

# WORKERS' ACTION

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"NOT MERELY a recession, but another great depression". That's the forecast, not just from socialists, but from conservative economists, people who think the capitalist system is basically all right.

Manufacturing output — they predict — will fall 16½% over the next couple of years. That's the equivalent of one factory in six closing down.

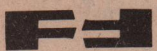
Already this March manufacturing output was 2% below the slump level of 1975, and 9% down from its most recent high.

Unemployment will be 2½ or 3 million by 1981 or 1982 — and no-one will predict if or when it will drop again.

Bankruptcies are multiplying — 1,500 firms so far this year. Major sections of industry, like steel and cars, are cutting back drastically — almost collapsing. Basic public services are collapsing even faster.

Even the bosses' organisations and the bosses' papers (like the *Economist* and the *Financial Times*) now see disaster ahead, and are appealing for some change or other in Government policy.

The Bank of England wants pay to be kept 5% behind the cost of living. Tory ministers are beginning to talk about Government pay curbs, at least for the public sector. So they might cushion the crisis a bit for the bosses — but only make it worse for the working class.



The US, too, is sliding into slump. The rest of the capitalist world is not far behind.

The Tories did not create the crisis. But their policies are calculated to make it worse. They see the crisis as a law of nature. But they believe — partly out of economic superstition, partly because they just can't see what else to believe — that all the Government should or can do is control the money supply, cut its own spending, pump money into the pockets of the profiteers, and wait for the mystic 'invisible hand' of free enterprise to bring prosperity.

In truth the crisis is not a law of nature but a law of capitalism. In times of boom, the drive for profit spurs

competitors on to huge investments. But the economic law of the capitalist rat-race is the law of the jungle. There is no planned relationship between the growth of investment and the consequent growth of production, and the growth of the market.

Eventually the wild drive for profit runs up against the limits of the capitalist market — especially at a time like now, when the world monetary and trading set-up is in chaos. Too little is produced in relation to human needs, but too much in relation to the market. Under capitalism, there is no necessary correlation between needs, effective demand, and production.

Profits falter, investment slumps, bankruptcy and unemployment spread from sector to sector, and the capitalist economy spirals into slump.

There is a way out: to establish a direct relation between production and human needs, by taking the means of production into common ownership and establishing rational, democratic working-class control and planning.

But the right-wing leaders of the labour movement think like the Tories. Even if they have some vague socialist phrases for use on speech days, in practice they see capitalist crisis as a law of nature. They can only think of plans to soften the crisis. Their current best idea is... incomes policy! Their way of 'fighting the Tories' is to beg the Government to be more sensible and 'change course'.

The right-wing outlook is no good for fighting the Tories, still less for giving positive answers to the crisis. They used to be able to con us with the promise that things would go forward, slowly perhaps but surely, if we waited, voted Labour at the right times, and patiently accepted their slow dribble of social reform.

But there is no steady progress to be had now. The right-wingers can promise us nothing to wait for. We have to mobilise the labour movement now to kick the Tories out and make sure the labour movement's policies for nationalisation and workers' control are put into practice, not just left as good intentions.



Steel towns like Consett [above] face devastation now. And within a year there could be three million on the dole.

# TORY DISASTER

We need to fight the Tories now with direct action, breaking the law if necessary. At the same time we must fight to transform our movement, to make it an effective positive alternative to the Tories. We must fight for socialist policies and at the same time for the democratic reforms which the right-wing leaders are so desperately trying to fend off: for a labour movement under the control of the rank and file, which can create a government accountable to and based on the rank and file — a workers' government.



## Racist swoop in N. London

FORTY POLICE with dogs and 15 Home Office officials swooped on a North London factory on Friday June 20, looking for 'illegal immigrants'.

Thirty one people were arrested, though eleven were soon released, and one is still being held 'for questioning'. Twelve are — to use the polite language of racist officialdom — 'in the care of the Home Office'.

When they arrived at the Main gas appliances factory in Edmonton, police and im-

migration officers demanded to see the company's payroll. According to the employers, Thorn-EMI, "The first we knew about it was when the police arrived".

While the Home Office people went into the pay office, the police, with dogs, patrolled the site and the nearby railway line.

There were a few scuffles as black workers — many of them West Africans — were held. Some managed to escape and crossed the rail-

way line despite the dogs.

This is not the first of such raids in the area. As before, the police and Home Office obtain warrants which do not name anybody — they're just out to net as many blacks as possible.

The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants protested at this 'fishing expedition in which it is necessary for people to prove that they are innocent'. The JCWI also expressed doubt whether such raids were even lawful.

Whatever the legality of it, the workers' movement should have a clear policy.

No cops in the factory! No victimisation of blacks! No immigration controls!

Both Enfield and Haringey Trades Councils are taking the matter up. Pressure should also be put on the officials of the NUSMW-CH&DE, the main union at the factory, to defend those arrested — irrespective of whether they are judged to be 'illegal immigrants'.

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# AUEW: Organising the left

LEFT-WING engineers are meeting this Saturday (28th) at a time when the AUEW faces one of the worst crises in its history.

We face the twin scissors of the Duffy-Boyd leadership on one side and the bosses on the other. The bosses are out to cut living standards, the top AUEW leaders are helping them by trying to crush and isolate left-wing opposition in the union.

Engineering is being slaughtered. Since January 8,000 jobs have gone down the river in Manchester alone, and only one factory, Stone Platts in Oldham, has attempted to fight redundancy. Everywhere else there is a rush to take voluntary redundancy. Workers are leaving an industry which ten years ago was seen to be a good job and now is reckoned to be low-paid and insecure.

Much of the blame must lie with the union Executive Committee (EC). Lack of leadership and divisive claims at national level have meant that bargaining has taken place mainly at factory and local level.

This has taken the focus away from unifying, across the board claims which are especially necessary in a period of slumps and crises. The bosses' hand has been strengthened with productivity dealing and measured day work.

To fight this fragmentation, we need demands which unify us — demands like 35 hours now, across the board claims for substantial increases, and automatic protection of wages against inflation.

But Duffy and Boyd are

putting the boot in against militants. Earlier this year two union officials were sacked for doing research for Bob Wright in their own time. Proposals on the table for full-time branch secretaries on the model of the EETPU can only hasten the day of amalgamation with Franco Chapple's union. Already AUEW branch secretaries have been circulated with a letter from union headquarters in Peckham Road warning them about

correspondence from the *Engineers' Charter*.

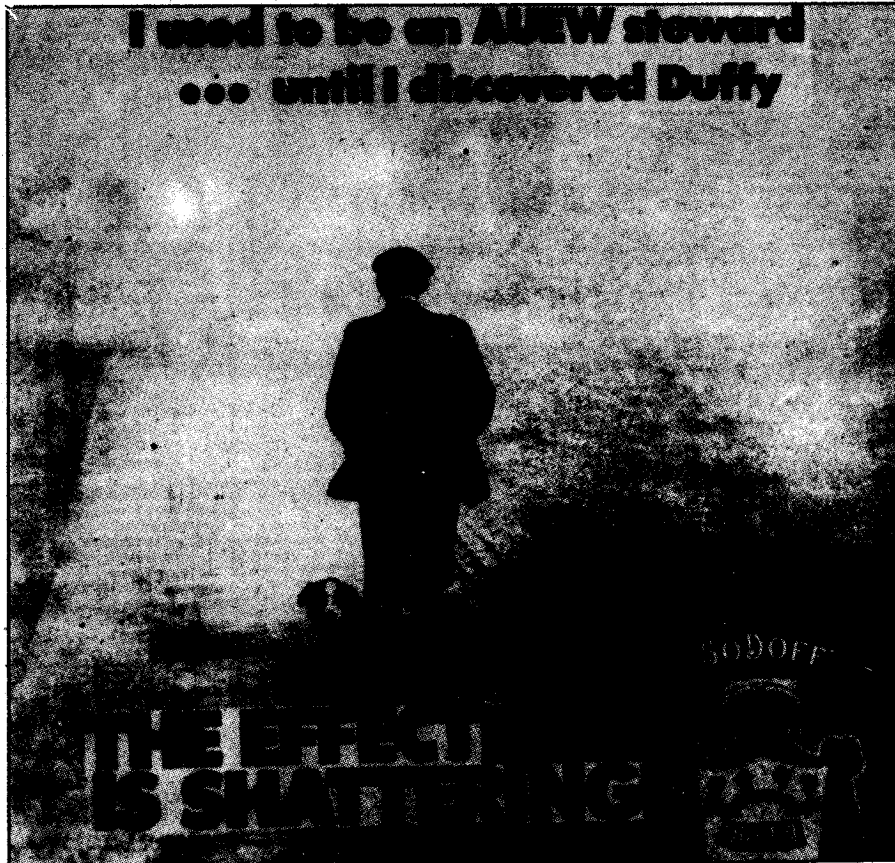
During the strikes in support of the national claim last year, *Charter* was the main force trying to organise on the ground for an all-out strike. As well as that, the *Charter's* support for the no-confidence motion on the EC after the Derek Robinson fiasco has marked it out as a major enemy for the bureaucrats.

