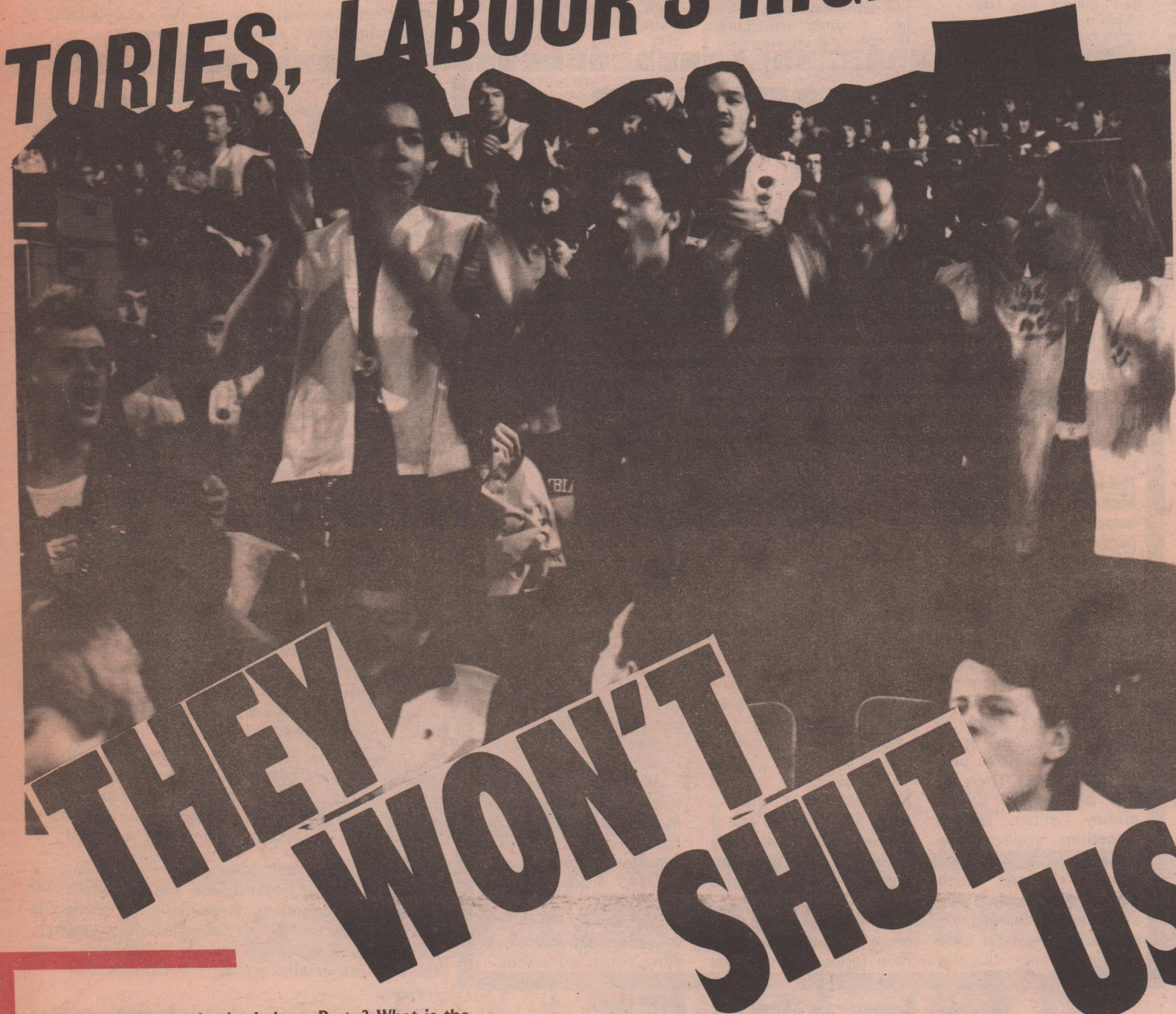


CLASS FIGHTER

PAPER OF THE NATIONAL LEFT-WING YOUTH MOVEMENT

Class Fighter No. 6. July/August 1982

TORIES, LABOUR'S RIGHT WING



THEY WON'T SHUT US UP!

WHAT is going on in the Labour Party? What is the battle about? The right want to make all the decisions in Parliament. The left want decisions to be taken at the Party Conference and the Labour Government to carry them out.

Over the last two years, the left have made a lot of ground. We have succeeded in getting the leader elected by the Party and not just by MPs. The right have been losing the political arguments so the only weapon they have left is the party machine, its full time employees and unelected advisory committees.

Now they are using that power base to drive the left wing, at least the serious left, out of the party. They say that the left, particularly, the "Militant tendency" are a "party within a party".

But the Labour Party was set up as a federation between the trade unions and socialist organisations to represent the views of the trade unions and working class people in Parliament and outside it.

At first all the 'tendencies', the different points of view, in the workers' movement had a voice in the party, and democratic decisions were taken.

But as Labour grew in the 1920s, leaders soon got a taste for the privileged life in Parliament. They knew if they were to keep those privileges they would have to work with the bosses to control the working class. They knew that in a democratic movement they would not be able to enjoy the power, so they began to tighten up to keep out the left.

In the early 1920s, the CP formed as a new left wing, after the Russian Revolution. The Communists wanted to affiliate to the Labour Party so all the working class parties could be united. But they wanted to keep their own caucus to decide together what they wanted to argue for in the party.

The leaders of the Labour Party began a witch-hunt against them and got the Party conference in 1928 to refuse to allow CP members, some of whom had been in the Labour Party for years, to stay in.

But despite the witch-hunt, tendencies of revolutionary socialists still survive in the Party. And the "mainstream left" has organised itself too — because anyone can see that "ideas" without the organisation to carry them out are useless.

It's always been in the youth of the Labour Party that left wing ideas have flourished most and where organised groups have been strongest.

In the 1930s the pro-Stalin Communist Party took over the Labour Party youth wing and it was disbanded. In the early 1960s a new YS was set up and many left wing groups joined and eventually the largest, Keep Left, was expelled and the YS virtually closed down.

But the Left kept coming back. In 1971 Militant won control and the party leaders left it alone, but now the right wing are becoming worried and are starting to attack. They have decided to witch-hunt the Militant, and with them the right wing could

well try to wind up the YS. The witch-hunt will also be extended to all those groups in the Labour Party like Socialist Organiser, London Labour Briefing and Socialist Newsletter. The whole of the left must unite to fight it.

Class Fighter supporters are putting a model resolution into local YS's, to local Parties, the NEC and to Michael Foot, (and also a resolution to the YS national committee), calling on them to campaign now to defend the YS.

