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Socialist OUTLOOK

RUSSIA: western plans go awry

SOUTH AFRICA: WOSA puts down a marker

FRENCH youth fight pay cuts. STUDENT unions in crisis

BOSNIA: New convoy to Tuzla

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No. 59, March 26, 1994

FIGHT BACK

FOR OUR NHS!

ALL OVER Britain the Tory NHS reforms are driving hospitals into crisis and closure.

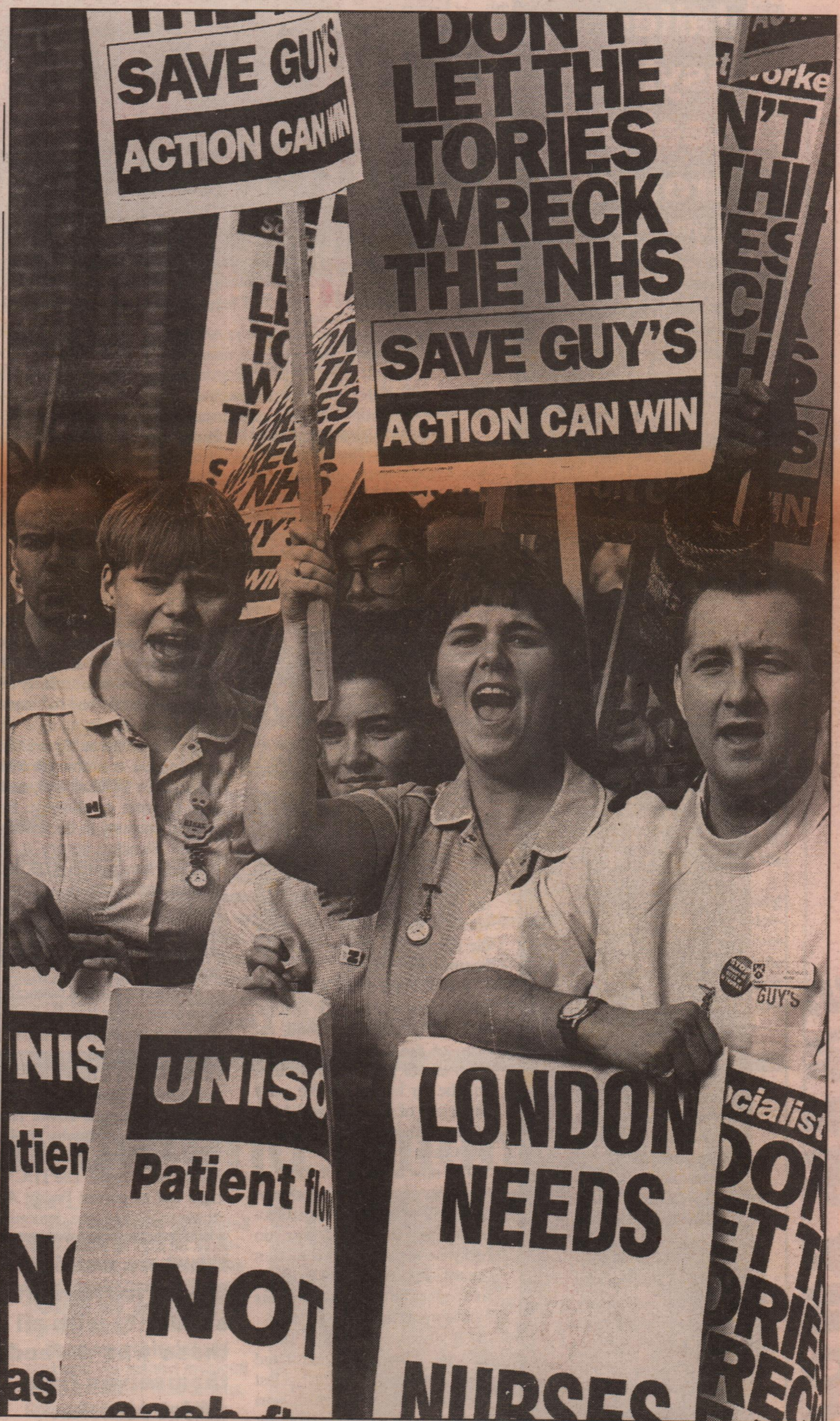
Guy's Hospital in London is just the highest profile victim of a wave of closures now also threatening Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other cities.

Even where hospitals stay open, cash for routine treatment is running out. In Redbridge and Waltham Forest in north east London, there is no money to buy any waiting list treatment at all for local people during 1994-5. Local Trust hospitals have been plunged into financial crisis.

Health workers are fighting back. At Guy's, unions have linked with consultants and with the local community to build a joint campaign.

But unions have been painfully slow to act, despite the threat to thousands of jobs. The fight must be stepped up, with strikes and occupations called where necessary to defend threatened beds and wards.

Time is running out. Get active. Defend our NHS!



NHS on the Danger List – SEE INSIDE page 5



Black leadership and the weight of organised labour are needed for successful counter-mobilisation of anti-racists

Racist violence hits Oxford

Oxford

There has been an abrupt increase in racist activity in east Oxford in recent weeks.

In Regent Street the home of a Somali family was badly damaged by fire. Police are treating it as arson: the family escaped but five members were hospitalised overnight to monitor the effects of poisoning by smoke.

On Cowley Road the house of a rabbi and prominent local leader of El Chaim was attacked with firebombs which failed to cause serious damage.

This attack has been ascribed variously to people outraged by the massacre of Palestinians in a Hebron mosque by a Jewish settler, or to fascists.

Graffiti

BNP and racist graffiti has appeared outside DSS offices and a community centre; a window was broken at the next-door Unemployed Workers and Claimants Union Office.

Former National Front organiser John Wilshaw, who served nine months for attacking a mosque in Aylesbury, Bucks works in Oxford. He claims to be a reformed character.

Two Kidlington men last year got off charges of participating in a BNP attack on an Anti Racist Alliance event in Isleworth, West London.

Jailed asylum seekers protest

AT THIS moment, hundreds of people seeking political asylum are on hunger strike in Home office 'detention centres' and other prisons in England.

On Friday 11 March some 150 joined about ten already on hunger strike since the previous Monday at Campsfield House, the new 200-place detention centre at Kidlington, Oxford run by Group 4.

About 70 are on strike at Haslar prison, Portsmouth. Almost all are from Africa and Asia. They have been held for months - some over a year - without charge or time limit, on the decision of individual immigration officers.

They demand to be free while their asylum applications are considered.

The government is trying to break the strike by moving strikers from prison to prison, by threats of deportation and confining them to their rooms.

Detainees are supposedly allowed free association. But they report force-feeding and other violence by immigration officers and Group 4 men. Campsfield and Harmondsworth are profit-making enterprises.

Three times as many asylum seekers, 720 last month, are being detained than a year ago.

It is part of an agreement made in secret by Europe's governments.

Labour's Graham Allen MP has called for an inquiry. Instead he should call to end to all immigration laws and detention centres.

■ CLOSE CAMPSFIELD demonstration, Saturday June 4, Kidlington, near Oxford.

Build on TUC demonstration!

By Nigel Fisher and Charlie Langford

THE MARCH 19 TUC demonstration in Tower Hamlets shows the way forward for the anti-racist movement.

With 60,000 people and countless trade union banners it was a magnificent show of solidarity with the black community of the East End. The fascists of the BNP and racists generally have had notice served on them that they will meet a united response from the trade union and anti-racist movement.

Anti-racists are still confronted with a huge struggle to combat racism in all its guises.

The immigration laws jail asylum seekers or prevent them from escaping from oppression. The police still criminalise black youth.

Racists are still attacking black people on the street and in their homes. Black people still face discrimination in housing, education and jobs. They suffer the worst of the bosses onslaught whilst at the same time are made the scapegoats for the crisis the bosses have created.

It is now far easier to take up anti-racism within trade unions, and to challenge the inbuilt racism of the labour movement. With labour movement input, it will be far harder for the petty sectarians of the ANL and ARA to feud about primacy in the movement.

It is now important to keep up the momentum. In May and June there will be local and Euro elections. The Tories are likely to do badly in both. We need to turn the anti-Tory mood into an effective fight. The only way to do this is to support the Labour Party.

Of course the trade union leaders will want to control and divert anti-racist activity, but last Saturday's demonstration was by trade union members rather

their leadership.

This needs to be built upon to ensure a movement based on the activity of rank and file trade unionists and anti-racists is created.

Breeding ground

Anti-racists and trade unionists must put pressure on the trade union leaders and Labour Party for policies which really combat the decaying social conditions which are a breeding ground for racism and fascism.

Creating new criminal offences is not the way to defeat racism. Using violence for whatever reason is already a criminal offence.

The problem is that the police force and the courts are thoroughly racist. What we need is labour movement solidarity with all those who defend themselves from racist attacks.

The Liberals run Tower Hamlets council - a council which refused the TUC demo permission to meet or disperse from council property in the borough.

The Tuesday before it also similarly harassed an NUT demo against racist cuts in section 11 funding (for specific educational provision for school students who do not have English as a first language).

The ruling Liberal councillors have been under (totally ineffective) investigation for racism by the national Liberal party since the election of a BNP councillor in the Isle of Dogs last October.

The disgrace of Tower Hamlets council shows why the Liberals will never be able to combat racism effectively. The TUC was right not to permit Paddy Ashdown to address the demonstra-

What we need is labour movement solidarity with all those who defend themselves from racist attacks.

tion.

There is a fascist grouping within the European parliament. The BNP have an ambition to become the British wing of that grouping. So far they have been prevented mainly by the British Tories being so right-wing that there is little political space for a fascist party to operate.

With the downturn in Tory fortunes that factor is now less powerful and it is likely that we will see a major push by the BNP in the forthcoming elections.

Tory policies have opened the way for racism and for the fascists. The situation in Bosnia shows where this road leads. This makes the actions of the Labour Party and trade unions critical.

They need to throw their full weight into the fight against racism and fascism.

They need to lead the fight for full employment, decent pay for all, proper housing, education and healthcare. There is no alternative.

Unity in Leeds

by Graham Smallwood

At the recent AGM of Leeds Campaign group the initiative was taken, at the suggestion of Socialist Outlook and Socialist Organiser supporters to organise a public meeting to co-ordinate activities around the March 19 TUC demonstration.

The public meeting, although relatively small represented a significant step forward.

Activists from the ARA, ANL, YRE and AFA along with socialists and trade unionists discussed the best ways of building the demonstration and working together locally.

Between 20 and 30 activists,

from the different campaigns, came together to distribute thousands of leaflets. It is hoped that after the demonstration we can continue to work together and perhaps establish a more permanent framework.

Pulling out

Unfortunately after contributing to the first meeting the SWP seem to have taken the decision to pull out of any joint activities.

At a recent SWP public meeting on racism with Tony Cliff Socialist Outlook and Socialist Organiser supporters were told they would not be allowed into the meeting.

It is hoped that the local SWP branch change their attitude and play a positive part in the joint fight against racism and fascism.

Stop TUC collaboration with Tories!



5,000 SHEFFIELD council workers have given a good example of how to fight the Tory anti-union laws.

Confronted with a choice of more wage cuts or massive redundancies at the hands of a Labour council which last year slashed their pay, they held an angry 2,500-strong meeting – and voted there and then for a one-day strike.

Officially disowned by union officials petrified that they might see their funds sequestered under the draconian Tory anti-union laws, strikers produced a defiant leaflet slamming those Labour councillors who had denounced their strike as illegal:

"The decision of a members' meeting of over 2,000 people on March 8 may be contrary to the Tories' anti union legislation – so what?"

"We will not passively accept a deterioration in council service."

This show of defiance follows the unofficial strikes by three branches of the college lecturers' union NATFHE, after Appeal Court judges had ruled that the union's ballot and March 1 strike call were unlawful.

Longer hours

The NATFHE action was called to oppose brutal new contracts to take effect from April 1, imposing longer hours, reduced holidays and 'flexible' working. In other words, the anti-union laws are now being used in earnest for their prime purpose – driving down the pay and conditions of the working class.

Already successive waves of legislation have outlawed solidarity action and mass picketing, leaving strikes like Burnalls isolated, and been used to sequester the entire assets of the NUM. But now an even more comprehensive net of legislation threatens to ensnare unions, aimed at preventing strikes ever being called.

The NATFHE leaders, disregarding their own 62% ballot vote for action, meekly buckled before the court threats, it is becoming increasingly clear that defiance of the law is ultimately the only answer.



No open door for unions: Tories like Heseltine simply exploit TUC signs of weakness

The legislation is almost impossible for unions to comply with. According to the Court of Appeal, the ballot stepped outside the rules by failing to notify college bosses of the individual names of every union member entitled to vote. One judge said the union records must be accurate to "within the number of fingers on two hands".

But NATFHE has 50,000 members. There is scarcely a union in the country, other than a minority in workplaces where all members pay contributions by check-off, which could not fall foul of this ruling, no matter how big the majority vote for action or how democratic the ballot.

These latest obstacles to the right to strike follow on the new laws which oblige union members to 'sign up' every three years for direct deduction of contributions (the DOCAS system), while allowing employers to refuse this facility.

Pulling out

Already some unions are facing massive loss of membership as a result, with increasing numbers of employers, including NHS Trusts, announcing that they will pull out of DOCAS.

The trust of Tory policy has always been quite explicit – to smash unions and drive down wages. Kenneth Clarke at the recent G7 meeting in Chicago boasted

that the cornerstone of Tory hopes of economic recovery was 'deregulation' – imposing legal shackles on unions while encouraging employers to smash through any remaining legislative protection for workers. British anti-union laws are more draconian than in almost any modern bourgeois democracy.

Wages councils

Major's gang have scrapped the wages councils which once guaranteed minimum pay to the most exploited; they have only just been overruled by the courts after years of opposing equal pay for part-time staff; and they are now at loggerheads with the European Union over their opposition to restrictions on child labour and the hours worked by school-age teenagers.

Ignoring all these facts, the TUC which has retreated down the line since the first anti-union laws in 1980, clings on the belief that there is some mileage in talks with the Tories.

On March 3, Treasury Minister Stephen Dorrell was welcomed into Congress House to speak to 300 union leaders and reps, spelling out his insistence that any public sector pay rises had to be earned through job-cutting 'efficiency'. He has been invited to address civil service unions on March 22.

On March 9, Liberal Democrat cam-

paigns organiser Des Wilson was appointed as the head of campaigning for the TUC. The next day, TUC leader John Monks was invited by Tory ministers to join talks on how to restore shattered trade links with Malaysia.

Spotting more signs of weakness, on March 17 Employment Secretary David Hunt made what BBC commentators described as a 'conciliatory' speech welcoming the TUC's recent reorganisation and offering a 'window of opportunity' for unions to play a positive role in the success of British industry.

Like Dorrell, Hunt tempered his few words of 'conciliation' – the pledge that there will be no new anti-union laws before this parliament – with arrogant demands that the unions break their links with the Labour Party and 'leave political posturing behind'.

Union branches, regions and this summer's conferences must give a prompt and unequivocal answer: they must back the example of the Sheffield council workers, and demand the unions break off all talks and collaboration with the Tories, which does nothing but strengthen the employers.

Instead unions should synchronise and mobilise their campaigns and mass action to defy and break the Tory laws.

Public sector unions must band together in a fighting alliance to smash the pay freeze and defend the welfare state.

Coordinate

The Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee, which has consistently campaigned to unshackle the unions, can play a leading role in coordinating the efforts of the left at this summer's conferences. Its April 9 steering committee should map out plans to pile pressure on to the collaborationist union bureaucrats.

With threats of redundancy running from top to bottom through every industry – including retail, banks and even telecom management – there can be no peace or security for workers or their unions until this hated, discredited, authoritarian government is defeated.

Lambeth call to defend union rights

LAMBETH Trades Council has called a conference for April 23 arising from the NATFHE judgement.

Under the slogan 'Fight for the Right to Strike', the conference seeks to bring together as many trade unionists as possible from across London to debate the way forward.

