

**SOCIALIST**

**APPEAL**

£1

*The Marxist voice of the labour movement*

Issue No.14 - July/August 1993

Solidarity Price £2

**Exclusive:**  
**Trotsky's**  
**Grandson**  
**Speaks**  
**Out - p.16**

**The Real Face Of...**

# Tory Britain



**Labour: Force the Tories Out!**

# Crisis? What Crisis?

*"Is this a dagger which I see before me  
The handle towards my hand?"* Macbeth.

The knives are out. Lamont has been sacrificed. Mates has had the chop. The whole Tory Government is teetering on the edge, buffeted along from one crisis to another. John Major, who epitomises the parvenu image of the Tory Party, appears totally out of his depth. Following the debacle of sacking the Chancellor, the growing scandal of Tory Party finances threatens to consume him.

Major attempted, unconvincingly, to brush the matter aside as 'a little local difficulty'. The backbench 1922 Committee met, and, like in some football club board vote of confidence, 'concluded that John Major is our Prime Minister'! He is already the most unpopular Prime Minister since records began. His government is held in lower esteem than any other administration since polls began in the 1930's. Only 13.8% of voters approve of the Tories and only 21% of John Major, according to Gallup. The party was publicly humiliated in Newbury, and it seems likely that a catastrophe faces the Tories at Christchurch. **It is the worse crisis of Toryism in living memory.**

## Corrupt Government

The Tory Government is increasingly seen as a corrupt government. The deliberate cover-up of its secret financial dealings, involving the tops of the Tory Establishment, has gone to the very heart of its long established authority. It has served to sweep away the veil of hypocrisy and lies which hides the essence of Tory 'democracy'. Capitalism means corruption. The Lonhro scandal of the early 1970's was exposed as the *"ugly and unacceptable face of capitalism"*. But it was simply a glimpse of the real relations that prevail under the system of big business. In a society based upon the exploitation of labour, and the profit motive, privilege and corruption is part of the system. The enterprising gangsterism of characters like Donald Trump in the States, plus the epidemic of insider trading, epitomised the diseased nature of American capitalism.

**In general this corruption is kept under wraps, for fear of undermining the system, but periodically we get a glimpse of the underlying malaise of capitalism.** In Italy and Japan, the corruption of the political parties has reached epidemic proportions. In Japan we have witnessed the resignation of Tanaka, the prime minister felled by the Lockheed bribery scandal; Takeshita, the prime minister destroyed by the Recruit shares-for-favours scandal; and Kanemaru, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) godfather arrested this year in connection with the

Sagawa bribery and gangster scandal. The situation has reached new depths with the fall of the corrupt Miyazawa government, and the break up of the ruling LDP, which has dominated politics since 1955, and opens up a new turbulent period. *"It's like the Berlin Wall coming down for Japan"*, said Morihiro Hosokawa. Miyazawa had a 9% popularity rating. Unfortunately, the Socialists, instead of waging a campaign against the whole corrupt system, and for a workers' government, has shamefully abandoned any left policy and entered into an electoral pact with a split off from the LDP.

## Italian Crisis

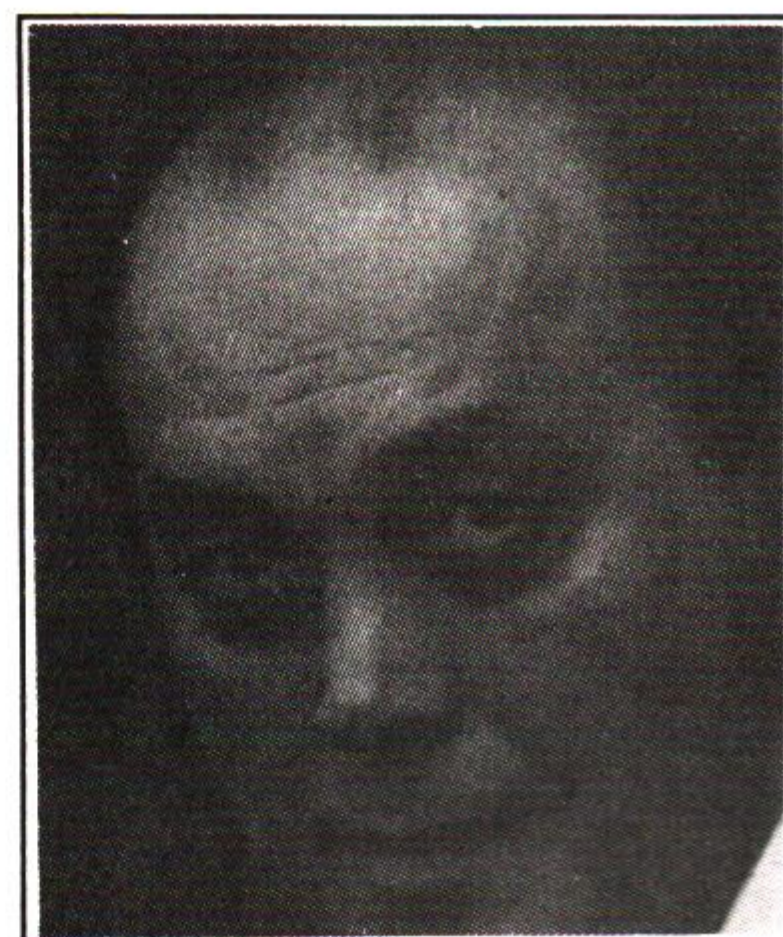
**In Italy, the collapse of the Mafia-ridden Christian Democrats, the dominant party of the Italian ruling class, together with the scandal-ridden social democrats and others, has created a political earthquake.**

In last month's municipal elections, Craxi's Socialists were humiliated, taking a mere 2.2% in Milan, with the Christian Democrats crashing to 10.2%. Big gains were made by the Northern League and the former Communists, the PDS. These results followed on from the bombings in Rome and Florence, which provoked mass demonstrations. *"We are living through a change of regime"*, said the Corriere della Sera.

These unparalleled events in Italy have opened up a situation similar to the 'Dreyfus affair' in France at the end of the last century. Then, the exposure of the frame-up of Captain Dreyfus, a Jewish army officer, which the reactionary military authorities attempted to cover up, provoked a social crisis. The Socialist Party, together with others like the novelist, Emile Zola, directed the public anger against the military caste and the bourgeois generally. A question mark was placed over the whole system. Not only the working class but the peasantry witnessed the rottenness of the Republican regime.

The French ruling class moved to resolve the situation through a military coup, around General Boulanger. Lenin explained at the time, that with a bold leadership the French working class could have won over the middle layers and taken power. Unfortunately, the Socialist Party, frightened by the 'military danger to the Republic', allowed one of its representatives, Millerand, to enter the bourgeois government of Waldeck Rousseau. The purpose of this action was to head off the developing movement of the masses. The Socialist Party leaders used it as the excuse to abandon its agitation.

In the words of Rosa Luxemburg, "the government pigeonholed the Dreyfus affair instead of fighting it through to the end." She attacked the lame excuses of the leadership of Jean Jaures: *"But that was necessary 'in order to put an end to the now useless and boring trials and avoid sickening the people with too*



Asil Nadir - at the centre of "corruption" scandals

*much publicity which would now obscure the truth.'* (Jaures in Petite Republique, 18 December 1900)."

As with the Dreyfus affair, sections of the Italian secret service - steeped in the methods of the Gladio conspiracy to destabilise the parliamentary system - have attempted to create a climate of fear through the recent bombings. If the Italian workers' parties, the PDS and Refundazione Comunista, had a revolutionary perspective then Italy would be on the eve of the Socialist revolution. **Mass agitation by such parties, exposing the scandals of a diseased and bankrupt system and showing a socialist way forward, could arouse the Italian working class to take power into its hands.**

## Labour Failure

In Britain, the Tory Government is in an extremely weak state. The scandal surrounding its foreign finances, and its links to corrupt deals, should be used by the Labour Party leaders to wage a concerted drive to bring the government down. They should abandon their 'me-too' policies, and champion the cause of working people in the factories, offices and on the estates.

**The Tories have been in power for 14 years. It is time the Labour Movement used its strength and resources to force a general election. The campaign must start now for a Labour Government committed to real socialist policies to tackle the crisis.** Labour cannot afford to tinker with capitalism, but must take into its hands the major monopolies, banks and insurance companies that dominate the economy, under workers' control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need. A socialist plan of production, using the rich resources of Britain, could be democratically implemented to eradicate the evils of unemployment, poverty and homelessness. Such a perspective would inspire millions of workers and guarantee a massive Labour majority on the lines of 1945.

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## NUPE Conference

# Name the Day ...and Organise!

At the National Union of Public Employees last conference, which took place against a background of the creation of a new union (Unison) on July 1, positive and negative aspects emerged from a conference limited in the effective decisions it could take.

On the plus side, conference unanimously agreed, despite the reservations of the right wing executive, that NUPE, together with our Unison partners NALGO and CoHSE, should launch a national campaign against Tory attacks on the NHS. The composite motion called for action to take the form of a national demonstration and Day of Action organised on a working day to have the same effect as a one-day strike with emergency cover.

### Underfunding

Resolution 37, attacking the government's underfunding and back-door privatisation inherent in the Care in the Community legislation, also called for a national campaign of leaflets, stickers, petitions culminating in a national Day of Action involving industrial action and a demonstration.

These two issues should be linked, a campaign launched and a day named, giving sufficient time to organise maximum support. If timed and handled correctly these issues - exposing the Tories for exactly what they are - could lead to a virtual wipe-out in next year's council and European elections.

Other pluses included a return to NUPE's traditional position of campaigning for a minimum wage of two-thirds of national male average earnings, as opposed to toeing the Labour Party line and accepting half median

earnings in the first instance.

NUPE also committed itself to playing a central role within Unison and the wider movement in campaigning against racism and fascism, with a view to organising a national trade union and labour movement demonstration in central London this year.

On the down side, a left composite calling for a campaign linking public sector workers together for action against the government's 1.5 per cent pay limit was narrowly defeated on a card vote. An EC report arguing that it was difficult if not impossible for the unions to mount effective national action against privatisation was passed, and a resolution calling for retention of the status quo on Labour/union links was defeated in favour of an EC compromise position of retaining the link on a watered-down basis.

The Left, which had become disorganised by this stage, now only has two recognised members elected to the 26-strong EC that will form part of 120-plus interim National Executive in Unison.

There are issues that can be built upon in Unison, but it is vital that the left unites on a non-sectarian basis to ensure that the leadership cannot sit on conference decisions such as those passed by NUPE this year.

**Steve McKenzie,**  
NUPE Bexley General

## Building the Party

Last year, for the first time in living memory, our Constituency Labour Party members voted for right wing candidates in the leadership and NEC elections. Our problem has been one of activists leaving the party and a tiny minority keeping the party running.

We decided to try and change this by making sure the Executive Committee was working properly and dealing with the business instead of doing it at the branch. A recruitment leaflet was delivered throughout the ward to attract new members and a political education officer was elected to ensure we had speakers at all meetings. The majority of each meeting is now taken up with political discussion. A report of the meeting is circulated to members to show them the branch is worth being involved in.

Consequently, attendance at meetings has more than doubled and more members are aware of what is going on in the party and are not just sat at home receiving only the propaganda the media feeds them.

On top of this, we also have a youth officer for the first time in years and more young members than any time since the youth section was wrecked by the right wing. These youth are keen to learn about socialism and enthuse the older members to return to activity. So if your local Labour Party is in a bad shape, don't despair! It can be revitalised with good organisation, determination and confidence.

**Mike Pullin, South Leicester**

## Deadline..

The deadline for articles for the next issue of Socialist Appeal is August 15th. If you've got a story for Socialist Appeal call our news desk on 021-455-9112

### Health Service

## Extra Work, Less Money!

**Health Care Assistants (HCAs) at Scarborough and North-East Yorkshire Health Care NHS Trust have again rejected management attempts to impose a new pay and conditions package on them.**

As previously reported in Socialist Appeal (see issue no.12), 92% of HCAs rejected management's first offer in a ballot but since then management have refused to reopen negotiations or go to arbitration.

The unions at the hospital advocated a work to rule because the HCAs have become such an important part of the ward staff.

### Management's Derisory Offer

Management's pay offer was derisory. It does not reflect the extra training, responsibility or duties HCAs are doing. At present all the HCAs are on the contract of auxiliary nurses which means that under the terms of the work to rule they will not now take blood pressure, temperatures, pulses, bring patients back from theatre and a number of other extra duties.

**The HCAs are now so important to the hospital this action can have a major effect. But should management still refuse to negotiate we must prepare to spread and increase the**

**action.** With the new power of Unison we can be more confident than in the past of wider support among other grades and parts of the hospital. This fight must be linked to full recognition for Unison in the hospital for negotiating pay and conditions. We must also not be cowed by management's attempts to silence us by threatening shop stewards who speak to the press.

Management's plans mean staff being worse off, the scrapping of unsocial hours payments and more. We must defeat them.

By a Unison/Cohse activist,  
Scarborough and North East  
Yorkshire NHS Trust

## Linking the Fights for Jobs

I was proud to be on the Burnley, Bury, Leigh leg of the North West Peoples March Against Unemployment and Pit Closures, which culminated at Parkside Colliery with a large and lively rally attended by thousands of people.

Parkside is the last pit in the area to be axed by the Tories in their malicious campaign to destroy pits, industry and jobs.

The terrible collapse of British capitalism is being felt by millions of working class people, and the march was organised to highlight and focus the united fightback. Many people took part - Parkside miners, Women against Pit closures, unemployed workers, hospital workers, Timex strikers, in fact workers from all areas, united against the Tories. Each leg of the march went through many towns in the North West spreading the message of united struggle, collecting thousands of pounds for the campaign, organising meetings, and generally 'getting organised'. "Sack Major, not the miners", "Tories Out" and "Coal not Dole" were some of the slogans that rang through the streets as people joined the march to Parkside.

The rally afterwards was high

**NORTH WEST PEOPLES MARCH**  
• **AGAINST** •  
**UNEMPLOYMENT & PIT CLOSURES**

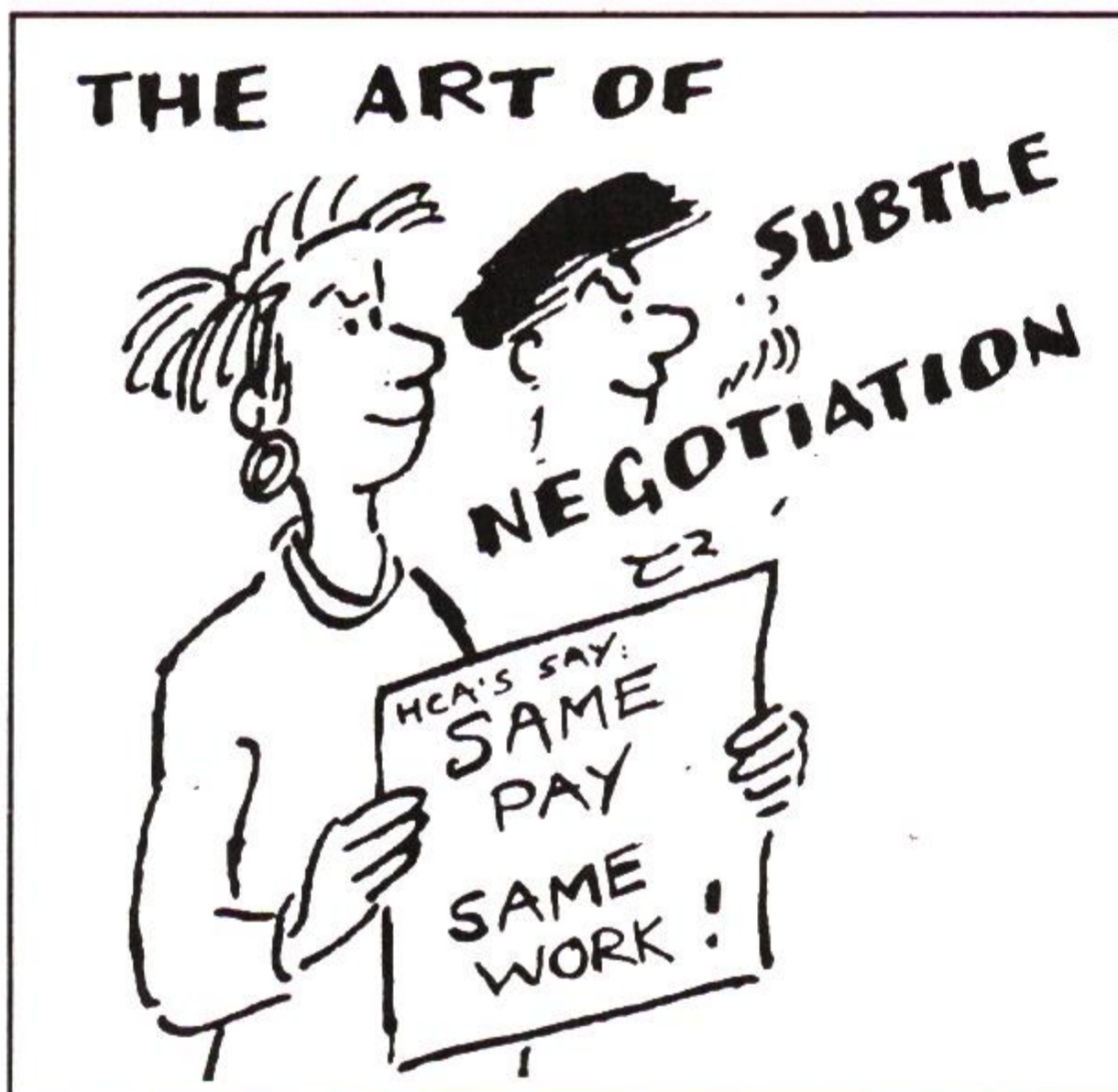
spirited but tempered with a sense of anger at the Tories and their reactionary policies. Speaker after speaker denounced the economic madness of shutting down a pit with at least thirty years of coal reserves still left. Arthur Scargill gave a thundering speech at the end, well received as always. Aching legs and feet aside, the message at Parkside was clear - 'The fight goes on'.

Steve Pearlman

## The NHS is Not Safe in Tory Hands

Whilst the Labour Party and the health service unions have consistently accused the Tories of planning to privatise large sections of the NHS ( a process already underway with the internal market) the Tories have always denied it.

The government is now understood to be planning to accept a report originally commissioned for the right-wing Social Market Foundation and written by Tory MP David Willetts to allow the private sector to build and manage private hospitals which would treat NHS patients and be paid for out of NHS funds. The plans are not dissimilar to the US private health schemes - where millions of poor people are denied care.



# Print Strikers Fight For Reinstatement

Workers at print firms Revell and George in Salford and Arrowsmiths in Bristol are continuing their long-running strikes after printers were sacked at the two firms for taking industrial action in pursuit of their union's national pay claim.

The Graphical, Paper and Media Union (GPMU) launched its national campaign following attempts by the employers to ditch national agreements. Subsequent negotiations have continually broken down with no agreement.

Workers at Revell and George submitted a

£6.50 wage claim, a demand for an extra day's holiday and for temporary workers to be paid at the same rate as full-time workers which was rejected in its entirety by management.

The workers then balloted, resulting in an overwhelming vote for action. Management then suspended two shop stewards and workers

organised a union meeting in works time and refused to return to work until the suspensions were lifted. After thirty-six hours the workers were sacked.

Since then the Revell and George strikers have been campaigning for reinstatement. A number of successful Monday morning mass pickets have been organised. Management believed that if they sat tight the strikers would just disappear. That is not the case.

Despite an injunction banning the mass pickets, there have been suggestions that Monday morning "mass coffee mornings" could be held outside the works instead!

The campaign for reinstatement is now beginning to pick up wider labour movement support and a boycott of Revell and George products has been launched (They are mainly travel brochures for coach companies).

The strikers need support from the entire labour movement. The GPMU leaders, instead of hiding behind the Tories' anti-union laws, should be organising wider solidarity action and building the mass pickets.

**What you can do to help:**

Send letters of support and donations to Manchester GPMU, Graphic House, Mosely Road, M19 2LH

Join the mass pickets and demonstrations  
Invite a striker to speak at your next trade union/Labour Party meeting

## Profit Boost Heralds Job Cuts

1000-plus jobs are set to go at Southern Electric despite a hike in profits. Profits at the recently privatised utility rose by 12% last year and shareholders dividends are also set to rise by a similar amount. However, for the workers at Southern Electric (and the other electricity supply companies) privatisation has not been such a windfall. As well as pay freezes, pay cuts and worsening working conditions, every single supply company has announced job losses now totalling more than 10,000.

Southern Electric bosses blame the losses on a reorganisation of their depots, administration centres and customer service centres in a bid to keep down bills. But in reality they are simply acting in the interests of the shareholders who now dictate the terms of electricity supply.

### IRSF Conference

## Riding Roughshod Over Members' Wishes

The Inland Revenue Staff Federation's (IRSF) Annual Delegate Conference was a real eye opener for many of the previously so-called "moderate" branches.

The fact that in the week prior to conference, a pay ballot was held in a hurry was reflected in the 84 motions of urgency received - 16 of which were debated.

The position of conference was that there should be a rebalot, the original ballot was null and void and that we should continue non-co-operation with "performance management".

A motion calling on all those members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) who had been re-elected for the next year who voted to recommend acceptance of the pay deal to resign was narrowly defeated by 334 votes to 331 on a card vote.

**The leadership antagonised many of their traditional supporters by making clear something the Broad Left had known for some time - that they will only implement policies they regard as "legal".** This developed into a statement made from the top table, blowing the union rule book apart. The official position of the leadership is now that they will only implement policies if they are "legal" and do not contradict membership ballots.

When challenged on the question of legality and what advice had been given by solicitors, the leadership refused to answer on the grounds that it could "damage the interests of the union"!

**Many good policies were adopted during the week including talks on mergers with NUCPS and CPSA, and opposition to market testing and privatisation.**

However, there is little chance of any policy

being implemented that leads to any form of confrontation with the board of the Inland Revenue.

The ballot on the pay deal, which does not come into effect until August, showed over 15,000 (36%) against the deal, with 10,000 (25%) in favour of one day a week strikes.

Without a national lead

and with leadership

warnings that this

"was not the right time - keep our powder dry and fight on the next issue", the substantial numbers voting to fight back reflects the anger and frustration of the rank and file.

**The bankruptcy of the leadership of the IRSF is indicative of the majority of leaders of the labour movement at the present time.** Their blinkered view and inability to take in the whole spectrum of attacks on the conditions and pay of their members and respond accordingly is acting as a brake on any movement.

