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Socialist OUTLOOK

Fighting racism & fascism pp 4 & 5

CENTRE: WHICH WAY FOR LABOUR'S LEFT?

A CRUEL SPRING IN SARAJEVO: BOSNIA ON PAGES 10 & 11

'PERSIL FAMILY' VALUES: PG 13

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Bosses plump for Blair...

Tories' dream would bring Labour's nightmare



Why the left must stand: Centre pages

Birmingham campaign for public services

by Bob Whitehead

A 'COMMUNITY Conference' is planned for October 22 at Birmingham Union Club. It seeks to unite providers and users of public services in a campaign of resistance to further government cuts.

Tens of millions have been taken from the City Council by central government over the last fifteen years. Attacks on local democracy and on the workforce, through compulsory competitive tendering, have continued relentlessly. Despite current government weakness, more are threatened.

It is high time to re-create a

spirit of resistance: the best way is to build unity.

Sponsorship has already come from UCATT, UNISON, NUJ and the NUT. Several Labour Party wards have added support and more are expected. If the Trades Council and District Labour Party agree sponsorship the local labour movement can really swing behind this conference.

So far the focus for the campaign has been council services, but the last planning meeting decided to widen the scope of the conference to include the crisis in the local NHS. Residents, pensioners, community groups and the voluntary sector are being contacted.

Of course only widespread in-

dustrial action can halt attacks on public services. But the prospect of such action is brought closer by uniting all those on the receiving end of Tory policy. It will help cut into the divide and rule policies of CCT, 'purchasers', 'sellers' and 'charters', allied to new management techniques.

The Community Conference initiative originated from Birmingham Socialist Campaign Group but the intention is for it to take on a life of its own as a democratic, united and dynamic body.

■ Planning meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month, except for June, which will be on the 8th at 7.30pm in the Union Club.



Birmingham benefit staff fighting for jobs before the local election



Early days in the Parkside camp

Pit camp protest defies bailiffs

by Steve Hall,
President Leigh,
Atherton and
Tyldesley TUC

AT 8am on Wednesday May 18 thirty bailiffs and 250 police evicted protesters from Parkside pit camp in Newton-le-Willows.

Hammers and crowbars were used to break down the door of a porta-cabin and forcibly eject three members of Lancashire Women Against Pit Closures barricaded inside.

Although only non-violent resistance was offered two male pit camp supporters, not even on the site, were arrested on spurious charges of obstruction.

A 100 yard long, six foot high steel fence has been erected at the pit entrance to prevent protestors regaining access.

The assault came as no sur-

prise since British Coal had won its court application for re-possession twelve days previously. The protesters had subsequently received visits from bailiffs and police asking them to leave the site.

Police had suggested departure coincide with a 'final' rally so the women could 'bow out in glory' but the response was always 'we are not going away'. Some have even indicated willingness to go to prison to pursue the fight!

Minor charges

The police have made no moves against Sylvia Pye - National Chair of WAPC and the only person named in the repossession order - or any of the other women. Only relatively minor charges are being pressed against the two men.

BC and the police want to down-play the affair to avoid adding fuel to the fire. This would only focus attention on a

protest which has, for twelve months, prevented BC from filling in shafts and demolishing Parkside's headgear.

BC's attempt to 'exorcise' the pit camp has been a complete failure. 'Parkside Pit Camp Mark 2' is already established on the other side of the road.

It is impossible to convey the dismay of David Nixon (the fourth pit manager in the last twelve months!) when greeted the following day by the cheery faces of WAPC members! They were brewing up less than 50 yards away from the original site - signalling the fight continues unabated.

150 people - including Arthur Scargill - joined a rally at the site on Sunday May 22.

■ Further actions are planned. For details phone: 0925 221181 or 0942 884763.

St Helens jobs fight led into blind alley

by Glenn Voris,
Treasurer St. Helens
Trades Council

RECENT JOB losses in St. Helens (700 at Pilkington's and 500 at Smith Kline Beecham) led to two 1000-strong demonstrations in the town, and the formation of a committee involving local trades unions and the Labour Party, which decided to organise a demo and rally in London, followed by a lobby of Parliament, on May 25.

Jim Bond, convenor of Pilkington's AEEU, made himself coordinator of this March For Jobs campaign. St. Helens TUC decided to support the campaign, which could mobilise the people of St. Helens and also help towards rebuilding the Trades Council.

Jamboree

However, serious problems started to arise as this labour movement orientated campaign was diverted into a popular front jamboree.

Bond, frightened of any left-wing influence in the campaign, put pressure on a pub landlord to cancel an SWP meeting with leading local trades unionists. Management at Pilkington's and Beecham's saw this as a green light to intimidate the union speakers.

The right-wing Labour council and many rightist trade union leaders supported Bond's actions, saying that they didn't want the SWP to hijack the campaign.

Any talk of strike action was

scuppered. The campaign's sole effort was to organise an appeal to the Tories, demanding more regional aid to create permanent jobs - a recipe for disaster. Many trade unions now have little desire to become involved.

Frightened by possible Liberal Democrat advances in the local elections, the council at first supported the campaign.

As soon as the elections ended without lost seats they virtually dropped out. Whilst claiming to support the Beechams workers, they were secretly discussing with Beechams management to turn most of the site into a car park.

Churches

Jim Bond's enormous involvement in the Church means that about a third of the coaches to the London demo will be filled from the churches. Many church leaders, including Archbishops, will speak at the rally, as will Liberal David Alton and Tory Nicholas Winterton.

On a more positive note, Lancashire Women Against Pit Closures will speak at the rally, and together with St. Helens TUC will be on the lobby of Parliament. The campaign has mobilised large sections of workers in the town.

Unfortunately the Beechams workers have now decided to give up the fight and accept the redundancy offer.

Despite the obvious weaknesses, St. Helens TUC has been able to use the campaign to revitalise its organisation, gaining around 12 new affiliates so far.

■ Socialist Forum Meeting, June 8, 7.30pm, Nags Head, St. Helens

Tory dream would bring Labour nightmare

COMPARED with today's Labour activists, the legendary Hobson had plenty of choice.

None of the established candidates regarded as front runners offers any kind of socialist perspective. Worse, there is a real threat that the new leader could herald a new lurch to the right.

The only significant strength of John Smith's period as leader was that he brought a welcome respite from the frenetic witch-hunting and abandonment of policies under Kinnock.

And though he sought to stamp his authority on the Labour Party by his high-profile conflict with the unions over aspects of One Member One Vote at last year's conference, Smith himself, with his instinctive alliances with the traditional right wing of the union bureaucracy has been described by UNISON's Mr Fixit Tom Sawyer as 'the best friend the unions have had' among recent leaders.

But all this could change. Barely had Smith's body began to cool before Tory news barons began weighing in with their attempt to promote the candidacy of their chosen young pretender, Tony Blair.

This has been linked to efforts to hurry through the election process, one aspect of which would be to minimise debate and consultation inside the unions.

Euphemistically described as a 'moderniser', a bland term which has replaced 'moderate' as a synonym for right wing, Blair represents the young, ambitious wing of the Labour movement that is most remote



Will Labour get the chance to vote for a left alternative?

from the unions and hostile to the party's historic links with them.

It was Blair who led the crusade to break Labour from any commitment to repeal the Tory anti-union laws.

Now, as Shadow Home Secretary, his chief role has been to outflank the Thatcherite Michael Howard, targeting the traditional Tory 'law and order' vote by echoing and then amplifying every reactionary Tory measure to strengthen police powers.

This has continued with Blair's constipated silence over the recent announcement of the routine arming of London's police.

But if Blair typifies the social conservatism of a layer of today's Labour bureaucrats, his potential rivals all share an economic conservatism which has left Labour bereft of radical policies on jobs, housing or living standards.

Gordon Brown, Blair's fellow 'moderniser', is one of those most to blame for the

wretched economic consensus with the Tories, in which each party vies for the label of lowest taxation, ignoring the urgent need for large-scale public spending to create new jobs and rebuild the shattered infrastructure.

Against these two stand the 'traditionalist' John Prescott, and the allegedly 'left' wing Robin Cook (so left wing he stage-managed the election of Smith after Kinnock's resignation).

Common policy

But Brown, Cook and Prescott are all recent co-signatories to a common policy document pressing for greater involvement of private capital in public sector projects. And Prescott, supposedly the diehard defender of the union link, was the one widely credited with pulling John Smith's chestnuts out of the fire in last year's OMOV debate.

Despite the eulogies to Smith as the man who allegedly made Labour electable, even right

wing union leaders such as the GMB's John Edmonds had publicly criticised the Party's lack of any clear campaigning stance, going so far as to support left initiatives like the coming *Tribune* conference.

The main explanation for the party's current high rating in the polls and success in May's council elections is not Labour's strength but the crisis of John Major's scandal-ridden government.

Small wonder, therefore, that the Tory press should seek now to ensure that any future Labour government comes to office with a 'safe' leadership firmly committed to the interests of big business. In doing so, the press barons and their apologists are simply defending their own class interests.

But for millions of workers, low-paid, unemployed, or facing brutal attacks on their jobs and working conditions and trade union rights, the priorities are very different.

Only a radical, anti-capitalist programme can tackle the prob-

lems they face: and none of Labour's four front-runners will offer such a programme.

To allow the creation of a new right wing 'consensus', in which the minimal differences between these candidates is regarded as the sum total of debate in the Labour Party, would represent a further historic defeat for the left.

That's why *Socialist Outlook* supports calls for the Socialist Campaign Group to organise an alternative candidate.

This also involves exposing and challenging the bureaucratic stitch-up under which any leadership candidate must be nominated by minimum of 34 MPs. This rule was clearly intended to gag the hard left and restrict the possibility of any challenge to the right wing status quo.

It is unfortunate that the left faces almost as many problems as the right in agreeing a candidate with the credibility and charisma to stand for the leadership.

But as the right wing uses the moratorium on campaigning to continue its manoeuvres behind the scenes, it is essential that the left prepares to fight back - on a platform of breaking the economic consensus, defending the welfare state, and fighting for full employment.

This adds to the importance of the Manchester conference of the Socialist Campaign Group Network on June 11. We urge activists to attend and to press in their constituencies and trade unions for a political fightback: if Tony Blair is installed according to the Tory plan, it could be a decade or more before he could be removed.

Left lines up against Maastricht

FIVE YEARS on from the last elections and the so-called European Union is no more than a supermarket, a super-bank and a greedy super-power.

For the continent's ruling classes the function of the Union is clear: dismantle the Welfare State and wage war on the working class, youth, women and immigrants.

Our verdict is unanimous: this Europe is not our Europe.

The up-coming European elections will see left-wing parties and alliances campaigning for an alternative.

The left will enter the Strasbourg parliament in greater numbers than ever before. At the heart of their campaigns is a simple message: Europe yes - but Maastricht no!

In Germany, the ex-Communist PDS (Party of Democratic



100,000 demonstrated in Brussels against government austerity

Socialism), which, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, has emerged as that country's principal left-opposition party, will be fielding a diverse list of candidates. Among them will be a member of the left-wing Party of Communist Refoundation (PRC) in Italy.

This marks an encouraging trend amongst radical parties and organisations to build more concrete links - an important counter-point to the existing links between Europe's ruling circles.

In the French-speaking region of Belgium the election campaign coincides with the

demands of an important layer of left trade unionists for a new organisation, following financial scandals with the Socialist Party.

The United Left (Gauche Unies) is the result - an alliance which has the aim of continuing after the elections are over.

In Britain, the crisis of Major's government so vividly reflected in the council elections on May 5 seems certain to herald a new Tory debacle in the Euro-elections.

