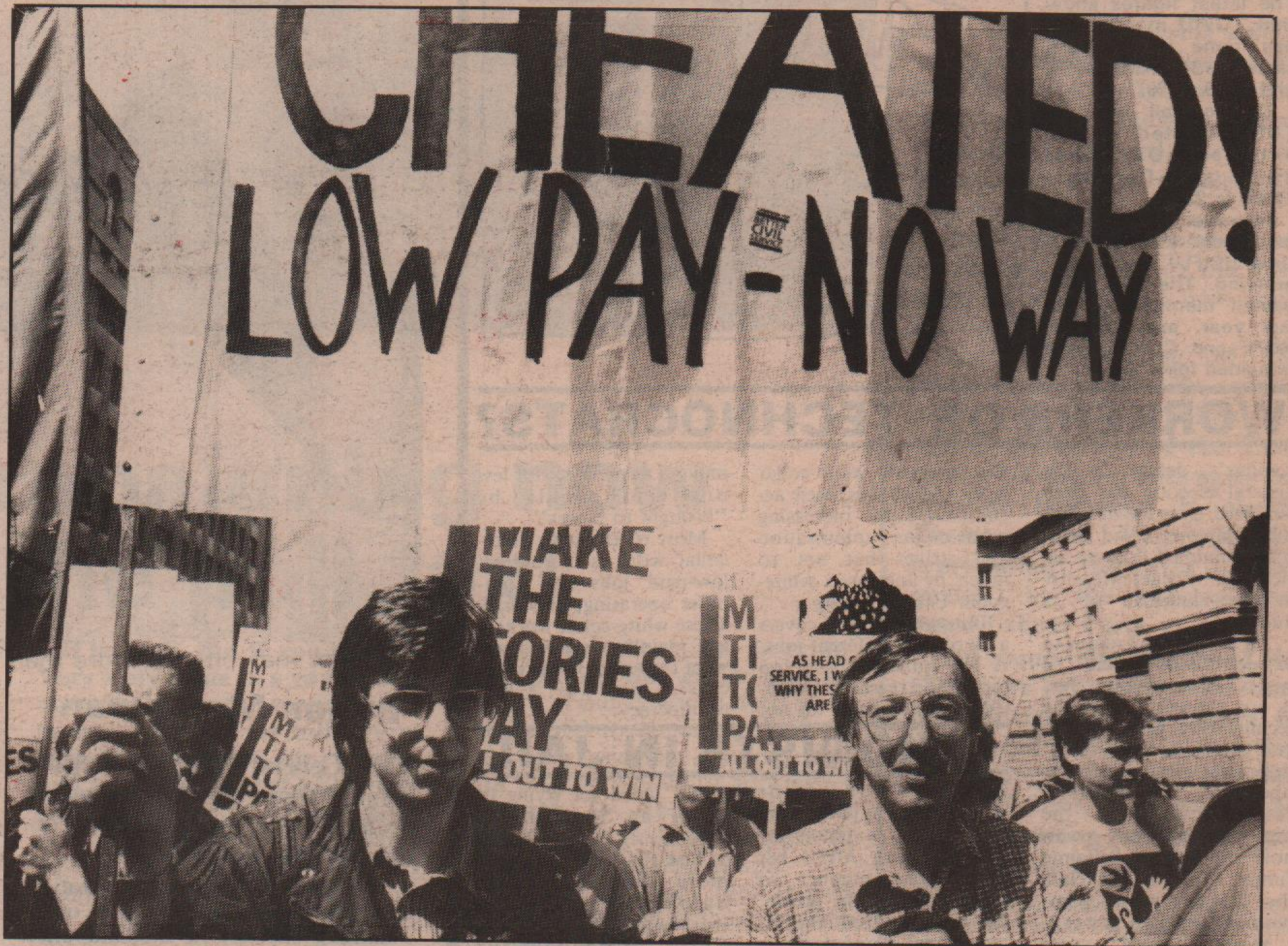


SOCIALIST ORGANISER

FOR WORKERS' LIBERTY EAST AND WEST

Tories declare war

JOIN THE RESISTANCE!



Civil servants on strike. Photo Andrew Wiard, Report

The newly re-elected Tory government plans a major new onslaught on British workers. They aim to radically alter the face of British society by:

- *Bringing in new anti-union laws;
- *Privatising new industries for the benefit of their racketeering stock exchange friends;
- *Cutting benefits;
- *Plundering working people through their 'poll tax'.

All these measures will leave working class people much worse off and, so the Tories hope, less able to defend themselves.

If the Tories get away with it, Britain will be a very different place in five years time. If you're poor, even worse than it is now — perhaps a lot worse.

Thus large parts of the working class will have to pay in suffering, degradation and misery for the failure of the leaders of the labour movement — trade unions and Labour Party alike — to

organise in the months and years before the June election the kind of socialist anti-Tory crusade which could have swept the Tories from office.

Thatcher plans sweeping changes in housing.

As well as giving a helping hand to racketeering private landlords, the Tories want to encourage the sale not just of individual council houses, but of entire council estates.

Estates

Estates will be sold off to private developers who will transform them into apartments for the rich. And though the Tories haven't said so yet, there is a necessary next step in their plans: they will do away with the right of single tenants to be rehoused.

Tenants will be able to 'choose' to leave the council system and have another landlord.

Young people will face the

threat of a complete loss of income if they refuse to accept a place on a miserable YTS scheme.

The expansion of the "Job" "Training" Scheme will soon mean similar problems for adults. The Tories will eventually try to introduce an American-style 'work-for-your-dole' system.

Water is marked down for privatisation. In Mrs Thatcher's Brave New Britain we can look forward to having Tory profiteers compete to sell us water!

More anti-union laws are due. The closed shop will be made inoperable and postal ballots — which the Tory press finds it easier to influence — will be made compulsory.

The existing racist immigration laws are to be 'tightened up'.

There will be an attack on comprehensive education.

Although the Tories don't



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Sabotage in Scotland?



Thatcher may bite off more than she can chew in Scotland

By Ian McCalman

The General Election results would suggest that the Doomsday Scenario, long predicted for Scottish politics, has arrived.

While the Thatcher administration has returned to office with overwhelming support in England once again, it has been even more decisively rejected in Scotland.

The national swing to Labour was only 3% and in the South of England, outside of London, where

three Labour seats.

In the North West and North East there were swings to Labour of 5% but these were overshadowed by the swing of 8% to Labour in Scotland. In the city of Glasgow, which now has no Conservative MPs, swings of up to 12% were recorded.

The Scottish phenomenon cannot solely be explained in terms of the traditional manufacturing North as against the service-based economy of the South. Anyone who canvassed in Scotland over the last few weeks was made abundantly aware that the

overwhelming majority of people voting Labour were also voting for a Scottish Assembly.

That dramatic demand did not express itself in a turn to the Nationalists. Gordon Wilson, SNP leader, lost his seat in Dundee to Labour and the main SNP gains were in the largely rural North East.

The situation presents major problems for the Tory Party in Scotland where their number of seats has fallen from 21 to 10, out of a total of 72 Scottish MPs, 50 of whom are Labour.

They will have difficulty in even staffing the posts at the Scottish Office and servicing committees, especially as almost all of their members of ministerial calibre have been driven from office. They may even have to draw upon MPs from English constituencies who are of Scottish descent.

Increasingly, Scottish Secretary Malcolm Rifkind is seen as a Governor-General and his party as having no mandate in Scotland.

Pressure will now mount on Donald Dewar and other Scottish MPs to take some sort of action to frustrate Tory rule in Scotland. Although the Nationalists have not fared well, their emerging leader Alex Salmond is more radical in his inclinations than Gordon Wilson and he will step up the pressure for parliamentary disruption.

Within the limits of parliamentary democracy, the Tory Party won a handsome majority in England and it is difficult to see how a campaign of disruption can be justified there. Certainly if Labour had won the election, we would not regard such disruption by Tory MPs as justified.

That argument does not hold sway in Scotland where the overwhelming majority of people have rejected direct rule from Westminster.

Whatever the equivocations of Dewar, pressure will grow for disruption of parliamentary business until the withdrawal of such measures as the community tax is effected. That may mean Labour withdrawal from the Select Committee on Scottish Affairs and the Scottish Grand Committee so as to further expose the unrepresentative nature of the present set-up.

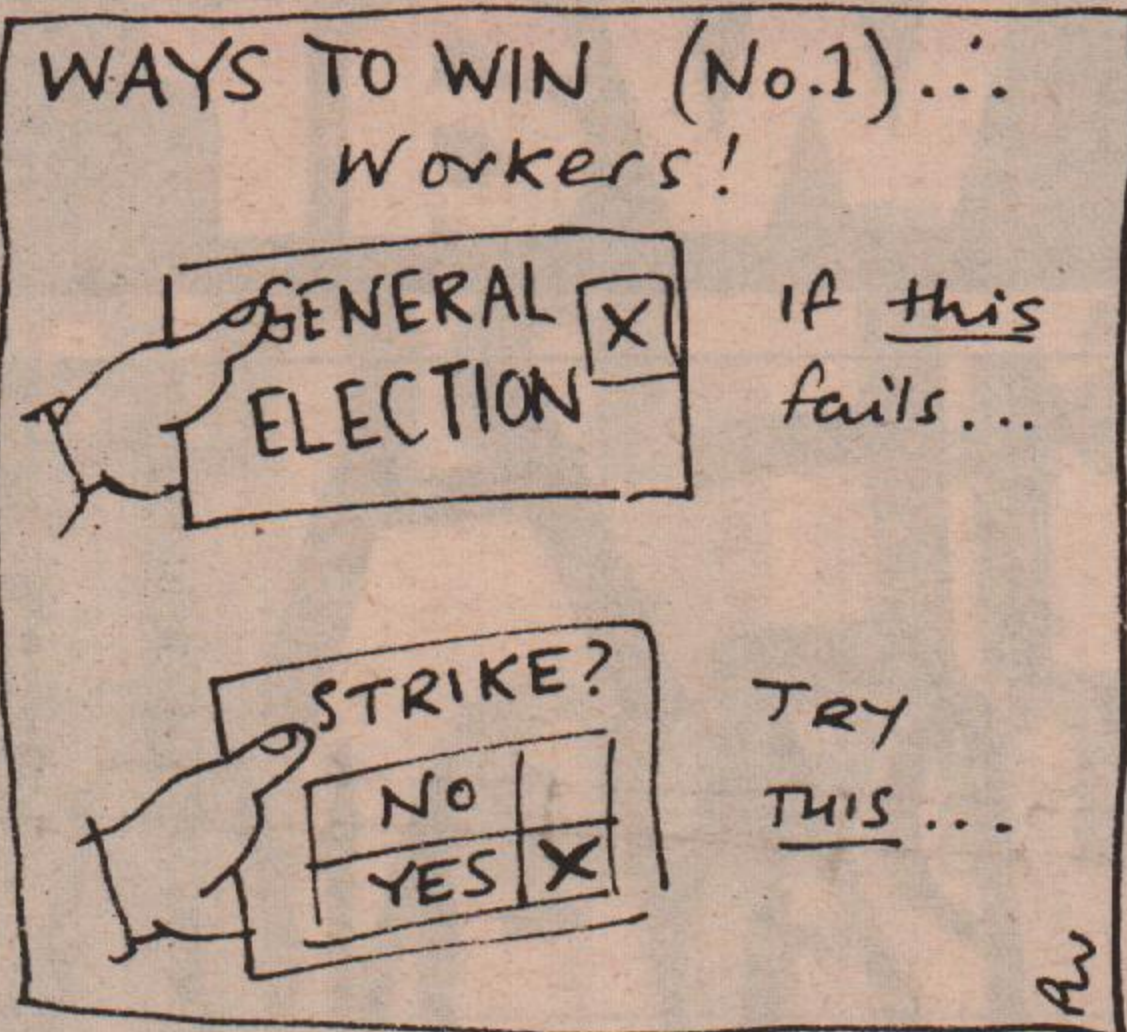
GRAFFITI

UNIONS RESIST DECLINE

Some of Britain's biggest unions have suffered badly from the slump. The latest figures show that TGWU membership has gone down 33% since 1980, AEU 35%, and GMB 17%.

The overall loss by TUC-affiliated unions between December 1979 and December 1986 is 24%.

However, the Banking Insurance and Finance Union (BIFU) has been growing. The CPSA has gained members in the last year, and NALGO, NUPE and COHSE have remained fairly stable.



WORKERS OR TECHNOCRATS?

Labour's defeat in the general election has been followed by a lot of muddled thinking. And none more muddled than an article by Michael Meacher in the Guardian of 25 June.

"It is vital for Labour to extend its class appeal", he writes. The working class is not enough. "It is the technocratic class — the semi-conductor 'chip' designers, the computer operators, the industrial research scientists, the high-tech engineers — who hold the key to Britain's future. That is the class that Labour must champion and bring to power."

Meacher's starting point is a fact: the decline of the manual working class and

the rise of white-collar work, which has been accompanied by increasing white-collar unionisation and strikes but not so much by increased white-collar Labour voting.

But 'white collar' covers a lot of very different jobs. A few hundred or a few thousand research scientists and engineers do not

make a new class, still less one that should be "brought to power"!

Most of the new white-collar work is in routine, low-paid jobs like computer operating, or worse. These white-collar workers are plainly workers, and what they need is working-class politics, not technocracy.

UNIONISTS IN JAIL

About 4,500 trade unionists are in jail around the world for union activities. South Africa has the biggest number of trade unionists in prison, but a report from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions also mentions five people in the

USSR jailed for trying to form an independent union.

The ICFTU reports more than 200 trade unionists murdered worldwide, notably in Chile, Paraguay, El Salvador and Brazil.

MYTHS OF FREE ENTERPRISE

Can Thatcherism work? Its supporters point to South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong as examples of how untrammelled dog-eat-dog free enterprise can prosper.

It's a prosperity built on hell-holes for the workers of those countries. And many economists have pointed out that the Thatcherite argument is wrong, even

in narrow capitalist terms. South Korea and Taiwan have developed with a very high degree of government regulation.

Hong Kong seemed to be the last Thatcherite showcase. But a feature in the Financial Times last week quotes the head of Hong Kong's civil service: "The idea that we are a freewheeling laissez-faire society is total baloney".

"Many of the territory's largest and most prosperous companies", reports the FT, "have become strong not because of...free enterprise, but because of profits made possible through government-guaranteed monopolies, called schemes of control". Hong Kong also has a larger proportion of its population in public housing than almost any country in the world — 48%.

