

**NOTHING
TO LOSE ...
A WORLD TO GAIN!**

20p

**class
fighter**

**WHERE
WE
STAND**



Who we are

THE YS Conference in 1981 came at a time when the riots were beginning. Brixton had erupted; just down the road from the conference in Scarborough there were pitched battles on the streets between police and youth. Yet still we heard the same old story from the 'Militant' supporters who run the YS: "Wait till we've got socialism, then everything will be alright."

At the conference were supporters of two revolutionary youth papers, Red Youth and Barricade. Both were committed to transforming the YS into a fighting revolutionary youth movement. Like the majority of working class youth, we were not prepared to 'wait' till we got socialism before fighting for our rights. We want to fight now. We had basically the same ideas about both the YS and organising youth so we decided at that conference that it was time for a united opposition to the 'Militant' supporters in the YS. From that conference we committed ourselves to build a national left wing youth movement that would be part of the YS, that fought to build the YS through struggles amongst working class youth, fighting to mobilise them against the Tory attacks.

This pamphlet is the result of a two-day conference called in November 1981 to launch the movement. Many amendments were made to the original draft, as the result of discussions based on the everyday experience of youth, not a series of 'get up and recite the programme' speeches that the YS is, in the main, made up of. This pamphlet has also been amended by a later conference and on the basis of our YS work since then.

The pamphlet serves two purposes. It is a pamphlet for action now, giving clear policies on the way forward for unemployed youth, young women, school students, black youth and youth on "training schemes" etc. At the same time the pamphlet points out the bankruptcy of this rotten system, capitalism that we have to live under, that throws us on the dole and uses us as cheap labour.

It points out the way forward in the fight for a government which does not attack workers, but which is committed to our interests and accountable to the working class — a workers' government.

We've had discussion on it in the National Left Wing Youth Movement and now we want to take it out to youth, both in and out of the YS, to judge for themselves.

This is only part of our campaign to get our policies across. We also have our paper, 'Class Fighter', and through our work we argue for the policies contained in this pamphlet. If you broadly agree with what you read here why not join with us in the Labour Party Young Socialists to fight for a YS that will attract masses of youth to it, and will offer them much more than words. Fill in the form on the back page and send it off to us.

April 1983

We've nothing to lose

- a world to gain!

Capitalism has shown itself completely incapable of meeting even the most basic needs of our class. Fantastic wealth was built up over centuries of rule by the bosses on the backs of the working class and oppressed people throughout the world, yet in the 1980s we are faced with unemployment on a huge scale, a decaying system of health and social security, an education system cut more than it has been since medieval times, and a Tory government viciously intent on making us the scapegoats for the crisis of their system.

We do not even have the right to work. The majority of school leavers have no chance of getting a job. We are destined by the Tories to rot on the dole queues after a short spell on government training schemes.

The driving force of their system is their insatiable thirst for profit. If they can't make a profit, then we're thrown out of work, we have our living standards cut and they'll shackle our unions and mutilate the health and education system the working class has fought for over past decades.

Thatcher and Reagan then have the gall to demand that we become their sacrificial victims in a nuclear war. In their drive for profit and maintaining their system they're prepared to blow the entire planet to smithereens. This is the madness of capitalism.

Our class — the working class — is the only class that can stop this lunacy. It is the only force capable of overthrowing capitalism and replacing it with a system based on workers' needs, not profit. As Marx put it, we've nothing to lose but our chains! And we've a world to gain.

Working class youth have a vital role

to play in this struggle. Youth are usually the most militant, the least cynical, the most willing to take on the system. We've seen the huge numbers of youth forming the backbone of the anti-war movement and CND. There are huge numbers of youth on the dole, who could be the backbone of a labour movement fight against unemployment but who, unless we act quickly could be lost to the fascist gangs of thugs in the National Front, the British National Party and the British Movement. The riots of 1981 were an expression of anger and frustration against a system that offers us nothing and shows that youth are ready and willing to fight back.

What we need is a revolutionary socialist youth movement and that is what we aim to do in the National Left Wing Youth Movement. We are part of the Labour Party Young Socialists, and are fighting to change it into a revolutionary youth organisation.

Our immediate task is to win working class youth to our banner and to provide the political training and experience necessary to take on the system and win.



We won't be ripped off at work

If you've got a job you feel you're lucky, but even in the days when you could get jobs, youth were always given the worst jobs with the worst pay and conditions. Whether it's working all hours in a hotel restaurant, or mashing tea in a factory, we have always been ripped off at work.

The majority of youth at work are not unionised, and even the ones who are don't have the rights of normal members. For instance, apprentices don't have the right to strike.

The trade union leaders are not keen to organise youth. The reason is that we would be demanding action, and demanding answers if we didn't get it.

We want a fight to be taken up in the unions to get all the millions of youth at work organised into unions. One way of doing this would be to fight for the things that would benefit youth, like a mini-

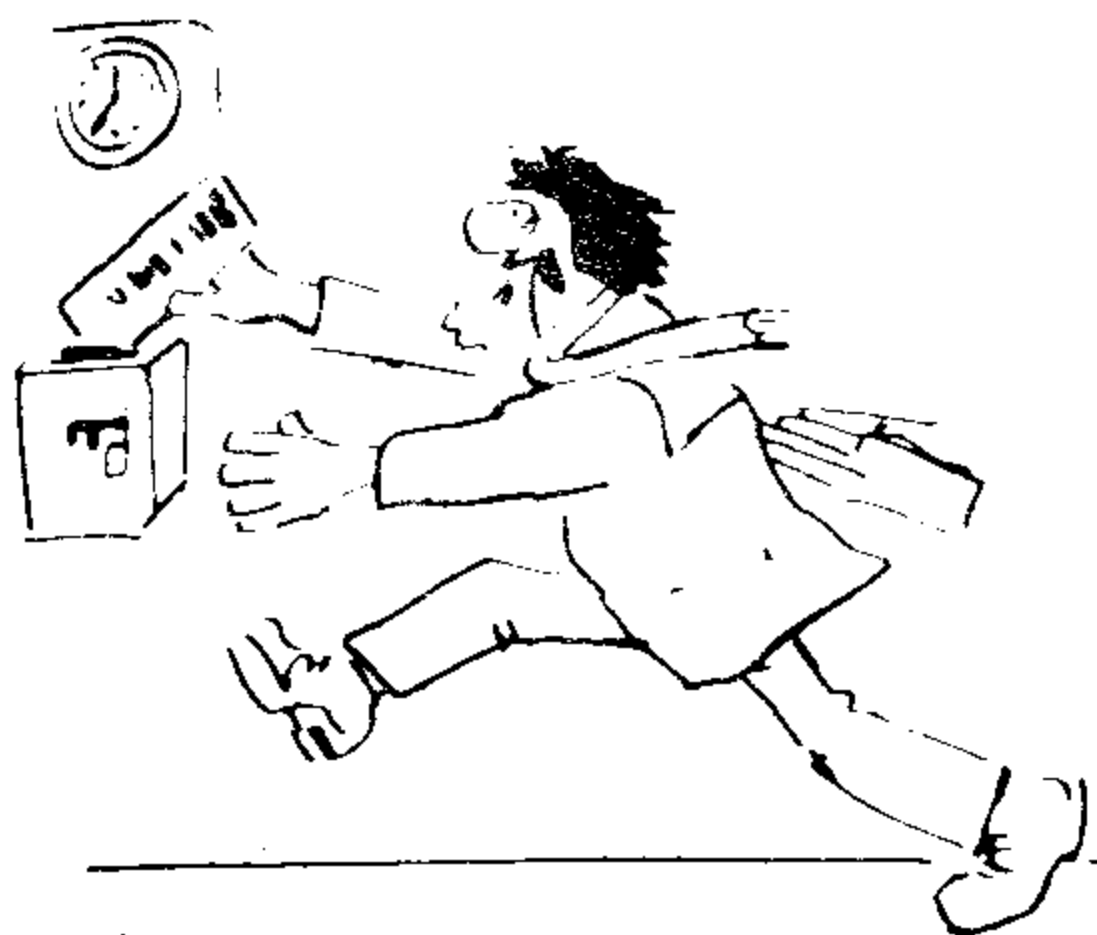
than £40 a week to youth — there is a clear need for us to have a voice in the unions at factory, regional and national level.