As the promotional leaflet points out:

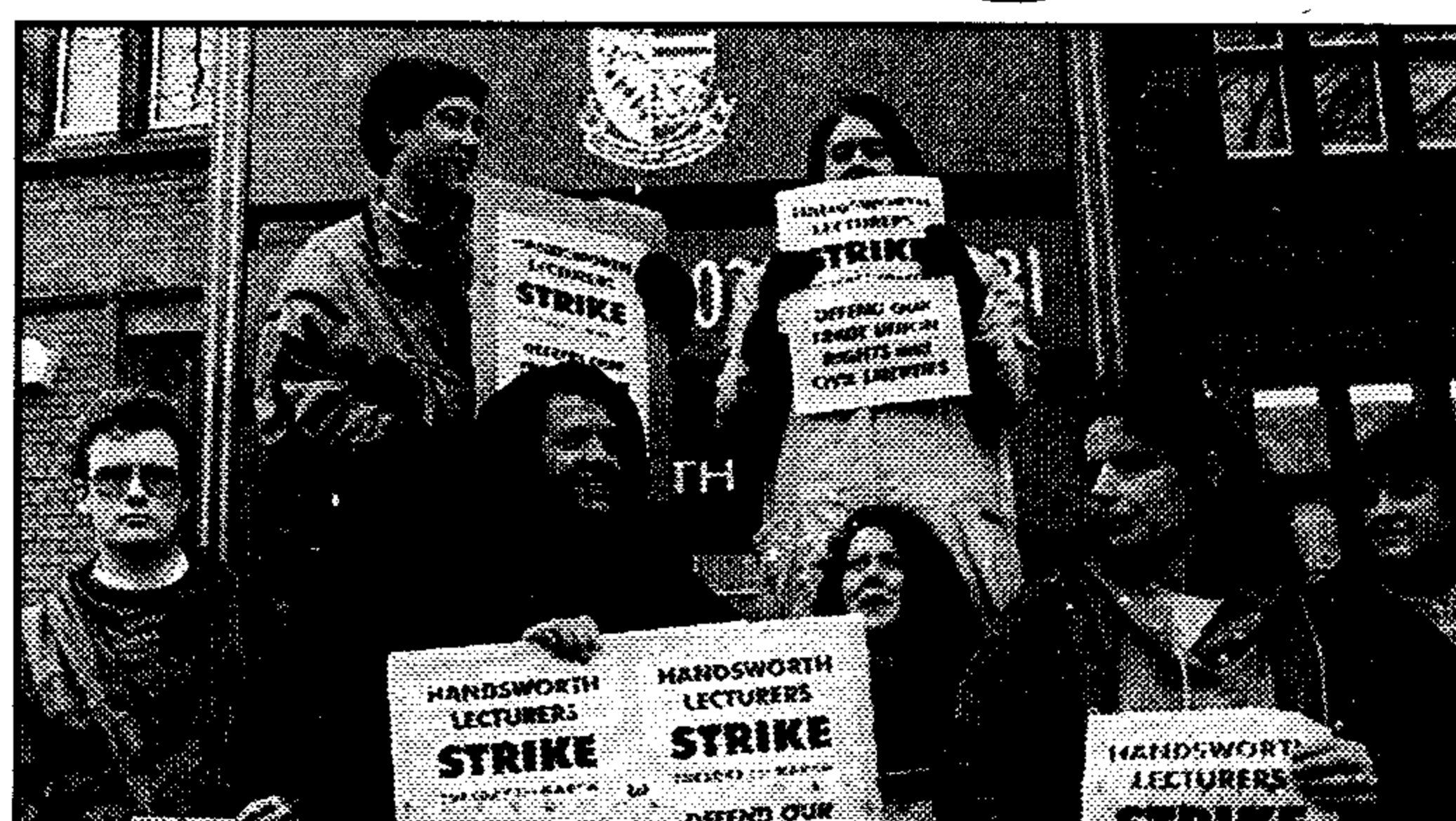
"According to the Tory judges, if a union's membership details have more than ten inaccuracies, then any ballot is unlawful.

Under these conditions, strike action is virtually impossible, and now that the government is funding any Tom Dick or Harry's court action against such 'unlawful actions', no trade union or shop floor activist is safe from the

courts."

The conference, scheduled for 9.30am to 1pm on Saturday April 23, will discuss the legal implications of the new situation and debate ways of fighting back.

Speakers will include a rank and file activist involved in the unofficial Tube strikes. Credentials £1 from TURC, 12/14 Thornton St, London SW9 0BL.



EDITORIAL

Labour's timid recipe for failure



Labour lacked even the courage to pledge a repeal of Tory VAT on fuel – let alone socialist policies

By Dave Osler

THE ROW sparked off when the shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, claimed that Labour's recent policy statement, *Financing Infrastructure Investment: Promoting a Partnership Between Public and Private Finance (FII)*, had 'stolen a march on the Tories' provided journalists with rather sexier copy than the contents did.

It's a dull subject, perhaps. Yet Britain is crying out for infrastructural renewal. Some 5,000 miles of primary roads are in urgent need of repair.

One sewer pipe in six is more than 100 years old. If something is not done soon, we could quite literally end up in the brown stuff. So what is Labour saying?

The document, co-authored by Brown, employment spokesman John Prescott and trade and industry spokesman Robin Cook, is poorly presented and hardly racy reading.

Its basic proposition is that as long as any given item of infrastructure is up and running, who gives a toss who paid for it?



Co-author John Prescott

Labour has always based its economic thinking on what used to be called the mixed economy. Prescott developed similar themes for British Rail during his stint at transport, with little ideological flack from the Left. Labour Keynesians such as Roger Berry find both good and bad in the document.

Infrastructure

For their part, the Conservatives have no qualms whatsoever about funding major infrastructural projects, provided they are in Malaysia and that there's a nice little drink in for their business buddies.

Even the Bolsheviks' New



Tory Treasury guru Portillo

Economic Policy conceded the role of private capital in the process of socialist construction. So is FII revisionism run rampant or just plain common sense?

As Prescott rightly remarked, the document is about accountancy, not socialism. Socialists can be forgiven for asking, why bother with the Labour Party when you could join the Institute of Chartered Accountants instead?

To secure for the workers, by hand or by brain, a 49 per cent stake in the Chipping Sodbury by-pass is now the cutting edge of Labour's proposals for making good the disrepair wrought by 15 years of free market van-

dalism.

While the Tory Right has tried to paint FII as 'a new disguise for sin', the Tory Left pointedly welcomed it in principle.

Reaction from the private sector, from the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors to Alistair Morton, chairman of both Eurotunnel and the government's Private Finance Initiative, has also been overwhelmingly favourable.

There is more than a grain of truth in Liberal Democrat claims that it is now difficult to slip a treasury bond between the two major parties on the question.

Even from a social democratic rather than a Marxist light, Labour's latest thinking is astonishingly timid given the scale of the task at hand.

FII seems to accept the current level of public sector investment as given. Yet in other places it rightly points out that the public Sector Borrowing Requirement is an accountancy fiction virtually unknown in other countries.

Borrowing

If governments can always borrow more cheaply than private companies, as FII rightly points out, why doesn't Labour put its cards on the table and say it will increase government borrowing to fund essential investments?

The probable answer is the treasury team's ingrained fear of allowing the media to brand Labour's plans as 'tax and spend'.

Many on the Left are worried about one sentence in particular: 'We also see a limited application in the provision of private finance for publicly led projects in education and health.'

What the advantages are, other than bolstering the party's private enterprise credentials, are not spelt out.

Nor are some of the drawbacks of private sector involvement. Private companies can and so go bust, especially under a Government hell-bent on ensuring a recession a decade.

The extension of London underground's Jubilee Line to Docklands was made conditional of £400 million funding from Olympia and York, developers of Canary Wharf. Their spectacular bankruptcy put the project back years.

But probably the most important criticism of FII is that it is devoid of macroeconomic context.

Instead of drawing up an isolated check-list, plans for rebuilding Britain's crumbling infrastructure should form part of a socialist government's wider strategy for generating full employment. The big picture has clearly not been thought through.

And if Labour sticks to its guns and enforces health and safety standards and the right to trade union recognition on Britain's building sites, let alone try to extend social ownership, it may find that the traditionally Tory civil engineering and construction firms are not so friendly after all.

HOME NEWS

Fighting for full employment

PLANS for the Socialist Campaign Group Network (SCGN) conference 'Fighting for Full Employment – Socialist Policies for the 21st Century' are well underway after the meeting of the National Forum on March 20.

The conference will be held at Manchester Town Hall on June 11 between 11am and 5.30pm and will open with a plenary session setting the agenda for the day.

There will then be five concurrent workshops on unemployment and strategies for full employment and the following: the rise of racism and

fascism; the international context; arms conversion and public ownership; the welfare state and the trade unions.

The workshops will be followed by the final plenary session which will take report backs and voting on resolutions.

The national forum also discussed model resolutions it will be promoting for Labour Party conference.

The SCGN will prioritise resolutions on full employment, youth rights, the Child Support Act, public ownership, universal benefits and the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights resolution.

The forum also passed two emergency resolutions. The first regretted the recent refusal of some Labour MPs to vote for an equal age of consent at 16 for gay men in line with current party policy.

It heavily criticised Campaign Group members Bob Cryer and Bob Parry for their failure to vote for 16.

The second motion condemned the TUC for inviting Treasury Minister, Stephen Dorrell to meet with them. SCGN members in the trade unions will be taking this emergency resolution to this round of trade union conferences.

The forum decided to push



Campaign Group MP Jeremy Corbyn prepares to show the flag

for the Campaign Group slate for the NEC to have a clear political platform and will be discussing this with the MPs.

The forum called on network members to plan meetings and rallies in support of

the slate in June and July.

■ Details of the conference, model resolutions and information about the network from SCGN, 3 Blades House, Kennington London SE11.

Red faces in Redbridge as thousands join the queue

Emergencies only as cash runs out

By John Lister, London Health Emergency

WAITING list NHS treatment for over 300,000 residents of north east London will grind to a halt in April, as the Redbridge and Waltham Forest health authority runs out of money.

The crisis situation spells out the desperate plight of some health authorities under the Tories' crazy market system.

The authority faces an end of year deficit of up to £6 million, with a further reduction in its budget for 1994/5 and in following years as a result of the Tory health reforms.

The only contracts health chiefs will place for 1994-5 will be for emergencies, maternity, urgent cases, and treating those waiting over 18 months.

Rocketing

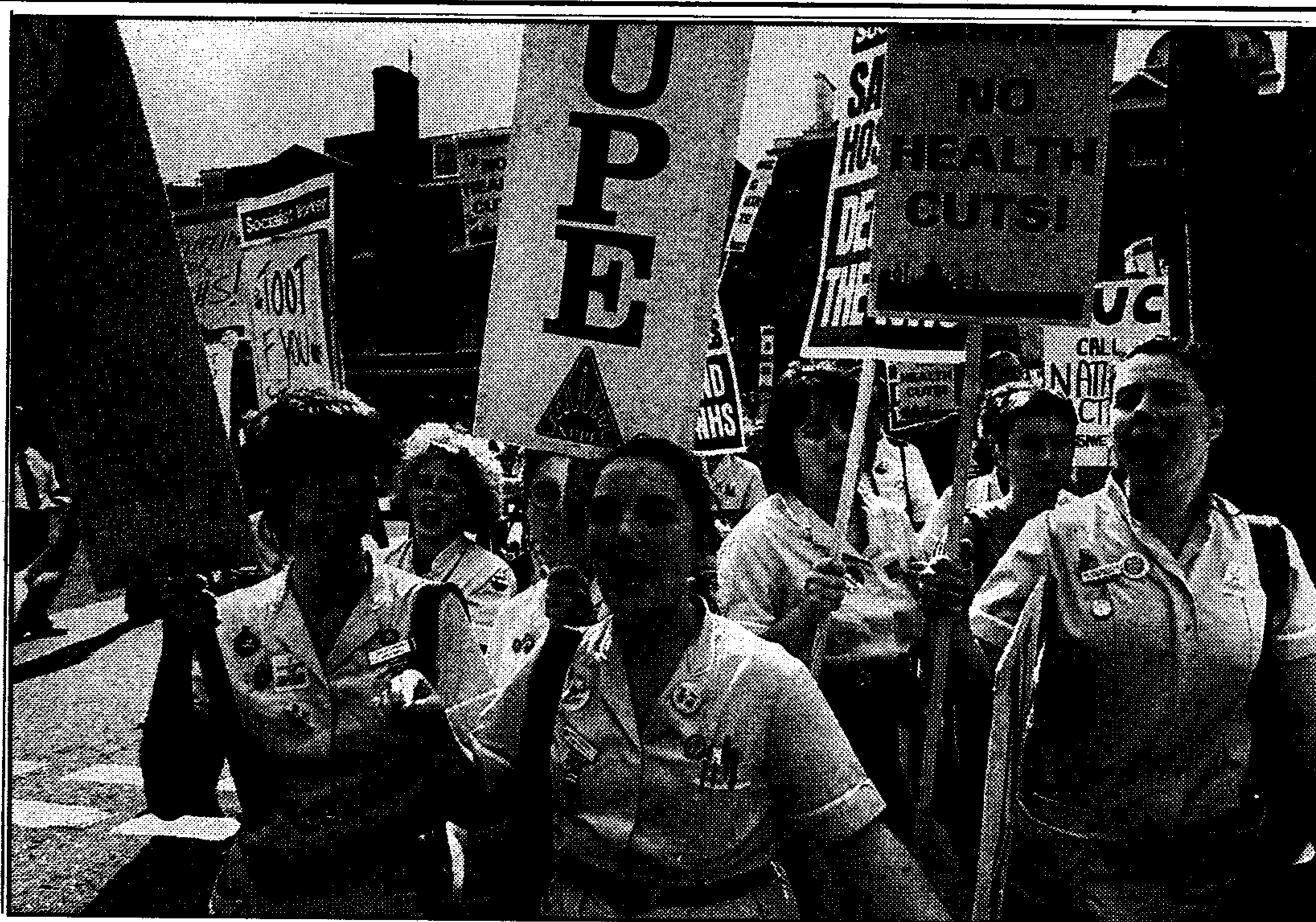
There will be no elective admissions to Whipps Cross or the new £70 million King George Hospital at Goodmayes. Waiting lists at King George's, which rose 38% in the three months to last November, will rocket upwards.

The cuts mean that Redbridge Healthcare Trust which runs King George's faces a worse financial crisis, with a projected £2.5 million deficit next year.

Already the Trust has axed 35 jobs to save £600,000. Further cuts seem inevitable.

To add insult to injury, Redbridge residents could find that while they face a minimum 12 month wait for elective admission to their brand new local hospital, patients from neighbouring Barking & Havering could be admitted before them, because their health authority has just increased its contract with the Redbridge Trust.

Unions at King George's have already begun to organise a campaign of resistance to any further cuts, while Whipps Cross has seen consistent struggle against repeated cutbacks by the crisis-ridden Forest Healthcare Trust.



How greedy GP fundholders hold on to funds

585 fundholding family doctors are expected to share out a surplus of £28 million of the cash allocated to them for patient care last year.

This is the amount left unspent, after an expected £4 million is returned to regional health authorities, according to figures obtained by Darlington MP Alan Milburn.

The government has no power to demand repayment of unspent surpluses – although health ministers insist that the money cannot be pocketed by the doctors themselves, and has to be spent on their practices.

This vast pool of spare cash has rapidly increased.



Given the present health care costs, Mr Frampton, I'm afraid you can't afford to go on living.

Rip-off

The region facing the biggest rip-off is NE Thames, where the average fund-holding GP clung on to more than £1 of every £6 allocated – a cool £77,000 per doctor.

These figures fuel growing criticism of the controversial system, which gives fundholding GPs a much more generous budget per patient than given to District Health Authorities, but follows this up with only minimal monitoring of their performance.

Questions are being asked in some regions about the apparent link between vast under-spending by fundholders and the rapid increase in numbers of fundholders' patients admitted to hospitals as emergencies.

Emergencies bill

Health authorities are required to pick up the bill for all residents who receive emergency hospital care, while fundholders are supposed to pay from their budgets for elective treatment.

The West Midlands Health Monitoring Unit points out that Coventry DHA saw a massive 19% increase in emergency admissions from fundholders' patients in the first year of the scheme, against an increase of just 6.5% from non-fundholders. By contrast elective admissions from fundholders decreased by over 13%, com-

pared with 2% from non-fundholders.

Of course the more publicised aspect of fundholding is the emergence of a 'two tier' service within the NHS, with GPs using their purchasing power to force local Trusts to give preferential treatment to their patients, ahead of others in the queue.

Fast-track

A recent BMA survey of 173 hospitals showed that 73 of them were offering preferential services to fundholders' patients: 41 were offering 'fast-track', more rapid admission.

But this claimed 'advantage' for the patients of fund-holders could soon be wiped out by government proposals to make all GPs fundholders.

Precisely how such a chaotic system could operate alongside District Health Authorities, and with every fundholder trying to score an advantage over every other, has not been explained.

Not everyone can jump the queue at once!

For a FREE copy of Health Emergency newspaper, send 25p stamp and your name and address to LHE, 446, Uxbridge Rd, London W12 0NS

Case exposes collapse of mental health care

THE BLINKERED determination of ministers and NHS chiefs to push through massive bed closures in London's psychiatric hospitals has opened the door to disaster.

The publication of the inquiry report on the tragic case of discharged schizophrenic Christopher Clunis, who stabbed a man to death on a tube platform in December 1992, revealed not only a catalogue of failure by five different agencies, but a complete absence of any overall control or chain of responsibility to ensure that community care can work.