AID

The Tories have cut aid to poor countries severely. You might wonder why they bother to continue sending any at all.

The answer is that a lot of aid goes into the profits of British companies. Over 50 per cent of the aid paid out between 1978 and 1985 went to four companies, GEC, NEI, Davy McKee and Balfour Beatty.

According to a parliamentary committee report, these companies form a strong and vociferous lobby in favour of aid projects.

SELL-OFF RIP-OFF

The Tory government has lost hundreds of thousands of pounds of public money through a privatisation scheme.

The contract for selling off surplus military vehicles in Scotland was handed to a private company — which then went bankrupt before paying for the vehicles.

The corresponding contract in most of England and Wales has been handed over to British Car Auctions. By a strange coincidence, in the same year as BCA got that contract, it started giving money regularly to the Tory Party, and Dennis Thatcher was made a director of another company controlled

ed by BCA's owner David Wickens.

INVEST

Are the Tories really reviving British capitalism? 27 years ago, in 1970, Britain was putting less of national income to gross fixed investment — 19% — than any other big capitalist country except the US.

By 1979 things were worse. Britain was investing 18% of national income, and was behind even the US. Now figures are out for 1986: Britain invested 17% of national income.

Japan invests about 28% of national income.

Kinnock gets cheers but gives no lead for a fight

Anyone who slept through the General Election and awoke only when Neil Kinnock addressed the Scottish miners' gala in Edinburgh on the following Saturday could be forgiven for thinking that Labour had won the General Election — and, of course, Labour did win the General Election in Scotland, winning 50 of the 72 seats.

In stark contrast to his reception two years ago — when in the immediate aftermath of the miners' strike, stewards were out in force to ensure "good behaviour" on the part of the audience — Kinnock received two standing ovations before he had even opened his mouth, and was repeatedly interrupted by applause when he proceeded to do so.

The message from Kinnock's rapturous reception was clear enough. In the short term at least, his prestige had risen enormously. Labour might have lost the election, but Kinnock's image as a "strong leader" had gained a certain credibility. And Kinnock clearly enjoyed basking in it.

Kinnock declared that it was not a time for licking wounds nor a time for mourning. He was not in Edinburgh to bury the dead but to give life to the living. The last general election campaign had begun in Scotland, and now so too was the cam-



aign for the next one.

Anyone foolish enough to believe that Our Leader was about to call for a campaign based on supporting workers in struggle and fighting the Tories every inch of the way both inside and outside of Parliament would have been sorely disappointed, however.

On the contrary, Kinnock stressed his opposition to "gestures and stunts" and his support for "securing change only through the ballot box". He likewise stressed the importance of "the broad appeal of our Party" and "the unity of our movement". There was not even a passing reference to active opposition to the Tories' imminent attacks on working class rights and interests.

Kinnock was right to say that this is not time for mourning and that ongoing campaigning is a necessity. But the campaigning needed is not one which sacrifices principles to delusions of vote-cadging. What is needed is a fight against the Tories every inch of the way, and a fight against those in the labour movement who seek to hold back such working-class struggles.

BIGOT REPRIEVED

The Labour Party's national constitutional committee last week rejected the proposal that Sam Campbell should be expelled from the Labour Party.

Campbell, the former convenor of Midlothian District Council, plumb-ed the depths of notoriety last August when he described Catholics as "the enemy" while speaking at an Orange rally. He called for the closure of Catholic schools and for the withholding of television license fees in protest at "Catholic influence" on television programmes.

After his outburst had been widely reported in the media, Campbell resigned his convenorship and also, his membership of the Orange Order. The council's Labour Group disassociated itself from his views and suspended him indefinitely. The Labour Party National Executive Committee subsequently reduced the suspension to six months.

However, the campaign to drive Campbell out of the labour movement can only be weakened by the antics of the professional anti-imperialists of the ilk of Glasgow Labour Committee on Ireland.

To advocate expulsion of all Orange Order members from the Labour Party, in the manner of Glasgow LCI, is not only misguided in itself but also completely irrelevant to the issue of Sam Campbell, who has formally resigned from the Order in any case. Campbell, and others of his type, should be judged like anyone else: on the basis of what they say and do.

Cain and Abel

Jim Denham writes on the SDP/Liberal feud

ONE OF the few pleasing aspects of the General Election results has been the deflation of the Alliance's overblown pretensions, and — in particular — the humiliation of the repellent Dr Owen.

As Bryan Gould commented, "After this, the doctor will have to go off and found a new country".

The discomfiting of the Alliance is, admittedly, pretty poor consolation when set against the victory of the Thatcherite hordes, but once again the political landscape is clearly Them against Us, with Us represented (however inadequately) by the working-class-based Labour Party.

The smug opportunists of the SDP have come off worse than the self-righteous no-hopers of the Liberal Party — a fact that was obviously not lost upon that nice Mr Steel, who wasted no time on pressing home his advantage vis-a-vis Dr Death.

As the *Guardian* (which generally supports the Liberals, but surprisingly seemed to sort of call for a Labour vote on 11 June) commented on Friday: "Perhaps Mr David Steel was tactless to begin murmuring about a merger of the Liberals and SDP so soon after defeat.

"But tact and necessity are not always easy bedfellows... Yesterday's *Guardian* Marplan poll establishes beyond reasonable doubt that a merged Alliance has a strength which a disunited confederation cannot hope to match... Why on earth, then, are Dr Owen and his four Westminster colleagues dragging their feet so destructively — and splitting the SDP in the process?"

If you ask me, tact doesn't come into it either way as far as David Steel is concerned. William Rees-Mogg got it right in the *Independent* when he described the Liberals as combining "a certain high-mindedness of tone with an equally unmistakable temptation to engage in political karate". In other words, kick them while they're down.

The *Independent* is increasingly coming out as Dr Death's mouthpiece (despite having chickened out of giving voting advice on election day), and on Monday sprang to his defence with a stirring editorial: "The immediate crisis in the Alliance was precipitated, quite deliberately, by David Steel in the immediate aftermath of the election.

"With the support of Roy Jenkins, he attempted to bounce the SDP when the younger party looked at its most vulnerable. They reckoned without the determination of Dr Owen and the unity of the other four SDP MPs. These will, if pushed hard, declare UDI rather than be swallowed up by the Liberal Party".

The other pro-Alliance paper is the ailing *Today*, which on Monday offered the feuding Davids some sage advice, reminiscent of the late Tony Hancock at his most profound: "There is an ancient saying the two parties would do well to bear in mind: marry in haste, repent at leisure. There is no need for either party to act in such a hurry... A few more months of calm debate and reflection — until the party conference season in the autumn — will do no harm".

Wise words indeed. Happily, in their carnal lust for power, the Davids show no sign of heeding such advice. For the best coverage of this gratifying spectacle, I recommend the *Independent* for Dr Death's side and the *Guardian* for the Boy David's.

I'm not backing either side, of course. I just hope they inflict a lot of damage on each other. Meanwhile I'm reading the *Independent* and the *Guardian* with relish.



Dockers are gearing up to fight the Tories. See article page 12.

Resistance

From page 1

seem too clear about it themselves, they plan to do away with local education authority control over schools. Parents will have the 'right' to remove their children's school from the local education authority.

Polytechnics are to be taken out of the local authority system.

At the core of these Tory plans are measures that will further widen the gap between rich and poor.

That's exactly what the class war Tories aim to do.

If they are not stopped, large numbers of young people will become homeless and penniless — and be forced to starve or live by crime. The hard-won rights of working-class people will go down the drain.

The labour movement must learn the lesson of the eight bitter years since Thatcher came to power in 1979. It's no good trying to cooperate with the Tories while hoping for a Labour government to come to the rescue. Such labour movement weakness only encourages the Tories to step up the attack.

The trade unions must mount a massive campaign of resistance to Tory attacks.

Now, from the start of the new Tory government.

Mass demonstrations, agitation, education, strike action — we need to throw everything we've got at the Tories this time round.

There are encouraging signs that the unions might break collaboration with the Manpower Services Commission over YTS and JTS. Unions like the GMB are calling for an end to trade cooperation.

The TUC has decided to withdraw support from JTS. We need a huge, active campaign by the unions and the Labour Party against these Tory slave-labour schemes.

Tenants' associations need to be built to resist attacks on housing, and help in organising resistance to the poll tax. Local Labour Parties can play an important role in strengthening them, and linking up with campaigns on other issues.

If the labour movement fights back, the Tories can be stopped. There is not a day to lose.

Start campaigning now against the poll tax!

The Tories' plan for a poll tax is probably the most insidious as well as the most brutal attack of all those they are preparing against the working class.

The domestic rate we pay now will be abolished. Instead, we will have to pay a tax per head — a tax for each one of us over 18 rather than a tax per household.

This poll tax will be neither a flat rate nor related to income. In fact, on average the poorer you are, the more you pay — not just in relative terms, but literally.

The level of poll tax is determined by the spending needs of the local authority. So in high-spending inner city areas, poll tax

will be high. But if you live in a Tory leafy glade in a county that doesn't have to spend much money, your poll tax will be low.

In inner London, for example, poll tax could be over £10 a week on current levels of spending. And the government green paper says that anyone claiming unemployment benefit will be on an income level too high to qualify for rebate.

Everyone will have to pay at least 20% of the tax out of their own pocket. Rich people who live in Tory areas will on the whole be better off as a result of the poll tax.

If you don't pay, you can be sent to prison.

We've got until 1991 to mobilise a campaign against this

monstrous attack on working-class people. But we should start now. Labour councils need to be committed to a campaign of action and resistance. Unions who will probably have to administer the tax — the CPSA and NALGO — need to prepare to boycott its implementation.

Part of the Tory idea is that Labour councils will either lose money — by setting a low poll tax figure — or face widespread anger directed at them, rather than the government. So councils need to plan now for a campaign that organises and involves local people who are going to be affected.

The Tories can't be allowed to get away with this. Stop the poll tax!

CLEVELAND CHILD SEX ABUSE CASE

The enemy of the people?

ON 30 June the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) published its annual figures for reported sexual abuse of children.

Child sexual abuse covers a wide range of crimes, and includes the repeated rape of often very small children of both sexes, most commonly by members of their own families. The NSPCC reported 6330 cases over the last year.

The previous year the number of reported cases had been 2932. So the increase was 137 per cent.

Has there suddenly been a mass outbreak of criminal lunacy directed against children? Almost certainly not. Criminal it is, and some of it lunatic — but it is not sudden. It is routine and normal.

The NSPCC believes that even this year's high figures are probably not much more than half the real number of the sexual crimes committed against children.

What's new is that, as a result of increased public awareness that a vast amount of sexual crime against children takes place, many more cases have been discovered and reported. Some experts think that even the NSPCC grossly

underestimates, and one child in every ten is sexually abused in the home.

The assaults are covered up by parents, sometimes by both parents. The authorities — some doctors, for example — have long turned a blind eye to them.

That is the background to the uproar over the exceptionally high number of children (over 200) recently taken into protective care in Cleveland as a result of the work of Dr Marietta Higgs.

Separating children from their parents is usually destructive and painful. To be wrongly accused of sexually exploiting your own child must be peculiarly horrible.

All sorts of questions of parental rights to a proper hearing, to get a second medical opinion, etc., have been aired in the Cleveland affair. Yet the Cleveland figures — within which there may be included mistaken diagnoses and therefore injustice — are not startling in the light of the expert guesses made about the hidden iceberg of sexual abuse of children, to the truth of which this year's jump in reported cases is a sort of testimony.

The Cleveland figures are what you would expect — more or less. It is im-

possible for an outsider to know exactly where the truth lies in Cleveland right now.

All the more shameful, therefore, was the witchhunt — no other word fits — conducted against Dr Higgs by the entire range of the tabloid press, from Murdoch's sewage-smear of ferings to the Daily Mail.

The tabloid editors had no doubt that they knew exactly where the fault in Cleveland lay — with the dedicated expert who insisted that she had uncovered a vast and threatening social infection. Marietta Higgs was "the enemy of the people", and they screamed in chorus that she should be sacked.

Right-wing Labour MP Stuart Bell took up the cry in the House of Commons. This visceral reaction must itself be a sort of evidence of the vast scale of the problem Marietta Higgs — to her great credit, even if she has made mistakes — has tried to tackle in Cleveland.

The scandal of sexual abuse of children needs to be tackled with the same vigour everywhere. And the press must not be allowed to whip up a backlash which tips the balance against the recent efforts to bring the extent of sexual abuse of children out into the light of day.

Struggles inside Israel

In the past months, students in the Israeli universities have become increasingly agitated over the issue of tuition fees. As part of the government's economic austerity policies, funding for the universities (and for education in general) is steadily being cut, resulting in a rise in tuition fees. This year, Israeli students had to pay more than \$1300 for the privilege of entering the "Ivory Tower".

For next year, the university administrations want to charge even more — \$1600; some believers in laissez-faire economics want to go as high as \$2200 or even \$3000. For its part, the Israeli National Union of Students demands that tuition fees be fixed at \$800, as recommended several years ago by a government commission.

When negotiations proved fruitless, a prolonged student strike broke out, paralysing the university campuses. Students went out on the streets; several student demonstrations were violently dispersed by use of tear gas and club-swinging police horsemen. So far, the student struggle was conceived as a socio-economic issue, unconnected with Jewish-Arab relations; though student peace activists, who took a prominent part in the student struggle, pointed out similarities between police brutality towards the students and the behaviour of policemen and soldiers in the occupied territories.

The character of the struggle changed abruptly on 17 May. After several futile attempts at mediation, the cabinet was to reach a final decision on the issue of tuition fees. Education Minister Navon proposed \$1,150 as a compromise, and this proposal seemed likely to be accepted. Since the early morning, thousands of students gathered in front of the Prime Minister's Office, tensely waiting for the conclusion. To their shock, they found out that the cabinet had determined upon two levels of tuition fees — \$1,050 for students who had served in the army, \$1,550 for those who hadn't.

Practically all Jews in Israel are drafted to the army; the Arab citizens of Israel, except for a few communities considered "loyal", are not allowed to become soldiers, even had they desired to do so. Thus, there was little doubt about the racist meaning of the government decision. It was proposed by Science Minister Gideon Patt, member of the so-called "Liberal" Party, and passed by the votes of the Likud and religious ministers, against the opposition of the Labor Party.

