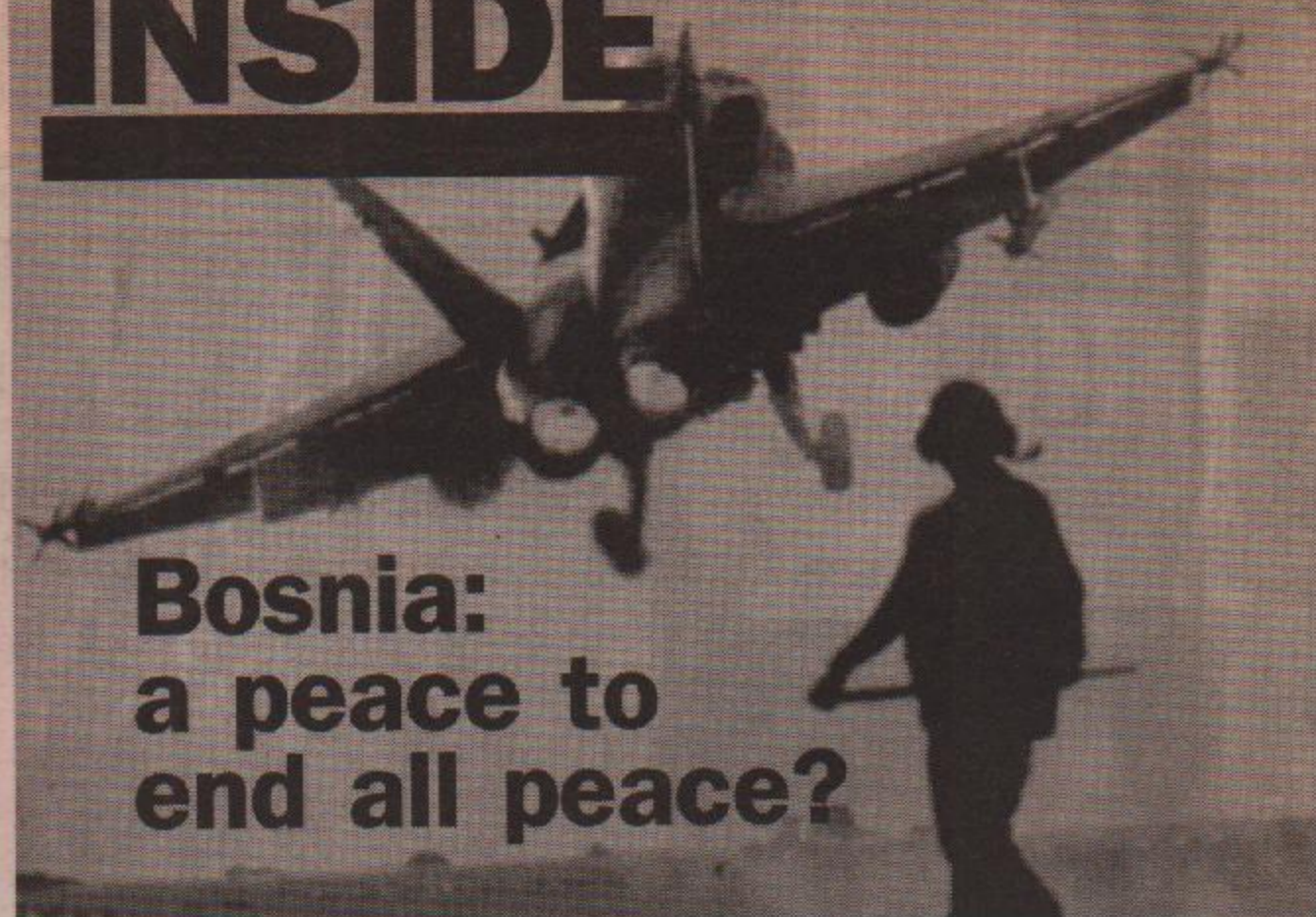


Workers power

For Internationalism, Socialism and Workers' Revolution

INSIDE



**Bosnia:
a peace to
end all peace?**

No 193 OCTOBER 1995 ★ Price 50p

Rich demand tax cuts

Tory war on welfare state



**AS MILLIONS
QUEUE FOR
DOLE TORIES
GIVE TAX
HANDOUTS TO
THE RICH**

When greed comes before need, nothing is sacred. The Tories are desperate to win back votes by cutting taxes for the middle classes, and to save money for their rich millionaire backers. Their answer is to wage warfare on welfare. Why won't Tony Blair's New Labour oppose the cuts and promise to defend the welfare state? Why is Blair joining in the Tory crusade of tax cuts for the rich? • Turn to page 3

Schools, hospitals, benefits slashed but Blair won't fight the cuts!

Why the welfare state is up for grabs - page 3



Build a national anti-racist movement!

BRIAN DOUGLAS was murdered by police. His killers have not even been suspended from duty. Joy Gardner was murdered by police. Her killers walked free after a courtroom farce. Stephen Lawrence was murdered by racists. Youths accused of killing him were only brought to trial after an historic private prosecution by the family. Police killed black youth Mark Harris, then systematically harassed his family who campaigned for justice.

Winston Silcott was cleared of the murder of PC Blakelock in the Tottenham uprising of 1985. But he remains in jail for another crime he did not commit. Oliver Campbell was framed and jailed by racist police.

Hundreds of asylum seekers live a life of misery behind the barbed wire of detention camps like Harmondsworth and Campsfield.

This is the racist justice system. Individually, its victims face an uphill fight against it. Often the victim's case goes unnoticed by the media for years. The progressive lawyers who specialise in seeking justice for victims of racism are not brought in until too late. Families often have to start from scratch, learning the basic lessons about who to contact and how to organise through painful experience.

That is why we need a national campaign against the racist justice system and the racist state.

The organisers of the National Justice Demo on 7 October, which include many of the family campaigns, have taken the first steps in organising such a movement.

A national anti-racist movement will have to do two things. It must build and centralise the resources needed to fight the racist justice system from within—through lawyers, advice centres, fighting funds and effective publicity. And it has to mobilise active anti-racists and the organised labour movement in a political struggle against the racist system.

Often the individual campaigns against

racism and injustice draw their strength from local communities. But the community cannot be kept mobilised forever. Sometimes—rarely—a case is won. What do the activists do then? More often it disappears into a legal swamp for years, with only a handful of activists keeping the flame of hope alive. We have to focus the strength of local communities around a common goal. For that we need a national movement.

For such a movement, a focus on the organised working class will be essential. It is the unions and labour movement that have the power of millions behind them to carry out a real and lasting change.

Of course, many have said this before,

like the leaders of the Anti-Racist Alliance and its successor, the National Assembly Against Racism. Both these organisations have concentrated on building a talking shop where MPs and trade union leaders can parade their anti-racist credentials. Where are such people when it matters; when we are battling the police at Welling, or organising demos in the teeth of police opposition? Most often nowhere to be seen, or even, as with ARA's condemnation of the march against the BNP's Welling headquarters—on the other side!

We don't need more talking shops. But we do need to force the Labour and trade union leaders to fight.

That means forcing them to fight now

Satpal Ram

Demonstrate for Satpal

SATPAL RAM has done nine years of a life sentence. His "crime" was to defend himself against a racist attack. His attacker, who refused medical treatment, subsequently died.

The Free Satpal Campaign has forced Michael Howard to do a U-turn, and on 20 October Satpal's case will be heard at the Court of Appeal.

The campaign, which has the backing of many Birmingham labour movement organisations, national unions and anti-racist groups, is calling for a demonstration outside the Court of Appeal when Satpal's case begins.

Campaigners claim that at Satpal's original trial the defence barrister was negligent in failing to advise a plea of self-defence. Bengali translators were not provided, which meant that the full facts of the case were never heard in court.

Throughout his imprisonment Satpal Ram has suffered attacks and abuse from

prison officers and spent periods in solitary confinement.

On 13 September, as Satpal prepared to launch his Appeal, he was once again given 16 days' solitary at York's Full Sutton jail. He was illegally denied food, exercise and a mattress to sleep on, and refused access to his own legal papers.

- Send messages of support to Satpal Ram (Quote E94 164), HMP Full Sutton, Moor Lane, Stamford Bridge, York YO4 1PS.
- Protest by phoning the prison Governor, Mr Staples, on 01759 372 447 and faxing 01759 371 206.
- Contact the Free Satpal Campaign, 101 Villa Rd Harmondsworth, Birmingham B19 1NH. Phone: 0121-507 1618.
- Demonstrate: 10am Friday 20 October, Court of Appeal, The Strand, London.

for the release of all those framed by racist police; for the police killers of Joy Gardner and Brian Douglas to be brought to trial. It means a fight not just against Michael Howard's new "internal controls" on black people but against the whole range of racist immigration laws. It means organising self-defence of communities under attack and winning support from the whole labour movement for those who fight back.

The 7 October Demo is focused around these key demands, and every anti-racist should be organising to build for it now. The TUC's 28 October demonstration was designed as yet another empty gesture: words but no action were to be the order of the day.

But if we can build a militant mass protest on 7 October, and maintain the momentum, making the Manchester demo a big, lively protest, we can take important steps towards the kind of movement we need. There is no need to choose between these two marches—we should all be building for them both. We need to force the TUC to fight. But we also need the voices of those facing daily harassment on the streets to be heard.

The provisional date for a national meeting of anti-racist groups and campaigns, called by the organisers of 7 October, is early December. Watch this space for further details.

MARCH FOR JUSTICE

Saturday 7 October

Assemble 12.30pm Hackney Downs Park, Downs Rd, London E5. March to Stoke Newington Police Station. Further information Tel 0181-533 7111 or 0181-533 4533

UNITE AGAINST RACISM

Saturday 28 October:

Assemble 12 noon Platt Fields, Manchester. March to rally in Albert Square. Further information Tel 0171-636 4030 or 0151-298 1225

Free the Welling nine!

TWO YEARS after a demonstration against the BNP's HQ in Welling, fourteen demonstrators have been convicted of rioting. They were found guilty of defending themselves after the police attacked the march. Predictably, the demonstrators, not the police, have been sent down. Nine of those convicted have started prison sentences ranging from sixteen months to three years.

No police officers have been charged, none have even faced disciplinary action. During the trial a senior police officer freely admitted that the police assaults on the day were designed to terrify the demonstrators.

Yet the trial's judge, Rogers, said of the police officers involved:

"one or two went over the top but the vast majority of police behaved in an impeccable fashion".

Yes, they impeccably set up a trap, impeccably led thousands of demonstrators into it, impeccably charged and impeccably bashed young people's heads in.

The mastermind of police tactics on the day, Paul Condon, remains in charge of the Met and has since added to his racist credentials by targeting black youth on the streets in Operation Eagle Eye.

The most immediate task is to fight for the release of all those jailed. We demand the release of all the prisoners. The convictions must be quashed.

And as for the next time, we have to make sure that we are just as prepared as the police.

Workers Power argued prior to the Welling Unity Demo that the march would be attacked and that we had to make sure that the stewarding was well organised and prepared to defend the demonstrators.

Comrades from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), however, believed that the sheer weight of numbers would be sufficient to stop the police. They accused us of "macho posturing". They were tragically wrong. They left the march open to attack and the defendants at Maidstone Crown Court have paid the price.

We must not make the same mistake again. We need a workers' defence organisation which is properly trained and organised to defend demonstrations from police attack. Only then can we begin to challenge the police tactics, defend our right to demonstrate and carry through an effective fight to physically stop the fascists.

The ANL have called for individuals and organisations to adopt a prisoner. They are:

In HMP Elmley, Church Road, Eastchurch, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, ME12 4AY.

Karl Anacoura RN 0599
Sanjiv Karla RN 0598
Stephen Kelly RN 0318
Phil de Sousa EJ 5496

In HMP Canterbury, 46 Longport, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1PJ:

Paul Gay RN 0593
Mark Gay RN 0594
Charles Ryder RN 0595
John McFeely RN 0596
Russell Wilde RN 0597



Welling 16 October 1995



Bosnia - a peace to end all peace?

