

Workers Press

25p

Saturday October 11 1986

Number 45

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

GET THE TORIES OUT

BY SIMON
PIRANI

There can be only one answer to the Tories' reactionary rantings at the Bornemouth conference — a campaign to bring this government down as fast as possible.

Working class blood is boiling at the speeches of Tory health minister Edwina 'let them not eat chips' Currie and party chairman Norman 'more privatisation' Tebbit.

But the Labour leaders haven't issued a single call for working class action against this government or for an election to be forced.

Why? Because the Kinnock strategy is directly opposed to working class action: he intends to wait for Thatcher to call an election and join the scramble for the middle class votes.

Right-wing economic policies were pushed at Blackpool to win voters from the Tories and the Alliance; the presidential-style marketing of Kinnock was simply the wrapping paper of this package.

Bidding for middle class support also means trampling opposition and tightening the grip on the Labour Party machine: the removal of Eric Heffer from the National Executive and the 'Militant' expulsions are backed by the setting up of a disciplinary committee to streamline the witchhunt. (See 'Lessons of the Militant witchhunt' — page 12)

The Labour leaders' drive to attract Tory votes and the prevention of anti-Tory mobilisation of the Labour movement go hand in hand.

A vital role is played by the union leaders: 'Don't rock the boat, Kinnock will solve your problem,' they say.

'Don't try to commit Kinnock to solving your problems, you will rock the boat,' echo the Labour right, showering you with roses.

The union leaders' attempts to stifle any movement against Thatcher rest on the very anti-union laws that this government itself passed. Organisers of strikes, large or small, are told they cannot win because the law cannot be broken.

Take the struggle for union rights at Wapping:

● EETPU scabbing has been accepted by the TUC

● The National Union of Journalists' refuse to expel leading scabs (NUJ FOCs working at Wapping have just been fined £30 each!)

● There has been a disgraceful collapse of blacking in the newspapers' distribution

Basic union principles are trampled underfoot, with the rationale that 'unity must be preserved' (with the scabbering EETPU) and 'we are not strong enough to challenge the law'.

The courageous strikers at Silent-night Bedding (see story page 4) and Morris of Glasgow, members of FTAT who have been out for more than a

year, have fared no better than the printers.

Attempts to organise effective blacking bring warnings that 'secondary action' would bring court cases.

Even the growing desire for workers' sanctions against South Africa has met with bleats of protest from union officials who fear Thatcher's laws.

Like the 1974-1979 Labour government, Kinnock and Co, left to their own devices, will simply replace Tory laws with constraints of their own.

Bring down this government with a campaign of working class action in defence of basic trade union rights, in defence of jobs, against the cuts. There can be no simpler answer to Kinnock's crawling cowardice than this campaign — for a Labour government!

This kind of action, the only means to ensure the defeat of Thatcher, terrifies the Labour and trade union leadership. This is one of the main lessons of the struggle against Thatcher since 1979.

After the Wembley conference decision of 1982 to resist the anti-union laws, the Warrington print union recognition fight was betrayed by the TUC.

The miners' strike was isolated, sabotaged and betrayed by these same union leaders, 'left' and right.

The mining communities' willingness to sacrifice, the heroism, especially of women and youth, and their readiness to defy the law, brought not only jail sentences and sackings, it revived great traditions of solidarity, gave a surge of confidence to the whole working class, brought new forces into the struggle for the first time — and raised questions of leadership more sharply than they have been raised since 1926.

All the consequences of TUC betrayal — the pit closures, the strengthening of the UDM, the brash confidence of Murdoch and other employers following the strike — cannot take away these great political gains.

The miners' strike was in fact only the first of a series of bitter battles between the working class and the state.

It must be seen as part of the growth of working class struggles in Europe, east and west, in South Africa and internationally.

The strength of the working class in its fight against Thatcher is measured not simply in the Labour Party but in the great industrial centres and the increasingly militant public sector.

Continued on p2

MAGNIFICENT!

SOGAT'S LOUD

NO! TO RUPERT'S 'FINAL-FINAL'

NOW LET'S GO FORWARD

NO MORE rhetoric; no more isolation; no more pretence!

It's now time to build on this wonderful show of courage, fighting spirit and solidarity in rejecting Murdoch's scab money.

We can and we must win this fight for trade union organisation and jobs at Wapping.

It now only needs the printing industry to rally not just behind us but alongside us, bringing with it the full ranks of the trade union movement.

Brenda Dean, Tony Dubbins and Norman Willis must make the call in unions for the massive weight of TUC to

come to the aid of the striking printworkers.

Fleet Street has again been given the lead against the tidal wave of attacks on them.

It presents all the Fleet Street workforce with the opportunity to mount a fight-back not only against the proprietors but against the non-union trend.

Note this, 'Independent', 'Today' and Maxwell's planned evening paper.

The most important element is to ensure that the EETPU is suspended from the TUC — the pressure for this must come from the rank and file printworkers.

● Call a 24-hour day of action in the printing industry to build solidarity for the News International workers and call on all rank and file trade unionists and sympathisers to join them and build the picket at the Wapping plant.

● Revitalise the Support Groups, encourage them in the important role they have played and build the pickets at the TNT depots.

But to win, we must boycott all Murdoch's products and boycott services to the plant.

George Hall,
SOGAT; FOC Sun/NOW Clerical Chapel; FOCs Strike Committee
— in a personal capacity

Blues get 'got lost' blues

IN RESPONSE to the overwhelming rejection of the latest News International 'final-final' offer of Rupert Murdoch, over 2,000 of the sacked printworkers and their supporters turned up for the usual Wednesday evening march from Tower Hill to Wapping.

This time they completely outwitted the police by marching a different route to what

had been planned.

The police were unprepared; it was some time before they realised it — and caught the march up somewhere near Aldgate.

The printworkers, obviously in a very jubilant mood, were not going to be stopped from marching their own route and at one point ploughed through a police line without much resistance.

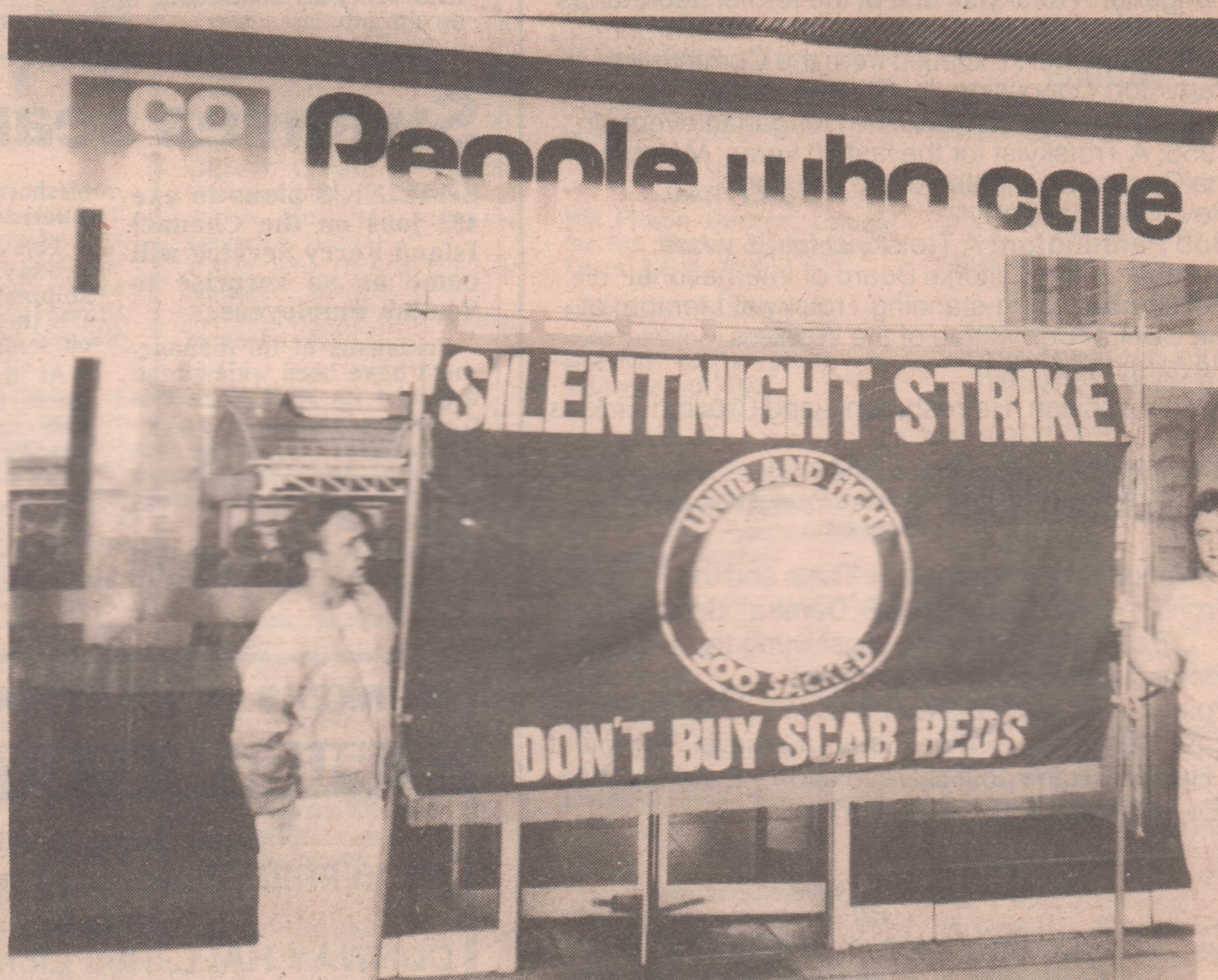
Local residents, in solidarity

with the printworkers, held their own march and received a loud reception from the pickets when they reached the Wapping plant.

