Now those mobilised by our campaign must support the campaigns of Helen Aladasanwe and Florence Okolo and the Al-Astry family in Wigan.

We have to fight for all black people facing deportation. We must make sure ours is just one of many victories to come." ■

## ANTI-RACIST ALLIANCE

# No Way Forward

**O**VER 500 delegates and visitors attended the AGM of the Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA) on 15 October. But they didn't spend the day discussing how to fight racism, instead they witnessed a barrage of claims and counter-claims which have been part of a year long factional fight. The meeting had been brought forward in an attempt to break the paralysis of the past year in which ARA did very little of positive use in the anti-racist struggle and much to damage it.

The internal warfare first came to light after highly publicised punch-ups between Ken Livingstone MP and National Secretary Marc Wadsworth during Executive Committee discussions over a pay rise for Wadsworth and the ARA staff. This was followed by a period of mutual mudslinging and threats of legal action.

The struggle between Wadsworth

and Livingstone was partially resolved when the AGM voted them both out of office. They were replaced by Diane Abbott MP as Chair and Kumar Murshid as National Secretary. But the in-fighting meant that there was no time at the AGM to discuss any of the resolutions or amendments about actually fighting racism!

When ARA was launched in November 1991 it declared its aim of building a broad based alliance embracing black and white people, based around the principle of black leadership in the anti-racist struggle. It set out to be both a pacifist alliance, placing legal reform above mass struggle against racism, and a vehicle to enhance the careers of black middle class "leaders" like Wadsworth.

Wadsworth consistently used his position within ARA to attack not the racists or the police but other anti-racist campaigns led by the so-called

"white left". Under his guidance ARA split the anti-fascist forces on 16 October 1993, leading about 3,000 elderly and mainly white pacifist demonstrators through central London, while 60,000 anti-fascists, including many black youth, confronted the police on the Unity Demo in Welling. Adding insult to injury Wadsworth then went on TV that night to denounce the 'rioters' of Welling, not the police.

Denouncing the left for violence and providing the trade union bureaucracy with a bit of radical black camouflage for their betrayals is one thing, but Wadsworth can not even deliver any real forces. As many of the (undebated) motions at the AGM recognised, ARA was unable to mount a campaign against the BNP in Tower Hamlets, mobilised almost no forces for the TUC anti-racist demo on 19 March and has been marginalised by the Anti-Nazi League, which mobi-

lised 150,000 black and white youth for its London Carnival this summer.

The main difference between Livingstone and Wadsworth was that Wadsworth's antics were not helping to building the passive, cross class alliance they both want. With the leadership of ARA now in "safe" hands the Labour and trade union leaders are set to have another go.

We don't need their kind of alliance. We need a fighting campaign committed to organised self defence of the communities under attack, committed to fighting deportations and for the repeal of all immigration laws, committed to mass demonstrations with organised workers' defence to crush the fascists. We need a campaign which will address the root cause of racism—the poverty and misery of capitalism in crisis. ■

## FASCIST ATTACKS

### Organise Self defence!

**T**HERE IS disturbing evidence that in the aftermath of their election failures and facing widespread condemnation of racist attacks, the BNP Nazis have begun systematic attacks on the left. In Leeds the Nazi terror group Combat 18 has launched a series of violent attacks against local anti-racists, targeting Anti-Nazi League campaigners in particular. In July the Secretary of the local Trades Council's house was attacked with baseball bats and hammers. In August Combat 18 attacked a TV crew making a documentary about the neo-Nazi group, torched a car belonging to an anti-racist and fired a crossbow bolt through the window of an anti-fascist's house.

This pattern of attacks has been repeated in Coventry and South Wales. In Coventry the house of an anti-Nazi was attacked. In Barry, South Wales, two environmental campaigners were severely beaten by Nazi thugs. In Cardiff two local anti-racists have had their home attacked with clubs and bricks.

The BNP/C18 attacks on the left, the tip of an iceberg of hit lists and covert anti-left surveillance by the far right, shows that the fascists are a threat to the entire working class movement, not just black people. Fascism is a weapon of last resort for the bosses against the entire working class. It is training its supporters in violence now, preparing for the future. In response to the campaign of terror we need organised self-defence. Exposing the Nazis as violent criminals and winning mass condemnation is not enough. Months of passivity by the main anti-racist organisations encourage the Nazis to take pot shots at left wingers and anti-racist activists.

When the anti-fascist "43 Group" faced a campaign of intimidation by Mosley's Union Movement in the 1940s it issued a simple warning, "for every Jew and anti-fascist attacked, ten fascists will be thrown through shop windows". They were true to their pledge, and played a major role in preventing Mosley from rising again.

Workers Power supporters have argued tirelessly in the anti-fascist movement for organised workers' defence squads to protect our protests, to keep an eye on fascist activity and wherever possible to take the initiative to prevent them meeting, campaigning and marching.

We have tried to organise the forces for this. We argued at the ANL Conference for a serious approach to organised self-defence. In a positive move the ANL recently mobilised a sizeable number of stewards to meet the threat of a Nazi Blood and Honour mobilisation at London's Charing Cross Station. It was a tacit recognition of the truth of our argument, that, contrary to their rhetoric, it is not the ANL's lollipops that the Nazis are frightened of but our ability to meet them with organised self-defence.

After Leeds, Cardiff and Barry, the ANL's leaders should consign their opposition to organised self-defence to the dustbin. They should get on with organising self-defence. It should be the Nazi scum who cower in constant fear, not working class activists and black people. ■

# EDITORIAL

## FOR LASTING PEACE IN IRELAND *Troops out now!*

JOHN MAJOR chose an assembly of Northern Irish businessmen to reveal his willingness to begin talks with Sinn Fein. The choice was no accident.

Thousands of working class nationalists have either lost their lives or had them wrecked by Britain's long enslavement of its oldest colony. In the past 25 years British troops occupied the north-eastern six counties and subjected the nationalist community to a reign of terror.

Major has nothing to offer the the working class anti-unionists of the North. But the deal he wants to impose on Northern Ireland has much to offer the colony's handful of capitalists and their prospective multinational backers. Peace will not be for the benefit of the people, but it will boost the profits of the bosses.

Major is aiming for a constitutional settlement within the framework of a still divided Ireland. That is why he is pushing ahead with a referendum on the colony's future—a farcical exercise given that the Northern Ireland statelet has a built-in unionist majority and that the majority of the people of Ireland will be excluded from voting on the future of their country.

This is designed to pacify the bulk of the unionists—guaranteeing Major their continued support, and the vital support of their MPs in Westminster. It will head off the "Protestant backlash" that Paisley threatens and that Major fears.

At the same time, he is insisting that the referendum will not be the last word in terms of a constitutional settlement. Here he is pitching for the support of the nationalist community and the continued collaboration of the Dublin government. He told his business audience that for long term peace:

"Neither a purely internal solution nor a return to the domination of one side by the other would achieve this."

Decoded, this means that Dublin's role in directing the affairs of the North will continue and the unionists must not expect the planned new Northern Ireland assembly to be like the old Orange-run Stormont assembly that was brought down by the anti-unionist revolt of the late 1960s and early 1970s. This, he hopes, will ensure that the nationalist community, like its unionist counterpart, is pacified for the duration of the "peace process".

Major's message is music to the ears of the bosses. For them a settlement, even an interim one that keeps the six counties in the United Kingdom, will allow the development of the economy courtesy of massive European subsidies. This will compensate for the loss of jobs in security related sectors—and it will open up the Dublin-Belfast corridor to the flow of cash rather than car-bines.

With such a settlement in place Major hopes that, in the long term, the unresolved national question will quietly resolve itself, either through a referendum decades in the future when the nationalists have a majority in the six counties, or through the erosion of unionist obstinacy as a result of prosperity and an increased familiarity with Dublin's role in the North.

Either way, such an outcome would be a terrible betrayal of the

democratic and national interests of the anti-unionist masses.

Major's scheme involves two options—a capitalist Northern Ireland under British rule or a capitalist Northern Ireland that may, perhaps, choose one day in the future to join the Republic, when Britain is prepared to allow it to. What it does not involve is the only conceivable democratic option—the right of the Irish people as a whole to determine their own future now, free from the occupation of their country by British army and free from the political veto of the British state.

Major has re-opened roads to the Republic and given Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness the freedom to travel in Britain. He has offered to start talks with Sinn Fein and has accepted the permanence of the IRA ceasefire. Yet he has offered nothing of substance on the question at the heart of the struggle in the North for the last 25 years—the freedom of the country from British rule.

Major's "peace process" is an affront to democracy. No consistent democrat, let alone socialist, should give it the time of day.

As for the Loyalist ceasefire, it may give the anti-unionists some respite from indiscriminate shootings and strengthen the IRA's claims that its ceasefire was called from a position of strength. But the Loyalist death squads had no real choice. The suppliers of their arms and intelligence—the British army and secret services—are going along with Major's peace process, so the death squads have been ordered to lie low. At the first sign of anti-unionist resistance to the continued British presence these squads will be unleashed once again.

Yet Sinn Fein, following the logic of the IRA ceasefire, have, in the words of Martin McGuinness, "broadly welcomed" Major's proposals.

Instead of counterposing the legitimate demand of British troops out, McGuinness called for them "to be removed off the streets". And while, a month ago, he refused to countenance Major's call for the IRA to surrender its arms, he now insists that this will be a matter "for some way down the road, all part of the round table negotiations that have to take place." Of Major's whole package he said:

"They have shown a degree of imagination which we have been calling for for some time."

Neither the IRA, nor Sinn Fein want for courage. Backed by the anti-unionist masses they stood firm against British rule for years. Yet now, these same organisations are rushing to gather around the table with the men who authorised the cold blooded murder of countless Republican fighters, who to this day defend atrocities like the massacre of civilians on Bloody Sunday 1972, and who will not hesitate to unleash the full might of the British state on anyone who challenges their continued subjugation of the six counties.

In any language, this is a betrayal. It is not just a betrayal of those who rot in the British state's prisons for the "crime" of fighting to free Ireland. It is a betrayal of the very goals for which Sinn Fein and the IRA for so long stood for—the ending of the British occupation and the right to Ireland's real self determination.

This is not a betrayal of some sentimental ideal or tradition. It is the final act of demobilising the mass anti-unionist revolt which reached pre-revolutionary proportions in the years 1969-71. The Republican leadership subordinated that mass struggle to the elitist guerilla strategy. Now they are saying to Britain: you can reform the Northern Ireland state from above without fear of unleashing revolutionary struggle from below.

The scale of this betrayal is being camouflaged by McGuinness and Adams by their talk of a protracted peace process. And in this they are getting the backing of the Dublin government. For its part Dublin is turning Sinn Fein, in alliance with Hulme's SDLP, into its long term ambassadors in the North—political bargaining chips with Britain and the Unionists, and constitutional pressure groups for its interests should it decide to formally renounce its own claim to Northern Ireland.

The whole issue of the national question has moved into the sphere of diplomacy and secret talks. The masses, excluded from the struggle for so long by the IRA's guerillaist strategy, now find themselves excluded from the settlement by the "statesmen" of Britain and Ireland and the aspiring statesmen of the six counties.

The task of socialists is to wrest the initiative from the hands of these leaders and place it in the hands of the masses. This means renewing the fight against the British state and confronting any backlash by the Orange thugs.

But it also means fighting against both on a new basis. It means placing the mobilisation of the masses to the fore. It means ensuring the defence of the masses from troops and loyalists by armed defence squads accountable to the mass movement.

Above all it means fighting for a working class solution to the national question. It means mobilising the class power of the workers throughout Ireland, to wipe the expectant smiles from the businessmen north, south and beyond the border. It means placing the uncompromising fight for an all Ireland workers' republic at the centre of the strategy to unite the country and drive the British out.

The majority of Protestant workers have nothing to gain from the "peace process". A capitalist Ireland without the police state in the North will mean the gradual erosion of their sectarian privileges. That is why suspicion of the peace process is greatest amongst working class loyalists.

Gerry Adams offers them the "hand of friendship". But it is an empty gesture unless Sinn Fein can offer them a joint struggle against a common class enemy, north and south of the border: against a religious state and a rampantly exploitative Southern Irish bourgeoisie. How can it do that whilst standing on the steps of the Dail hand in hand with the guarantors of capitalist order in the South?

Only revolutionary socialism can shatter the Orange monolith and win the best elements of the protestant working class—to the red flag, not the green-white-and-gold.

The only peace that can ensure that the working masses are rewarded for their years of sacrifice is a peace which gets Britain out of Ireland and the bosses, north and south, out of power.

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### workers power

#### MEETINGS

.....  
**SHEFFIELD**  
*Bolshie Women*  
*Why we need a working class women's movement*  
Tuesday 8 November  
7.30  
see seller for venue

*Ireland after the ceasefire*  
Tuesday 15 November  
See seller for venue

.....  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
*Blair's Labour - what future?*  
Tuesday 22 November  
7.30pm  
Union Club,  
723 Pershore Rd, Selly Park

.....  
**COVENTRY**  
*How to stop student poverty*  
Wednesday 23 November  
8.00pm  
see sellers for venue

**MARK HARRIS TRUTH AND JUSTICE CAMPAIGN**  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
Wednesday 9 November 7.30pm  
Butetown Community Centre, Cardiff

## £700 emergency for Peruvian comrades

After the success of our last Fund Drive—£5,417.22 raised to finance the LRCI third congress—Workers Power was set to launch a brand new drive for funds to upgrade our printing and desktop publishing equipment.

But in the meantime our comrades in Poder Obrero in Peru have had their's dramatically downgraded.

Sadly all their equipment has been destroyed, due to their office being ransacked. The LRCI's Latin American publications reach the hands of thousands of workers and peasants.

They are produced on basic computer and printing equipment which, nevertheless, is beyond the capacity of our comrades to replace from their own resources.

So we are postponing the Workers Power print shop fund drive until we have raised £700 as part of an international emergency collection for our Peruvian comrades.

Please rush your donations, large or small, cheques payable to Workers Power (please write Peru on the reverse of the cheque), to BCM Box 7750 London WC1N 3XX.

**Aziz Rahman** (see facing page)  
says: "Workers Power mobilised nationally and locally for my campaign against deportation. They were crucial to the success of the rally and picket outside the hearing of my case at the Immigration Appeal Court. I have no hesitation in asking you to donate to the Workers Power Fighting Fund."

#### FIGHT FOR WORKERS POWER!

- I would like to know more about Workers Power & the LRCI
- I want to join Workers Power

- I would like to subscribe to:
- Workers Power £7 for 12 issues
  - Trotskyist International £8 for 3 issues
  - Trotskyist Bulletin £8 for 3 issues

Make cheques payable to Workers Power and send to:  
Workers Power, BCM 7750, London WC1N 3XX

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone: ..... Trade union: .....

IMAGINE YOU'VE just lost your company £250 million, and in the process caused £500 million losses for your company's customers. Then you upped the basic pay rate for 4,000 workers by an average of 20%—at your firm's expense—and set back the Company Plan by about two years. Your boss wants to see you. Worried?

Not if you're a Railtrack negotiator. They each received a £2,000 bonus for "handling" the signal workers' dispute this summer.

### Showdown

The payout was made to cover up the fact that the rail bosses lost more than they won in the showdown with the RMT strikers. As BR Chairman Bob Reid put it, "the strikes, loss of momentum and slippage in performance . . . have turned 1994 from a potential year of renaissance to one of disappointment, damage and major threat."

The settlement at the end of September was accepted by a six to one vote in a telephone poll of the signal workers. Whilst it was nowhere near the original claim for an 11% pay rise for seven years of constant productivity gains, the deal was better than anything Railtrack had offered during previous negotiations.

A one-off payment of £480 (6%) was won in recompense for past productivity improvements. A package worth 3.4% was achieved in return for further flexible working practices. In addition, Railtrack agreed to honour a 2.5% pay rise, backdated to April.