Dave Stockton details the carve up of Bosnia. Paul Morris asks why sections of the left are tailing Croatian and Serbian nationalism—pages 10/11



Land and Freedom

Ken Loach's Land and Freedom details the betrayal of the Spanish revolution. It is a film every Workers Power reader should see. Richard Brenner's guide to the parties, movements and chronology of the Spanish Civil War is on pages 8/9



Argentine workers fight Menem

Mario Gómez of the Argentine PTS (Workers for Socialism Party) explains how Argentine workers are resisting the attacks of recently re-elected President Carlos Menem—page 12

In next month's Workers Power

Full coverage of Labour Party Conference • Economy: What's going wrong with Clarke's recovery? • A to Z of Marxism: F is for Fascism • France: Towards a new May '68? • USA: The workers against the new right. Plus Letters, Reviews



Welfare state

Top of the Tory hit list

HEALTH CARE, education and social security are beyond the means of UK plc—so say the various economic experts, ex-NHS managers, Tory ministers and even, increasingly, the Labour Party.

Former director of NHS personnel, Eric Caines declared, "the NHS as a publicly funded, free-at-the-point-of-access service is, to all intents and purposes, gone forever".

A leaked memo from Gillian Shephard warned that "insufficient resources now threaten the provision of education in the state school sector, including grant maintained schools".

And from within the offices of Peter Lilley's Department of Social Security new schemes for cutting claimants' benefits are being designed every day in order to deal with spending that has gone "out of control".

Pensioners are being told that the money they have paid towards their state pension is not there. Workers made redundant through no fault of their own will be stripped of the right to unemployment benefit under the new "Job Seekers' Allowance" scheme. Patients are made to feel guilty for daring to be sick. Children struggle in overcrowded classes and schools are stripped of teachers and books.

These attacks on welfare provision are

increasingly justified in common sense "affordability" terms, with facts and figures provided by outgoing executives. Indeed, by not going as far as the most radical reports suggest, the Tories can even pretend to be defending a free NHS and state schools.

Tom Sackville, the Junior Health Minister, has already set the tone when he announced that:

"It is going to be necessary, before we start talking about rationing health care in some cases for elderly people, that we have to think about why we pay out billions in benefits to young able bodied people."

In fact, health care has always been rationed. One in six health authorities now have explicit rationing—operations and procedures that they have decided should not be available on the NHS (but are still there for those with the money to pay).

And the "billions in benefits" Sackville talks about—which makes the dole sound like a lottery win—amounts to £46.50 a week. The Tories and their advisers are quite right that the welfare state faces a severe crisis. But the crisis exists because the bosses are not prepared to pay out what is needed. They want tax cuts for the rich, paid for by making people take out private health care, sickness and pension schemes and destroying the state welfare system.

The government claims that the £41

billion it spends on the NHS is a record high. But the actual rise in the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on health is inadequate. In 1979 it was 4.58% of GDP, in 1994 it was 5.78%. This increase is not enough in the face of the real increases in need—due to an ageing population and the rising costs of some treatments.

Britain actually spends far less than most countries on health care. The vast majority of health care is still paid for through taxation and provided by the state. The NHS is recognised as one of the most efficient health care systems in the world—being relatively low cost because it is public.

Where private health care predominates even larger sums of money are wasted on administration, accounting and advertising; unnecessary treatments and operations are encouraged as a way of increasing the profits of individual doctors and the private health businesses.

The Tories' aim is not to reduce the proportion of GDP spent on health care, but to shift that spending from the public to the private sector, from a tax on profits to a way of generating greater profits for private health care companies.

What about benefits? The social security budget has increased massively under the Tories, because of the mass unemploy-

ment that Tory policies encouraged. People claim benefits because in Tory Britain mass unemployment is a fact of life. Invalidity benefit has increased because the Tories deliberately drove people to take it so as to artificially lower the unemployment figures.

Housing benefits have increased because the Tories have cut the money spent on low rent public housing enormously. It is down from 3.13% of GDP in 1979 to 0.83% in 1994. This, in a country with the second highest homelessness rate in the European Union.

The Tories' answer to the poverty trap is to cut these benefits even more—through the Job Seekers Allowance, through new invalidity rules to take this benefit away from a quarter of a million claimants and through making even more people homeless.

The debate on the future of the welfare state is a debate about how best to swindle the millions of workers who have, over the years, paid into government coffers with their taxes ten times what they actually take out in pensions, health care and so on.

It is a debate about how to destroy the welfare state in the name of what is "affordable" from the point of view of the profit margins of British capitalism. It is a debate about the Tories' impending blitz on the British working class. ■

Tax the rich!

internal market in the NHS should be abolished and all benefits must be raised to the level of the national minimum wage, guaranteeing the right of all to work or full pay.

We need not only to defend but extend the welfare state. We need a massive injection of cash into health, education and social security. Of course, this sort of welfare state, one that really meets workers' needs, would raise the question of affordability point blank. The Tories want to attack welfare to pay for tax cuts. Is our answer tax rises? Yes, but on the rich, on those who have bled the working class dry but have bloated themselves and their bank accounts.

At present it is the working class who

pay the bulk of the taxes. We pay through income tax, national insurance and indirect taxes like VAT. Indirect taxes, which are deeply unfair because they take no account of different incomes, now amount to over a third of the government's income, compared to a quarter in 1979. In the same period income tax has gone down from 34.4% of the government's income to 27%. Top rate income tax, on the very richest people, is one of the lowest in Europe at 40%.

Socialists have a simple answer. Tax the wealth and incomes of the rich. Who do we mean? The top company directors, the executives of the utilities, the landowners and property speculators, the corporations

who run the big industries. These people take home lottery wins every week. They earn millions in a year. Their wealth exists because our work creates their profits.

But this, while it could easily fund the health service, social security and education to a much greater level than we have ever seen, would not be sustainable under capitalism.

The welfare state is a drain on profits. In times of economic crisis as the bosses seek ways to maximise profitability they will inevitably try and cut back on welfare. To really defend the welfare state means attacking capitalism, not just by taxing profits but destroying the profit system itself. ■

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TUC 95

More shock therapy from Blair

Just as the TUC congress began, a carefully planned leak revealed Tony Blair's plans to dissolve the influence of the trade unions within the Labour Party.

The Unfinished Revolution was written by Blair adviser Philip Gould. It is remarkably frank—required reading for anyone who still doubts just how right-wing Blair really is.

It urges Labour to prepare "a political agenda that matches the Thatcher agenda of 1979". It also makes clear that the reduction of the union block vote at conference from 70% to 50% is only a first step. Blair's long term aim is "Labour as a genuine one-member, one-vote party".

Nobody should be fooled by this "democratic" phraseology. The rights of the individual members to elect their own management committees and representatives are to be ruthlessly curtailed. The real point of the proposal is entirely to remove the influence of millions of union members on the party they founded and funded.

Message

Just in case anyone thought Gould's document was simply the rantings of an unelected spin doctor, Blair rammied his message home in an interview with the Observer:

"If people seriously think that by going back to where we were 10 or 12 years ago we are going to win power, they require not leadership but therapy. We've got to smash that complacency out of the system".

It is no accident that Blair reserves such fighting language for his enemies in the working class movement: there is no talk



of "smashing" overpaid top executives, or even the Tories. The first target to be smashed was a union move to secure a national minimum wage to abolish poverty pay.

The firefighters' union, FBU, and the building workers' union, UCATT, tabled an amendment demanding that Labour introduce a minimum wage of £4.15 per hour. Disgracefully, the new general sec-

retary of the AEEU, Ken Jackson, (whose members average around £7 an hour) called for the minimum to be set at £3 an hour. Even that pittance was to be phased in over five years! Under intense pressure, the FBU and UCATT backed down. As usual the right wing were prepared to set the agenda, whilst the left caved in on the grounds of "unity".

The left in the unions needs to start

building for a fight now if we are to win a decent minimum wage for all. This is a real possibility in the coming months. Even John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, has predicted an "upsurge in militancy". He told congress on the opening day, "where there are bad employers count me among the militants."

Activists in the public sector trade unions should demand a programme of strike

action to break the Tories' wage restraint. The demand for a minimum wage of at least £4.15 an hour should be built into each and every pay claim. Claims should be brought forward to make a co-ordinated campaign possible.

Preparation

A fight now would be the best possible preparation for the spring of 1996, when the TUC is due to decide its joint claim for the minimum wage. If we can win hourly minimum wage levels of £4.15 or higher in the NHS, civil service, education and local government by next spring, then it will be harder for people like Ken Jackson to stand up and argue for £3.

But trade union militancy is not enough. A nationally-enforceable minimum wage needs legislation. Only then will the really low paid—youth, women and part time workers in non-unionised workplaces—gain something and be drawn into the workers' movement.

If penny-pinching bosses try to claw back the costs by cutting jobs and shutting down enterprises the entire labour movement should demand the nationalisation of any firm that cannot or will not pay the minimum.

Employment Service workers are already balloting for strike action against a 2.75% pay "rise". But to develop into an upsurge that can win, union activists need to learn the lessons of this year's congress debacle. We cannot rely on the left leaders to fight. We need a rank and file movement that can force our leaders to fight—and if they won't, replace them with those that will. ■

Unison election

Split squanders left's chance to organise

THE CAMPAIGN to elect a new General Secretary of Unison is underway.

Both of the left candidates for the post have received the required number of nominations to contest the election. SWP candidate Yunus Bakhsh received the nomination of 46 branches. Roger Bannister, candidate for the Campaign for a Fighting and Democratic Unison (CFDU), received 42. But the left's failure to stand a united candidate against Rodney Bickerstaffe sharply diminishes the chances of either candidate acting as a focus of opposition to the bureaucracy and using the campaign to rally the left behind a real rank and file organisation.

Why should the left challenge Bickerstaffe? He has appeared to be on the left of the trade union bureaucracy with his opposition to the ditching of Clause 4 and his argument for a minimum wage of £4.15 an hour. The Unison leadership's "left" positions on these questions stem partly from the pressure of the membership and partly from the fact that fighting Blair on Clause 4 and the minimum wage do not require Bickerstaffe and co. to organise any action now.

Bickerstaffe and the leadership have been responsible for the failure of the union to oppose the government's savage attacks on Unison members: the public sector pay freeze, opting out, compulsory competitive tendering and the government's dismal NHS pay offer. They have recently adopted a policy of allowing local strike ballots, in well organised workplaces such as Sheffield Libraries, UCLH Hospitals and the Liverpool residential workers. But on major national struggles their record is one of cowardice and ineptitude.

Such an appalling record had to be chal-

by Bill Jenkins

lenged. But as soon as the left agreed to stand they fell out and split their forces.

The Campaign for a Fighting and Democratic Unison (CFDU—a coalition of activists led by Militant Labour) and Fightback (the SWP's trade union front organisation in Unison), organise the overwhelming majority of the left in Unison.

Sectarians

They are similar in size, have virtually indistinguishable politics, and are both led by sectarians who do not want the left to unite and fight in one organisation.

At the time the SWP/Fightback claimed they could not unite with CFDU because they were in favour of a delegate-based rank and file organisation.

The CFDU claimed unity was impossible because they "could not work with Fightback".

The real weight of these arguments can be measured by the fact that they have been quietly dropped by both organisations in the election campaign.

Now rank and file militants are faced with a bewildering choice of two left candidates. Leaders of the Newcastle branch, who had been prominent in the campaign to unite the left, decided that if the left could not agree on a united candidate then they would support neither. Workers Power supporters preferred not to give up the fight and decided that in spite of our reservations we would have to support Roger Bannister, the candidate of the CFDU.

Roger Bannister does not have a great record as a Unison militant. Throughout



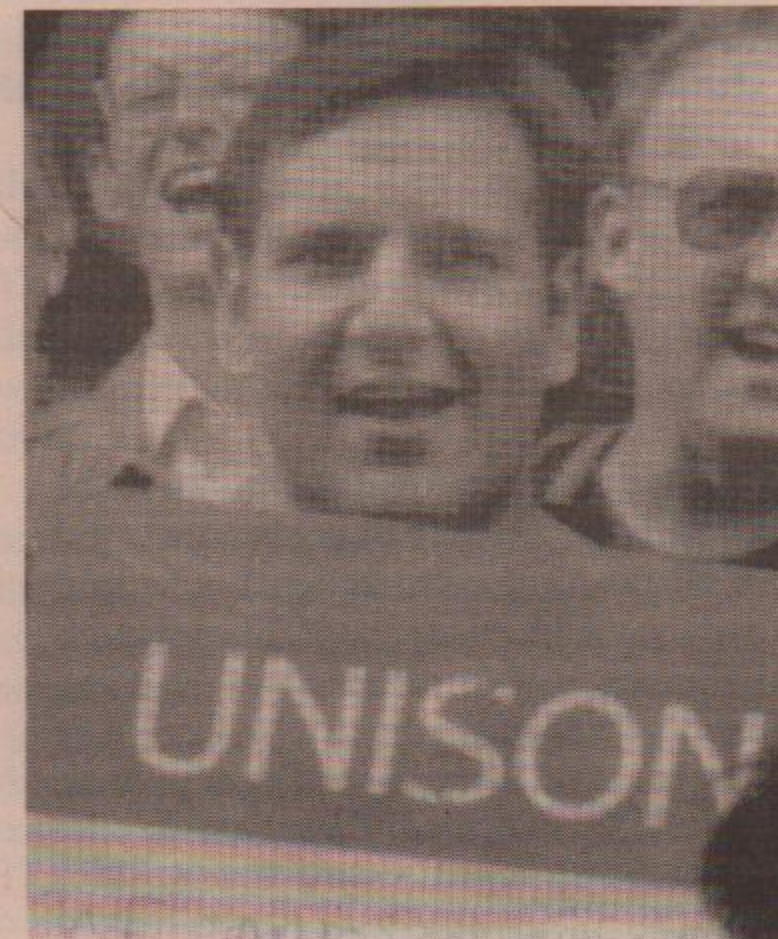
Roger Bannister

his period on the NEC Bannister took no real initiative to organise the rank and file and failed to effectively distinguish himself from the bureaucracy. He obeyed the NEC's unconstitutional ban on the right of NEC members to oppose the leadership from the conference floor.