Their spokesman called for the rest of Fleet Street and other sections of the trade union movement to join with the sacked printworkers in defeating Murdoch.

He praised them for showing great courage and determination in rejecting the latest N.I. offer.

They say they care —



The hell they do! — p4

FROM
PAGE 1

GET THE TORIES OUT!



KINNOCK: talks of 'social ownership' a fraud.

The right's victory in Blackpool is only one side of the story: the other is the renewed strike action by Durham miners, the stubborn stand at Wapping and smaller but equally fierce battles, like those of the Silentnight strikers, Scottish teachers and Sealink crews.

Support

- Full support to the Durham miners in their fight against pit closures, management arrogance and victimisations!
- Full support to the Wapping printers who refuse to sell their union principles for any money!

It is with these struggles

that the campaign against Thatcher will go forward.

Demands must be taken up for an incoming Labour government to repeal the anti-union laws, release the jailed miners and re-instate the victimised miners.

Kinnock must be called upon to come to the defence of trade union rights in the print and wherever they are threatened by the multinationals; demands must be put for restoration of Tory cuts and re-nationalisation of privatised industries.

Opposition to the Labour rights' fraudulent 'New Realism' will begin with this fight. It will be carried further with the working out of a socialist programme to meet

the crisis, which we began with the WRP Manifesto published in June.

Kinnock's economic policy — 'British Enterprise', a National Investment Bank and incentives to British capitalists to bring their money back to this country — is designed to encourage investment by big business and the middle class.

But these pathetic steps to a 'mixed economy' cannot stop unemployment or poverty.

At Blackpool, Ian Mikardo attacked Roy Hattersley's 'fancy scheme dreamed up for bribing British investors into putting their money into Britain instead of abroad'.

It would not work, said Mikardo, adding that the City of London agreed with him.

Not only that. Without socialist nationalisation of the banks and the breaking of the financial markets' grip, how can British industry be organised in the interest of the working class or middle class?

Kinnock's talk of 'social ownership' is a fraud because he intends to leave almost all the economy under the control of big capital.

Unless the working class and its organisations exercise democratic power — that is workers' control — over both manufacturing in-

dustry and the financial sectors, how can rational planning or prudent investment be organised?

Kinnock's planning will be tailored to the needs of the Murdochs, Lonhros and Rio-Tino-Zincs, just as the TUC's policy allows them to ride roughshod over trade unionists.

Against this, socialist policies of nationalisation under workers' control of industries, banks and other financial centres must be worked out.

This is the only way to put an end to capitalist plunder and the Tory 'get rich quick' policies which the working class has fought so hard against since 1979.

WALTHAM NALGO'S 'CHEAP LABOUR' CONFERENCE

Government's stranglehold over minds and bodies

THROUGH cheap labour schemes, the government maintains a stranglehold not only over the bodies but over the minds of thousands of the unemployed, Dan Finn, a researcher from the Unemployed Unit, told trade unionists last weekend.

He was addressing a conference organised by Waltham Forest NALGO as part of their campaign against Community Programme and Youth Training schemes.

There are 1,200 workers on the Community Programme who work in TUC Centres for the Unemployed. Under the terms of the CP, they are not allowed to engage in political activity — not even to the extent of posting notices of political marches or rallies.

Finn told the conference that the voluntary sector receives more cash from the Manpower Services Commission than from any other government department. Church-run schemes have 27,000 MSC places.

Unionised workers with proper rates of pay are being undermined by workers dragged as a cheap labour force. There are 100,000 CP places in local authorities, with schemes continuing to mushroom.

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

The squeeze is also being put onto local government workers at the same time as privatisation.

£400 million of government spending has been shifted from local authority finances to the Community Programme.

In most areas of the country, especially the north, the only source of cash for fresh employment initiatives is the Community Programme.

Seventy per cent of people who enter the community programme go straight back onto the dole at the end of their year.

There is a constantly

changing population of workers in schemes set up so that it is practically impossible to become unionised or organised in any way. If they do, it all disappears anyway at the end of twelve months.

It is a formula perfected by the De Beers Mining conglomerate in South Africa a hundred years ago, and which held back the organisation of the South African working class in unions.

John Eversley from the Greater London Trade Union Resource Unit gave a rundown on the history of the Youth Training Scheme.

He began by explaining the extent of the TUC's more or less total commitment to these programmes. In 1979 and 1981 the TUC protected the YTS under the threat of Tebbit's proposal for a two year compulsory programme.

In 1983 the Tories came up with the £25 a week scheme as we know it today, and the TUC took it on wholeheartedly.

According to the MSC, one third of YTS do not conform to their own criteria.

20-25 per cent of youth in the workforce are on these programmes. They stay for an average of 35 weeks, which means they do not complete their course. The courses themselves are only 50-60 per cent occupied.

In only 5 per cent of places are unions consulted, which

means the trade union movement has virtually no control over them at all.

The trade union movement nationally does not have a united approach to YTS.

T&GWU, GM&BU and NUPE take the position that the schemes can be improved.

The post office unions and NALGO are moving in the direction of opposition and unions like the NGA and CPSA refused to have anything to do with them from the start.

Virginia Heywood (Islington Trade Union Resource Centre) and Maggie Arkwright (Hackney NALGO) spoke on their personal experiences of battling the Community Programme.

The discussion centred around the question of complete opposition to the schemes. Some participants felt the trade union movement has a responsibility to the unemployed to try to transform them, as the only new employment on offer, by turning them into permanent jobs with trade union rates of pay.

Delegates were asked to take back two model resolutions to their branches, which demanded complete withdrawal from the schemes, and a national steering committee was set up to carry the campaign against YTS and the CP forward.

PUBLIC MEETING
30th Anniversary
of the
HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION
Main speaker: **Peter Fryer**
correspondent for the
Daily Worker, eye-witness to the events in Hungary and author of 'Hungarian Tragedy'
London
October 26, 1pm - 9pm
Kingsway-Princeton College
Sidmouth Street
Grays Inn Road, London WC1

other speakers:

Michael Varga (Balazs Nagy):

Hungarian Trotskyist, one of the former secretaries of the Petofi Circle

Cliff Slaughter: Expelled from the Communist Party for Opposition to Stalinism after the Khrushchev speech, and the Hungarian events in 1956; A Trotskyist for the last 30 years; Member of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

Bob Pennington: A Trotskyist for 35 years;

Member of the Editorial Board of International
Bill Hunter; Long-standing Trotskyist; Member of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

Also exhibition, Refreshments and Creche. Tickets £2

Organised and sponsored by the Workers Revolutionary Party, International, Workers Power and Socialist Viewpoint

Workshops: The Moscow Trials and the Popular Front — Cyril Smith (WRP Central Committee)
Political Revolution — Post Hungary — Tony

Richardson (Socialist Viewpoint)

Poland — Oliver MacDonald (Editor, Labour Focus)

East Germany — Peter Firmin (Socialist Viewpoint)

Hungary & the political revolution — Dave Hughes (Ed. Board, Workers Power)

Glasgow

Sunday October 19, 300pm
Ingram Hotel, Ingram Street

Manchester

Tuesday October 21, 7.30pm
Basement Theatre
Manchester Town Hall
St Peters Square

Swansea seamen call for strike

SEALINK'S plans to axe 492 jobs on the Channel Island Ferry Service will come as no surprise to Sealink employees.

Criticisms of its management have been widespread amongst its staff since this once-profitable once-nationalised company was sold to American James Sherwood for the give-away figure of £6 million.

Fears are also evident that the company will 'flag out' to

offshore agents, possibly in Guernsey or the Isle of Man.

This could give them large tax savings — and like other shipping companies in the UK they would employ staff on temporary contracts.

At the time of going to press, talks between unions and management are in deadlock, although Sealink's ships are at a standstill.

Evidence of seamen's attitudes to years of job losses and turning to flags of convenience by shipping com-

panies is shown by a decision of Swansea and District Branch of the National Union of Seamen to send a resolution to its headquarters calling for a national strike of all its members if the Sealink dispute is not settled in the near future.

OOPS!

SPOTTED by a delegation of miners at the Labour Party Conference carrying a copy of the boycotted 'Times' newspaper: none other than top leg-person for the Healyite 'News Line', Penny Bloor. Aspiring to be a top person too, perhaps.

