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For socialist renewal!




For workers' liberty!



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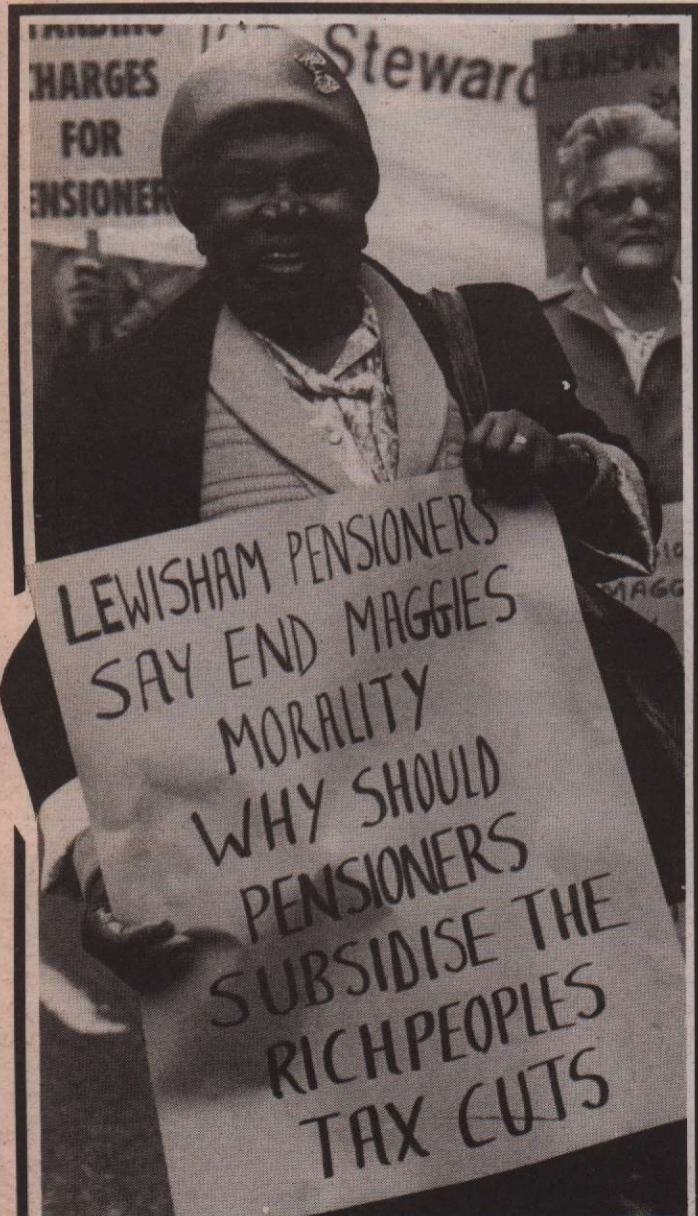
SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the Left!

Vote Labour Nov 7!

The scandal of Tory Britain



Tories rob pensioners

Major's electioneering exposed page 7

While unemployment continues to rise — condemning millions to poverty and demoralisation, and some to homelessness and despair — Britain still has the longest work hours in Western Europe.

According to John MacInnes of Glasgow University, speaking at a conference organised by the Scottish TUC recently, ten per cent of male workers in Britain do more than 68 hours a week, and over 40 per cent do more than 46 hours.

Workers are forced into long hours of overtime by low pay. *If the hours were cut, and the work shared out among all those wanting jobs, then every worker could have a decent job and a decent*

- Jobs cut while shorter hours could save them
- Pensioners fobbed off with pennies
- Health service set for privatising
- Education starved, students pushed into poverty

livelihood. But it is more profitable for bosses to use the fear of unemployment to squeeze more work from smaller workforces. And so that's what happens in Tory

Britain: millions jobless in poverty, millions forced into long hours and overwork, and a small minority

Turn to page 2

Lift sanctions on Iraq

The slaughter of the innocents

By Thomas Macara

The number of Iraqi children who have died of disease and starvation as a result of the American bombing of Iraq has to be counted in the tens of thousands.

Infant mortality is now four times what it was before the war. One in 10 Iraqi children dies before reaching the age of 5.

According to a just-published report by doctors and scientists who

conducted a survey in Iraq, the number of children who die like this will increase dramatically unless something is done.

They call for an immediate lifting of the sanctions which curtail Iraq's ability to sell oil.

They investigated conditions in 30 cities, and visited 9,000 homes. They report raw sewage in the streets, a water supply system on the verge of collapse, and half the people already drinking contaminated water.

They encountered

cholera and typhoid, which will spread murderously if social conditions continue to deteriorate.

People are starving. Inflation has risen by 2,000%.

As always, the children suffer most in such conditions. Young children die from diarrhoea an adult can survive.

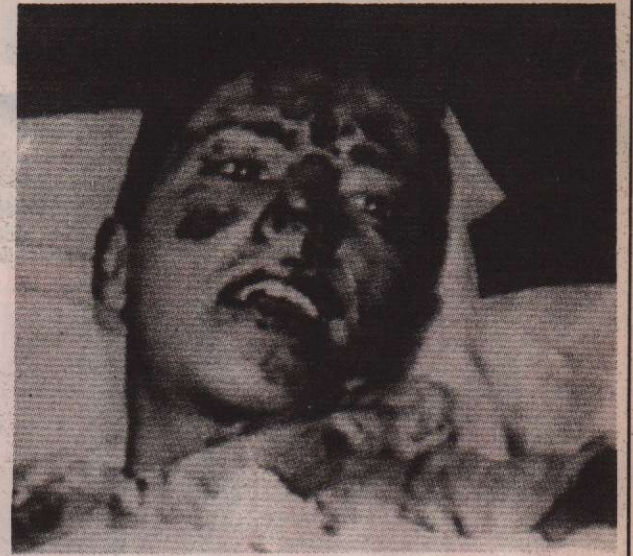
Tens and tens of thousands more of them will die if the economic blockade of Iraq continues.

The US, Britain and

their Allies said they were out to destroy Saddam Hussein. They bombed Iraq back in time half a century or more.

But they left Saddam Hussein in power. The savage butcher continues to rule, and the "international community", which allows Saddam Hussein to survive in power, continues to punish the children of Iraq.

This barbarism must cease. Lift the sanctions now! Stop slaughtering the children of Iraq!



A victim of American bombing during the Gulf War. Children continue to suffer and die as a result of the war and the continuing sanctions — from disease and poverty.

Jobs to go at Thames

Statement by Thames TV's joint shop stewards committee

Thames Television's Joint Shop Stewards Committee, representing BECTU, EETPU and NUJ, are appalled at the failure of our company to retain the London weekday franchise.

We believe the loss of the licence is entirely due to a vindictive piece of legislation brought in by the current government after the excellent Thames programme, "Death on the Rock".

The direct result is that 1,000 or more people at Thames could pay with their jobs.

Thames had become, with

the active support of the trade unions, a company capable of submitting a high-quality application to the Independent Television Commission. We have no doubt that Thames would have retained the franchise had the licencing process been left to the judgement of the viewers, rather than a lunatic system based on the highest cash bid.

Thames's "talent for television" is their staff. It is they who have been responsible for making quality programmes which comprise almost half of ITV's network productions.

We are calling on Thames management to stick to their union agreements in order that the goodwill necessary for a successful transfer from a franchise-holder to television's major independent production company is maintained.

Prakash and Prem must stay!



Prakash Chavrimootoo and her young son Prem are fighting against deportation. Prakash left a violent marriage and tried to start a new life. She works for Birmingham Social Services.

On 16 October Prakash had an appeal hearing against her threatened deportation at the Immigration Appeals building in Birmingham, at which a picket was held. Photo: Mark Salmon

Anti-Fascist alert!
Oppose the BNP — rally outside Castle Donnington Community College, 1.00pm, Saturday 26th October

The lie machine



Nice Mr Major is not always quite so nice — not nice at all when he is trying to intimidate the BBC.

Clearly the Tories see intimidation of the BBC as an integral part of their election strategy.

Kinnock did his best to help Jack Dromey beat Adams. The Tory press is ungrateful. Kinnock is smeared with Adams. Jack Adams is no more a communist than Neil Kinnock is!

The Sun does its bit. But maybe they miscalculate. A lot of people would gladly trade a small tax increase for a restored NHS.

Enright should stand down!

By Dave Marshall, Secretary, Hemsworth CLP

Following the result of the NEC panel decision to impose Derek Enright as Labour candidate in the Hemsworth by-election, I can only say that this is an insult to the Labour voters, party members and the memory of George Buckley.

The dictatorial attitude of the Labour leadership will make it harder for us to win the support of traditional

Labour voters to achieve what we all want — a Labour government.

Derek Enright has very little support within the constituency and would not have won the position of candidate.

If Derek Enright believes in democratic socialism then his course of action must be to withdraw and force the NEC to reconsider the whole procedure.

The NEC should draw up a short-list including Derek Enright and Ken Capstick, who received broad support within the constituency, obtaining five out of a possible ten Labour Party branch nominations.

Scandal of Tory Britain

From page 1

coining profits!

The same relentless drive for profits lies behind other scandals in Tory Britain.

Pensioners have been fobbed off with a few pence extra, in a feeble Tory attempt at a pre-election drive. The Tories' plan is to push people towards private pension schemes, leaving the state pension system only as minimal relief for paupers.

Market forces are the Tories' "plan" for education. The result: many students have been forced into crippling debt, or have had to take part-time jobs while they study. Adult educa-

tion, and nursery education, are being destroyed.

Market forces are the Tories' plan for health, too, however much they try to deny it now. Just this week they have had to impose a hasty ban on their new "trust" hospitals charging

NHS patients for treatment outside regular health authority "contracts".

We need to kick out the Tories. We can make a good start with a strong Labour vote in the by-elections coming on 7 November.

Poll tax non-payment spirals

By Cate Murphy

Thousands of people are refusing to pay part of this year's poll tax bills added to compensate for last year's non-payers.

Most councils are finding it even harder to collect the tax, and they are way behind in their collection rates.

Only the Tory flagship council Westminster — granted extra money to ensure a very low bill of £36 — is ahead on collection rates.

In Tory chairman Chris Patten's Bath constituency, the local council is issuing 1500 liability orders against people refusing to pay the "non-payment levy" of £9.15.

Liverpool has collected a mere 10% of revenue due,

and Hackney — which levied £80 extra to cover last year's non-payment — has got in less than a quarter of the money due.

The Tories may have hoped that their announcement of abolition would kill off the non-payment movement, but the reverse appears to be true. Millions are not paying.

Councils are still chasing non-payers from last year, and with figures rising all the time, they're not going to be able to chase all this year's non-payers.

The fight must continue to get Labour councils to stop harassing working class people with the bailiffs and the courts, and to win a pledge from Labour that a Labour government will introduce an amnesty for non-payers and poll tax prisoners.

Labour witch-hunt against NUM

By Steven Holt

Another case of A Walworth Road's witch-hunt against socialists in the Labour Party became clear on Thursday 17 October when Ken Capstick, vice-chair of the Yorkshire NUM, was not shortlisted as a candidate in the selection for Hemsworth by-election.

Ken Capstick is a popular figure in the local Party and trade union movement, and his undemocratic exclusion is strongly resented by the labour movement in Hemsworth.

The NEC of the Fire Brigades Union has demanded the National Executive reconsider its decision, whilst the NUM nationally will be reconsidering its contributions.

NUM President Arthur Scargill has said that "We will always pay our contribu-

tions to those constituencies where we have mining MPs. But I can see no point in continuing contributions of £3 million [to the Labour Party nationally since 1982] when the party rejects an NUM-nominated candidate who has the support of the selection meeting."

The Yorkshire NUM has decided not to fund the election campaign for the imposed candidate and will be arguing within the NUM nationally for the withholding of funds from the Labour Party.

Lessons of the Judge Thomas affair:

The reality of America's democracy

The idea that in our society people are socially equal, and the belief that ours is a democratically organised society, are the two great myths of modern capitalism.

But these myths fall apart and dissolve into nothingness in the workplaces of the capitalist world.

With few exceptions, in workplaces people are not equal, but cogs in a hierarchy run by capitalists (or government-appointed managers). A world in which private capital allows a few to own the means of production on which the lives of millions depend can have little room for workplace democracy.

Everywhere, some have power over others. Everywhere in our society there is exploitation and degradation, more or less disguised, more or less openly brutal.