Yunus Bakhsh on the other hand was prominent in fighting the bureaucracy's sell out of the nurses pay claim, and has excellent credentials as a trade union militant.

If the choice of candidate was based simply on the personal qualities and past conduct of the two we would have supported Yunus, as Workers Power delegates and observers made clear at Unison conference. But it is not.

There have been too many examples of militants elected without a programme and an organisation to hold them to account, who have sold out their principles, unable



Yunus Bakhsh

to cope with the heavy burden of bureaucratic control and free lunches.

For all of his individual sincerity Yunus is standing on a minimal platform. He and his organisation are actively opposed to the building of a rank and file organisation.

Candidate

At conference when they decided to stand Yunus the SWP made it clear he was standing as their candidate, and not as that of their rank and file front Fightback. We do not oppose or criticise Yunus for standing as an SWP candidate. But his campaign literature does not make this clear. It states that he is a member of the SWP but does not explain their relationship to his campaign. It is misleading. Any Unison member could rightly ask: if Yunus is unclear on the basis of his campaign, beyond the most minimal call for the need to fight,

how can he be clear on anything else?

Bannister has accepted the CFDU programme, limited as it is, and is using the campaign to promote the rank and file organisation of the left in Unison.

His platform embodies all of the positive elements of Yunus's campaign but has also taken up elements of the criticism made of him principally by Workers Power. His campaign clearly links the need to fight with the rank and file organisation needed to win that fight.

SWP members in Unison have accused Workers Power of "being in a united front with the left of the bureaucracy" by backing Bannister. But the SWP does not reject united fronts with the left of the bureaucracy in the individual strikes it has helped organise, such as Sefton, Sheffield and UCLH. The point is, that a united front with any bureaucrat is best carried out with an organisation that can hold them to account. That kind of organisation—the rank and file movement—is what the SWP claim is impossible or unnecessary.

The primary purpose of any election campaign must be to rally the rank and file to resist the bureaucracy and fight for its own organisation. Bannister's campaign gives us the opportunity to do that. Yunus's campaign is limited to voting in the election and for those that want more—join the SWP. It is not a way forward for the mass of our members.

We urge all Unison members to vote Roger Bannister for General Secretary, and to use the election campaign to fight for a rank and file organisation which can build the fighting organisation we really need to win the battles of the future and to confront the hold of the bureaucracy which is threatening to strangle our union. ■

Liverpool

Social workers fight Labour Council

NEARLY THREE hundred residential workers in Liverpool are now in their sixth week of an all out strike. They are fighting against the Labour Council's attempt to force through cuts in wages and conditions. The workers care for vulnerable youth, people with mental illness and people with learning difficulties, in homes across the city.

Like the recent successful strike of library workers in Sheffield this strike needs solidarity from all council and public sector workers.

The Labour council in Liverpool is working overtime to prove its anti-working class and pro-Blair credentials. They are trying to rip-up nationally agreed terms and conditions, costing workers between £500 and £2500 in lost pay a year. They want to end overtime. This could easily be done by employing a central pool of trained permanent staff to cover, but instead the council want to introduce casual staff.

The council have used everything at their disposal to try and break the strike, but they have failed.

They used the anti-union laws to challenge the results of the first ballot, but a second ballot confirmed the overwhelming support for the strike.

They have sent in scabs to the homes, only to be met by determined picket lines which have succeeded in turning some scabs away, and by children in some of the homes who do not want scabs looking after them! The council responded by sending in sledgehammer-wielding managers to break down the doors.

The Council have ordered the police to stop the strikers collecting money in the city centre. But strikers have won support from union branches and workplaces locally and nationally.

The strike is solid, and is a rallying point for other workers in Liverpool who are taking on the council. Day care centre workers, housing workers and firefighters in the city are also in dispute with the council.

One major problem the residential workers face, in common with all workers taking strike action, is the anti-union laws.

So far the strikers have complied with them, but if they win solidarity from other workers they would have to defy the law.

The strikers would like to picket out other workers in the homes who have joined the union *after* the ballot, but this too would be against the law. And it is not just the courts they would be fighting in this case—Unison has made it crystal clear that if they defy the law then official backing will be withdrawn.

Solidarity

At the moment local Unison branch and strike leaders are going along with this strategy in return for official backing. But if they are joined by other workers through solidarity action the strikers will need to be prepared to take on the courts, the council and their own union!

Messages of support, donations and speakers: Residential Workers Strike Committee, UNISON, Fourth Floor, Produce Exchange, 8 Victoria Street, Liverpool L2 6QJ. Phone 0151 227 3965, Fax 0151 258 1247.

London Underground

Strikes shake Tube bosses

September saw management and workers at London Underground squaring up for a major fight over pay.

Management must have thought they were winning when the leadership of drivers' union ASLEF recommended accepting their pathetic 3% offer. But their celebrations didn't last long. Hundreds of ASLEF members joined the transport union RMT, which was prepared to organise strike action against the pay offer. A series of one-day strikes followed.

Despite management lies that the strikes had little effect, they were clearly gaining momentum. On the second day of strike action on 1 September, management had to admit that only 38% of trains ran on the Victoria and Piccadilly lines. By the following week half of all trains on the network were halted.

Courts

Management went back on the offensive, turning to the courts. They claimed that 800 new recruits to the RMT could not take part in the action because they had not been part of the original ballot!

Using the Tory anti-union laws, the courts duly found in favour of London Underground. Rather than challenge the

law and threaten all-out action across the tube and railways in the event of the new members being victimised if they struck, RMT leader Jimmy Knapp called off the 48 hour strike planned for 20 September.

The following day, however, brought news of the ASLEF members' ballot. They rejected the deal and their leadership's recommendation by 2 to 1. The RMT announced that they would ballot again between 6 and 19 October. Another 'Yes' vote is virtually guaranteed and the strikes will continue in late October. *The fight is on.*

Rank and file tube workers have to learn the lessons of the ups and downs of September.

- The bosses will use disunity to weaken any strike. Now that ASLEF members have voted to reject the deal a united campaign of strike action must be organised alongside a push for a single industrial union for all railworkers. The union bureaucrats must not be allowed to undermine the fight to win a decent pay rise through disunity.
- The best way to co-ordinate action, as the strikes in 1988 showed, is to establish cross-union strike committees based on delegates from rank and file tubeworkers, able to plan action without being dependent on the decisions

of the cowardly trade union leaders.

- The anti-union laws are a powerful weapon in the bosses' armoury. They will use them whenever they can. Only a united militant response, which means defying the laws and escalating the action, can re-establish effective trade unionism in the face of legal attacks. Meanwhile every trade unionist should be bombarding the Labour Party with demands for Tony Blair to stop saying Labour will keep these laws and to commit himself to their immediate repeal when he gets into Number 10.
- The experience of the RMT's recruitment drive nails the lie that workers are driven away from unions because they take action. The reverse, as ASLEF bureaucrats now realise, is the truth. Workers leave unions that don't fight, that do nothing. The way to stop the union movement shrinking is to start the fight now.
- Limiting the action to one day strikes carries the risk of defeat. The bosses will try to ride out the strikes and use the time between to undermine the action. United *indefinite* action can win on the Underground, and a lot quicker than a series of one day actions.

Dave Carr

Victory!

HEALTH WORKERS at London's UCLH hospitals are celebrating victory in their fight to reinstate Dave Carr. Dave, a plastic surgery nurse and Unison branch Chair, was sacked after managers accused him of intimidation during an argument over proposed job losses. But just eight hours away from the start of the biggest all out hospital strike for years management made a humiliating climbdown and reinstated him.

Dave received a "final written warning", which will leave him open to future victimisation. But his last minute reinstatement left managers close to tears and workers jubilant.

Dave's reinstatement is a clear victory for the strategy of all-out indefinite strike action. A strong tradition of sectional-

organisation, with regular work-time branch meetings and a good shop stewards' network, allowed Unison activists to win the ballot for all-out action.

Limits

Workers offered management emergency cover under union control, but placed strict limits on that cover. Had the strike gone ahead there would have been no catering, no cleaning and only minimal portering. Nursing cover would have been down to real emergency levels.

Management, who accused Dave of intimidation, had no qualms about intimidating workers themselves. They refused the offer of emergency cover, threatened a lock-out and planned to run specialist wards with agency staff and non-special-

ist nurses. But their bluff was called.

Nurse shop stewards were able to recruit entire wards to Unison, with nurses leaving the no-strike RCN, joining Unison and pledging strike action all in a single day. Management threatened that low paid union members would have to face "six months to a year" on strike pay. Now it is management who face months of humiliation.

It is vital that the momentum gained in the Dave Carr dispute is used to strengthen the fight against multi-skilling at UCLH.

Across the NHS, Unison members need to learn the lessons of the fight to reinstate Dave Carr: one day strikes seldom win, and can drag on for months. All-out strikes can win—sometimes before the first picket line is mounted!



Fighting back at Companies House

by Workers Power supporters

CPSA AND NUCPS members at Companies House (CH) in Cardiff are set to ballot for a series of strikes in defence of three hundred workers threatened with contracting out.

The vote of 202 to 111 in favour of moving to a ballot was won at a series of mass meetings last month, despite hostile opposition from local union leaders. This in itself represents a great step forward in the long running campaign to save civil service workers from worse conditions, lower pay and job cuts that come with privatisation.

The first sign that management and Tory Minister Phillip Oppenheim were not going to have an easy ride came at the end of July. A shock announcement that nine members of the computing department and the mainframe computer were to be contracted out to Hoskyns plc brought an immediate response.

A spontaneous work-to-rule soon brought the computer crashing down. "Value for money", it was suddenly announced, could be found after all with no loss of civil service jobs.

But the strike vote had not been proposed by the local union leadership. It was moved from the floor of the meeting by a Workers Power supporter from the computer section.

Despite the clear sign that militancy can win, the majority of the branch leaders wanted to wind down the campaign to save the other 300 jobs due to go by April 1996. They argued to keep an overtime ban in place as a bargaining chip for squeezing a few concessions, but admit defeat on the jobs front.

The right-wing pulled out all the stops to try and prevent the vote for a ballot going through.

Now every effort must be made to

win the ballot and devise a strike strategy that can force management and the Tories to climb down again.

Since the meetings, management have revealed their hand further by announcing that they expect the workforce to shrink from over one thousand to as low as 400 by the year 2000, due to the introduction of new technology. It is no longer a fight just for the 300; everyone's job is at risk.

The strike plans are as yet undecided. The unions want to ballot for "continuous" strike action, like the signalworkers did last summer. This involves giving the employer notice that we intend to strike on a series of individual days. As long as the first strike occurs within the first 28 days, mass meetings can then decide to implement or call off subsequent strikes at will, without invalidating the initial postal ballot. Crucially, the action should be controlled by the rank and file membership as a whole, not some distant bureaucrat in London.

When CH unions applied for official backing for this form of action in defence of the nine computer jobs, they got an agreement for 50% strike pay for the three day strike followed by weekly strikes for the next three weeks. CPSA and NUCPS national leaders must be forced to continue with their backing.

Messages of support can be sent to:

The Trade Union Side, Room 2.144, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff CF4 3UZ (tel/fax 01222 380197).

For more news on civil service trade unions and the fight for a rank and file movement, get the second issue of *Rank and File*, journal of the Socialist Caucus, available from Rank and File, PO Box 3140, London E17 5LJ (price 50p).