### Vindicated

Compared to other "restructuring" deals that have been foisted on railworkers over the past few years, the signal workers have been vindicated in their decision to take strike action in defence of their working conditions.

Their working week has been reduced from 39 to 37 hours and they have won two more days holiday per year. Railtrack also had to backpedal on their two central demands: for Sundays to be paid at single rate and for "annualised working hours" whereby all overtime payments would be abolished.

The signal workers clearly won a partial victory in the teeth of opposition from the bosses, the Tory government and their poodle press who tried in vain to turn public opinion against the strike. Every worker should take encouragement from this.

The strikers have been vindicated for sticking it out for four months. Even Railtrack admits only 70 RMT members broke ranks, whilst 400 new members joined up! The RMT Council of Executives, however, endangered the whole dispute through its tactics, limiting the strikes to one and two day actions.

### Regroup

A massive scabbing operation was encouraged by the fact that the rail bosses had a week or more to regroup between strikes. If the signal workers had strung all their strike days back to back, been organised to picket out the weaker areas and occupy scab signal boxes they could have quickly brought Railtrack and their Tory paymasters to their knees.

Similarly, if Jimmy Knapp and Vince Hinton had broadened the action and called out other rail workers, like the drivers who were clearly prepared to stop work in solidarity, the whole network could have been brought to a grinding halt. This may have meant breaking the anti-union laws, something the bureaucrats are so afraid to do, but it could also have won the full

# SIGNALWORKERS Who won the rail dispute?

claim and put a real question mark over the whole privatisation process.

As it is, privatisation has been stalled but not stopped dead in its tracks. The public sector pay freeze has been breached, but it has not been smashed.

A massive and long overdue rise in signal workers' living standards has been won, but at the expense of future cuts: 500 signal workers will lose out in two years time as bonuses are incorporated into basic pay rates.

The signal workers have won a partial victory. But the chance to inflict a significant political victory against the Tory offensive has been lost.

Railtrack will be out for revenge in the coming months and years. As David Armstrong, one of their directors, commented,

"Sunday working will be on a voluntary basis, but if somebody doesn't volunteer we can roster them to work."



Busworkers join RMT picket line. Strikers won a partial victory but lost the chance to stuff the Tories

In other words the bosses intend to continue their offensive.

Rail workers have shown us all that one summer of strike action can win what seven years of negotiations could not achieve. But the future of the

industry stands at a crossroads. Either the rail unions push home the advantage and use strike action to prevent any clawback, or the privatisation bandwagon will be back on track! ■

## STUDENTS

# All out on 9 November

THE GOVERNMENT says everyone has a right to education; they say that in Britain there is education for all. Everyone, they claim, no matter what their background, has access to higher education.

What does this "right" to education actually mean for a working class student in 1994? Well, you have the right to:

- Libraries with not enough books
- Lecturers who don't have any time to teach
- Lecture groups of over 500
- Massive debts
- No state benefits
- Poverty

News that the Tories are going to cut 10% of grants this year, and another 10% next year just shows the sort of education system they really want. Education only for those who are able to pay.

As the grants continue to be cut students are being forced to run up massive debts, totalling thousands of pounds over the three year courses.

The Student Loans Company is in the process of taking over 100,000 ex-students to court for non payment of their student loans and has plans to prosecute up to half a million people in the next three years!

Many students also have to get part time jobs as well as trying to study. This kind of work is usually very low paid.

Trying to find somewhere to live is another nightmare.

Thanks to Tory cuts in housing there is less and less affordable hous-

ing to rent. And don't think about squatting—they've got the CJB to deal with that.

Colleges are severely under-resourced. Over the past few years they have been told to enrol more and more students but they haven't been given the money to actually teach them.

Lecturers have found themselves with classes so large that there isn't

a room in the university big enough to accommodate them.

Clearly, if working class students are not going to be forced out of education, if students are not going to be pauperised and some kind of quality in education defended, we have to fight.

What is the National Union of Students (NUS) prepared to do to lead this fight?

## How UNL fought and won

Last year management at UNL tried to cut two courses, South Asian Studies and Classical Civilisation. They also wanted to increase class sizes and to freeze the student union budget. Workers Power spoke to Dave, one of the occupation activists

"Students staged a 17-day occupation of the site at Kentish Town. In the end management had to use police and the courts to end the action. The occupation took over the whole of the site at Kentish Town, completely disrupting the ability of the management to run the college normally. Despite the fact that exams were only weeks away that did not stop students. We were prepared to occupy right through the time allocated for exams.

The occupation involved hundreds of students, and was not controlled by a few student union officials. In fact the student union president did everything he could to sabotage the occupation. But this did not stop the occupation as it

was run and controlled by all the students. Every day there was an occupation meeting of all the students that decided where the action would go next. All decisions were made by these mass meetings.

The students decided from the beginning to try and extend the action. We went to other sites of the university and argued with students to join us and occupy their sites. And we went to college workers and their unions and called on them to take strike action to stop the cuts going through.

In the end we successfully saved the two courses and the student union budget was unfrozen.

Students at the college have not

rested content with last year's victory. This year an activists' meeting of over 40 students, including new students, has been organised. Management were so frightened of this they tried to stop us using the canteen for the meeting. Of course they couldn't and the meeting went ahead.

From that meeting it was decided to organise a campaign of canteen boycotts because canteen prices had gone up. After the first day of the boycott management offered a few concessions including cheaper tea and coffee prices and a consultative body for students to make suggestions about the canteen. But this has not been enough for students to call off the campaign.

The occupation at UNL was an example of the kind of organisation and action that students need to resist the attacks on education and to defeat the government's grant cuts nationally.

that draws in as many students as possible, uniting colleges across the country. It will take actions like occupations, demonstrations, rent strikes.

If they are to be effective these will need to be more than just limited, token one-day protests. We need indefinite occupations and strikes if we are to win the sort of education we deserve. ■

If we are to beat the grant cuts we will have to take similar militant action that aims to stop the normal running of the education system.

In every college activist groups should be set up with the aim of drawing in any student who wants to fight against cuts in services and grants. These groups should link up with other groups, locally and nationally, to strengthen our forces and broaden the fight.

Activist groups should make links with college workers. They are also affected by the government cuts. Their wages and working conditions are under attack.

The campaign needs to be more than simply defensive. We should be fighting not just to defend the grants we get now but for a grant that we can afford to live on. We don't want to just defend the current levels of spending on education, we want to increase them so that we have well equipped libraries, enough lecturers and well resourced courses.

Then, perhaps, we'll be able to say that 'education for all' is a reality, not a Tory con trick. ■

## NATFHE All out strike to win!

**T**HE NATFHE union leadership should run courses in how to lose a dispute. They continue to sabotage the actions of their members who are fighting against a savage attack on working conditions.

College employers are trying to bring in new contracts which will cut holidays and increase working hours and the number of classes for lecturers in further education. What is the union leadership doing? Calling off strikes and ensuring their membership is divided.

During October a number of strikes did take place, but these were despite the union leadership, not supported by them. Natfhe members are prepared to take action but it is not being coordinated.

In Wales eighteen Natfhe branches were out on strike for three days, as were lecturers in Southwark in London.

Why were they not joined by other branches?

In the case of London two other colleges were refused action by the national union: Kingsway and Tower Hamlets. The reason? The employers were willing to have local negotiations.

The Natfhe leadership is determined to encourage local agreements rather than a national fight.

But this leaves branches divided. Weaker branches are forced into rotten deals and the impact of any action which is taken is considerably reduced.

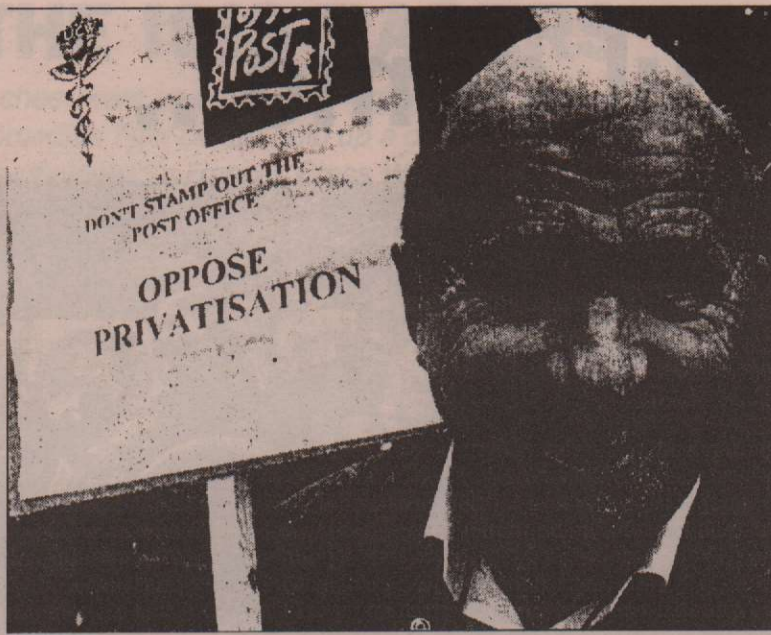
The leaders will not even call for strike action where the employers refuse to negotiate. They ignored the call by a Natfhe Further Education Sector Conference to support the three day strikes and instead called for some sort of action, refusing to specify if this should be strike action.

Whilst the actions of the leadership are a disgrace, the willingness of the membership to take action has been encouraging to many militants.

If the employers are to be resisted and the new contracts thrown out, all out strike action will be needed.

Militants in Wales have already recognised this. They are building for all-out action across Wales next term. On 7 December there will be an all-Wales strike and a rally in Cardiff. At the rally the arguments for an all out strike will be put and militants believe the membership will support that call.

If other regions can follow the example of Wales, then this is a battle that can still be won. ■



**P**OSTAL WORKERS are facing privatisation and a management offensive on pay and conditions. Management want to cut overtime and weekend working payments. At the same time they are trying to introduce new shifts, merge depots, abolish second deliveries and cut jobs.

Action to beat back these attacks is vital. Throughout the country postal workers have shown that they are willing to take such action.

Manchester, Birmingham, Stoke, Newcastle, London, Wakefield have all had one day or longer strikes in the last month. In Manchester counter workers have staged two strikes against privatisation. All of these actions have been solid.

As well as strikes, countless other towns have witnessed big and lively demonstrations against privatisation.

All of this is good. Management have been thrown back a few times, particularly where they have tried to discipline workers as they did in Stoke and South London. Strikes got disciplinary threats withdrawn and suspended workers reinstated.

But these actions need to be built on and co-ordinated into a campaign of strikes, culminating in an all out strike against any government announcement (expected in late October) on the privatisation and break up of the Post Office.

Unfortunately this is not how the leaders of the Union of Communications Workers (UCW) see it. Alan Johnson made a name for himself at the Labour Party Conference as one of Blair's most "modern" union leaders when he sided with Bambi over ditching Clause Four. The UCW joined the bastions of the right—like the AEEU and the ISTC—to vote with Blair.

Johnson's modernising zeal doesn't stop with the Labour Party. In the union he is busy leading the fight against militant action. When 1,100 workers in North London struck against the threatened merger of sorting offices and an attempt to cut their meal breaks by forty minutes, Johnson and the UCW executive sanctioned the strike, but then ordered other postal workers to do the strikers' work! The strike was solid but the

## POSTAL WORKERS Fighting the Tory sell-off

union leadership undermined its strength.

This is how they are reacting to every action that flares up. They are there with their bureaucratic fire hose to douse the flames.

The hostility of the bureaucrats is not simply because they fear rank and file action—although they do—it is because such action threatens their entire strategy for beating off the threat of privatisation. That strategy has at its very centre the wooing of bosses' organisations and Tory MPs. Militant action will, Johnson believes, frighten off these hoped-for allies.

Johnson has learnt nothing from the pit closure debacle in 1992. Then too, the labour movement put its faith in Tory MPs who promised to break with the government. The pits closed, the miners' jobs were lost and the NUM was decimated even further.

It is obvious that such a strategy is useless. Not to the UCW leaders! Why? Because they fear the militancy of their own rank and file more than they fear the privatisation of their industry.

That is why their campaign has

concentrated on lobbying Tory MPs. That is why it is singing the praises of the reactionary Ulster Unionist MPs who say they will vote against privatisation. That is why they are giving more publicity to bosses' organisations that oppose privatisation, like the Direct Marketing Association, than to the actions of their own members.

Rank and file UCW members do not have to put up with this. They should not be forced to rely on the eight Tory MPs who have promised to vote against privatisation.

They need only rely on themselves and the labour movement. A solid national strike against privatisation throughout the entire postal industry, backed by solidarity from the rank and file of the labour movement, could stop Heseltine's plans for a sell off in no time.

The strikes show the will for action is there. Over the next weeks it is vital that rank and file militants across the union begin to organise themselves, against the leadership, to transform that will into a fighting strategy. ■

## NHS

# Scrap poverty pay deal!

**O**NLY A few weeks ago the Unison health workers' conference in Bournemouth resounded with promises of a fight over NHS pay. *Unison Week*, the union's paper for shop stewards, promised that health workers would bust the Tory pay freeze.

The bureaucrats' infatuation with fighting talk proved little more than a holiday romance. They quickly went back on their promise to call an immediate ballot for strike action over the pay deal.

The NHS pay rise was due at the start of April. On offer is 2.4% for more than 200,000 workers, many of whom are already on poverty pay. And even this shabby offer has big strings attached.

In return for a rise that will barely cover the money lost in the Tory tax rip-off, the bosses are demanding the introduction of regional and "performance related" pay in all future wage rounds.

Unison officials are citing the results of a "consultation exercise" in the branches as the reason for refusing to call a strike ballot. Even though the majority who were "consulted" voted for action, the leadership claims the vote was too close.

The whole "consultation exercise" is just one of the many bureaucratic tricks the union leaders use when they want to sell their members down the river. When it was a case of their

livelihoods—threatened by the Tories' new rules for signing up members—they mounted a positive campaign to "Sign Up".

But with their members' livelihoods at stake they made a few phone calls and decided to do nothing.

The Unison leaders should be deluged with resolutions demanding a ballot on pay.

If there is no mood for a strike, let this be tested; not just by consulting but allowing the membership to hear the arguments for and against action, allowing the membership to discuss what action is needed to win a real pay increase.

A ballot, even if lost, would at least allow militants to address the tens of thousands of rank and file members with the arguments for action. It would show that there is a reason for signing up to a union.

The leaders want to damp down the pay fight to give Tony Blair an unhindered run against Major in parliament. Strikes would "embarrass" Labour's new leader.

That is why the same Unison bureaucrats have just presided over the acceptance of a two year poverty pay deal in local government.

The pay rounds in health and local government show why we need rank and file control of the unions, to get rid of the leaders who sell out and to replace them with an accountable leadership that will fight. ■



Defending emergency services at Central Middlesex Hospital

# Another peaceful demo...

**T**HE FACTS about the demonstration against the Criminal Justice Bill (CJB) on Sunday 9 October, and the resulting battle in central London, speak volumes about the radicalisation of young people, the role of the police and the tasks of the left today.

A peaceful demonstration of about 40,000 people—mainly young and including thousands of teenagers—took to the streets of London to protest against the Criminal Justice Bill. But the official organisations of the workers' movement have boycotted the fight against the CJB. Labour will not oppose the Bill in parliament—Tony Blair actually supports many of its provisions. The handful of trade unions which backed the demo sent only a few token banners.

Active opposition to the biggest threat to civil liberties for decades was left to individual union militants, a small number of isolated branches, a smattering of ad hoc youth groupings and the far left.

Police actions followed the pattern established at Welling in October 1993, where police banned, surrounded and attacked a 60,000 strong march against the BNP headquarters, and at the Trafalgar Square demonstration against the Poll Tax in March 1990. Isolated acts by individuals were used as an excuse to attack and criminalise a mass demonstration.