The slogan of the *Charter* conference on Saturday —

*Stop the Rot, Kick out the Right* — needs to be given immediate substance. If every job is to be defended, and is to be worth defending, we need to build a powerful movement of the rank and file, based on stewards' committees and the strength of the shop floor.

MICK WOODS

★ Engineers' Charter conference: 11am, Saturday 28 June, at Holborn Library Hall, Theobalds Rd, London.



# Teachers: a shift to the left

THE 'RANK and File' teachers' group has grown from 500 to 600 members over the last year.

100 delegates attending the 'Rank and File' annual conference last weekend (21st-22nd) reported increased support in the teachers' unions for socialist policies, and the conference made steps forward on several issues.

On Saturday the conference worked out model resolutions to push for the NUT (National Union of Teachers) conference. The main political debate came over an amendment from Workers' Action supporters for R&F to argue for a clause in the pay claim guaranteeing monthly pay increases to compensate for inflation.

The amendment was defeated. Chanie Rosenberg, opposing it, argued that it would put our pay into the hands of the bureaucrats and stifle militancy.

As Workers' Action supporter Cheung Siu Ming pointed out, our pay negotiations are very much in the hands of the bureaucrats at present! But inflation-protection will not be won and defended without a constant fight.

On Saturday the conference also heard a lively report from a Nottingham delegate about the fight to reinstate Eileen Crosbie, a nurse teacher sacked for refusing, on official union advice,

to take responsibility for a class of 40 under-5s with the assistance of only one nursery nurse.

The NUT has backtracked on action in defence of Crosbie. The National Executive's proposals for action are less now than when she was only suspended, despite the fact that the branches concerned have voted for indefinite strike action.

Meanwhile, Eileen Crosbie's husband, a policeman, has been interviewed in London about his possible Communist leanings...

On Sunday there was much more lively debate.

A motion from Lambeth R&F calling on R&F to support affiliation of the NUT to the Labour Party, in order to assist the struggle to democratise the Party, was amended to read simply that R&F 'will not oppose, but critically support affiliation, while not campaigning for it'.

The supporters of the amendment saw only one reason for not opposing affiliation was that R&F should not line up with the right wing in the union. WA supporters argued that the fight in the Labour Party is important both in terms of the cuts fight and general politics. But others said that the fight over Labour Party democracy is past its peak, that it would be a diversion from the struggle, and that affiliation of the NUT would

simply mean... the addition of one more right-wing block vote to those already supporting Callaghan. (A strange argument from militants committed to democratising the union and breaking the hold of the right-wing bureaucracy!)

In another debate, some R&F supporters also felt that support for, or work with, the Women in the NUT group, could be a 'diversion'.

Leeds R&F submitted a resolution calling for steps to unification of R&F and the

other major left-wing grouping in the NUT — the Socialist Teachers' Alliance, politically dominated by the International Marxist Group.

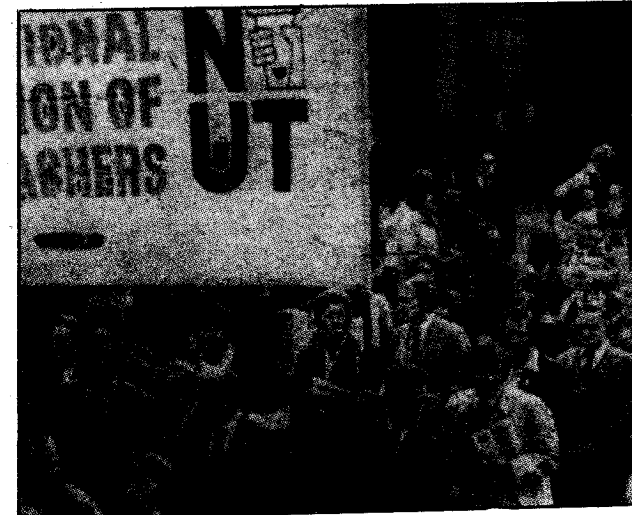
This motion was amended so that it simply welcomed the increased cooperation between the two groups. However, an amendment from WA supporters was carried, calling for a bulletin to be produced by the two groups, outlining and explaining their differences.

This gives grounds for hope about progress towards unity.

Conference also agreed to support the 'Charter 80' campaign for political prisoners' rights in Northern Ireland, and to campaign for Troops Out.

Although marked by the political domination of the Socialist Workers' Party, with its belief that almost anything beyond direct union issues and building R&F is a 'diversion', the conference showed that some vital questions are at least being discussed.

PETE FIRMIN



The cuts have pushed many teachers into fighting back as trade unionists.

## MINERS' VOTE COULD BE CRUCIAL

CHANGES IN VOTING on democracy by some of the larger unions at the Labour Party Conference in October may enable the Left to win its democratic reforms on re-selection of MPs, election of Party leader and control of the Manifesto.

The outcome of this week's NUM conference, whose quarter of a million votes were last year cast in favour of the status quo by Joe Gormley, could play a very important part in changing the balance of forces: the growing Left in the union is determined to change the position, and possibly strong enough.

UCATT members, at their conference early in June, voted to cast their block vote in favour of the reforms which it opposed last year, and CoHSE has changed its vote to support the proposal for an electoral college for the election of leader.

The NUR conference in July will be a battlefield between the executive, in favour of mandatory reselection, and the general secretary Sid Weighell, who opposes it. ASTMS and SOGAT also have major differences between the membership and the general secretaries, Clive Jenkins and Bill Keys.

Lack of democracy in such unions, and lack of control over the delegates to conference, many of whom have considerable powers of discretion in casting their unions' votes, is a major block at present to a decisive vote for the reforms at this year's conference. But with an estimated 90% of the constituencies supporting the Left, it seems that the Right will have to fight to gain ground before October if it is not to lose much of its hold on the Party.



Backing democratic reforms:	
TGWU	1,250,000
NUPE	500,000
UCATT	200,000
ASTMS	147,000
TASS[AUEW]	94,000
Agricultural workers	75,000
Dyers and bleachers	60,000
NGA	60,600
Sheetmetal workers	53,000
SOGAT	50,000
Furniture and Allied	
Trades	42,000
Bakers	37,000
ASLEF	27,000
FBU	16,000
NATSOPA	16,000
	2,627,000

Backing reform of election of Leader:

CoHSE	105,000
Uncertain:	
NUM	250,000
NUR	180,000
Tailor and garment workers	105,000
Foundry workers	42,000
Seamen	25,000

Against democratic reforms:	
AUEW	927,000
GMWU	650,000
USDAW	429,000
EETPU	260,000
UPW	187,000
APEX	109,000
ISTC	85,000
POEU	79,000
Boilermakers	75,000
TSSA	60,000
	2,861,000

## Press release by the RFMC

NATIONAL Executive Committee members on the Commission of Inquiry were called upon last night to write a minority report opposing the Commission's findings on the Electoral College and the Party Manifesto, and to present that minority report to Labour Party Conference in October. The call came from the Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy which held an emergency meeting in the House of Commons yesterday evening (17th June).

The Committee demanded an Electoral College based on re-weighted voting at Labour Party Conference to give every constituency party, every Member of Parliament and Party candidate and every affiliated organisation a vote. The Committee rejected the proposal put forward by the Commission of Inquiry and demanded that there should be no connection between the Electoral College and the Manifesto. Every constituency party and all members and affiliates of the Committee's supporting organisations are to be sent immediately a letter. It urges constituency parties to table a motion to this year's Conference which 'would give the political and industrial wings of the movement an equal say; 25% of the votes would be cast by constituency parties and 25% would be cast by MPs or Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, and the other half by affiliated organisations'.

At the meeting were representatives from Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Clause IV, Independent Labour Publications, Institute for Workers' Control, Labour Co-ordinating Committee, Labour Party Young Socialists, Militant, National Organisation of Labour Students, and Socialist Campaign for Labour Victory. NEC members present at the meeting gave a report of the Commission's proceedings and left after a brief discussion.

## LONDON ASTMS CONDEMNS JENKINS

On the Labour Commission of Inquiry, the decisive views and votes belong to two trade union leaders — Moss Evans and Clive Jenkins. Both of them argued against their own union policy.

Jenkins came to the decisive session of the Inquiry fresh from a conference of his union, ASTMS, which had voted for mandatory re-selection and NEC control of the manifesto, and specifically 'urged' Jenkins to use his position on the Inquiry to promote these measures.

But Jenkins voted AGAINST mandatory re-selection [which nonetheless scraped through the Inquiry, with Moss Evans' vote], and AGAINST NEC control of the manifesto.

ASTMS no.8 divisional council, meeting on Saturday 21st, responded promptly by passing this resolution.

"This Divisional Council views with dismay the reported fact that the General Secretary voted contrary to ASTMS policy... on the Labour Party Commission of Inquiry... In the light of this we emphasise the need for ASTMS policy to be put forward at the coming Labour Party conference and for our delegates to vote accordingly".

