

tms

the next step

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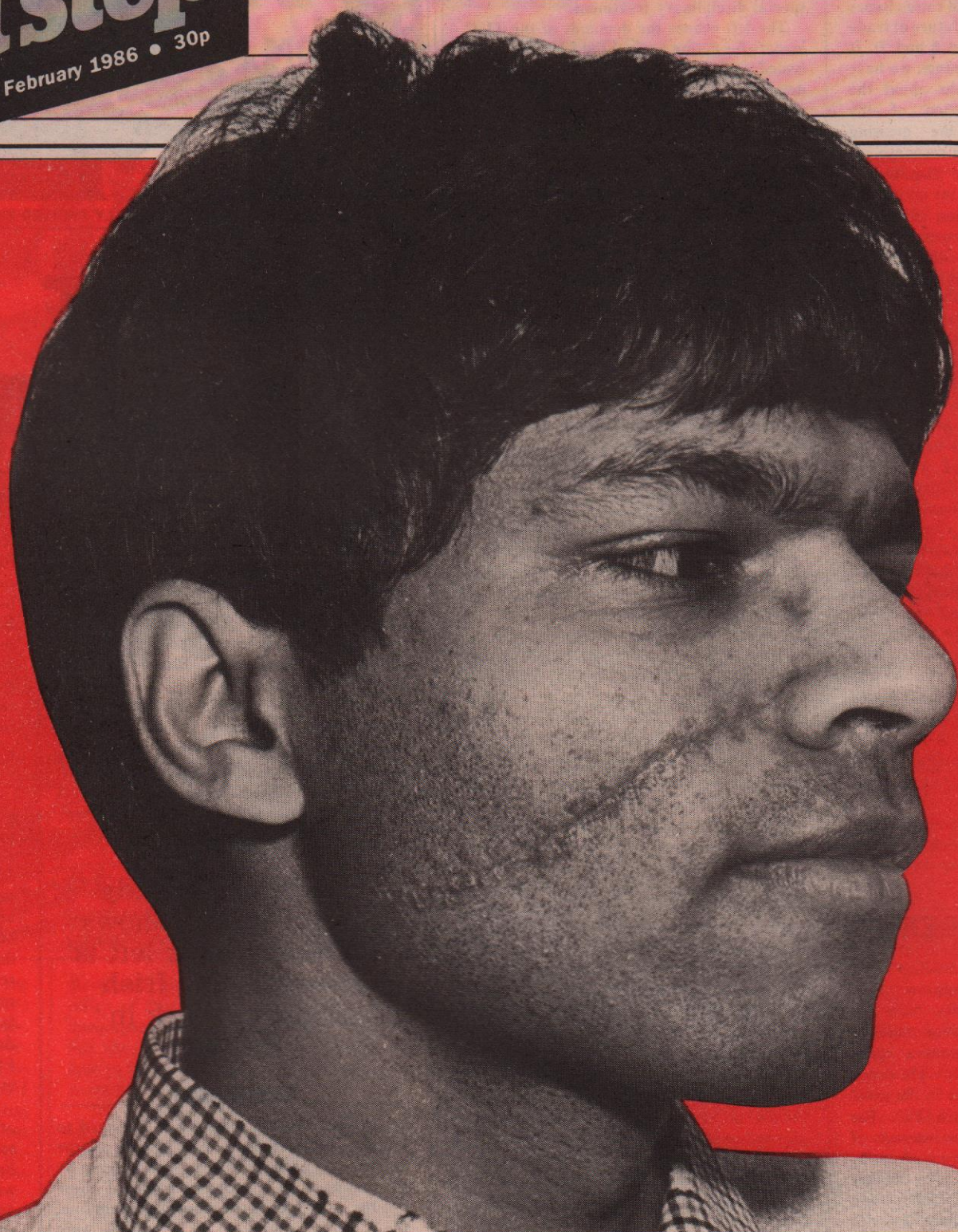
Eric Hammond or Ron Todd – what's the odds? page 6,7

The Irish War comes to London page 3

New Tory slave labour scheme page 5

Can Marcos survive in the Philippines? page 8

6



DAVE ROURKE

MUGGED BY RACISTS

Dino Patel was slashed with a Stanley knife — the latest victim of the rising tide of racist violence

Full story page 4

THE CHALLENGE OF WAPPING

The dispute at Rupert Murdoch's News International plant at Wapping follows nearly a year after the defeat of the miners' strike and raises issues of historic importance for the future of trade unionism in Britain (see pages 6 and 7). It underlines forcefully the warnings we have given in *tns* in recent months about the increasingly coercive direction of the employers' strategy and the growing inadequacy of the trade union response.

Murdoch's conduct of the dispute has shocked many observers. He set up a plant that resembles a concentration camp and threatened any printer or journalist who refused to transfer to it with instant dismissal. When printers went on strike he summarily sacked some 5000 workers and set in motion a massive strike-breaking operation to print and distribute his newspapers. The dispute has immediately brought to the fore conflicts between striking printers and members of the electricians' union who have been brought in to do their work. It has also led to strike-breaking by journalists, truck drivers and warehouse workers, revealing the same disintegration of trade union solidarity that was evident in the miners' strike.

The Wapping operation reveals months of careful planning by Murdoch and his team, and their union collaborators in the leadership of the electricians' union, the EETPU. By contrast the print unions and the rest of the TUC have been left behind from the start. While workers crossed into the Wapping plant and newspapers streamed out by the truckload, the print union pickets could only stand and shiver in the bitter winter cold. The moves now well underway to suspend and subsequently expel the EETPU from the TUC reflect a desperate rearguard action by union leaders concerned to make some gesture to salvage their standing in the eyes of their redundant members.

A GREATER DANGER

We have no wish to defend the conduct of the EETPU leaders over Wapping. Eric Hammond and his colleagues have co-operated with a viciously anti-union employer in attempting to crush genuine trade unionism in the printing industry. However, there is a much greater danger to the trade union movement than the EETPU. The integrity of the unions and the interests of union members are at risk, not merely in the EETPU, but in every union. The danger arises because the strategy of collaboration which the EETPU has pursued with Murdoch is not peculiar to the EETPU but is shared, perhaps to a slightly lesser degree, by other unions within the TUC.

Many unions have shown that they are willing to negotiate redundancies and flexible working conditions on behalf of their members. Most are prepared to go a stage further and accept limitations on the right to strike, or to make a deal which strengthens their position at the expense of other unions. Many unions have conducted ballots in accordance with Tory anti-union legislation, though in defiance of official TUC policy. Even left-wing unions have declared their readiness to accept government funds for ballots, which is also against the rules. In negotiations underway with the Labour Party, senior union leaders have agreed that the framework of Tory anti-union legislation should stay under a future Labour govern-

ment and that the unions should accept restrictions on wages. Yet the leaders of the other unions single out the EETPU for special disciplinary treatment.

The left echoes the demands of the TUC leaders for action against the EETPU. It has issued calls to defend the print unions and demanded that the TUC lead the struggle against Murdoch and the EETPU. But before we rush to the side of Brenda Dean and urge Norman Willis to the barricades, we should ask — exactly what are we defending and can the TUC defend it?

THE ROTTEN CORE

The print unions have been widely accused of being attached to stone-age technology in Fleet Street, but their greatest weakness is their commitment to medieval trade union methods. The print unions have a reputation for strong organisation based on their ability to control the labour process and use the bargaining power that derives from the highly perishable nature of the commodity they produce. However they have long shown their willingness to use their bargaining power as much against other sections of the working class as against the employers. Methods of recruitment 'within the family' have ensured that there are few women or blacks in the print and indeed few people under the age of 30.

The militancy of the print unions reflects the narrowest sectionalism, based on the fairly stable relations that have prevailed between management and workers in the print in the past. The recession and new technology, Eddie Shah and Rupert Murdoch have made these conditions obsolete, and for the print unions there can be no going back to the good old days. From the point of view of the working class as a whole, the good old days in Fleet Street brought very limited advantages and would not be worth bringing back even if it were possible. As events at Wapping show, the traditions of the print unions provide no way of fighting an employer like Murdoch — this sort of class warfare can only be combated by building a different sort of trade unionism.

Norman Willis sums up everything that is rotten about British trade unionism. A lifetime bureaucrat, he is only happy telling little jokes in quangos which bring together the TUC with top employers and representatives of the state. He personifies the corruption of trade union leadership through its incorporation by the British establishment over decades. Willis is always at the ready when some group of workers in struggle need to be told the harsh facts of capitalist life and urged back to work. The miners turned to the TUC and got nothing but empty rhetoric and sell-out negotiations. And this is the body the left now holds up to tackle Murdoch! If the consequences were not so serious the whole idea would be laughable.

For the Revolutionary Communist Party Wapping throws into the sharpest focus the seriousness of the employers' offensive and the inadequacy of the unions' response. The discussion of the issues raised by Murdoch's offensive and Hammond's role cannot be restricted to the question of the expulsion of the EETPU from the TUC. This debate confines the whole issue to a squabble within the TUC bureaucracy, when to challenge the problems of collaborative trade unionism we need to wage a campaign that goes out to rank and file workers in every union.

LABOUR AND IRELAND



THE IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT RALLY SHOWED THE WAY FORWARD ON SATURDAY

HOW NOT TO BUILD A MARCH

When did you last go on a left-wing march where nobody has been told the route, where there appear to be two assembly points, and where the National Front counter-demo manages to turn up on time while the organisers of the march don't get there until later? If you can't remember, you weren't on this year's Bloody Sunday commemoration march.

Sunday's demonstration was called by the Coordinating Committee for British Withdrawal from Ireland, which unites left groups in and around the Labour Party with Irish community organisations and Liberal Party members. The 14 British-based groups

This week's Bloody Sunday march shows how the Labour left is disorganising Irish solidarity work in Britain

which make up the committee managed to mobilise between them 1000 people for the march — a pathetic effort. And judging by the banners on the demo, some of these groups — including the most important one, the Labour Committee on Ireland — were not officially present at all.

The Irish Freedom Movement has neither the big-name sponsors nor the resources of the groups close to the Labour Party. Yet in two weeks we mobilised twice as many people for the march as any other single organisation. In contrast, this demo had been the Coordinating Committee's priority since the spring of 1985! The committee's failure to get people out on the streets displays its organisational incompetence and political sectarianism.

Labour left wingers are fond of giving lectures on the need for community politics and getting people involved at grass-roots level. Yet when it comes to Ireland they organise little or no public activity.

They confine their Irish work to lobbying on Labour Party conference floors and sending out sponsorship forms to leading figures in the official labour movement. Their 'mobilisation' for the march was centred on the internal business of a committee that met in semi-secret, and last-minute speaking tours that were restricted by poor advertising to the same old Irish solidarity social circle.

Worse still, when the Irish Freedom

Movement went out to build the march, with a high-profile national campaign of posters, leaflets and meetings, we were denounced for trying to 'take over' their demo. The organisers would rather people stayed at home than march behind the banners of the Irish Freedom Movement. This approach reflects the left's priority: to defend the Labour Party and keep activity on important political issues under its control. The basic reason for having a solidarity movement — to defend the Irish people against British terror — has been lost beneath all this sectarian skulduggery.