To get the left campaigning, a new organisation has been set up called the 'Unregistered Alliance'. This involves all those groups in the party who stand opposed to the register. We are calling on YS's, wards, GCs, women's sections and trade union branches to support it, and try to get to the meetings that it is organising.

We appeal to Militant comrades to support this alliance and not to back out on a fight by complying with the register.

We can't sit back and let the right wing get on with it. We must say loud and clear that the Labour Party is our party and we are not leaving it to the right wing. That means mobilising the 500 constituencies who came out against the witch-hunt of Peter Tatchell, getting every YS branch actively opposing the register and beating back the threat posed to the YS.

INSIDE: MARCH AGAINST SLAVE LABOUR

Liverpool



Oct. 16

Holocaust in the Middle East — see centre pages.

CLASH

hit
Brixton

Judith Bonner reports
— page 6

OPINION !!!!???

Should education be compulsory — page 7



Peter Tatchell
"A Labour Party without a youth section will be dead and moribund. — we need a campaign to defend the LPYS."

ALL CLASS FIGHTER supporters should go and get their YS branch to the Labour Movement Conference on 11 September at Wembley Conference Centre, London.

EDITORIAL

from Pravda AGOGO.

They used to have labour camps...

Tebbit's new 'training initiative' starts soon. We look back at similar compulsory schemes in the '30's

FOR school leavers the prospects of work may be bleak, but for those in the "job creation" industry business is booming. Manpower Services, YOPs, TOPs, the Youth Training Initiative have become a major part of the bosses' strategy over the last four years.

But their aim is NOT to combat the poverty and indignity of unemployment amongst young workers. Instead they want to use the mass unemployment of youth to create a different kind of workforce — one which can be worked till it drops with no more than a minimum outlay on wages. A workforce which has no trade union rights against sackings, victimisation or inhuman working conditions. In short what the bosses want is slave labour.

History

The history of "employment" schemes in the 1930s gives us a clear picture of which way the Tories want to go with the new training initiative. It also shows that the bosses are prepared to be patient in their pursuit of their slave labour goal — taking one step at a time.

In 1925 the government began to open training centres for the unemployed. Courses ran for six months and gave training in specific trades like welding and carpentry. In many respects, they were similar to the present government retraining centres.

But in 1929 these were supplemented with a different kind of training. In May of that year the first Ministry of Labour "Instructional Centre" was opened. These were not skill centres. They were generally known as "training and reconditioning camps".

Typical jobs in them

were forest clearing and road making. And the camps were residential!! In other words they were work camps, the British equivalent of the labour camp.

These special camps paid no wages. The "volunteers" instead got four shillings a week pocket money, taken out of their unemployment benefit. All the rest of their benefit was taken from them for food and accommodation at the camp. The trade union rate for labouring at that time was 42 shillings a week. Little wonder that these camps were known to workers as the "slave camps".

Behind this 'slave labour scheme' was the idea that workers should work for their dole. That the unemployed had no rights to benefits unless they were prepared to slave for hours in the most back-breaking jobs and that meant working a week for a day's pay. That was the future offered to youth.

Government papers of the time show how the bosses weren't keen just to make people work for dole money. In 1934, a new Unemployment Act was passed extending the role of the slave camps among the young unemployed. Attendance became compulsory for those drawing benefit once they were called up for work

in them. Those who refused not only lost their benefit — they were prosecuted! During 1935 hundreds of young workers were fined by magistrates for refusing to be drafted into the bosses slave labour army in the camps. Four years later they were all being drafted into the trenches as cannon fodder for the Second World War.

The struggle of the unemployed of the 1930s was a long and heroic one which has gone into school history books as the Jarrow marches. But the marches changed nothing! That is why we are taught about them. The real fight of the unemployed, against closures, for trade union rates for all work, to smash the slave labour camps remains a closely guarded secret.

The militant young workers who organised strikes in the slave camps and on training schemes aren't in the history books.

That is the way forward today, against the Tories' dream of a new generation of slave camps, fighting as they did in the '30s to bring the unemployed struggle into the labour movement.

Especially now when £25 a week is put forward as a decent wage for a 40 hour week on the New Training Initiative.



PEACE THROUGH DETERRENCE—THE ONLY ANSWER TO A BULLY'S THREAT

Many of us have had to stand up to a bully at some stage in our lives. The only answer is to say: "Let me alone — or you'll be sorry." And to have the strength to back up your words. The situation is just the same between Russia and the West. Britain and NATO must have the strength to face up to the threat of Soviet military might. And that means Britain and NATO must have nuclear weapons. All sane people share a horror of nuclear war.

But if we're wise and on our guard we can prevent any war in Europe — as we have for over 35 years. In the last ten years Russia's spending on arms has grown dramatically. But that of the West has fallen. Every week Russia sets up a new nuclear missile aimed at the western world. No government that cares for its people's safety and well-being can ignore facts like these.

That's why Britain must do everything in its power — with our friends in NATO — to deter Russia from further aggression. Some people say Britain should go it alone and throw away its nuclear weapons, that if we didn't have them Russia wouldn't threaten us. That's dangerous rubbish. History proves that the weak and defenceless don't get ignored and left in peace — they get trampled on. Strength and deterrence. That's the way to secure peace — not wishful thinking.

The West is making every serious effort to halt the nuclear arms race by negotiations with the Soviet Union. But until we have the strength to guarantee peace by throwing our own nuclear weapons out of the window? Those who think "Don't think" are to be respected. It's a confidence in all sorts. But to do it on our own — without cast-iron safeguards against aggression — would be madness.



PEOPLE in high places are getting very worried by YCND. They need to be, for YCND is the fastest growing youth campaign in Britain, with over 6,000 members and hundreds of groups up and down the country. Since June 6 alone we've been inundated with hundreds of new applications.

The latest people to show interest in us are the Ministry of Defence. They're producing a glossy leaflet "How to deal with a bully — peace through deterrence — the only answer to a bully's threat."

The bully is Russia, and the leaflet, aimed at school youth, tries to convince the reader that "NATO's policy of deterrence has kept peace in Europe for over 30 years". (Try telling that to the Turkish people living under the Generals' dictatorship, kept in power by NATO).

We are also told that, unlike Russia, NATO is making serious efforts to halt the nuclear threat. The peaceful grassy lands of this country are portrayed in the centre of the leaflet in an attempt to convince us that all is serene and peaceful in England. (Bet there's a nuclear bomb shelter for some rich bastard under the grassy hill!)

In response, YCND has produced a counter-leaflet "Think for Yourself — My

Youth, our Future, Peace through Deterrence."

It aims to counter the MoD leaflets by facts and truths, encouraging young people to get involved in CND and voice their opposition to the insanity of an arms build-up — of course we haven't the resources of the MoD but we hope enough youth, teachers, (and civil servants in MoD) will circulate the leaflet and promote peace education in schools.