## Rave

This time trouble began when, towards the end of a rally in Hyde Park, two sound systems drove up Park Lane, attracting about 5,000 for an impromptu rave on the multi-laned carriageway. Riot squads promptly surrounded the ravers, many of whom were oblivious to the fact that the situation could end in violence. At the same time police severed all communications with the Demo organisers.

Over an hour later the sound systems were moved into Hyde Park, taking with them many ravers but leaving up to a thousand activists in control of Park Lane. Having totally overreacted the police faced a problem of how to retreat without losing face. So they used the excuse of a bottle or two being thrown at them to stage an all out assault on the demonstrators, first outside and then within Hyde Park.

Hundreds of police in riot gear charged the crowd, backed up by at least three detachments of mounted riot police and a transit van, which at one stage drove at speed into a fleeing crowd.

But working class youth have not wasted the four years since Trafalgar Square. They are getting ever more angry, and ever more confident of their ability to resist such police assaults. Instead of the few dozen "anarchists and Trotskyists" referred to in the press, the police faced, by their own admission, at least two thousand youth prepared to fight back and defend their demonstration. Those two thousand were supported and shielded by the vast majority of the demonstrators present.

So, while the police got their "riot", and the papers got the headlines they wanted, they also got something they had not bargained for: a courageous and effective example of how police aggression can be defeated.

As the horses charged into the crowd, many demonstrators refused to run. Time after time the horses were surrounded and individual demonstrators leapt up to drag the mounted cops from their saddles. Groups of riot cops were detached from their commanders, surrounded and pelted with every conceivable missile as well as being met by the



# ...another police riot

fists and boots of demonstrators.

As the police mounted their umpteenth failed assault on the crowd a defiant chant went up from hundreds of battered and bruised young men and women: "boring, boring..."

Soon, police were forced out of the park. Within the crowd there was tremendous solidarity. Nurses and doctors tended the injured. Groups of friends—far outnumbering the "organised" left—put together impromptu self-defence teams to resist the police. Those who hit the ground were picked up by unknown comrades. Those snatched by the police were rescued without hesitation.

In their fury the cops turned on the easiest targets. Shoppers and cinema-goers on Oxford Street had their heads cracked. Even newspaper reporters were attacked by the police. Hapless pacifists, wandering up to the police lines to remonstrate, got the same treatment.

Throughout the build up to the demo there had been a political clash between activists who favour direct action against the Bill, and a large pacifist tendency—styling themselves "fluffies"—who wanted to rely on non-violent direct action.

As the violence erupted many arguments broke out with "fluffies" who were trying to restrain those fighting back. The "fluffy" organisers did not carry out their threat to spray rioters with purple paint to identify them to the police, but they did actively try to prevent resistance.

## Force

The political divide in the anti-CJB movement was mirrored in the reaction of demonstrators departing by coach. As one demonstrator observed: "there were two types of coach; one kind with everybody cheering and fired up, another kind with the majority ashen faced, stunned and totally disorientated."

It would be easy to stigmatise the "fluffy" tendency as middle class. Admittedly it does contain more than a fair number of Jocelyns and Jemimas for whom two years dropping Es on the London club scene is only part of the process that leads from public school and college to a plush job and a company car.

But the argument for and against violence runs deep within the working class as well. It goes right back to Chartism, the first mass workers' movement, which had both "moral force" and "physical force" wings.

This argument has to be addressed. The case for physical force has to be defended.

Working class repugnance at violence

*Colin Lloyd assesses the results of the CJB demo and addresses the arguments, for and against violent resistance, that have riven the workers' movement since the Chartists*

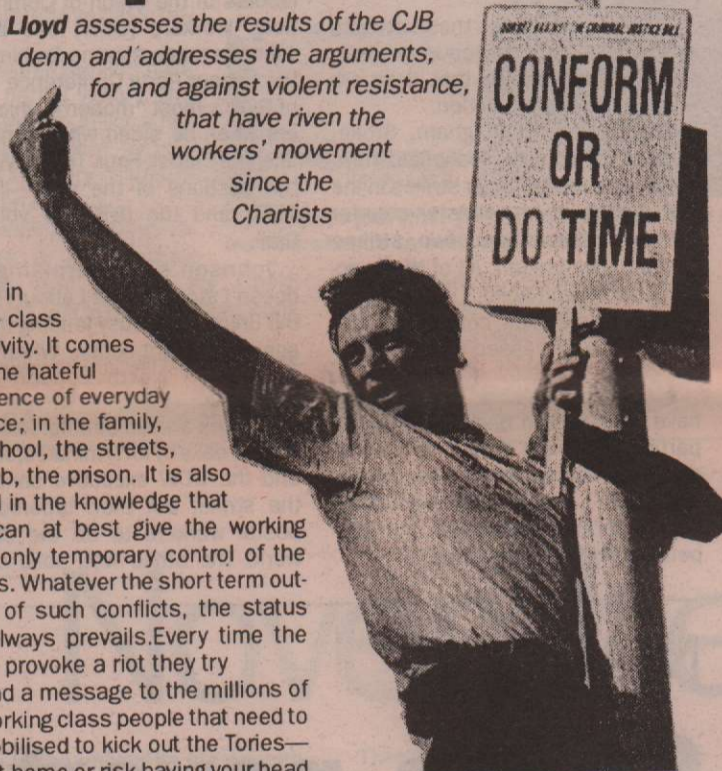
is not rooted in middle class sensitivity. It comes from the hateful experience of everyday violence; in the family, the school, the streets, the pub, the prison. It is also rooted in the knowledge that riots can at best give the working class only temporary control of the streets. Whatever the short term outcome of such conflicts, the status quo always prevails. Every time the police provoke a riot they try to send a message to the millions of the working class people that need to be mobilised to kick out the Tories—stay at home or risk having your head cracked. Every press and police witch-hunt against the supposed "ringleaders" carries the message to workers—"don't have anything to do with these dangerous left-wing nutters". This message is reinforced by the legalistic Labour and trade union leaders:

But pacifism, whatever its motivation, is a dead end. Young people shocked by the violence that followed the march need to face up to reality. If the police assault on the march had not been resisted, if the methods of "nonviolence" had carried the day, then the police would have succeeded in enforcing one of very things for which the Bill has been designed. They would have disrupted and dispersed a legitimate democratic protest. Only by fighting back did the youth prevent them from doing just that.

The police are not there to "keep the peace". They are there to enforce the will of the ruling class, the rich who fear the ability of the working class to fight back and are introducing the CJB to keep us in our place.

It is no accident that every major demo over the last four years has ended in violence. It is a direct product of two things: police brutality and the mounting anger and courage of young working class people. It is no good bemoaning the fact that things have come to this. It is a fact of life. The real question is: how can we win these struggles, not just against police violence, but against the system that causes it?

The young fighters that came to the



fore on 9 October need to learn more than just how to throw well and dodge horses. They need to learn that organised resistance, where necessary violent, is a legitimate part of the class struggle. And they need to learn how to organise it, how to link it to the mass movement, so that rioters cannot be stigmatised as a "minority of troublemakers" and hounded in the press, but can find support amongst the vast majority of workers.

These tasks are political. The anarchist groups, though containing many brave street fighters, have no political strategy for addressing the millions of workers who are not anarchists. The best known anarchist organisation, Class War, carries out no systematic work in the unions or workplaces. It rests content with organising a relatively small number of committed individuals.

## Class

They refuse to call on the trade unions and Labour to back working class protests, and therefore have no tactics that can bring millions of organised workers into conflict with the sell-out leaders that they currently trust.

It is one thing entirely for a worker sitting at home watching the news or reading the Tory press to accept the lie that "troublemakers" started the violence. But it would be another thing altogether if trade unionists had been there in large numbers to see for themselves what really happened. And when this happens, organised

workers can and will shed their pacifist ideas quickly. Some of the best organised and most heroic resistance to police aggression was seen on the picket lines in the great miners' strike, the Wapping printworkers' dispute and more recently at Timex.

What is more, by leaving the role of the organised working class out of account, violence is reduced to a mere gesture by the anarchists. They may imagine there is a direct link between fighting the police today and fighting to overthrow the state tomorrow, but they are incapable of making that link in practice within the only class capable of making a revolution: the working class.

## Violence

The SWP, on the other hand, is keen to stress the role of the working class. But it has proved unable to cope with the task of leadership thrust upon it by the Labour and trade union leaders' abdication of responsibility.

Last year, at Welling, it was the SWP leaders' fear of "squaddism"—organised violence against the fascists—which underlay their refusal to organise adequate stewarding or prepare for the inevitable clash between a banned demo and the riot squads.

At Hyde Park the same SWP leaders again abdicated responsibility. They love the prestige of the yellow stewards' bibs and the walkie-talkies. But faced with the police onslaught they did nothing to organise and maximise the effectiveness of resistance. Half of them were trying to clear demonstrators and cool things down while the other half—and no doubt many individual SWP members—simply got stuck in.

At the root of this is the idea that a big revolutionary socialist party in Britain can be built on the cheap—without confronting questions of violence and organisation, without confronting and defeating the practical consequences of reformism and its accompanying message of pacifism.

What we need, faced with consistent police violence and provocation, are organised workers' defence squads.

Organised self defence has two functions: if necessary it can give the police a much more thorough hiding than they received at Hyde Park, and it can maintain order on demonstrations where needed. Given that the police use isolated incidents to provoke mass confrontations, it should be the workers and youth who decide when confrontation turns to violence, not one individual with a bottle or brick.

## Youth

But even the best organised defence squads in the world cannot win the political battle. The CJB could have been beaten if Labour and the unions had mounted a mass campaign before it became law. Now, while mass resistance to the CJB's provisions is vital, it will be difficult to destroy it like we did the Poll Tax. The Poll Tax cost the Tories millions, and it involved over ten million non-payers. The CJB will be targeted against small groups, potentially isolated from each other, like travellers, hunt saboteurs and ravers.

To turn the workers' movement into a force that can fight the Tories needs more than individual or single issue activism. One individual cannot be active in every campaign. To span every section of the working class and every just cause we need a revolutionary party.

And the task of winning the youth to a class orientation cannot be left to Tony Blair, or even to left reformists like Arthur Scargill. We need a revolutionary youth movement, committed to politicising everything, from schools to clubs to football fanzines, and uniting the struggles of the youth with the struggles of workers the world over. ■

THIS NOT often that a book goes on sale in left wing and black community bookshops which argues that one section of humanity is genetically inferior to another, doomed to extinction, and that the world faces centuries of race war. Nor is it common to find a book advertised on a radical, "right-on" comedy show arguing that homosexuality is a disease and that women do not have the muscle mass to fight the system.

But Dr Frances Cress Welsing's book *The Isis Papers* contains all of this and more. In a collection of essays spanning more than twenty years Welsing spells out her theory of "colour confrontation" and its implications for the struggle against racism in modern society. For Welsing it is white people who are genetically inferior; race war is predicated by genetics and there is a genetic root to all manifestations of racism—social, political, economic and psychological.

According to Welsing: "... the quality of whiteness is a genetic inadequacy or a relative genetic deficiency state, based on the genetic inability to produce the skin pigments of melanin (which is responsible for all skin color) ... Color always annihilates (phenotypically and genetically speaking) the non-color, white. Black people possess the greatest color potential."

On the basis of this genetic "fact" Welsing develops the theory that the needs of genetic survival cause white people to develop an "uncontrollable sense of hostility and aggression" against non-whites. Thus for Welsing:

"The genocide of non-whites must be understood as a necessary tactic of a people (white) that is a minority of the world's population ... the global white minority must act genocidally against people of color for the purpose of white genetic survival."

This, Welsing claims, is the key to understanding not only all social and psychological behaviour (black and white), but the whole of human history to date. The rest of the book is an attempt to apply her "psycho-genetic" theory to diverse instances of racism and its effects on black people.

Welsing investigates the racist-phallic symbolism of the gun, ball sports and boxing in black culture, and investigates the role of drugs in inculcating passivity amongst black males in the USA. Indeed drugs, homosexuality and single mother families are criticised on the same level as racist lynchings and castration because they are seen as weapons to prevent black procreation.

Behind each of the individual aspects of Welsing's analysis stands the claim that she has developed a "unified field theory" modelled on Einstein's physics. Other theories of racism, she claims, cannot explain the whole experience. They compartmentalise its social, psychological and cultural aspects and do not relate it to the history of society as a whole.

Most theories of racism, according to Welsing, also fail because they refuse to be determinist. They are the theoretical equivalents of the "physics of chance", which refuse to look for unified or systematic causes of all aspects of the racist system.

At one level it is easy to ridicule Welsing's theories. Many of the essays have dated palpably. Her critique of "feminised" black male culture, "the braided and curled hair, the earrings and bracelets ... the flowered underwear, the high heeled shoes with platforms" could hardly apply to black street style today on either side of the Atlantic.

But Welsing's theories have found a resonance amongst militants looking for more than just

## THE ISIS PAPERS

A cheer went up among the largely black studio audience of *The Real McCoy* when comedian Felix Dexter held up a copy of *The Isis Papers*. The book, by Black American psychologist Dr Frances Cress Welsing, has become a talking point amongst black people looking for a coherent explanation of racism. Paul Morris reviews the arguments in *The Isis Papers* and asks, do they really hold "the keys to the colours"?

# Is racism in our genes?



Asian youth contingent leads black and white anti-racist march through London. But according to Welsing black and white are genetically at war with each other

a series of slogans or partial political demands, looking precisely for a theory. So what is wrong with Welsing's theory?

Let's assume that she is right in asserting that whites are genetically "albino mutants" and that black skin colour is genetically predominant. This begs the question: why is "race war" between whites and non-whites genetically programmed? Why not a war between the tall and short peoples of the world? Why did the left handed people of the world not feel threatened by the genetically predominant right handed? Why did one of many genetic differences within humanity become the cause of a system of oppression?

Welsing's explanation focuses on psychology. Being a "small minority" whites felt beleaguered and were threatened with extinction if they didn't stop black/white relationships. So they constructed a system to undermine the genetic potency of the black male.

This theory just does not stand up to the test of facts. For a start it is unlikely that early human societies were aware of the relationship between sex and childbirth. Secondly there is ample evidence of spontaneous intermixing throughout history and especially throughout the history of earlier societies. Whilst there was prejudice, exclusionism and at times violent oppression against "alien" peoples in pre-capitalist society, it did not take place simply or even predominantly between black and white.

One of the weakest points of Welsing's theory—but a vitally necessary element of it—is that racial oppression is impossible between non-white peoples: "there is only one functioning racism in the known world—white supremacy". Among "non-white" peoples Welsing

*The Isis Papers*  
The Keys to the Colors  
by Dr Frances Cress Welsing  
Third World Press, Chicago  
£12.95

includes everybody from the Native Americans to the Japanese and the Spaniards. She challenges anyone "to demonstrate the functioning supremacy of any of the world's non-white peoples over anyone".

Well, the Spaniards massacred the indigenous peoples of South America. The Japanese held most of Asia under a reign of terror, systematically oppressing other nations—for example Korea and China—during the 1930s and 1940s. Idi Amin's Uganda practiced genocide and forced migration against its Asian population.

Fear and loathing of other peoples did not assume the form of systematic racial oppression until the onset of a certain kind of society. It certainly has an effect on culture and psychology in that society, but the system of racial oppression and white supremacy is fundamentally determined socially, not genetically.

It was a specific human society which chose the genetic features of skin colour as a dividing line between oppressed and oppressor. It was the capitalist system.

As European capital expanded around the globe, it was obliged to create an ideological underpinning for the enslavement of Africans and the conquest of India and the Far East.

Yet Welsing's theory abstracts completely from all forms of society and class. Welsing cannot see that her own ideas are determined by the very class society she refuses to consider. Welsing's theory takes black/white conflict as a natural,

genetically programmed "fact" when it is socially determined.