Other divisional councils and branches should pass similar resolution — and press for support to be given to the Rank & File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy.

by COLIN FOSTER

# LABOUR PARTY STRUCTURE

## Mobilising Committee condemns Inquiry report

MEETING ON Tuesday 17th, the Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy decided to come out strongly against the report of Labour's Inquiry.

The Inquiry — by a narrow majority — is recommending the election of Party leader by an electoral college (½ MPs, ¼ unions, ¼ CLPs and socialist societies), and control of the Manifesto by the electoral college too. It also reaffirms mandatory reselection.

The RFMC will soon be producing a special insert for its broadsheet, *Mobilise for Labour Democracy*, criticising the Inquiry majority report and calling for election of Leader by a broader electoral college and NEC control of the Manifesto.

The Inquiry minority — the five NEC nominees and Party Treasurer Norman Atkinson — have announced that they will produce a minority report and try to get the NEC to back it. The RFMC backs this move but criticises the Inquiry minority's choice of a ½:¼:¼ formula for the electoral college to

choose the Leader. (One third MPs and candidates, one third CLPs, one third unions: in the Inquiry minority's view, this electoral college would be solely for Leadership elections, and not for control of the Manifesto, which should belong to the NEC).

The RFMC says the Inquiry minority and the NEC should instead go for the ¼:¼:¼ electoral college, which has a smaller weighting for MPs and which has the strongest support in the Party rank and file. This ¼:¼:¼ formula is put forward in a Campaign for Labour Party Democracy model resolution this year.

Dennis Skinner and Joan Maynard have

said that they will propose the ¼:¼:¼ formula on the NEC.

Grass roots support for the RFMC's demand was shown at the East Midlands Labour Party Conference last weekend (21st). The CLPD's proposals for electing the leader were carried by a margin of 2500 to 1700, after a debate which made clear that this meant rejection of the Inquiry's report. A well-attended RFMC fringe meeting was addressed by Audrey Wise, Michael Meacher and John Bloxam.

On the Labour Party demonstration against Cruise missiles on Sunday 22nd, both the RFMC broadsheet and the new 'Mobilise for Labour

Democracy' badge sold well.

When the Inquiry report first came out, some on the Left may have been influenced by complacent and timid attitudes like that of the Communist Party's *Morning Star*. Always eager to keep in with the trade union leaders, the *Star* hailed the Inquiry conclusions as "great steps to more democracy" (June 17th).

On June 18th the *Star* warned that "some left elements were over-reacting considerably to the compromises reached by the commission on the electoral college and the Manifesto". Despite the growing outcry from Labour's rank and file, on the

19th the *Star* was still saying: "some left MPs are believed to be ready to support the report as a step in the right direction".

After the 'peaceful road to socialism'... the peaceful road to Labour democracy! But the *Star's* vision of endless gradual, cautious progress has been battered by events.

The Inquiry compromise has very little solid support and is so botched-up that it may not even be practically workable. No-one yet knows how the ½:¼:¼ electoral college is actually going to be chosen. (The RFMC advocates that an electoral college should be formed simply by re-weighting the votes of

CLPs and unions at annual conference, and adding the votes of MPs and candidates).

At the same time, the right wing is furiously on the offensive. MP Neville Sandelson has explicitly called for a split in the Party. William Rodgers' Campaign for Labour Victory has threatened a split and roundly denounced the Inquiry report as a "total sellout".

The main Party leaders, James Callaghan and Dennis Healey, have kept quiet. But the public outcry from the Right gives them cover to manoeuvre privately.

What is going on in the Labour Party is not a quiet inevitable slide towards democracy, but a bitter struggle between Left and Right — or, more fundamentally, between rank and file workers and activists, and self-serving pro-capitalist MPs and bureaucrats. If the Left does not organise and go all out to win this struggle now, then we will lose the initiative to the Right — and the Right will go on the offensive against us.

With British capitalism crashing into deeper and deeper crisis, and the Tories on the rampage, we cannot afford to lose.

## The Electoral College: where it comes from, how it has been twisted

IN ITS recent report, the Labour Party Commission of Inquiry has taken the idea of a Party 'electoral college' — originally floated by the Left as a formula for more democratic election of the Party Leader — and turned it into a way of protecting the Front Bench and MPs against accountability.

The Inquiry proposes that the Leader should be elected by a college made up 50% of MPs, 25% of trade union representatives, and 25% of constituency and socialist society representatives.

The final say on the Manifesto would also belong to this electoral college — rather than to the National Executive [NEC], as last year's Labour Conference decided.

So MPs would still rule the roost — and, given the power of patronage, the Front Bench would still rule the roost among MPs.

MARTIN THOMAS reviews the different 'electoral college' proposals and where they come from.

AFTER THE Inquiry's report, many Labour activists are concluding that it was a mistake ever to get involved in arguments about an electoral college. We should have stuck to the simpler and better principle of the leader being elected by conference. The leader should be controlled by the body that controls policy.

Now the Left is caught up in a struggle where we appear to be haggling over details of how the electoral college is formed, not the principle of democracy. For 1980 conference, we have no choice but to rally behind the proposals for a broad elec-



toral college and explain the issues as best we can. But it is useful to review the development of the debate.

In 1976, Harold Wilson resigned as leader and the MPs elected James Callaghan — though most Labour activists would clearly have preferred Tony Benn. Four CLPs put resolutions to Labour Party Conference that year calling for the leader to be elected by Conference (two of them) or by the CLPs (the other two). But the Conference passed another CLP resolution, for the National Executive (NEC) to set up a Working Party on how to elect the leader.

The submissions to the Working Party showed a growing mood for democracy — but no consensus on the best democratic method for electing the leader.

45 CLPs supported the status quo, 80 wanted democratic reform. The preferences of the 80 differed widely. The most popular ideas were election by CLPs (15) or by the individual membership (18); election jointly by MPs and the CLPs (15); and election by Conference (18). The electoral college idea lagged behind, with 11 CLPs supporting it.

But the unions showed no support for reform at all.

The Working Party's report — accepted by the 1977 Conference — said that three proposals should be put to 1978 Conference: status quo, election

by Conference, and electoral college. For the electoral college, it proposed a ½:¼:¼ formula — ½ MPs and prospective candidates, ¼ CLP delegates, ¼ unions.

The electoral college proposal was a compromise between different strands of thought.

MPs wanted still to have a say in the choice of leader.

For many constituency activists, the first idea, prompted by the choice of Callaghan against Benn in 1976, was election by constituencies alone. They soon recognised that the unions would never accept that: but they opted for the electoral college as better than conference, where trade unions have 90% of the votes.

And it turned out that many trade union leaders, too, preferred the electoral college. They did not want the responsibility of decisive voice in choosing the leader.

In 1978, the newly-formed Labour Coordinating Committee backed the electoral college, while the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy went for election by Conference. But the status quo was approved by a big majority — 4.4 million to 1.9 million. The trade unions still did not want change.

Within months the situation altered. In 1979, the LCC's newsletter reported: "The majority of trade union votes were swung last time behind the

status quo. We now know what they got in return: a wages policy last winter which publicly divided the labour movement..."

"There are signs that the unions and their leaders want to increase the leadership's accountability to the movement."

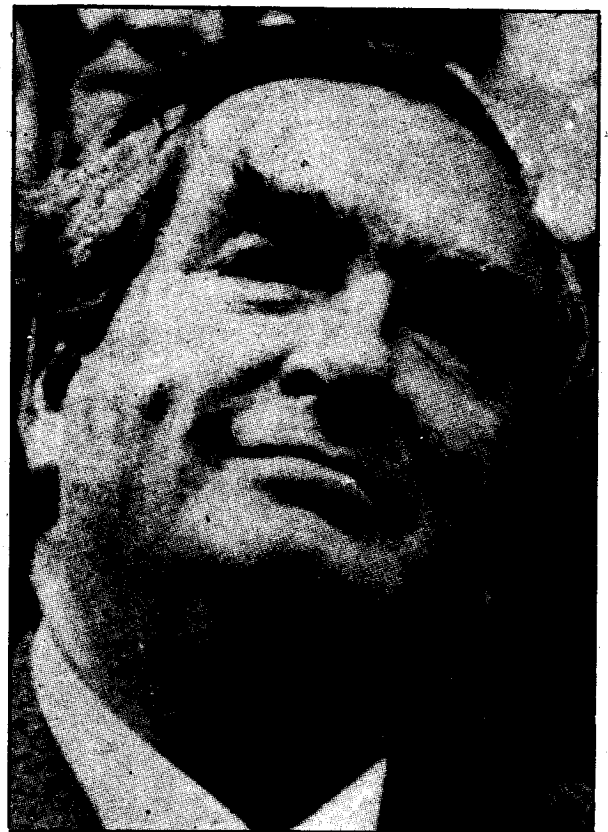
One sign was the 1979 NUPE Conference, where a debate on the Labour government's cuts and the "low pay" strike of early 1979 led to a decision to support democratic reform in the Labour Party.

The NEC waived the "three year rule" and allowed another debate on the election of leader at the 1979 Labour Conference. Slowly, terribly slowly, the labour movement was drawing political conclusions from the experience of the industrial battles against the Labour government.