When news of the cabinet's decision reached the students waiting outside, there were moments of confusion and consternation. The first to recover were the Arab students, who immediately started shouting "Down with the racist government!" Together with members of the left

Jewish and Arab students unite

wing "Campus" student movement, they rushed into the road, attempted to block the passage of the departing ministers' cars, and were forcibly removed by police.

Within hours, the shock wave spread. The students affiliated to the moderate left Ratz and Mapam parties joined in the protests; so did the leadership of the student unions, dominated by Labor. At night, angry students picketed Prime Minister Shamir's residence; some wore Ku-Klux-Klan masks, and carried signs reading: "Look in the mirror, Mr. Shamir!"

On the following day, mass protest rallies took place in all Israeli universities. Aside from student activists, the speakers included senior representatives of the university administrations. Deans, rectors and university presidents firmly vowed that racial discrimination would never enter the universities. Within two days, all Israeli universities officially and unanimously declared their refusal to implement the government's decision; this was clearly backed by a majority among both students and lecturers. Uriel Reichman, Dean of the Tel-Aviv University Law School, startled his students when he said: "Today I will talk about something more important than the law of property" and proceeded to denounce the government's racist decision. Many other lecturers did the same in their classes.

On May 18 Science Minister Patt was to be the guest of honour at a degree-awarding ceremony in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. One by one, three hundred science graduates pointedly ignored the minister and refused to shake his hand.

When student Yan Foreman went on the podium to collect his degree in biochemistry, he suddenly seized the microphone and shouted: "I refuse to take my degree while someone who initiates racist decisions is here!" Thereupon, the gathered graduates burst into shouting "Pratt go home!" The minister had to leave hastily through the back entrance.

Right-wing students, supporters of the Likud and of the extreme right Tehiyon party, made desperate efforts to organise counter-demonstrations in favour of the government decision; these ended in miserable failure. On 19 May student union elections took place in the Jerusalem Hebrew University. The right wing students suffered a crushing defeat and lost nearly half their seats in the student union council.



Palestinian demonstration

While demonstrations continued daily on the university campuses, two appeals against the government decision were presented to the Supreme Court: one was initiated by an Arab student who is a member of the Progressive List for Peace, represented by Yossef Bard, the PLP's lawyer; the other — by the National Union of Students, The Union of Arab Students and several Arab and Jewish students affected by the government's decision. (Aside from Arab students, the government decision discriminated against certain categories of Jewish students, such as cripples, married women and mothers, who are exempted from military service, and would thus have to pay the higher rates).

The controversy had wide repercussions outside the universities. Not only the Arab students, but the entire Arab community felt itself threatened and mobilised in numerous demonstrations. The Committee of Arab Mayors, which includes the mayors of all Arab towns and villages in Israel, took an active part in the struggle.

In the Jewish public, too, emotions run high. Anti-racist groups, civil rights associations and political parties all voiced strong protests. Of crucial importance was the position of the Labor Party, which firmly opposed the government decision. Labor Secretary-General Uzi Bar'am stated: "Morally this may be the most grave decision ever taken by an Israeli cabinet; it makes Israel similar to South Africa and Ian Smith's Rhodesia."

Never before did the Israeli Labor Party take such a position. Indeed, in previous cases it not only supported anti-Arab discriminatory measures, but also initiated them; the most notorious example occurred in 1976, when the Labor government introduced an amendment by which a

large part of the welfare payments in Israel were made conditional upon army service by at least one member of the recipient family. Through this system, which is still in force, Arab families receive welfare benefits much lower than those given to equivalent Jewish families.

The Labor Party's change of front was partially dictated by opportunistic motives; at exactly this time, Labor was engaged in a head-on confrontation with the Likud, its partner in the "National Unity Government", and the issue of tuition fees provided Labor with additional ammunition.

Labor was also sensitive to the turmoil among its Arab membership. Abed-el-Wahab Darawsha, Labor's Arab Knesset Member, voted against the government in protest. In a deeper sense, however, Labor's new position is a reflection of the deepening polarisation of Israeli society.

Spectrum

On both sides of the political spectrum there is a growing radicalisation; both racist and anti-racist positions are being pronounced more and more clearly. These undercurrents also make themselves felt in the big parties.

The Likud leaders were caught by surprise by the rising tide of protests. At first, Prime Minister Shamir replied arrogantly: "The Arab students feel too well in our universities; they are PLO supporters". This statement aroused a new wave of protests, from both Arabs and Jews. However, the sharp defeat of the Likud students in the Jerusalem student elections caused a second thought.

Maxim Levy, Mayor of Lydda, who is a Likud member and the brother of Housing Minister David Levy, declared his opposition to the

government measure; he stated that, as the mayor of a town with a mixed Jewish-Arab population, he feels an obligation to speak out against discrimination.

By 24 May, the Likud ministers had decided to cut their losses. At the cabinet meeting they agreed to reopen discussion on the issue of tuition fees. Thus, the anti-racist part of the student struggle seems nearly won. However, the socio-economic part still remains; it may yet happen that tuition fees will be fixed at a level equal for Jewish and Arab students, but so high that only the rich in both communities could afford to study. Thus, the Israeli students still face a hard struggle.

On the level of the anti-racist struggle in Israel, it can already be stated that the mobilisation of May 1987 marks a new stage in the history of the anti-racist movement. Previous anti-racist mobilisations such as the ones in Um-el-Fahm and Givatayim*, were directed against the open, extreme racism of Rabbi Meir Kahane. While being very important these mobilisations held the danger that, because of the concentration on Kahane, less open (but more influential) racists will be ignored. Now, for the first time, wide sections of the Israeli public have come to realise that "respectable" ministers, who form a majority in the cabinet, can also behave in a racist manner, and should be opposed as such.

*In August 1984 Jews and Arabs, standing together, prevented the racist Kahane from entering the Arab town of Um-el-Fahm ("The Other Israel", No. 10, p.4). In August and September 1985, thousands of demonstrators repeatedly frustrated Kahane's efforts to hold a rally in Givatayim, a suburb of Tel-Aviv (No. 17, p.4; no. 18, p.4).

Reprinted from "The Other Israel" no. 26, June 1987.



Israeli peace protesters

THE BATTLE FOR WALLASEY

With the TV lights blazing in his eyes and the cheers of ecstatic Labour supporters ringing in his ears, Lol Duffy rose to speak at Wallasey Town Hall at 3.12 a.m. on Friday 12 June. With a passion that silenced the Tories and Liberals, he spoke of Labour's enormous achievement in Wallasey. It is, very simply, this. If the Labour Party nationally had achieved what we achieved in Wallasey we would now have a Labour government. A Tory majority of 6,708 had been reduced to a mere 279. Labour's vote had increased by a staggering 39%. The 70th marginal on Labour's target list

will, next time round, be number five.

As a haggard Lynda Chalker left the Town Hall she waved to the press — her strongest allies for the past four weeks. On closer inspection, though, she wasn't waving, she was drowning. Next time Wallasey will be won by a socialist MP. In 1987 Wallasey Labour Party ran a campaign which we believe is a model not just of an election campaign but of how to build a genuine mass party and turn that party out into the community to build real popular support. This is an account of how it was done.

Labour sets out its stall

Labour's candidate was Lol Duffy, a Marxist and a working-class socialist who had been imprisoned for leading an occupation at Cammell Laird shipyard against job losses in 1984. Lol was clearly the candidate of the left, of those who wanted to resist the Tory attacks. Lol is a supporter of Socialist Organiser and this was itself made into an election issue.

Lol's selection was greeted with derision by the local media and the handful of right-wingers in the party. "Chalker will eat him for breakfast" they said. "Marxist to fight Chalker" was the headline, denouncing Lol's support for Socialist Organiser. Local right-wingers said his views would be a liability. 22,512 electors — Labour's highest ever vote in Wallasey — proved the fainthearts wrong. What they didn't understand was that for every one person confused by the 'Marxist' tag, another 10, 20, 30 people voted for the first time for Labour because here, at last, was a candidate and a party which fought for the interests of working people.

By Alan Johnson and Mick Cashman

Kim Moroney, Leasowe Community Centre worker, argues: "We worked as a team because we had someone up there that we knew would work for us and that's why we thought it was worth doing everything we could do."

Eric Smith, Vauxhall shop steward, commented: "It was a brilliant campaign from the outset. The concept of it, the motivation of the people. It was a campaign that gained momentum, taking people with it as it went a long. To give a personal example, in the Leasowe area we started with about ten people and ended up with at least a hundred people involved in one way or another. What more is there to say?"

The Party laid out its stall as early as November 1986 when, on dark and rainy nights during one of the worst winters in memory, we leafleted the



Lol Duffy: arguing socialist politics Photo: John Smith (Profile)


entire constituency to introduce our candidate and our policies.

"Lol is standing for Parliament as a working-class socialist who will not accept the privileged wages and lifestyle that buys people off. He will only take the national average wage and use the rest for the benefit of the labour movement. The campaign of Wallasey Labour Party will be open and honest. We will be calling door to door to answer your questions about Lol's and Labour's policies."

The effect was remarkable. The

party was reinvigorated and sustained a campaign over a period of some eight months.

Terry Hall, a community worker in the heart of the Leasowe estate is clear about the effects; "The campaign generally was brilliant. It was more than just a campaign for a general election. It was a process of mass education. You could see it from day one, getting stronger. People became aware of the issues. Lol was the kind of candidate people could identify with."



STANDING ON WITH THE CONSERVATIVES


THE REAL ISSUES IN THIS ELECTION

UNEMPLOYMENT

Since 1978 the Tory Government has changed the way the unemployment stats are calculated 15 times. If the new stats were never published they would show that there are now over 4 million unemployed.

NEWS FROM **LABOUR**

THATCHER HAS A DREAM



- Low wages for all workers and conditions
- No unions to protect workers wages
- The unemployed forced to work for their dole
- Young people in their place
- Massive profits and massive poverty

TORY DREAM—YOUTH REALITY

• Young peoples wages slashed by 13% since 1979

Lol Duffy says:

The Tories are a party of the rich for the rich. They have no real interest in the majority of Wallasey people—apart from the profit they can make out of them.

THE CASE FOR LABOUR

Trade Unions, the unemployed, women, the old, the disabled and the low-paid. We have all suffered under a vicious years of Tory rule. Thatcher now says she wants to wipe out socialism forever. Join us in the fight to stop her!

PUBLIC MEETING

8th MAY, WALLASEY TOWN HALL, 7.45 PM.

DENNIS SKINNER - MP for Bolton and leading member of the Campaign Group of MPs.

BETTY HEATHFIELD - Women Against Pit Closures.

LOL DUFFY - Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Wallasey.

Plus speakers from local Trade Unions.

Published by WALLASEY LABOUR PARTY, 103 Seacombe Road, Wallasey. Printed by WIRRAL PRESS, 117 Wirral Street, Wallasey.

Wallasey had been held by the Conservatives since the seat was created in 1918. Local Tories see the seat as their birth-right. The inheritance was passed on in 1974 from the Rt. Hon. A.E. Marples, after 29 years of service to the Tory cause, to a Mrs Lynda Chalker. Chalker is Merseyside's very own Margaret Thatcher — rich and out of touch.

She was educated at the schools of the privileged, Roedean and Heidelberg. She is now married to Clive Hugh Alexander Landa who sits very happily on the board of directors of a mere seven companies and is managing director of the Pearl and Dean Group.

Marked out for great things, Chalker was appointed Under-secretary of State for Health and Social Security from 1979-82 and Under-secretary of State for Transport in 1982. Her recent move to the Foreign Office was no doubt helped along by her previous experience as assistant industrial advisor to Barclays Bank International. So here she was standing on the

The battleground

threshold of the "glittering prizes" of office with only an "unelectable" Labour candidate to oppose her. What could be easier?

But Wallasey in 1987 was not the Wallasey known and ruled over by MP Sir Chadwick Burton (1922-31) or Lt. Col. Moore-Brabazon (1931-42) or even old Ernest Marples himself. Wallasey had been ransacked by eight years of Thatcherism.

*Unemployment in Wallasey in 1979 stood at 3,600. By 1987 it had doubled to 7,400 — an unemployment rate of 18.5%. Drug abuse is threatening to sweep some estates, bringing with it misery for working class youth.

*The Health Service had been decimated. Wallasey hospitals had been falling line nine-pins — Victoria Central Hospital, the Leasowe

Hospital, the Women's Hospital and Maternity Hospital were all closed. The 3059 people waiting for hospital treatment in the Wirral in 1985 had gone up to 3130 waiting in line, in pain, in 1987.

Beds

Of the 361,311 beds lost from the NHS since 1981, Merseyside is the worst hit area. The only remaining unit in Wallasey provides an accident and emergency service from 9 to 5! Mrs. D. Ambrose, a nurse at the unit, was featured in a Labour Party leaflet in the final week of the campaign:

"I am a nurse at what is left of Victoria Central Hospital. Our Wallasey Health Service has barely survived

two Thatcher terms. It won't survive a third. We need Lol Duffy as our MP. He is committed to a decent health service in Wallasey. It's up to all the people in Wallasey to act now. It is too far, and for many, too expensive, to go to another accident and emergency unit on the Wirral or Arrowe Park".

And Chalker — this "battler for Wallasey" — was junior minister for health in the Tory government that closed the hospitals, from 1979-82.

*Education: Since 1979 445 teachers have been sacked and many schools closed. The Tory local authority even opposed the remission of college fees for the unemployed.

*Transport: Rose Butler, a Wallasey pensioner, summed up the feelings of many when she wrote: "I am a pensioner. My life has been

made a misery since bus deregulation. I rely on the buses, but the service has gone to the dogs. Labour is the only party really committed to improving the bus service. That's why I am voting for Lol Duffy on June 11."

And Chalker — this "battler for Wallasey" — well she couldn't really deny that as junior minister for Transport from 1982 she had been an enthusiastic supporter of deregulation of the bus services.

Moving about Wallasey the contrasts of wealth and want, of poverty and privilege are sharply drawn. From the leafy lanes of Wallasey village to the run down estates of Leasowe and Seacombe the reality behind the so-called 'North-South Divide' is clear to see: the age old divide between rich and poor.

Wallasey is, in a sense, a 1980s version of Charles Dickens' 'Tale of Two Cities', of 'the best of times and the worst of times'. This, then, was the decaying and divided Wallasey Lynda Chalker had to hold on to if she was to walk again in the corridors of power.

