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# Socialist OUTLOOK

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# STAND FIRM FOR SOCIALISM



THE STRUGGLE over Clause Four has been one of the most important political fights in the labour movement for years. The outcome on April 29 will set the parameters for the next stage of the fight.

Either Blair can be pushed back and a blow struck for socialism: or the scene will be set for further attacks by the right.

Blair is already saying that breaking the trade union link is his next target.

It has been a hard fought battle. Any difficulties involved in the debate have not been because of any

inherent strength in the politics of Tony Blair, or any weakness in the campaign to defend the clause.

From a political point of view the campaign has struck a resonant chord from the outset. Collective ownership has rarely been as popular in the general public in Britain as it is at the present time.

Paradoxically it has been the degree of hatred of the Tories within the labour movement and way beyond which has created the biggest obstacles. Blair has presented it as a vote of confidence. Many LP members think that if they oppose the revision they will strengthen the Tories.

This view is profoundly mistaken.

The way to boost the Tories is to support Blair and get rid of Clause 4. But it has been hard to win this argument after 16 years of Tory rule and the social consequences involved, and with an undemocratic campaign with the whole of the media and the apparatus of the party strongly

supporting Blair.

It is this desire to get rid of the Tories at any cost that is behind the overwhelming constituency ballots for Blair's new clause and means he is likely to win around 70 per cent of the constituency vote at the special conference.

The unions have put up more resistance to Blair's formula. Some are already in

conflict with Blair's right wing policies.

And it will be the unions which are forced to confront the consequences of a right wing Labour government seeking to maintain the capitalist market at the expense of jobs and living standards. Whatever the outcome on April 29, that fight will go on. Stand firm for socialism!

## Keep Clause Four RALLY

Friday April 28, 7.30pm

Camden Irish Centre, Camden Square  
(Camden Town tube)  
Speakers include Arthur Scargill

Post conference open meeting

**The fight for  
socialist policies now**  
Sunday April 30, 1-4pm

ULU, Malet St, London WC1  
(Goodge St tube)



# NUT conference swings behind anti-cuts fight

by Keith Sinclair  
(Delegate Hull  
NUT) and Roy  
Leach (NUT  
Exec), both in a  
personal capacity

A NUMBER of highly significant gains were registered by the left at NUT conference, held over the Easter week-end.

The background to the conference has been continued attacks on education accompanied by local action against cuts in areas such as Oxford and Nottingham.

A key factor in the run-up to the conference was the emergence of organised groups of governors and parents who have been willing to stand alongside teachers.

The most important of these groups has been Fight Against Cuts in Education (FACE)

## Pay

Conference agreed a left motion on pay. This was in response to years of

poor pay awards from the Teachers Pay and Conditions Review Body. The national leadership of the union have consistently and correctly condemned the Pay Review Body and its pay awards but the executive have done nothing to attempt to mobilise teachers for a pay campaign.

The successful motion commits the NUT to calling a special one day salaries conference in the Autumn term to plan a serious pay campaign for the first time in years.

## Class size

There were major debates on the issue of class size at all three of the teaching unions conferences held over Easter. The most surprising thing being that all three have agreed to take some form of action over the problem of increasing class sizes.

Following a heated debate, NUT conference passed a left motion committing the union to ballot for a one day strike in the summer term.

The attack on education is a national attack and a national strike will provide an appropriate national response.

The NUT leadership fought to defeat the strike call and the left will have to work very hard to overcome the sabotaging actions of the executive and Doug McAvoy.

Local action should also be used to build support for the forthcoming national strike.

The emergence of FACE over the last few months is of central importance to the new position facing those who work in education.

FACE has successfully brought together parents, governors and teachers in a national united response to

education cuts.

Sue Lister, Chair of FACE, spoke to a packed fringe meeting organised as a recall meeting of the Oxford Conference on Pay and Conditions.

The disgraceful refusal of the NUT leadership to back the FACE demonstration in March was attacked from the conference floor, and policy was passed "welcoming the formation of organisations like FACE".

This conference endorsement should enable the number of NUT branches affiliated to rocket over the next few months.

Teachers, parents and governors need to be building now the FACE conference on June 10th and for the proposed national demonstration on September 30th.

There were two important developments within the NUT left. Unfortunately, one was positive and the other negative.

The welcome development was the better working relationship between the Socialist Teachers Alliance (STA) and the Campaign for a Democratic and Fighting Union (CDFU).

Joint meetings were held, joint slates agreed and tactical agreements reached on a whole range of matters.

Socialist Outlook supporters in the NUT fully support this development, and will continue to work to bring the organised left together.

The unwelcome development was the trajectory of the teacher comrades of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

The SWP have been members of the STA for a decade. Their organisation has now made a serious sectarian turn (see book review page 13).



Mass protests against education cuts influenced NUT delegates, but not the platform.

The effect of this was seen at NUT conference with the SWP refusing to participate in the STA.

In one sadly memorable phrase, leading SWP teacher Shaun Docherty stated at an open left meeting, "I will not be influenced by the outcome of this meeting".

The meeting had defeated a tactical proposal from the SWP. There are clearly differences within the SWP on this question and every avenue needs to be kept open for the involvement of those SWP teachers who understand the continued need for left unity.

The NUT General Secretary, Doug McAvoy, has attacked the decisions of NUT conference, stating that conference was unrepresentative of classroom teachers - as if he had taught a lesson for decades!

Socialist Outlook teachers will be working with all those who wish to see the NUT conference policies turned into reality.

## Blunkett affair: no victimisations!

THE ARRIVAL of Labour's shadow Education Secretary David Blunkett at the NUT conference provided much of the early media interest.

Teachers are angry at the right wing drift of the Labour Party, and at Blunkett's failure to give any lead to the campaigns against cuts. His attacks on teachers and opposition to strike action add even greater insult.

Unfortunately the way in which the Socialist Workers Party chose to approach Blunkett's visit enabled the media to turn him into a martyr and gave the right wing a golden opportunity to attack the left.

They have done so. The union leadership and the media have both tried to whip up a witch-hunting atmosphere. The suggestion from union president John Bills that governors should take disciplinary action against NUT members is a disgrace.

Despite our disagreements with the SWP, we have no hesitation in opposing any attempts to victimise those allegedly involved.

And the role of the press, scenting a last-ditch hope of restoring Tory fortunes before the council elections, has been scandalous. Reporters hounded and chased conference delegates around and out of the conference hall, and some have been pursued to their homes after conference.

WELFARE STATE

## Notts sets FACE against school cuts

By Sal Morawetz

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S thriving FACE group symbolises the power of the campaign.

We have well experienced trade union activists, angry teachers, school surveyors, riled parents who've never previously been 'political', hacked off governors, schoolkids and more!

Holding regular fortnightly organising meetings of 30-plus people we sent five coaches to the national demonstration; have held four large public meetings in Nottingham and Mansfield; run regular city-centre campaign stalls, collected over 10,000 signatures for a petition; help to set up school and area-based FACE meetings and distributed letters, information packs and bulletins to every school in the

county.

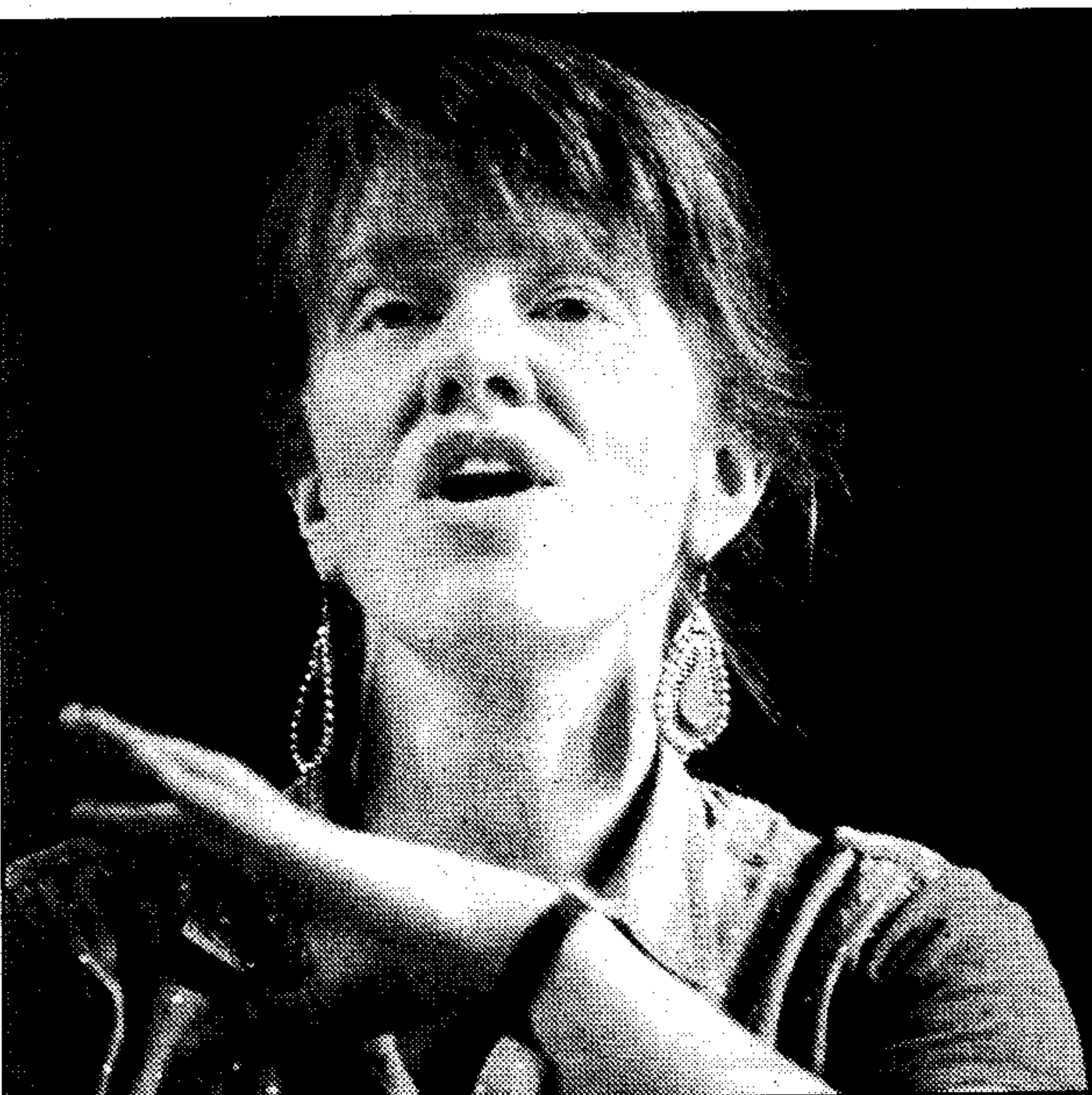
Perhaps our active support of the NUT's day of action was more important, marching alongside teachers to join a rally of 3,000 outside the County Hall.

Our group makes the links between these education cuts and the Tory attacks on vulnerable people cared for through social services and the working class generally through the NHS.

Therefore we play a key role in building the Notts Welfare State Network demonstration on June 3 in Nottingham.

On May 20 a union-sponsored Notts FACE conference will have practical workshops and discuss how to continue building the pressure.

For information phone Sarah (0115) 9626298 or Sarah-Lough on (0115) 9654428. Sal Morawetz, a UNISON steward and FACE organising committee member, writes in a personal capacity.



## Platform against cuts

SUE LISTER, national chair of FACE (right) and Jill Mountford (above), Secretary of the Welfare State Network, were among the platform speakers at the April 8 conference of the Network. Over 200 attended the conference, held in London, which centred on fighting cuts in the NHS, education and pensions.



PHOTOS: Mark Woodyatt



## What we think

# Behind the witch-hunt of NUT left wing

HELL hath no fury like a beleaguered union bureaucrat. And few bureaucrats have been as battered as NUT General Secretary Doug McAvoy, who has effectively declared war on the majority of his own union conference.

On Sunday April 23 the *Sunday Times* carried a witch-hunting (and seriously inaccurate) article on newly-elected NUT Executive member and Oxfordshire district secretary Roy Leach, who is a supporter of *Socialist Outlook*.

This was no random decision.

McAvoy – whose salary is more than three times that of most teachers, and whose expenses, at £18,000 a year, are more than many of his members are paid – had called in the Murdoch press to do his dirty work after suffering a succession of bruising policy defeats at conference.

The journalists involved said that McAvoy had been phoning their paper every day since the Blackpool conference, demanding that they run an attack on some of the left wingers who had the nerve to win a majority on the key issues debated there.

Worse, McAvoy had arranged for NUT Head Office to supply the hacks with a dossier of information on Roy Leach, revealing that NUT officials keep a 'black list' of left wingers whom they clearly regard as fair game for abuse in the media and possible victimisation at work.

### Prejudice

In other words the interests of NUT members are being subordinated to McAvoy's political prejudices, and the democratic decisions of elected delegates at the union's conference are regarded not as policy to be implemented, but as fair game for public attack from the union's highest-paid employee.

But McAvoy's vicious witch-hunt against the left is a mark of increasing desperation. He hopes the Tory press will bail him out after his own supporters lamentably failed to defeat the left in democratic debate.

The harsh fact he cannot escape is that the decisions of this year's NUT conference, like the call for strike ballots against rising class sizes from

the traditionally right wing Association of Teachers and Lecturers, and the controversial call to send home surplus children from over-sized classes adopted by the normally conservative NAS/UWT, were the result not of 'infiltration' by the hard left, but a genuine nation-wide radicalisation in defence of education against Tory cuts.

It is not the hard left, but the Tories who have triggered this politicisation of education by slashing £1 billion from school spending. The question which McAvoy cannot answer is how should the unions respond.

Interestingly neither of the other teaching unions which had voted for action saw their General Secretaries indulge in anything like McAvoy's vitriolic attack on the decision.

### Parents

They know that the mass local demonstrations, public meetings and lobbies that have mobilised parents, governors and school students across the country and brought 15,000 onto the March 25 FACE demonstration in London were not comprised of extreme leftists but simply people angered at Tory cuts.

The thousands of teachers who have staged protest strikes in Oxfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Sheffield and other areas voted freely to do so in ballots because they are angry at the cuts – and because, often for the first time, they feel the impetus of genuine, massive, public support: they are fighting not for wages but for the quality of education.