However the complicity of Labour's leadership in promoting the bosses' Europe, and giving credibility to the reactionary Maastricht Treaty, restricts the scope for British workers to cast an anti-Maastricht vote.

Socialist Outlook calls for a Labour vote in the Euro elections not because we endorse

Labour's craven political platform, or the careerist, money-grubbing politicians seeking to climb aboard the EU gravy train, but because it is another opportunity to deal a blow to John Major's Tory vandals.

The path towards a socialist united states of Europe lies not through reformist legislation passing through the talking-shop of a Strasbourg parliament, but through forging practical links of solidarity and joint campaigning between trade unions, anti-racist and anti-fascist groups across the continent.

The success and impact of International Workers Aid for Bosnia, built from small beginnings, offers a glimpse of the type of work that can and must be done.

Vote Labour: and fight for internationalism!

EDITORIAL

By Jeff Lowe

EVERYONE claims to be in favour of anti-racist and anti-fascist unity. But the more we talk about unity the less there is. Not one of the existing anti-racist organisations unites all those opposed to racism and fascism and all have serious weaknesses.

It would be much better if the existing anti-racist groups united in a single organisation, led by Black people. But at the moment anti-racist unity will almost certainly mean building local coalitions to campaign around specific issues.

■ The Anti Nazi League is predominantly a front controlled by the Socialist Workers Party.

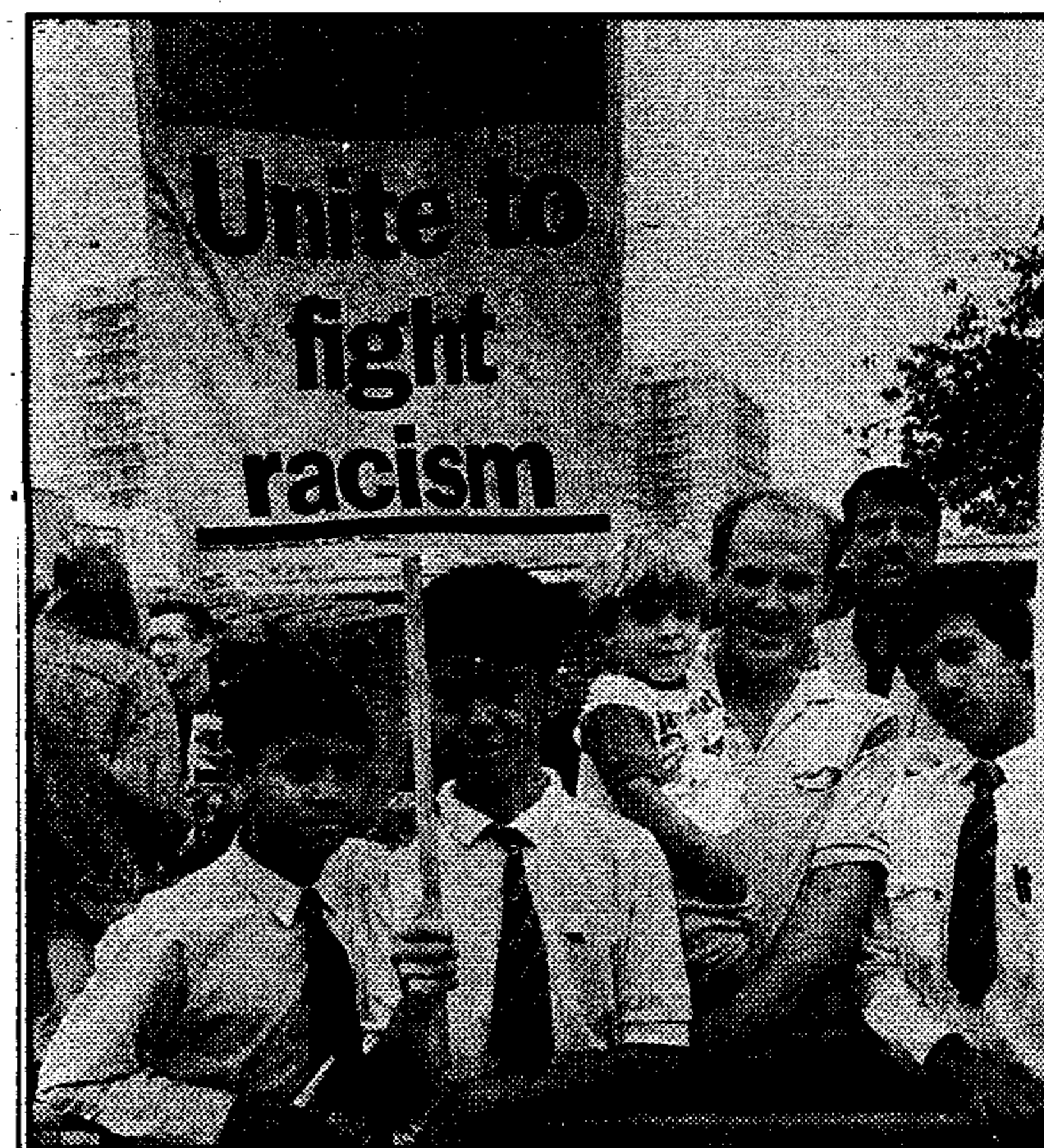
■ Youth Against Racism in Europe – whilst less sectarian than ANL – is under the control of Militant Labour.

■ The Anti-Racist Alliance has a lot of support amongst trade unions and in the Black communities, but refuses to collaborate with other organisations. Its current leadership is also under attack by Black activists for failing to 'deal with any of the major issues facing black communities in the UK'.

Socialist Outlook has long argued for unity in action against racist attacks. We have tried to bring together all those who want to oppose racism and fascism.

Our supporters played an important role in the Unity Committee that organised the successful May Day march

Unite the anti-racist struggle!



School students fight racism

against racism in Manchester. We have stressed the importance of the campaign to close down Campsfield.

Much of the left has ignored Campsfield. None of the anti-racist organisations has made it a central issue. Yet the detention of large numbers of Jamaicans over Christmas received wide publicity and led to protests by Transport Union leader Bill Morris. Recent hunger strikes by Algerian detainees have also made it a focus.

Campsfield

Campsfield is important because at present the main threat to Black people in Britain, and elsewhere in Europe, comes from the racist, capitalist state.

This does not mean we should ignore fascist activities and racist street attacks.

We have to insist on the right

of Black people to defend themselves from racist attacks, whoever the perpetrators. Self defence is no offence! The labour movement must rally behind black communities which fight back against racist violence.

But state racism and street racism reinforce each other. State racism legitimates racism generally.

Racism is wide-spread throughout society, including large sections of the working class. It will not be defeated just by actions of minorities.

We have to take anti-racism into the heart of the labour movement – as well as amongst women's organisations, the lesbian and gay movement, and young people – to unite with Black, Jewish and Irish communities.

Racism and fascism are not just moral questions. They di-

vide the working class and make it more difficult to fight for our interests.

The roots of racism run deep. They are not just a response by backward sections of the working class to lack of jobs or houses. But these material conditions undoubtedly fuel racist responses. It is no accident that the fascist BNP has been able to win support in run down areas like the Isle of Dogs and former mining communities in the East Midlands.

The recent TUC march against racism was a welcome development. But as long as the trade union and Labour Party leaders refuse to fight to defend jobs and wages, and fail to mount campaigns against unemployment and homelessness, they help to sustain an environment in which people turn to the fascists because they appear to offer the only radical solutions.

Leaflets issued by the Labour Party in Millwall – despite the good campaign reported elsewhere in this issue – show a real failure to understand the nature of fascism. They claim 'Business' will not support the BNP. This may be true at present but not always so. In Italy and Germany big business was the main backer of Mussolini and Hitler.

The working class must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets. But that can only be done by fighting for solutions that meet the real needs of working people.

Denunciations of the evils of racism and fascism – however well-intentioned – are not enough. Efforts to unite the anti-racist struggle must be stepped up.

A useful first step would be a united campaign to defeat BNP leader John Tyndall in the Dagenham by-election on June 9.

Kick racism out of football

by David Thomas

IN 1993 the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers Association launched the *Lets Kick Racism Out Of Football Campaign*.

Press conferences, articles in match-day programmes and the decision by clubs to ban and support the prosecution of 'fans' responsible for racist behaviour was welcome.

However the recent First Division play off game between Millwall and Derby County shows football supporters have a long way to go before racism is eradicated from the terraces.

In an evening punctuated by violence Millwall supporters invaded the pitch to assault Derby County players. Derby took the unprecedented decision to substitute their two black players five minutes before the end of the game because they were concerned for their safety.

This is not the first racist activity at Millwall this season. In August Ricky Otto of Southend was subjected to sustained racist abuse. During Nottingham Forest's recent visit to the Den a Millwall 'fan' tried to run on the pitch to assault Stan Collymore, Forest's centre forward.

During the late 70's and early 80's racist activity was a serious problem at football grounds up and down the country. National Front paper sellers were regularly seen at

many clubs including West Ham Utd, Newcastle Utd and Portsmouth. Football violence was endemic often with a racist character.

The N.F. newspaper *Bulldog* used to publish a league table of hooligan gangs. Football terraces were often hostile environments for black people.

A combination of factors has led to some improvement. First, the last fifteen years has seen an increasing number of black professionals.

Heroes

Ian Wright at Arsenal, Andy Cole at Newcastle and Paul McGrath at Aston Villa have become heroes to thousands of football fans, black and white. This summer Paul Ince became the first black player to captain the English national side.

There has also been a proliferation of supporter based 'fanzines' which have often campaigned against the racists at their respective clubs. Leeds United fans produce *Marching Altogether* which is explicitly anti-racist.

The Celtic fanzine *Not The View* has linked up with supporters of Hamburg side St Pauli who have an impressive record of combatting the far

right in Germany.

The resurgence of the BNP has led to fascists raising their heads again at football grounds. Charlton Athletic, who play less than five miles from the BNP HQ at Bexley, has been a particular target for the Nazis. Combat 18 have been reported to be working with the notorious 'Headhunters' gang at Chelsea.

How should we respond? The CRE/PFA is set to continue next season. ARA should pressure the players union to follow the example in Italy where every Premier League team took to the field carrying anti-racist banners.

We should urge Labour councils to campaign with football clubs and supporters groups to ensure football grounds are free from racist activity. In the 1980s Lewisham council promoted a whole series of initiatives with Millwall, mainly with the aim of bringing more women to matches.

Unfortunately, with Lewisham implementing a cuts budget, much of the funding was cut. Given the appalling scenes this week it is clear they should have stepped up rather than cut back their campaigning.

Let's kick racism out of football.

FIGHTING RACISM

DEMONSTRATE for Britain's Forgotten Prisoners!

JUNE 4, 1994

ASSEMBLE 1pm Exeter Hall, Kidlington

(feeder march leaves St Giles, Oxford at 10.30am)

MARCH to rally 2pm at the gates of CAMPSFIELD detention centre

SPEAKERS include JEREMY CORBYN MP, MARC WADSWORTH (ARA), BOB PURKISS, chair TUC race relations committee, MOHAMMED IDRISH

STOP the detentions and deportations!
Asylum is a human right!

Isle of Dogs diary

By Christine Fraser

MAY 1990: Three Labour councillors elected in Millwall ward.

1990-1992: Liberal Democrats pump out racist propaganda and launch community mobilisations on racist demands. National party leaders ignore Labour complaints.

BNP begin to organise covertly. Key activists infiltrate appropriate community groups and forums, raising racist propaganda and mobilising around racist demands.

October 1992: Millwall by-election called. Millwall anti-racist/anti-fascist committee formed between Bengali organisations and other anti-racists.