The Broad Left over the next year will be exposing the leadership's role to the 70% who never vote in elections and at the same time agitating amongst the membership, outlining a programme of action that will push back the assaults we are facing on all sides. The issue of "performance management" poses a stark choice for us - trade unionism or credit unionism. With an active and informed membership we can ensure the former.

Martin Page, Leicester, Rutland,  
Northants Collection Branch Delegate

## Nalgo Conference

# Anger and Caution Dominate

The last ever NALGO conference took place in Brighton in June. In its 97 year history the union developed from an association of chief officials mainly concerned with their pensions to a TUC affiliated union with over 700,000 members.

Local government sector delegates met on the first day of conference to discuss the employers final pay offer of 1.5%. In a bad tempered debate, confusion reigned. The final decision was that the offer be put to a ballot and then, if it is rejected, a further ballot on industrial action be held. In practical terms conference voted to have a ballot on whether to have a ballot! The pay debate reflects the indecisive mood of NALGO members in local government at the moment, angry at the paltry 1.5% offer but, given the other threats to the service, reluctant to consider industrial action over pay alone. Delegates overturned the platform over the issue of flat rate pay awards which benefit the lowest paid members. The leadership was instructed to submit a flat rate claim in 1994. It will be worth watching to see if this instruction is carried over into UNISON.

Conference called for a special Rules Conference of UNISON to be held before December 1993. Again the National Executive opposed this, arguing that motions would have to be in by mid-August. This would give branches little time to merge, or consult members. This cut no ice with conference and the NEC went down to another defeat. However, the resolution merely instructed former NALGO NEC members on the UNISON interim NEC to argue for a rules conference, so we will wait and see the result. The leadership also suffered defeat on their attitude to Tory anti-union laws when a motion calling for open opposition to the legislation and for industrial action,

if needed, was carried. A call for national action alongside the miners to halt pit closures and public expenditure cuts was not successful.

Alan Jinkinson, NALGO's last general secretary and UNISON's first, will have left Brighton with "repudiation" ringing in his ears. Two motions were passed overturning his decision to "repudiate" strikes and occupations in London in fear of the Tory anti-union laws.

A fringe meeting called for the setting up of a new left organisation in UNISON. Some 70 delegates agreed a statement calling for a new, democratic left group which welcomes everyone.

The week saw the NEC suffer a large number of defeats reflecting the general dissatisfaction with the lack of a positive lead on pay and cuts. The leadership were lucky to get away with even their expenses intact! Yet no clear line emerged which had consistent support of the delegates. All eyes were fixed on the 1st July when UNISON comes into existence and a new chapter opens up.

## In Brief

### Another Poor Performance

Former Stock Exchange chief executive Peter Rawlins received a 28% pay rise before resigning last March, it has been revealed. Rawlins, who quit after the planned Taurus computer system was aborted, was paid £348,530 a year plus bonuses.

His pay rise came in a year when the Exchange made a loss of £11.9 million which was largely attributed to the costs of Taurus which was Rawlins' brainchild. So much for performance related pay!

When he resigned, Rawlins received compensation of £174,500 plus a £9,500 car.

### Tory Cuts Put Lives At Risk

When the Tories cut investment in London Underground from £860 million to £570 million, one of the first projects to be slashed was the removal of melamine, asbestos and bitumen which still lines some of the underground escalators.

London Underground chairman Dennis Tunnicliffe admitted in a letter to Labour MP Glenda Jackson that the safety work was being postponed for at least three years because of "the projected low levels of government funding over the next two years."

And yet it was Tory MPs and London Underground management who, when the project to remove the fire hazardous material was first started, said it was of vital importance in avoiding potentially life threatening situations.

## Stonham Battle Hots Up

Nalgo members at a Stonham Housing Association project in Birmingham have been sacked after taking official industrial action and picketing the project.

The dispute, which had the unanimous backing of the residents, came after Stonham had discriminated against employees, used short-term contracts to avoid paying fringe benefits and refused to recognise Nalgo. (See Socialist Appeal, No. 11)

Stonham have now pulled out of the project entirely leaving the workers and residents high and dry. The Tory Community Care proposals advocate the use of associations such as Stonham to provide services. No wonder the Tories like such a scheme if it means workers being employed with little or no protection and poor quality services on the cheap.

The workers need support to carry on their fight for their rights. You can help by:

Making a donation and sending a letter of support to: Stonham Support Group, Birmingham Nalgo, 3rd Floor Mercury House, 71 Cornwall Street, Birmingham B3. Cheques should be made payable to Stonham Support Fund.

By raising the issue at your Labour/trade union meeting. For more details contact the address above.

A battle royal is taking place inside the Labour Party over the future direction of the party. Dave Sims looks at the arguments behind the votes and points out the real way forward for Labour.

# Battle for the Labour Party

*"I think the Leader has got to take a lead (sic). That is why I am fighting for One Member One Vote... My mission is to defeat the Tories, modernise Labour and abolish the union's block vote."* (John Smith, Sunday Mirror, 13 June 1993). A battle royal is taking place in the Labour Party and in the affiliated unions over the future character of the Party. This is likely to come to a head in a vote over

paign is being waged under the slogans of 'democracy' and 'modernisation' - but it is nothing of the sort.

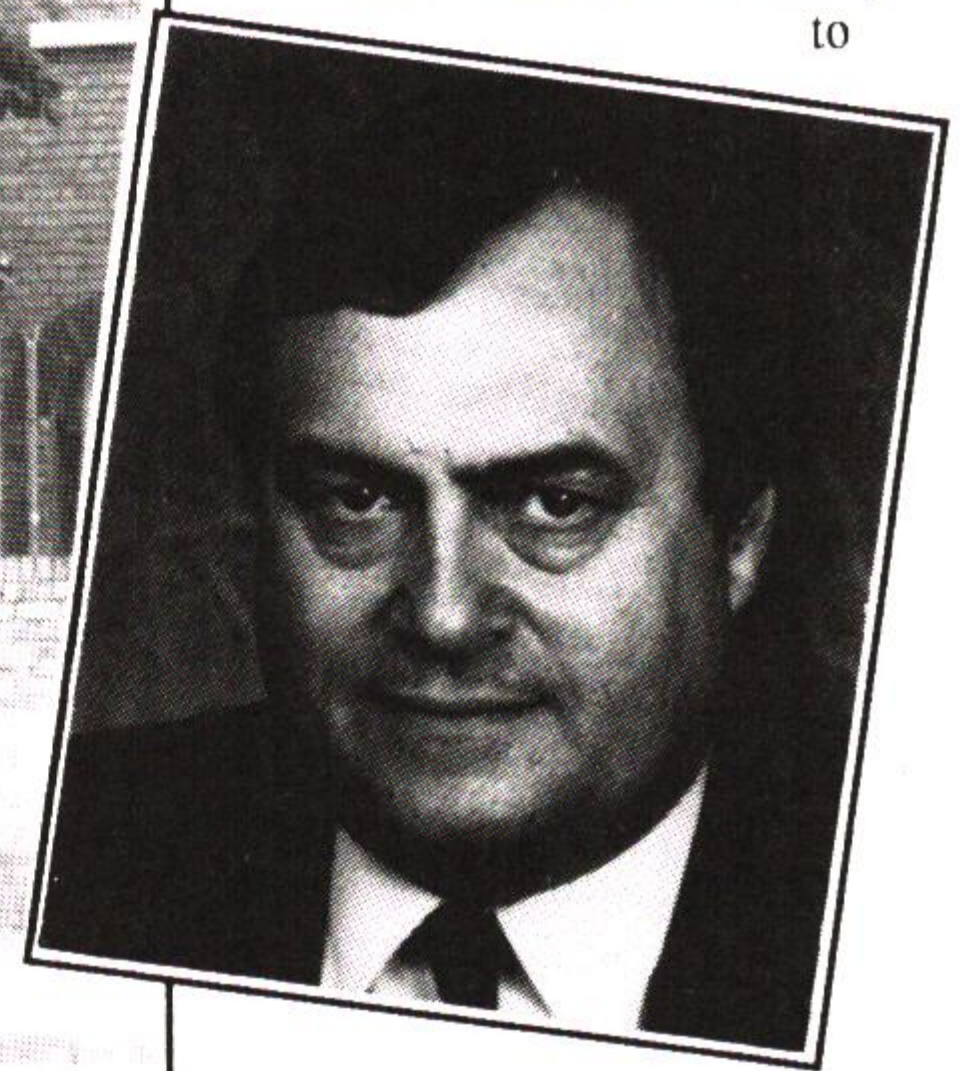
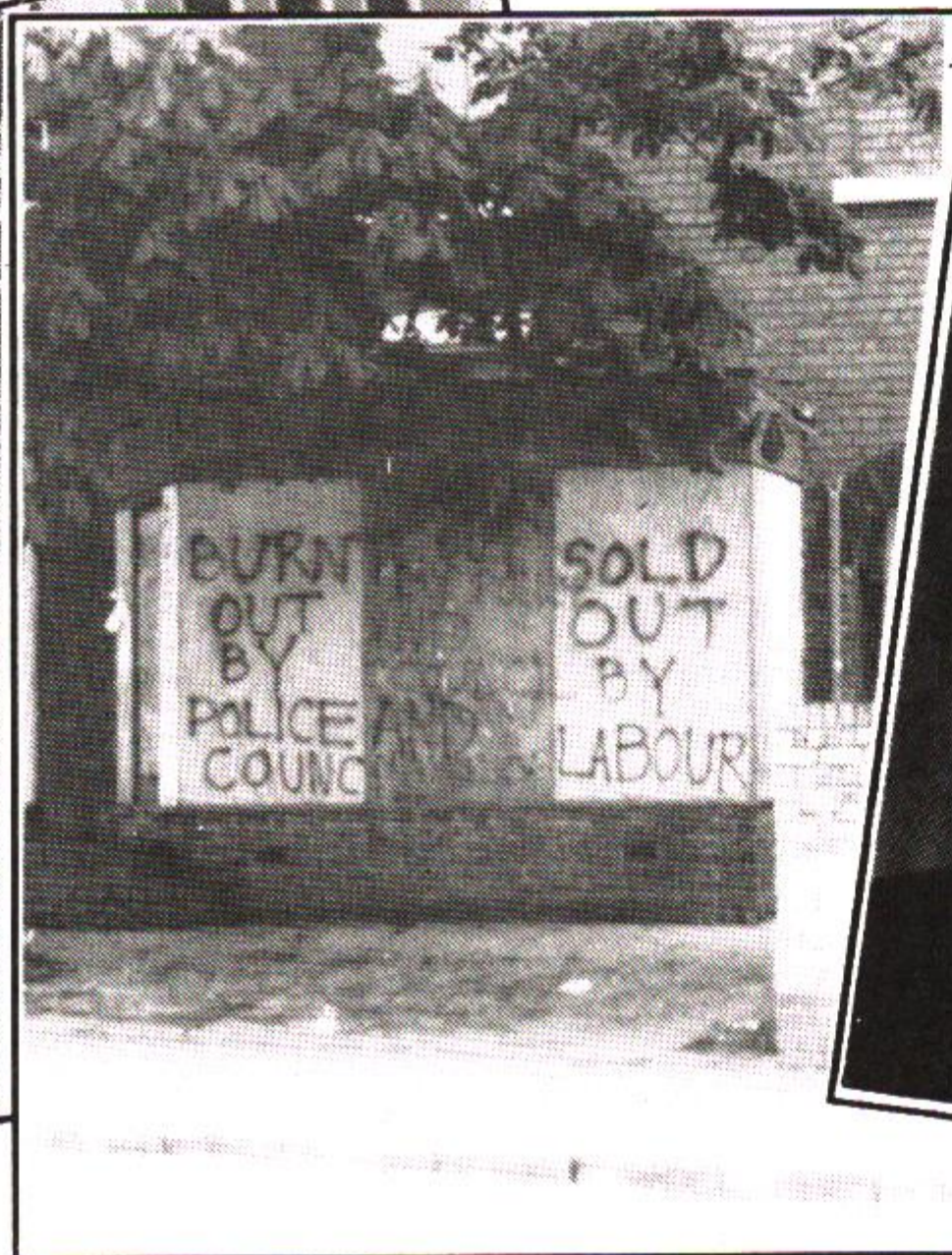
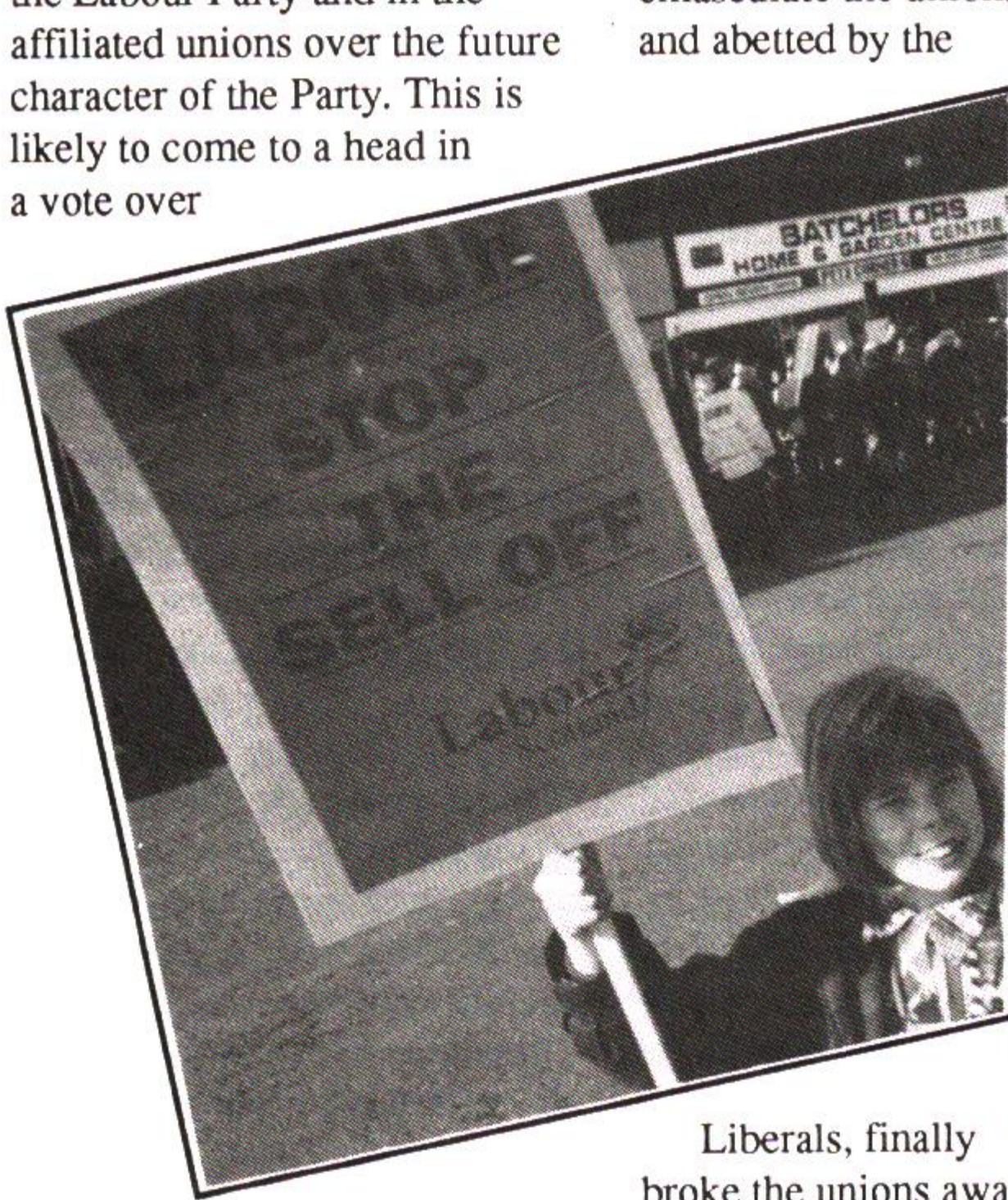
At the turn of the century, the trade unions were compelled to build a political party to represent the interests of the working class in Parliament. Attempts to emasculate the unions, aided and abetted by the

socialist aims of the Party, Clause Four, introduced individual membership for the first time. The adoption of Socialism, despite the craving for bourgeois respectability on behalf of the leaders, was an historic gain for the movement.

The millions of trade unionists who paid the political levy, were represent-

according to democratic union conference decisions, or the conference delegations. Today, the capitalists want to see a totally reliable Labour Party that whole-heartedly accepts the capitalist system. In 1959, the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell, attempting to copy the German Social Democracy's removal of Socialism from its objectives the previous year, rested on the right wing trade union leaders in an attempt

10



Liberals, finally

broke the unions away from the stifling influence of the Liberal Party. **The fundamental antagonism between the capitalist state and the workers' organisations necessitated the birth of the Labour Party.** It was the political representative of the trade unions, which provided the necessary finance to sustain the Party. This was a unique development - on the continent it was primarily the political parties that created the union movement. As a result, from its inception the Labour Party's character had a federal structure made up of the trade unions and socialist societies. Membership of the Party was derived through membership of the affiliated organisations.

In February 1918, a new constitution, which also contained the

ed in the Party according to their affiliation contributions. The trade union block vote at Party conferences represented that strength. In the past, the domination of the right wing was secured through the block vote. During the 1950's, right wing trade union leaders, like Deacon (T&G), Carron (AEU) and Lawther (NUM) provided the cornerstone of the rights control over the Labour Party. There was no doubt that the block vote was used in a totally undemocratic fashion, but the right wing were prepared to defend it when it suited their plans. Due to this behaviour, some on the left raised the need to end the block vote. But this would weaken the trade union link. What is needed is the democratisation of the block vote, for it to be cast

scrap Clause Four, but was forced to retreat by the rank and file. **The right wing is now once more orchestrating a campaign to get rid of Clause Four and break the Labour-trade union link. They see both as a future threat to their system.** Although Clause Four (which is printed on every members card) has remained a dead letter, new social convulsions can push the Labour Party sharply to the left and rank and file demands will increase for a socialist way out of the crisis. Clause Four will come to the fore in the Labour Party and the unions. Therefore, big business wants to remove this socialist aspiration.

The trade union basis of the Party, together with its independence from the other capitalist parties, means that it is a poten-

Smith's one member one vote (OMOV) proposals at the October annual conference. Unless the right backs down or compromises, the scene is set for a big clash. A campaign is being waged by Labour's parliamentary right wing - the so-called modernisers - headed by John Smith, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, to turn the Labour Party into a British version of the American Democratic Party. In other words they want to turn Labour into a safe capitalist party, where the umbilical cord between the Party and the trade unions is finally broken. The right wing has the whole-hearted backing of Big Business and the Tory Establishment. **This cam-**

tial threat to the system. The ruling class have also learned the lessons of the 1974-79 Labour Government, which attempted to carry through anti-working class policies and created opposition, then radicalisation in the Labour movement. The experience of the Callaghan Government pushed the constituencies and the trade unions to the left. In 1981 constitutional reforms were won: the creation of the electoral college to elect the leadership and the mandatory reselection of MPs. In October, Tony Benn came within a whisker of winning the deputy leadership of the Party. This sent shock waves through the ruling class.

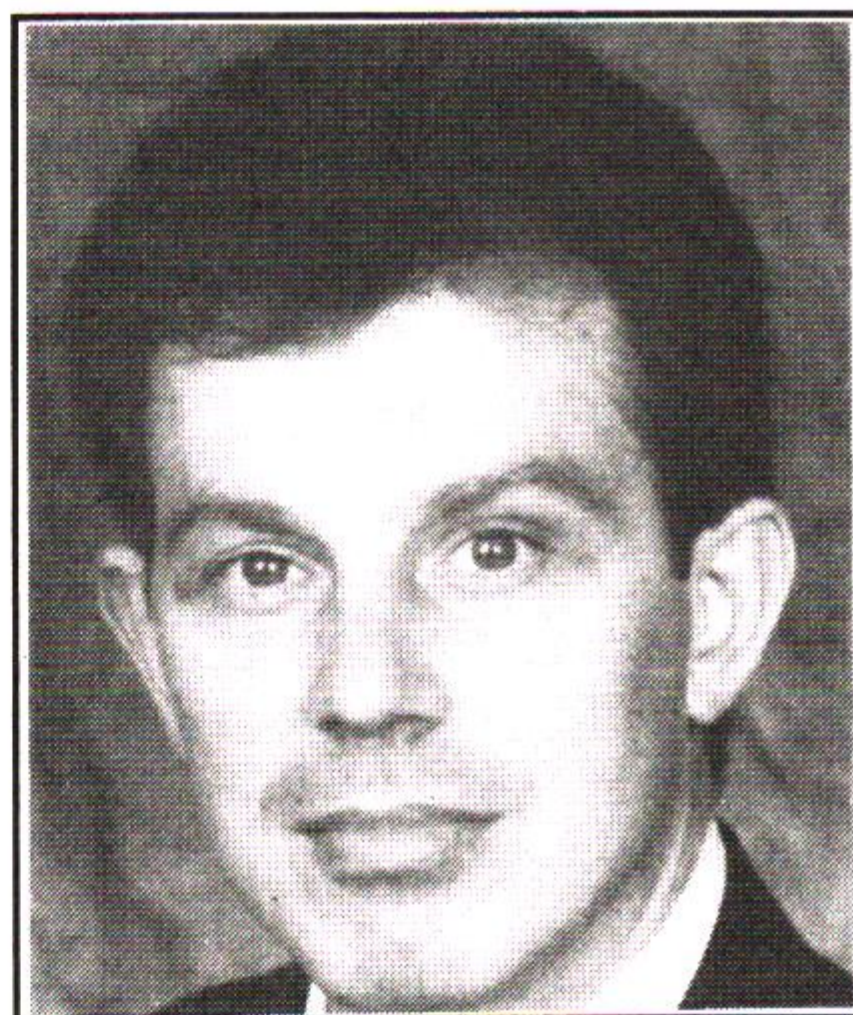
**Radical Policies**

The root of the right wing 'counter revolution' of the 1980's, was to reverse the radical policies that were adopted and eradicate the democratic accountability that had been won. Larry Whitty, the Party's general secretary, at a press conference in October 1990, outlined the proposals to change the powers of the Labour Party Conference. In his briefing he said the main reason for these proposals was to prevent a repetition of what happened to the Callaghan Government, when the Labour Conference came out against the Government's 5% pay norm and precipitated the 'Winter of Discontent'. In the future, he said, a Labour Government would have to take some unpopular measures. "We couldn't have a Labour Conference oppose them." The attempt to introduce OMOV is part of this scheme. Originally, the so-called modernisers believed they would get an easy ride, especially when John Smith got such a high vote as Leader. The new breed of right wing careerists, like Blair and Brown, who have no real connections with the trade unions, are desperate to turn the Party into an SDP Mark-Two. For them, the trade unions are an albatross around their necks. They want to follow the example of their German and Swedish Social Democratic counterparts, where the leadership has relative independence. The next step in severing the

trade union links, is the introduction of the state financing of political parties. That would make them totally independent of the trade unions and their 'irresponsible' demands. These 'modernisers', or 'Clintonites' to be more accurate, far from pushing at an open door, have hit a brick wall! It has opened up a deep split in the Labour Party leadership, between them and the 'traditionalists' headed by John Prescott and Clare Short. "The wind blows the tops of the trees first". In a scathing attack in Tribune, Clare Short warned Smith of the "poisonous voices" of ambitious "crown princes", a clear reference to Blair, Brown and Mandelson.

