

# DEVON LABOUR BRIEFING

No. 31

JULY 1988

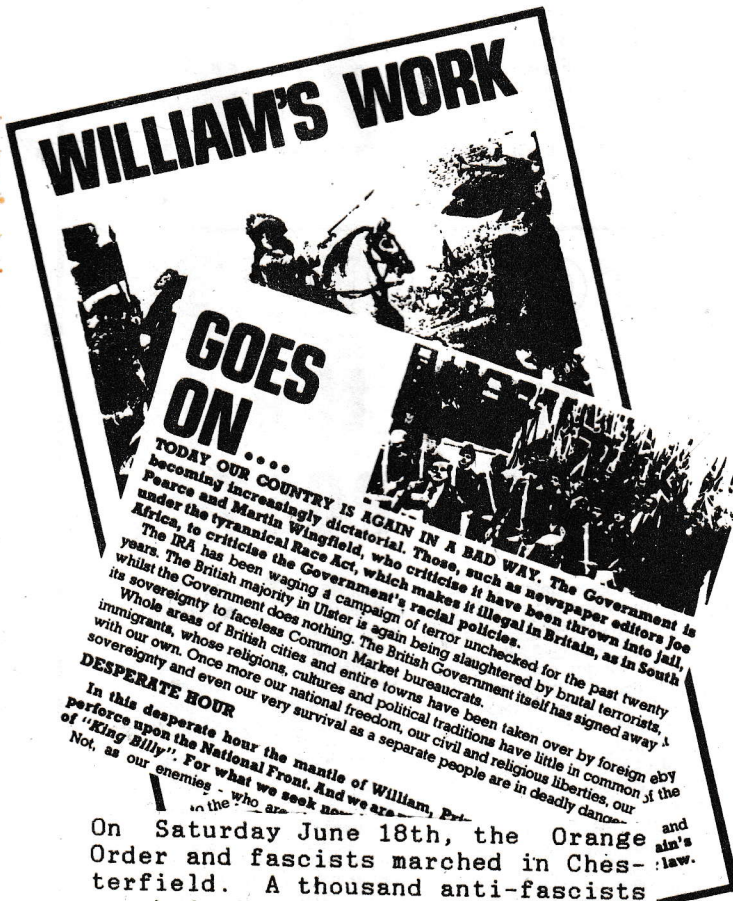
10p

## KICK THE FASCISTS OUT!

Many people in Exeter have received leaflets delivered house to house by the National Front, explicitly using the Orange connection (below).

The following individuals and organisations are just some of those who have expressed their opposition to the 1988 Orange Celebrations in Exeter and elsewhere.

Alf Dubbs MP,  
Tony Benn MP,  
Ken Livingstone MP,  
Jeremy Corbyn MP,  
Bernie Grant MP,  
Harry Cohen MP,  
John Hughes MP,  
Bob Clay MP,  
Pat Wall MP,  
Labour Party South West Regional Committee,  
British Labour Group on the European Parliament,  
Bristol Labour Party,  
Ayr College Labour Club,  
Wimbledon Labour Party,  
Harrow West CLP,  
Kingston CLP,  
Tiverton CLP,  
Honiton CLP,  
Islington Trades Council,  
Liverpool Trades Council,  
Aberdeen Trades Council,  
Leeds Trades Council,  
Ealing Borough Trades Council,  
Labour Committee on Ireland,  
Doncaster and District Labour Committee on Ireland,  
Chesterfield Labour Committee on Ireland,  
Devon and Somerset Students Association,  
Exeter University Guild of Students,  
Trade Unions for an Independent and United Ireland,  
South Devon Anti-Apartheid Group,  
Lord Tony Gifford QC,  
Earl of Perth,  
Professor Christopher Hill,  
Anne Frank Foundation (Neth),  
Frysk Anti-Fascist Committee (Neth),  
Young Socialists (Neth),  
Communist Party (Neth),  
Radical Party (PPR) (Neth).