The message is clear: "There has never been an arms race that hasn't ended in war". "That's a history lesson none of us can afford to ignore."

At the last NC preparations were started for the first national YCND event. This will happen in London on September 18 with bands and do's — the only hassle at the moment is finance, with the GLC unwilling to give us a hand and CND in dire financial straits.

Another event is the peace camp being held in East Acton "Tent City" during the whole of August. Organised for YCND by END, there'll be events and workshops and lots more so bring a tent and it's only £1 a night (phone END 01-277 1236 for more details).

In the last issue of Class Fighter you'll remember YCND were supporting the Reagan Reception Com-

mittee and its demonstration on June 7. Well at the last NC Bruce Kent, national secretary of CND told us quite categorically that not only should YCND not have criticised CND for failing to support it but couldn't go on the demonstration.

When I argued that this directly undermined YCND's ability to make its own decisions and the sovereignty of its conference he replied "If you want to drag CND's name in the mud then go!!"

For those on the left in YCND there's a big problem arguing against the bureaucratic attitudes of people like Bruce Kent who want to keep CND pure and unadulterated from politics (especially socialist ones). We don't need purity like that! Join CND and YCND now!

JUDITH BONNER

YCND NC
Write to YCND, 11,
Goodwin Street, London,
N4.

Ministry of Defence propaganda leaflet

NATO'S POLICY OF DETERRENCE HAS KEPT PEACE IN EUROPE FOR OVER 30 YEARS



That's a history lesson none of us can afford to ignore

CND's reply

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN ARMS RACE THAT HASN'T ENDED IN A WAR.



That's a history lesson none of us can afford to ignore.

School students wear "resistors"



NATIONAL UNITY — HISTORIC AGREEMENT



Marek Garstecki, now editor of the Solidarity Trade Union Working Group bulletin in Britain, remembers his school as the starting place of his political involvement. Like most other schools, says Marek, the social studies teachers encouraged classes to discuss and think for themselves. And if the head teacher wasn't in the Party, or the secret police weren't watching, radical history teachers would talk about "forbidden parts of Polish history".

Clampdown

Some schools, like Warsaw Grammar School, have such a reputation for student and teacher militancy that since martial law, there has been talk of closing it down. We asked Marek what sort of school student involvement there had been with Solidarnosc and he told us about the URO — the Pupils Defence Movement.

"Although known student activists were likely to fail their leaving exams, (unless they did better than everyone else) and get put

into dead end jobs or small provincial colleges, it was common to find discussion pamphlets circulated by school groups". School students also led marches and at Marek's tech college crash courses in printing were filled with school activists.

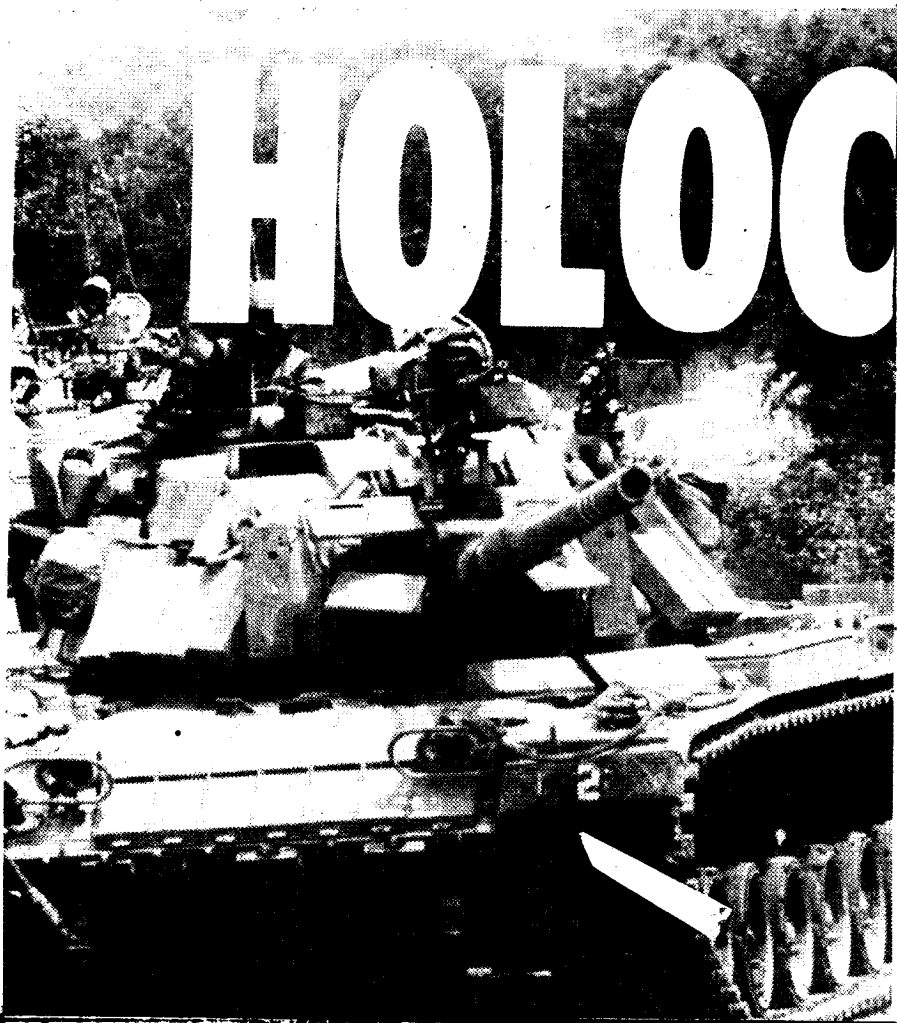
Since the clampdown, school students have had to find new ways of protesting. A popular form of protest has been to sit in absolute silence during lunch breaks. In some schools the head has called in the police to stop the silence! The latest Voice of Solidarnosc carries a report of the Youth Social Defence Committee's recommendations to school students to continue the silent break protests, wearing resistors (resistors are pieces from old radios worn in Poland as symbols of resistance — they're much easier to get hold of than badges!) on their lapels, not going to cinemas, theatres or discos, and going for a walk during TV news broadcasts.

The first generation of college students since the growth of Solidarnosc have flocked into the militant union, the NZS (Solidarnosc students). These are the students who were in their last year at school when the strike wave started. Marek thinks the organisations of school students have been responsible for this. Before the new college intake (last year) only 20% of students were in the NZS, now the number is around 50%.

Speakers

Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group can send speakers to meetings to talk about Solidarnosc. Why not get your LPYS branch or General Committee to invite a speaker. Maybe you could contact your local Polish Solidarity Committee and hold the meeting jointly. Information and collection sheets are a good way to start building support for Solidarnosc. You should write to STUWG and the NZS at: Acorn House, 314/210 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP.