The left's disorganisation of the demonstration shows that it has little interest in building a public campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement or any other aspect of British oppression in Ireland. The consequence of this was not only to undermine the political impact of the event, but to put those who did attend in physical danger from fascist attacks. The organisers relied on the police to protect the march and organised no proper stewarding. When the fascists arrived, the only people prepared to defend the assembly point were the Irish Freedom Movement and a handful of individual activists.

If Irish solidarity work is left in the hands of the Labour left factions, they will only succeed in dissipating the potential for building a movement that can take sides with the Irish people against the British authorities. The Irish Freedom Movement showed on Sunday that our approach of unflinching opposition to the Irish War and open campaigning for the victory of the Irish people is getting results.

We will spend the months ahead organising under our own banners to expose the Anglo-Irish deal — and the Labour Party's role in it. We will carry on going all-out to build marches and rallies, and organising coherent contingents that can get the message of Irish freedom across to a wider and wider audience.

The old Irish solidarity circle is now fully preoccupied protecting the patriotic Labour Party — whose councils in Sheffield and Leicester banned the last two Bloody Sunday marches, and whose Irish 'activists' did their best to wreck this one.

Mick Hume

RCP

The Revolutionary Communist Party needs your support if we're to make the bosses pay for the crisis. Rush donations to our fighting fund at BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX. Special thanks this week to Derek in Canterbury, Vaughan in Todmorden, and Eli and Rahi in London.

VOTING FOR FREEDOM WITH OUR FEET

ON SUNDAY THE IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT MARCHED TO REMEMBER THE VICTIMS OF BRITISH TERROR IN IRELAND



DAVE ROUNKIE

Wild horses wouldn't have kept me away from Manchester United's game against West Ham on Sunday. But a Bloody Sunday commemoration march has a more powerful pull than any pony. So when the match kicked off I was on the other side of London, marching with the Irish Freedom Movement from Hyde Park to Kilburn to mark the anniversary of the day British troops shot dead 14 Irish marchers in 1972.

As we waited to set off from Speakers' Corner, a couple of hundred right-wing youth who want to be the master race when they grow up lurched along the main road on a counter-demo, waving Union Jacks and 'Ulster' Loyalist flags. 'Hang the IRA!' they yelled. The Irish Freedom Movement met their words with action, impaling Ian Paisley on a six-foot pole. Alas it wasn't the real

Reverend, but a huge *Spitting Image*-style effigy of Paisley carried at the front of our contingent. (We also had one of Thatcher, but she proved too much of a burden and had to be carried horizontally, slung across poles like a pig on a spit.)

The effigies, the 'Troops Out Now' placards, the banners, the slogans and the singing stewards helped make the Irish Freedom Movement contingent the biggest and brightest on the march. As we wound north, marchers moved from other parts of the parade to get in on the action with the IFM. And those who joined the demo late lined up alongside our supporters. Of course there were others who spilled out of pubs on the Edgware Road to spit beer at us and tell us what we could do with the trombone somebody was blowing near the back of our contingent. But Ireland is always the issue to get people going on both sides of the political fence.

The IFM marchers had been 'got going' the night before, at our 'No British solution' rally. They packed a central London hall to hear speakers remember the massacre of 14 Irishmen on Bloody Sunday 1972, and point out that little has changed in Northern Ireland. Despite all Thatcher's diplomatic posturing around the Anglo-Irish agreement, British policy in Ireland is still based on the brutal repression of those who fight for Irish unity and independence. Only days before the march, an Ulster Defence Regiment patrol in County Tyrone shot two Irish youths in a pub car park.

The master race morons might think that it ought to be a capital offence to be an Irish nationalist. But the Irish know it already is one.



ANDY PERRY AND EASTERHOUSE

Saturday's après-rally entertainment was provided by Manchester's Easterhouse, the only revolutionary communist rock group on Earth. They sang considerably better than the Manchester man on our lead megaphone on Sunday's march. Still, his heart was in the right place, as he encouraged us to 'fight for Irish freedom, until the troops are booted out', to the 'tune' of *When the saints come marching in*. The Almighty showed His displeasure at this heresy by pouring rain on us all afternoon. But our spirit of solidarity with the Irish people was not dampened, and the songs went on. If they could survive Bloody Sunday, it's a sure thing we could put up with a Sunday shower.

Some of our supporters had their own ideas on how to counter the cold weather. 'Burn it down!' they chanted as we passed Paddington Green police station, where hundreds of Irish people have been interned without trial and tortured under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The canteen

workers waving at us from the station windows thought that was a good idea too. The establishment's 'enemies within' get everywhere these days.

Kilburn is a big Irish area, one of the few places in Britain where you can see republican graffiti on the walls, so we got a great reception when we reached the end of the route. As the post-march rally began the police who had shadowed us from Hyde Park huddled under a parapet and squabbled over the single packet of peanuts they had between them. The fascist 'counter-demonstrators' never turned up to counter anything. And hundreds of Irish Freedom Movement marchers stood behind our banners to shout the slogan that summed up the message of Bloody Sunday: 'British Solution, No Solution, Troops Out Now'. Final result: my team lost the football, but our side won the day.

Mick Hume



IAN PAISLEY IN SUITABLY MODEST POSE



.... MADE RED WEDGE LOOK LIKE LIBERALS

RACIST ATTACKS IN THE EAST END

POLICE ACTION OR WORKERS' ACTION?

Last week's *Open Space* documentary on Channel 4 featured racist attacks at Langdon School and on Chandrakant Randerwala's shop in nearby Napier Street. It gave the impression that the attacks were led by the National Front and that the Newham Monitoring Project, which made the programme, was organising defence. Neither impression corresponds to reality.

Most racist attacks in the area are carried out by a local gang, the 'Vicarage Lane firm'. The 'firm' is not connected to the National Front. Nor has the Newham Monitoring

How should we respond to increased racist violence? Kenan Malik and Andrew Calcutt report on racist gangs in Newham

Project, a GLC-funded race relations/police monitoring quango, been defending black people against racist attacks. In the Newham area East London Workers Against Racism has taken the lead in mobilising workers' defence.

THE FIRM

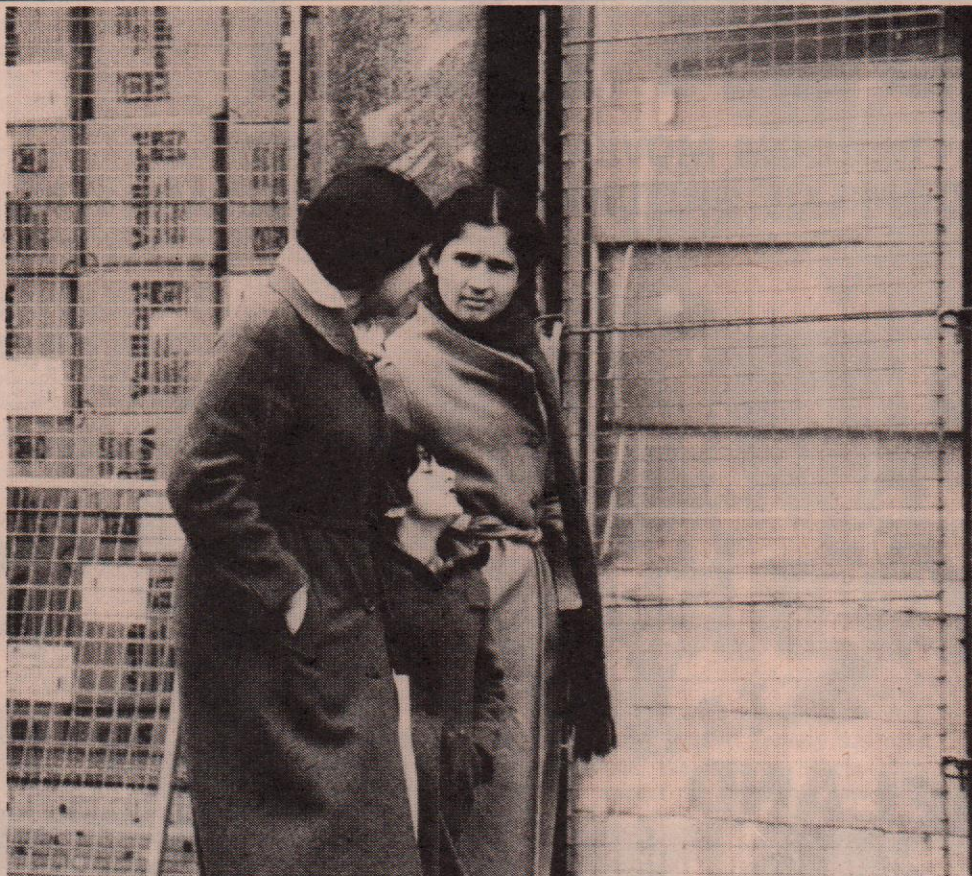
'I don't believe in the National Front,' says Darren. Darren is a leader of the Vicarage Lane firm. He lives near Langdon School. But Darren has been expelled from Langdon, and from nearby Trinity School. 'Darren got chucked out of school for racist abuse. He called someone a Paki,' explains his mother. 'His mate Ricky has just been expelled for racialism.'

His father denies Darren is a racist. 'On their own they're alright. It's when they're in groups they come on gang-handed. I know blokes who are black and they're nice people. You can say what you like to one and he don't get the hump and he can say what he likes to me and I don't get the hump. But there's other coloureds who will give you crap and that's what I don't like. If you call them Paki or nigger or whatever you get done.'

Darren's family don't consider themselves racist, but they think that blacks should 'keep their place'. They agree with Darren's mate Jim that 'Asians are a problem'. 'All the sweet shops are owned by Asians,' he says. 'Soon we'll have no jobs. The Asians are buying the houses. They'll have jobs for their relatives and friends. And they get "O" level Urdu — that's a qualification we don't get.'

The idea that blacks are the problem is common around Vicarage Lane. Young people agree with their parents' support for Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. 'We have to fight,' they say. But there's little connection between the National Front and the Vicarage Lane firm. 'You see the paper on sale at Upton Park on a Saturday,' says Terry, 'but I only read *National Front News* when I find it on the bus.' Some of the firm are so out of touch with the NF they think you need a 'bonehead' haircut to be in it.

The NF doesn't organise the Vicarage Lane firm — nobody does. 'It's something to write on walls,' says Darren. 'The original VLF, they're all married now. And one day we'll go our different ways. For now we're the older ones — we're 17, 18 — and the younger ones look up to us. When the older ones go away, the younger ones take over.' Today there are about 10 'older ones' in the firm. Most evenings they meet and go down 'the Lane'. That's when the trouble starts.



EAST LONDON ASIANS MAY NEVER SEE THE NF, BUT THEY FACE RACISTS EVERY DAY

The firm's members are not racist because of any affection for Hitler, but because they see blacks as the source of their problems.

These views are not peculiar to the firm — they are widely shared in their community and in British society at large. Darren's mother, a TGWU convenor, thinks blacks take jobs from whites and have a chip on their shoulders about the way they're treated. In their harassment of blacks, Darren and his mates simply put the prejudices of their parents and the rest of society into action.

THE QUANGO

The anger of young blacks at racist attacks in Newham led to the formation of the Newham Monitoring Project. Its aim was to 'monitor racism and racist attacks in

Newham and the response of the police and local authority to such attacks'. It employs several full-time workers paid by the GLC and has regular contacts with the Labour council and the police.