Instead of drawing any strength from this unique movement of parents and governors, brought together in the Fight Against Cuts in Education (FACE), McAvoy has consistently denounced and opposed it. He sent out circulars urging NUT branches not to participate in the FACE demonstration, hinting (without any foundation) that it was a 'front' for the SWP.

In reality FACE represents a genuine popular movement, spanning class and party political divisions: it, far more than McAvoy, speaks for the anger of middle England.

Even when it was obvious that the march would be very

large and that many NUT branches were actively supporting it, McAvoy rejected invitations to participate, suggesting, ludicrously, that the demo 'might lead to violence'.

Having done nothing but sabotage prospects of unity with parents and governors, McAvoy then had the gall to claim at conference that the proposal for NUT action on class sizes might alienate them!

The problem is that McAvoy's chosen allies are not the parents, governors and teachers fighting for education, but Labour's front bench, who have done and said nothing to build that fight.

McAvoy has clearly been working hand in glove with Tony Blair's rightward-moving leadership team, despite the fact that the NUT is not affiliated to the Labour Party, has no voice in its policies, and Blair has delighted in flouting NUT policy, not least by sending his son to an opted out, anti-union school.

### Alliance

The political alliance with 'New Labour' was clearly why McAvoy engineered the abandonment of the NUT's boycott of the SATS tests.

And McAvoy shares the Blair/Blunkett hostility to the very notion of industrial action – on anything, at any time, by anyone. Blunkett, who has offered no policies to resolve the crisis in education funding, and has made a crusade out of opposing strikes.

That view is not shared by most NUT conference delegates, many of whom were clearly buoyed up by the confidence that a radical stand in defence of the quality of education would win strong public support.

### 'Extremists'

McAvoy chose to exploit the ill-judged tactics of a handful of SWP delegates lobbying Blunkett in an attempt to attack all left wing delegates and suggest that the union was being 'taken over by extremists'.

In fact McAvoy well knows that the SWP influence at the conference was negligible. The main body of support for left motions came from the Socialist Teachers Alliance.

But in comparison to McAvoy's right wing stance almost anyone prepared to de-

fend education can be regarded as 'extreme'.

Roy Leach is a supporter of *Socialist Outlook*, and an active member of the STA. But he has been for years.

What has stirred McAvoy to such anger is that Roy led one of the first of this year's protest strikes, and has also been a founding member of the FACE steering committee, showing that it is possible to link with parents and win support.

As a new member of the NUT's NEC Roy will also be

in a position to refute many of McAvoy's brazen lies about FACE, and join a strengthened left.

It's not the majority of delegates who are out of step, but McAvoy. The proximity of his face to Tony Blair's backside appears to obscure

his view of reality.

NUT members must demand that McAvoy and his caucus of witch-hunters stop attacking and victimising his own members and start doing what he's paid so lavishly to do – defending the policies of the union.



Can they really all be extremists? McAvoy opposes all forms of action.

# Wipe out the Tories!

**THE HISTORIC** white-wash of the Tory Party in the Scottish council elections was wrongly hailed as a victory for 'Tony Blair's Party'.

In fact the Tory failure to win control of a single one of the councils they had hoped to gerrymander was much more due to growing hostility to their policies than public enthusiasm for Blair's selection of sound-bites and evasions.

This was also underlined by the strengthened showing of the Scottish nationalists, who cashed in on the anger at Major's remote and arrogant government imposing reactionary policies without any shred of a popular mandate north of the border.

Further sweeping Labour gains are also being predicted in the English council elections on May 4 – again on the basis of the most ambiguous and evasive policies from Blair's team.

By focusing the full brunt of Labour's wrath on the Tories for increasing taxes, and on Tory councils for charging higher levels of council tax than Labour councils, Blair's team are cutting off any possibility of a Labour government re-



Major's policies are driving voters to Blair

versing the cuts that are devastating education, social services and other key council services.

Labour councils elected on this basis, like some Blairite Labour councils which are already attacking the jobs and conditions of their workforce through competitive tendering and imposing a combination of cuts and new charges in social services, will offer a foretaste in miniature of life under a Labour government.

Some union members are waking up to this danger, and are beginning to fight now for policies that they want to see implemented by Labour in gov-

ernment.

The Scottish TUC, in voting unanimously for renationalisation of public utilities, and an extension of industrial common ownership, also went on to stipulate £4 an hour as its target for a minimum wage. UNISON delegates, fearful that Blair will continue Major's onslaught on the public sector, voted down his revised Clause Four.

Three teaching unions, who have been offered nothing by Blair, have defied Blunkett and decided to ballot on industrial action to fight cuts.

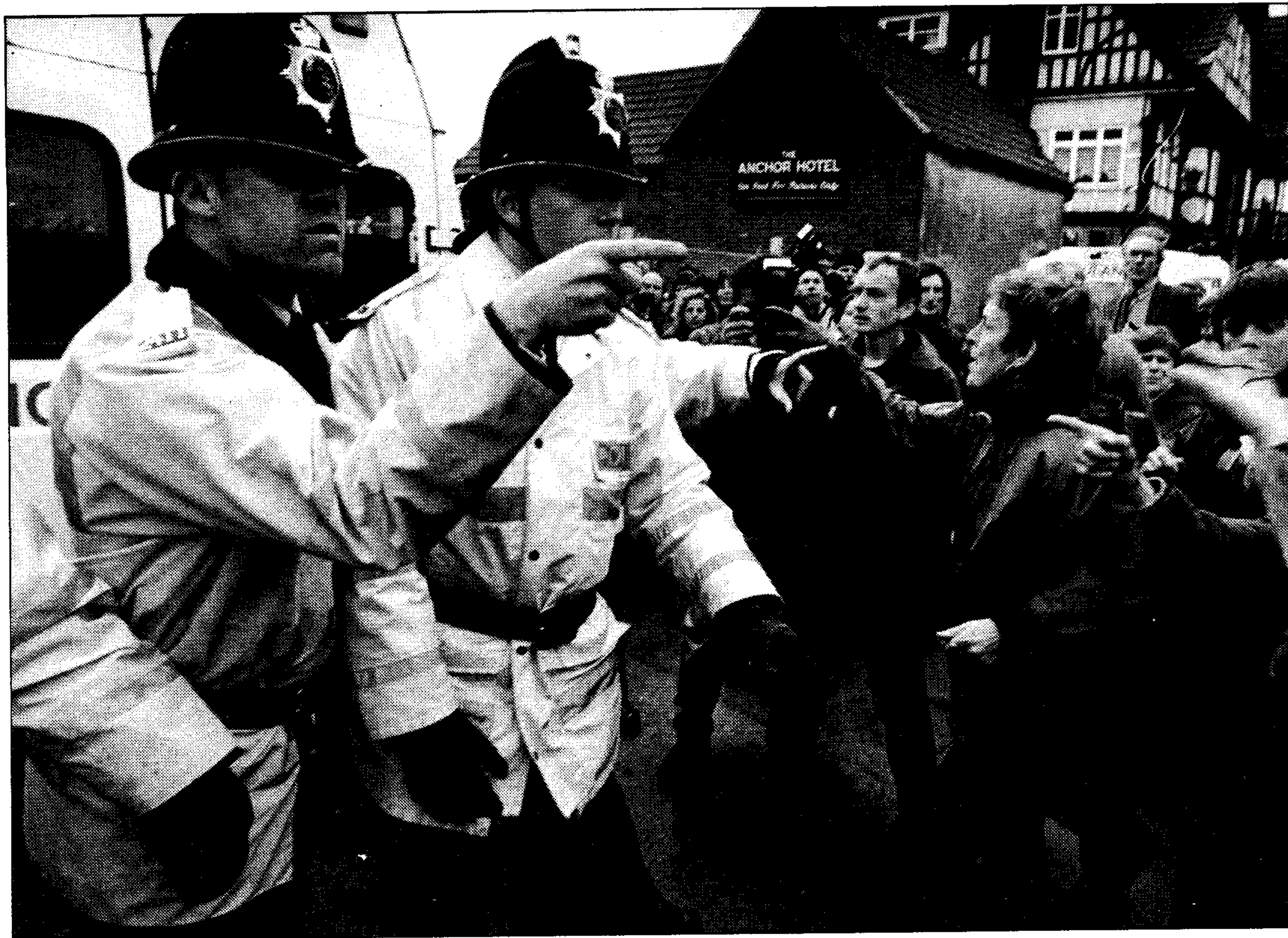
The political battle lines are being drawn now: but the decisive battles cannot be won in this situation of 'phony war', when the top of almost everyone's agenda is wiping out the Tories.

A labour movement that has seen the defeat of the Tory government will be much more confident to challenge the pink Toryism of Blair's half-baked policies.

That's why, regardless of the decision on Clause Four on April 29, socialists urge a Labour vote on May 4, and a redoubled fight for the policies we need from Labour in local and national government.

EDITORIAL





# Disgrace of Campsfield immigration prison

By Aidan Day

A NEW official report has slammed Group 4's running of Campsfield detention centre in Kidlington, near Oxford.

It has prompted Claude Moraes of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants to call again for Campsfield to be closed down.

It is just one of a network of prisons set up to hold asylum seekers as Britain's contribution to the racist 'Fortress Europe' policy.

The Chief Inspector of prisons Judge Stephen Tumim's report on Campsfield House says it is hardly surprising that there have been mass protests and hunger strikes.

Britain's first private immigration detention centre holds 200 asylum seekers in miserable conditions. The 59 'de-

tention orderlies" are paid £4 an hour and drawn largely from the ex-forces.

"When combined with an uncertain future, language difficulties, a perceived or real lack of information and the fact that some detainees appeared to be terrified at the prospect of being deported, the stress increases" the judge said.

This should not come as any surprise. Campsfield is the shape of the future. Fortress Europe needs its prisons and it needs bully boys to run them.

While the governments of western Europe want to restrict movement of people they will always require repressive institutions of control.

These will always tend to be brutal. Putting Group 4 in charge guarantees it.

■ Telephone the Campaign to Close Campsfield on 01865-724452.

## Brightlingsea: a whole town under the cosh

THE SMALL Essex port of Brightlingsea has been turned into a police state after judges ruled that the rights of exporters of live animals must be upheld against popular local protests.

200 police were drafted in, and invoked the Public Order Act to crush the

protests of local residents who had been blocking slaughter wagons carrying sheep.

A similar crackdown has also taken place in Dover, where harbour chiefs have been told by a court judgement they have no right to turn away a legal trade

in live animals.

This heavy-handed use of the state to ride roughshod over popular mass protest is a stark warning to the labour movement of the powers already vested in the police before they were supplemented by the Criminal Justice Act.

# Sinn Fein launches new campaign in Britain

By Arthur Haynes

Sinn Fein has announced a new 'peace initiative', aimed at winning support in Britain.

The campaign was introduced by a Martin McGuinness speaking tour, culminating in the Bloody Sunday rally in Manchester, which mobilised 1500 people.

Representatives of the city's Labour Council welcomed Martin to the city, and both the Bolton and Manchester TUCs decided to organise fact-finding delegations to the North of Ireland this summer.

Sinn Fein representatives are increasingly worried by the stalemate approach of the British government and the British Labour leadership support for Tory and Unionist intransigence.

The most recent meeting of the network supporting the initiative decided to fo-

cus on the bipartisan policy of the present Labour leadership.

Supporters will be doing as many meetings as possible with Party members and trade unionists, to win support for Irish national self-determination and peace through British withdrawal.

Gerry Adams will do four major meetings in June in Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and London, to be followed by two councillors in each area doing meetings for the next week.

It was also decided to lobby for the removal of the Emergency Powers Act, to mobilise against the renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and to concentrate on the civil rights issues.

The initiative is supported by the Troops Out Movement, the Irish in Britain Representation Group, the Labour Party Irish Society, the Labour

Committee on Ireland, the Connolly Association, the Federation of Irish Societies, the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, Women and Ireland, Wolfe Tone Society and the Colin Roach Centre - among others.

The campaign will be centred in part on mobilising the labour movement and the Irish community in Britain.

It is clear that there can be no military solution to the problem; only a socialist solution can mobilise the working class to destroy the partitionist states on both sides of the border.

Sinn Fein has so far chosen the wrong alliances to defeat British imperialism.

In that sense, the ceasefire is likely to achieve no more than previous ceasefires. This however does not diminish the grave responsibility on socialists in Britain to get the troops out and support self-determination.

# Ragbir must stay!

The campaign against the deportation of Ragbir Singh gathers pace with a demonstration in Birmingham on April 29.

He has never been convicted of any crime, never charged with any offence and no evidence has been presented against him. Despite this the Secretary of State has issued a notice to serve a deportation order.

Ragbir has been editor of the Punjabi newspaper *Awaze Qaum International* for four years. He lives with his wife Kulwinder Kaur

who is a British citizen and his two British born children.

As editor of the paper he has expressed strong views about the situation in the Punjab opposing the policies of the Indian government.

## Prison

Ragbir is currently being held at Winson Green prison Birmingham. He is not allowed to know the specific allegations made against him. He is being refused the right to request bail. He has no right of ap-

peal.

His NUJ branch secretary Jeremy Dear said "If the Home Secretary believes Ragbir is a terrorist, let him present the evidence in an open court instead of hiding behind the sinister veil of national security".

■ Demonstrate Saturday April 29 11.30am Black Patch Recreation Ground Foundry Lane, Smethick. Rally at 1pm Summerfield Park.

For further info contact Jeremy Dear on 0121 415 5866.





# Council elections 1995

## What kind of policies is Labour offering?

By Andy Richards

ON MAY 4, much of England and Wales goes to the

polls to elect local councillors. All the signs are that the Tories will suffer an electoral "meltdown", particularly since this is the year when a large number

of Tory-controlled councils are up for election in their entirety.

In many areas the Tories cannot find candidates; in others they are using various aliases, such as 'independent' and 'retired newsagent'! The Tory crisis coincides with numerous community campaigns against service cuts and school governing bodies and councils are setting illegal budgets to protect services.

So what does this mean for Labour and why does it matter?

The Labour Party will undoubtedly benefit from the massive anger and hatred directed at the Tories, although their unwillingness to offer serious alternative policies does nothing to help the fightback.