Not only the unions had shifted. 24 CLPs put in resolutions or amendments for election of leader. 15 backed various forms of electoral college (7 the ½:¼:¼ formula, 5 a ¼:¼:¼ formula) and 5 election by Conference.

Three composites were put to the vote: for election by Conference (lost heavily), for the ¼:¼:¼ formula (lost heavily), and for the electoral college in principle (lost very narrowly).

That vote rallied most of the Left behind the electoral college idea. This year the CLPD is backing the ¼:¼:¼ formula, and so is the LCC (though in 1979



Now the electoral college idea has been twisted into a plan for a new governing council of Labour dominated by a few MPs and union tops.

they backed ½:¼:¼). The CLPD argues that ¼:¼:¼ actually represents 50% for the unions and 50% for the constituencies — each constituency has two delegates, of which one is their MP or candidate — though in fact there is no way the constituencies can directly control the MPs, or even the candidates.

Other details of the electoral college formula are also important apart from the make-up of the college: the best proposals argue that the Leader should be elected or re-elected yearly, and that the election should be at Conference, with the Conference transformed into the electoral college simply by re-weighting the union and CLP votes and adding the MPs and candidates' votes.

The left wing proposals for an electoral college also differ from the Inquiry's formula in being much broader — they would have from 1700 to 2400 votes, rather than maybe 100 in the Inquiry's college.

THERE WAS always a danger that the electoral college proposal would bog us down in a fight over fractions — trench-warfare over who would get a half or who would have a third.

Now an even bigger danger is clear. By trying to give the electoral college responsibility for the Manifesto, the Inquiry has launched an attack on both the NEC and Conference.

In reality this electoral college is what the GMWU submission called a National Council of Labour.

This offspring of Basnett's obsessively bureaucratic brain would create a new tier of authority in the Labour Party, dominated by MPs but effectively standing above the NEC and Conference.

By giving the electoral college both elective and policy-making roles, the Commission's right wing — and that includes Moss Evans in this case — are proposing not a very limited version of reform but a full-scale attack on even the present level of Labour Party democracy.





# Why Walter Rodney was murdered

**Walter Rodney: killed for his fight against capitalism**

"WALTER RODNEY was a great Pan-Africanist, a living link between the continent of Africa and the Americas". That was how black historian C.L.R. James described the late Walter Rodney at a public commemoration in London's Conway Hall last week.

Rodney was born in Georgetown, Guyana (then British Guiana) 38 years ago, the son of poor workers who struggled hard to get him through primary school.

He went on to study first at the University of the West Indies, then, for his doctorate, in London. In London he wrote his "History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800".

In London he helped organise a study group of West Indians and Africans who admired the work of C.L.R. James. From London he went to teach in Tanzania, and from there he returned to the West Indies to teach history in Jamaica.

There he had an influence on the Rastafarian movement, publishing reflections on his discussions with them in "Groundings with my Brothers".

His work in Jamaica was cut short when the Shearer government refused him re-entry after he had attended a Black Writers' Conference in Montreal in 1968. Again Rodney went to Tanzania, where he developed close links with both anti-imperialists in mainland Southern Africa and the anti-imperialist movement in Zanzibar. It was in this period that he wrote his best known work, "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa".

He left Tanzania to take up a professorship at the University of Guyana, but this appointment was blocked by Prime Minister Burnham.

In Guyana he did what he had done elsewhere — he refused to focus exclusively on academic work and took a leading part in political agitation and organisation. In 1979 he emerged as one of the leading figures in the newly formed Working People's Alliance, the successor of the suppressed Movement Against Oppression.

It was above all as a political militant that he inspired the Burnham government with hatred and fear. They hated his having revealed them as neo-colonialist stooges; they hated his organisation of the poor; and they hated his militancy.

Rodney's socialism was not the same as ours. His was pan-Africanist and populist. But he was bitterly opposed to the neo-colonialists who have continued the most oppressive capitalist rule in Guyana, and many African countries, using nationalism as a cover. He died because he was a fighter against oppression, against imperialism and against capitalism.



Forbes Burnham

ing 'fitted up' for a Guyanese version of the Reichstag fire. Three of the five — Walter Rodney, Dr Omawale and Dr Roopnaraine, were charged with arson.

Despite the seriousness of the charge, the case was sent before a magistrate whose stiffest penalty could be a three year sentence... in order to ensure there would be no jury.



The assassination of Rodney is only the latest in a long series of attacks on WPA members since the party was set up in April 1979 and made big inroads in the support for the People's Progressive Party of Cheddi Jagan, until now the main opposition party. What probably worried Burnham most was the WPA's success in reversing the trend of racial politics in Guyana. The WPA included both main ethnic groups, the Indo-Guyanese (traditionally represented by the PPP), and the Afro-Guyanese (traditionally the base of the Burnham-led People's National Congress).

The racial split was connived at by British and US imperialism, worried by the limited radicalism and pro-Moscow sympathies of Cheddi Jagan, leader of the PPP, the party that ruled Guyana after independence in 1953. It was they who created Burnham's PNC.

Burnham's government, elected by dubious means in 1968, should have declared elections in 1973 but did not. Not only has it held on to power illegally, but it is now trying to change the constitution to give Burnham even greater powers.

Where constitutional sleight-of-hand and ballot rigging won't work, other tougher measures are used. The murder of Rodney, other murders, stopping opposition papers from getting paper and so closing them down, and a big increase in the number of police — all these measures, the PNC hopes, will smash down opposition. In addition, the government uses the right wing gangs of the House of Israel, led by 'Rabbi Washington'.

The House of Israel is used both as an assault force (sometimes their thugs are given police uniforms) and as a strike-breaking force. They were used against the sugar workers' strike in 1977, against picketing bauxite workers last July/August, and against members of three unions involved in a joint strike also last August.

At independence, there was only one policeman to every 300 civilians. Now the ratio is one to 35. Recently Burnham, despite the economic chaos, bought US \$2 million worth of equipment for electronic surveillance.

DR WALTER RODNEY, an intellectual of international repute and a revolutionary black militant, has been assassinated by the Forbes Burnham government in Guyana.

According to a statement by Walter's brother, Donald Rodney, on Friday June 13th the two of them were in a car in Guyana's capital, Georgetown, testing a walkie-talkie. The set had been made for them by Sergeant Gregory Smith of the Guyana Defence Force, who claimed to be sympathetic to the Working People's Alliance, the new party of which the Rodneys were leading figures.

The walkie-talkie concealed a small bomb which blew up, killing Walter instantly. Donald escaped death and is now in hiding. According to Leland Da Cambra, a WPA militant who addressed packed London public meetings on two evenings last week, the plan was to blow up Walter Rodney outside the Georgetown jail in order to be able to claim that he had died trying to blow up the jail in an attempt to free 17 WPA members who were arrested on June 2nd on treason charges.

The murder took place while Walter himself was on bail. He was one of five WPA militants arrested in July last year in connection with the burning down of a ministry building in Georgetown. The five were obviously be-



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## JO THWAITES reports on the Women's Fightback conference.

OPENING the second Fightback conference in Birmingham last Saturday, 21st, Rachel Lever outlined what the campaign had set out to do when it was launched late last year.

"We felt what was needed was not so much one more single-issue campaign, but something that could co-ordinate and focus a united response, a fightback, in the face of a Tory assault on women... an assault that amounted to an attempted regression... a backlash that would not only hit millions of women as individuals, but also set back by decades our whole struggle for equal rights and independence".

And to take up that challenge we have to organise in the labour movement, too.

The purpose of the Birmingham conference was to make policy and set up Fightback as a structured campaign.

Over 200 women attended the conference from all over Britain, and about half were from Labour Parties and women's sections.

In the morning, a draft policy statement was presented from the Planning Committee. The aim of the draft was not to have a whole shopping list of demands covering everything under the sun, but to state simply what our tasks are — so that anyone who picks up a paper or sees a leaflet for the first time can see what we are about and what we aim to do.

There were two proposed amendments.

*Workers' Power* argued for a different policy statement altogether, amounting to the political programme of *WP* on how to fight the cuts and attacks on women's rights. It proposed that Fightback should make propaganda for a general strike, for committees of trade unionists and housewives to work out a cost of living index, for a sliding scale of wages, for no recognition of the provisions of the Employment Bill, etc.

*Workers' Action* supporters agree with most of these objectives. But we argued against the comrades of *Workers' Power* that the function of Fightback is not to make propaganda for this

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sort of programme, and its condition of membership should not be agreement with that programme.

The International Marxist Group (IMG) wanted to delete criticisms of those who sell out and hold back our fight, and to have instead a bland sentence saying that we are in favour of democracy.

They also wanted to delete section 5 of the draft statement: "We are for direct action, solidarity as women and as workers, and for maximum mobilisation for

### STEERING COMMITTEE

TWELVE WOMEN were elected onto the Fightback Steering Committee:

Gerry Byrne	[111 votes]	Rachel Lever
Angela Brittain	109	Pat Long
Mary Corbishley	104	Fran W
Fiona Mackay	103	Fran Sid
		Jo Thwa
		Fran Br
		Rowena
		Tina Ma



Pat Long moved a resolution for Labour Party women's section on Friday.