Industrial action is one of the most effective weapons of the working class. When workers go on strike the bosses cease to make any profits. They want a settlement as soon as possible so they can get the money rolling in again.

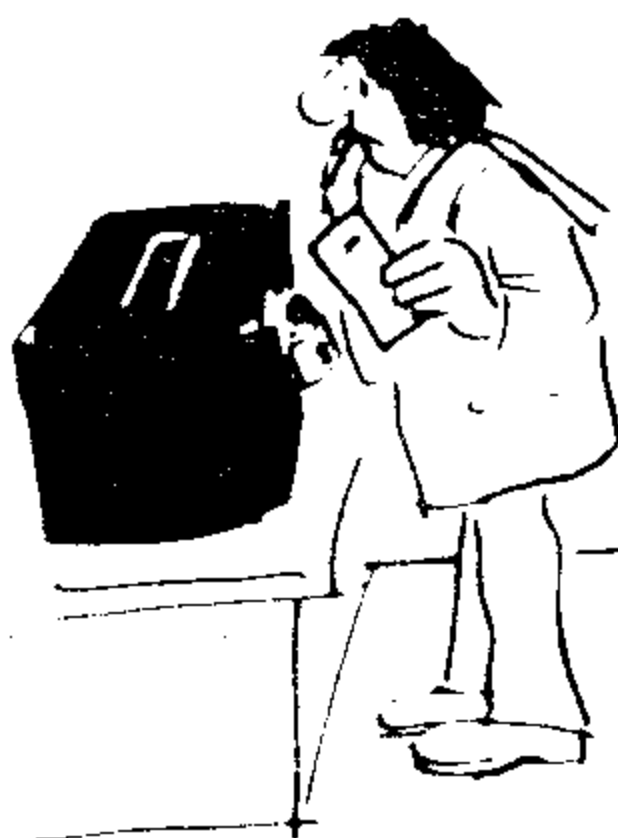
Workers are just as determined to win when they go out on strike as the bosses. Most strikes, however, end up with compromises or sell-outs. The reason for this is the leadership of the unions. Instead of protecting the interests of the members they represent, they protect their own interests.

Many union leaders have been rewarded for their years of class collaboration with places in the House of Lords or knighthoods. We say that we cannot carry on like this. The union leaders must account for what they do and if they don't represent the workers they must be thrown out and replaced by people that will. Only this way will we see a real fight against the Tories, and see the last of the

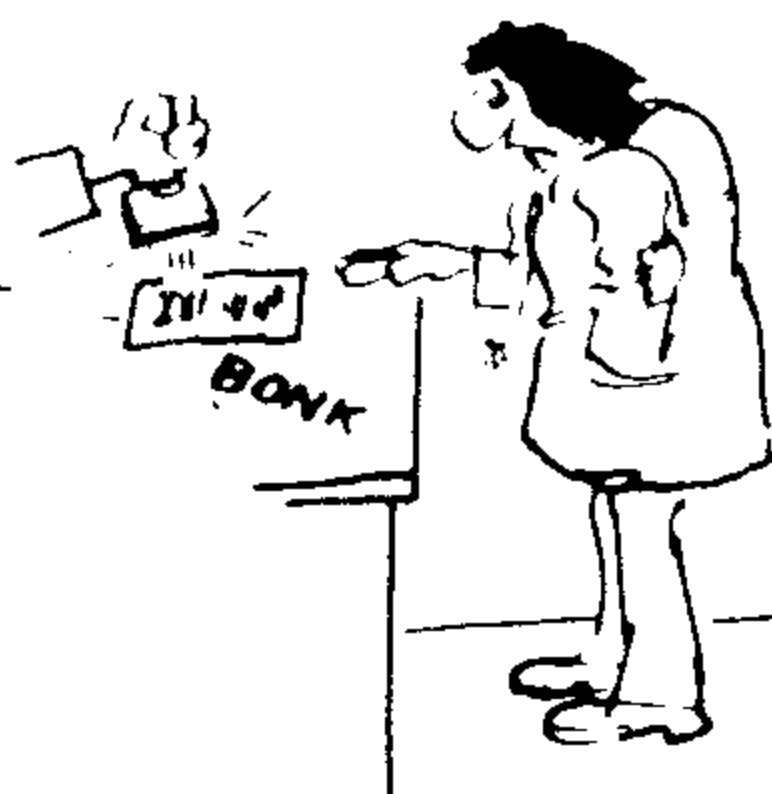
1. CLOCK CARD



2. POLL CARD



3. DOLE CARD



4. PLACARD



mum wage.

We want to see the highest involvement of youth in the trade unions. That means setting up youth sections in all unions. With the legislation that Thatcher is organising — like the subsidy restricted to firms in the private sector that pay less

THE FOUR STAGES OF MAN

betrayals of the past, like the recent sell-out of the health workers.

To get this we must be active in the trade unions, attending branch meetings and arguing for action:

- *Full trade union rights for all youth at work.

- *Unhurry youth at work.

- *Full pay for apprentices and the right to strike.

- *Fight for democracy and accountability in the labour movement. Full-

time officials to be elected for short, fixed terms, recallable, accountable, and paid the average wage.

- *Fight to create jobs and seize the benefits of new technology, with a 35 hour week and work-sharing under workers' control with no loss of pay.

- *Fight to defend wages against inflation by clauses guaranteeing automatic monthly pay increases in line with price rises, as assessed by workers' committees.

Jobs not YTS – we're not slaves!

Half the 3 million-plus unemployed are under 25. The only "choice" for unemployed youth who are fed up being on the dole is either a cheap labour scheme or a life in the army (and that's about as useful as "choosing" to be a rock and roll star).

The "training" schemes that the government are replacing YOPs with are just as much a con as YOPs. They still undercut union wage rates and weaken shop floor union organisation. And, what's worse, the TUC welcomes YTS with open arms. Once the government dropped its original proposals – a compulsory scheme, paying only £15 a week – the TUC dropped its opposition.

The new scheme may not be compulsory, but if you are signing on and you refuse to go on the scheme, you can find yourself being treated as someone refusing to take suitable work and have your benefit docked by 40% for six weeks!