A SOCIALIST

On 8 May, the day after the local elections, over 200 people came to Wallasey Town Hall to hear Dennis Skinner, Lol Duffy and speakers from Women Against Pit Closures and local disputes. Never had the town hall seen so many banners — Labour Parties, trades unions, women's sections, Vauxhall shop stewards, Wirral Trades Council, all were there. The meeting was held in expectation of Thatcher announcing the date of the election the following week, which she did.

It was a marvellous meeting. We laughed until we cried with Dennis Skinner who can prick Tory hypocrisy like no-one else.

We cheered the striker over from Moat House in Liverpool and gave to the collection. And, eventually, the meeting fell silent to hear an appeal from Lol Duffy for a crusade that would be not the end, but the beginning of a fightback. Lol ended his speech by saying:

"We prop up this system. We work for it, we make it go. But it is not our system, is it? It's theirs. And when it falls apart, like it is now, we take the cuts and the pain, we tighten our belts, we take the weight of it on our shoulders.

I think it's about time we took control of it once and for all. Let's run it in our way for the benefit of the majority. That's what socialism is about — ordinary working people taking control over their own lives, working together to make a decent life.

But I'll say this. There is no easy walk to freedom. Socialism isn't something that Dennis Skinner or even 300 Dennis Skinners can deliver to you wrapped up in a bow. It will be created by us, fighting together to create a new society. It won't be easy but what price not joining the fight? What price standing aside? Join the Labour Party. Make it your party. Join the campaign for a Labour victory in Wallasey. Join the fight for socialism."

The meeting set the tone for the

The Labour campaign

campaign — a socialist campaign for a Labour victory. We knew there was only one way to counter the avalanche of lies and distortions from the local media. To meet and discuss with and explain to the people of Wallasey what we stood for and what we did not. We also had to be seen to be serious about fighting for what we talked about. We started to do this long before Thatcher named the day.

For months we had been carrying out a political survey of the constituency. By a door to door survey, asking for people's views on policies — Labour and Tory — we explained our policies, refuted the lies, and recruited to the party. We began to involve new people in the campaign.

Struggle

When a struggle broke out we didn't run away from it, scared. We stood with the workers and gave active support. A strike on the Leasowe estate, of women shop workers, put the idea of a socialist campaign for a Labour victory to the test. The strike was against harassment of staff by hired bouncers and for union recognition.

The picket line was, at times, literally, a battlefield. The Labour Party played a role of leadership in the dispute, alongside the TGWU, supporting the picket line, helping to organise meetings of support and raising funds. The strike was successful. The union was recognised and the hired thugs left. But we didn't leave it there. We brought those strikers into the Labour Party. "Make it your party", we said. Some joined and were the best fighters during the election campaign. One of the central ideas of a

socialist campaign for a Labour victory is to combine and integrate the political fight to unseat the Tories with the fight to strengthen workers' position in the workplace. So, in Wallasey, the pioneering work of the 688 Branch of the TGWU and of Labour Party members in unionising and creating a stewards' structure on local Community Programme schemes was used as a strength to bring into the election campaign. Those young stewards were tireless in their work, seeing clearly that it was one movement and one fight and the need is to tie in the different fronts into one coherent struggle to replace the Tories with working class socialism.

They worked shoulder to shoulder with trades unionists and shop stewards from the factories that are still left on the Wirral. Vauxhall shop stewards regularly had 20-30 workers from the car factory canvassing and leafletting night after night.

The local DHSS was leafleted every day for three weeks to talk to every unemployed person in Wallasey. We argued that they should "Put Chalker on the Dole", and join the fight for decent benefits for all.

We talked to parents picking up their children from school, explaining what the Tories' plans for education would mean to them and their children.

We talked to pensioners in homes for the elderly. Many who had voted Tory all their lives were, this time, persuaded to vote Labour. Chalker's vote against free TV licenses and the cut in the value of the pension being more important to them than tradition.

We held street meeting after street meeting. A leaflet — "Come and meet Lol Duffy at 5.30" — a car, a megaphone, and you have a political forum on a housing estate.

We organised a 'bed-push' from the site of a closed hospital to the only remaining unit in Wallasey. With coffins, hospital beds and uniforms and leaflets and speeches, we drew attention to the decimation of the health service in Wallasey. Lol Duffy met the nurses and staff of the hospital. He witnessed a young nurse straining to cope with over 30 geriatric patients with only two auxiliaries to help.

Some of the health workers were involved in the campaign. The Labour Party is now pledged to campaign alongside them for a 24-hour-a-day accident and emergency unit for Wallasey and decent staffing levels and conditions at Mill Lane.

We organised a cavalcade on the Saturday before polling with over 50 cars, hundreds of campaigners, mass leafletting, street theatre, speeches and music. It was possible to sense the mood in the town by this time. People began to dare to think: "Perhaps we could do it this time." Labour Party members in the shopping precincts would be asked by Labour voters with wide open eyes, "We can do it this time, can't we?"

More and more people joined the party and the campaign. John Reilly remembers: "I got involved because it was really well organised. It involved a lot of young people, people who wanted change, people looking for jobs."

Barbara Smith, Cadburys part-time worker, recalls, "I've got involved with the campaign because Eric did, my husband, and all I was going to do was make tea. But by dinner time I was totally involved. I just wanted to do more."

School students, too, found a place. The Labour Party members

The Alliance: Chalker's friends

It was the way the Alliance campaign workers (all 5 of them) referred to her as "Lynda" and smiled, that made me suspicious. "Lynda is going to walk it," they'd say. "Lynda is very popular, you know."

The Alliance quickly got itself into tune with the shrill cries of 'intimidation' and 'Marxist' from the Tories. Jon Richardson, their candidate and a member of the SDP's national council, was a truly spineless individual. Face to face with Lol he would be all sweetness and light. Then he'd go away and write his poison-pen leaflets about Lol being an "unelectable" jail-bird and a "self-confessed Marxist" who had "turned many Labour supporters and all floating voters against him". He used Frank Field's shameful attack on Lol to the full.

Richardson tried to start a MacCarthy-style witch-hunt against Lol for his support for Socialist Organiser. The Alliance published a leaflet saying:

"He is a self-confessed Marxist who supports the Socialist Organiser faction. This group's aims include 'public ownership of the major enterprises and a planned economy under workers' control' and even more sinister, 'democracy much

fuller than the present Westminster system — a workers' democracy with elected representatives recallable at any time."

One of the funnier sights of the campaign was the Alliance supporters trying to answer the questions of angry workers the next day. "What's so sinister about us controlling the economy then?" "Why should the bosses run it all — they always make a mess of it anyway?" And best of all, "What's wrong with being able to recall delegates? If we'd had that, you traitors wouldn't have been able to get elected on a Labour ticket and then keep your seats when you ran out on the party, would you?"

The Alliance lied to the people of Wallasey throughout the campaign. They knew and we knew that they were an irrelevance whose only contribution might be to let Chalker back in. Yet right up to polling day their leaflets pumped out the same message: "The Alliance can win, Labour cannot". "The Labour candidate cannot win in Wallasey". "This Labour candidate is unelectable".

In reality Labour's campaign took about 2,000 voters away from the Alliance — proof that you can win Alliance votes by providing a clear socialist alternative and a positive campaign not by turning ourselves into an SDP Mark II.

But the Alliance did its job. It confused just enough people to inflict the Tories on Wallasey for five more years. Over the next five years the Labour Party should take the Alliance very seriously. From now on we go for the jugular.

ELECTORATE: 67,126.

	1987	1983
L. Chalker (C)	22,791	22,854
L. Duffy (Lab)	22,512	16,146
J. Richardson (SDP)	8,363	10,717

TURN-OUT: 79.47%



who had assisted them in the establishment of a school students' union now involved them in the election campaign. A school student from Mosslands Comprehensive remembers: "It was the first campaign I have been involved in. Everyone was dead friendly. I was a lot younger than them and they all helped me canvass, which I've never done before. I enjoyed everything in the campaign. It got involved to try and get the Tories out because if the Tories stay in I've got no future. I'm still at school and the future doesn't look too bright."

Slave

So the campaign was also about recruiting the next generation of socialists. The Labour Party in Wallasey is now launching a campaign around the government's slave labour schemes — YTS and JTS — with petitions, leaflets, lobbies and meetings. The anti-Tory crusade continues.

We staged events with stars from Red Wedge like Billy Bragg and the Housemartins, touring them around the constituency. They even managed some a capella singing outside the supermarket at Morton shopping centre!

Red Wedge bring with them their fame and a political message. The first gives a bigger audience for the second, and that's great. They also gave us some of the only good press coverage we had during the campaign.

All this campaigning activity was combined with a painstaking canvassing operation. Ward-level organisers met every morning at 8.30 a.m. with the central campaign team to discuss the day's programme of activity, press releases, leafletting, canvassing. Any problems were ironed out and responsibilities allocated.

A level of organisation — generated out of commitment — meant that three canvasses were carried out and Wallasey was, within one week of the declaration, covered in the red of "Duffy — Labour" posters, generating a mood in the crucial first days of the campaign.

George Clarke, a former leader of Wirral Labour Group and still active in the party said during the campaign: "I've taken part in every election campaign since 1945 but never have I seen the party so well organised or so energetic in its campaigning."

And the workers not only came from Wallasey, but also from neighbouring Birkenhead, Liverpool and beyond. Towards the end of the campaign Kirkby Unemployed Centre was providing a minibus full of workers night after night.

Our campaign had concentrated on the real issues: unemployment, health, education, housing, pension the Tory record. We had set the agenda.

It quickly became obvious — to us and to them — that if the Tories and the Alliance tried to fight us on this battleground we would have a Labour landslide on our hands. The response was swift and predictable: smear Labour and whip up a scare campaign. What wasn't predictable though was that the first blow would come from 'our own' side. We had the grotesque chaos of a Labour MP — yes, a Labour MP — scuttling around newspaper offices handing out poison pen letters about our party!

Slander from 'M'

A scandalous 'report' appeared in Militant in the week after the election. It didn't mention the achievement of Wallasey Labour Party. It only lied about their involvement. They called themselves "the best fighters to get Lol elected". The truth is that the few Militant supporters who live in Wallasey were barely seen. In truth they canvassed once or twice, always trying to get copies of the Militant for infuriating local party workers.

A prominent Militant supporter

CAMPAIN

Marxist to fight Chalker

Duffy pledges to take pay cut

LABOUR'S prospective parliamentary candidate for the next general election has pledged to accept the national wage if he is elected.

Lol Duffy says of his salary he will not be used for the benefit of the Labour Party.

He will not campaign "to Parliament so we have a cushy life on privileged wages and conditions."

He added: "Our campaign has to be conducted openly and honestly. It must be about winning more people to the ideas of Socialism, about involving people in determining their own future as opposed to the present system of government which puts greed before need, respects wealth instead of health and divides black and white, men and women to keep its control."

He forecast an election defeat for Conservative Wallasey MP, Mrs Lynda Chalker.

"The Tories' mis-rule is about to come to an end and the people of Wallasey are already playing an important part in this. In the council elections last May, Labour gained Liscard and Moreton from the Tories, while being re-elected in Seacombe and Leasowe. If the council election results were translated to a General Election result, I would now be MP for Wallasey."

He said.

He attacked Mrs Chalker's record, saying she is Foreign Minister for a government that refuses to take effective action on

Apartheid and that she was a junior health minister when Victoria Central Hospital was closed down.

He also pointed to the four million on the dole and accused the Conservative government of condemning 11 to 12 million people to live in poverty.

As part of his election strategy, Mr Duffy says he will attend community group meetings, trade unions and public meetings and the local Labour Party will be canvassing door to door.

Guest at Dele...

story the Tories pushed for four weeks. Here's the story of the 'screaming hordes'.

For months the Labour Party had been organising lobbies of Lynda Chalker's Tory HQ in Wallasey. They had always been peaceful. We leafleted passers-by, made our protest, and then took the protest to the nearby shopping precinct to carry on leafleting and talking to people about the issues.

Very successful lobbies had been held on the abolition of the maternity grant and death grant, on unemployment and on the Tory record on women.

Once, Chalker even allowed a delegation in to quiz her about cuts in benefits. She turned out to be a remarkably ignorant woman. Debbie Williams, a full-time welfare rights advisor recalls: "I nearly fell off my chair at some of the rubbish she came out with. She just didn't know anything about the benefits system."

"She tried to tell us that people on government schemes can get special help with their mortgages! That's just not true. She even said the solution was for unemployed people to start saving. She seemed amazed when we said it was not possible to save and survive on the dole. It was like 'let them eat cake' all over again."

Embarrassed

Chalker had been completely embarrassed and was not going to let it happen again. Our next lobby — on the question of South Africa and the imprisoned union leader Moses Mayekiso — was ignored by her. Instead a die-hard Tory supporter from Wirral West snatched leaflets out of our hands and scratched at our placards, hurling abuse. The women present from the Labour Party told her to calm down.

Meanwhile some local youths, who had nothing to do with the picket, had stuck a few stickers on her car. Well, that was it. Over the next few weeks we watched as this incident was transformed from a few stickers on a car, to a case of verbal abuse, then of physical attack and, finally, two days before polling, to 'Screaming Hordes Attack Offices'.

The Tories also tried to make big play out of the presence in Wallasey of Labour Party members who came in from other constituencies to work in target marginals for a socialist campaign. These people were put up by local Labour Party members. They worked under the direction of the central campaign committee. They worked tirelessly for a Labour victory. But seeing another chance to smear and distort the truth the Tories pumped out the tale of an "imported dirty tricks brigade" attacking pensioners!

Chalker backed out of debate after debate. An NUT-organised 'Education Forum' drew over 500 people. Chalker never even replied to the NUT's invitation and didn't turn up on the evening.

The only debate she attended was organised by the Wallasey Council of Churches. A list of 16 written questions was known to Chalker and Richardson over a week in advance. We were told that such a list existed at 11 am on the morning of the meeting. Chalker and Richardson, sitting next to each other and exchanging frequent whispers, droned out prepared answers to prepared questions. Lol — a lion in the Christians' den — spoke from the heart of poverty, unemployment, inequality and of the socialist alternative.

One of the church-goers was canvassed the next day. She said that the women had been discussing the previous night's meeting at their coffee morning and were voting for Lol. No wonder Chalker shied away from open debate!

Labour's campaign on June 11

On the day itself the Labour Party ran like clockwork from 5 am to 10 pm. A central team in the Labour Party offices, ward-level organisers, four committee rooms for each ward, an organiser in each committee rooms — we turned out 78.5% of the Labour promises won during the campaign.