# Women in front line

ns against the capi- system that exploit sresses us".  
 IMG felt that criti- trade union leaders ention of the word st' would alienate ss of women. What id say to the women or Grunwick, or er strike where wo- e been struggling to backing from their ion leaders, is any- ss. And a woman entral Islington Lab- y said to me, "Do nk that because I'm labour Party I don't at capitalism is?"  
 rence rejected both IMG amendments.  
 Conference also a resolution from the g Committee propos- eering Committee of n to be elected from ce to run the cam- a week-to-week bas- national planning s every two or three

to defend women's right to work — by highlighting the threat to maternity rights in the Employment Bill, by arguing against any attempts to push women or part-timers out of work first, and by educating the labour movement as to why women's right to work is central to women being able to function as equals in all areas of social and political life.  
 Fightback also plans to organise a lobby and rally at the TUC conference in the autumn. Motions from GLC Nalgo and the Birmingham Fightback group put emphasis on the fight against the Employment Bill, and a motion from Central Islington Labour Party women's section called for a fight against cuts — and against rate rises too.



A motion to support the National Abortion Campaign was also passed in the Action section of the agenda, and the Steering Committee will plan out how all these decisions will be implemented.

Unfortunately the discussion on the *Fightback* newspaper was left to the very end of the conference. But a workshop on the paper was held at lunchtime.

The workshop discussed a proposal put forward by *Women in Action* (a journal for women in the unions, produced mostly by the IMG) for fusion with *Women's Fightback*. The fusion was approved by conference, and the Fightback steering committee will meet the *Women in Action* EB to discuss the practicalities.

We will be aiming for a newspaper which is open to the specialist single issue campaigns, and to women who want to write about their experiences at work, on their estates, or in their unions — but also a paper that gives a unifying lead... a paper that working-class women can identify as their own.

It was a lively conference, with many disagreements — but we felt that reflected the success of the Fightback campaign in bringing together forces in the labour movement and the women's movement that would not normally meet. And the conference gave Fightback a sound footing for campaigns in the coming months.

As one woman said: "Women are in the front line for attacks from the Tories. We in Fightback must make sure that women are in the front line in the overall fightback against the Tories"

## WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK 5p

THE KIDS NEED THEIR DINNERS



.... and the women need their jobs!



Chix women fight on

*Women's Fightback* — latest issue. Single copies 5p plus 10p postage; bundles of 20, £1 post free.

## FIGHTBACK'S POLICY

1. We aim to build a mass campaign of action against the major attacks being mounted on women's rights, such as the right to control our fertility, the right to health and childcare facilities, the right to work, the right to live in this country with the partner of our choice, the right to maternity leave and job security for mothers, the right to wages, benefits and legal status independent of a man, the right to organise as trade unionists and as women.

These rights and others, many not yet won or consolidated, must be defended and extended in face of the onslaught against women by this government.

2. Such a mass campaign has to be part of a labour movement response to the Tory attacks. We aim to provide a focus for united action by women already organised in the labour movement and in campaigns and groups of the women's movement, and to involve women who do not yet relate to any of these movements.

3. We aim to strengthen the position of women in the labour movement, and fight for it to take our needs as a priority. We will encourage and aid the organisation and consciousness of women as women in the labour movement, and fight for the aims and demands of the women's movement in the unions and labour organisations.

We fight to change the sexist atmosphere in the labour movement, and for positive discrimination and changes in arrangements and practices to enable women to play a full part at all levels. We fight for the implementation of the TUC Charter for women in the unions. We fight against the labour movement reflecting in any way the oppressive ideas about a woman's role, which can undermine women's ability to fight back, and dangerously divide the movement.

We ally with all those fighting for rank and file control, democracy and accountability, against those who hold back and sell our fight. Never again a 'Labour' government that ignores party decisions, serves the bosses and bankers, and beats down workers' standards and struggles.

4. We aim to coordinate and assist those women in the Labour Party who are fighting for these aims.

5. We are for direct action, solidarity as women and as workers, and for maximum mobilisation for all actions against the capitalist system that exploits and oppresses us.



## JUNE 22: 27,000 march against the Bomb

27,000 WERE THERE, despite pouring rain, on the Labour Party's June 22 demonstration against Cruise nuclear missiles.

William Rodgers, Shadow Defence minister and leading Labour right-winger, must have been as sick as a parrot. He had demanded that the demonstration should affirm that Labour supports NATO and opposes unilateral disarmament. But the placards, the slogans and the banners showed that the rank and file think differently.

Even some platform speakers came out for unilateral disarmament.

But the Tories are still going ahead with the siting

of Cruise missiles in Britain. The US war hawks are still going ahead with their 'first strike strategy', based on using nuclear weapons BEFORE the USSR in any clash.

There must be three main priorities after June 22.

★ Commit trade union branches, Labour Parties, and the whole labour movement to clear, decisive opposition to the war drive: unilateral nuclear disarmament and withdrawal from NATO.

★ Keep up the demonstrations and protests against the Cruise missiles. Make sure not a single one can be sited here without a huge outcry.

★ Fight for democracy and accountability in the labour movement, so that the leaders have to carry out the movement's policies: no Cruise missiles and no successor to Polaris.

The last Labour government spent £1,000 million SECRETLY on updating Polaris, and in Parliament Callaghan and Rodgers have BACKED THE TORIES on Cruise and Polaris — even threatening to sack Shadow Cabinet members who supported Party policy. The movement must win control over our leaders, and the power to kick out leaders who betray and misrepresent us.



by MIKE FOLEY

"I THINK THERE'S a lot of things happen here have been deliberately kept from the British people". This was the view of one of the residents of the Creggan estate, speaking on Thames Television on Tuesday June 18th.

Creggan is a large working class estate in Derry. Last year Mary Holland interviewed some people on the estate about ten years of British troops on their streets. Holland was Irish correspondent for *The Observer* for many years until its present editor, Conor Cruise O'Brien, decided that one of her articles — on the same theme as the TV programme — provided propaganda for the Provisionals.

Holland 'left' *The Observer*, or, more accurately, she was effectively forced out.

The TV broadcast allowed us to hear some of the ordinary Nationalist population, views which O'Brien would prefer to brand as IRA propaganda.

The programme was made

## TV tells the truth on Ireland - for once

a year ago, but has not been shown until now because of last year's TV dispute. Relatively little has changed over the year.

The British troops are still there, although their numbers have been reduced to their lowest level since just before the internment swoop of 1971. In the meanwhile, the RUC numbers have risen to over 7,000.

In the border areas the RUC has been strengthened with the formation of ten Divisional Mobile Support Units. The Ulster Defence Regiment is also being groomed to replace the British army in more and more areas.

Sir Maurice Oldfield, former chief of MI6, and now security co-ordinator in the North, has stepped up cross-

border cooperation. His efforts, together with a team of NIO officials and RUC and British Army officers has been mainly directed at intelligence gathering, devising tactical initiatives and achieving a co-ordinated 32-County campaign against the Provisionals.

Among the more sophisticated secret surveillance equipment now in use in the North is Radio Frequency (RF) flooding. This system was used by the SAS during the Iranian Embassy siege in London, according to the Dublin-based magazine *Hibernia*. RF allows a telephone to be used as a spy microphone even when the handset is on the hook and the instrument not in use.

Some of the information gleaned from such equipment is supplied by the army to the Loyalist paramilitaries. For example: two weeks ago, the nephew of a former IRA Chief of Staff was seriously wounded by Loyalists. He was lured to a neighbour's house by a telephone call.

He had no phone in his own home and took calls from a neighbour's house.

Few people apart from the security forces would have such details.

Most of the inhabitants of the Creggan know, or are relatives of, the casualties of the war in Northern Ireland. The fact that Republican prisoners are not regarded as political prisoners by the European Commission of Human Rights changes the situation relatively little for them. As one of the women inter-

viewed pointedly asked: "Do English working class mothers understand what their sons are doing over here?"

The short answer of course is no, if they rely on the British media. Considering that 28 programmes on Ireland have been censored, banned or delayed in the 1970-78 period, 'Creggan' was a welcome break in the wall of media silence on Ireland.



From An Phobias/Republican News

## New strike wave shakes S. Africa

by LAWRENCE WELCH

JUNE 16TH, this year, the fourth anniversary of the Soweto uprising, was the start of a four day wave of protest by the black working class which shook the whole of Southern Africa.

At least 42 Coloureds (people of mixed racial origin) have been killed in the townships around Cape Town, and hundreds injured. The damage to property ran to millions of pounds.

Despite a ban on meetings of a 'political nature', which included all church services and meetings to commemorate Soweto, 400 people gathered on Sunday 15th outside the Regina Mundi church in Soweto. Police ordered them to disperse and then attacked them with tear gas, batons, dogs and a new 'sneeze machine' which pours out a noxious

gas. On Monday, buckshot and plastic bullets were used, leaving 35 injured.

Similar incidents took place in Bloemfontein and in Port Elizabeth, and Durban...