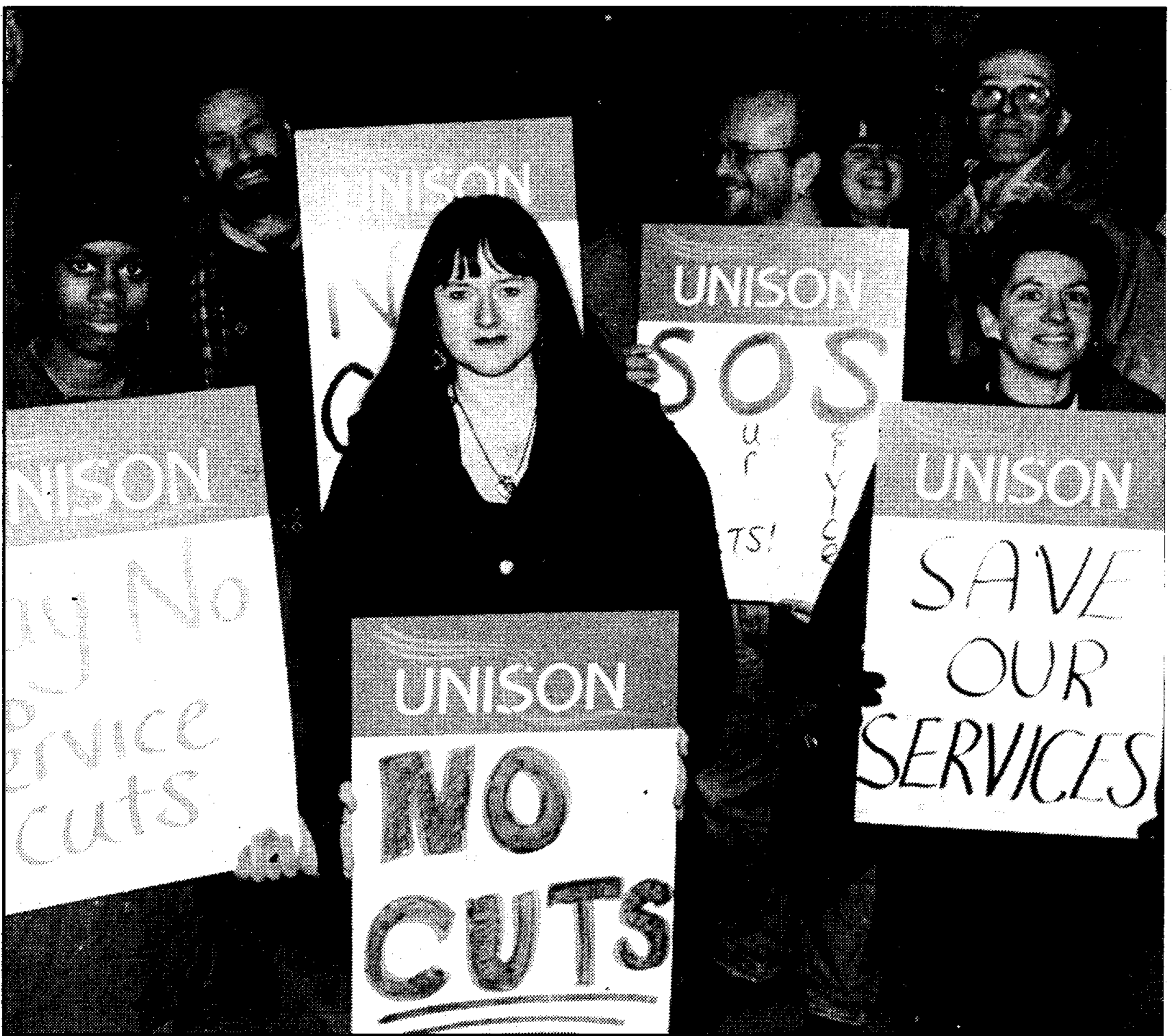
Also it is likely that some Tories will be saved as 'New Labour' and the Liberal Democrats cancel each other out.

It is important however that the left gets involved in these elections in order to stop the tide of Blairism in local government. Clearly there is little in the way of radical policies coming from the Leader's office at present.

### Prosecutions

Instead of backing the massive community campaigns against the cuts, Blair talks of prosecuting parents of truant children and Blunkett of closing down schools where there are "bad" teachers!

Frank Dobson wants to give more power to the hated District Auditor and Jack Straw distances the party from its commitment to end compulsory competitive ten-



### "Instead of backing the massive community campaigns against the cuts, Blair talks of prosecuting parents of truant children"

dering (CCT).

The ultimate low point was Blair agreeing with Major's attack on the NUT. None of this is party policy of course.

This is reflected locally in Brighton, where the ruling Labour Group has just completed the voluntary privatisation of a third of the council's services.

Now it is planning to sell off thousands of acres of beautiful downland, and has recently backed away from compulsory redundancies only in the face of a threatened strike by UNISON members.

These developments make it all the more important that socialists within the party get involved in the election campaigns either as helpers or candidates.

There is huge potential for

left councillors linking with the campaigns by parents and teachers against the education cuts, and with campaigns to save other council services.

In Hove, where I am standing, the Tories have run the Council as their own private fiefdom for a generation, with largely ineffectual opposition from a small right-wing Labour Group.

They are pushing ahead with a plan to sell off the housing stock to a housing association and the local Labour Party is pledged to stop this if it gets control in May.

Despite its genteel image, Hove features on a number of deprivation indices, with a large elderly population and higher than average unemployment.

### Superstores

The Tories have spent their time handing over land to superstores and failing to oppose road developments. They have no policies to deal with poverty and unemployment.

It is now highly possible that they will pay for this by losing control of the Council - something which would have seemed impossible until now. They are not even standing candidates in five of the thirty available seats.

The left in Hove Labour Party has done an enormous

amount of work over the last four to five years and it is largely the left's initiatives which have been the basis of party activity.

It was the left which organised public meetings to oppose the housing transfer and ran a campaign against the closure of old people's homes in the area. As a result a number of left candidates have been selected as candidates in the elections.

The other important element in the local political scene is that the government has decided that Hove and Brighton are to merge to become a large unitary authority.

This is likely to mean massive upheaval and possible cuts in services and a threat to the jobs of perhaps hundreds of workers in the present Hove, Brighton and East Sussex authorities.

### Counter-weight

A strong left presence in the Hove Labour group will act as a counterweight to the right-wing dominated Brighton group.

There is scope for the left in local government and it should be campaigning in these elections on a platform of no cuts in jobs and services, no to CCT and an end to attacks on party policy by our leaders.

## Defend Preston's left councillors!

By Mike Milne-Pickon

THE CAMPAIGN for the local elections in Preston came afloat in April when right-wing councillors used the press to launch an attack on the left leadership of the council.

Banner headlines on the front page of the *Lancashire Evening Post* reported that 14 Labour councillors had issued a press statement disassociating themselves from statements of the left Leader of the council, Valerie Wise.

The statement arose when, during April's council meeting, the Conservative group leader accused Valerie Wise of "wishing to see a socialist republic in Preston." Wise responded to this public red-baiting by saying that she very much hoped to see a socialist republic in Preston, and the rest of Britain, since it would mean an end to unemployment, poverty and cuts in public services.

This was too much for the local Blair supporters, who issued their statement in a calculated attempt to split Labour in the run-up to the elections and wreck Labour's chances.

Preston council is unusual, if not unique, in having a 'hard left' leadership composed of members of the Socialist Campaign Group Network.

Wise was a member of the Greater London Council in the mid-1980s, led by Ken Livingstone, and was the Chair of its pioneering Women's Committee. She is the daughter of the left MP for Preston, Audrey Wise, who is hated by the left wing locally for her enthusiastic campaigning for Clause Four and socialist policies.

While many sections of the party have moved to the right,

the Preston left has remained dominated by the politics of the Socialist Campaign Group.

The left won majority control of the Labour group last May by 16 votes to 15, in what the press called a left "coup."

Since then the left has sought to open up the council, fight corruption following the 'Operation Angel' police investigation of council officers and right-wing councillors, and improve council services and equal opportunities.

The right-wing is discredited among many rank and file party members because many of them are under police investigation for alleged corruption. They have tried to attack the council leadership and sabotage the local election campaign.

The right seized control of the Preston CLP in March, although the District Labour Party is still led by the left and has unanimously backed Valerie Wise's leadership in public.

As we go to press, it looks as though the left could win a stronger majority on the council. The defence of the council leadership against witchhunts nationally and locally is an important task for the left after the Special Conference and the council elections.

■ The BNP is to stand in elections to the Blackpool borough council. Lancashire was a centre of Nazi activity in the 1970s, but little had been seen recently. Local anti-fascists will be mobilising against the BNP. Two people are under police investigation for allegations of assaulting a BNP canvasser.

By Stuart Brown

BNP bonehead Gary Marshall is standing in the Kirkby-in-Ashfield local elections in May.

The town is one of a handful in the area paying the price for the Tories ruthless destruction of the local coal industry. Unemployment is over 25 per cent, youth unemployment even higher.

The past 18 months has

seen a rise in racist attacks with attempts by the fascists to organise a number of festivals and rallies.

In January a National Socialist Alliance meeting attracted over 100 supporters.

### Canvassing

So far the election campaign hasn't been going too well for them. They've been having problems getting supporters out to canvas.

Although local opposition is strong, many people

are too scared to put Labour posters in their windows for fear of retaliation.

One resident was subjected to a tirade and asked what she thought. Her dog came to the door and pissed on the man's leg. "That's my view too!" the woman replied slamming the door.

Anti-fascist groups have been regularly leafletting the town.

A mass Labour Party canvass has been arranged for April 29 in support of the lo-

cal candidates. The BNP has also called for a mass canvass on the same day. AFA and Nottingham Anti-Fascist Alliance will be mobilising to stop them.

In Newark, ex-BNP member, Brian Kent is also standing as a Christian Nationalist. Little is known about him or the organisation.

The fascists may only have a toe-hold in the area but even a toe is too much! It needs amputating - now!

COUNCIL ELECTIONS



# UNISON delegates say 'no' to blank cheque for Blair

**The vote by a special conference of UNISON's Affiliated Political Fund to reject Tony Blair's new Clause Four threw top Labour and UNISON bureaucrats into apoplectic rage, and opened a real possibility that Blair might lose.**

**Socialist Outlook spoke to GEOFF MARTIN, Chair of UNISON's London Region APF, who has been a leading campaigner in defence of Clause Four.**

**SO: Why did UNISON delegates stand firm against Blair's text?**

GM: The key sticking point was the reference in the new clause to private enterprise, the market and competition.

How could a public sector union which has been hammered over sixteen years on the basis of that very philosophy suddenly sign up to it, just because it has come from the Labour leader's office?

The new clause also comes in the wider context of concern that Labour is dumping policy commitments on issues

like the minimum wage, competitive tendering, rumours that they are going soft on the internal market in the NHS, and the fact that Tony Blair has sent his kid to an opted-out school.

All of this had a special resonance with low-paid UNISON members working in those very public services, who want to see something a bit more than that.

**SO: These policies won't come as a complete surprise to many UNISON members up against right wing Labour councils, will they?**

GM: That's right. We've already seen in London boroughs which have gone beyond the constraints of compulsory competitive tendering imposed on them by the Tories, and have voluntarily tendered out services they did not need to.

There is a feeling amongst activists in London that we could see the same thing from a Labour government. We are saying that we want this issue dealt with *before* we get a general election, *before* we get a Labour government, rather than wait till afterwards.

**SO: What are the arguments put up by people trying to defend the Blair clause?**

GM: The argument as far as I can understand it has been that we can't be seen to oppose the leader, rather than any attempt to address the nuts and bolts of what the clause does or doesn't say.

This is more or less an ex-



*Prescott's speech failed to win over UNISON delegates: so did blackmail from Labour and UNISON bureaucrats*

ercise in giving a blank cheque to the Labour leadership, and there's no way we can do that. There's too much at stake; there are already rumours about a Labour government going in hard against the public sector in terms of fi-

**"Blair's clause reads like an NHS opt-out Trust application, with all its references to the 'rigours of competition', 'enterprise', the market and all the rest of it. It is just completely alien."**

nance. That means going in hard on public sector pay.

There have been all sorts of rumour and speculation on what might happen to UNISON if we weren't seen to support the new clause. But in

the event a lot of the delegates at the special conference reacted against that.

People don't like to be blackmailed, and they don't like the impression that their views are being ignored and that they have just to sign up to something without having a proper debate.

It's quite interesting that Tony Blair was the person who said he wanted an open and honest debate on Clause Four.

But those of us who have engaged in it have had to run the gauntlet of unattributed slaggings-off from Labour front-benchers under the cloak of anonymity. If that's an open and honest debate, then forget it, really, it's just nonsense. He only wants an honest debate if everyone agrees with him.

**SO: Doesn't it seem strange that national officials of UNISON have left it up to you as a lay member to represent the view democratically decided by the union.**

GM: If they choose not to say anything it's up to them. I've got a very clear mandate from the London APF, and I'm quite happy to speak in support of it if anyone asks me.

If that means that I get slagged off or attacked by people close to the leader, then so be it. That's up to them.

What is unfortunate is that after this decision has been taken there has been an all-out attack on UNISON as an undemocratic and unrepresentative union, which is just entirely unhelpful.

They haven't criticised the AEEU, which hasn't had a ballot, but simply announced they are backing Blair.

We had a full and exhaustive

consultation process in the structures at branch and regional level which culminated in the national political forum.

I don't believe it's right to have one member one vote on every individual issue. We have representative democracy: that's what the House of Commons is about.

We haven't had a postal ballot like some of the CLPs who have been asking questions along the lines of 'Do you live in the modern world or are you some unreconstructed dinosaur still harking back to the nineteenth century?'

**SO: Of course much of the balloting of CLPs took place before the wording of the clause was published, meaning that some bought a pig in a poke.**

GM: That's right. And another question is whether some of the Labour front-benchers who say we should have had a ballot would have been prepared to stick their hands in their pockets and finance it for us.

I would rather see UNISON funds spent on campaigning for a pay rise for health workers at the moment rather than conducting ballots when we already have structures to deal with this type of consultation.

**SO: Now that UNISON is opposing Blair, the Special Conference is likely to be a much more close run thing. What do you see as the issues after April 29?**

GM: Certainly the Special Conference is not the end of the matter, whichever way

it goes.