The monitoring project has backed campaigns around black youth who, by fighting back against racists, have come into conflict with the police and the courts. The effect of these campaigns — over the 'Newham 7', the 'Newham 8' and the Pryces — was to channel the anger and energy of young blacks into appeals for state agencies to tackle racism. For example, the campaign that emerged out of the outrage felt by the black community over the murder of Eustace Pryce last year ended up pleading with the police to take firmer measures against racists, and for the courts to impose a stiff sentence on his murderer.

The monitoring project is too much a part of the state machine to play any effective role in fighting racism.

It is also too closely tied to the outlook of the Labour Party to deal with the issues raised by the Vicarage Lane firm. The prejudices that underlie the firm's activities have been encouraged by decades of Labour support for restrictions on immigration at national level, and by Labour's systematic discrimination against blacks in jobs and housing at borough level.

Instead of tackling the mainstream prejudices that are central to the issue of racist attacks, the monitoring project prefers to focus on the marginal issue of the National Front. Last year it joined a number of quangos to form Anti-Fascist Action. While this campaign has not even taken any practical measures against the NF, it has distracted attention from the real issue. It reduces racism to a problem of a few eccentric individuals and avoids the everyday racism that makes life in Newham a misery and a menace for thousands of black people.

PRACTICAL PROTECTION

When the attacks started on his shop in 1983, East London Workers Against Racism offered practical assistance to Chandrakant Randerwala. At that time he let the police deal with it. It's a decision that he regrets: 'Now I know better. They told me that the attacks were just kids' jokes, that's when I thought of you.'

Randerwala also appealed to the council, to his local MP and he contacted the Newham Monitoring Project. 'They kept promising to come and see me but I never saw them.' Then he got back to Elwar — 'the only organisation that didn't say, "There's nothing we can do." ' Our supporters have taken practical steps to defend the shop and taken the wider argument against racism into the local area. We have gone door to door to rally anti-racists and to isolate the gangs. We know who they are and, more importantly, the racists know that Elwar is around. Since Elwar began defending Randerwala's shop the level of attacks has dropped sharply.

Randerwala might have seen little of the racists over the last two months — but suddenly he has been inundated with visits from local councillors and council officials, race relations officers, the police committee support unit and, at last, the monitoring project and its film unit. It's almost as if the quangos — like the police — are more concerned about Elwar than they are about the racists.

The Vicarage Lane firm is one small racist gang in one area of East London. But its ideas and its methods plague every inner-city area in Britain. Only a genuine working class anti-racist movement which is willing to confront both the racists and their ideas, can sort them out.

THE FACE OF RACIST BRITAIN

Alex Farrell talked to Dino Patel, victim of a racist razor gang

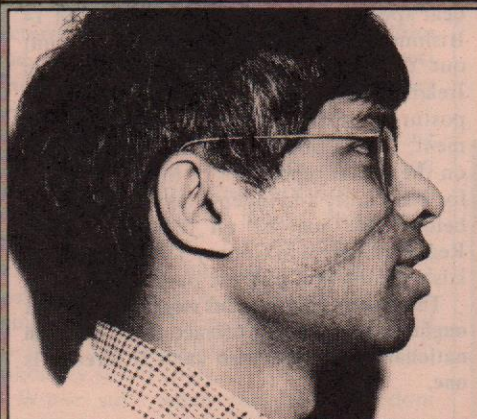
'I felt something warm, wet and sticky. I put my hand up and oh my God I knew what had happened then. I said, "The bastard's cut me." I was petrified that he was going to cut the kids as well. The gash opened up. The cool air hit it and it was just gushing out. I turned round and the three men were just strolling away, casually crossing the road.'

Dino Patel is a young unemployed teacher from Tower Hamlets. Last week he went to an anti-racist benefit at a local theatre with two children of friends. As they left they were followed by three men who came out of the nearby pub.

'I saw them out of the corner of my eye but

didn't take much notice. One had his left hand in his pocket, holding something and he was pointing to me with his right hand. He said, "I'm sure you're a vegetarian." Then the three men circled around me.' One of the men produced a Stanley knife and slashed Patel across his face. He required 19 stitches.

Although the street was bustling with



people nobody tried to stop the men. 'I don't want to criticise but everybody looked away, walked away. When I was walking from the theatre I had to weave my way through the crowds. After I got cut, the blood was pouring. I was half red, people just walked out of my way.'

It's an area where racist attacks are common. 'A lot of Bengali people have been ringing me up, telling me their friends, relatives or themselves have been beaten up between Stepney Green Station and that pub. One bloke was cut in the face with a broken bottle. Another got beaten up, punched in the face, broken teeth, the lot. He ended up in hospital.'

Council of War
RACISM: HOW TO FIGHT IT
Workers Against Racism dayschool
Sunday 9 March 11am-5.30pm
Fairholt House
Aldgate High Street E1
Tickets £2/£1 UB40
Ring 01-729 0414

WATCH OUT SPIKEY, HERE COMES YTS

'A nation of winners' is what the authorities say the new two-year Youth Training Scheme will create. *Karen Williams* talked to the losers under YTS

The scheme helped me get a job — I wouldn't have got one without it,' said Patrick, who did a brickwork course for 15 months before getting a proper job as a packer. But he laughed as he explained that he didn't learn much useful on the scheme — a bit of metalwork and maths on a brickwork course. Most young people didn't share his positive experience. 'It's the government's excuse for getting people off the dole, slave labour with young people doing what an adult does for a poxy wage,' said Matthew. He spent six weeks stacking while he was supposed to be learning how to be a trainee warehouse manager — and he'd already done the job for years on a Saturday. Nobody he knew had got a good job after YTS.

Wendy is fed up with the whole business — she's stuck it out for seven months, applying for 'proper' jobs at the same time. 'I haven't really learnt enough,' she says. 'I wanted to do accountancy, as they promised me, but I've ended up just doing clerical work like filing. I want to work in a bank but I don't think I'll get a job in May when I finish.'

'Education, that's a laugh,' says Terry. 'I did a one-day release course — accounts, English, maths. But what good is learning English and maths in college when you're going to do a manual job? What they should do is get you in a real job and teach you on site.'

OFF THE STREETS

The government introduced YTS in 1983, supposedly to 'bridge the gap' between school and work. The theory was that school leavers should be given the opportunity to learn a skill and get on-the-job training while being paid a minimal amount. 'Earn as you learn' became the slogan for dealing with youth unemployment.

The one-year YTS scheme was master-minded by Lord Young to deal with the rapid rise in youth unemployment in the early eighties. The scheme put young people to work but paid them no more than they would get on the dole. It also offered some block release further education and some second-rate training.

But the Tories' aim was not so much to teach young people useful skills as to get them off the streets and keep them out of trouble.

WAY OF LIFE

Youth unemployment has continued to rise. Young people now make up around one third of all unemployed. Hence in April YTS will become a two-year scheme, and the number of young people on it will increase from the present 300 000 at any one time to between 450 000 and 500 000. Flying the flags of 'training', 'skills' and 'long-term prospects', the government hopes to make the new YTS part of the British way of life, just like mass unemployment. Nearly two-thirds of all 16 and 17-year old school leavers already go on to YTS schemes. Manpower Services Commission chief Bryan Nicholson said last week that the government's aim is 'to keep driving that proportion up so that two-year YTS becomes the normal and preferred route to the world of work for young people and employers alike.'

Spikey Dodds is a normal British sixteen year old, leaving school this year.

But to Japan, and our other international competitors, he's a big threat.

That's because this year he'll be starting 2 years paid skill training on the new YTS.

He'll begin his course by trying out several different skills before he chooses the one he'll train for through to the end of the second year.

By then he'll have a skill, a certificate to prove it and a better chance of getting a job.

Our competitors in the Far East and Europe have been training their young people like this for years.

It's made them more efficient and more productive and it's helped them take trade away



**WATCH OUT JAPAN,
HERE COMES SPIKEY DODDS.**

from us. But from now on they're going to have to watch out. Spikey Dodds will be spending the next two years learning how to take trade away from them for a change. Along with about 360,000 other school leavers.



**TRAINING FOR SKILLS. THE NEW 2 YEAR YTS.
NOW 16 AND 17 YEAR OLD SCHOOL LEAVERS CAN EARN WHILE THEY LEARN.**

The Tories are determined to process the whole 16-18 age group through their containment programme. The government has made special arrangements to allow people who leave school at 18 to join the scheme, as youth unemployment phases into adult unemployment and becomes a permanent way of life. With payment on the scheme at £27.30 a week for the first year trainees and £35 for the second, a whole generation is being turned into a cheap, controlled reserve army of labour.

Postponing the agony of unemployment is useless, as Simon points out: 'There are so many people on YTS that not everyone can even hope for a job. They may be trained but that doesn't mean there'll be any more jobs to go into than there were before they started the scheme.'

How does the future look to Russell who is still at school but due to leave this year? He reckons the new two-year scheme would be like serving a two-year prison sentence. 'Two years is too long,' says Tracey who's stuck the scheme for six months. But the scheme is intended as a long-term venture. It lasts two years, and even when it's over you'll carry the scars with you into the future.

TOE THE LINE

The new YTS carries a 'passport of performance', otherwise referred to as 'a recognised vocational qualification', which you receive when you leave. This means that if you toe the line and behave yourself you'll do well, but if you misbehave or speak out of turn, or turn up late a few times or go off sick too often, your future prospects will be blighted.

The Tories have tried for some time to make YTS compulsory — so that if you turn down the offer of a place on a scheme you lose benefits — but so far they have come up against too much resistance to get away with it. But, like their niggardly attempts to cut bed and breakfast benefits, they haven't

given up trying.

Most young people are cynical about the scheme. But many have no alternative if they can't find work immediately on leaving school. After earning £26 or so a week for a few months, any sort of wage seems a major advance. Thus YTS has reduced people's expectations about what they can expect to earn. This is what Lord Young calls 'pricing young people back into jobs'. It means that they are prepared to accept sweatshop wages and conditions more readily. Young people on average now earn a third of adult income.

OUR FUTURE

Many young people have already become resigned to a bleak future of boring work or no work and, either way, poverty. But they are entitled to real jobs and real training. The labour movement has a responsibility to fight for the future of the working class.

The official labour movement has a shameful record of cooperation with the Tories in running the cheap labour schemes.

Trade union leaders have been happy to go along with measures to take young workers off the labour market and reduce the pressure of unemployment on organised workers. Senior trade union leaders rejoice in the 'permanent partnership' they have established with the government and the employers in administering the schemes. It is significant that this is one of the few areas where the Tories still welcome the trade union leaders in a close working relationship.

Backing the YTS scheme is no way for the labour movement to help provide young people with a future. The trade unions should be fighting for real jobs with good training and good pay and conditions, not 'top ups' to inadequate wages. Helping the Tories drive down the wages of the young does not help solve the problems of the labour movement. It just makes worse the disintegration and demoralisation of the whole working class.