Onto this fundamentally flawed foundation she heaps piles of "evidence". Everything from the white phallic Washington monument, to the Holocaust to "homosexuality, rape, flags, men's ties" can be understood within the "unified field" of Welsing's theory.

But such a method has nothing in common with Einstein or any materialist, determinist scientific method. Real science, physical and social, seeks fundamental laws of motion in an analysis of concrete events themselves.

Take Welsing's views on suntanning. Suntanning and cosmetics, which both add colour to the skin, represents for Welsing white people's psychological desire to be black.

Maybe they do. But how then do we explain white people's desire, for most of the 18th and 19th centuries, to have white skins, to avoid the sun, to apply white cosmetics to their hair and faces? Both cultural practices were socially determined. White makeup in former centuries was a way of distinguishing the rarified and work-shy aristocracy from peasants whose grimy, outdoor lives often deeply coloured their skins.

Welsing's theory cannot take account of such facts so it ignores them. Instead of a coherent, unified theory of racism we have a non-theory, filled with all the reactionary prejudices of a middle class American shrink.

So what are the strengths of Welsing's book? At a political level the theory contains much that will be attractive to militants influenced by black nationalism. Its concentration on changing black people's "submissive" attitude to racial oppression echoes a common

theme throughout much of modern US black resistance writing:

"Black women must learn to rear sons who will learn from the cradle that their major function as men is not to get a good job and a fine car but to defend, protect and support their people (in that order) even should death be the consequence ... There will be good jobs and self respect (if not fine cars) once the people are liberated. There will be no true self respect until that task is completed"

Welsing's study of the Holocaust also attempts to combat the idea that racial "assimilation" or the integration of a few middle class blacks into white society can solve the threat of racist genocide. The experience of the Jews in twentieth century Europe proves, for Welsing, that:

"No matter how much you may mix with and intermarry with people who classify themselves as white ... no matter how many doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, scholars you produce, no matter how much money, diamonds and gold you obtain; if you are classified as non-white under conditions of white supremacy domination when the hammer of white supremacy falls, you will be under that hammer."

With the ideas of struggle, not submission, and the impossibility of a solution short of destroying the racist system, revolutionary socialists can agree. But Welsing's book does not give a coherent guide for the struggle to smash that system. On solutions to the race war, she muses:

"Perhaps some psychiatrist will develop a method of mass psychotherapy ... to help whites become comfortable with their color and their numbers."

But since she rightly cannot see this happening, she concludes that a continuation of the war is inevitable. Since she rejects rioting as counterproductive, and the picket line as posturing, we are left with only the individual struggle against male "feminisation", against drugs, homosexuality and the single parent family within the black community itself. There is no strategy for collective resistance, and there cannot be one. The entire argument has nothing but reactionary conclusions.

Marxists do have a "unified" theory of racism. We understand that it is rooted in capitalist society, in the decaying imperialist system which condemns humanity to national wars, racial oppression and periodic racial genocide.

Our theory can link that to individual cultural manifestations and its effects on the oppressed themselves, without recourse to reactionary anti-gay ideas, the depiction of women as physically weak child rearers, or the appropriation and inversion of 19th century white racist ideas. It can do so precisely because it understands the different laws of motion of different levels of human activity—genetic, social, political, psychological—and does not attempt to fit the facts of all these activities into one, crackpot, genetic theory.

Also, Marxism, unlike *The Isis Papers*, contains a solution. It is not to hope fondly that assimilation will mollify the oppressor. Nor is it the pursuit of wealth by a black middle class. It is the revolutionary integration of black and white working class people—into the workers' movement and the struggle to destroy capitalism. *The Isis Papers* do not contain "the keys to the colours". Those who want a coherent theory of racism, a systematic refusal to compromise with the racist system and a struggle for its total destruction will have to look to revolutionary socialism. ■

AT THE 1993 Labour conference five people turned up to a fringe meeting to hear Tony Blair explain his vision of new Labour. This year every conference delegate, as well as every political journalist in the land, sat transfixed by Blair's speech on the same theme.

Of course he had one big advantage this year—John Smith was dead. And the thinly disguised subtext of Blair's speech was that "old" Labour died with him. Blair cannot openly say this. But he thinks it. And he is determined to break with "old" Labour in some very important respects.

Labour is a working class party based on the trade unions, but it is led by men and women committed to acting on behalf of the bosses. It is a contradiction in terms—a bosses' working class party. Dealing with this contradiction has always been the leadership's biggest problem. How can they act on behalf of the bosses, but still retain the support, and money, of the organised working class?

Kinnock staved off the left's attempts to democratise the Labour Party. He ruthlessly purged the party and he junked every left wing policy it adopted in the stormy years of the early 1980s. The bosses were grateful for this service—but not so much that they were prepared to trust Kinnock to handle their economy.

Smith was even more palatable to the bosses. He attacked the institutionalised power of the trade unions in the party with the introduction of "one member, one vote" (OMOV). More than anything Kinnock did, this went to the heart of Labour's contradiction. It undermined the role of the organised working class in parliamentary politics.

The bosses well remember the importance of this role. Labour—financed and supported by the unions as it is—can be subject to pressure from the organised working class. For years the bosses have wanted to end this situation so that they could have an alternative to the Tories that was not tainted by the direct interference of the unions.

Smith was of the "old" Labour right. He got the attack on the block vote through only by pledging that there would be no further undermining of the unions' role in the party. Moreover, he was still willing to accede to union pressure on some policy questions. His agenda was rendered acceptable to the party and the unions because it was combined with commitments to the national minimum wage and full employment.

It is probable that the bosses could have lived with an old-style right wing Labour government led by Smith. But his death has opened up a more appetising prospect for them—a new-style right wing Labour government led by Blair.

Blair is not just phrasemongering when he talks about "new Labour". He does have a vision of a party free from trade union influence, free from any trace of class bias and free to act unhindered on behalf of Britain's ruling class. Labour's 1994 Conference demonstrated this beyond doubt.

In the Guardian, the political commentator Martin Kettle, wrote:

"Blair seems to me to be the most root and branch revisionist Labour politician in living memory—and I mean that as a compliment."

That came before the leader's conference speech. After it the praise grew ever louder. His unambiguous rejection of Arthur Scargill's call for the repeal of Tory anti-union legislation reassured onlookers in the press gallery, the VIP balcony (which was filled with Britain's top bosses) and beyond. Not one utterance in Blair's sixty-two minute oration caused so much as a flutter of anxiety in the boardrooms, the banks or the stockmarket.

There were no promises or details of what Labour would do in office. More important was Blair's promise of what they would do in opposition—



## Clause Four

# Blair declares war

**"To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service"**

get rid of Clause Four of the party's constitution. At the end of his speech Blair casually announced that the sole definition of Labourism's political objectives was bound for the dustbin of history.

Blair's has contempt for the party he leads. Instead of putting the issue of Clause Four forward for an open debate in advance of conference he kept his plan under wraps. His plot was revealed to only ten people in the party before his speech. He wanted a coup, not a debate.

Clause Four is Labour's only statement of political purpose. It is not a genuinely socialist statement of intent. It is a woolly reformist get-out clause. Nevertheless, as Labour's only constitutional statement of policy, its commitment to common ownership and to rewarding workers, is an important dividing line between Labour and both the Tories and the Liberals.

If nothing else it reflects the working class base of the Labour Party. That is why so many trade unions reproduced the clause in their own constitutions. It is why Labour leaders in the past, notably the right winger Hugh Gaitskill in 1959, have tried to abolish it—until now, unsuccessfully. It is why Blair has

decided to attack it.

Clause Four has never been implemented by any Labour government. So why the fuss? The answer is best detected in the bosses' reaction to Blair's coup. The editorial in the *Financial Times* understood its significance:

"The direction in which he seeks to lead the people's party is away from state socialism, trade union dominance, high taxation, carefree expenditure, acquiescence in inflation, class warfare and some of the expensive but anachronistic traditions of the 50 year-old welfare state. It is towards becoming the party that tackles crime, supports the family, restores civic society, reconstructs the constitution and pursues social and economic objectives that are little different from those of one-nation Tories."

The *Economist* editorial commented: "In two months, Mr Blair has achieved more than Mr Smith in two years . . . Clause Four stands for Labour's intellectual debts to Marx, for its origin as a party of struggling proletarians, for the politics of protest and confrontation."

Clause Four was designed to contain rather than promote these things (see accompanying article). But it is a

THE FORERUNNER of the Labour Party, the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), was formed in February 1900 in response to a series of attacks by the courts on trade union rights. The first Manifesto of the LRC only pledged it "to support trade union principles and ideas by political methods".

It was in essence a superior sort of pressure group. On questions not narrowly linked to the policy of the unions the LRC's MPs were free to vote in different ways depending on their own inclinations.

After the LRC's transformation into the Labour Party in 1906, it continued to act as the parliamentary ally of the Liberal government, which was at the time carrying out radical reforms.

But the following years saw increased militancy and the enormous growth of the unions, especially the years 1911-13. Union membership doubled between 1906 and 1913, and the proportion of workers in unions rose from 11.9% to 23.1%.

This period was termed "the Great Unrest". It was marked by the rise of syndicalist trade unionism, the suffragette movement, and the Irish national struggle. The First World War also produced an elemental upheaval in the life of the British working class, shaking it out of old habits and ways of the past.

The masses—roused by industrial action, recruited into the trade unions, faced with the carnage and misery of war—started to look for a radical political alternative. The Labour Party was moderate, but as the party of the unions it became the electoral focus for hopes of change.

In 1910 the Labour Party had received only some half million votes. In the 1918 election that rose to 2.25 million. By 1924 it was 5.5 million, one third of the total votes cast. The "forward march of labour" looked unstoppable.

But what were to be the programme and the practical policies of this

# Labour

"workers' party"? Unlike the European Socialist and Social Democratic parties it had none. Its leaders before the war were proud of this.

The Fabian Society, led by intellectuals Sidney and Beatrice Webb, insisted on "the inevitability of gradualness". They had tried to "permeate" with socialist ideas not only the Labour Party, but also the Liberals and even the Tories.

Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald was influenced by their evolutionary reformist vision. But events were to require MacDonald and the Webbs to mount a real political struggle against revolutionary socialism—a struggle in which Clause Four was born.

On August 4th 1914 the British government declared war on Germany. The TUC and the Labour Party declared their support for the war. Both were soon engaged in army recruitment campaigns and mobilising industry for the bosses' war effort. In response to MacDonald's pacifist line the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) passed the leadership to Arthur Henderson who had not a pacifist bone in his body. He was always a warm supporter of British imperialism's war effort. He is reported to have joined in the Tory and Liberal cheering in the House of Commons when it was announced that James Connolly and the leaders of the Irish Easter Rising had been shot. He was an ultra-reactionary servant of the

symbol of the potential influence of "class warfare", of "confrontation", even of "socialism" on the Labour Party. It is that influence that the bosses want to see removed from Labour's body politic. Getting rid of the symbol is a step towards getting rid of the real thing.

The battle to get rid Clause Four is part of Blair's wider scheme of gutting the Labour Party of its working class component. When we look back at the rest of Blair's keynote speech that is clear.

The delegates who gave him a standing ovation should note that he refused to give a clear commitment to a national minimum wage. Instead he went on television and said that if there was to be one it would have to be introduced "flexibly"—that is, for many workers, not at all.

On full employment, he also retreated from Smith's pledges, announcing:

"Let's not pretend that we can deliver it overnight . . . Let's be honest, straight and realistic."

Given that Labour's current policies do not specify that a single penny will be spent on job creation we can see that full employment is a catchphrase,

not a policy.

Compare this with his calls for discipline in schools and sacking teachers, his warm embrace of Thatcher's anti-union laws, his repeated pledges to the market economy. These are concrete enough.

But the plaudits from the bosses' press, the luxury breakfasts for corporate visitors, have not transformed Labour into an open bosses' party. There is still much to fight for.

For the first time in five years conference took it upon itself to give the leadership a few shocks. The union delegates were instructed by Blair to act as though they were just individual members, not representative of levy-paying union members. The union delegations refused. The T&G's Bill Morris reminded Blair that the unions are collective organisations:

"There are no individual delegates here, we are representatives of the TGWU."

Of course there is much to be done to democratise the union bloc vote. But turning union delegates into mere individuals does not democratise it one bit. It hands one individual thousands of votes and frees that individual from any obligation to represent



To many on the Labour left, Clause Four represents the glory days of Labour's "socialist roots". But as Dave Stockton explains, it was dreamed up in 1918 by right-wing Labour leaders who were determined to "save Britain from revolution".

# Labour's socialist roots?

bourgeoisie, but he served them as a leader of the working class movement—what Lenin called a "labour lieutenant of capital".

Henderson was the architect of Labour and trade union collaboration in the war effort. He promoted the "Treasury Agreement" of March 1915, which he saw as embodying a commitment by the state to a partnership with organised labour, or rather with its bureaucracy.

In return for this agreement he was prepared to sacrifice the right to strike. This contributed enormously to the growth of an unofficial shop stewards movement, first of all on Clydeside.

In 1917 a wave of strikes centred on engineering workers spread from Lancashire to Sheffield, the West Midlands and London. These were organised by shop stewards—elected workplace delegates who formed local and district committees and then a national Joint Engineering Shop Stewards Committee. By May strikes involving 200,000 workers resulting in the loss of one and a half million working days had put the wind up Lloyd George's war cabinet.

Then in February 1917 Russia erupted in revolution. Henderson feared that the British strikes were part of the same wave of international unrest. In the spring of 1917 he warned his colleagues that "the industrial unrest had been deepened

thousands of union members.

Likewise, the CLPs reminded Blair that OMOV, in and of itself, does not guarantee the election of pliant right wingers to the NEC. The Socialist Campaign Group got one third of the votes, and returned Dennis Skinner and Diane Abbott to the party leadership. This won't stop Blair. But it reminds him that there are thousands of his beloved "individual" members who reject his middle class values and policies.

And on policies, while conference did not embrace the "old time religion" that Arthur Scargill called for, it did thwart Blair on Trident and defence spending, and, most dramatically of all, on Clause Four itself. When, after four re-counts, it was announced that the Glasgow Maryhill resolution calling for a "socialist economic policy" and reiterating Clause Four was passed 50.9% against 49.1%, not even Blair's fixed grin could conceal his annoyance.

Immediately after this vote Blair arrogantly announced that it had, "absolutely no significance". If he treats democratic votes like this while he is in opposition, imagine how they will be treated by him if he gets into Downing Street.

Whole sections of the party are not prepared to give in to Blair's project of removing working class influence in the Labour Party. But many recognise him as the only possible leader who can win an election and are prepared to accept the right wing policies that necessarily come with him.

At the moment the resistance is muted. His decision to launch a war on Clause Four gives the left the chance to reverse this situation.

Too many on the left, including Skinner and Tribune, have attacked Blair for creating a "diversion". A battle over Clause Four, they insist, will stand in the way of beating the Tories. Scargill, on the other hand, recognises that this is an attempt to finish Thatcher's work of wiping socialism off the agenda. He called Blair's speech "a



Red Flag over Glasgow, 1919—Labour leaders needed a radical image to stave off revolution

by the Russian Revolution".

Russia was covered by a network of workers' and soldiers' councils—soviets. Dominated at first by the Mensheviks, they were not seen as organs of insurrection or of working class power. Rather they were treated as a way of putting working class pressure on the government.

It is thus hardly surprising that all strands of labour opinion in Britain apart from the most enthusiastic reactionaries sought to copy this idea as a possible means of bringing the terrible slaughter of the war to an

declaration of war".

Scargill is right. From Blair's first day as Labour leadership he opened hostilities against the working class. Militants should not fear this struggle at all. Far from a diversion from fighting the Tories, it is a vital means of forcing Labour to meet working class demands if it is elected. After all, if we cannot stop Blair now our chances of doing so if he becomes Prime Minister will be considerably weakened.