**Prescott's Attack**

Prescott attacked the manoeuvres of Smith's supporters who had sent a letter to all CLP's supporting OMOV, saying "The movement is sick to death of a minority attempting to impose its will on the majority without any consultation. It's back to 'Back me, or sack me', and we've had enough of that in the past." He told a rally at the GMB conference, "I wish they would shut up and wait for the results." The 'traditionalists' are reflecting the deep disquiet in the



Tony Blair

ranks of the Labour Movement at the drift and 'me-tooism' of the Smith leadership. They are

To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service. *Labour Party Constitution Clause IV (4)*

**Labour membership card**



The Labour Party 150 Walworth Road London SE17 1JT 071-701 1234

seen to abandon everything, including their principles, in the search for respectability and moderation. John Edmunds, general secretary of the GMB, a consistent supporter of the right, has intervened in the dispute, reflecting grass roots discontent: "we seem to be holding back and waiting for the Tories to destroy themselves", and the party was suffering from "lethargy and lack of vision." "The moment for bland timidity is past. We should never allow the limits of Labour's ambitions to be set by an economic framework laid down by the Tories", he said. In his speech to the GMB conference he said: "It is very uncomfortable and in some cases painful to be told by political friends that they don't want you involved." The right wing GMB president, Dick Pickering, stated bluntly: "We will not allow a bunch of politicians to hijack the party."

This represents a massive turn around on the previous position of many right-wing trade union leaders. In September 1992, the New Statesman published a survey, which showed that six out of 10 union leaders would support the abolition of the union bloc vote at party conference. Eight out of ten union leaders would support a system of one member, one vote for the election of Labour parliamentary candidates, and three-quarters would back one member, one vote for the leadership election. This survey indi-

cated these leaders were completely out of touch with the views of their membership, which have now forced them to sing a radically different tune. It also shows that under pressure even right-wing leaders can be forced to articulate the views of the rank and file. The plans of the Parliamentary right-wing have met with one defeat after another

at the trade union conferences. Unions, which make up more than 50% of the Labour conference vote, have come out against OMOV. Only the AEEU have endorsed Smith's position. COHSE conference, which allowed its resolution rejecting OMOV to be remitted, may have allowed the COHSE leadership to swing behind Smith. But even this is not certain. In the words of Bill Morris, TGWU general secretary: OMOV "is dead in the water".

**Gaitskell's Speech**

The reaction of Smith and Co, using the power of the capitalist media, is to appeal over the heads of the trade union leaders and the conference delegates. It is possible Smith will attempt to copy Gaitskell's defiant speech "To fight, fight, and fight again, to save the party", which will not necessarily win the vote, but get the whole-hearted backing of the capitalist media. He will be regarded as the 'great statesman' by the Tory press. It is a desperate gamble that puts the parliamentary right on a collision course with the unions. Edmunds has attacked the OMOV supporters for splitting the party. According to the Guardian (7.6.93), "Relations between Labour affiliated unions and the party's parliamentary leaders are at their most bitter since the winter of discontent ...". What are the perspectives for the Labour Party? The leadership of the party - together with the union leadership - moved far to the right over the last 10 years. However, this shift to the



right has reached its limits. This is indicated by the splits that have opened up over Clause Four and the trade union link. Seven out of ten regional Labour Party conferences have come out in favour of retaining union participation in the election of parliamentary candidates. Even the Executive of the Scottish Labour Party has openly rejected Smith's proposals. The party monolith created by Kinnock - according to David Blunkett - has broken down. The witch hunt, which demoralised a whole layer of activists, has largely run out of steam. A recoil is beginning to take place. However, the active rank and file base of the party has declined over the past 10 years. The party membership fell by 8,000 last year. The total of 253,000 is the lowest level since 1929. This has been due fundamentally to the swing to the right, the effects of the boom of 1982-90, the four successive election defeats, the witch hunt, and the demise of the left. However, although this is a narrow base, we need a sense of proportion. The present figure is only 20,000 lower than in 1982 (roughly 30 less per constituency), when the left were in the ascendancy, Benn had missed the deputy leadership by less than 1% of the vote, and the party had held mass demonstrations against unemployment throughout the country. The figure has not been much higher throughout the 1980's. Membership will grow on the basis of events, when working people see the need to become politically involved. The idea coming from some quarters, that there could be a left split from the party is way off the mark. Although there is discontent and frustration in the party, there is no basis at present for an organised left split. The last major left split from the Labour Party was in 1932. The ILP split with 100,000 supporters, but fell to pieces in a short period of time. That split, however, was born out of a Labour Party in colossal ferment, having gone through the experience of

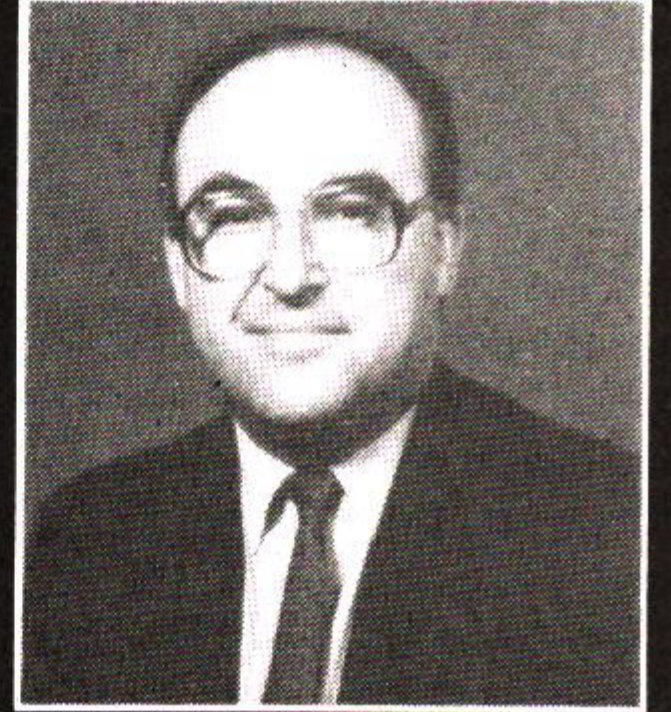
the 1929-31 Labour Government, the MacDonald Betrayal, the World Slump, mass unemployment, and the victory of fascism in Italy and then Germany. There was a tiny split in Scotland in 1976, with the formation of the Scottish Labour Party. It took two Labour MP's - Jim Sillars and John Robertson - and a handful of activists. Again, within a few years it had totally disintegrated, with remnants entering the SNP. Any similar 'split' would end in the same shambles.

**Whatever the intentions of the right wing given the powerful resistance from below, they will not be able to break the union links. Their plans to turn the party into a new SDP have collapsed.**

The Labour Party is the mass party of the working class. Whatever the intentions of the right wing leadership, given the powerful resistance from below, they will not be able to break the trade union links. Their plans to turn the party into a new SDP have collapsed. There is a reaction taking place in the movement. The splits at the top are an indication of this process. These tensions are a harbinger of future divisions on class lines. With the revival of the economy, strikes will pick up as workers attempt to get back what they lost in the previous period. This radicalisation on the industrial front will spill over onto the political field. Many will draw the conclusion that industrial struggles alone will not solve their problems. The only mass alternative is the Labour Party. Therefore workers will trickle into the party, through the wards and as delegates to the GMC's. A new left will begin to crystallise, possibly around John

Prescott, who has begun to articulate the discontent of the rank and file trade unionists and party members. The task of activists is not to desert the struggle in the party, but to reinforce the struggle against the right wing, and prepare the ground for the future battles that will arise within the movement. The key to changing the Labour Party is the trade unions. But conversely, the key to changing the unions is the party. Both are inseparably interlinked. The formation of UNISON - 1.4 million strong - can be of great significance for developments in the party. In 1995 the new union will be balloting over Labour Party affiliation. The campaign by the left within the union must begin now for affiliation, and to win the union to socialist policies. It is important that the votes at the union conferences against OMOV are translated into party membership. It is time that rank and file trade unionists reclaimed their party. The battle over OMOV, and the setbacks for the right, are a prelude to future battles. There is no alternative for working people but to fight to transform the Labour Party in the period that lies ahead. Above all it will be the task of trade unionists to spearhead this campaign. On the basis of events, they will see the limitation of simply trade union struggle, and move onto the political plane. The present struggle is a foretaste of that development, and is an answer to the gloom and doom merchants that have written the party off. We will witness the transformation and re-transformation of the party once workers begin to move into action. Genuine Marxism will play an indispensable role in arming the new generation of workers and youth with a political understanding of the vital tasks that lie ahead. This will serve to avoid the pitfalls of sectarianism and opportunism, and lay the basis for a labour movement based on the ideas of scientific socialism.

## LOCAL PARTIES SAY NO TO OMOV



A new poll conducted by the BBC's *On the Record* showed that 109 constituency parties favoured keeping the union block vote, with 61 opposed. In voting for the party leadership, 93 CLPs wanted the trade unions to retain their status, while 82 wanted 'one member one vote'. Trade union and CLP opposition so far declared is 65%, with Smith's proposals getting only 25% and 10% of the conference vote undecided. The defeat staring Smith in the face has led to attempts to cobble together a compromise, but this has split the Smith camp wide open, with a number calling for a show down at the Party Conference.

**In the Next Issue of Socialist Appeal - Labour Party Conference special pull-out with news, views and analysis - DON'T MISS IT!**

# NUM Shows Fighting Spirit

This year's NUM conference, meeting against a background of vicious attacks on mining jobs, the mining industry and mining communities - 20 of the 31 threatened pits have already closed - was in defiant, even optimistic mood.

The will of the majority was to fight, particularly with the support and backing of the TUC. Alan Tuffin, bringing greetings from the TUC announced that the General Council had adopted a 7-point plan to defend the industry beginning with a vigil outside number 10. "I know many of you think this is not good enough," he said, to which the conference chair replied: "I'm one of those." Alan Tuffin responded: "I only wish I had the opportunity to blow the whistle and call my members out in

support because they would come out. Maybe there will still be an opportunity for that."

The united conference, almost every resolution was passed unanimously, called for a united trade union movement campaign to fight the anti-union laws and unemployment.

Arthur Scargill, NUM President, responded to Bill Jordan's (AEEU) comment that Scargill's visit to Timex was like the captain of the Titanic visiting, saying it was a great shame he felt the need to say that. "Now is the time for unity and the NUM would welcome Jordan's support in the campaign to defend jobs. It was only a shame they did not get that support last autumn," he said.

Many delegates referred to the corruption scandals rocking governments worldwide and drew a comparison with the equally

corrupt privatisation racket - that is the huge profits being made by the Tories' friends at the top of the gas and electricity industries in the rigged energy market.

As ever, the NUM conference was a political event. As Scargill commented, "the miners have always had to fight and will always have to fight because they have a political perspective."

There was a great spirit of internationalism with support being shown for the Peabody miners' dispute in the USA and speakers from the Nigerian Miners' Union. Equally, the NUM continued its tradition of supporting struggles at home with collections for strikers at Middlebrook Mushrooms and Hilliers.

An emergency resolution from Yorkshire area condemning the US bombing of Iraq was passed unanimously.

## Pits Battle

# Supporting the Miners



Eileen of Trentham NUM WAPC receives the donation from Maureen Wade, Stockland Green Labour Party Chair.

Labour Party members in Erdington, Birmingham raised over £250 for the miners in street collections. The money was handed over to representatives of Trentham NUM and Women Against Pit Closures at a presentation and street meeting in the local high street.

It was an emotional event - Trentham officially closed the day before. Eileen, representing the NUM and whose husband and three sons were all miners told how they had become "industrial gypsies." Some had been transferred to Trentham last year when Coventry colliery closed down and now they were being transferred to Point of Ayr colliery. One miner had a mortgage on his home he couldn't sell in Coventry, one on his new home in Stoke, and now would have to stay in B&B in Rhyl so he could work at Point of Ayr.

She told how there had been tears in the social club the night before, but the miners' composure returned and those who had been transferred and would be lodging in Rhyl were cheered off to the strain of "We're all going on a summer holiday!"

While the battle for Trentham had been lost, the war continued, and they would be continuing their defiance in defence of the pits still on the government's hit list.

At the street meeting shoppers gathered to hear the miners representatives and Richard Evans, prospective Labour council candidate for the area criticise the Tories - even the local vicar took a turn at laying in to the government!

## Union Links Debate

Much fuss has been made in the press over Scargill's threat to split the Labour Party, yet there has been very little coverage of the real debate which took place on maintaining Labour's links with the unions and returning to socialist policies.

Tom Clarke, bringing fraternal greetings from the Labour Party called for a "Labour government with Labour policies for our people." The conference chair added: "Yes, a Labour government, but with Clause Four."

A resolution from South Wales area calling for the maintenance of Clause Four as the central aspiration of the Labour Party and the renationalisation of all the privatised utilities was passed unanimously.

Tyrone O'Sullivan, Tower NUM delegate, moving the resolution explained: "This resolution is political but then everything in life is political. Some silly people believe in heaven, but the rich know there's no heaven so they make their heaven on earth by using and abusing us."

He then read out Clause Four and said: "This is my bible and I cannot imagine a Labour government which does not renationalise these industries or a Labour Party without Clause Four."

In his Presidential Address Arthur Scargill said: "There are two choices facing mankind. The example you have in the eastern bloc, currently flirting with the market, has led to the tearing open of the social fabric, mass unemployment, corruption riots and so on. The same is true of capitalism the world over. But there is another way, demonstrated by the demonstrations last autumn. We may have lost the opportunity at the moment but now we have to continue to fight for a Labour government as committed to our class as the Tories are to theirs. The only alternative is socialism."

Phil Mitchinson

# We Want Justice!

Newspaper bosses in Leeds have decided to abolish the right to union representation. But workers at the Yorkshire Evening Post and Yorkshire Post are not giving up their rights without a fight.

Already a number of demonstrations and pickets have been held outside the company main site and support has flooded in from local trade unions.

The YEP and YP are part of the United Newspapers Group which has titles in a number of cities including Blackpool, Sheffield, Preston and Newport as well as being the owner of the *Daily and Sunday Express* and *Daily Star* and owner of shares in television and magazines.

The management's move in Leeds is part of a nationwide anti-union campaign against journalists, printers and other staff across its titles. In Leeds, workers have already faced redundancies and worsening working conditions and health and safety is now at risk after the union

used the law to protect the health and safety of its members using computer screens and in response the company derecognised the union.

Among the print workers there has been a return to "lump" labour. Young, often unskilled workers turn up and some are sent home unpaid because management deem they are not needed that day. A number of strike ballots, strikes and protest actions have taken place across United Newspapers.

Now the United Newspapers Group Chapel (which brings together NUJ shop stewards from all the newspaper titles) has called for a group-wide ballot for industrial action. The NUJ National Executive has backed the ballot but must campaign for a Yes vote, and if the ballot is successful plan a clear campaign of strike action to win this dispute. The workers at the various centres have shown they are prepared to take action, now it must be co-ordinated and the full resources of the union put behind it to win this dispute and signal a very important step



• The free newspaper produced by YEP workers detailing management's attacks

forward in defending and regaining union recognition in local newspapers.

As a matter of urgency an approach should be made to the GPMU, calling on them to instruct their members not to cross picket lines and join the action.

Jeremy Dear, NUJ National Executive

PAT WALL MP Bradford North 1987-90

## A Socialist Fighter

Pat Wall, who was a life-long Marxist and a Labour MP, died on 6th August 1990. He joined the Labour Party during the 1950 general election, and became the secretary of Liverpool Garston CLP at the age of 16. He held office in Toxteth, Harborough and Bingley Labour Parties, as well as being an USDAW Shop Steward and Branch Secretary and Bingley UDC Councillor. Pat was President of Bradford Trades Council and a member of the Yorkshire Regional Executive of the Party. He was selected by the CLP to fight Bradford North, but due to the sabotage of Ben Ford, lost to the Tories. He regained the seat for Labour in 1987.

We reprint below an extract of an article he wrote in September 1975 about his experiences in the party.

"The right wing are attempting to propound a myth that the traditional democracy of the Labour Party is being subverted by militant left wingers and Marxists. The truth, as any activist of even a few years standing knows, is rather different. Over long periods of its history the Labour Party had a tradition of witch-hunting its left wing.

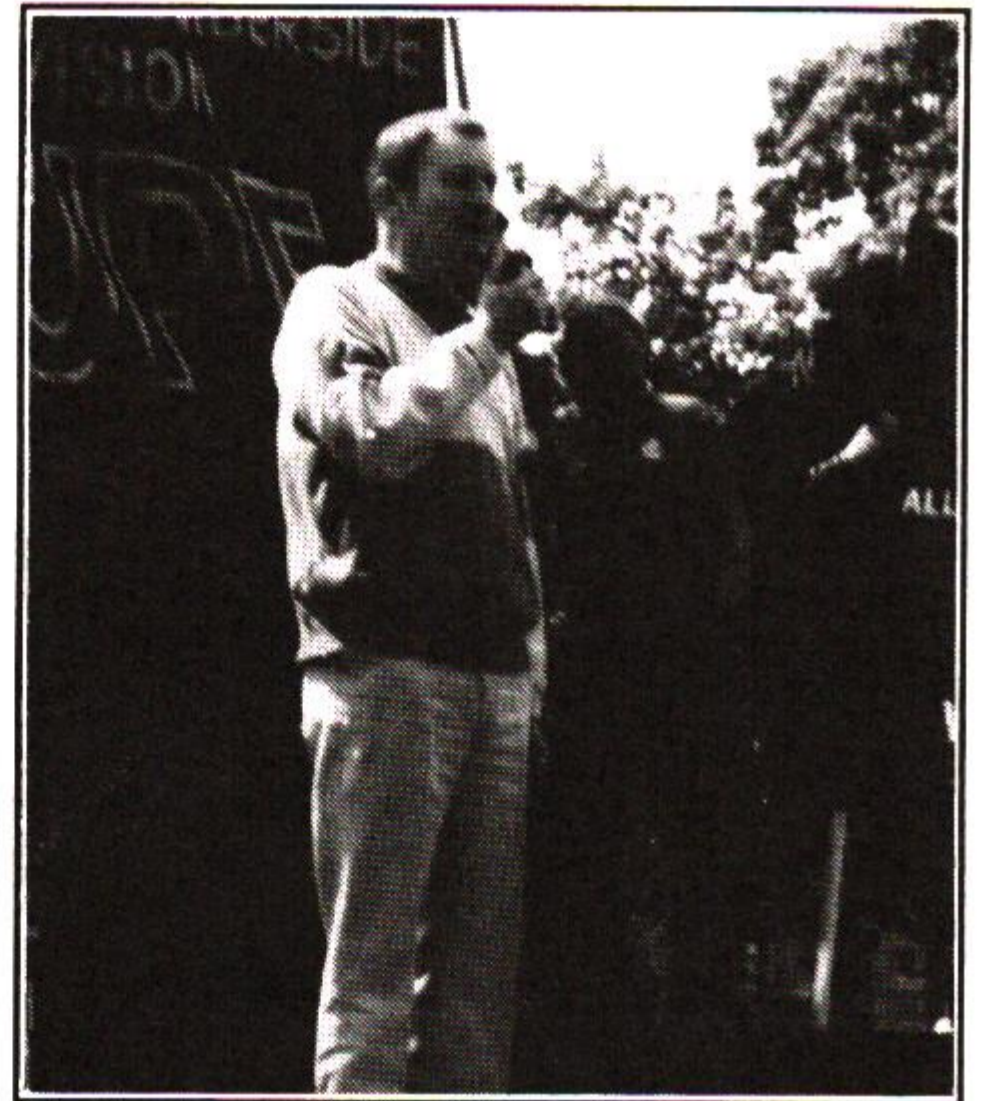
In the early fifties the right wing, including an organised 'Catholic Action' caucus, dominated the Liverpool Labour Group; many represented 'rotten boroughs' in the older parts of the city where party membership was almost non-existent. The late John Braddock was both leader and chairman of the Group, deciding who could or could not speak against

his policies. Many of his supporters spent more time in the 'Vernon' pub across the road than in the meeting. When a vote was near a messenger would cross the road and back they would troop, many 'half cut', to shout down, or even physically threaten opposition speakers. It was the redistribution of ward boundaries and the growing left wing majority in the Trades Council and Borough Labour Party which ended this state of affairs.

Intolerance and witch-hunting were even more marked in the constituencies. Are we supposed to forget the disbanding of CLP's, administering of 'loyalty oaths', the monstrous proscription list, the banning of left wing journals and ginger groups not to mention the divorcing of trade unionists from the Labour Party by the splitting of joint Trades Councils and Borough Parties? Some people have suddenly discovered the decline in the Party membership which has gone on for years and is only slowly reversing. It was right wing policies, 'Butskellism' and the lack of democracy which drove hundreds of activists from the Party.... The move from reforms to counter-reforms between 1967 and 1970 had the same effect.

Above all it is the treatment of the Labour Youth movement that the right wing stands condemned. The history of the youth organisations has been one of arbitrary restrictions, gross interference by officialdom, lack of democratic rights, and the closing of branches.

In 1955 the post war Labour League of Youth was disbanded. After an interval Youth Sections were allowed on a Constituency basis, but they were expressly forbidden from having any



Pat Wall

contact with each other. Following the 1959 electoral defeat the Young Socialists was formed, but this organisation was in turn disbanded in 1964.

The present Labour Party Young Socialists has a more democratic constitution and better relations with the Party. However a considerable degree of harassment still exists. Many regional officials seem more concerned with closing branches than opening branches. The present crisis requires leadership, but if that leadership is divorced from the control of the rank and file, its policies as now and in the past will become divorced from those of the movement. For this reason socialists should support the demands put forward at this Conference and undoubtedly in the future for greater democracy and rank and file control - for the election of the Party leader by Conference. For Conference decisions to be binding on MP's. For the limitation of MP's salaries and for the right of recall at all levels and in all sections of the movement."

