

# weekly worker



No 90

Thursday April 13 1995

## Celebrate May Day!

### London march and rally Monday May 1

Assemble Highbury Fields (Highbury tube) at 12 noon for the march to Clissold Park  
CPGB supporters should meet at 11.30am at Highbury Fields. Telephone 0181-459 7146 for details

# Vote against council cuts

Last week teachers throughout the country demonstrated and took strike action against education cuts. Meanwhile the healthworkers' unions are still dragging their feet in opposing their pay offer. The communist campaign against attacks on jobs and services has received much support. But you can go one step further: vote Communist on May 4 and join us in fighting back. Demand what we need, not what capitalism can afford

MANCHESTER is facing a £1 million cut from its secondary education budget. Although Poundswick Junior School won extra funding last week, it turns out that this will be at the expense of secondary schools. The story is the same throughout the country, as the government refuses to fund the teachers' meagre 2.7% pay 'rise'.

Tom May, Communist candidate for the Dallow ward of Luton told us that "The schools are so bad here that anyone who can afford to is going outside the area. What we need is a united campaign throughout the country."

The fightback is beginning. Last week teachers in Derbyshire, Rotherham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Nottinghamshire and Devon took one day strike action against budget cuts and redundancies. They were supported by parents at rallies and demonstrations. In Rotherham most schools were closed and in Nottinghamshire, where 300 teachers' jobs are threatened, three quarters of schools were closed. In the first action for 10 years over 2,500 teachers in Devon came out on strike action.

Even the normally 'moderate' Association of Teachers and Lecturers has now announced a ballot for industrial action against increased class sizes.

But the action has been followed by Labour and Tory both pledging to continue education cuts.

Communist Party Dundee branch protest against the closure of Dundee Royal Infirmary

Education secretary Gillian Shephard, in a cynical attempt to stave off action, told headteachers that education would become a priority when the economy grew.

We know the Tories will make workers pay for their crisis as long as we let them. Labour shadow education spokesperson David Blunkett, in promising not to reverse the cuts, proudly announced: "We have to be the first

government in recent history that delivers more than it promises."

This will hardly be difficult since Labour is offering nothing except more attacks on the working class, more cuts and more closures.

Blunkett moaned that education costs £28 billion a year in England and that Labour could not be expected to reverse the cuts 'immediately'.

This is certainly the logic of a system which is ruled by the market and which puts profit before need.

Communist candidates in the elections demand that we put people before profit. There should be no price on workers' health or education. While technology has vastly improved the possibilities of healthcare and advanced education, working class people are denied the use of it. Apparently it costs too much. So teachers and healthworkers are unemployed while schools and hospitals are run down.

All the main parties promise cuts and bemoan a lack of money. Labour blames the Tories and the Tories blame the economy, but all councils are cutting councils.

The rich are getting richer while workers' pay is slashed. Managers and directors are awarded huge pay rises, while workers are laid off, services closed down and prices jacked up.

Communists are standing in the local council elections to oppose these attacks on the working class. We cannot promise to balance the budget better than Labour or Tory, because the budget is not big enough.

Workers need their own Party to organise against attacks on our class.

A Communist vote is a vote against all cuts and a signal that the task of reforging that Party is beginning.

## Quality education for all

Roger Harper,  
Communist candidate  
for Hulme in  
Manchester, demands  
the education we need

SCHOOLS in Greater Manchester are in a state of decay. Crosslee Primary School was ravaged by fire last June. 300 children are still crammed into cabins, converted stock rooms and sub-standard class rooms. The fire was attributed to an electrical fault, caused by years of neglected repairs.

The roof leaks in on staff and pupils alike, and morale is at rock bottom. This is a common problem which grows daily.

The chair of education, councillor Kath Fry (Whalley Range, Labour) called on teachers in Wythenshawe not to take threatened industrial action. Nationally Labour's education spokesperson, David Blunkett, simply echoes the Tories in calling for 'unsatisfactory' schools to be closed and re-opened with new teachers. This is completely derogatory to teachers and ignores the stress they are under due to increased workload, Dickensian conditions and a demoralised school population with no hope of a job when they leave.

Communist candidates in Manchester, in contrast to this, know that industrial action by teachers, supported by parents, is the only way to win the quality education we need for all. The campaign against Sats by rank and file teachers, which began in opposition to the union bureaucracy, should be the model for action today against cuts and redundancies.