On Saturday June 18th, the Orange Order and fascists marched in Chesterfield. A thousand anti-fascists marched in protest. Tony Benn, Chesterfield's Labour MP, opposed the commemorating of William of Orange, the cause of the Orange and fascist march.

How long will this go on? Do we have to wait for violence and bigotry to erupt on the streets of Exeter?

LABOUR - TAKE THE POWER!



**THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, WILLIAM OF ORANGE, AT THE INVITATION OF A MAJORITY OF THE ENGLISH RULING CLASS, LANDED IN DEVON WITH HIS ARMIES TO TAKE THE CROWN FROM THE CATHOLIC JAMES II**

The Labour-led Exeter City Council has ignored the year long protest by Anti-fascists and other progressive groups and is unleashing "Exeter's William of Orange Celebrations" on us. £60,000 of rate payers' money has also been squandered on this piece of municipal nonsense.

The argument against the celebrations can be put ever so simply: William of Orange is the historic symbol of British occupation and Loyalist fascism in Ireland. His conquest of the Catholic Irish at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 is still celebrated. He is the mentor of the anti-Catholic Orange Order which functions to oppress Catholics in Ireland and elsewhere. Loyalist fascism is backed to the hilt by the National Front.

\* September 17th will see the Orange Order, supported by the National Front, marching through Exeter. The National Front has said it will "bring its supporters from all over the country" to participate in the celebrations.

\* Thanks to these celebrations, the Orange Order are holding conferences at Exeter University and in Brixham.

\* The National Front are leafletting Exeter in support of the celebrations. They have congratulated the Labour Council and hope to build a branch here.

\* More than one thousand Exeter people signed a petition calling on the Council to abandon the celebrations. The Labour Council leader has called those locally opposing the celebrations "five stupid bastards" and national AFA "the National Association of Headbangers".

Exeter Labour Party stands almost alone in backing these celebrations - the Honiton and Tiverton CLPs and the Regional Labour Party have condemned them. Even the Labour Group in the European Parliament has condemned the celebrations.

To justify the celebrations, the right wing City Council Labour Group pump out three lies:

\* "William of Orange brought about democracy in England". True, the power of Parliament - at that time "elected" by landowners - was enhanced, but working people had nothing to do with it. This was a coup within the ruling class.

\* "The people of Exeter cheered William in 1688." For what it matters, this is untrue. William was kept waiting

outside the City for three days because Exeter was uncertain about the status of this foreign army, including slaves and mercenaries.

\* "The celebrations will bring tourists to Exeter." It is now quite clear that most of these "tourists" will be Orangemen and the National Front. Already, the police are combing the city for supposed IRA cells. All of this will hardly draw tourists.

Socialists, progressive groups and anti-fascists have one message: "CANCEL THE CELEBRATIONS". But Chester Long's ruling Labour group ploughs on. It's not enough for them to say that they don't want the Orangemen and the fascists here - they must abandon the celebrations.

More from the man who dubbed those opposing the Orange celebrations as "stupid bastards." Thanks are due to him for "not allowing our (City Council) property to be used by an outside organisation (The Orange Order) that wishes to assemble to march". So far, so good, but the reason given is that "its already been indicated by extremists (Anti-Fascist Action) that they will come and disrupt it."

So Anti-Fascist Action are effective "stupid bastards". Thought that one out Chester?

(Quotes from Express and Echo, p12, 22.6.88)

# STOP PRESS

## from the IRISH POST

The Labour-controlled council in Oxford has banned a William of Orange tercentenary celebration in a local park following protests from local socialists, including the Labour Committee on Ireland and the Trades Council, writes TONY BIRTILL.

