

DEVON LABOUR BRIEFING

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NO ORANGE CELEBRATIONS



Friends of British Ulster parade their sectarianism through Bridgewater.



The parade is soon used by National Front members to bring violence to the streets.

Chris Churchward
Ex-Services CND

If the Protestant bigots of the Orange Order, with their National Front supporters, parade in the streets of Exeter it would not be the first time Exeter has seen fascists on its streets.

Between the wars the tide of fascism was sweeping Europe; Italy 1922, Germany 1933, Spain 1939. Like Mussolini, Sir Oswald Mosely the British fascist, started his career in the labour movement before embracing fascism. Mosely's British Union of Fascists was funded by Italy and was backed in Britain by the Daily Mail newspaper.

The fascists came to Exeter in the 1930s and I am old enough to remember their regular Saturday night meetings on the streets of Exeter. These were usually held at the junction of Goldsmith Street and the High Street or at Bedford Circus. Occasionally, they would hire a hall for a rally; the authorities in Exeter made no attempt to stop Fascist activities.

Arrogance, provocation, aggression and intimidation were the hallmark of these Black-shirted hoodlums. They were opposed by a united front of communists, Socialists and Trade Unionists, whose cry was taken from the International Brigades in Spain, "They shall not pass". The resultant mayhem attracted those with no strong feelings, those passing by, and others who had come out to "see the fun". Running battles ensued and passions were inflamed; the insults of the fascists went beyond one's capacity for toleration.

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LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

If the William of Orange celebrations go ahead in 1988, the only tourists that will come to Exeter will be the Orangemen and the National Front. We shall take up the slogan "They shall not pass". We must keep faith with those socialists who suffered and died at the hands of fascists throughout Europe. If the cost is bloodied noses and cracked skulls, so be it. That would be a small price to pay for democratic freedoms.

Briefing

In the period before the General Election, Devon Labour Briefing is promoting two major tasks. The first is to campaign for the election of a Labour government, even though we question the capacity and willingness of a Kinnock government to address, even in non-socialist terms, the economic and political crisis of Britain. Yet, we can recognise that any outcome from the general election, other than a Labour victory, would further set back working class morale and socialism.

The second track of our strategy is to fight the collapse of socialist analysis and policy inside the Labour Party. This must take the form of forcing Labour to take seriously the demands of working people, the unemployed, women, ethnic minorities and people of different sexual orientation. Only through building a powerful, extra-parliamentary and integrated alliance of the oppressed can Labour hope to muster the strength to defeat the power of the ruling class and the capitalist state.

It is pointless for Kinnock to attempt to accommodate Labour to the bourgeois order, as British capital cannot and will not deliver even moderate Labour demands. The attacks by Kinnock on the socialist councils is weakening socialist morale and is expanding the room for dirt from the bourgeois press. The support Kinnock receives from the establishment for making these attacks is of no value for the labour movement.

Both the short and long term futures look bleak. Immediately, we might achieve, if we fight hard enough, an end to the damaging Kinnockite attacks on socialists in the Labour Party both nationally and in Exeter. Despite Labour's insipid and contradictory policies, we might even win a Kinnock majority government. If we achieve both those things, the prospect for socialist transformation in Britain, will move up the agenda of British politics.

'Loony Left'

In the aftermath of the defeat at Greenwich there has been a renewed offensive against the Labour left in general and the London left in particular. The essence of the argument is that 'loony left' policies put off older and more traditional voters and therefore lose elections. Of course, put that way it sounds a very persuasive position. If policies are 'loony' they will naturally fail. So it is worth looking at some of the positions taken by the Labour candidate.

Firstly she supported the PLO. Now the PLO is not a political party, indeed it contains a number of widely divergent organisations adopting different political and strategic orientations. It is more of a national assembly in exile. Therefore to support the PLO is not to support an individual, still less is it to commit oneself to particular tactics. It is mainly to support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

Secondly she supported Black Sections. While much abuse has been heaped upon this proposal, it is based upon a principle which is accepted almost everywhere else within our Party. Trades Unions, Socialist Societies, the Cooperative movement, women are all allowed to organise autonomously. Jewish people have their own sections in Poale Zion. No-one argues that any of these split the Party or constitute 'Apartheid'. We all recognise that different constituents of the movements face particular problems which they must organise around together. In fact their autonomous organisation strengthens involvement in the Party by increasing confidence and the ability to bring issues before the Party as a whole.

