

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

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## South Africa

# Apartheid's

# death

# squads

# still rule



**J**UST HOURS before the burial of murdered African National Congress leader Chris Hanu the apartheid death squads struck again.

In the early hours of Monday morning (19 April) three masked black gunmen shot dead 19 people — in

Sebokeng township outside Johannesburg.

A socialist speaking from South Africa told *Socialist Organiser*: "The attack bears all the hallmarks of a typical third force operation. The killers have disappeared without trace". Despite Nelson Mandela's release

over three years ago the main obstacle to democratic change in South Africa — De Klerk's murderous apparatus of repression — has not been removed. On the contrary. Apartheid's death squads still rule.

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**Victory to the black workers!**

# Timex: back the mass pickets!

"IF YOU GO under no workforce in Britain is safe from the kind of management practices which we have seen here," said Dundee East Labour MP John McAllion, speaking at last Monday's mass picket of the Timex factory in Dundee.

Some 400 people had turned up in driving rain for the mass picket, the fourth one to be held

since mass picketing on a Monday morning began in late March.

Although a massive police presence combined with threats from the AEEU leadership to expel union members who breach anti-picketing laws have, for the time being at least, largely transformed the mass picket into a demonstration, the mass turnout on Monday

mornings remains a morale-boosting show of support for the sacked workforce.

Morale among the 340 workers, sacked by Timex twelve weeks ago in a union-busting and pay-cutting offensive, remains high, encouraged by reports that the lumpen-scab workforce taken on to replace them continues to churn out large amounts of rubbish.

Speaking at a rally after the picket deputy convenor Willie Leslie surprised many of the trade unionists present by his fulsome praise of the AEEU leadership and the Scottish TUC.

The AEEU leadership has gagged Timex convenor John Kydd from speaking in public

about the dispute, whilst the STUC, although it has organised two major demonstrations in support of the Timex workers, has failed to mobilise for the mass picketing.

Willie Leslie stressed that there were only two possible solutions to the dispute: either Timex sits down with the

AEEU as the union representative of the sacked workers, or Timex goes out of business.

Mass picketing continues every Monday morning. The Scottish TUC should step up the pressure on Timex by backing the mass pickets and demanding the re-instatement of all sacked workers.

## Scottish TUC supports strikers

THE Scottish TUC Congress stirred into life on Tuesday morning, 20th, as the emergency resolution on the Timex dispute in Dundee was discussed.

The resolution condemned the sacking of the Timex workers, called for moral and financial support for the sacked workers, and advocated the reform of employment laws to protect workers engaged in industrial action from dismissal.

In moving the resolution on behalf of the AEEU, Jimmy Airlie warned: "Timex cannot win that dispute. The name and good reputation of the company have already been severely damaged.

If Timex do not settle and negotiate realistically then their name will live in infamy."

Airlie also announced a demonstration in Dundee on 15 May (the Saturday before the 90-day redundancy notices served on the sacked workers run out on 17 May), following on from the Dundee May Day demonstration in support of the Timex workers.

In the debate on the resolution a number of speakers called for support going beyond that proposed in the resolution. Speaking on behalf of Dundee Trades Council, Mike Arnott, called for moral, financial and physical support for the Timex workers.

STUC General Secretary Campbell Christie summed up the debate by pledging that, "the trade union movement in Scotland is determined that this dispute will not go away. The Timex workers will not be deserted by the trade union movement in Scotland". The resolution was passed unanimously.

Although the resolution shied away from calling for support for mass picketing, and was silent on the question of workers refusing to handle Timex products, it will help keep the Timex dispute a live issue in the run-up to the expiry of the redundancy notices next month.



The mass turnout on Monday boosts the strikers. Photo: Mike Gibbons/IPG

## Massacre in Waco

# The FBI is guilty of murder

By Martin Thomas

OPPRESSED, battered and bewildered by life under capitalism, a hundred people turned to David Koresh's "Branch Davidian" religious cult in Waco, Texas.

The wealthy, comfortable, and respectable have religious cults too - with crazy doctrines and sado-masochistic rituals - but cults like Koresh's, smaller, more intense, less rarefied, offering more immediate escape, generally attract the poor and miserable.

The cult never harmed anyone else. It kept to itself.

But the FBI decided that Koresh was breaking US weapons law and building an

arms cache. Maybe he was, maybe he wasn't. If his group had been the Ku Klux Klan - or the Los Angeles Police Department - rather than a maverick religious cult, then Koresh would not have been disturbed.

The FBI decided to make a show of force. Spurning all the quieter methods which, with their huge resources, they could have used, on 28 February they launched a full-scale assault with 200 armed agents.

The alienated, strung-out cult members naturally fired back. Four US government agents were killed and 16 injured.

Then the FBI mounted a massive siege; and, on 19 April, they went in with tanks and CS gas. Asked if the CS gas would harm the small children inside,

the FBI responded: "Hopefully, the maternal instincts of the mothers would kick in".

80-odd people died, including 17 children, when the cult's home went up in flames. Fire engines did not come until 40 minutes later - far too late.

America's police have done it before. On 13 May 1985 Philadelphia police bombed a whole city block from the air in order to root out an oddball cult called MOVE. Four children and seven adults were killed.

MOVE had injured no-one - at most they had annoyed their neighbours - but Philadelphia's mayor called them "an urban guerrilla group", and that was enough.

Fire destroyed a sizeable area,

making 300 people homeless. The police claimed the fire was started by MOVE themselves, but all the evidence points to the bomb.

The FBI followed the same philosophy as British police who will send squads of cars, sirens wailing, lights flashing, men with batons or even guns at the ready, to arrest a single unruly working-class youth. The FBI are guilty of murder, just as the British police are when their bewildered victims kill themselves in despair.

That is what the Tories' "understanding less and condemning more" means at the bottom of society, for those most alienated, and stressed-out by this inhuman system. It means: conform, or die!

## Italian Establishment gains a respite

By Chris Reynolds

ON 18 APRIL, Italy gave an 82 per cent referendum majority for the replacement of the country's Proportional Representation system by a system nearer to First Past The Post.

The majority was boosted by disgust at Italy's corrupt political Establishment - but, as Italian socialist Franco Turigliatto points out, it will be used by that same Establishment to patch up their domination.

"The 'yes' front... includes Confindustria [the Italian bosses' federation] and all the bosses' organisations, [almost] all the media, the traditional parties of government, and the two main 'opposition' parties: the PDS (ex-Communist Party) and the Northern League (a right-wing populist party).

The bourgeois forces want to make the formation of governments simpler, to cut back

political representation, and to exclude the most combative left-wing oppositions from parliament.

The Party of Communist Refoundation [a party formed by ex-CPers with other leftists, including Trotskyists] is in the front ranks of the mobilisation in defence of the proportional system... supported by the Network [an anti-Mafia movement]... and the Greens...

The Party of Communist Refoundation and the Network demand the moribund government should go and there should be a vote to elect a new parliament and kick out the corrupt and the mafiosi. The 'yes' front's waiting for after the referendum to install a government including the PDS and the Northern League, to change the electoral law, and then elect a new parliament with the situation under control".

The excerpts from Franco Turigliatto are translated from the French weekly *Rouge*.

## Labour Left launches Campaign Network

By Colin Foster

TWO HUNDRED Labour Party activists, meeting in Sheffield on 17 April, decided to launch the Socialist Campaign Group Supporters' Network.

It will be a rank-and-file left grouping in the Labour Party linked to the Campaign Group of left MPs.

In the debate on Maastricht, an

amendment from Martin Thomas was carried, to oppose the anti-Maastricht (Thatcherite) faction of the ruling class as strongly as the pro-Maastricht faction, and to support a democratic united Europe and European workers' unity. This internationalist view won a clear majority despite opposition from people round *Socialist Action*.

The other big controversy, on electoral reform, Redmond

O'Neill's motion backing the existing First Past The Post system was defeated (75 to 61), and one calling for a broad left debate on electoral reform, coupled with a campaign against any pacts or coalitions, was carried.

Redmond O'Neill argued that Proportional Representation meant coalition. Pete Firmin and Matt Cooper pointed out that the argument against pacts and coalitions must be won fair and

square, whatever the electoral system. We must fight for Labour to win a clear democratic majority on working-class policies, not hope somehow to fiddle through reforms and avoid coalitions through lucky breaks from an undemocratic status quo. Declan O'Neill insisted that the left should not be tied to First Past The Post on the basis of a short snap debate.

Resolutions on the structure of the Network and its immediate tasks were not opposed. The Network will have a small officers' group, with a broader steering committee, it will "encourage and facilitate the establishment and growth of local Socialist Campaign Groups in all areas".

Local Campaign Groups are generally weak and scanty as yet, the attendance in Sheffield reflected that but conference set up a flexible structure, this will help in organising the revival of the Labour Left when it comes.

The convenor of the Network is John Nicholson, and it can be contacted c/o 129a Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

## The Poisoned Well



Whether the *Mirror* could possibly have gone downhill in the last few weeks is a matter of current public debate. That it is now at the very bottom of the hill is a plain matter of fact.

Page one of Monday's *Mirror* led with earth-moving news about the friendships of a TV star, and carried an ad for "me and the sexy Bishop" inside.

At least 87 died in Waco Texas, but the chauvinist *Sun* was mainly concerned with the 24 "Brits" among them.

Norman Tebbit, Mrs Thatcher's cudgel and chief bully boy, has not paid his poll tax!

## Black history at Workers' Liberty '93

Workers' Liberty '93 is three days of varied socialist debate and discussion. Friday 2 to Sunday 4 July at Caxton House, North London.

Part of this year's even is a six part black history course. We will look at the lessons from America and debate the history and way forward for black people in Britain.

The six-part course will be held on Saturday 3 July.

About America:  
\* The roots of American black nationalism - from slavery through reconstruction to Garvey

- \* The "integrationist" tradition
- Du Bois to Martin Luther King
- \* Revolutionary black nationalism
- Malcolm X and the Black Panthers

### On Britain

- \* How modern British racism began
  - slavery, colonialism and pseudo-scientific racism
  - \* A forum on black oppression in Britain today - what now?
  - \* The history of black workers' struggle in Britain - lessons from Imperial Typewriters and Grunwicks to Burnsalls.
- (This is the final session and will be held on the morning of Sunday 4 July)  
Tickets: write to PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. Special offer until the end of April

# Bosnia: arm the Muslims!

**F**OR OVER A YEAR NOW the Bosnian Serb army, backed by Belgrade, has been waging war to destroy the Bosnian Muslim people.

The big powers have wailed and moaned and complained, but they have let the destruction continue. Now the UN is *disarming* the people of Srebrenica, one of the few Muslim towns which was still holding out against the Serbs, while leaving its Serb besiegers armed.

Throughout the war the big powers have imposed an arms embargo which, theoretically even-handed, has in fact been an embargo against the Muslims. The Serbs had almost all the supplies of the old Yugoslav federal army, and had no problems ferrying anything extra they wanted over the border from Hungary: the Muslims had almost no weapons.

The big powers did not want the war. It is bad for trade and investment. They do not like the Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic: he creates trouble.

They want the fighting to end, and quiet to be restored for trade and investment, as soon as possible. The fighting ends quicker; quiet — the quiet of graveyards — comes quicker if the weaker side is defenceless. And so the big powers, despite all their pious complaints, prefer the Muslims to die or flee defenceless rather than have the means to fight back.

The same principle applies in Croatia and Kosovo. The big powers did not want the Serbs to invade Croatia: but when they did, the UN engineered a deal which left over a quarter of Croatia nominally under UN control but practically under Serb control. The Croats who fled or were driven out from their homes are still refugees.

The big powers would prefer it if Milosevic were not so harsh with the people of Kosovo, a segment of Albania which has been under Serb control since 1913. His harshness is regrettable. But for the people of Kosovo to rise up and demand self-determination — that would be inexcusable! No, the rule of the capitalist world order is that the weak and oppressed should lie down, suffer quietly, and hope that the oppressors will come to see the merits of liberalism.

Socialists should be four-square with the people of Srebrenica, Tuzla, Sarajevo, and other Muslim or mixed towns or cities in Bosnia. We should do all we can to help their self-defence, by aiding peace movements in ex-Yugoslavia and by demanding that the big powers lift their embargo and send arms to the Muslims.

**Doesn't that contradict anti-imperialist principle? Would not the Muslims become agents of imperialism against the Serbs?**

The active imperialism in ex-Yugoslavia is *Serb imperialism*, an imperialism recognised and denounced by Leon Trotsky 80 years ago, when the Serbian state



Serb imperialism is out to destroy the Bosnian Muslim people

of that time seized Kosovo and Macedonia.

"All the more sweeping... seem the territorial conquests made by Serbian imperialism [in 1913]. Serbia now includes within her borders about half a million Macedonians, just as she already included half a million Albanians". [*The Balkan Wars*, p.366].