Oxford is twinned with the town of Leiden in Holland and the twin towns committee, known as the Oxford-Leiden Link, had planned to stage a gala at Cutteslowe Park in the city on August 20 in memory of the tercentenary of the landing in England of William III of Orange to assume the throne of England in place of the Catholic James II. The council had originally backed the idea but changed its mind when the political implications of the event were pointed out. Council leader Barbara Gate said: "We were

politically naive in this matter, but the event has now been scrubbed".

The Labour Party in the Oxford ward of St. Clements had argued that similar celebrations in the Labour-controlled towns of Exeter and Chesterfield had become the focus for demonstrations by the Orange Order and the National Front. A similar argument was put forward by the Trades Council and Basil Hinton, who is the national vice-chairperson of the Labour Committee on Ireland as well as being a member of the Oxford Labour Party, wrote to the Labour Group on the council, pointing out the dangers of the event. The city's Labour Party and the council accepted the arguments.

### 'INSULTING'

"The council's decision is a victory for common sense", Basil Hinton told The Irish Post. "This celebration would have been insulting to the city's large Irish community, insulting to local Catholics and would have encouraged fascists and Orange-



# DUTCH COURAGE

At the end of May, two AFA members went to Holland on a fact finding "holiday" to make contact with anti-fascist groups there.

"It's all over now isn't it?  
No, it isn't.

It is tragic and discomfoting but: fascism is alive today. New fascist groups are at work all over the world. In Britain for example there is a truly neo-nazi organisation, the National Front (N.F.)."

So opens an article in The Anne Frank Journal published by the Anne Frank Centre, Amsterdam, whose exhibition is visited by half a million people from all over the world each year and whose reputation is higher even than that of Amnesty International in Holland. The Centre works full-time and single-mindedly against fascism throughout the world and it was therefore not surprising to find an article from "The Guardian", on the rise of fascism in Britain and the N.F.'s intentions for Devon around the William of Orange Celebrations this year on their exhibition stands. Consequently, both the Director, Vera Ebels, and the Information officer, Cas van der Sande, were delighted to welcome us, to hear more details which they can publicise and to give us support.

The Anne Frank Centre epitomises the response in Holland to fascism for, having been occupied during the Second World War, the Dutch know how easily the seeds of fascism can be sown and how readily it can grow through the kind of ignorance, lack of vigilance and failure to challenge it which we witness in England today. Contrary to our experience with our own Council, our analysis did not have to be explained; rather they elaborated it for us! Being rigorous in their research, using only hard primary sources, the staff of the Anne Frank Centre were able to give us more details about international links between paramilitary and fascist groups throughout Europe. Given their knowledge and understanding, the Centre asked to be invited to England this year to research and monitor the N.F.'s "opportunity of a lifetime" (from the "The Flag") for mobilisation around the Orange celebrations.

Likewise, the Irish Information Centre did not need to be told the story of the N.F. and the Orange Order and their relationship to the Tercentenary Celebrations, but was eager to use our visit as an opportunity to publicise further the implications. So, through the Irish Information Centre we were able to have meetings with Emmy Van Hoord of the Foreign Section of the P.P.R. (Political Party Radical), the Young Socialists and the Dutch Labour Party (P.v.d.A.), the

strongest opposition party, just two seats short of power. All three undertook to pursue the issue with their comrades, being particularly concerned that the Dutch Royal Family publicly disassociate its House of Orange from the Orange Order. They also all intend to highlight, in the Dutch Parliament and the European Parliament, the dangers of encouraging fascism through this year's events.

All political parties we met were anxious to take action, being aware of Ulster Unionist John Taylor's alliance with the European Parliament's fascist grouping, and of the UDA/UDF (paramilitary wings of the Orange Order) links with Flemish militant fascist groups. They also told us of their concern about the UDA/UDF buying guns from Antwerp. They do not underestimate the extent and power of fascism.