No matter how many high-sounding 'guidelines' may be published in response to disasters, the system that has emerged is a total shambles.

There is no individual or body with the authority to compel cash-strapped local health Trusts, purchasing authorities, social services and relevant voluntary groups to sit down and plan out a comprehensive service.

Instead each of them tends to seek to balance its books at the expense of the other, leaving the police to tackle the problems that can arise when a potentially violent patient is left without care or support.

While the holes in district-level provision are big enough, there is no London-wide strategy for community care: instead councils throughout the capital have been left without the cash to create a proper infrastructure of day care and other community-based services for people with mental illness.

The government in 1988 specifically rejected recommendations from Mrs Thatcher's advisor Sir Roy Griffiths that there should be a minister for Community Care.

Dodging blame

But Bottomley has also refused to accept responsibility for the collapse of the fragmented and under-resourced system her government has put in place, attempting to shuffle off the blame onto under-funded boroughs.

The inquiry report called for an increase in provision of acute mental illness beds, of which there is a dire and chronic shortage in inner London, and more secure units for the treatment of severely disturbed patients.

Even the Tomlinson Report, proposing drastic cuts in medical and surgical hospital beds, called 18 months ago for an urgent review of the adequacy of provision of

acute psychiatric admission beds. This has been ignored.

Instead all Bottomley now offers is another £10m for provision of community-based services.

London Health Emergency has consistently exposed the lack of proper community-based psychiatric services to replace the thousands of mental health beds closed since 1984, and warned of the pressure on acute mental illness beds in the capital.

Information Director John Lister called for an immediate injection of cash to tackle the problem. He said:

"It is a scandal that it takes a tragedy like this to gain attention for the neglect of mental health services, and the collapse of the so-called community care policy. Psychiatric wards all over inner London are bursting at the seams, with many showing beds more than 100% occupied."

"Even now the government is throwing £6 million into subsidising new voluntary sector schemes designed to close down 150 more mental health beds in London, while as this report shows there are already too few psychiatric beds to meet the needs of desperately ill patients. Immediate action is needed to stop further suffering."

HOME NEWS

UNISON Local Government Conference

Promising signs in the gloom

**By Doug Thorpe
Islington UNISON
'A' Branch**

DELEGATES attending the first local government conference of UNISON on March 4 could be forgiven for feeling like extras on a film set.

National paid officials clearly saw the conference more as a cross between an exercise in crowd control and a sound check rather than a policy making meeting.

This was the first significant national conference in UNISON since the merger of NALGO, NUPE and COHSE. To ex-NALGO delegates the differences quickly became apparent.

There were far fewer paper sellers outside the doors reflecting the reduction in numbers of delegates from left organisations. Inside there was much more rigid control, no stalls from political groups, and no leafletting allowed.

Even requests for printing or distribution had to be approved by the standing orders committee under the "guidance" of the ubiquitous Roger Poole, whom many of us had last seen on our television screens selling out the ambulance workers a few years ago.

It wasn't long before cracks began to appear in the veneer of efficiency. Towards the end of the first day the management of proceedings degenerated into farce as it became apparent that the voting figures allocated to branches bore no relationship to real membership.

Delegates poured up to the rostrum to protest at wrong figures, as much as 2,000 votes out in one branch, and the conference had to be adjourned in the middle of the first card vote.

The next day officials

brazened it out and insisted the numbers could not be changed. The results of subsequent card votes, particularly the closer ones including an amendment deleting the call for a national ballot for a one day strike, were clearly of questionable validity.

The key debate over cuts and the pay freeze took place on the second day. Service Group Executive (SGE) succeeded in defeating any and all proposals for specific national strike action over cuts, privatisation or the pay freeze.

Balloons

On the devastation of local government by cuts and Compulsory Competitive Tendering, all the SGE had to offer was the usual balloon-waving campaigning.

While they made much of their support for a Day of Action they resolutely opposed and defeated a proposal for a national strike on this day (whenever it is, they couldn't give a date).

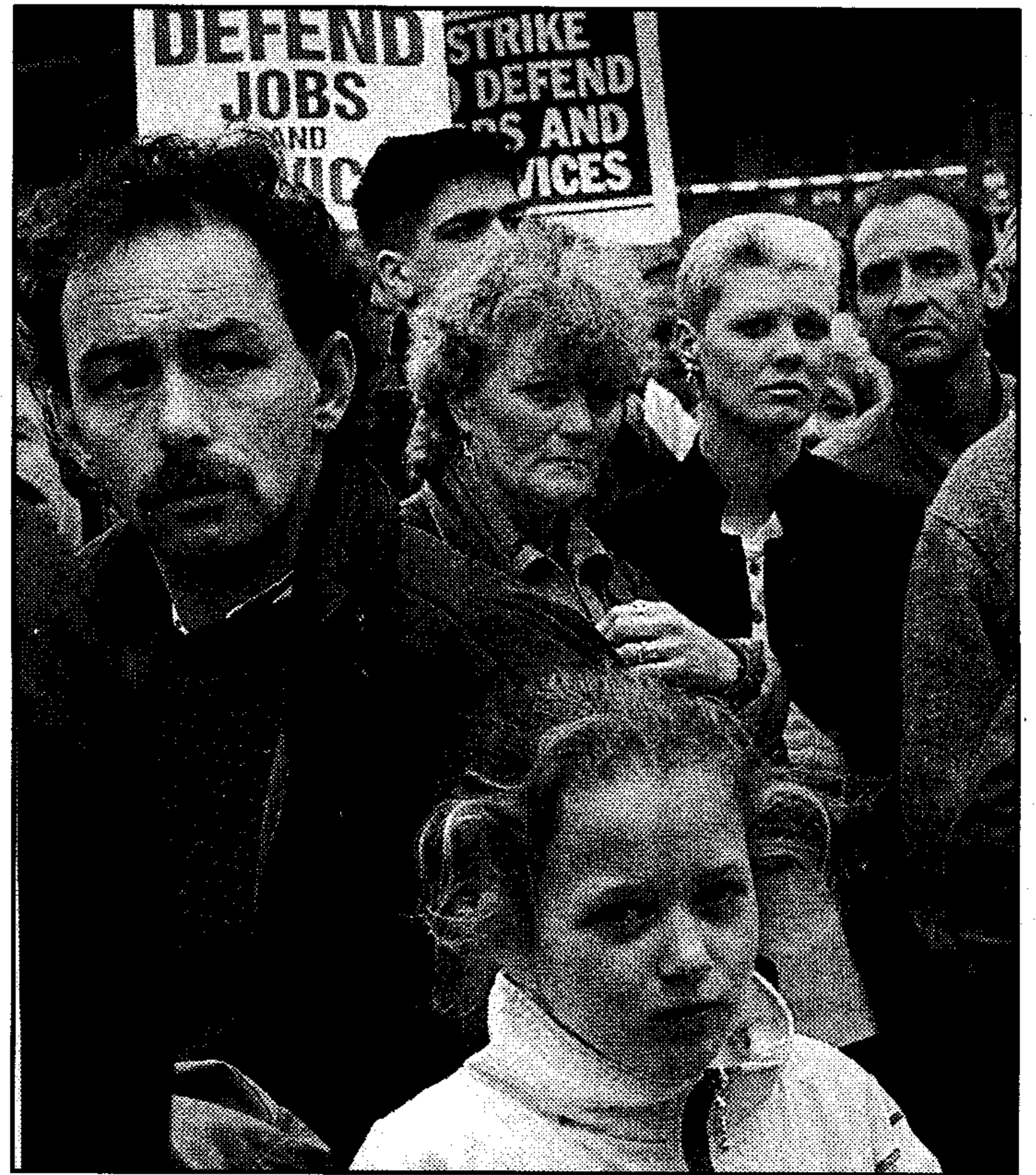
They said this would be illegal and, as *Morning Star* supporter Judy Cotter said for the SGE, "a kamikaze action that would destroy our union."

If the executive were bereft of ideas the challenge from the left was not particularly sharp either. Speeches were not well made and showed some confusion.

There were some promising signs amongst the gloom. Although the bureaucracy won all the crucial votes their margin of victory was small. The proposal for a national one day strike got 47% of the vote on a card vote.

On the final day the Executive lost a number of votes over lesser issues and the left showed some organisation, successfully moving the agenda along to reach motions that had been put at the end of the agenda by the standing orders committee in the hope that they would not be reached.

One of these motions which



Jobs and services under threat - but UNISON chiefs are scared of strikes

was carried calls on the NEC and political fund conference to consider removing sponsorship from UNISON sponsored Labour MPs (ie David Blunkett) who did not vote for the age of consent to be lowered to 16 for gay men.

Organise

The crucial issue for the left is still the need for organisation. A fringe meeting called under the heading 'Building a Fight-back' was sponsored by 25 branches and showed a militant spirit that was absent from the conference itself.

The organisers (SWP) have promised a recall meeting for sponsoring branches but it is not clear whether they can be

persuaded of the need for an ongoing, democratic structure as opposed to a series of ad hoc meetings called by them.

The other strand of organisation is through a number of regional caucuses that have formed, most notably the North East Broad Left and the London CFDU.

The London CFDU, is supporting an initiative to co-ordinate the regional caucuses at a national level.

Both of these initiatives are welcome and preferably can be drawn together to form one national left organisation.

For this to happen trust needs to be built and past antagonisms overcome.

This can only be done on the basis of democratic structures.

TRADE UNION NEWS

Women's TUC sees light on Tory Child Support Act

**By an NCU
delegate**

IN A MOOD of defiance at this year's Women's TUC, delegates decided now is the time to fight against the Tories attack on single mothers and to build the campaign for the repeal of the Child Support Act (CSA).

In a very powerful speech

Audrey Wise MP, president of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) moved the motion on the CSA.

It confirmed 'total opposition to any legislation which attacks carers claiming benefits in any way, plunges absent parents into poverty or fails to improve the situation of the children'.

Punitive

The resolution recognised the punitive nature of the CSA and called on the TUC to 'draw up proposals which give real support to children and their carers, including...the setting of universal child benefit at a realistic level which reflects the true cost of caring for and supporting children; the establishment of state funded, quality, affordable childcare facilities'.

This motion represents a big change - last year's conference was split down the middle on the question.

There was a growing recognition that in the name of putting children and lone parents first this vicious Tory government

does not care, and that the CSA represents an ideological attack on single parents and women in particular.

Socialist Outlook has always argued that this is the case and activists need to build on this change in mood and take the campaign into the wider labour movement.

The Transport and General Workers Union played a very important role in organising a fringe meeting on the CSA. In the context of the International Year of the Family they have also issued a Single Mothers' Charter.

Worst record

Despite all the talk about family values, the UK has the worst record in Europe on maternity, paternity and parental rights and public sector childcare.

The National Union of Teachers motion, seconded by the NCU, highlighted the alarm and anger many women feel at the way the government has attacked single mothers by linking them with the rise of crime and delinquency, school failure and

truancy, and accused them of being a drain on state funds.

It stressed the hypocrisy of the government and rejected completely the myth that single mothers are irresponsible. It raised the question of providing support for single mothers who wish to go out to work - with a special emphasis on childcare provision.

Both the T&G and USDAW have also highlighted the need to replace the act with a system of support that benefits women and children.

Socialists need to discuss how to build an effective, united campaign to repeal the CSA which brings together all those who oppose it with the labour movement.

Activists should raise the issue in their unions putting pressure on the TUC General Council to organise a demonstration. We should also be pressuring the Labour Party to do more.

As a part of this process people should build support for the Conference on the Child Support Act taking place in April.

Just Out!
New and updated edition of
ARMAGEDDON IN EUROPE
Why we defend multi-ethnic
Bosnia

By Geoff Ryan, 48pp

Send £2.10p (inc p&p) to Socialist Outlook,
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Time for NUT left to join forces

**By Roy Leach,
Secretary
Oxfordshire NUT
(Personal
capacity)**

THIS EASTER over a thousand delegates will gather at the NUT annual conference in Scarborough.

Media attention will, as always, be focused on this most political of (teacher) union conferences where 'executive bashing' has become almost routine.

Unable to win the vote in key debates the new realist leadership resorted to overturning conference decisions on the executive where they have an increasingly tenuous majority.

The results of this year's executive elections (half the seats are re-elected each year) offer the possibility of the long-awaited breakthrough by the left.

Even the SWP revoked their policy of refusing to 'get their hands dirty' and are standing candidates on the Socialist Teachers' Alliance slate and are likely to see one or two of their comrades elected.

The conference agenda has once again been set by the left with STA motions being prioritised for debate in five out of eight sections of the agenda.

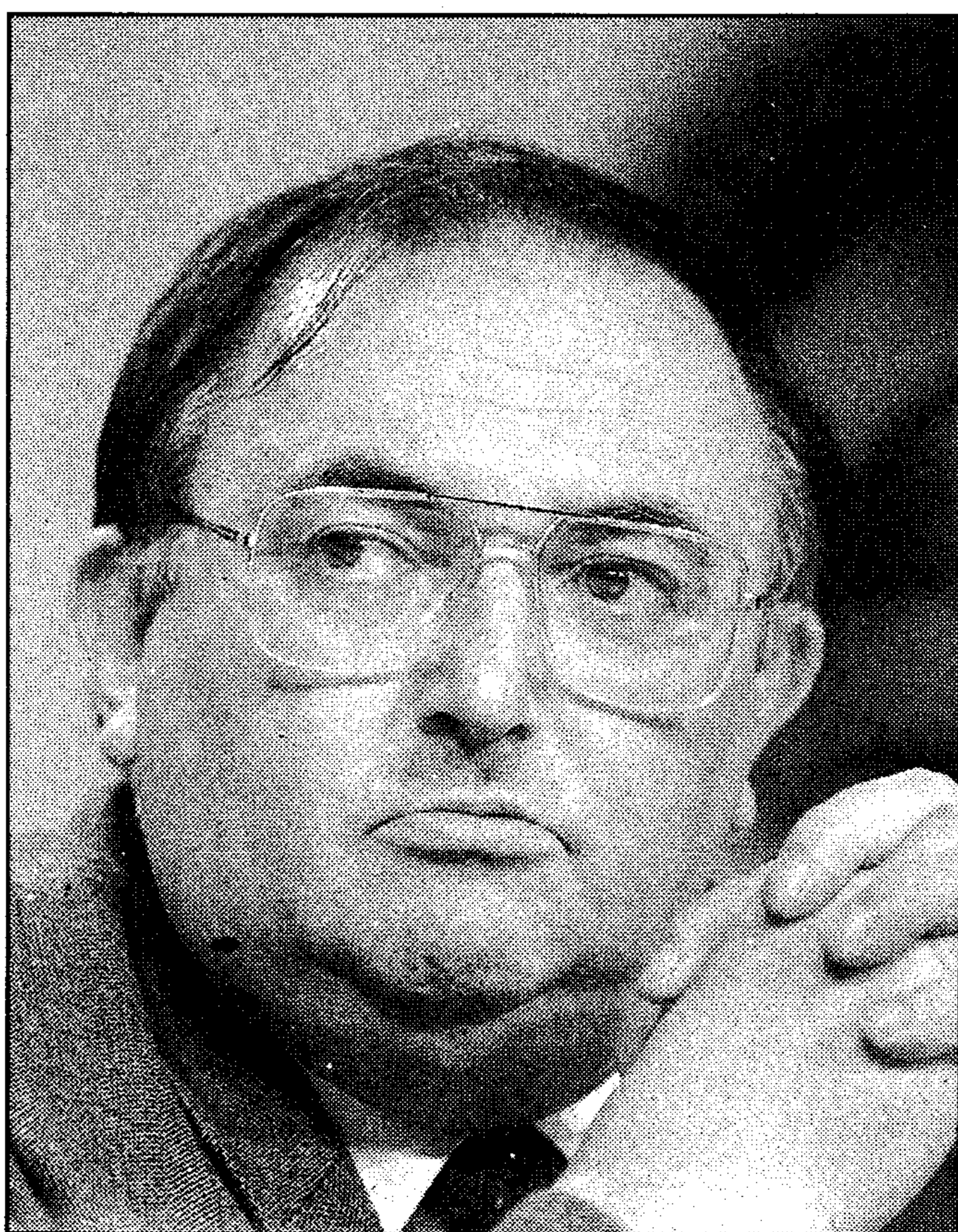
Backing boycott

Last year the conference was dominated by the SATs issue. Now, following a second overwhelming ballot result, General Secretary Doug McAvoy, with his eyes set on five more years as Britain's top paid union bureaucrat has nailed his colours to the boycott mast and whipped the spineless right wing executive majority into line.

So the key debates will be on salaries and conditions of service. Although the government has agreed a pay 'rise' of 2.9% for teachers they are not funding it.

Most local authorities, having budgeted for less and with balances depleted by years of capping induced cuts, have passed the costs onto school budgets with little or no extra cash.