Liberal Democrats fight viciously racist campaign.

Labour councillor Ted Johns elected, with BNP candidate winning 20 per cent of poll.

Labour Party ward right wing, including sub-agent James Hunt, say BNP vote was a good thing: it reduced the Liberal vote and allowed Labour to win.

SWP pack meeting of Millwall anti-racist anti-fascist committee, and change its name to 'Island Against the Nazis'.

May 1993: Millwall selects three candidates for next May's elections, deselecting sitting 'left wing' councillor. Selections include Ted Johns and James Hunt.

Summer frustrated by SWP wrecking tactics, Island Against the Nazis ceases to function.

September 1993: Millwall by-election. Local Liberal Democrats spontaneously tone down racism (but are picked up for racist history afterwards). SWP issue leaflets in name of 'Island Against the Nazis'.

Labour campaign for James Hunt picks up some of the intrinsically racist demands of previous Liberal Democrat campaigns. The left is comprehensively excluded from any involvement from the campaign.

Eve-of-poll local paper carries alleged 'leaked Labour canvass returns' showing possible BNP victory, which fuels confidence to vote BNP. Derek Beackon wins surprise (even for him) victory for BNP by 7 votes.

National press says it is a protest vote about housing. They are a year too late; by now the racist ideology has taken hold and some white voters vote openly to scapegoat local Bengali population (established in Millwall since 1988) for all social ills. BNP election propaganda clearly advocates race-hate.

Labour vote is decreased by incompetent, uninspiring campaign which also drives some Bengalis to vote Liberal Demo-

How Labour (eventually) beat the BNP in Millwall



Labour celebrates massive Millwall victory

crat, or even BNP (in confusion with Bengali National Party).

SWP issue leaflet in the name of 'Island Against the Nazis' 'revealing' that BNP is a racist party and implying that the electorate voted in ignorance of this.

Defeated

At the same time, defeated Labour candidate James Hunt (the man who had seen an increased BNP vote as a good thing a year before) resigns from the Labour Party on regional TV rather than give evidence to the party on who leaked the alleged canvass; he joins the ex-ward chair and ex-ward secretary to form the 'East London People's Alliance' based on basic Labour manifesto overlaid with racist policies on housing allocation.

ELPA announces it will field candidates in May elections for all three Millwall seats, including ex-ward candidates James Hunt and Ted Johns (allegedly won over from Labour). Within two months, the Alliance has split over irreconcilable personal ambitions. Ted Johns eventually decides to retire and back Labour rather than stand for any party.

Mavericks

The Labour right-wing mavericks begin campaigning for a cross-party alliance to beat the BNP in May - variously a pact with the Liberal Democrats, and a Lab/Lib/Con slate (!).

The demand is soundly rejected by Labour and the electorate, but picked up a little by the bourgeois press, church figures and some big business leaders.

The BNP deliver a leaflet door-to-door each month.



Ousted Beackon

The SWP thwart attempts by Island Against the Nazis to call lobby of Beackon's first full council meeting. UNISON call lobby: well attended, but no ongoing organisation.

Spring 1994: Labour selects two candidates to fill vacancies and begin mass campaign against BNP and in defence of non-racist housing policies. Members flock back to ward meetings now the right-wing officers have gone. Left is positively encouraged to participate in organising the coming election campaign.

ELPA claim mass exodus from ward Labour Party to their Alliance: straw poll in the Labour Party reckons they mean mass exodus of four people. Series of regional TV appearances by James Hunt and ex-ward chair with increasingly bizarre allegations about the Labour Party.

Local business magazine carries articles talking up BNP vote. Media starts sniffing

around Millwall, apparently keen to get lots of footage in the can ready for use after BNP historic victory gives them control over policy-making in decentralised Isle of Dogs neighbourhood and control of its £23 million budget.

BNP and Labour each delivering a leaflet a month to the 7,500 doors in Millwall ward.

Police figures for racist attacks in the ward show 300 per cent rise since the by-election.

SWP refuse to build Island Against the Nazis lobby of Beackon's first neighbourhood committee meeting, but attend, enter council chamber and throw cup of coffee at him (missing) to persuade Beackon they don't like him. Press reports ANL incident and ignores larger lobby outside.

April 1994: Labour election campaign begins, assisted by Labour activists from across London and even beyond, including organised left groups. Centred on the slogan 'Only Labour can beat the BNP'; the campaign attracts support from home-owners in private developments, concerned about falling house values, from black and Asian voters, and from large sections of the white working class.

Counter-productive

Walworth Road decide Millwall is a priority, and send in Nick Rainsford MP, who makes a series of counter-productive interventions.

BNP deliver 'British Nationalist' 8-page paper door to door on selected estates, disseminating explicit fascist programme. Liberal Democrats deliver a couple of hysterical leaflets on selected estates.

SWP fly-posting says the BNP are against the NHS and

rave music. SWP/ANL appear at Labour Party canvass points and go door to door petitioning, carrying *Socialist Worker* and reinforcing BNP propaganda that the ANL undertake 'rent-a-mob' tactics.

The Labour canvassers meet resistance to voting Labour because of ANL doorstep tactics. After two weeks, a mediator from Militant Labour brokers a peace agreement; when the two groups meet, the Labour Party will say 'we're going this way, you go that way'. It works, preempting reformist demands for UN intervention.

Some white voters admit they are voting BNP with as little emotion as if they had said 'No Vernon's, I'm with Littlewoods'. Others go purple and shout a lot. Scary incident with BNP supporters surrounding three Labour canvassers who have become separated from main team persuades Labour to stick closer together in future.

Dog bites 'comrade'

Black voter's dog bites slightly dodgy Labour candidate in hand. Left activists deplore canine's political sophistication in face of the over-riding need to unite to beat the fascists.

Labour campaign defends non-racist housing policy and says the BNP victory would end any investment in the area by business or in social housing by public or private sector. BNP bring out another issue of 'British Nationalist' refuting these claims in detail and carrying the full text of the ex-ward chair's resignation letter with a catalogue of bizarre allegations against Labour.

'London Stop the Fascists' network organise counter-demo on the Saturday before the poll at a local supermarket to protest at Beackon's public appearances. BNP feel obliged to organise counter-counter-demo.

Thugs

Massive police demo keeps forces far apart: local population can't move for police vans and helicopters. Labour insistence that the BNP are bringing thugs on to the street thus ironically proven.

Police ship in van loads of riot shields ready for polling day.

Sunday's Labour campaign day sees over 100 activists leave their local campaigns and come to Millwall - fully half of them are from the organised left, and at least 5 per cent are Labour Party full timers.

May 5, Polling day: Labour wins all three seats, more than doubling its previous highest vote. BNP vote increases (Beackon's by 50% in six months), Liberal Democrat vote down to pre-86 levels. Record turnout for a council election in the UK.

FIGHTING FASCISM

UNISON holds back on pay

UNISON's first conference failed to defend its members against current government attacks on the public sector.

In the debate on public sector pay, a toothless motion was carried. An amendment calling for a national one-day strike was defeated, despite gaining 37 per cent support. This buries any lingering hopes of UNISON taking national action against the pay freeze this year.

Action over pay in some sections is still possible, though this is unlikely given the leadership's willingness to settle for offers of around 2 per cent.

The only left victory was on defence of the NHS with the adoption of a motion, opposed by the Executive and UNISON leader Rodney Bickerstaffe, committing the union to oppose closure of health facilities by means "up to and including strike action".

Real battle lines were not drawn over policy issues but over democracy and the running of the union. Since the merger, union officials have increased their control over the structures at members' expense.

A mood of distrust of National Officers and the National Executive Committee amongst delegates met with a ruthless response from the bureaucracy, led by ex-NUPE officials.

Ex-NUPE full-timers seized on the issue of Labour Party affiliation to divide the conference, claiming that the ex-NALGO left, which was not affiliated to the Labour Party, was trying to control the union's political fund without paying into it.

New union rules prevent ballot on Labour Party affiliation until 1997. Division into affiliated and non-affiliated union sections prevents discussion on Labour Party issues. This al-

lows leaders to witch-hunt the left by playing on distrust between delegates from the founder unions.

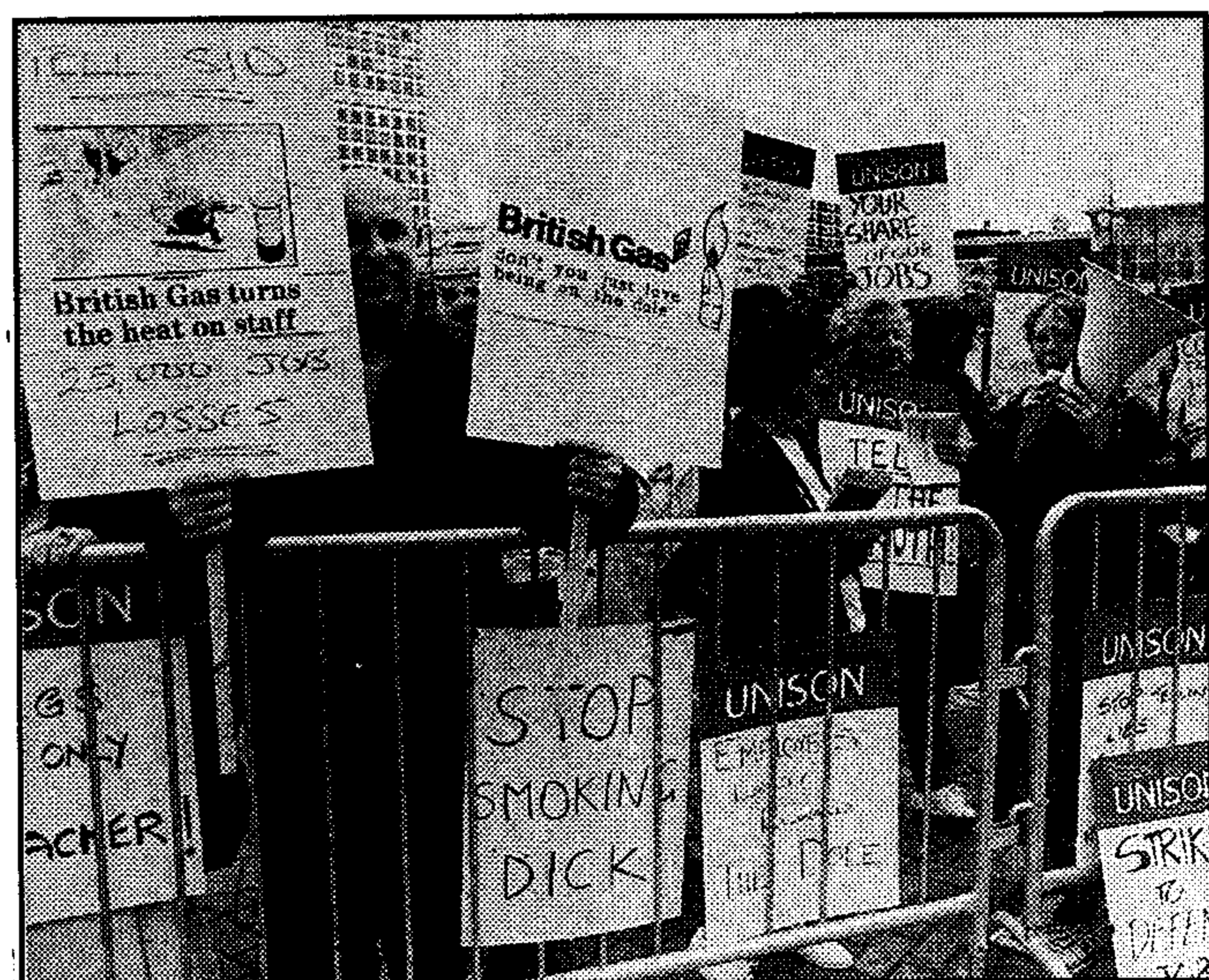
This mood was used to overwhelmingly defeat affiliation to the Anti-Nazi League and Youth Against Racism in Europe.

