



PEACE MOVES

After the Icelandic summit Update yourself on the peace movement in all its different forms.

CND conference

A selection from the 100 meetings at Blackpool Winter Gardens, Nov 15-16. Open to observers.

☛ Details Martin Jones 01-250 4010.

Making Coalitions

Speakers include Ken Livingstone, Dafydd Elis Thomas MP and Martin Jacques.

CND and the political parties

Is there a clash between the interests of the peace movement and those of the political parties which support some or all of its policies?

CND and the nuclear power movement

Speakers from CND, the trades unions and George Pritchard from Greenpeace.

A New Wind from the East

Gorbachev's impact both inside the Soviet Union and on its foreign policy will be examined by Joan Ruddock, Gerard Holden and others.

Talking Sanity

A series of debates on implementing nuclear disarmament in Britain. "The peace movements and a disarming government": Ken Livingstone, Clare Short and Bruce Kent; Nov 24, Camden Town Hall.

☛ Details Colin James 01-250 4010.

Peace Tax Campaign

Dr Richard Lawson, a GP and Green Party councillor calls on GPs to join in support of a test ban treaty.

☛ Details Richard Lawson 0934 835140.

Left Unlimited

Denis Healey debates with Fedor Burlatsky, editor of *Liturnaya Gazeta*, - preference to weekend ticket holders, so book now!

NEWS

Nancy Astor Luncheon

To commemorate the entry of the first woman into the House of Commons in 1919- Nancy Astor. Organised by the 300 Group

☛ Details 01-734 3457.

A Night for the People of South Africa

Tim Curry, the Communards, David Hare, Hanif Kureishi and many more brought together by War on Want to aid refugees in the front-line states.

Nov 16.

☛ Shaftesbury Theatre, London WC2.

AIDS - a Trade Union Issue

The London Strategic Policy Unit has produced an information pack to be used by trade unionists dealing with problems associated with AIDS.

☛ Details from 15 Highstone Mansions, 84 Camden Rd, London NW1.

Marxism Today continues to expand and we need volunteer staff to help with merchandising and design. You will receive expenses and play a full and active part in every aspect of the magazine. Many thanks to Lawrence Budge, Dan

Glaister, Don Redding and John Scott for their help on this issue. ☛ Contact Jane Critchley 01-608 0265.

MEETINGS

Against the Burnings

Chile Solidarity meeting with Veronica de Negri - mother of youth burnt to death by Chilean troops - Denis Healey, Alan Beith MP and others. Oct 30, 7.30, Conway Hall, London.

The Politics of Mental Health

Annual conference of the Socialist Health Association.

Nov 8, 10.30-4pm
☛ Details 01-703 6838.

There is an Alternative

Day seminar on formulating an alternative benefits system. Speakers include Ron Smith, Peter Essam and Joan Brown (PSI).

Nov 24, 9.30-4.30
☛ Details Camden Action on Benefits 01-831 6734.

Isaac Deutscher Memorial Lecture

Robert Brenner, winner of the 1985 Isaac Deutscher Prize will talk on "The Autonomy of the State?".

Nov 26, 7.30 pm.
☛ London School of Economics.

New Food Politics

A full menu of the contemporary issues in food politics.

Nov 29.
☛ Details from the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science 01-607 9615.

Islington Remembers Spain

An evening of discussion and music to mark the part played by Islington in the Civil War. Nov 20, 7.30

☛ Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Rd N4.

Britain at the Crossroads

Child Poverty Action Group conference with Buchi Emecheta, Malcom Wicks and Ken Livingstone.

Nov 8, 10.30-3.15, ULU, Malet St, London WC1.

☛ Details 01-242 3225.

Local Strategies for Work

The first national conference.

Speakers: David Blunkett, Margaret Hodge, Rodney Bickerstaffe and others. Nov 14-15.

☛ Details: CLES Heron Hse, Brazenose St, Manchester M2.

PUBLICATIONS

Peace Through Non-Alignment

Ben Lowe on British withdrawal from NATO. *Verso* £150.

Peace by Chris Sewell

An easy to read introduction to the issues of peace and the campaigns for civil rights and disarmament. *Spokesman* £2.50.

Hard Cash

A report by Change and War on Want on the damaging effects of racism and sexism on the aid agencies and how to combat them.

Black Woman

A monthly magazine from the perspective of anti-racist, anti-sexist, class-conscious women will be launched in November 1986.

☛ Details *Black Woman* 01-608 0447.