Militants must welcome the chance of a war with the Blair leadership. In every constituency and union branch with levy paying members, the campaign against Blair must be started. But it must be a war in which we fight not just to defend Clause Four, but to enforce our demands on Labour:

- for a national minimum wage set at the average industrial wage
- for definite targets for the creation of full employment financed by taxing the rich and seizing their assets
- for the repeal of all the anti-trade union laws bar none; for the firm commitment to renationalise those industries and services that the Tories have hived off, with no compensation to their current bosses and with workers' control in every enterprise.

Blair is fighting against all such policies—even watered down versions of them—with the dumping of Clause Four as an important screening operation.

A fight over words on paper will not stop the next Labour government from attacking and betraying the working class—Clause Four has not stopped every previous Labour government from doing precisely that. But it will muster the forces for the real fight to come. To force Labour to act in the workers' interests and to force the unions to resist every attack—Labour, Liberal or Tory—which the bosses' interests dictate. ■

**Clause Four Competition—  
see page 15**

end.

The British government decided to send Henderson to Russia to persuade the Menshevik-dominated government to fight Germany to the finish. There he witnessed the failure of Kerensky's summer offensive and the rapidly growing influence of Bolshevism within the working class. Seeing the parallels with the revolutionary syndicalists in Britain, he immediately knew which side he was on:

"The men (sic) are not content with asking for reasonable advances... but their demands are so extravagant that it is obvious that they are prompted not so much with a desire for economic improvement as to secure a complete change in the control of industry".

And not only of industry! But Henderson was no fool. He became convinced that pursuing the war to the bitter end would bring revolution across Europe and maybe to Britain as well.

He feared that if the reformist socialists expended all their influence on the bourgeoisie's "fight to the finish" they might go down with their masters. So he supported moves to hold a conference of Allied and neutral Socialist parties in Stockholm.

But Lloyd George had formed his coalition precisely on the basis of war to the end and total victory. Henderson's support for Stockholm outraged the War Cabinet and it refused all visas to the Labour representatives. Henderson resigned from the cabinet and applied himself to reasserting the electoral independence of the Labour Party, a thorough overhaul of its organisation and its written policies.

He now believed that a parliamentary socialist alternative was the only thing which could prevent revolutionary influence from spreading to Britain. When it came to bureaucratic and electoral organisation Henderson needed no lessons. But in creating an ideology to fool the rank and file that Labour was a socialist party there was no one better than the Fabians, who had been carrying out this task since the 1880s.

With Sydney Webb's assistance Henderson drafted a new constitution for the Party in the autumn of 1917. Its aim was to turn the Labour Party from a federation of unions and socialist societies into a party with individual members and local parties in every constituency. Previously its individual members belonged to groups within the party, such as the Independent Labour Party (ILP).

In a situation where anti-war feeling was mounting and trade unionists at a local level were becoming

ever more radical it was vital for the leadership to put the election work of the Party as far as was possible out of the reach of radical socialists and syndicalists.

This was the main objective of Henderson's constitution. He could expect to get the support of the union leaders to reduce the influence of the ILP. However Henderson knew he could not afford to completely alienate the ILP members, who would be needed to build up the new constituency organisations. These members would need to believe that Labour had, at long last, been won to socialism.

Henderson recognised that the old pre-war politics he was raised on would not attract a mass membership. He came round to the necessity of adopting a "socialist" goal: one well distanced from an immediate programme of social reforms and one absolutely tied to a parliamentary road.

He encouraged Webb to draft a programme for Labour which for the first time was "socialist", albeit completely reformist and gradualist in its strategy. This programme—*Labour and the New Social Order*—offered a series of radical reforms including nationalisation of the monopolies which the war government had either taken over or supervised for the war effort (rail, coal etc).

In the Constitution there appeared for the first time a section on political objectives. Who actually drafted "Clause Four" (in fact, Clause IV part 4) still remains something of a mystery. It could well have been Henderson himself or Sydney Webb. Henderson's draft of the Constitution offered the National Executive two versions to choose from.

"To secure for the producers by hand or brain the full fruits of their industry by the Common Ownership of all monopolies and essential Raw

Materials;  
alternatively

To secure for the producers by hand or brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service."

The Executive appears to have speedily adopted the second.

It is filled with ambiguities. It accepts the common ownership of the means of production, the objective which Marx and the Marxists had been fighting for seventy years. But its drafters did not intend Labour to do anything to achieve it.

Alongside this undated cheque are various typical Fabian formulations. It is the "producers by hand and by brain" not the workers who are to get the full fruits of their labour. Indeed it left it open to the possible interpretation that the manager or even the working capitalist was also a producer. The Fabians always showed a special solicitude for the "new middle class", the "brainworkers" (as though a miner, an engineer, a railwayworker did not use their brain at work).

As for the "equitable distribution", equality is only such as "may be possible". Also ambiguous was the "best obtainable" means of "popular administration and control". Webb and Henderson thought that workers were not the best possible administrators or controllers of their own industry. Which class was to exercise control is carefully left out.

Last but not least the entire formulation was permeated with reformist parliamentarism. Labour's task was not to promote and lead the self-emancipation of the working class based on the workers' own mass activity, but to secure "for" the workers the best possible deal through passing laws in parliament.

So why do Marxists defend the creation of that unlikely pair of working class heroes, Arthur Henderson and Sydney Webb?

The answer lies not in any merit of Clause Four itself. It is a piece of two-faced reformist deceit, which has acted a fig leaf for the most gross class-collaboration for generations of Labour traitors. What we are defending is the gain in class consciousness over the preceding refusal to fix any political objective for the party, let alone one based on nationalisation. That gain is not dead as long as honest rank and file militants see Clause Four as justifying their defence of industries and services run on a basis of human need rather than profit.

It is because of this that more open servants of the ruling class like Blair, and Gaitskell before him, attack it. It is for this reason that we join with everyone willing to defeat this attack.

But to do so does not necessitate covering up the sorry programmatic highpoint of British reformism. It was dreamt up to head off mass radicalisation, not to express it. And that is something no Labour or trade union activist should ever forget. ■



Labour leader Arthur Henderson (right) ousted pacifist Macdonald (left)

ON 19 September US troops landed in Port-au-Prince, beginning the second US occupation of Haiti this century. In 1915 Woodrow Wilson's aim was to put "men in charge of affairs whom we can trust". In 1994 President Clinton's aim is exactly the same.

The roots of the Haitian crisis lie in the popular revolt which toppled the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier ("Baby Doc") in 1986, ushering in a period of political turmoil. Since then the USA has been trying to assure a smooth transition to stable capitalist democracy, and to avoid direct military intervention. They have been constantly thwarted.

When Baby Doc fled into exile in France in 1986, the Duvalier dynasty had been in power for 28 years. François Duvalier ("Papa Doc") was popularly elected as president in 1957. Within a year he set about establishing a dictatorship. The president's "cagoulards"—later to achieve notoriety as the murderous Tontons Macoutes—were his instrument of terror. After mopping up political opponents, they were unleashed in a purge of the army.

By 1963 the trade unions had been dissolved and their leaders forced into exile. Between 1959 and 1963 a series of attacks on the Catholic Church, including the expulsion of several bishops and the Archbishop, had effectively broken its Breton-dominated hierarchy. Duvalier manipulated and encouraged the popular religion of Voodoo as a counterweight to Catholicism.

Papa Doc's base of support was in the urban black middle class and among the peasant landowners with medium size holdings. His campaigns against his enemies drew on the black nationalist ideology of "noirism", mobilising his supporters against the colonialism of the French dominated Catholic Church and against the privileged position of the mulatto elite in the church, education system and army.

Black Haitians were promoted. Yet at the same time Duvalier was careful not to alienate the largely "mulatto" capitalist and estate owning class, which retained its dominance over trade. By the mid-1960s Papa Doc had perfected the dictatorship which remains in place to this day. Power lies with the military machine which also controls the police, with the Tontons Macoutes, which became partly integrated with the military, and with Section Chiefs appointed by the army. The Section Chiefs are often small landowners, and themselves employ private militias ("attaches") to extort taxes and levies from the peasants and terrorise the democratic movement in the rural areas.

By the 1980s this regime was becoming an embarrassment to a US government intent on encouraging "democratic" neo-liberal regimes throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Duvalierism represented quite the opposite. Whole sections of its ruling class had every interest in maintaining the status quo. They wanted to prevent the transformation of Haiti into a manufacturing assembly area for US capital, a development that threatened to annihilate



US troops are policing the imperialist order in Haiti

## HAITI

# From Papa Doc to

*John McKee relates the tortured history of Haiti under imperialist domination*

the domestic trading bourgeoisie.

The popular explosion of 1985-86 drove Baby Doc from the country. It developed as an alliance between the "popular movement", the peasant organisations, "Ti Legliz" (the 'small church' movement), students, trade unionists and the "democratic" bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie. The latter, represented by the National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD), constantly sought a compromise with the old regime and a "peaceful transition". The result was that after 1986 the popular movement was demobilised. The old dictatorship re-asserted much of its control through the use of terror. The 1987 Constitution was a compromise which banished the Tontons Macoutes, promised free elections and reform but left power in the hands of the military.

In 1990 the Haitian masses took part in their first free elections since 1957. They voted overwhelmingly for a coalition led by Fr Jean-Bertrand Aristide which won 67% of the popular vote. Against Aristide were ranged two major parties representing different fractions of the Haitian ruling class. Roger Lafontant, former head of the Tontons Macoutes, represented

the Duvalierist regime. He drew support from the military and the land-owning oligarchy which kept the share-cropping peasantry in semi-feudal servitude. The other significant presidential candidate was former World Bank official Marc Bazin, the favoured candidate of the US State department which bankrolled his campaign through various front organisations. He drew his local support, such as it



was, from the so-called "technocrats", the section of the bourgeoisie and managerial layers most closely connected with the US-controlled assembly industries and agribusinesses.

Aristide had won a reputation as an opponent of the Duvalier regime, surviving numerous assassination attempts. A member of the Salesian Order, Aristide had gravitated towards "liberation theology" and was active in the "Ti Legliz" movement which established "base communities" and organised amongst the poor. It became an organising focus against the Duvalierist dictatorship and played an important role in the toppling of "Baby Doc".

Aristide was a populist. He appealed to the urban poor, the workers and the small peasants. He was initially under their direct pressure. That is why the five families and their imperialist masters hate and fear him. But Aristide identifies most of all with the small private property owners, rejecting working class politics and communism. Therefore he would not and could not sever his links with the deceitful "liberal" elements of the Haitian capitalist class.

At first he acted as a tribune of the masses. But his very prominence put

him beyond the masses' control and even their pressure, especially once he was armed with presidential powers. He built up an adulatory following that enabled him to play a Bonapartist role. Despite his radical reputation, Aristide was courted by the National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD) which drew its support from the traditional sectors of the Haitian bourgeoisie, the merchants and traders who controlled imports of foreign manufactured goods and exports of agricultural products such as coffee. The trading bourgeoisie felt threatened by Bazin's neo-liberal programme which sought to establish Haiti as a major base for US assembly plants, threatening to undermine the source of their wealth in the importing businesses.

Aristide became the candidate of the FNCD but drew behind him the Ti Legliz movement, various peasant, student and other popular organisations. This movement became known as the "Lavalas", meaning the "flood", a biblical reference to the mass wave of support that would sweep him to power in the elections. This was in essence a popular front—a bloc of the exploited classes with a section of their exploiters.

THE LATEST issue of *Trotskyist International* carries two major contributions to a Marxist analysis of the world situation and perspectives for the class struggle. Chaos in the New World Order is based on a perspectives document passed at the Third Congress of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International held this summer in Prague. It charts the contours of the world class struggle in the light of the collapse of Stalinism, the intensification of inter-imperialist rivalries, and the emergence of new workers' movements in developing countries. The authors challenge the view that imperialism has achieved stability, in economics,

politics and international relations. They predict the intensification of revolutionary struggles as the contradictions of current "settlements"—from South Africa to Israel—explode.

"Against Capitalist Restoration— for Proletarian Political Revolution" encapsulates the revised and amended programme of the LRCI in the former Stalinist countries. Developing and replacing Chapter 5 of the

*Trotskyist Manifesto*, the document sums up the lessons of the last five years of class struggle in Eastern Europe and tackles questions of programme and tactics in relation to national self-determination, bourgeois democracy and the dismantling of the centralised plan.

*Trotskyist International 15* also contains an extensive account of the struggle of the Mot Strömmens ten-

gency inside the Swedish section of the USFI and the creation of the LRCI's new Swedish section (see page 12 of this issue).

This will be the last issue of *Trotskyist International* in its current format. The LRCI Congress decided to combine the journal with *Permanent Revolution*, the theoretical journal of Workers Power (Britain). This reflected the need for both publica-

tions to reach a wider audience, and the increased necessity for Trotskyist International to carry theoretical articles. Subscriptions to both journals will be transferred to the merged publication, the first issue of which will be available in January.

To order your copy of TI 15 fill in the form below:

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## Trotskyist International

# US TROOPS OUT NOW!

During his election campaign Aristide cautioned his supporters that the Lavalas movement intended to carry out "a political revolution, not a social revolution". In fact he merely proved that in Haiti the one is impossible without the other.

**REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISTS** oppose and condemn the US occupation of Haiti. We do so despite the fact that at present the masses have illusions in the pro-democratic role of the US troops.

These illusions are reinforced by the fact that the US military have on occasion given tactical protection to unarmed demonstrators from attack by the police and the attachés. The Cédras régime's opposition to the US occupation has no progressive or anti-imperialist character whatsoever. They were seeking merely to maintain their bloody dictatorship over the Haitian masses, not to spearhead national, popular resistance to US domination of Haiti. In these circumstances revolutionaries can give no support of any kind to the military or to any guerrilla struggle which might be launched by elements of the army and the attachés against an Aristide government and the US forces in the coming period.

The immediate task of revolutionaries in Haiti is to call for mass mobilisations and the arming of the masses so that they can finally smash the dictatorship and its en-

tire machinery of repression. In this struggle revolutionary communists must seek to break the illusions of the masses in the role of the US troops. They must warn that their real purpose is to protect the Haitian state machine and its murder gangs from popular justice, to protect the Haitian capitalists and big landowners from those they exploit.

Clinton has sent in the troops to ensure a smooth transition to a democratic capitalist regime, which will continue the super-exploitation of the masses. But for the USA this millionaires' democracy is no more than an optional extra over and above their fundamental aim: preserving capitalist property and the capitalist state. If the masses try to settle accounts with their tormentors and exploiters, if they try to secure any real social gains, the US troops will back another military Bonapartist regime.

Any successful uprising of the Haitian workers, peasants and urban poor would at once find itself under attack by the US forces and would have to fight to drive them from the island. Revolutionaries have to call for the withdrawal of the US troops and the arming of the masses. Agita-

tion and propaganda must be carried on amongst the rank and file of the US armed forces, especially the large numbers of black troops, to help the masses acquire the arms needed to defend themselves against the military.

- Arm the masses! For a popular militia based on the workers, the urban poor and the small peasants. Dissolve the standing army, the police force and the paramilitary squads. For the immediate withdrawal of all US and UN forces.

- Full legality for the trade unions and peasants' and students' unions. For workers' and popular assemblies to ensure the development of the mass democratic Haitian revolution into a social revolution, which will give the factories to the workers and the land to those who work it.

- Pull out the roots of the dictatorship! For revolutionary popular justice. Bring the murderers of the Cédras régime, the Tontons Macoutes, attachés and all Section Chiefs guilty of crimes before peoples' courts for summary justice.

- Down with all accords with the military! For immediate elections to a sovereign constituent assembly,

convened by popular assemblies and under the protection of the armed popular militias, with the right to recall deputies who act or vote against the will of their electors.

- Land to those who work it. Expropriate the large estates, re-distribute the land to the peasants, fight for voluntary co-operative production on the land.