And given that the Army is showing an interest in getting involved, that's a pretty serious situation for young people who want to have nothing to do with Britain's armed forces.

The YTS isn't quite the same as YOPs. It has a compulsory "education" element in it and it lasts longer. The TUC

was opposed to YOPs but says YTS is OK because of the 'education' and 'training' element.

In fact the TUC argues that union negotiators should be pressing for schemes to be set up. And they say that the same negotiators should work out how many youth should have "trainee" status and how many "employee" status.

The TUC seems to think that employers are going to take on permanent workers and pay them union rates when they can have a succession of "trainees" paid for by the Manpower Services Commission.

The young workers on "training" schemes need to be unionised to fight for a proper wage.

The danger facing us now is that YOPs and its successors could become an institution for school leavers. We must stop this before the Tories achieve their aim.

We must fight for a programme of action capable of smashing YTS.

- *Full trade union rates and full trade union rights on YTS. For a massive campaign to unionise YTS.

- *Trade unions must withdraw all support from YTS.

- *Replace YTS with a programme of useful public works at trade union rates

of pay.

The labour movement must be prepared to take a stand and organise the unemployed, as well as fight to defend existing jobs. At the moment it is doing neither.

We support the National Unemployed Workers' Movement which was set up to build a movement that the TUC cannot ignore, as they ignored the call of the thousands of unemployed at the People's

**JOIN THE NATIONAL
UNEMPLOYED WORKERS
MOVEMENT**

**Write to the Secretary, Mick
Jarmaine, 119 Maidstone Road
Leicester for details of your
nearest group**

March in 1981 who were demanding action.

The NUWM see the young unemployed playing an important role in the movement. If we sit back and allow unemployment to grow, we will not only see mass poverty. While the labour movement refuses to show its strength, the National Front and British Movement will be organising youth.

We must demand and fight for action now!

*The TUC must fight to organise the unemployed with full union rights.

*Defend jobs by sharing work out on full pay. It's the bosses' crisis, make them pay!

*Labour councils must create jobs by building badly needed houses, hospitals etc.

*Occupy threatened factories and workplaces to defend jobs. Nationalisation of firms declaring redundancies — without compensation.

*Build the unemployed workers' movement!

Class war not nuclear war! Build YCND! Britain out of NATO!

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST THE BOMB

The prospect of a short Third World War looms. Short, because it will be a nuclear war.

Thatcher and Reagan are war-mongers. Since Reagan got elected in the USA, millions of dollars have been poured into military 'defence' spending, stocking up the USA's nuclear armoury he claims as a 'deterrent' to the Soviet Union. But the notion of deterrence by stockpiling a bigger and bigger supply of weapons is lunacy. The Labour Party conference in 1981 and 1982 recognised this by voting for unilateral disarmament. (This is disarming unconditionally. Multilateral dis-

armament, which is supported by right wingers like Dennis Healey, is disarming only if everyone else, including the Soviet Union, does).

The real reason for the war drive isn't a 'defensive' reaction by the USA and Britain to the USSR, nor even the particular politics of Reagan and Thatcher. It is the imperialist countries — the rich capitalist countries which try to dominate and exploit and profit from the poorer countries — that are rattling the sabres. It is imperialism and its drive for profits and markets which makes Reagan and company prepared to blow up the world if they see their power threatened.

They're quite prepared to start a nuclear war — they've even talked about firing demonstration shots in Europe as a warning to the Soviet Union. So they can hardly say they're protecting the Western world when they're prepared to blow up a good chunk of it.

We say it's not enough to call for nuclear disarmament — we have to argue that to mean that seriously, then Britain should get out of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), the imperialist alliance which until 1978 had at its head that same General Haig who talks of firing nuclear 'warning shots' in Europe. Haig also thinks that invading Cuba might be a good idea to stop all this communist activity in the Caribbean.

The leaders of the USSR are just as vicious and irresponsible as those of the USA and Britain, but the USSR does not have the same war drive because it is based on a different economic system.

In 1917 there was a workers' revolution in Russia led by the Bolshevik Party. Capitalism was overthrown and the Soviet Union, the first workers' state, was created. That was a historic event not only for the Soviet workers and peasants but for the oppressed masses throughout the world. We must defend the remaining gains of that revolution.

The Bolsheviks saw revolution in Russia as just the beginning of world revolution. But because of the treachery of reformist leaders in Europe, the revolution was left isolated in economically backward Russia. A bureaucratic caste developed, uniting sections of the Bolshevik Party round Stalin with old bureaucrats from Tsarist Russia and careerists from other political parties that had existed in 1917.

Large sections of the Bolshevik Party led by Trotsky, opposed this degeneration. But they were defeated, ruthlessly purged, and sent to die in the Stalinist labour camps in Siberia, or executed after frame-up trials organised by Stalin.

The Soviet Union's commitment to

fighting for the world revolution was ditched, and the working class was repressed by the bureaucracy using totalitarian police-state methods.

The National Left Wing Youth Movement is for the defence of the Soviet Union. By this we mean that we oppose any attempts by the capitalist countries to conquer the Soviet Union and hand out the nationalised property there to private ownership.

Like Trotsky we believe nationalised property to be progressive on condition that the working class can seize political control it from the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe. That is why we oppose any attempts by the capitalist countries to destroy the potential embodied in the nationalised property of those countries.

Against capitalism and imperialism we defend the nationalised economies of the USSR and the other Stalinist-ruled states. Our defence is unconditional — that is, irrespective of the self-serving, anti-working class and reactionary policies of



the ruling bureaucrats. We fight against their characteristic policies and their rule, believing that under all conditions the best way to defend the potentially progressive survivals from the October revolution (and the revolutions — like China and Cuba — whose development was influenced by it and by the existence of the USSR) is to overthrow the bureaucratic tyranny and set up the democratic power of the working class.

We stand for a political revolution by the working class against the bureaucracies of the USSR and the other Stalinist states. The social and political regime of these bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism or communism.

Especially we support the struggle of the Polish workers organised by Solidarnosc. We oppose the military crack-down, which the Soviet Union deman-

ded, and we recognise the right of Polish workers to fight against the domination of the USSR and for free trade unions.

The threat of war is very real. The thousands of youth who turn out on CND and YCND marches is testament to this. We support CND and YCND and played a role in getting the LPYS to affiliate to it. We support the Greenham Common women's peace camp and work to support this and other similar anti-war activities. YCND's Rock the Bomb Festival on May 7 1983 is an important day. Tens of thousands of youth will be there and many of them will not have protested against the bomb before.

But we don't think turning up to demonstrations is enough. (Neither do most of the youth that come on the marches). CND and YCND should turn to the labour movement and fight to get the organised working class to mobilise for unilateral disarmament now and withdraw from NATO.

Even though the LPYS is affiliated to YCND it doesn't do much to build it. We are involved in setting up a campaign called YS for YCND which organises YS members who want to fight the bomb now and who want to commit the YS to doing so too. We welcome the Labour CND group and hope that YS for YCND will become a proper part of YCND too.

**YOUTH CND
COSTS £1 A YEAR TO JOIN
FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE
UNDER THE AGE OF 21
SEND £1 AND YOUR NAME
AND ADDRESS TO:
YCND, 11 GOODWIN ST.
LONDON N4**

School students and students fight back!