And where ever men have power,

women are sexually pursued, harassed, coerced and exploited. It is the norm in our society.

The women's liberation movement has made people more aware of it, and some ashamed of it, but has so far been able to do little to change it.

It is all too probable that Judge Clarence Thomas, George Bush's candidate for life membership of the US Supreme Court — which has a central political role, and is in many ways more powerful than Congress — did use his power over a subordinate woman colleague, Anita Hill, to harry her sexually. We do not know. We cannot know.

The TV circus in which Thomas was accused by Anita Hill was not a trial. It was, as Thomas himself told his tormentors, more like a high tech lynching. He did not get "due process" — a properly conducted trial — and, in the outcome, neither did Anita Hill. The apparent rejection of her charges by the powerful Senate committee which went ahead and appointed Clarence Thomas a

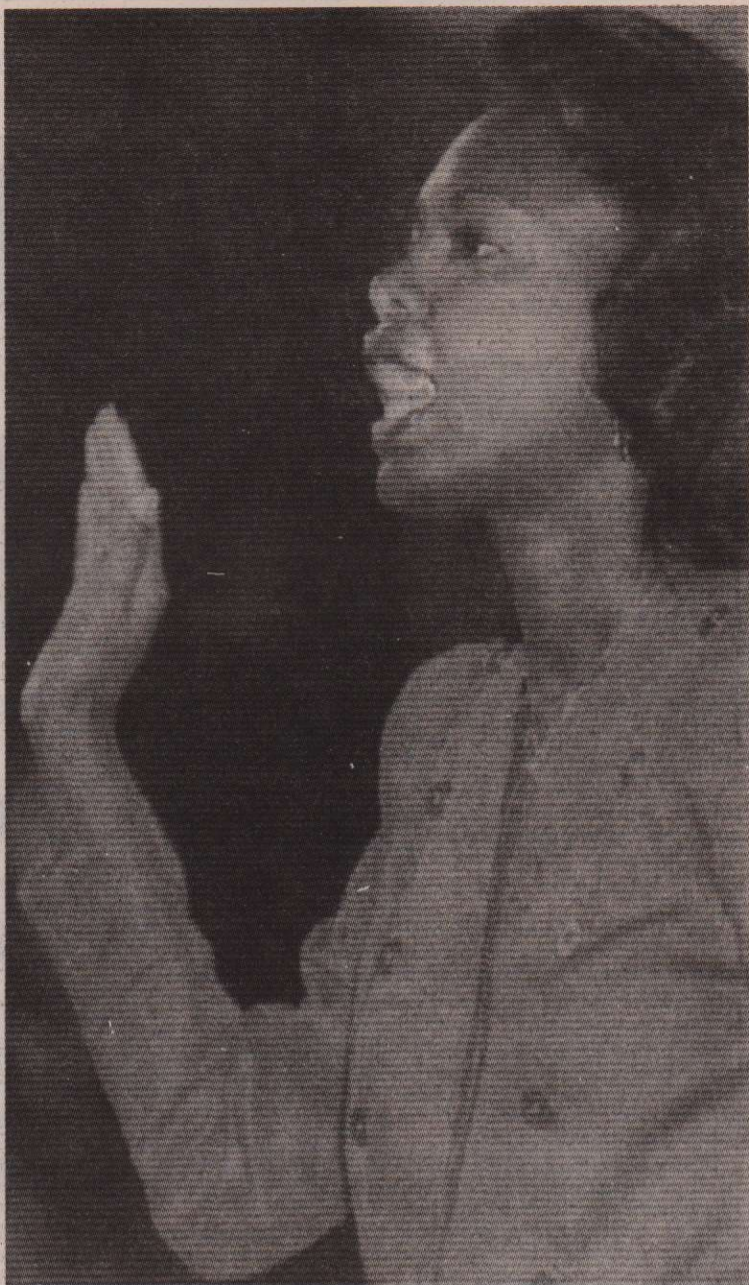
justice of the US Supreme Court, seems to leave her branded a liar.

But it was not only and not mainly either Professor Anita Hill or Judge Clarence Thomas who came out of this attempted high tech lynching bloodied and discredited. It is the American bourgeois democracy.

Here we saw a radically sick system in operation. A conservative black man, the President's candidate for the Supreme Court, was almost destroyed for alleged sexual misbehaviour by a Senate committee which included Senator Edward Kennedy, notorious for such things!

Thomas — the stooge candidate of the brutally racist Republican Establishment — finally triumphed over his accusers by trumping their charges of sexism against him by charging them with racism!

Thomas's future really was at stake, but it was all a great insincere pantomime, played with demagoguery and insincerity on both sides, in which both sides used the battle



Anita Hill: caught in the political crossfire

cries of sectional interests and pressure groups as so much convenient small change.

This is a political system in which rich members of the bourgeoisie like Edward Kennedy pass for "liberals", the best there is in a bourgeois political world where money counts for everything. A system in which there is a known minimum price for the chance to win a Senate seat: currently \$25 million, which is what an effective media-conducted campaign costs.

It is a system currently open only to the rich, or to those financed by the rich. It is a system in which vastly expensive personal political beauty contests between personable candidates who share a profound agreement on everything that matters, has brought "politics" into such disrepute that — in the world's most important democracy — not much more than one third of the electorate bothers to vote.

People know that, whoever wins the election, the plutocracy is always the real winner.

That political system now holds a terrifying mirror up to the people of Britain. In the last decade, British politics has taken giant strides

towards "Americanisation" — that is towards electoral contests from which almost all real political content has been emptied out, and all real decisions are made behind the pseudo-democratic facade by the rich and their top civil servants. In the USA many such key decisions are made by the Supreme Court!

The long dominance of Thatcher, a "conviction politician" disguised this process, at the same time as speeding it up by way of compelling fainthearted renegade socialists like Kinnock to accept the essentials of "Thatcherism".

Now that Thatcher has gone, and Major provides the Tories with a slightly softer and slightly more human face, we are left with a political system in which only such things as Labour's wavering and too timid commitment to preserve and — perhaps — repair the NHS, divides the parties where policy is concerned.

The Kinnockites are helping push British politics closer to the American model with their craven acceptance of a Labour-Tory consensus based on the Thatcher counter-revolution. Thereby they betray not only socialism — to which they no longer even claim any allegiance — but democracy, too, of which they pretend to make a god.



Edward Kennedy: spot the hypocrite

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Fight for the soul of the labour movement!

In almost any political clash between Neil Kinnock and Arthur Scargill, socialists will side automatically with Scargill.

And it is a scandal, the way the Labour Party leaders heavily-handedly excluded NUM-nominee Ken Capstick as a possible Labour candidate in the upcoming Hemsworth by-election.

But when Arthur Scargill and others in the NUM — the Yorkshire Region, for example — start talking about disaffiliating from the Labour Party in protest, then it must be said that they are playing straight into the hands of the Kinnockites.

What would they do instead? Start their own political party? Withdraw the miners' union from

politics? Anyone who thinks that this is the way to fight Kinnock has lost sight of what the fight with Kinnock is all about.

It is a fight for the soul of the labour movement; a fight in which the left refuses to accept that the labour movement is the secure property of the Kinnockites.

It is a fight in which the left cannot admit defeat unless we are also willing to write off the entire existing labour movement and declare the need to begin all over again.

It is, to say the least, premature for the left to make a declaration of such a historic defeat, and withdraw voluntarily from the Labour Party, vacating the field to the Kinnockites.

To do that because of the vetoing of a candidate would be nothing

less than monumentally stupid.

Right now, our fight is an unequal one against people who control the commanding heights of the movement, and who are backed by all the might of the bourgeoisie in society. It is a fight in which the left is suffering blow after blow.

But the right is coming to its day of reckoning with the labour movement. It will be judged by the labour movement when Kinnock forms a government next year, or is exposed as doubly bankrupt for losing Labour the fourth general election in a row.

Arthur Scargill is right against Kinnock on almost everything; on this, the left in the NUM should tell him that he is dangerously wrong. They should tell him plainly and forcefully.

"The emancipation of the working class is also the emancipation of all human beings without distinction of sex or race."

Karl Marx

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Bro. James says "cheese"!

See if you can make any sense of the following:

"Now I will guarantee you never could guarantee in all the time I've signed agreements man and boy and I never signed a perfect agreement. And I've been doing it all my life, but there is always somebody who'll criticise this

aspect or that aspect, but the alternative to an agreement is no agreement and it's anarchy. Tell me when you get a perfect agreement with your employer, tell me when you get the perfect agreement with Captain Bob or Aussie, what-d'-you-call-him, Aussie Jack. Nonsense. And who is going to argue that is talking nonsense. We're in the business of representing the men. Now, they're not perfect, but we're all perfect human beings. A pity the reverend is sitting here, but mebbe he'll say a prayer for us. It will prove and it will stand the test of time. We may be wrong and if we're wrong, tell us. And we'll say 'Cheese!'"

No, that was not a da-daist monologue from this year's Edinburgh Festival. It was Jimmy Airlie at the press conference that followed the signing of the "Hook-Up" agreement between the Offshore Contractors Council and the AEU, EETPU and the GMB, this summer. It was a lousy agreement by any standards, giving the oil companies the power to de-recognise the unions at a date of their choosing. It was a deliberate blow against unions like the MSF and the TGWU and it was intended to isolate and destroy OILC.

Whether Airlie's embarrassing incoherence was the result of failing powers, emotion or tiredness, we may never know. But it may have been a bad conscience. Because Airlie, the man who now acts as an unquestioning henchman for Bill Jordan and Gavin Laird, was not always a craven right-wing hack.

Back in the early '70s, Airlie was a respected left-winger and a leading organiser of the great Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' sit-in (where he actually played a much more important role than the better-known Jimmy Reid). Throughout the late '70s and '80s, as the right-wing consolidated its grip on the AEU, left-wingers looked to Airlie as the last bastion of good old-fashioned socialism on the AEU Executive — an impression that he was only too happy to play up to. At the same time, the more astute elements of the AEU leadership began to realise that Brother James could be quite a useful "left" cover for their own dirty deeds.

By 1988, Airlie was fronting for Jordan and Laird over the Ford Dundee debacle, when the AEU offered the company a single-union deal that would have completely undermined the TGWU's organisation in every other Ford factory. When AEU Broad Left members protested, Airlie bellowed: "This is a broad left and anyone who disagrees with that can get out!" (AEU Engineering Gazette rally, 1988).

What went wrong? Was Airlie an empty vessel, full of sound and fury signifying nothing, all along? Or was he a good left-winger who got confused and demoralised by the defeats of the late '70s and '80s?

At least part of the answer lies in Airlie's stalinism. He always identified with monolithic power structures (whether they were the old AEU Broad Left machine, or the USSR) dispensing "left" policies to the deserving masses down below. Rank and file organisation was always alien to him. Now that the USSR has collapsed and the old Broad Left is a shadow of its former self, he's only left with the Jordan/Laird bloc to cling to.

With the hook-up agreement and the sustained attacks on OILC in recent weeks, Airlie has reached a new low. Hopefully, his "left" credentials will finally be exposed for the sham they are. Let's all say "Cheese!" to that!

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

Israeli socialists speak out:

Peace in the Middle East?

The peace conference is bluff

Michel Warshawski, in Jerusalem, spoke to Socialist Organiser

Do not believe that the peace conference is an important event. I think it is a big bluff.

Nothing real is on the agenda. The formalities have been dictated by Israel. If the initial parts of the conference take place, then the Israeli conditions for continuing will become much stiffer. The chances for breakdown will become that much greater.

The US would like some movement from Israel. But I do not see them putting Israel under real pressure. Without pressure Israel will make no compromise.

This regional peace conference provides a smokescreen for the Israeli government. In the next two or three years they are looking to change the demographic and political reality in the West Bank and Gaza. They aim to "Judaise" the West Bank in such a way as to make any real autonomy or independence almost impossible.

The political framework for the conference is set around bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. They aim to avoid dealing with the Palestinian national question.

I think this Israeli government is ready to negotiate with Syria. A deal could even include withdrawal from part of the Golan Heights. But the only way the Palestinian question can enter the agenda is through so-called autonomy.

This "autonomy" for the West Bank would be in the interests of Israel. It would mean a type of Bantustan on the West Bank.

As for the US, the only action they have taken is to postpone \$10 billion of loan guarantees until Israel takes part in these negotiations.

For the next few years, Israel is still important from the US's strategic point of view. Israel's is still the most stable and efficient army in an area which is basically unstable.