The inevitable consequences will be redundancies, larger class sizes and worsened condi-



Broad but by no means left: NUT General Secretary Doug McAvoy hopes to ride tide of anger over SATS to win a new term of office.

tions of service. Conference will be presented with the stark choice between the failed casework and atomised local action strategy of the executive or a national campaign alongside other public sector unions.

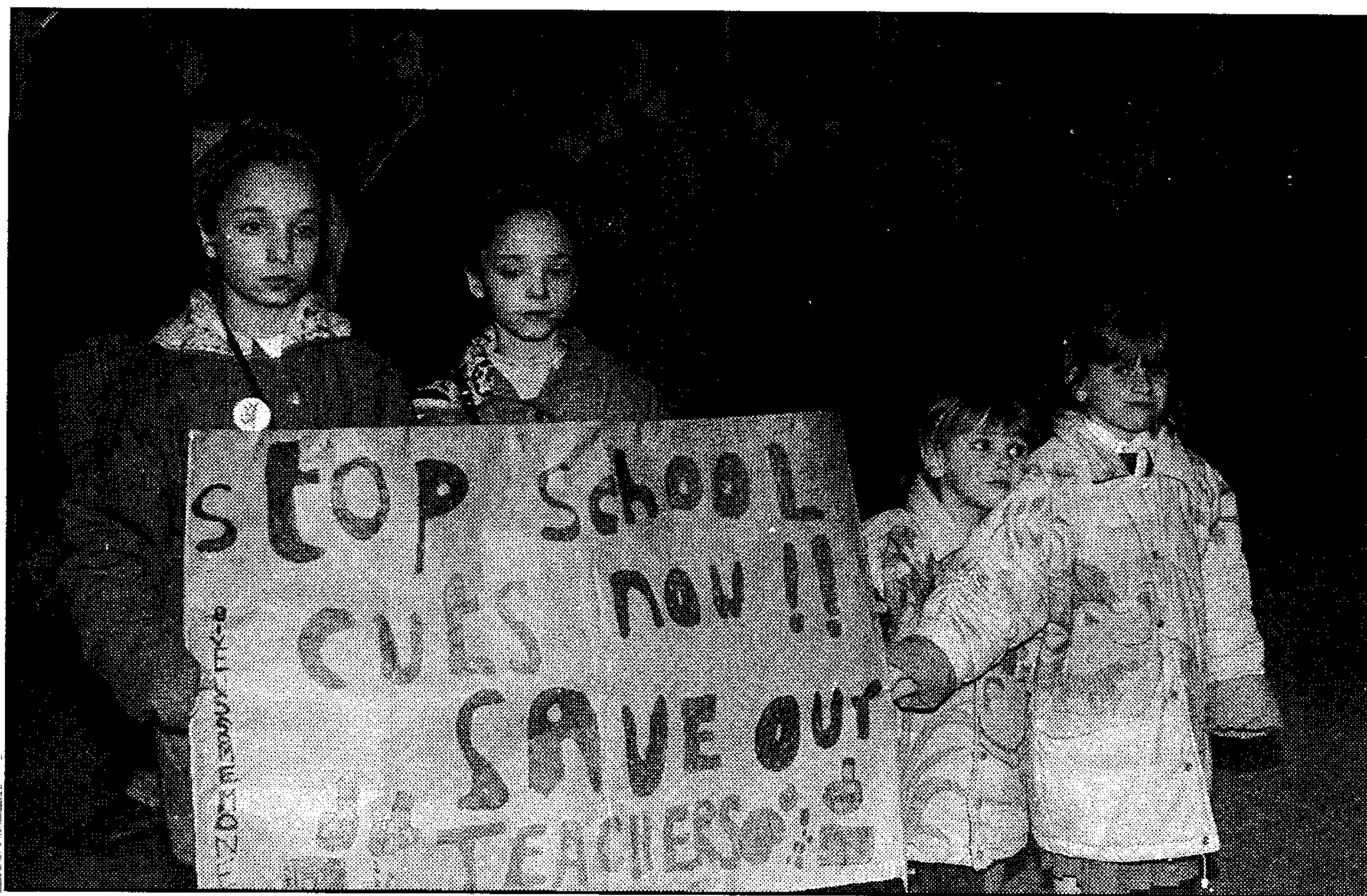
Recent advice issued by the 'five teacher associations' (which includes the scab PAT) is all about managing redundancies 'fairly' and shows that the new realists have learned nothing from the past 14 years.

The recent High Court decision against the lecturers union NATFHE poses a massive threat to the NUT with its infamous membership computer.

The motion on the anti-union laws, to be moved by SO supporter Roy Leach, exposes the complete failure of the union and the TUC to seriously confront the Tories' laws.

The consequences of this policy are clear - further shackles imposed on unions - yet an executive amendment will seek to maintain the union's craven kowtowing to every piece of reactionary legislation the Tories (and judges) can dream up.

Other lively debates are likely around anti-racism, Section 11 and performance related pay (PRP).



School youth join protests at £4m cuts in school spending by Walsall council

ist abuse and attacks.

Last year's conference voted for a national ballot for a boycott of appraisal because of its links with PRP. The leadership's failure to implement this decision will provide yet another clear example of their lack of fitness to lead.

There are two left formations - the STA and the smaller Campaign for a Democratic Fighting Union. Both are genuine broad lefts and there are no principled obstacles to their merger. Yet this is vigorously opposed by the SWP and a few non-aligned socialists who argue that this would represent a shift to the right and a dilution of socialist politics within the union.

Democracy

They fail to understand that the STA is not a united front of revolutionary marxists but a genuine broad left in which a commitment to union democracy, accountability and defence of members' interests should be the touchstones of membership.

The left in the NUT is the best placed of all to create a genuine class-struggle union and yet the sectarianism of the SWP threatens this and the hard won gains of the past years.

As a result an open 'unity caucus' has been formed with the goal of building a genuine broad left which can mount the challenge to the right wing and new realists that teachers and the trade union movement so desperately need.

Re-run call for UNISON ballot

By Terry Smith

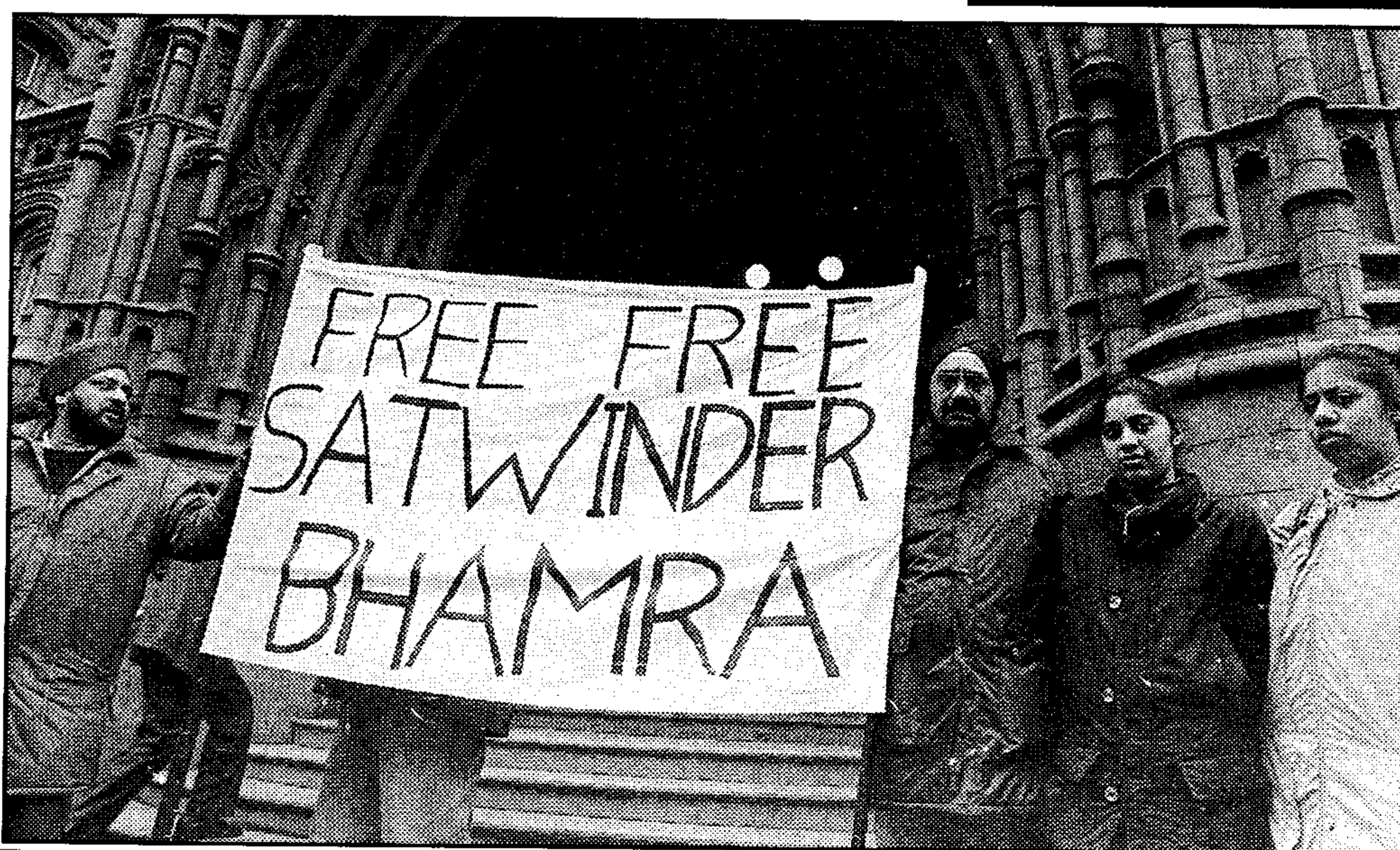
A re-run of the ballot for Regional Convenor, the senior elected post in the London Region of UNISON has been demanded after a series of irregularities came to light at the first meeting of the union's London Regional Council.

In the disputed election, left wing candidate Geoff Martin tied with Debbie Long, each receiving 59 votes. But under the proportional voting system used, Long won the post on the basis of more first preferences.

However it then emerged that a string of delegates who would have voted for Geoff Martin had been denied ballot papers, with officials claiming their registration papers must have been 'lost in the post'.

Martin, branding the ballot 'a total shambles', has now written to UNISON General Secretary Alan Jinkinson, demanding a fresh ballot.

He and several prominent left wingers were elected to the Regional Executive, with UCH strike leader Candy Udwin topping the poll.



Satwinder Bhamra has been falsely imprisoned for 11 years. A protest picket on March 9 marked the anniversary.

HOME NEWS

South Africa in turmoil

An electoral campaign made in USA

THE ELECTIONS taking place in South Africa on the 27th and 28th April open up the risk of important political battles during the few weeks of campaigning, reports PIERRE FRANÇOIS in this second (and concluding) article.

THE RECENT evolution of the ANC has opened the door to all kinds of possibilities. At its base the organisation is almost totally disjointed, except in a few regions which function in a quasi-independent way from the 'centre'.

These include central Natal, which is in the hands of the charismatic Stalinist leader Harry Gwala, and the Eastern Cape. The latter is a totally deprived region on the economic plane but one in which the leaders of the mass movement of the 1980s still have influence.

Mandela and the coterie that surrounds him try to complete this demobilisation by constantly appealing for 'calm' and insisting that everything is 'under control'.

Demobilise

The electoral campaign is consciously designed to demobilise whatever militant energy remains. Thanks to the 'judicious' counsels of a team of American experts sent by President Clinton, all energy is directed into a primarily media based campaign.

Moreover, the 'mass' meetings organised by the ANC are modelled on the 'population consultations' dear to the heart of the American president with 'questions' and 'answers' from a specially selected audience.

The South African left, whose scattered ranks operate both within and without the ANC, has been seen to be largely neutralised since 1990. For example, the trade unionists of COSATU, who wanted to take forward the debate on the programme for economic construction, have had to admit defeat.

Failure

Their efforts to give a mass content to the social issues at stake failed to raise the interest of a substantial part of public opinion.

Of course the lack of enthusiasm in the mass movement is also a consequence of the economic crisis, which severely affects the popular layers; not just the underclass and unemployed, who make up more than 50% of

the Black population, but also trade unionists in work.

But is this a reason for total capitulation – without even batting an eye lid, as

has been the case since COSATU's special conference last autumn – by becoming part of the ANC's electoral slate even before trying to seriously negotiate about

the programme of the organisation?

The warnings from certain sectors, notably from within the metal workers union NUMSA, have not been heeded, not least by a good part of the leaders of the trade union left, who have decided to be ANC candidates.

This capitulation has been well orchestrated by the 'liquidationist' tendency that controls the Communist Party (including J. Slovo and J. Cronin) and which exercises, particularly on the central apparatus of the trade union confederation, a control bordering on dictatorship.

Marginalised

The CP is, in fact, trying to use the trade union movement to avoid being totally marginalised by Mandela, who is becoming more and more explicit on his ambitions to 'purge' the CP from a 'post apartheid' ANC.

In essence nothing can stop this tendency, at least between now and the elections.

The most aware sectors of the masses have more or less given up on the project of influencing the actual march of things, consigning it to a long term issue.

Conference appeal

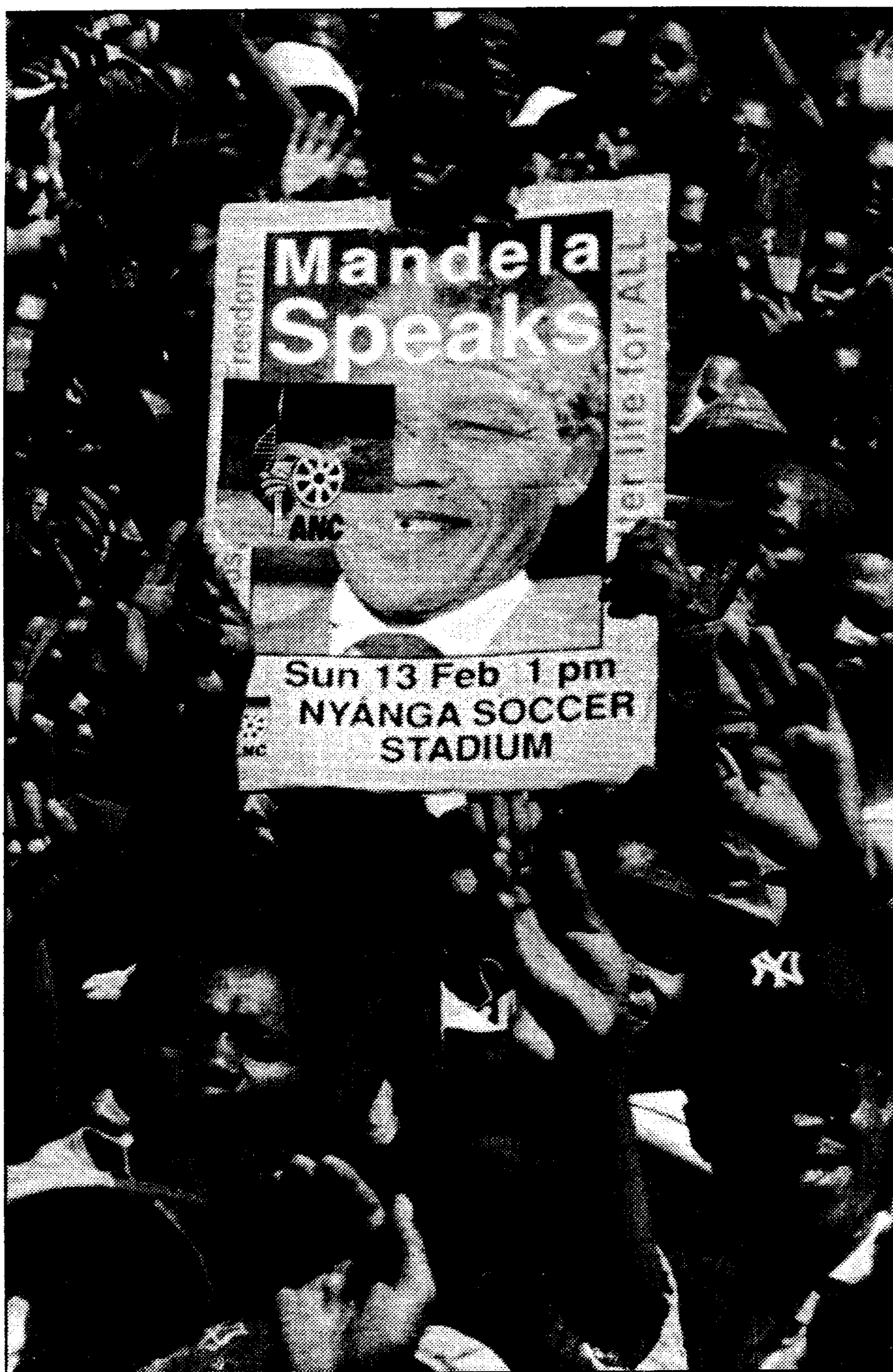
The appeal recently launched by NUMSA for a national conference on the future of the 'South African left', endorsed by other popular movements and a few small left-wing organisations (notably WOSA) could, therefore, become an issue of important debate.