The role of the European Community, the UN, and the US in ex-Yugoslavia has been sordid and criminal. But they do not wish to conquer territory or make colonies there! They can get all the economic influence they want in ex-Yugoslavia much more cheaply without conquest.

**Doesn't the call "arm the Muslims!" mean lining up with Margaret Thatcher?**

It is not necessary to be a socialist or a friend of the working class in order to sympathise with the beleaguered Muslims; nor should the cause of the Muslims be discredited because anti-socialists and enemies of the working class take it up.

Maybe Thatcher really does sympathise with the Muslims. Maybe she just wants to exploit the issue to raise her political profile. (After all, why did she not speak out boldly for the Muslims before now, when they are in their last ditches? Why was British government policy towards ex-Yugoslavia no different when she was prime minister from what it is now?) It does not matter. Socialists should work out our views independently, not by saying "no" when our enemies say "yes" and

"yes" when they say "no".

**What about the call for big-power military intervention in Bosnia, or ex-Yugoslavia more generally?**

That is a different matter — and, as we see from the disarming of the Muslims in Srebrenica, probably even *directly contradictory* to arming the Muslims.

Some people on the left, like the *Tribune* newspaper and some contributors to *Labour Briefing*, have called for big-power military intervention to impose a democratic political settlement in ex-Yugoslavia, as the only "realistic" alternative to the continuing chauvinist bloodbath.

But it is false "realism". In the first place, it will not happen. And, secondly, even if it did happen, it would not bring the consistent democracy necessary for a stable peace.

A big-power intervention would be concerned not with democracy but with re-establishing trade and investment at minimum cost. It would ride roughshod over any minority demand that seemed too costly to grant or weak enough to be suppressed.

*We can't trust the Western governments.* We can't make calling on these cynical, self-serving governments our answer.

**Aren't the Muslims as bad as the Serbs? Wouldn't arming the Muslims just reverse the direction of the chauvinist bloodbath?**

Yes, the Muslims are as bad as the Serbs, or the Serbs are as good as the Muslims. The majority of both

peoples never wanted this war, and would prefer a peace based on mutual respect.

But the Serbs are stronger than the Muslims, and the initiative among the Serbs is held by ruthless, well-armed chauvinists. Even if the Muslims are not all spotless democrats and internationalists, and even if some of them have committed anti-Serb atrocities, they have the right to self-defence.

If the Muslims were to gain a great military superiority over the Serbs, then quite probably they would take terrible revenge. But that far-fetched hypothesis has nothing to do with present-day realities.

To save the remaining Muslim areas from destruction, to break the momentum and morale of Serb chauvinism, and to open possibilities for a bigger peace movement — those would be the *first* effects of arming the Muslims. Whether the further effects would be good depends on whether a working-class political movement could be built, uniting Muslims, Serbs and Croats on a democratic programme. There are no guarantees. But there never are.

The hypocritical "neutrality" of the big powers between the Serbs and the Muslims is like the "neutrality" of Britain and France in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. That "neutrality" blocked arms supplies to the Republic, while Franco's fascists were freely supplied by Germany and Italy. "Neutrality" now between an oppressor people (the Serbs) and an oppressed (the Muslims) — a "neutrality" which in fact favours those who already hold the upper

hand — is as vile as "neutrality" was then between fascism and parliamentary democracy.

**Do we call for the restoration of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina? What about the "Vance-Owen" plan for restoring it as a federal state made up of Serb, Croat, and Muslim "cantons"?**

All the plans for dividing Bosnia into Serb, Croat and Muslim cantons have just given encouragement to the Serb chauvinists (and the less powerful Croat chauvinists): the more territory they seize, driving out or slaughtering other peoples, the bigger share they can claim in the division.

If the Serbs got their "cantons", they would just pull them out of

**Continued on page 5**

*"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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OBITUARY

Stalinists  
against Scargill

SCOTLAND'S remaining 1,200 miners were out on strike last Friday (16 April) on the second 24 hour strike called by the NUM.

But the Scottish area leadership of the NUM is doing nothing to encourage campaigning against the threat of pit closures, nor is it doing anything to promote links between miners and other trade unionists fighting for their jobs.

The modest two-paragraph resolution on the coal industry submitted by the Scottish NUM to this week's congress of the Scottish TUC, for example, does not even mention the threat of pit closures, still less advocate a fightback in defence of jobs!

The Scottish NUM's lacklustre approach to fighting pit closures is rooted in the leading role in the union played by the Democratic Left (formerly the Communist Party).

Like his predecessor Mick McGahey, the current President of the Scottish NUM George Bolton (elected in 1987), is a prominent member of the "Democratic Left".

Over the past decade the Democratic Left leadership of the Scottish NUM has consistently failed to mount serious opposition to pit closures, and has steadily pushed the Scottish NUM further to the right.

When the closure of Kinneil colliery was announced in December 1982 miners there staged a sit-in, whilst miners at a number of other pits walked out on strike in support.

But the Scottish NUM Executive, led at that time by Mick McGahey, refused to support the Kinneil miners.

McGahey claimed that "The hearts and minds of the Scottish miners had not been won for action on Kinneil" and ordered a resumption of normal working throughout the Scottish coalfield.

In April 1983 the Coal Board announced the closure of Sorn colliery. The NUM membership at Sorn voted five to one to fight the closure. Again the NUM Scottish Executive refused to support them.

The following month the Coal Board set about closing Cardowan colliery, by beginning to transfer its miners to other pits. The Scottish Executive of the NUM instructed other pits to accept the transfers, thus facilitating the creeping closure of Cardowan, in the face of the opposition of many local NUM branches.

In February of 1984, the closure of Bogside colliery was announced. Without batting an eyelid the Communist Party leadership of the Scottish NUM accepted closure.

Almost simultaneously the Coal Board announced the closure of Polmaise colliery. The Polmaise miners demanded and campaigned for an all-out strike throughout the Scottish coalfield.

But McGahey opposed an all-out strike. Speaking on the eve of the national miners' strike which began in March of 1984, he argued that "the hearts and minds of the Scottish miners had not been won for industrial action".

Less than a fortnight later all Scottish miners were actively involved in the industrial action for which, according to McGahey, they were not prepared!

During the miners' national strike itself the leadership of the Scottish NUM acted like a dead weight. It did little or nothing to organise mass picketing, and instead focussed its attention on keeping a vice-like grip on local miners' support groups.

After the strike the issue of victimised miners was sidelined at Scottish area NUM conferences. Only a handful of meetings were held with the victimised miners, and attempts were made to isolate them from other NUM activists.

In 1987 Scargill stood for re-election as NUM national president. At the initiative of George Bolton, the NUM Scottish Executive adopted a "no recommendation" position — meaning, in effect, don't vote for Scargill.

In an effort to ensure Scargill's defeat many victimised miners were denied a vote, whilst redundant miners who supported Scargill's right wing opponents were allowed a vote, contrary to NUM rules.

Bolton again showed his right-wing credentials in the disputes over six-day working and the use of private contractors.

Whilst Scargill was campaigning against six-day working, Bolton spoke out in public in favour of it. And whilst the NUM was campaigning against private firms being allowed into the pits, Bolton was sending victimised miners application forms for jobs with private contractors.

The Communist Party/Democratic Left leadership of the Scottish NUM has presided over the decimation of the Scottish mining industry. In 1979 there were over 18,000 miners in Scotland. Now there are just 1,200.

Comparable damage has been inflicted by the Tories on the coal industry in the rest of the country. But the difference is that the national NUM leadership fought back against the Tory onslaught, whereas the Scottish NUM leadership consistently backed away from any confrontation.

The record, both past and present of the likes of McGahey and Bolton underlines the need for rank and file links between miners in Scotland and the rest of the country. Where the leadership refuses to lead, as is so clearly the case with the Scottish NUM, then the rank and file must.

Correction: last week's SO was wrong to state that CPSA General Secretary Barry Reamsbottom has never been an active rank and file trade unionist. This is not the case. Another explanation should be sought for his poor performance.

INSIDE THE  
UNIONS



By Sleeper

Kath Crosby — a militant  
fighter for socialism

By Fran Brodie and Rachel Brodie

KATH CROSBY, a staunch and aggressive fighter for socialism, died on 27 March. She will be a great loss to the labour movement.

Kath had been fighting cancer for eight months after being diagnosed as having a brain tumour in July of last year. She fought with power and determination as she fought all battles.

Two weeks before she died, in a wheelchair and partially blind, Kath gave a toast to socialism in the House of Commons on behalf of the Labour Party, using James P Cannon's definition for socialism as a society "where there is nothing to buy because there is nothing for sale".

Kath had a long history in the labour movement, starting out with the Young Communists. In the early seventies she joined the women's liberation movement. She helped set up a refuge for battered women in Manchester.

A house had to be found in which the women could feel reasonably safe, so Kath and the other women involved squatted a house.

It then had to be guarded night and day against the police or ex-partners of refuge women who may have invaded the house. One man did enter the refuge. He soon regretted it. And from this grew Women's Aid.

*"Kath was an ardent fighter for working class women, and supported the idea of a working class women's movement."*

Kath was an ardent fighter for women, especially working class women, and she supported the idea of a working class women's movement. She was also a great believer in education. She studied economics at Manchester Poly and did a Master of Arts degree at the Poly of North London, and wrote her thesis on women and the labour movement. She finished her thesis while suffering from cancer.

She also helped to organise homeworkers. Kath did not patronise the women she helped to organise, or



Kath (left of picture) marches with the Manchester Workers' Fight banner on the first national demonstration — initiated by WF — against the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Fran Brodie is carrying the banner

women who were not directly involved in politics, but helped them learn to fight their oppression from where they were at.

Women would call to her home for advice on welfare rights, what grants they were entitled to, how to claim income support, etc. She also fostered children who grew to respect Kath and enjoyed sharing her home. Some she taught to read and write, helping them to become independent and able to cope.

She was a kind and generous woman. Her house was always open to those who needed it, especially if she liked them, for she was not glib.

In the seventies when the fascists were marching she fought them — literally. One time we had to run for our lives from a pub in Blackburn after Kath had stubbed out a cigarette in the palm of one of a group of fascists we ran into.

In 1987 Kath was selected as Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Stockport. She was met with a barrage of abuse and intimidation. She became the victim of a witch-hunt by right wing Labour as well as by the Tory press. She received anonymous phone calls that threatened her children. She was such a threat to the right wing that they did all in their power to stop her.

To the very end she fought. She did not weaken. She was tired and lost, but she didn't hide from the life she had led or from

her beliefs. When she was ill in the hospital a priest took it upon himself to visit Kath's bedside, and he was abruptly told to fuck off.

*"To the very end she fought. She was tired and lost, but she didn't hide from the life she had led or from her beliefs."*

Over 100 people attended her funeral. Her coffin was covered with the Red Flag and people stopped in the street to look on. Kevin Barry, The Red Flag and The Internationale were played at the crematorium, and — on Kath's request — Shelley's *Masque of Anarchy* was recited.

A memorial later in the evening, attended by at least 150-200 friends and comrades was held at Lambeth Town Hall, where Ted Knight, John Fraser MP and many friends and comrades spoke of Kath.

Kath's testament is contained in these words of Shelley:

*"Rise like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number  
Shake your chains to earth  
like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen  
on you.  
Ye are many, they are few."*

HARRY WICKS  
KEEPING MY  
HEAD



The Memoirs of a British Bolshevik

Keeping my head

The memoirs of a British Bolshevik — Harry Wicks

Available from Socialist Platform Ltd,  
BCM 7646, London WC1N 3XX. Price £5.95.

# South Africa: what now?

**The murder of South African Communist Party leader Chris Hani has led to an explosion of mass action across the country.**

**Hundreds of thousands of people took part in protests on Wednesday 14 April and again on Monday 19 April, the day of Hani's funeral.**

**Industry was entirely shut down on both days in what amounted to general strikes by the powerful non-racial trade union movement.**

**A month of mass action has now been called by the ANC leadership.**

**Anne Mack answers questions about what will happen now in South Africa.**

**Is apartheid really being abolished? Is De Klerk really a reformer?**

Yes - but all the reforms are within limits designed to keep the same wealthy white elite on top.

In 1976 the Soweto rebellion of black school students sparked a national township uprising. Ever since then the white racist regime has faced a fundamental problem: how to modernise South Africa, creating a stable balance with a black middle class and a skilled black working class, without surrendering white privilege and power.

PW Botha made real but limited attempts at reform from above, but only fanned the flames of black revolt.

His proposals to create tame, controlled unions for black workers backfired. His limited legal reforms were exploited to help build a militant labour movement that now organises over a million workers.

Other reforms were token. Pass laws went, only to be replaced by 'a new identity card for all South Africans', advertised on billboards in every segregated township

and squatter camp in the country.

In the mid-80s the township revolt of the students and youth threatened to fuse with the workplace struggles of the new unions. A general strike paralysed the Transvaal (South Africa's industrial heartland) in November 1984. The Botha government turned towards repression.