It was for the same reasons that the Dutch press was responsive and will cover the political ramifications both now and throughout the year. We have already had two 'phone interviews since our return and contacts have been established for Dutch reporters, including the World Service, to take part in our press conferences in July and September. The Press and the political parties were conscious, in a way which we had not been, that the events of this year are open for the Orange Order and the N.F. to damage the Dutch Royal Family and Anglo-Dutch relations. Claiming that this is an innocent year of flower shows and silver exhibitions is belied by the serious international consequences to which some of our comrades still wish to remain blind.

The fact that the bookshops in Amsterdam were eager to stock and sell our pamphlet "Exeter's William of Orange Celebrations 1988: The Socialist Case" demonstrates further the Dutch political awareness of the ever-present dangers of fascism and proves, with the response of everyone we met, that it is not we who are the "headbangers" or "stupid bastards", but those in England who still refuse to understand history and its lessons.

As the Anne Frank Journal says, the "N.F. does not only use words to enforce their ideas .... They invite more attacks and more violence and publish names, addresses and 'phone numbers of their victims. People are beaten up the promulgation of fascist views or actions and we will seek ways to challenge it even though personally threatened. However, we refuse to take any responsibility for what happens this year as a result of the Tercentenary Celebrations: that responsibility lies firmly with our so-called representatives on Exeter City Council, and the Labour Party leadership both locally and nationally.

Exeter Anti-Fascist Action.



# REFORM OR REVOLUTION?

A dialogue between a briefed labourer (BL) and a member of the Campaign for Real Trotskyism (Ms Winnie Rhoda Par, known by her initials as WRP). The discussion took place in June 1988.

BL: I'm working hard to see Benn and Heffer elected to the leading posts in the Labour Party. Their campaign is vital as *they represent class politics within the Labour Party.*

WRP: I can't agree to that. They know nothing about class politics. They seem to think that class politics is just about militancy and support for workers struggles.

BL: Well that is what class politics are about isn't it?

WRP: No, class politics are based on examining all the class relationships in society. I agree with Karl Marx, he argued that the point of class struggle is that it leads on to the dictatorship of the proletariat and then on to the abolition of all classes in a communist society. I don't recall Tony Benn saying that. So we real Trots base our class strategy on the whole of class relations. Support for the oppressed is the start not the finish of wisdom.

BL: You are a bit extreme, I think that the leadership election is about whether we are a *party of class politics or class collaboration.*

WRP: The way to end class collaboration is to fight for your party members to see that capitalism is destroyed. The only people in the labour movement who can ensure that class collaboration is defeated are those who will go all the way and fight to destroy class society. The rest all tend to compromise in the end.

BL: Aren't you a bit hard on Tony and Eric? As I see it *just as the leadership have consistently abandoned struggle so they have constantly championed it. Whether it be their positions on the miners, on Liverpool or on Ireland, they have refused to be cowed by press hysteria and personal attacks.*

WRP: How odd. I thought Tony Benn spent years in Labour governments. They were governments which kept hold of Britain's bit of Ireland and even sent in extra troops to make sure it was safe. I didn't notice any fuss from Tony Benn at the time, did you? I still don't think he is behind a policy of a revolutionary struggle to free Ireland from the British.

Defending the Liverpool councillors and the miners was certainly better than the Kinnock policy of attacking them. However, without a massive assault on the "leaders" of the TUC and the Labour Party there never was any hope of getting the miners the backing they needed. The weakness of the left was a tendency to not make the demands needed. At several points in the miners strike a general strike was possible. Weakness at those points lost the initiative and allowed Thatcher to get off the hook.

BL: *Really you know the contest is not about personal rivalry, but about how the Labour Party orientates to the social forces that surround it.*

WRP: I think that you mean that because the Labour Party is in the pocket of the capitalist class it is losing all its working class support. You hope that Benn and Heffer can get some of that support back. Your premise seems to be that support for the Labour Party is a measure of workers' backing for socialism. I feel that many people who are fighting the Tories actually despair of your Labour Party and its left and right faces.