Communists say that there must be comprehensive and free education for everyone who wants it from nursery to degree level. This must be quality education which demands much more funding than currently on offer. If capitalism cannot provide the education that we need then clearly it must go - not our education.

## United fight against cuts and closures!

## Letters

### No tears

I have to confess that comrade Vic Turner's comments on clause four (*Weekly Worker* 89) left me scratching my head somewhat - was it directed towards the left of the Labour Party or the Communist Party?

Apparently, comrade Turner was "confident that some sort of real socialism would come to the fore", as a result of the clause four furor. This is a bit odd. How could "real socialism" (ie, Marxism-Leninism) emerge from within the Labour Party?

Comrade Turner then states, "There will no longer be even the pretence of socialism". Does he think this is a good or bad thing? From a communist perspective, I would argue that the fact there is no longer even a "pretence of socialism" is a healthy development in the long run. The less illusions militants and workers have in Labourism the better, I say.

More seriously, Vic says that the left are "naturally" very concerned about the dumping of clause four (sure, the *Labour* left!) and then concludes on what is presumably a 'cheerful' note: "There is going to be a real fight, whatever the leadership says".

I do not believe that communists should encourage, or support, the Labour 'left' in attempts to salvage clause four or, in the future, introduce some sort of neo-clause four, mark two.

However, it does appear that comrade Turner identifies with the struggle of the Labour left to retain some influence within the 'new' Labour Party. He says that "the last thing we wanted was to have to devote our energies to that".

I believe that comrade Turner should devote his energies to reorganising the Communist Party, not rescuing the 'soul' of the Labour Party.

Therefore, I strongly disagree with Vic's final comment that "the kickback from the left has to come quick and has to come strong", as the whole tenor

Note: Letters may have been shortened because of space. Some names may have been changed.

of the article is directed towards the Labour Party, not the Communist Party. In reality, such a conclusion obscures the real issue: do we devote our energies towards sowing socialistic illusions in the Labour Party (past, present, future) or building the Communist Party (in the here and now, for the future)?

If Tony Blair's ditching of clause four ends up making our job easier, then good, and let us have no more tears for the Labour Party

**Danny Hammil**  
South London

### Poll tax riot

I see that last week's issue of *Militant* carries an article commemorating the 5th anniversary of the anti-poll tax riot in Trafalgar Square.

*Militant* is rightly proud of the role its organisation played in mobilising 200,000 to the demonstration. But even today it cannot find a word of criticism over its non-organisation of any form of self-defence, either in advance of, or during, the vicious police attack on the marchers.

It states, "*Militant*, whilst not approving of looting and rioting, stressed the rights of self-defence against physical attack ..." (April 7 1995)

But where is the dividing line between "self-defence" and "rioting"? For the ruling class there is none. Any attack on the police is viewed as criminal, and at the time the leader of the anti-poll tax federation, *Militant* member Steve Nally, was drawn into that same viewpoint. He condemned "deliberate attacks on the police" by demonstrators (*Militant* April 6 1990).

On television he went further, promising to "name names" in response to a gutter press campaign to identify those who fought back.

*Militant* wants it both ways. It wants to claim the credit for the demise of Margaret Thatcher, in which the Trafalgar Square riot played no small part. At the same time it wants to distance itself from the 'rioters'.

**Roger Dickson**  
North London

# The price of health

LAST WEEK'S confirmation by health secretary Virginia Bottomley of the full or partial closure of several London hospitals came in a written parliamentary reply. But the fury of even Conservative MPs, particularly London Tories anxious for their own seats, forced her to defend her actions the next day.

All remaining NHS hospitals in the borough of Greenwich are to be closed, with the transfer to the health service of the smaller Queen Elizabeth military hospital to replace them, and the world famous Barts and Guys will lose all but a few minor units. The overall effect will be the continuation of bed losses and the rundown of healthcare.

Interestingly, Liberal Democrat MP Simon Hughes, active in the campaign to save Guys, stated that the only hope now lay in a general election and Labour's promised moratorium on further closures in London. Such individuals would now be perfectly at home in Blair's party.

However, Labour's moratorium clearly falls far short of what workers require. Several recent cases have highlighted the already pitifully inadequate level of 'service' provided by the NHS.

But Labour leaders, as in other policy areas, promise to reverse none of the Tories' cuts. They are at one with them on the need to dismantle the welfare state. They share the belief that capitalism can no longer afford to provide what we need, and their 'social justice' commission of last year even proposed

Healthworkers enjoyed a short-lived 'victory' in their fight to save Guys

forcing workers to take out their own private health insurance.