Write to: BCM Box 7750, London WC1N 3XX

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Trotskyist INTERNATIONAL

Bosnia: a peace to end all peace

ENGELS



1820-1895

Rebuilding the workers' movement

Concluding our series commemorating the centenary of Frederick Engels' death, John McKee tells the story of Engels' role in the founding of the Second International

IN 1870, having spent 20 years working at the family firm of Ermen and Engels in Manchester, Engels moved to London. Jenny Marx had found a house in Regents Park Road. But Engels hesitated before taking on a three and a half year lease.

France had just been defeated in the war with Prussia, and Engels expected a militant upsurge as a result. He might have to leave quickly for Europe if revolutions broke out, he told Jenny Marx.

Over twenty years later Engels was still in the same house.

A revolution did indeed break out. But the Paris Commune was crushed in 1871, and with it, the vanguard of the French workers. The defeat of the Commune was a defeat for the whole European working class. The International Workingmen's Association, the First International, collapsed soon after.

Leaders

But Engels' next twenty five years in London were not to be wasted. His house, especially after Marx's death in 1883, was to become the effective centre of the international socialist movement. Leaders of the European Marxist parties were regular visitors. Edward Aveling, Eleanor Marx's husband, described how:

"Every day every post brought to his house newspapers and letters in every European language, and it was astonishing how he found time, with all his other work, to look through, keep in order and remember the chief contents of them all."

Among his "other work" was his editing of the second and third volumes of Marx's *Capital*; an enormous labour that probably only Engels, Marx's life-long friend and collaborator, could have carried out.

In the 1880s Engels continued to expound and popularise Marx's theories. The European workers' movement was entering into a new period of struggle. Much of Engels' attention was directed towards advising and encouraging the German workers' movement which was led by an explicitly Marxist party.

Engels concentrated on Germany for good reasons. Germany was becoming the industrial power house of Europe. From German unification in 1871, to 1880, industrial production doubled. It was to double again by 1913. This rapid industrialisation was producing a new and powerful proletariat, one not demoralised by the defeats that had shaken the French workers.

Elections

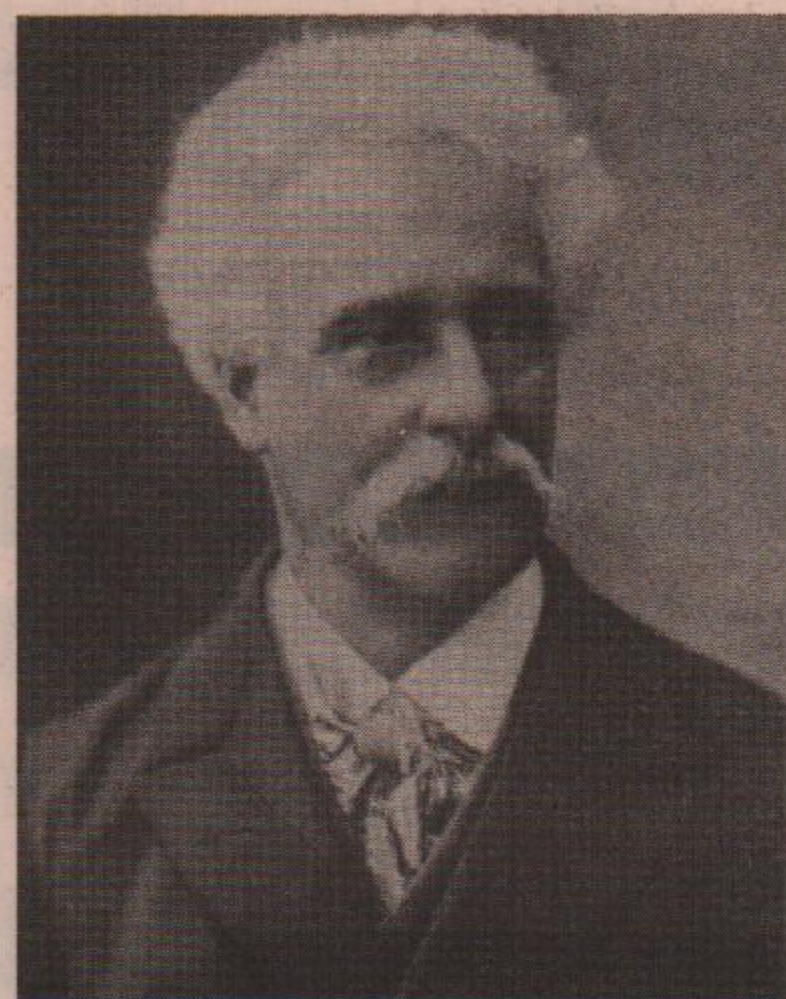
Despite the "Anti-Socialist laws" introduced in 1878 to try and stifle the party, German Social Democracy grew rapidly on the basis of contesting parliamentary and regional elections, an activity which was still legal. By the mid-1880s the party was gaining over half a million votes and had a significant parliamentary fraction in the Reichstag. It still functioned under semi-legality, however.

The German party became a model among European socialists. The anarchist groups, who rejected on principle the "political struggle" and electoral work, were

failing. Social democracy was going from strength to strength.

Neither Marx nor Engels let their heads be turned by the phenomenal growth of the German party. They did their utmost to steer the party along the tracks of a real Communist programme. In 1875 they had written a critique of the founding programme of the party, the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, which unified two different trends in the German movement. By 1879 they were so alarmed at what they saw as a growing bourgeois trend in the movement that they threatened an open break with the party.

The right wing of the party led by Vollmar increasingly argued that power could be achieved by "gradual means". In an article in *Social Democrat*, the party's legal journal, he declared the assertion that the party strived for the dictatorship of the proletariat was a lie. This was proved, he



Paul Lafargue

said, by the fact that it was absent from the party programme. In the Reichstag, Wilhelm Liebknecht, a major leader of the party, declared that the party intended to reach its goal only by peaceful means, and that the idea of violent revolution was an "absurdity".

The threat of an open break, contained in a "circular letter" to the leadership from Marx and Engels, led to a delegation being hastily despatched to London. Out of this meeting came a block between Engels and the left wing of the party led by August Bebel, an alliance which was to last until Engels' death and which succeeded in putting the open revisionists in the party into a minority for that time.

While Engels was to concentrate on party building in Germany for whole periods, he did not neglect socialists in other countries who regularly wrote to him for comment and advice.

His voluminous correspondence in the 1880s and 1890s sees him discussing with socialists in the USA, advising the first Marxists in Russia (Plekhanov's group),

collaborating with Victor Adler, leader of the Austrian socialists, with Turati in Italy, and with Czech socialists. In Britain he was closely involved in the attempts to build a Marxist party alongside Eleanor Marx and Aveling.

Engels also had close contact with the French socialists. By the late 1870s the French proletariat was beginning to recover from the defeat inflicted on it after the Commune. Jules Guesde was released from jail under an amnesty for the Communards in 1879 and went on to found the French Workers' Party. The party's programme was drafted by Guesde and Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, and written up by Marx. Lafargue was to become a regular visitor to Regents Park Road.

Possible

The French party developed its own revisionist wing around Paul Brousse. Brousse led the "Possibilists", so named because for them politics was the "art of the possible". They believed in making alliances with bourgeois radicals to achieve reforms. This led to a split with the party in 1882. Engels' response is symptomatic of his approach to party building in this period:

"Unity is a wonderful thing if it can be achieved, but there are more important things than unity. Since Marx and I have been fighting so-called socialists all our lives, we cannot complain that this conflict has broken out."

Obviously, the fundamental tool in uniting the working class internationally around a principled common programme was an international organisation. The First International had been finally wound up in 1878, although it had effectively collapsed in the wake of the Commune. With the revival of socialism in Europe came proposals to refound an International, in the late 1870s and again in the early 1880s.

Engels was against these proposals. He thought that events in Europe would determine when an international could be launched. He was terrified that an international launched prematurely would be dominated by "emigrés" rather than be really representative of large parties rooted in the proletariat. Engels wanted to avoid at all costs the internecine warfare between emigrés and anarchists that dogged the First International in its final years.

Conference

By the end of the 1880s the situation had changed. The growth of the German and French parties and the revival of socialism in Britain led to calls for an International on a new basis. In 1887 both the British TUC and the German Social Democrats independently called for an international conference to be organised.

Engels recognised the danger of a reformist international being launched; the

TUC had commissioned the "Possibilists" in France to convene their conference. So Engels threw himself into organising a Marxist International. For the first six months of 1889 Engels put aside much of his other work to use all his contacts to ensure the biggest and broadest conference.

In 1889, the centenary of the French Revolution, two separate conferences met in Paris. Hyndman, leader of the British Social Democratic Federation, reported:

"Two mutually recriminating congresses were held in separate halls by Possibilists and impossibilists respectively, the anarchists being impartially present at both."

But Hyndman's cynicism proved to be wrong. The Marxist congress had broader representation and, again under Engels encouragement, the two groupings were soon to fuse in a single International under the influence of the left wing. The Sec-



Eleanor Marx

ond International was established and coordinated a series of struggles and strikes for the eight hour day each May Day in the 1890s.

The 1890s saw Engels taking up the fight against the right wing in the German party. Eleanor Marx had attended the first congress of the party after the repeal of the anti-socialist laws at Halle. She wrote to Engels that she thought the party in the Reichstag had grown "rather bourgeois".

A decision of the party to revise its programme at its next congress, at Erfurt in 1891, led Engels to publish, for the first time, Marx's critique of the Gotha programme. He did it in the social democratic journal edited by Karl Kautsky, then part of the left wing, without asking permission of the leadership.

The party Executive were infuriated and broke off contact with Engels for a month or more. But Engels did not mind because the leaders could no longer prevent Marx's criticism being laid before a new generation of workers. In the end the draft of the new programme was sent to Engels who

suggested numerous amendments, many of which were incorporated.

Some socialists have looked back at this period and tried to implicate Engels in the growing revisionism in the social democracy. The record shows that Engels spent his last years fighting this bourgeois trend in the movement. But why did he not organise to split the movement and drive out the revisionists through factional struggle as Lenin did in the Russian Social Democracy?

His attitude to the right wing at this time is summed up in a letter he sent to Plekhanov in 1895 about the French socialist leader Jaures:

"Jaures is on the right road, he is learning Marxism. He has already made excellent progress—far better than I had hoped. Anyhow, we must not demand too much orthodoxy! The party is too large and Marx's theories are too widespread, for a few more or less isolated cranks in the western countries to do much harm."

Engels was writing in a period where the Marxist parties were growing apace and the movement was assembling its cadre. What Engels did not systematise, nor could he have done at the time, were his own insights into developments within the European economies and their effects on the working class itself.

Privileged

Most significant was the development of a labour aristocracy, a privileged social layer out of which a labour bureaucracy grew. This bureaucracy was to become an important mechanism through which the working class was to be reconciled with capitalist society. The reformists were to base themselves on this aristocracy and bureaucracy.

Even Lenin, who recognised the need to build a cadre party around a clear revolutionary programme against the revisionists in Russia, did not generalise from this to the rest of Europe until after 1914.

It was the war—and the collapse of the Second International in an orgy of social chauvinism—that finally brought home to Lenin the role of reformism in the workers' movement and its connection to the development of the imperialist stage of capitalism. In analysing these new developments Lenin found that Engels' writings and insights of the 1880s and 1890s provided invaluable building blocks in developing Marxism for a new epoch.

Engels died on Monday, 5 August 1895. Socialist friends and party leaders from all over Europe attended the private funeral that Engels had insisted upon. He was cremated and his ashes scattered off Beachy Head in Eastbourne, his favourite seaside resort.

As always, Engels avoided what he regarded as "needless fuss" over his position in the socialist movement, always deferring to the greater theoretician and thinker, his friend Marx. In one reply to a 70th birthday greeting Engels had written:

"It is my fate that I should reap the fame and honour sown by a much greater man—Karl Marx. I can only pledge to spend the rest of my life in the active service of the proletariat."

He more than lived up to his promise. ■

Ted Grant's Marxism

Reason in revolt

STEPHEN HAWKING'S book *A Brief History of Time* is now available on CD-ROM. The multimedia format allows the viewer to flip through a complex series of interrelated scientific and philosophical insights, to the accompaniment of the author's own musings.

Those who do not own a CD-ROM, but who want to experience something similar on the printed page, could try reading *Reason in Revolt*, by former Militant leaders Ted Grant and Alan Woods.