Thirdly she supported the rights of gay men and lesbian women. This attracted special mention from Neil Kinnock for whom positive policies lose pensioners votes. Yet, quite apart from the fact that such policies are Party policy, they are merely an expression of our opposition to oppression which must lie at the centre of any socialist strategy.

In fact all three areas that have been highlighted are concerned with the basic right of all people, whatever their nationality, race, or sexual orientation, to be choose their own destiny. There is a certain irony in the fact that the leadership letter was leaked just as Roy Hattersly's 'Choose Freedom' was being published. Freedom for who, Roy? Does it cease to apply if one happens to be of a different

country, a different colour or a different sexuality from your own?

What is tragic is that the policies that have been castigated are no more than an expression of widely held beliefs. Yet this is hidden in the way that they are belittled, distorted, misrepresented. Of course we expect these things from the gutter press but once our own Party joins the braying pack what chance do they have? If such positions were to be clearly and forcibly expressed they would command respect. Far from alienating 'traditional support' they represent the basic values of our movement.

Sadly our leadership has turned its back on presenting a socialist alternative. Every time anyone opposes the mentality of 8 years of Thatcherism, they disown it seeking to reassure the public that they share the narrow minded bigotry of the Tories. Kinnock would have outshone Thatcher in banning the Zircon film. He will also outdo her in attacking gays and lesbians. Quite apart from the fact that these things are a disgrace to the traditions of Labour, they are also an electoral liability. They only strengthen Thatcher's hand, support her ideology and her party.

Now, in the shadow of an election, the need for a clear socialist alternative is more important than ever before. There is still time to show that there is an alternative and that Labour can represent it. That there is a possibility a Labour vote will mean real change. It is in the belief that political success at every level depends upon the elaboration of this alternative that Briefing is organising a socialist policies conference. The conference will be held in London on the weekend of March 28th/29th. Don't miss it! It represents a unique chance to construct the basis of a better future under Labour.

Steve Reicher
Exeter CLP

Red Wedge

I got involved in the Red Wedge day by mentioning to a friend of mine that Billy Bragg was coming to Exeter. Well, she knew more about this than I did and persuaded me to go along to the committee meetings, so I looked at the whole event as an opportunity to learn something about politics starting with the Labour Party.

The meetings I attended gave me an insight into the planning and organisation that must be so tight that all possibilities are taken into account. How many things have to be considered? Security, finances, tickets, time factors, furniture, food, transport, toilets, access, insurance, the law, everything in fact. The hardest thing must be dealing with people, explaining what has to be done, compromising and then relying on them to keep their word, when they say that a certain thing is under control.

The day itself had its good and bad points. Several people found that the posters were not eye-catching enough and were not really clear so probably many people did not realise it was all happening. Also it was on a Monday, and, although this was obviously aimed at helping the unemployed to look at problems, I would imagine that many people who have always had work may be unaware of how other people manage without a job. Of course most of the emphasis was on unemployment, employment, work, jobs, etc, but there were a few community projects such as the video workshops and the Day space which provides funds for people to set up profit making schemes. Maybe more emphasis should be placed on the creative aspect by helping people to use their time constructively, instead of sitting at home feeling depressed, frustrated, bitter about having no money and no job.

I arrived at St. George's Hall at about 11am with my son Tom who is under 2yrs and is not eligible for the creche facilities so I could not really do as much to help out as I would have wanted. The last minute arrangements did not seem as hectic as I had expected, but many of the stall holders failed to turn up so there was plenty of free space and several empty tables.

Many different organisations were represented; Youth CND, the Women's Centre, Anti-Apartheid, the Young Socialists, video workshops, Plymouth Claimants Union, Day Space, the Silent Night strikers. There were also a wide variety of activities to get involved in such as work shops, discussion groups, theatre groups, music games. There were petitions to sign and people thrusting leaflets at you from every direction.