When the result came through the hundreds of Labour supporters assembled at a 'Victory Social' fell silent. To have come so far and to fall short by so little was a cruel blow. Hardened activists were seen to have a cry and why not!

Some were convinced that the anonymous call we received the day before polling, saying that 'Duffy' ballot forms were going to go missing in the count itself was genuine. They pointed to the wild stamping and cheering of the counters when the result came through as grounds for suspicion at least.

At the count itself Lol Duffy delivered a blistering attack on Chalker for her campaign, on Frank Field for his treachery. He called for a celebration — "If Labour had done this well nationally we would have battered the Tories. Chalker has no mandate. She is on her way out." It was a victory in all but name.

The Opinion Polls

Radio City — an independent radio station — broadcast an opinion poll for Wallasey in each week of the campaign. The polling agency was Williams and Associates in Liverpool. The first two polls showed Labour still in the doldrums and the Tories were riding high. Both polls were given publicity in the Liverpool Echo.

We couldn't understand it. Our canvass returns said different. Our campaigning said different. The whole mood in the town said different. If the polls were right why had the local bookies stopped taking bets on Lol over a fiver?

On Thursday 4th, Labour supporters were leafleting outside Wallasey Village railway station. We met students from Liverpool Polytechnic, employed by Williams and Associates to poll Wallasey for Radio City. They told us that they had been registering a massive swing to Labour since the first week of the campaign, and couldn't understand the poll 'results' broadcast by Radio City.

The next day a party worker rang up Radio City's 'Election Unit' to ask for an explanation for all this. "Er...ah...we...you can get a funny impression from one polling site and...er...anyway, they shouldn't be talking to political parties...this is very worrying...er...I'll have to look into this."

On Tuesday 9th, the final poll was broadcast. It showed Labour, all of a sudden, neck and neck with Chalker! The poll received no publicity at all in Liverpool. By this stage that didn't surprise anybody.

A letter to Lol

"Thank you for a magnificent Labour campaign in Wallasey. Everybody worked so hard and we feel proud to have been part of it in voting Labour. We feel sure that next time it will be Lol Duffy MP! We have now decided to join the Labour Party."

The anti-Labour campaign

It was a classic example of a press stitch-up. You start with an anonymous "Wallasey resident". The resident, we are told, has written to Frank Field, right wing Labour MP for Birkenhead, to "seek the MP's comments on Mr Duffy". Field writes back on 5 May to say "Thank you very much for taking the trouble to write to me. I can tell you in the most definite terms that I shall not be supporting Duffy. I have refused to appear on any platforms with him and I hope Cammell Laird workers similarly will refuse to give him a hearing when he tries to gatecrash on our factory-gate meetings during the election campaign."

The next step was for Martin Hovden, the editor of the local freesheet, the Wirral Globe, and a friend of both Field and Chalker, to be given the letter and then to wait his moment. One week into the campaign, on 21 May, he struck. "Marxist Lol slammed by Frank Field" said the front page. He reproduced the letter for all to read.

s and lies militant'

Wallasey was seen walking through Liscard precinct a few days before polling day with a Terry Field sticker on. "Wouldn't you like a Lol Duffy sticker as well?" we asked. Oh yeah, sure...how's it going anyway?" she said. That says it all really about these "fighters" for a Labour victory.

The comrades have got every right to work in the constituencies they want. But they have no right to slander and lie about the campaign they leave behind.

Frank Field is best known for his support for 'tactical voting' and for calling for votes against left-wing Labour candidates. Field supports council house safes, opposes unilateralism and is opposed to women's abortion rights.

Threat

He was reelected as Labour candidate after threatening to stand as an independent. In Wallasey he was doing a job of work for Lynda Chalker, pure and simple. The Labour Party should have demanded he state his support for Lol Duffy. Instead it stayed silent.

Field has not been challenged publicly to this day by Labour leaders for his actions. Imagine if a left-winger had suggested that voters should vote against Labour candidates. They would have been drummed out of the party and Walworth Road would have imposed a different candidate.

The Labour leaders stayed well clear of Wallasey for four weeks. Chalker now bleats about her dreadful result being due to Wallasey being "Labour's number one target seat". What rubbish! She knows that within days of the election being called Frank Dobson and Michael Meacher had pulled out of planned visits. Kinnoch himself visited Mossley Hill and the neighbouring Ellesmere Port and Neston, weaving a path around Wallasey. The sum total of the front bench contribution to this 'key marginal' was John Prescott for two hours.

Chalker, meanwhile, had the support in Wallasey, of Michael Heseltine, Willie Whitelaw, Kenneth Baker, William Waldegrave and Geoffrey Howe, as well as the almost full-time assistance of David Hunt, Tory MP for Wirral West.

With the help of Dennis Skinner we held a lively street meeting and walkabout with Tony Benn and Terry Field on the Leasowe estate.

The Tories then began a calculated smear campaign against Labour. This is how the Tory dirty tricks campaign worked. The Liverpool Echo would ring up Liz Williams, the Labour Party press officer: "We have just had a phone call from a pensioner who wouldn't leave her name. She says Labour Party members threatened to beat her up if she didn't vote Labour. Are you going to deny this?" No matter what Liz could say the Echo got the story it, and the Tories, wanted: "Labour deny intimidation charge."

Radio Merseyside would receive a call from 'an elderly woman' who insists she was physically assaulted by Labour Party members outside the Tory Headquarters. We ask for a reply and are told the issue is closed.

The morning the phone-calls and the stories began, was also the morning that "bully-boy" scare stories started to appear about Labour's campaign in Broad Green and Bermondsey. It was obviously being directed like a stage-play from Tory Headquarters in London.

Blacklists

It became clear that Peter Shipley, a grubby little ex-National Front supporter who now compiles 'blacklists' of socialists for employers, was working under Norman Tebbit in Tory HQ.

One of the most depressing aspects of all this would be the journalists who would ring up, after some Tory had sent in some lying press release, and say: "Look we know this is all rubbish, but what can you expect? You always have to wade through this shit at election time. We are Labour supporters, honest, but can you comment on the allegation anyway?"

That night the Liverpool Echo's 'report' was headed, "Screaming horde blitz offices". This was a non-

The lessons of Wallasey

The central lesson of the Wallasey campaign is that when socialists go out and campaign for socialist policies with vigour and imagination, it is possible to create and sustain mass popular support. When socialists do this they also build the Labour Party and labour movement itself — membership in Wallasey has virtually doubled.

The Labour Party is transformed in the process from an inward-looking, committee-dominated organisation obsessed with rules, regulations and resolutions into an outward-going open campaigning party; a natural forum for working class people to come together and discuss how to change the world and plan to go out and “do the business”.

The likes of Marxism Today, New Socialist and New Statesman and Frank Field are transfixed by Thatcherism, like a rabbit caught in a car’s headlights. Their only answer to it is to move to the right. They tell us that Thatcher is a new phenomenon and that we are old-fashioned socialists. And they propose a return to the politics of the Lib-Lab pact of the 1970s as a solution! They cannot understand that socialism can be made a popular force, but only if it is a socialism which lives and breathes in time, which is present and lives in every factory, office and estate, which is a clear, working class socialist alternative to Thatcherism and not a ‘fuddled fiddle in the muddled middle’.

Beyond

Only a socialism which preserves but moves *beyond* the decent, love-thy-neighbour caring alternative offered by Kinnock is capable of challenging Thatcher in the 1980s and 1990s.

The party leadership ran a positive, at times powerful, anti-Tory campaign. But, in truth, you cannot attack the left of your own party for four years and expect to win a general election. Imagine if all the passion of Kinnock’s “Big Sister is conning you” speech, all the power of Gould’s assaults on Tory privilege, all the aggression of Healey’s attack on Thatcher’s “love affair with the Bomb” had been made part of the staple diet of Labour politics for four years.

A powerful anti-Tory crusade could have been built that would have focused the movement on unseating the Tories and driven the Alliance into the margins. Instead we have suffered four years of backtracking and fudging; of failure to support the victims of Tory policies such as the miners and the printers. Four years of Labour



Lol Duffy and Lynda Chalker at the count

Photo: John Smith (Profile)

always chasing after a political agenda they allowed the Tories to set. Four years of attacks on the left of the party.

Supporters of Socialist Organiser have profound disagreements with the Militant Tendency — we find them sectarian and an obstacle to united left action — but we are not so arrogant as to want to expel them from the party, turning the party inwards rather than turn our fire on the Tory enemy.

Crusade

Every Labour Party member now has a clear job of work. Carry on the anti-Tory crusade the leadership began for four weeks and will now almost certainly drop again in favour of attacks on the left. Labour Parties must turn themselves outwards and make themselves genuine campaigning bodies seen on every picket line,

in every tenants’ struggle, fighting every hospital closure, clearing out every DHSS snooper. Talk of kicking out Thatcher before five years is idle unless we organise a storm of protest from every corner of the British Isles against the Tories.

Socialists in the party need to combine their activity with a political rearming of the movement. We need to redefine our socialism. There can be no return to the Wilson or Callaghan days. We need to make our aspirations for a planned economy under democratic workers’ control live in the movement as a power to inspire and direct.

We need to spell out socialist policies for health, education, workers’ rights, civil liberties and bring into being a popular movement capable of fighting for such policies. for the idea that socialism can be delivered from above through Parliament, wrapped up in a bow, by 300-odd Labour MPs trooping down

a division lobby in the House of Commons is a consoling nonsense for children. Parliament is, for sure, a central part of British political life, but in the grown-up world we know that the forces ranged against socialism will need to be met with a counter-force at precisely those points where they will concentrate: outside the hallowed walls of Westminster.

We need to end the farce of Labour Party top-dogs hob-nobbing with police-state tyrants disguised as “communist party chiefs” or “trade unionists” in Eastern Europe. We need to make “Workers’ Liberty — East and West” our byword — we must stand with the workers whether their oppressors are quoting Milton Friedman or Karl Marx.

If we want to democratise our own trade union movement and fight the Tory anti-union laws — and the two are inseparable — then that means taking seriously the building of powerful rank and file movements in every union.

We need a government prepared to fight for our class as hard as the Tories fight for theirs, but we also need a movement capable of sustaining such a government in power. Such a movement is not brought into being in four weeks, with or without the help of Hugh Hudson, Brahm and stage-managed rallies. It will be built over a much longer period in the hurly-burly of resistance to the Tory attacks, in the patient explanation of what is, and what is not, socialism.

Where now in Wallasey?

Socialist Organiser’s headline on 13 June read “Don’t Mourn, Fight Back”. Right now, that’s the beginning of all wisdom. In Wallasey people are already fighting back.

A packed meeting of over 100 party members met to discuss the way forward. That meeting committed itself to carry out a recruitment drive to the party from Labour voters, to campaign alongside health workers for a 24-hour accident and emergency unit in Wallasey and for decent staffing levels and conditions at Mill Lane.

Alongside the party youth the threat of JTS will be taken up — we aim to make Wallasey JTS-free.

The thirst for knowledge of those awakened politically by the campaign should be satisfied by regular open political forums organised by the constituencies and made up of debates, talks, videos, and entertainment. Creches are essential at all events.

Women on the Leasowe estate are already setting up their own Labour Party Women’s Section as a direct result of the election campaign. Trisha Curtis explains why: “There has been much more enthusiasm in this campaign, and absolutely 100% belief in what we have been campaigning for. Everyone’s been right behind Lol because he’s an ordinary person, one of us. We organised the Women’s Section to get the ordinary women from the estate involved. By activities here on the estate we will draw attention to the Labour Party among women”.

Trish Maquire said: “Women will fight for issues that men would leave out like lighting up access, more street lamps, nursery schools — better equipped ones with more creches. It is about time women showed that they don’t sit at home and wait for the men but that they can also fight for what they believe in.”

Socialist Organiser is a weekly newspaper with a network of supporters on the left-wing of the Labour Party and trade unions. We stand for workers’ liberty and socialism — East and West. We aim to help organise the left-wing of the movement to fight to replace capitalism with working class socialism, in which working people can democratically control their own lives, and goods would be produced for people’s needs, not for

Socialist Organiser

private profit. Our policies are democratically controlled by our supporters through annual general meetings and an elected national editorial board. We urge every reader of this broadsheet to act on the lessons of Wallasey. Become a supporter of Socialist Organiser!

“Socialist Organiser did a fantastic job. They made their mark right from the beginning of the campaign. They worked so hard, so efficiently, so skilfully. Socialist Organiser has won a lot of friends and a lot of respect around here. It has certainly won mine. If we had had the same sort of campaign around the country we would have seen a Labour government without a doubt.”

Kenny Murphy,
senior steward,
Vauxhall car factory

“Supporters of Socialist Organiser played a central role in Wallasey’s election campaign. They offered a clear socialist alternative to the Tories. They were able to work alongside the party activists to create a united campaign which impressed me. I’d been a reader of Militant but I’ve learned what Marxism is really about since then. I’m now a supporter of Socialist Organiser”.

Marie BeCALL,
YTS trainee.

I would like more information about Socialist Organiser.

Name

Address

.....

Tel

Send to: PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

Leading a double life

1917
YEAR OF REVOLUTION

Thursday 18 May

In a telegram to provincial commissioners, Prime Minister Lvov urges them to take action against any "interference" by local committees into the affairs of the Church.

A thousand-strong meeting of workers of the Shchetinin factory in Petrograd condemns the decision of the Petrograd Soviet to send representatives into the Provisional Government. A general meeting of workers of the Volk factory in Moscow adopts a resolution calling for transference of all power to the soviets, and recalls their delegate to the Moscow Soviet for having supported a vote of confidence in the Provisional Government. A general meeting of workers of the Molot factory in Nishny Novgorod resolves to organise a workers' militia. In Tashkent a union of wives of reserve soldiers is set up and elects two delegates to the local soviet.

A meeting of delegates from soviets in the Verkhneudinsk region calls for continuation of the war and approves the entrance of socialists into the Provisional Government.

Friday 19 May

Minister of Agriculture Chernov calls for an end to "excesses" by the peasant movement. A meeting of factory owners of the Vyborg region of Petrograd condemns attempts to establish workers' control in the workplace.

8,000 youth demonstrate in Petrograd under the slogans "Down with the war!" and "All power to the Soviets!", and demand safety and health regulations for young workers, and extension of the franchise to youth. A meeting of workers' representatives of the Dynamo factory in Moscow calls for workers' control over production. Workers sack two managers and a foreman in factories in the Podolsk region. A general meeting of workers of the Zhest factory in Saratov condemns as mistaken the entry of socialists into the coalition government and calls for transference of all power to the soviets.