Meanwhile the unions' low key pay campaign plods on. After the 'fair pay' day against a national one percent offer, the main health union, Unison, is consulting its members over industrial action.

But the lacklustre nature of the campaign, combined with the leadership's lowering of their official claim to a pay-cutting three percent, has meant that their members have been open to local management enticement.

While as yet no Unison members have succumbed to this pressure, it is likely

to be intensified by the latest department of health 'concession' that only basic pay, not conditions of employment, would be subject to local negotiations. The government claims that 75% of local offers would be for the full three percent.

Astonishingly, a joint statement from the unions welcomed the move. Although a Unison spokesperson was adamant that no local deals were being entertained, she told the *Weekly Worker* that the fact that nationally negotiated conditions of employment were to be retained was positive.

**Peter Manson**

## United action against JSA

WHILST attention has been largely focused on the attacks on the NHS and local government, the Jobs Seekers Allowance has begun its early stages of implementation. It represents a massive assault on the unemployed, civil service jobs and conditions and the welfare benefits system. The JSA will replace unemployment benefit and income support in April 1996. The Tories are literally intending to:

- rob millions of workers of their national insurance contributions.
- cut unemployment benefits from one year to six months.
- take away the right to benefits for some 165,000 people
- 'save' £410 million in the first two years as a result

Those now on income support will be paid under a system of severe restriction and enforcement. The 'job-shy' will face an array of 'sanctions' if they refuse to take up cheap labour schemes and low paid work. These include:

- no benefit at all for two weeks
- up to 60% reduction in benefits
- no right to hardship payments

Benefit workers will be expected to implement the JSA and become 'benefits police' for the current mass of unemployed workers.

The introduction of a dehumanised corporate culture has been underway for some time in both the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency. The aim is not only to undermine our trade union but to create the necessary consciousness needed to control 'our customers'. So, while attacking the unemployed, the JSA also lays the groundwork for a wholesale attack on civil service workers' jobs and conditions.

There will be an estimated 50% reduction in the Employment Service alone, with over 20,000 jobs going. Ministers are predicting an "increased risk of assault" on staff. The existing poverty level of benefits resulted in 1,445 assaults in 1993 alone.

In the absence of an unemployed workers' movement the main organised force standing between the JSA and the unemployed is the largest benefits

workers' union, the CPSA. The current struggles of CPSA members with management and the union bureaucracy are therefore of increased relevance to the working class as a whole.

The CPSA national leadership is not only the most rightwing in the whole TUC; it is the most anti-communist. Since coming to power, the National Moderate Group set as its declared aim to "drive out Marxists". Yet this is also a reflection of the existence and potential strength of the left in the CPSA.

In the Benefits Agency section the Broad Left/Militant Labour has the leadership and in the Employment Service has a majority.

However electoralism and hunger for positions, as opposed to leading struggles, has dominated ML's perspective for years. Under the umbrella of 'Left Unity' ML has entered into the most opportunist of alliances with the misnamed Broad Left 84 grouping (ex-Kinnockites, Democratic Left liberals, etc). ML is propping up a sell-out team, under the guise of pushing it to the left.

Already the policy of non-cooperation with JSA implementation has been overturned in the Employment Service by ML's BL84 allies.

The CPSA rank and file group, Socialist Caucus, along with the Socialist Workers Party, proposed to ML/BL forming a principled united front. This was refused and now Socialist Caucus and the SWP are standing candidates in union elections in opposition to BL84. In a public debate last week ML went so far as to compare Socialist Caucus candidates to the splits in the face of the rise of Hitler.

In London a semi-rank and file joint union committee led by Socialist Caucus has had some success in uniting delegates from unemployed organisations and both the main unions. It organised a boycott of a tracking survey for job cuts and saw off a JSA pilot exercise in West London. A London-wide bulletin is challenging management propaganda.

Neither the union leadership nor the aspiring 'left' bureaucrats are capable of

leading a campaign to defeat the JSA and defend benefit workers. Only through rank and file organisation can such a successful struggle be waged.

**Chris Ford**  
Chair, West London CPSA  
(DSS Benefits Agency)

From *The Call*, paper of the British Socialist Party, April 15 1920

### Our duty to Ireland

LET US face the fact fully and squarely that the forcible repression of Irish aspirations is being done in our name. Let us be quite clear also that no capitalist government is likely to grant the freedom that the Irish people demand. They are too tenacious of their boasted Empire to agree for a moment to any part of it slipping away. It follows then that the workers of Great Britain shoulder the task of ending this centuries-old wrong. It does not permit of a moment's doubt that the great labour movement here would not wish to coerce Ireland. When we accept the principle of self-determination it is to be hoped we mean it. Only the rankest hypocrisy would grant to other small nationalities the freedom of self-government and deny it to our brothers next door.