As conference wore on an anti-leadership sentiment amongst delegates culminated in a unanimous vote against plans to build new headquarters.

Closure

However a consequence of this will be the closure of the old COHSE and NUPE headquarters, with bureaucrats concentrated in the NALGO head office.

The battle, predominantly by ex-NUPE officials, against rank-and-file activists has culminated in the closure of the



Picket of British Gas AGM

Liverpool branch.

Steps were taken to bring together health activists from the three merged unions, with a highly successful 100-strong evening meeting convened by one of the Manchester health branches on the eve of the health section conference.

Plans have been laid for this meeting to reconvene before the autumn health sector conference.

Steps are being taken to co-ordinate left-wingers in the union following a large meeting organised jointly by three regional left caucuses.

This development must in-

volve working to overcome the divisions between the former unions, with mergers occurring quickly at branch level despite obstruction from regional officials.

Local government branches will have to fight for practical solidarity with struggles against hospital closures.

We must meet this challenge so that the left will not be wiped out in UNISON. A July meeting will plan an autumn conference.

■ The Campaign for a Fighting Democratic Union can be contacted c/o Islington UNISON "A" branch, 1a Canonbury Street, London N1 2TA.

TRADE UNION NEWS

NCU Broad Left defeat

THE NATIONAL Communications Union Broad Left has lost control of the union's National Executive Council to the right wing "Centre Left" grouping.

Colin O'Callaghan, Ian Cuthbert, and Paul Moore, all on the hard left of the BL, lost their seats in the Engineering Constituency, reducing the BL majority to 15-6, while the right wing Clerical "mafia" maintained their 100% grip on their 12 NEC seats.

The drop in support is due to the NEC majority's failure over the last year to confront BT management over a whole series of issues.

Failure

These include time and motion study, failure to ballot the membership on last year's pay deal, and most important of all agreement to performance based redeployment of staff. These successive retreats, combined with a generally 'business as usual' approach, have reinforced the already widespread demoralisation amongst BT staff.

While there was a general decline in support for BL candidates reflected in a lower turnout, the three "hard lefts" had obviously been targeted by some some branches who

otherwise supported the BL slate.

Though they have made serious mistakes, in particular by supporting the redeployment agreement, their loss will weaken an already directionless BL grouping.

BT management will now seize the initiative on amongst other things compulsory 6 day working for field staff, and further marginalisation of the NCU through systematic application of the new management techniques.

Merger

The NCU bureaucracy will reassert itself over the forthcoming merger with the Union of Communication Workers, which is under solid right wing control.

But the major failure over the last year has been the Broad Left organisation. The Steering Committee has only met twice and has

failed to take any public positions on any of the key issues, let alone campaign on any of them amongst the members.

It has even failed as an electoral organisation, the recent (unsuccessful) General Secretary campaign having been run completely independently of the BL.

A major inquest needs to be held if lessons of this defeat are to be learned.



MSF Conference

Lyons tamed?

By Glenn Sutherland, Conference delegate.

THIS YEAR'S MSF Conference, held in Brighton May 7-11, was crucial for the credibility of General Secretary Roger Lyons.

He expected conference to endorse his massive consultation exercise, *MSF into the 21st Century*, designed to transform MSF from an independent union on the left of the TUC into an American-style business union.

In the event, Conference decisively rejected this plan and its class-collaborationist logic.

The leadership also suffered defeats on two other fundamental questions of democracy.

The decision of MSF's delegation to last year's Labour Party Conference to abstain, contrary to MSF Conference policy, on one-member-one-vote for parliamentary re-selections, which had delivered OMOV to the Labour Party leadership, was roundly condemned.

This year's Conference instructed MSF NEC to campaign for a return to the block vote in Parliamentary re-selections.

An emergency motion calling for a lay-member investigation into wide-spread right wing electoral fraud in the recent NEC elections was also carried. This is the first time an emergency motion that had been ruled out of order has ever been discussed, let alone carried.

This was even more remarkable since Lyons had obtained legal advice that the terms of the motion were illegal.

Although the NEC and the General Secretary are unlikely to act on these decisions, the importance of Conference defeating the leadership cannot be over-estimated.

Lyons was successful at fractionally moving the union's formal political position to the right, by weakening MSF's commitment to campaigning for nationalisation of important sectors of the economy.

We were told that a new social phenomenon had been discovered - caring capitalists who act more in their workers' interests than for profit.

Attempts to extend the union's position against all Tory anti-union laws to support for members and others taking action outside the law was defeated, although MSF is still - just - committed to repeal of anti-union laws.

The organised left in MSF

took small but significant steps forward. Network 90, a loose formation of left activists, produced a widely read daily bulletin. We also organised - jointly with London Unity Left - a very well-attended fringe meeting with Dennis Skinner and Dawn Primarolo.

Network 90 took practical steps to broaden its organised base beyond London, with a regular bulletin and local meetings. There are also plans for an open left conference in the autumn.

Relations between Left currents in the union have considerably thawed, creating the possibility of serious political discussion and debate between Unity Left - the previously Stalinist-dominated TASS broad left - and Network 90. Militant, Socialist Organiser and SWP members seemed to recognise that sectarianism has no place when the Left must unite to hammer out an alternative political programme.

Lyons has lost credibility with rank-and-file MSF activists. The task of the Left is to prepare a fight for an alternative leadership.

■ For more information on Network 90 and its activities, write to Network 90, c/o Jennie Twydell, 80 Pembroke Street, London N1 ODP

Racists gain support in Dutch elections

By Ron Blom in Amsterdam

ELECTION results in the Netherlands show a decline in support for the right-wing

government parties the Social Democratic (PVDA) and the Christian Democrats (CDA).

Opposition parties, the openly racist conservative-liberals (VVD) and postmodernist liberals (D66), were the main

beneficiaries.

All four main parties now have similar numbers of seats. Against this right wing coalition, the Workers' Socialist Party (SAP), Dutch section of the Fourth International, and the revolutionary youth organisation Rebel, fought on a clear left programme of open borders and welfare rights.

All four of the main parties have similar right wing politics. The Social Democrats campaigned on an austerity programme of attacks on the welfare state that included cutting sickness benefits. Not to be outdone the Christian Democrats called for cuts in pensions.

The government has attacked migrants and increased immigration controls. This fits with the racist policies of the VVD, who called on children of migrant workers to be barred from state education.

In seeking to destroy the welfare state, the establishment parties seek to benefit the capitalist road builders and transport companies - through a massive programme of road and airport building to create 'Netherlands - the distribution country'.

The Green Left (a fusion of former Communists and paci-

fists), made no gains, with ambivalent policies on migration that included proposing a coalition against racism with the VVD.

An anti-establishment ticket in the form of the Socialist Party nonetheless echoed the main parties in calling for migrants to be spread equally around cities - with no more than ten per cent in any one area!

So it was the Workers' Socialist Party and Rebel which campaigned on a clear anti-racist stand against immigration controls.

This campaign involved thousands of young people, including migrant youth, many of whom are too young to vote or who have not been given Dutch nationality. Defence against racist attacks became an element of the campaign, and SAP and Rebel were prominent in building the fightback.



'We are hungry: Eat the rich' Anti-capitalist propaganda from Dutch radical youth organisation, Rebel.

Mujahedin breaking up Afghanistan

by K. Govindan

AFGHAN mujahedin are fighting each other as bitterly as they once fought occupying Soviet forces.

The fall of the Soviet-backed PPDA regime of Mohammed Najibullah in April 1992 unleashed squabbling among the diverse Muslim sects and ethnic/linguistic groups cobbled together in an 'anti-communist' front.

Over 11,000 Afghans, mainly civilians, have died and tens of thousands seriously injured. The capital Kabul lies in ruins. Most of the population have fled to the devastated countryside.

The government of national unity, comprising the major militia leaders, was doomed to failure when General Rasid Dostum, who controls nine of Afghanistan's 29 provinces, was left out.

Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, an arch fundamentalist from the traditionally dominant Pushtun people who leads the *Hizb e Islami* has joined forces with Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek and former Najibullah loyalist.

Their enemy is 'President' Burhanuddin Rabbani who leads the *Jamaat e Islami* party. Fellow Tajik, Ahmad Shah Massoud, is Rabbani's main ally.

The new war in Afghanistan has significant regional dimensions. Saudi Arabia backs the *Ittihad e Islami* party, while Iran finances the Shia *Hizb e Wahadat e Islami*. Pakistan officially supports Rabbani and Massoud, while attempting to mediate between rival factions.

However, the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI is thought to be arming Hikmatyar, who has ethnic affiliations with the Pathans of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province.

New players are the central Asian republics of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan which share a common ethnicity and culture with some mujahedin leaders.

The governments in these formerly 'communist' republics are secular and deeply worried about the strength of fundamentalist forces in their own states.

Uzbekistan backs General Dostum not only because he is Uzbek but also because he has secular credentials.

Tajikistan may have been expected to support the ethnic Tajik Massoud. But he has ambitions beyond the borders of Afghanistan.

Unification

He wishes to unify Tajik areas of the country with Tajikistan, an idea the Russians don't warm to easily. The Tajikistan government fears Moscow more than Massoud.

Popular support for the mujahedin had less to do with sympathy for Muslim fundamentalism than hatred of an occupying army. Their ability to offer a credible alternative has been seriously damaged.

In late March, in Kabul, there was a sizeable demonstration of civilians demanding an end to war and expressing no confidence in any of the factions.

Nevertheless, the break-up of Afghanistan into ethnic/linguistic regions seems a likely outcome.

Sheffield United boss Reginald Brealey blamed for deaths of Indian workers

Blood on his hands?

by South Asia Solidarity Group

ON NEW YEAR'S day 1994 a worker from the Victoria Jute Mill in Calcutta died of starvation. His family hold the mill owner, British businessman and owner of Sheffield United Football Club Reginald Brealey, responsible.

Brealey has also siphoned off £2.5 million in pensions and statutory benefits and more than six months' unpaid wages.

In 1989, Brealey became chairman of Titagur plc which controls the four jute mills of the Thomas Duff group. Since then, despite the price of jute rising sharply on the world market, the 20,000 workers have been living on the edge of starvation, with the mills remaining closed for weeks at a stretch.

In 1990 the company made profits of over £6 million. Yet the 2,000 people who have retired since Brealey took over have received nothing of their pension. Brealey has also been charged under the Foreign Regulations Act 1973.

Instead of modernising or investing in the mills Brealey is

attempting to increase the work-load while reducing the number of workers. His latest offer in one mill involves laying off 500 workers, abolishing the night shift and introducing a four day week. Despite their desperation the workers have rejected it.

Recently Brealey brought twelve British managers to Calcutta. On 16 March, when the workers came to present their demands, two of these managers, Whitcombe and Vigors, taunted the delegation with racist abuse.

The workers refused to tolerate this final insult and the managers were dragged out of their offices into the crowd outside, and had to be rescued by senior police officers.

A mass picket of the British Deputy High Commission in Calcutta demanded an apology for the managers' racist behaviour.

Setting an example?

In a bizarre twist Brealey has just bought a 16,500 acre estate in a remote part of Scotland for £2.5 million (the exact amount owed to the Indian jute workers). The estate will be used for setting up a project to 'train young people who have been in care'.