In Kishinev a congress of soviets of the Bassarabscian region passes a vote of confidence in the Provisional Government. A meeting of the Tsaritsyn Soviet rejects a resolution from the Bolsheviks calling for an end to the war.

Saturday 20 May

Workers at the Sestroretsk glass factory respond to management's announcement of closure of the factory by taking it over. A meeting in Kronstadt of the crews of "Republic" and "Lena" calls for the transference of the ex-Tsar to custody in Kronstadt. In Pskov an Executive Committee of the Supreme Soviet of workers', soldiers' and peasant deputies of the North-West region and Northern front is elected; Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries predominate in it. Factory owners in Ivanovo-Voznesensk protest at the decision of workforces to introduce a 6-hour working day on the eve of holidays. A general meeting of soldiers of the 8th regiment of the 2nd reserve sappers battalion, stationed in Kharkov calls for an end to the war and the transfer of all factories, plants and land into the hands of workers and peasants.

Sunday 21 May

The commander of the First Army on the Northern front reports of growing unrest among the troops, including refusal to obey orders, collapse of discipline, and circulation of socialist newspapers. On the Western front, the chief of staff of the Turkestan first rifle corps reports that soldiers are refusing orders to advance to the trenches.

The regional Soviet in Elnya orders the regional commissioner to carry out the decisions of the Soviet as the principal organ of power. The Executive Committee of the Satkinsk factory soviet in the Ufa region resolves to establish a workers' militia. The Kavkaz regional congress of workers' and peasant deputies opens in Tiflis, it advocates the 8-hour working day, confiscation of land, and support for the coalition Provisional Government. A regional congress of peasant deputies in Erivan calls for continuation of the war and support for the Provisional Government. A provincial peasant congress in Tambov, attended by 600 delegates, calls for confiscation of land and maintenance of the military capabilities of the army.

By Edward Ellis

There was a time when 'gay' films were pretty few and far between. Nowadays there are a fair number of them. 'Dona Herlinda and her Son', a Mexican film showing with English subtitles, is a particularly good one to add to the list.

It is a charming comedy about a middle-class, middle-aged woman in Guadalajara, whose son Rodolfo, a doctor, is having an affair with Ramon, a handsome music student. Like all Catholic mothers, she wants Rodolfo to be happily wed — and acts as a match-maker with a suitable woman. But Dona Herlinda is a woman of the world.

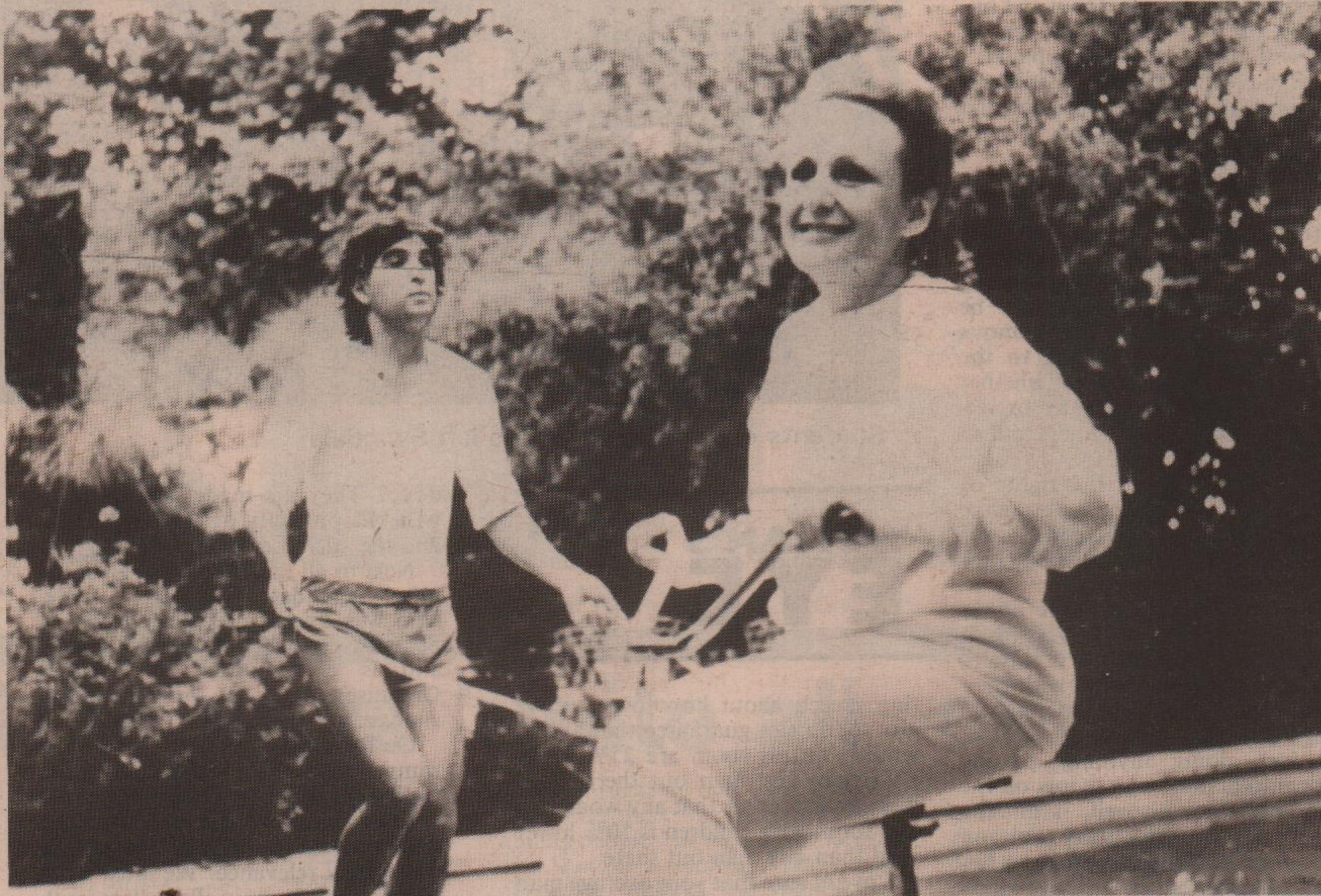
Comedy

Much of the comedy is derived from Dona Herlinda's calm imperturbability and feigned naivety. Over dinner, she asks an astonished Ramon if he'd like to move in with them, because 'Rodolfo has a very big bedroom', and it would be better for him than a hotel should he 'need something in the middle of the night'.

Rodolfo and Ramon are interrupted by her just as they are getting a bit carried away with their exercises one morning, but Dona Herlinda calmly inspects the washing, hanging up to dry, and walks away.

But she gets her way: Rodolfo is duly married. So the film centres around the trauma of this experience for the male live-in lover. Ramon, not surprisingly, is devastated by Rodolfo's marriage. Dona Herlinda, without ever once acknowledging the situation verbally, does her best to help him through it.

Indeed, she makes arrangements to facilitate her son's complex double-



Ramon and Dona Herlinda

relationship. She plans a new house, where the four of them can live together.

Distress

It's a lovely low-key story that in places is extremely funny, with the same kind of natural eroticism — though a bit more explicit — as 'My Beautiful Laundrette'. The performances, especially of the two men who are all over each other, are tremendous. Ramon's distress as he

thinks he is losing Rodolfo is touchingly portrayed.

But as well as its look at sexuality, 'Dona Herlinda and her Son' is an open window on the Mexican middle class. Sections of Mexican society have got very rich over the past twenty years under the impact of rapid growth and oil money — although now foreign debt and economic crisis are squeezing them badly.

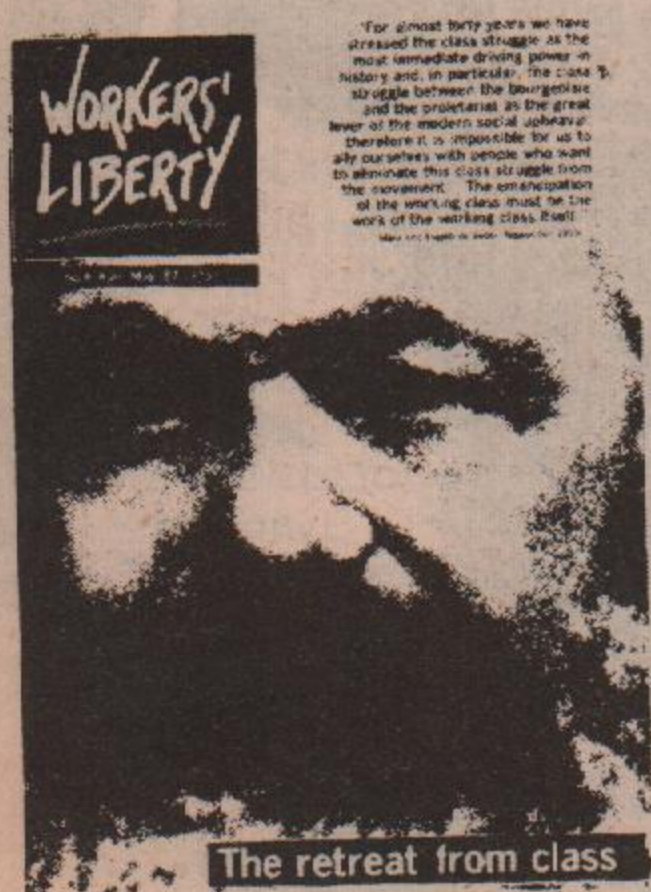
The characters in 'Dona Herlinda' all exhibit the acquisitiveness and materialism of the newly rich middle class. Rodolfo and Ramon have con-

versations in which they both have to shout because of the personal stereotypes which they refuse to take off. Social gatherings have a hollow atmosphere: they dance to imitation punk rock, not quite sure what they are doing.

The film quietly pokes fun at the pretence, while holding our sympathy for the characters. Everyone is nice; their weaknesses and stupidities are human.

It's a pity that 'Dona Herlinda and her Son' will not be seen by wider audiences.

For more about socialist ideas, read these pamphlets



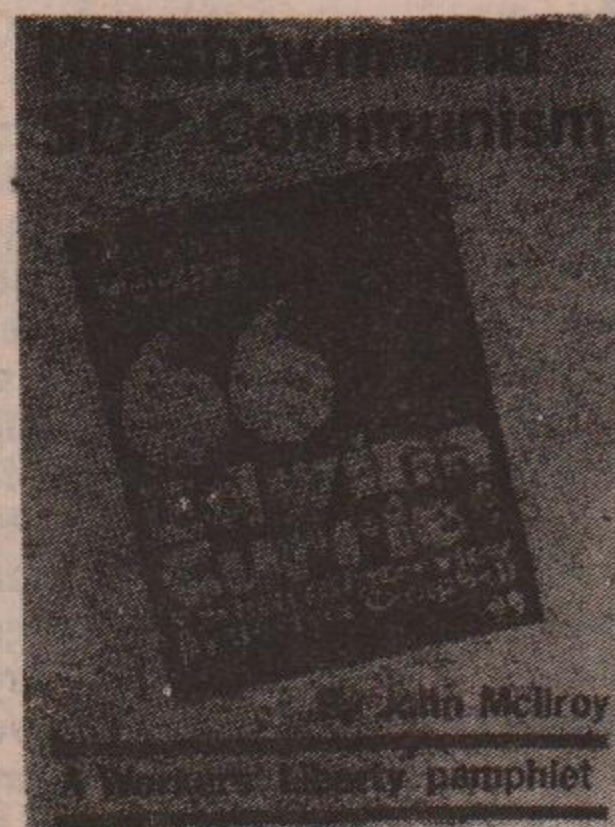
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Articles on the Labour Party, S. Africa and the miners strike. A Workers' Liberty pamphlet

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The rise of the 'As a... 's

By Jean Lane

Having been invited to the National Union of Students' women's conference in May, as a guest speaker, I decided to spend some time listening to the debates and went to my first hustings meeting since I was myself a student 11 years ago.

Nothing much has changed. There is still rhetoric from those who are trying to carve themselves out a career base in the NUS, sounding off and saying nice words about the oppression of women that we can all agree with and sometimes applaud.

And the revolutionary left still battles against the cosy-chat brigade and tries to persuade students to do something in practice.

The hustings this time around were between two women standing for the position of national women's officer. The cosy-chat, nice-rhetoric position was being defended by Julie Grant, who thinks that the world can be neatly divided up into autonomous parcels of people according to the nature of their oppression: whether they are women, black, gay or lesbian, disabled, Jews, mothers and so on.