The real battle will still be to get some real commitments into the manifesto for the next general election which reflect the wishes and aspirations of trade union members and other ordinary working class people.

Take the minimum wage for example. I just can't understand this argument that says we can't put a figure on the minimum wage until we see the Treasury's books. That's the line that I've been given by front-bench spokesman Kevin Barron.

I think that's rubbish. What they really mean is that we can't campaign for a minimum wage because we might upset some crap employers who pay people shit wages.

The problem we've got in the Labour Party at the moment is that there is no policy on almost anything: we've got this huge great vacuum.

So you get speculation, people saying 'this is going to be Labour's policy': the most recent example in the NHS has been this business about stopping funds for fertility treatment. Then you hear a ringing denunciation from Labour, saying 'that is not our policy'.

There has been a lot of speculation that Labour is looking to accept some elements of the NHS internal market.

The problem is that the revised clause four would give them room to do that. Blair's clause reads like an NHS opt-out Trust application, with all its references to the 'rigours of competition', 'enterprise', the market and all the rest of it. It is just completely alien.

We don't want to see the same drift in health that we've already seen on education. What are we going to have next? Tony Blair sending his kids to a private hospital?

**CLAUSE FOUR**

## Cut and paste job builds Tony's Tory platform

TONY BLAIR's new Clause Four may seem awfully familiar. But perhaps that's because several of its key aims and phrases have been lifted from old Tory manifestos.

Blair's eager enthusiasm for "the enterprise of the market" is a straight lift from Thatcher's 1979 commitment to "a free enterprise economy".

His call for "opportunity for all" is pinched from John Major's meaningless

1992 commitment to "responsibility and opportunity".

Blair's 'back to basics' call for "a just society which... nurtures families" is a paraphrase of Thatcher's 1983 call for "a responsible society which protects the weak but also allows the family and the individual to flourish."

Blair's insistence that "the rights we enjoy reflect the duties we owe" is obviously pinched from Thatcher's 1983 formula "freedom and responsibility go together."

Blair's call for a "thriving private sector" also recalls John Major's winning formula "competition and private ownership are the most powerful engines of economic efficiency."

Of course Blair's excuse for such brazen plagiarism is obvious: in each case the stolen phrases come from the manifesto of the party that won the election.

But with Tory policies so widely despised and discredited, even a capable opportunist should realise it might be better to keep well clear.



# Clause Four hangs on union vote

By Alan Thornett

The unions have put up the strongest fight in defence of Clause Four.

The stakes are high, especially for low-paid and public sector workers who have lost out most heavily to Tory free market policies.

Thinking the result is in the bag, Blair has already been touring radio studios making it clear that his right wing project has only just started, pledging to break the union link, and claiming that the Labour Party is undergoing a "revolution".

In one interview he expressed admiration for Mrs Thatcher - both of her "determination" as a politician and her stress on "enterprise".

If unions currently backing Clause Four, particu-

larly UNISON and the TGWU hold firm, the special conference vote is likely to be about 60 - 40 for Blair.

If other unions like the GMB or the MSF went for the old clause it could be much tighter.

The decision of UNISON to back the existing Clause was exactly the boost the campaign needed in its final stages. This victory was quickly cut across, however, by the CWU, whose vote went 9-1 to Blair, and USDAW, despite its large low-paid membership.

Much therefore rests on those yet to decide.

Both the media and the Blair camp are making the most of the CWU's ballot result, claiming this vindicates their line. But many of the unions which have voted for Blair did not hold ballots.

It remains, however, a

very fluid situation with a lot of pressure still to be applied by the right. A lot of arms are still to be twisted up the backs of those with votes in their hands.

The TGWU is especially vulnerable. Bill Morris equivocates more every time he goes on TV.

As we go to press he is insisting that despite current NEC policy it will be the delegation to conference which will decide - and refuses even to say which way he would prefer them to cast the TGWU

vote.

The left and the Campaign therefore need to keep up the pressure throughout this week to hold onto the existing vote and to extend it by winning the MSF vote and at least an abstention from the GMB.

As recently as the Scottish TUC GMB leader John Edmonds was joining calls for a £4 minimum wage, full employment and renationalisation of utilities, none of which is compatible with Blair's new clause.

At the same time the left

must be organised for special conference itself and the events surrounding it.

Earlier in the morning the Campaign is organising a meeting of delegates who are supporting the existing clause to discuss tactics and options inside the conference itself.

The Campaign has organised a tremendous fight over the past six months in defence of the clause, in defence of socialism, and in defence of a crucial reference point in the LP constitution.

Whatever the outcome of the special conference this weekend the campaign can be proud of this record, proud that it has been at the centre of the biggest political debate in the labour movement for decades, and proud that in the course of



Bill Morris: preparing to eat his strong words?

this it has rebuilt links and helped to strengthen a section of the left in both the LP and the trade unions which has been prepared to wage this fight under very difficult conditions.

**LOBBY Labour's  
Special Conference  
11.30am Saturday  
April 29  
Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre  
(Westminster tube)  
BRING YOUR BANNERS!**

# What's so new about Blair's 'New Labour'?

**NEIL MURRAY takes a long hard look at the politics of the party before Blair's arrival.**

IT HAS BECOME common to hear people on the Left say that if the battle over Clause IV is lost, the Labour Party "will be lost to socialism".

They claim Clause IV is the 'socialist heart' of the Party, representing its 'socialist roots'. The real nature of the Labour Party is somewhat different however.

The commitment in Clause IV to "securing the full fruits of their labour for the workers" stands in sharp contrast to what Labour does in government. Even the main reforms of what is generally considered the most left Labour government, that of 1945, did not get close to challenging the fundamentals of capitalism.

The introduction of the welfare state, welcome as it was, was common currency among all the parties of the day. After a second devastating war people were not prepared to put up any more with the poverty and disease of the pre-war years.

The nationalisations carried out by that government were of bankrupt industries essential to the infrastructure of capitalism. The boards set up to manage them consisted of ex-owners and others committed to ensuring they functioned for the benefit of capitalism as a whole. There was not a whiff of "popular administration and control".

Other Labour governments have done far less. What reforms they have implemented have been within limits acceptable to capitalism. They have been prepared to use troops against strikers, introduce pay re-



Attlee's 1945 Labour government had Clause 4, nationalisations - but was not a socialist government

strictions and anti-union laws.

In their foreign policy Labour governments have even more explicitly carried out the requirements of imperialism, although sometimes keeping it secret for fear of opposition in the Party's ranks.

## Capitalist policies

In short, every Labour government has been a capitalist government.

Even in opposition Labour has kept its fight against Tory governments within clearly defined boundaries. While fulminating against the worst excesses of their policy, it has been careful to keep the fight against them within legal, and if possible, parliamentary channels.

From the fight of Poplar councillors in the 1920s to the battle over rate-capping in the 1980s, the Labour leadership has kept a safe distance between the Party and popular resistance.

Even when it has had to appear to support such fights, as with the General Strike of 1926, it has used its influence to undermine them and, ultimately, to sell them out. Yet at the same time these struggles have enjoyed massive active support from the vast majority of Party members and supporters.

Take the miners' strike of 1984-85. While the Party leadership under Kinnock did as little as possible, Party members turned out in vast numbers on picket lines and demonstrations.

Only after the strike had been lost was Kinnock able to express his true feelings, going on the offensive against Arthur Scargill and the left in general.

The Clause IV debate has shown that many Party members and trades unionists think Labour should be committed to fundamental change in society.

These contradictions, between the desires of the base of the Party and what the Party actually does in practice, are not simply a product of people deluding themselves, but a contradiction built in to the very nature of the Labour Party.

## Hallmarks

Formed by the unions to represent the interests of Labour in parliament, the Labour Representation Committee bore all the hallmarks of trade union politics from the start. Under capitalism, the unions exist to improve workers' conditions within the system. They do not challenge the system itself.

The Labour Party expresses this on a national scale through Parliament. While accepting and administering capitalism it attempts to obtain reforms within the system.

It represents the organisational in-

dependence of the working class from the bosses' parties. But this is a long way from the political independence represented by a socialist programme capable of leading the working class to the seizure of power and the establishment of a socialist society.

Before the battle was won in the unions to establish an independent party of Labour many trade union leaders were happy to sit as Liberal MPs.

Although the break to form the Labour Representation Committee represented a recognition of the need for organisational independence and for some policy differences (particularly around the anti-union laws of the day) it did not signify a programmatic break with the rationale of capitalism.

The establishment of the Labour Party as an independent party of the working class represented (and still represents) a significant gain over such countries as the USA, where the working class has to choose between two explicitly capitalist parties.

But the Labour Party never was a socialist party in any meaningful sense of the word.

The adoption of Clause IV by the Party in 1918 was a recognition that there was great sympathy in Britain for the Bolshevik revolution and that many workers sought such fundamental change here. But the leadership either never had any intention of introducing this change.

It is these contradictions in the nature of the Labour Party which lead revolutionary socialists to describe it as a bourgeois (i.e. capitalist) workers' party. While based on the organised working class the programme it attempts to carry out is one rooted in trade union politics - bourgeois through and through.

CLAUSE FOUR



# Vietnam victory changed the world

By Harry Sloan

TWENTY years ago socialists and internationalists were celebrating the historic victory of the Vietnamese people over the brute force of US imperialism.

The world thrilled to television pictures of the chaotic retreat from Saigon, the helicopters lifting the last US marines from the embassy roof, after years in which the same TV channels had relayed some of the misery and horror of the war.

The US defeat, and the collapse of its vicious puppet regime in South Vietnam, opened up a new period for struggles internationally.

Though they were outgunned by the huge US war machine, and left to fight alone by the Soviet and Chinese stalinist regimes, the unbroken resistance of the Vietnamese fatally cracked the morale of the US and puppet forces.

Faced with a growing mass mobilisation against the war within the US itself, and the disintegration of its conscript army on the battlefields of Vietnam, the world's most powerful imperialist nation had been fought to a standstill.

It was left no other course but retreat.

The following 15 years saw US global intervention shackled by the 'Vietnam syndrome', the war-weariness, hostility to large-scale military intervention, and fears of another bruising defeat.

The Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions of 1979, both of which toppled key US strategic allies, were spared the immediate threat of US intervention. The half-cocked effort to free US embassy hostages in Iran without committing substantial forces proved a complete fiasco, and reinforced the 'Vietnam syndrome'.

## Arms race

To hide this obvious weakness, in the 1980s, under Ronald Reagan, the military focus shifted from the threat to deploy mass forces of ground troops to the rapid build-up of war technology, escalating the arms race and the economic crisis with the deployment of Cruise and a new generation of ground-based missiles, new, more deadly nuclear submarines, new warplanes, and the 'Star Wars' anti-missile defence system.

It was not until the Gulf War that, under cover of the blue flags of the United Nations and a relentless aerial bombardment, the USA again felt safe to send large contingents of ground troops into action against a single, isolated enemy.

But while imperialism was weakened by the Vietnamese victory, the taking of Saigon was also seen as a threat to the 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism which both the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies had hoped to maintain.

A hostile Soviet leadership set its face even more resolutely against any form of support for liberation struggles - in Central America, Southern Africa, the Philippines and elsewhere. It was made obvious from day one of the Nicaraguan Revolution that the Kremlin was not prepared to give the military and economic support to the Sandinistas which the Kruschev regime had given to Fidel Castro's 1959 revo-

lution in Cuba.

But another stalinist regime was also forced to tread carefully after the Vietnam victory. Ho Chi Minh's government in North Vietnam did not wish to allow the Viet Cong forces which had battled so hard to defeat the USA to take power into their own hands in the South.

It was no accident that the tanks which completed the liberation of Saigon were manned by North Vietnamese regular troops and not by the National Liberation Front.

Ho's government took control, but did not hurry to expropriate capitalism in the South, waiting until the mass upsurge around the victory had died down, and political control had been firmly established, before moving to unify the country.

The economic and environmental devastation wreaked by a 25-year war on what had always been an underdeveloped country made it quite obvious that there could be no question of building 'socialism' in Vietnam alone.

Lacking adequate technological and economic support from the Soviet Union and China, while understandably reluctant to seek deals with imperialism, Vietnam remained caught in an impossible contradiction.

It is a sorry reflection of this that 20 years after their heroic struggles liberated their country from imperialist rule, the Vietnamese people, like the Chinese workers, denied trade union and other democratic rights, find major imperialist multinationals now eagerly setting up plants to exploit their cheap labour.

A new BMW plant in Hanoi is clearly not catering for a domestic market: it is a key element in the strategy of the German car-makers to cut wages and conditions world-wide.

While we celebrate the fighting spirit, the tenacity and commitment which won the military victory in Vietnam, the full *political* victory has yet to be won.

We reprint here extracts from keynote articles on the Vietnamese victory written at the time by two British Trotskyist organisations, whose very different traditions have since converged on many issues.

The first is from *Red Weekly*, paper of the International Marxist Group, then the British section of the Fourth International.

The second is from *Socialist Press*, then a newly-launched fortnightly paper of the Workers Socialist League, formed after mass expulsions from Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party.



## Vietnam - Vanguard of Humanity

WHAT MORE can be said on Vietnam? The red, blue and gold flag of the Provisional Revolutionary Government flies over Ho Chi Minh City. The United States, the greatest military power on earth, has suffered its first ever defeat in war.

The international working class has celebrated one of its greatest ever May Days. Humanity has taken one long stride nearer its liberation.

But as revolutionaries glory in the triumph of Indochina, we should understand what made such a victory possible:

● first, last and above

all else the heroism and will to struggle of the Indochinese workers and peasants.

● the solidarity of revolutionaries throughout the world, from Che Guevara in Bolivia to the anti-war movement in the United States, who helped sap the belly of the imperialist monster.



20 years on : retreat from Somalia

# A bloody nose for Globocop

By Bala Kumar

WHEN the United States pulled out of Somalia a year ago to be followed last month by the remaining United Nations troops, it had suffered its greatest humiliation in twenty years.

George Bush's parting gift to his successor was "Operation Restore Hope".

It was a "humanitarian intervention" we were told, the US acting out of pure selflessness, to deliver Somalia from famine and the grip of warring militias.

It was conveniently overlooked that the famine had peaked well before December 1992, and that western governments had ignored repeated appeals for food aid. Also ignored was the fact that these 'warlords' were using western made arms.