BL: Without the Benn/Heffer challenge *we would be faced with an American style Democratic Party that had lost any pretensions to a socialist future.*

WRP: The American Democratic Party was never a working persons' party in any sense. It was and is a capitalist party. It has won the union leaders into a totally unprincipled web of alliances. The Labour Party has its origins in an alliance of unions and socialists formed to defend the working class in the early years of this century. Labour's



merit is not its "pretensions" to socialism but its roots in working class struggle. Socialists inside the Labour Party have the duty to win their comrades to revolutionary socialism. It is not their job to just follow Tony Benn like a poodle on a lead. The worst of it is that your defence of Tony Benn makes him seem more left wing than he really is.

BL: You know we say that *Tony Benn seriously underestimates the resistance that would be generated by his radical projects.*

WRP: Yes that's a bit like saying that a 2CV is a little slower than a Jag. Tony Benn starts from the premise that the British state can be reformed into a machine to service socialism. We real Trots take the view that the state machine has to be destroyed. Tory judges (unelected) have stolen the funds of the NUS; Tory spies forced Harold Wilson out of office; Tory civil servants kept nuclear accidents secret from Tony Benn himself while he was Secretary of State for Energy. Chief Constables have had their forces lay into miners, black youth, printers and the rest. These Chief Constables are entirely unaccountable, except to god. Benn holds to the eccentric belief that a majority in Parliament, with a bit of backing, will overcome this lot.

We real Trots think it will need a revolution.

BL: So you wouldn't support Benn and Heffer then?

WRP: Oh yes I would. A Benn/Heffer victory would help in the fight against the current right-wing leaders, but we can't kid everyone that socialism will arrive with the victory of a left wing Privy Councillor against a right wing one. We support every struggle against the right but we don't pretend they are more than they really are.

BL: What do you think we need then?

WRP: A campaign for real Trotskyism which will work for revolutionary principles everywhere and will not pretend that reformism can answer any problems.

I think that "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions."

Notes:

1. The parts in italics come from DLB June 1988.
2. Labour Party members able to locate and finish the quotation at the end should review their party membership with the help of the Exeter Labour Party and its Executive and General Committees.

## TORY HOUSING LAW

Dave Parks,  
Exeter CLP.

The new Tory Housing Bill is due to go before Parliament during this session and will come into effect either late this year or early next year. It will have a devastating effect on the rented housing sector. Rents will shoot upwards and housing benefit payments downwards. There will be a massive wave of evictions, homelessness will increase and local authorities will be left with next to no housing stock with which to deal with the situation.

The aims of the Bill are outlined in the White Paper "Housing: The Government's Proposals" - these are a spreading of home ownership, an extension of the independent rented sector (private sector landlords and housing associations), a reduced role of local authorities and the break up of the larger concentrations of "run-down" council housing in the inner cities to the private sector. The Government sees the housing shortage

as being due to lack of competition in the rented sector and to rents being too low to encourage private landlords to put their properties on the market. It therefore intends to remove rent controls and move towards the privatisation of council estates.

### The private rented sector

At present, about 8% of the housing stock is owned by private landlords. Almost one in five of these units are officially unfit for habitation and about one in seven are lacking basic amenities. In Exeter there are over 17,000 people living in about 2,000 houses in multiple occupation, many of which are sub-standard. Most private tenants are regulated tenants under the Rent Act 1977; they have the right to ask the rent officer to register a fair rent, usually well below a market rent and they have substantial security of tenure.



However, all new tenancies granted after the Housing Bill will be of a new kind with fewer rights for tenants. These new tenancies will be so-called 'assured tenancies' or 'assured shorthold tenancies'.

Under these new tenancies there will be no right to a fair rent with rents being set purely by the market. With the severe shortage of rented housing, this will undoubtedly lead to rent increases since although many landlords charge high rents at present they probably resist the temptation to put them too high for fear that their tenants might demand a fair rent. Landlords will have new powers to evict with assured tenancies. Mandatory grounds for a court to grant possession to a landlord will include: suitable alternative accommodation being available; serious rent arrears and persistent delay in paying rent.