For a while this was effective, but it was not a long-term strategy. After the collapse, in 1989, of the Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe which had financed and provided training and a bureaucratic base for the ANC, FW De Klerk seized the opportunity to set the agenda. His strategic aim was to bring about a partial and controlled democratisation from above, replacing apartheid with the market, a strong state and a new black elite.

There were to be real democratic changes and general elections, but they were to take place against a background of intensified psychological warfare aimed at the black majority. Random township killings were as much a part of this policy as high level negotiations with Mandela.

This strategy has succeeded to the point where the ANC leadership are now prepared to accept power sharing with the National Party until the end of this century.

**Will this power-sharing satisfy the majority of black workers?**

No. De Klerk wants to use the market to do the same basic job as apartheid, keeping the black workers down, while simultaneously keeping the door open for the new and developing black middle-class elite.

Instead of pass laws the cash nexus can be used to keep the vast majority of black people out of the white suburbs, schools and swimming pools. Most black people can not afford them. The few that can will be used to hold down those that can not.

After all, this free-market



Police open fire on a Soweto protest at the death of Chris Hani

racism 'works' in America. Housing in Washington DC is already more effectively segregated than in some parts of Johannesburg.

The problem for South Africa's rulers is that the country's working class - the biggest and most powerful on the continent - could well prove somewhat stronger than the thin layer of trade union officials and ANC activists who now seek to channel their democratic and socialist aspirations through the narrow channels of top-down negotiations and of extended 'power-sharing' which will guarantee white power and privilege.

**Are the ANC leaders going to lose control of the situation, especially since they have lost Chris Hani who was very popular with the youth?**

They could, but they have not yet. The reason is that there is no coherent organised force to provide a pole of attraction for workers and youth disillusioned by Mandela and the rest of the ANC leadership.

The working-class socialists in South Africa are weak, and

the ANC and SACP have a strong grip on the trade unions. Unemployed and school-age youth are less under ANC control, but nowhere near producing an alternative to the ANC.

People like Winnie Mandela and Harry Gwala - an old-time CPer who still says he supports Stalin - make very radical-sounding noises, but they do not possess any organisation that could act as a lever to alter the political situation.

Both the ANC's central organisation and its armed wing MK are still very much under the grip of the ANC and the SACP leaders who have been in the forefront of the proposed power-sharing deal.

Winnie Mandela is rightly discredited in the eyes of most black workers. It is only the most downtrodden and desperate township youth - the Comtotsis, half political fighter, half gangster - who still look to her for leadership. To organise such people into a coherent political fighting force you need a huge apparatus and funds. But only the ANC has such a political machine.

Winnie Mandela and Gwala would need to split the ANC before they could build a powerful force. This is a long way off.

The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) is picking up some support. Their black chauvinist slogan 'One settler, one bullet' has become popular on recent marches. But they are not an effective alternative to the ANC.

**Will South Africa collapse into racial civil war?**

The continuing mass action could spark new conflicts and new massacres and transform the political situation. But it seems that the ANC leadership are already back in the saddle. A week ago Nelson Mandela was booed and hissed at a mass rally: this Monday he was cheered.

Veteran CPer Joe Slovo has talked of the need to 'let off steam'. That is the strategy of

the ANC/SACP leadership. The black chauvinists and ultra-radicals are not strong enough to push aside the ANC, and talk of racial civil war and descent into anarchy is premature.

The black workers have not yet spoken out in their own voice. When they find themselves in open and direct conflict with the ANC/SACP leadership they will pose a much more serious threat to both Mandela and De Klerk than the youth who lack discipline and organisation.

Huge conflicts between the workers and a National Party/ANC government are inevitable.

**What is the left in South Africa saying?**

The main left organisation, the Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), is quite rightly focusing on two issues: an immediate election to a constituent assembly which will draw up a new constitution, and self-defence for the black workers' movement and community organisations.

This approach has the advantage of realism over the ANC leaders' utopian approach of calling for a non-elected interim government which will have 'joint control' over the security services as a way of stopping the killings.

Unfortunately, the left tends to spend too much time chasing after the radical nationalists in the PAC and the black consciousness organisations rather than seeking a way to the majority of the youth and workers in the trade unions who still support the SACP. To win these people over, the left will have to link its organisation for immediate elections and self-defence to a programme of economic demands like a minimum wage and a massive programme of public works to end unemployment and provide housing, education, health and public services to the black working class.

Such a programme requires a head-on confrontation with white capitalist power.

## Apartheid's death squads still rule

**From front page**

Over the last decades, the apartheid military/police apparatus has laid waste to huge areas of the sub-continent, wrecking the lives of millions of people. Low intensity civil war has been waged against the inhabitants of South Africa's black townships.

Since "peace" was officially declared, with the release of Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC in February 1990, the death rate in the townships from "unrest-related violence" has increased massively.

It is just not possible to separate De Klerk's negotiating strategy from the security forces' overt and covert attempts to fan the flames of township violence.

As well as negotiating, De Klerk intends to let loose his stormtroopers, who will bomb, shoot, rape, batter and burn their way to the new South Africa.

This is not random violence. It is deliberate and purposeful.

De Klerk doesn't need to be the evil mastermind behind every "unrest" incident including the assassination of Chris Hani for the activities of the state-supported death squads to dovetail with his overall policy.

In recent years, the military top brass, working first through the shadowy Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) and later, after the formal disbanding of the DMI, through other forms, have pursued a sophisticated military/political strategy.

They have sought to combine violence against black people, both indiscriminate and selective, with calculated attempts to change the political climate.

They want controlled democratic reforms from above which will keep the old state apparatus of white people in place.

The end goal is to replace apartheid with the strong state.

A key part of this strategy is to divide and discredit the ANC. The decision of the ANC leadership (under the pressure of three years of escalating township 'unrest') to re-open talks with the government on the basis of a 'sunset clause' which would involve ANC/National Party power-sharing till the end of the century could help discredit the ANC. The murder of Hani will certainly help divide it.

De Klerk's strategy works on the same principle as the contra-war against the people of Nicaragua: a war designed to make the people vote for 'peace' by voting the Sandinistas out of office. The aim is controlled terror against the black majority so as to 'depoliticise' them, combined with concessions to their leaders.

There can be no celebration of a 'new dawn' in South Africa while the instruments of this policy are firmly in place.

On the contrary, the mass movement must link the demand for immediate elections to a constituent assembly with the call for the breaking up of "De Klerk's killing machine".

## Arms for the Muslims!

**From page 3**

Bosnia and attach them to Serbia. Probably the Croats would attach their "cantons" to Croatia.

However, a united Bosnia could not be restored outside a comprehensive democratic settlement between the south-Slav peoples. At present Bosnia is just a geographical, legal and diplomatic concept: its substance, the people, has divided into three warring communities, with no political movement on the scene which unites them.

To reconcile Serbs, Croats and Muslims in Bosnia requires reconciling Serbs and Croats in the whole south-Slav area.

The socialist answer is for the working class in the various conflicting peoples to come together, to settle accounts with their own chauvinists and tinpot imperialists, and to restore a Yugoslav federation or confederation, this time with consistent and thorough

democracy and under the control of the workers.

Is that unrealistic? Immediately, *nothing* is a realistic prospect except further slaughter, further division of the area into unviable warring states, further "ethnic cleansing", more refugees.

There is no immediate "practical" solution - unless massive Western military intervention is an acceptable and viable solution, which it is not.

Our Marxist ideas cannot get a grip on the situation unless and until there is some organised working-class force to give them a grip. What we must do now is outline the programme around which that organised working-class force might be gathered. We are in the same sort of position as the socialists of the region in 1912-13, when they advocated a "democratic Balkan federation" amidst atrocities even more terrible than today's. Were they "unrealistic"? No: they were doing the only serious and substantial thing that could be done towards a better future.

GRAFFITI

# Give Norman a bladder

GRAFFITI

ON FRIDAY 30 April there will be a demo outside the House of Commons to protest at the Government's plan to do away with the May Day bank holiday, the traditional workers' holiday.

It is good to see that trade union and Labour Party leaders have not totally forgotten the spirit of working class solidarity, the history of struggle and.....no, hold that. This demonstration, it seems, is organised by men wearing white trousers with bells on who bang sticks together. May Day is the biggest fixture in the Morris dancing calendar and they are determined to keep it that way.

Perhaps if Norman Willis were equipped with an inflated pig's bladder on a stick he would pose more of a threat to the Tories.

AS ANY good lefty knows, people can rapidly become poster blind. They walk past poster sites without paying the slightest bit of attention. The trick is to get your publicity into a new and unexpected location — the best recent example is a socialist student group, who will remain nameless, flyposting the motor way signs into Blackpool the night before a student conference there.

The bosses too know this lesson, and are constantly seeking new eye-catching locations for their billboards. Now a US firm is offering the ultimate advert — they are offering to build artificial moons, company logos several miles across that hang in the sky in geostationary orbits (they remain over the same area of the earth all the time). Designed to appear the same size as the moon, they will light up in the night sky in a similar way. The cost is \$30 — 50 million.

The 1996 Olympics in the States are being targeted for the first skyverts. We can only hope for two weeks of cloudy weather.

THIS WEEK saw the opening of the Thatcher Foundation's offices in the Polish capital, Warsaw, and the approval of a \$100,000 programme to train ten Russian librarians in the US Library of Congress. There, the foundation says, they will learn "the workings of the US democratic system [and] free market economy", which are apparently intimately linked to something called "the philosophy and

practice of American librarianship".

Not everyone swallows the crap about the indivisible link between capitalism and democracy. A Russian tycoon, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, who has been elected to the Presidency of the southern Russian republic of Kalmytskaya, shows a shrewder understanding of the relationship between economics and politics. "I am not a communist, I am not a socialist, I am not a democrat. I am a capitalist" he says. He intends to introduce an "economic dictatorship" to turn the oil and gas rich republic "into a second Kuwait".

He did not mention that Russia, with its traditions on the independence of republics, may be more than willing to become a "second Iraq".

A LESSER KNOWN cousin of the Thatcher Foundation is the Lamont Green Shoot Institute. Boris Yeltsin this week emerged as the institute's star student on "talking up the economy", economic prediction and diplomacy. Speaking to a 4,000 strong meeting of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Yeltsin suggested that inflation had fallen from 30% in January to 17% in March. The rest of his words were lost in a torrent of jeers and heckling. "I don't understand...." Yeltsin was heard to say, turning to Arkady Volsky, the union's President. Clearly, Boris.

JUST IN CASE you were thinking of having a self-satisfied nationalistic smirk about the state of the Russian economy, you should have a look at the Time International economic survey.

Asked which of 36 countries were struggling with economies "in decline", world business leaders ranked Britain top with a rating of 51%, while the CIS scored a paltry 38%.

The UK is rated no. 32 in a table of "growing economies", behind Egypt, China and Hungary.

THE ROYAL FAMILY has a use after all. The Queen Mum has taken up the fight for the good people of Folkestone, outraged that long-distance road signs will have the word "Folkestone" removed from them and replaced with the word "Euro-tunnel". She acts in her capacity as the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

Britain's favorite battling great-granny lists drinking gin and spitting at the servants among her hobbies.



Yeltsin: "Crisis? What crisis?"

# Yesterday's Mirror — Today

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

YOU MUST have noticed Anne Robinson smiling enigmatically down upon you from the hoardings. She has just defected from the *Mirror* to *Today*, following in the footsteps of dozens of other *Mirror* hacks who've had enough of David Montgomery and his buffoonish editor, David Banks.

Ms Robinson is probably better known as the presenter of the BBC's *Points of View* programme than as a newspaper columnist, which presumably accounts for her presence on the hoardings. Nevertheless, her arrival is undoubtedly a coup of sorts for *Today* editor Richard Stott, and also represents the culmination of a remarkable process whereby most of the key personnel of the Maxwell-era *Mirror* are now to be found at *Today*, while many of the journalists who worked for *Today* under David Montgomery are now at the *Mirror*.

Much has already been written and said about Mr Montgomery's regime and the threat it poses to the *Mirror*'s traditions. But what of *Today*, owned by

Rupert Murdoch and now staffed by what amounts to a *Mirror* old boys' (and girls') re-union from the 1980s?

Richard Stott has undoubtedly livened up Murdoch's traditionally bland middle-market tabloid, giving it a campaigning edge and an aggressively anti-Tory editorial policy. It now carries articles in support of the miners and even concerns itself with the plight of the unemployed. Its political editor Alistair Campbell, is a big buddy of Neil Kinnock's and is scarcely less keen on John Smith, Margaret Beckett, et al.

The logic of all this, of course, is that come election time, *Today* should call for a Labour vote. But will the

Digger and his British lieutenant, Andrew Knight allow it? Stranger things have been known to happen (in Australia, the Digger's papers have backed Labour and there have been recent rumours of improved relations between Walworth Road and the *Sun*). The crucial consideration, naturally, will be circulation.