This is despite the fact that the CP, aware of the importance of keeping its organisational monopoly, is doing everything possible to sabotage the idea.

On this point the right-wing liquidationists who control the party are joining up with those nostalgic for Stalinism who, whilst opposed to both Mandela and Slovo, are fearful of an initiative which could by-pass them on their left.

Meanwhile, for the masses, the days after the elections will be salutary.

They will have to engage in very long and hard battles. They need not just to recompose the mass movement, but also to find new people prepared to carry out a left-wing political project based on the masses, outside of – and very probably against – the ANC.



"For the masses, the days after the elections will be salutary. They will have long and hard battles not just to recompose the mass movement, but also to find new people prepared to carry out a left-wing political project based on the masses, outside and probably against, the ANC"

CENTRE STAGE

Before and after the elections

WOSA puts down a marker for socialism

Regular readers of Socialist Outlook will remember that in issue 56 we carried an analysis of the current situation in South Africa from NEVILLE ALEXANDER, the National Chairperson of the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA). Here, prominent WOSA activist SALIM VALLY, further outlines WOSA's strategy in the forthcoming elections and beyond.

AS COMRADE Neville outlined in his article for Socialist Outlook last month, the idea of a mass workers party in this country is not simply an ultra-left scheme, it actually has resonance in the working class and oppressed masses at the moment.

Neville mentioned, the survey in which 60 per cent of a random sample of black people here thought a mass workers party should be formed. Also the largest trade union in South Africa, NUMSA, the Metalworkers Union, passed a resolution at its last congress saying a workers party may be necessary to unify the left and for workers demands.

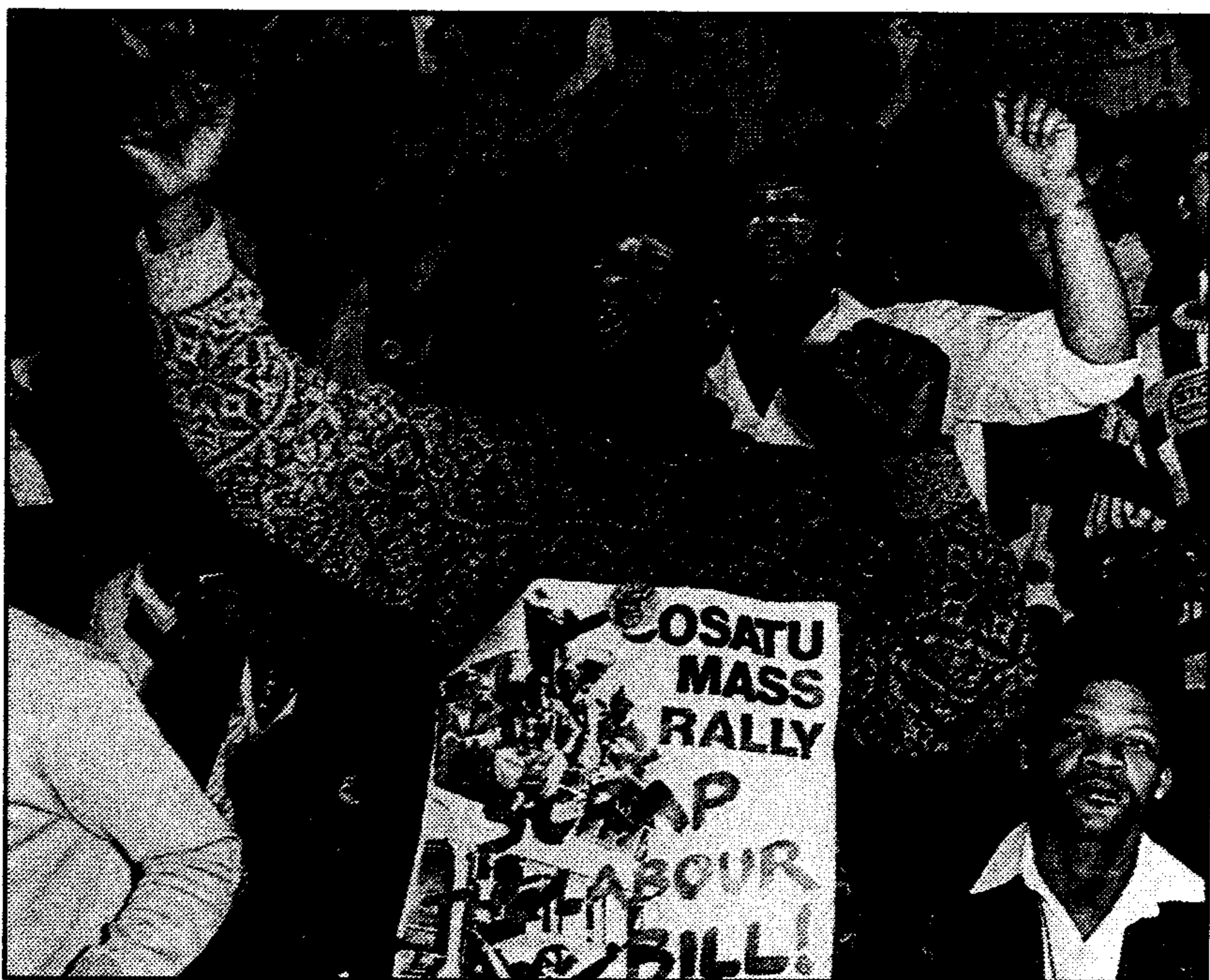
It is not only in NUMSA that this debate has taken place. In several unions there has been a very sharp debate around this question. It has raised a very real tension in the ranks of the South African Communist Party, with on the one hand sections of the leadership denouncing the idea as being inspired by 'dupes' of the South African Intelligence Services' and on the other hand members saying 'no comrades, this is a serious question to which we must give serious consideration.'

Workers' List

So it is in this context that we in WOSA, along with several other left groups and individuals active in the trades Unions and the Civic movement, have taken the decision to stand in the forthcoming elections as the Workers List Party as part of our ongoing strategy to bring about the formation of a mass workers party.

We do have serious misgivings about the elections. An interim constitution has already been decided upon and entrenched before a representative governmental structure has been established, and in particular, clauses have been included that preserve white domination in both the economic field and the civil service.

And that's not to mention the power sharing compromise for the next five years and the constitutional court that will outlaw any radical attempts at wealth



WOSA understands the need to patiently relate to rank-and-file ANC support

re-distribution.

Despite these misgivings, we took a significant majority decision in WOSA to take part in the elections in order to propagate the mass workers party idea.

We decided on the name the Workers List Party for two main reasons: firstly, we have a list of working class demands and secondly a list of working class candidates.

Premature

We do not call ourselves the Workers Party because this would be premature. We are very much aware that the timing of the launch of a real mass workers party will be of the essence, and that it should coincide with big working class struggles and significant working class support moving in our direction.

However, we believe that it is essential that a list of working class demands are raised in this election.

To those who say 'well surely the ANC are promising Jobs, Homes and Free Education for all, and its simply sectarianism to stand against them', we would answer with the following.

The ANC have at present made it very clear that they will not be prepared to challenge the power of big business interests, and will therefore be unable to do much more than tinker with the major inequalities and social problems we have in this country.

We are talking about a situation here

where we have more than eight million people who are unemployed, probably an equal number who are homeless, we have people who are literally starving in some rural areas, we have hundreds, even thousands of street kids, children between the ages of 7 and 14 living on the streets...

And we have an extreme concentration of wealth in the hands of a few monopoly companies...and the ANC has ditched its commitment to anything more than perhaps re-nationalising some public utilities recently privatised by the National Party!

For us, this is simply not acceptable as a strategy for true liberation.

We are called unrealistic because we argue for nationalisation under workers control of the commanding heights of the economy. But we respond that the real unreality is believing that dependence on foreign investment, the world bank and the benevolence of capitalism is going to benefit many more than the small existing and emergent middle class as far as the black population of the country is concerned.

Labour costs

Capitalism will only invest here if it believes labour costs can be kept to a minimum, and in comparison with the Pacific rim countries, South Africa is not a major contender in the global beauty contest to attract high finance.

So we believe we are correct to point

this out forcefully at this stage, to put our marker down because we are aware that our standing in the election serves primarily to increase our profile and raise working class demands.

Opposition

As far as the list of working class candidates goes, we stress this in sharp opposition to the make-up of the list of candidates adopted by other parties.

For example, on the ANC list, there are several prominent former collaborators with the apartheid structures, such as Nelson Ramadike, the leader of the Lebowa 'homeland', and General Ramashuwana, former head of the Venda 'homeland' and now the leader of the National Peacekeeping Force.

He was involved in the 'elimination' of several ANC and MK comrades in his former role in the South African Security Police. They have greatly enriched themselves in the process to the tune of millions of Rand.

There are many others, including Ishmael Richards who was the person who actually turned us over to the security forces during the uprisings around the boycott of the tri-cameral parliament in 1983-84. So when we talk about a workers list we are talking about people who have served the workers struggle rather than riding on the back of it.

For all these reasons we believe our decision to stand in this election is a necessary one and is not an ultra-left scheme.

We also need to take the opportunity while we have it, for many of us believe that repressive measures against the non-ANC left could well be not so far away given the social pressures outlined, the ANC's unwillingness to take the radical measures necessary to deal with them, and their probable willingness to deal with working class reaction to this.

And that is not to mention the ever-present threat of all-out civil war instigated by the extreme right with their strength in the state security structures and the civil service.

What we have embarked upon has serious risks, but also tremendous possibilities for progress, not only for us but for the left globally. We feel we have an enormous responsibility here to hold up the banner of real democracy, socialism and independent workers struggle, and also to expose the role of those who have for years held up the stalinist societies as examples of socialism.

But we also think that our struggle is your struggle and urgently appeal to you to support us by contributing financially to our election fighting fund so that we can put up as many candidates as possible and really get our message across at a national and local level.

■ Cheques payable to WOSA can be deposited by bank transfer directly into:

Account no. 1979 318433.
Ned Bank, 100 Main Street,
Johannesburg, South Africa.

CENTRE STAGE

"The ANC have made it very clear that they will not be prepared to challenge the power of big business interests, and will therefore be unable to do much more than tinker with the major inequalities and social problems we have in this country"

Who lost Belarus?

By Colin Meade

'THESE PEOPLE have got a problem' said the chair of the US Senate's Intelligence Committee last week. He was referring to the American state's spying and terrorist network, the CIA, which, at an estimated cost of \$3bn a year, faces the spending axe.

And indeed they do have a problem – a seemingly irresistible tide of Communist and crypto-Communist victories throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Not only have the CIA failed to stem this flood, but they do not even appear to have collated the readily available facts which add up to this astonishing picture.

How much damage did Russian super-mole Aldrich Ames do to US security? And who is keeping quiet about the facts on Capitol Hill?

In one of the greatest ironies of our times it falls to Socialist Outlook to assume the mantle of defence of the free world and put the question straight: *who lost Belarus?*

First of all, there are the election victories of successor parties to the old ruling Communist parties and close allies in a series of countries over the past two years. These have occurred in Lithuania, Romania and Poland – in the latter case ousting a government of the elite of the Solidarity movement that did so much to shake the Stalinist edifice in Eastern Europe in the 1980s.

In many other countries similar parties view their political future with rising confidence.

One example is Hungary, long seen as a front-runner in pro-Westernism and privatisation. The Socialist Party is showing up in the polls as the most popular party with 27 per cent support, up from 11 per cent at the 1990 elections.

And then there is East Germany, where the former-Communist PDS may pull ahead of the governing party, the right-wing CDU, in this year's series of regional and national elections to become the second strongest party after the Social Democrats.

Overshadowed

Perhaps most important is Russia, where, overshadowed by the spectacular entry of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy onto the front of the political stage, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and its associated Agrarian Party gained 100 seats between them, well ahead of Zhirinovskiy (63) and the leading pro-Western formation, Gaidar's Russia's Choice (76) in the December 1993 elections.

Alongside these party victories, a series of leading figures from the old days of the Soviet bloc have risen phoenix-like from the dustbin of history.



Tanks repress nationalist sentiment in Azerbaijan



Yeltsin advisor Kagalovsky with Major

Notable cases are those of Gorbachev's former foreign minister Edward Shevardnadze, now back in power in his native Georgia, and Gaidar Aliev, all-powerful first-secretary of the Azerbaijan

"The 'democratic' governments were often little more than figureheads"

Communist Party between 1982 and 1987 and reinstated in June 1993.

And finally, Belarus. Here nationalist leader Stanislau Shushkevich was recently voted out as chairman of the Supreme Soviet and replaced by a figure from the old nomenklatura. This means the abandonment of Belarus' neutrality as this former Soviet republic is firmly reintegrated into the Russian economic and security space.

This trend, which will continue, exposes the fact that the 'democratic' governments were in many cases little more than figureheads. The main centres of power remained in the hands of the former nomenklatura.

Furthermore, the Russian government has used its raw material supplies, and particularly its control of the region's oil

reserves, to discourage displays of excessive independence on the part of the countries of the Near Abroad.

The inability of the post-Soviet opposition governments to deal with the geopolitical realities – 'so far from Washington and so near to Moscow' – is but one aspect of the utopianism prevalent in these circles, which led them to make promises they cannot keep.

At the heart of the perspectives of the free market enthusiasts lays a mistaken view of the international political and economic system which wholly ignores its discriminatory and power political qualities. Detached from all historical and geographical bearings, the liberal democratic systems and the world capitalism market are seen as perfectible systems without inherent defects.

According to this view, the problems of the world flow from the obstacles to the perfect functioning of the system presented by cultural backwardness, and among other things, by the Soviet-style regimes. Remove these obstacles so the theory went and the American model can, with American expert advice, be installed.

In reality, of course, the capitalist powers have no interest in creating competitors and their aim in the former Soviet bloc is to make a quick buck, exploit cheap labour in pursuit of competition with one another and get their hands on sources of raw materials.

Nationalist

As well as the pro-Western strand, the opposition has also had an extreme nationalist element. In both Georgia and Azerbaijan regimes came to power pledged to win conflicts with internal and external enemies.

As it became clear that there would be no such victory, the former rulers, with their networks, contacts in key ministries and agencies in their own republic and throughout the Soviet bloc came back in. Thus in Azerbaijan pro-Turkish nationalist Abulfaz Elchibey had to flee after

Armenian advances in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The former CPs have revived because they are the parties of powerful interests firmly rooted in social and economic realities. The Supreme Soviet in Belarus which replaced Shushkevich is full of collective farm chairmen and state enterprise managers.

The membership of the Hungarian Socialist Party is dominated by skilled workers, professionals and middle managers. Recent local elections in Russia brought overwhelming victories for members of the nomenklatura – managers, party officials and the like.

Voters

Underneath the leadership layers are the voters, all those millions adversely affected or threatened by market reforms and social disintegration. While insisting that the 'reform process' will continue, as a Romanian newspaper put it 'the government... has two faces, like Janus. It says one thing to the IMF and World Bank and another at home. Its aim is to keep the status quo and protect state property'.