The present situation is not so bad for the Americans. Obviously they would like a political settlement — if it is available cheap.

I think that the role of Israel as a strategic asset for the Americans will be seriously weakened within three or four years. But the

Americans will not change a 20-year-old policy overnight.

In Israel, the Likud realise that they have about three years to achieve their goals, change the reality of the West Bank, and make meaningful Palestinian self-determination impossible.

We have seen precisely how little the Americans are prepared to do: they agreed that Israel should not freeze the building of settlements in the occupied territories while the conference was actually meeting. I do not believe that this Israeli government would stop building settlements, even in return for a lifting of the Arab states' trade boycott.

The conference will pro-

"The Americans will not change a 20 year old policy overnight"

ably be drawn out for a very long time. The commissions could be drawn out for months or years. Meanwhile, our government continues a very aggressive policy of settling the West Bank.

The real losers will be the Palestinians. It is hard to see what they can gain from this conference.

They will attend as second-rank participants, with few rights. They will be at a conference which is clearly intended to postpone any solution to the Palestinian question.

This could provoke the dismantlement of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which would be a tragedy. The PLO is a unified Palestinian national movement. Divisions could be created in part by some sort of Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank and Gaza, through Israeli-Jordanian agreement. Such autonomy would have little to do with the aspirations of the Palestinians elsewhere in the world, and could create divisions and disillusionment.

Why have the Palestinians accepted this conference? Most of the Palestinians I have spoken to say: "Our situation is so bad that we can do nothing else". This is really not a good answer.

I think some of the Palestinian leaders still hope that Israeli intransigence will provoke a united Arab front. I wish that were true. But I fear not.



Palestinian being searched in Jerusalem

Terrible Days — a 200 page book by Adam Keller about social divisions inside Israel.

Available from WL Publications, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. £3 plus 75p p&p. Cheques to "WL Publications".

The Other Israel. The

alternative news journal.

Available from Adam Keller, PO Box 956, Tel Aviv, Israel 61008.

The Alternative Information Centre can be contacted at Box 24278, Jerusalem, Israel.

Gaza waits

Mary Khas reports from the Gaza Strip

Am I hopeful about the planned peace conference? I am not sure how much pressure the US is prepared to put on Israel. I am not sure what Israel is willing to give.

If this conference turns out to be just a lot of talking and handshaking it will make no difference to the Palestinians in Gaza.

The concrete issues are: will the Palestinians achieve self-determination and political rights?

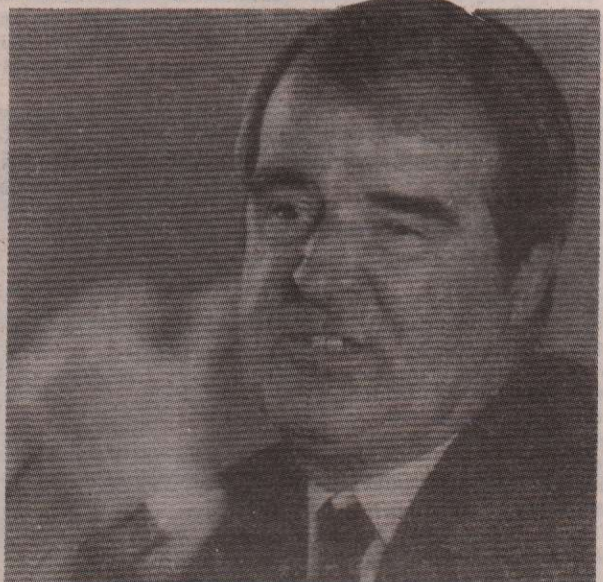
If there is an Israeli com-

promise made to grant some autonomy, I will still be asking, when will there be complete self-determination? Without full self-determination the people will not be satisfied.

In my opinion the Palestinians have reached the end of their compromises. There will be no more compromises.

I think that the people in Gaza do not see much hope in these talks. However, people are watching and waiting. People are saying: miracles may happen, the Americans may twist the Israeli government's arm.

While people watch the talks progress, the direct struggle has eased off. There is less activity on the ground.



"See this?"



Israeli peace protesters. Demo organised by Women Against the Occupation

Will the USA push Israel?

Adam Keller reports from Tel Aviv

In Israel there is a clear majority in favour of the government attending the Madrid conference.

The Israeli cabinet have just approved attending the conference by 17 votes to 3. Sharon was in the minority — but he will not resign. Only the extreme right oppose participation. The small right-wing parties are now in crisis, it seems some may split.

The conference will open with Bush, Gorbachev and all the delegations present. The conference will then divide into working groups. The different Arab groups will coordinate their various discussions with Israel.

The first stumbling point will be the issue of the settlements. The Arabs will demand that the Israelis freeze the building of settlements in the Occupied Territories. It is likely that the Arabs will say that until this issue is solved they are not willing to go further.

The Israelis then have a few options. They could use the settlements issue to break the conference up. They could also do a deal whereby the settlements are

stopped in return for the Arab states stopping the Arab boycott against Israeli.

If Shamir tries to stop the talks over the settlements issue, it will be because he calculates he can rally the Israeli right and win the next election on the issue.

The problem for Shamir is that this type of action will make the Americans and also Europe very angry. It will also unite the Israeli left against the government.

Of course, the big question is: how much pressure will the US place on Israel? Right now it would seem the US is prepared to put Shamir under a lot of pressure. They have already refused Israel loan guarantees.

There have been a number of smaller American moves, including an administration-orchestrated press campaign against Israel. The US Senate has also refused to pay an additional \$200 million in Israeli defence aid.

Last week the US made a very sharp protest against the Israeli air force's violation of Lebanese, Syrian, Saudi and Jordanian airspace when they flew a mission over Iraq. The US accused Israel of putting the UN's policy in the region in danger.

Bush is also co-ordinating pressure with Europe. Israel was ex-

pecting DM 10 billion in aid from Germany. But Kohl is also not giving the money until Israel shifts position on the settlements.

I think that Bush and Baker — from their personal points of view — would like to go down in history as the people who brought peace to

"If the US pressure stops, the whole process will grind to a standstill. But a lot depends on the Israeli peace movement"

the Middle East. It may also be a way for Baker to make his mark on the way to becoming President.

The Americans would like to establish a pax Americana in the region. They would like all the states, without exception, to fit neatly into their new order.

There has been a big shift in the US's attitude towards Israel. The American-Israeli alliance was a product of the Cold War. Israel was an outpost in the Middle East against the Soviet threat. Israel is not so useful against a threat emanating from the region itself — an Arab nationalist regime like Saddam Hussein's or fundamentalist Iran.

Unless Israel becomes integrated into the region it is not a US asset, but a burden. This was very clear during the Gulf war.

It would seem that the US wants a three or five year period of autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza. Perhaps this will be accompanied by a small number of US troops acting as a buffer force.

If autonomy is agreed in principle, there will follow months of

negotiation. There are several crucial issues.

Firstly, who will have control over state lands and water resources? The settlements are built on state lands and, in fact, a large part of the West Bank is state lands. Currently the Israeli government controls the water sources and diverts water for the use of the settlers.

The central question is: does autonomy mean that the Israeli army is excluded from Palestinian villages and towns? If it does, then autonomy is, de facto, a Palestinian state with isolated Israeli settlements and military bases. The only question then would be the removal of the remnants of the Israeli presence.

Such negotiations will be very difficult. There are lots of places where such talks could break down.

I think the Palestinians have acted quite cleverly. Formally, they have yielded to the Israeli government's demand for no PLO representative and no delegation from East Jerusalem. But in fact they have made it very clear to the whole world that the PLO is appointing the Palestinian representatives and that Israel is, in fact, talking to the PLO.

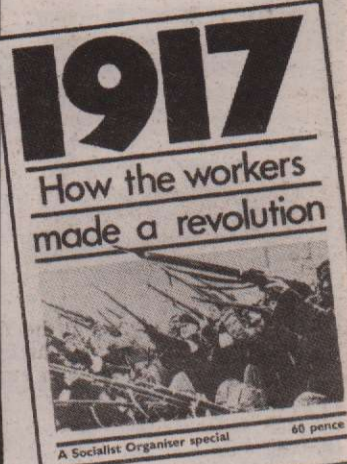
The Israeli government looks more and more ridiculous when they say they will never talk to the PLO.

If the US pressure stops the whole process will grind to a standstill. But a lot also depends on the Israeli peace movement.

Peace Now, together with other groups, is organising a two-week peace campaign. There are rallies and meetings in most towns.

We are organising a big rally in Tel Aviv town hall on Saturday 26 October. I hope there will be tens of thousands demonstrating.

More from Socialist Organiser



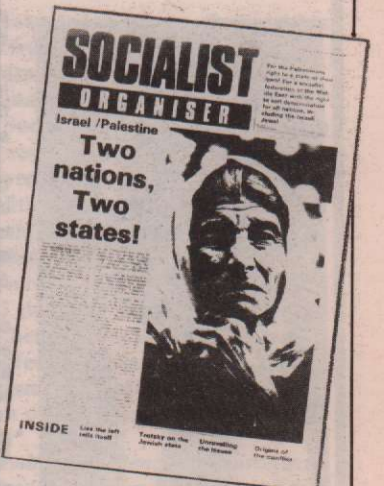
60 pence plus 34p p&p



£1.20 plus 34p p&p



£1 plus 34p p&p



20 pence

From SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA

Free Abie Nathan!

The veteran Israeli peace campaigner Abie Nathan has been jailed for 18 months for breaking the Israeli law against contact with the PLO.

Israeli peace activists are demanding his release. Pickets of the jail will take place on the 10th of

every month. Peace activists are aiming to nominate Abie Nathan for the Nobel Peace Prize. Please get your organisation to write a letter of support to: Abie Nathan Mashayahu Prison Ramlah Israel.

The missing link

GRAFFITI

Out-of-date department: Back in the summer (as in many previous summers) readers may remember that sellers of *Socialist Organiser* were banned from the SWP's week of "debate", Marxism '91.

Excuses varied — standing on tables, being Zionist, calling Tony Cliff a liar. The real reason is that debate is about as welcome in the SWP as Jimmy Airie at an OILC branch meeting.

Now it has come to light that the honour of being kicked out of the SWP's self-congratulatory talking-shop is not solely preserved for *SO*.

The "Radical Anthropology Group" (RAG) also incurred the wrath of SWP full-timers by:

- believing that sex differences originated before class society. In primate society, they argue, the first collective consciousness was that of females. Lumbered with child-care they were unable to go and hunt.

To persuade their men-folk to bring them meat, they went on 'sex-strike' — this being expressed in the synchronising of their menstrual cycles to that of the lunar month. This, RAG believes, was the origin of human evolution.

- Trying to argue the above in anthropology workshops at Marxism '91.

The SWP full-timers stopped people speaking, removed tickets and kicked people out.

Three things can be deduced from all of this:

- RAG's ideas seem to be a few shards of pottery short of an anthropological study;
- any group who needs to counter their arguments by throwing them out of their meetings is suffering from Stalin-paranoia;
- the missing link between ape and people is obviously the SWP full-timer (before any chimpanzee reaches for a pen to complain, I offer to withdraw that last remark)

Draft Quote of the Week Award goes to Patrick Younge writing in his column in *Black Britain*.

Previously he has favoured the banning of the rap act NWA because they give black people a bad name. This week he writes:

"Am I the only person who thinks that on balance the whole Clarence Thomas versus Anita Hill nomination show was a big step forward for the black community?"

"The downside, if there is one, is that we never got to the bottom of the sexual harassment allegation — after all, one of them must have been lying."



Clarence Thomas. *Maybe* he was lying?...

The *Daily Express* has come up with one of the most unconvincing reasons for not voting Labour.

"Michael Caine will leave Britain, it was feared last night... He has bought a £1.4 million Hollywood bungalow and there is speculation that he could quit if Labour wins the next election and brings in tough taxes".

Ties will not be completely severed. Mr Caine owns a large slice of Oxfordshire, including a whole village which he views as his fiefdom.

On that reckoning, Labour has got my vote. Any chance of getting rid of Roger Moore as well?

Eugen Varga, the leading writer on economics for Stalin's Communist International, is said to have replied to a telegram demanding an article urgently with the question: "What do you want? Boom or slump?"

East German weather-forecasters, it is now revealed, had to operate in the same way. According to the German paper, *Bild am Sonntag*, they were ordered to forecast warm, dry weather for the days of the major Stalinist festivals.