Before long the United Nations contingent led by the US began acting as just another warlord, when it became entangled with General Farah Aideed.

There is little to recommend any of the militia leaders, but Aideed's only saving grace is that he refused to follow the simple plan the US/UN arrived with - to instal his rival Ali Mahdi as Prime Minister, restore state authority and replace the soldiers with bankers and businessmen.

## Goose chase

Farah Aideed had a little more ambition than a Cabinet post, but when the US/UN issued a warrant for his arrest he led them on a merry goose chase - which they ultimately lost.

They made him into a symbol of Somali pride and a national hero, and made themselves almost as unpopular as the hated ex-dictator Siad Barre.

In Somalia we were introduced to this new doctrine of 'humanitarian intervention', since used to justify the invasion of Haiti.

But from the start the Left warned that this was simply imperialism re-inventing itself.

Why was the US in Somalia? There are broadly three explanations advanced which overlap in places.

- Somalia is of strategic importance both for its location and its resources;

- Islamic fundamentalist regimes were being given a taste of US firepower;

- and, that it was an exercise in post-Cold War militarism.

In the event, the lure of a possible strategic military outpost in the Horn of Africa, hopes of monopolising potential oil reserves, and the desire to intimidate potentially hostile regimes in the region through a show of force proved insufficient to persuade Bill Clinton to commit more US forces to Somalia.

As a result, the world's most powerful military machine was given the run-around by a bunch of indisciplined local militias, and withdrew amid scenes of total chaos, confirming the impotence of firepower and hardware in the absence of a political base.

When we called for the

withdrawal of the US/UN we were told that a bloodbath would occur, yet the reverse has happened.

Somalia has actually cooled down as a result of the withdrawal.

The militia leaders have been robbed of the media attention and UN patronage that kept them in power. Across Somalia the 'warlords' are losing authority to clan elders, who are drawing on traditional practices to contract with neighbouring clans for peace.

Agreements like these kept the northern republic of Somaliland free of famine and war the last few years.

Aideed's power base is shrinking to south Mogadishu as his allies in the rest of the country tire of him and are preoccupied with their own political survival.

There are persistent rumours that the UN paid Aideed and his arch-rival Ali Mahdi huge sums of money not to restart the war and to broker a coalition government. True or not, this has only discredited them further before the people.



The old formula and the new hardware were not enough to crush Somali militias

There are no other credible alternatives except small groups of liberal intellectuals mainly in exile.

A new feature is the emergence of fundamentalist movements asserting an Islamic identity to unify the Somali people when clan identities are blamed for the chaos and tragedies of the past.

In north Mogadishu, Islamic tribunals have been carrying out sharia punishments such as amputation of limbs and even stoning to death an alleged criminal.

Somalia may have collapsed as a nation state, but across the country regions are administering themselves,

drawing support from clan associations, and particularly women who are often the heads of families following the death of their husband.

Clad in the uniform of the United Nations and with "humanitarianism" as its badge, the US wants to be accepted as globo-cop.

The failure to build a movement for US withdrawal is lamentable, but any belief that this latest phase of imperialism is an improvement on the past is inexcusable.

Above all, Somalia should remind us that imperialism - contrary to its own mythology - doesn't always win.

# Vietnam: Now for Political Revolution!

AFTER 30 years of war, during which the most barbaric and sustained bombardment by the world's most advanced weaponry had failed to extinguish the spirit of revolutionary struggle, the Vietnamese workers and peasants have defeated the puppet forces of South Vietnam and US

imperialism.

The greatest blow has been struck against capitalism since the Chinese Revolution of 1949, and a lasting blow also at the treacherous Stalinist conception of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'detente' put forward by the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies.

Taken with the revolutionary victory of the Khmer

Rouge forces in Cambodia and the rapidly approaching complete collapse of the government in Laos, the Vietnamese victory must be seen as part of the world movement of the working masses now taking place against the attacks and oppression of capitalism.

Flowing from this must come an understanding of the continuing international

obligations of the new united state of Vietnam. The dangers are that the Hanoi regime, which has held bureaucratic control of the economic and political life, will turn away from these responsibilities.

The statement by Mme Minh at Heathrow Airport last week when, amidst general statements on supporting struggle in other countries, she said: "But having suffered so much from foreign intervention it is not our intention to interfere in the affairs of other countries", shows the dangerous tendencies towards nationalism gaining a hold on the bureaucracy now that the immediate threats of imperialism have been dispelled.

While supporting wholeheartedly the revolutionary struggles of the Vietnamese masses, we have stressed the vital need for organs of workers' and peasants' power to combat the danger of bureaucratic degeneration within the now united country.

This is in opposition to the astounding line of the Workers Revolutionary Party, which now declares unconditional support for

the 'consistent revolutionary line' of the Hanoi regime since the NLF took up arms in 1941.

## Murder

Presumably the WRP consider the 'consistent revolutionary line' includes the murder of the Vietnamese Trotskyists, who led the struggles against the French and Japanese in the 1930s and the Second World War, and who led workers' militias in South Vietnam in 1945. Such a statement is scandalous in a paper claiming to be Trotskyist.

The problems now require a Trotskyist leadership with the lessons of the historical fight against Stalinism.

It is clearly impossible to construct socialism (under which the level of material wealth and of production must be raised above that possible under capitalism) within the narrow national confines of Vietnam itself.

For the overthrow of capitalism in Vietnam to go forward to the establishment of a socialist workers' state, there must be both an expansion of industry under the control of organs of workers management, di-

recting towards an overall national plan, and the fullest active support for revolutionary struggle throughout Asia and the imperialist world.

The Moscow and Peking bureaucracies have restricted the supplies of arms to the struggles in Vietnam and Cambodia as part of their separate push for deals and detente with the US imperialists - using the Vietnamese masses as a bargaining counter.

Now the technological assistance forthcoming to Vietnam will be very much conditioned by the political manoeuvres of the Stalinist bureaucracies.

The economy will thus remain inadequate to eliminate the inequalities on which bureaucracy festers and future social contradictions can store up.

The way forward is therefore through the establishment in the towns and villages of soviets through which the power of the liberated workers, peasants and soldiers of Vietnam can be consolidated in challenging the bureaucracy, and bringing about the political revolution.

*Socialist Press, May 15 1975*

- the endeavour of the working class of the entire world, whose unrelenting struggle dispersed the power of the capitalist system and its war criminals.

The Vietnamese triumph - in a way that no revolution has been since Russia in 1917 - is the victory of the international working class and its struggle.

Vietnam - the spark which lit the flame of revolutionary struggle for millions of people in the imperialist countries - is the ultimate disproof of the lie that imperialism and the world working class could 'peacefully co-exist'. Vietnam is the living example that the socialist conquest of power must involve the violent destruction of the capitalist system.

Finally, Vietnam ex-

presses something which has never been seen so clearly until this day. No country in the world has ever met an imperialist onslaught on the scale of that in Indochina.

The allied invasion of Russia in 1918 was nothing compared to the nightmare of Vietnam. Five times as many bombs as in the entire Second World War rained down on a country with a population only half that of Britain.

The forests were stripped, the people were attacked with poison gas, and the soldiers were asphyxiated with bombs which sucked the oxygen from the air. The United States created a South Vietnamese army of over a million and gave it the third largest airforce in the

world. And it was the Americans who lost.

Their puppet army was pulverised to defeat in eight weeks. Nothing in history has ever shown in quite the same way the force, the superiority of politics to weaponry, the superiority of courage and revolutionary will to the mechanical power of the paid puppets of imperialism.

Indochina is the ultimate lesson that no matter what horrors capitalism can unleash, it will be the working class that will triumph in the end.

Vietnam resounds around the world because it confirms the great cry that once echoed from Havana through the slums of Harlem to Hanoi: 'Venceremos - We Will Win!'

*(Red Weekly, May 8 1975)*

CENTRE STAGE



Military "state of seige" follows general strike

# Crackdown in Bolivia

**HUNDREDS of trade union leaders, peasant activists and student militants have been rounded up in Bolivia following a government declaration of a "state of seige", reports SIMON DAY.**

THE CONSTITUTION has been suspended and more than 1000 trade union, peasant and student leaders have been arrested. They are being systematically expelled from their home regions and sent into internal exile. Detention is without trial.

The military have seized all the strategic points in the country - streets, schools, universities and workplaces. A clandestine committee has been formed to resist the repression and organise the protests - street demonstrations, road blockades and the continuing general strike.

## National

The crackdown follows an indefinite national strike by teachers against the privatisation of education, for an increased budget and for better wages. Like the rest of Bolivian workers the teachers earn less than £100 pounds a month but have to buy goods at western prices.

The strike mobilised mass support of parents, students, community organisations and other trades unions. It spread from the countryside to the main cities. Thousands walked in so-called "sacrifice marches" through the freezing highlands.

Telecommunication work-



*The Bolivian military are enforcing a 90-day suspension of all constitutional rights through the 'state of seige'*

ers and miners have also struck against privatisation.

The government action followed a national conference of delegates from factories, mines and peasant unions called by the Bolivian trade union federation *Central Obrera Boliviana*. The police and military forced their way in and arrested all present.

## General strike

A spontaneous general strike has been gathering pace since the beginning of April.

There have been regular clashes of demonstrators and police in La Paz. The southern border province of Tarija has declared its independence from the central government.

The militants that have been rounded up in the last week have been sent to some of the most inhospitable regions of the country - Bolivia's "Siberia" up in the Andes mountains and the disease ridden parts of the Amazon. They are being threatened with sentences of

up to 15 years in jail for organising and advocating strikes.

## Vicious

President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada has a record of repressive measures. In 1985 days after becoming economic minister he declared a vicious programme of economic shock therapy.

In one day wages were frozen and the prices of goods increased fifteen-fold. He declared a state of seige when the COB launched a general

strike. When 15,000 Bolivians marched with the miners for better wages de Lozada used the army to put down the protests.

He is one of the richest people in the country, owning one of the biggest mining companies. He uses his government powers to sell off government industries at knock down prices, directly benefiting from the privatisation drive.

All trades unionists and labour movement activists must demand the immediate and

unconditional release of all political prisoners in Bolivia. The state of seige should be ended. Trade union and democratic freedoms must be defended against the dictatorial regime of de Lozada.

• Send letters of protest to *Presidencia de la Republica, Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza Murillo, La Paz, Bolivia*. Send faxes to the *Bolivian Embassy on (0171) 235 1286*.

WORLD OUTLOOK

## IWA Bosnia convoys roll on

By Roland Rance

**DURING THE** long Bosnian winter, and despite the increased fighting in the Tuzla region, International Workers' Aid has continued its convoys to Bosnia.

This is providing much-needed support to the Bosnian people's struggle against fascism and genocide. Tuzla, the centre of IWA activity, remains the only large town in Bosnia governed by non-nationalist forces.

Its population of 110,000 is swollen by 60,000 refugees, with tens of thousands more in the sur-

rounding region. Unemployment is about 70%, while many of those in work receive little or no pay.

### Union

In a joint project with the Miners Union, several hundred tonnes of flour and other foodstuffs have so far been distributed by IWA's Bread Programme.

The three Miners Unions in Tuzla merged last year, creating one union with over 12,000 members. Of these, only 3500 are working in the mines; 4800 are fighting on the frontline, while 4000 are unemployed.

These and their families are

the main recipients of this aid.

In a separate project in coordination with the Womens Association, some 20,000 womens parcels have been sent by IWA and distributed to women in Tuzla. In addition, money has been raised for the purchase of a mammograph, which has been taken to a hospital in Zenica. Additional food, clothing and other aid has been distributed to refugees in the camps in Croatia.

Other projects being studied include support for the Miners Union in providing working clothes for miners, support for an independent non-nationalist newspaper in Tuzla and for a non-commercial women's paper,

and possibly organising tours of Bosnian miners and journalists in western Europe.

IWA is demonstrating the reality of international workers' solidarity with the Bosnian people, in the face of the support of western governments for 'ethnic cleansing' and the partition of Bosnia.

### Europe

IWA continues to gain support across Europe. A new group has been established in Norway, which has already attracted many trade union affiliations.

IWA groups are now active in over a dozen countries. For several months, however, the cam-

paign has not functioned in Britain except to raise fund to pass directly to IWA Europe. Activists from the campaign decided recently to support the work and projects of IWA Europe, and appealed for donations.

Until we establish the British campaign more firmly, any money received will be sent on to IWA groups in Europe to support these vital projects.

• Donations should be sent to IWA, c/o PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU. Cheques should be made payable to International Workers Aid.





Surprise winner: Jospin

## Chirac knocked back in French poll shock

By Charles Mullet

JOSPIN'S surprise lead in the first round of French presidential elections is a primarily a defeat to Chirac.

Up to now Jacques Chirac has been the most successful of the right wing candidates in giving an impression of a sympathetic understanding of the pressures on France's voters.

He has thrown out a series of enigmatic remarks which hint at support for wage rises, reviving the economy and a referendum on Economic and Monetary Union.

This enabled him to gain ground against fellow Gaullist Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, who entered the campaign as clear favourite.

The combination policy of the franc fort (hard money) and a frenetic foreign policy has meant a permanent economic squeeze resulting in chronic high unemployment and a budgetary black hole created by demands on the social security system.

The debacle of European action in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere has called into question the effectiveness of French leadership abroad.

### Racist vote

The record 15% vote for Le Pen's National Front is an indication of the disenchantment of voters with the mainstream parties. Racism in republican guise will undoubtedly be a feature of a new rightwing presidency.

The Socialist Party candidate Lionel Jospin has laboured under the heavy burden of the memories of Socialist misrule.

On the other hand, Chirac has shown the left how it could start to revive its fortunes: dump Maastricht, dump imperial ambitions, go for jobs and growth. The left now has to pressure Jospin to take this course.

# Zapata rides again

**MAGDALENA VILLIERS** has recently returned from Mexico. She offers an eye witness account of the rebellion in Chiapas led by forces echoing the legendary revolutionary Emiliano Zapata.

ON THE FIRST day of 1994 Mexico jumped into the news when armed insurgents took over three towns in Chiapas in the extreme south of the country.

This was the first notice that most people, including many Mexicans, had that the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) existed.

But in fact the EZLN had been working quietly in Chiapas for at least a decade and had built a strong presence among the indigenous peoples, the campesinos and the working class.