Tom and I watched an alternative pantomime of Cinderella, which was really amusing and clever with singing and dancing and a grand finale brought to us by an all star cast of four (Two Left Feet?) It was a pity that there was only one member of the audience under 18, but a few appeared before the end of the show.

What I was most looking forward to was the question and answer session with a panel that included Billy Bragg, local politicians, etc, but it was held in

such a small room that, by the time I found out where it was, I could not hear or see anything as I was stuck right at the back.

The concert was a good one with Real by Reel in the opening spot, followed by Attacco Decente; they were a unique sounding band featuring the flamenco guitar and sulciiers, well appreciated by the audience. I expect we will be hearing more from them in 1987.

Billy Bragg was good as usual singing songs old and new with feeling. He also gave the opportunity to two drunk anarchists to state their case, but this became a collection of abusive words and straight after that they went home and everyone else stayed for the rest of the concert. I expect a few people went home with a great deal to think about.

It was a successful day. I heard on the radio yesterday something about Neil Kinnock wishing to disassociate himself from minority groups and extremists. It would be disappointing to quite a few people if this was true.

Hopefully, something positive will come out of the day's activities and we will be able to achieve a foundation for young people to use and direct their energy and talents and for them to become more involved in political issues both nationally and locally.

Veronica Matthews
Red Wedge

AUT Sell Out

Every sector of education is under attack from the Tories. Schools, colleges, polytechnics, universities, community education schemes, continuing and adult education; all are desperately underfunded. Those who work in education are for the most part underpaid and overworked, and many are now demoralised both by the deterioration in their own living standards and by the attacks on the fabric of the institutions in which they work.

There is too a growing awareness that if it is to survive in anything like its present form in Thatcher's Britain today, education must offer a united front to those who seek to dismantle even the minimal gains in terms of democracy, participation and access won over the last few years.

Against this background, it therefore comes as something of a surprise to see one educational union, the Association of University Teachers, which represents the majority of university lecturers as well as a substantial proportion of administrative, library and computer

staff in universities, advising its members to accept a pay deal which, while offering reasonable financial benefits in the short term, does nothing to secure the long term future of either universities or those who work in them. A new salary structure and changes in conditions of service have had to be accepted which adversely affect in particular those at the beginning of their working life and those who will join the profession in future. Even more disturbingly, AUT members have voted to accept a pay deal which gives the administrative, library and computer staff, very much the junior partners in the union, a considerably worse deal than their purely academic colleagues. And this despite a unanimous vote at both local and national level only last year that we would never accept a deal which effectively sold out on the academic-related staff in universities.

The about turn has been quite sudden. Only a month ago we were talking about a serious programme of disruption of the life of universities (within the limits of our strictly limited industrial muscle!). This included non-marking of examinations, the refusal to write academic references for students, withdrawal of support from all types of voluntary activities in the universities, and, to a lesser extent in the community. Yet as soon as we were offered a deal which seemed to offer sufficient reward to make all the hassle of organising to take industrial action seem rather unpalatable, we had AUT officials and the AUT membership falling over each other in an unseemly rush to do U-turns. We were told by the Executive that although the deal we were offered had many drawbacks that we had to accept it, because neither the Executive nor the membership would be willing to launch a major campaign for anything better. Worse still, failure to accept could have led the Government to impose the settlement, with the risk of losing our collective bargaining rights. And so we have capitulated.

This makes quite a contrast with the other teaching unions. Despite the way that they have been treated by the Tories, and despite the media campaign to misrepresent their demands, the NUT and NAS/UWT are fighting against the imposition of their salary settlement and are to continue their industrial action. Like school teachers, college lecturers are experiencing a considerable worsening of their conditions of service. NATFHE are fighting on. Extra-curricula activities that all teachers used to do out of a sense of goodwill are now being turned into contractual obligations with little or no extra remuneration.