DAY OF ACTION

to demand

Repatriation of Irish Republican prisoners in British jails

Saturday November 8

11.30am Assemble at the Monument, Hdaymarket, Newcastle

12.00 noon March through Newcastle

2.00pm Assemble at Frankland Prison, Durham

March to Durham Prison

Rally — Speakers to include prisoner

relatives, NUM (in personal capacity)

BRING YOUR BANNERS!

Supported by Clydeside Troops Out, Republican Band Alliance, Prisoners of War Committee (Glasgow). More information from PH3, 340 W. Princes St., Glasgow G4

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY PUBLIC LECTURES

Please note changes:
All on FRIDAY evenings, start at 8.00pm sharp
CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, London. WC1

October 10, 17 and 24
Geoff Pilling on Marxist Political Economy

To be followed by classes on
The State and Revolution - B Archer
The Revolutionary Party - D Bruce

Durham Mechanics second day of action

THE MINERS' determination to fight was once again confirmed last Tuesday when strike action brought WESTOE COLLIERY to a halt.

The strike, solidly supported by the NUM members and the Deputies, was the second in a series of one-day stoppages called by the Durham Mechanics.

The Mechanics' action is for the reinstatement of Geoff Hartnell and all sacked miners; to force the Coal Board to pay the back money stolen from them; to restore the conciliation machinery in the industry and to stop the closure of Seaham colliery.

The 130 UDM members at the pit had been urged by their branch officials to cross the picket lines and work as normal. Everybody expected them to do so.

UDM branch president George Hunter said before the strike: 'We will definitely come to work. Our rules are quite plain: we do not recognise picket lines which do not recognise the UDM.'

However, the UDM's predictions couldn't have been more wrong. Throughout the day about a dozen men went into the pit.

As the almost empty buses arrived at the gates, the obvious success of the strike was greeted with cheers and the pickets were contemptuous of the odd scab who sat, lonely, on the odd bus.

A coal board spokesman said nearly 6,000 tonnes of

BY LYNN BEATON

coal had been lost through the strike.

Jim Perry, President of the Durham Mechanics and secretary of the Westoe Lodge, said on the picket line: 'I am very pleased with the strike and the excellent support the Mechanics have received from the NUM and the Deputies and we thank them for that.'

Jim expects the next six days of action to be as successful as the first two have been. He pledged to keep the pressure on the coal board until the sacked men are reinstated.

Referring to the UDM members, he said: 'This will be a chance to show that they really respect democracy.'

Durham Mechanics voted overwhelmingly for the strike action on September 18. Their first target was Murton colliery where a strike, four days after the vote, was a great success.

At Westoe, the Deputies met at 4a.m. and agreed to meet only the minimum safety requirements.



PICKETS outside Westoe pit had an easy job when only a handful of scabs turned up for work.

At each shift they met inside and balloted to decide which 15 men would stay in. As the others left the pit they were greeted with cheers from the pickets outside.

The feeling of solidarity was strong and it was again clear that any talk of the miners being finished as a fighting force is nothing but the pessimism of cynics.

The success of the strike at Westoe was especially significant as it was feared there might be trouble because of some conflict in the NUM lodge since the 1984-85 strike.

Seven men have been sacked at the pit since the end of the strike and the conflict is between those who want to take direct action to

fight the sackings and those who don't.

The last two sackings took place only one week ago when 2,200 men brought the pit to a standstill when they refused to cross a spontaneous picket organised by the sacked men.

A later meeting decided to hold a ballot over the issue despite the fact that a pre-

vious ballot, now stale because of new Tory regulations, was overwhelmingly in favour of action.

However on Tuesday there was no question of support for the Mechanics' action. The NUM lodge secretary Tommy Betts said he expected his members to respect the action and they certainly did.

while Seaham and sacked men picket NCB



SACKED miners lobbying the British Coal offices in the north-east.

A MEETING of the Durham Area union officials and the coal board in the North East decided last Tuesday October 7 to go ahead with a local review procedure of the closure of Seaham colliery.

The meeting was picketed by miners from Seaham Colliery and sacked miners.

These meetings are normally held monthly but the last two have not taken place. It was felt the Coal Board was avoiding talking about a review for Seaham.

Albert Nugent, secretary of the Campaign to save Seaham colliery, told Workers Press: 'It's our right. The Tory Government were strutting about in 1984-85 saying that the review procedures were sacrosanct.'

'Let's see how sacrosanct they are now.'

While the meeting was still taking place the coal board announced its plan to reduce the amount of redundancy money after March next

year. It was felt this was intended to stampede the men at Seaham and elsewhere to take redundancy immediately: if redundancy is not taken in the next six months miners will only get half the money.

But redundancy money is only equivalent to two or three years' earnings and if it hasn't been spent on what social security regard as the necessities of living in the first year you can't receive any social security.

The meeting was also picketed by several sacked miners in the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign. Among them were John Little and Glen Black from Dawdon Colliery who were sacked in October 1984 after an incident where colliery windows were broken.

Both men were charged and given two-year sentences. They have served eight months in jail and feel that they have more than paid for the windows which were broken.

John and Glen told Workers Press: 'All we did was put a window out. A scab put some NUM windows out and he went to court and got a two-year discharge.'

'We put some NCB windows out and get a two-year prison sentence and lose our jobs as well. We've more than paid for the NCB windows.'

LISTINGS
LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR GAY RIGHTS: March against Nottingham County Council's discriminatory policy. October 25, 12.15 p.m. Old Market Square. More details next week

WORKERS POWER PUBLIC MEETING 'British Trotskyism, 1938-1949' 7.30 p.m. Monday

October 27, Small Hall, Conway Hall, Speakers: Al Richardson (Co-Author of 'War & the International') Mark Hoskinson (Workers Power, Editorial Board)

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.
EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN McCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.
ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.
PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.
PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.
CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES:
SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicestershire Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP

ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.
BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.
PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.
EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

HULL
HM Prison Hedon Rd, Hull, Humberside

ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

DURHAM
HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.

MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.
PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.
JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.
BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.
RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

The information on this list is supplied and updated by An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for which we thank them.

Workers Revolutionary Party

ARCHIVE SALE

PLUS MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

Saturday 19 October
10a.m. to 5p.m.

21b Old Town, Clapham, London SW4

Archive material includes: Workers International News, Fourth International (1940-1980), Labour Review, SLL/WRP pamphlets, CP material, Labour Monthly, Communist International & pamphlets, International Socialist Review (SWP).

Equipment includes: Industrial bric-a-brac; fixtures & fittings, furniture, electronic and electrical oddments, various paraphernalia, etc.

Refreshments available

Admission 50p

Fifty years since the battle of CABLE STREET —

FIFTY YEARS after the Battle of Cable Street in London's East End, veterans from that day returned to a rally on the site where many of the battles had taken place with the police.

They had been determined that Mosley's British Union of Fascists should go ahead with their planned march through sensitive Jewish areas on Sunday October 4, 1936.

Last Saturday's five thousand strong march went through streets which were once thronging with the Jewish community but now house the latest victims of fascism and racist attack, the Asians.

On the demonstration were banners from trade union branches, trades councils, local tenants groups, Asian and Jewish organisations, anti-fascists groups and political organisations.

Before the march, the veterans relayed their experiences of that day, some very vivid.

Mildred Gordon, now the prospective Parliamentary candidate for Bow, Poplar, was only a child when the events of that day took place.

She remembered 'how, during the fighting, people were coming down to have their heads and wounds bandaged.

'Men relayed how they had thrown marbles under the feet of the police horses as they charged into the crowd again and again'.

When she was nine, Gordon recalled, 'one of her earliest memories was of the newsreels and newspapers which were full of the rise of Hitler in Germany.

'Newsreels showed Jews being taken out onto the streets and made to scrub them with sulphuric acid whilst the Nazis stood and laughed.

'These things were traumatic for a young child,' she said.

'The fascists were going to have four marches through the East End starting from Tower Hill.

'They were planning to march through key areas, but the Eastenders had decided that they weren't... they were going to

BY ALAN CLARK

stand and fight.

'If Mosley had been able to establish himself firmly in parts of the East End which he wanted to march through, we might have seen a different picture in this country,' Gordon claimed.

She also recalled, 'how tram drivers had stopped their trams in the middle of the road, put the keys in their pocket and walked away.

'How Irish catholic dockers had turned over carts and lorries and blocked the road — they also tore up paving stones'.

'We have to learn from history' she said. 'The old slogans, united-we stand divided we fall, unity is strength, those are meaningful things for us today'.

Gerry Ross, a veteran, reminded everyone of the powerful people behind Mosley's Blackshirts.

'To the Daily Mail, Mosley was a darling; they and Lord Rothermere supported him.'

'There were also elements in the highest circles who secretly welcomed the takeover of fascism in this country.

'It was no accident that the police used every means possible to get the fascists through.

'Instructions had been passed down from these same people,' Ross claimed.