The demands being presented by the EZLN are basically the same demand that were made during the Mexican revolution of 1910 by Emiliano Zapata himself (hence the name).

Why, given that the 1910 revolution gave birth to one of the world's greatest progressive constitutions, have these issues surfaced again?

The answer's simple - Chiapas is the richest state in the Mexican federation in resources, and the people are the poorest.

More than 60 per cent of Mexico's electricity is gener-

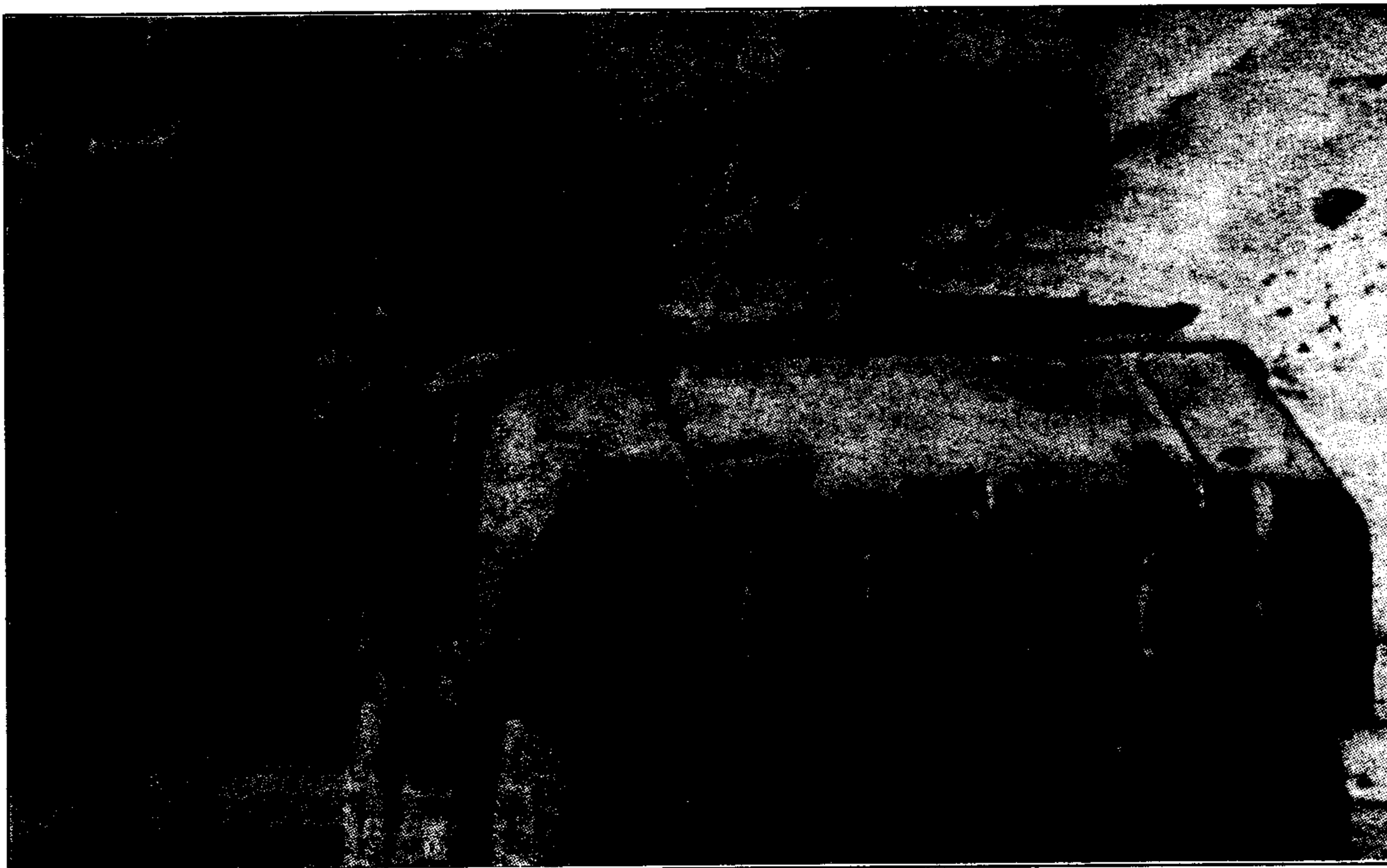
ated here, mainly from hydroelectric plants - but the price of electricity is the highest in Mexico. Huge amount of coffee, beef, cereals, cocoa, spices, minerals and bananas are exported.

The state is lying on a huge, virtually untapped, pool of oil, but the only people who profit are large landowners and multinational companies like Nestle.

Campesinos make up 80 per cent of the 3.2 million population of Chiapas, and many earn only 100 pounds a year. Malnutrition is rife. Few homes that have running water, drainage, bathrooms or electricity.

The terrain is extremely rugged, made up of mountains and jungle, and there are few paved roads. In consequence, the PRONASOL and SOLIDARIDAD programs, which have built utilities, schools and hospitals that serve the people well in other parts of Mexico, have failed in Chiapas.

The ratio of hospital beds has been increased - but they



Mexican army convoy rolls in to Chiapas - but fails to locate Marcos!



Two more who claim to be Marcos

are often 8 hours ride away over the mountains. Half of the children are growing up illiterate because the schools are two hours walk from their homes - and anyway they have to work in order to eat.

What is needed is a programme of itinerant teachers and doctors.

Given that Mexican university students get virtually free tuition in exchange for a (paid) year's work for the state, this could easily be pro-

vided.

The EZLN has articulated the cries of the people, but the uprising is far from confined to an elite political group. The slogan that has emerged is "Somos todos Marcos" - "We're all Marcos" - a reference to the pen name of the EZLN leader.

When the Federal Army thought it had penned the EZLN in a remote part of the mountains, it was unable to discover where any of the Zapatistas were - everyone is a Zapatista.

The military presence is very large, with machine gun emplacements at the entrance to every village and town. Harassment is still widespread.

(It's not confined to Chiapas - my bus to Mexico City was stopped and searched by machine-gun toting soldiers, not just once, but four times in three hours between mid-

night and 3.30 am)

At least 15,000 people were forced out of their homes by the Federales prior to March 1995, when an amnesty law was passed to enable them to return home without army reprisals.

Of course, the harassment hasn't stopped, but it is a bit muted now, especially since Archbishop Samuel Ruiz, a liberation theologian, has taken several human rights violations to the Supreme Court, unmoved by assassination attempts.

And then there's the Caravan for

Peace, organised by non-governmental non-UN organisations, to watch over the people's return home. (Not a very safe activity - the Federales opened fire on the group a few days ago).

Unfortunately for the Mexican government, the EZLN has not disappeared, in spite of the Federal army harassment and other actions, including the bombings.

Instead its support has become so strong and widespread across the whole of Mexico that the Zedillo regime has been forced to concede some of the EZLN's first demands and to open talks on other issues, including agendas for indigenous peoples and women's rights and the dire economic situation.

For more information, contact the Mexico Solidarity Group or the Mexico Committee for Human Rights, both based in Casa Latina-America, Kingsgate Place, London NW6.

## South African workers betrayed

By Charlie van Gelderen

IN THE DECADES of struggle against apartheid every section of the South African liberation movement emphasised the "leading role of the working class".

It was the militancy of workers which eventually compelled South African capitalism to change course.

The alliance of powerful black trades unions which emerged in the 1970s with the struggle against apartheid frightened the ruling class. It feared the transformation of the struggle for national liberation into an anti-capitalist struggle.

It was this fear that drove the ruling class to

seek an accommodation with the leadership of the liberation movement, particularly with the ANC.

The unwritten part of the agreement was that the ANC leadership, its Communist Party allies and the

COSATU bureaucracy would all honour an implied "social contract" and keep the workers in order.

The ANC led government is now delivering as expected.

A proposed new labour

relations bill will severely restrict the rights of workers - reneging on all the promises made in the freedom charter and in numerous speeches from the leadership.

The bill is scheduled for

debate in parliament in June.

Several workers' organisations, including the marxist Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action, are leading the fight against the it.

### The main provisions of South Africa's draft Labour Relations Bill include:

1. Workers are allowed to strike only after 30 days have gone by, or after the dispute has been mediated.
2. Workers must give 48 hours notice of their intent to strike.
3. Scabbing is permitted.
4. Picketing is allowed on the premises only with the employer's consent.
5. Even if the strike is "legal" under these terms workers can still be dismissed for "technical, structural

- or economic" reasons.
6. Strikes over firings, layoffs and recognition of union jurisdiction are outlawed unless they go first to the Labour Court arbitration process.
7. Strikes are prohibited in "essential services" such as those concerning health and safety.
8. Strikes are also prohibited in services requiring continuous maintenance. This is not spelled out, but could include mines, steel, food production and wherever the

- employer deems work is needed.
9. Bosses can fire workers for taking part in, or even "contemplating" an unprocedural strike. Unions can be sued for losses.
10. There is no obligation for employers to recognise or bargain with unions.
11. Arbitration is by government commission. The unions no longer have a right to reject arbitrators they think are biased.



# Our morals are not theirs!

**"In an epoch of triumphant reaction the various democrats, social democrats, anarchists and other representatives of the 'left' exude twice as much morality, in the same way as people sweat twice as much when they are afraid".**

**So begins the first of the two pungent essays that form 'Their Morals and Ours', a short book by Leon Trotsky published over fifty years ago.**

**ENZO TRAVERSO marks the recent appearance of a new French edition. The translation is by Charles Mullett.**

**WITH THE CLOUDS of war gathering over Europe and the show trials in the Soviet Union, many left-wing intellectuals in the 1930s were persuaded that the horrors of Stalinism were an inevitable product of the Bolshevik Revolution.**

Trotsky's was a tightly-reasoned counter-argument refuting the facile equations of communism and fascism, Bolshevism and Stalinism, Trotskyism and Stalinism.

He presents Stalinism not as a logical consequence of Bolshevik "amoralism" or godless communism, but as the historical product

of an isolated and suffocated revolution in a socially backward country.

In his view, there can be no question of "elementary rules of morality developed in line with the growth of humanity as a whole and necessary for the life of the whole collective".

He does not reject the Enlightenment notion of a universal human morality, but emphasises that it exists in the concrete reality of a society divided into classes. To put it another way, history obliges morality to take on class features and, in the epoch of imperialism, the universal ethical ideal is embodied by the revolution.

To the accusation that the Bolsheviks followed a Jesuitical or Machiavellian amorality expressed in the phrase "the end justifies the means" he answers that historical materialism does not recognise such a simplistic divide.

For Marxism the end is communism - human freedom, the abolition of the domination of one person by another and the restoration of a human community in harmony with nature. This implies that not all means are acceptable, and that some must be ruled out because they can only act as obstacles to the achievement of the desired end.

"One would have hoped that Trotsky would have established the necessary distinctions, specifying which means are and are not permissible.

Unfortunately he insists on the historical legitimacy of means that have seemed very dubious, even harmful.

A serious problem arises when Trotsky defends all the political and military measures employed by the Soviet regime in the 1918-1921 civil war which followed the October Revolution.

In the name of the defence of the revolution he justifies the summary executions by the Soviet secret police, the establishment of



*Grisly remains of Stalinist repression. Mass grave of NKVD mass murder of 250,000 near Minsk.*



*When did defence of the Revolution become repression? Stalin (right) with Cheka boss Dzerzhinsky.*

copyright, the outlawing of counter-revolutionary parties and even the imposition of the de facto dictatorship of a single party and the taking of hostages and the execution of family members.

If we take seriously Trotsky's own stated principle, according to

which the goal of socialism implies an ethically-based restriction on the methods of struggle, Victor Serge's objections seem justified: "the degeneration of Bolshevism began when the Cheka won the right to decide people's fate behind closed doors".

Trotsky draws on the authority of Marx and the experience of the workers' movement to show that some acts of "revolting barbarity" were necessarily inscribed in the conditions of civil war.

But he does not consider whether summary executions, secret trials, censorship and the banning of all the anti-Bolshevik parties might not have fostered the rise of Stalinism and the authoritarian regression of the Russian Revolution - whether there are means which are politically and ethically illegitimate for attaining the goal of human liberation.

With the benefit of hindsight and without wishing to idealise or make ahistorical comparisons, we can say that the Sandinista revolutionaries in Nicaragua proved Serge right.

In this extremely poor country, economically strangled and the victim of imperialist military aggression, not only did the revolutionary government not carry out executions of hostages, they also abolished the death penalty, permitted

total freedom of expression to the counter-revolutionary camp and even promoted the social reintegration of Contra prisoners.

In fact some of the noblest pages in the history of the workers' movement, such as the Warsaw ghetto uprising of Spring 1943, were inspired by this simple moral principle: the primacy of the human dignity.

Whole generations of men and women have been inspired to struggle for socialism for moral reasons. Socialism cannot therefore escape the need to define a "code of ethical behaviour". Class morality cannot embody universal human morality if it does not recognise that certain means are unacceptable.

If injustice and oppression justify revolt and taking up arms, a revolutionary project for human emancipation leaves no room for massacres and torture. These means work against the desired end.

Even so, fifty years after it first appeared, Trotsky's work still retains a certain freshness.

If socialism needs to be thought through anew, the necessary "re-foundation" will have to be both ethical and political. After all, our morals are not theirs.

## Trumping the Tory race card

**Still Resisting After All These Years and Workers' Control Not Immigration Controls, two pamphlets by STEVE COHEN**

**Reviewed by K. Govindan**

WHAT could be more predictable than the Tories reaching for the race card when their fortunes hit bottom?

Labour's support for immigration controls is just as predictable.

Steve Cohen recounts in *Still resisting* how the TUC and trades councils opposed the agitation of Jewish workers around the 1905 Aliens Act, Britain's first immigration law. Jews fleeing from anti-

semitism in Europe were feared as potential rivals for jobs.

It was for Jewish worker militants to remind British workers that "the vast amount of poverty and unemployment which exists is in no way due to the influx of foreign workmen, but is the result of the private ownership of the means of production".

Trade union and Labour Party activists will find Cohen's work full of useful insights. It is an invaluable addition to our campaigning work.

As well as offering a summary of a century's campaigning against immigration controls he frames a programme for trade union action.

The pamphlet *Workers' control not immigration control* expands and explains the thinking behind slogans such as "All immigration controls are racist" and "Repeal all immigration controls".