- Cancel the debts to the imperialists, their banks and the IMF. For cheap loans and equipment to the peasant farmers.

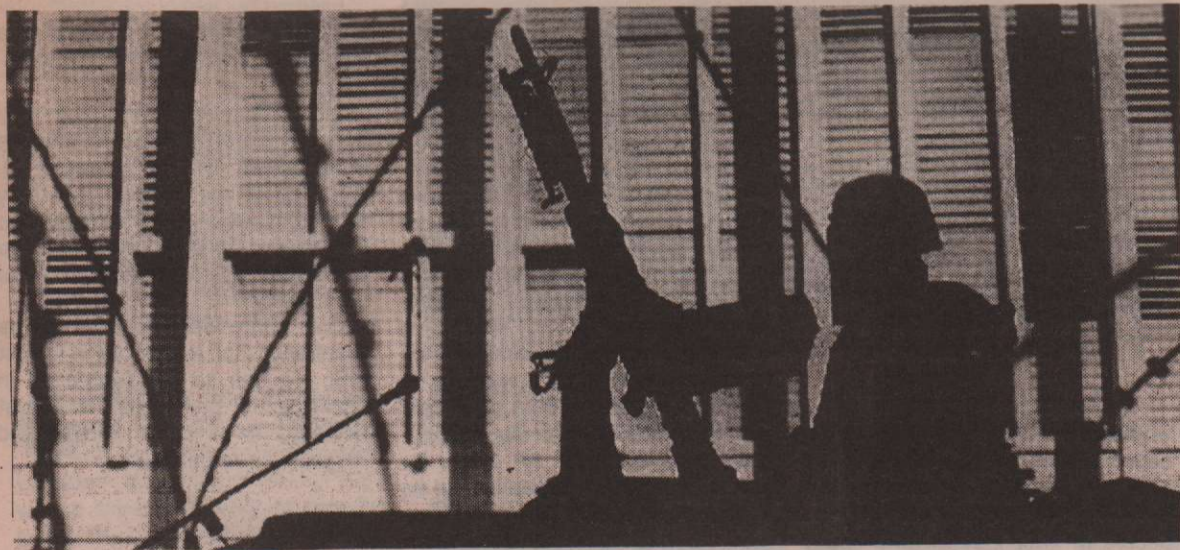
- Expropriate the Haitian "five families"—coup-mongers and millionaire exploiters of the masses.

- Immediately establish a legal minimum living wage, protected by a sliding scale against inflation. For workers' control in the factories, shops, offices and on the large farms. Expropriate the imperialist concerns.

- For a massive programme of public works, building houses for the masses and bringing fresh water and electricity to the towns and villages.

- For a revolutionary workers' and peasants' government in Haiti. Solidarity with Cuba against any US intervention. For a Socialist Federation of the Caribbean.

## Aristide . . .



Between the election victory and Aristide's inauguration Lafontant attempted a coup, seizing the national palace and declaring himself provisional president. The coup brought the masses onto the streets. Barricades were thrown up throughout Port-au-Prince and the coup collapsed. Over a hundred supporters of the old régime and many members of the Tontons Macoutes were lynched. The *Pere Lebrun*—a flaming tyre placed around the neck of its victim—made its appearance as a popular weapon of revolutionary justice.

Strengthened by this demonstration of popular support, Aristide was inaugurated in February 1991 and proceeded to carry out his programme of reforms. These were moderate bourgeois democratic reforms but threatened to dismantle the oligarchy's instruments of power during a period of radical mass ferment. The police were to be separated from the army, purged and placed under the Ministry of Justice. The army high command was purged of its Duvalierist generals—six of the seven general staff were retired. The army was to be drastically reduced in size. The judiciary was to be purged; four

Supreme Court judges were immediately replaced. The 555 Section Chiefs were removed from army control and placed under the jurisdiction of the Justice Ministry.

On the economic front Aristide rejected immediate privatisation of state controlled enterprises like the telephone company and instead proposed state support through new investment. A land reform programme was proposed to revitalise Haitian agriculture. A reform of the government bureaucracy was planned to reduce corruption and inefficiency. Proposals were made to increase Haiti's pitifully low minimum wage.

These reforms were moderate enough to receive the stamp of approval of the International Monetary Fund, which restored credit to the new government. During his election campaign Aristide cautioned his supporters that the Lavalas movement intended to carry out "a political revolution, not a social revolution".

In fact he merely proved that in Haiti the one is impossible without the other. His purge of the old régime provoked howls of rage from all sections of the bourgeoisie which had been thoroughly alarmed by the inter-

vention of the masses against the coup. The popular front alliance of the Lavalas was already beginning to come apart as Aristide had to rely more and more on the popular movement to defend his presidency. He now made references to "false Lavalassien" who had to be fought.

By the end of September, with rumours of coups and assassination attempts sweeping Port-au-Prince, Aristide addressed his supporters in the popular movement from the steps of the National Palace, calling on the poor and unemployed to "turn their eyes on those with the means". In a possible reference to the *Pere Lebrun* he told them, "Your tool in hand, your instrument in hand, your constitution in hand. Don't hesitate to give him what he deserves."

Three days later General Raoul Cédras, who Aristide had placed in charge of the army, launched a coup. Aristide was bundled out of the country while the popular movement bore the brunt of the military repression. Five hundred were killed within the first weeks of the coup, and at least 3,000 had been slaughtered by 1994.

While Washington formally condemned the coup they did little to

enforce the embargo imposed shortly afterwards by the Organisation of American States. The Republican administration decided that if possible they would like to see a return to "democracy" without Aristide, who they had decided was a dangerous maniac. For the US Administration his appeal to the masses to take up arms was enough to prove him psychologically unstable! As the *Washington Post* put it in an editorial:

"Returning President Aristide to Haiti is going to be difficult for reasons to which he himself has greatly contributed . . . The President is a hero to the desperate people who live in the slums of Port-au-Prince . . . He has organised them into an instrument of real terror. . ."

Washington made it clear to Aristide that he could only return to Haiti on their terms:

- that he negotiate with the generals or their representatives, and that he appoint a prime minister acceptable to the USA (the post of prime minister under the 1987 constitution is much more powerful than the president),

- that an amnesty be granted to the coup leaders, including their right to stay in the country,

- and that some form of international force should be stationed on Haiti to keep the masses in their place.

Aristide gradually capitulated to all these demands.

By June 1993 the United Nations passed a resolution calling for a mandatory embargo on oil to Haiti, and was preparing to organise an international "peacekeeping force" to oversee any agreement reached on Aristide's return. Ten days later the "Governors' Island Accord" was signed. Aristide would name a new prime minister, the Parliament would start instituting reforms under the supervision of a UN force, there would be a blanket amnesty, and Cédras would retire before Aristide's planned return in October 1993. Aristide accepted that his term of office would expire in early 1995 and that he could not stand again for the presidency. He thereby acceded to his own exclusion from office by Cédras (and Clinton), thus thwarting the hopes and aspirations that the masses had placed in him.

Aristide's new prime minister, pro-US businessman Robert Malval, immediately called on all forces to organise political parties, specifically

inviting back the exiled Duvalierists. They quickly responded and formed the Front pour l'Avancement et le Progres Haitien (FRAPH), with the approval of the military, containing many former Tontons Macoutes and attachés.

As the date for enforcement of the agreement drew closer, the new government found itself subject to a reign of terror. In September a close associate of Aristide and member of the business elite, Antoine Izmyery, was dragged out of church by attachés and murdered. On October 11 the *USS Harlan County*, bringing American and Canadian soldiers, turned back when confronted by an armed FRAPH demonstration on the dockside. Three days later Justice Minister Guy Malary was killed in a hail of bullets as he left his office. The Governors' Island Accord was dead.

The Clinton Administration was left with few alternatives. Almost a year of threats of military intervention had no effect, nor had the leaky embargo. The world's major imperialist power could not back down in its "own backyard" and therefore began to prepare what it had been desperate to avoid: a military intervention.

By September 1994 20,000 US troops were poised to invade Haiti. A last minute deal struck by negotiators led by Jimmy Carter caused the Cédras régime to capitulate and agree to a US-supervised transfer of power. The deal was virtually identical to the Governors' Island Accord. It marked a retreat from Clinton's demands for Cédras to go into exile and for the immediate return of Aristide to power. Instead Cédras could remain to coordinate resistance to Aristide and terror against the Haitian masses.

Cédras and the military put up no resistance to the US troops and the masses welcomed them. Mass mobilisations were immediately attacked by police or attaché gunmen and at first US troops stood by. When they responded in Cap-Haitien, the forces of repression retreated.

The US troops are being drawn step by step into the role of policing the masses. The US embassy and the CIA have long been monitoring Haitian "subversives", even handing over information to Cédras and his predecessors. The USA is no friend of popular democracy, let alone of the workers and poor peasants. It is their most determined and powerful enemy. ■

**H**ANDS OFF our pensions! That was the slogan being shouted as five million workers demonstrated on 14 October. In towns and cities across Italy there were massive protests against the Berlusconi government and its drastic cuts in pensions.

The whole country stopped work in one of the biggest general strikes in history. Participation in the strike was over 90%. Even the police, usually on the other side of the barricades, took part—raising their own novel slogan, "arrest Berlusconi!"

This strike was just one step in an impressive series of marches, spontaneous strikes and road blocks. One shop steward reported:

"The workers see Berlusconi as the enemy, and are asking to launch strikes in the plants every day."

The government's entire budget is an attempt to rob the workers and make the rich richer. Pensions are already low in Italy. Seventy five per cent of people are on less than one million lire (£400) a month. The government want to block all retirements for one year at least, push the current age of retirement from 60 to 65, end the "sliding scale" of pensions and cut new pensions back even further.

This threatens to put millions of working class people below the poverty line.

The reason for the attack is clear. The huge level of state debt (120% of GDP), and the consequent interest payments, are a massive burden.

### Risky

This makes any capital investment in Italy risky, because the whole system, including the currency, could run out of control or collapse. Italy is already on the periphery of the plans for European unification. Behind Berlusconi's proposed "adjustments" stand the World Bank and IMF who have urged the Italian bosses to reduce the state budget by cutting social services, privatising state owned industries and the welfare system.

The health and education systems are next in line. University fees have increased threefold, now costing more than a month's salary for the average

## ITALY

# General strike as Berlusconi falters

BY MARCO ROSSO

worker.

Faced with the combativity and determination of the working class, and threatened by a corruption inquiry that could point the finger at Berlusconi himself, the whole government is at a turning point.

Elected a few months ago, thanks to massive propaganda carried on his own private TV stations, Berlusconi has cultivated the image of a new, efficient and dynamic manager for Italy plc.

### Coalition

But he has no real political party of his own. Forza Italia is really just another one of his businesses. His government relies on an uncomfortable coalition between the Lega Nord—a regional populist party based on the Northern petit bourgeoisie, which is committed to ultra-liberal economics and a federal state—and the MSI-National Alliance, the heirs of the Italian Fascist party, who are committed to a strong centralised state.

Despite the frailty of this coalition, the government's strength lies in the weakness of the opposition and of the leaders of the working class.

The trade unions are fighting for an institutionalised role in negotiations, but they have made no commitment to defend the workers. Two years ago they agreed to the scrapping of the *scala mobile*, the sliding scale of wages against inflation which had been established after years of struggle by the workers.

Despite the fury of the workers at

this treachery, the bureaucrats kept their stranglehold over the unions. Despite the massive attacks threatened by Berlusconi, the union leaders greeted his election victory as "a victory for democracy". For the first time in many years the metalworkers' pay round has ended without a single hour of strike action.

On the issue of pensions, the bureaucrats are not against the cuts as such, and have agreed to the principle of "reform" of the system in favour of the bosses. They only complain about the methods used by the government to push the reform through. The only thing they are pro-

tecting is their role as middlemen, selling short the workers' interests in return for their own privileges. That is why they show no intention of building on the general strike.

Instead, they have called a national demonstration for mid-November, with no strike action in the meantime. At present they have a free hand to negotiate without being under any control from the rank and file. The Vice President of the Confindustria—the bosses' organisation—declared:

"The whole process will be managed with all the responsibility that the unions have shown over many occasions."

The left wing parties are still groggy



Milan 14 October

European right. Indeed, the SP even argued that if a No vote caused companies to leave Sweden, then:

"Companies wanting to move abroad have to be made to understand that they thereby also leave their companies in the hands of society. Faced with such a resolute direction, we are confident that many entrepreneurs would prefer to stay."

So the "resolute" SP called for only "unpatriotic" capitalists to be nationalised—and couldn't even bring itself to state that clearly. The new organisation, Arbetarmakt, stands for the expropriation of the capitalists altogether, under workers' control—whether or not they are trying to quit Sweden.

The Mot Strömmens tendency rapidly discovered that there is no reason for revolutionary communists to remain in the SP, or indeed in the USFI itself. Countless "oppositional" tendencies exist in the USFI, none of which are prepared to declare openly that its leadership is centrist.

The comrades read and discussed the fundamental documents of the LRCI and our programme, the *Trotskyist Manifesto*, eventually concluding that, together with us, they could and should build an independent group able to intervene openly in the Swedish class struggle.

The Swedish workers have a proud tradition of struggle. Over the coming years, as the bosses push for ever greater austerity measures, their fighting spirit will be rekindled. The Arbetarmakt group is well placed to intervene in those struggles, and take forward the fight for a new revolutionary socialist party. This time it will be worthy of the name.■

from their electoral defeat last Spring. The PDS—the largest fragment of the former Communist Party—is pushing its 50 year-old policy of class compromise. At the moment this means an alliance with the PPI, the successor to the discredited and collapsed Christian Democrats (the Italian Tories). In the name of the "democratic reform of capitalism" they are advocating the same old policies of cuts, privatisation and sacrifices in working class living standards, in order to win support from sections of the bosses, which they describe as the "progressive bourgeoisie".

Their ideological bankruptcy is total. To win an alliance with the Catholic PPI (whose leader is a close friend of the Pope), the PDS is ready to back and finance private Catholic schools from the state budget. It is even prepared to make concessions over abortion rights.

### Overtures

*L'Unita*, the PDS newspaper, is leading the way in making overtures to the church by distributing the gospels as a supplement! Despite all their leftist talk, the hardline Stalinists of Rifondazione Comunista have no strategy other than following the PDS into this bloc. Otherwise they could lose something they value above any principles—their MPs.

The fate of the present government depends on many factors: the national and international economic recovery, the strength of the working class response, the will and capacity of the trade union leaders to disarm and control the movement, and the development of the coalition government's internal contradictions. There is profound instability ahead.

The capitalists are seeking a new, stable political system, strong enough to carry through the kind of attacks on welfare, and even on democratic rights, that Berlusconi is attempting at the moment.

Even in the case of a governmental crisis the bosses do have alternative solutions, such as a PDS-PPI coalition.

But in the medium term, they may need to undertake a turn towards Bonapartism, that is to build a regime "above the classes", relatively free from electoral insecurity, one which could bring a "strong man" to the fore as the supposed "saviour of the country".

One contender for this role is Gianfranco Fini, leader of the fascist MSI. He has so far succeeded in changing the black shirt of fascist nostalgia for a more credible and respectable Armani suit.

### Salute

But despite the low profile he has adopted as a member of the coalition, little has changed in the nature of his party. Fini's bodyguards may rush to discourage his black-jacketed admirers from giving the straight-armed salute. But when left deputies accused Berlusconi of corruption in the parliamentary chamber it was MSI representatives who reverted to type and rushed across the floor of the house to start beating up their opponents in full view of the TV cameras.