The owner of a kidnapped cat from Croydon was reported last week as saying:

"I know the Prime Minister's brother and I've a good mind to tell him about it".

For those believers in the theory that men don't benefit from sexism, research from the Low Pay Unit would seem to argue the opposite.

Men earn £102 billion a year more than women. Some £42.44 billion of this is accounted for by overt discrimination in shift and bonus payments, occupational segregation and flexible working patterns.

So Margaret Thatcher wrote to Bruce Gyngell, boss of TV-AM, to say how she felt responsible for him losing his job.

How soon do the rest of us get our letters?

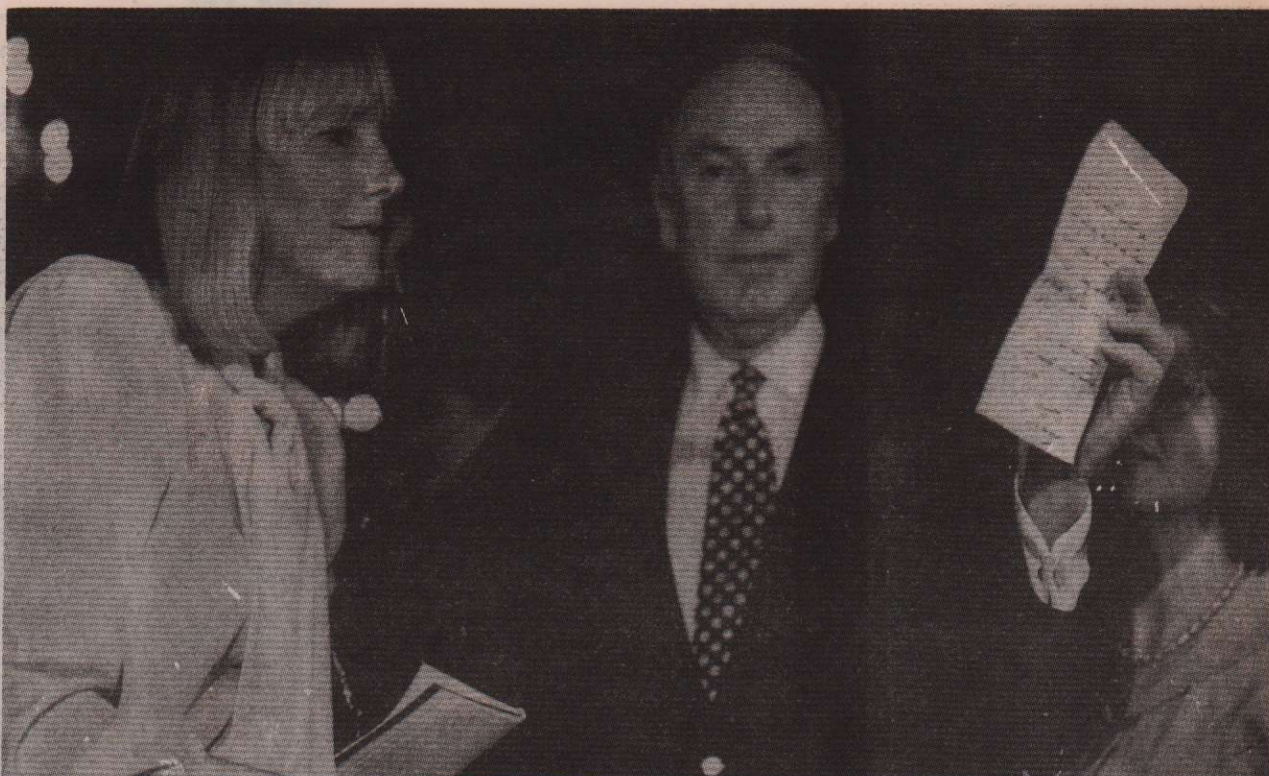
Reports reaching us suggest that this November's SWP conference will be concerned with filling the vacuum on the left.

The best way to fill a vacuum is, of course, with hot air — in this case "Build the SWP" over and over again.

But, so the SWP leadership believes, there are hindrances to building the SWP. It has too much politics, a National Committee, branch committees. Do away with them!

The prospect of a less democratic SWP with less politics in its paper might be hard to imagine. However, it seems to be on the cards.

Meanwhile, some members of the SWP put their names to the "Sign Up Against Cliff" campaign. In the traditions of the group, most or all of the names are of people who left the SWP years ago.



Bruce Gyngell holds up his letter from Thatcher to TV-am journalists

Tabloids target TV twits

Until last week few people outside the media had heard of Bruce Gyngell.

He was probably less well known than, say, Norman Lamont. Until last week few people outside the media had heard of the Independent Television Commission, or knew anything about the allocation of TV franchises.

Then, suddenly, it was front-page news in broadsheet "quality" papers and tabloids alike. And Mr Gyngell became a household name overnight.

The British media loves stories about itself. In particular, the tabloid press loves stories about TV. The chaotic scenes outside TV-am's offices on Wednesday summed up the whole incestuous business: rival TV reporters jostled each other to get interviews with people they thought were TV-am employees, but who turned

PRESS GANG

The Guardian
DAILY MIRROR
STAR

By Jim Denham

out to be newspaper reporters also looking for TV-am employees.

The press had already unanimously declared the franchise allocation an unmitigated disaster. Even the true-blue *Daily Telegraph* solemnly declared: "The Broadcasting Act, of which yesterday's ITV franchise allocations are the first fruits, was one of the most signal acts of folly of the last years of the Thatcher Government".

But for the *Sun* the blame lay with the Independent Television Commission. "TV Twits Turn Off Our Fun" bellowed Thursday's editorial. According to the *Sun*'s analysis, the "High Commissioners" (aka ITC, aka "TV twits") are a bunch of killjoys who've "not had a popular thought in their lives and could not possibly allow the public to enjoy its TV".

Mr Gyngell began to emerge as the hero of Greek tragedy — a brave, noble figure struck down by cruel fate (or the ITC). A brief summary of Mr Gyngell's career at TV-am may help explain the enthusiasm with which the Murdoch press espoused his cause.

In the winter of 1987-8, Gyngell presided over a four-month strike of ACTT technicians, sacked all 229 of them, and brought in new technology. TV-am emerged as a slimmed-down, highly profitable outfit, churning

out a diet of lowbrow chat and cheap imported re-runs. Sounds familiar?

The ITC looked set to take its place alongside the TUC, the EC, and the Church of England in the *Sun*'s pantheon of hated institutions. Then came the "Dear Bruce" letter: Mrs Thatcher admits it was all her fault... and apologises!

This astonishing development made it rather difficult to continue blaming the ITC for the downfall of TV-am and the man in the pink suit. Anyway, by Monday, the *Sun* had another target in its sights: the BBC. The charge was that old chestnut, left-wing bias.

Do you ever get the feeling that the Murdoch press will never be satisfied until the entire British media has adopted the same standards of "quality" and "impartiality" that characterise Sky TV, the *Sunday Times*, and the *Sun*.

The plight of young homeless women



WOMEN'S EYE

By Liz Millward

I have written before in this column about the pressures on young women to diet. Some young women would simply like to be able to get enough to eat.

"Debbie is no more than a child. She still has puppy fat on her face but has lost more than a stone in weight in the last 6 months..." This quotation is from the *Observer's*

report on a study of young homeless in Nottingham.

Health problems like scurvy, caused by vitamin C deficiency, were reported. Similar studies in London reported the growth of tuberculosis amongst the homeless. Both these diseases had been virtually eliminated in this country until Thatcher began promoting 'family values' by punishing those whose families broke up.

Young women like Debbie are not only at risk of turning to prostitution or crime, but of starving to death, or permanently damaging their health because of poor diet. In fact, prostitution and crime seem like 'good' options compared to starving.

Between the ages of 16 and 18, young people are generally not entitled to welfare benefits, because the Tories think their families should look after them. If they leave home they get nothing.

A homeless young person is caught in the trap best summed up as "no home — no job; no job — no home". Without help to break the cycle, the young person cannot possibly support themselves

legitimately. And that help is not forthcoming, except for the lucky few.

Although the government claims that there are enough hostels and other 'bed spaces' to go round, they do not take account of young women's needs. Many hostels are primarily used by older men, often with problems like alcohol addiction. A young woman might stay in such a place in an emergency, but she will hardly make it her 'home'.

Even where young women do find hostel accommodation suited to their needs, there is an acute shortage of move-on accommodation. So a hostel bed may be a brief interlude before being back on the streets. People cannot be reasonably expected to hold down a job in such circumstances, or a YTS place (which is the only way to get Welfare benefit).

The Nottingham study found young homeless women have a high incidence of cervical cancer and miscarriages. If they do have a child, they are at least assured accommodation, but overstretched local

authorities are most likely to put them into bed and breakfast. Poor nutrition is rife in B & B because of the absence of proper cooking facilities, so the young mother may be separated from her child — and will almost certainly be separated from her boyfriend or husband.

While some young women are still at school, others are being told that society doesn't even care enough for them to ensure that they get enough to eat. The Tories have abandoned these people, not caring what happens to them. They even have the cheek to blame them for turning to crime, begging or prostitution.

Now Norman Lamont wants to cut taxes by another 5p in the pound. The Tories think they can buy another 10 years in office with promises like these. What will be the social price of the next tax-cut, of the next ten years?

Cholera? Poor women giving birth in the streets? After all, who in 1979 would have believed that amid plenty, young people would once again starve in Britain?

Tories make OAPs £13 worse off

By Anne Field

Over their years in office, the Tory government has trimmed back pension increases. Now, just a few months before the General Election, they have cynically "rediscovered" the elderly. Evidently they see Labour's promise to increase pensions by £5 for single people and £8 for couples as a vote-winner.

This week, Tory Minister Tony Newton is announcing a £15 increase for 200,000 old people in care, and an increase in the bonus for over-80s from the grand sum of 25p a week to £1.

The increase for over-80s will not even bring back their bonus to more than a fraction

of its value when the 25p bonus was started twenty years ago! The basic formula for pension increases will remain unchanged.

Because the price index used for pensions and benefits excludes housing costs, at the moment it is running higher than "headline" inflation, so the routine pension and benefit rises will look as if they are real improvements. They are not.

Since the Tories came to power in 1979, pensioners in Britain have suffered one cut-back after another.

In 1980 the Tories scrapped the linking of pensions' increases to wage increases. If the index-linking had been maintained, single pensions would now be over £13 a week higher, those for a couple £22 a week higher.

Since 1980 pensions are supposed to have increased in line with inflation. But the official inflation figure is

often lower than the real rate of inflation experienced by pensioners.

There has been no increase in the pensioners' Christmas bonus of £10 since it was introduced in the early seventies. If it had been increased in line with inflation, it would now be worth £50. If it had

"Since the Tories came to power in 1979, pensioners have suffered one cut-back after another."

increased in line with earnings, it would be worth £70.

The Tories have held back on the annual up-rating of pensions. In 1980 up-rating was delayed for two weeks, and in 1985, for one week. The overall loss to pensioners was £14 for a couple, and £9 for a single pensioner.

Pensioners have also suf-

fered under the impact of many other Tory policies.

The social security "reforms" introduced in 1988 left over two million pensioners worse off. Nearly ¼ of a million lost more than £3 a week. Pensioners also lost out with the introduction of the poll tax as so many lived in homes with low rateable values.

Pensioners use the National Health Service more than others, and have therefore suffered particularly from NHS cutbacks. The Tories' attacks on public transport have meant particular hardship for pensioners only 3 out of 10 of whom have access to a car.

British pensioners are now amongst the worst off in Europe. The value of the British pension is 75% that of the French, 60% that of the German, and 50% of the Dutch.

90% of British pensioners

have an income less than average earnings. 50% have an income less than half average earnings. Two million pensioners get Income Support, a further 2 and a half million draw Housing Benefit, and a further two million are only just above the basic pension level.

Of course, not all pensioners are worse off. In her last year in office, Thatcher had the pension due to her in retirement raised from £25,069 to £33,425. This increase alone was higher than the current level of state pensions.

While pushing down the living standard of those dependent upon state pensions, the Tories have encouraged more people to "opt out" of the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme [SERPS]. Four million have already quit the scheme, and a further two million are expected to quit

by 1993.