If we can raise one flaw in

what is overall an excellent and useful contribution then it is the absence of more precise economic analysis explaining the reasons for legislation.

Cohen's discussion of the international dimensions of the controls is particularly important in an age of globalisation. In Britain we are becoming more aware of the racist motivation behind ideas of Fortress Europe. This is combined with particularly repressive internal controls to police resident immigrants.

The next stage of our campaign must therefore be to link national campaigns to the Europe-wide struggle.

■ For more information and copies of the pamphlets contact Greater Manchester Immigration Aid, 400 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 9LE, Telephone 0161 740 7722.



# Danger: sectarians at work!

*Socialists In The Trade Unions*, by Alex Callinicos, Bookmarks, £3.50.

Reviewed by Keith Sinclair

The Socialist Workers Party has produced a new handbook aimed at "activists who want to make the unions fighting organisations".

Given that *Socialist Outlook* shares that laudable aim, it should be possible to recommend the book. However, despite certain strengths it is a disappointment – although not a particularly unexpected one.

The book starts off with a useful section that demolishes the argument that the unions are finished.

Callinicos uses up-to-date statistics to prove that rumours of the unions' death have been greatly exaggerated.

The government's own *Employment Gazette* is quoted: "The decline in union membership overall since 1989 can thus be ac-

counted for almost entirely by the decline in manual membership."

Callinicos effectively makes the point that the working class contains far more people than some would have us believe – CPSA members in the DSS or school office workers are as working class as the few remaining car workers in Cowley.

There then follows a section on Rank and File organisation which is interesting as it gives an inkling of why the book has been produced – the recent turn of the SWP to creating "a network of Socialist Worker sellers" in the workplaces.

Callinicos contrasts the SWP's policy of "rank and filism" to the work of the Communist Party-led National Minority Movement in the 1920s.

## Key tasks

He argues that the questions involved in building a national rank and file movement can wait for the future, meantime activists should carry out the following four tasks - build strong sectional organisation, prioritise solidarity work, work with and against union officials – and

selling *Socialist Worker*!

What's omitted from the list of tasks is also very important.

What about union branches, for example? Nor is there any mention of the need to link together militants to fight. Joining the SWP is the only option they are given.

It is necessary to try to unite serious activists now in the unions – we cannot wait until everyone sees the need to build a revolutionary party.

In most unions there are some sort of broad left or other left type of organisation.

Those formations are important, even if in most cases they are not as effective and open as they might be.

Organisations like the Socialist Teachers' Alliance (STA) represent a real gain and can play crucial roles in struggles, as they did in the Anti-SATS Campaign, and can again in the fight on class sizes.

Yet the SWP "new line" has been accompanied by a gradual withdrawal of SWP teachers from active participation in the STA at a national level.



It ain't half sectarian, mum! SWP is splitting from Broad Lefts to 'build the party'

SWP civil servants have also withdrawn from involvement in some of the sectional Broad Lefts in the CPSA.

The book ends with some thirteen pages of lists of "useful addresses". If a civil servant in the CPSA wants to contact their union headquarters they will find the number. But they will look in vain for the address of the CPSA Broad Left!

There is no mention of any of the attempts that have been made to build links across the various unions such as *Trade Union News* or the Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee.

## Rationalisation

The book is therefore a rationalisation of a fundamentally sectarian turn by the SWP.

It is a turn away from working with the rest of the trade union left, in favour of building the SWP – to the detriment of the wider movement.

It will divide the left in those areas where the SWP have any influence. Nevertheless, the task of building the left and unifying it in action will go on – with or without the comrades of the SWP.

# Defending October, but abusing our history

DUNCAN CHAPPLE reviews *In Defence Of The Russian Revolution: a selection of Bolshevik writings 1917-1923* edited by Al Richardson. Porcupine Press, £12.95.

THIS BOOK is more about the defence of the Russian Revolution by the Bolsheviks than a defence of it against those who oppose it today.

It unites a previously unpublished speech by Lenin

on the Bolshevik invasion of Poland with out of print articles by other Bolshevik leaders.

There are better introductions to the thought of the Bolsheviks: Alan Woods and Ted Grant's excellent £1.50 book *Lenin and Trotsky: what they really stood for* is a case in point.

So is Trotsky's *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, a more extensive collection.

Sadly, Richardson's book lacks the kind of explanatory material that readers unfamiliar with the detail of the debates in the Bolshevik party need.

Nevertheless, this collection gives inspiring echoes of the dreams, aspirations and pressing tasks of the

revolution.

Richardson's introduction presents his views on the present day defenders of the Bolshevik tradition and our attempts to understand Stalinism.

## Workers' state?

He dismisses the debate between those, like us in the Fourth International, who consider the USSR to have been a degenerated workers' state and those, like the Socialist Workers Party, who consider it to have been a capitalist state since the 1920s.

This debate is crucial for understanding the tasks of revolutionary marxists for the bulk of this century.

Was it right to have denounced North Korea against

the US – as the Fourth International did – or not – the position of the fore-runners of today's British SWP?

Were the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, for instance, progressive anti-capitalist struggles, or minor political fights within the capitalist class?

Richardson adds the slanderous suggestion that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International supported the Soviet bureaucracy during the Khrushchev-Brezhnev period!

Richardson should know better. The FI has unswervingly advocated anti-bureaucratic revolution against the stalinist regimes during the last 60 years.

*Socialist Outlook* can provide readers with a vital anti-



Lenin and Trotsky's legacy obscured by a factional intro

duce to Richardson's tract.

Yeltsin's coup prompted the publication of *Fallacies of State Capitalism* - a volume of essays by the Fourth International's Ernest Mandel and *Socialist Worker* edi-

tor Chris Harman.

This 125 page book is now on sale half-price: just £2.00 plus 50p p&p. Send your cheque, payable to *Socialist Outlook* to PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

REVIEWS



# What we fight for

Up AGAINST MASS unemployment, rampant employers with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-won public services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis – an avoidable crisis created by the historic failure of its official leadership.

*Socialist Outlook* exists to build a new type of working class leadership, based on class struggle and revolutionary socialism.

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

The Tory strategy has been to shackle the unions, and to fragment and weaken the resistance, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time.

In response, most TUC and Labour leaders have embraced the defeatist politics of 'new realism', effectively total surrender, while ditching any pretence of being a socialist alternative. Every retreat encouraged the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form of *reformism*, seeking only improved conditions within capitalism.

We reject reformism, not because we are against reforms, but because we know that full employment, decent living standards, a clean environment, peace and democracy, can never be achieved under capitalism.

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

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

Our socialist alternative is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change.

We fight to mobilise and unleash the power of the working class to topple the corrupt and reac-

tionary rule of capital and establish its own class rule.

We struggle against fragmentation by building solidarity, to unite the various struggles of workers, the unemployed, of women, of pensioners, of the black communities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth – and of those fighting imperialism in Ireland and worldwide.

*Socialist Outlook* is above all an *internationalist* current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises in over 40 countries.

Unlike some other groups on the British left, we do not believe a mass revolutionary party can be built simply by proclaiming ourselves to be one. This degenerates into sectarian posturing and abstention from struggles in the labour movement, playing into right wing hands.

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

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

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

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

Contact us now, get organised, and get active!

# Berlin climate conference puts conservation on the back burner New blast of hot air on global warming

By Bala Kumar

25 PER CENT of the world's people living in the rich countries are responsible for 75% of global carbon emissions.

But the advanced capitalist world will not act to halt global warming because to do so would pose the need for changes in the economic system and the relationships of power and wealth that flow from it.

Oil producing countries fear the loss of revenue – western transnationals foresee the end of their huge profits and monopoly markets.

Meanwhile global temperatures are rising significantly as a result of climate change. That is the conclusion of a scientific report presented to the inter-governmental Climate Change conference in Berlin.

## Melting

Each decade sees an average increase of 0.3 degrees celsius, melting polar ice caps and causing a rise in sea levels which would inundate 36 small island states.

So far global warming has been blamed for everything from droughts in California to floods in Bangladesh and forest fires in Russia. Heat from the sun's rays are trapped on earth by the depletion of the ozone layer in the atmosphere which is responsible for channelling it back into space.

This greenhouse effect eats away the ozone by chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) which are found in aerosol cans and in refrigerators.

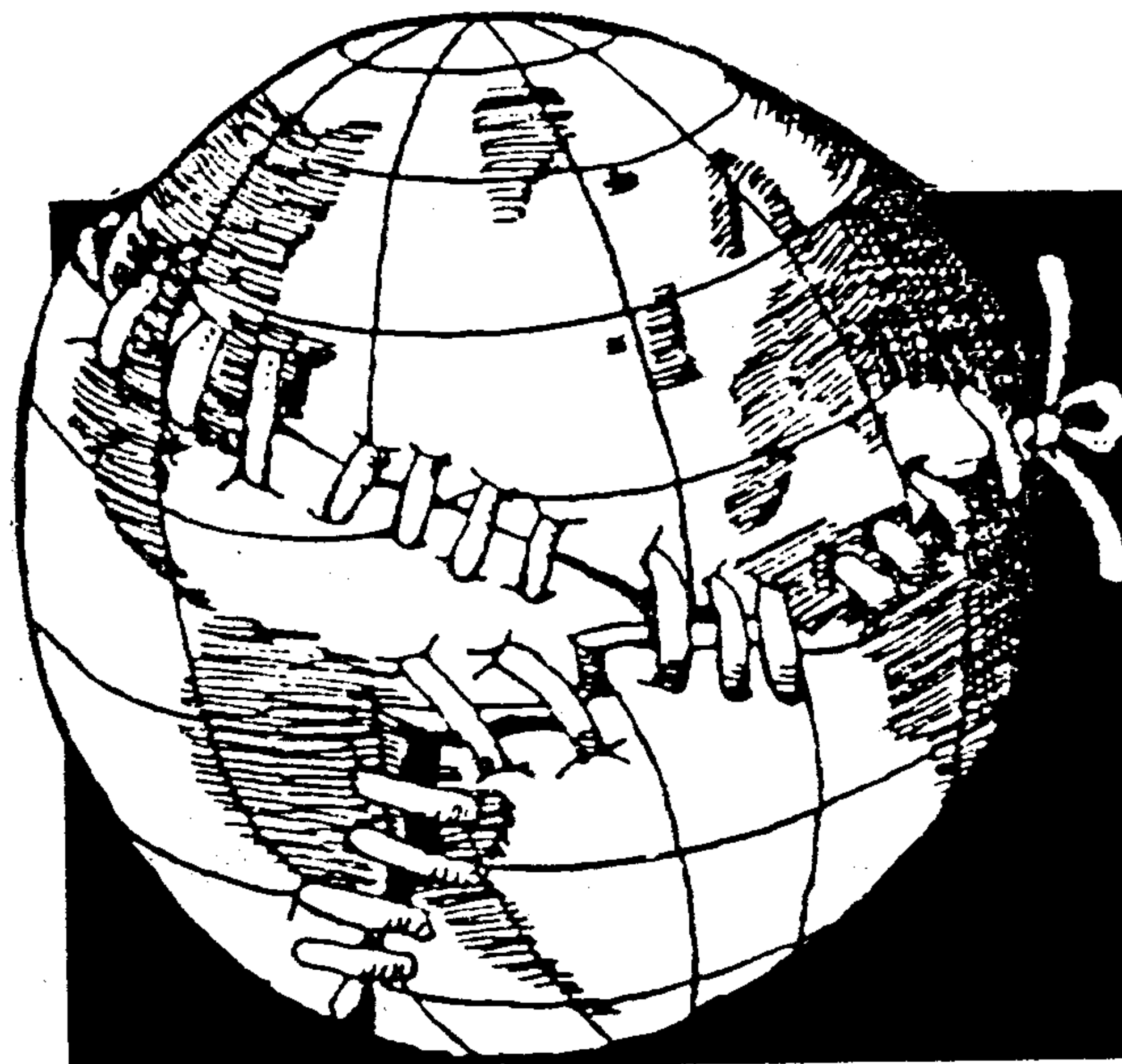
Presently states are committed to eliminating the use of CFCs by 1996. But they are not the only agent of global warming. Carbon dioxide is produced in large quantities by the combustion of fossil fuels like oil and coal, and nitrous oxide and methane by-products of rice cultivation are also culprits.

## Convention

Under the 1992 Climate Change convention industrialised countries aim to maintain carbon emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000. While some will meet this goal – which is not a legal obligation – others probably will not.

Even if all the major carbon emitters achieve the target, it will probably be too little too late for many.

At the Berlin conference small island states pressed industrialised countries to re-



carbon dioxide like halting deforestation are opposed by countries currently exploiting tropical rainforest at unsustainable rates.

Meanwhile China could soon be a leading source of CFC emissions because of its reliance on the chemical in consumer goods. Beijing claims that because the environmental standards being forced on China never applied to western countries when they industrialised, they therefore amount to a form of protectionism.

Western countries barred from using CFCs have now switched to using hydro-chlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) which are just as harmful.

The environmental group Greenpeace has just developed a refrigerator which doesn't use CFCs – but has received no support for mass production.

Decisive action won't come from capitalist governments or big business: it does not fit the logic of capitalism.

Defence of the environment demands a complete break with unfair and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

duce their 1990 level of emissions by a minimum of 20 per cent by 2005.

They were disappointed. There was not even an undertaking about levels of carbon emission beyond the year 2000. This has been deferred to the next Climate conference in Tokyo in 1997.

Instead western countries led by Australia, Canada and the USA stonewalled on dealing with the fundamental causes of climate change, backed by oil producing countries like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Germany and the Scandinavians were far more sympathetic to the Maldives and Marshall Islands than India and China who are intent on following the Western growth model.

Reducing carbon emissions means reducing energy use in the West and switching from fossil fuels to renewable energy like sun, wind and water.

Countries like Germany and Japan see the market potential in renewable technologies and favour subsidising research in this area and encouraging demand.

Natural ways of absorbing

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To advertise your event in **Socialist Outlook** write to 'What's Happening', PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU by Friday May 6.

# What's HAPPENING

## APRIL

**Weds 26**  
CLAUSE 4 and the struggle for socialism Birmingham Socialist Outlook Forum with Alan Thornett 7.30pm Queen's Tavern

**Fri 28**  
WORKERS Memorial Day 'Remember the dead: fight for the living'. Fight for safe working conditions. Leafleting and demonstration in London. Details: 0171-226-5436.