The project, named 'Back to

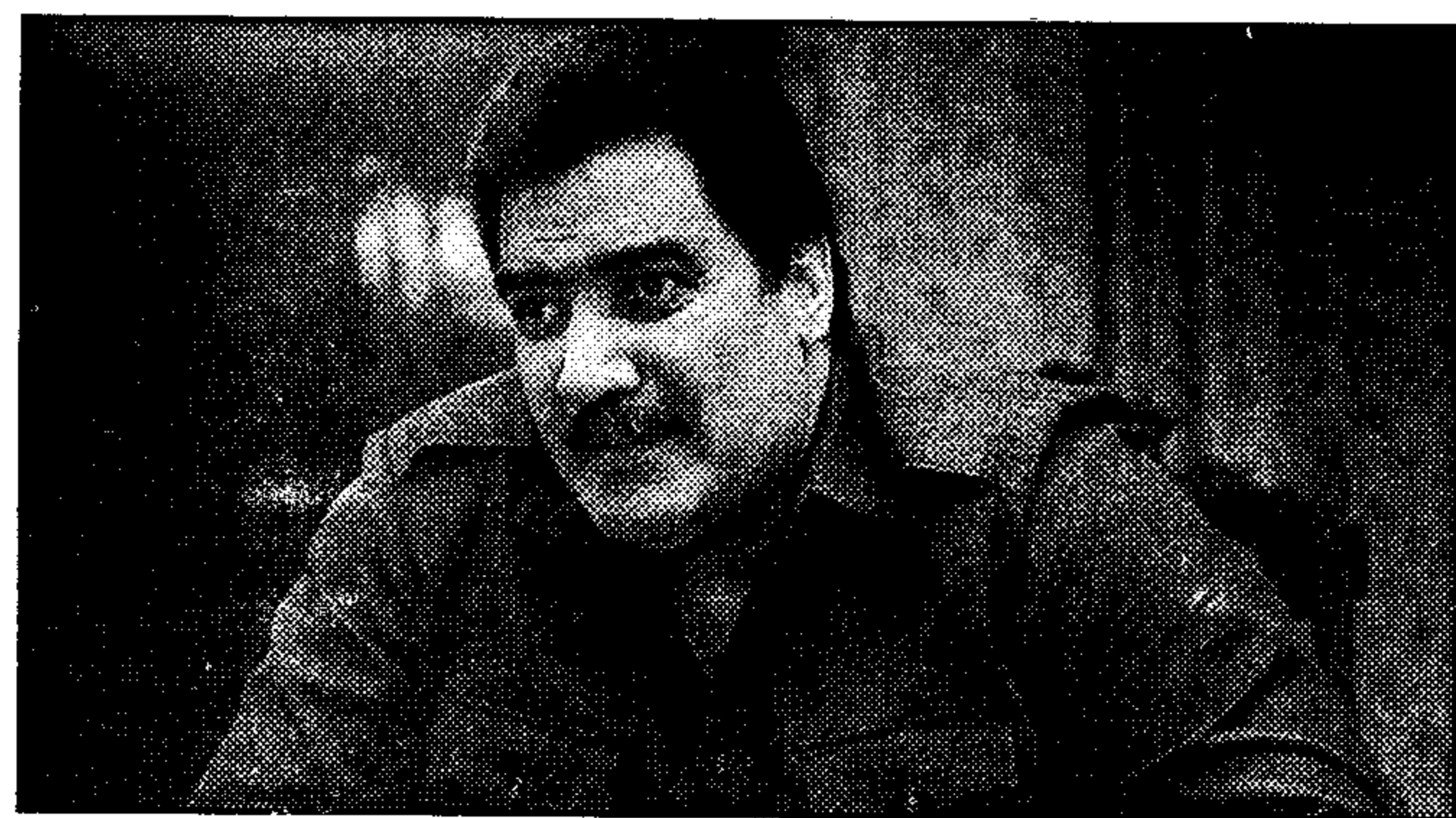
Basics' will be run by a retired army colonel and includes visits to the Calcutta jute mills where 'Youngsters will see how people earn their living and change their attitudes'.

The workers and their supporters have faced continual police repression. One worker is feared dead after being taken from his home by police, others have been beaten and their homes raided.

On 24 February the workers set up a camp outside the Angus Mill which is kept going by donations. In June they are planning a series of actions to draw attention to their demands, which are:

- 1) Brealey's extradition to face charges
- 2) Re-opening of the mills under conditions which provide a living wage
- 3) Payment of wages owed
- 4) Repayment of the pension fund and other statutory benefits (a total of £2.5 million) which legally belong to the workers
- 5) Unconditional release of all those arrested.

■ Details of the campaign from: South Asia Solidarity Group, c/o Londec, Instrument House, 205-217 Kings Cross Rd, London WC1X 9DB. Tel: 071 713 7907.



Afghan ex-president Najibullah

WORLD OUTLOOK

Fighting back for socialist policies

With Labour's politics once again in the melting pot in the aftermath of John Smith's death, the fight for a genuine socialist alternative takes on an added importance. SOCIALIST OUTLOOK spoke to Socialist Campaign Group member JEREMY CORBYN MP about the forthcoming Campaign Group Network Conference on Full Employment

SO: This conference is timely coming in the wake of the local and European elections and in the context of the leadership contest. What do you want it to achieve?

JC: What I hope it will achieve is a serious analysis of the European election results and the problem the party has failed to address so far. We have been achieving good election results over the past two years based essentially on an anti-Tory vote rather than a pro-Labour vote.

Most voters are looking round the country and asking who's the best placed candidate to defeat the incoming Tory, and voting for them - whether they be Liberal, Labour or Nationalist. That is a very weak position for a political party to be in.

We are seen as a force for a negative rather than a positive. What has to be addressed is what a Labour government is there to achieve and what it is capable of achieving.

The General Election defeat of 1992 was very thoroughly analysed by a lot of people including the Essex University report, and a number of factors emerged. There was a slight increase in Labour support amongst the mobile middle class vote. But there was a serious falling away of support amongst the poorest voters and amongst pensioners, which would suggest that we're not getting through some-



Low paid workers, like these Burnshall's strikers, are looking for radical answers from Labour

where.

There was also a correlation between local party activity and the subsequent election result - an unpalatable fact which Peter Mandelson's ilk clearly don't like because their whole analysis has been to destroy the activity of local parties.

SO: So what part can this conference play in the process of developing an analysis and understanding of why this has happened and adopting policies that can redress the problems? What organisational structures need to be set up?

JC: It can come out with a series of policy proposals relating to full employment and the welfare state, arms expenditure, European policy, an international policy for a Labour government, a policy on criminal justice.

Those are all very, very important issues. But it can also say to those in the

"We can say to those in the Labour Party who feel disenfranchised by the Kinnock years, and feel ignored by the modernising drive of the party, that there are other people who think like they do, and there are other people who have joined the Labour Party because they believe in socialist politics".

Labour Party who feel disenfranchised by the Kinnock years, and feel ignored by the modernising drive of the party, that there are other people who think like they do, and there are other people who have joined the Labour Party because they believe in socialist politics.

SO: What sort of campaigning and what sort of structures do you think are necessary for this task?

JC: An open left organisation within the party. It mustn't be secret, it mustn't be proscriptive or prescriptive. It must give people the space to discuss and debate which they are increasingly denied within the normal party machinery. And it must be attractive to socialists who are outside the Labour Party at the present time.

The Labour Party has an age and an image problem. Its age profile is increasingly old. I seem to have gone through my life being a young member of the Labour Party, and I'm not getting any younger. We are not attracting young people into the party who feel alienated. To teenagers, environmental pressure groups and libertarian pressure groups are far more attractive than Labour.



Corbyn: 'MP for all the labour movement'

SO: Do you think that the Network is a beginning for that type of organisation?

JC: It must live up to these expectations. It's always going to be difficult to organise the network because it's all done on a shoestring by essentially voluntarily labour, and there is always a danger that people will say that the Network must say A and demand A of everybody. It just can't, you just can't operate like that. It's got to operate on the basis more or less of a consensus on the direction in which we go.

SO: What is the position of the MPs in relation to the Network? Do they welcome it?

JC: The Campaign Group supported the establishment of the Network and its first conference in Leeds was extremely successful. The second one in Sheffield was rather small, and perhaps not as well prepared as it should have been.

I'm hoping that the Manchester one will be very large indeed and will be representative. I think what comrades are



John Smith: seen as radical in calling for full employment

CENTRE STAGE

Why the left must stand a candidate

By Helen Shaw

IN THE WAKE of John Smith's death there hasn't been a single day when the bourgeois media has failed to offer its latest suggestion or assessment of who should step in to Smith's shoes.

But who do the left think should stand, and how can the left make its voice heard above the media circus?

Activists in the Labour Party are crying out for fighting alternative that breaks the economic consensus with Tories. In order to play any significant role in the political debate, in this contest the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs (SCG) must stand a candidate.

Those that suggest you can influence the debate without a candidate are living in a dream world. Questioning the candidates about the left's policy priorities will be dismissed if there is no candidate standing who embodies those policies and gives party members a chance to vote for them.

Any ideas coming from the left that the SCG shouldn't stand are defeatist. They prefer to abstain rather than risk defeat. We'll never get anywhere if we always wait for the right conditions for a struggle.

Arguments about the potential failure of a candidate to achieve the prerequisite number of nominations from MPs fail to grasp the opportunity to expose the lack of democracy in the current mechanism. They also fail to recognise the potential to regenerate the left of the party with the call for and if possible the standing of a left candidate.

Undemocratic

Should we wait until Labour Party conference overturns the undemocratic rule - which was precisely designed to stop the SCG putting up candidates or the selection of new left wing MPs who will make it possible to achieve the requisite number of nominations?

If those goals were to be achieved it will be because the SCG take a fighting position and head up a recomposition of the left. Failure to stand merely capitulates to and consolidates the undemocratic nature of those rules.

The SCG needs to put aside personal differences, look beyond the

House of Commons, and work collectively to obtain the required number of nominations and allow the left in the party to participate in the contest. If there is no left wing candidate, thousands of party activists will effectively be disenfranchised.

Why should left candidates even stand for the NEC if the criteria for participation in elections is guaranteed success? They recognise that they can't necessarily win, and over the years some on the slate have received low votes which could be seen as derisory and indicative of the weakness of the left. And yet they have consistently campaigned for places on the NEC. What is so different now?

If SCG members are elected to the NEC without being prepared to fight for a left leadership candidate they are effectively saying they will be prepared to be Blair's lieutenants.

Prescott is perceived by the *Guardian*, and apparently also by *Socialist Organiser*, (which is calling, ludicrously, for 'Prescott Committees') to be the 'left wing' candidate.

The danger is that unless the SCG intervene to change this perception it will become the reality and the sole parameters for any political (non) debate. If the SCG were not even to attempt to get enough nominations to run a left candidate, it would contribute to a further shift to the right of the spectrum of Labour politics and leave the SCG itself as marginalised and discredited critics on the edge of the party.

The SCGN conference is very timely. But are the SCG just going to be observers to an apolitical media beauty contest, missing a great opportunity to regenerate socialist ideas in the party?

It is pointless standing on the sidelines putting demands on Prescott or Robin Cook. People who argue for this approach misjudge the potential there is and the resonance of socialist answers to problems of full employment, defending the welfare state, housing the homeless - the list is endless.

Those who make their judgement based solely on an assessment of what's left of the old left rather than where the new left is or could be are wrong.

Pressure should be brought to bear to insist that the left turns words into action and fights for a candidate.