For our part we are quite willing to grant this to the people of Ireland. More: we are convinced that only the Irish people themselves will be able to settle the vexed question of Ulster. With the workers of all countries travelling fast towards communism, the folk on the other side of the Irish Channel may be trusted to settle their religious and racial differences, and fall into line in the federation of free peoples.

C · P · G · B

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YEARS

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## Review

### Gump award hype

**Forrest Gump**, on general release

THE FILM *Forrest Gump* won a large number of Oscars at the recent Academy Awards, to the disgust of an even larger number of left and right bourgeois critics, particularly those in Britain. Their argument amounted to the complaint that it portrayed a simplistic triumph of good over evil, and that *Four Weddings and a Funeral* was a better film anyway.

Now I expect neither Hollywood nor the British film industry to produce revolutionary art, and like many other people I go to the flicks for an evening's entertainment. But I found that both films had some content of intellectual worth. However, *Four Weddings and a Funeral* attempted to gloss over the disgusting nature of upper class life while avoiding any criticism whatsoever of these moral and intellectual bankrupts.

**John Bayliss**

*Forrest Gump*, in contrast, had a Candide quality about it, pointing out that success or failure in capitalist America was subject to the possession of finance and good fortune rather than virtue.

If Gump had a semi-happy outcome to his life, it was at the expense of a disaster for the majority of his friends and relations, the prostitution of his mother, the oppression of blacks, the destruction of a whole industry, and a war shown as brutal and useless. All this against a background of political corruption that was very wittily portrayed.

Most of the British complaints amounted to chauvinistic sour grapes. Neither film is a masterpiece, but what do you expect from capitalist film makers?

expected to find work.

Although on paper many may be medically 'fit' for certain types of work, the new criteria ignore such factors as age, mobility and - most crucially - available jobs.

This must be one of the most disgusting attempts by even the Tories to cut costs and blame the working class for its economic crisis. Many workers will be forced into a life of desperate poverty. This can only increase the alienation of people who are considered worthless in profit and loss terms by this brutal capitalist system.

**Helen Ellis**

### Benefit attack

THIS WEEK the government pushed through a double whammy of attacks on claimants. On Tuesday it won a court ruling banning people who are not "habitually resident" in the UK or Ireland from receiving unemployment benefit.

On Thursday invalidity benefit was to be replaced by incapacity benefit. Social security doctors begin the task of interviewing and examining claimants with the aim of depriving 220,000 people of entitlement. Most are not

# Tories face disaster

THE CONSERVATIVE Party's long-term decline in Scotland from around 50% support in the 1955 general election to the 11% obtained last week will almost certainly be reflected even more dramatically in England and Wales next month.

Under Margaret Thatcher the Tories had their programme - painful and divisive though it was - for 'making Britain great again'. Curbing union power and unleashing the full power of the market were the tools, yet the decline of British capitalism has not been halted. Thatcherism failed in its central aim, and now the Tories are deprived of their previously unifying force, when they believed they were striding forward towards their goal.

Today they no longer even believe in themselves, nor in the possibility of winning a further term in office. With careers and influence looking increasingly threatened, it is no wonder that individuals are looking to secure more lucrative business positions, and so become more open to allegations of corruption.

No wonder either that they have perhaps become less careful in concealing other outside interests - particularly of a sexual nature - and that the divisions in the Conservative Party have become more and more open.

These divisions go to the very heart of what the party is supposed to be about - the defence of nation

and enterprise. Now the issue of Europe has driven a wedge between these two elements. Big business is almost unanimous in its conviction that ever deeper integration within Europe provides the only possible basis for British-based capital to compete in the world.

But the Conservative Party is not only the party of big business. Particularly in the countryside it is the party of *small* business, and thousands of Tory activists, remote from the reality of the global economy, place British sovereignty alongside small-scale enterprise at the top of their agenda.

While the prospects of a federal Europe - although central to the Treaty of Rome - remained a distant possibility, these divisions were less important. Now, however, the principle of monetary union has been unanimously agreed by all EU member-states, and its inevitable corollary of political union can no longer be dismissed. The Eurosceptics are right when they say that their position is much more in tune with the grass roots Tory membership, but ludicrously wrong when they claim that it represents the way forward for British capitalism.