The press and media have been full of reports about the financing of the Tory Party. But what is the real significance of big business support for the Conservative Party? Veronica Patterson reports.

# A Little Local Difficulty

## Tory Finances Exposed

*"With so much at stake, this election was one of the most vital we have fought. Your contribution helped to ensure our decisive victory."*

**Margaret Thatcher writing to Asil Nadir in 1987**

**After the forced resignations of David Mellor and Norman Lamont, the Major government has faced a further storm of political crisis and the resignation of a third minister, Michael Mates. The Tories undoubtedly hope Mates resignation will calm the storm of criticism over the financing of the party and the allegations of corruption amongst its politicians.**

In the runup to Mates' resignation, one Tory MP told the Guardian, *"We shouldn't make any concessions on the funding system under pressure from the Labour Party and the press. If it's a choice between making concessions on disclosing donations or losing Mates, then I'd rather see Mates go."*

But it seems unlikely that anything can distract from the torrent of claims about the Tories money - all of which have been met by a stony and damning "no comment".

An article in the May issue of the magazine *"Business Age"* (which as yet has not been sued for libel by the Tory Party or any of the individuals named), begins: *"The inexplicable doesn't come much bigger than the internal finances of the Conservative Party. Here is a web of intrigue so Machiavellian as to be totally unacceptable on the part of the government of our country."*

### Nadir Donations

The estimates of the donations Asil Nadir gave to the Tories range from £440,000 up to £1.5 million. None of it declared, as legally required by Company Law, in the accounts of Nadir's Polly Peck empire. Sounds like a lot of money, but *"Business Age"* points to £71 million in unexplained donations to the Tories over the last eight years, with more than £30 million coming from abroad.

The discrepancy between contributions to the Tories identified from the accounts of the top 1,500 companies lodged in Companies House and total actual donations amounted to £4 million in 1989, £5 million in 1990, £13 million in 1991 and £17.9 million in 1992.

The Conservative Party does not explain the source of its donations. There is no legal

requirement for them to produce accounts for the simple reason that legally the Conservative Party does not exist! Between 1979 and 1984 the Tories published no accounts at all, since then they produce a partially audited account of income and expenditure, without a proper balance sheet and which does not necessarily add up!

### Tory Fundraising

In 1975, when she became leader, Thatcher appointed Alistair (now Lord) McAlpine as deputy treasurer. From the until 1990 he was effective head of Tory finances and the man behind the Tories fundraising endeavour's throughout the world.

*"When I arrived at Smith Square" he said, "I had a lock put onto my office door and no-one else was allowed in."* He went on, *"I was appointed by Margaret and I believed that my loyalty was only to the Party leader, not to the Party Chairman and not to the Party members."*

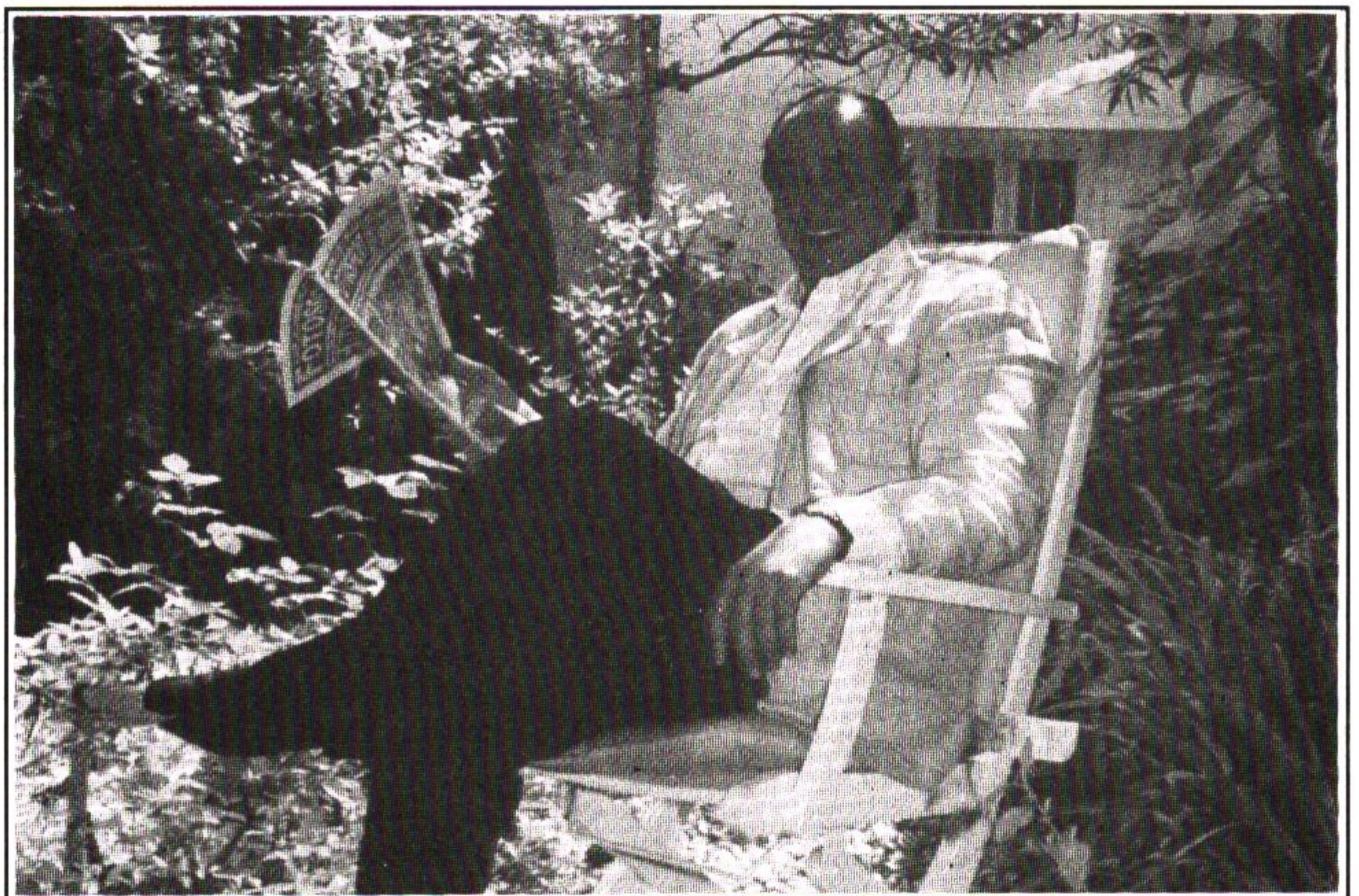
McAlpine and fellow fundraising director of the Conservative Board of Finance, Sir Brian Wyldbore-Smith, worked independently and kept various bank accounts, one in Jersey

and four overseas nominee accounts held at subsidiaries of the Royal Bank of Scotland - for receiving overseas donations. McAlpine himself has referred to "tons" of secret offshore accounts. Other cheques were written out to them personally, sent to their private addresses and then transferred by them to Smith Square.

The Tories have tried to turn the spotlight on Labour with the allegations in the *Independent on Sunday* (27.6.93) that Labour received thousands of pounds in donations from Greek Cypriot tycoon, Charilaos Costas, who is wanted in Britain on fraud charges. While socialists in the Labour Party have always opposed links with wealthy businessmen like Costas or Robert Maxwell, in reality Labour's business links are small beef compared with the shady nature of the Tories funding.

*"Business Age"* writes, *"Lord McAlpine made Britain's party of government the creature of foreign rulers, foreign arms dealers, property speculators and tax dodgers on a grand scale."* Wyldbore-Smith has declared, *"I don't think a cheque has ever been refused."*

Contributors allegedly include Li Ka Shing, Beijing billionaire, former representative on the board of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, a member of the Chinese People's Assembly and chief western agent of the state arms manufacture, Norinco. His donations include £1 million at the time of



Asil Nadir relaxes while the Tories panic

the 1987 election and further smaller donations in 1990 and 1991 - when Chris Patten, now Governor of Hong Kong, was party chairman.

### Policy Favours

*The Guardian* (26.6.93) reports another Hong Kong millionaire, Tsui Tsin-tong, who has given a six figure contribution to the Tories. Tsui also has business links with Norinco. He met John Major at Downing Street in August 1991 and, the *Guardian* claims, the meeting paved the way for Major to visit China, ending Britain's diplomatic boycott after the massacre in Tiananmen Square. The *Guardian* goes on to state, "There is no suggestion that the donations influenced government policy towards Hong Kong or China."

Another donator is the Sultan of Brunei, reportedly the richest man in the world, who profits from a permanent British military presence in his country and who is undoubtedly grateful for the British government's continuing support.

There have been continued reports that the Saudi Arabian royal family donated large sums of money to the Tories. Labour MP Clive Soley, in a debate in the House of Commons, named Michael Heseltine as the Minister involved in meeting a senior member of the Saudi royal family before the last general election with the aim of raising funds for the Tories' election campaign. A report in the *Guardian* (22.6.93) claims that the payments from the Saudis may have totalled £7 million, and was delivered in cash by private jet a few days before last year's general election.

### Secret Benefactors

These allegations came only days after Sir Norman Fowler, Present Tory Party Chairman, told the Home Affairs Select Committee investigating party funding that the Tories did not accept donations from foreign governments.

An editorial in the *Sunday Times* (20.6.93) states, "So who are these secret benefactors and what do they expect for their largesse? Altruism seems an unlikely motive: if assorted Sultans, Sheikhs, shipowners and spivs are funnelling millions to the Tories, then some will clearly expect to receive something for their money."

British-Saudi relations have been dominated since the mid-eighties by the Al-Yamamah arms deal, worth up to £60 billion, and personally negotiated by Margaret Thatcher and a member of the Saudi royal family. Rumours and allegations over the payment of "commissions" have been denied by all parties concerned.

Of course the leaders of big business wish to finance the party of capitalism in Britain and to ensure that a Labour government is not

elected. McAlpine has said that the Hong Kong businessmen donated "because they hate the Labour Party." But oiling the wheels of business deals, influencing foreign policy, invitations to the right dinner parties or a seat in the House of Lords - all could be just as good reasons for donating to the Tories.

The *Times* article points out: "since the Tories came to power in 1979, 18 peerages and 82 knighthoods have been handed out to the bosses of 76 companies that have between them given more than £17 million to the Tory Party. The more they pay, the better chances and the glitzier the bauble: the 12 largest corporate donors have reaped a harvest of nine peerages and as many knighthoods. Lloyd George was more honest: he sold them outright."

### Mates' Gift

The gift of a watch by Michael Mates to Asil Nadir with the now famous inscription, "Don't let the buggers grind you down", and the loan of a car from Nadir's PR consultant, seem like small issues amidst the piles of muck being raked up within the Tory Party. Yet it is a sign of the "you scratch my back" atmosphere prevalent at Westminster. The Commons requires MPs to detail outside income, sponsorships, etc. in its annual Register of Members Interests - the *Independent on Sunday* described how some MPs use it to get information on lucrative sidelines. One Minister is quoted saying, "I had a really nice collection of directorships which were taken by other MPs when I became a Minister. The thing to do is to see who's retiring and line theirs up."

The article goes on to give details of several MPs who flew on the inaugural British Airways flight from London to Jakarta courtesy of BA. Another MP was sent courtesy of USAir to play for the parliamentary tennis team. And a group of Labour MPs went on a trip to Colorado to view a dry storage facility for spent nuclear fuel courtesy of, wait for it - Scottish nuclear plc. It rather puts into perspective left wing MP Dennis Skinner's consistent refusal to get a passport so that he can never be tempted or indeed accused of taking part in the Westminster "tourist club."

Lord McAlpine, now retired from his position in the Tory Party to concentrate on writing, is about to produce his first book entitled, "The Servant." He describes it as a sequel to Machiavelli's "The Prince", and it is dedicated to Baroness Thatcher!

The fact of the matter is that capitalism is a corrupt system and inevitably the ethics of the main party of capitalism and the parliamentary system as a whole are tainted with corruption. As the *Sunday Times* put it, "If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, chances are it is a duck."

# Truth or Fiction?

**"The watch was... a lighthearted gesture. I had no idea of his intention to leave England."**

Michael Mates

**"It's far from impossible that I may have met him at some time..."**

Sir Norman Tebbit

**"Any money that was dishonestly obtained and dishonestly donated to the Conservative Party is not wanted."**

John Major

**"We did not discuss Asil Nadir. In a beautiful place like Venice why would we discuss a sleazy fellow like Asil Nadir?"**

Lord McAlpine, on meeting Michael Heseltine in Venice

# The Capitalist Dilemma

**Tory leaders and the economic experts in the capitalist press have one thought in mind at present - that the government's budget deficit, likely to be around £50 billion this year, must be cut.**

Thus Michael Portillo, the Treasury secretary and darling of the Thatcherite right, is supposedly planning all kinds of cuts in benefits (invalidity, pensions etc.) to reduce spending and the Cabinet has agreed to keep the total government expenditure at £250 billion, which means a cut in real spending once inflation is taken into account.

The budget deficit simply results from the government spending more money than it receives in taxes. While the deficit exists, the government must borrow (just like any household) from the banks and institutions to pay for the difference. The Treasury issues bills (promises to pay) to financial institutions who buy them at a lower rate than their face value, thus making a profit. Also the Treasury issues bonds which the finance houses buy. They pay interest at half yearly intervals over one year to five years, and can also be bought and sold in the bond market. In this way the government raises money.

## Interest Rates

The financial institutions are willing to buy these bills and bonds because they know the government will not go bankrupt, but they can only buy them if the interest rate is good. So the more money the government must borrow the more likely it is that interest rates will rise.

**That is what the government fears - that excessive borrowing will drive up interest rates and stop the weak economic recovery in its tracks, by making it more expensive for industry and workers to borrow.**

However, by cutting spending the government is ensuring the loss of more jobs and the consequent collapse of the infrastructure necessary to support manufacturing with healthy and educated workers and efficient transport and communications. Even in those areas of government spending where cuts could be made, like the arms industry, the government makes no provision to retrain or maintain the living standards of workers in these industries.

That is why the new Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, is considering raising taxes as an alternative, so that cuts in spending are not

so drastic. This is strongly opposed by the Thatcherite wing of the Tory party who prefer to see more workers on the dole and the growing poor of this country suffering from even less benefit, rather than have the tax burden increased for industry or the better-off.

## Tax Increases

If there are tax increases, they will be mainly indirect ones, ie. taxes on what you spend (VAT, sales tax etc.) rather than on what you earn (income tax). **Already the last Chancellor, Lamont, proposed to put VAT on fuel and energy supplies for the first time to raise revenues, directly attacking the old and sick. Clarke is planning more of the same.**

If taxes have to be increased, it would be much more equitable to raise direct taxes (income tax and corporation profits tax) because these are progressive (meaning that

***"If we were going to cut public expenditure we would have done it before now and I don't believe it is economically right. I have said that in the past and there is no need to do it whatsoever. So you can rule out any prospect of that."***

**John Major,  
general election rally,  
March 30, 1992**

the richer you are the more you pay as a proportion of your earnings), unlike indirect taxes like VAT or the infamous poll tax. In the last 14 years the Tories have steadily reduced direct taxation so that it is now the lowest level in Europe - the rich have got richer and the poor have got poorer. Income tax is paid by all those in work, who can afford it better than the unemployed, old and sick.

But while the Tories and the Labour leaders argue about the best way to cover the deficit by cutting spending or raising taxes, there is little discussion of the real questions: why is there a deficit in the first place and does it really matter?

The government has run up this deficit for one main reason: the recession in the economy.

When there is a slump in the economy and manufacturing loses money, it does not pay corporation tax. When workers lose their jobs they stop paying income tax and start collecting unemployment benefit (and now the government is complaining that many are now collecting invalidity benefit as well!). So spending shoots up and revenue drops down.

## Economic Growth

The real answer to reducing the deficit is to boost economic growth so that industry expands, invests in new machinery and plant, and people are taken on to work. **If the three million unemployed were put to work at average rates of pay they would pay enough tax to clear the deficit at a stroke, and leave plenty over to pay for better schools, hospitals, etc.**

Even putting one million back to work would save enough in dole money and raise enough in taxes to solve this so-called problem.

But that is just what British capitalism cannot do. This current economic recovery is so weak that there is no prospect of any serious reduction in unemployment for the foreseeable future.

The market economy and the privately owned banks and industrial companies are unwilling to expand enough to raise employment because profits are too low. And they will only invest, employ and produce if there is profit.

The Labour and trade union leaders profess to stand for full employment, but they refuse to recognise that full employment is now impossible under capitalism, not just in Britain but also in Europe and the rest of the

capitalist world (unemployment rates have steadily risen in each successive cycle of boom and slump since 1973).

The only way to take production and employment forward is by a plan for investment, employment and output. But a successful plan means giving the government real control over the economy by taking the levers of economic power out of the private profit system. That means public ownership of the financial institutions and major industrial firms, to be run democratically by the workers in those companies and managed by the labour movement as a whole.

**Socialist Alternative**

Of course such an alternative remains a pipedream while the Tories continue to rule the roost and while the Labour and trade union leaders continue to believe that they can solve the needs of working people within the confines of a market economy. But the socialist answer is clear: no cuts in government spending on social services and benefits: no increase in taxes for the poor (if there must be tax increases, raise the rate of tax for the top 20% of income earners and for the big monopoly companies); and above all implement a socialist programme for full employment at trade union rates of pay.

**Michael Roberts**

# Poverty Party

Official government figures show that in 1991 there were 13.5 million Britons, or 24% of the population, including 4 million children (31% of under-16s) who depended on less than half the average income - the best definition of being poor. In 1979, when Thatcher came to power, there were only 5 million in that position. The bottom 10% of income earners have suffered a 14% fall in real incomes under the Tories, while average earners increased real incomes 36% (not much over 12 years).

And it is getting worse: the bottom 20% of the population have suffered a loss in the share of total income after tax and benefits from 9.5% in 1979 to just 6.6% now, while the richest fifth of the population have raised their share from 37% to 44%.

The poor are getting poorer and the rich are getting richer.

Timex

# Workers Show Of Solidarity



Timex workers outside the gates

**I went up to Dundee in support of the sacked Timex workers and to take part in their demonstration and rally.**

Despite the fact that the demonstration started at about 9.30am, thousands gathered from all over Britain. Around 7,000 - 10,000 were estimated to have demonstrated. Thousands travelled up on overnight buses and trains from England and Wales. Cars, trains and buses came from all over Scotland. Mounted police were drafted in from Glasgow and used for the first time in Dundee since the 1930s. The demonstration showed the solidarity and resolution within the labour and trade union movement at the present time.

**Defiant Mood**

The early shift was stopped - but the defiant mood of the Timex workers does not stop at this victory. The struggle goes on. The success of the demonstration had everything to do with the fact that there was such a high presence of trade unionists marching under their respective banners. Not only that, the mood of solidarity at the rally extended much further and was more universal than the Timex workers alone. There was disgust at Timex and all private sector employers, who act with such contempt for the workers who create the extortionate wealth of these employers. There was disgust at the anti-trade union laws and there was disgust at the government which refuses to intervene, dismantles the welfare state and slashes benefits while

accepting cash donations from the richest, in return for tax favours and business contracts. The mood is strong enough among trade unions, to quite easily dismiss John Smith's plans for the Liberalisation of the Labour party. The mood was there.

Like the NUM in their response to pit closures and job losses, the AEEU in Dundee has taken a stand against Tory ideology and capitalist greed. Despite the fact that the union itself is probably the most right wing in the country, this dispute proves that workers can become radical in the face of attacks and have again proved the age old tradition of solidarity within our movement. Furthermore the national union leaders have been forced to intervene on the side of workers in Dundee. This is only down to the determined stand the workers in Dundee have made. Of course the right wing leaders would prefer to sit on their hands and do absolutely nothing - but they know only too well the mood in the labour movement at the present time and the extent of the profile Timex has been given. If they didn't get involved it wouldn't just be the jobs of the Timex workers on the line - it would be theirs as well.

Timex workers have shown the way. The fightback is in the trade unions and in the Labour Party. We must carry on the struggle to bring down the Tory government by supporting workers in struggle and ensuring that the Labour Party comes to power with a socialist programme.

**by Billy Stewart (Lanarkshire)**

Esteban Volkov, grandson of Leon Trotsky, has written a short article for *Socialist Appeal*, restating his position in defence of the ideas of genuine Marxism.