Solly Kaye, well known East End stalinist, also had the same message.

'Sir William Morris, boss of the Morris motor company, gave £50,000 to Mosley to start a newspaper,' he said and also told how other well known Lords had either supported or gave money to Mosley.



BANNERS dominated the march to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street last Saturday

'Appeals to the Home Secretary to have the fascists march stopped fell on deaf ears.

'The Tory Party refused to take any action, the Liberal Party refused to take any action, the Labour Party said, 'We're against them, we'll issue leaflets but stay away — stay away.''

'The News Chronicle and Daily Herald both said stay away, but the working class came and came united in their thousands'.

Lou Smith, one of the organisers of Cable Street, paid tribute to the trade union movement and to the dockers who stood firm against the fascists in 1936.

To the youth of today he said, 'Your job is to carry on that fight, not to hide and run away'.

Bill Keeble made the point that, 'Fascism is not invincible, fascism breeds upon the idea as does all reaction'.

Ian Mikardo, the local Labour M.P., attacked the East London Advertiser, who

had made a scurrilous attack upon the Chinese community in Limehouse.

'Without any evidence, the paper had accused them of killing pets for food.

He has asked the Attorney General to refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions to see if the Advertiser could be prosecuted for incitement to racial hatred.

Mikardo went on to say, 'It is no accident that the five countries that the Thatcher government has chosen whose visitors should have visas to come here are all countries where the people are black.

'This is state racism and has to be opposed with every breath we have'.

When the march and demonstration reached Bigland Street for the planned festival, several more speakers, including Jeremy Corbyn, David Kitson, Jack Dash and Ann Lilburn from Womens' Miners Support Group all spoke in support of the Cable Street anniversary.

Tories have bled BR dry says Labour Research

THE LATEST issue of *Labour Research* launches a scathing attack on the government and the British Railway Board on the question of the policy of privatisation and the cutting of the Public Subsidy to the Railway Industry.

The report shows railways in Britain receive, in subsidies, nearly 50 per cent less than their European counterparts, and the subsidy has been reduced by a quarter since 1979.

The Tory government has limited finance to BR through the PSO (Public Service Obligation) and the External Financing Limit.

This policy has led to a drastic reduction in manpower, safety conditions, and rolling stock and track maintenance.

Labour Research shows that the Tories' claim to have embarked on 'the biggest investment programme for 25 years' is a fabrication.

The Thatcher government has seriously impaired the running of the railway system (though the last Labour administration did little to aid the industry) the continuing destruction of jobs and the closure of stations, regional depots and engineering workshops, the latest being Swindon.

The *Labour Research* article highlights how the Tories and the BR Board have savaged the industry and deprived and deliberately starved the industry of necessary finance to maintain and improve the day to day running of the rail system.

Customer satisfaction has

BY ZBIGNIEW WOJCIK

been lowered and complaints have increased, according to the rail users watchdog committee (CTCC), a body monitoring standards on the railways.

Freight business has been actively encouraged to go elsewhere.

The article in *Labour Research* also raises the question of what the Labour Party intend to do if they take office.

They have said that they will enable British Rail to take on 18,000 new staff.

Here there is need for real caution.

Previous Labour governments have not carried out policies to construct an integrated road and rail network in Britain.

In fact rail subsidies have never been particularly high under Labour.

Labour Research also makes the point that the plan for 18,000 jobs would be quite inadequate to restore the 70,324 jobs lost since 1979.



A SCENE from the original battle of Cable Street

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Organised by Workers Power
Every other Wednesday, 7.30pm
Upstairs at the Landor Hotel
Landor Road, SW2 (Clapham North 0)

October 8: Cable Street 1936
October 22: The Popular Front in France 1936
November 5: The Moscow Trials 1936

and a new Public Order Bill is on the stocks!

1936

THE ORIGINAL Public Order Act was brought in supposedly to combat Mosley's fascists in 1936 but anti-racists very soon found it was being used against them rather than Mosley's goons.

In January 1986, a further piece of legislation, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, came into effect with the purpose of further restricting the rights of anti-fascists and any other group or individual that the police deem 'undesirable.'

We now see the imminent introduction of a new Public Order Bill — likely to become law at the end of the year.

Much has already been written about the new offences it will create and the sweeping powers it will place in the hands of individual police officers.

Much more media coverage must now be given to its awesome implications on the freedom to demonstrate and picket.

We have already seen how the state mis-uses its existing powers.

Who can defend the prosecution of investigative journalists under the Official Secrets Act?

Or the prolonged detention of innocent Irish men and women under the Prevention of Terrorism Act?

Is it feasible that Newman, sitting in his high chair at Scotland Yard, will tell his minions not to enforce his masters' reactionary desire to put an end to dissent?

Of course not. The relentless march towards total militarisation of the police in mainland Britain is about to break into a run. They already have the equipment — armoured cars, plastic bullets, CS gas and guns.

They already have Newman's so-called 'expertise' in running the RUC black-shirts.

In a matter of months, they'll have one of the last remaining pieces of the jigsaw with the legislation to back them up officially.

The use of the phrase 'freedom to demonstrate' rather than 'the right to demonstrate' was a deliberate one.

THIS report on the current Public Order Bill has been contributed by JOHN NORMAN OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION. While it does not reflect the views of the WRP, we warmly thank him for this contribution and invite discussion on the important questions that they have raised.

Unlike many other countries, Britain has never constitutionalised the right to express dissent on the streets.

Indeed, the very essence of the Public Order Bill is that to demonstrate in public is both a privilege and a luxury.

They argue that the Bill is designed to deal with hooliganism at football matches but then lump together rallies, pickets, street parties, sponsored walks, carnivals and demonstrations as if they were all a serious threat to local communities rather than an integral part of them.

This totally disregards the fact that workers on picket lines are fighting for their families, which constitute their communities as a whole, or that anti-fascists on counter-marches against the NF are protecting their communities from the threat of racist attacks.

The women at Greenham are trying to save every community — women, children and men everywhere — from the threat of nuclear destruction.

The overall theme and in-

tent of the Public Order Bill, therefore, would support the general police attitude of 'we can do what we like when we like'.

They might also add to that statement that 'the new laws won't make any difference'.

For far too long, we have seen how, at places like Brixton, Wapping, Stonehenge and Broadwater Farm the police put themselves above and outside the law.

Until now there has been no focus for us to express our outrage and helplessness at their criminal activities.

That is why the Public Order Bill, perhaps the most fundamentally savage attack on civil liberties this century, must become a focal point of attention.

A defiant message of solidarity and an attempt to make the Public Order Bill unworkable is being organised by the Campaign Against Police Repression alongside Anti-Fascist Action, the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, the Campaign for the Right of Assembly and Dissent, City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, the Federation of Claimants Unions and

Greenpeace, London.

Well over one thousand individuals have now signed the Campaign Against Police Repression's 'Declaration Form' about the Public Order Bill.

What was the point?

Anyone can sign a petition to be presented to Parliament or the Queen without any real fear of arousing the wrath of the forces of state control.

This form, however, has a totally different purpose — and may have far-reaching consequences for the individual signatories.

It is nonetheless a form which we should all sign — in order to create united opposition to the Bill and to defend each other . . . before they start picking us off one by one.

Because of the new restrictions requiring seven days' notice for all demonstrations, the spontaneous march the Saturday after the Public Order Bill becomes law will automatically be illegal.

This being the case, it is hoped to successfully challenge the Bill immediately it is passed, thus setting a pre-

cedent for resistance which must see the Bill's downfall.

Should the police single out individuals for prosecution for 'organising' the march, they will be presented with several thousand names on the Declaration Form, giving them the problem of having to prosecute thousands of people or allowing the law to be broken.

All of this is necessary so that we are all able to continue in our various forms of protest.

We have to break the law before the law breaks us.

● For more information, contact Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, London N4, or phone 01-881 2938.

Fill in this form and return it to the above address:

I, the undersigned, am proud to declare that I am an organiser of the march against the Public Order Bill taking place the Saturday after the Bill becomes law, gathering at 12 noon at Clock Tower Place, London, N7

Name

Address

.....

Silentnight pickets Co-op



but management turns them down!

IN A BID to stop Co-op management from selling Silentnight products, strikers and supporters lobbied the AGM of the CRS in Manchester.

The joint picket was mounted from the Barnoldswick factory with people from Bury, Manchester and Rossendale.

'At such large pickets as this, police often harass and arrest us,' Steve Price, FTAT convenor at the Sutton factory explained to Workers Press.

'Over 55 pickets have been arrested at Sutton. The police have obviously made plans to list various people.'

'They have walked into our pickets and grabbed four or five strikers, charging them with obstruction.'

'The police have also assaulted our peaceful pickets.'

'It is clear that they are picking people out to arrest to get the most militant ones off the picket line.'

'Two lads were done for throwing one egg. They were fined £77 each.'

'Another lad was done for

board, in their business suits, were making their way into the building and avoiding discussion.

Some, like Harold Ainley of Huddersfield region CWS, said it was his personal opinion that the Co-op should boycott Silentnight products.