Labour has promised that, if re-elected, it will:

- increase pensions over and above the rate of inflation by not less than £5 for a single pensioner and £8 for a couple;
- restore the index-linking of pensions to pay increases or inflation, whichever is the higher;
- introduce a non-means tested bonus for pensioners over the age of 75;
- look towards an ultimate target of a pension which is ½ of average earnings for single pensioners, and one half of average earnings for a couple;

Such proposals are welcome but would not even restore the value of pensions to what they would have been if they had remained index-linked. And Labour's "ultimate target" is posed as a vague aspiration rather than a definite goal.

Peace and violence in Northern Ireland

Students debate Ireland

Ireland remains one of the most important questions facing the British labour movement. Its policy on Ireland will be a key test of the nature of a Labour government. The Labour government of 1974-9 pursued disgracefully repressive policies against the Northern Ireland Catholics.

Here, Pat Murphy takes up ideas expressed in a recent *Labour Student* article

There are socialists in Britain, Ireland and beyond who "romanticise" the struggle waged by the IRA. Misguided comparisons abound with the violent, bitter struggle of the vast majority in places like South Africa or Vietnam in the 1960s.

The very real communal division in Northern Ireland, which is based on more now than the British presence, makes the IRA's choice of a nationalist military campaign an especially inappropriate, counterproductive weapon.

There is, however, another problem, just as serious, in the way

that socialists approach the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland. It is illustrated by Gary Kent's article in *Labour Student* on the "Peace Movement" that now exists in Northern Ireland.

Gary Kent, more genuinely, but also more naively, believes in a Northern Ireland that exists only in the minds of a few English liberals bemused by the resilience of communal politics in the Six Counties. It is a place where the main cause of political instability and violence is the campaign of the paramilitaries. It is a society brutally and callously denied "normal" politics and "conventional" democratic debate...by a few hundred extremists, the ubiquitous "men of violence".

Without any illusions in the project of the IRA, it is essential to understand that Northern Irish politics have never been "normal", and the existence and activities of the paramilitaries are a product, a symptom, of the political situation in Ireland, not the cause. We have only to chart the development of the Provos to see that: non-existent during the 1960s' Civil Rights campaign; set-up properly during the brutal police and loyalist response to that movement; mushrooming in size in response to internment in 1971; becoming a significant political force only after years of failed attempts to reform Northern Ireland, and the symbolic deaths of prisoners demanding political status.

The relationship between the Provisionals and nationalist people is ambivalent. There is little convinced support for their strategy, but they are not regarded by most as "criminals pure and simple". They retain significant passive support from sections of the community because they represent an answer to a legacy of repression for people who can see no other.

Kent falls into the oldest of liberal traps — the paramilitaries are terrorists, the state, which has a shoot-to-kill



A plastic bullet — and one of its victims, John Downes

policy, rubber bullets, no-jury courts and armed garrisons in working-class districts where they are unwanted, is the legitimate source of security.

How, then, can the British left contribute to peace in Northern Ireland? Not by ignoring the injustice at the root of the "Troubles". I suggest only some basics.

(1) Recognise the complexity of the problem and the hostile, anti-Republican environment within which we operate. This shouldn't gainsay independent criticism; political criticism of the Republicans must be sharp, clear and unapologetic, but it must be distinguishable from condemnation and denunciation.

(2) A major priority, given the real causes of violence in Northern

Ireland, is solidarity with the oppressed. Socialists gain a hearing by clearly highlighting and opposing state repression in Northern Ireland. To ignore that and concentrate, instead, on the response to it of paramilitaries is frankly inexcusable.

Such a policy shouldn't be allowed to masquerade as "peace-loving" either — for it is in fact tacit support for state violence. The more paramilitary violence is seen as the problem the more state attempts to "deal with it" and normalise Northern Irish politics become excusable and even welcome. (The once-radical Workers Party are lost somewhere down this road.)

(3) The first priority is to advocate and work for a political solution which addresses the real

cause of violence, ie. the partition of Ireland and the resulting sharpening of sectarian and communal divisions.

Socialists should support moves to reunify the island, allow self-government and give the fullest political autonomy and protection to the Protestant Irish minority, including the right to federal government.

I think we should also be sympathetic to the idea of voluntary confederal links between a United Ireland and Britain as a recognition of Protestant/Unionist identity.

Labour Students have produced yet another knee-jerk reaction to much of the far-left romantic illusions in Sinn Fein and Republicanism. But knee-jerks create mirror images.

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With contributions from Tony Benn, Gerry Adams, Eamonn Black, Pat Murphy and John O'Malley.

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The seedbed of today's

The early '60s: when the SWP was anti-Leninist

The Labour youth movement of the early '60s was the seedbed of the modern British Trotskyist movement. This article, part 2 of a series, surveys the different factions in Labour's Young Socialists in 1961-2. The Labour Party was right-wing and intolerant; it still kept control over the YS, but with difficulty; the major boost for the left came from the big and active campaign for nuclear disarmament; the biggest left group in the YS was "Keep Left", linked to the SLL led by Gerry Healy, and the future SWP (led by Tony Cliff) and "Militant" (led by Ted Grant) also had some support.

While frantically organising to defend their paper, and their existence within the Labour Party, *Keep Left* supporters also turned outwards to build mass working class YS branches.

A turn was made away from inward-looking small discussion-circle type branches, towards organising branches which combined social activities for working class youth with some often elementary politics.

Wigan YS, existing in a small and dull town richly endowed with Labour Clubs and their facilities, was the pioneer here. Organising dances, the original nucleus of half a dozen politics soon recruited 300 youth to the YS.

Keep Left had previously opposed attempting to 'compete with the social facilities available under capitalism'. Like the other tendencies, it had a sectarian-propagandist bias towards comparing and discussing 'line' and fine points of theory and analysis, rather than taking its political line into the working class youth to fight for it there.

The 'mass YS' policy provoked the hostility and jeers of other YS leftists, more concerned with having exclusive circles of friends and congenial fellow 'thinkers' than with organising working class youth. In fact, it did prove possible in many areas to 'refine' from mass YSs a hard core of working class boys and girls who developed politically and got involved in campaigns and struggles. The policy meant that the hard-core *Keep Left* supporters had to transform themselves from smug, bookish contemplators and 'thinkers' into people who could talk on all the varied levels required to the real raw material of a YS movement — working class youth; take up their concerns; draw them into activity. It was often very difficult — for some people it proved impossible — but it was an antidote to the sort of frozen impotence that gripped the Labour Party youth sections in the later '60s and, under *Militant* control, all through the '70s and early '80s.

A spokesperson for the *Keep Left* tendency put the policy like this: "Building large YS branches, initially from socials, is not easy... Anyone who thinks because he can quote from volume 2 of the Selected Works of Lenin that he is better than the young working class boys and girls who come to rock and roll, is not just on the wrong foot — he is on the wrong planet. We must realise that these young people are potentially the future leaders of the labour movement".

The policy allowed *Keep Left* to mobilise working class youth, and, ultimately, it explains how they came to dominate the YS. In the context of a bitter three-way fight in the YS, the 'raw youth' were, it is true, often counterposed to the sort of discussions of issues and political perspectives which were essential to the development of a realistic as well as a militant youth movement.

And, in the exigencies of the faction fight, *Keep Left* cadres may too often have been

manipulative with the "raw youth". But that was caused by the intense factional warfare and Transport House harassment; it was not something intrinsic to the drive to turn out to working class youth. It was that drive which marked *Keep Left* out as a serious revolutionary tendency.

If in the end nothing good came of this policy, and little was consolidated, it was because of the weak side of the *Keep Left*/SLL tendency, which led ultimately to a grotesque degeneration: that is, to its politics.

The first YS conference did take place at Easter 1961, and was relatively free of restraints.

Through 1960 Labour Party youth groups had multiplied almost threefold, and by Easter 1961 721 YS branches were registered. 381 delegates attended the conference. Free political discussion was allowed, contrary to the initial Labour leadership blueprint for the YS.

A National Committee was elected by conference on the basis of regional blocks of delegates simultaneously electing a representative from each of 11 regions.

The conference was a prolonged battle between the Labour leaders and *Keep Left* for influence over the non-committed delegates.

The conference voted 222 to 97 against NATO and for unilateral disarmament. A vote of no confidence in Hugh Gaitskell was carried by 189 to 113. Roger Protz, the editor of the official YS paper, *New Advance*, circulated a personal statement against the bureaucratic running of the paper.

The witch-hunt of *Keep Left* continued. Right-winger Ray Gunter denounced *Keep Left* for once criticising Aneurin Bevan, recently dead and already a labour movement saint. In Bevan's lifetime, Gunter had tried to have him expelled! Demagoguery won, and by 172 to 148 a motion deploring the attack on *Keep Left* was lost. Only one *Keep Left* representative was elected onto the National Committee, Liz Thompson.

In the heat of the conference, a number of the left currents disagreeing with *Keep Left* decided to pool resources and publish a new journal. *Young Guard* began to appear six months later, in September 1961.

This split in the left had big consequences. Most of the supporters of *Young Guard* considered themselves Marxists. In *Young Guard*, *Rebel*, the paper of the Cliff tendency, amalgamated with *Rally*, the duplicated publication put out by the Labour Party supporters of Ted Grant's group through Walton Young Socialists. The 'Nottingham Tendency', forerunner of *Socialist Outlook*, which had recently separated from Grant was involved. Left reformists from *New Left Review* and the *Voice of the Unions* also enlisted.

New Left Review was then a journal of those such as EP Thompson, Stuart Hall (now a guru of *Marxism Today*) and Doris Lessing who had split from the CP after Hungary and, essentially, moved to the right of the CP's nominal revolutionary politics.

The war between *Keep Left* and *Young Guard* was from now on to be often as bitter as *Keep Left*'s war with the bureaucrats.

Despite its coalition character, politically *Young Guard* was in fact heavily a Cliff group paper. In 1962-3 it was perhaps the main paper of that tendency, together with *International Socialism* journal. *Labour Worker* (it became *Socialist Worker* in 1967) which they also published, was narrowly syndicalist by comparison.

All the successive editors of *Young Guard*



Demonstration, Trafalgar Square, October 1962. The Cliffites echoed the pacifism of these demonstrators with Paul Foot saying: "Better 'all hands off Cuba'"

were Cliffites. One of them, Gus Macdonald, is now head of Scottish TV. The Grant tendency did not withdraw from *Young Guard* until September 1963, but was little in evidence politically (though one of its people, Keith Dickinson, was business manager).

1961-62: Keep Left versus Young Guard

What divided the two groups, *Keep Left* and *Young Guard*? *Keep Left* believed in building a serious Marxist organisation within the labour movement, and that the time to work at it was at hand.

So, in theory, did the Grantites, but *Young Guard*'s majority rejected this idea. Many *Young Guards* considered Stalinism to be the product of Bolshevism, and a 'Leninist Party' to be a Stalinist abomination. (Some of the features of the Healy organisation reinforced them in such ideas).

The Cliff group's propaganda centred around such ideas. For example, in 1960 Tony Cliff published a big pamphlet on Rosa Luxemburg in which he declared that Luxemburg was right against Lenin in being suspicious of sharply-defined, centralised organisation. When he reissued the pamphlet in 1968, he was again a "Leninist". The

than 'more rockets for the Cuban workers.'" The Cuban people were being asked to surrender to imperialism

discussion and argument on the issue was reprinted unchanged from the first edition; only the concluding sentence was changed, and now it said that Lenin was right against Luxemburg on organisation!

The Healyites and the Grantites belonged to mutually hostile international associations — the Healyites adhered to the "International Committee of the Fourth International" set up by J P Cannon in 1953, though they began a process of splitting with Cannon in 1961; the Grantites were the official section of the Pablo-Mandel "Fourth International" until 1965.

The Grantites and the Healyites had a position on Stalinism of "critical support" and "make a political revolution"; the Cliffites considered the Stalinist states to be "state capitalist", at the very end of capitalist historical development, as distinct from the others, who saw them as "post-capitalist".

The Cliff group had started in 1950 as a Leninist, Fourth-Internationalist group (70 strong at the beginning, though by 1958 it was 20), disagreeing with the others on "state capitalism". It circulated the magazine of the American Shachtman group (the Independent Socialist League) through the '50s. By 1960 it was politically very decayed, organised as a loose federation, recruiting youth on opposition to the Healyites' "toy-town Bolshevism", by which they meant the self-proclamation and posturing that today's SWP lives off. At the centre of the loose

left

ederation, as it grew in the 1960s, was a "state-capitalist" sect around Tony Cliff and Michael Kidron, but there were other strands too: as late as 1968, some prominent AEU militants in Manchester resigned from the organisation because it opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the USSR and the Warsaw Pact in August 1968!