Prescott: so-called 'traditionalist'



Fighting privatisations and in defence of jobs: rail workers need real leadership



Miners struggle: a missed opportunity for Labour to offer radical solutions

looking for when they come to Manchester is to hear what the thoughts of people are for the Campaign Group, and to make a contribution to how they think the Campaign Group might present issues in parliament and in the party. And above all to hear how other people in the party see things.

We're not going to change society in Britain by sitting back and waiting for a general election after which the ripe cherries will fall into our lap. We're going to change society in Britain if we mobilise people into the expectations of what a Labour government could achieve and demand it of that Labour government.

That is a strength in politics - a weakness is just sitting back and waiting for it to happen. That leaves the forming of public opinion to people who are not friends of Labour.

SO: How about the Tribune conference on June 25. It seems to be based on a platform that's considerably to the left of Tribune's public face?

JC: Firstly the date is regrettable because it clashes with the Global Forum meeting in Manchester which is an important international initiative.

But I think the Tribune Group and Tribune newspaper are increasingly at variance, in that Tribune newspaper is genuinely trying to give a platform to various people and groups within the party, and I think it is succeeding in doing that. I appreciate the efforts they've made in that direction.

The Tribune Group in parliament is basically a huge conglomeration of essentially pro-establishment figures. It is now the establishment group within the party. Because it is so broad it is really incapable of being a serious left force within the party.

SO: The Campaign Group has recently recruited former members of the Tribune Group. What do you make of that?

JC: The Campaign Group could become much bigger because it offers the opportunity of serious political discussion and debate and offers the opportunity of putting forward those views in parliament in a credible way.

The Tribune Group is incapable of doing that. It is so hopelessly compromised by its very close relationship with the leadership, almost whoever the leader is. In fact, I think all of the potential leadership contenders with the exception of Jack Cunningham are members of the

Tribune Group.

SO: I'll close on the central theme of the SCGN conference which is full employment. What would you like to see come out of this conference in terms of carrying forward campaigning around full employment?

JC: What I find depressing is that we were all pleased last year when John Smith declared himself in favour of full employment. The whole raison d'être of the Labour Party since its inception was a campaign for a job for everybody, a secure and permanent job for everybody.

It's come to something where we consider it a move to the left if the leadership of the party even think of full employment. But nevertheless his declaration was extremely welcome.

The problem is that we are not being offered an economic policy that is anything other than demand management within the economy. That isn't going to lead to full employment, not least because there are serious structural problems of unemployment in Britain through deindustrialisation and privatisation and the power of multi-national capital to switch funds all over the place. That means jobs are expendable in any one country.

Also the agreements the British government has signed in Maastricht and GATT make it much more difficult to control those forces. If we are to achieve full employment there has to be a degree of planning in the economy, there has to be a shorter working week and there has to be a minimum wage.

All those things have to be done. Nearly every one of those will bring a Labour government into conflict with the EC commission and possibly with the GATT rules. This is an argument we have to have. It means a Labour government has to be very determined that it is going to achieve full employment.

It's the one issue which could win us a general election. It's the one issue which unites young and old and gives real hope to people.

But if we only half-heartedly put it and don't add the details of how we're going to achieve it, it will just be laughed at during the election campaign for being a cynical election manoeuvre.

And if we put it forward and then do nothing about it as a Labour government, we shall quite rightly receive a lot of opprobrium from people.

CENTRE STAGE

A cruel spring in Sarajevo

JENNY MEES, from the Belgian section of the Fourth International, was with the first International Workers Aid convoy into Tuzla last November. She has been in Bosnia again with the regular IWA convoys running since early April.

Jenny spent a month in Tuzla and a week in Sarajevo as part of an IWA delegation to the May Day celebrations. IWA were guests of the trade unions and spoke at the May day rally.

Here Jenny, who is at the moment back in the IWA base in Split in Croatia, gives her

very personal impressions of being back in Bosnia at the end of the winter nightmare.

SPRING is the cruellest season. I heard this said many times from people in Tuzla and Sarajevo.

It is the time nature awakens. It is the time of great religious feasts. It is the time of expectations of new life.

Clubs and Town Halls are resounding with discussion and hope. The paralysing cold and the merciless hunger are gone. The cities no longer die at 10 in the evening and wait for another day of bombardment. But people have few reserves of spirit and no money at all, it all went in the bad winter months.

People emerge dazed. 'We have all changed'. 'I don't recognise my own city'. 'This war makes people behave like criminals'. 'How can you understand this when we cannot understand what is happening to ourselves?'. Worst of all the war continues and fear is everywhere.



Workers' Aid convoy welcomed back to Bosnia

In the now sunny streets of Sarajevo people again walk in the middle of the street, but last week four human beings died by the sniper's bullet. Tuzla market is full of vegetables and fruit, but last week three shells blew two people to pieces.

The shops now sell personal belongings exchanged in the winter for food and life. During my four weeks in Tuzla the price of eggs dropped from £4 for 6 to £4 for 36.

I thought everyone could buy them but no. When I bought some for the family of my little friend Arcl it was a big event. Our daily companions Amir and Emir let it slip that 'we have flour for five days and then something will have to turn up'.

Senad, who writes poems about the war, follows the political and military situation carefully. 'There is to be an offensive in Brcko; we will have

to go and fight and we will die'.

Mrs Mujesire prepares me a lovely dinner out of nothing and talks about her garden - will the birds eat the seeds saved so carefully through the winter months? Her daughter Ehvira cries when I leave for the outside world.

Dancing

On May 1st there was no curfew in Sarajevo and the student club stayed open all night. Young people danced. There was Branko on his crutches and Edin in his wheel chair.

The day before I had walked through the city with Mehmed, a trade union activist and a great believer in a happier future for BiH. We passed a poster for the rally the next day "Prvi May".

This walk and my discussions with Mehmed was my

real May Day - much more than the next day with the big words and broad gestures of three presidents of European trade unions on their flying visit to this city.

These discussions in Sarajevo and the faces of the children in the street when our International Workers Aid trucks arrived back in Tuzla in April after four winter months away are my most vivid impressions of the spirit of resistance in BiH. 'You came back, you came back, welcome back, they told us'. They gave us a present - a little dog (which is at this moment sleeping peacefully in the IWA office) who is as brave and tough as they are. Of course we called him Tuzla.

■ In future editions we will carry interviews Jenny conducted with trade unions in Sarajevo

WORLD OUTLOOK

The 'Other' Serbs and 'Other' Croats speak out

by Geoff Ryan

KARADZIC and the Pale assembly claim to represent the Serbs of Bosnia. This is legitimised by the UN and EU who accept their right to negotiate on behalf of Bosnia's Serbs.

The voice of Serbs opposed to partition is stifled. At the beginning of the war those who openly opposed ethnic cleansing were executed. Since then the anti-nationalist opposition has hardly been heard in Bosnia.

In the west the Serb opposition is not given a platform to express their views. Governments and media collude in presenting Karadzic as the voice of all Bosnian Serbs. This is a totally false picture.

Some hundreds of thousands of Serbs live in territory controlled by the Bosnian army. Nearly

five hundred, from throughout Bosnia, met in Sarajevo on 27 March. They set up a 'Serb Civic Council', with 33 members. One of the vice-presidents is Nicolas Kovac, Bosnian ambassador to Paris.

According to one of the participants they 'amended' the accord signed in Washington, so the Serbs are presented as one of the three peoples making up the so-called 'Croat-Muslim' Federation.

On 6 February Bosnian Croats held a similar meeting in Sarajevo. 400 people opposed to the Croat nationalist policies of the Zagreb government met in the 'Croat Assembly of Bosnia-Herzegovina'.

They were mainly MPs elected to the Bosnian Parliament in 1990 and councillors from the centre and north of Bosnia, as well as some members of the Catholic church. This

'Croat Popular Council' expressed opposition to the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Socialists and all those fighting to defend a multi-ethnic Bosnia have to ensure the voice of these Serbs and Croats is heard. We publish here the text of an appeal by those who attended the March 27th meeting. It should be distributed as widely as possible in the labour movement.

Appeal to the Citizens and Peoples of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina

"BEING AWARE of the terrible consequences of aggression, war and genocide we are launching an appeal to all citizens, political organisations, cultural institutions, citizens associations, religious bod-

ies, humanitarian organisations and other pacifist and democratic organisations in order to convoke a 'General Assembly for Trust' of all the citizens and peoples of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The 'General Assembly for Trust' will be the expression of our willingness and desire to start off a process for the rebuilding, promotion and development of trust between citizens and peoples, despite our determination to not forget, to identify and punish those responsible for war crimes and genocide.

The 'General Assembly for Trust' will be the expression of our desire to live together - in peace and freedom - within Bosnia-Herzegovina, an internationally recognised sovereign state.

The 'General Assembly for Trust' will be the expression of our wish to create a democratic

state in which the rights of all citizens are respected and all nationalities are equal.

The 'General Assembly for Trust' will be the expression of our determination to see that all those responsible for war crimes or acts of violence are punished and our common desire to create the conditions which will allow all those forced to become refugees will be able to return to their homes.

'The General Assembly for Trust' reaffirms our view that Bosnia-Herzegovina represents for us a common and permanent task, which is the responsibility of everyone.

The Assembly would like to gather together the necessary proof and witnesses to ensure that the authors of crimes perpetrated on the soil of Bosnia-Herzegovina are punished."

Serb Civic Council, Sarajevo, 27 March

IWA goes from strength to strength Workers' convoys roll in to Bosnia

THE INTERNATIONAL Workers Aid campaign in defence of a multi-ethnic Bosnia is going from strength to strength – both in terms of material aid to the trade union movement, direct links, and in political support for the struggle of the Bosnian people.

This report, which is still partial, is taken from campaign reports sent from the IWA Split office to the national sections of the campaign. Direct reports from those involved will be available soon.



Selim Beslagic, Mayor of Tuzla, on successful International Workers' Aid tour of Sweden

THE FIFTH IWA convoy (the fourth of the bread programme) left Makarska near Split for Tuzla last Wednesday and a convoy is being dispatched every 12 days from the base which has been established in Makarska.

At the same time a delegation from IWA attended the May day celebration in Sarajevo as guests of the trade union movement and spoke at a rally of 10,000 people.

The bread programme is organised directly with the Kreka miners union who distribute the aid to individual families in the form of packs of flour, oil and

sugar for making bread.

There have been problems. The first convoy to Tuzla this spring had to rebuild confidence with the city authorities, who had been shaken by the antics of the WRP campaign (their 'December convoy') which asked them to organise a reception on the basis of 80 lorries arriving and then turned up with four!

A delegation from IWA stayed in Tuzla after the first spring convoy – including Jenny and Wimm from Belgium and Yannick from the Netherlands – and had extensive further discussions with trade unions – explaining the stance of IWA in defence of a multi-

ethnic Bosnia and the labour movement basis of our campaign.

They met a big delegation from the teachers' union which urged IWA to develop the kind of links with them that has been developed with the miners union. They stayed with individual families and were able to get a deeper insight into the impact of the war.

They also had discussions with political parties in Tuzla and representatives of the Serb and Croat communities. Yannick established a project with students at Tuzla university which involves a video made in conjunction with Tuzla radio.

This is shortly to be edited and produced in the Netherlands. Talks were held and links established with the National Theatre in Tuzla, Radio Tuzla, and the Women's Association of Tuzla which has appealed to IWA to campaign for mammography apparatus for cancer screening which does not exist anywhere in Bosnia.

There were also discussions with the Civic Forum in Tuzla which is trying to get a newspaper and TV station off the ground.

Although IWA is now keeping an ongoing presence in Tuzla this needs to be strengthened and there are plans for a permanent office in the building of the miners union. This would enable closer working and the opportunity to establish stronger links with trade unions throughout the rest of ex-Yugoslavia.