During this special meeting, the CWS used all of their 1,000 votes against the boycott resolution while CRS voted 570 to 430 against.

The top management (represented by the CWS) said during the meeting:

'We are not having lay members telling us how to run the Co-op. Such a position would be against the constitution.'

The meeting voted narrowly not to support the boycott campaign.

For anyone wondering, Kinnock backs the campaign: 'It will help them to get a square deal.'

It sounds more like a washing powder advertisement than a promise for jobs. He couldn't say much

less.

The Labour Party conference passed a resolution to make it illegal to sack workers on strike — such as those at Silentnight or at Wapping.

Any Labour government is mandated to do this.

One political problem facing the Silentnight strikers is how they can force a future Labour government to implement the conference resolution as part of a campaign to secure trade union rights and jobs.

Conference

The signs coming from the Labour Party conference are that the leadership will not fight on these issues.

The 'Justice' campaign was not welcomed at the conference but the Silentnight strikers were.

However, Kinnock does not stand on the picket line, whether it is an FTAT or NUM struggle.

Anti-Fascist Action, Campaign Against Police Repression, Campaign for Homosexual Equality, Campaign for the Right of Assembly & Dissent, City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, Federation of Claimants Unions, Greenpeace London

MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS

The Saturday After

RALLY: THE FIRST SATURDAY AFTER THE PUBLIC ORDER BILL IS PASSED
MARCH: THE FIRST SATURDAY AFTER THE BILL BECOMES LAW

BOTH ASSEMBLE AT

12 NOON, CLOCK TOWER PLACE, MARKET ROAD, LONDON N7
(Near Caledonian Road tube, Piccadilly line)

CITY AA Extraordinary General Meeting

Sunday October 19, 12-6pm
Creche (please phone 837 6050 if required)

PUBLIC MEETING

1974

The events surrounding the expulsion of Alan Thornett from the WRP

October 12, 1pm - 6pm
East Oxford Community Centre
Princes Street, Cowley Road
OXFORD

Session 1. MEETING 1pm - 3pm

Speakers: Alan Thornett

From WRP (to be announced)

Chair: Steve Howgate (Oxford & Swindon WRP)

Break

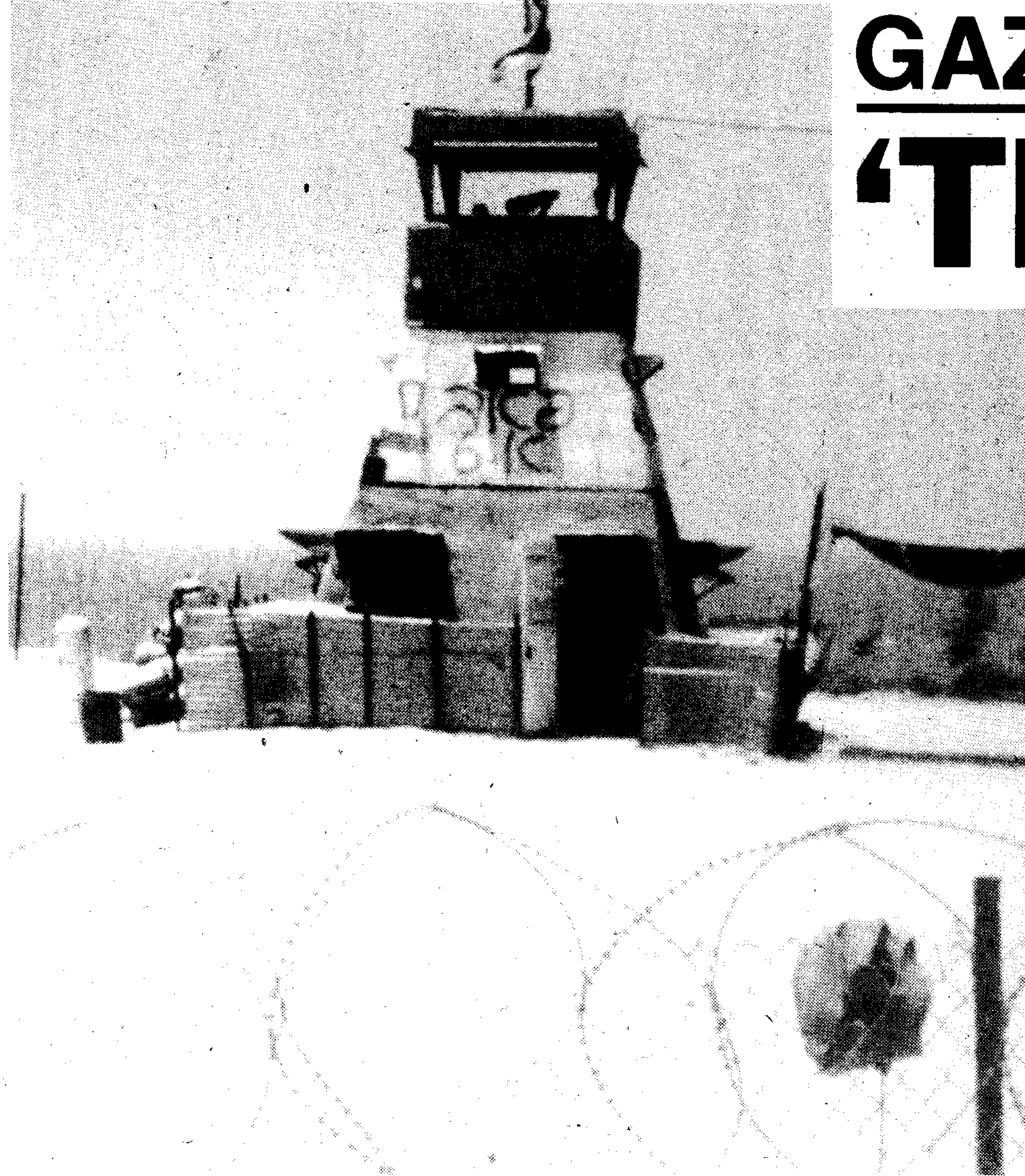
Session 2 DISCUSSION 4pm - 6pm

Dateline Palestine:

More on-the-spot reports
from Charlie Pottins

GAZA STRIP:

'The Soweto of Israel'



All along the coast, Israeli watchtowers like this one.

IN MAY this year, the West Bank and Gaza Strip Data Project, headed by Meron Benvenisti, published findings on the economic and social conditions in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip.

The report says the Strip has 'become the Soweto of the State of Israel', and calls living conditions there 'beyond disgrace'.

Among the Project's findings:

- The Gaza Strip is now one of the most densely populated regions in the world.
- Over half a million people live there, at a density of 2,100 per square kilometer. By the year 2000, the population should reach 900,000.
- Of the Strip's land area of 360,000 dunams (a dunam is about a thousand square meters), 113,000 dunams — almost one-third — have been declared 'state lands' by the Israeli authorities, for use of Zionist settlers.

● The 2,150 Israeli settlers now there directly control four times as much land as the eight Palestinian refugee camps occupy.

● Health conditions are 'catastrophic'. Twelve out of 15 population centres have no sewage system, resulting in cholera outbreaks.

● Infant mortality is four times the level in Israel. Hospitals are badly understaffed and undersupplied.

● Gaza's main Shifa hospital lacks basic equipment such as X-ray machines, and is short of beds.

● The Gaza Strip's per capita gross national product is only one fifth of Israel's.

● More than half of Gaza's workers are now employed in Israel, though they are not allowed legally to live there, and must return each night.

● One third are employed unofficially, that is without permits. The majority of these are children under 15.

● The average wage of Gaza Palestinians is 40 per cent less than that paid to Israelis.

● The Gaza Strip's own chief industries — citrus fruits and fishing — are being destroyed.

● Citrus production, 243,000 tons in 1975, fell to 114,000 in 1984.

● Israel discourages Gaza citrus exports to protect its own. It has restricted water usage by Palestinian farmers, while not applying restrictions to the Israeli settlers.

Israeli restrictions keep Gaza produce off the Israeli market, while Israeli producers have unlimited access to Gaza's fruit and vegetable markets.

● The Gaza fishing catch fell drastically from 3,800 tons in 1968 to 420 tons in the first few months of 1985.

● Israeli military authorities have directly brought this about by enforcing a 12 kilometer offshore fishing limit on Gaza fishermen.

The report observes:

'The whole of Gaza is becoming a labour camp for use by Israel. There is basically no independent Gazan economy to speak of.'

Besides providing cheap labour for Israeli employers, and paying local taxes, Gaza Palestinians working in Israel have to pay Israeli income tax and national insurance.

They can neither live nor vote in Israel, nor do they enjoy its social services.

● The Israeli state reaps \$35 million annually from these 'occupation taxes', the report says.

'This contradicts claims that there isn't enough money to improve services, and shows that Gaza is a profit-making business for the Israeli treasury', the authors comment.

● Neglect and exploitation have made the Gaza strip potentially the most 'explosive' area in the Occupied Territories, the Benvenisti report warns.