That is why the bourgeoisie is looking to switch its support away from the discredited Tories. For the short term at least, Tony Blair's New Labour Party looks a safer bet.

Jim Blackstock

## Another one bites the dust

JONATHAN Aitken's performance at Monday's press conference, when he attempted to defend himself against allegations of corruption, epitomised the Tories' difficulties. Woodenly reading his melodramatic script from the autocue like a third rate ham actor, he promised to start a fight to "cut out the cancer of bent and twisted journalism in our country with the simple sword of truth and the trusty shield of British fair play".

The treasury secretary's tirade against *The Guardian*, which had that morning published further details of his business links with Saudi princes, including gifts of a Jaguar XJ6 car and paid hotel bills, was in fact aimed at preventing that evening's broadcast of the *World in Action* programme. It failed. The programme went ahead, merely incorporating clips of the press conference alongside further allegations of his private dealings - dubious even by the corrupt standards of capitalism.

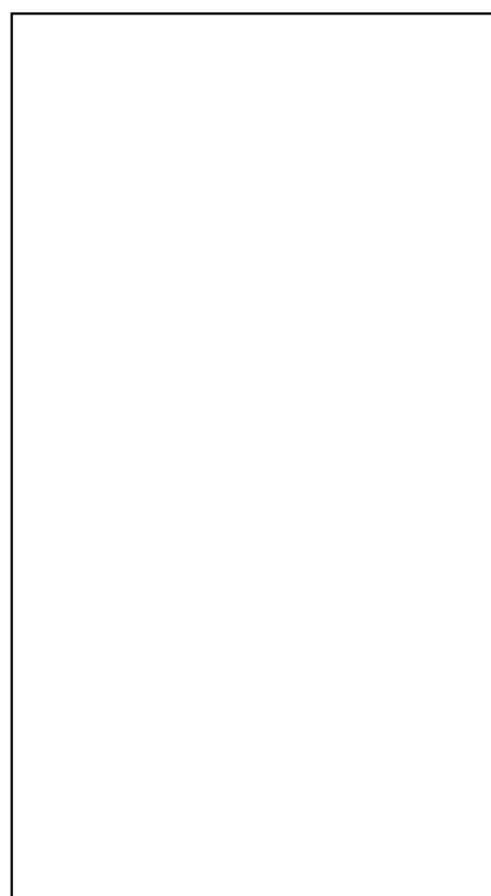
Curiously - you may think - the next day he did

not go off guns ablazing to the libel courts. He was carefully considering the contents of the programme. And there was me thinking it was all lies, damn lies.

The fact that Aitken apparently had the full backing of Conservative Central Office for his dismal attempts at self-defence only serves to further discredit the government as a whole. But the Tories were desperate to halt the allegations of sleaze directed against them.

Just the day before, parliamentary private secretary Richard Spring became the 16th member of John Major's administration to be forced out of office. Eight of them, including Spring, resigned or were sacked following allegations of sexual 'impropriety'. Another PPS, Stephen Milligan, died during the course of a solo sex act.

We believe that individuals' sexual lives are their own affairs. But the fact that these hurried exits took place under a government which espoused back-to-basics 'family values' exposes the Tories' bankruptcy. They have now swung over to a directly contradictory



Jonathan Aitken: number 18 on the list?

position. John Townend, chairman of the Conservative backbench finance committee, commented that Lloyd George was "bedding women on the floor of Downing Street" and still helped win World War I.

Lord Archer, former deputy chairman of the party, thought that it was absurd that the conduct of one's private life should lead to resignation. But he added: "If an MP takes bribes or commissions or hospitality, then it's a *grey area* of corruption - that's a totally different question" (our italics).

The Tories seem to have lost all sense of even bourgeois morality. Short of a miracle, they will get no eleventh hour reprieve.

Alan Fox

## Death for capitalism's rejected scapegoats

THE DEATH last Saturday of Nicholas Ingram, who was executed in the electric chair, marked the end of another grisly episode in the history of the United States 'justice' system. As if the method of execution was not stomach churning enough, the attendant media circus only compounded the sickening nature of the spectacle.

So why did the British media go into overdrive over Nicholas Ingram? After all, in Texas last week another prisoner was executed and we heard nothing

about it. Indeed, Ingram is the fourteenth person to be executed this year, not the first. The answer is simple, of course: Ingram was British-born, one of 'us'. As *The Observer* aptly put it, for the British media "the elements of nationalism and voyeurism would be irresistible" (April 9).