Modelled on Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*, Grant and Woods' book attempts to use recent advances across the scientific spectrum—from subatomic physics to genetics—to show the contemporary relevance of dialectical materialism.

There are excellent explanations of the origins and basic laws of dialectical thinking, and interesting popularisations of recent scientific discoveries. Most non-scientists will learn a lot from this book, and scientists will learn a lot about the history of philosophy, although not in any systematic way.

In the first 80 pages we are whisked through the basic laws of logic and the origins of their discovery, chaos theory, the behaviour of liquids, the Periodic Table, evolutionary biology, particle physics, the method of Marx's *Capital* and the role of the individual in the revolutionary process.

And then we are whisked through it all again! By page 423 the reader's brain is awash with ideas and information about every concept in the pop-science lexicon: Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, Einstein's theories of relativity, Mandelbrot's fractals, Piaget's theories of child development, Richard Dawkins' "selfish gene", etc etc.

But the book is not a success in its own terms. The authors' declared intention is to "show the relation between [Marxist philosophy] and the position of science and philosophy in the modern world." (p15) However, the book's approach to the role of dialectical thinking in science itself is precisely its weakest point.

Debate

There has always been a debate within Marxism about the limits of dialectical logic. Many "Western Marxists", including Lukacs and Sartre, have claimed that whilst dialectical materialism is a valid approach to the study of human history, dialectical laws do not govern the development of nature.

Marx and Engels, however, insisted that nature's laws were profoundly dialectical. The task of human thought was to grasp these laws, first approximately and then with ever more accuracy. This fundamentally correct standpoint is the one that Grant and Woods adopt. But too often they simply "anoint" a particular scientific discovery or theory as dialectical.

They aim to show how contemporary scientific discoveries prove the validity of the dialectic. Using numerous examples they attempt to demonstrate that only a world view which studies things in their process of transition, as a dynamic unity of opposites, can theorise complex phenomena.

A typical passage begins with a description of a natural phenomenon and the "accepted" scientific explanation for it. Then the story is told of how modern science destroyed the accepted theory and replaced it with a new one, often undermining the basic suppositions of that branch of science itself. Then the truism is introduced that "things are more complex than they seem", that all things are a dialectical "unity of opposites".

Laws

This method, whereby the laws of dialectical motion are laid down in advance and then science used to "demonstrate" them, has only limited value and can be dangerous. It risks imposing these laws as "abstract truths" upon the science in question rather than revealing their operation through a detailed examination of the specific laws that govern a particular science.

Grant and Woods themselves explain that an intuitive grasp of dialectical truth was long ago stumbled upon in mystical



Paul Morris reviews *Reason in Revolt* by Alan Woods and Ted Grant

form by early religions, such as Taoism, Buddhism and Hinduism. The danger of an approach which says "every new discovery is proof of the dialectic" is that it is virtually indistinguishable from so much of the modern mysticism, religion and eclectic mumbo-jumbo that Grant and Woods set themselves against. Modern subatomic physics may very well confirm to a dialectician that the "unity of opposites" is a fundamental feature of matter. But equally, others can and do take it as "proof" of the existence of yin and yang for example.

Truth

What today is held to be scientific truth can tomorrow be revealed as a bad approximation to the truth. To hold up today's scientific orthodoxy as a "proof" of the dialectic is to fall into the trap of imposing an abstract model on concrete reality, not discovering dialectical laws in reality itself. Take the example of "phase transitions",

point of water, 100 degrees celsius, as an illustration of the qualitative leap. A greater and greater quantity of heat energy, added to water, produces a qualitative change, from water into steam.

But dialectical materialists were happy to cite this example long before the study of "phase transitions" began. 18th century physics provided a perfectly good illustration of the dialectics of nature, in the boiling point of water, but now science has discovered more profound and general truths about this process. A "phase transition" is more than just a qualitative leap. The study of phase transitions is the study of the sub-phases of the qualitative leap.

Likewise the Periodic Table, the chart found on the wall of every school chemistry lab, which shows how changes in atomic quantities produce changes in the quality of matter itself. Even in its early, speculative form, before being corrected and completed by modern science, the Periodic Table was an excellent example

have been more profound if his empirical research over 30 years or more had been guided by a reading of Hegel. They insist that Darwin was, "unconsciously using a similar method" to Marx.

Clearly, a consistent (i.e. dialectical) materialist would not have made the compromises with religion that Darwin did regarding the origin of matter in general. But would he or she have produced a better account of the origin and development of the species, an account that in all essentials remains valid today?

Mysticism

Without coming to terms with these issues Grant and Woods at times succeed in converting dialectical materialism into a substitute mysticism themselves. The following is just one of many infuriating passages:

"Change affects all, but not only in a negative way. Alongside death there is life, and order arises spontaneously out of

Whatever Grant and Woods can teach us about Marxism in the abstract, they can teach us nothing positive about the way to build a revolutionary workers' party and fight for socialism.

the process whereby matter changes from solid to liquid, non-magnet to magnet or conductor to superconductor etc. According to Grant and Woods, such transitions are clear examples of the dialectical law of transformation of quantity into quality:

"All these processes are different, yet it has now been established beyond doubt that they are similar, so much so that the mathematics applied to one of these experiments can be applied to many others" (p53);

and:
"The phrase 'phase transition' is neither more nor less than a qualitative leap" (p50).

Anybody who studies dialectics will soon encounter the example of the boiling

of the dialectic. But empirical and theoretical physics, not dialectics, was able to render the truth of the Periodic Table more profound.

Grant and Woods' survey of scientific progress ends with a bold claim:

"How many errors, blind alleys and crises in science could have been avoided if scientists had been equipped with a methodology which genuinely reflects the dynamic reality of nature, instead of conflicting with it at every turn!" (p376)

This is a good question. But for Grant and Woods it is only rhetorical, when in fact it needs a serious answer.

Grant and Woods, for example, fail to demonstrate how Darwin's theory of natural selection by means of variation would

chaos. The two sides of the contradiction are inseparable. Without death, life itself would be impossible. Every man and woman is not only aware of themselves but of the negation of themselves, their limit. We come from nature and will return to nature."

This calls to mind not so much Engels but the ramblings of the blind old Shaolin monk to David Carradine's Grasshopper in the TV series *Kung Fu*.

Cosmology

By far the best part of the book is that devoted to a review of debates in modern cosmology. Here, Grant and Woods are able to trace the progression from revolutionary science to counter-revolutionary

ideology in the "Big-Bang" theories about the origin of the universe.

But ultimately the book is testimony to the fact that, no matter how capably one can teach dialectical materialism, that is no guarantee of being able to change reality in a revolutionary way.

Ten years ago Grant and Woods would not have been able to write this book, because their duties at the head of a large "Marxist" organisation, with significant roots in the working class, would not have allowed them time. Today they are the leaders of a few dozen comrades, expelled from Militant, which itself has abandoned many of Grant and Woods' basic ideas.

Grant predicted that Militant would become "the decisive force on the planet within a decade". But the past decade has utterly disproved Grant's view of the dynamics of the British class struggle. He predicted that "the left could not lose" in the Labour Party, that capitalism would "crash" after 1987, that the workers would flow into the Labour Party and that Stalinism could not be overthrown. Each prediction has been dramatically disproved.

And these were the things that Grant, who liked to call Marxism, "the science of perspectives" should have got right.

Failure

Grant's Militant Tendency presided over the failure of the Liverpool City Council struggle and then the betrayal of the March 1990 Poll Tax demonstrators who fought the police. He presided over an organisation that was rigidly bureaucratic; which tolerated sexism, homophobia and outright boorishness about all things "intellectual".

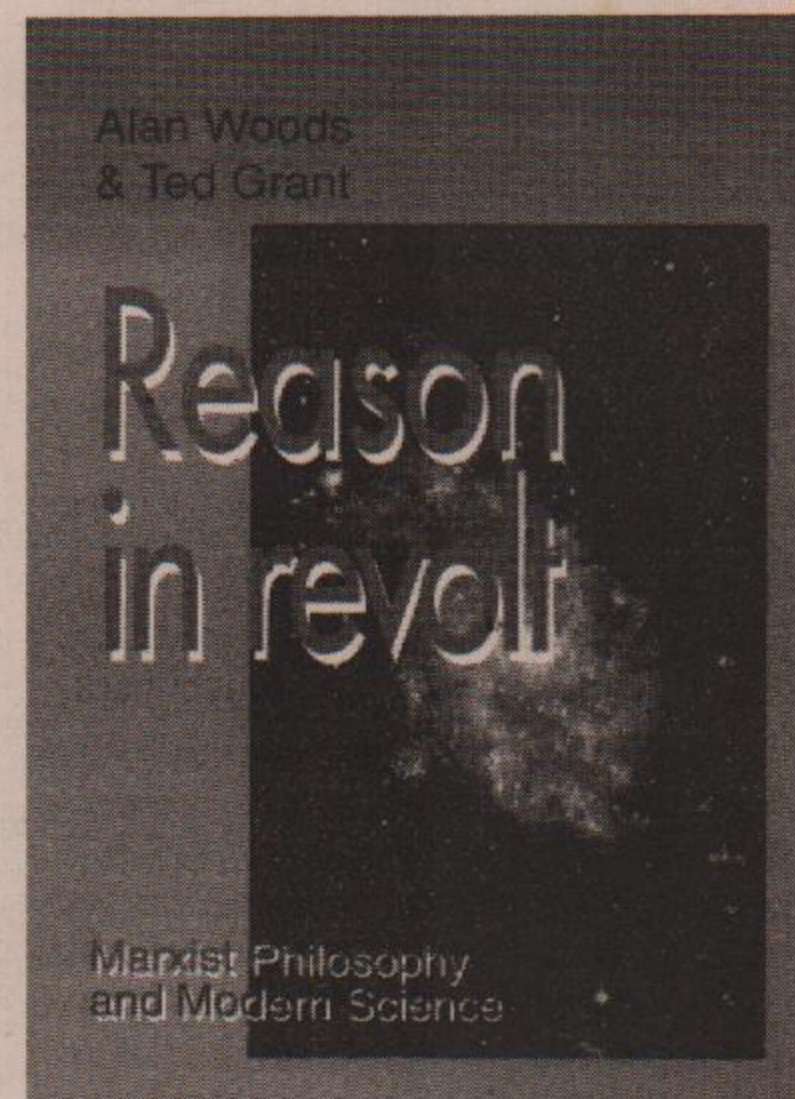
Grant's failure was basically a failure of method. Grant treated the dialectics of history as if they were the dialectics of nature. He treated them as immutable laws which, once discovered, would "prove" the eventual triumph of socialism, and compared to which the subjective human element is ultimately irrelevant. The "hammer blows of class struggle", for Grant, would always solve and overcome the lack of conscious revolutionary leadership. That outlook is what enables Grant to believe, to this day, that the Labour Party can bring about socialism, peacefully, through parliament!

Retired

Now Grant has retired to the safer ground of writing commentaries on science and the theory of knowledge it might be argued that he can do little harm.

But, whatever its merits, we have to say that this book is the product of a defeat. It is the product of the failure of an important centrist leader of post-war "Trotskyism".

Whatever Grant and Woods can teach us about Marxism in the abstract, they can teach us nothing positive about the way to build a revolutionary workers' party and fight for socialism. ■



Reason in revolt:
Marxist Philosophy and Modern
Science
by Alan Woods and
Ted Grant
Wellred Publications
£9.95

Chronology of a revolution betrayed

1936

February: Elections bring Peoples' Front to power. Government chooses capitalist Azaña as prime minister, with support of four bourgeois parties and the Socialist and Communist parties. POUM and anarchists support Peoples' Front.

May: Azaña becomes President. Tries to appoint right-wing Socialist Prieto as prime minister to head off workers' struggles. Communist Party supports him but left-wing Socialists block the move.

June: Spanish workers engage in mass strikes.

July 13: Communist Party declares total support for government.

July 17-21: Fascist rising declared by General Franco, beginning among troops in Morocco and spreading quickly to Spain. Peoples' Front government refuses to arm the workers and withholds news of the scale of the fascist uprising. Rank and file Socialists, anarchists and POUM seize arms directly. Workers take over factories and peasants occupy the land. Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias formed in Catalonia.

August 18: British and French governments sign "non-intervention" pact. Arms embargo imposed.

September: Popular Front government moves left as left-wing Socialist Largo Caballero becomes prime minister. Communists join government. POUM and anarchist CNT join regional government in Catalonia, the *Generalidad*.