SCHOOL STUDENTS AND EDUCATION

The idea of a free education system is a progressive one. But the education system is not very progressive at all.

At school we are told to respect authority, call the teachers 'sir' or 'miss', and prepare ourselves for the rat race outside school, years on the dole or in a boring job or looking after kids for 20 years.

School is a mirror image of the class

society we live in. Headmaster at the top, students at the bottom. If we step out of line, it's up to the head's office for the stick (or the tawse in Scotland) — one of the most barbaric legal practices that still exists. And for the upper class kids it's public schools — which have survived every Labour government.

Universities are glorified in this country — the 'great' Oxford and Cambridge — but the truth is that Britain has about the smallest percentage of the

population entering higher education of any non-industrialised country.

Universities are not made for the working class, they are very elitist and choosy about who they let into their precious establishments.

The Tories represent the biggest threat to the education system since it was set up. They have implemented massive cuts that mean for schools much bigger classes, lack of paper and equipment, out of date books, as well as more authoritarian teaching and restricted subjects. For the universities, colleges and teacher training colleges, it means that it is virtually impossible to get in if you are working class. Courses are being massively restricted.

There must be a fightback now. School students should get organised into the National Union of School Students, and build a union as strong as possible to fight alongside the teachers' union, the NUT, against the Tory cuts, as well as against the wrong methods in the schools like corporal punishment. To have a say

in how the schools are run, we need to build a movement that the head and the teachers cannot ignore.

Students used to be a very radical section of society, often taking action on any issue from cuts in their education to the Vietnam war. But now, students are less willing to fight. They are too scared of being on the dole at the end of their course to get into trouble or waste study time on what they think are hopeless fights. Class Fighter supports Socialist Students in NOLS (National Organisation of Labour Students) who argue that students won't win anything worth having without backing from the labour movement. We support the YS and NUS campaigns for a living grant for 16-18 year olds at school or college.

*Grants for all students over 16.

*End corporal punishment and petty rules.

*For an end to public schools.

*Rebuild NUSS.

*Stop the cuts, fight closures by occupation and strike action.

Riots on the streets!

The labour movement must help us

At the time of the July 1981 riots, the press said that rioting was just a trend and each riot after Toxteth was a copycat riot.

The truth is that Brixton and Toxteth gave young people the confidence to do what they had wanted to do for ages, get back at the police for the years of harassment. The Tories organise these uniformed thugs to harass youth because they see them as a danger. There's no trade union leaders that could instruct us to stop and 'see sense'.

The riots were a protest against the

attacks we face at the hands of the Tories. The riots were in that sense a step forward. A very large section of youth were radicalised in a short period.

All the labour movement leaders expressed their horror at the riots. Some of them blamed unemployment. None of them blamed themselves for allowing unemployment to rocket unopposed and for failing to involve youth.

Just saying that youth should turn to the labour movement is not enough. Youth have come onto the streets to say what we think. But the labour movement goes on the same. People like Michael Foot, trade unions leaders, and

even Tony Benn, didn't support the youth. The labour movement needs to listen to youth and involve them. They should turn to the youth.

During the riots we demanded removal of the police from the riot areas. They were not 'protecting' the communities. The courts dealt out very heavy fines and prison sentences for all the youth arrested - regardless of the evidence. Class Fighter helped organise defence campaigns and worked with the Bradford 12 Committee which was successful. Their case proved that self-defence by the black community is no offence.

The 'sus' law that allowed police to convict on 'suspicion' (used to harass young blacks) has been scrapped but police harassment of youth still goes on the same. And new Tory legislation in the Police Bill will give the cops more draconian powers to use against youth.

We have no illusions that the police can help the black community. Many of the police are racists themselves. They refuse to say that racists are responsible for racist murders (the most serious one being the Deptford fire massacre) but they are very keen to arrest anti-racist activists.

We call for genuinely independent labour movement inquiries so that these murdering thugs are exposed and are dealt with accordingly. Stoke Newington

Police Station has most recently become the centre of a campaign, after Colin Roach was found dead there. Class Fighter works for an independent labour movement and black organisations inquiry and the removal of the racist police at this station.

The police, acting for the ruling class, have employed increasingly brutal tactics in suppressing the working class in this country.

We call for the disbanding of the Special Patrol Group (murderers of anti-racist Blair Peach), and groups like the Tactical Aid Group. We demand an end to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which allows the police to keep supporters of the Republicans and anyone else they choose in custody for long periods.

We think that local communities could police themselves. Bodies consisting of tenants, trade unionists, and Labour Party members should be formed to keep order. The police are part of the capitalist state designed to keep the working class and youth down.

*Stop police harassment

*Disband the SPG and other riot forces.

*Build community and labour movement defence squads.

*The labour movement must turn to youth.

Drive the fascists back to the gutters where they belong!

The mass of black and Asian workers were brought into this country because of a shortage of labour in a period of boom. They were promised good jobs and good conditions, they got the opposite.

Now when the British bosses don't need them any more, they hound the

lack and Asian community, bringing in laws against them such as the racist Nationality Act and particularly attacking the youth.

The Tories allow and in a subtle way encourage racism and 'comedians' on TV get away with the most foul racism while left wing programmes are censored. Also

there are many racist bands who provoke the community and who are, together with their followers, protected by the police. They got what they deserved at Southall, and the police again showed whose side they are on.

'Oi' music has encouraged racism among youth. We must find a way to relate to the followers of this cult and make them see that racism and fascism offer nothing to youth but defeat.

The bosses need to split up workers and racism helps them to do it. The argument that blacks are to blame for unemployment gets a hearing when the system is in crisis. That's why the National Front and the British Movement are growing. It is essential that they are stopped. We must be at the forefront of that fight.

We have made some gains in fighting fascists and defending the Asian community against attack. In Coventry it was an LPYS branch supporting the National

Left Wing Youth Movement that organised a meeting of 300 local youth to plan the defence of the community in the midst of fascist attacks and murders.

We need to organise groups capable of confronting the fascists and demoralising them by showing our strength. We must also fight to mobilise as much as possible for anti-fascist demonstrations.

We support the call for the rebuilding of a national anti-racist and anti-fascist movement based on labour movement and black organisations. Within this we would fight for a policy of workers' defence squads. We must fight for:

*No platform for fascists — drive the fascists off the streets.

*Build labour movement support for black self-defence. For workers' defence against racist and police attacks.

*No racists to hold labour movement positions. Purge fascists from the labour movement.

*No immigration controls.

Young gays and lesbians come out — angry and proud!

"Lie to your workmates, lie to your folks,

Put down the queens, tell anti-queer jokes'..

Tom Robinson, "Glad to be Gay"

Long the invisible oppressed, buried under centuries of persecution by the Church and the state, young gays and lesbians have finally emerged, angry and proud.

There were gay liberation movements in the 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in Germany, but these were crushed by fascism. You didn't just have to be a Jew to be gassed, being gay or lesbian ensured death in the gas chambers

JOIN GAY LPYS

If you are gay and want to join with other gay youth in fighting to make the YS take up the issue of gay rights contact Gay LPYS at LCGR, 61a Bloom Street, Manchester

as well.