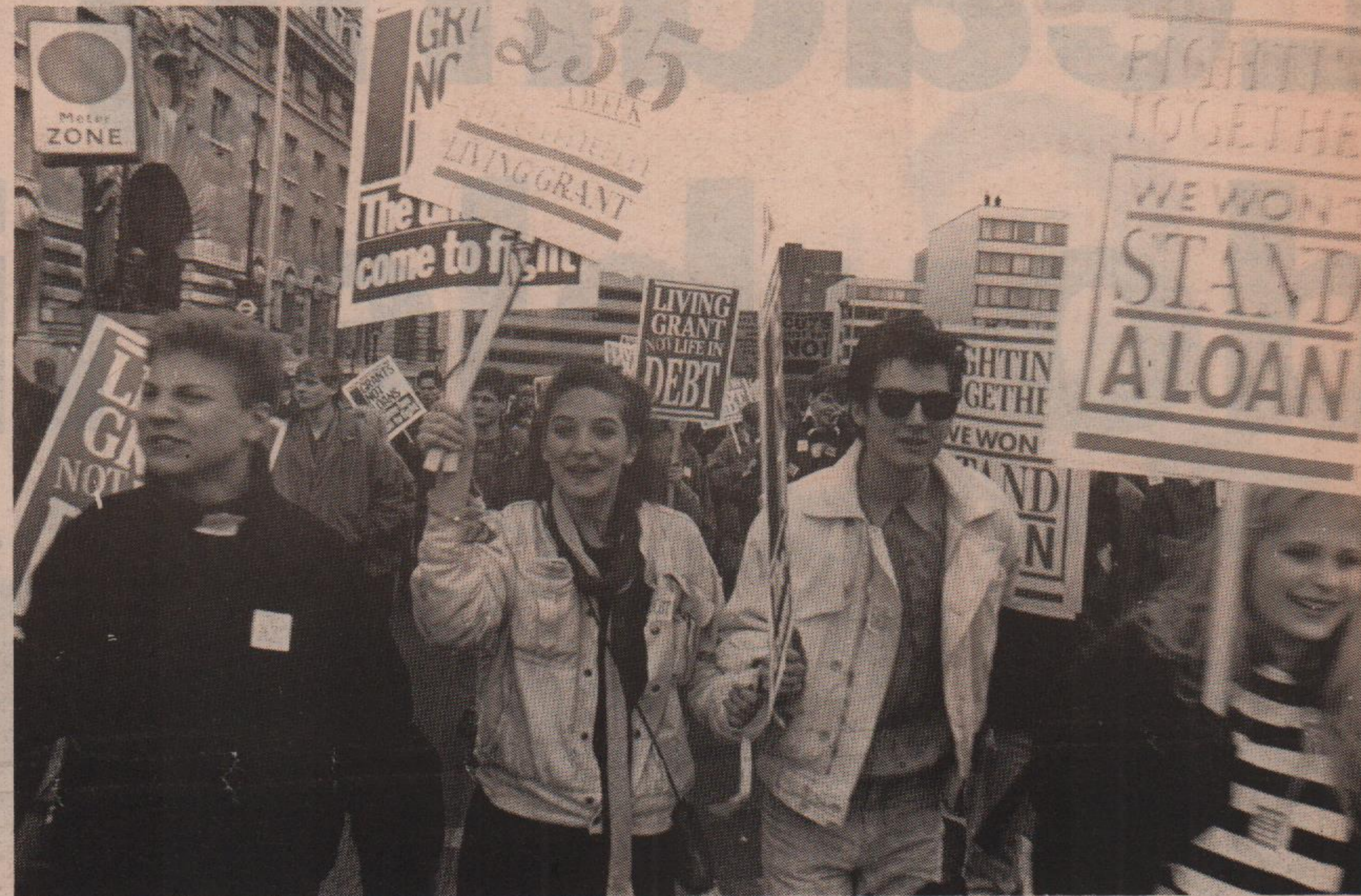
Her goal is to win the rights of these groups to organise autonomously and to have the power to define their own oppression, (no-one else having this right).

When they have won this power and have defined their oppression, it is very unclear (in fact it is unsaid) what they are going to do with their knowledge or how they are going to change things.

In fact, doing anything, putting words into action, is very low on the list of priorities — well, is missing from it. It's enough to say that you are a woman, a black woman, a lesbian...because that means you know what oppression is all about and are therefore better placed to take positions of leadership and to represent the oppressed. What you are is more important than what you do.

What it boils down to is that the ultimate aim is to take positions, and the best candidate will be defined as a black woman, as a lesbian, as a mother, as a Jew...This attitude was stated so much during the conference that after a while I felt like standing up and screaming: "cut the 'as a... 's' and tell us what you think, and then, more importantly, tell us what you are going to do".

During the hustings the candidates were asked what they proposed to do about women on low pay. Julie proceeded to give a very fiery and uplift-



Students on the march. Photo Ian Swindale

WOMAN'S EYE

ting speech about how low paid we are: "You can guarantee that all the women in this room are 25% lower paid than any man out there. And you can guarantee that any woman in this room with children is 50% lower paid than any man out there..."

I'm not sure that your average man on a YTS or Community Programme scheme would agree on the figures, but the general message is true, and the way it was delivered sent a righteous thrill through your nerves and made the blood quicken in the veins.

Work

But as one woman student said to me when the hustings were over, "These speeches and debates are all right, but whenever we leave these conferences and go back to the colleges, we don't hear anything and nothing's being done".

Well, careers aren't made out in the anonymous sticks, are they, where the donkey work is being

done? They are made on platforms with the publicity of the fiery words and the stirred emotions.

Next to all this blood and guts, the other candidate, Michele Carlisle, who was standing as a supporter of Socialist Students in NOLS (SSiN) and is a supporter of Socialist Organiser, was a very welcome change.

On low pay, she said that we must campaign in the Further Education Colleges and the colleges where working class women are attending and to whom the issue of low pay has a very real relevance. We must work to turn the unions in the colleges outwards, making links with women in the local communities and on the housing estates to fight low pay.

Other practical suggestions for action made by SSiN members during the conference, such as demanding the right to have Tampax and condom machines installed in women's toilets; and campaigns for better street lighting on campuses so that women can go out at night, were sneered at by the 'as a... 's'. These were economic trivia, diversions from the important issue of the right to autonomy and power.

Women bus drivers in a London garage who, last year, refused to discuss rota changes until they had their demands for tampax machines met by the management, might be

surprised to hear about that.

SSiN was accused at the hustings of being too concerned about politics to be bothered with women's rights (as if women's rights aren't political). As Julie Grant so succinctly put it, "SSiN are too preoccupied with the abstract concept of the international ruling class." I'm not sure that the black women of South Africa would find this "concept" so "abstract".

Michele, so far as I could see, would have been the better choice. Not as a Jew or as an anything else, but because she had the ideas and the energy for action. But, the trouble is, Michele has another "as a" which counteracts all the others. As a socialist, in a place where politics is a dirty word.

It's rather like when you go to your local housing office to put yourself on the list. You might be oppressed by damp, rats, overcrowding and ill-health, but if you've got a room with a bed in it, well, I'm sorry...

It's precisely because Michele has a political socialist outlook that she was the better candidate. The rest doesn't count for much at all when it comes to fighting women's oppression, but for the moment the "as a... 's" have it.

The rhetoric and fire will continue in the conference halls and the socialists, fortunately, will continue to work on the ground.

From page 10

Monday 22 May

The Provisional Government describes the situation in Kronstadt where power is in the hands of the Soviet, as "completely impermissible" and sends two "Socialist" ministers to Kronstadt to clarify relations between Kronstadt and the government. General Brusilov replaces General Alekseyev as commander-in-chief of the army. The editor of the Moscow Soviet's newspaper resigns in protest at the Soviet's conciliatory attitude towards the Provisional Government. A meeting of 65 landowners in the Rannenburg district resolves to ask the Provisional Government to take urgent measures in defence of the properties of landowners. A mass meeting of workers in Tsaritsyn condemns the government's "freedom loan" for the war and the formation of a coalition government. Peasant meetings in the Tulsk province and in the Aleksinsky district call for an end to the war, publication of secret treaties, and confiscation of land and banks.

Tuesday 23 May

A meeting in Petrograd of soldiers of the third infantry reserve regiment declares no confidence in the Provisional Government and calls for the transfer of power to an all-Russian Soviet. In Helsingfors a meeting of the crew of the "Republic" calls for support for workers in struggle with capitalists, and for the immediate convening of an all-Russian congress of soviets to assume power. Soldiers' wives demonstrate in Moscow for better treatment for soldiers and their families. A soldiers' meeting in Gomel calls for the transfer of power to "the people itself" in the form of soviets. On the Rumanian front soldiers refuse orders and arrest their officers.

The Shuya Soviet calls for an end to the war and publication of all secret treaties. A regional congress of soviets in Samara declares a struggle for soviet power to be premature and advocates support for the Provisional Government coupled with a struggle for control over it by Soviets. In the Penze province peasants seize land and free prisoners-of-war from working on it.

Wednesday 24 May

The Soviet of workers' deputies of the Gorodsky region of Moscow votes by 46 votes to one in support of the nationalisation of land, banks, and main branches of industry, and for the transference of power to the Soviets. A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kostroma Soviet condemns the entry of socialists into the Provisional Government and condemns the war as predatory and imperialist. By a majority of 200 votes the Kiev Soviet of workers' deputies votes to support the Provisional Government. The Tashkent regional soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies votes in support of a new offensive in the war.

A meeting in Tver of soldiers of the second artillery division passes a resolution calling for an end to the war and transference of all power into the hands of the soviets. The factory committee of the Brenner engineering factory in Petrograd takes over the plant and establishes links with the Petrograd gun-manufacturing factory in order to obtain orders from it.

Thursday 25 May

By 582 votes to 162, with 74 abstentions an extraordinary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies adopts a resolution demanding that Kronstadt "immediately and unconditionally carry out all the directives of the Provisional Government". At a mass meeting of several thousands in Voronezh a member of the Kronstadt Soviet calls for support for the Soviet, an end to the war, and the removal from power of the Provisional Government.

A general meeting of workers of the Petrograd cables factory calls for extension of the franchise to eighteen year-olds; in the absence of an extension of the franchise, the latter should be recalled from

Turn to page 11

No, socialism is not dead

The new issue of Workers' Liberty is just out. The magazine carries an extended feature on the election and its implications for socialists. "No, socialism is not dying", argues that if anything is dying it is the Stalinist and bureaucratic counterfeits which has passed for socialism in Britain up to now. Workers' Liberty calls for a return to working class socialism.

An extended "Survey" covers the revolt of the Irish working class against the cuts which the newly-elected Fianna Fail government is imposing; the moves towards trade union mergers in Britain; the Soviet "trade unions" under Gorbachev; the prospect of an international trade war; the defeat of the Labour Party in the Maltese elections; the prospects for Australian labour; and the state of British Labour's youth movement.

Features include an examination of the recent spate of large-scale financial scandals in the City; an at-

Jack Cleary reviews 'Workers Liberty' no.7

tempt to explain the recent blood feud between factions of the so-called INLA, which killed 13 people; an explanation of modern architecture; an assessment by Clive Bradley of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution as used by most Trotskyists; an interview with Zbigniew Kowalewski, a leader of the left wing of Solidarnosc, on Gorbachev's reforms, and the second part of Brian Pearce's article on the development of the Bolshevik Party.

Of special interest is an excerpt from a long interview by Al Richardson with the veteran West Indian Marxist CLR James.

A new feature in this issue of Workers' Liberty is "Forum" containing responses from readers.

Workers' Liberty no. 7 carries a debate on Jim Allen's play 'Perdition'; and a polemic against WL5 (on Ireland) by Geoff Bell.

There are also a number of review articles on subjects ranging from AIDS to the Hungarian Revolution to the experience of women in the miners' strike.

Workers' Liberty no. 6 — the first in the new style — was very well received. All copies had been sold out within four or five weeks of publication. We are printing extra copies of number 7.

A serious magazine of Marxist theory has an irreplaceable role to play in the period ahead as the labour movement takes stock of its experiences and hammers out a response to the sustained and continuing offensive of the Tories.

Take out a subscription to Workers' Liberty. Persuade your friends to subscribe. Take a bundle of six and sell them to your political associates.



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Industrial CPSA ballots on all-out strike

By Mike Grayson

A SEVERE blow has been dealt to the 1987 civil service pay campaign with the decision of the managerial union SCPS to pull out of their joint action with the main civil service clerical workers' union, CPSA.

This decision was announced by the SCPS leaders on Tuesday 23 June — just two days before both unions were due to have regional strikes in the south of England.

The decision took SCPS activists as much by surprise as it did the CPSA, and many of those activists refused to cross CPSA picket lines on 25 and 26 June. Nevertheless, the treachery of the SCPS leaders had a demoralising effect on the turnout by CPSA members.

CPSA now stands alone in its fight for a decent pay increase. The government has so far refused to increase its offer of 4.25 per cent, and the only route CPSA can now take is to ballot its members on an all-out strike.

This will be done after the final regional strikes, in Wales, the North West and Midlands, on 2-3 July.

It will be an uphill struggle to win the vote for an all-out strike, but all activists must now put their full energies into doing it.



CPSA members and officials on 26 June. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report.

1917 YEAR OF REVOLUTION

From page 10

the front. In Saratov the office-bearers of the sick fund of the local woodworkers' union reject appeals to subscribe to the "freedom loan" on the grounds that "any support for government loans, especially a loan destined for support of the imperialist war, is betrayal of the banner of internationalism."

A ship-repair yard in Odessa condemns the conciliationist attitude of the Odessa Soviet towards the government and replaces its delegates to it. In Bezhitsa the local Bolshevik branch declares that the activity of the local Soviet does not correspond to the needs of the moment, and resolves to recall its delegates from it.

Friday 26 May

By 580 votes to 162, with 74 abstentions, the Petrograd Soviet condemns the refusal of the Kronstadt Soviet to recognise the power of the Provisional Government, declaring this to be "a blow to the cause of revolution". The Provisional Government appeals to the population of Kronstadt to obey its directives. Soldiers in a machine gun detachment of the Sestroretsky regiment on the Northern front declare their opposition to an offensive and send messages of support to various Bolshevik papers. In Revel the provincial commissioner is dismissed from his post for refusing to implement the orders of the local soviet of workers' and military deputies. Workers take over the Guzhon factory in Moscow after management announces its closure. Workers take over the Gulavi factory in Moscow on the grounds that its owner is a German. In Gus-Khrustal'ny a regional congress of soviets condemns the war and the Provisional Government. The Voronezh Soviet bans all meetings for a week, on the basis of the needs of the struggle with counter-revolutionary elements. A meeting of soldiers of the 58th reserve infantry regiment of Voronezh passes a resolution in support of the Kronstadt Soviet.

Saturday 27 May

The Kronstadt Soviet appeals to the population of Petrograd and of all Russia to support the Kronstadt Soviet, which has introduced a stable revolutionary order in the town, not anarchy as claimed by the bourgeois press. The Tushinoguchkov Soviet condemns the entry of soviet delegates into a coalition government. The Rzhev Soviet adopts a resolution declaring that no member of the Soviet may be sent by anyone to anywhere without the permission of the Soviet. On the South-western front a meeting of soldiers of the 20th division condemns the Provisional Government and any offensive in the war; it calls for transference of all power to the soviets. A meeting in Tsaritsyn of soldiers of 155th reserve infantry regiment adopts a resolution condemning the war as in the interests of the bourgeoisie and declaring that "the re-creation of the International and organised fraternisation on the front are the shortest path to international peace in the interests of the peoples of all countries."

Sunday 28 May

A Moscow regional congress of soviets, attended by some 200 delegates, calls for support for attempts to achieve peace but support for the war effort in the meantime, and declares its complete support for the Provisional Government.

A meeting of the Bolsheviks in Voronezh condemns the Soviet's ban on meetings, claiming the decision is out of order on the grounds that the Soviet was inquorate (with only 60 out of a possible 218 deputies present). A mass meeting of workers and soldiers in Voronezh demands that the "socialist" ministers leave the coalition government, or else they should cease calling themselves socialists; the meeting also sends greetings to the Kronstadt Soviet, declaring it to be "the first revolutionary Soviet in Russia".