**Exclusive**

# Socialism Remains the Only Answer

*Esteban lived with Trotsky in Coyocan, Mexico City in 1940. On 24 May of that year he was wounded in the brutal machine gun attack by Stalinist supporters on the household. On August 20, he was at school when Ramon Mercader carried out his fateful assassination attack.*

*For many years Esteban was curator of the Trotsky Museum in Coyocan and has been a lifelong defender of his grandfathers ideas.*

**“The historical process is, unfortunately, slower than anticipated by the great Marxist classics.**

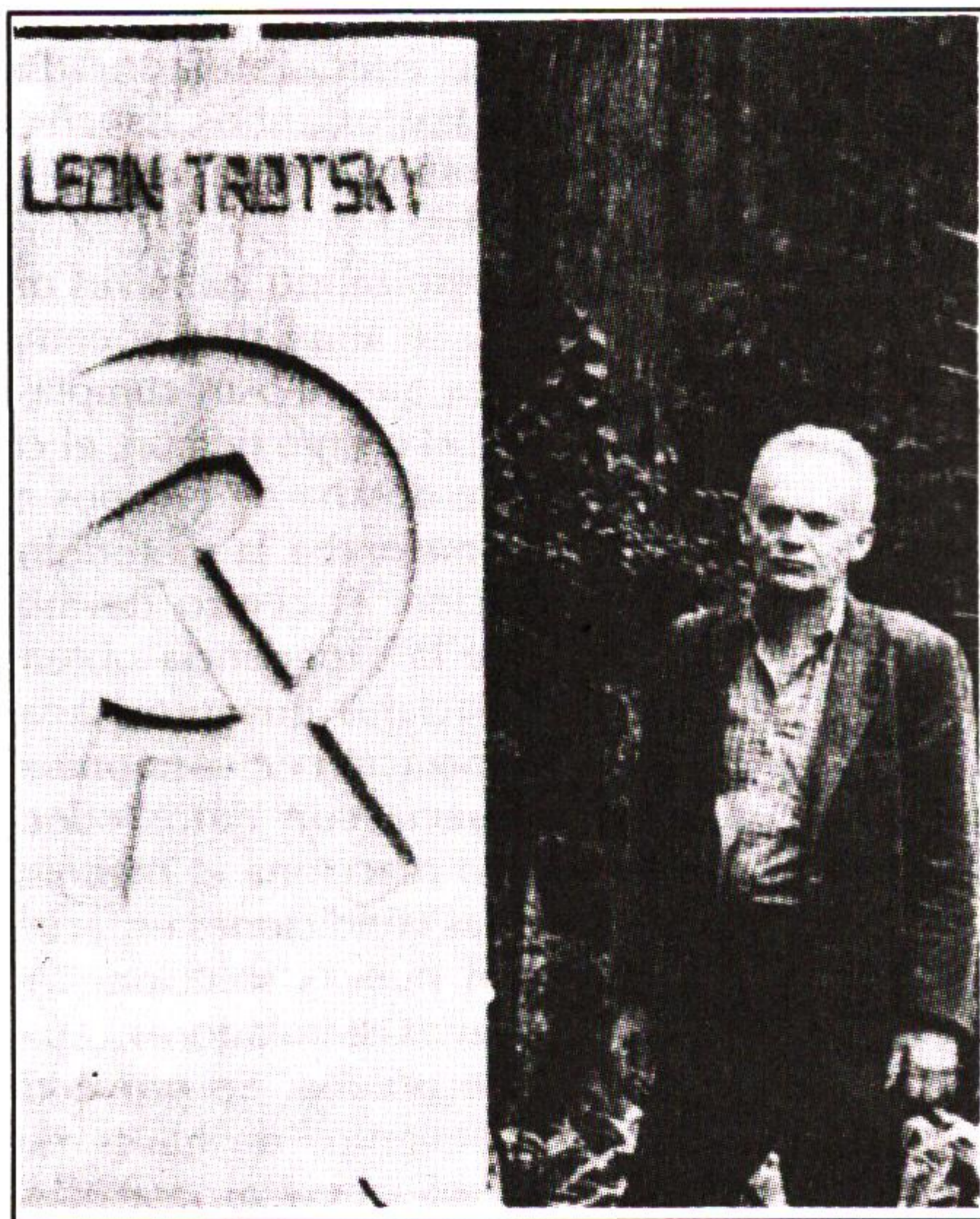
They thought that with the October Revolution, socialism had arrived. Unfortunately, it was not the case. A new social phenomenon, the bonapartist bureaucratic caste, came into being. This new group, parasitic and exploitative, aborted the first Socialist

Proletarian Revolution, derailing and betraying the historical path of the revolutionary process.

## Trotsky's Analysis

This phenomenon was brilliantly analysed by Leon Trotsky, the Russian Marxist revolutionary. If he dedicated the beginning of his life to carry out the revolution, the latter part of his life was completely dedi-

cated to try to save that same revolution. What we are witnessing nowadays is the attempt to write its obituary and to consummate its annihilation. The present reactionary Russian leaders have adopted a similar attitude as the rulers of the



Esteban Volkov next to Trotsky's grave in Mexico

capitalist countries when identifying the so-called “socialism” of Russia with the October Revolution and Marxism. This way, they give credit to the big lie that Stalinism was the continuation of October, when it was nothing else but its thermidorian reaction. Therefore, they want to perpetuate the lie of Stalinism. They are not at all interested in historical truth being revealed, but to run down socialism, identifying it with Stalinism.

## Revolution Betrayed

It seems that the publication of “The Revolution Betrayed” (1936), one of Trotsky’s masterpieces, sped up preparations for the project to physically exterminate Trotsky, as recently released GPU documents show. Since that time, Stalin personally followed up the progress of his murderous plans once or twice a week. In that period, the Stalinist leaders carried out a colossal campaign of lies, both in relation to Trotsky’s role (described as counter-revolutionary, serving the western powers) and to the circumstances of his murder at the hands of Ramon Mercader, the executioner of the plans of the bureaucratic caste. Bourgeois journalists, as well as those



Trotsky during the revolutionary events of 1917



writing for official "communist" publications, lavishly funded by Moscow, collaborated in that dirty campaign of lies and distortions.

Despite everything, Marxist methodology is more than ever in full force, even with the temporary detour and setback in the implementation of socialism on a world scale. Thanks to Leon Trotsky's work, Marxism is up to date and linked to the historical process we are living in, allowing us to understand it.

### Temporary Setback

The betrayal of Stalinism, its work as undertaker of the October Revolution and socialism will not stop the struggle for genuine socialism and workers democracy, which will reappear stronger in a not too distant future. In the last instance, it is in the crucible of defeats where the final victory will be forged.

The temporary setback suffered by the Russian Revolution should not in any way be seen as the end or the failure of the socialist project. Not one single revolutionary process in history has immediately given its fruits.

It is indisputable that one of the best educated proletariats of the world, the Russian working class, is going through a period of confusion, as a result of so many years of repression and Stalinist dictatorship. But they will leave behind this lethargy quite soon and they will again take the road to genuine socialism with power in the hands of the wage-earners who generate the wealth, without the patronages of parasitic bureaucracies.

The ever increasing misery, shortages and sufferings of the big majority of mankind will not be solved on the basis of a socio-economic system whose logic is to accumulate capital and wealth in the hands of privileged minorities.

Looking to the present panorama of the planet today, there is not the slightest doubt that the only way out is on the basis of a society structured and organised on the basis of the needs of the big majorities of mankind - a socialist society."

## Leon Trotsky - "Revolution Betrayed"

*The brilliant analysis of the development of the post revolutionary Soviet Union and the role of Stalinism*

£12.50, including p&p from Well Red Books, PO Box 2626, London N1 6DU.

# Poverty Amidst Plenty

Whilst the leaders of the top industrialised economies issued a statement proclaiming unending prosperity for the world's peoples following their summit last month, another report highlights the reality of the state of the world economy, warning of "a dangerous potential for human strife."

The fourth UN Human Development report has already been slated by several government's who are criticised for their "short-sighted policies" and for following policies which provide a "grim picture of social division."

The report reveals that "more than a billion people live in absolute poverty, on the margins

of existence where no concept of human dignity can exist, and where the income disparity between those people and the richest billion is 150 times."

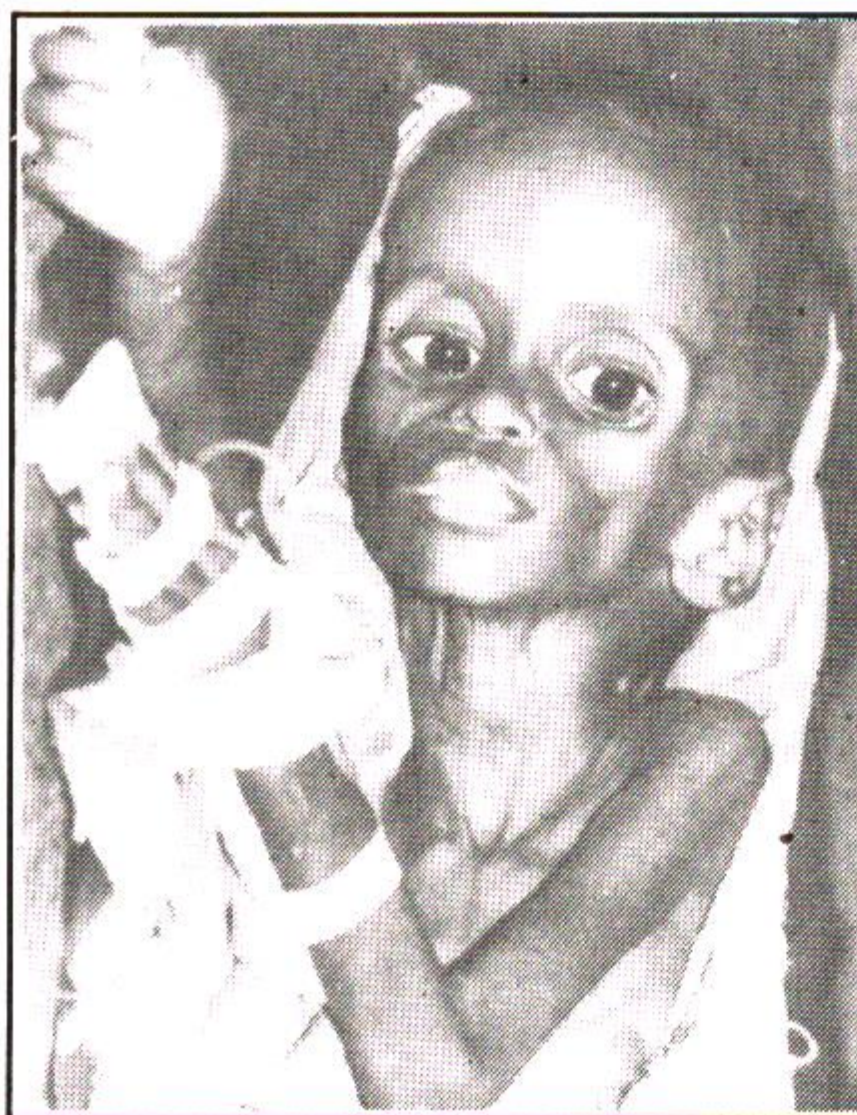
Unemployment, and underemployment are highlighted as key problem areas facing the capitalist economies, and the report states that a billion new jobs will need to be created by the year 2000 to stave off disastrous consequences.

**Unfortunately for those living in absolute poverty or those unemployed and relying on state benefits in the advanced industrialised nations this is not the first time such a report has been issued by the United Nations or one of its numerous committees.**

There have been reports on child malnutrition, famine, human rights and a host of other subjects but the end result has been little or no change.

The United Nations is not an independent body. It was set up in the interests of imperialism and big business and despite its sometimes fine words its actions are dictated

by the interests of the rich and powerful who have no intention of "fundamentally changing the way we manage our economic and political systems" as the report believes should be the case. The report calls for credit to be made available to poorer nations to help them develop their own industries. But credit is already made available at crippling interest rates, which means



that the debt burden on these countries and subsequent interest charges actually results in transfers of resources of billions of dollars from the poorer to the richer nations.

**What the report does show (although, of course, the conclusion is not drawn) is that capitalism as a world economic system cannot satisfy the needs of the world's population.** Whilst the few live in luxury, billions live in poverty. Whilst food is dumped in order to keep prices, and consequently profit, up, millions starve. It is not a question of scarcity of resources such as food, shelter and energy - it is a question of the control and ownership of those resources. Until the control is taken out of the hands of the profiteers and parasites and invested in the hands of the workers the UN report's aim of "economic and social progress" is a dream.

## I'm Alright, Boris!

Boris Yeltsin is wasting no time in ensuring, when it comes to dishing out opulence and bureaucratic privileges, he is first in line.

Since his referendum "victory" Boris has had a change of address to the luxurious Ulitsa Osennay, a block of flats complete with sauna, gold taps, marble floors and chandeliers.

Whilst the ordinary Russian is deemed by law to only need nine square metres of living space per person, Old Boris appears to need the 450-square metres of his new home. And what's more in the new open, democratic, egalitarian Russia of Yeltsin it may come as a surprise to find that the official civil engineer who worked on Boris Yeltsin's new apartment has dubbed it more luxurious than those of Kruschev, Brezhnev or Gorbachev.

# The Rise and Fall of the Communist International

Last month saw the 50th anniversary of the dissolution of the Communist International by Joseph Stalin. To mark the occasion, *Socialist Appeal* is re-publishing an edited version of Ted Grant's article 'The Rise and Fall of the Communist International' printed in the June 1943 issue of 'Workers International News'. The article clearly charts the revolutionary events that gave rise to the Third International in 1919 up to its demise under the Stalinists twenty four years later.

(A fuller version is contained in Ted Grant's Selected Writings, 'The Unbroken Thread', available from Well Red Books.)

The Third International has been officially buried. In the most undignified and contemptible fashion it would be possible to conceive, it has passed off the stage of history. Hurriedly and without consultation with all the adhering parties, not to speak of the rank and file throughout the world, without any democratic discussion and decision, as the result of the pressure of American imperialism, Stalin has perfidiously abandoned the Comintern.

To understand how it is that this organisation which aroused the terror and hatred of the whole capitalist world has come to such an inglorious end at the bidding of capitalism, it is necessary to review briefly the stormy rise and even stormier decline of the International. The decree for its dissolution was merely an acknowledgement of what has long been known to all informed people; that the Comintern as a factor making for world socialism was dead and had departed forever from its original aims and purposes. Its demise was predicted and foreseen long in advance.

The Third International grew out of the collapse of capitalism in the last war. The Russian revolution sent a wave of revolutionary fervour through the ranks of the working class throughout the world. To the war-weary, disillusioned and embittered masses it came as a message of hope, of inspiration and courage, it showed the way out of the bloody chaos into which capitalism had plunged society. It was born as a direct consequence of the betrayal and breakdown of the Second international which supported the ruling classes in the last war.

The breakdown of imperialism and capitalism was signalled by the revolutions in Germany, Austria, Hungary, revolutionary situations in Italy, France and even Britain. The spectre of socialist revolution hung all over Europe. The memoirs and writings of nearly all the bourgeois politicians of that time bear witness to the despair, the lack of confidence of the bourgeoisie in the face of the fact that they had lost control of the situation. Social democracy saved capitalism.

## German Revolution

The powerful trade-union and socialist bureaucracies placed themselves at the head of the upsurge of the masses and diverted it into harmless channels. In Germany, Noske and Scheidemann (right wing SPD leaders) conspired with the Junkers and capitalists to destroy the revolution. The soviets of workers, soldiers, peasants and even students, which had issued from the November revolution of 1918, held power in their hands. The social democrats handed the power back to the capitalists.

In Italy, by 1920 the workers had seized the factories. Instead of leading the workers to the conquest of power, the Socialist Party bade them cease "unconstitutional" procedure. So it was throughout Europe. The results of this programme are evident today. The worst tyranny and the bloodiest war in the history of capitalism. But precisely



It was the October Revolution which played a large part in the creation of the International

because of the breakdown of international socialism in the Second International, which had betrayed Marxism, the Third International was formed.

The Third International was formally inaugurated in March 1919. Its declared aims and objects were the overthrow of world capitalism and the construction of a world chain of united soviet socialist republics to join up with the USSR, which itself was not conceived as an independent entity but merely as the base for the world revolution. Its fate would be determined and was bound up with the fate of the world revolution.

The formation of the Third International swiftly led to the creation of mighty communist parties throughout the most important countries in the world. In Germany, France, Czechoslovakia and other countries, communist parties with a mass membership were created. In Britain a small communist party was formed which wielded considerable influence. The success of the world revolution in the next period seemed assured by the development of events. The communist parties in Europe were steadily increasing in numbers and influence at the expense of social democracy.

### Wars of Intervention

The last war had not succeeded in solving any of the problems of world capitalism. In fact it had aggravated them. Capitalism had broken down at its "weakest link" as Lenin expressed it. The attempts to destroy the young Soviet Republic by the wars of intervention had completely failed. German capitalism, the mightiest in Europe, found itself stripped of its resources, part of its territory, burdened with staggering reparation payments, and generally placed in an impossible position. British and French imperialists, the "victors" in the last world war, were in a position fundamentally not much better.

The failure of Germany to pay the instalments on the reparations resulted in the French capitalists marching into the Ruhr. This helped to complete the collapse of the German economy, and the German bourgeoisie endeavoured to unload the burdens onto the shoulders of the working and middle classes. The mark fell in value from 20 to 40 to the pound in January, to 5 million in July and 47 million at the end of August. The indignant German masses turned towards communism.

As Brandler, the then leader of the Communist Party, stated at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Comintern: *"There were signs of a rising revolutionary movement: We had temporarily the majority of the workers behind us, and in this situation believed that under favourable circumstances we would proceed immedi-*

*ately to the attack..."* But unfortunately the leadership of the International failed to stand up to the test and take advantage of the opportunity. Success in Germany would inevitably have led to victory throughout Europe. But as in Russia of 1917, so in Germany of 1923, sections of the leadership vacillated.

Stalin, with his organic opportunism, urged that the German party be "curbed" from taking any action. The result was that the favourable opportunity to take power in Germany was missed and the communists in Germany suffered defeat. For similar

principles of revolutionary internationalism on which the Russian revolution had been based and on which the Communist International was founded.

The history of the Comintern since those days has been largely bound up with the fluctuating policies of the bureaucracy of the USSR. Lenin had insistently linked the fate of the Soviet Union with that of the world working class, and principally of its vanguard the Comintern. Even the oath of the Red Army pledged the soldiers to loyalty to the international working class. Indeed the Red Army was not regarded as an

## The "theory" of socialism in one country sprang directly from the defeat of the German revolution. It indicated a turning away from the principles of revolutionary internationalism on which the Russian Revolution had been based and on which the Communist International was founded.

reasons the revolution in Bulgaria also suffered shipwreck. But the defeats of the revolution in Europe caused by the failure of the leadership inevitably led to serious consequences.

Reflecting at the time, perhaps unconsciously, the interests of the reactionary and conservative bureaucracy which was just beginning to raise itself above the Soviet masses, Stalin for the first time in 1924 came forward with the utopian and anti-Leninist theory of "socialism in one country". This "theory" sprang directly from the defeat which the revolution had suffered in Germany. It indicated a turning away from the

independent "national" force, but as one of the instruments of the world revolution.

On the background of the growing reaction, nationally and internationally, the struggle between the internationalists and the Thermidorians (Thermidor: a term used to describe political reaction without a social counter-revolution. Derived from analogy with the shift of power in the French revolution in the month of Thermidor (July) 1794) entered into an acute stage. Trotsky, in alliance with Lenin, had demanded the restoration of complete democracy within the Bolshevik Party and the soviets. Lenin, in pursuit of this objective, had demanded the removal of Stalin from the post of General Secretary of the party because he had become the focal point around which the bureaucracy was crystallising.

After Lenin's death, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin, the "troika", secured a decision disregarding Lenin's advice by the Central Committee and commenced a campaign against Lenin's ideas which were being put forward by Trotsky, with the spurious invention and legend of "Trotskyism". The fate of the Comintern was linked with the fate of the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union which, through its prestige and experience, was naturally the dominant force in the International.

The transition from the policy of world revolution to that of socialism in one country expressed a sharp turn to the right in the Comintern. In Russia, Zinoviev and Kamenev were forced into opposition by the anti-Marxist policy now being developed by



Josef Stalin



Part of the Dnieperstroy Hydro-electric station criticised by Stalin

Stalin. They were thrust into an alliance with Trotsky and his supporters. Stalin, together with Bukharin, opposed the policy of industrialising Russia through a series of five year plans suggested by the Left Opposition led by Trotsky and came out with his famous aphorism at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee in April 1927 that *"to attempt to build the Dnieperstroy hydro-electric station would be the same thing for us as for a muzhik (peasant) to buy a gramophone instead of a cow"*.

### Chinese Betrayal

Inside Russia the policy was to allow the kulaks (rich peasants) and the Nepmen (capitalists in the towns - so-called after the New Economic Policy of 1921), full scope for economic development. This policy was perfectly typified by the slogan coined by Bukharin with the full support of Stalin, given out to the peasantry: *"Enrich yourselves!"*

The policy of the Comintern was now pushed far to the right with the preoccupation of Stalin to find allies to *"defend the Soviet Union from attack"*. The Comintern was already being reduced to the role of border guard. The disagreements within the Bolshevik Party and the International flared up over the question of the Chinese revolution and the situation in Britain. In China during 1925-7 the revolution was stirring up the millions of Asia into action. The Comintern, instead of relying on the workers and peasants to carry through the revolution, as was the Leninist policy in Russia, preferred to rely on the Chinese capitalists and generals.

The Left Opposition warned of the consequences of this policy. The Chinese Communist Party was the sole workers' party in China and had a dominating influence over the working class; the peasantry were looking towards the example in Russia to show them the way out of their centuries-long suffering at the hands of the

landlords, through the seizure of the land. But the Comintern stubbornly refused to take the road of working-class independence which Lenin had insisted on as the prerequisite for communist policy in relation to the bourgeois-democratic and anti-imperialist revolutions in the East.

Meanwhile a similar policy was pursued in Britain where the masses were undergoing a process of intense radicalisation. As a means of struggling against intervention against the Soviet Union the Russian trade unions made an agreement with the General Council of the TUC. The tendency towards revolutionary developments in Britain is seen in the fact that a million members, a quarter of the trade-union membership, were organised in the Minority Movement (an organisation that brought together the left in the British trade unions in the 1920's. It was initiated and largely led by the Communist Party). Trotsky, analysing the situation in Britain, had predicted the outbreak of a general strike.

### Anglo-Russian Committee

The task of the Communist Party and the Communist International should have been to prepare the workers for the inevitability of a betrayal on the part of the trade-union leadership. Instead, they sowed illusions in the minds of the workers, especially as the trade-union bureaucrats had covered themselves with the agreement with the Russian trade unions, whose prestige they utilised as a cloak. After the betrayal of the 1926 general strike by the trade-union bureaucracy, Trotsky demanded that the Russian trade unions should break off relations with the TUC. This Stalin and the Comintern refused to do.

After using the Anglo-Russian Committee for as long as they needed, more than a year after the General Strike, the British trade-union leadership broke off relations. The Comintern let out a howl that they had been betrayed. But meanwhile the young Communist Party of Great Britain which

should have increased its membership by leaps and bounds as a result of these great events, was paralysed and disorientated by the policy of the International, was completely discredited and dwindled in influence among the masses.

The Soviet masses were further disheartened and disillusioned by these defeats of the international proletariat and suffered a further decline in spirits. The defeats which had been a direct consequence of the policy of Stalin and the bureaucracy further strengthened its hold on the Soviet Union. The Left Opposition led by Trotsky which had correctly analysed and forecast these developments was now expelled from the Bolshevik Party and from the International.

The internal results of Stalin's policy now began to bear fruit in the alarming growth of the strength and influence of the kulaks and of the Nepmen. The Soviet Union stood on the brink of disaster. In panic and terror Stalin and the bureaucracy were compelled to adopt a caricature of the very policy for which Trotsky and his co-thinkers had been expelled. In Russia the Five Year Plans against which Stalin had so strenuously fought were introduced.

### The Third Period

Meanwhile the panic turn to the left internally was reflected in a panic turn to the left internationally. Stalin had burned his fingers badly in his attempts to lean on capitalist elements in China and to conciliate social democracy. Now he veered the International sharply in the opposite direction. In violation of its statutes the International did not hold a conference for four years.

A new conference was called which introduced officially the programme of the Communist International. It also proclaimed the end of capitalist stability and the beginning of what was termed the "Third period". This was supposed to usher in the period of the final collapse of world capitalism. At the same time the social democracy, according to the once-famous (but now buried) theory of Stalin, was supposed to have transformed itself into "social fascism". No agreements were now possible with "social fascists" who constituted the main danger confronting the working class and must be destroyed.