THE PROPAGANDA WAR

FLYING THE FLAG

Right-wing Tory MP Anthony Beaumont-Dark and left-wing Labour MP Dale Campbell-Savours have got more in common than a rather silly name. When the newly appointed industry minister Paul Channon announced this week that the Tories intended to sell off BL commercial vehicles to General Motors and other parts of the BL conglomerate to other foreign buyers, both MPs rushed to defend the British company against an American takeover.

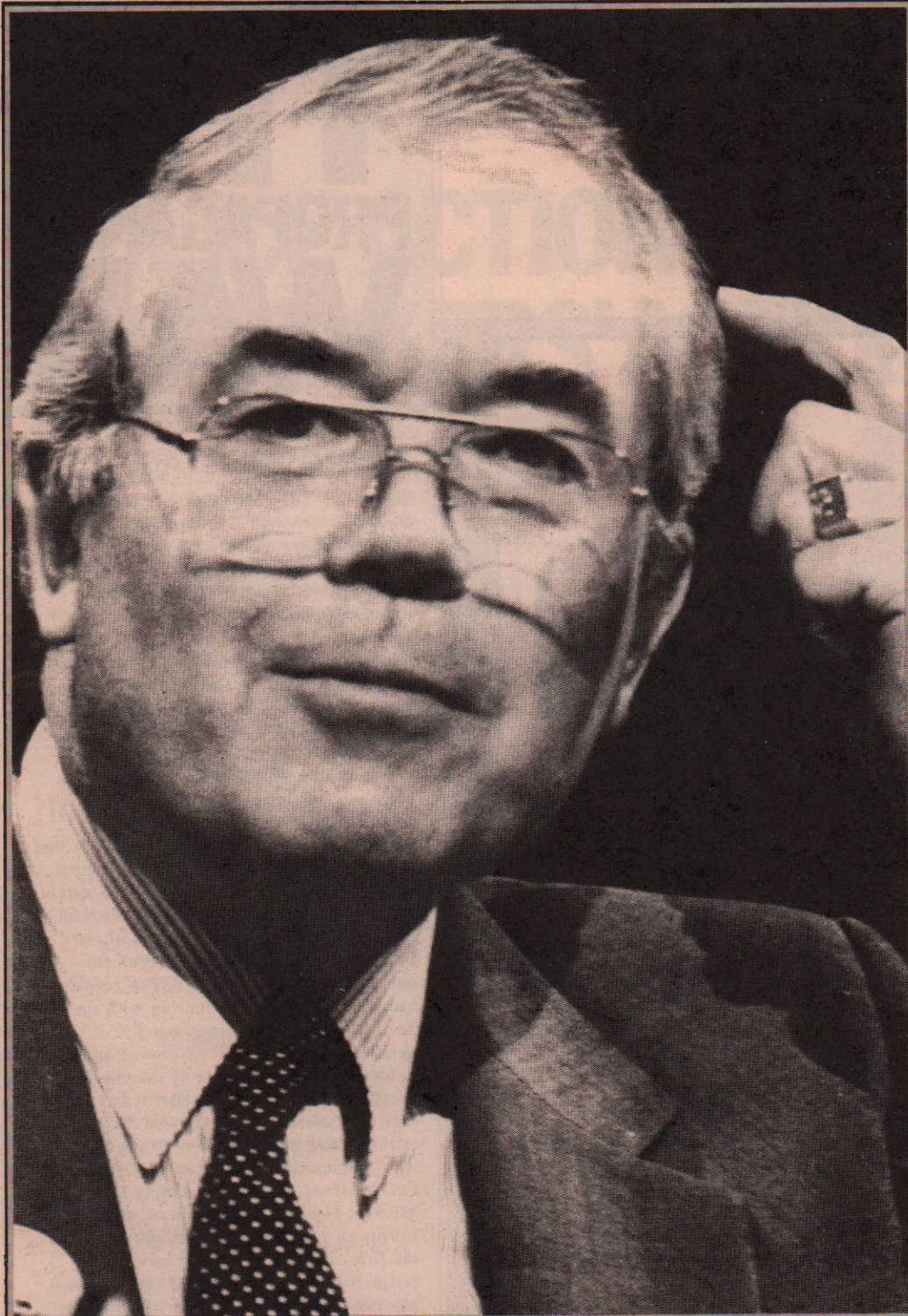
'We shall be left with nothing but Meccano sets in the heartlands of this country,' said Beaumont-Dark. 'This government is dropping the Union Jack and raising the Stars and Stripes over British industry,' echoed Campbell-Savours. Other Labour spokesmen joined in the patriotic chorus. The convergence of the Labour Party with Tory critics of government policy on manufacturing industry reveals Labour's parasitic relationship with the Tories, as well as the increasingly nationalistic thrust of its electoral appeal.

One significant feature of the ongoing Westland saga is the way that it has shown that the Labour Party relies on Thatcher's critics within her own party to provide it with ammunition against the government. On Westland Labour has simply taken up Michael Heseltine's position of support for European rather than American control of the firm. Instead of putting forward any distinctive Labour policy for saving jobs in manufacturing firms whoever owns them, Labour spokesmen are content to confine the discussion at the level of what is best for the Westland shareholders and to provide a rather blurred echo of Alliance criticisms of the constitutional improprieties of Thatcher, her ministers and civil servants.

Labour's reliance on Tory dissidents has become a well established trend. On economic policy, Labour follows the lead of Tory wets in both the house of commons and house of lords, and endorses their periodic calls for refutation, and other measures to encourage industry through more active state intervention. Labour latches on to Tory backbench hostility to government policy on local government to give its municipal socialism a respectable edge. One of the most successful posters in the GLC's campaign was one which featured Tory wets Edward Heath, Francis Pym, and James Prior under the slogan — 'Are the critics of rate-capping left-wing extremists?'

Nobody could accuse the policies of Kinnock's Labour Party of being extremist, because they are increasingly borrowed from the Tories. Indeed Kinnock seems to have set about proving that Labour can advance Tory policies even more forcefully than the Tories. On the law and order issue he proclaims that crime has increased under the Tories and that Labour is the party that can really fight crime and restore public respect for the police and the courts.

When it comes to questions of defending the nation's industry — or its military interests — then Labour is out to prove it is more patriotic than the Tories. Hence Labour's stand over Westland and BL. Workers at BL will recall that it was a Labour government that first raised the Union Jack over the company. They will recall too how Michael Edwardes, the Rupert Murdoch of the car industry, appointed by Labour to shake out the industry, got rid of tens of thousands of jobs in the attempt to make BL a British success story. Labour's Tory policies were bad enough in the seventies — in the eighties they are even more dangerous.



The EETPU - a scab union

The role of the electricians' union in the print dispute at News International in Wapping is no different from that of the specialist strike-breaking squads that were a familiar feature of British industrial relations up to the twenties. The EETPU has shipped in scabs to do other workers' jobs and to destroy genuine trade union organisation.

The EETPU is no stranger to this sort of operation — it provided the same service for the employers in the lagers' dispute at the Isle of Grain power station in 1980. The local official then was the current general secretary Eric Hammond, and the target was the general and municipal workers' union.

Last week Hammond chose the Waldorf hotel in London to present the fruits of company unionism — a comprehensive package of benefits. This includes assistance with house purchase and insurance, car recovery, life assurance as well as advice on savings, unit trusts, pensions and shares. The union offers the companies concerned the benefits of a 'well-defined group with considerable expansion potential' and its computer-based record system. But workers who want these services can get them from commercial companies. They join trade unions, not for the fringe benefits, but as organisations that can use the collective strength of the workforce to force the employers to provide decent wages and conditions.

Hammond has turned the EETPU into a machine that carries messages between bosses and workers and encourages workers to do several jobs at once to keep the bosses' profits up. He has reduced the function of a trade union to that of sharing out the crumbs grateful employers brush in its direction.

Under the leadership of Hammond and his predecessor Frank Chapple, now Lord Chapple of Hoxton, the EETPU has taken a step beyond the sort of collaboration between trade union officials and employers that has prevailed in Britain since the war.

British unions have long accepted that negotiations in industry are limited by corporate profitability and that unions have a responsibility to cooperate in raising productivity and profits. It has been accepted by both sides of industry that the unions may take limited measures of industrial action within this framework, provided that such actions respect the wider authority of establishment law and order. The EETPU has gone beyond this narrow recognition of the existence of the class struggle in industry to reject militancy in any form.

It is significant that the EETPU has attempted to keep one foot in the traditions of the post-war labour movement through declaring that it will support a power strike in the event of any GCHQ trade unionist being victimised for remaining a union member. It has also tried to deny that its sweetheart deals are in fact no-strike deals, claiming that they still leave that option open as a last resort. But this sort of posturing and sophistry cannot disguise the EETPU's increasingly provocative scab unionism. Its meetings at the Confederation of British Industry (which it even applied to join), its invitation to Norman Tebbit to open its new technology training centre and its open association with the leaders of the breakaway miners' union all show that the EETPU is well on the way to becoming a fully fledged bosses' union.

Andrew Calcutt

THE STRUGGLE AGAIN

The pressure for the electricians' union to be suspended from the TUC now seems unstoppable. The EETPU has recruited workers for Rupert Murdoch's new Wapping plant, taking jobs from Fleet Street printers and collaborating with the bosses' attempts to smash the print unions. The EETPU's strike-breaking role has led to a chorus of demands from the print union leaders and their supporters for the EETPU to be suspended from the TUC and expelled if it refuses to follow TUC directives over the dispute in the printing industry.

There is no doubt that the EETPU is a scab union (see box). Every active worker shares the anger and resentment of the printers on the *Sun* and *The Times*, the *Sunday Times* and the *News of the World*, at the way the electricians have collaborated with a carefully calculated employers' strategy to get rid of 5000 jobs and destroy effective trade unionism in the print. If the other unions in the TUC were resolutely opposed to the company union methods of the EETPU, and fully committed to fighting the employers and the government to defend jobs, wages and working conditions, we would have no hesitation in supporting the call to kick out the EETPU.

The problem is that the electricians only take one step further an approach which is becoming commonplace throughout the trade union movement.

PACESETTER HAMMOND

Electricians' leader Eric Hammond commented last week that it 'would be a pity if the TUC suspended the EETPU at a time when it has been moving steadily towards policies recommended by the EETPU'. Hammond is right when he points out that other unions, even unions with a left-wing reputation (see box), have been prepared to make the same concessions as the EETPU in their negotiations with employers. Over the past couple of years other unions and the TUC have followed the EETPU's lead towards a form of trade unionism which is prepared to make more and more concessions to the employers and the state.

● No-strike agreements

The EETPU has pioneered agreements with employers in the new technology sector which accept redundancies, flexible working and restrictions on trade union rights. Deals which accept 'compulsory arbitration' amount in practice to the abandonment of the right to strike. In return the union has won recognition and token concessions such as the removal of distinctions between white collar 'staff' and blue collar 'works' employees in terms of conditions and perks.

The EETPU often combines no-strike deals with agreement that it will be the only union recognised at a particular plant. This has led to other unions being squeezed out in established plants, and to competitive tendering for union recognition at greenfield sites.

Other unions have condemned the EETPU's no-strike deals, while trying to make similar agreements themselves. The EETPU leadership met a series of complaints against its no-strike deals last year by presenting a dossier of similar agreements made by other unions, including the transport workers, the general and municipal workers and the left-led white collar engineering workers' union Tass. Proposals for disciplinary measures over these agreements had to be shelved.