In Elsie's River, Cape Town, a message from headquarters ordered police to "Shoot to kill", as people built barricades across roads and attacked supermarkets and businesses which had not closed.

The police public relations officer, Lt-Col Leon Mellet, voiced the government's view of the situation: "I wish agitators would stop using children as their pawns. I can't see no way that these children could have been shot by police."

Two weeks earlier, the police killed two school children in the same area and wounded six others. One child's mother gave her view of the events. "Once these police

have a gun in their hands they go wild. They always say agitators are responsible for protests. Why should we need agitators to tell us what is wrong?"

"Any 18 year old white person gets the vote but a Coloured professor does not".

Another witness saw an

11 year old fall dead: "It made me sick to see a child that young shot before my eyes. It was shocking and I cried", he said.

Like 1976, the Soweto uprising, these events came in the wake of a two month boycott of schools by school students. What is new is that the boycott was started

by Coloured schoolchildren protesting about the disparity in the amount of money spent by the State on educating the different races (£450 per white child, £100 per Coloured, and £50 per black).

The boycott spread only slowly to the black school children — although black schoolchildren in the less militant area of Bloemfontein (in the conservative Orange Free State) boycotted classes nearly a month ago. By the end of May it had been taken up in black townships in Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

Major strikes have inten-

sified the struggle: the meat workers of the Cape, backed by the militant Western Province General Workers' Union, have organised an industry-wide strike, including a meat boycott by black townships. Some 6,000 textile workers in Durban have come out.

The bombings of two major oil-from-coal plants by the ANC have no doubt also boosted the confidence of the black working class. And two journalists who accompanied soldiers on South Africa's recent raid into Angola have reported that "after their initial surprise, guerillas of the South West Africa People's Organisation, SWAPO, fought tenaciously. Their morale was described as extremely high."

The grip of the apartheid state has once more been shaken. The Coloured working class has now been drawn decisively into the struggle alongside the black working class. As the white ruling class runs out of its short term solutions, so the black working class is, as last week's events show, learning to organise in a way that will bind these 'solutions' into a rope which will hang the apartheid state.



Four years after Soweto [above], the Cape revolts

## USA: the anti-Cuba campaign turns sour

TWO MONTHS ago the press and TV were full of fury about the thousands of refugees who wanted to leave Cuba.

Now those thousands have left Cuba and many of them have gone to the US. And there is hardly a word from the press about the fact that the US government is shutting the Cubans up in prison-type camps, arresting people who try to get more Cubans into the US, and even deporting some of the Cubans.

In April, the media were eager to moralise. The fact

that people wanted to leave Cuba showed it was a grim tyranny. (Not a word about the fact that a vicious US blockade has caused inevitable economic difficulties in Cuba. Of course many Cubans find the richest country in the world, only a few miles from their shores, attractive).

The media were full of righteous anger about the would-be refugees being cooped up in the Peruvian Embassy in Havana — not mentioning that the refugees were waiting for other countries to let them

in, not Cuba to let them out.

Now the refugees are cooped up again — waiting for the US government to let them out. They are held under armed guard, 'processed' at a snail's pace, let out only if they can find a sponsor or relative and pass security checks — and deported otherwise. Some have already been deported.

On June 1st, several hundred Cubans made an attempt to break out of Fort Chaffee camp, Arkansas. They were beaten back by armed soldiers and military police.

Later the same day, 300 made another escape attempt. Troops opened fire, injuring 70, and used tear-gas and clubs.

2,000 troops have been stationed at Fort Chaffee. Where's the grim tyranny now?

Also, since May 14th, the US has put a ban on private boats bringing more Cuban refugees into the country.

On June 3rd, a freighter carrying 731 Cubans to the US was seized. The owner and crew were arrested, and so were some relatives of the refugees, and the Cubans were sent to a camp.

In April, the Cuban refugees must have thought they had it

made. As they arrived in the US, greeted as heroes, they reportedly asked everyone, 'Do you have a car? Do you have a TV?' The cars, the TVs and all the other benefits of US prosperity would soon be theirs — they thought.

Now the US government and the media curse them as criminals, mentally ill, and social scum. They have no cars, no TVs, no jobs, no homes.

They are at the bottom of the heap of US society, along with most other refugees... and only marginally better off than the Haitians.

Thousands of Haitians try to flee from the US from the vicious Duvalier dictatorship. These are political refugees, not economic 'refugees' like most of those from Cuba or Mexico.

Since 1972 only 58 Haitians have been granted refuge. 5,000 currently face deportation proceedings. 600 were deported between 1974 and 1979.

A former member of the dreaded Tonton Macoutes secret police and a former Haitian army official have both testified that there are standing orders to arrest any refugees sent back.

MARTIN THOMAS

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# LABOUR PARTY STRUCTURE

# How it all began

by DAVE SPENCER

ON A RECENT 'Any Questions' programme, Lord Kearton of British National Oil Corporation told of introducing a Texas oil millionaire to a minister in the last Labour government for talks on North Sea oil. The Texan commented afterwards, "If that man's a socialist, my name's Peter the Rabbit".

Activists in the Labour Party will know what he means. No need for names; the Party is full of them, bootlickers of the bourgeoisie, slaves to their own careers. Even the boss class has little respect for them. The fact is that this tension between the activists and the Parliamentarians has been a more or less permanent feature of the Labour Party from its beginning.

Most of the 129 delegates who formed the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 were not in fact socialists at all — they were radical liberals. The reason for this was quite simply that they were mainly trade union leaders who had been bought off by the British ruling class in the heady days when the British Empire ruled the waves.

Wining and dining of the trade union leaders was quite common, and these leaders were often conspicuous at workers' meetings by their top hats and stiff white collars.

Social climbing and knife-and-forkism were rife. It was only when Germany and the USA challenged British domination of world trade that the British government and bosses moved in very heavily on the trade unions, culminating in the famous Taff Vale decision of 1901. It was felt by the TUC at that time that it needed a more effective voice in Parliament than the Liberals and that was the origin of the Labour Party.

As a result, the Labour Party was very different from the continental Social Democratic Parties, which were explicitly Marxist and which had created their own trade unions. Instead, the Labour Party was a creation of the unions, most of which had been hand in hand with the Liberals since the 1860s.

Even then, the famous Keir Hardie, whose portrait adorns the wall of many a Labour Party headquarters, and who was one of the leaders of the Independent Lab-

our Party and the Labour Representation Committee, made secret electoral pacts with the Liberals. He himself became the first Labour MP because he was unopposed by the Liberal Party.

A little later, in 1908, Churchill became Liberal MP for Dundee because he was unopposed by the Labour Party. In 1903, the Labour Leader, Keir Hardie, had urged Lloyd George to leave the Liberals and to lead a new party of "the genuine reformers". At the same time he denounced Marxism, saying that "the propaganda of class hatred is not one that can take root in this country".

As a result of this cooperation with the bosses' party — which coincided with a period of falling living standards — many workers turned away from electoral or political struggle towards industrial direct action. There were a number of movements for union demo-

Cabinet that shot the leaders of the 1916 Easter rising.

It is true that Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald and other ILPeres opposed the war, but they did so on the grounds of pacifism, not internationalism. Throughout this period, the Labour MPs record in Parliament on all issues is tame and feeble, but in particular on burning topics such as Ireland and votes for women.

The war and the Russian Revolution caused a vast radicalisation in the working class. Trade union membership shot up and as the war dragged on there were more and more strikes. The number of trade unionists affiliated to the Labour Party more than doubled to 3½ million in 1919, and 4,300,000 in 1920.

The Labour vote also rose dramatically in 1918.

The Russian Revolution had a huge impact on workers tired of war and looking for a way out of the morass

collaboration with the Liberals, left the government and committed itself clearly to socialism for the first time.

The February 1918 Conference of the Labour Party adopted a new Constitution, including the famous Clause IV. It was drafted by the Fabian Sidney Webb, who had previously been a leading 'Lib-Lab' theorist and who was an exponent of the most slavish gradualism.

Clause IV was and still is a sop to the Left, made under pressure of direct activity. It could be all things to all men: a commitment to ideals for the future, while the practical day-to-day betrayals would go on.

The NEC had no commitment to implement Clause IV. It was seen merely as an ultimate aim. The adoption of Clause IV also took away from the Left, i.e. from the ILP, its main object and impetus: the commitment of the Labour Party to socialism.

The new constitution also restructured the Labour Party for mainly electoral purposes. The Party became centralised with its own individual members, organised on the basis of local electoral constituencies and wards, all subject to central Party discipline.

Before 1918, the Party had been organised very differently. There were no individual members: only members of affiliated organisations — the Socialist Societies (Fabians, ILP, etc) and the unions. The

constituency organisation was in some areas the local ILP branch, in others the Trades Council. A separate CLP organisation was a rarity.

Local organisations had a lot more autonomy. For example, in 1902, many ILP branches urged the Dewsbury ILP to support Harry Quelch, the Marxist Social Democratic Federation candidate, against the advice of the ILP and LRC leadership.