Increasingly the power of central government is used, as it was in the miner's strike, to destroy the power of collective labour. (So much for rolling back the frontiers of the state.) In the

case of the teachers, to deprive them of their collective bargaining rights. Now no strike deals will have to be concluded before they can be restored. It's a bit like being treated like a naughty child at school!

Which all makes it so distressing and disappointing that the AUT and the university lecturers should decide not to join the fight. Some of us would have been only too willing to lend a hand in defending education. But Kenneth Baker had done his calculations well. He offered just enough to ensure that those higher up the scales (the majority of university lecturers in an ageing profession) to tempt those with vested interests in short term gains to take the money and run.

Jo Shaw
Exeter CLP

Tactical Voting

In recent weeks there has been much publicity supporting the idea that an Alliance vote at the next election is the only way of defeating the Tories in Exeter. Much of the impetus has come from a supposedly independent organisation called 'Tactical Vote 87' (TV87). The aim of TV87 is to identify 100 constituencies in which tactical voting would ensure the defeat of a sitting Conservative MP. In half the places victory would go to Labour, in the other half victory would go to the Alliance. TV87 has identified Exeter as one of the places in which the Alliance would benefit.

On the surface the idea has some appeal. We all want to see the end of Thatcher. The proposal has even gained credibility from some prominent left-wingers, such as Eric Hobsbawm, who have called for an 'Anti-Thatcher Alliance'. Yet the attraction of tactical voting is an illusion. There are three basic reasons why it is a bad idea.

In the first place the fairness of TV87's proposals must be questioned. 50 for us and 50 for you might look fair on the surface, but the Alliance has considerably less support than Labour. So to give it half the seats is to prioritise them in many places where we have a much better chance of winning. Exeter is a case in point. By every projection of current voting figures Labour leads the Alliance locally. Labour is quite clearly in second place so by what logic can one argue that Labour supporters should go over to the Alliance in order to get John Hanham out? If TV87 was really independent, and the Alliance were honest about their support for tactical voting, they would be putting over the message: if you want the Tories out in Exeter vote for John Vincent, the Labour candidate.

The second point is that tactical voting is presented as a short-term measure, but has long term effects. If people desert Labour in order to cast a tactical vote against the Tories, and their vote falls steeply, then next time round people will begin to see a Labour vote as a wasted vote. It will be argued that since Labour did so badly last time, one might as well continue to vote Alliance. Thus tactical voting leads to a long term decline of our Party and destroys any future chance of a Labour majority to reverse the country's decline. We should be arguing that, wherever one is, we must build the Labour Party and provide a base from which future victories are possible.

But there is a third, and more fundamental objection to tactical voting. It is based on the fallacy that removing Thatcher will end our woes. The implication is that Tory policies are to do with the malevolence of individual politicians. Yet that is clearly absurd. Thatcher is not doing things out of personal prejudice. Her policies represent the attempts of capitalism to restructure; to increase profits by attacking jobs and by attacking the conditions of those left at work. One will not change things by putting different politicians at the helm, but only by breaking with the politics of the employers.

It is patently obvious that Alliance politicians will not do this. If anything Owen and his cronies are more anti-Labour Movement than the Tories. After all they left the Labour Party when they felt that Trades Unions were being given too much say in decision making. Whatever they say now, Alliance politicians in power would be forced to carry out the capitalist offensive. The window dressing may differ, the substance would not.

It is only a confident and strong Labour Party that could offer an alternative to Thatcherite policies, rather than just replacing Thatcher herself. Of course, for that to be true Labour would have to commit itself to real socialist policies rather than, as at present, denouncing all those who put them forward. It is plain illogical to suggest that moderating our image will head off defections to the Alliance. Once one fails to show that Labour alone can produce the anti-capitalist policies to reverse the decline, one is wide open to the argument that Thatcher is so bad that even the Alliance is preferable.

With a Labour Party clear in a commitment to socialism we could argue with confidence that, wherever you are, from Bexley Heath to the Isle of Wight, any vote but a Labour vote is a wasted vote. A radical Labour Party would be the best possible answer to the false promise of TV87.