Stalin also had gays in the USSR executed or sent to labour camps.

The modern gay movement is much bigger. There are Gay Switchboards, gay centres, and gay clubs in most large towns.

Fighting for GAY RIGHTS

Gays and lesbians are by no means equal, though. The age of consent for gay men is 21 – five years higher than the age of consent for heterosexuals. This means that young gays have to deny their sexuality for five more years, or run the risk of prosecution. A clause in the Sexual Offences Act 1967 also makes it illegal to commit any sexual act in public. Seems reasonable enough until you discover the way it is abused by the police.

If you are a gay man (lesbians don't exist in the law) you can't hold hands or kiss in public, sleep in a hotel (it's a public building) or pick each other up in public places (where else do you meet people?). All these activities are legal for straight couples.

If you are a woman, society tells you it's your place to have and look after children. But if you are a lesbian, it would seem you aren't a woman any more because the courts tend to take children away from lesbian mothers.

However, it is not only capitalism which contributes to the suppression of gays and lesbians. The Labour Party, by its silence, has failed to take up the issue

and challenge the reactionary laws and ideas which form the basis of this discrimination.

Even the Labour Party Young Socialists refuses to discuss gay liberation, while the Trades Union Congress refuses to include in its equal opportunities policy, the right of gays and lesbians to be offered the same opportunities as straight people when looking for work.

Gay workers can get sacked just for being gay, especially if they work with young people. Judith Williams, a care worker, who spoke at a Class Fighter meeting at YS summer camp is one such person.

We believe gays and lesbians should have the right to express their own sexuality freely and easily. It is just as legitimate as heterosexuality.

Class Fighter has been involved in setting up Gay LPYS. This group fights for gay liberation together with the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights. One of its central aims is to get the age of consent for gay men brought into line with the law for heterosexuals. At the moment the Labour Party leaders want to bring the gay male age of consent down to 18, not 16.

We demand:

- *The age of consent for gay men to be the same as for heterosexuals, 16.

- *An end to all discrimination against gays and lesbians.

- *The scrapping of all criminal laws relating to gays and lesbians.

- *Lesbians to have custody of their children and to be allowed to adopt and foster children as well.

- *The Labour Party, LPYS and trade unions to actively take up gay and lesbian oppression and campaign against it, in the workplace and elsewhere.

- *Sex education in schools to portray gay and lesbian sexuality as a valid form of sexual orientation and counter prejudice against gays and lesbians.

- *Support for the Gay LPYS group.

Women aren't sitting pretty

Women are oppressed in capitalist society — not only through being paid less than men (despite the Equal Pay Act) but also ideologically and through the family structure and the fact that the burden of housework falls on women.

We are brought up to the idea that a woman's place is in the home, looking after children, husbands and aged relatives. This idea is also reflected in the kinds of jobs women do — usually servicing jobs like cleaning, typing, catering, laundry work, nursing and so on.

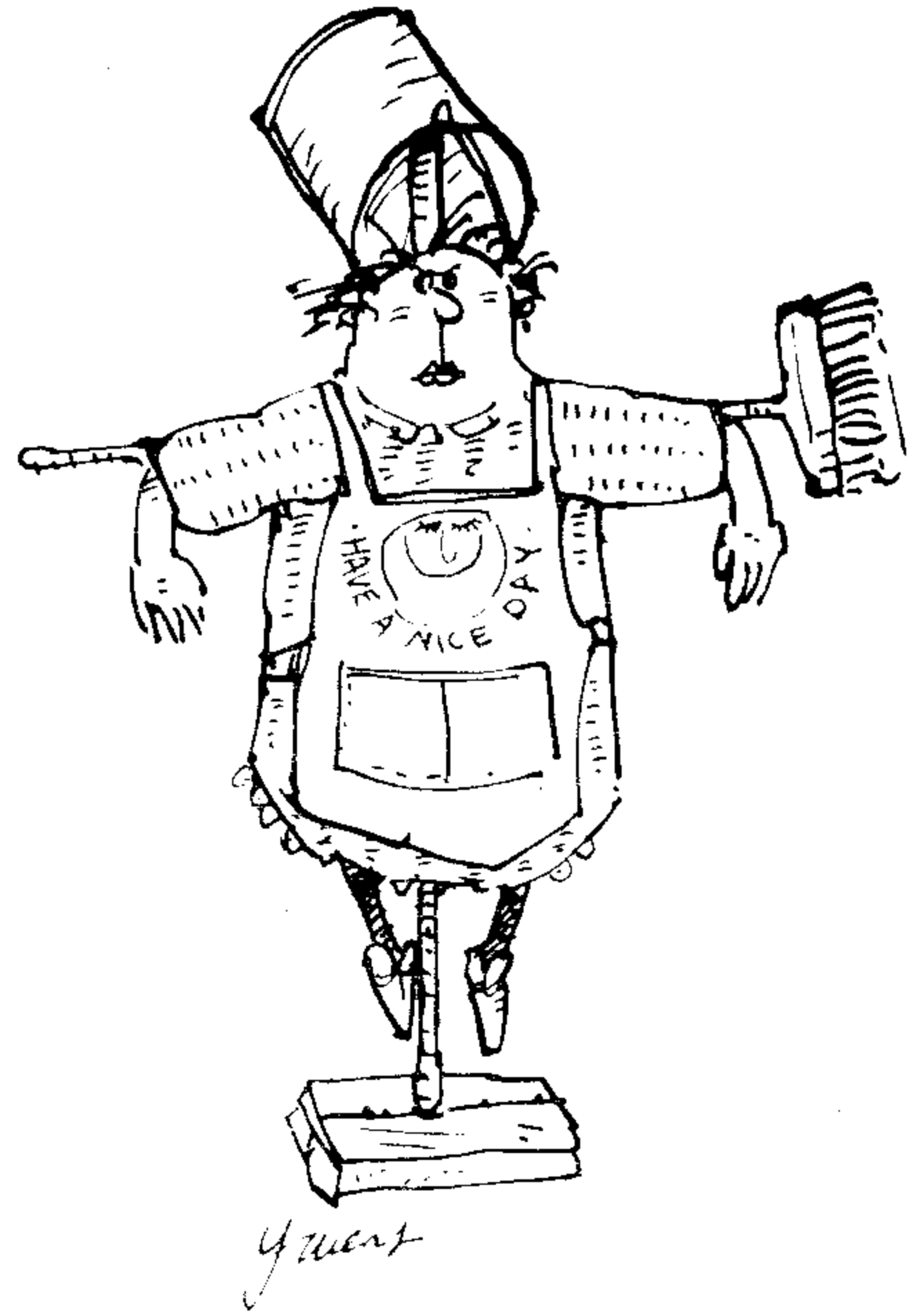
Tories

This suits the Tory government, particularly now, when massive cuts are being made in the public sector. So not only are women being thrown out of their jobs, but the burden of the work — looking after the young, the sick, the elderly, falls back even more on women in the home. That is not considered 'work' — it's just what women ought to do.

At school, we are encouraged to do home economics and typing to prepare us for a future of being a housewife and mother with maybe a job part-time or full time for a few years if we're lucky.