Again, in 1907, Victor Grayson became an Independent Labour and Socialist MP in the Colne Valley with the support of the local ILP, causing great embarrassment to the national Labour Party leadership. The British Socialist Party, an explicitly Marxist party, was able to affiliate to the Labour Party even as late as 1916. Communists were elected as Labour MPs in the early '20s.

After 1918, this independence was far more difficult, and Parliamentarism ruled. The central organisation cracked down on any constituency rocking the boat. The Communist Party, which succeeded the BSP in

activists is evident in the remarks of Sidney Webb, who described CLPs as "frequently unrepresentative groups of nonentities dominated by fanatics, cranks and extremists". They neglected the trade union bloc vote as a counter, he thought.

Another aspect of the new 1918 constitution was the greater power given to trade unions, who were mostly right wing. Their contribution to party funds was also very much increased.

The affiliated Socialist Societies had previously elected their own three reps on to the old NEC, the trade unions having 11 seats. Under the 1918 constitution, there were 23 NEC members, 13 from national affiliated organisations (including Socialist Societies and trade unions), five from local Labour Parties, and four reserved for women.

Despite Clause IV, the policy document adopted at the 1918 conference, 'Labour and the New Social Order', was nothing more than a Fabian blueprint.

Throughout the 1920s, this craving for respectability, this electoral and Parliamentary emphasis, dominated the Labour Party at the expense of all direct action. The Labour leaders denounced the miners striking for the nationalisation of the mines and denounced the dockers refusing to load arms for the British troops' invasion of Russia in 1920.

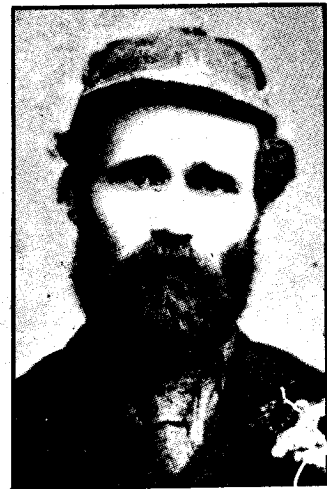
The 1924 Labour government, an alliance with the Liberals, did nothing for the working class.

This policy brought about the worst defeat in the history of the British working class, the defeat of the general strike in 1926.

In some respects, little has changed since 1918. The Party leaders still rely on alliances with right wing union leaders to provide them with a base inside the Party. They still steer to the Left when the pressure from below gets too great, only to stab in the back the hopes they have raised.

And they have done all this under the same constitution, written by Webb in 1918.

Today the fight to renovate the structures of the Labour Party is the fight against the same right wing policies, contempt for the Party membership and domination of the Party by careerists and bureaucrats.



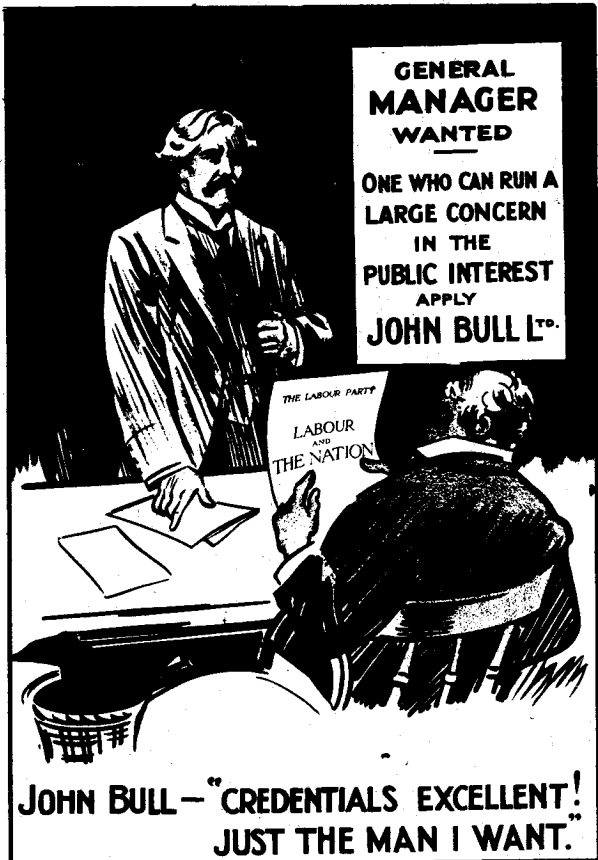
Keir Hardie



Sidney Webb

1920, had its application for affiliation turned down and in 1925, membership of the CP was made incompatible with Labour Party membership.

The contempt with which the Labour leadership has seen and still sees local



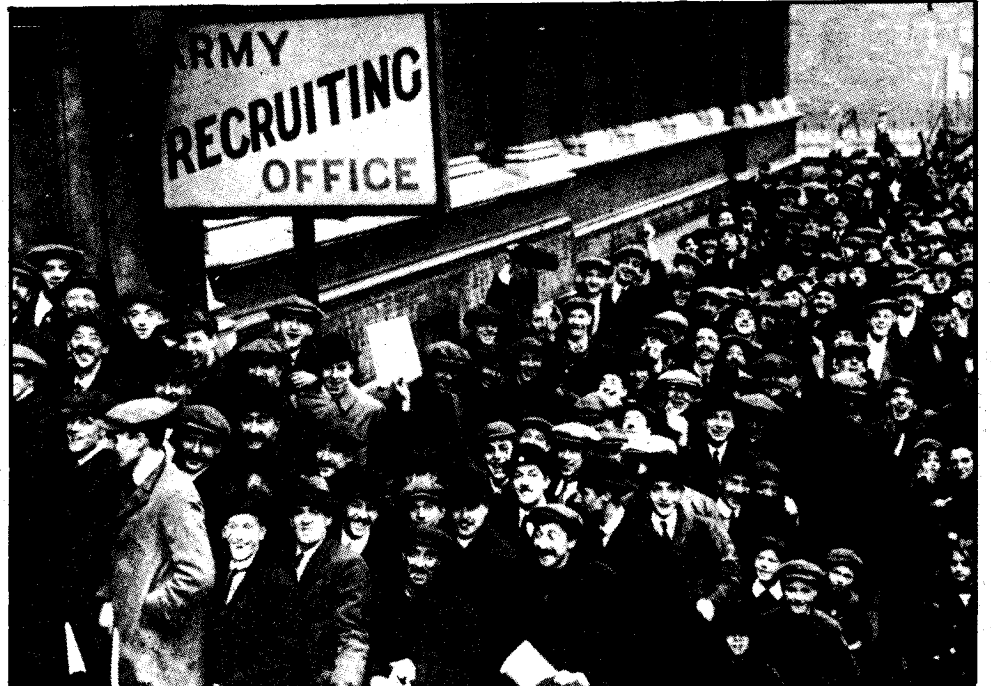
One election poster that Labour leaders like Ramsay MacDonald [in poster] took seriously...

cracy, and industrial unionism, and a series of bitterly-fought strikes.

The culmination of this class collaboration was in the 1914-18 war, when most Labour Party members were urged by their leaders to join up to fight for the nation, and trade union officials became recruiting officers and progress chasers for the state. Arthur Henderson, a prominent Labour MP, went so far as to join the War Cabinet — the same

much capitalism had led them into.

All this brought considerable pressure on to the Labour leaders to adapt or to run the risk of being swept aside. They managed to adapt. For example, in 1917 at the Leeds Congress, called to discuss the Russian Revolution and the war, Ramsay MacDonald called for the Soviet system in Britain. As part of this adaptation, in 1918 the Labour Party broad its open



In World War I the top Labour leaders became recruiting sergeants for imperialism — just like today.

# WORKERS' ACTION

ON JUNE 13th, ten thousand CPSA members took strike action in support of two sacked Department of Employment activists, Richard Cleverly and Phil Corrdell. Since then, the Defence Campaign has agreed on a number of initiatives which are designed to continue the rank and file struggle for trade union rights and to win reinstatement on CPSA terms.

The rally which followed a march of 500 CPSA and labour movement activists through Lambeth on the 13th heard first-hand the reasons why such rank and file initiatives are necessary.

CPSA Deputy General Secretary, Alistair Graham, attempted to explain the decision of the Disputes Committee, which rejected serious industrial action. He met with a cool response from a growing number of members who realise that strike action is almost certainly the only way to win.

The dependence of the union's bureaucracy on

## DOLE VICTIMISATION Rank and file action is the way to win

formal appeal procedure will, if allowed to rule unchallenged, lead to a defeat. Only a small number of appeals before the Civil Service Appeals Board have led to reinstatement — irrespective of the Board's judgement. Even fewer cases are successful through industrial tribunals.

And the initial appeal may not be heard until September.

The experience of Derek Robinson of British Leyland should demonstrate that pursuing official channels, at the expense of rank and file action, will ultimately ham-

string strike calls in the event of an unfavourable result.

The dismissals and the employers' justifications are so outrageous that many members found it difficult to believe other "offences" were not committed. In response a factsheet, reproducing dismissal notices and tribunal statistics, is to be produced for national circulation.