Steve Reicher Exeter CLP

WOMEN AND MALE VIOLENCE

Attitudes towards women's experiences of male violence, even those of the left, are still incredibly ill-informed and often downright ignorant. Rape, sexual assault and harassment, incest and wife battering are still treated as relatively infrequent events, middle class feminist issues blown out of proportion by "alarmist" and, what is worse,

"deserved" by their victims. Crime statistics based on police reports are known to show only a minute fraction of the real total. Yet, with few other sources of information, they are taken at face value by almost everyone. To do this is to ignore the everyday terrifying and humiliating experiences of ordinary women.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Take, for example, domestic violence (wife-battering), which is considered by researchers to be one of the least reported crimes. An estimated 70,000 cases go unreported each year in London alone. American research (Suzanne Steinmetz, in "The Cycle of Violence: Assertive, Aggressive and Abusive Family Interaction") suggests the figure is much higher, with only 1 in 270 incidents of abuse ever being reported to the authorities.

Even if reports are made, society, blinded by patriarchal notions about the privacy of family matters (reinforced by the capitalist nuclear family which is seen as secondary in importance to the public domain), focuses the blame on individual women "nagging" their husbands to the point where they are given the final, fatal bearing, or "choosing" violent relationships out of some sense of masochistic weakness.

Moreover, domestic violence, as a form of social control by men over women is reflected in misogynist practices by the police and courts. In both Britain and the U.S. all research clearly shows that police characterise wife battering as a non-criminal matter. Even the term "domestic" violence is used as a means of marginalising and trivialising the issues concerned. Police see their role as "respecting" family privacy, as mediators to defuse conflict, not as people empowered to protect the victim. Decisions to arrest a suspect for a crime, or not, to refer incidents of male violence to the social services rather than the courts, to charge the suspect with "disorderly conduct" rather than assault, all affect how men's violence becomes defined as "criminal" or "non-criminal". England's "Women's Aid" found in a study in 1981 that of women interviewed who had suffered severe, life threatening assaults, only 1 in 5 men had been arrested and charged.

Above all, capitalism has proved that the sanctity of marriage is rated more highly than women's physical safety. A woman is encouraged to feel her assailant's behaviour is her problem, and even if she does not, the chances of significant intervention are slight, the chances of cases being processed further virtually nil and sentences are lenient

even in the event of repeated violence. As a result, few women bother informing anyone about their experience, especially if they fear their husbands will "get back" at them by violence, or by emotional or financial duress.

RAPE

Rape figures are equally underestimated in police and crime surveys. Of women interviewed by the Women's Safety Survey (the first of its kind) in London in 1982, 2 in every 5 had experienced rape, attempted rape and sexual assault at least once in their lifetime. Yet rape crisis programmes in the U.S. and Britain indicate that as many as 75% of these never come to the attention of the police. And police and the law still regard rape as a narrowly defined experience. In the U.K. it is defined solely as a crime in which a man, through the threat or use of force commits penetration of women's vagina with his penis. Meanwhile, oral and anal penetration, or penetration of a woman's vagina with bottles and objects (often a more humiliating and physically damaging assault) is described by the law as "indecent assault" and has a maximum penalty of 2 years or 5 for a girl under 13 (?!). The maximum for indecent assault on a male, however, is 10 years.

The prevalent myth of the "tall dark stranger" (a racist view, which, as Willmette Brown states, is used by "white men persecuting black men under the pretext of protecting white women from rape, and is a long tradition of Establishment racism") is also disproved in the Women's Safety Survey. It shows that 64% of women who had been raped or sexually assaulted had been attacked by men known to them (particularly husbands). Yet rape in marriage is still legal. The Criminal Law Revision Committee, a panel of 15 men and 2 women (!) stated that rape inside marriage was less painful than the "uniquely grave" crime of other rape. Its 15th report on sexual offences in 1984 concerning the legality of rape in marriage says "an extension of the offence to all marriages ... might be detrimental to marriage as an institution". Considering the extent of such offences, and the other forms of oppression women face in marriage, it would not be such a bad thing!