Welcome to the 'Planet

GAZA — 'I want to start by thanking you all for coming,' said Yusra Barbari. 'As you've heard, "Gaza is a planet". So we consider those who visit us as astronauts!'

We met Yusra Barbari at the Red Crescent health centre here, a busy place where mothers wait patiently in line with their infants, white-coated receptionists and medical staff are hard at work and young people come for training or study in the library.

A dignified silver-haired lady with a no-nonsense air, Yusra looks the kind of person who might have once run an East End social work 'Settlement' or fought for years for better housing conditions and been much loved by all.

That's not far from the work she does here, setting up women's centres, sewing circles and kindergartens and campaigning for a local hospital.

Only here in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip, where Yusra Barbari leads the Women's Committees, her activity also means being regularly hauled into police stations and military courts as a dangerous subversive!

Yusra's wry-humoured opening remark had a serious point.

En route for Gaza we had to go through an Israeli military checkpoint, as anyone must who enters or leaves the Strip.

Further south, coils of barbed razor wire and a wide no-man's land watched over by guard towers before the Egyptian border.

I watched some people shouting a few words to relatives across the wire.

All along the coast, more guard towers watch the beaches and the horizon.

Even the fishermen of Gaza are not allowed to go out more than a few miles to sea. It has virtually destroyed their industry.

But 'security' — the occupiers' security — rules.

The Red Crescent's Gaza health centre, set up by a group of Palestinians, stands

just outside the town, where streets give way to sand-dunes sloping down to the Mediterranean.

Down by the sea, fishing boats are beached, women are taking the youngsters down to paddle, people are swimming, a family are erecting a makeshift tent for shelter from the sun while they picnic.

The sea is a beautiful deep azure-blue, with emerald to white breakers.

Just back of the beach, amid all the sand, thousands of huts — breeze-blocks, cement and corrugated iron — form the Beach camp.

Here and there, one of the shacks serves as a shop or cafe, or craftsman's workshop.

The Beach camp is no Club Mediterranean pleasure spot however, but home — for the time being — to thousands of people.

'For the time being' means since 1948, when they fled here from Jaffa, from Majdal and Beersheba as the Zionist army and terror-gangs set up the State of Israel and Palestinians became a refugee people.

Under Egyptian rule and now under Israeli occupation, they have lived in these huts, tried to find work, raised children, dreamt of their Return. And organised. And resisted.

If the children who cluster round are clean, cheerful and lively amid these desperate conditions and seem well looked-after, that's also part of the struggle.

The heroism of the Palestinian mother should be re-

corded alongside that of the fighter.

And when you wave to these kids their response is immediate, spontaneous — little hands raised in confident victory signs.

Conditions in the Gaza Strip were never good.

More than half the land was unproductive sand dunes.

The fruit growers and farmers were cut off from much of their land by the 1948 armistice lines.

The big refugee influx meant abundant cheap labour for the growers and wages fell considerably.

Thousands remained in the camps, dependent on UN refugee relief.

Some workers managed to find employment abroad, particularly in the Gulf — a prospect now being hit by the oil slump.

With the Israeli occupation, much of the land has been seized for Zionist settlement.

Gaza's citrus and fishing industries are being crushed and workers travel daily to seek jobs in Israel — usually low-paid 'dirty' jobs in building, agriculture or factories.

Palestinian resistance in the Gaza Strip takes many forms.

Underground cells of Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) have carried out sporadic actions against the occupiers, although with isolation and severe repression, armed struggle here is more difficult than elsewhere.

Gaza!

Palestinians have also set out to build their own social, cultural and political organisations, in spite of repression from the occupiers and more recently opposition from local reactionaries hiding behind religious fanaticism.

On June 26 this year, Dr. Rabah Muhanna was savagely attacked by a gang who had followed him home from his clinic.

The thugs, armed with knives and iron bars, said they would 'finish him off'.

Fortunately his family managed to fight the attackers off, but the doctor and several of his family were badly injured.

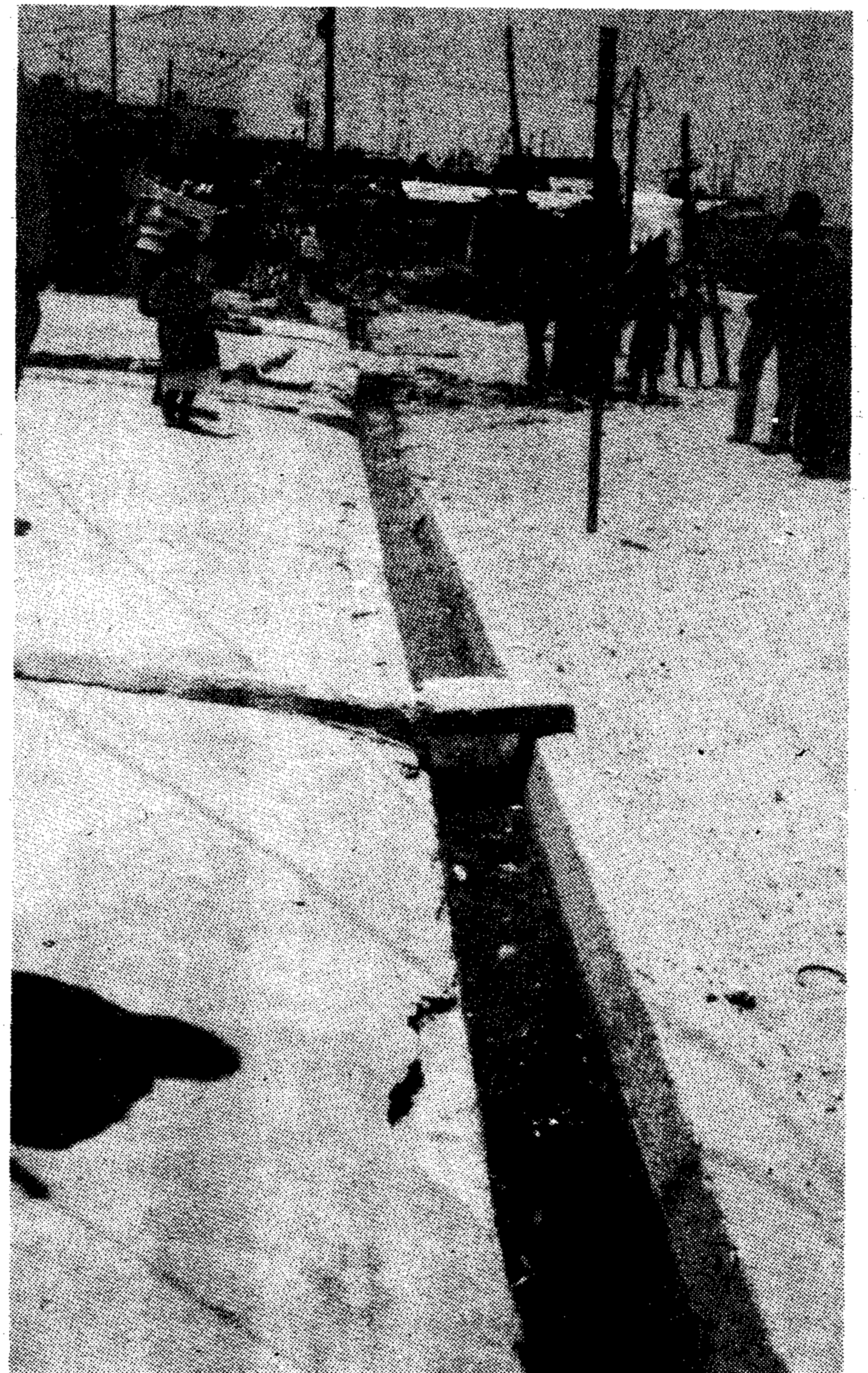
Later a group calling itself 'Islamic Direction' claimed responsibility and accused Dr. Muhanna of being a 'communist'.

Palestinian nationalists and socialists suspect the Zionist secret services, as well as Arab reactionaries, have a hand behind such 'Islamic' activity.