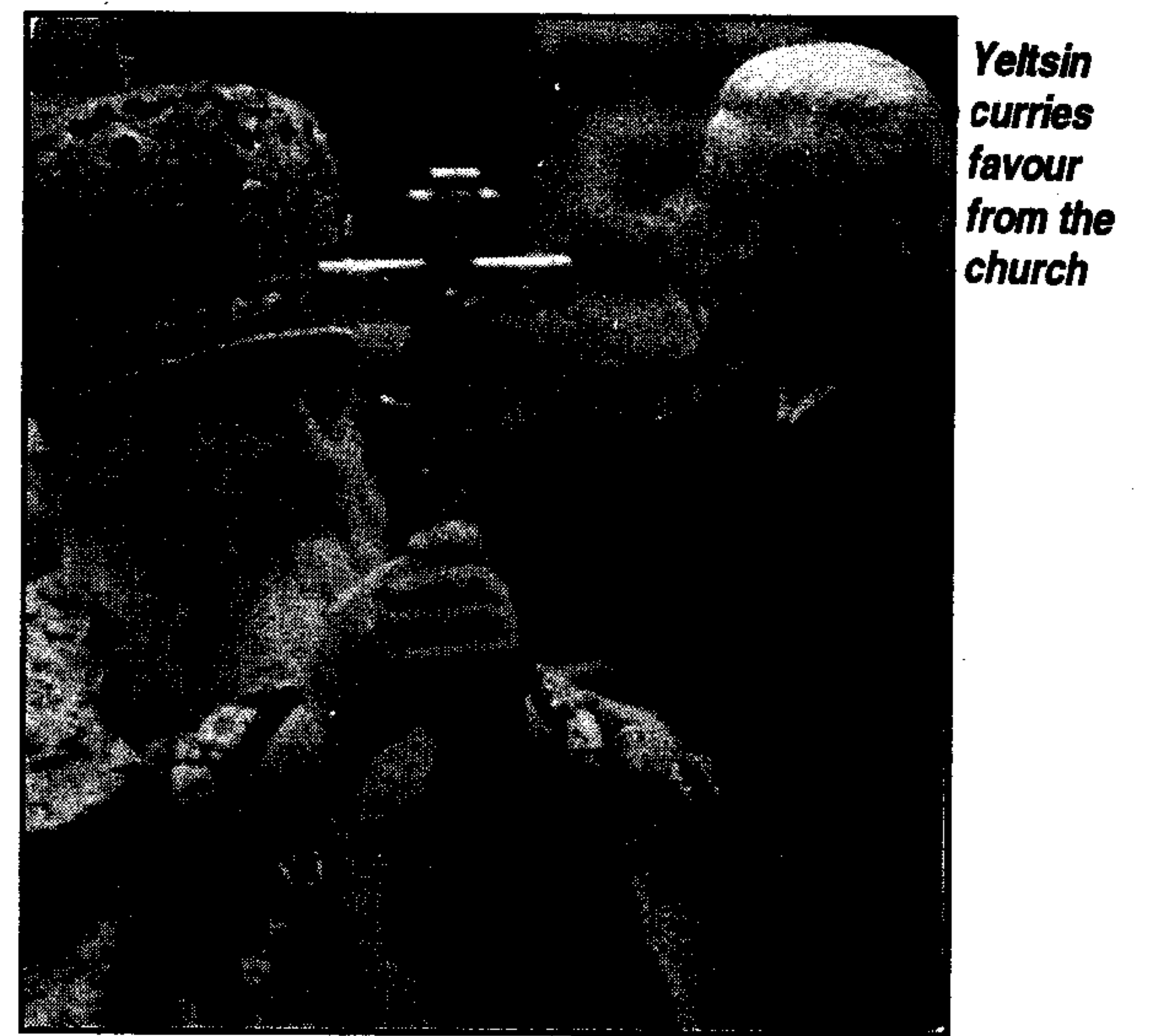
However, these parties, even when in government, have no clear plan to restore the former Communist system. That system collapsed partly because its rulers decided to abandon it – because it was not viable.

Whole waves of technological innovation were passing these countries by as easy sources of fuel and raw materials were exploited to the point of collapse. As one Hungarian privatiser put it 'we do not advocate for or against a monopoly, but we have to get together a functional telephone service'.

But it is not just their problem. The Soviet bloc was part of the Cold War arrangement devised as a means of keeping 'the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans under'.

A new push from the Western European left is needed to get the Americans out, the Russians in and provide the circumstances for German industrial power to be put to the common benefit.

Such a push would also make for job creation for the American intelligence community as they tried to find out 'Who lost Europe'.



Yeltsin curries favour from the church

USA gives up on Somalia

The US contingent in Somalia pulls out at the end of March.

Socialist Outlook asked ASHA-KIN F. DUALE, Somalia's only woman barrister and prominent childrens' rights campaigner for a comment. Due to her representation of political dissidents during the Barre regime, she was forced to flee Mogadishu, and now lives in London.

SO: How do you assess the American involvement in Somalia?

AK: The US marines came on a humanitarian mission - to retrieve the guns their government had supplied to the Barre regime.

But their intervention was extremely problematic. The image of the US soldier dragged through the streets of Mogadishu shows the outrage of

the people. The media ignored the killing of 750 Somalis in those three days of clashes due to their pro-western bias.

Famine is part of the history of every nation. By fighting back, Somalis have shown the world that those who claim to bring humanitarian aid are only acting in their own interests. People are happy that the US is leaving.

SO: How about other contingents?

AK: German troops were stationed in Beled Weyn. Among other problems they have caused, local people blame them for the lowering of the level of the Schebelle river.

Most people depend on this river for their livelihood. The troops lived in luxury while the people suffered.

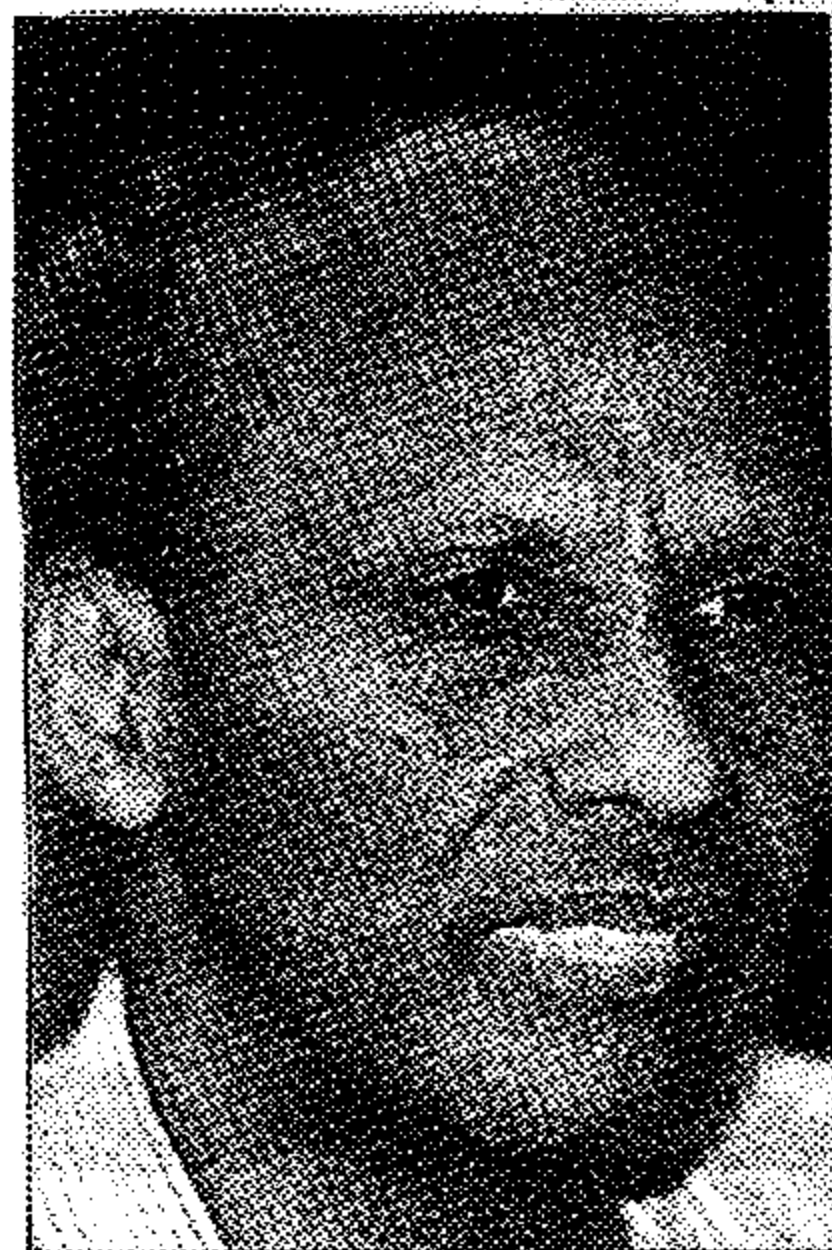
SO: Some see Farah Aided as a national hero, others as a bandit. What is the opinion of most Somalis?

AK: Aideed is the reality of today's Somalia.

People are proud that he was more than a match for the Americans. However his role in the warlord conflicts means he has no place in the national reconciliation of Somalis.

SO: The UN has sponsored

Below: Aidid



a number of conferences in Addis Ababa between clan militias.

AK: The UN has a hidden agenda.

It is imposing from above a settlement using hand-picked 'leaders' who are not representative of the wishes of the Somali people. The UN has favoured some faction leaders above others.

SO: How do you suggest a genuine national reconciliation is achieved?

AK: It must come from the grass roots.

Somalis were a nomadic people. We had a system of conciliation among clans, from clan elders up to district level and up to national level.

SO: The former British protectorate of Somaliland has declared itself the Independent Republic of Somaliland. How do Somalis in the South view this?

AK: Hargeisa and Burco in the

North were bombed by Barre's forces. People in the south have no ill-feelings against people in the north.

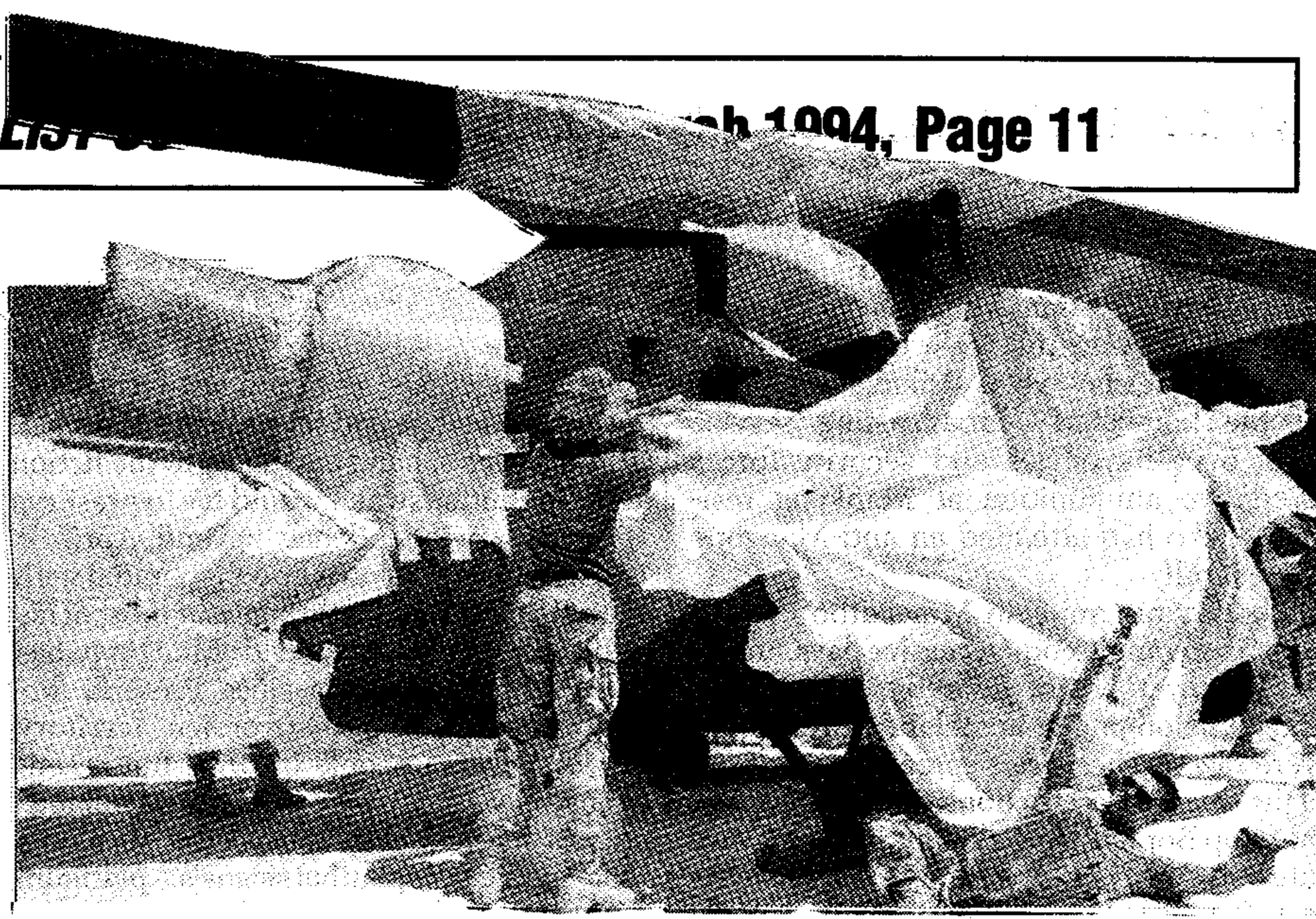
Barre also terrorised the south with summary executions. There should be a referendum to decide the future of the Union.

SO: The media concentrates on the manoeuvres of militia leaders, but are there agencies more accountable to the people?

AK: There are womens' associations in the north and south who play an important role though they are sidelined by the United Nations.

They are fully involved in clan reconciliation, food distribution and national reconciliation.

Development related projects related to agriculture and irrigation depend on financial support. Although there are Somali non-governmental organisations with the ability to carry out these projects, money is only channelled through Western NGO's. This increases out dependency on the west.



Above: US soldiers wrap one of eight helicopters in protective plastic.

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Fratricide in the Tamil Tiger movement

By Bala Kumar

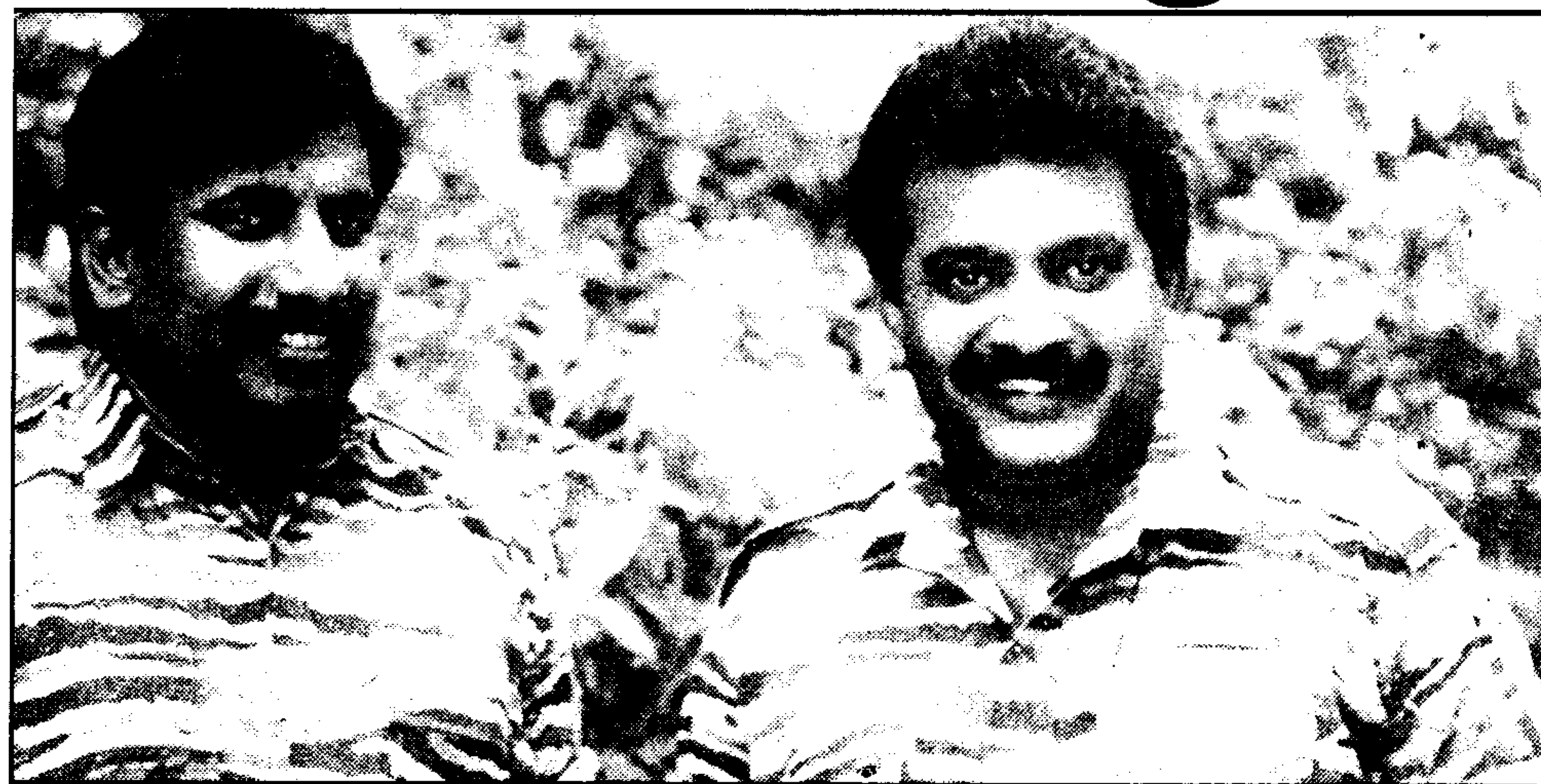
A CRISIS among the leadership of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has shaken that organisation to its roots leading many to question its future as the dominant expression of Sri Lankan nationalism.