October: Republican central government scraps independent workers' and peasants' militias. Catalan government dissolves revolutionary workers' committees. POUM remains within government. Siege of Madrid by fascist forces starts. International Brigades formed.

December: POUM expelled from government.

1937

May: Republican government, egged on by Communist Party, attacks anarchist-occupied Telephone Exchange in Barcelona. Workers build barricades. Anarchist CNT and POUM negotiate and call for barricades to be dismantled. Police and government Assault Guards massacre militants and occupy key buildings and opposition offices. Caballero replaced by right-wing Socialist Negrin, with Communist Party support.

June: POUM banned by Republican government. POUM leaders arrested. Nin is murdered in prison. Government carries through systematic repression of workers' control in factories and peasant occupations of the land.

1938

January: Franco's artillery bombardment of Barcelona begins.

June: Franco's armies reach the coast and cut Republican Spain in half.

September-November: International Brigades fight last battle and withdraw from Spain.

1939

January 26: Barcelona surrenders.

February 27: Britain and France recognise Franco's Spain though the Republic still holds one third of Spanish territory.

March: "National Defence Junta" formed: expels Communist Party from Peoples' Front and negotiates surrender to Franco.

August 23: Hitler-Stalin pact signed.

September: World War II begins.

Land and Freedom



As a background to the debates provoked by Ken Loach's film *Land and Freedom* Richard Brenner describes the main events and the role played by the working class parties in the Spanish Civil War

KEN LOACH has made a film of tremendous importance to the working class movement. *Land and Freedom*, opening in Britain on 6 October, dramatises key events of the great Spanish Revolution of 1936-39.

Loach focuses on the experiences of a young Liverpudlian communist who goes to Spain as part of the International Brigade to fight the fascists. The film depicts not only the hardship and horror of a bloody civil war; as Loach himself says:

"It is about an experience of revolution betrayed, and it raises the question of whether such a moment may come again in Europe."

We are certain that such a revolution will come again. That is why we must learn the lessons of Spain.

The Communist Party

FAR FROM promoting workers' revolution, the Communist Party of Spain was slavishly loyal to Stalin's theory of "socialism in one country".

This anti-Marxist daydream declared that socialism could be built in the USSR alone. The main aim of Communists was to defend the USSR's "peaceful co-existence" with the main capitalist powers. Anything that antagonised Britain, France and the USA—such as a successful workers' revolution in Spain—had to be avoided at all costs.

Moscow devised the "Peoples' Front" policy, which tied Communist Parties to a permanent alliance with the "democratic" sections of the capitalist class.

In Spain this policy was translated into the slogan "First Win the War!". The content of this practical sounding slogan proved disastrous for the Spanish revolution.

Workers' control, peasant land seizures, democratic peoples' militias, revolutionary committees were universal. All of these had to be steadily undermined and abolished by the Stalinists in the name of unifying the Republican camp to win the war against the fascists.

Diaz, the leader of the party, told his Central Committee in March 1937 that under the Popular Front government, land seizures, collectivisation, and the confiscation of capitalist property were "not only not desirable, but absolutely impermissible".

But only the industrial workers and mass of poor peasants had the social weight and material interest to defeat fascism; the "democratic" capitalists could, in the end, surrender democracy and continue to enjoy the fruits of exploitation. By destroying the workers' revolution the Stalinists would ensure the victory of fascism in the war.

The Communist Party was uniquely placed to carry out this counter-revolutionary policy. It had all the prestige and authority of Moscow and the Soviet state behind it.

It had iron discipline, vast financial backing from the USSR and an army of functionaries from the par-

ties of the Communist International present inside Spain.

The Stalinists set up a union of small businessmen and manufacturers (GEPCI) and loudly defended the interests of the middle class and the employers. They backed every reactionary step of the Caballero coalition and the Negrin-Prieto regime that followed it. In January 1937 the Stalinist Minister of Supply in Catalonia dissolved workers' supply committees, allowing GEPCI speculators to hoard food and push prices up.

Worse was to come. In December 1936 the Soviet paper *Pravda* threatened that:

"As for Catalonia, the purging of the Trotskyists and the Anarcho-Syndicalists has begun; it will be conducted with the same energy as it was in the USSR."

They were true to their word. The CP and the Catalan PSUC backed the government's dissolution of the revolutionary committees, and argued for the full restoration of the barracks system, officer privileges and an end to democracy within the workers' militias. They pushed within the government for censorship of the POUM and anarchist press, slandering their opponents as "fascists".

In May 1937 it was Stalinist forces that were to the fore in the attack on the anarchist and POUM workers in Barcelona. Following this treachery, Stalinist police, trained and led by agents of the Soviet secret police, hunted down, tortured and killed thousands of revolutionary fighters—all in the name of unity of the anti-fascist bloc.

Andrés Nin of the POUM and the veteran anarchist leader Camillo Berneri were murdered in cold blood.

Having done the capitalists' dirty work for them, the Stalinists themselves were not saved. In March 1939, the capitalist National Defence Junta took power in Republican Spain, determined to finish the job of previous regimes, and surrender outright to Franco. The CP was expelled from the government, persecuted, its militants hunted down and killed. And there was no-one left to defend them. ■

Land and Freedom— The Spanish Revolution Betrayed

A day of debate and discussion about the Spanish Civil War and the new Ken

Loach film, organised by
Workers Power

Saturday 21 October
1pm—5pm Caxton House

St John's Way,
London N19

Nearest Tube, Archway

Trotskyist International 18, out now, contains a detailed background on the POUM, a review of Land and Freedom and its impact in Spain today, and a translation of the leaflet issued by the Trotskyists on the Barcelona barricades in 1937.

Glossary

POUM: Workers Party of Marxist Unification, led by Andres Nin

CNT: National Confederation of Labour - anarchist trade union federation

UGT: General Workers Union - led by socialists.

Colin Lloyd

Dear Jack Straw

A letter to the Shadow Home Secretary from one of his neighbours . . .

Dear Jack, Like Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver*, you've decided to clean up our streets. At a meeting with South London coppers and councillors last month, you attacked:

"The winos and addicts whose aggressive begging affronts and sometimes threatens decent, compassionate citizens. And the squeegee merchants who wait at large road junctions to force on reticent motorists their wind-screen cleaning services."

It was Tory premier Disraeli who once said Britain was "two nations"—rich and poor. Living within spitting distance of your door—but worlds apart from you and your middle class neighbours—I know what this means.

The Georgian square you live in is a thriving, upper middle class community. Your neighbours feel secure from unemployment, eviction, loss of benefit and spiralling short term debts. These hardships dominate the lives of the council tenants opposite.

Your middle class neighbours live in constant fear of burglary, but they can afford expensive security systems and massive insurance payments.

You claim your drive against disorder was prompted by your friend's 13 year old daughter, too frightened of street violence and harassment to go outdoors.

Working class kids suffer that too. So do their parents and grandparents. But most of my neighbours can't afford cars. It's us who have to use public transport—not as a populist gesture like you but as a bare necessity.

Your neighbours are secure from most of the big worries of modern city living. They feel the biggest threat in what, for us, is just a minor inconvenience: the people you call winos, addicts and squeegee merchants, and the "disorder" caused by graffiti and decay.

My objections to your shameless use of right wing Tory rhetoric against these victims of the profit system are not the same as those you call "woolly minded Guardian leader writers". It is just this: you are fighting the effects of poverty not the cause. And you will never fight the cause as long as you follow Tony Blair.

Why do violent people, mentally ill,

wander inner-city streets? Because "community care" was a cover up for budget cuts in health and social services. You will do nothing to restore these cuts.

Why do young people beg aggressively? Because they are starving, and an empty stomach makes you hustle for what you need. That is one of the basic laws of the market, which Labour's new Clause Four praises as "rigorous and dynamic".

Racist graffiti? We're all against that. But wiping it off the walls won't wipe it off the minds of some white workers. What will be a fight for the resources needed to give every working class resident of inner-city estates like mine the services and housing provision they need.

Then the racists who try to divide us will be disarmed.

But we live in Lambeth, where you and Tony Blair have just denounced the former Labour council for trying—however ineffectively—to defend vital local spending.

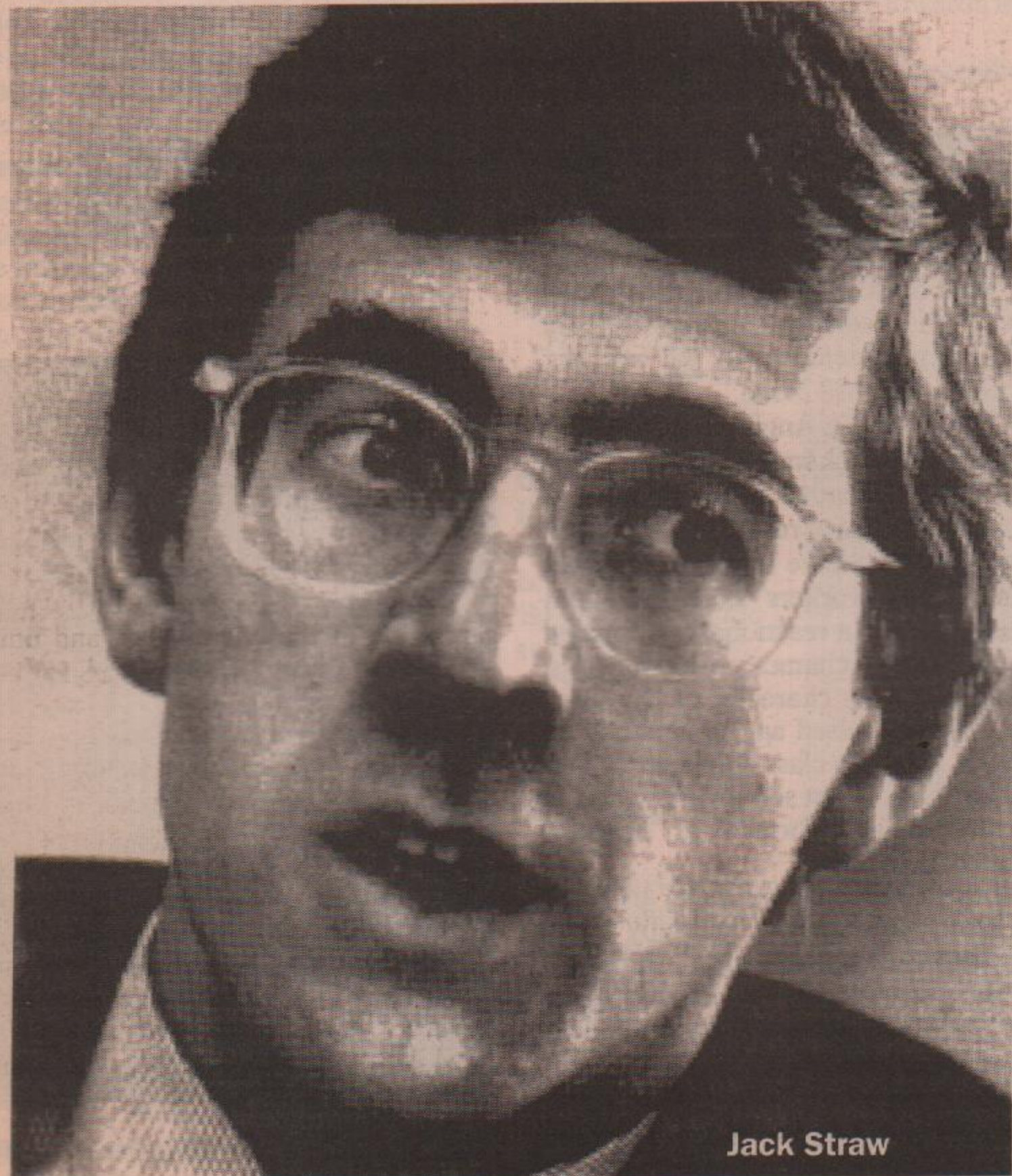
The estate I live on is not the worst. There is a community there as well. It is multi-racial and kept together by the knowledge that nothing comes to us without a fight. Ever since our estate set up the first anti-Poll Tax union in England back in 1989, the solidarity's been there. You never joined, of course.

For now we've got bigger things to worry about than graffiti and beggars. If it's crime at all, it is violent street crime that most of my neighbours fear. If they could afford a car, or if there was a decent transport system—and if their fears were not wound up by racist police chiefs—they'd fear it less.

Our main worries are money worries: rent, benefits, poverty wages, meagre pensions. Gas and electricity bills inflated by privatisation, shopping bills inflated by VAT, debts run up with loan sharks.