With assured tenancies, the landlord has a right to agree a new rent with the tenant at yearly intervals or at the end of any agreed fixed period. If such a rent cannot be agreed, either party can go to a Rent Assessment Committee which will assess a 'market' rent. The landlord will be able to charge more than this fixed market rent, however, and so presumably it is open to him to introduce massive rent increases in order to get the tenant out.

These new kinds of lettings will of course mean guaranteed high rents for landlords, and will obviously be far preferable to regulated tenancies. There are thousands of regulated tenants in Exeter, and it will be very profitable for landlords to evict them and replace them with guaranteed high rent paying assured tenants.

With higher rents becoming the norm there would of course be a greater burden on public expenditure through housing benefit. This has in part already been dealt with by the social security reforms which took effect in April 1988. Subsidy from central government towards local authority rent allowance costs will be reduced.

Throughout the White Paper, it is pointed out there is Housing Benefit it available to help with rents when they go up. Certainly, all of these changes together with those detailed below in the public sector will lead to a massive increase in demand for housing benefit, and as central government is unlikely to increase such expenditure there can be only one solution: big cuts in housing benefit. Clearly, as housing benefit is cut back and rents rise it will become more and more difficult for the low-paid and unemployed to be able to meet their rents and so more people will become homeless.

#### Council housing

The long term aim of the government is quite clearly to privatise completely council housing. At present about 24%

of the housing stock is owned by local authorities with about 13 million tenants. Privatisation will obviously affect a large number of people and so the government intends to do it gradually. The Housing White Paper does not use the term privatisation but states that there "must be a drive for disposal of public sector housing to other landlords". There are two principal mechanisms for achieving this aim, the first being the 'Pick a Landlord' scheme involving the Tory concept of 'Tenants' Choice'.

#### Tenants' choice

Under the 'Pick a Landlord' scheme, property companies and private landlords can state their interest in any local authority housing with secure tenants. The local authority would then have to carry out a ballot of those tenants to discover whether they want to transfer. Such a ballot would require a majority of tenants eligible to vote to oppose any transfer. In theory it would be possible for an estate to be taken over by a property company without a single tenant voting in favour so long as fewer than 50% of those eligible to vote use their vote. Some Labour councils such as Birmingham, which 123,000 tenants, have taken the step of writing to their tenants to explain that not voting in such a ballot would be counted as voting 'yes'. The Labour-led Exeter City Council has recently taken similar steps to inform tenants about the implications of the Housing Bill.

Council tenants will similarly have the right, under these proposals, to ask an independent landlord (private landlord, housing association, property company etc.) to take over the ownership of their homes from the council.

This is supposedly to deal with bad (local authority) landlords by allowing tenants to transfer and also by introducing competition. However, housing association and private sector tenants will have no such 'tenant's choice' for dealing with their bad landlords. They will not be able to opt for a local authority landlord. Similarly, once council tenants have exercised 'tenants' choice' and found themselves lumbered with a bad landlord, they will not be able to transfer back to the local authority. Council tenants who vote 'no' to a transfer will be entitled to remain with the local authority landlord, but in the case of flats maisonettes etc., ownership will transfer to the new landlord with a leaseback to the council for 'no' voters.

It looks unlikely at present that many tenants will want to transfer. Council rents are generally speaking very much lower than any private sector rents; housing association rents are about 25% higher on average and private tenants pay much more than this. With private landlords being given new powers to evict and the right to charge high mar-



ket rents for the first time since 1957, it would seem even more unlikely. However, there is nothing to prevent Tory councils working together with potential new landlords to sell off their houses. This is apparently the case with Torbay Council, according to an Exeter Labour Party leaflet on this subject. In such cases, council tenants will have to make their decisions on the basis of information given to them by both the local council and the prospective new landlord; they will have no right to independent information. Clearly, in such cases, it will be up to local tenants' groups, the Labour Party and other groups to advise council tenants as to what they will be letting themselves in for if they do not use their 'no' vote.