KEEP Clause Four rally with Arthur Scargill 7.30pm McNamara Hall Camden Irish centre by Camden tube.

**Sat 29**  
DEMONSTRATION in Manchester against deportations called by Okolo Family Defence campaign 12.00 noon All Saints' Park Oxford Road.

LABOUR Party special conference lobby 11.30am Queen Elizabeth Hall London SW1. Bring your banners.

**MARCH** to stop the deportation of Raghbir Singh. Assemble 11.30am Black Patch Recreation Ground Smethwick, West Midlands for march to Winson Green prison and rally at 1pm Summerfield Park Dudley Road. Details: NUJ 0121 486 1809.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL benefit concert at Hove Town Hall. Details Jim 01273 671873.

**Sun 30**  
THE FIGHT for socialist policies now. Post-conference open meeting sponsored by Defend Clause Four. 1-4pm ULU, Malet St, WC1.

MOZAMBIQUE Angola Committee AGM 11am-3.30pm 22 The Ivories 6-8

Northampton Street N1 details: 0171 359 7729.

## MAY

**Mon 1**  
WHAT NEXT after Clause Four? West London Socialist Outlook Forum 7.30pm Ealing W5.

**Mon 8**  
RALLY for reconciliation Ex-services CND 'Generations Together for Peace' procession and rally at Westminster Central hall details 0171 700 2393.

**Sat 13**  
SOCIALISM, Social Democracy and revolution Socialist Outlook speakers include François Vercammen, United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Tickets £6/£3 from Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

ORGANISING to defend the

public sector. Called by Strathclyde and Newcastle UNISON and Tyne & Wear FBU. Lecture Theatre Two Leeds Metropolitan University Calverley Street LS1 Details 0191 232 8520 ext. 6980.

**Sat 20**  
NOTTS FACE conference details: Sal 0115 9626298.

**Sat 27**  
DAY of Action by Campaign to Close Campsfield.

**AFRICAN Liberation Day** march 1.00pm Kennington Park London SE11. Rally at Trafalgar Square Details: 0171 924 9033.

tells: 0171 924 9033.

## JULY

**Sat 3**  
NOTTS Welfare State Network demonstration details Sal 0115 9626298.

**Thurs 7-Sat 9**  
SOCIALISM beyond the market: CSE 25th anniversary conference details: John, Phillip or Mary (0191) 232 6002

**Sat 9**  
CRIMINAL Justice after the Bill a day conference sponsored by the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers.

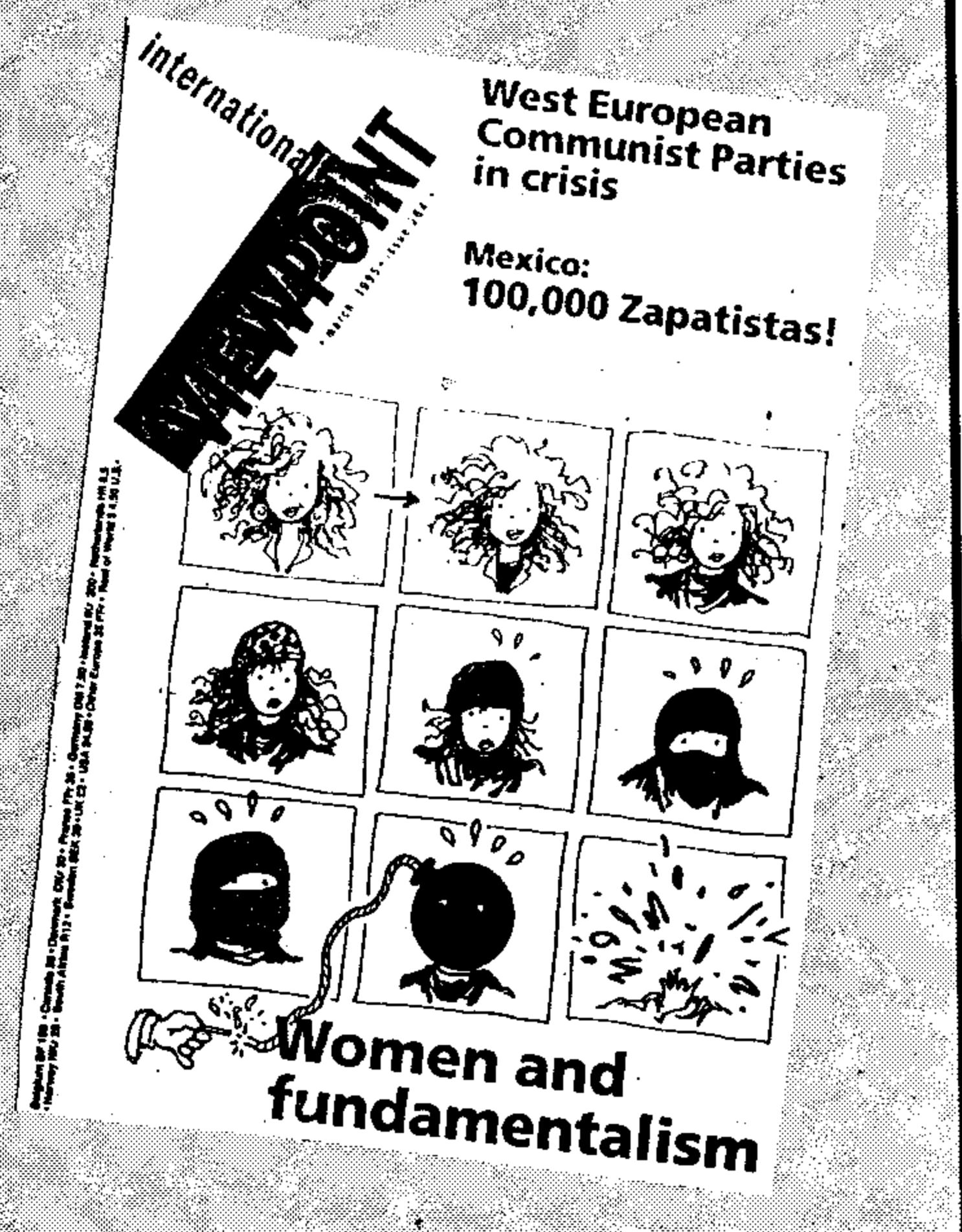
9.30am - 4pm Camden Town Hall opposite St Pancras BR. £3/£10 from 20-21 Took Court EC4.

**Fri 22 - Fri 29**  
INTERNATIONAL Youth Camp in southern France. Send £35 deposit to 'Liberation Publishing Association', PO Box 1109, N4.

**AUGUST**  
**Weds 23 - Mon 28**  
SOCIALIST Outlook Summer School Aberystwyth. Send your £35 deposit now to 'Socialist Outlook Summer School, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU..

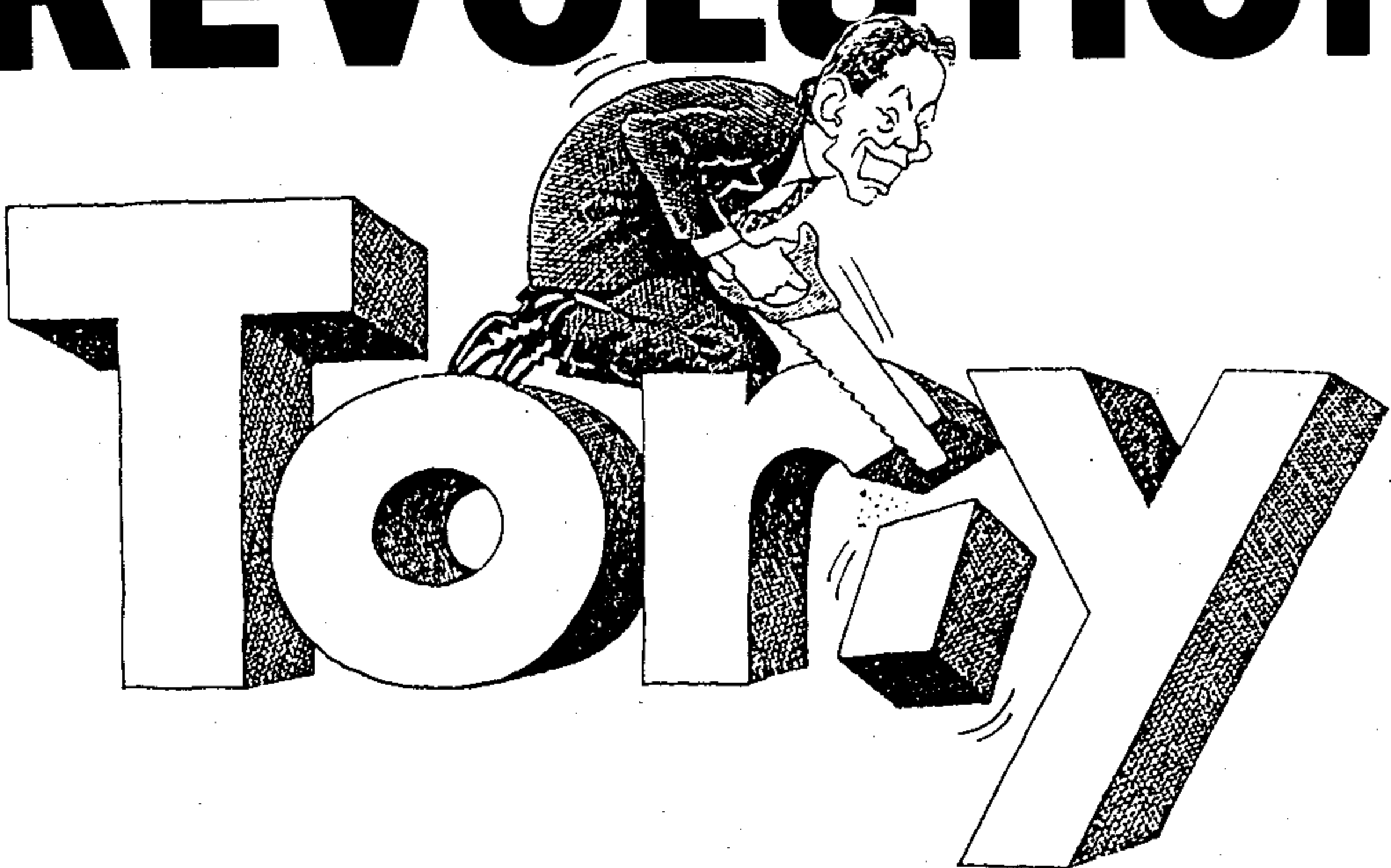
## INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

The current issue of *International Viewpoint* features two major dossiers. SAMINA FELLAH opens a review of women and fundamentalism in Algeria, the US and France to show important global trends. FRANÇOIS VERCAMMEN introduces a selection on the western European Communist parties. A major feature on the last five years in Eastern Europe and Russia by CATHERINE SAMARY reflects parts of a discussion at a leadership meeting of the Fourth International. Single copies cost £2. For the next eleven - £22. Send your cheque, payable to 'Outlook International' to PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.



### After Clause 4 vote: is the Party over?

# Socialism, Social Democracy & REVOLUTION



### A SOCIALIST OUTLOOK DAYSCHOOL

10.30am - 5.00pm, North London, Saturday 13 May  
Reform or Social Revolution?

Nationalisation or expropriation?  
Revolutionaries and the Labour Party  
Socialist Outlook is holding a special day of discussion and debate for defenders of Clause 4, open to Socialist Outlook supporters and those sympathetic to our ideas.  
For tickets, send a cheque for £6 waged, £3 unwaged to Socialist Outlook Fund, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

## FEEDBACK

### Revisionist?

ROY Rudditt (letters, April 8th) seems to completely ignore what my article in S.O. 79 was about.

It wasn't an attempt at an outline of a programme or strategy for achieving socialism, whether national or international. It restricted itself to a small - though not unimportant - part of that: the issue of

whether socialism can be achieved by parliamentary, peaceful means.

Roy's point - that socialism in one country is not possible - is true but beside the point. It is perfectly possible to agree that socialism has to be international and still believe that it can be achieved through parliament - witness many left Euro-MPs.

Pointing out that other imperialist powers would intervene against a workers' state in one country certainly emphasises the need for the revolutionary International and for

close links between workers' organisations across national boundaries, to extend the revolution and to defend it by arms against its internal and external enemies, but again there is many a left reformist who would demonise the CIA, US imperialism etc, but still thinks that Britain is somehow different and that fundamental change can be brought about here without resort to arms.

It is this which I sought to address, not the wider issues Roy accuses me of missing.  
Neil Murray, Upney

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SOCIALIST OUTLOOK



# Socialist OUTLOOK

Fight  
education  
cuts 2005

## SUPPORT THE TEACHERS!

THREE conferences of teaching unions over the Easter holidays decided to ballot their members on industrial action against rising class sizes.

This is a vital stand in defence of the quality of education, at the very point where Tory cuts are forcing governors and education authorities to contemplate classes as large as 40 or more.

But the teachers' fight for education has been met by hostility from NUT General Secretary Doug McAvoy. And Labour's David Blunkett has not only opposed any form of industrial action, but responded to campaigns demanding a legal maximum of 30 in a class by promising that a Labour government would limit class sizes - to 40!

The thousands of parents and governors who have rallied behind campaigns against cuts in school budgets must now show their support for teachers who take action.

Labour and union right wingers claim that strikes and other action would 'alienate' parents, while in fact it is their failure to offer any kind of lead which has held back the development of a nation-wide fightback.

It has been left to the parents' and governors'



campaign, Fight Against Cuts in Education (FACE) to give a national lead.

FACE is confronting all council candidates with demands that tie support to a 'pledge' to campaign for more cash to education and a legal limit to class sizes, arguing that any candidate

who fails to sign the pledge should be opposed.

By the same logic teachers who take action to secure the FACE objectives must be supported - and the fight stepped up to make Tony Blair's 'New Labour' take up the struggle to save our schools.

Advertisement

**FACE conference: Building  
the fightback for education**  
Coventry June 10 11am to 4pm  
Contact: FACE c/o St. Giles County Middle  
School, Hayes Lane, Erdham, Coventry CV7 9LS  
Tel: (0589) 789104

### Vote Labour: fight for socialist policies