It was just at this period that the unprecedented slump of 1929-33 affected the world. In particular it hit Germany. The German workers were thrust into a position of degradation and misery and the middle classes were ruined. Germany's unemployment figure rose steadily till at the peak it reached 8,000,000. The middle class, having failed to receive anything from the revolution of 1918, and disappointed with the failure of the communists in 1923 to take power, now in anguish and despair began to

look for a solution to their problems in a different direction.

Subsidised and financed by the capitalists, the fascists began to secure a mass basis in Germany. In the elections of September 1930, they secured nearly six and a half million votes. Despite their expulsion from the Communist International, Trotsky and his followers still considered themselves as part of it and insistently demanded that they be allowed to return to the ranks. At the same time they subjected the suicidal theory, which had now been adopted by the Comintern, to a sharp criticism. In place of it they demanded a return to the realistic Leninist policy of the united front (The united front was conceived as a temporary agreement between mass workers' organisations, for action on specific issues, while retaining independence of programmes) as a means of winning the masses in action and through their own experience, to communism.

With the victory of Hitler at the polls Trotsky sounded the alarm. In a pamphlet entitled *"The Turn in the Communist International - the Situation in Germany"* he issued a signal for a campaign, which was carried on for three years by the International Left Opposition of the Comintern, as the Trotskyists looked on themselves. In Germany, France, USA, Britain, in far away South Africa, and in all countries where they had groups, the Trotskyists conducted a campaign demanding that the German

Communist Party set into motion a campaign for a united front with the Social Democrats to prevent Hitler coming to power.

At the direct instructions and bidding from Stalin and the Comintern, the German Communist Party denounced this policy as a counter-revolutionary "social fascist" one. They insistently fought against social democracy as the "main enemy" of the working class and argued that there was no difference between democracy and fascism. In September 1930, the *"Rote Fahne"*, organ of the German CP proclaimed: *"Last night was Herr Hitler's greatest day, but the so-called election victory of the Nazis is the beginning of the end."*

### Hitler Seizes Power

Right throughout these years the Comintern continued its fatal course. When Hitler organised a referendum in 1931 to oust the Social Democratic government in Prussia, at the direct insistence of Stalin and the Comintern, the German communists voted with the Nazis against the social democrats. As late as May 1932, the British *"Daily Worker"* could proudly indict the Trotskyists for their policy in Germany thus: *"It is significant that Trotsky has come out in defence of a united front between communist and social democratic parties against fascism. No more disruptive and counter-revolutionary class lead could possibly have been given at the time like the present."*

In January 1933

Hitler was enabled to take power without any organised opposition whatsoever in a country with the most highly organised working class and with the strongest Communist Party outside of Russia.

For the first time in history reaction was enabled to conquer power without any resistance on the part of the working class. The German CP numbered 6,000,000 supporters, the Social Democracy numbered 8,000,000 - together they were the mightiest force in Germany. By this betrayal, the German CP was doomed forever.

But the Comintern was far from recognising the nature of the catastrophe. Instead, it solemnly endorsed the policy of the German CP and of the International as having

been perfectly correct. An organisation which cannot learn from the lessons of history is doomed. As a force for world socialism, the Communist International was dead. The International Left Opposition broke away and proclaimed the necessity of a new international. But what was apparent to the vanguard who had abandoned the attempt to reform the Comintern, could not be apparent to the broad masses. Only great events could teach them.

The Communist International continued to carry on this false policy right up to 1934. When the fascists in France, encouraged by the successes of fascism in Austria and Germany, conducted armed demonstrations for the overthrow of the Liberal government and parliament, the CP issued orders to demonstrate with them. But now the full danger which Hitler represented to the Soviet Union was apparent to everyone. Stalin and the bureaucracy became panic-stricken. Contemptuous and cynical of the capacity of the Comintern as an instrument of world revolution, Stalin more openly converted it into an instrument of Russian foreign policy.

### Popular Frontism

Stalin, in his search for allies, now turned to the bourgeoisie of Britain and France. The "Popular Front" policy was initiated and endorsed at the last Congress of the International held in 1935. This policy of coalition with the Liberal capitalists is one against which Lenin had struggled all his life. It represented a new stage in the degeneration of the Comintern and the first workers' state.

With the rise of Hitler, again due to the policies of Stalin, the stranglehold of the bureaucracy within the Soviet Union was further increased. Higher over the Soviet masses has the bureaucratic caste raised itself and increased its power. From merely being incapable of insuring anything but defeats for the world working class, Stalinism has become opposed to the workers' revolution in other countries. The Moscow trials, the murder of the old Bolsheviks, the purges, the murder and exile of tens of thousands of the flower of the Russian communist workers, completed the Stalinist counter-revolution within the Soviet Union.

Events in France and Spain (Popular front governments were elected in Spain in February 1936 and in France in June 1936. As in Spain, the French workers immediately moved into action, occupying factories, establishing workers' committees. In both countries the popular front government acted as a strike breaking force, in Spain opening the way for Franco's fascist uprising in July 1936) are fresh in every revolutionary's mind. The Comintern played the main role in destroying the revolution which could have



A poster calling on workers to support the first Five Year Plan

been accomplished. Indeed, it revealed itself as the fighting vanguard of the counter-revolution. The defeats of the world working class inevitably led to the new world war. Ironically, the war was ushered in by a pact between Hitler and Stalin. Thus Stalin dealt new blows to the world working class and the Comintern. It now executed a somersault and conducted a campaign for peace in the interests of Hitler, with a skilful counterfeit of a "revolutionary" policy.

### Comintern Dissolved

This policy of Stalin and the "stinking corpse" of the Comintern suffered irretrievable ruin when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union. The Comintern had to execute a right about turn and convert itself once again into a doormat for Roosevelt and British imperialism. But with the increased dependence of Stalin on British and American imperialism, has come the increased pressure of the part of capitalist "allies". American imperialism, especially has demanded the ending of the Comintern as a final guarantee against the danger of social revolution in Europe after the downfall of Hitler.

The long drawn-out pretence is over. Stalin has dissolved the degenerate Comintern. In doing so he openly announces his stepping over to the side of the capitalist counter-revolution as far as the rest of the world is concerned. But the imperialists, in forcing Stalin to make this trade in return for concessions and bargains on their part, have not understood the consequences this will have. It cannot and will not prevent the coming of new revolutions throughout the world. In the less than two decades since the beginning of its degeneration, the Comintern has ruined many favourable situations in many countries.

The coming decades will witness many revolutions with the breakdown and collapse of capitalism. Even the violently disturbed epoch of the period between the wars will seem comparatively tranquil compared to the period which lies ahead. On this background of storms and upheavals a real instrument of world revolution will be created. What the workers lacked in the last decades, outside Russia, was a workers' Bolshevik Party and a Bolshevik leadership. The great days of the Comintern of 1917-23 will live again. The growth in support for the ideas of Marxism internationally, based on the traditions of Bolshevism, the rich experience of the past, and learning the lessons of defeats of the working class, can once again lead the oppressed to the overthrow of capitalism and to the world socialist republic.

Ted Grant, June 1943

# The Great British Tradition

By Beatrice Windsor



## The first long haired trouble-maker

History is written by the victors. This is not only true of wars, but also of the class struggle. Hence, bourgeois historians have disdain for rebels, revolutionaries and those who fight oppression. Instead we are given a diet of non-consequential kings and queens, monks and bishops.

Before the formation of the English state, we are of course allowed a glimpse of those rebellious elements that fought for national liberation such as Bodecia or King Harold. But after our assimilation to the Norman conquerors and the beginnings of the modern state, so amnesia sets in about anybody who dared take up arms against poverty, oppression and injustice.

Some sanitised versions are allowed, the legend of Robin Hood being a case in point. But he was an acceptable 'outlaw' - he didn't want to overthrow the system; he wanted to replace a bad egg with a good one, to reform the absolutist monarchy.

Even the 20th century's portrayal of Robin Hood and his Merrie Men has to fit in with the vision of the current ruling class - clean cut heroes prancing about in Sherwood Forest, a perfect role model for young impressionable minds.

This is far removed from reality of course. The real rebels were gregarious old bruisers whose whole persona would challenge the ruling class, who despite their limited consciousness struggled - often to the death - for revolutionary social change.

Although there were probably many more before him, the first recorded rebel was William FitzOsbert. Active in the 12th century reign of Richard I, he was, according to the chronicler of the period Roger de Hovenden, "fired with zeal for justice and equity" and "he made himself champion of the poor".

A former Crusader, he displayed his opposition by growing his hair and beard - the ruling elite at that time continued the clean shaven image popular to the Norman gentry. He was soon championing the cause of the peasants, earning the title 'William Longbeard' (the medieval equivalent of calling him 'Red Robbo').

The authorities eventually caught up with him in 1194. In that year Richard I was being held to ransom by the Duke of Austria - despite their fancy titles their action of kidnap, ransom, murder and general terror show the rulers of the time were little better than gangsters. To gain their king's release, the Royal Court set a punitive tax on all subjects to raise the ransom demand.

In London, the new merchant class and the Aldermen who ran the city instigated a corrupt method of collection that by-passed them and offloaded the burden of the sums to be raised onto the masses (no change there then).

Longbeard agitated against this, drawing large crowds to his rallies in the graveyard at St Paul's Cathedral. A lot of agitation went on and around churches in the Middle Ages - this was the main focal point of all communities and, under strict control by the Church who acted as a 'Civil Service' to the monarchy, was the only conduit of communication to the masses.

The Justiciar of London, the city's chief officer of law (who also happened to be the Archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert Walter, once again demonstrating the Church's grip of the state machine) sent in soldiers to arrest Longbeard. In the resulting punch-up one of the Archbishop's men was killed. Knowing they would be in the frame, Longbeard and his hairy friends legged it to Cheapside, taking refuge in the church of St Mary-le-Bow.

From the depths of the church's interior Longbeard shouted out, reminding the Archbishop of the statutory legal right to sanctuary to all God's creatures. The Archbishop responded by burning the church down, and Longbeard and his followers were arrested as they fled the flames. The lesson here for the masses was that there is one law for the rich, and another for long haired trouble makers.

Longbeard was taken at once to Smithfield and hung. Crowds gathered and carried away the gibbet, manacles even the turf at the site of the execution and revered them as holy relics. It was to take some time before the masses could develop the consciousness to realise that their future lie in fighting alongside the living, rather than praising the dead.

Next issue; pay restraint, 1370's style

## PSOE Scores Spanish Election Victory In...

# A Defeat for the Right

The general election in Spain on June 6 was a humiliating defeat for the right wing Popular Party which was convinced it was going to win.

Faced with the prospect of a return to power of the right, the workers of Spain closed ranks around the Socialist Party (PSOE).

Although the PSOE lost its overall majority, it emerged, for the fourth consecutive occasion, as the largest party, and will form the basis of the next government. Despite widespread discontent with the right-wing policies pursued by Felipe Gonzalez, over nine million votes were cast for the Socialists. (In the landslide victory of 1982, they got ten million.)

### Massive Vote

If we add to this the vote of the Communist Party-led coalition (Izquierda Unida) the result was still more impressive.

In Andalusia, the PSOE and IU together got 60 per cent of the vote, except in Almeria, where they got 57.4 per cent. The result in Seville - the power-base of Alfonso Guerra - was a staggering 67.7 per cent.

In many other provinces the left parties got over 50 per cent - in Caceres, 56.8 per cent, in Asturias 54.5 and so on.

At the same time, we see clearly the beginnings of polarisation to the right and left in Spanish society. The PP got 2,700,000 more votes than in the last election in 1989 - an increase of 35%.

The collapse of the centre party, the CDS, whose votes were transferred almost entirely to the PP, indicates a sharp swing to the right among sections of the middle class.

The rapid deterioration of the economic situation, with 22 per cent unemployment and a series of devaluations, indicates the underlying weakness of Spanish capitalism.

The ferment and discontent of the middle class is a symptom of the malaise in Spanish society which will grow in the next period, as the crisis of capitalism manifests itself in the form of further attacks on living standards.

The election result for the IU was a consequence of this sharp polarisation between the PSOE and the PP, and the desire of the workers to block the advance of the right.

### Muddled Programme

The leaders of IU put forward an extremely muddled programme which did not clearly differentiate itself from that of the PSOE.

Faced with a choice between two reformist parties, with no fundamental difference, the workers inevitably voted for the bigger of the two in order to block the right. The IU registered a modest growth in votes, but only one extra Parliamentary seat - up from 17 to 18 - whereas the leaders were predicting from 20 to 24 MPs. This will undoubtedly have a demoralising effect on the ranks of IU, which is also split between the right-wing "renovators" and the leaders of the CP.

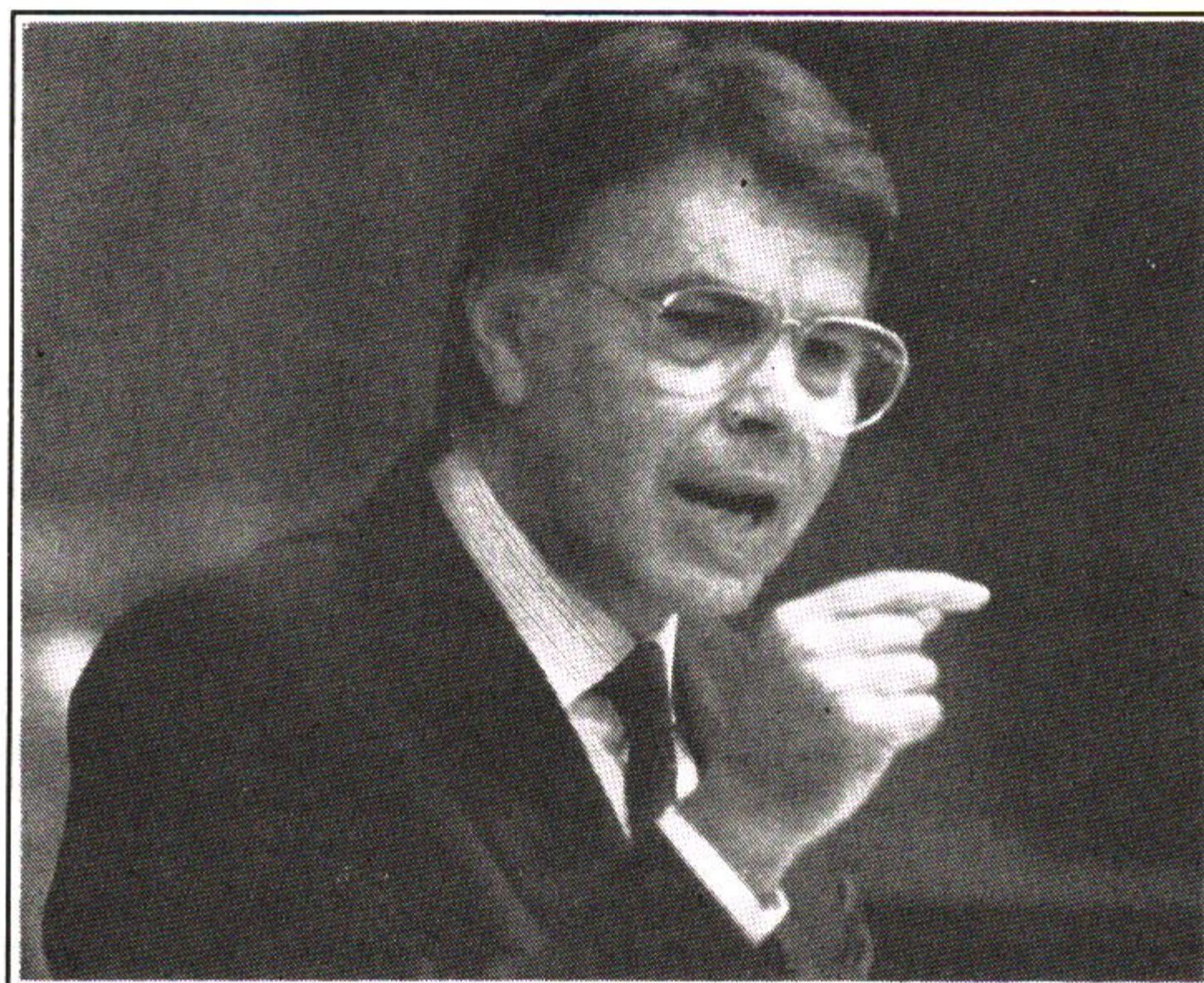
As predicted by the Spanish Marxists, Gonzalez is attempting to form a coalition Government with the bourgeois nationalists of Catalonia (CiU) and the Basque Country (PNV).

This represents a slap in the face for millions who voted for the left and would clearly prefer a government of the PSOE and IU, pledged to carry out a policy in the interests of the working people.

In reality, these elections were a setback for the bourgeois nationalists. In the Basque Country, for example, the PSOE-PSE received more votes than the PNV.

The radical Basque nationalists of Herri Batasuna lost 10,000 votes, and were even beaten by PSOE in their traditional stronghold of Guipuzcoa.

Likewise in Catalonia, the PSOE



Felipe Gonzalez

beat the bourgeois nationalists of CiU.

It is therefore a scandal that Gonzalez and the right wing should immediately link up with these elements, as opposed to forming a coalition with IU, which would have an overall majority. At the time of writing, the PSOE leaders have still not finally formed a coalition with the nationalists, although a good deal of haggling is taking place.

### Nationalist Coalition

Such a coalition government would be extremely weak and unstable. It is not even clear that it would last until the next elections. Under conditions of crisis, the Spanish bankers and capitalists will put remorseless pressure on the government to carry out attacks on living standards and cuts in public spending. The Basque and Catalan nationalists will demand financial rewards for backing the PSOE, whether in a formal coalition or from outside. This in turn will cause enormous friction with the other regions, pouring oil on the flames of the national question and embittering relations with the poorer regions such as Andalusia and Extremadura which voted massively for the PSOE and IU and, in addition, are the main power-base for Alfonso Guerra, the head of the party apparatus. Even before the elections there was a growing split between Gonzalez and the extreme right wing of the PSOE leadership and

the faction led by Guerra. Far from disappearing, these frictions have increased.

The day after the elections, the PSOE right wing made an attempt to present the result as a personal victory for Felipe. This was, in effect, called into question by Guerra, who emphasised the role of the party.

The outlines of a future split at the top of the PSOE are there for all to see.

The trade union leaders have lost no time in accepting the idea of a "social pact", although Nicolas Redondo, general secretary of the UGT trade union federation, has been resisting this.

### Economic Crisis

However, under conditions of severe economic crisis and growing social polarisation, such a pact would not be long-lasting and would inevitably break down at a certain stage, opening the flood-gates for massive social conflict, even greater than the general strike of December 1988.

Under such conditions, it is unlikely that the PSOE could hold together for long. Under the pressure of a radicalised workers' movement, there will be an inevitable struggle within the Socialist Party and the UGT between the right and the left, which will create a growing audience for the ideas of Marxism in the Spanish Labour movement.

Alan Woods

# Workers and the Former Yugoslavia: What is to be Done?

Dear comrades,

Last month's Socialist Appeal carried an excellent analysis of the present conflict in the former Yugoslavia showing perfectly how the blame for the war lies firmly at the door of imperialism and the interests of international capitalism.

But I feel its not enough just to apportion blame, we also have a duty to try and explain what steps we see as being appropriate to bring these horrors to an end.

As Marxists no sight can be more disgusting than seeing workers of different nations fighting against each other for the benefit of their own ruling elite.

For us the unity of the working class is sacrosanct, and it is only the working class unity that can offer any hope of ending the killing. As had been previously pointed out the Vance-Owen Treaty has no possibility of success as it solves none of the ethnic, geographical or more importantly the social and economic problems of the area.

It is only through the workers organisations and not the United Nations that a lasting peace can be won. The responsibility now falls on the labour movement internationally to put pressure on its own leaders to stop their respective hand wringing, war mongering or selective silences and take a clear class line.

1. They should go over the heads of Vance and Owen and call directly on the workers of Yugoslavia to end the war

2. They should demand a war aims conference be called to include all the warring factions, although this will have little chance of leading to any peaceful settlement in itself, it will show the working class a clearer picture of how they are being sacrificed in a struggle that holds no gain for themselves.

3. They should also call for an international trade union conference to bring the workers representatives of all sides together to discuss common ground

4. And fourthly every reported atrocity should be properly investigated by an independent labour movement enquiry.

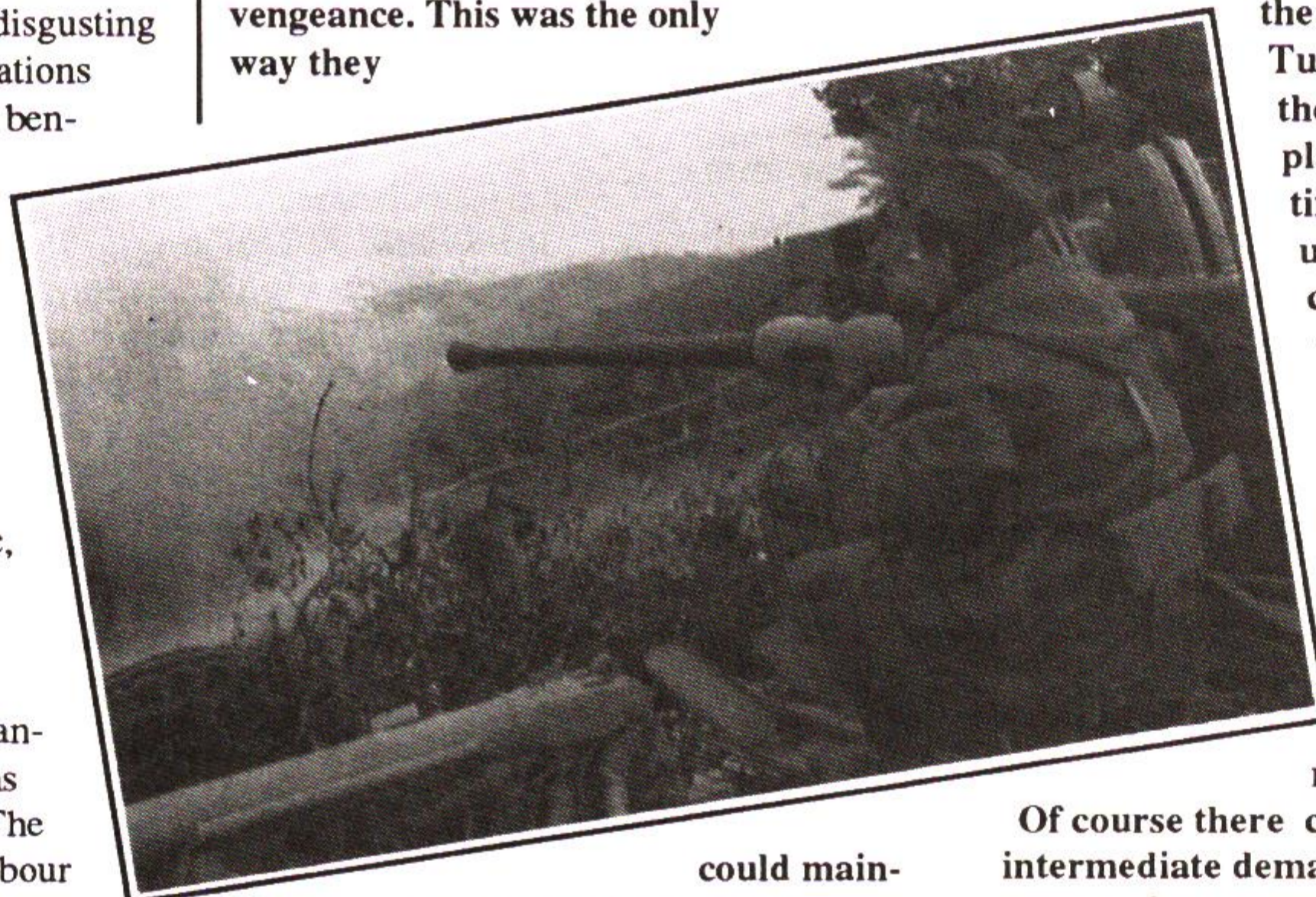
As it is international capitalism that starts such wars it is only international socialism that can eradicate such wars.