As the *Mirror*'s readership figures continue to plummet, and *Today*'s rise, there is reason to think that working class Labour supporters are switching over to Murdoch's paper: the way to keep them is to come out openly for a Labour vote. David Montgomery may yet go down in history as the man who delivered — inadvertently — *Today* into the hands of John Smith.

# How Further Education colleges are changing

EDUCATION FOR BARBARISM

By Colin Waugh

ON 1 APRIL the Government "incorporated" the 300 plus local authority Further Education colleges by transferring their funding to the non-elected FE Funding Council (FEFC).

The 1944 Education Act required councils to provide FE. Initially, colleges ran technical or commercial evening classes. Then the 1964 Industrial Training Act encouraged firms to give apprentices day release. Although FE also started offering minimum age school leavers a second chance at 'O' and/or 'A' levels, industrial background staff continued to dominate, giving it a different ethos from schools or universities.

From the late 70s the Government began making unemployed school leavers into FE 'students'. This led to the rise within FE of a 'skills ethos' — do-gooding, missionary-type basic schooling mixed with narrow forms of industrial training. Many colleges are now run by people who, aided by de-industrialisation, used this ethos to displace the ex-craftspersons who ruled before. During the 80s many councils re-organised post-16 schooling into sixth form/and or tertiary colleges, also now 'incorporated'. FEFC funding means 'the

more you expand, the more you get', and vice versa. But de-industrialisation has cut the supply of day release students and local authority cuts stop low income adults getting discretionary grants for full time study.

Some colleges will expand by providing firms with 'customised training' for their staff, and some will draw students from elite groups in developing countries. However, most must try to recruit 16 to 19 year olds whose parents can support them and who can get 'A' levels at the first go — i.e. students normally in sixth forms. And now they're out of local authority control, colleges can ditch poorer and/or less proficient students to concentrate on this 'market'.

To grab their slice of this HE entry market, colleges will compete to become feeder institutions for universities seeking, for example, 'franchises' by which their students can do a given university's first year degree units alongside 'A' levels. They will also try to merge with local sixth form colleges. In such FEs, any remaining industrial ethos will be killed off.

Some 'successful' colleges may take over their neighbours, strip assets such as young 'A' level lecturers, computers, etc., sack everyone else, and sell the land. But some of the 'unsuccessful' colleges will survive by getting, for example, EC funding to provide low-quality FE for the long-term unemployed, people with 'special needs', ethnic minorities, depressed areas, etc, using mainly part-time

staff.

However, at the same time that it 'de-industrialises' FE, incorporation will 'industrialise' schools.

FE colleges will compete against each other, but also against private training agencies, private colleges and all-through schools with sixth forms, including prestigious opted-out — and even public — schools.

TO SUCCEED they must cut costs, not only by worsening teachers' conditions of service but also by changing the way they interact with students. They will try to do this by extending to academic courses aspects of the industrial training approach pioneered on lower level courses for the unemployed.

The knowledge possessed by lecturers and their skill of explaining by face-to-face interaction with a class will be built into devices for programmed learning. Subjects will be broken down into small steps, each with its own assessment criteria — steps which students with a certain level of general education, family support and access to a VDU can take for themselves. Agencies will develop, perhaps from within some of the colleges, perhaps from examining bodies like BTEC, which will employ a few ex-lecturers to design course materials along these lines. Most colleges could eventually become outlets for these materials, where students come primarily to use them in open plan 'study bases' supervised by a library

assistant and a security guard, or just to loan them for home use. This approach is bound to spread to schools.

Incorporation will also create opportunities for the Left.

First, the more 'successful' FE colleges are oriented towards 'profits', the more they will be vulnerable to union action, because reservations about hitting disadvantaged students will become less convincing. Secondly, NUT, NAS/UWT, NATFHE and AUT members will now be working alongside one another in colleges, or in institutions linked by franchising. These factors mean there should be a better chance of building a rank and file movement of teachers across union and institutional boundaries.

Thirdly, the sectoral barriers between university, FE and school students will be weakened. Fourthly, young people from relatively well-off backgrounds, with relatively high expectations, will be placed in FE colleges with alienating learning methods pioneered with more disadvantaged students. These factors mean that there should be a better chance of developing an active student movement across school, FE and university boundaries.

Lastly, the 'industrialisation' of learning, by stripping away the teachers' traditional function of giving information and explaining things, must also, eventually, strip away their functions of exercising authority and keeping order. This should make it easier for teachers and students to take joint action.

# Should Russian workers back the "technocrats"?

Boris Kagarlitsky, a leader of Russia's Party of Labour, has argued that Russian workers should support a "national democratic block" led by Ruslan Khasbulatov and other "nationally oriented" parliamentary leaders, against Boris Yeltsin.

We print extracts from an interview in *Campaign Group News* where Kagarlitsky expounds his views, and a comment explaining why *Socialist Organiser* disagrees.



Rat-infested, crumbling, poverty-stricken Moscow. This is the Russian people's only future under any of the current alternative political forces

## The main battle is with Thatcherism

Boris Kagarlitsky is a leader of Russia's Party of Labour. He was jailed under the Brezhnev regime. In March this year he was appointed political advisor to Igor Klochkov, the chair of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia. *Socialist Campaign Group News* asked Kagarlitsky for his view of Russian politics after Yeltsin's attempted coup.

[To refuse to back Khasbulatov] is as wrong as those communists who argued, before Hitler came to power: 'We don't have to get involved in this dispute between Hitler and the social democrats'.

In reality, the left must take sides. On the one hand you have a monetarist, neo-liberal and ultra-Thatcherite tenden-

cy represented by Yeltsin and Gaidar, which is still in power in the country. It tried to impose a dictatorship to force through an economic policy which the majority of the people of Russia reject.

On the other hand you have a very broad coalition of labour leaders, technocrats and nationally oriented small

business people who want to work for the domestic market. This is the most important camp opposing Yeltsin and it is going to gain from his defeat. It is a very wide block of forces which rejects the extreme kind of capitalism which Yeltsin's government tried to impose on the country.

I don't say that this block is definitely going to be socialist. Unfortunately, that is not true. It is a national democratic block which also represents the interests of working people. But there is a strong objective tendency towards more radical and socialist solutions within this block, not only among the trade unions and the left but even among the parties and tendencies of the centre. In seeking solutions to the desperate crisis in Russia even they have started to understand the importance of socialisation of the economy.

Of course then you have some very serious disagreements between the technocrats and the left. But both sides agree on the necessity of having some mixed economy, social and economic planning within the mixed economy and a substantial public sector. The level of socialisation and planning and the importance of the public sector could be disputed within this perspective.

## What we think

IF THE PARTY of Labour follows Boris Kagarlitsky's advice, then it will be a terrible defeat for the project of building an independent workers' party in Russia.

Khasbulatov and his people represent the bureaucrats running big state enterprises as much as, or more than, "technocrats and nationally oriented small business people"; in other words, they represent the bulk of the immediate exploiters of the Russian workers.

They oppose Yeltsin's policy, geared more towards raising new capitalists from the middle class and the gangster underworld, because they fear for their privileges, not because they are "tending towards radical and socialist solutions".

Workers fighting to save their jobs may make use of their bosses' opposition to a closure, but they should never merge themselves into a "national democrat-

ic block" behind those bosses. Workers should oppose attacks on democratic rights and attempts to construct a dictatorship — but those may come from Khasbulatov as readily as from Yeltsin.

*"Workers should never merge themselves into a 'national democratic block' behind their bosses."*

Kagarlitsky's analogy with Germany is false. Trotsky urged the German Communists to ally with the Social-Democrats to form a workers' united front against fascism.

The history of the USSR is proof enough that bosses favour-

ing or operating through state ownership are no better than private bosses. The whole idea of a "national democratic block" dominated by bosses which somehow "also represents the interests of working people" is nonsense. If the more nationalist, statist-oriented bosses behind Khasbulatov win out against Yeltsin, they will not construct some semi-socialism, but a corrupt, stifling, exploitative regime of a type very common in the Third World.

In its founding statement, the Party of Labour declared: "The parties of the majority currently in power [and that included the forces now behind Khasbulatov] have as their objective to defend business people; as for us, we declare that our object is above all the defence of the wage workers". Those wage-workers still need a party of their own, independent from all blocks with the bosses.

Martin Thomas

## How sick can you get?

### POLITICAL FRONT

By Rebecca Van Homan

FURTHER EVIDENCE that the Tories are taking us back to the last century is the news that diseases such as dysentery and hepatitis are once again becoming widespread in Britain's inner cities as a direct result of privatised water companies disconnecting supplies.

Since water privatisation there has been a three-fold increase in the number of dysentery cases in England and Wales — from 3,693 cases in 1987 to 9,020 in 1992.

Figures to be published next month by the water regulator Ofwat are expected to show another rise in the number of households having their water disconnected.

Public health officials in the West Midlands have established a direct link between cuts in water supplies and outbreaks of dysentery and hepatitis.

Malcolm Brooks at Birmingham City Council said: "Outbreaks of hepatitis occur when sewage cannot be washed away, when people cannot wash their hands after going to the toilet, and especially when there are children in the home. Disconnecting the water supply takes us back to the nineteenth century".

Last year, 21,000 households in England and Wales were disconnected, an increase of 177% on 1991. Among the worst cities were Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool and Sheffield, where densely populated communities were cut off for more than two weeks.

Water prices throughout Britain have risen by an average of nearly 50% in the past five years. Needless to say, this has not been matched by increases in housing benefit or income support.

The Tories are creating a sick society where the first people to become diseased are the poor. The children I teach are malnourished, many underweight. They live in houses where cockroaches are normal, and one child's brother has rickets.

It's time to turn the violence back on to the people who are inflicting it.

The revival of the trade union movement is a positive sign that more people are not prepared to take any more. We need a unified struggle to empower people to change this monstrous system once and for all.

# Fiftieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto

## "We will not yield"

Fifty years ago this week the Nazis began their final assault on the Warsaw Ghetto, where 40,000 Jews were making a last desperate, heroic stand against Nazi barbarians determined to annihilate them. A mere remnant of Warsaw's once-large Jewish population, they had decided that it is better to die on your feet, fighting, than to die on your knees, unresisting. Joan Trevor tells the story of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

**I**N SEPTEMBER 1939 Hitler's troops captured Warsaw, the capital of Poland. The Nazis now ruled the biggest centre of Jewry in Europe. 350,000, a third of Warsaw's population, were Jews.

Three million Jews lived in Poland as a whole. Ultimately the Nazis wanted to kill them all, but to do this was an enormous task. To make things easier for themselves, they herded the Jews into medieval-style ghettos — smaller and smaller areas in 45 separate ghetto towns across Poland.

There they worked for German war industries, and some died of malnutrition, which cost the Germans less than a bullet; all awaited the preparation of the more efficient, modern, Nazi method of extermination — the death camps.

Each ghetto had a Jewish Council appointed by the Nazis from among community leaders. The Councils administered the ghettos, compiled statistics for the Nazis, conveyed their orders to the community. By setting up such structures the Nazis hoped to persuade the Jews that, though it would be a miserable one, they could expect some sort of future under Nazism.

They knew that this was not so. The Jewish Councils hoped that it was. Perhaps, the leaders probably reasoned, if they were useful and compliant the Nazis would not think it necessary to kill large numbers of Jews. One ghetto leader, Rumkowski of Lodz, took great pride in the fact that "his" ghetto was self-sufficient and economically useful to the Germans.

In November 1940, the Warsaw Ghetto was sealed behind a 10 foot wall. It was 2.7% of the area of Warsaw — for

over a third of Warsaw's population. 80,000 non-Jews were ordered to leave the Ghetto — to make way for the arrival of 140,000 refugees. Inevitably, conditions were appalling.

Twelve people lived in each room. They had a ration of 800 calories each per day — half of what an adult needs to stay healthy. The refugees had nowhere to live and slept on the streets. The native Warsaw Jews resented them and the Jewish Council provided no relief to them.

66% died in the streets of the Ghetto from cold, starvation and disease.

Only youth organisations would help them and recruited from among them.

Every day was a battle to find enough to eat. People turned in on themselves concerned only to save their own family, or just themselves. In spite of this, many tried to keep up the sense of human dignity the Nazis were ripping from them.

They held concerts; academic and religious life continued. Dr. Korczak who ran the orphanage sealed it against the Ghetto and through three years protected his children from knowledge of life outside. People were dying in the streets — but this pretence to normality was the only form of resistance they had.

This desperate desire not to believe the worst was one of the reasons why those who from the beginning wanted the Ghetto to fight could not gain the influence they needed.

The Council members were torn between shame at their assistance to the Nazis, their sense of impotent responsibility, and the knowledge that they could still provide some relief for the Jews. So they rationalised their role.