ANC Anniversary Calendar

To mark the 75th anniversary of

the ANC a wall calendar based on the Freedom Charter by artist Ruth Carneson is now available as well as greetings cards in the same design. Calendars £3. Greetings cards with envelopes £1, available from ANC, PO Box 38, 28 Penton St, London N1 9PR.

Part-Time Workers

One in every five workers now works part-time, the vast majority of whom are women. This booklet examines the situation and sets out legal rights and an approach for the unions. Available from Labour Research Dept., 78 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1. £1.

Critical Mess

The latest issue of Third World First's quarterly magazine examines the real costs of global nuclearisation. £1.50.

VIDEOS

Moving Away From Home

A video resource pack from Shelter for young people.

☛ Details 01-633 9377.

Northern Newsreel No 3

The main feature on this half-hour bulletin is on the Fowler Review plus items on the MSC and regular features.

☛ Details: Northern Newsreel, 36 Bottle Bank, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE8 2AR.

Open Eye Catalogue

Videotape catalogue now available - on women and trade unions, international issues and media representations - and other work.

☛ Details 90-92 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1 6EN.

Who's Next For Privatisation . . . ?

A video record of a campaign by local authority and hospital workers against private contractors in the North East. Available from: 5 Side (Rear), Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 3JE.

Entries for the December Update

should be sent to the office by November 4. For information: tel Nick Mirzoeff on 01-673 3450. Please try to ensure you give details of disabled access.

CONTRIBUTORS

This month's contributors include: **Jon Bloomfield** is a member of CND's international committee and of the Communist Party's executive committee.

Barbara Rogers edits *Everywoman* magazine. She has written several books on Southern Africa. **Jeff Ferry** is a London-based American newspaper correspondent.

Virendra Sharma is an Ealing councillor and ethnic minorities officer for the Labour Party.

Tony Levene is a freelance financial journalist.

Jackie Willis is a freelance writer. **Beatrix Campbell** is a journalist on *City Limits* magazine and she is currently completing a book called *The Iron Ladies* to be published by Virago next year.

Gerard Holden is a research officer at Sussex University's Science Policy Research Unit.

Eric Hobsbawm was formerly Professor of Economic and Social History at Birkbeck College, London and is a member of *Marxism Today's* editorial board.

Gareth Stedman Jones is the author of *Languages of Class* and *Outcast London*.

John Grahl is a lecturer in economics at Queen Mary College, London and a member of the Communist Party's economic committee.

Bob Rowthorn is a member of *Marxism Today's* editorial board. He is Reader in economics at Cambridge University.

For *Mainstream* roundtable participants see p36.

Steve Vines is a journalist on *The Observer*. He was previously a freelance journalist specialising in Middle East affairs and secretary of the Labour Party NEC's Middle East sub-committee.

Nick Newman is a freelance writer who interviewed Nigel Mansell in Austria earlier this year.

Micheline Wandour is a playwright.

Victoria Wood is an actress and comedienne. Her series *Victoria Wood As Seen On TV* starts this month.

Rosalind Brunt lectures in communication and women's studies at Sheffield Polytechnic and is a member of *Marxism Today's* editorial board.

David Berry is a freelance writer. **Stuart Cosgrove** writes for the *New Musical Express*.

Janie Glen teaches in adult education and is a member of the Communist Party executive committee.

Anthony Barnett is the author of *Iron Britannia*.

David Forgacs edited *Rethinking Italian Fascism* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1986) and is a member of the Communist Party's theory and ideology committee.

Ian Williams is a member of the Liverpool Labour Party and northern correspondent of the *New Statesman*.

Alan Leaman is a member of the Liberal Party's standing policy committee.

Hywel Francis is chair of the Wales Congress in Support of Mining Communities and also chairs the Welsh Communist Party's energy and mining advisory committee.

Joan Smith is a freelance journalist.

An Act of Avoidance

I must respond to Raphael Samuel's contribution (*Marxism Today*, September) on the miners because of its historical inaccuracies, its suspect analysis and essentially *anti-communist* tone, outlook and content. Underlining it all is a brash metropolitanism which does not address itself to the reality of the strike and its aftermath.

Even the small errors are revealing and give some clues as to the shakiness of the contribution. Firstly, there is no such organisation as 'The South Wales Campaign for the Defence of the Coal Communities'. The correct title is 'The Wales Congress in Support of Mining Communities'. It was not set up on the initiative of the Communist Party but by the South Wales Area NUM leadership. Party members have however played a prominent role in its work and its strategy of building a broad democratic alliance is clearly the approach of the CP's programme, *The British Road to Socialism*.