Sexist attitudes towards women don't just come from the Tories. Sexist comments, jokes, and sexual harassment at work, in the street or at home are daily occurrences women are faced with. We say this is something that has to be opposed. It splits the working class in the same way that racism does, only more subtly.

Women don't play an equal part in the trade unions. You're always hearing trade



union officials saying women are politically backward — 'they won't come forward for positions' or 'they won't go on strike'. Struggles like those at Lee Jeans or the Liverpool typists show this isn't true. But women have to overcome years of being told they shouldn't be involved in politics.

That's why we fight for positive discrimination in favour of women in the trade unions, the Labour Party, the YS, to encourage women to come forward and play an equal part in politics and the labour movement.

Women don't have control over their own bodies, and attitudes to women's sexuality are discriminatory too. A woman who sleeps with lots of different men is called a 'slag' or a 'tart' while a man who does the same is admired as 'masculine'.

Lesbian sex is not acknowledged by law, so while this protects women from prosecution, it reflects society's attitude to women's sexuality. Women are taught

that their sexuality is all to do with men and children. Pleasure doesn't get a look in. Go through the chapter on human reproduction in any school biology book and you won't find any mention of the clitoris. So it's not surprising that society doesn't even bother to outlaw lesbian sex. The argument runs like this. Women are not sexual, so they can't have sex without a man. Obvious, isn't it? Lesbians don't exist!

If a woman does get pregnant, it isn't her choice whether she wants to spend the next 20 years of her life looking after kids, it's the doctors, the state and the Church who decide for her.

We say women should have free and safe abortion and contraception on demand.

The present-day family structure — father at the head, mother and children below — is an oppressive unit. It serves to organise society in a way that's convenient for capitalism. It depends on the mother figure providing the care for the children and the husband, by doing the cooking, the washing and the cleaning.

We say that these tasks should be socialised — that women should not have to do them, and that they could be organised collectively in a community. This would make more sense economically (you could have a free launderette instead

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK

For details of Women's Fightback activities and a copy of the latest issue of Women's Fightback newspaper, write to 13, Buxton Rd., London N19



of 30 private washing machines); it would also free women from the drudgery and boredom of housework, and enable them to play a full, equal part in the production of wealth and throughout society.

Family

The family is also oppressive for the children, as the parents have absolute authority over them. How many times have you heard 'Because I say so', as the reason for having to do something?

The present family system has not existed forever. It is a convenient economic unit for capitalism, which restricts and oppresses women and children. The economic and legal restrictions which force people to live in such units should be removed and there should be a choice.

Such changes need a huge economic upheaval, and a planned economy. Also, the struggle for socialism cannot be successful without the women of the working class coming forward to fight for their rights. Socialist revolution and women's liberation are therefore inseparably linked.

*Fight for women's liberation — support Women's Fightback.

*For a woman's right to a job.

*Equal pay and opportunity for women.

*Free and safe abortion and contraception on demand.

*Positive discrimination in favour of women in all labour movement bodies.

*Creches to be provided at all labour movement meetings.

*Fight sexism — educate young men.

*Financial and legal independence for women.

*Lesbian mothers to have custody of their children and be allowed to adopt and foster children as well.

*For socialisation of domestic chores — free nurseries, laundrettes, community restaurants.

Troops out of Ireland now! Release all political prisoners!

Ireland has a British problem. The British partitioned Ireland in 1921 and created the artificial statelet in the North. Britain lopped off six of the nine counties of Ulster, and the boundaries were drawn in such a way that the Protestants were guaranteed a majority. Northern Ireland was run as a sectarian state, and the Protestants were kept loyal to Unionist (Tory) politics by marginal privileges.

While the Protestants declare themselves 'loyal' to Britain, the British state has difficulty in controlling the excesses of Orangeism. In the 1960s Britain began some timid efforts at reform. This sparked off a mass civil rights movement among the Catholics. The Protestant bigots responded with brutal attacks and attempted pogroms.

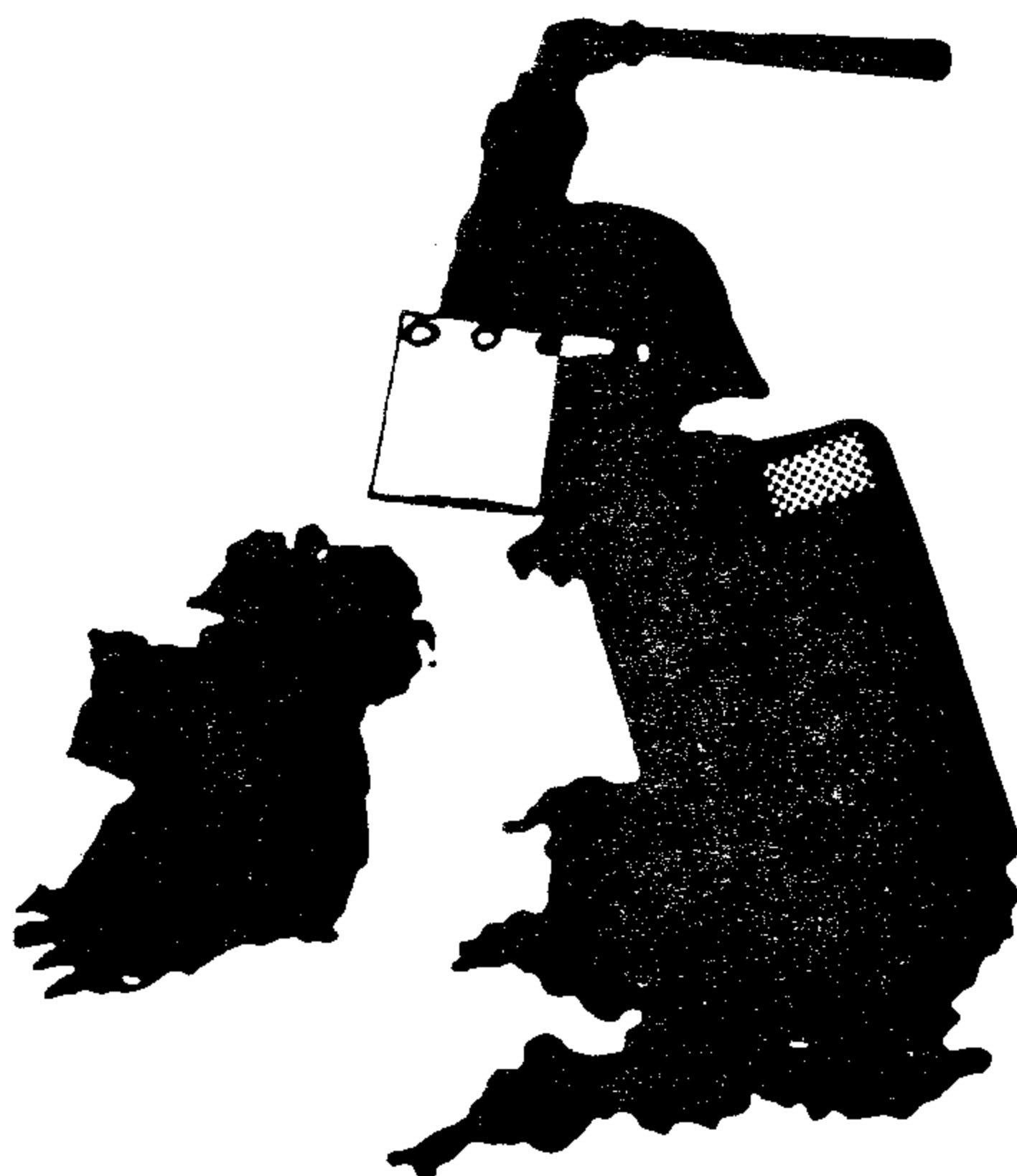
In 1969 the British troops were sent onto the streets of Northern Ireland, supposedly to protect the Catholic minority from attack. Within a short time it was clear that the reason they had gone there was to protect the interests of the British bosses.