IMAGES

Images of women in the media serve to trivialise and perpetuate rape. Pornography may not be causally linked to rape, yet both are manifestations of the same attitude towards women and sex - of a desire to avoid interaction with a woman as a human being. Pornographic images serve to portray women as willing victims, objects to be used, and as disembodied vaginas for the sole purpose of pleasing men. Indeed, in one American survey, 21% of women raped by their husbands said they were subjected to sexual experimentation prompted by pornography.

Regarding the Yorkshire Ripper killings in the media we saw such headlines as "Even Prostitutes don't deserve to die like this", and "good-time girls offering sex for sale", and "an innocent 16 year old." The press, as routinely happens in rape cases, focussed its attention on the "virtue" of the victims. (The same is true in the recent vicarage rape case). It adopted the initial approach that the Ripper only wanted to kill prostitutes, and, implying the "understandable" nature of this hatred tried to turn Sutcliffe into a modern day Jack the Ripper. It was only when other more impeccably connected women were attacked that they started to take the issue seriously. Meanwhile, more women have died.

In the end, these are all attempts to focus on women's "provocative" behaviour and away from men's violence. Judges discuss women's "overtly revealing" clothing in rape trials, women's sexual history may be used in court, although men's may not. Questioning women's behaviour is standard procedure. For example, in 1983, a Wisconsin judge sentenced a man to 90 days in prison for raping a 5 year old girl because she was a "particularly sexually promiscuous young lady"! At five?!

Rape is put down as "rough sex" and wife battering as "a family quarrel". If a woman acts to minimise her injury or prolong her life by not struggling she is accused of "co-operating" and "consenting". If a woman kills a man who has been beating or raping her she is convicted of murder. If a man kills his wife for "nagging" him, he is convicted of manslaughter (sic).

CLASS ISSUE

To achieve the conviction of a man in court a woman must be "convincing" (i.e. educated) and have led a saintly life. Black, working class, lesbian women, those on the pill or known to the police, those who dress "wrong", those who were on drugs or drinks at the time of the assault are unlikely to report the assault in the first place, let alone to get a conviction. Of course, if you are assaulted by a Black man you are more likely to get a conviction.

Racist sexual assault and abuse is commonplace. So, too, are homophobic assaults on lesbians. Working class women's resources for avoiding violence - owning a car, living in a "nice" neighbourhood, having a job etc. - are much more limited. The Women's Safety Survey also found that half the women raped in marriage were afraid that money would be withheld from them or their children. Unwanted sex was the price of the husband's support for the family. Women formerly living in council flats are not rehoused unless they pay back the rent and rates accumulated in their absence. Black and working class women receive atrocious treatment at the hands of the police if they ring up for help. Violent and coercive police treatment is a common occurrence for many women.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

That an act of rape is different from an act of sexual harassment is indisputable. Even so, each act is a physical and sexual intrusion and only the form and intensity differ. Over 80% of women receive unwelcome remarks or "touching up". In Britain, the fight against sexual harassment in the workplace has We still have a situation, however, where in any discussion about sexual harassment, three main assertions about male-female sexualised interaction occur. Sexual advances are either a sexual (but unthreatening) game, a "romantic" interaction, or a conscious manipulation on the part of the woman to gain benefits. These assumptions in no way recognise the issue of men's power over women and women's sexuality, the unequal power between employer and employee, and the fact that sexual harassment is used to undermine women's credibility in the workplace - to objectify her as a sexual being - in order to maintain that power.

They fail to acknowledge what this harassment means to women's lives. Many women have to leave their job (with no dole for six weeks) or are fired if they refuse to co-operate. The stress from it goes far beyond it being a mere sexual "game".

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Although these endless facts and figures are distressing, and inclined to cause cynicism amongst feminists, there is a significant amount which can be done to change the situation. The new Ministry for Women which would be set up under a Labour Government could be vital in getting some of the following recommendations implemented. Yet, realistically, only the victory of a socialist Labour Party and the overthrow of capitalism will truly challenge male power. Then and only then will women be in a financial, social and cultural position to escape and reject male violence.

LPYS REPORT SUPRESSED

Neil Todd.
Exeter CLP.