HOLOOC

AUST IN THE

WILL ADAMS reports on what the Palestinians face as the Israeli army surrounds, bombards and stages 'mock' air attacks on Beirut.

WHILE the world's attention was distracted by the war in the South Atlantic, Israel decided to launch an invasion of Lebanon. The excuse given was that it was an act of revenge for the shooting of an Israeli ambassador in London but it was clear that the invasion had been planned for many months. Already over 10,000 Israel citizens and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have been killed during the Israeli invasion and over half a million have been left homeless.

The British press blandly reports the invasion, presenting it as a conflict between evenly matched powers when in fact Israel has one of the largest, most ruthless military machines in the world. The Lebanese National Movement and the Palestine Liberation Organisation are fighting a heroic struggle against the odds, relying only on themselves and the power of international solidarity.

In Lebanon a civil war broke out in the mid-70s. On one side were the largely Christian militias, often fascists, racist and pro-imperialist. On the other side was the Lebanese National Movement, consisting of the mainly Muslim militias and left-wing organisations, and the Palestinians.

Invasion

In the course of the invasion the Zionists and imperialists want to wipe out the Lebanese National Movement and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation which has been using Lebanon as a base, and establish a suitably right-wing government in Lebanon that will act in the interests of imperialist policy in the region.

Israel was set up by a United Nations partition of Palestine in 1947. Control of Israel was given to the small population of Jews within its borders, many of whom were recent immigrants.

The workers of the native Arab population who were the majority in Palestine were ignored both by the UN and by the state of Israel.

The partition was followed by war between Israel and the Arab states, the Arabs rightly resisting the partition of their land. The Zionists occupied the area granted to them by the 1947 partition and also part of what the UN had granted the Palestinians.

The Jordanian regime snatched the rest. Existing amongst Arab countries justifiably hostile to it, Israel has been forced to brutally extend the area it controls for its own protection.

Zionism has always held the idea of a 'Jewish homeland' as a solution to the problems of anti-

semitism. Zionists argue that it is not safe for Jews to live among non-Jews and so it was necessary to establish a separate state for Jews. In this Zionism is clearly a racist ideology. In its beginning Zionism was a minority ideology among Jews, even though Britain in 1917 recognised that a Jewish homeland would be established in Palestine, regardless of the wishes of the Palestinians. It was only after the extermination of six million Jews in Hitler's gas chambers that Zionism gained the support of large numbers of Jews. In other words, the Arab people are being told to compensate the Jews of Europe for the crimes committed against the Jews by the imperialists.

Flex

In the fighting that followed the partition of their land, many Palestinians fled or were driven out of their homes. Some fled to Arab states and established camps on Israel's borders — unable to return.

Others, who moved from one part of Palestine to another to escape the fighting found that they were prevented by the Israelis from returning to their lands.

Most of this land was given to Jews. The expulsions of Palestinians did not stop in 1947-8, however. Today, there are massive refugee camps in Lebanon and other areas where Palestinians live, struggling for the right to return to their homeland.

In the 1967 war, Israel invaded the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the Sinai. Israeli Jews were organised to go and establish settlements in these areas, again expelling some of the Palestinian population.

Discrimination

Palestinians within Israel face open, systematic discrimination. Palestinians get worse jobs, lower wages and poorer housing than Jews. Palestinian workers are not allowed to form their own trade unions, but are only allowed to join the Arab section of the Histadrut, the Israeli 'Federation of Labour', which besides being a major force for Zionism (it used to organise widespread boycotts of Arab products in favour of Jewish products) is also one of Israel's major employers.

No Palestinian national party is allowed to organise or to stand candidates for the Knesset (Parliament) thus denying Palestinians an effective political voice.

The racist 'Law of Return' allows any Jew in the world to enter Israel and become a citizen, yet



denies the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. Israel tries to deny that the Palestinians are a nation and forbids the flying of the Palestinian flag.

But the Palestinians have not lost their national identity, despite being dispersed over the Middle East. If anything, their desire to live as a nation has been strengthened by the creation of Israel. The overwhelming majority of Palestinians support the Palestine Liberation Organisation, an umbrella organisation of groups fighting for a Palestinian homeland, and wish to have this organisation representing them.

The hypocrisy of the Zionists is clear: they claim that Israel is a haven for Jews fleeing the genocide of Nazi gas chambers, yet they are presently carrying out genocide against Lebanese and Palestinian people; they claim that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, but full democratic rights are only given to the Jewish population.

As socialists we fully support the fight of the Palestinians for a secular democratic state in Palestine (i.e. one that is not religiously based, and which gives equal rights to all citizens). We would argue that such a state should be a socialist one, but do not make this a precondition of our support for the Palestinians. We support the PLO which leads the fight of the Palestinians and has their support.

Rally

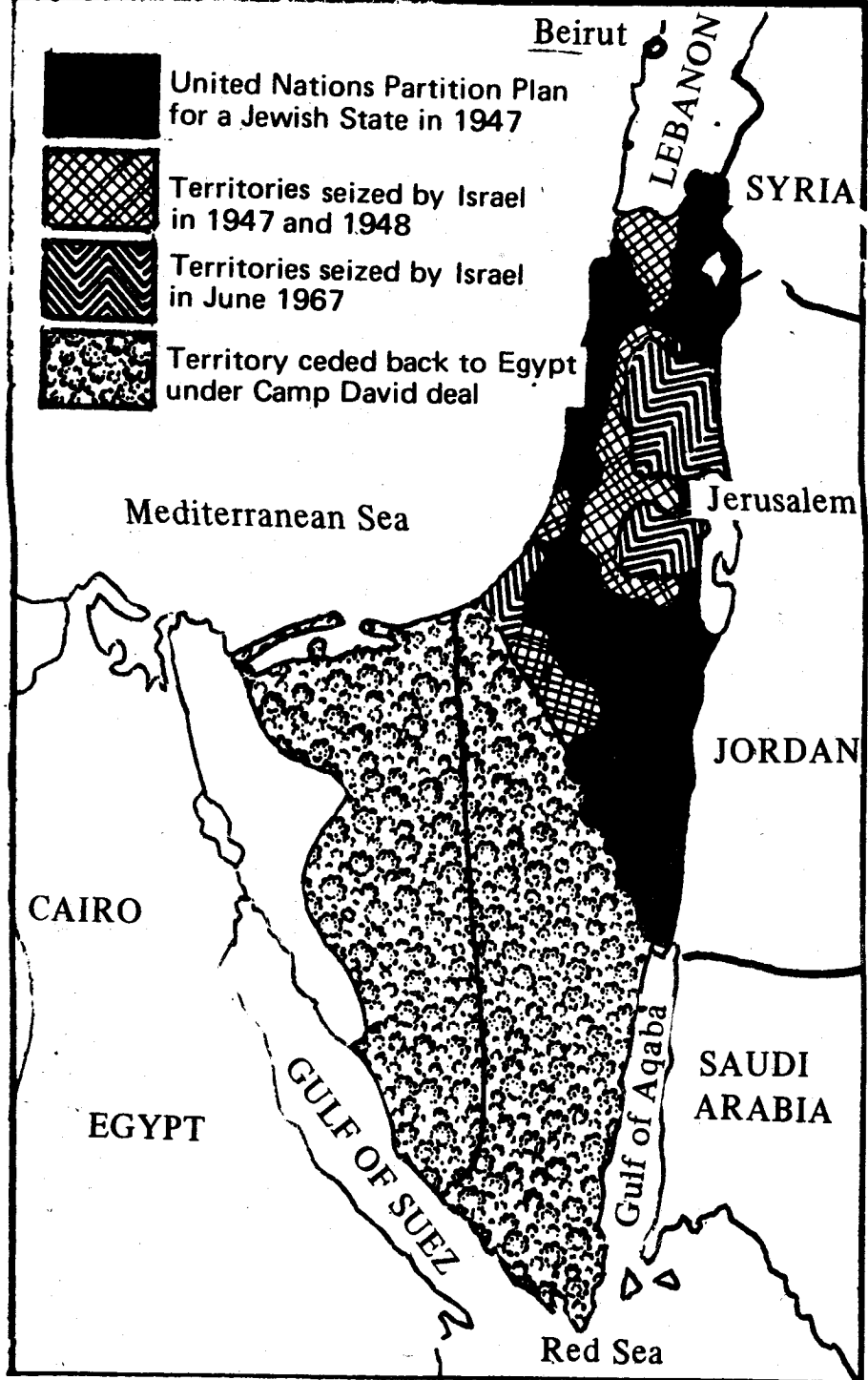
This is a recruiting the Army — post Falklands episode.