The Cliffites explained war as being tied to capitalism because arms production kept capitalism going. This was the "permanent arms economy" theory, a shibboleth for the group then hardly less central than "state capitalism", but long ago abandoned. They took it from the Schachtmanites.

From it they developed a bland, pacifist-socialist conclusion that socialism was necessary and that CNDers should come into the workers' movement, ie. the Labour Party and YS.

They produced New Year greeting cards in 1963 with the same slogan as the CP: 'For Peace and Socialism'. Both Russia and the USA, they argued, were equally capitalist. Third World struggles might perhaps be supported, but were not centrally important. They would redefine themselves during the Vietnam War: but if someone had proved then to Tony Cliff that he would support Iran in the Iran-Iraq war, and then laud the revolutionary significance of Iraq's conquest of Kuwait, he would probably have hanged himself!

Keep Left explained the drive to war in the traditional terms of Leninism: *Imperialism* produced war. They considered support for the colonial struggles of decisive importance. Moreover, states like the Soviet Union and China were, they said, not capitalist, but degenerated and deformed workers' states. Socialists should take sides with them against imperialism.

Obviously the *Young Guard* tendency was best suited to coexist with the CND and Committee of 100 which, led by Bertrand Russell, organised mass sit-down protests against nuclear weapons. They could recruit from that milieu and from those generally "socialist" but not committed to building a fighting organisation here and now.

The defence of the Soviet Union was a major issue in the YS. The Cliffites, pacifists and Tribunites said to the Trotskyists: You have no right to oppose British capitalism's H-bomb unless you oppose Russia's. The Grant tendency agreed with *Keep Left* on the question, but threw their weight behind the Cliff group. *Young Guard* carried the Cliff line while the Grant group kept their mouths shut.

In the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, when President Kennedy was threatening to drop H-bombs on Cuba if the USSR did not remove rockets which the Cuban government wanted in Cuba, (there had been an American-backed invasion 18 months earlier at the "Bay of Pigs"), the *Newsletter* came out with headlines: 'Say No to Yankee War', 'Hands off Cuba!', 'Defend the USSR'. *Young Guard* shouted: 'Our demand is 'All hands off Cuba'. But without the Russians' hands', (serving the USSR's interests), the USA would have squashed the Cuban revolution!

In *Young Guard*, a certain Paul Foot explained the Cliffite pacifist view, during the controversy that followed with Dave Ablitt of the Nottingham group (the Grants were, as usual, silent) as follows: "Better 'all hands off Cuba' than 'more rockets for the Cuban workers'". This meant surrender of the rights of the Cuban people to control their own island to the power of imperialism, if imperialism upped the stakes enough. It was a good explicit expression of the crass pacifism in which the Cliff tendency dabbled at this period.

Paradoxically, the pacifist/CND period prepared the way for its own inversion and for the overthrow of one of the dogmas on

which the Cliffites founded their tendency. When the Vietnam War flared up, with the giant American war power trying to pulverise the Vietnamese, there was a great revulsion in CND circles, and many swung behind the slogan 'For the NLF'. The Cliffites did too, effortlessly, in 1965.

In principle it is impossible to separate Vietnam from Korea, opposition to support for which led to Cliff's separation from the "orthodox Trotskyists" in 1950. And Vietnam, like Cuba in 1962, could have led to nuclear war.

Finally, *Young Guard* disagreed with *Keep Left* on the need to fight the bureaucracy in head-on conflict.

On the contrary, John Palmer, a leader of the Cliff tendency, put it like this in 1963: "The onus is on the YS to find a relationship with our Party which will radically reduce those frictions and clashes which are leaving such a bitter heritage in the ranks of young people joining the YS. One thing must be made clear above all. There is no future for the YS outside the Labour Party; our only hope is to find a relationship even more close to it than at present, but one which will allow us essential freedom as a youth movement".

Which is quite a tall order given the right wing policies of the Labour leaders, then soon to be in government carrying out vicious attacks on the working class. A tall order — if what is meant is a fighting socialist youth movement. The point is that *Young Guard* had a rather cosy view of the future.

The Cliffites did not believe much could be done (until they developed a perspective of industrial work, in the mid-60s). Capitalism was stable, and would remain so for many years. This view is now sometimes presented in mythology as the *Young Guard* coalition being realistic, as against *Keep Left*, which foolishly tended to consider a major crisis of capitalism as more or less always imminent (or in progress). In fact, *Young Guard* were no more realistic in their assessment than *Keep Left*.

Believing that capitalism was indefinitely expanding and stable, they were bitterly disappointed after 1964 that the Labour government did not deliver reforms to the working class.

The *Young Guard* tendency did have more of the character of a real youth movement than *Keep Left*, because of its looseness, lack of a driving purpose and lack of discipline.

Keep Left youth were driven; and essentially they were a hard faction, led by a highly disciplined and centralised (indeed bureaucratic) organisation, vigorously warring with the Labour Party leadership and the general softer left while at the same time striving to build the organisation in the raw youth.

The assessments of immediate reality made by the Healyite SLL were often wrong. Yet their urgency about building an organisation was not wrong; on that, they were entirely right. The 1960s would soon produce a resonating series of major class struggles, which would reach a tremendous level in the '70s. A serious, democratic, realistic and responsible Marxist organisation could have shaped those struggles and ensured more stable working-class gains from the series of victories we won.

The Marxist organisation, working in the trade unions and Labour Party, could at least have become tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands strong. The SLL was geared to such developments, the others were not. The tragedy for the YS youth and for the rank and file members of the SLL was that the SLL leaders, who had an unbreakable stranglehold on the organisation, were not up to the job politically, and not up to it personally or morally either. Drunk with limited success, they turned themselves into a destructive sect and then into something worse. But that was still a while in the future, after the SLL had won the majority in the YS.



A Red Army battalion recovers after a battle during the civil war. After the civil war Lenin argued that trade unions were still very necessary — in the conditions — to defend workers' interests.

Did Lenin really favour a monolithic state?

WHAT THEY REALLY SAID

Did Lenin really favour a monolithic state? Check for yourself by reading this extract from the minutes of the Bolshevik party congress in 1921. The civil war had just ended, but the workers' government was in terrible straits. The country's economy was shattered; famine was abroad; the working class was dispersed and exhausted; the people who had sacrificed so much to win the war against Russian counter-revolutionaries and foreign invaders now wanted improvements quicker and bigger than the government could possibly achieve. At this black moment decisions were taken which later served as stepping-stones for Stalin: the banning of the left-Menshevik opposition, the formal prohibition of factions within the Bolshevik party, the conquest of Georgia. Desperate to restore the economy, some Bolsheviks, notably Trotsky, proposed the creation of 'labour armies', to turn the discipline revived within the Red Army towards the revival of industry. This is what Lenin said.

Comrade Trotsky commits a mistake. According to him, it is not the role of the unions in the workers' state to protect the material and spiritual interests of the working class.

This is a mistake. Comrade Trotsky talks about the "workers' state". Excuse me, this is an abstraction. It was natural for us to write about the workers' state in 1917; but those who now ask, "Why protect, against whom protect the working class, there is no bourgeoisie now, the state is a workers' state", commit an obvious mistake. Not altogether a workers' state; that is the whole point. This is where Comrade Trotsky makes one of his fundamental mistakes.

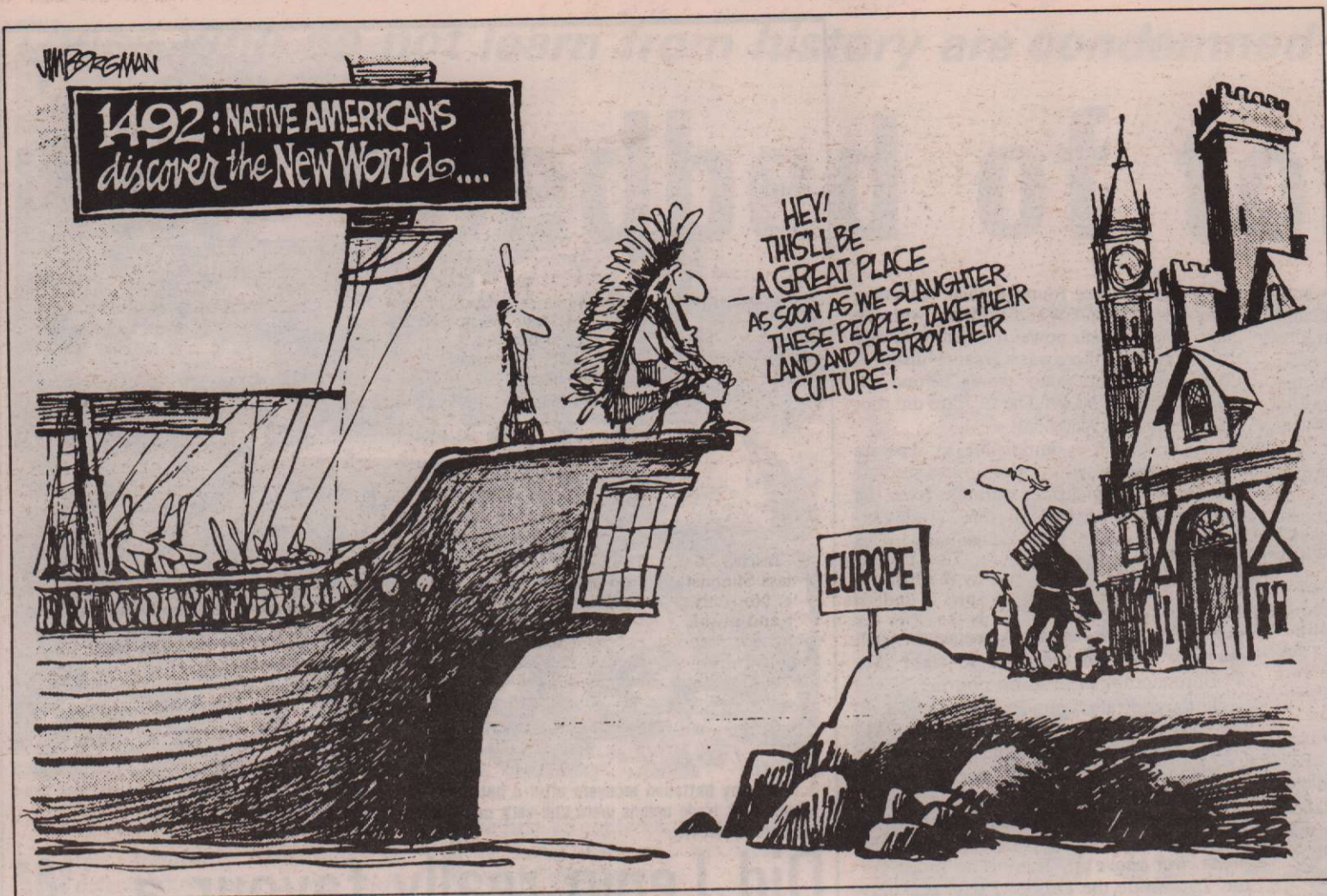
We have now passed from general principles to businesslike discussion and decrees, and we are being dragged away from the practical and businesslike. This will not do. In the first place, our state is not really a workers' state, but a workers' and peasants' state. And from this follow many things. [Bukharin: "What kind of state? A workers' and peasants' state?"]

And although Comrade Bukharin behind me shouts, "What kind of state?" I will not stop to answer him.* Those who care to, let them recall the Congress of Soviets which has just come to a close, they will find the reply in that.

But more than that. It is evident from our Party programme — a document with which the author of the "ABC of Communism" is familiar — it is evident from this programme that our state is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions. And we should have stuck this sad — what shall I call it, label — on it. Here you have, then, the reality of the transition. Well, the state has in practice taken this form; does that mean that the trade unions have nothing to protect, that we can dispense with them in the protection of the material and spiritual interests of the entirely organised proletariat?

No. That is an entirely wrong argument theoretically. It carries us into the sphere of abstractions, or of the ideal which we shall achieve in fifteen or twenty years' time, and I am not sure that we shall achieve it even in that time. We are confronted with reality, which we know very well — that is, if we do not allow ourselves to become intoxicated, to be carried away by intellectual talk or abstract arguments, or by what sometimes seems to be "theory", but what in fact is a mistake, a miscalculation of the specific features of the transition. Our present state is such that the entirely organised proletariat must protect itself, and we must utilise these workers' organisations for the purpose of protecting the workers from their own state and in order that the workers may protect our state.