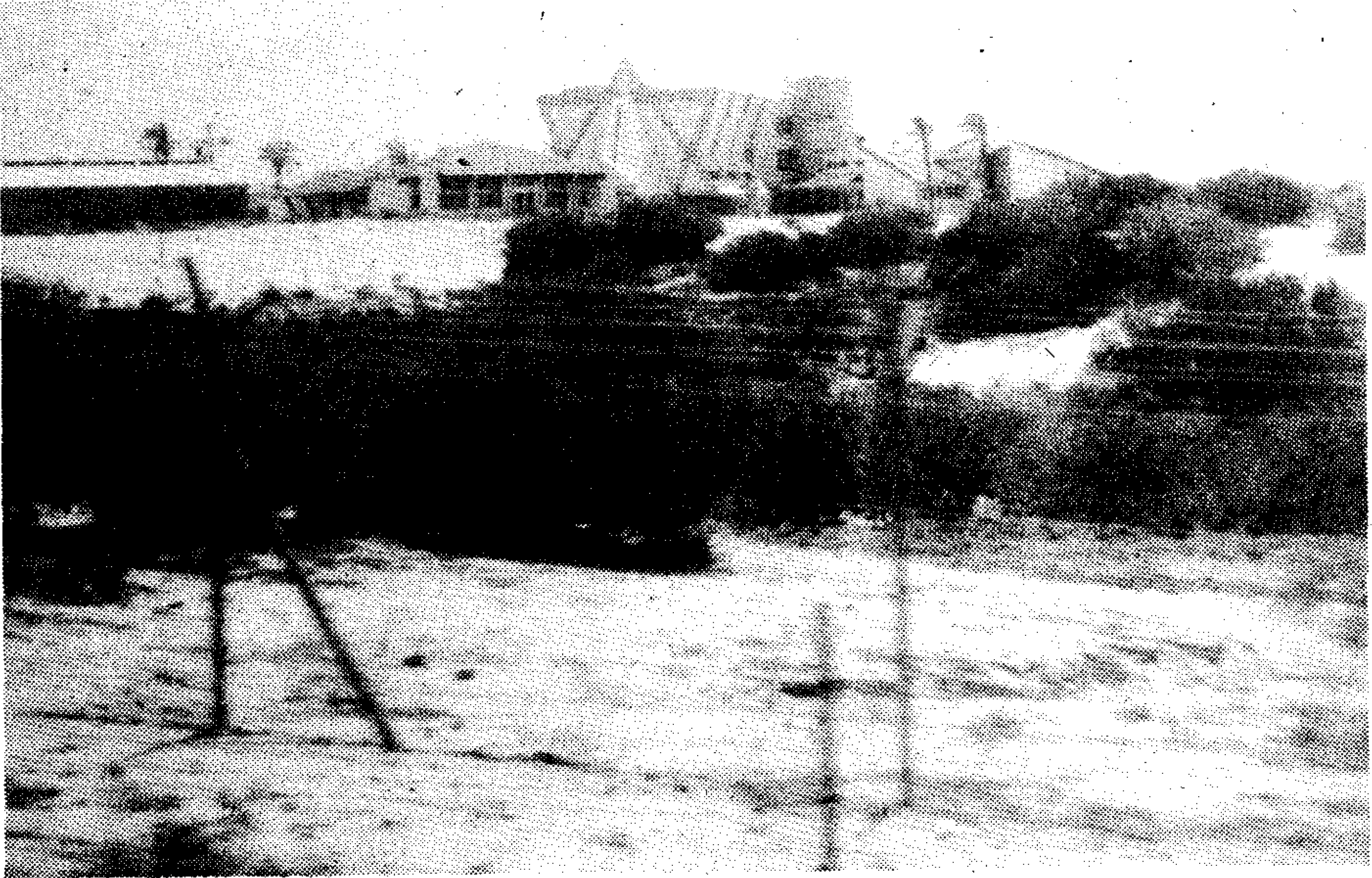
They also believe the religious reactionaries are still smarting from their loss of control over important institutions.

In 1985, Islamic leader Dr. Zahhar was ousted from leadership of the Arab Medical Association in Gaza when nationalist doctors won the elections.

The aim of patriotic and progressive Palestinians is to raise their people in Gaza from oppression, dependency and demoralisation and lay the foundations for a democratic Palestinian state.



SANITATION is a problem in the crowded camps, and even the towns.



A new Zionist settlement goes up in the Gaza Strip. Israeli authorities have seized one-third of the area.



In the Beach refugee camp. Against poverty, lack of facilities, military occupation, and reaction, the women of Gaza wage a daily struggle

'The remedy is our own state'

BESIDES chairing the board of the Red Crescent Society, Yusra Barbari is a leading personality in the women's movement in Gaza, and well aware of the links between health, social and national issues.

WE have five women's centres, in Gaza city, in Khan Yunis, in Rafah, and Beit Hanur. We also have a nursery in Gaza. In each centre we have a kindergarten for children 3-6 years old, and in the nursery we take children from one month to three years old.

In each centre we have sewing circles, knitting, embroidery, and crochet circles. We also have social activities.

We provide services to people in need, especially if the breadwinner is in prison, or a martyr, or has been deported.

We provide families whose men are in jail with rations, because we were forbidden to give them cash, only help in kind.

In the last five years we were stopped because the authorities stopped us receiving any donations, in cash or in kind.

There was an American organisation which sent a cheque for \$10,000. I waited five years for permission from the authorities to cash it. In the end I had to send it back to the organisation, and tell them we had not been allowed to use it.

This gives you an idea of our situation in the occupied territories.

We have women's services, we help people who need prosthesis, and we also co-operate with the Red Cross and Red Crescent in combatting illiteracy.

After Camp David, the authorities tried to force us to co-operate with the occupation in a new status, for so-called 'autonomy'.

They try to exercise control by preventing some organisations receiving money, and letting others have what they need. They don't want organisations led by nationalists to be able to work.

It happened we had two buses. Now they are out of use. No-one could get permission to repair them. I asked for another bus, for transporting children to school.

The situation in Gaza is more severe than in Jerusalem, or the West Bank. There people can maintain some relationship to Jordan. Here we are isolated.

We are not allowed to receive money. They want us to close our organisations. They are unable to close them all because of international public opinion. They want us to close ourselves,

by curtailing services to the people.

But we won't close. We will continue struggling.

Women join men in everything, including struggle.

Two years ago I gave an interview to a medical bulletin issued in the Gaza strip. They asked me what are the causes of our social problems, what are the remedies.

I told them, the causes are the occupation and what follows. The remedy is the occupiers' evacuation, and our own state. I was brought to court for this.

Six months ago, we advertised in a local newspaper our activities, and vacancies. We advertised an English course. I was brought to the police station three times, and interrogated.

They took my fingerprints as a criminal woman for organising sewing courses — imagine — and an English course for women!

I want to give you a fair picture of the Israelis. Some are tactful. The Judge heard the evidence against me, and said 'sorry, if a few women want to get together and form a sewing circle this not a subject for the military court.' Unfortunately, it is not always like that.

Regulations

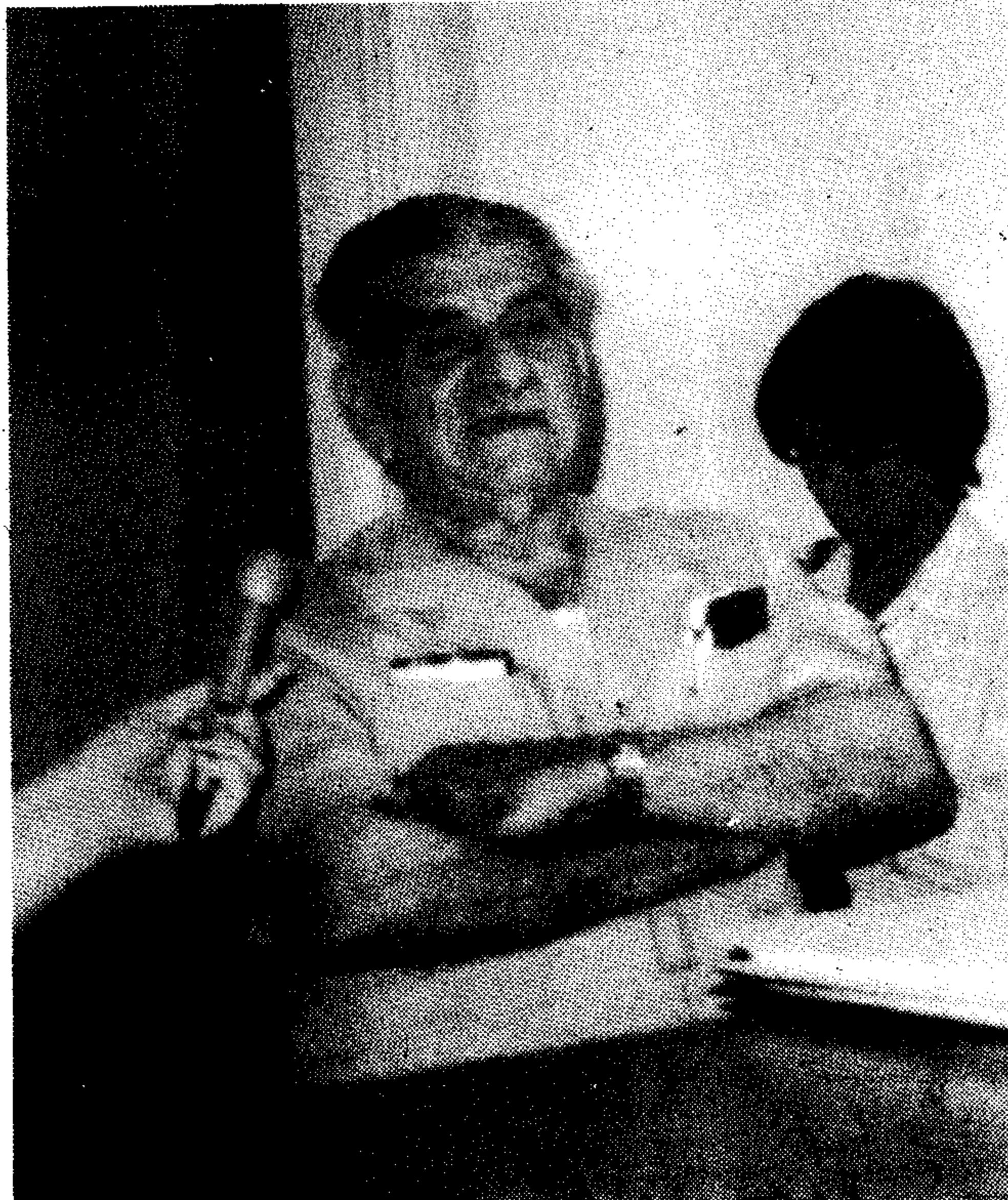
In 1906 under the Ottoman regime they issued a law regulating relations between the regime and clubs in Palestine. It continued to be applied during the Mandate period.