Youth in Britain have had imperialist war drive can South Atlantic. They dug and got their imperial tas Even on the way they were mere £11,000 a shot... war being conducted at ho with all those who might op

Every night on TV we age, making us feel someone who were dying. The Sun boys all the way.

But why should we be schemes that offer us £25 The detention centres the back against the Tories a security snoopers who say dole? Thatcher for throw the dole queue?

The truth is that we Britain'. Most of us can't never supported Thatcher can we betray her?



MIDDLE

Yael, a supporter of the Workers' League of Palestine, spoke to Class Fighter when she visited London. She is now back in the Middle East.

What is life like for young people in Israel?

There are two separate communities in Israel: the Israeli Jews and the Palestinians. The groups are separate and their differences are especially marked among the youth.

The two communities go to separate schools and they speak different languages — Arabic and Hebrew. They only meet at universities or when they are at work.

Palestinians tend to have strict rules for young women — they don't go out alone and have to be in early in the evenings. The young Palestinian men are freer but still will usually live with their parents.

At 18 all Jews have to join the army, except for a few groups — women who are married, etc. Women spend two years in the army, men three years. When they leave at 20 or 21, there is a great pressure on them from their parents and from society to get married and settle down.

Jewish youth have a very short time free from responsibility. This makes them conform a lot more than in Britain — you don't see Israeli youth with coloured hair! It also makes them not very interested in politics.

What political organisations are there for youth?

The Likud and the Labour Party (main political

parties) have youth movements. Jewish youth join these youth movements at about 10. The youth movement you join depends on which one has a club nearest your school — it doesn't depend on your politics. They are more like social clubs than political groups.

There are also Jewish youth movements connected with the religious parties — many of the members of these will go on to join Gush Emunim (an extreme Zionist group) and will go and live in the occupied territories.



Inside the borders of Israel, Palestinian youth can join the Communist Party youth movement or the Patriotic Progressive Movement — a Palestinian nationalist group. These organise political meetings and demonstrations.

In the occupied territories Palestinian youth can join the youth sections of groups within the PLO — Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, etc. But these groups aren't allowed to exist openly so they have to organise under different names.

What are the occupied territories?

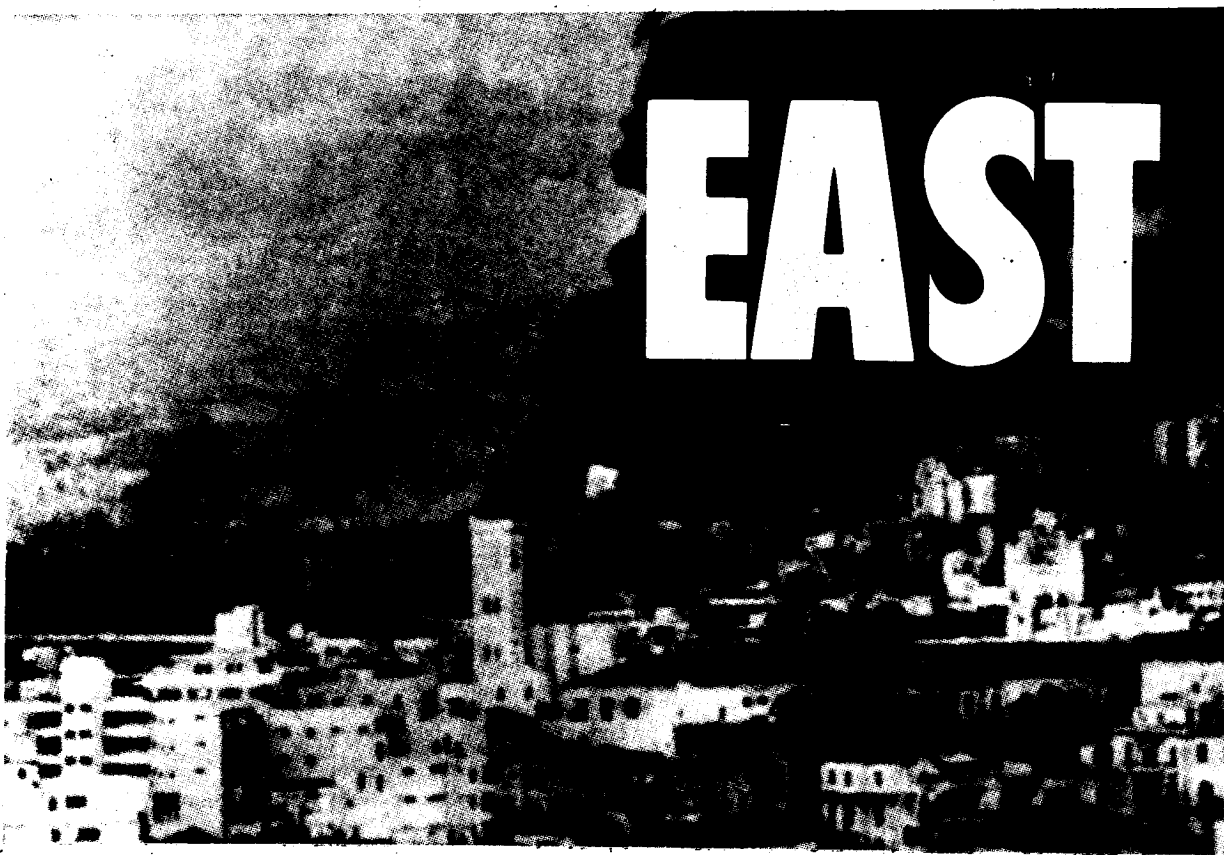
In 1967 Israel occupied the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan Heights which at the time were parts of other countries. This is justified in Biblical terms — the Jews are the "chosen race" and these areas are part of the Biblical land of Israel.