If Fini succeeds in his aim of taking over power at the head of a new presidential republic he will be able to use both the repressive forces of the state and the MSI's fascist squads to challenge working class resistance. Whether the working class will be able to stop his plans, as well as break the bosses' offensive, will depend on the level of class struggle and the willingness of the workers to fight. Above all, defeating these threats will depend on the ability of the workers to create a renewed trade union movement and a genuine revolutionary workers' party, breaking once and for all from the Stalinist tradition of betrayal.■

## SWEDEN

# New LRCI section formed

**T**ROTSKYISM HAS taken a big step forward in Sweden. At the beginning of October a new revolutionary socialist organisation was formed as a section of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI). The LRCI, which was established in 1989, now has sections in nine countries.

The new organisation, Arbetarmakt (Workers Power), emerged as a tendency within the Swedish Socialist Party (SP). Originally naming itself the Mot Strömmens tendency, which means Against the Stream, it was determined to fight against the direction being taken by the party leadership.

### Platform

The tendency campaigned against the adoption of a new, more right wing, programme and for unambiguously revolutionary politics. It gained 30% of the votes for its platform at the SP Congress early this year. Finally the comrades of Mot Strömmens concluded that the SP could not be reformed, and that a new organisation would be necessary.

The Socialist Party is affiliated to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI), an organisation which claims adherence to Trotskyism. But in common with

other sections of the USFI, the SP has never adopted a genuinely revolutionary programme or practice.

Always trying to adapt its politics to the existing ideas prevalent on the reformist left, the SP leaders aimed to convert their paper into a "general" left wing publication with other, reformist, groups, rather than use it to put across Trotskyist ideas. In elections, they ran individual candidates on the lists being put forward by the reformists of the ex-Stalinist Left Party, rather than seeking an independent profile.

The special Congress of the SP in February 1994 proved to be a turning point. The attempts of the party leadership to alter the programme gave rise to serious opposition from the left in the party. In the aftermath of the collapse of Stalinism—something which took the SP leaders by surprise and which they failed to analyse or explain—the new programme blurred over the difference between reform and revolution.

Whilst the document spoke of the need for a "decisive change" in the state, it made no mention of the need for the working class to break up—smash—the capitalists' apparatus of repression. Instead the programme was full of vague phrases about people's power and democratic reform of the state.

Far from explaining how a future

workers' state would need to be based on workers' councils, it spoke of a "central national people's assembly, parliament—elected by the people in free, general and direct elections." In this way the direct and recallable system of workers' democracy was abandoned in favour of a souped-up version of capitalist parliamentary democracy.

### Centrist

Alongside this surrender to reformism—something typical of centrist parties which swing between revolutionary phrases and reformist practice—the SP adopted a thoroughly wrong position on the issue of European integration. The SP campaigned for a "No" vote in Sweden's referendum on entry into the European Union (EU).

Claiming that the working class would be better off outside the EU, they ignored the fact that the Swedish bosses will have to attack the working class in or out of the EU. Indeed a Sweden outside of the EU would have to compete with the EU states by making an equally savage attack on the working class.

Worse still, the SP leaders adapted to the right-wing and bourgeois forces within the "No to Europe" campaign. No sharp criticisms were made of the nationalism of the anti-

## AS AUSTRIA MOVES RIGHT

# Yuppie racists on the rise

**T**HE RESULTS of the Austrian elections in October marked an important shift in Austrian politics. The pillars of post-war Austrian stability—consensus politics and social peace—are coming to an abrupt end.

The Chancellor will remain the same and the new government will be run by the same parties, but what was significant was the success of the far right Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) led by Jörg Haider.

Haider's FPÖ was founded by Nazi supporters after the Second World War. Haider himself has been called the "yuppie fascist". While the FPÖ is not a fascist party, it is a far right, racist anti-immigrant and anti-trade union populist party. Its ability to gain almost 23% of the national vote and 42 seats out of 183 in the Austrian parliament must be treated as a grave warning by the Austrian working class.

Haider's success reflects growing disillusionment in the two parties who have ruled by coalition in Austria for fifty years: the Social-Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the conservative People's Party (ÖVP).

The SPÖ scored their worst election result for almost a century, down by 7.6% to 35.2% of the vote. The ÖVP lost 4.4% and is now down to 27.7%. Despite some gains by the Greens and Liberals, the clear winner of the elections was Haider, who came third with 22.6%, a gain of 6.6% of the vote nationally.

### Upturn

Despite the recent upturn in the economy, the last recession demonstrated that Austrian capitalism could not overcome its important structural problems. Austria's industrial base is in heavy industries: steel, engineering and chemicals. It is very weak in developing industries such as micro-electronics, sectors which require more research and development.

Austria also continues to have a high level of social welfare provi-

sion, maintained since the Second World War. There is a highly organised working class, a high degree of unionisation and entrenched trade union rights. The Austrian bosses have been unable, and even unwilling, to dismantle the Austrian welfare state and attack workers.

This is not because the Austrian bosses are more benevolent than those in other countries. It is because institutionalised class collaboration—the Sozialpartnerschaft (social partnership)—was able to guarantee class peace and handsome profits.

This system served the bosses very well in years of the post war boom, with strike figures counted in minutes if not seconds per year. And while the long boom ended many years ago, Austria's position as a

BY MARTIN SUCHANEK

(Vienna)

neutral buffer state on the edge of the Iron Curtain ensured it was relatively sealed from the struggles in the rest of Europe. But all of this is coming to an end.

The SPÖ and the union bosses are desperate to maintain their privileges, which are based on the social partnership. The industrial bourgeoisie prefer to carry out their attacks with the help of these same treacherous leaders. But some sections of the Austrian bourgeoisie are now prepared to support a more openly aggressive anti-SPÖ and anti-union course, one which the traditional right, the ÖVP, has proved incapable of pursuing.

The FPÖ was able to make in-

roads in the traditional ÖVP-base amongst the small and middle capitalists and amongst the peasantry. Evidence of this prior to the election led the ÖVP minister of foreign affairs, Alois Mock, to speculate about forming a coalition with the FPÖ. If Haider continues to gain ground a realignment of the right along these lines is a possibility.

However, at the moment, the FPÖ and Haider remain a problem for the Austrian bourgeoisie, not because of their racist anti-immigrant policy, nor because of their anti-union campaigns, but because of their anti-EU position. The big Austrian bosses know their future lies in, not outside, the EU.

In the meantime, the FPÖ will be able to further pressurise the government to meet their "demands",

as was the case with SPÖ/ÖVP's recent introduction of "anti-foreigner" immigration laws. The coalition partners will now be able to use the FPÖ's success to justify their own racist and anti-working class policies.

Haider's major focus in the elections was not racism, but the privileges of the SPÖ and trade union bureaucracy within the social partnership. This helped him to make important inroads amongst traditional SPÖ voters in the big cities and the industrial areas. In Vienna the SPÖ vote dropped by a quarter. Nationally nearly 20% of all those who voted for the SPÖ in 1990 voted for Haider this time.

### Housing

Unemployment has risen significantly and housing has declined. To deal with this Haider has a clear message: it cannot go on like this. And he has someone to blame for it: the immigrants and the "socialists", the privileged trade union bureaucrats.

Haider is talking about new "democratic forms", a more authoritarian state structure and governmental regime, very much in the way Berlusconi does in Italy.

The SPÖ try to counter this by saying that they stand for "stability", for no risks, for "continuity".

The only continuity many workers can see is the continuation of their sacrifices, more redundancies and the continuation of the privileges of the bureaucrats. It is exactly that "continuity" that throws workers into the arms of Haider.

Austrian workers must reject the continuity of the SPÖ collaboration. There is no need to mourn the passing of the social partnership. It represents the end of the cosy relationship between the bosses and the labour bureaucrats, a relationship which enables the SPÖ to sell out the workers and tie them to the interests of the bosses, a relationship which seeks to solve the problems of Austrian capitalism on the backs of Austrian workers.

But the way to finish off the social partnership is through fighting for revolutionary working class politics. We also say it cannot go on like this. And yes, there is somebody to blame: the capitalists and their system. We have to fight them and stop the FPÖ in its tracks.■



Haider (right)—a grave threat to the workers

## GERMAN ELECTIONS

# Cold comfort for Kohl

BY F MÜLLER

(Berlin)

employers' association declared that to deal with Germany's problems the "unity of all democrats" may be necessary—a clear call for the conservatives and liberals to consider a coalition with the reformist Social Democrats (SPD). Even Rudolf Scharping, tame leader of the SPD, told his supporters after the election that he expects to be in office, "in 1998 or even earlier".

### Victory

Six months ago commentators were expecting a victory for the SPD. But Scharping pursued a passive strategy. Instead of attacking the Christian Democrats and the liberals, he adopted the slogan, "wait for the recession to take effect". But the recession came to an end just before the election, allowing the CDU, and its Bavarian sister party the CSU, to recover ground. Nevertheless the SPD increased its vote to over 36% of the

electorate.

The result that caused the greatest consternation amongst the bosses was the strong showing of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS). The PDS is the successor to the Socialist Unity Party, the Stalinist rulers of the old East German state. Its link to the apparatus of the former degenerate workers' state means that the PDS is a reformist workers' party. Although it is committed to supporting the capitalist system, the PDS uses radical rhetoric, particularly appealing to the working masses of the East.

Its leader Gregor Gysi describes it as "not only a left party, but an East party", representing the interests of the population of the former East Germany.

The PDS won over 4% of the vote, and polled very strongly in working class areas in the East, particularly in Berlin, Thuringia and in the north in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where it won a massive 23%. Only 4 years after reunification, when the Christian Democrats stormed to power

with a massive vote in the East, workers are starting to realise that capitalism is not the system of riches and freedom that they had imagined.

Mass unemployment, the rise of racism and social insecurity have all contributed to a profound sense of disenchantment. Moreover, it was not just nostalgic Stalinist hacks but workers, and even young people from the West, who voted for the PDS. This heralds the possibility of a breakdown of the fragile consensus established by Kohl after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

### Support

The PDS is short on policies and has no intention of leading a fight against the capitalist system itself, but its mounting support is a sure sign of radicalisation, both in the East and among the youth.

The PDS won its votes despite a vicious witch-hunt from the Christian Democrats and their tame press. The SPD joined in the witch-hunt, more concerned to alleviate right wing dis-

approval than to build a left wing coalition government against the CDU. Scharping has refused to rule out a coalition with the conservatives. There is only one party with which he has guaranteed that he will not form a governmental alliance: the PDS.

The far right parties suffered a real blow. The racist Republicans—who are deeply divided—still hold between 1 and 2% of the vote, but this was not enough to get them into parliament. The abolition of the right to asylum, which was supported by the SPD, pulled the ground from under their feet.

This collapse of the far right could be short-lived. With mounting economic and social problems the far right may soon revive in an even more radical form.

To distinguish themselves from the respectable racism of the mainstream parties they will need to carry out more direct attacks on immigrants and even on the workers' movement itself. Other fascist front organisations like the DVU and the NPD could provide cover for the further growth of outright fascist forces.

Kohl may have been all smiles after his narrow victory. But the ingredients of social tension, revealed in the election results, all point towards instability and class struggle in the new Germany. And those struggles will be decisive for the whole European workers' movement.■

## ISRAEL AND THE PLO

## Can the peace deal hold?



Palestinian women want action — Arafat won't deliver

**CAN THE Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal hold? First the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier by the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, led Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to suspend the latest round of talks in Cairo.**

Then an agreement and peace declaration between Israel and Jordan caused jubilation on the streets of Tel Aviv. But days later the same streets were echoing to a different sound as a massive Hamas bomb tore apart a bus in central Tel Aviv, killing 22 people and wounding over 40.

In response the "peacemakers" in the Israeli government are punishing the entire Palestinian people. The occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been sealed off indefinitely by the Israeli Army. Over 30,000 Palestinian workers will be unable to get to their jobs in Israel.

Government officials are openly discussing steps to shut down all Hamas-sponsored organisations in the occupied territories, including schools, mosques and clinics.

In an act of calculated brutality, the home of the Hamas bomber's family is to be bulldozed. The leader of Israel's main opposition party, Likud, has even called for a Berlin-style wall to be built around the Arab territories. One Israeli Minister appeared on TV calling for total separation of Jews and Arabs—an apartheid regime modelled on the one being dismantled in South Africa.

The recent award of a Nobel Prize to Rabin is starting to look like a sick joke. The editor of the *Jerusalem Report* commented:

"... it might have been prudent for the committee to have waited at least another year, to have given peace in

BY RICHARD BRENNER

the occupied territories more of a chance to prove itself."

Hamas is continuing the long campaign of resistance to Zionist rule that the Palestinian people—and particularly the youth—have been waging since the early 1960s.

Although the Israeli state claims to be the "only democracy in the Middle East", Palestinians are treated as second class citizens. They face discrimination in education, housing, and jobs. In the occupied territories they are denied any meaningful democratic rights. The Zionist state maintains an artificial Jewish majority within the state of Israel only by the most savage racial discrimination: excluding the descendants of Palestinian families expelled in 1947-49 whilst allowing any Jewish person from any country to become an Israeli citizen overnight.

#### Fundamentalist

The kidnapped soldier, Nachson Waxman, held joint US and Israeli citizenship, and was part of an army of occupation that has been conducting a bloody war against the Palestinian youth of the occupied territories. His kidnapers were demanding the release of 200 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails, including Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the "spiritual leader" of Hamas. Thousands of Hamas sup-

porters demonstrated outside the Gaza Central Prison on 15 October in support of this demand. His movement is gaining widespread support, and now has the solid backing of an estimated 15-20% of the Arab population of Gaza.

Why is Hamas—with its Islamic fundamentalist message—on the rise? The secular (non-religious) national liberation movement which has been the only influential Palestinian organisation for the last thirty years, has sold out. Young people who want to win back their land and put an end to racist oppression are now looking elsewhere.

The "peace deal" agreed between Israel and the PLO aims to end the Palestinian struggle for their national rights and democracy. In return, the settlement grants the PLO limited administration over "autonomous areas" covering only 30% of the Palestinian people—in Gaza and in Jericho on the West Bank. The Palestinians are only able to have a say on tourism, education, health, welfare and local taxes.

The Israeli troops, who were supposed to withdraw from the Arab centres of population by the end of 1993, are still in place. The new Palestinian authority has no real control over its territory, no right to its own diplomacy or its own army. It is clear that the new Palestinian police force exists only to impose the settlement on reluctant Palestinians.

The Israeli government has used every act of Hamas resistance to increase their pressure on the PLO and force them to retreat still further.

Rabin's current strategy is to force the PLO into a war with Hamas, dividing the Palestinian masses, and firmly

establishing the role of the new PLO police as an instrument for maintaining rather than challenging Israeli domination of the region. The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, backed this approach, calling on Arafat to, "confront the reign of terror imposed by Hamas". Rabin demanded that the PLO make a "strategic choice" between Hamas and the peace process, that is between the interests of the Zionist state and of the Palestinians who are continuing to fight back.

Arafat's actions leave no doubt about the choice he has made. He rounded up over 200 Hamas activists in Gaza, and made it plain that he would co-operate with the Israelis in suppressing Hamas organisations. He stated that his police will not release any members of Hamas' military wing, Izzidin al Qassem.

#### Pressure

In the aftermath of the latest bombing, Rabin is putting Arafat and the PLO under even greater pressure. The Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army is talking of the possibility of Israeli troops entering the "autonomous" Palestinian areas in their hunt for Hamas activists. Even Arafat had to say that this could lead to war and the total collapse of the "peace deal".

There is clear evidence that such an outcome would fit the schemes of certain sections of the Zionist political and military establishment. There are powerful interests—not just within the Likud and the Army, but also within Israel's ruling Labour Party itself—who never wanted to make this deal with the PLO in the first place.

Israel had to be forced into a settle-

ment by the United States through the threat to withdraw loan guarantees, cutting Israel's fragile economy off from the massive subsidies it needs in order to survive.

Opponents of the deal hope that by provoking the Palestinians ever further, the PLO leadership will no longer be able to contain the anger of the masses and will have to break the deal. That way they could extricate themselves from the terms of the settlement whilst blaming the PLO for the failure of the "peace deal" and avoiding US economic sanctions.