It was all revealed for a sham when the order came in August 1942 that the Jews were to be deported to camps in the East.

They were told they would be settled and allowed to redeem themselves by



Ghetto Jews rounded up for deportation to death-camps. Even the young children have had to

work. In fact they were going to the death camps.

No-one could know the full horror of the camps, but the Council had some eye-witness accounts of the deaths there. Nonetheless, they encouraged

Jews to volunteer for deportation with the promise of better food. At the embarkation point loaves of bread were provided, and jam. When political activists in the ghetto — left wingers and Bundists and Zionists — put out leaflets telling the truth about the death camps that awaited those who left the ghetto, people just did not believe them. It was too incredible, too terrible for these defenseless, peaceful

human beings to take in.

**B**ETWEEN JULY AND October 1942, 310,000 people were deported to camps, principally Treblinka, where life expectancy was one hour.

In this situation, what could the middle-class leaders of the Council do? They could have told the people the truth, or as much of it as they had.

There were things they could have done to keep more Jews alive for longer.

Throughout the Ghetto's history criminals thrived and the rich — like the rich of all peoples — were able to secure privileges for themselves. They bribed councillors and police.

When taxes had to be raised to pay the Nazis, or police wages, a 10% tax was levied on basic foodstuffs — the poor paid as much as the rich. In January 1942 the Council voted down a proposal to "take from the rich the means with which to feed the poor".

The ghetto police, on pain of death, were ordered to bring five people each for deportation. They dragged people off the streets, separating families.

The role of the rich in the ghetto was shameful, and they were rewarded with the hatred of the people. But the Nazis themselves made vile propaganda from it to show in Germany. They photographed rich Jews enjoying their privileges, while, nearby, emaciated Jews died in the streets ignored. As if it were only rich Jews who would behave like this and not the rich of any people! As if the Nazis were not themselves responsible for ghetto conditions.



Itzhak Zuckerman, leader in the final days of the uprising — he survived the Ghetto



ghetto uprising

# and a single Jew”



to learn the universal sign of surrender

They do not know it, but those — for example Jim Allen, socialist author of the play *Perdition* — on the left who make “anti-Zionism” and anti-Israeli propaganda out of the behaviour of the bourgeois Jewish puppet councils, stand in the direct line of descent from this vile Nazi propaganda.

Until January 1943 the Ghetto was a cohesive society, massively oppressed and terrorised, but a society nonetheless, with its classes and structures intact. Only when the final round of deportations was planned, when the extent of the genocide was finally known, and the futility of passive hope realised, and — most significantly — only when the Jewish underground began to obtain arms, did the Ghetto go to war against the Nazis.

**T**HE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT in making resistance possible was the presence of organised leftists, militant Zionists, Bundists and Communists, and young people.

By January 1943 the middle class leadership was so discredited that the SS itself had assumed direct control of the

Ghetto. The left won the leadership of the tiny 10% remnant — 40,000 people — of the Ghetto and led a genuine popular uprising.

It was far too late, and yet it was magnificent.

**“310,000 people were deported to camps, principally Treblinka, where life expectancy was one hour.”**

Why did the Ghetto opposition not fight earlier? Several reasons. They knew what the Nazis were doing. Their printers worked day and night producing an amazing range of publications, warning the Jews of the danger. In spite of the isolation of the

Ghetto from outside they were able to keep in contact with the Polish underground and with their comrades outside.

But, until 1943, they had no arms, and they did not have the trust of the people. Until then, they set themselves the job of relief work, organising young people, holding meetings. They exposed the hypocrisies of the Council. Slowly they gained the respect of the masses who remained.

And the oppositionists were themselves divided. Socialist Bund leaders warned the youth against making pre-

mature attacks on the Nazis. They were suspicious of the militant Zionists, some of whom were very right wing. They still looked to their links with the remnants of the Communists and Socialists outside.

Then early in January when the Nazis came to clear out the Ghetto the opposition set aside their differences, realising that it was now or never for the Jews. They knew that *they* would have to be the ones to begin the resistance to the Nazis. The opposition groups formed the ZOB — the Jewish Fighting Organisation — under the leadership of Mordecai Anielewicz, and prepared to defend the Ghetto.

The years of underground organisation meant that they were able to make the best use of the few opportunities open to them to inflict damage on the Nazis, to save Jewish lives and to set an example to the resistance outside the Ghetto.

They killed police informers. They demanded money off the rich to buy more arms. They organised the 40,000 Ghetto dwellers, readying them for the Nazis’ final assault.

In January they were able to thwart the Nazis for a few days and to persuade the remaining Jews that it was better to fight even against impossible odds than to give themselves up for deportation.

The final deportation was planned for April and on the 19th trucks arrived to take people to Treblinka. The Nazis and their trucks were attacked. Nazi tanks which guarded them were set on fire. For three days the fighters held running battles with the Nazis, forcing them to retreat.

Finally the Nazis won simply by dint of setting fire to the whole Ghetto, burning the hidden Jews out of their cellars. By mid-May the Ghetto did not exist, either in terms of buildings or people.

7,000 Jews had died in the fighting, 30,000 were captured and sent to Treblinka. Hundreds of “rubble fighters” remained to carry out random attacks on the Nazis for months to come. A few hundred Jews crawled for twenty hours through the sewers to join resistance

groups in the forests around Warsaw.

The persistence of the Ghetto opposition, in spite of their almost unbearable fear and depression, their isolation, the indifference with which for years their warnings were met, is one of the most remarkable things in this story.

And that they fought knowing that most of them would die; not that they fought so late.

It is easy to tell the story of the uprising; understanding the full horror of Nazi genocide, and appreciating the courage of those who fought them takes an enormous leap of the imagination.

Seeing pictures of the Holocaust for the first time is a shattering experience for most people. But in time the horror fades to a vague memory of the numbers involved — 150,000 from this ghetto

to here, 200,000 from that one there — with no understanding of the violence behind it all.

The Ghetto fighters’ first priority was a *violent* act: to assassinate Josef Szerynski, the leader of the Jewish police, and other police and informers.

This small-scale act of violence by people

and on people whose names we know is somehow shocking. It stands out from the anonymous horror and prompts us to look again at the real human experiences behind the statistics in the history books.

We are used to reading about the Jewish people having been treated as one homogeneous lump of expendable humanity. The killing of the policemen reminds us that the Jews, like every other people, had their classes and their divisions too.

That the people who led the uprising were driven to killing these brutes, where most of us can scarcely pluck up the courage to be rude to a policeman on a demonstration, is the other lesson we must learn — the effects of fascism on the lives of ordinary people, and the need to crush it early so that no-one need ever fall victim to it again.

We must organise the mass of people to fight for their own lives now. So that we will never — as the Ghetto fighters did — have to organise people whose one remaining choice is to choose the manner of their deaths.

**“The role of the rich Jews was shameful. But the Nazis themselves made vile propaganda from it to show in Germany.”**



The Ghetto is no more — May 1943

# In defence of BI

Especially in the 1960s, the black liberation struggle in the US was much influenced by the battles through which former colonies in Africa and Asia won their independence. Many African-American activists — like Malcolm X until the very last few months of his life — see their struggle as one of “national liberation”. But how far does the analogy go? Leon Trotsky, in the 1930s, argued that although the African-Americans were not a separate nation, their movement might take the form of striving to become one, and if so socialists should support them. Some Marxists hold that Trotsky’s view, though arguable in the 1930s, became outdated with the mass shift of the African-American population from the rural South to the big cities, the basic industries and the North.

In SO 558 we published an article

**I**N PART, JOHNSON’S critique is a quibble over terminology: how to properly define “a nation” and the concept of “self-determination.” But, and this is far more important, he also badly misunderstands the dynamics of Black liberation in the United States and what policy revolutionary socialists should follow to forge an alliance with the Black movement. These problems were at the heart of the discussion inside the SWP.

In this article we will deal with the question of definitions first, in order to lay the basis for better understanding this second, and more crucial aspect of the debate.

## What is a nation? What is “self-determination”?

**T**HE STARTING point for Johnson is a “scientific” definition of “a nation” and “self-determination” as classically understood by Marxists. He quotes *Marxism and the National Question* by Joseph Stalin — a work which, he points out, both Lenin and Trotsky praised. “A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture...”

It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation.”

Based on this approach, then, Blacks in the U.S. do not qualify. Johnson concludes that therefore it is completely unacceptable to talk about “self-determination” for Blacks as Marxists have traditionally applied that idea — the actual creation of a separate state

by an American Marxist, Peter Johnson. Johnson argued that “There is no Black nation in the US today... On the contrary, Blacks are now the core of the multiracial American working class... There is no possibility of Black national self-determination today, in the Marxist sense of secession of a Black nation state... The question in the Black liberation struggle is... revolutionary integrationism, the removal by revolutionary means of the obstacles to Black equality and integration.”

This week we publish a reply (slightly abridged), by Steve Bloom and Claire Cohen, from the same magazine that carried Johnson’s article, *Bulletin in Defence of Marxism*.

A couple of passages in Bloom’s and Cohen’s article refer to bits of Johnson’s article not included in our abridged reprint.

by an oppressed people.

Johnson also objects to the way Breitman and the SWP used the term “self-determination”: “Most revealing, ‘self-determination’ is redefined. It is no longer used in the Marxist sense of the decision by a nation whether to secede and form a separate state, but rather in the ‘Bundist’ sense of ‘control of the Black communities and all the institutions within them.’”

To begin let us mildly protest Johnson’s unqualified endorsement of Stalin’s definition of a nation. Despite the testimonials for his general analysis from Lenin and Trotsky, Stalin is too rigid in this. Another Marxist of the same period, Nikolai Bukharin, in his work *The ABC of Communism*, for example, gives a similar definition but reveals a bit more flexibility: “A nation or a people is the name given to a group of persons who are united by the use of a common tongue and who inhabit a definite area” (p. 192). But Bukharin adds a footnote to his text: “Long ago, the Jews inhabited a definite territory and possessed a common speech; today they have no territory, and many of them do not understand Hebrew. The gypsies have their own language, but they do not inhabit any definite territory. The non-nomadic Tunguses in Siberia have a territory, but they have forgotten their distinctive

tongue.”

Unlike Stalin, and unlike Johnson, Bukharin recognises that the boundaries of what is and what is not a nation are fuzzy. They cannot be rigidly determined by abstract laws. The Jews, gypsies, and Tunguses are nations even though they lack either a common language, or territory, or both. In this he is far more dialectical, and therefore far more Marxist, than Stalin.

Blacks in the U.S. are “a historically constituted, stable community of people” which

does, in fact, live in a common territory — though they share it with other groups (to the extent that they are not segregated into ghetto communities). They suffer a common economic oppression and have their own “psychological makeup manifested in a common culture.” Even the question of whether there is a distinct “Black English” is a hotly debated topic. If such a people wants to think of itself as a nation, haven’t they the right to do so? Why should the revolutionary Marxist movement object?

As far as “self-determination” is concerned, Johnson is technically right but still wrong on the substance of the matter. Marxist terminology, like everything else, can change under changing circumstances. Before 1914 “social democrat” meant one thing. After the capitulation of the German party at the beginning of World War I it meant quite another. The term “workers’ and peasants’ government” has had five different meanings since it was first introduced by the Bolsheviks — in different contexts and in different periods.

During the 1960s the Black community itself began to use the idea of “self-determination” as synonymous with “Black control of the Black community. This was not a theoretical innovation of Breitman or the SWP, but merely the adoption of a new meaning for old terminology resulting from the evolution of a particular struggle. Would it have been better for the SWP to sit on the sidelines and lecture Blacks about the proper use of words?

So the real question that needs to be addressed is not whether the SWP was sufficiently orthodox in its definitions when it made its turn toward Black nationalism during the 1960s, but whether that turn was right or wrong. And this takes us to the real substance of our disagreement with Johnson’s article.

## What are the actual dynamics of the struggle?

**W**HETHER OR not the Black community in the U.S. is a nation in the strict scientific meaning of that term, and whether or not true “self-determination” in the Marxist sense of a separate Black state is possible, *the revolutionary struggle of Blacks to control their own communities, to shape their own destiny as a people, is 100 per cent analogous to the dynamics of national liberation.* The campaign for “Black Self Determination” as understood and defined by the Black community itself is both a basic struggle for democratic rights and human dignity of an oppressed people, and a fight which, if waged in a revolutionary manner (or if it is victorious even in part), can seriously weaken the U.S. ruling class. It is therefore a

struggle which all working people in this country should encourage and support.

This simple idea is the essential meaning of the Breitman position adopted by the SWP in the 1960s. It remains a correct understanding of the relationship between Black liberation and the struggle for socialism in the U.S. today.

## How will we forge the necessary alliance in struggle?

**A**T TIMES, JOHNSON presents his argument as if this were essentially a discussion about what kind of future society might be best for working people, Black and white: “If a population regroupment should occur and large sections of the Black working class should demand the right of national self-determination, Trotskyists should support that demand, although almost certainly we should oppose actual secession, since separation of the Black and white working classes would limit what either could do.”