Gush Emunim is a powerful organisation that supports these occupations. It organises Jews to go and establish settlements in these areas. It doesn't have many members — its largest demonstration was 15,000. But it has lots of money. They have the best meeting rooms, can produce lots of posters to advertise and can organise free buses to take people to demonstrations.

How have Israeli youth reacted to the invasion of the Lebanon?

Many of them who oppose the invasion will do nothing. Maybe they are opposed to it but there is no political youth movement to organise them.

The youth in the army seem to accept their orders — there's not been much protest. But there have been some big demonstrations in Israel against the invasion. Up to 100,000 people and that's big for Israeli marches. I think so many are opposed to the war because of the casualties. Near where I live in



Israel there is a cemetery. There have been many burials recently — far more than the authorities have announced publicly for the area. So there is a real feeling against the war and young people are very much part of that.

What can youth in Britain do?

British youth should support the rights of the Palestinians to return to their own land and their right to self-determination — the right to a state where Palestinians are not discriminated against, where they have rights to the land and where they can choose their own representatives. All these rights are denied them in Israel.

British youth must support the organisations fighting for these rights. The PLO is the organisation that the Palestinians wish to represent them. It has been fighting Zionism for the past 18 years.

AS the death toll is rising daily in the Lebanon it is most urgent that we show our support for the PLO and the Palestinians immediately.

Get your YS branch to send donations and messages of solidarity to the following addresses at your next meeting.

Palestine Liberation Organisation, General Union of Palestinian Students, both at 52, Green Street, London W1.

Other useful addresses include:

Labour Committee on Palestine, c/o 28 Carlton Mansions, Holmleigh Road, London N16.

Palestine Solidarity Committee, c/o Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2.

Trade Union Friends of Palestine, c/o Ernie Ross MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

round the flag, boys.



o Army Officer

a small taste of what the... like with the war in the... Nelson up from his grave... force out into the sea... firing rockets that cost a... practice. We also saw a... me. The media waged war... pose Thatcher's war.

saw extended news cover... responsible for all those... backed Britain and the

ck Britain? For its YOPs... or 40 hours work a week?... ensure we won't fight... the police? The social... we get too much on the... ng over three million on

have no reason to 'back... be called traitors, we've... in the first place so how

There are some traitors in our midst though. They are the leadership of the Labour Party and the trade unions. They pretended that they fought for the interests of the workers and youth. What did they do? 99% of them backed up Thatcher's war in the South Atlantic as they back up the war in Ireland.

We must get rid of these fakers and replace them with genuine workers' leaders.

It seems that we also need a clear-out in the LPYS — our own organisation. They refused to build a movement to withdraw the fleet, saying it was not possible.

This war must not be forgotten in the YS. We should write to Socialist Youth declaring our opposition to their position.

The war in the South Atlantic is not over either. While there is a British task force in the South Atlantic or any other place, we can never be free. A "Labour Committee for Withdrawal" has been set up by Ken Livingstone, Peter Tatchell and other left wing Labour Party leaders. We should support this committee and inject our support for the defeat of the British bosses.

Ireland

NO

time to waste

SINCE National LPYS Conference with the South Atlantic crisis in the forefront of people's minds (and in the media), Ireland has taken a back slot.

Conference once again failed to take up the relevant issues of Ireland — not that it managed to generate lively debate on either anyway.

It is easy to forget the fact that there's a bitter

struggle being waged in Ireland when the media is more concerned with Royal babies and intruders.

Now is the time to start raising the issues in the LPYS. Regional and National conferences aren't that far off and as youth officer of the Labour Committee on Ireland I think there is no time to waste in organising for them now. If you are going to summer camp then why not come

along to the Class Fighter meeting on Ireland with an LCI speaker.

In fact if you haven't heard of the Labour Committee on Ireland then you should be hearing from us soon.

There will be a mailing to all YS branches from Walworth Road from the LCI offering speakers to all YS branches — so that should be a spur to push a proper anti-imperialist posi-

tion in the YS opposing British imperialism in the North.

Also coming up in November is a recall labour movement conference on Ireland. So if you want more details or want to join the LCI, contact: Labour Committee on Ireland, BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX.

PETE CASHMAN
National Youth Officer,
Labour Committee on Ireland.



ROCKING the Casbah with a bit of 'billy, reggae, roll and disco, the Clash came to Brixton one Sunday. Much soul searching (retrospection), Joe Strummer AWOL in Paris . . . exit Nick (Topper) Headon . . . they finally made it.

Nowadays it is trendy to be fun, fun 'apolitical' — 'let's dance, but don't bring politics into it'. Dancing is fun, it beats meetings every night. Whilst there are purists — the trendy ones who think dance is dance and the turgid ones who think politics is politics, so unethical to mix the two — the Clash are the real intellectuals among

I danced when I wasn't too overawed, or stretching to look once more at Joe Strummer's hair (or lack of it) or gasp at Paul Simonon.

Joe Strummer's vocals were excellent, and Mick 'I can play a whole chord' Jones managed to sing his song that means so much to him, 'Stay Free'. And Paul 'Oh, isn't he gorgeous' (he is, he is!) Simonon based away to Guns of Brixton. Rock the Casbah needed a bit of practicing or a

We all come up against walls. The Clash have climbed a lot, or just pushed them over. The Clash Casbah Club may be in your area now so go rock it.



THE NEXT DAY

HILARY I HAVE COME FOR A JOB

BUT HARRY YOU HAVE NO TRAINING VERY WELL YOU CAN FETCH + CARRY AROUND THE OFFICE FOR ME

O THANKYOU



LETTERS

Agree? Disagree? Just want to write a letter? Write to Class Fighter, at 214 Sickert Court, Essex Road, London N1.

Weymouth fanzine

WE started Pravda-a-go-go (it took months to get used to the name) because we were fed up with the boring, stereotyped, YS papers like Socialist Youth and Militant (Class Fighter is a distinct improvement) and we wanted something to sell with a local bias which youth could relate to, i.e. interesting topical points, not just "let's nationalise the top 200 monopolies".