Ingram's death is part of a general trend towards barbarism in the United States, where alarmingly large numbers of people are looking towards capital punishment as one of the methods by which social decay, violence and crime can be arrested, if not reversed - the other main 'weapon' being savage cutbacks in welfare benefits and social provisions. Naturally, the fact that working class black prisoners constitute 40% of death row inmates, even though they only make up 12% of the population, is just a 'coincidence' for the advocates of the death penalty.

Thus, more and more states are reintroducing it in America. The latest state to convert was the previously 'liberal' New York, which takes the number with the death penalty to 38 - and Iowa and Wisconsin are expected to follow suit soon. With 3,000 on Death Row the bottle-neck is worsening. In Arkansas last year the first triple execution for 32 years was carried out, on the 'sensible' grounds that it

saved overtime pay and reduced stress on the poor old jail staff.

Unsurprisingly, America's 'war against crime' is attractive to all manner of bourgeois politicians in Britain. Many of them want to reintroduce the death penalty to Britain, although it is surely beyond question that it has no deterrent effect whatsoever (the Deep South, where it is mainly used, has by far the highest murder rates). All that matters is that bourgeois society exacts *revenge* on its officially designated scapegoats.

Communists treat with contempt the bourgeoisie's 'war against crime' and the never ending hysteria and bigotry that the 'war' generates, aided and abetted by the media. Not because we approve of murder, but rather because we genuinely believe in being 'tough on the cause of crime' - ie, capitalism. The poverty, inequality and alienation produced by capitalism as it struggles to survive is *the* cause of crime, not the deranged 'psyche' (or genes) of 'evil' criminals. To eradicate the pervasive social phenomena of crime and violence, you first have to eradicate capitalism, through revolution.

Funnily enough, you do not hear that very often in the media. Now, I wonder why?

Frank Vincent



Marcus Miller

This week the Audit Commission published details of 'police efficiency'. At the same time government figures reported a six percent rise in violent crimes. Marcus Miller, Communist candidate for Moss Side in Manchester, responded:

"Labour and Tory are competing with each other to see who can increase police power the more. But we know this will not solve crime. The police serve capitalism and not the people. Their vicious attacks on our pickets, demonstrations and rave concerts prove that.

"That is why Communists say there should be no support for the police. Shutting up ever greater numbers in overcrowded prisons does no good at all. We must change the conditions which cause crime - poverty, alienation, unemployment and social fragmentation. To begin to do that workers must organise themselves into workers' defence patrols."

## What we fight for

● Our central aim is to reforge the Communist Party of Great Britain. Without this Party the working class is nothing; with it, it is everything.

● The Communist Party serves the interests of the working class. We fight all forms of opportunism and revisionism in the workers' movement because they endanger those interests. We insist on open ideological struggle in order to fight out the correct way forward for our class.

● Marxism-Leninism is powerful because it is true. Communists relate theory to practice. We are materialists; we hold that ideas are determined by social reality and not the other way round.

● We believe in the highest level of unity among workers. We fight for the unity of the working class of all countries and subordinate the struggle in Britain to the world revolution itself. The liberation of humanity can only be achieved through world communism.

● The working class in Britain needs to strike as a fist. This means all communists should be organised into a single party. We oppose all forms of separatism, which weakens our class.

● Socialism can never come through parliament. The capitalist class will never peacefully allow their system to be abolished. Socialism will only succeed through working class revolution and the replacement of the dictatorship of the capitalists with the dictatorship of the working class. Socialism lays the basis for the conscious planning of human affairs, ie communism.

● We support the right of nations to self-determination. In Britain today this means the struggle for Irish freedom should be given full support by the British working class.

● Communists are champions of the oppressed. We fight for the liberation of women, the ending of racism, bigotry and all other forms of chauvinism. Oppression is a direct result of class society and will only finally be eradicated by the ending of class society.

● War and peace, pollution and the environment are class questions. No solution to the world's problems can be found within capitalism. Its ceaseless drive for profit puts the world at risk. The future of humanity depends on the triumph of communism.

We urge all who accept these principles to join us. A Communist Party Supporter reads and fights to build the circulation of the Party's publications; contributes regularly to the Party's funds and encourages others to do the same; where possible, builds and participates in the work of a Communist Party Supporters Group.