On a long term basis, Labour Councils clearly face a choice of either assisting Tory privatisation plans by increasing rent and hence attacking tenants or resisting rent increases (and cuts in services) and possibly facing surcharge.

#### Housing Action Trusts (HATs)

The second mechanism for privatisation is the use of HATs. These new bodies are to take over the ownership of certain designated rundown council estates. In this case, tenants and local authorities have absolutely no choice in the matter, it is to be purely on the decision of the Secretary of State.

It looks likely that HATs will be the most important mechanism for privatising council estates particularly in inner city areas and around conurbations. Since most of Exeter's council housing stock would not be considered 'rundown', it seems unlikely in the short term, that any areas would be designated to an HAT. However, in the long term HAT areas can be designated wherever the Secretary of State pleases, presumably there is nothing to stop it being used to get rid of any stubborn 'no' voting tenants left in the future.

## OPPOSE McDONALDS!

Chris Churchward.

**THE YANKS ARE COMING!** - coming to Exeter in the form of McDonalds - the American 'Fast-Food' chain.

Exeter City Council Labour Group placed themselves firmly on the side of big business when, on the casting vote of John Shepherd, planning permission was given for McDonald's to open up in the premises previously occupied by Woolworth's on the High St. As a further step on the road to turning our City into a centre for tourism and catering, providing low paid and part time jobs for Exonians, Labour took no notice of the protesters. These were conservationists and ecologists who had occupied the building on the news of McDonald's planning application and organised protests.

One particular objection to McDonald's is their low-pay, anti-union policies which, more than one Labour Councillor has said, are of no concern to the City Council. Well, really! it was nauseating to see a Conservative member of the Planning Committee then express the objections that many ordinary people have to McDonald's controversial business methods in the fast food chain.

As an individual objector to the McDonald's planning application, my objections were based on the following considerations:

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION:** the type of packaging used by McDonalds, when broken or burnt, release a gas (CFC) which is shown to have links with the destruction of the ozone layer.

**PARKING:** the "take-away" clientele would cause congestion in Cathedral Close and outside the premises.

**PUBLIC HEALTH:** the Health Education Council and the British Medical Association have stated that the kind of diet offered by McDonald's is dangerous to human health. The average McDonald's meal is high in fat, salt and sugar and low in fibre. It aims its advertising at children and young people, the very group who will suffer most from consuming junk food.

**CONSERVATION:** this proposed take way, with the garish shop-front for which the Company is renowned, is in a conservation area, directly opposite a historic church (St. Petrocks) and not far from the Guildhall.

**EMPLOYMENT POLICY:** discussing this with the full-time officials of the shop workers' union (USDAW), I found them "pretty fed up" with the attitude of those who (John Lloyd) "are concerned with getting it right for Exeter" and have an arrogant assumption that they are doing a good job. USDAW does not expect to be given facilities for T.U. recruitment by McDonald's or to be able to attract into membership many of the staff they employ. There is a turn-over rate of 80% per annum amongst staff in McDonald's establishments, with a high proportion of part timers, YTS, and school children. They are required to work irregular and unsocial hours for low pay. Beyond this, (as with the proposed Burton development) USDAW officials point out, more outlets do not mean more jobs. There is bound to be a limit to spending-power and demand, and new jobs created in one store will mean the loss of jobs in existing stores. Even more is that present full time jobs will be converted into more part time jobs.