If some tough bastard would come along and clean all that up, we'd all be cheering. But you and Tony Blair won't do it. We've got to do it ourselves, in the teeth of opposition from you and the yuppie influx into New Labour.

Cheers
Colin Lloyd
Kennington
London SW8



Jack Straw



Palestine

Reject Taba Accords!

by Richard Brenner

HISTORY IN the real meaning of the word", said Israeli Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, of the latest deal between Israel and the PLO signed on 24 September. Bill Clinton and Malcolm Rifkind were quick to add their fulsome praise for the agreement.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat outdid them all on his enthusiasm for the deal. "The dawn of freedom is coming", he enthused. Western governments all joined in, hailing the agreement as the first step towards a future Palestinian state.

Behind the rhetoric, a straightforward fact is being concealed. Never in history has a stateless people been granted an autonomy so incomplete, powers so limited and a self-administration under such direct military and political control by their oppressors.

The Palestinian people are far from securing their right to self-determination. Despite the hype, the Taba Accord is yet another milestone in the long history of betrayal of their democratic and national rights.

The West Bank was seized by the Israelis in 1967—it has been occupied by Israeli troops ever since. Successive Zionist governments then pursued a settlement programme that was blatant land theft.

In a territory populated by around one million Arabs, over 100,000 Jewish settlers were encouraged to set up fortified communities across the West Bank, in order to extend Israeli rule and control throughout the area. They live in close proximity to the Arab population, but completely isolated from them, in hermetically sealed communities whose sense of social solidarity is fuelled by religious fanaticism and a racist hatred of Arabs.

When the PLO signed a peace deal with the Israelis in Oslo in 1993 they were granted a near-powerless "National Authority" (PNA), covering only the Gaza Strip and the town of Jericho in the West Bank. The Israeli troops were due to leave the West Bank gradually, with no fixed timetable. Indeed the Zionists had continually avoided meeting even the most modest of their obligations, whilst rigorously holding the Palestinians to every dot and comma of theirs.

In February last year, a fanatical Zionist settler attacked a mosque in Hebron and slaughtered 29 Palestinian worshippers. Yet far from using this outrage to curb the settler movement, the Israeli government had been using the excuse of needing to "protect" the murderous settlers to delay troop withdrawal indefinitely.

The Taba Accord comes at a time when tensions on the West Bank have been rising. The bitter clash between Palestinians

and Israeli settlers for control of the occupied town of Hebron had reached fever pitch. Arabs declared a general strike and Yasser Arafat even felt pressured to walk out of the Taba talks just hours before the agreement was initialised.

Hebron has been a particular flashpoint because of the fanaticism and violence of its tiny population of armed Jewish settlers. They number only between 250 and 400 people in a town of over 380,000 Arabs. Yet they have occupied the centre of the town, conduct terror attacks on Palestinian civilians, and arrogantly demand the "right" to settle and control the whole of the West Bank. Israeli troops are stationed in Hebron to "defend them".

Is there anything in the accords that promises and end to this climate of terror aimed against Palestinians in Hebron and elsewhere in the West Bank? In short, no.

The Israeli troops are set to withdraw gradually from six West Bank cities and hundreds of villages; but this will leave the Palestinians with 70% of the West Bank still under Zionist military occupation. The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) retains overall control and full powers in "areas of strategic importance to Israel" and over the Jewish settlements.

What kind of "autonomy" is it when the troops of a hostile and racist foreign power may, as Taba allows, enter any part of your territory at will to search out your dissidents and resistance fighters, dragging them away to prison without reference to Palestinian authorities?

What "self-determination" have the Palestinians secured when the murderous and fanatical bigots in the Zionist settlements can continue their terror and land grabbing without any resistance, because the accord insists that Israelis in the West Bank "may not in any circumstances be arrested or placed in custody by the Palestinian police"?

The armed power of the Palestinian entity may be used only for pursuing Israel's interests - namely the repression of those workers, students and youth brave enough to continue the fight for genuine self-determination.

Arafat has accepted that the IDF troops and settlers will remain, though "redeployed" to protect the settlers and Israeli control of a disputed religious site, the Tomb of the Patriarchs. A redivision of Hebron will take place for policing purposes.

After ratification of the accord, the partial IDF withdrawal will commence but could take many months. The Zionists will

continue to use "protection of the settlers" as an excuse for delaying implementation of their obligations under the deal. Then in six months elections will take place for a Palestine Council - under the watchful eye of the IDF and Arafat's police.

Prior to the accord the mass of the population was growing ever more incensed at the weakness and treachery of their own leaders. At a meeting in Hebron on 3 September, attended by several PNA ministers, speaker after speaker called for a complete withdrawal of Israeli troops and demanded that Arafat respect the wishes of the people.

The general strike in Hebron on 23 September was called by Arab leaders determined to show opposition to any deal that leaves the racist settlers in place. Local mosques issued a fatwa (religious judgement) forbidding the Palestinian negotiators from giving away any part of the city to the Israelis.

The Palestinian workers and youth have no interest in stringing out this absurd and insulting "peace process" for a moment longer.

Against the plan for manipulated PLO-Israel elections to a powerless body, the call must be raised for a democratic Constituent Assembly with full powers. Such an assembly must be convened with representatives elected by every village and town in the West Bank and Gaza, among Israeli Arabs and representatives from those Palestinians expelled and still living in surrounding Arab states.

It should be convened and defended by armed militia drawn from the camps and ghettos not the stooge Palestinian police. It must deliberate under the banner of the right of return of all those Palestinians driven out and robbed of their land since 1948.

Across the occupied territories the call must now go up to tear up the Oslo and Taba accords, and relaunch a mass movement to drive the Zionist settlers and troops out of the West Bank. The settlers are not a legitimate national minority with rights to be respected, but a conscious and politically motivated movement of racist colonists.

An indefinite commercial and industrial general strike against the occupation of Hebron and the building of mass defence organisations could quickly develop into a revolutionary challenge to the entire Zionist occupation. To take this path—the only path to democratic rights and national liberation—the Palestinian workers and youth need to break with the dead-end approach of Arafat and the PNA, and build a revolutionary socialist party of their own. ■

Interview

Recession sparks Argentine resistance

WP: Could you explain the project of the Menem government since coming to power in 1989? What has it achieved?

MG: In the six years it has been in office the government has pushed through privatisation, selling public companies off to a range of foreign owned multi-national companies in the EU and USA. The government established the Cavallo Plan back then, which had at its heart maintaining parity between the peso and the US dollar, one for one. This plan was sustained by an inflow of foreign speculative capital into Latin America as a result of the downturn in the economies of Europe and the USA.

Now there is a problem. The crisis in Mexico at the start of 1995 has meant that capital started to flow out of the continent back to Europe and the USA. This disrupted all the budget plans of the government; in order to keep to his agreements with the IMF on budget control Menem turned to attack the public sector, aiming to cut it down radically.

Strengthened by his election victory in May, Menem turned even more resolutely to attack the working class. He passed more legislation aimed at increasing job flexibility in the factories. All this in turn caused the social explosion in San Juan and Cordoba at the end of June.

WP: Given the level of industrial resistance this year in the face of the new recession, how do you explain Menem's victory?

MG: In the first place this was due to the effects of the Cavallo economic plan. Menem's "stabilisation" of prices and wages was the main achievement of his administration coming after the hyper-inflationary chaos of the Alfonsín government (1985-89). To this we have to add the crisis of the traditional bourgeois opposition, the Radical Party and that of the centre-left (Frepasso).

These forces supported the policies of the Menem government all along the line, including the Cavallo Plan; so there was no real opposition to the Menem government. At the same time the workers' movement is tied to Peronism through a strong social payments network.

Throughout the country, the government has spent \$600 million a year to maintain the social pact with the working class while attacking its jobs and wages. All three trade union federations' leaders supported the government and demoralised the resistance of the workers when they resorted to struggle.

WP: How did the left fare in the elections?

MG: There was a polarisation between Menem and the re-named Frepasso (now Frente Grande) which absorbed the middle class voters who abandoned their traditional party—the Radical Party (UCR). Peronism and Frepasso had altogether 80% (50% and 30% respectively) of the vote. In this situation the far left suffered a catastrophe. Even the so-called "Alianza Sur" (consisting of the ex-Frente Grande Solanas, the Stalinist PTP, and a semi-national Peronist current) was a total failure. The Trotskyist movement captured only 100,000 votes which was a huge reduction over past elections.

This was primarily due to the adaptation of the MAS—in the past the main Trotskyist group—to Stalinism, the bourgeois regime and the union bureaucracy during previous workers' struggles.

Hence centrism bears a big responsibility for this crisis and the election revealed the extent of it.

WP: Can you explain the character of your electoral bloc with the MAS and how effective do you judge it to have been?

MG: We called for a bloc of the four "Trotskyist" parties: ourselves, the MAS, the MST and Partido Obrero. The MST always seek unity with the centre-left on the basis of a rotten programme. Partido Obrero meanwhile formed a left-wing front made up of themselves alone. We thought it was necessary to raise the banner of a working class and socialist answer



CGT's campaign against unemployment in San Lorenzo—at 40% the highest in Argentina

to the crisis of Argentina.

Unemployment is the biggest problem and is now 20% on average and 40% in places. As a first step we made an agreement with a regional organisation of the CGT trade union federation in the industrial city of San Lorenzo around the demand to fight unemployment and defend wages: we called for nationalisation of all factories announcing lay-offs or closures, a cut in the working day to six hours to allow for the absorption of the unemployed; plus a minimum wage.

We felt it was important to try and unify the Trotskyist response to this crisis and thereby reveal the bankruptcy of the reformist left in the country. It was the first time that we got agreement around a programme of transitional demands and workers' control, something centrism rarely, if ever, poses either in the factories or at the electoral level. Unfortunately, the MAS did very little to fight for the programme once they signed it. In fact, in a recent by-election the PO and MAS made a bloc on a political basis which is in effect a renunciation of our agreement in May.

WP: How significant were the uprisings in Cordoba in June this year? Who led them and what was the outcome?

MG: The first fight in Argentina was carried out by students who resisted the plans for restructuring education, but the student organisation was led by the Radi-

In the Argentine elections of 14 May President Menem won a decisive victory to secure his second term. The results for the far left were disappointing, despite a series of strikes and occupations against government attacks on the public sector. *Workers Power* interviewed Mario Gómez of the *Partido de los Trabajadores por el Socialismo* (PTS), on the background to Menem's win and the current situation in the Argentine workers' movement.

cal Party and they sought all the time to negotiate an agreement with Menem, but after his strengthening in the elections he used the Peronist majority to pass a law which privatised the universities.

The Radical Party leadership betrayed what was the major student struggle of the last years. Then came the crisis in the provinces in June and July after the elections. In Cordoba the leadership of the movement came from the MOAS and the CTA. This leadership failed to seek the unity of public administration workers with those in the factories and sought to prevent the mobilisations becoming a national movement; they embarked on negotiations with the church and the government.

In Cordoba the regional government had to resign and was replaced by central government elected in May. A month later there was a similar movement in Jujuy of public sector workers which fought against a Bill reducing their wages. The general problem is that these outbursts are too disorganised and they get bought off with

meagre offers of emergency money for food. But the government has not been deflected from its attacks.

New organisations need to be built; this is vital, otherwise the attacks cannot be beaten back. At present there is no regroupment and no alternative leadership on the left that can draw these spontaneous struggles together.

WP: Have there been other struggles in the industrial sector?

MG: Yes, in April there were important struggles in the south, in Tierra del Fuego. A series of lay-offs and closures due to the recession in the electronics industry (Continental, Kenia) provoked a wave of occupations which were violently smashed by the police.

But throughout the past year everywhere the vanguard in the struggles has been public sector workers—administrative workers. It was a precondition of the IMF agreement that the government cut this sector in order to find money to pay the external debt. The government has avoided a general onslaught to date on all workers, but the recession has given rise to a broader attack and a broader resistance.

WP: How do you assess the union leadership's response to the attacks?

MG: After Menem came to power the CGT split over the attitude to take to the government's attacks. The CTA emerged, which embraces the teachers' union and

the main public sector union—sectors which were hit hard by the first wave of attacks after 1989. It was a bureaucratic split within the apparatus of the CGT over the terms and conditions of negotiations with the government.

In 1993 a further split occurred in the CGT, when the MTA was formed. None of these splits emerged as a result of movements in the rank and file. The CGT contains the two biggest metal workers' unions and this is very important. The MTA is based on the important transport unions. The CTA probably has less weight and is based in the state sector.