In the meantime, Israel is stepping up efforts to reach separate peace deals with the rulers of surrounding Arab states. The peace treaty with Jordan deliberately involved terms which undermine the PLO and the prospects for any eventual Palestinian state, granting the Jordanian monarchy the right to oversee Islamic shrines in East Jerusalem, an area which is claimed by the PLO. But the real prize for Israeli diplomacy remains a deal with Syria, which would remove the last hostile Arab regime on the borders of Israel. Such a deal would enormously strengthen Israeli repression of the Palestinians.

#### Resistance

The focal points of resistance to the Israeli state are capitulating one by one—the secular nationalists of the PLO, the Jordanian regime and possibly President Assad of Syria. The left wing and Stalinist opposition forces within the PLO, such as the Popular Front and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, are all undermined by their organisational and political co-habitation with Arafat.

The ideology of Islam appears to be the only uncompromising message to a people sick of fruitless compromise. Hamas is consolidating its position as the sole rejectionist force with any real weight. But Hamas, despite its anti-imperialist demagoguery, is a dead end for the Palestinians.

Hamas will not unite the Palestinian masses—not all Palestinians are Muslims. It remains tied to foreign capitalist regimes such as Iran. It advances totally reactionary ideas on questions such as women's rights and religious freedom. Hamas wants the establishment of a religious state in which no opposition or democratic liberties would be tolerated.

The Hamas strategy of terror attacks and bombings leaves the masses as passive bystanders, and—as has been seen already—provides the Zionist authorities with every excuse they need in order to step up repression on a vast scale.

#### Anti-semitism

Unlike the secular PLO, which always made clear that it was opposed to Zionism, but was not anti-Jewish, Hamas knows no such distinctions. It stresses religious rather than national or class divisions—infusing the anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist aspirations of the Palestinian masses with a foul dose of anti-Semitism.

The growth of Islamic reaction as the only force able to relate to the militant anti-Zionism of the youth is a sure sign of impending disaster. It could begin a cycle of bloodshed that will dwarf the slaughter of the last forty-five years.

There is only one alternative—the construction of a powerful force for the rejection of peace with Zionism, but a rejection based on class rather than religion.

Only a revolutionary socialist party of the Palestinian working class can consistently champion democratic and national rights whilst linking them to the struggle for the economic and social emancipation of the majority. Without such a force, the racist Israeli state will become stronger and Hamas and the Islamic reaction will continue to grow. ■

# Big Pasqua is watching you

Dear Comrades,

Its not just in Britain that the police are getting more powers. All over Europe governments are giving themselves greater control over the lives of youth and workers.

In France the Interior Minister, Charles Pasqua, has presided over an increase in police powers unprecedented since the wartime fascist regime of Vichy.

As soon as the right wing came back to power in 1993, Pasqua allowed the police to stop and search anyone they wanted to, to "check their identity". As anyone who has been to Paris knows, 95% of those stopped and searched are young black men. That's what Major's proposed identity card really means: increased racial harassment and greater state control.

During the youth protests of March and April this year, a number of immigrant youth who were arrested during the demonstrations were illegally deported "as a matter of urgency". In the summer, Pasqua illegally deported two dozen immigrants who he claimed were Islamic terrorists, without producing a shred of evidence.

Finally, in the middle of October Pasqua's new Security Bill was adopted by parliament. The law allows the police and state security forces to video all public places. Big Pasqua is watching you! It

enables the police to stop and search any vehicle within a three mile radius of a demonstration in the 24 hours preceding a demo. Given that there is at least one demonstration in Paris every day, the police can turn the capital into an armed camp! The law

also ensures that anyone arrested on a demonstration which "gives rise to violence" will be banned from demonstrating for three years!

No wonder Pasqua has said that he shares "the same values" as the fascist Le Pen.

The real tragedy is that

these attacks have gone without any organised response from the labour movement. The ambient racism in the working class meant that no one lifted a finger to help the alleged "Islamic terrorists". The Security Bill was adopted without the slightest protest.

Pasqua's France should be a warning to British youth and workers fighting the Tories' Criminal Justice Bill: the future is just across the Channel!

In comradeship,  
Chris Duval,  
Paris

## Once again on animals

Dear friends,

I read with interest the letter by Colin Lloyd "Animal Lib? No thanks!" in *Workers Power* 181. In the letter Colin mentions the Animal Liberation Front and states, "[they] have endangered the life and limb of teachers, health workers, shop workers and research workers".

No they haven't! The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) has a clear and strict policy of non-violence. No ALF action must ever endanger lives, be that the life of a non-human animal or a human animal.

ALF actions are carried out against property, not people. The ALF targets the property of animal abusers so they can cause as much financial damage to that property. This way

money that would otherwise be spent on animal cruelty is diverted to repairing the damage and hopefully the damage is not so great that the animal abuser cannot afford to repair the damage and they go out of business.

Colin states that as a revolutionary socialist he wants to distance himself from all forms of animal liberation. A strange statement. Part of revolutionary socialism is about recognising that the notion of difference does not mean inferiority. An individual may be different to me, in gender, skin colour, ethnic group, race, sexual orientation, mobility, age, species etc, but that does not make them inferior to me. A part of animal liberation is also about recognising that difference does not equal inferiority. If we can break down the idea of difference meaning inferiority then human society can take a great step forward.

I assume that Colin is against the starvation of the Third World. It is a well known fact that the majority of food exported from the Third World is fed to 'Western' farm animals. Their reason? Profit. By the West being a meat eating culture we are starving the Third World.

To put some figures on this. It takes an average of 10lbs of plant food to produce 1lb of meat. Of the 145 million tons

✓ Agree  
✗ Disagree?  
! Got something to say?

Write in to:  
Workers Power  
BCM 7750  
London WC1N 3XX

of grain and soy fed to livestock only 21 million tons of meat is produced. The waste of 124 million tons of food per year has been calculated to be at a value of \$20 billion. It has further been calculated that for \$20 billion you could feed, clothe and house the world's entire human population for one year.

If all the butchers went out of business then not only would this be advantageous to the animals, but it would also benefit the Third World. And if the only way to put a butcher out of business is to destroy their property then so be it. Remember, animal libbers are not talking about killing the butcher. Just encouraging them to find a new trade.

I could go on and on with my examples of how human liberation is linked to animal liberation. But I realise this letter is becoming rather long so I shall end now.

Heal the world,  
"Rabbix"

(This letter has been shortened for reasons of space)

### COMPETITION

"To secure for the workers by hand and by brain . . ."

Tony Blair has started a year long debate on the future constitution of the Labour Party. Can you write a new version of Clause Four which adequately reflects the politics and priorities of Blair's "new Labour"?

Entries, of no more than 100 words to BCM Box 7750 London WC1N 3XX by 1 December • Prize £10

SATPAL RAM fought back against a racist attack in 1986. For this he was sentenced to life imprisonment. Now after eight years in prison, he has finally been granted an Appeal Hearing on 4 November. He has written the following appeal for support.

Dear Sir,

On 21 June 1993 lawyers acting on my behalf made a submission to the Home Secretary, requesting that a referral of my case be made back to the Court of Appeal in accordance with section 17 of the Criminal Appeal Act 1968. This request was rejected.

After obtaining legal advice a decision was made to challenge the Home Secretary's refusal by way of a judicial review. Subsequently in May of this year I was granted leave

to appeal to the High Court. The Appeal will be heard on 4 November 1994.

When one considers that I have already exhausted all legal avenues within the Appeal process, this will ultimately be the last opportunity for the British legal system to correct a grave miscarriage of justice.

I have now spent eight years

in prison for defending myself against a racially motivated attack. I feel that my continued imprisonment is completely unjustifiable and further highlights the blatant discrimination within the criminal justice system.

Until the system can eradicate discrimination on the grounds of class, gender, as

well as race, more and more innocent people will continue to be wrongly convicted.

I would ask anyone who is concerned to support me in my fight for justice, by attending the High Court on 4 November. Pressure from the general public is the only way that I stand a chance to get my case noticed and accepted as a grave miscarriage of justice, I ask you to respond accordingly. Thank you for your support.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." (Martin Luther King)

Yours sincerely,  
Satpal Ram  
Victim of the criminal justice system

For further details contact:

Free Satpal campaign  
101 Villa Road,  
Handsworth, Birmingham  
B19 1NH  
Tel: 021-551 4518

## WHERE WE STAND

### WORKERS POWER

is a revolutionary communist organisation. We base our programme and policies on the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, on the documents of the first four congresses of the Third (Communist) International and on the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International.

Capitalism is an anarchic and crisis-ridden economic system based on production for profit. We are for the expropriation of the capitalist class and the abolition of capitalism. We are for its replacement by socialist production planned to satisfy human need.

Only the socialist revolution and the smashing of the capitalist state can achieve this goal. Only the working class, led by a revolutionary vanguard party and organised into workers' councils and workers' militia can lead such a revolution to victory and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism.

The Labour Party is not a socialist party. It is a bourgeois workers' party—bourgeois in its politics and its practice, but based on the working class via the trade unions and supported by the mass of workers at the polls. We are for the building of a revolutionary tendency in the Labour Party, in order to win workers within those organisations away from reformism and to the revolutionary party.

In the trade unions we fight for a rank and file movement to oust the reformist bureaucrats, to democratise the unions and win them to a revolutionary action programme based on a system of transitional demands which serve as a bridge between today's struggles and the socialist revolution. Central to this is the fight for workers' control of production.

We are for the building of fighting organisations of the working class—factory committees, industrial unions, councils of action, and workers' defence organisations.

The first victorious working class revolution, the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, established a workers' state. But Stalin and the bureaucracy destroyed workers' democracy and set about the reactionary and utopian project of building "socialism in one country". In the USSR, and the other degenerate workers' states that were established from above, capitalism was destroyed but the bureaucracy excluded the working class from power, blocking the road to democratic planning and socialism. The corrupt, parasitic bureaucratic caste has led these states to crisis and destruction. We are for the smashing of bureaucratic tyranny through proletarian political revolution and the establishment of workers' democracy.

We oppose the restoration of capitalism and recognise that only workers' revolution can defend the post-capitalist property relations. In times of war we unconditionally defend workers' states against imperialism.

Internationally Stalinist Communist Parties have consistently betrayed the working class. Their strategy of alliances with the bourgeoisie (popular fronts) and their stages theory of revolution have inflicted terrible defeats on the working class world-wide. These parties are reformist and their influence in the workers' movement must be defeated.

We fight against the oppression that capitalist society inflicts on people because of their race, age, sex, or sexual orientation. We are for the liberation of women and for the building of a working class women's movement, not an "all class" autonomous movement. We are for the liberation of all of the oppressed. We fight racism and fascism. We oppose all immigration controls. We fight for labour movement support for black self-defence against racist and state attacks. We are for no platform for fascists and for driving them out of the unions.

We support the struggles of oppressed nationalities or countries against imperialism. We unconditionally support the Irish Republicans fighting to drive British troops out of Ireland. We politically oppose the nationalists (bourgeois and petit bourgeois) who lead the struggles of the oppressed nations. To their strategy we counterpose the strategy of permanent revolution, that is the leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle by the working class with a programme of socialist revolution and internationalism.

In conflicts between imperialist countries and semi-colonial countries, we are for the defeat of "our own" army and the victory of the country oppressed and exploited by imperialism. We are for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. We fight imperialist war not with pacifist pleas but with militant class struggle methods including the forcible disarmament of "our own" bosses.

Workers Power is the British Section of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International. The last revolutionary International (the Fourth) collapsed in the years 1948-51.

The LRCI is pledged to fight the centrism of the degenerate fragments of the Fourth International and to refound a Leninist Trotskyist International and build a new world party of socialist revolution. We combine the struggle for a re-elaborated transitional programme with active involvement in the struggles of the working class—fighting for revolutionary leadership. If you are a class conscious fighter against capitalism; if you are an internationalist—join us!

# Workers power

**INSIDE**

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- ★ Fighting student poverty
- ★ Israel and Hamas
- ★ Background to the Haiti crisis

British section of the LRCI - League for a Revolutionary Communist International

Price 40p/10p strikers Solidarity price £1

**Put them  
out of their  
misery...**



# Abolish the Monarchy!

A STREAM of exposures about Prince Charles' private life—not to mention photographs of his private parts—have started an impassioned debate in the press and the upper echelons of the British establishment. Can an adulterer be King? Can a King divorce? Can a King remarry?

Underlying these strange questions there is a real fear gripping the ruling class. They fear that the future of the monarchy is in danger.

The torrid revelations are damaging the public image of our hallowed monarchy. Instead of inspiring confidence, the Prince and Princess of Wales are revealed as petty, spoiled, feuding, and dishonest.

Instead of providing a model for lesser mortals of how marriage should be "till death us do part", they display how even at the top matrimony can be a

squalid and impermanent affair. Instead of reinforcing the "faithful family"—the moral norm preached by the Tories—Charles and Di make a habit of getting their infidelity publicised in newspapers, books and TV documentaries.

All of this makes the ruling class fear that far from being happy and glorious, our future sovereign is a sad joke.

But behind all the arcane "constitutional" deliberations about the role of the monarch, one question is being dodged. Why have a monarch at all? Our rulers keep quiet about this for good reasons. And those reasons are emphatically *not* a joke. They are deadly serious.

The monarchy is not just a feudal relic or a way of conning American tourists into buying Queen Mother ashtrays at souvenir shops. It is an institution which concentrates real power

in its hands. It can exercise those powers as a check on the will of the people. And it is unelected.

Just look at the constitutional powers of this harmless tourist attraction. It can:

- Declare war
- Sign treaties
- Block laws by refusing the royal assent
- Dissolve parliament
- Appoint prime ministers
- Dismiss elected governments.

But the dear old Queen would never use these powers, we are told; she is just a symbol to love and cherish.

If this is the case why has parliament never stripped her of these powers? Why has it repeatedly maintained them? Why does it spend millions of pounds of taxpayers' money maintaining the Royal family and its entourage? What other sector of the tourist industry

gets such lavish subsidies?

The monarchy's powers are real and are maintained in case the ruling class needs to use them in what it coyly refers to as "national emergencies"—in plain English threats to its power and wealth.

The Royal Prerogative, as it is called, allows top civil servants (also unelected) to make laws and alter governments using the Queen or King as cover. The Queen *really did* sack an elected government in 1975, when the Australian Labour government of Gough Whitlam was dismissed by Royal decree.

The ruling class are not about to use the monarch's vast range of dictatorial powers today—they do not need to.

But whenever the working class makes a serious attempt to shift the balance of wealth and power in its favour, let

alone to change the system lock, stock and barrel, the monarchy will be there, able to use its powers against us and to provide a rallying point for every reactionary in the country.

That is why every soldier in the British Army swears an oath of loyalty not to parliament or to "The People", but to the monarch. They swear to fight the Queen's enemies "without and within".

Some 44 Labour MPs want to get rid of the monarchy. But this was only revealed in a poll by a Sunday newspaper. These closet republicans have never once raised this demand openly, let alone started campaigning around it. Once a year they loyally troop into the House of Lords to listen to the Queen's Speech and bow to *their* majesty.

But genuine socialists—those who put fighting for the

interests of the working class before hopes of a knighthood or a place in the House of Lords—have no qualms in using the discrediting of the monarchy today to launch a fight for the only consistent democratic solution.

That is: abolition of the monarchy, and all the other undemocratic checks on our rights—the House of Lords (unelected), the top civil servants (unelected) the judges (unelected), the secret police and army chiefs (unelected), the Privy Council (appointed by the monarch).

Working class struggle won every single democratic right that has ever been introduced in this country.

The working class alone has the interest and the power to finish off the House of Windsor and every other bastion of privilege, oppression and unearned wealth. ■

**FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC!**