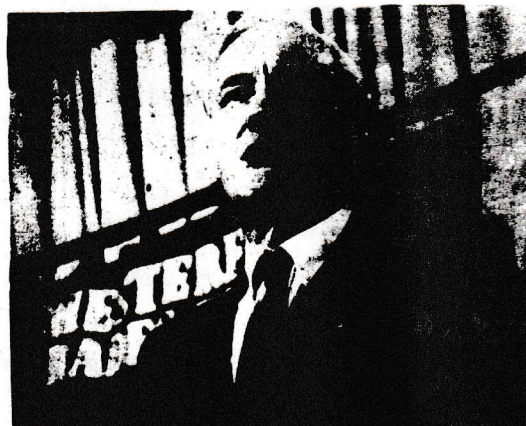
# Forward to Socialism

AN "EXETER AND EAST DEVON CAMPAIGN GROUP" WAS RECENTLY FORMED BY MEMBERS OF THE EXETER, HONITON AND TIVERTON CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES. ONE OF ITS CHIEF OBJECTIVES IS TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE BENN/HEFFER LEADERSHIP/DEPUTY LEADERSHIP TICKET. RAY DAVISON, SECRETARY/ORGANISER OF THE CAMPAIGN GROUP EXPLAINS FURTHER.

As I see it, Campaign Groups exist within the Labour Party for one dominant objective: to secure the election of a Labour Government seriously committed to Socialist advances on all fronts, but especially on the economic front. We must also ensure that, when this occurs, we have created a level of political consciousness and involvement among our supporters able to generate the resolution and resistance which will be needed to sustain us when we tackle economic power and privilege. In present circumstances, with capital on the offensive, our objective is long-term and requires discipline, but such circumstances also provide the field for an immense amount of immediate, practical, political work.

Our strategy should be simultaneously internal and external and we must be very clear that there is no opposition between these dimensions of our work. Internally, we must promote Benn and Heffer as part of a developing and continuous campaign to democratise the Party and regalanise its Socialist commitment. Our work here ties in with the philosophy and history of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and its established practices. We need to educate existing members of the Party, so they know about distribution of power within the Party, the function of the N.E.C., Conference and the P.L.P.. Internal policy objectives to increase accountability must be clearly assimilated as must the effective mechanisms for producing change. The importance of such internal reforms should not be underestimated if we are to secure the kind of accountable, committed Socialist party that we want. Our campaign should therefore involve extensive lobbying and leafletting of existing members and the presentation of detailed arguments about our past administrations. It is clear to us that the Kinnock/Hattersley strategy, dressed up as new realism, is a simple and sanguine restatement of failed policies of the past, propped up by an illiberal regime to stifle legitimate criticism and historical analysis. We have a direct and winnable struggle here. Campaign Members must be active at ward, branch and constituency level and in their unions to dispel the political complacency which alone allows welfare capitalism to survive in our party.

This education of existing membership and winning support for Campaign Group positions is to be promoted not just by lobbying but by providing opportunities for engagement in political action. Here the internal and external dimensions are inseparable: we must involve members and recruit members by involvement in practical situations where individuals resist oppression, discrimination and privilege. Our aim should be to show the political relevance of the action and its relation to our general strategy within the party. This is also the point where our own status as a pressure group will probably be stressed and where our links with the Socialist Conference and its separate identity will need to be clarified (I am a member of the Conference). Externally, what we want is the kind of involvement generated by 1984/85 with the leadership to back it. Labour membership will increase and be increasingly radicalised by effective campaign work which is well organised - this will break the sense of impotence and isolation produced by party bureaucracy and by ideology without a practical base. Campaign Groups should be the focus for revitalising socialism and a positive sense of purpose in the Labour Party: we are a kind of Trojan Horse!



**EXETER AND EAST DEVON CAMPAIGN GROUP  
AND THE CAMPAIGN GROUP OF LABOUR MPs**

invite you to a

**Labour Leadership Election Rally**

with

## TONY BENN

at the Barnfield Theatre Exeter

Thurs Sept 1st.  
Free admission

8.00 pm  
Doors open 7.30 pm

Enquiries: Ray Davison, Exmouth 277481