TUC COWARDICE

Not only have individual unions followed the EETPU's lead into company unionism, the TUC itself has endorsed this approach. The TUC's immediate response to the Tories' threat to outlaw trade union membership at its GCHQ spy centre in Cheltenham in January 1984 was to offer a no-strike deal if the Tories would back down. Suitably reassured by this display of cowardice, the Tories pressed ahead and smashed the GCHQ unions. In the current dispute at News International a consortium of print unions led by TUC boss Norman Willis offered Murdoch what amounted in practice to a no-strike deal early last month. Again this only encouraged the employers to put the boot

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● Tory legislation

Together with the engineering workers, the EETPU has led the official labour movement into open complicity with Tory legislation designed to weaken the unions. It has made a particular issue of conducting strike and other ballots in full accordance with the Tory rules. These maximise the scope for the establishment to exert its influence through the media, and minimise the opportunities for activists to influence their fellow workers. The EETPU and the AUEW leaders have also deliberately defied the decisions of the TUC's special Wembley conference on the anti-union laws in 1982 and applied for government funding for ballots.

The TUC leaders have constantly condemned the EETPU and AUEW for their capitulation to the Tory laws. At last year's TUC pressures for the suspension of these unions were only averted by an eleventh hour fudge. The terms of the fudge were the capitulation of the other union leaders to the EETPU/AUEW line.

AGAINST SCAB UNIONISM

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Another TUC special conference has been called for next week to ratify the new line. In practice all the union leaders have gone along with the Tory laws and many now want to get their hands on the ballot cash.

The miners' scab union

Last month Hammond provoked the wrath of Arthur Scargill and the other NUM leaders when he staged a press conference with Roy Jenkins, the leader of the breakaway Notts Union Democratic Mineworkers. Scargill demanded that the TUC take immediate measures against the EETPU for openly fraternising with a union which the TUC has refused to recognise. He used the spectre of a breakaway of right-wing unions from the TUC linking up with the UDM to form an alternative federation.

Hammond's gesture may have upset Scargill but it caused little concern at the TUC. It is well known that the TUC is sympathetic towards the UDM and maintains informal contacts with its leaders. And it is no secret that Scargill's moderate opponents in the NUM are already

talking about trying to link up with the UDM in a looser and more federal NUM. Last week's announcement of the vote against joining the UDM by the Leicestershire miners showed that workers who scabbed throughout the year-long strike now feel they can remain members of a union which has moved to adopt a more moderate approach. Indeed Scargill's response last week to the EETPU's announcement of its package of membership perks was to proclaim the superiority of the NUM's benefits compared with those on offer from the UDM.

LEFT HYPOCRISY

Every time he has been attacked by other union leaders, Hammond has been on strong ground in exposing their hypocrisy. He did this particularly effectively during the miners' strike when he bluntly declared that his union intended to scab on the miners, but that others offering 'total solidarity' had neither the capacity nor even the intention of delivering effective sympathy action. Hammond is also on strong ground when he says that not only the electricians, but workers in other unions — journalists in the various NUJ chapels, TNT truck drivers in the transport workers' union and distribution workers in the print union Sogat — have all helped to make the print unions' picket lines at Wapping ineffectual.

Expelling the EETPU from the TUC would simply let the other unions which are pursuing similar policies off the hook. The scabbing behaviour of the electricians at Wapping is only a symptom of a deeper malaise within the British labour movement.

Scapegoating the EETPU will merely reinforce the tendencies towards the disintegration of the unions, without doing anything to combat the politics of collaboration that are driving the unions towards destruction. For us there is no purpose in getting involved in an internal squabble among union bureaucrats about how far to go in collaborating with the employers and carving one another up.

NO TIME TO LOSE

Instead of scapegoating the scab leadership of the EETPU, active workers need to tackle the tendencies towards scab unionism that are becoming stronger in every union. This also means fighting inside the EETPU before the company union trends become fully consolidated. The only way to fight scab unionism effectively is by fighting for a form of trade unionism which rejects collaboration and is ready to take on the employers and the state to defend jobs and living standards. Fighting scab unionism means:

- No deals with any employer which accept job losses or deteriorating working conditions or the withdrawal of trade union rights from any section of workers. New technology on these terms would be very welcome.
- No concessions to Tory anti-union legislation. It is time to put a stop to government interference in the internal affairs of the labour movement. Workers alone should decide how to elect leaders, make decisions on strike action and how to conduct industrial action.
- No deals with the Labour Party which accept the continuation of anti-union legislation and wage restraint under a future Labour government, while abandoning the victimised miners to their fate.

The British left has already given its characteristic answer to the problems thrown up by EETPU — the same solution as the left wing of the TUC machine. 'Kick them out' chorused the left press last weekend, just as it echoed the disastrous policies of the left-wing union leaders through the miners' strike and other recent disputes. 'Kicking them out' may give some short-term advantage to unions which can recruit in certain sectors at the expense of the EETPU, and it may give the left the illusion that it is tackling the problem of scab unionism. In reality this solution merely evades the fundamental problem, and by evading it makes it even more serious. The writing is on the Wapping Wall for effective trade unionism in Britain. It reads that there is not a moment to lose in taking on scab unionism, not merely in the EETPU, but in every union in the TUC.



CHRIS BLACK

The TGWU- not much better

Last week transport workers' leader Ron Todd hit the headlines with his 'instruction' to the TNT drivers at Rupert Murdoch's Wapping plant to stop crossing the printers' picket line. Given that distribution had become the key weakness in the Murdoch grand plan to smash the Fleet Street unions, Todd's instruction seemed to be a dramatic development in the dispute. He deliberately repeated that he was 'not requesting, but instructing', an injunction he never issued to his members during the miners' strike.

Todd's militant 'instruction' was a gesture of sheer cynicism. The only reason he made it so categorically was because he knew it would be ignored. The TNT drivers were engaged for the specific purpose of distributing Murdoch's papers around the country outside the existing transport system and union framework. It had already been made clear during Murdoch's trial run 10 days earlier that the drivers were prepared to defy the printers' picket lines. Todd was prepared to risk legal sanctions by issuing his instruction, to strengthen the position of the TGWU against the EETPU within the TUC.

Todd leads the left attack on the EETPU because he hopes to consolidate the TGWU's weakened authority as the dominant union within the TUC.

Todd also hopes to project a combative image which will help him pick up EETPU members in the engineering and motor industries, when the EETPU is expelled from the TUC and loses the protection of TUC rules against poaching members from other affiliates. With a bit of luck, Todd reckons he could get away with sustaining no legal damages over the Wapping affair, and when things settle down the TGWU might even manage to hang on to the TNT members. This is what is widely regarded as 'left-wing' politics in the British

labour movement.

The TGWU has been a strident critic of the EETPU over no-strike agreements, single union deals and capitulation to Tory ballots. This has not stopped the TGWU signing similar deals in South Wales, the docks and in the Nabisco chain (as reported in past issues of *ins*). It did not stop the TGWU competing with other unions for a single union agreement at the Nissan plant in Washington.

Nor have the TGWU's scruples about Tory ballots stopped it from taking part in ballots over strike action and closed shops. The TGWU went so far in its slavish deference to media interference as to re-run its election for general secretary last year, after a series of newspaper scares about voting irregularities. Todd played a central part in the shabby compromise at last year's TUC over the EETPU/AUEW line on taking Tory funds for ballots, and he is likely to endorse this line at next week's conference.

Apart from capitulating to Tory anti-union legislation, the TGWU is playing a leading role in drawing up anti-union laws under a future Labour government. The TGWU leadership has given up its conference policy of formal opposition to incomes policy. Todd is now fully behind Labour's plans for keeping most of the Tory restrictions on trade union rights, for cutting wages and for keeping victimised miners in prison or on the dole.

The TGWU treads a fine line between old-fashioned militancy and new-style company unionism. When Todd condemns Hammond it usually means he has been outmanoeuvred and outpaced in the squabble for members and seats at the bosses' negotiating tables.

When the kettle calls the pot black, activists have more important work to do than joining in the wrangle.

ELECTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

THE SICK MAN OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Whoever wins this week's corrupt and murderous election campaign in the Philippines, state terror and civil war are set to continue, writes *Andrew Matthews*

Despite his unpopularity and ailing health, president Marcos may well win the election — if only by massive bribery and intimidation. Marcos' supporters at the ruling party's convention in December were paid \$1000 to attend. Audiences at his rallies are bused in free of charge, entertained by top name acts and given presents. Teachers who supervise the count have been offered the equivalent of a year's pay to falsify returns in favour of Marcos. Loyal military men have been posted to supervise the poll in opposition strongholds, while a leading liberal army officer has been sent abroad for the duration of the campaign. The election committee, packed with Marcos men, has barred foreign observers from going near polling stations.

CLEAN-CUT CORY

Marcos' opponent is 53-year old Corazon 'Cory' Aquino, who has been a symbol of liberal opposition to the dictatorship since her husband was murdered in August 1983. Aquino's image of integrity stands in sharp contrast to the corrupt and brutal practices which have passed for politics under Marcos. Her clean record is her greatest political asset.

The opposition campaign has focused on civil liberties, promoting a 'moral alternative' to the Marcos regime. Aquino's populist appeal has won considerable support and drawn enthusiastic crowds to mass rallies throughout her campaign. But Corazon Aquino has little to recommend her to workers and peasants.

Corazon's marriage to Benigno Aquino in 1956 brought together two of the most powerful families in the Philippines. The Cojuangcos own vast sugar and rice plantations while the Aquinos have been political power-brokers among the country's landowning elite since the turn of the century. As a representative of the landlords, who resent Marcos' control over the Filipino economy, Benigno emerged as the leading opposition figure in the late sixties. He was well placed to beat Marcos in the scheduled 1973 presidential elections. But in 1972 Marcos imposed martial law and Benigno was bundled off to prison for nearly eight years. It was only after his murder on his return from exile in the USA in 1983 that Aquino acquired a radical reputation.

Corazon Aquino's running mate in this week's poll is Salvador Laurel, a member of the ruling party until 1983. Then he quit to join the opposition party Unido, which until recently was considered too right-wing to make an impact at the polls. But since popular 'Cory' agreed to stand on the Unido ticket, the party's fortunes have improved. The Aquino-Laurel team makes an ideal combination for the middle class opposition to Marcos, combining populist rhetoric with a firm commitment to the US-sponsored order in the Philippines. Corazon's emotive appeal to the masses conceals the fact that on the essential political issues there is little to distinguish the Unido leadership from the



THE MARCOS MILLIONS CAN BUY HIM BODYGUARDS, BUT NOT STABILITY

ruling clique around Marcos.

Aquino's campaign attempts to bridge the widening gap between the Filipino establishment and the oppressed masses.

The Filipino Catholic hierarchy, a formidable force in a country where 80 per cent of the population adhere to the Catholic faith, has indirectly sponsored the Aquino campaign in a desperate attempt to stop the spread of revolt against Marcos. It was Manila's Cardinal Jaime Sin who united Aquino with her deceased husband's rival Laurel. Sin's pastoral letters, read to congregations across the country, advocate the formation of vigilante groups to check on government vote-rigging.

NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY

Aquino's campaign is discreetly backed by substantial sections of the Filipino elite. It is also favoured by the USA, which fears that the Marcos dictatorship may soon collapse under the impact of popular rebellion.

A powerful guerrilla movement led by the New People's Army, the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has shaken the Marcos regime to its foundations. The NPA has up to 30 000 members and the sympathy of many thousands more. It operates in 62 of the country's 73 provinces and controls a fifth of all villages. The NPA has earmarked 1986 as the year when it will carry its war to the streets of the capital,

Manila. On Mindanao, the largest island, government troops have been forced to retreat into the centre of Davao, abandoning the city's seashore slums to the NPA.

Savage repression and growing poverty have swelled the ranks of the NPA. The brutal response of the Marcos regime has only won more sympathy for the movement. Marcos' troops have machine gunned and napalmed entire villages in a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to restore control over the country's far-flung islands. In the areas under its control the NPA has expropriated landlords and introduced rudimentary health care and education. Its guerrilla attacks against corrupt government officials and local military garrisons have been hailed by the country's impoverished workers and youth.

Armed insurrection and a wave of industrial militancy have largely destroyed the credibility of the Marcos government. Aquino's campaign reflects the concern of growing sections of the Filipino establishment to contain the slide towards open civil war. But as Filipino capitalism lacks the means to alleviate dire poverty and mass unemployment, repression remains indispensable for the Filipino ruling class.

The elections cannot change this grim fact of life. But then, they were never intended to change it. The real purpose of the whole campaign is to broaden the base of capitalist government in the Philippines.

A WORRIED UNCLE SAM

The crisis in the Philippines is a disaster for the USA. Its two largest overseas military bases — Subic Bay and Clark air base — are in the islands, providing vital facilities for US military operations in Asia and the Middle East. The US government has already been forced to make contingency plans for a withdrawal to Micronesia and Guam, 1700 miles east, in case it fails to hold the ring against the insurgents in the Philippines. But, apart from the strategic setback such a withdrawal would represent, the USA cannot afford to be seen to lose a client state it has run for almost a century. This week's collapse of the US-sponsored regime in Haiti confirms that America's credibility among third world allies is already at an all-time low.

The last thing Reagan wants is to get bogged down in another bloody and unwinnable war to uphold a fumbling dictator against mass revolt. The US administration would like to get rid of Marcos and replace him by a more popular and efficient government which might have a fighting chance of prevailing over the insurgents. Reagan has put considerable pressure on Marcos to reform his administration.

In October US officials told Marcos that he was 'screwing up the fight' against the NPA and congress has cut military aid to force him to call the elections. To contain the rebellion America has demanded that Marcos clean up his act by holding 'free and fair' elections, ending corruption and making the army an effective fighting force. The elections are the first step in America's containment manoeuvres. As far as Washington is concerned the best outcome would be a poll that can be passed off as relatively 'fair' and brings a good turn-out for Aquino — enough to put pressure on Marcos, but insufficient to provoke the coup Marcos has threatened in the event of a landslide.

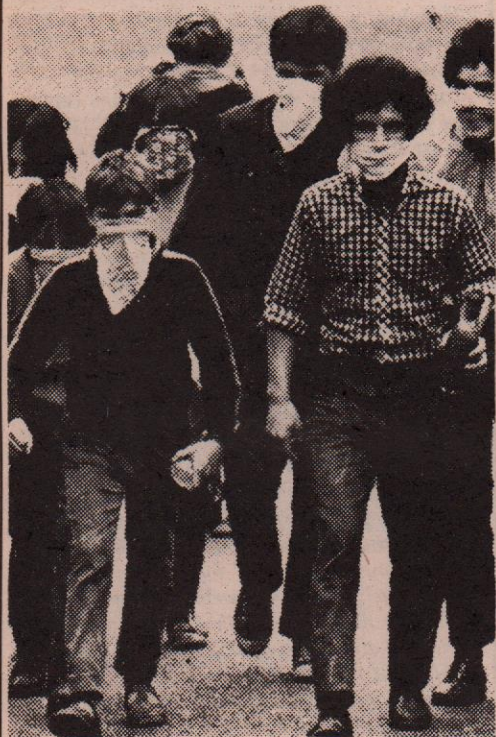
Washington has maintained a discreet silence during the campaign because open support for Aquino would be the kiss of death at the polls. But behind the scenes congressional committees and the Pentagon have leaked reports about Marcos' misappropriation of US aid and his undistinguished record of service during the Second World War to help Aquino.

Whatever the outcome of the elections, there will be little change for the workers and peasants of the Philippines. There is nothing to choose between anti-working class terror under the fumbling and corrupt Marcos, and anti-working class terror under a more efficient and broadly based Aquino government. Either way the future of the Filipino working class depends on the struggle to defeat US imperialism and its local backers.



THE YOUNG GUERRILLAS OF THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY HAVE PUT YEARS ON THE AGEING DICTATOR

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RICH GAYS IN MERRIE ENGLAND

The devil in Mr Davidson

Michael Davidson, *The World, the Flesh and Myself*, GMP £5.95

Michael Davidson's autobiography, written in 1962, is a sentimental journey through 60 years of 'the hard life' as experienced by an affluent homosexual.

Davidson was born to genteel middle class parents and went to public school before trying his hand at farming in South Africa. His homosexuality ended that career; the neighbours drove him out. Back in London he worked for the *Daily Express* alongside the young Tom Driberg, later a Labour MP and national executive member. Davidson was a

supporter of the Berlin communists against the Nazis in the twenties, a British agent in Morocco during the war and, as a foreign correspondent, an opponent of British policy in Malaya and Cyprus in the fifties.

Davidson's book is less candid than Driberg's *Ruling passions* which covers the same period. But it confirms the oppression experienced by even middle class homosexuals in the fifties. Driberg, friend of press magnate Lord Beaverbrook and founder of the William Hickey gossip column was, like Davidson, often arrested for 'unnatural offences'. Both had enough friends in high places to avoid exposure and ruin.

Davidson's book reveals the relative tolerance of the British establishment of homosexuals in its midst. Winston Churchill's remark that 'buggers can't be choosers', when he saw



MICHAEL DAVIDSON SWAPS STORIES WITH A MAN IN A DRESS

Driberg trying to pick up a youth, revealed as much affection as distaste. And as a foreign correspondent, Davidson found a middle class Briton in the Middle East could have affairs with local young men with impunity.

The establishment's ambivalence and the privileges enjoyed by men like Davidson could not end the restrictions society imposed on all active homosexuals. But it was the basis of the power that middle class homosexuals had over working class homosexuals, clearly expressed by the prominence of prostitution in sexual relations between men of

different classes.

The 'natural' authority of middle class men in the homosexual underworld was undermined by the more liberal morality of the sixties. Higher wages and the commercial gay scene reduced the importance of prostitution. But middle class ideas still dominated gay lifestyles. The individual fulfilment which Davidson and his set hankered after became the ideal of many working class homosexuals in the sixties and seventies. It is worth reading *The World, the Flesh and Myself* to see how much has changed, but also as a reminder of how much remains the same. **John Johnson**

BRECHT

Life's not a cabaret

Bertolt Brecht, *Collected short stories*, Methuen £3.95

Bertolt Brecht is justly famous for his plays and poetry. This generous selection shows he should also be celebrated for his short stories. There isn't a duff story between these covers.

The collection contains examples from every period of Brecht's creative life until 1948: the impact of the city on the boy from the German countryside, the terrible years of the depression and the rise of Hitler, and the

years of exile in the USA. Whatever the period and whatever tone and nuance he aims at (and there are many) Brecht's narrative grip never falters and every line hums with the pulse of city life.

Brecht insisted that you could only talk about people by telling a good story. This is evident in the earlier tales which draw on the traditions



of ballad. These stories resemble Tolstoy's moral tales in their simplicity, but Brecht sharpens them with the hard edge of peasant and proletarian life.

With story titles like

'Conversation about the south seas' and 'Letter about a mastiff', you can almost imagine them being sung in a Berlin cabaret. The titles also belie the real subject matter of these stories which are about working class life in modern cities, about people being swept along and often beached by social tides that move beyond their control. But Brecht's subjects are more than just flotsam — they fight with bitter determination to make their own lives in the face of daunting odds.

My own favourites are the parables from exile, mostly preliminary studies for plays such as *The life of Galileo*. In these stories Brecht gets to grips with questions of doubt, conscience and discovery. In 'The experiment' the inventor and scientist

Francis Bacon, dying in disgrace, finds that only a peasant lad is free enough of superstition to help him to discover refrigeration. In 'The heretic's coat' Brecht presents the ordeal of Giordano Bruno, founder of modern historiography, through the eyes of an old woman who visits him to demand payment of a bill.

In all these stories Brecht's pen is as sharp as Mac's knife. If there is a shortcoming it is that Brecht's refusal to sentimentalise comes too close to fatalism. But this casual attitude to the human condition rarely asserts itself at the expense of the stories. Go and pick up a copy and turn the pages. I hope it falls open at 'Four men and a poker game'. **Alan Harding**

THE AMERICAN DREAM MOVIE

Rambo meets Revolution

Revolution, Hugh Hudson (director)
Alamo Bay, Louis Malle (director)

Everything you may have heard about *Revolution* is true. It is not even worth going to see out of curiosity, unless you wonder what Al Pacino is like when he is utterly miscast (he makes it worse), how Nastassja Kinski will cope with a truly ludicrous role and worse dialogue (honourably) and whether Donald Sutherland can do a Yorkshire accent (gee, by gum). Part of the \$20m it cost was well spent on battle scenes and on capturing some landscapes worth fighting for, but that's it.

This is a sort of 'How The East Was Won' epic version of the American Revolution. Well for some of the time anyway. Hudson also wants us to remember that war is a messy, brutal, chaotic affair and that the participants rarely understand let alone support the momentous issues at stake. But the film tells us next to nothing about the forces involved in this fascinating episode of world history. As for the story of the little man and his loved ones it is too dreadful to

mention. And then we are expected to believe that by the end of the film our hero has absorbed some of the loftier notions put about by Jefferson and Washington in their bid for independence.

No doubt Hudson felt he should feed off the populism so many American films have always aimed at. *Rambo*, *Rocky IV*, *Year of the Dragon* are current examples. These are incomplete without a loner muttering through clenched teeth about his own disillusionment and the need for a new, improved American way. This may tell us something interesting about the uncertain mood of America today, but these films say nothing very interesting in themselves. And when John Wells (John Wells?), Steven Berkoff and Annie Lennox (Annie Lennox?) pop up shouting things like 'Liberty or Death!' there is a strong temptation to respond incorrectly.

This week another European has done a far

better job over there. 'I'm basically interested in the other side of the American dream,' says director Louis Malle, the man who brought us a memorable Burt Lancaster as the ageing, very small-time hood in *Atlantic City*. In *Alamo Bay* he settles upon the nasty little incidents which developed near Galveston Bay, Texas, around 1980. Texan fishermen and the Ku Klux Klan turned on the local Vietnamese (half a million were 'relocated' in the States) who in time-honoured immigrant fashion worked harder for less as the natives began to go under.