And: “The object of the socialist revolution is freedom, however, which includes the freedom to separate, as well as to unite. We can leave it to future generations that have grown up without political, social, or economic coercion to decide for themselves how they, as truly free people, will relate.”

It is hard to imagine why “future generations that have grown up without political, social, or economic coercion” will see the need for separate national states, or even for a state at all if we want to talk about a classical Marxist appreciation of terms. Our problem is not deciding how people should live a hundred years or so after the revolution, but rather *how we are going to make the revolution.* And in dealing with this very real, present-day question revolutionaries cannot avoid the actual “political, social, economic,” and we might add *national* coercions that exist in the U.S.A., and every other country.

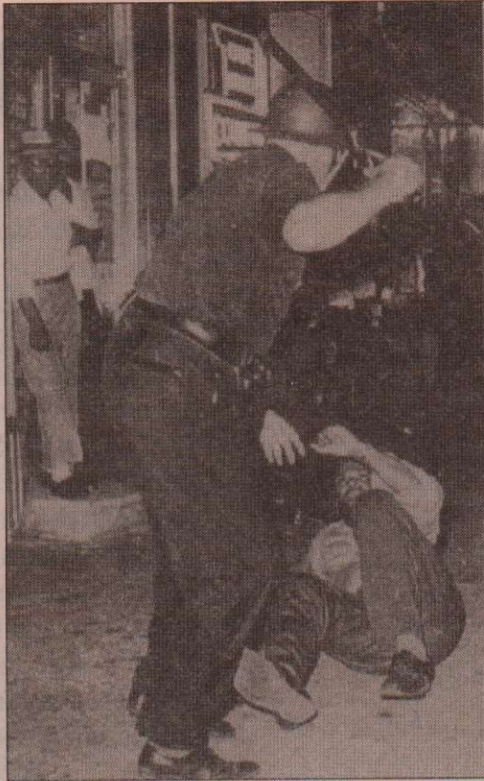
Simple appeals to national unity based on objective needs of “workers of all nations” are completely insufficient. The concrete experience of Blacks in the U.S. — in the union movement, for example, as well as in other struggles — tells them that such slogans are raised by those who want Blacks to set aside their own demands and their own struggle for equality in the name of some higher “unity of the workers.” Of course, Trotskyists like to think that we are different. But even if that is true, it isn’t enough for us to be different. We have to *prove* that we are different.

If genuine working-class revolutionaries are going to forge a real alliance with genuine Black revolutionaries, our task is to



Black power demonstration of 1968

# ack nationalism



Police brutality against Black people continues unabated throughout the decades:

(left) Los Angeles in 1991;  
(right) Harlem 1960s

convince Blacks that we are not simply trying to use, manipulate, or sacrifice their struggles for our own ends, as so many have before us. And the only way we can do that is to unconditionally support whatever legitimate demands emerge from the Black community, up to and including the demand for a separate national state. That support cannot be halfhearted: "Yes, well, we acknowledge your democratic right to decide this but we really think it's a bad idea." No, it will have to be militant and wholehearted support: "If that is what the Black community democratically determines, that is what we want, too, with all our heart and soul. And we will fight to the last drop of our own blood alongside of you if that is necessary to achieve your objective." White workers, and white revolutionaries, who think like that will prove that they are worthy of the trust and collaboration of the Black community.

Unity of workers can only be real if it is the unity of equals. Today, Black workers are not the equals of whites. In order for them to gain their equality, a period of disunity, of Black independence, may well be required. And only Blacks themselves have the right to decide if that is the case.

Above all we cannot make a socialist consciousness by Blacks a prerequisite to our support for their movement. And yet the very idea of "revolutionary integrationism" poses just such a demand because the revolutionary Marxist movement cannot forge an alliance with Blacks on that basis unless there is already a mass socialist consciousness within the Black community, that is, unless Black people already understand and agree with our basic ideas about the future society we are fighting for.

***"Unity of workers can only be real if it is the unity of equals. Today Black workers are not the equals of whites. In order for them to gain their equality, a period of disunity, of Black independence, may be required"***

## What does the historical record show?

JOHNSON ASSERTS that Fraser's document "was correct in its main propositions." Yet he cites one such proposition that would be proven wrong in only a few years' time: "Essentially, only the complete victory of fascism in the U.S. could transform the movement for direct assimilation through immediate equality into one of racial independence."

But it did not require a fascist takeover for a significant Black Power movement to develop out of the integrationist civil rights struggle of the 1950s and early '60s, only a bit of experience with how little the victory over legal Jim Crow would actually mean for Black people. And how can Fraser's thesis account for the most important development of Black consciousness to date, identified with the ideas of Malcolm X? Wasn't this clearly based on the concept of racial independence rather than direct assimilation? (We might also ask how one can simply ignore the strength of the Garvey movement during the 1920s.)

Later, Johnson cites the following observation by Trotsky: "Under the condition that Japan invades the United States and the Negroes are called upon to fight, they may come to feel themselves threatened first from one side and then from the other, and finally awakened may say, 'We have nothing to do with either of you. We will have our own state.'" He then sums up: "Japan did not invade... and fascism did not triumph." Ergo, Blacks have no right to a nationalist consciousness.

But what happened during the Vietnam war when Blacks were "called upon to

fight"? Didn't they, indeed, "feel themselves threatened first from one side and then from the other"? Wasn't this a genuine stimulus for the growing nationalist consciousness of the time? And wasn't that, in turn an important factor in the decision by the U.S. ruling class to bring the Vietnam war to an end? Doesn't this bear a striking resemblance to the theoretical possibility laid out by Trotsky, even if it did not follow precisely the same historical script? The substance of these social developments clearly bears out the thesis, adopted by the SWP and denied by Fraser, that a growth of Black nationalist consciousness in the U.S. was (and remains) a reasonable historical expectation.

Finally, can anyone deny that, today, those who promote an "integrationist" vision in the Black community tend to be the most classically reformist forces, while those who maintain a revolutionary perspective, no matter how ideologically incomplete, continue to move in a nationalist direction? Is this purely accidental? Or is there some lesson here for the revolutionary Marxist movement?

## Let's define things clearly

JOHNSON POSES the following question:

"What should Trotskyists say to young Blacks who have fought the cops in the streets of Los Angeles or have seen Spike Lee's movie 'X' and are trying to come to grips with the legacy of Malcolm X? Do we say that the key to Black liberation is the separatist for an independent Black nation somewhere in North America? Or for community control of the impoverished Black ghettos? Or do we say that the key to Black liberation is the integrated struggle of Black and white workers on shared self-interest, for socialism, racial

equality, and an end to economic and social as well as legal Jim Crow in the U.S.?"

Here there is some recognition that the idea of "self-determination" might be applied more broadly. (In passing we should note that the way it is posed by Johnson — "community control of the impoverished Black ghettos" — reveals his generally static appreciation of reality. Any struggle by Blacks which is powerful enough to actually gain a real measure of community control would also be powerful enough to demand a redress of the economic inequities that so severely impoverish the Black community.)

Still, the actual answer to his question, "What should Trotskyists say?" is: none of the above. Rather, our answer should be that Blacks themselves have a right to define the parameters of their own struggle. We will support demands for integration, for community control, or for separation, as long as they represent the will of the most active and conscious layers, and are fought for from a perspective which promotes militant mass action and makes direct demands on the U.S. ruling class and its oppressive state.

Certainly we will need to explain our conviction that whatever course Blacks choose — integration, community control, or a separate state — only the socialist transformation of this society can lead to genuine freedom and equality for Blacks and other oppressed peoples. Some Blacks who come to understand this will participate in the construction of a multiracial revolutionary socialist movement. And we can be confident that in the course of its struggles, and as a direct result of the support they will receive from the ranks of the revolutionary workers' movement as a whole, a majority in the Black community will see for themselves that we are right about the necessity of a socialist solution. But this may not happen before the revolution itself, and we cannot require, in advance, that Blacks in their majority recognize the validity of "revolutionary integrationism" or any other scheme that depends on a successful struggle for workers' power in the U.S.A.

Throughout his article, Johnson fails to pose the questions that were really at stake in the SWP's discussion. The material existence of Black people in the United States and the struggles that they have undergone in recent decades, have clearly begun to forge a nationalist consciousness among a significant layer. Should revolutionary Marxists welcome this developing consciousness because it can become an important source of additional militancy for the Black liberation struggle? Or should we deplore it because it doesn't correspond to our preconceived notions about what "a

nation" and "self-determination" are, or because it is somehow divisive to the unity of the working class?"

The SWP chose, correctly in our opinion, to recognize the reality and welcome the tendency to deepen the struggle. Peter Johnson attempts to deny that nationalist consciousness among Blacks has any validity whatsoever and suggests that revolutionary Marxists should counterpose

***"Any struggle by Blacks which is powerful enough to actually gain a real measure of community control would also be powerful enough to demand a redress of economic inequities."***

themselves to this trend. Though we profoundly disagree with his conclusions, we strongly agree when he says that this remains a crucial question for the revolutionary movement in the United States today.

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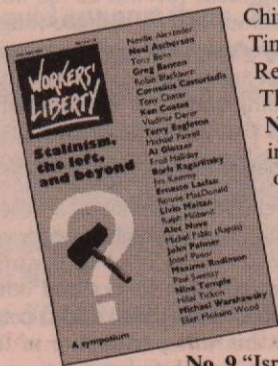
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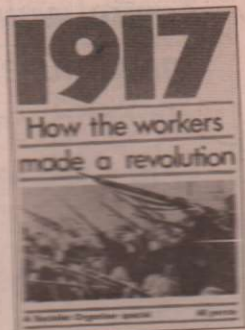
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# Where the state comes from

Previous extracts in this "Elements of Marxism" series have mostly been about economics. This week we start on the theory of the state, with a first excerpt from Lenin's "Lecture on the State". Lenin's concern here is to show that the State is not something eternal, made by God or by nature, but that it arises from and is shaped by class struggle, which in its turn is shaped by the economic anatomy of society.

TO APPROACH THIS question as scientifically as possible we must cast at least a fleeting glance back on the history of the state, its emergence and development. The most reliable thing in a question of social science, and one that is most necessary in order really to acquire the habit of approaching this question correctly and not allowing oneself to get lost in the mass of detail or in the immense variety of conflicting opinion, the most important thing if one is to approach this question scientifically, is not to forget the underlying historical connection, to examine every question from the standpoint of its development, to examine what it has become today.

The state has not always existed. There was a time where there was no state. It appears wherever and whenever a division of society into classes appears, whenever exploiters and exploited appear.

Before the first form of exploitation arose, the first form of division into classes — slave-owners and slaves — there existed the patriarchal family, or, as it is sometimes called, the *clan* family. Fairly definite traces of these primitive times have survived in the life of many primitive peoples; and if you take any work whatsoever on primitive civilisation you will always come across more or less definite descriptions indications and recollections of the fact that there was a time, more or less similar to primitive communism, when the division of society into slave-owners and slaves did not exist. And in those times there was no state, no special apparatus for the systematic application of force and the subjugation of people by force. It is such an apparatus that is called the state.

In primitive society, when people lived in small family groups and were still at the lowest stages of development, in a condition approximating to savagery — an epoch from which modern, civilised human society is separated by several thousand years —

there were yet no signs of the existence of a state. We find the predominance of custom, authority, respect, the power enjoyed by the elders of the clan; we find this power sometimes accorded to women — the position of women then was not like the downtrodden and oppressed condition of women today — but nowhere do we find a special *category* of people set apart to rule others and who, for the sake and purpose of rule, systematically and permanently have at their disposal a certain apparatus of coercion, an apparatus of violence, such as is represented at the present time, as you all realise, by armed contingents of troops, prisons and other means of subjugating the will of others by force — all that which constitutes the essence of the state.

If we get away from what are known as religious teachings, from the subtleties, philosophical arguments and various opinions advanced by bourgeois scholars, if we get away from these and try to get at the real core of the matter, we shall find that the state really does amount to such an apparatus of rule which stands outside society as a whole. When there appears such a special group of men occupied solely with government, and who in order to rule need a special apparatus of coercion to subjugate the will of others by force — prisons, special contingents of men, armies, etc. — then there appears the state.

But there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, the community itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan or by women — who in those times not only frequently enjoyed a status equal to that of men, but

not infrequently enjoyed an even higher status — and when there was no special category of persons who were specialists in ruling. History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people arose wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of which were permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, where some people exploited others.