* In speaking of the discussion of December 30, I must correct another mistake I made. I said: "Our state is not really a workers' state, but a workers' and peasants' state." Comrade Bukharin immediately exclaimed: "What kind of state?" And in reply I referred him to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, which had just closed. Reading the report of that discussion now, I realise that I was wrong and Comrade Bukharin was right. I should have said: "A workers' state is an abstraction. Actually we have a workers' state; with this peculiarity, firstly, that it is not the working class population that predominates in the country, but the peasant population; and, secondly, it is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions". Anyone who reads the whole of my speech will see that this correction does not affect my argument or my conclusions.



Controversy surrounding 500th anniversary of "discovery" of America

Columbus: hero or villain?

A tale agreed upon

By Anne Field

As the 500th anniversary of Columbus's "discovery" of America in 1492 draws closer, controversy over his alleged achievements continues to escalate in the United States, as well as in Latin America and Europe.

Columbus first achieved national stature in America with a book published by Washington Irving in 1828. In the aftermath of the war of 1812 against Britain, the search was on for non-British heroes for America. Columbus, at least as portrayed by Irving, seemed to fit the bill — an Italian sailing under a Spanish flag who allegedly displayed true American virtues.

Columbus got another boost in the later nineteenth century in the controversy over Darwin's theory of evolution, which came under sustained attack from the church.

Not unjustifiably, the Darwinians wanted to portray the church as hostile to any scientific advance. As "proof", they argued that when the church was dominant in the Middle Ages everyone believed that the earth was flat, until Columbus "proved" otherwise.

In fact, flat-earthers were as scarce in the Middle Ages as today. But the controversy established the myth that Columbus proved that the earth was round.

Columbus finally achieved official recognition as a national hero in 1934 when the American President declared 12 October (the date on which Columbus sighted land on his voyage of 1492) to be an annual national holiday.

In 1965 Columbus was back in the limelight as his pedigree as the "discoverer" of America was challenged by Yale University, which claimed that the "Vinland Map" allegedly dating from 1444, showed that the Vikings were well acquainted with America long before Columbus sailed.

The chairperson of the Columbus Day Parade in Chicago denounced the map as a "Communist plot". "You can almost see the Russian influence in the title," he said.

John Lindow, then campaigning for Mayor of New York (which has a substantial Italian-American population), equated any criticism of Columbus with denigration of the Italian musician Toscanini. According to an Italian-American politician in Cambridge, Yale's claim was an attempt to "disgrace the Italian race of America".

Fanfani, the Italian foreign minister, summoned a special meeting of the Italian diplomatic corps in America in order to defend Columbus — by comparing him with Newton.

Many people before Newton had had an apple fall on their head, argued Fanfani, but Newton was the first to discover gravity as a result. So, too, however many other people had travelled to America before Columbus, he was the first to discover it.

Given that Columbus thought he had reached India, this was a rather weak argument.

In 1973 a book by Simon Wiesenthal provoked disbelief rather than controversy when it claimed that Columbus was really a Jew who, under the pretext of working for Spain, was really planning to set up a Jewish state in any lands he discovered, in order to provide a refuge for Jews facing persecution in Spain.

There was another upsurge of controversy in 1978, when President Carter declared 9 October to be Leif Ericson Day, in memory of the Viking who "discovered" America.

"To dilute the importance of the discovery (of America) by the courageous Genoese navigator, the Admiral of the Ocean Seas, is insulting to millions of Americans of Italian descent," wrote the Supreme President of the 250,000-strong "Order of Sons of Italy in America" in an open letter to Carter.

The latest controversy is much more serious than its predecessors. On the one hand it challenges the mythology that has been spun

around Columbus as an individual — pointing to his anti-semitism, his activities as a slave-trader, his medieval ideas about an imminent Apocalypse, and the falsification of his logs on his voyage. (To make it appear as if he really had reached Asia, Columbus inserted extracts from Marco Polo's accounts of his travels to China in his logbook.)

On the other hand, it points to the consequences of Columbus's "discovery" of the Americas: genocide in Latin America and, in later years, in North America, the transatlantic slave trade, and the North-South divide which continues to exist today.

"Columbus's voyage was an important moment in the beginning of the age of nation-states and of colonial expansion. The plunder of the Americas and the enslavement of millions of Africans was not the fault of one man, but the form taken by the development of capitalism as an international system".

Some Italian-Americans have again rallied to the defence of Columbus (although it is doubtful whether Columbus was Italian in the first place — he never wrote a word in Italian, and wrote even to his father in Spanish).

According to one Italian-American, in a book specially published for the "Columbus Quincentenary": "There is no evidence to show that Columbus did any physical or psychological harm to any Jew, or, for that matter, to anyone else... That Columbus succeeded in his voyage of discovery is to his credit and to the benefit of all of us who have come to America... No man has yet done for the world what he did. But he

continues to be denigrated."

Yet the other side of the latest Columbus controversy is not without its problems, too. In many ways it is ahistorical. Columbus's crime is not that he was a White European Male, as some enthusiasts for the "Politically Correct" movement in America pose the issue. And it is foolish to make Columbus bear the blame personally for all the crimes committed in subsequent centuries.

Columbus's voyage was an important moment in the beginning of the age of nation-states and of colonial expansion. The plunder of the Americas and the enslavement of millions of Africans was not the fault of one man, but the form taken by the development of capitalism as an international system.

Capitalism did indeed, as Marx put it, come into the world dripping blood from every pore. But even to "blame" capitalism is off-beam.

In 1492 it was not materially possible to organise humanity worldwide as a cooperative commonwealth which creates comfort, security and freedom for each individual. The meagre level of industry, technology, science and culture did not allow it.

Today it is possible — if only the working class can take power. It has become possible through capitalism. The feudal or other tribute-paying economic systems before capitalism were every bit as brutal as capitalism, but they promoted industry, technology, science and culture much less.

If Columbus gave a boost to capitalism, he gave a boost to exploitation, colonial oppression and genocide — but also to the possibility of an effective movement against exploitation and oppression.

Progress and vileness are inextricably linked in the history of the last 500 years — and we cannot undo that. To go back over that history, awarding praise or censure to individuals on the basis of whatever late 20th century moral system you prefer, is less than useless. What we must do is seek the lessons in history which help us to go forward.

Was Wittgenstein a Trotskyist? Book

Martin Thomas reviews "Ludwig Wittgenstein: the duty of genius", by Ray Monk, published by Jonathan Cape

Was Ludwig Wittgenstein a Trotskyist? Off-hand, the question seems ridiculous.

Wittgenstein who died in 1951, was the most influential philosopher of the 20th century in the English-speaking world. He originated two major schools of thought, "logical positivism" and "linguistic analysis", both of which are generally associated with hostility to any "philosophical" criticism of established society.

Personally he repudiated both schools, but tended (as Monk shows well) towards mysticism and even hostility to some sciences rather than to greater radicalism.

Yet in 1946 — so Monk reports — Wittgenstein's response was "sympathetic" when his friend Rush Rhees told him he was considering joining the Trotskyist movement.

Wittgenstein objected only with conventional banalities — a philosopher, he said, should retain a freedom to think inconsistent with the discipline of a revolutionary political party — and Wittgenstein, an extremely prickly character, was the last person to resort to such flim-flam if he had deeper objections. Rhees was not only a friend but also one of Wittgenstein's most trusted philosophical co-thinkers.

If Wittgenstein really did move close to Trotskyist views in the last years of his life, it was the end of a very long journey. Born in 1889, he was the son of one of the richest industrialists in Austria, and as a youth conformed to the authoritarian, sexist, patriotic and anti-semitic politics of his social class with no "philosophical" detachment at all.

An awkward, unhappy character, he disliked the bland, conventional hypocrisies of his class, and had a romantic admiration for the supposedly industrious, straightforward and frugal working classes. In 1919 he gave away the whole of his huge inheritance to other members of his family.

But he was still very conservative. He was frightened and disgusted by the real workers and peasants he met (at technical school, in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I, and as a village school-teacher after the war). He was frightened and disgusted too, by the liberal and socialistic ideas of his philosophical mentor, Bertrand Russell.

In the 1930s he admired the Soviet Union, and went there hoping to exchange his life as a philosophy lecturer at Cambridge University for that of a manual worker in the USSR. (The Soviet government fobbed him off). But his attitudes here were still scarcely left-wing. He told Rush Rhees that "tyranny doesn't make me feel indignant"; objecting to a friend serving treacle with suet pudding, he recommended life in the USSR as being without treacle or similar indulgences.

The Nazi persecution of Jews probably drove Wittgenstein leftwards. As late as the early 1930s, he was extremely anti-semitic. Then his family, though long assimilated, was classed as Jewish under the Nuremberg laws. His wealthy relatives in Austria were eventually able to buy special exemption, but the shock made Wittgenstein drop his anti-semitism.

In World War II his attitudes shifted further: he volunteered to be a hospital porter, not a soldier, and he was critical of nationalism. In the 1945 General Election he strongly supported Labour. The USSR's military occupation of his native Austria may have completed his disillusion with Stalinism.

And, probably as important, his previously very uptight attitudes to sex loosened up.

Such was the result of the agonising efforts of an intense and keen-witted man to grapple with what he called "disintegrating and putrifying English civilisation".

A fascination with upper class traitors

Television

By Mick Ackersley

Like the whole of the British media for the last 40 years, Alan Bennett is fascinated by Britain's bizarre crop of upper-class traitors, the gilded youth of the British bourgeoisie who went over to Stalinism in the 1930s, when capitalism seemed to be going down the spout.

He wrote a play about the actress Coral Browne's strange encounter in Moscow with exiled British traitor Guy Burgess.

Now he has written one — *A Question of Attribution* (BBC1) —

about Sir Anthony Blunt, the upper-class intellectual snob who was, it seems, the Stalinist master-spy, and who then lived on, even after he was unmasked, in freedom and comfort, pursuing his other career as the master of Queen Elizabeth's vast collection of paintings. He was knighted for that work.

Bennett stumbled upon a brilliant metaphor for the whole business of the unmasking of the successive layers of upper-class British Stalinist spies — Burgess and Maclean, "the two", who went to Moscow in 1951; then Kim Philby, "the third man", who hung around in Britain until 1963; then "the fourth man", Blunt, and, lately, "the fifth man", Cairncross.

An "Old Master" in the possession of the Queen and under the curatorship of Sir Anthony Blunt was discovered to be a fake; in addition to the two visible figures in the picture it was discovered that there was another hidden figure that had been painted over, and behind that yet a fourth figure, detectable only on x-ray photos.

In *A Question of Attribution*, Blunt and the Queen discuss the painting.

That people are still fascinated by the British upper-class Stalinist spies is understandable. Not only is the story a reminder and proof, no doubt frightening, of the deep collapse of morale experienced by the British ruling class in the '30s, it also encompasses in a uniquely

dramatic form the story of the surprisingly large part of that bourgeois generation who fell for the "Great Illusion", the "God that failed", Stalinist "Communism".

Unknown numbers of bourgeois and petty bourgeois people flirted, more or less seriously, with "communism" and socialism, and a few with Trotskyism. Most of them quickly retraced their steps, especially when capitalism pulled itself together again for the great slaughter of World War 2. Those who had joined the Stalinist secret services could not go back; they were caught and hooked.

And it was a true tragedy: for they must have been among the most serious and selfless ones. They too must have experienced a

dawning realisation that they had been conned by Stalinism, that they had sold their souls to the devil. There was no way back — unless they were caught!

Blunt was unmasked in 1964, soon after Philby flew the coop and got safely to Moscow. He was interrogated, debriefed, and then... allowed to get on with his career! The ruling class's old boy network protected him — or was it merely protecting itself, hushing up yet another scandal?

It is indeed a fascinating piece of recent history. It is salutary for socialists to keep it in mind that those traitors to their own class mistakenly thought, when they signed up with Stalin, that they were crossing over to ours. For that they deserve respect.

A pallid "Rage in Harlem"

Cinema

Mark Osborn reviews "Rage in Harlem"

Mississippi, 1956: deep in the racist south, Emmabelle (Robin Givens) and her unpleasant friends steal a fortune in gold.

The black robbers are set up by white criminals and have to shoot their way out of a police trap.