Given the continuation of the war and the political situation in central Bosnia, IWA intends to continue its campaign through the summer and into the autumn, since it increasingly looks as if another winter of war will have to be faced in the region.

■ The fifth international meeting of IWA (open to supporters of all the national campaigns), which will lay plans for the coming months, is to be held in Brescia in Northern Italy on June 25-6.

Troops Out Movement debates Adams-Hume initiative

by Kieran Mac an Ulaigh

THIS YEAR'S Conference, in Leicester on 14-15 May, was attended by about fifty members from branches as far afield as Newcastle and Brighton.

Sinn Fein member Barry McElduff spoke about how his party saw the peace process aimed at resolving the war in the North of Ireland.

The main political discussion centred around a resolution from TOM's steering committee. This stated: 'the Adams-Hume initiative has achieved the greatest advance for the cause of Irish national emancipation since the hunger strike period of 1981'.

It argued future campaigning slogans should include 'Negotiate now for British withdrawal from Ireland'. The campaign theme should be 'British withdrawal and self-determination are the preconditions for lasting peace in Ireland'.

An amendment from Birmingham and Leicester TOM branches, backed by *Socialist Outlook* supporters, called for deleting the reference to the Adams-Hume initiative. It proposed as campaigning slogans 'End censorship. Talk to Sinn Fein. Peace through British withdrawal' – deleting 'negotiate'. The amendment argued campaigning themes should include 'unconditional British withdrawal from Ireland'.

This was defeated by nineteen votes to sixteen, with a number of abstentions.

A second amendment, proposed by members of Manchester TOM and again backed by *Socialist Outlook*, called for changing the campaigning slogan to 'Peace through British withdrawal from Ireland' – again deleting 'negotiate'.

Campaigning themes should include 'British withdrawal and self-determination for the Irish people as a whole is the precondition for lasting peace in Ireland'. This was passed by conference and is now TOM pol-

icy.

A number of less contentious resolutions were passed, particularly on the future organisation of TOM and production of the magazine.

Conference also officially

launched the campaign to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of British troops going onto the streets of the Six Counties.

This campaign culminates in a march in London on Saturday 13 August with a week-end

school planned for October.

■ For further information contact TOM at: BM TOM, London, WC1N 3XX, or phone 071 609 1743, or fax 071 607 7464.

Go – For Peace!

by Liam Mac Uaid

In August 1969 British troops were deployed on the streets of Northern Ireland. In the subsequent twenty five years they have failed to bring the peace they were sent to establish.

To mark the twenty fifth anniversary and re-state that there can be no peace in Ireland until Britain withdraws, a demonstration has been called for August 13. The demonstration organisers, including the Troops Out Movement and the Labour Party Irish Society, already have sponsorship from the Socialist Campaign Group of Labour MPs, John Pilger and Ken Loach.

Opinion polls consistently show a majority of people in Britain want to withdraw the troops. Socialists argue the British presence underpins the rotten sectarianism of the Northern Irish

state. We believe people in Britain also suffer from the corrosive effects of this last colonial war. The arming of the police, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the broadcasting ban are all attacks on our civil liberties justified by the continued conflict in Ireland.

The 25th Anniversary Demonstration Committee wants to stage a massive display of defiance to continued British rule in Ireland. Support is urgently required from organisations and individuals. For £50 national organisations can sponsor the demonstration. It costs £25 for local organisations £10 for individuals, though of course any contribution is welcome.

An advertisement in a national daily paper is planned for August. If you or your organisation want to appear on it the rates are the same as for sponsorship. Posters, leaflets, further details and speakers can be obtained from TOM.

Feminists fight Algeria's Family Code

IN OUR last issue SANADJA, member of the PST (Socialist Workers Party, supporters of the Fourth International in Algeria) explained the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. Here she looks at women's organisations in Algeria and the national question in the Berber region of Kabyle.

BEFORE 1988 the FLN was the only legal party. After 1988 we saw 60 parties legalised, along with various associations. Women also organised themselves, notably around the Family Code.

There were three associations led by different political currents.

The Stalinists controlled the *L'Association de Defense et Promotion des Femmes* [ADPF - Association for the Defence and Promotion of Women]. In the *Association Pour L'Emancipation des Femmes* [APEF - Association for the Emancipation of Women] the majority of leaders were from our current, the PST. And the *Association de L'Egalite Entre les Hommes et Devant la Loi* [AEHDL - Association for Equality between Men Before the Law] where the majority were Lambertists (adherents of the French Trotskyist organisation, led by Pierre Lambert).

The two Trotskyist-led associations were for the complete repeal of the Family Code and for civil law, whilst the Stalinist led organisation was in favour of revising the Code.

However there were differences between us and the Lambertists. We argued that whilst we had to call for the repeal of the Family Code it was also necessary to conduct an educational campaign to combat the fundamentalists.

At that time the Lambertists considered the fundamentalists a secondary issue: they saw the main task as opposing the law

and the government. However we often worked together, though the Stalinists frequently refused to join in.

In 1989 there were three or four thousand women on demonstrations, but by 1990 over thirty thousand. After the abrogation of the electoral process the movement broke up over an important political question.

The ADPF and a current within the AEHDL were in favour of stopping the elections and the army taking power. The other organisations were for continuing the electoral process.

The problem that we encountered was that whilst politicised militants agreed that it was necessary to continue the electoral process, not stop the elections just because the fundamentalists were at the door, many ordinary women did not agree.

For them continuing the elections meant an Islamic state, with women being confined to the home.

They said they could not understand how we, as feminists, could have such a position. It's true that our position was, and still is, very difficult to understand within the feminist movement. It is a very complex



situation.

Unfortunately no third road exists at present. During the 1991 elections there was a small opening. The FIS was in first position the FFS (*Front de Forces Socialistes* - Front of Socialist Forces) was second and the FLN was in third place.

But after the second round the FIS had a clear majority, the FLN was in second place and the FFS was unfortunately third. I could vote for this party, certainly not for the FLN or the FIS, but the problem is that it has very little implantation in the Arabic speaking areas. It is primarily in Kabyle.

There is a long history, dating back to colonial times, of governments fomenting divisions between the Arab and Kabyle (Berber) populations.

The government played this card a great deal. Anti-Kabyle racism is so ingrained that many democrats opposed to the FIS and the FLN would never consider voting for the FFS because it is seen as a Kabyle party.

At the moment the FIS hardly exist in Kabyle. They have a few individuals in some villages and one or two offices but they are very much a minority. But there's not a great difference in the position of women.

The Family Code is implemented everywhere: It doesn't just apply to Arab women. In some ways the situation of women is worse in Kabyle because it is mountains and small villages and *macho* traditions are even stronger.

Yet since the legalisation of parties a very important Women's Association has developed in Kabyle, which is the only one that continues to function openly since the freezing of politics in 1992.

They have begun to raise consciousness, more and more women are coming to meetings

and conferences. That is because there are more facilities, we don't have the FIS on our backs, there isn't the state of siege that exists in the cities.

The rejection of the FIS in Kabyle is greater than in the Arabic speaking towns - not just amongst women, the whole population rejects them.

The fundamentalist phenomenon in Algeria is not primarily a religious project: it is, above all, a rejection of the existing authorities.

There are a lot of young men who drink alcohol, even young women who wear mini-skirts who voted for the FIS. Disgusted by the FLN and lacking a third alternative they turned to the FIS.

National question

However, in Kabyle there was an important national question. The first repression after the war of liberation was in Kabyle. Movements around the Berber question have continued: there is a certain level of political awareness. Rejection of the government was nothing new in Kabyle. That is why the FIS did not have anything new, anything attractive to offer in Kabyle.

Women in Algeria need international support.

In France we are working with an association of Maghreb women to resist attempts by the fundamentalists to impose their control over women in France.

We have also got support from women in Belgium, Germany and Switzerland. Whilst I was in Britain I met with Women Against Fundamentalism and Southall Black Sisters, who are discussing what can be done in Britain to raise the issue of the repression of women in Algeria.

WORLD OUTLOOK

Socialist OUTLOOK

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The Persil family: right or right-wing?

Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights leader SARAH ROELOFS made this speech at its recent Annual General Meeting.

THE QUESTION immediately poses another one – should 'we' lesbians and gay men and in this instance lesbians and gay men active in the labour movement – say anything at all about the family?

How is the issue of the family relevant to the fight for lesbian and gay rights?

Some may argue that the issue of family policy is outside the remit of a lesbian and gay rights organisation. Others may argue that the best thing – if not the only thing – we can say about the family is – just 'smash it'.

This year – for the first time since 1989 LCLGR is prioritising a campaign to win a debate on lesbian and gay rights at Labour Party Conference. Instead of focusing our model resolution on a supposedly simple, single issue such as the age of consent or employment rights, LCLGR has focused on the issue of the family.

Political issues related to the family that are currently prominent include – the notorious Back to Basics, through Community Care, the Child Support Act, proposed housing legislation, immigration controls, control of who has access to donor insemination, the victimisation of lesbian Headteacher Jane Brown, law'n'order, to the big E – education – education about the family, education about sex and sexuality, education about HIV/AIDS.

Wall to wall

But there is not just promotion of the family – small 't', small 'f'. No – this is quite definitely capital 'T', capital 'F' – The Family. The positive preferment with wall to wall propaganda of one single family form as superior to all others, as the only normal, functional family form – as quite simply the best. And this family I call the Persil Family.

Persil family is very definitely whiter than white – invariably blonde and blue eyed. It is middle class from middle England. It is able-bodied. And it is certainly heterosexual.

It is father and mother, in that order with mother financially dependent on father but taking primary responsibility for the requisite 2.4 children. Persil

Family live in a nice semi, furnished from John Lewis's or Habitat, with a quite remarkable absence of any body fluids or physical or mental impairments or any conditions requiring caring.

It is supremely unbothered by poverty or unemployment though it may be experiencing some slight difficulties with the mortgage. It is racist. It is sexist. It is ablist. It is heterosexist.

Persil Family is not real. It is a model, an image, an advertisement, a soap opera – but it is promoted as real and ideally attainable for us all.

It is explicitly exclusive. It excludes not only lesbians and gay men, but black people and disabled people – not to mention disabled and black lesbians and gay men. All alternative competitors – notably lesbians and lesbian mothers, single parents, extended families, black families, disabled parents – having been shown to be directly responsible for every ill and evil society could ever imagine – are, in a word, dysfunctional.

All the debates about The Family – read Persil Family – exclude lesbian and gay men and their families.

How is it envisaged that Community Care will support lesbian or gay disabled people? How does the Child Support Act support the children of lesbian or gay parents?

How will the proposed housing legislation tackle the needs of young homeless lesbian and gay men?

How do immigration controls support lesbian and gay couples from different countries – not to mention black lesbian and gay couples? Do lesbians have equal access to donor inseminations?

LCLGR believes it is crucial that we engage in the political debates about The Family. If we do not we perpetuate our exclusion.

There are, in my view, two central reasons for lesbians and gay men to prioritise the family politics debate.

The first reason is to assert and defend our civil rights. Persil Family is society's preferred family form to the extent that it is a zero option. The degree of propaganda is so compelling that it feels utterly natural – and other family forms feel unnatural.

This being the case it is hardly surprising that many of us construct our families or wish to as variants on the Persil theme.

Alternatively our families may utterly nonconformist and innovatory. However constructed we should have the right, in law, to have our families viewed as equally valid as Persil ones.

This means we are demanding a wide range of equality measures eg. partner recogni-



tion in pension schemes; tenancy and mortgage rights; legal rights such as an equal age of consent and equal custody rights; health rights such as health care that includes equal reproductive rights; education rights and the right to get married.