It is a low-key film (with a very fitting low-key score from Ry Cooder) which makes chillingly clear how mean and barren life is in a poor fishing village on the rim of one of the richest areas of the world. The sense of community is non-existent as the recession squeezes the shrimp and crab industry. Money divides father and

daughter, lover and mistress. American and Vietnamese.

Ed Harris plays the fisherman losing his boat to the loan sharks. Amy Madigan is the young woman who would take him from his wife and kids but won't force her own father into ruin for his sake. He blames the newcomers, she employs them. Louis Malle shows great sympathy with their culture and their plight.

Both Madigan and Harris give great performances (although his is the more convincing role), the detail of the film is superb and the director shows a considerable grasp of the wider issues. Harris (it's Rambo again, this time refighting the battle of the Alamo) rails against 'industry and government' which defend the world but not your average American; but this is a more subtle study of a pathetic figure, his frustration leading only to a destructive dead end.

The film falls down however at the level of the plot. There is nothing wrong with it in itself, but it was a mistake to try to work up these conflicts into the relationships and destinies of the characters in such a schematic way. The film did not require it, nor was such a conventional dramatic resolution appropriate to a piece such as this. Perhaps Louis Malle thinks things can be resolved in such a simple way. Still, this week it's better than a *Revolution*. **Pat Ford**



FISHERMEN GUN FOR VIETNAMESE IN ALAMO BAY

LETTERS

WRITE TO: *tns*, BCM JPLTD, LONDON WC1N 3XX

NUM outrage

I'M A miner from Kellingley colliery in North Yorkshire. Last week rumours were going round the pit about Tory minister Peter Walker paying us a visit on 7 February, supposedly to pat us on the back for breaking productivity records. A lot of men were angry about this. Peter Walker trod all over us during the strike and encouraged men to scab on their workmates. As usual the NUM didn't tell us of any action planned to greet Mr Walker. But supporters of the miners' next step came to Kellingley and handed out leaflets proposing that we should walk out as Peter Walker came in. A lot of men were in agreement with this. The NUM's reaction to this was to put up a notice on the NUM noticeboard:

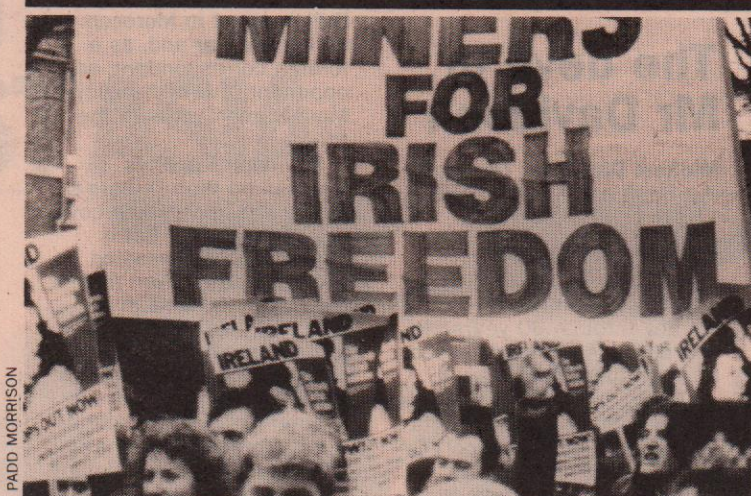
'Peter Walker may or may not visit Kellingley on 7 Feb, we have already met to discuss this. He will be met with contempt. However, we are not in the habit of throwing money away and walking out on strike. Some

leaflets have been put out by WANKERS calling themselves the Revolutionary Communist Party. Next time they may call themselves Black Lesbian Workers for Horny Colliers Ecology or owt that suits the cause. REMEMBER, Kellingley men say what Kellingley men do.

I was disgusted by this reactionary statement, it made my skin crawl to think that the NUM would make such a childish attack on the only people who campaign against the scab Union of Democratic Mineworkers.

The NUM are only concerned with keeping a good relationship with management when working conditions are declining, accident rates are climbing and more and more men are becoming redundant. At one time the NUM was a union worth fighting for. Now it's so busy pleasing the bosses it doesn't give a toss about its members.

**Outraged miner
Kellingley colliery
North Yorkshire**



Telling the truth

I MUST congratulate you on the centrespread article on Bloody Sunday (*tns* 5). I am a Derryman, now living in the Midlands, and was present on that horrendous day in Rossville Street 14 years ago. Since then I have read many articles in different papers. They told of the shootings but none had detailed it so well as your edition has done. The people

of Derry and all other nationalist areas of Northern Ireland are sincere, strong and proud and fear no-one. By telling the truth they face further harassment, invasion of privacy and loss of freedom, but it does not bother them. Please let us see more of this uncensored and unbiased journalism.

**E Brady
Coventry**

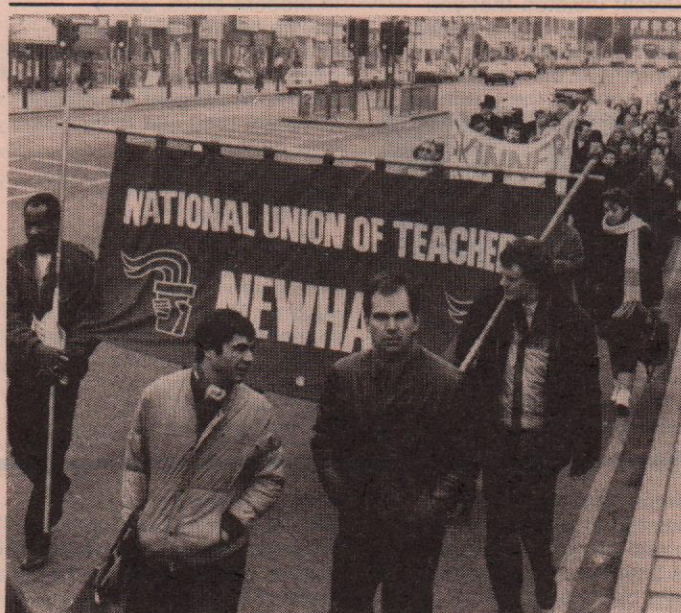
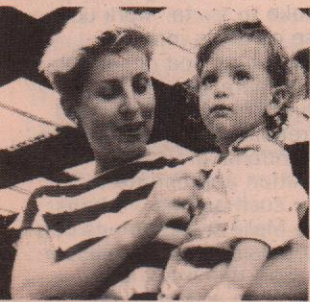
Women need nurseries

SINCE we last wrote to you (*tns* 3) about our fight for nursery facilities at Thames Polytechnic we've been winning support for our arguments that free nurseries aren't a luxury, they're an essential right that women, and men with kids, must have if they're to lead a decent life.

Pressure from students has already won £20 000 from the Poly authorities, but this money is a cut from other student services. It will only provide facilities for 15 children. And it's going to cost students £3.50 a day and poly workers £7.50 a day. Thames poly and the Inner London Education Authority pride themselves on their 'access' and equal opportunities policies, but at prices like this the nursery will indeed be a luxury.

Last summer the women's officer heard from more than 30 women who wouldn't be able to cope at college without a nursery. And there are many others struggling uphill to keep their places on their courses, to find childminders or at least £30 a week to pay them. We desperately need free nurseries, and only an uncompromising campaign will win them. South Bank poly has voted to join. Thames poly students at our lobby of Ilea on 18 March where we'll be demanding the nurseries we need. Please come and support us.

**Kim Pepper
RCPSS, Thames poly**



DAVE FOURKE

Take teachers forward

THERE has been little discussion of the teachers' dispute in your pages over the last 11 months. Angry members of the National Union of Teachers are still calling for strike action to be stepped up, but we're told it would be a waste of resources. We are accustomed to such reasoning. Now the NUT is isolated, after the other six teaching unions agreed to accept the employers' pay offer. But pressure from the membership means the NUT is still committed to improving pay without conceding any worsening of conditions.

To take the strike forward we've got to challenge the NUT's arguments about teachers' importance to the country's future and their loss of purchasing power compared with a police constable's, and put forward straightforward arguments about fighting for a decent living wage. Only then can we win wider support within the NUT for the necessity for more militant action, provide the basis for unity with other workers, and build an effective alternative to the NUT leadership.

**Paul
NUT, Sheffield**

Terrorist routed

ARMY recruitment officer Colonel BJ Smith left Sunderland Polytechnic with a brave face last week. 'The chaps that were put off coming to an interview, by the demonstrators, wouldn't have done very well in the army anyway,' he told the press. Revolutionary Communist Party Students

Society supporters had effectively made the point to potential recruits that the British army is not the peace-keeper it's made out to be, but an army with a list of war crimes that is long and bloody.

**Dave Clark
RCPSS, Sunderland Poly**

GLC
Working for London

GLC says 'sack yourself'

'TIDYING-UP with the London Residuary Body' is on the agenda at my Nalگو shop meeting at the Greater London Council on Thursday. Councillors, council managers and the unions have come to an agreement that in the department where I work 20 jobs out of 177 will be retained by the LRB to 'tidy up' after abolition at the end of March. And 'rather than leaving it to management to pick and choose', our shop steward argued, 'We must work out our own system.' So workers are expected to decide among themselves who most deserves the opportunity to stay in a job.

It's not surprising that workers are in this sickening and pathetic situation, when the unions have never put up any fight to defend our jobs which has been independent of the council bosses' own campaigns. When the Abolition Bill was passed, our 'radical' employers conceded defeat. But regardless of that we should have been fighting to save our jobs all the way. Even many of the left wingers here argue that, 'If it wasn't for abolition we could afford to be more principled.' For them and the unions who should have been leading a fight for jobs, realism means doing the bosses' dirty work.

**Toby Andrew
Fight Back supporter, GLC**

STEPPING OUT

Whether in Wapping or Peking, electricians' chief Eric Hammond is a bosses' man. In 1979, he joined various capitalists on a trip to China. On his return he wrote a ripping report for the EETPU journal, introduced thus: 'The title came to me in that split-second, reflex caution born of a lifetime's negotiating experience.' The title that hit him? 'Impressions of China'. Which proves other union leaders are lying when they say Hammond has imagined the idea that they, too, are involved in no-strike deals. Hammond has no imagination.

The class struggle erupted at the latest committee meeting between NUM officials and management at Kellingley pit. A union bureaucrat 'asked if the canteen made a profit and complained about meagre portions, particularly chips'. Management replied that 'this subject had been raised many times in the past' but 'nothing was ever done' because of 'strict portion control'. And that was that. I am told the NUM is also campaigning about the poor wellies at the pit. With such a fighting union to face, it's no wonder Tory minister Peter Walker has bottled out of visiting Kellingley.

The people who made the film exposing police violence and lies around Orgreave thought the story would make a good book, and asked two jurors from the showtrial to help. But they dropped the idea when NUM lawyers warned such a story would threaten the future of the jury system. Those miners who were jailed by magistrates, lost their jobs, and have now been refused the help of NUM lawyers in their fight for reinstatement, will doubtless be relieved to know the union retains a proper sense of priority.