Secondly there is the question of Michael McGahey. He was not the chairman at the party congress in 1985. It was George Bolton although it is perhaps forgivable and understandable that Raphael

Samuel should confuse them. McGahey's role in the congress was limited because he was still recovering from the physical attack made upon him at the end of the strike. He was therefore from time to time absent but he *did* make a contribution on the miners' strike (there was no specific debate as Samuel suggests).

But much the worst implied inaccuracy is that Michael McGahey is somehow manipulated against his will to obey some party line or other on such matters as analysing the strike or the *Morning Star*. That betrays an incredible ignorance of the man and his party. Michael McGahey is a communist, and as such he constantly emphasises the importance of analysing

problems scientifically, of the need for a *Communist* daily newspaper (in the style that Lenin described in his famous letter to Tom Bell) and always argues for the need for collective responsibility - one of his favourite ways of describing 'left adventurers' is to label them 'dilettante' for not accepting collective decisions.

Most of all he takes pride in being an intellectual, in the mould of other Communist miners' leaders before him - Les Ellis, Horner, Paynter, The Kanes and the Moffatts - who were never afraid of proposing unpopular solutions for the tackling of difficult problems. That is why at the recent NUM annual conference he said in the debate on unity:

'I joined this industry in 1939. It was two years after Spencerism. There were Spencerites around. But we had to build that unity that created the conditions for the creation of the National Union of Mineworkers in 1945. I would remind you, had those compromises - yes - compromises - not taken place - we would not have had the National Union of Mineworkers . . . Be careful - the approach of certain of my colleagues whom I respect very much could create the conditions . . . for non-unionism in the industry. It's a question of *how* we campaign . . .

We need one united union in this industry. We need it not only for the miners, we need it for the political unity of the movement. We need it to secure a Labour victory at the next election. We need it to defeat Thatcherism.'

This brings us to the two main criticisms of Samuel: the inter-related questions of the role of the Communist Party and the meaning of unity. The Communist Party still stands for unity of the miners and of the whole movement. That is why from the earliest days of the strike it identified the need to work out strategies to achieve the unity of *all* miners, the unity

of the miners with the wider movement and the winning over of public opinion.

These were essential pre-conditions for any progress in the struggle. The very fact that the party publicly identified these problems and continued to do so after the strike is not a reason for alleging that the party created them! The same can be said of *Marxism Today*. My view (which is obviously not detached - but then again neither is Samuel) is that during and after the strike proper attention was given to the real issues of the strike. There were roundtable discussions on women, on strategy and on the lessons as well as long and short articles which attempted some constructive criticism and analysis. It has always been the view of the Communist Party and many others in the labour movement that we cannot maintain, build or rebuild unity on silence, on 'loyalty' or on an uncritical view of leadership. Yet this is the approach which underpins all of Samuel's contribution.

When Des Dutfield, the new president of the South Wales miners and a prominent Labour Party member, addressed his first annual conference this year he made some very perceptive comments concerning *how* unity could be rebuilt upon long-standing and obvious democratic practices:-

'I will expect the opinions and the viewpoints of our members through our lodges to be reflected as accurately and sincerely as possible . . . It is of great importance that these views be expressed whether they appear to be supportive, contentious, unpopular or downright unpalatable at times . . . Silent acceptance on certain crucial questions is not satisfactory . . . I give you my word that you will receive the proper respect, when declaring your lodges' position on such issues and you will also receive all the assistance you may require in presenting your views.'

Such an honest outlook, informed as it is by the real world, is what the Commun-



Mick McGahey - facing facts

ist Party and *Marxism Today* has tried to adopt, obviously not always successfully, but it has tried.

In this view, if Arthur Scargill says, as he did in his 1986 annual address, that the 1937 settlement which ended the breakaway in Nottinghamshire created a 'false unity', then he must be publicly challenged. That is opinion not historical analysis: he and others would do well to read and re-read Page Arnot's official history of the period to get an understanding of the appalling problems and very real achievements of those times.¹ The unity which ultimately resulted in all the improvements under early nationalisation and then in 1972 and 1974 was achieved not simply through industrial action alone: this anti-intellectual posturing on the Left which, Mussolini-like, demands at all times action *instead of thought* (rather than both) is of course a fairly recent phenomenon. Will Paynter called it a fetish.

I find it wholly misleading for Samuel to suggest that the thoughtful and incisive close-up of Michael McGahey by Don MacIntyre (*MT* September 1986) was in