Soon there was widespread opposition from the Catholic community. And at the head of the fighting against the British Army in the streets were the youth. Since then we have seen massacres by the British Army like Bloody Sunday, January 1972, where 14 people were shot dead while on a peaceful demonstration. This action passed almost with-

out criticism in the British media. Time and again we hear of the 'terrorist' activities of the IRA, but hardly ever do we hear of the terrorism of the British Army who shoot down Catholic youth in cold blood.

Since the late 1960s, Britain has largely given up its feeble plans for reform, and its policy has been simply to restore order by trying to beat down the Catholics.

We stand by the struggle of the people of Ireland to determine their own future. We don't recognise the validity of the state of Northern Ireland. Ireland is one



country and there is no reason why it should be split into two. We must fight rigorously to get British troops out of Ireland.

We defend the Republican movement without conditions against British imperialism and support them critically — we do not support all their methods.

There needs to be a mass mobilisation of workers in Ireland and Britain, with a socialist leadership, to drive the troops out.

The myth that the republican movement have got no support in Northern Ireland was crushed by the election of Bobby Sands and then Owen Carron as H-block candidates to Parliament. Republican prisoners are captured prisoners of war. They are tried in special no-jury courts, and then treated as ordinary criminals. That's what the H-Block struggle was all about, and we fully supported it.

We salute the courage of the martyrs who have died for that cause. We blame Thatcher and her government for their murders. The Labour leaders and past Labour governments are their accomplices. They sent the troops onto the streets of Ireland in the first place, and Labour's spokesperson on Northern Ireland, Don Concannon, went to tell Bobby Sands that he agreed with the Tories only days before Sands died.

We welcome the stand taken by the Greater London Council and its leader, Ken Livingstone, who have had talks with the Republican leaders. They are breaking out of the traditional Labour policy of bipartisanship (which means having the same policies on Ireland as the Tories).

We support the 1982 Labour Party conference decision to ban plastic bullets and we will campaign to ensure this policy is carried out.

Class Fighter supporters demand a break with the bipartisan approach of the Labour leaders. We believe that the issue of Ireland is central to our work in the labour movement.

WE DEMAND:

*British troops out of Ireland now.

*Self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. A united Ireland — with all legitimate minority rights for the Protestants.

*Political status for political prisoners. Smash H-Block and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

*Support and build the Labour Committee on Ireland.

*Solidarity with Irish Republicans fighting for a united Irish Republic — and especially with Irish socialists fighting for a workers' republic.

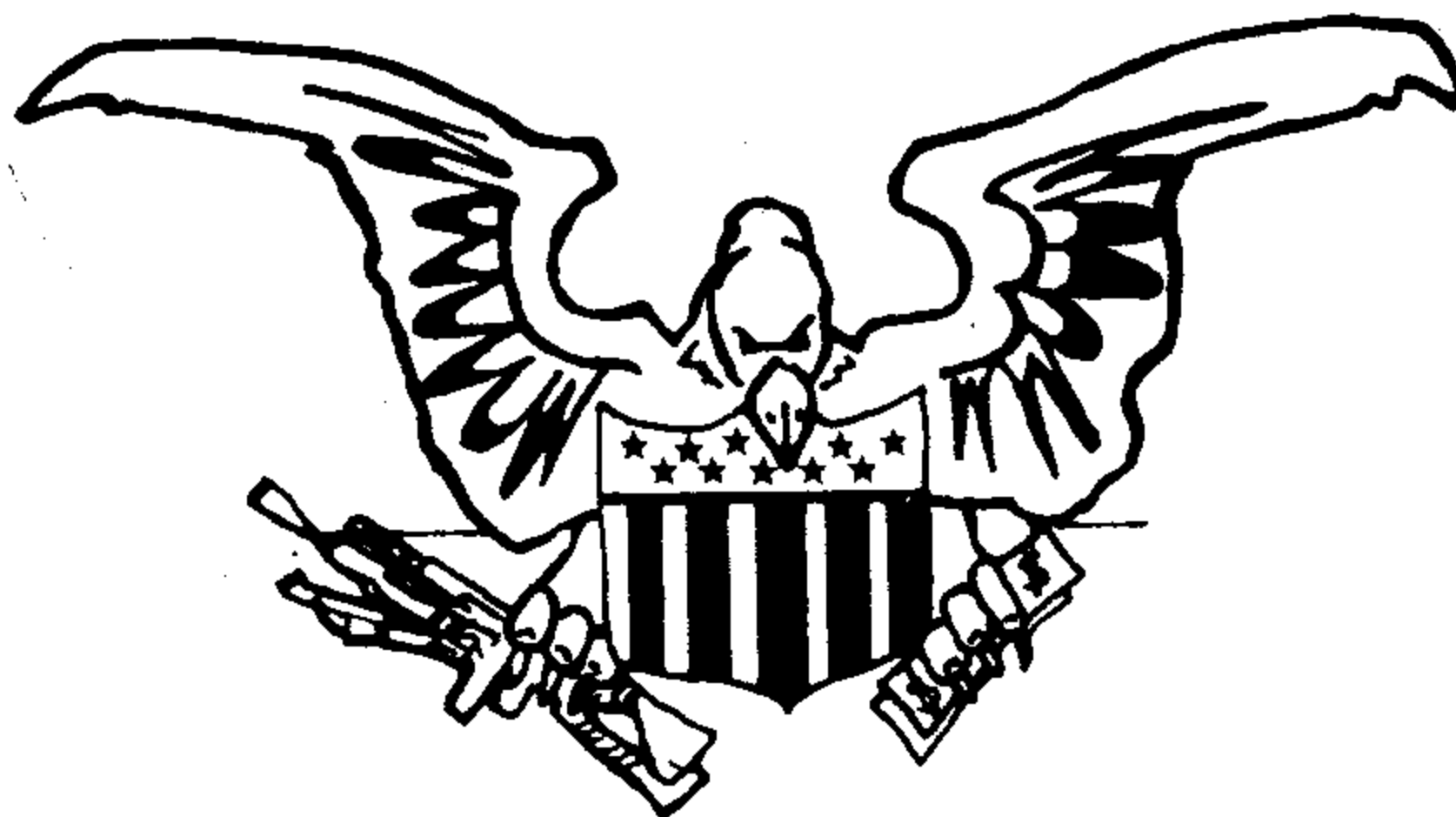
Our fight is international

We live in an imperialist country. What does that mean? Imperialism is the economic and political domination and exploitation of smaller, weaker countries by strong capitalist countries. The USA and

Britain have always fought to find new markets for their products and new places to exploit for cheap raw materials and cheap labour. Examples are the British in India and Africa — the old British Empire — and American involvement in South America (e.g. Chile) and Vietnam.