Producing the fanzine has brought our ideas to a lot of people who don't come to meetings and maybe unaware of our socialist ideas.

It is an idea for other YS's to produce local fanzines with not just politics but with reviews of local bands, gigs etc. It also encourages comrades to write articles and have ideas which often sparks off a good debate and producing

it gets the YS away from the practice of only having repetitive meetings.

Hope the idea will be of use to other branches.

Tony Prowse,
(on behalf of Weymouth LPYS)

PRAVDA-A-GO-GO!
SEXISM

*Orders to the editor,
James, 134, Chickerell Rd.,
Weymouth.

We didn't get where we are today...

I agree with Kate Williams, that there is a need to stress the plight of gays through more discussion within the socialist movement, and that time should be set aside in the various youth conferences to pay proper attention to this important issue.

Like all oppressed groups though the campaign must start at home, the Women's Movement didn't get where it is today by waiting around

for men to fight for them and similarly the gay movement can't hope to get anywhere unless the gay community themselves come together and fight for their rights.

Together

There is a great need for gay youths to come together, in order that discussions can take place on their various aims and demands and in

order to organise a mass gay movement which has positive demands to put forward and fight for. Only then will the other members of our society listen and lend firm support.

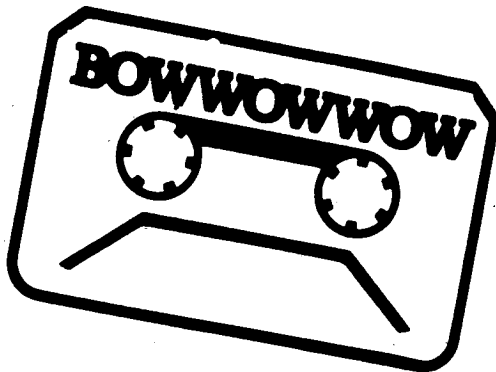
The machinery for doing this already exists in many of the larger cities, where gay youth groups have been set up, and most big towns with a Polytechnic or University will have a gay society. Elsewhere it may

be a little harder, but it's up to us to help ourselves in order to gain help from others.

G. Hancox
(NLWYM supporter,
Wolverhampton)

There will be a Labour Campaign for Gay Rights meeting at the YS Summer Camp - with Judith Williams speaking. She was sacked from her job for being gay.

Side Two



Bow Wow Yuck!

Dear Editor,

I thought last issue's review of Bow Wow Wow was appallingly dreadful and sickening to read. The author would be better off writing for Smash Hits which fortnightly publishes such bland drivel complete with full colour photos and lyrics.

First of all I'm not convinced that Bow Wow Wow are anything more than the

rat-bag Malcolm McLaren's side-kick - if they aren't, why don't they pack up their 'association' with him and go it alone?

But in any case I would have expected more from a Marxist critic than comments such as the sexist "looking good, feeling good"; of such moronic nonsense the rock industry stinks.

However the most worrying thing and the point of writing this letter is the idea that the author does not think that "pop music in itself can play a politically progressive role".

What have the Clash, the Beat, Aswad, UB40, Blues Band, etc., etc., been doing playing benefits for anti-racist organisations then?

A mass culture doesn't exist without overflowing into politics. A mass political movement [such as CND] doesn't exist without overflowing into culture.

I don't think Class Fighter should be eulogising this so-called "exuberant, good time pop music" which, oh, wow, is popular again. This is exactly the type of music which can't be progressive and is usually based not on music but sex symbols and you can take your pick - butch, femme or pretty boys! It's an asset that some [NME in particular] music papers have not become the sterile mouthpieces of the record conglomerates and are critical of rock music in general. Thousands of young people have rejected the so-called 'mainstream'. So should Class Fighter.

Yours fraternally,
Andrew MacDonald

"!!!???" OPINION

This month's 'OPINION' comes from Jacob, from Oxford YS, a school student. Is compulsory education necessary?

FOR years the left, and particularly the revolutionary left have been talking about making schools into better places. However, I have never heard anyone suggest compulsory education should be abolished. There has not even been any talk of a fundamentally different education system. All we have had is a few weak moans about corporal punishment and the worst of the petty rules.

Apparently education under socialism will be exactly the same as it is now - that is, a number of overcrowded jails where kids are herded from the age of five to learn the basic principles of capitalism - the most important being subservience to higher authority.

Of course when free universal education was first introduced it was considered a pro-rather than an anti-civil liberties measure, a chance for working class kids to escape from poverty and ignorance. But the ruling class don't miss their opportunities.

This method of controlling people's thoughts by locking them up in institutions supposed to improve their minds is used all over the world to counter the effects of mass literacy.

In the USSR, (and probably in the West as well) it involves dissidents being placed in mental hospitals. The central message of school is, and always has been, 'Do as you are told (by higher authority)

whether right or wrong. Your opinions are irrelevant. This message is clearly intended to be carried into later life, and no pathetic reforms will alter it.

Finally, the main argument for the retention of compulsory education - that no-one would learn without it, and we would end up with an illiterate population on our hands. This argument assumes two things, both of which are so ridiculous as to be hardly worthy of consideration:

a) Nobody ever learns anything outside of school.

b) Nobody ever enjoys learning and no-one would learn anything if not forced to.

Nonsense! It is a human instinct to want to learn for obvious evolutionary reasons (e.g. if you rely on berries and wild animals for sustenance you have to know which berries are edible and how to lay a trap. If you don't know, you have to ask someone who does). And I learnt far more when I skived off (for one day) and read Marx for Beginners than a whole month of school.

It is the duty of all socialists to oppose these eleven years of rigorous indoctrination which every British resident is forced to endure (without which capitalism could not survive) and fight for a just, free (in both senses of the word) and optional education for both adults and youth.

Time to liven up the YS

Dear Comrades,

Here are the demands Enfield North LPYS will be putting to the National Committee on YS democracy and building the YS.

*Socialist Youth should have open debate on the different views held in the YS.

*National and regional committees should only recommend once, for or against a resolution or amendment. This one recommendation should be during the summing up/ reply to the debate of a committee member. (The present system where the Committee recommends at least three times means that they have an overbearing influence on the way policy is formed; in particular, the recommendation directly before the vote is taken should be scrapped).

Effort

*A national committee or regional committee member should have the same maximum time limit on their summing up, as all other YS speakers.

*Each major issue should be debated and voted on separately.

*Movers of resolutions should have the right of reply to the debate.

*If an issue has a mini-

mum number (we say five) of resolutions or amendments then it should have the right to be discussed at conference.

*Issues which do not reach the minimum number required, but appear on consecutive years, should be allowed discussion time at conference as minority issues.