Tom Hunt (London)

We must be very clear in dealing with the events unfolding in the republics of the former Yugoslavia. What is taking place there is a three sided civil war, but this civil war is being fought out against the background of counter revolution.

## Stalinism's Collapse

With the collapse of the old Stalinist Yugoslavia, the ex-bureaucrats, warlords and gangsters who make up the ruling elites of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia played the national card with a vengeance. This was the only way they



could maintain any social basis - they aimed to destroy the planned economy which had formerly given the bureaucracy its base and were not yet capable of restoring capitalism in any meaningful sense.

We then saw the intervention of imperialism. Germany, in its desire for markets and economic domination in Eastern Europe, forced the hand of the EC in recognising the declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Then in Bosnia, despite the constitution of that republic and despite the agreements that were already being reached at that time, the EC recognised the declaration of independence of Bosnia (in reality of the Bosnian Muslims and Croats who make up just over 60% of the population). The civil war was then inevitable.

We must ask ourselves the question: what is the programme of Marxists when a capitalist counter revolution is being waged? What demands will be put forward in such a period? From this starting point

Last month Socialist Appeal printed a letter from Keith Roberts and a reply from the Editor about the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. Readers have responded to our appeal for more views and letters. Unfortunately, due to a technical error in the typesetting a major piece of the editor's reply was lost. So this month we print another letter raising important points and have also printed the portion lost from the editor's reply in the last issue. Any other readers with comments or points to raise can send them to us at PO Box 2626, London N1 6DU.

Socialist Appeal has consistently argued that the idea of the Socialist federation of all the republics of the former Yugoslavia, as part of a federation of the whole Balkans area, is the only realistic one that Marxists can put forward.

There is no question of taking a transitional approach in this situation. Counter revolution can have only one answer. We would therefore argue for the overthrow of Milosevic, Tudjman and Izetbegovic, the restoration of the planned economy, this time on the basis of genuine workers democracy, and for the refederation of all the republics of the former Yugoslavia. This should be our programme, and we must argue that this also be taken up as the programme of the international labour movement.

Of course there can be all number of intermediate demands raised in the course of struggle. But demands raised by Marxists must take this struggle forward and raise the consciousness of workers to the tasks that lie ahead.

## Workers' Unity

There are still communities where Serb, Croat and Muslim live together, in parts of Sarajevo and central Bosnia. There have been reports of these communities organising their own self defence from the attacks of the militias.

In all the communities there will be a recoil by a section of workers to the destruction and barbarism that has been unleashed. When it becomes clear that national division and capitalist restoration offer no way forward then workers will begin to look for real solutions.

The working class of Yugoslavia have suffered an enormous setback. It is the duty of Marxists to defend the very basic ideas of class unity and socialism. For these ideas offer the only way out of the horrors created by Stalinism and capitalism.



# Bosnia: The Carve-Up Continues

**Bosnia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia last April, following the example of Slovenia and Croatia, and with the full support of the European Community, is now worth no more than the piece of paper it was written on.**

In the words of the *Observer* (27.6.93), "The time has come to recognise reality. The efforts to hold to the appearance that Bosnia is an independent republic, with a government representing the whole people, have all too demonstrably failed."

Now Lord Owen, the EC's so-called "peace envoy", presides over negotiations whose only aim is the carve-up of former Bosnia into three separate "ethnic" states. This is all that is left of the West's policy in the former republics of Yugoslavia. As the *Observer* concludes, "Of course, it is a humiliation."

## Civil War

The 14 months of civil war in Bosnia have left 140,000 dead with 1.5 million (out of a 4.4 million population) refugees. This is the end result of the policy of Western imperialism. Initially Britain and France were against the break-up of Yugoslavia, it was Germany that forced the hand of the EC into recognising first Slovene and Croat, and then Bosnian "independence."

**The Policy of the West is now in tatters. The United Nations policy of "safe havens" is nothing more than a sham...the distribution of UN food is now under the control of local mafias.**

Germany encouraged the independence of the former republics of Yugoslavia in its search for markets and economic domination of the area. We must conclude that these acts were in large responsible for the nightmare that followed.

Now Kohl and Clinton, in an attempt to save face, have called for the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia, in order to let the Muslims "defend" themselves. This now empty gesture was vetoed by Britain and France fearful of an even bigger escalation in the conflict.

**The policy of the West is now in tatters.** The United Nations policy of "safe havens" is nothing more than a sham.

In Srebrenica, eastern Bosnia, the UN have disarmed the Muslims, but the town is still regularly shelled by Bosnian Serb forces. The distribution of UN food aid is now under the control of local mafias, who have begun to charge for the supplies. There have been food riots as the town sinks into absolute barbarism. Locals fight the refugees, refugees fight the locals - there is a wave of theft and murder. So much for this "safe haven."

The West is now forced to watch as the Bosnian Serbs and Croats carve up the former republic of Bosnia. As the *Observer* admitted, "It may not be pleasant to admit that ethnic cleansing can be rewarded, but that is the harsh truth..". The United Nations, the EC powers and the US have all suffered a humiliating defeat.

## Bosnian Carve-Up

Of course, Bosnia is not the end of the matter. *The Independent* (3.4.93) stated, "Western powers believe they have a strong interest in preventing Bosnia's carve-up since it would encourage territorial ambitions elsewhere in southern and eastern Europe.

Practically every nation, from Albanians and Bulgarians to Slav Macedonians, Hungarians and Romanians, could in theory claim someone else's land... a Bosnian settlement, should one be achieved, will not in itself stabilise Croatia, the Serbian province of Kosovo and Macedonia. Unless this point is grasped, the Balkans will be burning one year from now."

Alastair Wilson

## What We Said, What We Say

"The intention of the Yugoslav military caste was to prevent the break-up of Yugoslavia. But in practice, the Serb dominated army has been used for the purposes of carving a Greater Serbia out of the wreckage of the old federation. To accomplish this end the most atrocious methods have been used...the nationalist regimes of both Zagreb and Belgrade are engaged in a cynical exercise of carving up the neighbouring Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. That is the real reactionary content of the war-cry of "self-determination" in present-day Yugoslavia."

*Socialist Appeal No.3 June 1992*

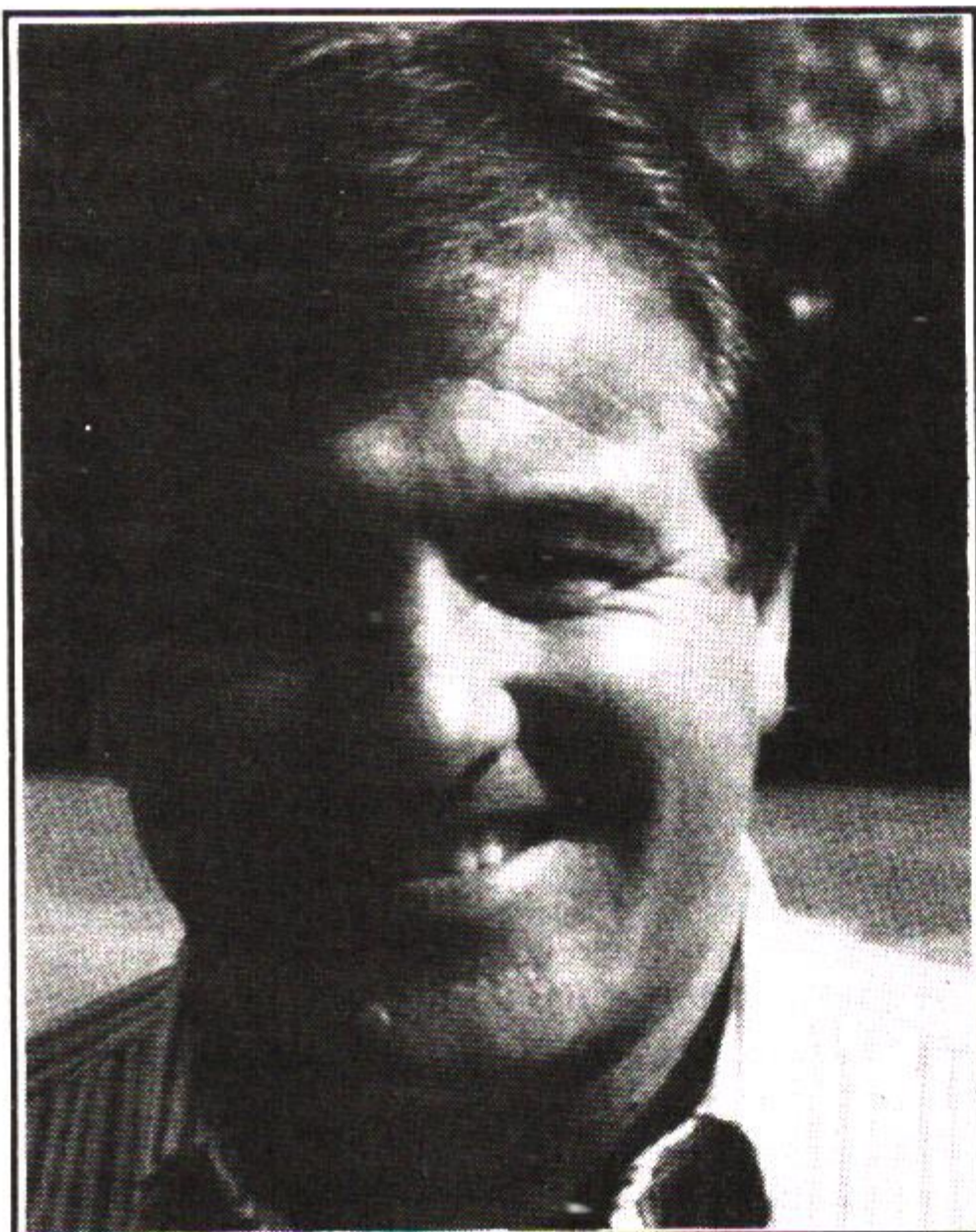
"The dis-United nations is not an impartial body but the representative of big business and the imperialist powers. Their representatives are at cross-purposes. While Bush (then US President) demands a restoration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a US diplomat in Belgrade, cynically, if realistically, commented that it would be "naive to believe that 'ethnic cleansing' could be reversed or that the former status quo could be restored".

"What is written by the sword can only be changed by the sword."

"There is no way out of this maze except with clear class policies. The working class nationally and internationally can rely only on their own consciousness, strength and solidarity. They cannot rely on the bosses or their governments at home to serve their interests. Even less so abroad."

"Now the Balkans threaten to become a new cockpit of wars, as it was before 1914. There is no solution outside the working class consciously taking control of their own destiny. The interests of the working class everywhere are the same. The only way out is a democratic Socialist Federation of the Balkans leading to a socialist federation of Eastern and Western Europe."

*Socialist Appeal No.5  
September 1992*



Terry Venables - At the centre of the current crisis at Spurs

On the day of the FA Cup final the sports pages are normally covered with articles about the match and the two teams. This year was different! Not only the back pages but most of the front pages as well were covered with details of the power struggle which had exploded inside one of England's most famous football clubs - Tottenham Hotspur.

The main shareholder at Spurs had moved to remove his co-owner - Terry Venables - from the club by sacking him from his position as chief executive. The fans and many of the players responded in uproar at the actions of Alan Sugar - of Amstrad fame - in seeking to get rid of the man who was widely credited with saving the club from going bust two years earlier. Demonstrations and protest meetings were held.

When the court case came to the Old Bailey to decide if the sacking should be upheld there were large demonstrations outside the court. Although Venables lost the court case, the question of who owns the club has still - at time of writing - to be resolved. Fans are still discussing the question of boycotting matches next season - starting with the meaningless Makita tournament and not renewing season tickets. **Many supporters have felt frustrated at the lack of say which they have in the fate of the club and the fact that they are simply seen as turnstile fodder. This is not unique to Spurs but applies to supporters of all football clubs. Does this matter and why is this the case?**

Football is an important part of the lives of many working class people. People see football as a break from the drudgery of their daily lives and go to enormous lengths to support it. Not for nothing has it been referred to as a religion. This passionate sup-

# Different Goals

port - often supporters will talk about a team using the word "we" as if they were actually playing (which in a sense they are) - is born of the origins of football. Many clubs in fact started as works teams. However, despite its working class roots, football - as with everything else in society - was owned and administered by the ruling class. Football boards were composed of in the main local businessmen and worthies who ran the clubs in the style of relics from a Dickensian past. These old buffers treated fans and players as something of no importance. They opposed professionalism as it meant paying players wages. They opposed abolition of the maximum wage because it meant paying players decent wages. Most of all they opposed - and in reality still oppose - anyone apart from themselves having any say in how the clubs and the game should be run. As it is in life so it is in football!

## Attendances Peak

After the Second World War attendances at football reached their all time high as people with money in their pocket but nothing to spend it on flocked to one of the few leisure pursuits available to them. **Despite this, nothing was done by the club owners to upgrade the facilities at football grounds as directors sat back and imagined that people would continue to come to football what ever the circumstances.**

By the sixties however other forms of leisure pursuits were starting to compete with football and attendances fell. The wealth that had been accumulated during the glory years of football started to wither away. Fans continued to stand in outdated, Edwardian stands, lacking modern amenities and with no consideration for safety standards at all. Indeed it is worth noting that football has been marked by a series of disasters which have led to improvements in safety but always after the event rather than before. The Hillsborough disaster in 1989 where nearly a hundred supporters were killed at an FA Cup semi-final in Sheffield remains seared in the memory of every football fan. During the eighties football started to look for alternative sources of income to supplement the declining gate receipts. First of all was the question of income from souvenirs etc. Clubs started not only selling replica team strips but also changing them more and more regularly so that fans would be forced to keep buying new ones. Other items such as track suits, videos, leisure wear and so on

were added to the stock sold at club shops to try and squeeze every penny out of supporters. When the time came to redevelop stands, executive boxes were put in to develop income from businesses. **"Corporate hospitality" became a by-word as companies were encouraged to take up these boxes and entertain their business contacts whilst fans stood outside in the rain and cold.**

Shirt sponsorship was introduced to supplement income from advertising around the pitch - and anywhere else that didn't move - in order to cash in on the main source of income which football hoped to tap into - television.

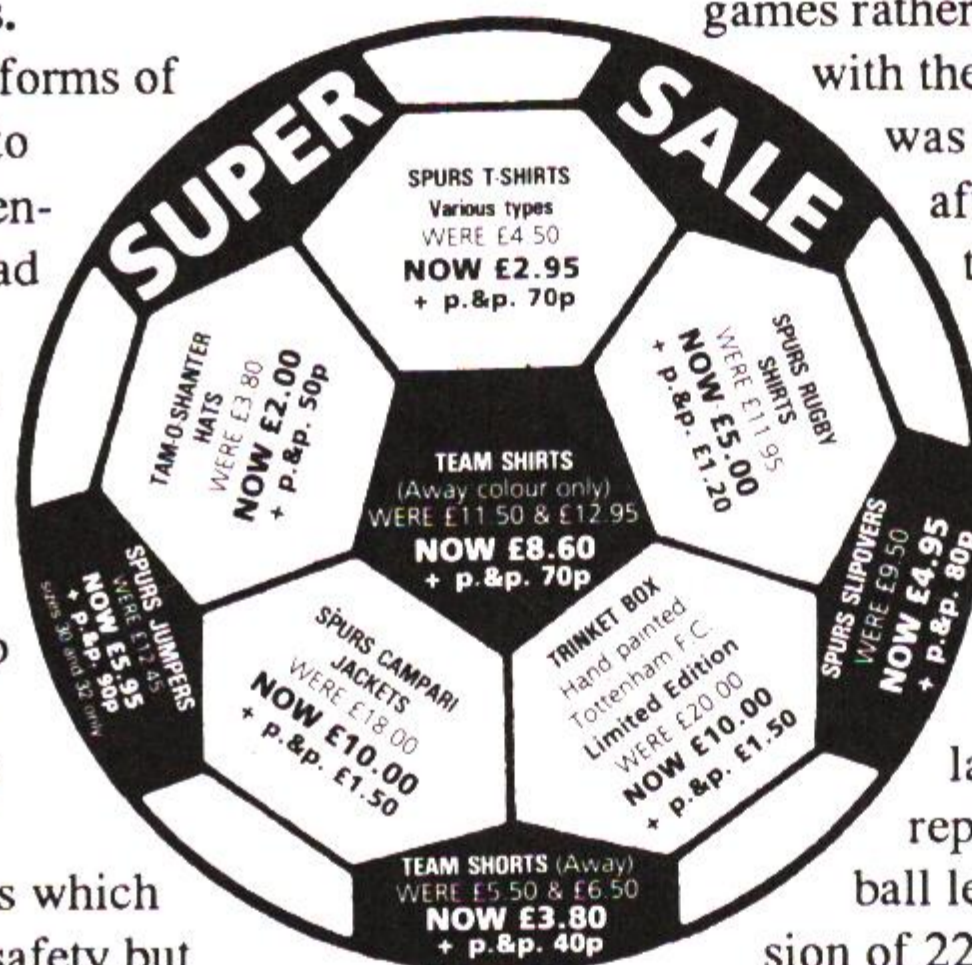
## TV Intervenes

Football sought to exploit television and television sought to exploit football. Regular live league football was introduced in 1983 and soon became the norm with various cup matches being screened as well. Games were moved around to accommodate the interests of the television companies and, of course, the big clubs were always featured in preference to the small ones. Central to this period was the move of the big clubs to take more and more of a share of the wealth generated by football at the expense of the smaller ones. It started with the decision to let all the home clubs keep all their gate receipts from games rather than share it

with the away team. It was to culminate - after many years of threatening a break away super league etc. - with the so called Premier League. This was introduced last season to replace the old football league first division of 22 clubs with a new independent one of... 22 clubs.

Apart from the fact that referees had to wear green strips nothing else had actually changed apart from the fact that the clubs in the league no longer had to share their income with the other clubs in the Football League.

Ironically this was to lead to an upset for the big clubs as the new premier league clubs voted to accept a deal from Sky satellite TV for the exclusive screening of live league games - with BBC having a highlights programme - on the basis that all clubs would have games shown live rather than just the



big clubs games. The fact that not too many people actually had satellite TV didn't worry them. The losers were the fans who have been forced to attend games at silly times on a Sunday or Monday and those at home who have been denied the chance to see live football on their TVs. ITV have responded by screening European, league cup and games from the lower divisions - along with our old friend the Makita International. BBC have also screened European games along with FA Cup games. Even Channel 4 have chipped in by screening live games from the Italian Serie A.

Everything is there apart from the games that really count.

It is not surprising given the above that a certain disillusionment with football has set in amongst football supporters. This is shown by the growth of the football "fanzines" - unofficial magazines produced by football supporters - and independent supporters associations which have grown up along side the Football Supporters

Association. These independent associations were formed in the main to fight things such as undesired ground developments, Bond schemes (where fans are forced to pay large sums to be certain of getting a seat in new stands eg West Ham and Arsenal,) One of the largest such groups is the Tottenham Independent Supporters Association (TISA) which has been organising the fight against Venables sacking at Spurs.

That such a group should exist is not surprising given what has happened to Spurs over the last ten years. **To describe all the ins and out at the club would take an article in itself if not a book. Suffice to say that anyone who wants a concrete expression of the phrase "capitalism in crisis" need look no further.**

### Brink of Ruin

Spurs became a public company floated on the stock exchange and tried to diversify its income from non-football sources. This led it to the brink of ruin. At one point it looked as though the choice was between going bust and being taken over by Robert Maxwell. Like many men who were moving into football during the eighties, Maxwell sought to emulate men like Bernard Tapie (Marseille) in France and Silvio Berlusconi (AC Milan) in Italy who owned football clubs as part of great empires and used them to gain power and prestige. Like Maxwell these men tied football interests in with ownership of television and newspaper companies and had political interests too. However Maxwell lacked the ownership of a big football club. Fortunately he failed in his bid to buy Spurs in 1991 and after his business interests started to unravel he had to take the big swim. The club was taken over by a consortium based around the joint own-



Conditions at grounds are often appalling and safety comes second to profit

ership of manager Terry Venables and Amstrad's Alan Sugar. This was called the "dream team" - for the fans it was to turn into a nightmare.

What has happened at Spurs could - and has - happened to other clubs. No club is safe. Some like Aldershot have gone bust, many others are in a poor state or have been threatened with closure. The list seems endless - Wolves, Birmingham, Swansea for example with Barnet and Cardiff just the latest to join the list.

### LPYS Debate

In the early eighties the press reported on a debate at the LPYS conference where the demand was put forward to nationalise the football clubs and give supporters and players control over the running of the clubs and the game. The press dug up various managers to rubbish the idea and state how well football was being run.