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### Origins of the concept of alienation

This Sunday (April 16) the London seminar series on *Marx's theory of alienation* opens with the 'Origins of the concept of alienation'. Next week *Modern revolutionary moments* looks at the Spartacists, 1918-1919. Seminars are in central London at 5pm every Sunday. For more details, call 0181-459 7146.

# Revolutionary votes

THE TORY wipe-out in the unitary authority elections in Scotland is a foretaste of the elections on May 4 in England and Wales, and undoubtedly heralds a Labour government at the next general election.

The working class in Scotland may not have a great deal of faith in Blair's 'social-ism', but greater than their mistrust of Blair is their hatred for the party that nakedly espouses capitalism and for many epitomises the poverty, despair and degradation of the last 16 years. They hunger for a change of government and Blair can deliver. As society moves further to the right, a liberal Blair government is not just a 'lesser of two evils' option, but the preferred option for sections of the establishment and voted for enthusiastically by many working class people. After 16 Tory years the desire to punish the Conservative Party is strong.

This punishment in Scotland was unrelenting:

	Seats	Councils
Labour	614	20
SNP	181	3
Lib/Dems	123	0
Conservative	81	0
Independent	153	3
No control		3

There was a low turnout with less

than 40% in many wards, but the Labour vote was strong. As a result the SNP was disappointed, as it failed to make any breakthroughs and lost some seats back to Labour.

Blair may be careering towards the right, but as he does so he is taking people with him. The current position raises important tasks for those on the left with the courage to put forward candidates in elections.

We can leave the Socialist Workers Party paper sellers to huddle closer and closer together as they half-heartedly call for a vote for Labour. We must start to build the socialist alternative now. Once Labour is safely in power the vacuum that we see in society today can only grow, as Labour continues the Tory attacks just as viciously.

Scottish Militant Labour's anti-Tory line took 9,717 votes across Scotland in 29 seats. But in the surge of support for Labour it lost three out of four councillors in Glasgow. Only Tommy Sheridan survived - and he does have a rather unpopular motorway being shafted through the middle of his ward.

It is clearly not easy to fill the vacuum in British politics at this time. Each of our 72 votes in Dundee had to be fought for very hard. They were however 72 uncompromising, honest votes for communism. In the Hilltown

we really put up a challenge to Militant (68 votes against our 51), who were clearly a much softer option than the CPGB. It will be even harder in the general election. But it is necessary.

The future of Labour domination is not a bright one for the working class in Britain. We all know that in the next two to three years we will see unparalleled Labour cuts, as the budget crisis bites both nationally and locally. SML should come out and openly ditch its left reformist approach. As for the SWP, it must shed its rank cowardice and stand itself. A call for a Labour vote must surely stick in the throat now.

We must have a revolutionary alternative. The need for a Communist Party has never been greater.

Mary Ward

## Hilltown results

Mary Ward, CPGB	51 (4.3%)
Mark Walker, SML	68 (5.8%)
Labour	754
SNP	301

## Lochee West results

Dominic Handley, CPGB	21 (1.3%)
Labour	999
SNP	316
Liberal Democrats	54
Conservatives	201

## New support

During the election campaign in Dundee we won a great deal of support for communism. Danny Williams, a new 15-year old supporter, was our youngest and perhaps hardest working activist. He joined during the campaign and worked with us throughout the following week. Here he tells us what he thought of the experience

I saw the debate between the CPGB and Militant advertised in the shop in the Hilltown, near where my mum lives. I went along and was really attracted to the ideas that Mary and other comrades put forward.

After that I canvassed around the electoral wards and delivered papers and leaflets.

We petitioned against the closure of Dundee Royal Infirmary and we had a tremendous response to that. Our 'die-in' outside the hospital got a lot of publicity.

I enjoyed most speaking on the doorstep because we got the chance to communicate with people.

Our election material was good and I think people understood that we were genuine.

I became a supporter because once



you understand the basic ideas of Marxism then you begin to see that it's true.

## Fighting fund

Comrades out on the street in Manchester city centre to launch our local election campaign raised £92.16. It was hard work, but it shows that it can be done.

As all our efforts are sunk into our election campaigns around England it is important that we do not forget to make fundraising a central part of our campaigns. Finance is crucial to ensure we can get our propaganda out to every door wherever we stand.

Readers and supporters are particularly important now. We need every pound, especially at this busy time. If you cannot support us financially, why not join us on the campaign trail?