Imperialism today is not direct colonialism. It tries to be as subtle as possible, for instance, the British government maintains a steely silence over its role in Oman. But the recent decision by Reagan

Solidarity



to step up military aid to the Army in El Salvador for use against the liberation forces and their supporters, shows that imperialist aggression is no less vicious than it ever was. We are on the side of the oppressed against the imperialists.

We are internationalists. Capitalism is an international system that operates across national boundaries. If we just concern ourselves with British affairs, then we are falling into the bosses' trap of nationalism. They try to play one lot of workers (British) off against another, e.g. South Africans. BL workers in Britain are paid around £90 a week, while their counterparts in South Africa (who are black) are paid £70 a month.

Obviously BL workers anywhere in the world have more in common with each other than they have with the likes of Michael Edwardes. And this applies to workers in the textile, engineering and countless other industries.

This also means that we are opposed to nationalist solutions to the capitalist

crisis, the most notorious one being the demand for import controls. This demand stirs up all the most backward ideas about buying British and making Britain 'great' again. In fact what import controls mean is 'pass the unemployment on to our brothers and sisters in another country'. That sentiment has nothing to do with international socialism.

As youth, our interests lie with supporting the youth of other countries fighting for their liberation. In Nicaragua, El Salvador, Turkey and countless other countries, youth have played and are playing a leading role in fighting the imperialists. We must solidarise and try to build links with them.

*For international socialism.

*Solidarity with all anti-imperialist struggles.

*Fight against import controls and all 'little England' nationalist demands.

*For the united socialist states of Europe!

Build a fighting revolutionary LPYS!

THE NATIONAL LEFT WING YOUTH MOVEMENT AND THE LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

We are part of the LPYS. At the moment the LPYS is the biggest socialist youth organisation and is recognised by the labour movement as its official youth organisation. For those reasons it is the organisation that youth wanting to fight

the system are most likely to come across — and it is a good channel to draw youth into the activities of the labour movement and the struggles within the labour movement.

The LPYS is dominated by the supporters of the 'Militant' newspaper. They control the National Committee of the LPYS and the LPYS apparatus at Labour

Party HQ in Walworth Road, South London. They call themselves Trotskyists but we don't think they are.

Their attitude to the class struggle and fighting for socialism is reduced to campaigning purely on certain fixed economic demands. Often you hear them say that 'nationalising the top 200 monopolies under workers' control with compensation in cases of proven need' is the major way of achieving socialism. Questions like women's oppression, gay oppression, and the fight for Irish freedom are seen as things which will sort themselves out automatically after the general economic demands. We think there is no separation. Fighting for women's liberation, for example, is part and parcel of the fight for socialism.

They are ambiguous over the Parliamentary road to socialism. We think that a revolution cannot be legislated through the House of Commons, that socialism will be achieved through the mass mobilisation of the working class outside Parliament — through workers' struggles (though we are in favour of using Parliament in the interests of the working class as far as that is possible). Militant have the idea that passing an 'Enabling Act' in Parliament will allow power to be handed over to the working class. This is a reformist idea. The ruling class is not so meek and mild as Militant seems to think.

There would be a vicious resistance to such a move from the capitalists. They are not going to let go of their system that easily. We only have to look at Chile, where the Popular Unity government led by Allende was overthrown in 1973 by the Army. If Benn were the leader of the Labour Party in Britain, if a Labour government were elected, and if it seriously tried to carry out its manifesto, then there is a real danger that a similar coup would happen. Field Marshal Carver has already admitted that senior officers talked about a possible coup in 1974 when industrial action by the miners brought down the Tory government.

To deny this and peddle illusions in a peaceful road to socialism through Parliament, as Militant do is very dangerous and, we think, irresponsible.

We take the fight for socialism more seriously. We think we have a duty to explain the issues truthfully to arm the working class for the battles to come.

The fight for democracy in the labour movement also applies to the LPYS. At the moment the NC of the LPYS is elected at regional conferences before the national conference, and then the NC dominates the national conference. The NC is not accountable to national conference. So we argue that NC members should be elected at national conference.

At YS conference NC members have extended speaking time from the platform — cutting out speakers from the floor. They use this as a way of dominating debate. We say NC members should have only as much time as other delegates.

Often at YS conference you get speaker after speaker saying the same thing, putting forward the Militant line. Consequently there is very little discussion or debate. This also applies to 'Socialist Youth', the YS paper. We think a youth organisation that doesn't allow debate and discussion from different viewpoints isn't a lot of use to youth trying to work out their political ideas. So we argue for open debate and discussion at YS conference and in Socialist Youth.

We appeal to other youth organisations — YCND groups, Revolution Youth and any groups of youth looking for a political response to the capitalist crisis to join us in the LPYS, to fight for leadership of the LPYS and build a real fighting revolutionary youth organisation.

Fight for a workers' government

This pamphlet outlines what we are fighting for. But the question can still be asked, 'How are we going to get all this? The Tories are still in power and a Labour government like the last one won't act in the interests of working class youth!

Yes, we agree. The last Labour government made massive public expenditure cuts, tried to smash the Low Pay strike during the 'winter of discontent' in 1979, didn't pull the troops out of Ireland, didn't save jobs — unemployment went up and up — quite simply, the last Labour government did not act in workers' interests.

So how do we get a government that does?

We need representatives of the working class who are accountable to us. Representatives who have to answer for whatever they do, or be replaced by someone who will.

A recent example of betrayal by so-called working class leaders was the sell-out of the NHS workers.

Union leaders are often elected for life — and in some cases not elected at all! They are paid huge salaries for keeping the working class in line. They do not act in our interests. The fight for democracy in the trade unions is essential to stop these 'bosses' pals' once and for all.

During the 1968 general strike in France, some strike committees not only organised the strike, but also made decisions about distribution of food and fuel in their areas. This has happened in Britain, too, during the 1926 General Strike. The point is that the working class had control over their lives. If there was a complaint you could take it to the strike committee, where elected repres-

entatives would act in your interests. If they didn't they could be brought to account at workers' meetings and kicked off immediately.

That's the kind of government we want: one where the working class can exercise power, not individual MPs.

That's why the present fight in the Labour Party is so important. The argument is not about whether Tony Benn has all the right policies (which we don't think he has), but about who controls the Labour Party and its representatives in Parliament.

We have to fight not for a Labour government of the old type — or a left Labour government to implement the Alternative Economic Strategy — but for a workers' government — a government committed to the working class, responsive to the labour movement and controlled by it.

To bring about a workers' government we must also help build a strong organised revolutionary left wing in the labour movement, which argues for the policies we have outlined above. The Labour Party's present Alternative Economic Strategy just means tinkering with the mechanics of capitalism. It will inevitably either be abandoned, watered down so that it is meaningless or antagonise the capitalists without destroying their power and lead to another Chile.

There must be an organised left wing ready to put forward new policies and new leaders.

*Fight for a workers' government.

*Never again a Labour government like the last one.

*All workers' representatives to be elected and subject to recall.

*Fight for democracy in the Labour Party and trade unions.

*Fight for socialist policies.

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