One time deputy leader of the LTTE, Gopalasamy Mahendrarajah, better known by his *nom de guerre* 'Mahattaya', was arrested along with 120 of his supporters late last year by Tiger cadres.

What shocked Tiger members and supporters was the disclosure in December of his execution planned for January. Some of his loyalists had already faced the 'revolutionary justice' of a kangaroo court. The charges were essentially of treason to the LTTE and its absolute leader, V Prabhakaran.

According to the Tigers, Mahattaya, had been secretly collaborating with the Indian intelligence service and plotting to topple Prabhakaran.

Appeals from the Tamil expatriate lobby and from Amnesty International as well as a courageous demonstration of civilians in the Tiger stronghold of Jaffna peninsula led to re-



Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran with 'Mahattaya' Gopalasamy Mahendrarajah (left)

ports of a commutation of his sentence.

However there are unconfirmed reports he may well be dead by now. If not, according to one source he has been so badly tortured that he will never be the focus of opposition to Prabhakaran.

The elevation of militarism as its guiding principle and its ruthless methods made the LTTE a feared opponent of the Sri Lankan and Indian armies. It was symbolised by the cyanide capsule that all Tiger cadres wear around their neck, to be swallowed in the event of capture.

When the Tigers demanded recognition as the 'sole legitimate representatives of the

Tamil people', it was not won by freely obtained consent or a coalition reflecting the strands of the liberation movement.

Instead they launched attacks against rival Tamil militant groups like TELO, PLOTE and the EPRLF, decimating their leaderships. Leftists such as a leader of the NSSP, Annamalai, were killed.

Even individuals who made criticisms of their undemocratic methods like the socialist feminist Rajani Thiraganama, were gunned down.

The difference with Mahattaya was his importance with the Tigers and his support for LTTE policy down the line. There were no dissensions on the Anuradhapura massacre in

1985 when 150 Sinhala civilians were slain in the streets or the massacre of Muslim civilians in the east in 1990.

This episode reflects the weakness of the Tigers organisation and Prabhakaran's strength. Nobody takes seriously the trumped up charges levelled against Mahattaya.

Tamil support for the LTTE is sustained by fear and grudging respect.

In free elections it is likely they would command minority support from the increasingly war weary and long suffering residents of Jaffna.

Their situation is grim. Since the renewal of hostilities in June 1990 between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the LTTE, the

government has mounted an economic blockade of the Peninsula seeking to starve Tamil civilians into revolting against the Tigers.

The Air Force and Navy regularly bombard homes, schools, places of worship and medical centres.

Many would sue for peace with the chauvinist Sri Lankan government to regain some sanity in their lives. Apparently Mahattaya and some others favoured immediate negotiations with the government and a political solution short of an independent Tamil state of Eelam.

In a movement where democratic debate is alien, where young boys and women are cannon fodder and the aims of a liberation struggle have been subordinated to those of a power hungry clique, there was only one way Prabhakaran could respond to any challenge to his authority.

Can the Tiger cadres be weaned away from their self-destructive ideology? Will the repugnance of many marginalise the LTTE creating a new democratic space and a renewal of thinking on the politics of Tamil struggle?

On all this and much more the progressive wing of Tamil nationalism and the broader Sri Lankan left will be tested.

WORLD NEWS



Age of consent: despite the rebuff by MPs the battle goes on. Supporters of the Outrage campaign lobbied parliament on March 14

Defend Jane Brown Stop Hackney's witch-hunt!

By Roland Rance

GOVERNORS at Hackney's Kingsmead School continue to back 'Romeo and Juliet' case headteacher Jane Brown.

She is still threatened with dismissal by Hackney Council in a determined attack on lesbian and gay rights, union rights and equal opportunities.

The Labour council, which is receiving rare enthusiastic support from the gutter press, even threatened legal action against the governors in a desperate attempt to scare them into line.

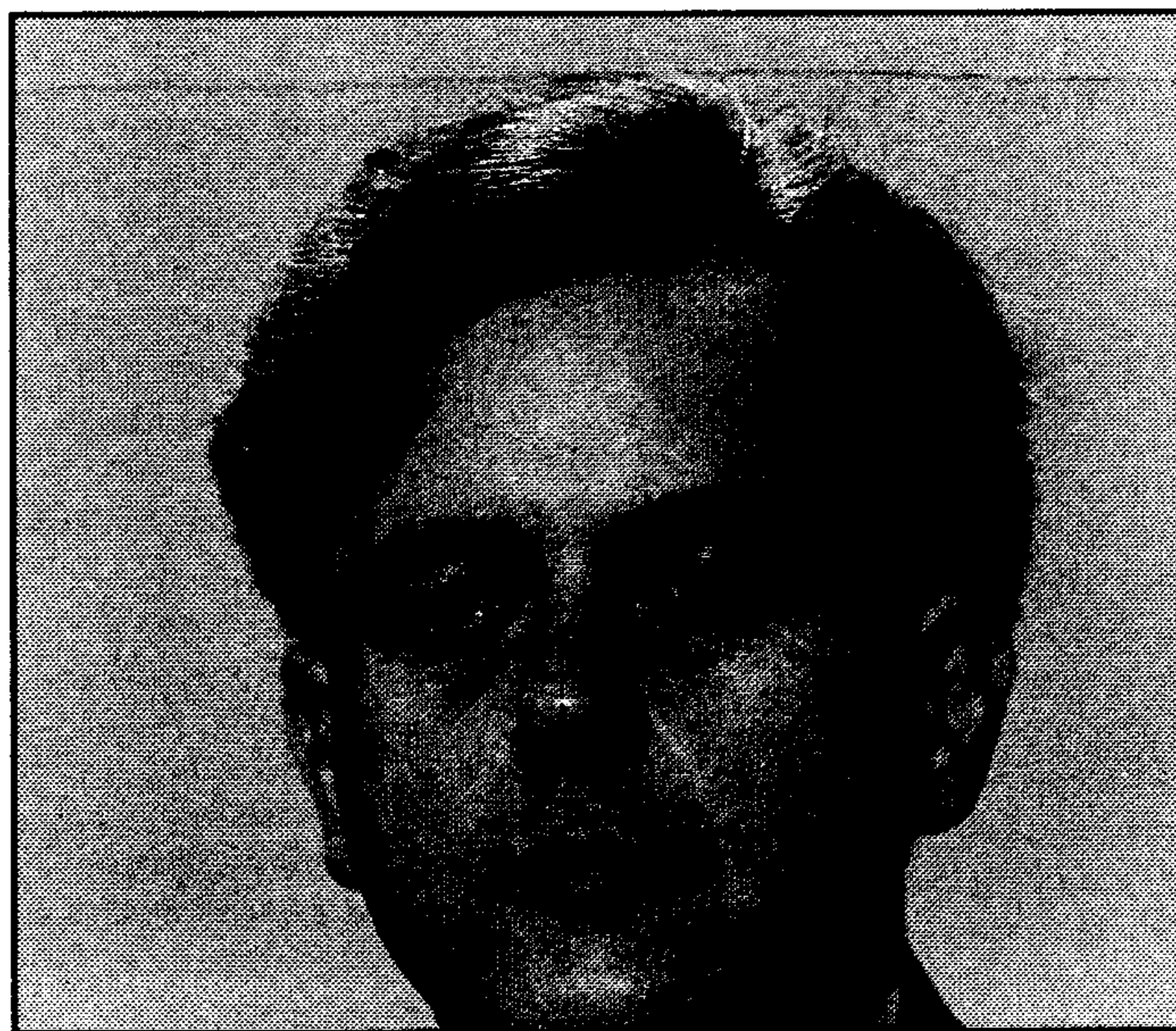
The school governors' investigation into the allegations against Jane Brown is expected to issue a report next week. Although details of the case are supposed to remain confidential, the Council regularly discusses them with the press.

In further attacks on Jane Brown's rights, the Council has denied her right to union representation, has released her name to the press, and has banned her from speaking to the press herself.

Hundreds

The Kingsmead Support Group has organised two lobbies of Hackney Council, attended by several hundred people.

The group, established by friends and supporters of Jane Brown to organise support and solidarity for Jane and the school against the vicious and homophobic attacks by the press and to oppose the unfair and partial treatment by Hackney Council, has opposed all attacks on equal opportunities.



Outflanked by right wing Hackney council: Education Secretary Patten

Nevertheless, the group has itself been the subject of attacks and rumours of racism in its attitude to Hackney Director of Education Gus John.

Supporters

The group points out in a letter refuting these allegations that supporters of the campaign include members of Hackney CRE, Hackney North MP Diane Abbott, Linda Bellos and the London Collective of Black Governors.

The Voice, *Capital Gay*, the *Pink Paper* and the *Hackney Gazette* have all failed to print this letter.

In its letter the group writes: Gus John has an understanding of the historical oppression of class, race and gender. Why is this not extended to the oppression of those who are lesbian and gay?

In a recent article in the *Voice*, Gus is quoted as saying

'Equal opportunities are about equality, not about special treatment for lesbians or anyone else'.

Surely the core of the argument is that because of the historic oppression of sections of society, and the resulting widely held stereotypes and prejudices against them, people do not come from equal starting points, and equal opportunities is all about addressing the resulting 'needs' which are not the same for everyone'.

The Kingsmead Support Group is campaigning against the ripping-up of Hackney council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

The council's attempt to divide the borough's minorities must not be allowed to succeed.

■ Messages of support and donations can be sent to Kingsmead Support Group, c/o Hackney NUT, 219 Mare Street, London E8 3QH.

Exhilarating battle of wills

Draupadi's Robes
written and directed
by Raman Kaur
performed by
Chandica Arts Group,
reviewed by K
Govindan.

IN THE EPIC poem, *The Mahabharata*, princess Draupadi is staked and lost in a game of dice by her husband to his cousin. When the victor unravels her sari attempting to disrobe her, he finds it without an end, so her honour is preserved.

This exhilarating play performed by a new theatre group of South Asian origin draws from that scene its theme of women as sources of energy, power and resistance.

Harjit and Priya are two university going women and the best of friends. One day Harjit is seen dating a (shock, horror, shock) Muslim boy, by a busybody neighbour.

News of this is not slow travelling to her Hindu parents. before Harjit realises what's happening, 'a smelly old chart from Canada' arrives in Britain. Her parents have obtained the horoscope of a suitable match to marry her off before she causes them further embarrassment before the community.

The rest of the play revolves around the battle of wills between daughter and parents and the evolution of Harjit and Priya's friendship into sexual love.

Draupadi's Robes is a bold

exploration of the status of Asian women in society and the clash in attitudes between different generations of women.

The play breaks new ground in its overt treatment of sexuality within the context of racist Britain, the patriarchal family and conservative social beliefs.

Punjabi and English are used interchangeably reflecting the shared and contesting identities of young Asians. While some of the puns may be lost on a non-Punjabi speaker the meaning is generally clear enough.

Of note too is the extensive use of verse, often stanzas from the poetry of Punjabi feminist Amrita Pritam. these recitations are interrupted by dance and song giving the audience a chance to absorb the dialogue.

Tight knit

All of life in a tight knit community is found here. The nosy *Auntiji* who always has the latest gossip and is ever ready to dispense wisdoms - 'statistics show love marriages have higher divorce rates than arranged marriages'.

There are jokes aplenty borrowed from Hindi movies Indian film songs and British popular culture.

While the happy ending seems too good to be true and the treatment of sexuality a trifle superficial, there are outstanding performances by Parminder Sekhon (Priya), Poulomi Desai (Harjit) and Sabahat Naseer (Auntiy).

Above all this production heralds the coming of age of a confident and culturally aware generation of British Asians. Their hopes, fears and preoccupations. Bravo!

ANALYSIS

In Socialist Outlook 57, Jeff Lowe and Paul Clarke wrote that *Gauche Révolutionnaire*, the sister organisation of Militant Labour in France, "prioritise campaigning against the crime of the embargo and organising an aid convoy to Serbia. "They prioritise links with the Serbian trade unions. These campaigns endorsed by Militant do not imply a 'neutral' position. The logic is support for Serbia". In this letter, MURRAY SMITH replies.

WE HAVE always considered the embargo on Serbia as prefiguring possible direct aggression.

The shooting down of four Serbian planes may be a first step towards such aggression: or the imperialists may keep on applying 'peaceful' pressure.

Especially given the particularly bellicose attitude of French imperialism and the press campaign here, we prioritised the campaign against the embargo, while explaining our overall analysis of the war.

In a war between Serbs, Croats and Muslims, we don't support any of the belligerents. Unlike you and your international co-thinkers, we have never campaigned for arms for Bosnia, or Serbia or Croatia.

Yes, we certainly have established links with Serbian trade unions, specifically with the principal independent union, Nezavinost, which is against the war and against Milosevic. If we had the opportunity we would be delighted to establish similar contacts with Croatian unions.

We and Militant Labour oppose all forms of blockade and embargo, economic or arms, imposed by imperialism on any of the belligerents in ex-Yugoslavia (or elsewhere). But we don't campaign around this question, whereas you do. You

'Militant' reply on Bosnia war

FeedBACK



UN troops: get them out of Bosnia

support Bosnia, and favour the Bosnian regime having more arms.

You invoke the right of nations to self-determination at the same time as you defend 'multi-ethnic' Bosnia which refuses the right to secede to the majority of Serbs and Croats who don't want to live within the Bosnian state.

Same rights

The Bosnian Muslims have the right to self-determination just as much as the Serbs or the Albanians or the Croats.

But we don't think the solution lies in establishing bourgeois states in ex-Yugoslavia, 'multi-ethnic' or not.

Socialist Outlook writes: 'Yugoslavia is dead and cannot be rebuilt'. The Yugoslavia of Tito is dead and cannot be rebuilt. But what can and must be rebuilt is a bigger and better socialist Yugoslavia.

Bigger, because embracing the whole of the Balkans. Better because based on workers' democracy.

That's why we defend the traditional communist slogan of a 'Socialist federation of the Balkans'. Not an immediate solution, but a class solution

Our analysis starts from the process of restoration of capi-

talism in ex-Yugoslavia, of the use of nationalism by all the restorationist regimes, of the role of imperialism.

That leads us to 'prioritise' opposition to imperialist intervention and to give no support to Milosevic's Serbia, Tudjman's Croatia, or Izetbegovic's Bosnia.

Apart from a few token Serbs and Croats, the government of Sarajevo is largely Islamist. When Socialist Outlook talks about the 'multi-ethnic defense' in Tuzla and elsewhere you also explain unwittingly why we shouldn't support it.

You pinpoint the problem: 'those brigades are part of the overall defense of Bosnia'. They're part of the armed forces of the capitalist Muslim-dominated government.

It would be different if the multi-ethnic workers' defence militias were against the government, the Muslim warlords and militias that also commit atrocities.

[International] Workers Aid would be different if it were just organising material aid for Bosnian workers' organisations, and not smuggling in your line of military support for the Bosnian regime.

You write: 'Socialist Outlook has no illusions in the UN or imperialism. We are against Western military intervention'. But how is it compatible with 'the necessity to open Tuzla airport, easily within the power of the UN'?

They've opened it. The UN on its own couldn't open a tin of baked beans. Its only strength comes from the fact that its backed by imperialist military force, or the threat of it.

■ Socialist Outlook welcomes readers' letters. Letters over 400 words will be edited.

WHERE WE STAND

Facing mass unemployment, rampant employers equipped with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-won education, health and welfare services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis – an avoidable crisis created by the historic failure of its official leadership.

Socialist Outlook exists to fight for a new type of working class leadership, based on the politics of class struggle and revolutionary socialism, to tackle this crisis.

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

The Tory strategy has been to shackle the unions with legislation, and to fragment and weaken the resistance of the working class and oppressed, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time, using the full powers of the state.

In response, most TUC and Labour leaders have embraced the defeatist politics of 'new realism', effectively proclaiming total surrender on every front, while ditching any pretence that they offer a socialist alternative. Every retreat and concession they have made to the employers and the government has simply fuelled and encouraged the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form taken by the politics of *reformism*, seeking no more than improved conditions within the framework of capitalist rule.

Socialist Outlook rejects reformism, not because we are against fighting for reforms, but because we know that the needs of the working class – for full employment, decent living standards, a clean environment, peace and democracy – can never be achieved under capitalism.

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

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

Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Our socialist alternative is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change. We fight to mobilise and unleash the power of the working class – the overwhelming majority of society – to topple the corrupt and reactionary rule of capital and establish its own class rule.

We struggle against fragmentation by building solidarity, working to link and unite the various struggles of workers, the unemployed, of women, of pensioners, of the black communities and ethnic minorities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth – and of those fighting imperialism in Ireland and throughout the world. *Socialist Outlook* is above all an *internationalist* current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises co-thinkers in 40 countries world-wide.