Linda Addison

Dominic Handley, who has recently joined the CPGB, stood for the first time as a Communist candidate in Lochee West, Dundee - a new ward for us.

He stood in a safe Labour seat where the sitting councillor was Dundee's lord provost (mayor), but his votes were hard won votes for revolution.

We spoke to him about the campaign

### When did you first become a supporter?

I joined a year ago during the European elections. I saw the CPGB shop and read the literature in the window. I had heard that Mary Ward had left the Labour Party and thought that was good.

I had always felt that Labour was just like the Tories. Now it all became clearer - like a veil had been torn away and I could see through them all.

The *Weekly Worker* was the first paper I had seen which unambiguously told the truth about the Labour Party - that it was not our party and we needed to rebuild our Communist Party.

I took part in the European election campaign and started to go to Dundee branch meetings.

### How did you feel when asked to stand as a candidate?

Terrified! I expected some abuse from 'settler watch' (mad nationalists) or fascists. I was nervous about displaying my politics openly on the street.

However, although I expected the campaign to be hard work, I was sure I would enjoy it because of my previous experience during the European elections. I really wanted to give people a choice.

The campaign was well organised and all our comrades enjoyed it. It brought us together more and made us stronger.

**What was the response on the door?** We had a good warm response in Lochee.

There was a lot of disillusionment with the established parties but although most people intended to vote Labour, having a Communist standing was like a breath of fresh air to many people. The idea was "Let's get the Tories out first and see what happens from there."

It was good to try to convince them that Labour was a capitalist party, just as bad as the Tories.

### What was the aim of the campaign and what do you think we achieved?

It was important to get our propaganda through to people. To challenge accepted ideas, to make people think and politicise themselves. To get them to ask questions about the failure of the entire system. To point out the sham of electoral democracy.

In Lochee parochialism and patronage seemed to go hand in hand. Tom McDonald is a well known and well liked individual on the right of the Labour Party. But the council itself cuts as ruthlessly as the rest.

We stood to put over our message and attract supporters - and we did that. It is now important to go back to folk and build on what we have achieved.

### Will you stand as a candidate again?

Yes, definitely!

The Communist Party Dundee branch has regular meetings on Monday at 8pm. Tel 01382-667517 for details

## Other left results

### Scottish Militant Labour:

Pollok	48%	1,019 votes
(Tommy Sheridan held his seat)		
Queenslie	37.5%	778
Wellhouse	31.2%	559
Summerhill	28%	515
Drumry	27.5%	563
Grenwood	24.7%	371
Braidfauld	24.4%	483
South Pollok	23.2%	427
Ardler	22.9%	141
Crookstor	22.3%	577
Areten	21.2%	330
Gorbals	20.5%	314
Levernhulme	18.7%	317
Govan	16.7%	362
Viewpark	16.5%	312
Keppochill	15.8%	240
Cumbernauld	12.4%	209
Garthamlock	10.4%	175
Easterhouse	9.2%	148
Barlanark	8.5%	160
Gillburn	7.8%	102
Trottick	7.6%	93
Grenock	7.3%	96
Witfield South	6.2%	61
Garrowhill	6.1%	159

**Communist Party of Britain:** Govan 45; Cairns 77

**Communist Party of Scotland:** Willie Clarke retained his seat with 1,271 votes

## Yet another straw to clutch

SOME PEOPLE will never learn, it seems. They will willingly cling on to any dogma, any tactic, any catchphrase, in order to avoid confronting reality. The Trotskyite *Workers Power* is a prime example.

The April issue contains the following gem: "Although the clause four fight is almost over, the real fight - to put Labour into office, then force them to meet our immediate needs - is only just beginning".

Straight from the horse's mouth. Despite its claim to be a "revolutionary communist organisation", the "real fight" for this group is *always* going to be for the election of a Labour

government, thus fostering illusions in 'militant' Labourism of some hue or other.

Ironically, organisations like *Workers Power* are the exact mirror image of 'official communism', which also cannot imagine life without the Labour Party and cannot imagine socialism without a Labour government.

Unlike *Workers Power*, and Trotskyism in generally, we in the Communist Party never lose sight of the fact that the "real fight" is about making revolution, and for that we cannot put off the task of reforging our Party.

Eddie Ford

## Trade Unions: Winning the right to organise

Come and see the video *Labouring Under the Law*, revealing the similarities between the struggle against past and present anti-trade union laws. Presented by Brent Communist Party on Wednesday April 19 at 7.30pm. For details call 0181-459 7146