And this division of society into classes must always be clearly borne in mind as a fundamental fact of history. The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, a regularity and consistency; so that at first we had a society without classes — the original patriarchal, primitive society, in which there were no aristocrats; then we had a society based on slavery — a slave-owning society. The whole of modern, civilised Europe has passed through this stage — slavery ruled supreme two thousand years ago. The vast majority of peoples of the other parts of the world also passed through this stage. Traces of slavery survive to this day among the less developed peoples; you will find the institution of slavery in Africa, for example, at the present time. The division into slave-owners and slaves was the first important class division. The former group not only owned all the means of production — the land and the implements, however poor and primitive they may have been in those times — but also owned people. This group was known as slave-owners, while those who laboured and supplied labour for others were known as slaves.



The state is a machine for class struggle

# When the poor feel guilty

## Spike Lee and black women

### DISCUSSION

By Christopher Barnes



Kept down by religion and guilt

### Cinema

Belinda Weaver reviews *The Ox*

**S**ET IN NORTHERN Sweden in the 1860s and 70s, *The Ox* is the story of a starving peasant, Helge. He kills his neighbour's ox to feed his wife, Elfrida, and baby daughter, Anna, during a hard winter, and suffers terribly for his "crime".

This is a sad film, but it's beautifully shot, and well worth seeing.

The late 1860s were harsh years on the land in Sweden, with the crops failing for several years running. For a landless peasant like Helge, there was no work, and thus no food. Many Swedes emigrated to America, hoping for a better life, though the film gives us a hint that not all found it.

The film is about the miseries of poverty, and the anguish of guilt. Helge and Elfrida eat the ox's meat, but they're terrified of discovery, and in their hearts, they feel like sinners.

Though it was a desperate move, killing the ox was not a lasting solution. Next winter, they're starving again.

But that's not the worst thing. Helge eventually confesses his crime to his pastor, who persuades him to turn himself in. The judge's sentence — there is no jury — is unbelievably harsh: a flogging, and penal servitude for life, with hard labour.

Crimes against property were punished extremely severely then; English peasants were hanged or transported to penal colonies for stealing food.

Helge's "crime" is of course no crime at all; he wanted his family

to survive. Yet his religion told him he was a sinner, and he believed it. He felt he deserved to be punished. That is the real crime.

The film tries to be fair to the pastor. Compared to some, he is fairly enlightened. Fond of Helge, and appalled at his terrible sentence, he gets up a petition to have the sentence reduced. He even persuades Svenning, the neighbour whose ox Helge killed, to give up his resentment and sign.

Yet he never absolves Helge of guilt. He understands why Helge killed the ox, but he condemns him all the same. Though not short of food himself, he refuses to see Helge's desperation. There's no helping hand for Helge's family in the bad times — not from the pastor, not from anyone. There is only condemnation when they "fall".

More intolerable than the pastor

is Helge's neighbour and sometime employer, Svenning. Svenning is eaten up with hatred of Helge. In a burst of self-righteousness, he tells the pastor he looked on Helge as a son, yet he did almost nothing for him. His wife is the same. When she sees Elfrida grubbing in the garbage for scraps of food, she's appalled at how low the proud Elfrida has fallen. She's not appalled at her own hard heart.

It's like the Tory Party today. There is plenty of advice about how to act, plenty of high standards set by people who never have to worry about food or heat or work, yet there is only bitter condemnation for those who fail. They're punished, as Helge and Elfrida are punished.

The film has many wrenching scenes — of Helge in the rank hell-hole of a prison wondering what his growing daughter is like, of Elfrida in a cheerless hut trying to feed her fretful, hungry baby on gruel made of bark.

If religion seems the main enemy here, rather than society itself, it's because religion is the only real contact Helge and Elfrida have with the wider world. Society is behind all that; religion is one of the pillars that props it up.

We can be thankful that religion's hold on people is less strong today, yet desperate acts like Helge's are still seen as crimes. Stealing food to survive is no more condoned now than it was then, though sentences are lighter.

With Major's "condemn more, understand less", we're moving back towards the cruelty of Helge and Elfrida's world, a world where victims are blamed, where the poor go under, and where a father who tries to save his child from starvation never gets the chance to see her grow up.

### Periscope

Paddy Dollard looks ahead to *Assignment — Blood on the Icon* (BBC2, 27 April, 7.45pm)

**W**HEN THE SPANISH conquerors reached what is now Peru early in the 16th century they found a strange Inca civilisation there.

Grown up parallel to and separate from the civilisations of Asia and Europe, it was, when the Spaniards came, at roughly the stage of development Ancient Egypt had reached three or four thousand years before Christ. Crossing the Atlantic Ocean, the Spaniards had also travelled back in time.

The Incas had a primitive state 'socialism', with great state granaries to feed the servile people and a tremendous system of roads to knit together the empire (which in fact was much larger than Peru is now) and allow the nobles and priests to administer its affairs. They had great cities like Cuzco but they did not have the wheel, or writing, or the horse. Tools were stone and their metallurgy was in its infancy, confined to gold for ornamentation and ceremonial vessels. They were still essentially a "New Stone Age"

civilisation.

As the Spaniards pillaged, robbed and enslaved those they conquered, the great golden treasures of Inca art were melted down for their value as crude metal.

The capitalist west's plundering of the artistic treasures of the former USSR is reminiscent of nothing so much as that terrible plundering that took place in South America nearly 500 years ago.

Protected not by the sea but by great physical and other sorts of walls set up by the bureaucratic rulers, the parallel Stalinist 'civilisation' too was strange, different and backward compared to that of capitalist Europe.

Now the walls have collapsed and the rulers of the more backward civilisation are at the mercy of more powerful predators.

The Stalinist system preserved the artistic treasures of the centuries of Russian Christian civilisation in museums and storehouses. They are in great demand in the west, where some art is a vehicle for investment and for financial speculation and worth far more than its weight in gold.

So native Russian gangsters rob and pillage state art collections in Russia and export their plunder to Western collectors, men with the morals of Pizarro and his conquistadors.

# The most thrilling year of my life

The excerpt below is from the autobiography of the South African Communist Party leader Eddie Roux, and it describes how he produced the CP's paper in 1930.

Although the CP was, by then, heavily corrupted by Stalinism, its members — and its leaders, like Roux — were revolutionaries. The idealistic spirit which still existed in the CPs then was stronger in South Africa because the CP was the only party fighting for freedom in a hideously racist society.

Roux's account conveys something of the centrality, for a genuine revolutionary, of the task of getting our ideas into print and across to the working class — and of the determination to beat down obstacles and difficulties which differentiates the revolutionary activists from the mere well-wisher or sympathiser.

I WROTE TO Bunting and suggested that I should undertake the production of the Party newspaper in Cape Town. I had found a coloured print-

er who was prepared to do the actual printing, the machining, of the paper at a reasonable figure, if I could bring him the forms on galleys ready made up in pages. I proposed to learn type-setting and to buy the necessary type.

The Party rented premises in Hanover Street, the main thoroughfare of District Six, Cape Town's Coloured quarter. There were two rooms on the top floor of a two-storey building, a larger one which became the office and a meeting place of the Party branch and a small one which became known as my bed-sitting room. Here I had my bed and my racks of type and other gear.

We called the paper by its Xhosa title, *Umsebenzi*, which means "the worker". It was very small, only a single sheet of four pages. About half was in English, the rest in various Bantu languages, chiefly Xhosa and Sotho, with some Zulu and Tswana as well. I had studied Xhosa-Zulu and had little difficulty in setting in these languages. Sotho-Tswana have always been a mystery to me, but by much practice I became quite good at spelling the words, though often I did not know what they meant.

I always look back on 1930 as one of the most thrilling years of my life. Never had I worked so hard but never was the work more rewarding. My weekly routine was as follows.

From Sunday night to

Thursday morning I was occupied chiefly in setting. I knew I had to get a certain amount done every day if the galleys were to reach the printer on time. I often worked at night until I was completely exhausted and then flopped on my bed and slept at once. In the morning I collected mail from our post office box in the city, five minutes walk from Hanover, did the necessary secretarial work and went back to setting. I never did any cooking but ate my meals, of cheese, grapes, peaches, milk, mostly out of paper bags while I sat on the bed.

*"Never had I worked so hard but never was the work more rewarding."*

On Thursday morning I carried the completed galleys to the printer and in the afternoon collected the printed papers. Bulk parcels had to be made up and posted before 6pm and to catch the evening mail to Johannesburg, Durban and the other big centres. Failure to get them off in time would mean disappointment and reprimands from the north, for the papers had to arrive

there by Saturday to be sold over the weekend. The feeling of relief that I had on Thursday when I had carried the last set of parcels into the post office is impossible to describe. I then had my weekly bath in the public wash-house in Hanover Street, and having thus got rid of sweat and printer's ink, changed into clean clothes and went to the Gools for supper and to talk about things other than printing and politics.

On Friday evening came the weekly branch meeting combined with the wrapping and dispatch of individual copies to subscribers. Comrade Max and others stayed on after the meeting to discuss and to start setting once more.

On Saturday morning I spent a couple of hours selling the paper outside Cape Town station. On Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning there were often Congress meetings on the Parade where again I sold the paper. Saturday evening I usually allowed myself off unless there was a special meeting at Ndabene or elsewhere. On Sunday I was free, free to climb Table Mountain, free to go to Clifton to swim and meet my friends. The Gools kept open house at their bungalow at Clifton. Life was strenuous but there were opportunities for relaxation, for the companionship of girls and young men, even for making love. I was no anchorite.



## What's wrong with Socialist Worker

By Paul Foot

### PLATFORM

Paul Foot's departure from the *Daily Mirror* highlights once again the lack of democracy in the mass circulation press.

Disagreement in the papers of these papers is confined within narrow limits. The left rarely gets a chance to put its views: often the mass circulation press is the organ of its millionaire owner's narrow viewpoint, and even — in Robert Maxwell's *Mirror*, for example — of his eccentricities.

Unfortunately, the left press tends to be the mirror image of the bourgeois press: if anything, more narrow and less tolerant. Intra-left debate is a scarce commodity. *SW* tries to be different, allowing free debate. At the other extreme has been *Socialist Worker*.

Even when the SWP, which publishes it, is experiencing convulsions, those who sell and finance *Socialist Worker* have no right to space in 'their' paper. It is, in practice, the organ of a tiny oligarchy. Paul Foot is part of that oligarchy.

Recently, he used his privilege as a prince of the SWP to publish what is — and may be intended as — an oblique criticism of this state of affairs. No doubt he feels the absurdity of demanding for the millionaire's press a freedom utterly lacking in *SW*. But will Foot try to do anything about it?

In the interest of promoting discussion on this vital question for the left, we print his comments.

**“WHEN I STARTED** work as a journalist 32 years ago it was possible to imagine some areas where my socialist ideas would be published in the mass media in some form. Now I am not so sure.

*The control of the British media has always been in the hands of five or six men, but in the past they have deferred to some semblance of variety and democracy. Now they seem united in their desire to silence every whisper of dissent.* [Foot's emphasis]

One conclusion for socialists is to hold our heads in despair. Another is more positive: to proclaim the case for socialist papers openly declaring their socialist ideas.

Such papers by definition cannot circulate in the same market as the capitalist papers. They cannot depend on the same support from capitalist advertisers and distributors. Their economics and their circulation depend on the sacrifice and time of socialists themselves.

This is not just flag waving for *Socialist Worker*. The uniformity of the capitalist press should not provide anyone with an excuse to make our socialist papers more sectarian and hysterical.

On the contrary. The more uniform the capitalist papers become, the more socialist editors should ensure their papers are open, democratic and varied.

But the developments in the capitalist press, including the union busting and censorship at the *Mirror* which led to my departure, make a strong case even stronger. We need socialist newspapers like never before.”

## Alliance for Workers' Liberty public meetings

### Thurs 22 April

**"Railworkers — how to fight back"**

Leeds AWL meeting. 7.30, Adelphi pub. An RMT member discusses the issues.

### Weds 28 April

**"Youth, crime and the Tories"**

Sheffield Youth Fightback meeting. 7.30, Mount Pleasant Community Centre.

**"The fight for women's liberation"**

Lancaster University AWL meeting. 2.00, Students Union.

### Weds 5 May

**"The politics of education"**

London AWL forum. 7.30, Lambeth Town Hall (Brixton tube).

### Thurs 6 May

**"Crisis in South Africa"**

Sheffield AWL meeting. 7.30, SCCAU, West Street.

### Pro-choice

### Sun 25 April

**"Cabaret for choice"**  
A benefit for NAC.

7.30, Hackney Empire, East London.

### Students

### Thurs 13 May

**Lobby of Parliament Against Voluntary Membership**

12 noon. Organised by Save Our Students Unions Campaign. Details: Elaine Jones, 071-272 8900.

### Miners

### Thurs 22 April

**London Miners'**

### Support Network meeting

7.30, London Welsh Centre, 157 Gray's Inn Road, WC1.

### Sat 1 May

**NUM benefit show**  
8.00, Hackney Empire, East London.

### Anti-racist

### Sat 12 June

**March against racist murders**

11.30, Thornton Heath Recreation Ground. Details: ARA, 071-278 6869.