Outside of the union federations the most important development has been the emergence of Santillán, the leader of the City Hall workers in San Juan. Many vanguard workers looked to him and his leadership as a possible avenue to regroupment of the workers' movement in opposition to the old bureaucracies. But his Stalinist politics (he is a member of the PTP) meant that he had no ambition to overthrow the existing leadership of the unions but merely to increase the pressure upon it.

WP: What does the reformist left opposition, the Frente Grande argue?

MG: Frente Grande emerged out of a split within the parliamentary deputies of the Peronist party. Their main leaders include Bordón. They seek to reclaim Peronism from Menem, but in public they support the Cavallo Plan; they support the privatisations, and would not reverse them in power. They supported all the amnesty laws passed by Menem that absolve the army of its crimes under the dictatorship. This lack of an alternative was the main reason why expectations of a Frente Grande victory in the last elections were dashed.

WP: Can you tell us more about the initiative to fight unemployment in San Lorenzo?

MG: San Lorenzo is an industrial city that has been very badly hit by the recession and restructuring. The city, near Rosario, is based on textiles and leather goods and has been savaged. It has the worst unemployment in Argentina—40%. We established a united front with the local federation of the CGT which raised a programme that constituted a first step in the fight against unemployment.

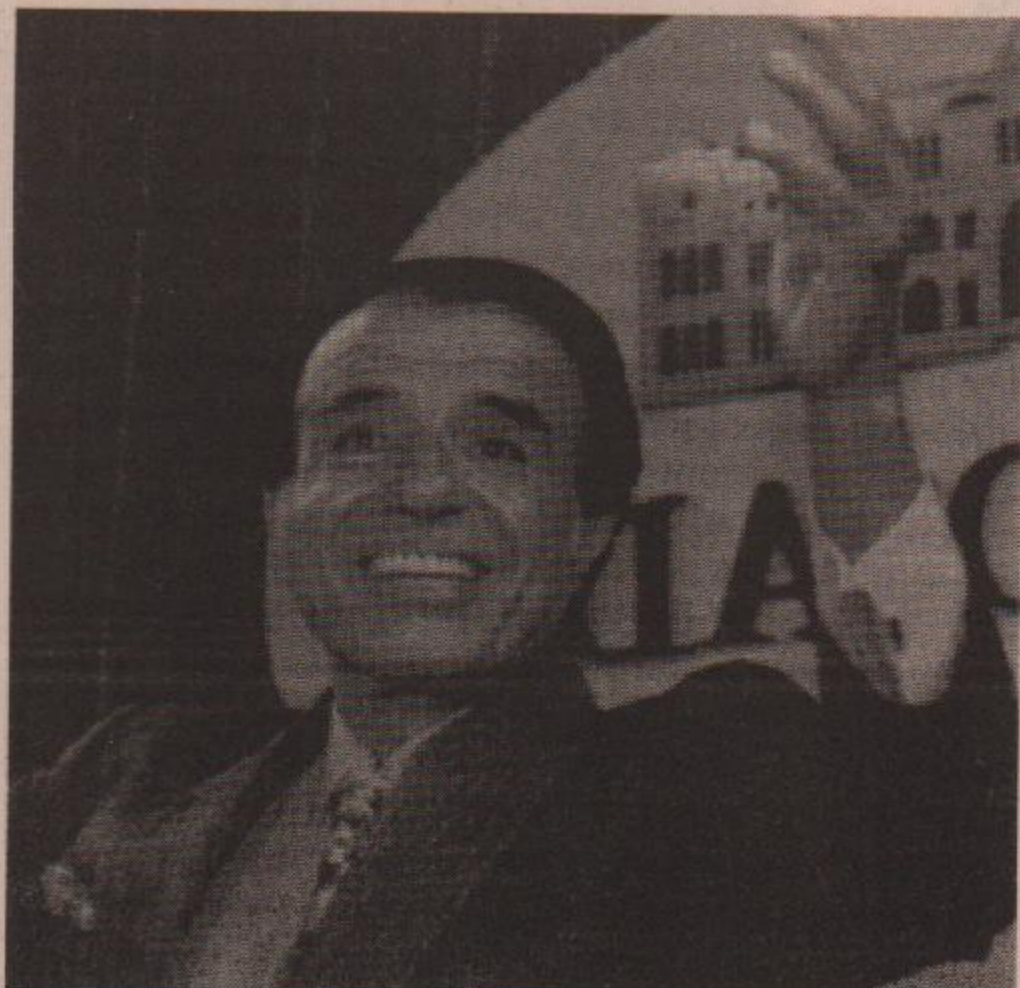
The regional union has more of a democratic character that it has nationally with more links with the rank and file, more open debate and hence reflects more the pressure of the rank and file. But when we signed the agreement they did not fight in the factories for making it a national campaign because they do not want to fight openly against the national bureaucracy.

WP: The existence of three main union federations suggests a weakness in the workers' movement. How does the PTS aim to overcome this?

MG: Yes, it is a weakness. Our policy argues for new organisations to be built. Last year the CTA tried to launch themselves as a new union federation. But we argued that no new reorganisation can take place until the basic dependency upon the state is cut. All the union federations rely upon the state to take union dues from the workers' wages and then the state redirects some of this money back to the union federation bureaucracies.

The burning task of the day is the organisation of the unemployed and unity with the employed. The unemployed are used to threaten the employed and make them agree to flexibility. All the union federations ignore this issue. Likewise, many plants have shaped a new workforce over the last years. Old workers were expelled and were replaced with young and inexperienced workers whose conditions of work are much worse.

The union has no policy against this and as a result many of the factories fight against each other. We fight for new organisations and a unifying programme. This was the direction of our intervention throughout the struggles of the working class movement. ■

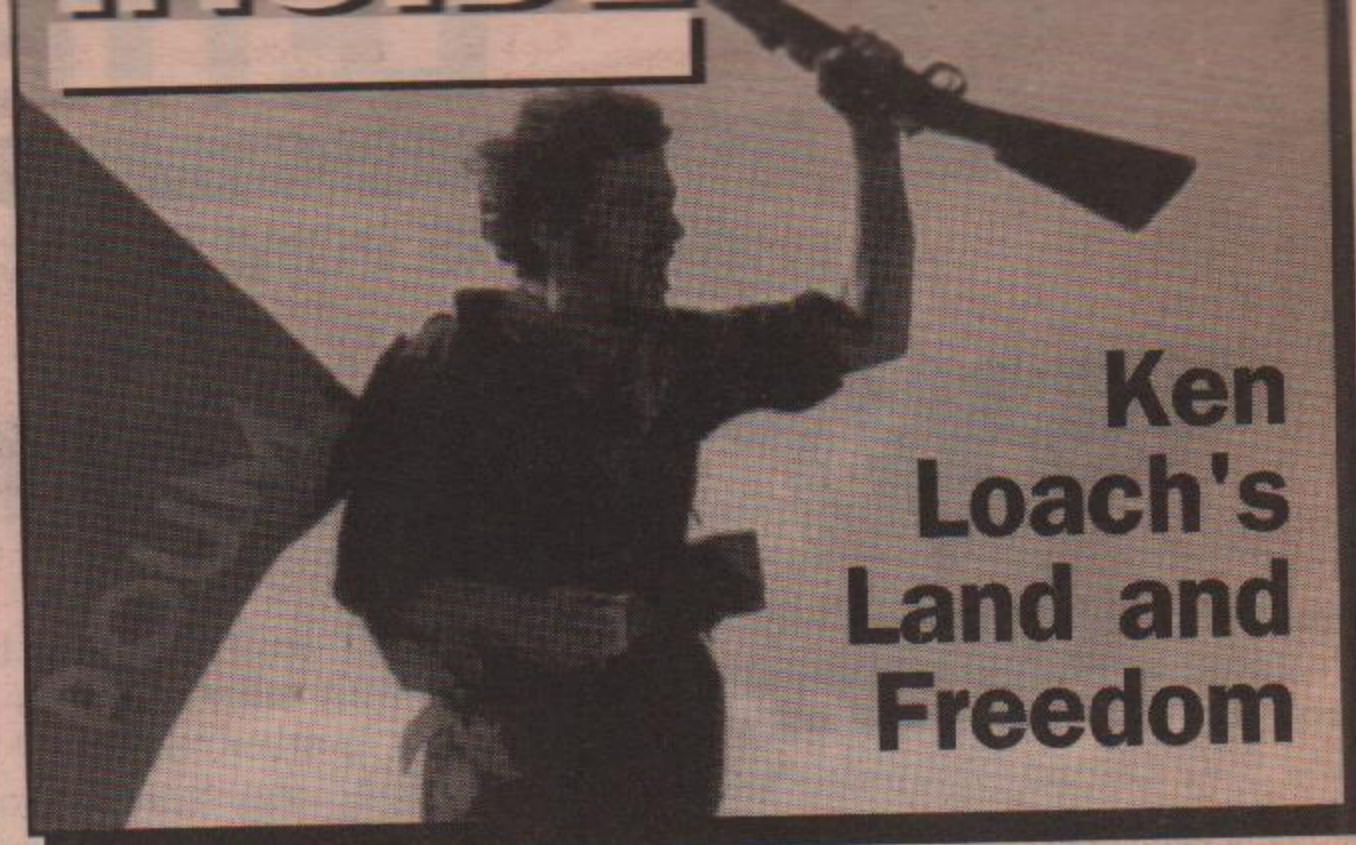


Menem met little opposition in his path to second term victory last May

GLOSSARY

- CGT:** General Labor Congress
- CTA:** Argentinian Workers Congress
- FREPASO:** Country Support Front
- MAS:** Movement towards socialism
- MOAS:** Movement of independent (autoconvocadas) organisations
- MST:** Socialist Workers Movement—a split from the MAS in 1990 led by Luis Zamora.
- MTA:** Argentinian Workers Movement
- Peronism:** The political movement named after General Peron, first elected at the end of the Second World War; it was a bourgeois populist movement that incorporated the trade unions and the ruling class in a project of welfarism and state capitalist industrial growth.
- PTP:** Workers' and People's Party
- PTS:** Workers for Socialism Party. The PTS came into existence in 1988 when it split from the main, historic party of Trotskyism in Argentina—the Movement for Socialism (MAS), led by Nahuel Moreno until his death in 1987.

WORKERS power



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

No 193 OCTOBER 1995 ★ Price 50p

March for justice! Unite against racism! Demonstrate

London 7 October
Manchester 28 October

Further details on page 2

Grudgingly, and two years too late, the courts have committed those suspected of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence for trial. Stephen's family made legal history by bringing a private prosecution for murder, after crown prosecutors abandoned the case.

The state showed no such reticence when it came to prosecuting anti-racist protesters who defended themselves against a police attack at Welling in October 1993. Faced with repeated acquittals of anti-racists charged with riot, the public prosecutors moved the trials to

Maidenhead in Kent, miles away from South East London. With a jury hand picked from the leafy suburbs they secured a combined total of over 20 years in jail for nine of the Welling defendants.

Time and again the actions of the police, the courts and the government reveal that British justice is racist justice.

This month every anti-racist should be mobilising to turn the anger against the racist justice system into action. More than twenty individual campaigns for the victims of police violence, harassment and the racist immigration laws have joined together to call a demo in London on Saturday 7 October. The organisers hope to launch a nationwide network of anti-racist groups.

Meanwhile the TUC sponsored demo, *Unite Against Racism!* takes place in Manchester on Saturday 28 October. Long on rhetoric, short on concrete action, the unions must be forced to fight for organised self defence against racist attack, the repeal of all immigration controls and actively support all campaigns for the victims of this racist system. ■

● Turn to page 2



NUCLEAR TESTING

Stop the tests! Free Tahiti!

JAQUES CHIRAC ordered the testing of nuclear bombs on the Mururoa atoll in the South Pacific to show the world that France was still a first rank imperialist power.

The site of the tests, thousands of miles from Paris, showed his total contempt for the peoples of the area.

In the face of an unprecedented wave of protests, Chirac detonated his bomb on 6 September and the sea boiled.

So too did the anger of thousands of Pacific islanders.

In Papeete, Tahiti, protesters defied French riot police and stormed the airport. Despite the arrival of extra troops and Foreign Legionnaires, the demonstrators continued their uprising, torching the plush tourist shops and hotels.

Throughout the South Pacific massive protests were staged, with thousands taking to the streets in Samoa and Kanaky (New Caledonia).

The world's media briefly focused on the uprising in Tahiti. But their main concern was elsewhere: the cat and mouse game between Greenpeace boats and the French navy, the



Continued on p14