More importantly, the campaign has agreed to organise regular collections throughout the country and to finance continued un-

official actions at Brixton dole (where Corrdell and Cleverly worked), if the members there agree to extend their official three day strike beyond June 27th — the day Richard Cleverly's dismissal becomes effective.

This action is not only the clear course for the struggle against the Tory attacks, but is also the first step in the campaign against the right wing bureaucracy in the CPSA, whose stranglehold over the official machinery is quickly proving to be a brake on the ability to defend mem-

bers' interests.

The continued strike would initially be unofficial, but pressure will be brought to bear on the bureaucracy to respond to the initiative and give full backing and financial support.

Whatever the result of this pressure, it is essential that the action is continued and the campaign built in all areas — inside and outside the CPSA. The battle for the jobs of comrades Corrdell and Cleverly is now very much an issue within the overall struggle to defend trade union rights in the face of vicious Tory attacks designed to immobilise the working class.

We must answer these attacks by proving conclusively that the rank and file has the independent strength to defend its own interests.

Information from and donations to:

Brixton UBO Defence Campaign, 16 Knowlton House, Cowley Road Estate, London SW9.

PHIL YEWDALL

## EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

**MASS PICKET AT ADWEST. READING: 6am, Wednesday 2 July, at Headley Rd, Woodleigh, near Reading.**

**FRIDAY 27 JUNE.** Lambeth Labour Left all-London public meeting: No Cuts, No Rate and Rent Increases. Speakers: Vanessa Wiseman, Neil Turner, Carol Turner. 7.30pm, at Lambeth Town Hall, Room 119.

**SATURDAY 28 JUNE.** Tribune group national conference. 10.30am, Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1. Open to Labour Party members and labour movement delegates. Delegates' credentials: Reg Race MP, 133 Grierson Rd, London SE23

**THURSDAY 3 JULY.** Mobilise for Labour Democracy: rally in Islington. Speakers: Audrey Wise, Bob Wright, Rachel Lever. 7.45pm, Central Library, Holloway Road.

**SATURDAY 5 JULY.** London Labour Briefing Local government conference. 10am, Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill, London NW3. Open to all Labour Party members and trade union delegates. Delegate fee £1, to 155 Green Lanes, London N16.

**FRIDAY 4 JULY - FRIDAY 11 JULY.** 'Marxism into the 80s', organised by Socialist Worker Student Organisation. At North London Poly, Prince of Wales Rd, London NW5. £9 in advance, from SWSO, PO Box 82, London E2 8DN. £10 on the door.

**MONDAY 14 JULY.** Mobilise for Labour Democracy: rally in Lambeth. Speakers: Reg Race, Graham Norwood, and others. 8pm, Lambeth Town Hall.

**SATURDAY 26 JULY - SATURDAY 2 AUGUST.** Labour Party Young Socialists summer camp. Bracelands camp site, near Coleford, Gloucestershire. Booking fee £5 (cheques to 'LPYS Summer Camp Fund'), to LPYS, 144 Walworth Rd, London SE17. Cost for full week £35.

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## Sacked sparks fight back

G.E.C. HAVE sacked 150 electricians they sub-contract to Metro-Cammell, Washwood Heath, Birmingham.

That happened six weeks ago. The other 1500 workers have been laid off for four days a week ever since.

The EETPU has refused to back the sacked electricians. Worse, it has threatened to bring scab labour to replace them.

The Joint Shop Stewards Committee inside Metro-Cammell have given no support, and have even said they will work with any scabs the EETPU send in. T&GWU officials have sent out a circular instructing lorry drivers to cross the electricians' picket line — but most lorry drivers are ignoring the instruction and respecting the picket line.

The sparks had asked for a 20% pay increase, a better lay-off agreement, and a redundancy agreement. The bosses offered a rise — to be financed by a bonus scheme that would mean a 25% reduction in their workforce.

The electricians refused this and were sacked immediately.

These workers need our backing urgently. Messages of support and donations to B.W. Squelch, 33 Hereford Close, Birmingham B45 0BQ.



After St Pauls [above], the police are being careful in Moss Side

## MOSS SIDE UNDER HEAVY MANNERS

SINCE THE success of the anti-fascist demonstration a fortnight ago (June 7th), the police have been out in force around the Moss Side area of Manchester.

It is now impossible to go into the 'Western' pub on the Alex Park Estate without tripping over detectives. It is common to have five or six leaning on the bar every night and dinner time.

In Moss Side, the 'Western' is one of the few pubs where youth can go in with-

out being hassled to buy drinks, where they can meet and play on the machines. That's gone now.

One improvement is the attitude of the police towards black youth — dead friendly now... apart from the 'fatherly advice' not to listen to white 'trouble-makers', which is being ignored.

It's a shame the police weren't as friendly on the 7th, when they used the anti-fascist demonstration as an excuse to settle old scores. They set a dog on a man who

refused to leave his wife while she was having an epileptic fit. Quite a few people were snatched and assaulted by our brothers in blue.

Moss Side has only just started to fight. The youth, who face 40% unemployment, have had enough of having the coppers on their backs.

The youth have their own demands: places to meet free from police harassment, an end to that harassment on the streets, an end to beatings in the cells, an end to

unemployment.

It is essential that the labour movement opens its doors to the youth and stands by them. Moss Side Constituency Labour Party has been isolated from local youth for too long.

The YS in Hulme ward have won the ward's support for the Defence Campaign set up after the 7th. It is now essential that this work is taken forward, to organise the youth and win them to socialism.

ON MONDAY 23rd June, strikers at Harshaw Chemicals in Glasgow returned to work after winning an eight week strike for the reinstatement of their convenor, Gerry Haughey, sacked in December 1979.

WA talked to Gerry Haughey about the strike — and argued with him about the role we think women workers and wives could have played in the strike.

Gerry Haughey told us: Management called a meeting for 1.30pm on Monday [23rd]. The meeting was over by half-three and was just about tying up the loose ends, like when we should go back to work.

A new disputes procedure is to be drawn up, but I was never happy with the old one anyway. The new procedure will have to be agreed to by both us and management. I've been reinstated, unconditionally. The section where I used to work has been closed down for the time being. Until it reopens I'll be on another job, probably a better one. We won't stand for any messing around. It's a total victory.

We asked how much help the strikers had got from the TGWU.

We've had more financial support from the AUEW than from the TGWU in the strike and that just about sums it up. Last December the region passed a motion saying that if I was not reinstated, all branches in Scotland would be circulated about the strike, but it was never done.

As far as financial help was concerned, we've had to go and get it ourselves, and a lot more could have been done.

The Trades Council were good enough to give us a room in the TU Centre for nothing and our delegate kept them informed of what was going on. But the Trades Council didn't do very well. We had to go and get things done ourselves.

That's where the unions let us down, particularly our own.

And the local Labour Party? we asked.

I'm in Dalmarnock branch, but haven't been near it since the dispute began. I just haven't had the time. The branch has not done anything. We're probably one of the strongest Labour Party wards in Britain but the branch meetings are always very poorly attended.

Over on the Clydeside, people are solid and strike together, but here in the East End they crack up too easily. ■■ What are the main lessons to be drawn from the strike?

The lesson is very simple, said Gerry Haughey: don't bother your arse with ACAS. Let workers stick together and fight. Our workers were solid, we stuck together, and that's why we won.

■ We never saw any women on the picket lines. Were any women workers involved in the strike?

There are two part-timers and three full-timers who are women. We had support from two of them, but the others were against it. We told the women they did not need to come on the picket line — the men were there and that was enough.

■ Isn't that discrimination? We're all for equal rights for women. This factory was one of the first to win equal rights for women. We won them even before the Act was passed. Women are entitled to equal rights.

But women won't come forward in union affairs. I used to work in a factory in Grimsby. The women were the most militant but they never came to branch meetings.

The women here do come to branch meetings. But the workers here are a rough and ready lot. There might be trouble on the picket lines. You can rely on a man to keep his mouth shut, but a woman won't.

■ Was anything done to involve the wives of strikers?

Willy Queen [the local TGWU full timer] received a letter which supposedly came from a wife of one of the strikers. It said that the wives wanted us to go back to work and that I was a troublemaker. The letter was anonymous and I don't even believe it was from a woman. One of the shop stewards is a tout for management. We'll deal with him when we get back.

■ But getting the wives together would have made sure the strikers got support from them at home.

The men got backing from

## Victory at Harshaws

their wives. There were moans and groans, but that's only natural. It's hard on the wives, especially if they're married to the shop stewards or me. But my wife agreed with me on not accepting compensation. Compensation is bribery and corruption, only it's legal.

■ Do you see the attempt to victimise you as part of a general offensive by the bosses and the Tory government?

This is it! I forecast this before I went back after I was sick, and had the branch ready for action. It's quite clear management is taking advantage of the Tory government.

As soon as they got in, they started to squeeze us. But mind you, I thought the last Labour cabinet was really a Tory cabinet.

■ Is there anything else you want to say about the strike?

I want to mention the workers in the squad. They worked particularly hard during the strike. And the main lesson is: stick together. It's the only way we'll ever win.

STAN CROOKE