It is especially important to defend those lesbians and gay men who are themselves attempting to implement equality policies in their workplaces.

Further to this is our vision of socialism. It concerns not just what we think is wrong with things as they are and how those things should be changed and improved, but how we imagine a better world. But in 1994 there is virtual silence.

My perceptions of the reasons for this supreme lack of political interest in such an important area is that it is related to three inter-related factors – the impact of 15 years of Tory misrule, the impact of the defeat of Stalinism as perceived as a definitive defeat of socialism and the loss of an active high profile feminist movement.

15 years of one of the most right wing Tory periods of government has resulted in significant political demoralisation and a growth of rampant individualism of the 'i'm alright sod the rest of you' variety. Depoliticisation of the lesbian and gay movement has been quite

marked.

The defeat of Stalinism has been perceived as wiping socialism off the agenda. Capitalism has won and all that is possible is to fight for a warmer, cosier, more caring capitalism. The net result is a dramatic curtailment of political ambition.

Deprived

The loss of a strong feminist movement has deprived lesbians and gay men of a political context that radically questioned the status quo on personal, sexual and family issues.

Lesbian feminism and feminism can certainly be criticised from many perspectives – not least the in built racist bias of some of the key arguments not to mention the parallel virtual exclusion of disabled women.

But fundamentally what

feminism provided was the explicit promotion of women's interests and a deep questioning of the sexual political status quo.

Obviously the debate about the family has a more direct and immediate meaning for women than men. But is this what gay men want?

Is it truly the case that gay men are wholly uninterested in and unaffected by these issues? And do 'girls just want to have fun' – or is this a reaction to a fun deprived Tory landscape?

As socialist lesbian and gay rights campaigners are we satisfied with this situation?

If we are not how do we best assert a lesbian and gay perspective on family policy both within the Labour Party and within the lesbian and gay movement?

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LIBERATION POLITICS

Uproar over Hawks at BAe AGM

By Paul Walker

OUTSIDE were 150 protesters shouting "Suharto, Major, CIA: how many kids have you killed today?" Inside were twenty token shareholders making life hell for the BAe board.

Shareholders at the 1994 BAe AGM raised a series of contentious questions about the sale of BAe Hawk aircraft to Indonesia and their use in East Timor against the civilian opposition and the armed resistance.

Supporters of Campaign Against Arms Trade continually pushed the BAe board about the recently agreed sales of Hawk aircraft and the human rights record.

Each of the 500 shareholders and the BAe board were handed an Alternative Report to the company Annual Report.

The Alternative Report pointed to the United Nations and European Union condemnation of the Indonesian invasion and genocide in East Timor and called on the BAe board to concentrate on converting the

company from military to civilian production.

According to *The Guardian* the AGM was in uproar over the series of questions about the genocide in East Timor.

The *Independent* pointed out that the shareholder action came as a complete surprise to the BAe board. The *Daily Telegraph* carried information and a picture about the action in its business pages and also a supportive article about the East Timorese resistance in its foreign news pages.

Assailed on all sides by hostile shareholders, Chief Executive Dick Evans, agreed to a meeting with campaigners to discuss the evidence of the Hawks being used in East Timor.

Clearly there is a long way to go but BAe now know that they cannot get away with hiding behind the UK government arms trade policy. They now know that campaigners from many different organisations are on their tail and are not prepared give up until the delivery of the Hawks due in 1996 is stopped and there is a full military embargo on Indonesia.



Jeremy Corbyn MP denounces 'General Pinochet' at dynamic, 150-strong picket of British Aerospace AGM

The campaign is taking off internationally.

April 24 saw the launching of a continent-wide campaign for an arms embargo on Indonesia in Antwerp by the European Network Against The Arms Trade. In Sweden, Germany and Ireland campaigns are developing to support the East Timorese struggle for self-determination.

Dick Spring, the Irish Foreign Minister, has spoken out about the Indonesian occupation of East Timor.

During a recent visit to Jakarta by New Zealand Premier Bolger, 51 of the N.Z. legislature's 99 MPs signed a petition on East Timor protesting against Indonesian genocide in East Timor.

In the UK things, too, things are beginning to move. The recent Fire Brigades Union conference passed a motion committing the union to supporting the campaign for East

Timorese self-determination and calling for a military embargo on Indonesia.

The FBU is contacting its Australian counter-part and intends to take the issue through the labour movement in Britain.

As some one once said: 'A great beginning.'

Jakarta can see the solidarity movement in its rear view mirror; let's make sure the murdering bastards don't get off the hook.

French marches lead struggle for jobs, 35hrs

A HUGE DEMONSTRATION against unemployment will take place in Paris on May 28th. The demonstration represents the culmination of five separate marches from the principal regions of France organised at the initiative of trades unionists and representatives of associations of the unemployed in the *Agir ensemble contre le chomage* (AC!) movement.

The first march set off from Carmaux in the south of France on April 6th, and marchers have met with an enthusiastic reception across the country. AC! argues for the adoption of a 35 hour week without loss of purchasing power and job creation to satisfy social needs, as well as a moratorium on all dismissals and the recognition of organisations of the unemployed.

France currently has 3.5 million unemployed according to official figures; trade union estimates are over 5 million

WORLD OUTLOOK

**Socialist
OUTLOOK**

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 un-

ion 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.

Sectarianism

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 revolu-

tion. 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!

- Please tell me more about *Socialist Outlook*
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What's HAPPENING

WANT YOUR event included?
Send details by **June 3 to What's Happening?**,
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MAY

Sat 28

ANTI NAZI League Demonstration & Carnival Liberation! and Socialist Outlook sellers meet 11am for march from Kennington Park SE11 through Brixton to carnival with The Levellers, Credit to the Nation and more in Brockwell Park SE24

BOB SMITH MEMORIAL MEETING 7.30pm Birmingham Trades Club Pershore Rd speakers: Mohammed Idris (West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign) Shirley Toshi Birmingham CARF, Socialist Outlook editorial board and others

Sun 29

NORTH London Socialist Outlook dine & wine evening £7/£4 details 071 263 8289

Tuesday 31

Socialist Outlook discussion: Where do family values come from? with Terry Conway 7.30pm Stationer's Park Community Centre Mayfield Road off Weston Park N8

JUNE

Sat 4

DEMONSTRATE to close down Campsfield House Detention Centre Liberation! and Socialist Outlook sellers meet 1pm car park Exeter Hall Kidlington, by junction of A34 and A4260 (off M40 exit 9)

SCOTTISH CND demonstration Assemble at Whistlefield picnic site at 12 noon for rally at Faslane gates at 2.45pm details 041 423 1222

Wed 8

LIBERATION! meeting 10.30am sharp London

Friday 10

EDINBURGH Miner's Gala and festival march on Regent Road at 10.30am details: Gordon McDougal 041 332 4946

VIVA AFRICA: workshops, stalls, music 11am - 4pm Albany theatre Douglas Way Deptford SE8 4AG free entry

Sat 11

FIGHT for Full Employment! Socialist Campaign Group Supporters Network conference with MP Dennis Skinner, Seumas Milne, Alice Mahon, Jeremy Corbyn, Alan Simpson and others Register 10.30 11am-5pm Manchester Town Hall Credentials £10/£5 (includes SCGSN membership) from SCGSN, 3 Blades House, Kennington Oval, SE12 5TW

Tues 14

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discussion: The retreat of National Liberation Movements - Ireland, South Africa, the Middle East and Central America. 8.00pm, Unicorn pub, Church Street, Manchester

Sat 18

LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE march 11am Hyde Park to Brockwell Park details 071 737 6903

VIVA AFRICA: live music with African artists, poets, speakers & dance 8pm Albany theatre Douglas Way Deptford SE8 4AG tickets 081 692 4446 box office £3/£2

Fri 24

Opening of Cities and sustainable development: Global Forum 1994 in Manchester tel: 061 234 3741 Fax: 061 234 3743

Sat 25

WHAT'S LEFT summer conference with John Edmonds, Alan Simpson, Dawn Primorolo, John Prescott and others Conway Hall Red Lion Square tickets £7/£5 from 'What's Left', Tribune, 308 Gray's Inn Road, WC1X 8DY

Manchester International Peace festival opens details: Olive or Linda on 061 234 3325

ANTI-Apartheid Movement Extraordinary General Meeting

Foucault anniversary conference 9.30am-5.30pm ULU Malet St WC1 details 071 809 5068

Tuesday 28

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discussion: Ireland: peace or capitulation? with Liam Mac Uaid 7.30pm Stationer's Park Community Centre Mayfield Road off Weston Park N8

JULY

Sat 2

OXFAM GLOBAL VILLAGE Fête 2pm-8pm Battersea Park Live music, International Co-operative day third world fair trade fair, Children's festival and Oxfam 5km run

Tues 12

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discussion: Permanent Revolution. 8.00pm, Unicorn pub, Church Street, Manchester

Thur 14

INTERNATIONAL Workers Aid for Bosnia benefit Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Road, N7

Fri 22 - Fri 29

INTERNATIONAL Youth Camp Arezzo Tuscany Italy All-in price £150 leaflets, posters and details from Liberation!, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU

Tuesday 26

Socialist Outlook discussion: Racism & fascism: the politics of despair, with Tony Benson 7.30pm Stationer's Park Community Centre Mayfield Road off Weston Park N8

AUGUST

Tues 9

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK discussion: The United Front. 8.00pm, Unicorn pub, Church Street, Manchester.

Thur 25-Mon 29

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK Summer School: ANALYSING RACISM AND FASCISM. Residential school in Aberystwyth, en suite rooms, plenaries, workshops and full social programme. £80/£30. Details from Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.

Socialist Campaign Group Supporters Network

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OPEN DISCUSSION socialist policies & the leadership contest

BOB SMITH Memorial Fund

Regular readers of Socialist Outlook will have read in our last issue of the death of Bob Smith. Bob was the most frequent contributor to our paper and is sadly missed by the editorial team.

Bob died shortly before his namesake, John Smith. There were no Tories at Bob's funeral - but plenty of ordinary workers who valued the contribution he had made to the fight for a socialist society.

Indeed, Bob would have been insulted by praise from John Major. He would have felt he had somehow failed in fighting for the interests of his class.

Bob was a revolutionary socialist. He opposed everything the Tories stand for. He hated capitalism and all the injustices it breeds.

He would want to be remembered by us continuing his struggle. His watch-word would have been that of American trade unionist Joe Hill: 'Don't Mourn, Organise.'

After discussion with Bob's comrades in Birmingham we have decided to postpone our current Fund Drive Appeal. In its place we are launching the Bob Smith Memorial Fund.

Money raised will go to continuing the work Bob devoted his life to. Send as much as you can, to:

PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU

HOME NEWS

Socialist OUTLOOK

UNITE in

fight

against

racism

"EVERYONE who can should be on the ANL carnival. It's important that black and white stand together. We mustn't allow racism to divide us."

Wimbledon footballer John Fashanu said it just right. That's why the Anti Nazi League carnival has won such widespread support.

In just two years since the ANL was relaunched by the Socialist Workers' Party over 100 Labour MPs, and national trade unions like the UCW, NUJ, NUM, RMT and FBU have backed the campaign.

But anti-racists must fight racism and fascism at every opportunity. The demonstration against the Campfield Detention Centre on June 4 is the next big event, challenging the racist immigration laws (see page 4).

Everyone at the Carnival should join the Campfield protest. The ANL should give its support. We need to build democratic anti-racist groups in every town and city that can unite black communities, the organised labour movement, the ANL and other anti-racist campaigns.

a

is the first letter of the alphabet.

There are twenty-five more. Socialist Outlook has them all in some very interesting combinations.

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