One more miners' story: The things people say about pit closures, part 57. Labour MP Alex Woodall recently spoke at a rally against the closure of Kinsley Drift pit in Fitzwilliam. Woodall whined that he 'felt sorry for the pit because all the good coal had gone out of it'. Like any true socialist, Woodall does not get emotional about job losses. He saves his sympathy for a hole in the ground. Across at Barnsley, NUM official Bill Etherington said he was 'very impressed' by the new review body, which had just decided to close Horden colliery. But he was worried that the coal board wasn't taking the talking shop seriously, because the minion putting the case for closure only had four sheets of paper, whereas Arthur Scargill had 'more pieces of paper than he could carry'. Now that Arthur's lost the appeal, perhaps he could stick his excess paper work down Kinsley Drift pit, to keep the poor thing cosy on these cold winter nights.

A person of my acquaintance has a strange habit of reading back issues of *Police Review*, and has been tracing the historical development of its adverts' page. In 1978 it was all ads for bronze statuettes of Victorian peelers and sensible footwear from Clark's. By the eighties it was touting truncheon jewellery, combat boots and guns. In 1984 a miner was added to the bronze statues range. Now you can get statues of riot police and a Love Aids catalogue, including a free vibrator. It seems boring Bernard Levin of *The Times* may have a point about the 'decline of moral standards in the police'.

Labour's deputy leader Roy Hattersley said this week he has a 'tribal instinct' about cricket, and tribalism also dictates his political action. Hattersley is an MP in Birmingham, the scene of the Handsworth riot which Kinnock blamed on 'tribal attitudes'. What can it all mean?

EDDIE VEALE

THE PARTY PAGE

DEADLINE FOR NEWS AND REPORTS: MONDAY 9AM 01-729 3771



DAVE ROURKE

The RCP needs you

Ann Burton explains how you can help build the party

We've been surprised recently to discover just how many people are reading *tns* regularly. When our Bradford branch switched some of its regular selling places, our sellers were pursued across the city by outraged *tns* readers who hadn't been able to get their paper at the usual spots. Duly humbled, our Bradford sellers are now covering the old sales pitches as well as the new.

The fact that so many of you buy and read *tns* every week without us knowing who you are and what you're thinking is a problem. Many of you must sometimes have been sufficiently inspired by the paper to wonder what you can do. We're sure most of you don't want to spend all your lives reading about changing the world — you want to have a hand in changing it yourself. Now's your chance.

At its last meeting our Political Committee decided to make February and March the months when we turn our regular readers into proper RCP supporters, and take *tns* to a wider audience. With the Tories in trouble and the official opposition floundering, it's important for us to move fast to increase our own national influence. That means building a bigger base of activists — on estates, in workplaces, colleges and everywhere. We want to spread the party message as widely as we possibly can. The key to this is creating a network of RCP supporters.

What's a supporter?

Becoming a supporter is the way you can stop just thinking that the RCP is a good idea and start putting RCP ideas into action. We

ask our supporters to become another voice for the party — to talk to their friends and workmates about what we're doing, to sell *tns* where they can and to play a role in developing the politics of the party.

Our supporters meet regularly to discuss current political issues, exchange views on *tns* and work through any political problems that crop up. At the end of last year supporters from all over Britain came together to discuss the party's plans for 1986. Over the months ahead we'll be organising dayschools and other meetings for supporters to debate the problems and opportunities that come up.

RCP supporters are the extra eyes and ears of the party. You have an important job to do in giving us additional insights into what's going on. Many of our articles and activities around local issues depend on your accurate observations to explain the ins and outs of the situation. We know how successful *tns* is by gauging how you respond to it. As a supporter if you think there's a problem with the paper or the party, it's your job to let us know. (This week's centre page feature was written in response to discussions with supporters who were confused about the EETPU.) If you have ideas on new places to sell *tns* or hold meetings — write in.

To make an effective intervention in the next election, we'll need our supporters' network to provide the party with local information, to suggest where we should run, candidates, and even to offer to stand! If you like what you read in *tns*, becoming a supporter is the least you can do. Give me a ring on 01-729 0414, or write to BM RCP, London WC1N 3XX.

Waiting for Kinnock — or fighting back now?

A day of discussion in Scotland and Yorkshire

Last week the Tories released two important sets of figures. One showed that unemployment has soared to an all-time high, the other revealed how last year's figures for days lost through strikes struck a 50-year low. Is the working class really on its knees? The collapse of the TUC and the Labour leaders' pathetic performance over Westland are enough to cast doom and gloom over anybody who still has any faith in them. But getting depressed won't win us anything. We need to know exactly what's happening and why, and how we should respond, so that we're ready to give workers a positive critique and a realistic alternative.

This month we're organising dayschools in

Scotland and Yorkshire because both areas have been hard hit by the crisis in the labour movement. In Glasgow we'll be looking at the specific problems of taking on the Labour Party north of the border. In Bradford the discussion will be set against the background of the mounting coal board offensive in the pits.

The dayschools will be important political grounding for the months ahead. We urge all supporters (and potential supporters) in these areas to attend.

SCOTLAND
Saturday 8 February
12-5.30pm
McLellan Galleries
Sauciehall Street
Glasgow

Sessions:

- One year after the miners' strike
 - Fighting the Tories — a new approach
 - Can the Labour Party be changed?
 - Hitting back RCP-style in '86
- Tickets £1 (50p UB40)
Refreshments and childcare available

YORKSHIRE

Saturday 22 February
10am-5pm
Central Library
Bradford

Sessions:

- Is Kinnock worth waiting for?
 - The pits: the UDM and company unionism
 - Racism — a knife in the back of us all
 - Women in Thatcher's Britain
 - Fighting back RCP-style in '86
- Tickets £2 (£1 UB40)
Refreshments, childcare and transport from around Yorkshire available



CHRIS BLACK

Coventry
Jobs not cuts!
This week Roy Hattersley said beating inflation was more important than reducing unemployment. This is the latest statement of policy by the Labour leadership that is taken directly from the thoughts of Margaret Thatcher. It can add this to its views on 'trade union democracy' (acceptance of Tory anti-union laws) and its rejection of

renationalisation (acceptance of Tory privatisation). Come and tell Hattersley what we think of that, when he opens a library next week Monday 10 February 10am New Library Central Precinct

ELWAR
is watching you

Brighton
How to beat the racists
Debate between Workers Against Racism, Anti-Fascist Action and police monitoring groups
Tuesday 18 February 7pm
Debating Chamber
Falmer House
Sussex University

London
Anti-racist rave-up
Benefit for Workers Against Racism
Monday 17 February
The Hundred Club
100 Oxford Street



JOE BOATMAN

Fighting for gay rights
Don Milligan outlines a new approach to fighting oppression
Thursday 6 February 6pm

Room A40
London School of Economics
Houghton Street WC2

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tns

South Africa

RUBICON II



BOTHA CAN'T REFORM APARTHEID

Last summer South African premier PW Botha promised to 'cross the Rubicon' and reform apartheid. Last week he promised more reforms. *Charles Longford* predicts the sequel will be as big a flop as the first showing

RUBICON I

● Normalisation

In July Botha said it was 'essential that the situation be normalised' to allow 'continued dialogue in the interests of all the people'. He assured 'law-abiding' citizens that they were safe and appealed to 'reasonable South Africans' to rise above 'pettiness and violence'.

For 'law-abiding citizens', read 'whites'. Since the state of emergency was introduced last July, the black majority in South Africa has suffered more 'pettiness and violence' from the apartheid state:

- more than 7000 people have been detained, interrogated and often tortured
- detainees include hundreds of children like 10-year old Fanie Goduka, who spent more than two months locked up in jail
- nearly 1000 people have been killed, most by police or troops.
- Power-sharing

Last summer Botha said the regime was 'prepared to share its power of decision-making with other communities'. He promised to negotiate a 'formula for power-sharing with leaders of all communities'.

By 'leaders of all communities' Botha meant the tame black homeland 'leaders' who are not elected and have no popular

support. In the townships, these black stooges have faced retribution from their communities. Many have been driven out and some killed. Most genuine black leaders are in jail, in hiding, or in exile.

RUBICON II

● Pass laws

Last week Botha promised to scrap the pass laws restricting the movement of black people into urban areas and introduce a 'common identity' book that all South Africans will have to carry.

But only blacks will be required to produce their 'common identity' book to prove their right to live, work or travel in their own country. While Botha offers to relax the pass laws, arrests for 'pass offences' have increased. A new Amnesty International report shows how the apartheid regime is using the pass laws to supply white farmers with prison labour.

No change in the pass laws can disguise the fact that if you are black in South Africa today, the state still decides where you can work, live and travel.

● Citizenship

Botha promises full citizenship rights to five million urban blacks, now denied it because they are designated citizens of 'homelands' most have never seen.

Yet as long as the regime creates artificial homelands for blacks, separate from the rest of South African society, they will remain second-class citizens.

The recent incorporation of Moutse into the KwaNdebele homeland, as a step towards full 'independence' this year, shows Botha is determined to push ahead with separate development. The homelands play a vital role in dividing the black community and providing a pool of cheap labour. Much of the so-called 'inter-tribal' conflict of recent months arises from population movements and tensions created by the homelands policy.

● Peace talks

'My government wants to hear your views, it wants to speak with you and your leaders in a spirit of cooperation and dedication to the future of our country,' declared Botha on black radio and television last week. He

suggested he would consider releasing Nelson Mandela in exchange for two Soviet dissidents and a South African soldier held in Angola.

Botha's cynical propaganda ploy over Mandela only confirms that the regime is holding the African National Congress leader to suit its political purposes.

While conflict in the townships continues, Botha will be left talking to the same handful of stooges. Even the most moderate black representatives demand the ending of the state of emergency and the withdrawal of the troops from the townships — subjects on which his speech was silent — before they will talk to Botha.

While Botha talks of peace his agents take more aggressive action. South African forces have recently invaded Angola and Botswana, provoked a coup in Lesotho, and continued to terrorise the townships under the official media blackout. Botha's offer of 'peace treaties' with his neighbours to curb the movement of ANC guerrillas into South Africa carries a thinly disguised threat that he will use force if they refuse to cooperate.

Break Botha's bankers!

Rubicon II got better reviews in the West than Rubicon I. Last summer Botha irritated his supporters in London and Washington with his 'don't push us too far' posture. Western disquiet led to a sharp drop in the exchange value of the rand and further damaged South Africa's ailing economy.

Last week's speech had a more conciliatory tone and, despite some irritation over Botha's childish 'Mandela for Sakharov' swap offer, it met a better reception. The British foreign office said it was 'clearly an important speech' with 'important proposals'. In Lusaka on Monday foreign

secretary Geoffrey Howe gave the British stamp of approval to Botha's promised reforms in the apartheid system.

Western leaders welcome any measures that will stabilise the situation in South Africa and make their massive investment in apartheid more secure. Their only concern about Botha's reforms is whether they will contribute to this objective.

Western observers overestimate the scope for reform within the framework of apartheid. They underestimate the extent to which South African capitalism and its overseas sponsors depend on the super-exploitation that apartheid guarantees.

They fail to appreciate that the struggle for black civil rights can only succeed through the overthrow of the system that provides rich profits for British and other Western capitalists, as well as for their South African colleagues.

Action Against Apartheid is campaigning against the British backers of apartheid. On 20 February representatives of the South African regime will be in London to renegotiate the terms on which British bankers lend money to apartheid. Supporters of Action Against Apartheid will be there to protest about British complicity in apartheid. Join us! Ring 01-729 0414 for details.