Against an atmosphere of 'pre-AGM hysteria' - whipped up by the sending of an unauthorised letter from the officers of the party to all members urging them to vote against the 'threat from the Left' - the YS began the year confronted with a witch-hunt against its chair, secretary and EC delegate. Instead of getting on with our job of recruiting young people into the party we were forced to fight for continuing membership of our most active members. The most disturbing aspect of the witch-hunt was the fact that officers of the party withheld and distorted information to the GMC. Who were the party's solicitors? Who was paying? Why was the spurious use of sub judice, applicable only to criminal proceedings, introduced in this civil dispute? The fact that the expulsion recommendation was withdrawn due to pressure from the national party vindicated our stand.

Despite the expulsion attempt the YS had a very active year. We fought a successful campaign against the infamous Clause 33 of the Exeter City Council Bill which would have made squatting a criminal offence. Although, it was disgraceful that despite the fact that the YS put two resolutions on housing and homelessness the GMC was prevented from debating this important issue

And, of course there was Red Wedge. (Is there life after?) The YS played a very prominent role in the planning, organising and running of the day event on Feb. 2nd. We worked closely with the many groups and individuals involved to ensure that the event was a success not only for the YS but for Exeter CLP and the many organisations taking part. The evening event goes without saying with over 700 people attending we not only covered costs but made a profit which the organisers of Feb. 2nd now intend to use for future campaigns and activities. It has financed a YS video of Feb. 2nd which has already proved popular. Thanks to Exeter CLP for underwriting the event and anyone else who helped to make it a success, particularly Fran Jenkin.

Finally, but certainly not least, the YS has been instrumental in the campaign against the Orange celebrations. Following the publication of the Promotions and Development sub-committee report of Sept. '86 in which the council planned to spend 60,000 pounds on the tercentenary of William of Orange there has been growing concern locally, nationally and internationally - a) because William of Orange is a symbol of protestant bigotry in Northern Ireland, b) because of the close links between the Orange Order the National Front and other Nazi groups, c) because of the stated intention of the National Front to come to Devon and the request by the Orange

Order to hold a service in Exeter Cathedral, d) because of recent events in Bridgewater where the Orange Order and their friends in the NF inflicted violence and racist propaganda on the local people.

Following a picket of the City Council outside the Guildhall and public meeting at Barts on Feb. 3rd at which there were speakers from Searchlight, Anti-Fascist Action and Bridgewater CLP an Exeter AFA was set up with the support of the YS. Its aims are to campaign against the Orange celebrations and to monitor and counter any racist or fascist activities in Exeter.

The rolecall of groups and individuals registering their opposition to the celebrations grows daily and includes: Searchlight, Anti-Apartheid, Anti-Fascist Action, Labour Committee on Ireland, Honiton CLP, Tiverton CLP, the Irish Post, the Campaign Group of Labour MPs, Tony Benn, Peter Archer, the Alliance and Tory Parties locally, the Trades Council, Devon and Somerset Students Association, the NUS who have adopted a policy of no rooms available at the University for the celebrations, the South-West Regional Youth Committee, London Labour Party, the South West Regional Executive Committee AS WELL AS EXETER CLP. Despite the

contempt for democracy the officers of the party and the Labour Group have shown in deeming not to be policy the resolution opposing the celebrations - PASSED OVERWHELMINGLY at the November GMC after a LONG AND FULL DEBATE, read out TWICE by the chair and explained LINE BY LINE the mover of the resolution - it IS policy and will remain so until such time as it is rescinded, which under standing order 7, cannot take place for 6 months.

The argument that the resolution is not policy because it was intended for conference (try find that in the constitution) is clearly absurd. The argument put by the Labour Group that it is not policy because THEY did not have sufficient notice is simply crass hypocrisy. These celebrations have been on the cards for nearly 2 years. When did they inform us? So much for accountability.

The laager mentality of the Labour Group is doing nothing but damage to our party and its electoral chances bringing us into disrepute and attracting ridicule from the rest of the Labour Movement. The mover of the resolution Jim McCambridge has already resigned from the party as well as other active members. The YS will continue to campaign against the celebrations and give its full support to Exeter Anti-Fascist Action.