*The system of estimating the strength of the LPYS by the number of branches should be changed. A new system should be devised based on individual membership. (Our suggestion would be for branches to print their own cards annually and issue to their members. On December 31 the number of members would be given to the NC member for the region).

From Peckham Labour News

A more accurate picture of membership would let us know if the YS is growing or declining, and we could adjust the way the YS is trying to attract new members accordingly.

Leaflets

*LPYS leaflets should be written in a more lively agitational way i.e. comparing how the ruling class lives in a recession with how working people live. Long winded statements such as "nationalise the top 200 monopolies under democratic workers control" should be dealt with in Socialist Youth, pamphlets and branch meetings where its full implications could be properly discussed.

This statement of

demands was passed unanimously by our branch on May 18.

We felt it necessary to take this action because our experience of YS conferences and YS propaganda is, firstly, that on occasions different points of view were not given a fair hearing, especially when it came to the formulation of YS policy. When a fair debate had taken place the national or regional committee would exert their fullest influence to make sure the vote went 'their way'.

Convincing

Secondly this line of thought means that YS propaganda is more concerned with putting over

'their policies' than convincing youth of the need for a socialist change in the running of society. As a result our YS propaganda is generally dull, with little lively debate in Socialist Youth.

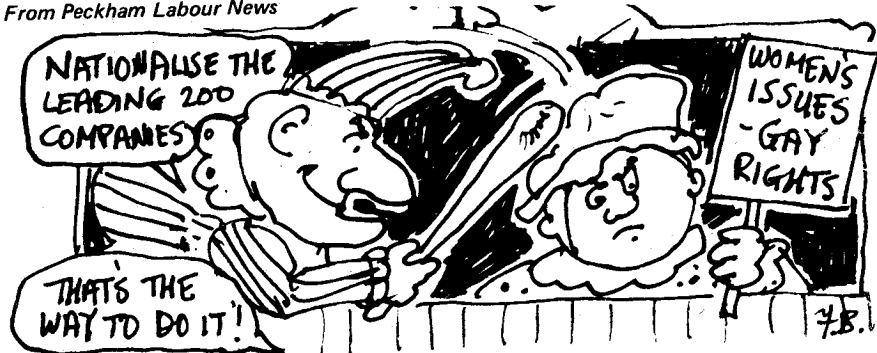
Persuasion

We feel that these faults must be changed if the LPYS is going to grow into a mass socialist youth movement.

We would like as many branches as possible to take up the demands and others with the National Committee. At our meeting on May 18, Kevin Ramage was in attendance and I put it to him that our statement should be published in Socialist Youth. He said that it might be better for a circular to be produced and distributed around YS branches. He was generally not too sympathetic with our criticisms saying they were 'negative'.

However, he did admit that YS leaflets had been aimed at 'political youth' over the last few years and that now there was to be a change of emphasis towards 'non-political' youth.

Yours fraternally,
DAVID BUXTON



CLASS FIGHTER

PAPER OF THE NATIONAL LEFT-WING YOUTH MOVEMENT

Class Fighter No. 6. July/August 1982

TORIES, LABOUR'S RIGHT WING



THEY WON'T SHUT US UP!

WHAT is going on in the Labour Party? What is the battle about? The right want to make all the decisions in Parliament. The left want decisions to be taken at the Party Conference and the Labour Government to carry them out.

Over the last two years, the left have made a lot of ground. We have succeeded in getting the leader elected by the Party and not just by MPs. The right have been losing the political arguments so the only weapon they have left is the party machine, its full time employees and unelected advisory committees.

Now they are using that power base to drive the left wing, at least the serious left, out of the party. They say that the left, particularly, the "Militant tendency" are a "party within a party".

But the Labour Party was set up as a federation between the trade unions and socialist organisations to represent the views of the trade unions and working class people in Parliament and outside it.

At first all the 'tendencies', the different points of view, in the workers' movement had a voice in the party, and democratic decisions were taken.

But as Labour grew in the 1920s, leaders soon got a taste for the privileged life in Parliament. They knew if they were to keep those privileges they would have to work with the bosses to control the working class. They knew that in a democratic movement they would not be able to enjoy the power, so they began to tighten up to keep out the left.

In the early 1920s, the CP formed as a new left wing, after the Russian Revolution. The Communists wanted to affiliate to the Labour Party so all the working class parties could be united. But they wanted to keep their own caucus to decide together what they wanted to argue for in the party.

The leaders of the Labour Party began a witch-hunt against them and got the Party conference in 1928 to refuse to allow CP members, some of whom had been in the Labour Party for years, to stay in.

But despite the witch-hunt, tendencies of revolutionary socialists still survive in the Party. And the "mainstream left" has organised itself too — because anyone can see that "ideas" without the organisation to carry them out are useless.

It's always been in the youth of the Labour Party that left wing ideas have flourished most and where organised groups have been strongest.

In the 1930s the pro-Stalin Communist Party took over the Labour Party youth wing and it was disbanded. In the early 1960s a new YS was set up and many left wing groups joined and eventually the largest, Keep Left, was expelled and the YS virtually closed down.

But the Left kept coming back. In 1971 Militant won control and the party leaders left it alone, but now the right wing are becoming worried and are starting to attack. They have decided to witch-hunt the Militant. and with them the right wing could

INSIDE:
**MARCH AGAINST
SLAVE LABOUR**
Liverpool



Oct. 16

Holocaust in the Middle East — see centre pages.

CLASH
hit
Brixton

Judith Bonner reports
— page 6

OPINION
!!!!???

Should education be compulsory — page 7



Peter Tatchell
"A Labour Party without a youth section will be dead and moribund. — we need a campaign to defend the LPYS."

well try to wind up the YS. The witch-hunt will also be extended to all those groups in the Labour Party like Socialist Organiser, London Labour Briefing and Socialist Newsletter. The whole of the left must unite to fight it.

Class Fighter supporters are putting a model resolution into local YS's, to local Parties, the NEC and to Michael Foot, (and also a resolution to the YS national committee), calling on them to campaign now to defend the YS.

To get the left campaigning, a new organisation has been set up called the 'Unregistered Alliance'. This involves all those groups in the party who stand opposed to the register. We are calling on YS's, wards, GCs, women's sections and trade union branches to support it, and try to get to the meetings that it is organising.

We appeal to Militant comrades to support this alliance and not to back out on a fight by complying with the register.

We can't sit back and let the right wing get on with it. We must say loud and clear that the Labour Party is our party and we are not leaving it to the right wing. That means mobilising the 500 constituencies who came out against the witch-hunt of Peter Tatchell, getting every YS branch actively opposing the register and beating back the threat posed to the YS.

ALL CLASS FIGHTER supporters should go and get their YS branch to the Labour Movement Conference on 11 September at Wembley Conference Centre, London.