Unlike some other groupings on the British left, we do not believe a mass revolutionary party can be built simply by proclaiming ourselves to be one. Too often this degenerates into sectarian posturing and abstention from the actual struggle taking shape within the labour movement, playing into the hands of the right wing.

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

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

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

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

LETTERS

Socialist Outlook 300 Club

It used to be that supporters of socialist newspapers lent their rent money to help meet the printers bills. Now we'll pay you!

In return for a monthly stake in our 300 Club, you get the chance to win a cash prize or smart gift.

For March, **Bob Whitehead** wins £50, while **Ken Loach** gets the indispensable new anthology – *The New World Order and the Third World* edited by Canadian socialists Lori Foster and Dave Broad.

Just fill in this form and send it back to Socialist Outlook's 300 Club, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

To: (Bank address)

Please pay Socialist Outlook Supporters Fund (A/c 701862897) at the Co-op Bank, 78/80 Cornhill, London EC3 (sort code) 08-02-28) the sum of £..... (in words) of..... (in figures) on the..... day of..... (month) 1994 and thereafter every month from my account, number..... Date..... Signed..... Your full name..... Your address..... Post code..... Tel.....

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Yes, I want to become a *Socialist Outlook* supporter

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Age.....

Send to *Socialist Outlook*, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU

What's HAPPENING

WANT YOUR event included?

Send details by April 8 to What's Happening?, P.O. Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

MARCH

Wednesday 23

Lambeth UNISON strike

LET BOSNIA Live! International Workers' Aid public meeting 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall Brixton

DEMONSTRATE against fascist councillor Beackon! picket of Jack Dash House Marsh Wall

Thursday 24

KEEP ON keeping on show! Kingsmead Support Group benefit doors open 7pm Hackney Empire 291 Mare Street E8 Tickets £7/£4 booking office 081 985 2424

Saturday 26

DEMONSTRATE to save Guy's Hospital! Socialist Outlook sellers meet 11am Southwark Park, Gomm Road Bermondsey

RMT campaign for a Democratic Union meeting 12.30 BR Association Club Piccadilly Station Manchester

Monday 28

A prospect of peace in the North of Ireland? Socialist Outlook public forum with Liam MacUaid 7.30pm Union Club Pershore Road Selly Park Birmingham

Tuesday 29

TOWER Hamlets 6 Defence Campaign picket 9.30am Thames Magistrates Court Bow Road

EXTENDING Universal Benefits Open meeting of the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MP's with Prof. Peter Townsend 7pm Committee Room C 1 Parliament St London

Wednesday 30

ANGOLA Emergency Campaign Lobby of Parliament 7pm Room booked in the name of Bob Hughes MP details: 071 387 6771

Thursday 31

DEFEND Cuba! Public meeting and slide show with Cuban First Secretary Manuel Vinas 7.30pm Old White Horse 261 Brixton Rd SW9 Brixton tube

APRIL

Tuesday 5

DEMONSTRATE against the Child Support Act at CSA regional offices in Dudley, Plymouth, Hastings, Birkenhead

and Millbank, central London

Saturday 9

COMMUNITIES of resistance against racism and fascism national rally 1-5pm Pakistani Community Centre Stockport Road Longsight Manchester

Monday 11

WHAT'S in South African elections for black workers? Socialist Outlook public forum with veteran South African revolutionary Charlie van Gelderen 7.30pm Union Club Pershore Road Selly Park Birmingham

Mon 11-Thu 14

NATIONAL Union of Students conference Winter Gardens Blackpool

Saturday 16

CAMPAIGN Against the Child Support Act national conference 10am-6pm Kingsway College Sidmouth Street off Grays Inn Road Kings Cross WC1 details PO Box 287 NW6 5QU

END THE Blockade: Cuba Solidarity Campaign day school Conway Hall Red Lion Square WC1

Sunday 17

BERT JANSCH plays benefit for campaign against M11 link 7.30pm Heathcote Arms Grove Green Road Leytonstone E11 £4.50/£2 details 081 527 9857

Friday 21

CAMPAIGN Against the Arms Trade Candlelight Concert 7.30pm St Martin-in-the-fields Trafalgar Square Tickets £12/£9/£6 from 071 930 0089

Sunday 24

MOZAMBIQUE Angola Committee AGM 11am - 3pm BDAF 22 The Ivories 6-8

Northampton St Islington N1 tube: Highbury & Islington

Tuesday 26

LOBBY of British Aerospace AGM Marriot Hotel Grosvenor Square W1

Thursday 28

MARCH to commemorate International Workers Memorial Day 12.00 Euston Station to Parliament details Construction Safety Campaign 071 537 7220

CAMPAIGN Against Hazards In London meeting 2.30pm - 6.30pm Church House Dean's Yard off Great Smith Street details 071 226 5436

LOBBY of Parliament against deregulation 2.30pm - 7.30pm

Sat 30

LIBERATION! editorial meeting 11am sharp South Manchester

LEEDS TUC May Day march and rally 11.30am assemble outside the art gallery

MAY

Saturday 7

GERMANY'S role in Europe: day-long seminar with Peter Gowan (New Left Review), Colin Meade (Socialist Outlook) and Gunter Minnerup & Gus Fagan (Labour Focus on Eastern Europe). Details: Peter on 071 607 2789

Wednesday 11

ANGOLA Emergency Campaign Lobby of Parliament 7pm Committee room booked in the name of Bob Hughes MP Details: 071 387 6771

Sat 21

NATIONAL free speech day - picket your local McDon-

ald's details London Greenpeace 5 Caledonian Road N1 9DX

Saturday 28

ANTI NAZI League Carnival march from Kennington Park to carnival in Brockwell Park South London Note venue changed again

JUNE

Saturday 4

DEMONSTRATE to close down Campsfield Kidlington, Oxford

Saturday 11

FIGHT for Full Employment! Socialist Campaign Group Supporters Network conference Manchester details: 19 Moorlands Avenue Leeds LS5 1AP

Wednesday 22

ANGOLA Emergency Campaign Lobby of Parliament 7pm Committee room booked in the name of Bob Hughes MP details: 071 387 6771

Saturday 25

ANTI-Apartheid Movement Extraordinary General Meeting

JULY

Fri 22 - Fri 29

INTERNATIONAL Youth Summer Camp Tuscany Italy leaflets/details from Liberation!, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU

NOTICE

SOCIALIST Outlook will be skipping a week to avoid going to press on the Easter and May Day bank holidays. Issue 60 will be dated Saturday 16 April and we'll be back fortnightly from then.

Fourth International consolidates publications

Spanning the world

By Duncan Chapple

THE FOURTH International is consolidating its system of publications.

Critique Communiste, the magazine of the LCR in France, has been merged with Quatrième Internationale, the annual French-language review of the FI. The new large-format, perfect-bound quarterly journal is called Critique Communiste.

The final issue of International Marxist Review in its old review format comes off the press this week.

Entitled "Capitalism's new economic order — restructuring

the labour process", the bargain-priced 144-page book include Claude Gabriel, Andy Kilmister and Eugenio Preo on globalisation, 'lean production' and New Management techniques. It is available for just £2.50, plus 60p for p&p from Socialist Outlook.

International Viewpoint, the impressive monthly review of the Fourth International, is already showing the benefits of more resources.

Enhanced graphic design, shorter time between copy dates and delivery and a new nine-country network of circulation representatives add to a UK price cut to make the glossy review even better value.

Regular readers already know about our combined introductory offer on Socialist Outlook and International Viewpoint.

As part of drive to increase the readership of the in-depth magazine in Britain, the special £25 price is now to be continued after the first year and is open to those who pay in other ways than direct debit.

This will allow a major expansion in the circulation of International Viewpoint. Direct debit subscribers will get a free copy of Ernest Mandel's "Fallacies of State Capitalism".

A reduced rate has been introduced in Britain for students. The French-language edition —

Inprecor — has successfully operated a reduced-rate student price for some time.

Many students are eager to read participatory accounts, from activists in dozens of countries, given in the magazine. For only £13 students can now get the review expressed to their door direct from Paris every month for a year.

In the Autumn, campaigning for subscriptions will be stepped up amongst students, and also among current and past readers of Fourth Internationalist publications in Britain.

Special mailings are being prepared for past subscribers and for sympathisers in Britain of the Fourth International.

The press reorganisation has also been reflected in increased interest in publications of the Amsterdam-based International Institute for Research and Education.

A new anthology — "Women's Lives in the New Global Economy" — elaborates themes touched on in the new International Marxist Review. Penny Duggan and Heather Dashner introduce the substantial dossier by demonstrating how feminist and workers' struggles can re-assert women's right to decide their future.

The anthology is available for £5 including p&p from Socialist Outlook.

Socialist OUTLOOK

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS AID

All money collected for International Workers Aid and its projects should be sent to:
IWA, PO Box 30,
LONDON SE15 5EP.

CONVOY!

By Alan Thomett

THE SECOND, European wide, International Workers Aid convoy to Tuzla in central Bosnia is on target to go through in early April. Despite the current reaction-

International Workers Aid heads back to Tuzla

ary deal being pushed by the USA for the partition and cantonisation of Bosnia along ethnically cleansed lines, Bosnia

is still fighting for its existence against the Serbs.

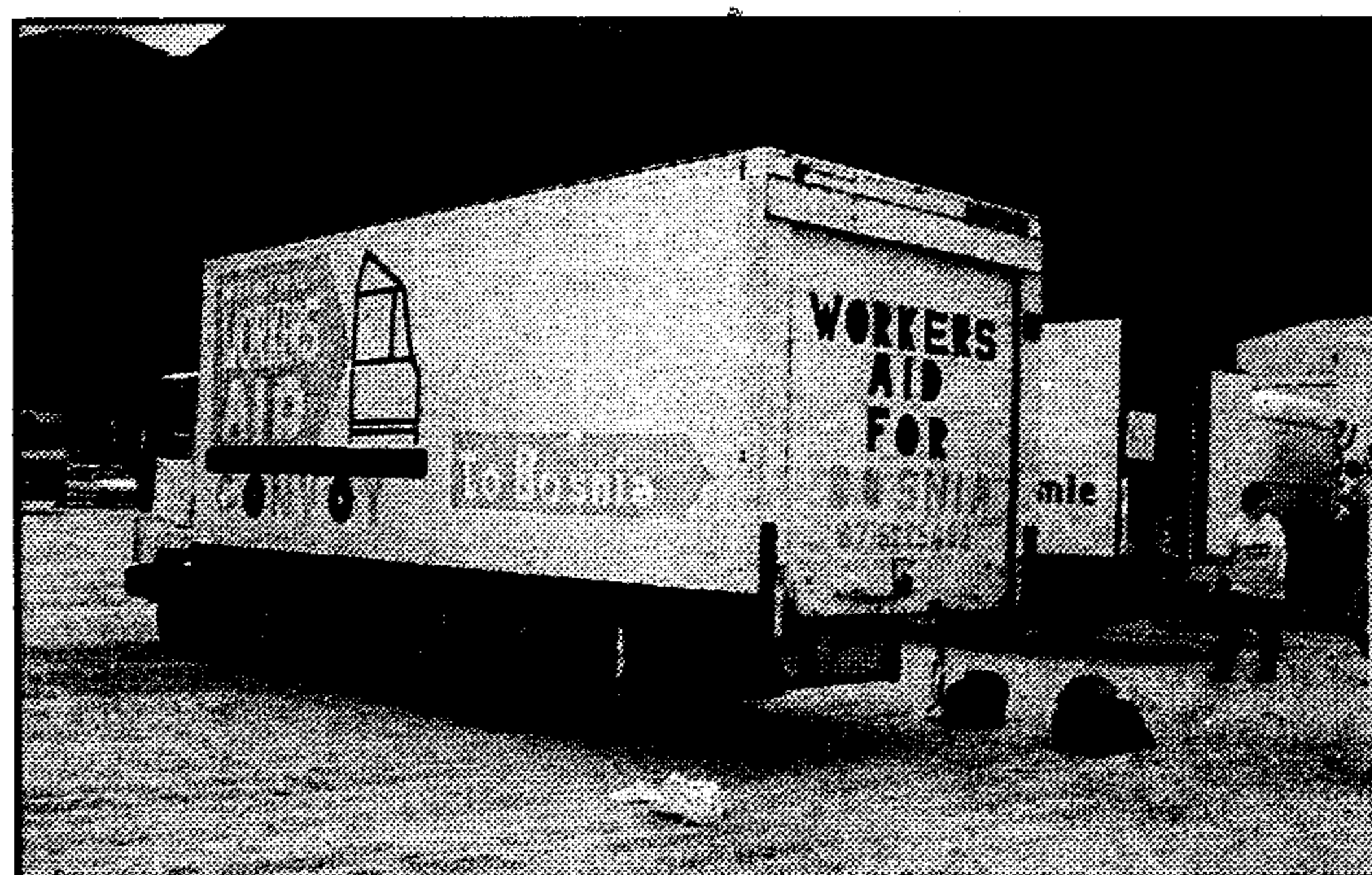
It is still cut off from the outside world apart from inadequate UN convoys and the slender link of the Southern route.

Despite TV images of extra UN convoys getting through since the Bosnian-Croat ceasefire little has changed in central Bosnia, where both resistance to Serb attacks and desperate need of the bare essentials of life continues.

The need for the aid and for the international working class solidarity represented by IWA, with a people and working class fighting for its existence, remains in full force.

Office and warehouse facilities have been established in the southern port of Split in preparation for 20 - 25 lorries from campaigns in six or seven European countries which will arrive there by April 7.

Specialised lorries have been purchased for the journey through the Southern route



over the mountains and into the Tuzla region.

In fact IWA intends to step up its aid shipments, particularly its bread programme, with a 'rolling convoy' over the next few months.

Tuzla unions

Lorries from campaigns in several countries will make repeated journeys to Split whilst specialised lorries take the aid through to Tuzla, and deliver it to the trade unions who will hand it to individual families.

The campaign in Britain sends a lorry from London on this stage on 2 April to link up with the campaign in France and then travel to Split.

The lorry has to be filled

with aid over the next ten days.

The priority is for basic foods particularly flour, sugar and cooking oil for the bread programme.

Other basic foods can be considered but cultural difference need to be remembered.

Clothing is a low priority with the exception of new children's clothing which is a part of the women's appeal.

■ Donations and information: IWA Britain 12-14 Thornton Street London SW9 0BL Tel 071 978 8622.

■ IWA International office: Box 6507, 11383, Stockholm, Sweden. Tel 08/612 12 48. Fax 08/673 03 45.1.

Bosnia deal won't bring peace

By Geoff Ryan

THE OLD Ottoman bridge in Mostar stood for over four centuries. It survived over 30 earthquakes and numerous wars. It was finally destroyed by the shells of the Croat HVO. Now a fragile footbridge, that only the bravest can cross, has been installed in its place.

This new bridge across the Neretva is a fitting symbol of the accords for a Muslim-Croat federation: a timid hope but perhaps also a new trap designed to snare the weakest.

The way in which the Croat-Muslim federation is being formed greatly suits the nationalist parties. Non-nationalist and secular parties such as those who run Tuzla, risk being marginalised.

If the nationalist parties remain in charge there will be new forms of ethnic partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina with a federation split into cantons which will be emptied of their minorities.

There will also be a Serb Republic of Bosnia where ethnic cleansing will continue. It is reported that in Banja Luka there has been no let-up in ethnic cleansing.

The *Basler Zeitung* of December 2 reported they have eye-witness accounts of three camps,

each with about two thousand detainees, still in operation.

Some opposition to this new partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina is beginning to emerge. Seven hundred inhabitants of Sarajevo demonstrated against partition and for the right to live together.

On March 19, at the initiative of the Student Coordination Against Ethnic Cleansing, demonstrations and meetings were held in at least 13 major cities in Europe. Students from Belgrade, Zagreb and Pristina (Kosovo) took part.

Belgrade struggle

When a delegation from the Coordination went to Belgrade they were met with complaints from Serbian students that they had been abandoned internationally, even though they had been fighting against the Serbian regime for several years.

Activities were also organised in the United States, Moscow and Israel. In Jerusalem Jews and Arabs demonstrated together against the ethnic partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Paris over a thousand demonstrators took part in a demonstration. These are important beginnings that we have to build on.

The trams may be running again in Sarajevo, even along *Sniper Alley*, but the proposed Croat-Muslim federation is no solution.

Should newspapers take sides?



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known for.

Over the last year our articles have been republished in Spain, Denmark, New Zealand, Germany, the United States, France, Australia — but our subscribers got them first.

And for UK subscribers, a combined subscription with *International Viewpoint* costs just £25!

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For one year - 24 issues: Surface rate: Britain £17; rest of the world £22. Air mail: Australasia, Japan, China £38, rest of the world £30.

For six months - 12 issues: Surface rate: Britain £9; rest of the world £12. Air mail: Australasia, Japan, China £20, rest of the world £16.

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