# Rail: widen the dispute, escalate the action

By a railworker

**I**N 1989 ASLEF joined the RMT's strikes over pay and negotiating rights belatedly and then settled early on part of the argument.

The effect was, at first, to encourage the RMT

activists and later to make them feel more isolated.

ASLEF leader Derrick Fullick has now repeated the exercise.

Apart from that, the railworkers' dispute is in danger of stagnating. Two one day strikes, a fortnight apart, are not going to

frighten the government and make them back down from the drive to railway privatisation which is at the root of the attacks we face.

It was right to start the dispute off with one day strikes. The movement has been hit hard over recent years and the idea of fight-

ing back needs time to take root.

But there is a danger of the strategy moving at too slow a pace.

We need to widen the dispute.

The RMT, ASLEF and TSSA have all submitted pay claims which would normally be settled by early April. These dates have passed. We know that we are up against the government's 1.5% public sector pay limit and this will involve a pay cut in real terms because of inflation. We need to break that limit.

All the rail unions should now prepare ballots for all-out action on pay. BR will not be allowed to offer

enough to maintain the living standards of the many low paid workers on the railways.

The question of pay can unite all railworkers and

link up with other public sector workers.

This is the most clear and immediate issue to fight on right now.

The success of the action

## Don't trust BR's promises!

Train drivers' union ASLEF leader Derrick Fullick is doing his Neville Chamberlain impersonation again: "I have in my hands a piece of paper... which will guarantee peace in our time!"

Fullick appears to have 'extracted' a piece of paper from BR management in which they will promise to abide by the PT&R (Promotion, transfer and redundan-

cy) agreement. This should come as no surprise. Of course, BR will say there will be no 'compulsory' redundancies. They will continue to say this until they announce them.

It is vital that RMT keeps up the strike action and pulls the other rail unions, TSSA and ASLEF, into united all out action over pay.

## Telecom workers fight back against compulsory weekend working

By an NCU member

**A**N AD-HOC meeting of NCU branches on Saturday 17 April called for a co-ordinated campaign against management proposals on flexible working hours and compulsory weekend shifts. Over 80 branches sponsored the meeting.

Delegates from branches all over the country reported that field staff (who would be working the new patterns) are angry at management proposals and looking to their union to fight against the shifts being brought in.

No-one can see any advantage to us in the current proposals, and ordinary members and activists alike have been amazed that the National Executive are negotiating with BT at all.

At the meeting there was scepticism over the possibility of the shorter working week talks (held parallel with those

on attendance patterns) coming to anything. Delegates had two main reservations. The shorter working week is only offered to staff in one division. The union's outstanding claim for a shorter working week was on the basis of higher productivity from new technology, not as a bargaining chip for more flexibility for management's advantage! Delegates resolved to demand shorter hours for all BT workers with no strings.

Although many NCU members are angry with management this anger could be frittered away unless there is co-ordination across the union and pressure is put on the NEC to say no to BT's proposals. The delegate from Swansea stressed the fact that unity is vital if we are going to threaten industrial action if the proposals are imposed. Instead of randomly encouraging unsupported militancy we should work for branches putting pressure on the leadership and co-ordinating rank and file activity. We can organise without the NEC but when it comes down to it, we must insist that the leadership leads.

Other delegates talked of the hidden agenda behind the changes in the Personal Comms. Division. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that PC is the division most easily franchised off. Also, the home based flexible working which is management's aim is one way of releasing buildings owned by BT to be sold off. The hidden agenda is sub-contracting

and asset stripping.

In the near future we must build on the members' feelings against the proposals and provide them with an opportunity to assert their rights to the decent conditions of work won over the years. There is now widespread support for a special one-day debate on attendance patterns at NCU annual conference.

## Disaster at Leyland-DAF

**T**HINGS ARE going from bad to worse at Leyland-DAF. Workers in Birmingham have voted to cut their own wages by 5% or £12.50 per week in order to save their jobs.

This Leyland-DAF vote — which comes on top of the recent vote for pay cuts at Sheffield Council — provides a very dangerous example to other trade unionists.

This strategy will not save jobs in the long run because it ties workers very directly to the fate of 'their' employer, and if management say more jobs cuts are

needed to 'save' the company then the union will be in a very difficult position to oppose this, having already accepted the basic premise of 'saving' jobs by making the company more profitable.

The alternative is to argue for occupations and nationalisation under workers' control. For this option to have any chance of gaining broad support we need the leaders of the TUC and the Labour Party to lead a broad campaign of mass action to drive the Tory government out of office.

## No Nazis in Hounslow

**O**NE HUNDRED people attended a meeting on Saturday 17 April to protest against a fascist attack on a Hounslow anti-racist meeting.

A West London Alliance Against Racism and Fascism meeting was attacked by ten British National Party thugs on 3 April. Organisers fought back and some of the Nazis were arrested by police.

Four BNPs have been charged under the Public Order Act.

This attack follows a similar incident at an Anti-

Apartheid meeting in Blackburn and an attack on an anarchist bookshop in Whitechapel, east London.

There is a picket outside the court when the fascists are due to appear:

9.30 on Monday 26 April Feltham Magistrates Court, Hanworth Road, Feltham.

More information from the Southall Monitoring Group, 081-843 2333.

## Solidarity and liberation

**T**HE LESBIAN and Gay Rights Coalition conference is on 15 May at Kennington Workshops, Braganza Street, London SE17. Discussions at the conference will include

Queer Politics, Lesbian and Gay Families, HIV and AIDS, trade unions and the Labour Party. More details from: LGRC, PO Box 306, London N5.

## Railworkers need rank and file links

**T**HE WAY the ASLEF and RMT leaders appear to have de-railed the united miners' and railworkers' fight against job losses shows very clearly the need for a railworkers' rank and file movement.

A step towards creating such a movement will take place this weekend.

We urge all railwork-

ers to attend the meeting called by RMT activists to form a campaign for a democratic and fighting union.

Open meeting for railworkers

Campaign for a Democratic and Fighting Union

12 noon, Saturday 24

April

Mechanics Institute, Manchester

## CPSA: retreat on Market Testing

**T**HE DSHSS Section Executive of the low-paid civil service union CPSA have voted down proposals to organise strike action to force the government to abandon its plans to contract out civil service jobs to private profiteers.

Supporters of the ridiculously mis-named *Militant* newspaper and their allies opted instead to press only for certain 'safeguards'.

They argued that any demands for industrial action had to be tailored to fit in with the views of the ultra-right 'Moderate' faction that rule the CPSA. They were not prepared to even consider the possibility of the section acting on its own

in defiance of the national leadership but in defence of the members.

**M**ILITANT supporter Phil Marston has called on the officers of all CPSA branches who have backed left-wing Presidential candidate Mark Serwotka to defy working-class democracy and hold emergency branch executive meetings to overturn the decision of members meetings. Marston's circular, put out in the name of the CPSA Broad Left, shows how desperate the opponents of Mark's stand are becoming. They are prepared to advocate that elected branch officers disregard the majority views of their own members.

## The Industrial Front

Busworkers in Somerset have broken through the 1.5% pay norm.

Workers in Southern National Bus Company were offered just 1%, but after a 6 to 1 vote for action management increased the offer to 5.5%

William Waldegrave, who is in charge of extending contracting out into the civil service, is proposing new legislation which will remove any existing legal obstacles to the government's privatisation programme.

600 Edinburgh postal workers walked out earlier this month in protest at the suspension of one Dunfermline postal worker. This is the latest in a series of battles over management's attempts to impose fixed duties.

The print union GPMU have started an overtime ban at 40 different workplaces up and

down the country. They are demanding £8 per week increase in basic pay. There are already signs of cracks on the employers' side. It is now vital to escalate the action.

There is to be no national ballot on action to stop compulsory redundancies at Rolls Royce. Instead, each plant is to be left on its own. Senior conveners and national union officials seem to think that no co-ordinated fightback is needed.

Walkouts followed by a 90% vote for all-out official action have forced management at ship repairers A and P Appledore to back down from plans to impose new contracts.

GPT stewards are organising a £1 a week levy so as to back action on their 5.9% pay claim.

Orkney ferry crews are in dispute over a 1.5% wage offer. They have held a one-day strike and are now running the ferry service but refusing to collect

## Solidarity conference postponed

The miners' solidarity conference planned for Saturday 24 April has been postponed. It is hoped to call the event within the next six weeks. For information phone 081 985 1905

## Correction

Sorry: Emma Parsons' report, last week, on the Labour Party women's conference, got the result of one vote wrong. Women-only shortlists for parliamentary selections were carried, not defeated, on a card vote.

# SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

## Wallasey fights Labour's shutdown

By Dale Street

**L**AST WEEKEND'S Campaign Network conference of Labour leftists heard Gail Cameron of Wallasey Constituency Labour Party describe how and why the CLP was shut down by Labour's National Executive at its meeting on 31 March.

Copies of a dossier written by the CLP officers for the National Executive were also circulated at the conference. The dossier explains:

"We faced a similar attack in 1991 when Frank Field was de-selected as the MP for [the neighbouring constituency of] Birkenhead. He produced what has become known as the 'Dirty Dossier' because of its mud-slinging and innuendo. Wallasey CLP was investigated and given a clean bill of health.

Now some of the people who contributed to the Field dossier are trying the same tactic again, and this time the National Executive has reacted in a totally undemocratic manner.

We hope that the National Executive will in future at least give CLPs a chance to respond to complaints and allegations before summarily closing them down. The principle of guilty until proved innocent should not be the way the Labour Party operates".

The dossier then goes through the eight charges made against Wallasey CLP, all piffling and none accurate. It concludes:

"We believe that Wallasey CLP was suspended in order to ease the selection process for the sitting MP [Angela Eagle], who was imposed on us by a bogus selection ballot conducted in contradiction of the Labour Party Rules.

Wallasey Labour Party has consistently argued against the direction the Labour Party has taken over recent years, and we believe we are being attacked for daring to voice our opinions. We are for a Labour Party that represents the working class and is for a socialist change in society. We are not for the leadership's attempt to out-Tory the Tories. We are for keeping a close link between the Labour Party and Trade Unions".

CLPs and trade unions should pass resolutions of protest, and send them to the National Executive (at 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT), with copies to Wallasey CLP. The Wallasey CLP secretary, from whom copies of the dossier can be got, is Lol Duffy, 11 Egremont Promenade, Merseyside L44 8BG.



Solidarity: miners' leader Arthur Scargill joins a railworkers' picket line at King's Cross, London. Photo: John Harris.

# Scargill says join the strikes!

### Miners' President Arthur Scargill has made this appeal for solidarity

**T**HIS IS NOT A FIGHT which is confined to the National Union of Mineworkers. Anyone who believes that we are fighting an isolated struggle does not understand the nature of the system under which we live.

We live under a government that claims the right to rule over us and ruin our lives — to create more unemployment than the 4.5 million who are already on the dole.

And yet we live under a government that only won 47% of the total votes cast.

Well, if you are listening, Mr Major, the people today in the coal industry and the rail industry are on strike with a ballot of 60%, not 47%.

I applaud the fact that this action is part of a European-wide day of action on jobs called by the European TUC. But the TUC leadership have booked a coach and gone to Strasbourg. I'm not denigrating the rally in Strasbourg, but I tell you this, and I tell the leaders of the General Council: "You would be better off staying in Britain and organising other unions to join this day of strike action than going off to Strasbourg".

If there was any justice or fairness in our society, legal action would have been taken against Heseltine and Major for the misap-

ropriation of public funds.

Why is it they are not buying the cheapest available fuel from deep-mined coal and giving it to all our consumers?

Don't tell me there isn't a market for coal!

There are pensioners who in the twilight of their lives are dying to have heat and coal given away free so as to ensure we utilise our national assets for the good of the people.

Today's day of action is the first in a series which will have as their objective keeping open the 31 pits threatened with closure and saving 100,000 jobs.

On Monday I listened intently when Simon Hughes, the Liberal-Democrat, called on people to join the 24 hour strike on Friday 2 April.

I made an appeal then and I will repeat it now, an appeal to the TUC and Labour Party leadership. Stop waffling on this issue. The next time Heseltine asks you about the strike, tell him you support it and you're calling on other people to join it.

If we lose this fight, over 100,000 people will join the dole queue.

We've seen 120,000 jobs disappear in the mining industry. I don't want people to keep on saying 'you got it right'. I want people to see that they have got to join us.

This is not the end of the campaign, it is the beginning of the campaign.

Their blind ideological hatred of the min-

ing industry and the NUM could still spell the end of this Tory government.

Today we've seen the NUM and RMT in disciplined strike action.

I ask every union in Britain to join with us to protect your jobs, education, health and social services.

You will be beginning the campaign which will restore democracy to this country and pave the way for the fall of this rotten, corrupt Tory government.

Arthur Scargill was speaking in Barnsley on the 2 April.

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