**Ten years on you cannot help but wonder if these people are laughing quite as loudly.**

The demands to democratise the game and remove it from the deadly hand of private ownership now seems more relevant than ever. Can any private owner - be it Sugar or even Venables if the truth is told - be really trusted with ownership of a club like Tottenham Hotspur? Bill Shankly said that football was more important than life or death. Those many thousands who spend their Saturday afternoons suffering for 90 minutes as their team fail to win easily enough to let them relax would understand that remark all too well. For an increasing number of fans this is proving to be the least of their worries!

by Steve Jones

Can football still be called a game or is it little more than a part of the world of business and politics? After the 1974 World Cup, different regimes reacted in different ways as street celebrations or street demonstrations greeted the fate of their teams.

Dutch captain Johann Cruyff was made a Knight of the Order of Orange Nassau after Holland reached the final for "special services to the throne, state or society." Football authorities visited Chile to see the state of the stadium which would host qualifying matches because it had "been known to house several thousand arrested political prisoners"

Brazil's manager and players had their houses burned down after being dumped out of the tournament by Holland.

Source: Don't Shoot the Goalkeeper

You play to win, and the play has little meaning unless you do your utmost to win. On the village green, where you pick sides and no feeling of local patriotism is involved it is possible to play simply for the fun and exercise. But as soon as the question of power and prestige arises the most savage combative instincts are aroused..."

George Orwell

## In the Cause of Labour

*"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."*  
**Lenin, What is to be Done?**

By 1910, the 40 year upswing of world capitalism was coming to an end. This period represented the peak of British imperialism's power - but it also ominously coincided with the rise of Germany and America and the end of her industrial monopoly. The loss of Britain's privileged position forced the British ruling class to rationalise its industrial base and cut across the concessions that underpinned the 'aristocracy of labour'.

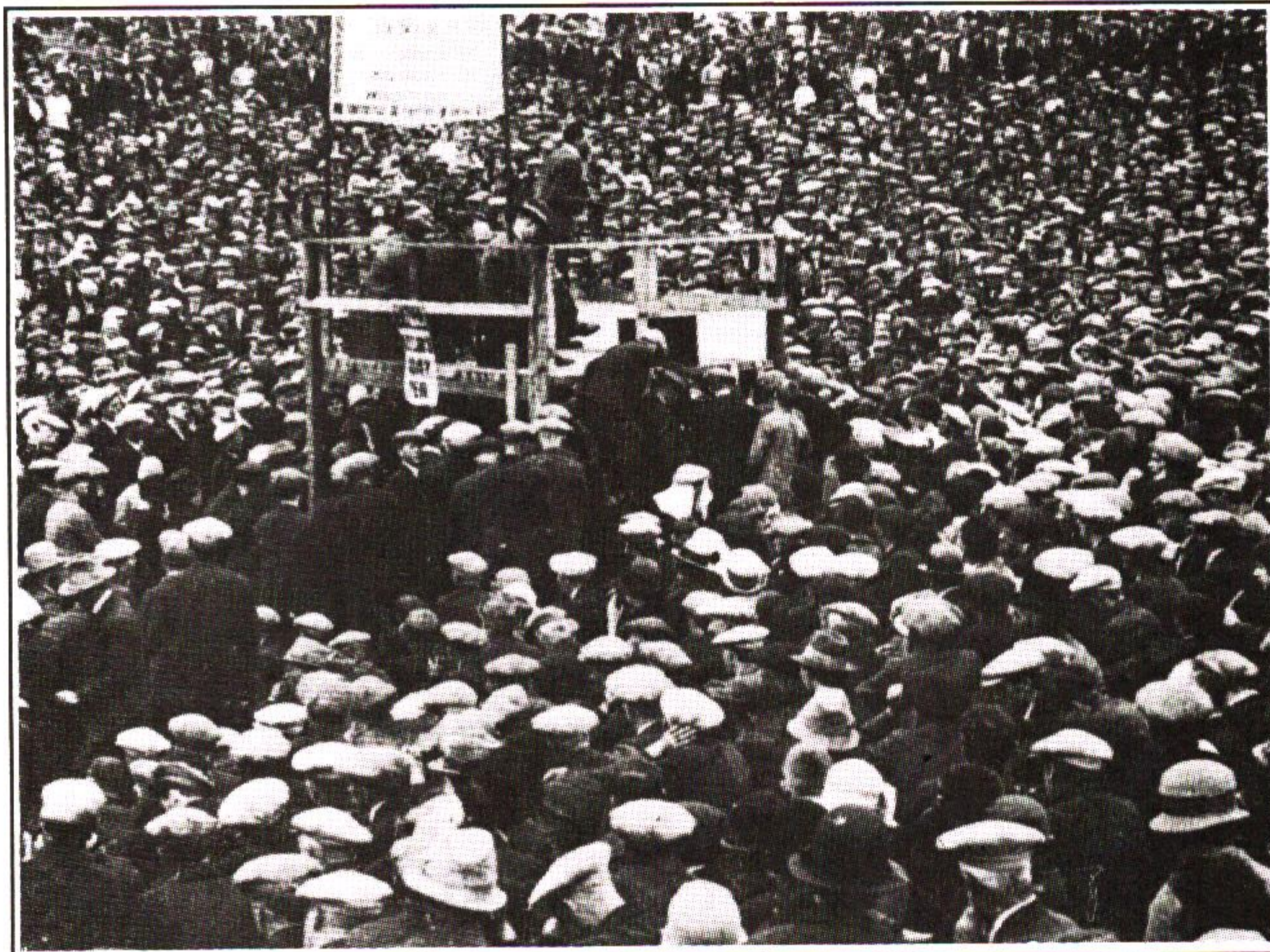
The birth of 'New Unionism' in the late 1880's and early 1890's was a direct response to the new conditions that were being imposed. The mighty class movement of 1910 - 14, which reached a revolutionary pitch, was built upon these new traditions of organisation. *"In those days"*, wrote Leon Trotsky, *"a dim spectre of revolution hung over Britain."*

By 1910 the membership of trade unions embraced two and a half million workers; by 1914 it had grown to 4 million strong. In the same period, TUC affiliations rose from one and a half million to nearly two and a quarter million.

### **Cambrian Combine**

The decisive change in the situation was heralded by the South Wales Cambrian strike in the Autumn of 1910. The Cambrian Combine, headed by the coal baron Lord Rhondda, typified the reorganisation introduced by the coal owners - to drive down wages, introduce speed-ups, and intensify the exploitation of the miners. For the coal owners, this was a vital step to boost profits, in an industry where labour costs represented 70% of the total.

At this time, younger miners in particular were pressing for militant action to secure a guaranteed minimum wage. As a result, the Cambrian miners refused to accept the new rates offered to them by the so-called Conciliation Board. The following 10 month strike, involving 10,000 Rhondda miners, was a ferocious class battle where the state



# The Great Unrest to World War

forces were dispatched against the strikers. In Tonypany, during civil disturbance, a miner was shot dead by troops sent down by the young Winston Churchill.

By November 1910, three dozen dockers and transport unions joined forces into the new militant Transport Workers Federation, with Robert Williams as Secretary. In June of the following year a wave of strikes broke out over pay and conditions on the docks in Southampton, Cardiff and Hull, to be quickly followed by Manchester and London. The London dockers were faced by an alliance of ruthless Port employers and the Liberal government, who refused to negotiate with the strikers. Churchill now

threatened to dispatch 25,000 troops to the docks to break the strike. As a result, daily mass demonstrations were held throughout East London in support of the strikers, some over 100,000 strong. The docker's leaders warned of armed conflict in the streets if troops were used. Given the explosive situation, the government panicked and persuaded the employers, headed by Lord Davenport, to concede most of the docker's demands.

In Liverpool, the strike movement reached civil war proportions. A 70,000 strong transport strike led by Tom Mann, which had assumed the character of a regional general strike, crippled the City. The

government rushed two war ships into the Mersey, their guns trained on the centre of Liverpool. 7,000 troops and special police were drafted in to break the strike. The monster demonstration at St George's Plateau was brutally attacked by the police, and pitched battles broke out in the streets. Two strikers were shot dead during the month long strike. Nevertheless, by the end of August, after Tom Mann threatened to call for national sympathy action, a favourable settlement was reached.

In the same month of August, the leadership of the rail unions were forced to call a national all-out strike over the failure of the bosses to honour the 1907 agreement. The government intervened by their offer of a Royal Commission was rejected. "Then blood be on your own head", retorted Prime Minister Asquith. 200,000 immediately responded to the call, and brought the railways to a standstill. In response, Home Secretary Churchill this time mobilised 50,000 troops to key centres. According to the Webbs, "a policy of repression had been decided on, and bloodshed was near at hand." Amongst numerous disturbances, the troops opened fire in Liverpool and at Llanelly, killing two strikers. "Strikes are assuming a mass character", noted Lenin in *Pravda*.

### Strikes Spread

With the fear of strikes spreading across the board, the government was forced to change tack and force the employers to negotiate. Eventually, after a further threat of strike action, both sides agreed to a reform of the Conciliation Boards with joint representation. It was a step forward in the struggle for union recognition. Perhaps more importantly, it gave an impetus to trade union amalgamation on the railways. By 1913 a number of unions fused to form the National Union of Railwaymen. Unfortunately, the craft union ASLEF remained aloof, resulting a bitter feud that was to last until the present day.

As the rail strike ended, new upheavals erupted in the coal industry. Bitter strikes had been fought in many areas throughout 1911, which culminated in a delegate conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain calling a national ballot for industrial action to secure a national minimum wage. By a majority of four to one, the miners voted to take action on 1st March. It was the first real national miners' strike involving a million workers. This time the government intervened to propose a National Minimum Wage Bill, which it rushed onto the statute books by the end of March! Although it did not concede fully what the Federation had demanded, it did establish the machinery for determining district minimums. In a further strike ballot, the majority of miners were opposed to the

deal. However, a special delegate conference decided to terminate the strike. Within a year the membership of the Miners' Federation had leapt by almost 160,000 to over 900,000.

"The most outstanding event in the past year has been the miners' strike. If the railway strike in 1911 displayed the 'new spirit' of the British workers, the miners' strike certainly marks a new epoch," wrote Lenin. "Since the coal strike the British proletariat is no longer the same. The workers have learned to fight. They have discovered the path that will lead them to victory. They have become aware of their power.... In Britain, a change has taken place in the relation of social forces, a change which cannot be expressed in figures, but which everyone feels." (*Lenin on Britain*, p 154, )

Throughout this period, the employers waged a constant struggle against the unions. In May 1912, a new battle blew up on the docks, when the Port bosses attempted to use non-union labour. The Transport Workers' Federation threatened a general strike of dock labour over the twin issues of recognition and the fulfilment of the 1911 agree-

ments. 80,000 London dockers answered the call, but the response from other ports was patchy. The employers dug in their heels. On Tower Hill, Ben Tillett lead his dockers in

prayer: "God strike Lord Devonport dead." Davenport remained alive and kicking, and continued to use blackleg labour to break the strike. As expected, the employers used their victory to carry out victimisation against the main activists.

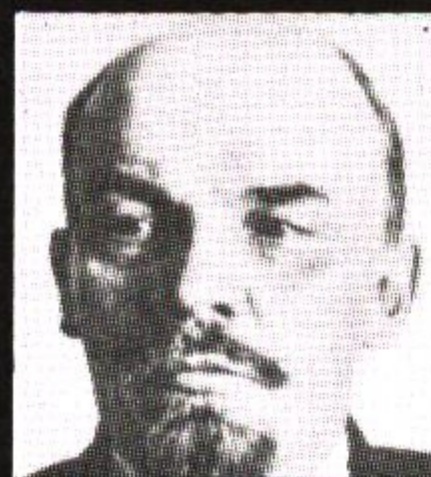
Almost a year after the defeat of the dockers, a storm broke in Dublin, where the Irish Transport and General Workers Union led by revolutionary fighters, James Connolly and Jim Larkin, took on the might of the Dublin employers. In August 1913, the Employers' Federation threw down the gauntlet, when workers on the Irish Independent were told to leave the union or face the sack. The men backed the union and were locked out. This signalled a general employers' offensive which led to 25,000 locked-out by September. The employers used the full might of the state to crush the Dublin workers; banning meetings and carrying through arrests, including Larkin and Connolly. From the union

pickets was organised a workers' defence organisation, the Irish Citizens Army, which countered the terror of police violence, that had resulted in the murder of two workers and the wounding of 400 in the course of the lock-out.

### Building Solidarity

The struggle caught the imagination of the British working class which rallied to the assistance of the strikers. The Co-operative Movement, which had grown to a large-scale trading company, sent ship loads of food to Dublin to feed the strikers and their families. The TUC voted £5,000. Sympathy strikes, involving some 7,000 British railworkers, were carried out. Unfortunately, the widespread sympathy was not translated by the TUC into the total blacking of Irish goods. This failure led to the waning of the dispute, which lasted until February 1914, when the workers were forced back through hunger. The union, however, remained in tact. Soon afterwards, the Irish Trade Union Congress adopted the view that "labour unrest can only be ended by the abolition of the capitalist system."

The spirit of the time was well expressed in the slogan "Strike and strike hard" carried by the *Daily Herald*, established by George Lansbury. The depth of the



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strike movement at this time can be gauged from the strike figures:

1908	averaged	30	disputes a month
1911	averaged	75	disputes a month
1913-14	averaged	150	a month

A typical fear of the ruling class was reflected in the bourgeois press: "Perhaps the most salient feature of this turmoil at the moment is the general spirit of revolt, not only against employers of all kinds, but also against leaders and majorities, and Parliamentary or any kind of constitutional and orderly action." (Quoted in *British Trade Unionism* by Alan Hutt).

This refers not only to the growth of militancy, but a new creed within the unions: syndicalism. The philosophy of syndicalism has its roots in a rejection of politics, above all party politics, and the concentration on industrial unionism and rank and file movements. A key plank was a rejection of leadership. In the words of the *Miners' Next Step*, written in 1912, "Leader-

ship implies power held by the leader. Without power the leader is inept. The possession of power inevitably leads to corruption. All leaders become corrupt, in spite of their own good intentions." (p13). They described their movement as a "no-leader movement".

Leon Trotsky, without mincing words, sharply pointed out, "The slogan of 'no leaders' - that slogan of demagogues who themselves aspire to leadership without qualifications."

The acceptance of syndicalist ideas by individuals like Tom Mann, James Connolly, A.J. Cook, Ablett, Horner and others, reflected a theoretical confusion and the weakness of genuine Marxism in Britain at this stage.

### British Syndicalism

British syndicalism was a fusion of French anarcho-syndicalism, which was quite powerful at the time, and the ideas of the supporters of the American Daniel De Leon. For them, militant trade unionism would eventually culminate in a general strike, leading to the overthrow of capitalism and the reorganisation of society based on industrial unionism and co-operation. For them the struggle against capitalism on the industrial front was somehow primary, and the political struggle secondary. Parliamentary struggle appeared irrelevant to the needs of the working class. These theories reflected the confusion and theoretical backwardness of the advanced sections of the working class. **They were a progressive reaction against the opportunist Lib-Lab politics of the Labour leadership and the class collaboration of the trade union leaders, but they also miseducated a whole generation of young workers at this time.**

A member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers summed up the feelings of many with the words: "The most charita-

**Instead of fighting to transform the unions from top to bottom, their rejection of leadership and concentration on rank and fileism let the right wing off the hook**

ble thing that can be said about political action is that it is slow, so slow that it breaks men's hearts."

As Lenin observed, "The opportunist conduct of the MP's belonging to the latter party (the ILP - ed) is giving rise, as is always the case, to syndicalist tendencies among the workers. Happily these are not strong." (Lenin on Britain, p154).

Instead of fighting to transform the unions from top to bottom, their rejection of 'leadership' and concentration on 'rank and fileism', in reality, let the right wing off the hook. The rejection of politics reinforced the position of the right wing in the Labour Party. Their obsession with the general strike completely ignored the nature of the capitalist state. They imagined that it would apparently collapse in the course of a general strike. There was no need for a revolutionary party. The 1926 General Strike proved differently, and demonstrated the imperative need for a revolutionary leadership to carry the strike through to a conclusion.

### Great Unrest

Nevertheless, these new militant figures provided the initiate and drive in the 'Great Unrest' prior to the First World War. Syndicalism provided the organised expression for the struggle of rank and file militants, especially in the rail, mining and engineering unions. In 1911, Tom Mann founded the Industrial Syndicalist Education League. A year later, the Amalgamation Committee Movement was established in the engineering industry, to work for industrial unionism, reform of the AES, and to promote workers' control. Vigilance Committees were established on the railways. Amongst the miners was established the Unofficial Reform Movement. These movements help to forge the amalgamations in the trade union field, especially on the railways and in transport. They also played a key role in the rise of the shop stewards movement over the next period.

By 1914, the militant mood in industry had far from exhausted itself. On the contrary, according to the Webbs, "British trade unionism was in fact in the summer of 1914 working up for an almost revolutionary outburst of gigantic industrial disputes." New political demands now came to the fore. Nationalisation of the railways was being raised. New claims were being made by miners, transport, and engineering workers. In July, the whole of the London building workers were out on strike. Under the pressures of the ranks, a new wider industrial body



Miners' leader AJ Cook

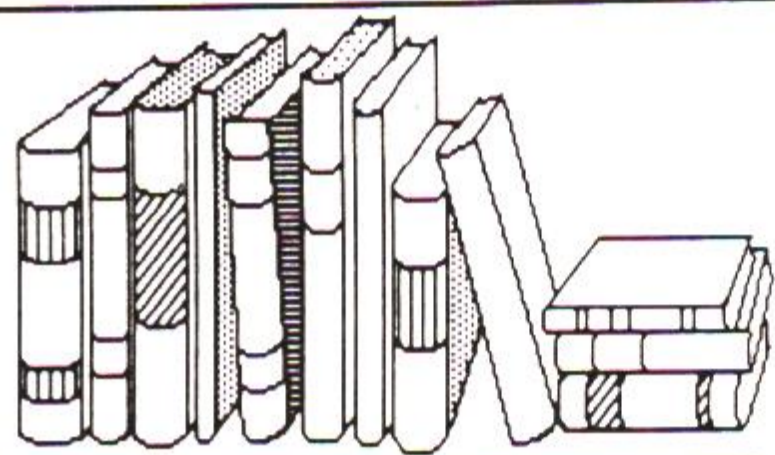
came into being: the Triple Alliance of miners, railworkers and transport unions, embracing 1,500,000 workers.

The country was faced with a political crisis. The Liberal proposal for Irish Home Rule was met by mutiny of the general staff, which in turn, was backed by a Tory-Ulster rebellion. This situation caused Lloyd George, at a meeting in the City on 17 July, 1914, to say, that with the Labour "insurrection" and Irish crisis coinciding, "the situation will be the gravest with which any Government has had to deal for centuries." As far as the ruling class were concerned, civil war and revolution was in the air.

### World War One

By the early days of August 1914, the picture has changed out of all recognition. German imperialism marched into Belgium. The Second International, that had promised to oppose the war by revolutionary means, collapsed. All the Labour and trade union leaders quickly lined up behind their respective ruling classes in, what became up until then, the greatest carnage in human history. The redivision of the world by the major imperialist powers had begun. On 24th August, 1914, the joint board of the TUC, the General Federation of Trade Unions and Labour Party met passing the resolution: "That an immediate effort be made to terminate all existing disputes, whether strikes or lock-outs, and wherever new points of difficulty arise during the war a serious attempt should be made by all concerned to reach an amicable settlement before resorting to strikes or lock-outs."

Rob Sewell



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Reports in this month show that over 45 copies were sold at Nalگو conference, over 25 at Nupe conference, 15 at IRSF connce and 14 at NUM conference. An NUM National Executive member has taken a number of copies to sell after our coverage of the battle to save the pits.

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Socialist Appeal is planning a major sales drive this autumn. The campaign, due to start with the publication of the September issue, will be backed by new sales leaflets, material on how and where to sell and a host of other useful information.

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# SOCIALIST

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# Postal Workers Resist Attacks

## *Fight Sorting Office Closures*

Royal Mail management has thrown down the gauntlet to London postal workers. They have announced a restructuring plan to shut five major sorting offices in London.

They claim that a fall in the volume of letters posted (due to companies relocating outside London and the recession etc) as well as the introduction of new technology are the reasons for the reasons for this action. Management has talked of shedding 6,000 jobs through these changes.

### **Negotiations Collapse**

The Union of Communications Workers, while not ruling out the closure of some buildings, maintains that it needs and agreement to protect members' "jobs, earnings, conditions and services". Despite negotiations Royal Mail management has dug its heels in and refused to agree to the Union's proposals on these matters. Although the management has put forward some financial inducements to "minimise the hardship involved", these are minimal payments and there is no removal of the threat of compulsory transfers and redundancies. Many will also experience a loss of inner- or outer-London weighting if these plans go ahead, depending on their redeployment.

It is clear that Post Office bosses are attempting to improve on the recent £283 million profits (and increase their own grubby payments) at the expense of the conditions and livelihood of the workforce. Managers insist that there will be no real problems arising from the redeployment but they do not want a joint approach to this

problem. They want to maintain complete power to move people wherever they see fit. Clerical grades experienced how unfair this can be in a reorganisation called Business Development which took place last year. It is also the thin end of the wedge on compulsory redundancies. While management has stopped taking on full-time employees it continues to take on part-time casuals. It is clear that management wants to hold all the cards. It wants sole decision-making power in its hands.

### **Conditions Undermined**

The Union cannot allow these diktats, they open the way to undermining conditions across the board. Any redeployment must be decided by a joint agreement with the union, giving rights for individual workers. The attempt to close any London offices unilaterally, without the agreement that the Union has been seeking, must be resisted. The first closure is due to be at West Central District Office on July 5. Unofficial strike action has already taken place when workers were suddenly told to report to Mount Pleasant sorting office instead. To stop the action, Royal Mail bosses went to the High Court to get an injunction against our members. Feelings are running high. As a result of management's stand, the UCW is conducting a ballot of all Royal Mail grades in London for industrial action to coincide with the West Central closure.



Unfortunately, at the time of going to press the result is not known, but it is hoped that in the short time available the union will have been able to get its message across to those offices not yet affected. They will be in the firing line in a big way in the future if the ballot is not won.

What is sure is that London's postal workers have the power to block the actions of management. The whole of the Capital's mail and much of international mail will come to a halt. Any attempts to re-direct mail will be blocked by the Union and we must be prepared for an escalation of the dispute.

No compulsory redeployment or redundancies! For an overall agreement which should lead into the 35-hour week agreed by this year's union conference. If the management does not budge we must prepare for an all-out strike. Only determined action will force Post Office bosses to back down. Postal workers must stand up for their rights. United we will win!

by Lee Waker,  
UCW delivery rep,  
East London

**No Redundancies! No Compulsory Redeployment!**