Emmabelle gets the gold and runs to Harlem, New York. Believing the rest of the gang have been killed by the police, she visits "Easy Money", a man who will buy her gold.

"I was also deeply disappointed because it is based on a novel by Chester Himes, one of the best, most idiosyncratic and most enlightening crime novelists who ever put pen to paper."

Emmabelle needs cash. In fact, she has not even got enough money to pay for a hotel room. This problem is solved when she picks up a nice young undertaker called Jackson.

She stays with him. Very quickly this young man's life speeds up. Jackson falls in love. Then he is robbed by the Mississippi men who turn up unscathed. From here on there is quite a lot of killing.

The story splits into several chases. Jackson searches for his true love; the Mississippi gang is after money; the police are attempting to arrest most of the cast.

In order to find Emmabelle, Jackson has to enlist the help of his streetwise brother, Sherman. Sherman who hates his name because it doesn't sound tough.

To avenge a friend's murder, Sherman wants the gold gang dead. He sorts it out with the police: "Some people are going to have to die..." "As long as it ain't me, I don't give a shit", answers the cop.

A happy ending? Yes. Requited love; brothers' reconciled; quite a bit of work for Jackson's undertakers.

I enjoyed "Rage in Harlem". But I was also deeply disappointed because it is based on a novel by Chester Himes, one of the best, most idiosyncratic and most enlightening crime novelists who ever put pen to paper. Judged by Himes' work, this film is a shallow, pallid travesty.

Himes set his crime stories in Harlem, the city within New York where half a million blacks live.

In Himes' novels — written in the '50s and '60s — there is a rich and vast array of the lives of the black community, still marked by the rural origins of many of those who came in the '40s and '50s as part of the several million strong black migration to the towns.

Himes himself served a term in jail and his regular hero cops, Coffin Ed and Gravedigger Jones, are very far indeed from the conventional crime novel cops. They are brutal and frequently savage thugs whose job it is to beat down the unlicensed thugs of the area.

Himes does not preach much about the condition of blacks in that part of America and their relationship to the mainly white society around them. He shows it for what it is, clearly and starkly, and occasionally there is an explicit comment, like a flash of light.

I quite enjoyed the film, but my advice is: read the books!



Danny Glover plays Easy Money, a Harlem king-pin

The children's room

By Minnie Ryan

You think sociology is dull? Sociologists are duller, if you believe *The Men's Room*.

This is a serialisation of Ann Oakley's bestseller about the sexual reawakening of a woman sociologist from a stale marriage which has left her with four kids, by way of an affair with a crummily pathetic departmental superior.

She is also being awakened politically, it seems, and channelling her feelings into "the women's movement".

The cast is good (Harriet Walter,

Charlotte Cornwell and Bill Nighy), but the overall effect is of a plastic world inhabited by plastic people pretending to copulate on camera for a considerable part of the time.

We see the sexual collision of two people, bringing havoc and pain not only to their old partners, but to the six or seven children they have between them.

On each side there is the "family home" and children, but the sexual nexus is eroded, so the children are traumatised.

It would be hard to find a clearer illustration than the story enacted by these plastic people of the absurdity of such a way of raising children, resting the whole thing on unstable sexual relations.

It is a painful family drama — and tragedy for the kids — in a world

where the old family is dissolving before we have got round to organising a better and more stable way of raising children.

Periscope

Critical Eye

Pack up the Troubles
Geoff Bell makes the case for British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.
9pm, Thursday 24 October, Channel 4

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Conference set for 2 November Is socialism dead?

Saturday 2 November, 11 to 5, at Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, London N19. Organised by "Stand Up For Real Socialism".

Opening session: *Capitalism and the working class*. Speakers include a

building worker militant, an oil worker from the OILC, Joe Pinto (speaking on capitalism and poverty in India), and Gail Cameron from SO.

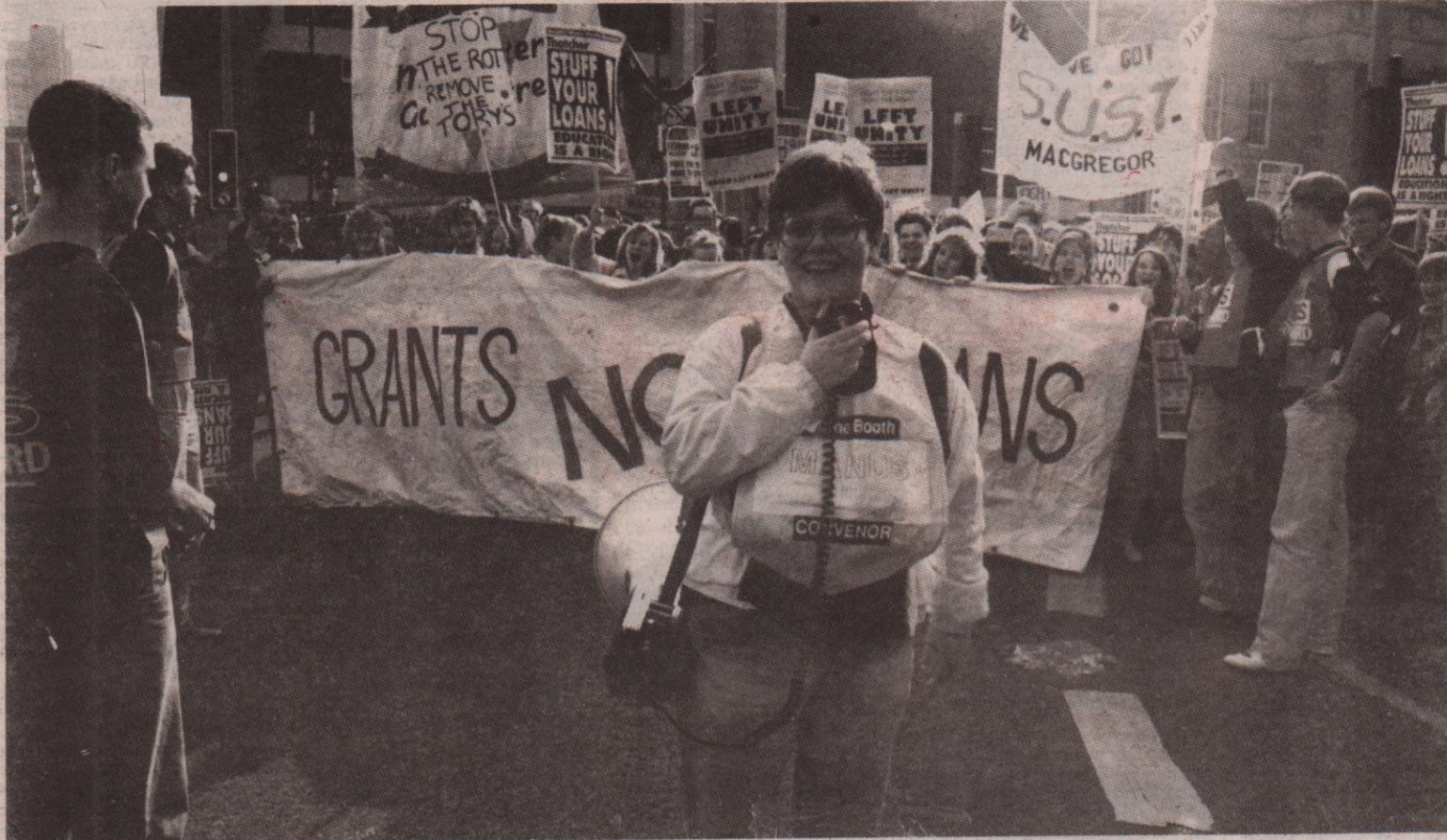
Debates: *Is socialism dead?* John O'Mahony, editor of SO, debates Professor Kenneth Minogue of the

London School of Economics. *Free market or socialist planning?* Martin Thomas debates Professor David Marsland of the West London Institute. *Can capitalism protect the environment?* Speaker: Patrick Murphy.

Problems of socialism: *Did Marx and Lenin lead to Stalinism?* Discussion with Bill Lomax and a speaker from SO. *Is socialism democratic?* Speaker: Ruth Cockcroft. *The poverty of anti-Stalinism* - speaker: Bob Fine.

There will be a creche, a bar, food, and stalls. Tickets are £6 (waged), £4 (students and low-waged), and £2 (unwaged). Cheques to "Stand Up For Real Socialism".

This conference is sponsored by Socialist Organiser. For more information phone Mark on 071-639 7967.



NUS Women's Officer Janine Booth at the head of the 1989 MANUS demo

Students must fight back!

By Richard Love, Manchester Area NUS

Kenneth Clarke, the Secretary of State for Education, says that students have more to live on than ever. Like his colleague at the Department of Health who says that the NHS is doing fine, Clarke is a liar! Thousands of

students, unable to make ends meet, know that he is lying.

The Tories have robbed students of the right to claim benefits and imposed loans on them.

That's only the latest attack. Since 1979 the Tories have again and again stuck the boot into students.

- They have abolished the travel grant and the minimum grant.
- They have cut the grant by over

30%.

• They have underfunded education so that lectures are too crowded and there are not enough books in the library.

To make matters worse, they have brought in big business to run parts of education that used to be under the control of locally elected bodies.

Students in Further Education get little or nothing to live on. This hits working class youth particularly hard.

It is time to kick out Kenneth Clarke and the rest of the Tories! That is why students will be on the streets of Manchester on October 30th on the demonstration organised by Manchester Area NUS.

For now, the only way to get rid of the Tories is to elect a Labour government. But we cannot stop there.

Labour is promising far too little. Labour's right-wing leaders say they will not write off the loans borrowed under the Tories or restore all the benefits lost under the Tories.

We must raise our own demands for grants and benefits to be restored back to 1979 levels.

Demonstrations, sit-ins and other action is important to making our voice heard for these demands.

Unfortunately, the Kinnockite leadership of NUS are too incompetent to run a campaign on student poverty. So up and down the country, student unions and area NUS's

have been taking their own initiatives.

Left Unity and Socialist Organiser supporters have been at the forefront of building the fightback in the colleges and linking that fightback to transform NUS into an organisation that really defends its members.

More than that, we'll be leading the campaign to demand that Labour doesn't sell students short.

Kick out the Tories! Make Labour deliver!

Left Unity meeting: immediately after the end of the rally, in the Lesser Free Trade Hall, Peter Street. Speakers include: Jeremy Corbyn MP, Richard Love (MANUS Convenor), Janine Booth, NUS Women's Officer (the latter two in a personal capacity)

END STUDENT DEBT

Wednesday 30 October
Assemble 12 noon, All Saints, Oxford Road, Manchester
Called by Manchester Area NUS

Why we are coming on 2 November

"The Tory government has cut the NHS and other public services. On the railways, management are cutting corners on safety and slashing jobs to prepare for privatisation. We need workers' control on the rail and throughout industry. The working class is the only class capable of putting human need before profit".

Rob Dawber, Sheffield and Chesterfield District Council, RMT.

"Women need socialism. Lesbians and gay men need socialism. For us there is no other real choice. In the end, socialism is the only answer to the day-to-day harassment and discrimination we face".

Janine Booth, National Union of Students women's officer.

"The Tories have been attacking education for 12 years. We need a government prepared to fund education properly. All students deserve a decent standard of living, and jobs at the end of their courses".

Richard Love, convenor, Manchester Area National Union of Students.

"We need to kick out the Tories and put in a Labour government. Labour is the only available working-class alternative to the Tories. We also need to continue to fight for our socialist ideas. Socialism is the only system which can guarantee working-class people decent lives".

Ruth Cockcroft, women's officer, Sheffield Central CLP; currently referred to the National Constitutional Committee of the Labour Party for expulsion on grounds of association with SO.

(All statements are in a personal capacity).

Yes, we need real socialism!

Our £10,000 fund drive has faltered this week.

The money coming in — £62.25 — has been only a small fraction of the sums received in previous weeks.

The running total now stands at £2542.92. To reach our £10,000 target by the end of the year we now need to receive an average of over £800 each week!

We need the £10,000 to buy new equipment. We also need an extra £10,000 a month in regular contributions to our "200 Club".

Thanks this week to Brighton readers (£15.25), Nottingham

readers (£20), and Sheffield readers (£20). Donations to (and 200 Club forms from) SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Subscribe to Socialist Organiser! £25 for a year, £13 for six months. Tear out this form and send with money (cheques payable to "Socialist Organiser") to Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

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