In Glazov, the first district congress of Soviets is held, attended by 56 delegates, and calls for support for the Provisional Government. An armed demonstration of soldiers of the 254th reserve infantry regiment in the town calls for the dispatch of all reactionary officers to the front. A union of soldiers' wives is formed in Tashkent.

MINERS

Scots NUM says 'unite all classes'

Delegates from the decimated ranks of the Scottish NUM met in Perth on 17-18 June for their annual conference.

Scottish NUM membership, like

COLLEGES

Left meets

The Socialist Lecturers' Alliance has been set up by union activists in NATFHE (National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education).

Its first aim is to oppose any sell-out in the current negotiations over pay and conditions. Beyond that the SLA hopes to organise against the government carve-up of further and higher education and to build a fighting union.

Over 40 NATFHE members met last week in Birmingham.

GLASGOW

Save Paddy's Market!

Opponents of proposals to shut down Glasgow's famous Paddy's market will be taking to the streets this Friday, July 3, to step up the pressure on Glasgow District Council.

The existence of the Market is a lifeline not just for its stallholders but also for tens of thousands of unemployed and low-wage earners throughout Glasgow, dependent on its low prices for staving off complete destitution.

But proposals for the future of the Clyde waterfront where the Market is situated envisage transforming it into "something akin to the Left Bank in Paris" (sic). (Do they mean rioting students and barricades on the streets?). This is fully in line with the Council's own crazy idea of making Glasgow "the Paris of the North".

Ironically, the Labour-dominated Council is thereby pursuing the Tories' strategy for "inner-city regeneration" — relying heavily on "private enterprise", encouraging more private housing at the expense

the workforce in the industry, has been in continuous decline since the post-war years. More recently, battered by the Tories and their stooges in the NCB/British Coal and choked by the grip of the Communist Party (CP) on the union, membership has nose-dived from 11,000 to 4,000 since the miners' strike.

But as the outgoing union President Mick McGahey — the veteran CP leader with more legends to rest on than laurels — handed over the reins of power to fellow CP member George Bolton, it was certainly not accompanied by any change in direction of the union's politics.

Sharing his predecessor's endorsement of the CP's "Eurocommunist" politics, in which specifically working class activity and interests are dissolved into an increasingly yuppie form of populism, Bolton's presidential

of council housing, financing various prestige-projects to boost the city's image, but doing nothing for the working class.

Not surprisingly, one member of the campaign to keep the market open described the council as "the jewel in Maggie's crown". They're there under false pretences, they stand under a socialist banner but they are as socialist as the man in the moon.

Friday's demonstration comes in the wake of several weeks of campaigning in the face of the characteristically evasive Council.

But the demonstration is not the end of the campaign. In particular, the issue needs to be taken into the Labour Party.

Labour Party members should be to the fore in helping the campaign against closure, in order to make the situation as painful as possible for the City Fathers.

Demonstrate in support of Paddy's Market. Assemble, 12.45 p.m., Shipbank Lane, Paddy's Market, Friday 3 July. March on the City Chambers.

address focussed on the need to "mobilise the entire Scottish nation and its people" in pursuit of the goal of a Scottish Assembly, which would allegedly "defend the interests of Scotland and our people."

An attempt by Bilston Glen delegates to add an addendum to the

resolution calling on the Labour Party Scottish Council to call a special Scottish Labour conference to discuss strategy against the Tories — which would have cut across the CP's populist broad frontism — was not accepted by the conference organisers.

NOTTS

Fighting the Tories



In the election in Notts we only just managed to hang on to Mansfield and Ashfield, and the result in Sherwood was very disappointing. It shows the extent of the damage done by Lynk and Prendergast.

It is about time something was done about those people holding Labour Party cards who got up and said "Don't vote Labour". If they get away with that they are getting away with murder.

The national result was disappointing, to say the least! Working class people will be screwed for another five years. I hope people now realise that the only possible response is extra-parliamentary activity.

Many rank and file UDM members ignored Lynk and Prendergast and voted Labour. We are using that, and Roy Lynk's conference statement in favour of 6-day working, to step up the campaign in the pits to recruit to the NUM.

The UDM have now signed a reshaped incentive scheme in the Notts coalfield, in an attempt to appeal to the faceworkers who benefit most from the scheme. It is the faceworkers, more than any other group, who have been coming over to the NUM. We are not prepared to accept the scheme because it is designed to sow divisions between faceworkers, 'out-by' workers and pit top workers; we must fight for the workforce to stick together. The

UDM's main support now is from 'out-by' and pit-top workers.

The issue of the privatisation of pits came up at the UDM Conference, with the Tories trying to give the impression that they were not seriously considering it. I think it is a smokescreen. All the fuss about Margam; 6-day working; sinking new 'super-pits' — for me that is the prelude to privatisation. Any investment they pump in now is to prepare for privatisation later, which I think will come in by the end of this Parliament.

We now have the reality that I have talked about before as a possibility in the Diary — over 300 miners still sacked and no Labour government to look to in the near future — and a Coal Board strongly backed up by the Tory government. We need to hammer out a policy, between the sacked miners and the union, about how to deal with this situation. We need a Conference of all the sacked miners to jointly work out a strategy that we can all believe in.

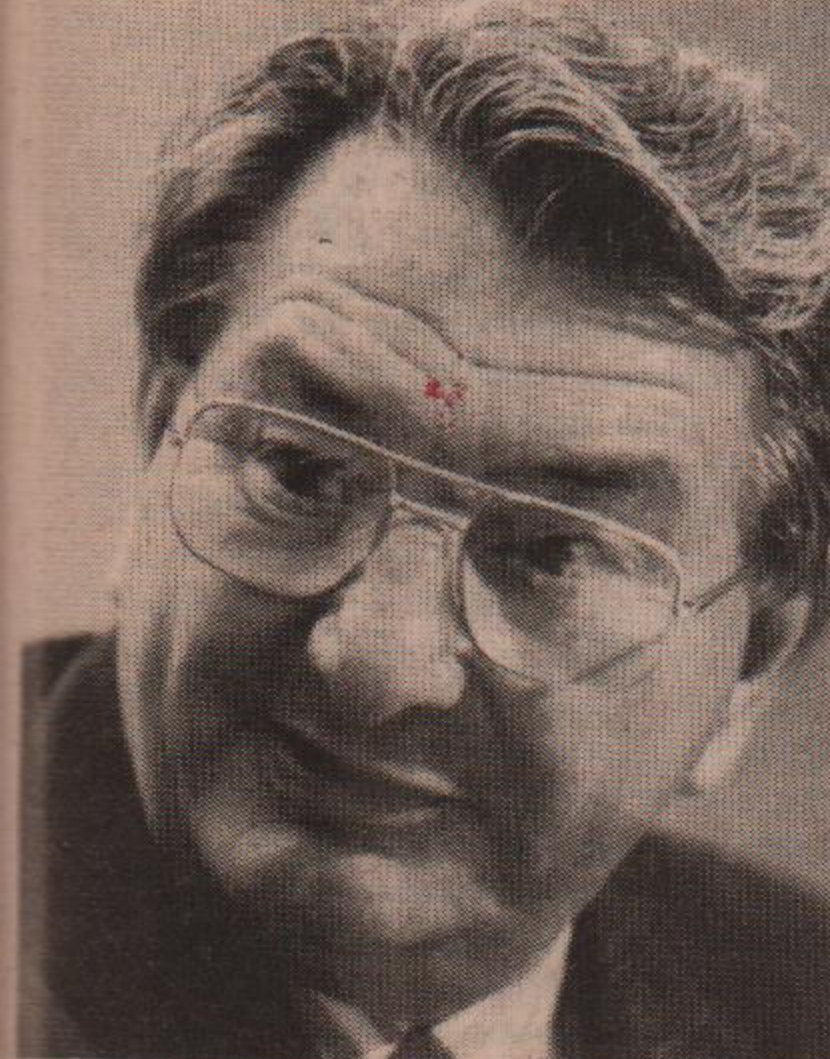
At the Yorkshire Miners' Gala a week ago over £1000 was raised for Notts Sacked Miners' Children's Holiday Fund. Tribute must be paid to those Notts sacked miners who went on a sponsored marathon — George Brookes and Albert Frogson — together with Notts miners like Stan Crawford who got back to work after the strike, as well as people from outside the industry. It was heartening. It is more difficult now to raise money and keep the issue of the sacked miners in the public eye; but the response in Yorkshire shows we have not been forgotten. We are not going to go away!

Paul Whetton is secretary of Bevercotes NUM, Notts.

SOCIALIST ORGANISER

Docks fight

Defend Labour Party democracy!



By Eric Heffer MP

The principle of extending democracy appealed to by the advocates of 'one member one vote' (OMOV) is certainly right. But that is not the issue at stake. The issue is whether we are going to have increased interference by outside forces in the Labour Party. The issue is whether Members of Parliament, once they have been selected, will have anybody to whom they are responsible and accountable.

Representative democracy means that the wards and branches can discuss an issue beforehand. They can have the candidates come to speak to them. Then they make their minds up as to how they ask their people to vote at the GMC.

If you change the whole system, then to whom is the MP responsible because it was not the body that selected the MP.

There won't be regular meetings of the entire individual membership. The GMC will still be there — but its



Demonstrators march to Marylebone police station in London to protest at the deaths of Mohammed Parkit and Nenneh Jelloh in custody there on 1 May and 24 April. Mr

Parkit had a heart attack and Ms Jelloh fell from a fourth floor window. Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report.

weight will be reduced. What is really involved in Neil Kinnock's drive for 'one member one vote' is an attempt to strengthen the Parliamentarians at the expense of the rank and file of the Party. It is an attempt to undermine the reselection process, to weaken and cancel out the democratic procedures established in the Labour Party at the beginning of the 1980s.

The way the issue is being pushed now, straight after the election, shows that it is part of a wider process. The Party leadership want to concentrate increased power in their own hands, and their OMOV proposals are designed to help them do just that.

No matter what the NEC decided last week — the issue is not settled,

the fighting not over bar the shouting. A number of unions continue to support the present system of reselection and they do not want to see it undermined. That is what many of them will fight for at Labour Party conference and there will be many activists keeping up the pressure inside the unions to hold to those decisions.

Break all links with the Tories!

Last Wednesday the TUC General Council finally decided 14-12 to boycott the government's Job Training Scheme for 18-25 year olds.

The vote followed nine months in which the TUC originally supported the scheme 'with reservations' after it was announced by Lord Young at last year's Tory Party Conference. The TUC then dithered when the government made the scheme national last March.

The Manpower Services Commission (MSC) now claim that 10,000 are on the scheme and that 2,000 join every week. The JTS means working for the equivalent of the dole.

Time was running out for the ditherers, although even on Wednes-

day Willis and the right wing were able to muster 12 votes to postpone the decision once again. But the work-for-the-dole element in the JTS had proved decisive in stiffening resistance in the trade union movement. Already the Scottish and Welsh TUC conferences had voted for boycott. In May the TGWU Executive Committee had voted to do the same.

Noses

Immediately after the election the Tories rubbed the TUC's noses in it by announcing that in future the slave labour YTS would in effect be compulsory and that they would put

additional bosses' representatives on the Manpower Services Commission.

The decision to boycott is a major step. It officially outlaws the scheme in the labour movement. But if the scheme is to be strangled at birth the decision to boycott must be accompanied by an action campaign, backed up by official instruction, for trade unions to refuse all JTS schemes in workplaces.

Existing JTS schemes should be picketed. The trade unions must pledge full support to unemployed 18-25 year olds who refuse to let themselves be conscripted on to JTS.

Though the General Council decided to boycott JTS, it left for "further discussion" the TUC's continuing participation in the MSC and on the other cheap and slave labour

schemes.

The cost of TUC involvement in such schemes is enormous. In return for marginal 'concessions', the TUC gives approval, encouragement and respectability to Tory cheap labour schemes.

Now the Tories are going for the jackpot — forced labour for youth. The TUC must decide to stop begging and start fighting. Organised labour must stop collaborating and organise serious resistance.

Labour's election defeat and the Tories' aggressive class war against youth finally pushed the TUC off the fence on JTS. The TUC should now be pushed to break off all collaboration and sever all links with the government.

Fight back now!

Last Thursday, 25 June, a TGWU docks delegate conference voted overwhelmingly to ballot 13,500 dockers between 3-16 July for a national strike if the Port bosses do not back down on their latest threat to undermine and scrap the National Dock Labour Scheme.

The National Dock Labour Scheme was won 40 years ago by dockers to replace the casual labour system on the docks. Under the old system you worked — a half-day at a time — when the bosses wanted you to. The National Docks Labour Scheme gives dockers a guaranteed basic wage and a trade union veto over redundancies. It is this element of 'workers' control' that has long enraged the bosses and the Tories.

The latest threat arose when Hapag Lloyd, the main customer at the Greenock container dock in Scotland, switched their business to Liverpool. Under the National Dock Labour Scheme the Clyde Port Authority is required to offer alternative work to all Greenock dockers who do not want to leave. But they say they only have work for six dockers, that there are no vacancies in any other West of Scotland port. They want to put the remainder who do not accept voluntary redundancy on the 'Temporary Unattached Register', thus clearly breaching the national agreement. They originally gave the dockers a deadline of June 30.

The move brought a strong response from the TGWU. The TGWU docks and waterways committee immediately denounced the bosses' move and, in line with national policy in defence of the National Dock Labour Scheme, called a national docks delegate conference and recommended a national strike ballot.

The Port bosses have been shaken by this militant reaction and they are now playing for time. Greenock's closure has been put back to 14 August, and the Clyde Port Authority has twice come back to offer increased pay and severance to entice the dockers to sell their jobs.

When the standard national severance pay of £25,000 was offered to the Clyde dockers, only three accepted. This has now been raised to £35,000, the sum used to buy jobs in Liverpool and London.

Because there is no alternative work in the area, it is possible that most Greenock dockers will reject the bosses' bribe to sell their jobs and resist the pressure from their union officials who have no stomach for a fight. In that case Greenock may become the major test case in which the future of the National Dock Labour Scheme is fought to a decision. Therefore the campaign for a large 'yes' vote in the national strike ballot needs to start now.

July 21 1985

YOUTH fightback

JTS

New 'Youth Fightback', 25p plus 13p post from 33 Hackworth Point, Rainhill Way, London E3. With articles on school students, Moses Mayekiso, Lebanon, and much more.