During the Egyptian period it was not applied. Under the Israeli occupation, they have added amendments to the regulations issued at the beginning of the century by the Ottomans.

Imagine! We are governed by a state that calls itself "an oasis of democracy in the Middle East", and uses laws of the Ottoman empire.

We have a licence to work as a benevolent organisation since 1964. It means our organisation can quote the Geneva convention, 1949. This states that an occupying power has no right to interfere with the organisation, to take assets, or to alter the constitution.

Last month I was brought to the military court twice a week. The charge was that five years ago a military officer came to one of our centres, and found a map of Palestine, with a Palestinian flag five centimetres wide.



DAOUD SAYEGH of the Gaza Red Crescent Society.

THE RED Crescent Society in the Gaza Strip combines medical, educational and cultural work. Dr. Daoud Sayegh, a leading member, spoke to us about its work.

'In 1969 we founded Gaza Strip Red Crescent society as a health and cultural society. We had to spend about three years negotiating with the military authorities. We weren't talking about establishing a state, only a benevolent society!'

'We started with clinics here in Gaza and in the camps. We now have three health centres. We have also established dental clinics in Gaza and at Khan Yunis. Every clinic has a pharmacy and we supply patients with medicines at cost.'

'We also supplied the local authority with an ambulance and another for the southern district, in Khan Yunis. From the beginning of our work we found we had a problem with nurses. This problem is not found in the Strip only, it is found in other places. So we began training young people. They study with us and we have sent nurses to all the health centres in Gaza and to the Baptist hospital.'

'We also sent three girls to learn nursing in Egypt. They study there for three years. Our only condition was that

We are forbidden to show our own flag.

When we held an art exhibition, they banned some of the pictures. They took exception to a picture by a famous Palestinian artist, because it symbolically showed Palestine being crucified on the cross. Another picture we had showed the massacres in Sabra and Chatila, and we were not allowed to hang that picture.

We were tried four times by the military court as criminals. They take our fingerprints as criminals.

We have a problem here when trying to re-unite families. Many of the people who married after 1967, the wife has a Palestinian identity card, but the husband who worked in Arab countries in 1967 is not registered in Israel.

When Reagan discusses human rights with Gorbachev during meetings, he insists on the right of Russian Jews to come here, because they are persecuted. They have the right to come, but Palestinians who were

born here are not allowed to come.

My brother died three years ago. I asked for my cousins to come here from Egypt. They are Palestinians, born in what is now Israel. They were not allowed to come.

Another thing that happens is that when a person is deported, his wife is not allowed to go to visit him. She can only follow him abroad for good, or she won't see her husband again.

Deported

When a father is deported, or in prison, or a martyr in our struggle, the woman has to work. She has to leave her children in the streets. She can't check that they are in school.

I think this is what the Israelis want. They know the Palestinians' percentage of graduates is second highest in world.

Children go to Israel, and are used by planters in Israel, or by contractors. It's



YUSRA BARBARI: 'Women join men in the struggle'

they serve here for two years. They graduated and are working in the Gaza strip now.

'Our main long term project is to establish a hospital. We began studying the problem in 1974. When we had completed our plans, we obtained a permit from the authorities. Then when we were ready to start, they stopped us building. We have to refer patients to Israeli hospitals. We are still trying to get our own hospital.'

'The second thing we were interested in was the cultural problem. We established a library. We used to hold meetings, lectures and debates on many subjects. Lately, we were forbidden to hold any meetings by the occupation authorities. We arranged art exhibitions and folklore festivals, but even these cultural activities the military authorities prevent.'

'We have tried to find someone in authority to tell us what they propose to do with the Strip. That was two or three months ago and we've still not found one.'

'We have other projects. In co-operation with other societies we have been able to start a centre for providing needy people with help for medical treatment, extra foods or other things they need. We also work to promote childrens' welfare and education.'

the same as South Africa. A child goes to Israel at 13 years old, he has nowhere proper to live, and no-one takes care of him. All kind of things can happen. You know how drugs spread in world.

One family has three brothers in prison, sometimes the other brother and the father were in prison. To help keep herself and her mother, the young girl worked at night, digging the ground, and then went to school in the morning.

They say we are terrorists. And the founders of terrorism, Begin, Shamir, were received by your government.

They don't want us to accept all UN resolutions, only 242, which makes us refugees.

All the Western governments call us "terrorists". Can you regard a Resistance man, who fights for his people, as a "terrorist"?

This Thatcher has made England a satellite of the United States. We follow the elections in the States, and

see the politicians all compete with each other to support Israel. If one says he supports Israel '100 per cent' the other will support it 150 per cent!'

The World closed its eyes to Hitlerism once. Now it is closing its eyes to what Zionism is doing.

Sharing

I am not against sharing this land with the Jews. There was co-existence between Jews and Arabs before. The midwife who helped Mummy at my birth was a Jewish woman called Shusha.

We can co-exist again, but as equals. And for this, first we Palestinians must have our own state.

Afterwards, maybe we will join in a confederation. We might federate with Jordan, or with Israel — perhaps it would be more practical to federate with Israel. But first we must have our own state, so that we can decide our future. ♪

STALINISM IN CRISIS

The challenge for the Trotskyist movement

THE 'REVELATIONS' of Khrushchev and the Hungarian revolution of 1956 had a devastating effect on the Communist Party of Great Britain with the loss of thousands of members.

The result would not have been so disastrous if the Party had been in a healthy state to begin with.

In fact, for many, party loyalty had long been strained.

Some were waiting for an opportunity to leave, held back by reluctance to desert their comrades when the Party was operating in an atmosphere of Cold War witch-hunting.

Over the years the obligation to defend every twist and turn of Soviet policy had become too burdensome for many.

Membership, which had reached its peak in the early post-war years, began to decline as members, usually silently, drifted away.

For some, it was the purge trials in Eastern Europe, or others, policy in Germany or Greece.

Some issues affected mainly intellectuals, like the Lysenko fraud or Stalin's pronouncements on linguistics or economics.

Others had a wider impact, such as the 'Doctor's Plot' in the period leading up to Stalin's death or rumours of anti-Semitism.

Workers were more likely to be put off by the Party's devious industrial and trade union policy.

The expulsion of Tito from the Cominform in 1948 and the abuse showered on him had been difficult to swallow for many (his subsequent rehabilitation was equally perplexing).

Moreover, the situation in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death was confused; no-

TOM KEMP joined the Young Communist League in 1936 in Wandsworth and the Communist Party in 1939.

In 1956, after a series of battles with the leadership, he tore up his Party card and made contact with the Trotskyist movement, which he joined in 1957.

Teaching economic history in Southampton and then Hull Universities, he is the author of many books and articles, his *Theories of Imperialism* being especially well known, both to Marxists and in academic circles.

one knew much about the new leaders and they did not command the same confidence as 'Uncle Joe'.

The years 1953-56 can be seen as a pre-crisis period; strange things appeared to be happening in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe.

Even if these questions were not being discussed openly, they were being raised in the minds of many members.

There was less readiness to accept the line as ground out by the almost unreadable 'For a Lasting Peace! For a Peoples' Democracy!' ('For-For'), the Cominform journal or by the Party's own press.

By the early part of 1956, questions were beginning to be asked about policy in the Middle East, about anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe and then, as more information and 'revelations' filtered through, all sorts of other matters.

The usually dull branch meetings, poorly attended, began to take on a different character.

Local officials found it increasingly difficult to handle the problems raised.

There were more visits from full-time officials from the District or higher level.

People who had seldom been seen at meetings began to turn up regularly.

In the period from February onwards there was a continuous supply of new questions, especially following the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.

Various pronouncements were made by leaders of other Communist Parties which would fill a substantial book.

The CPGB made its own lamentable contribution in a statement issued in June, 1956.

In the attempt to explain what had gone wrong in the Soviet Union following Khrushchev's attack on Stalin, most credence was accorded to several statements made by Palmiro Togliatti.

A long-time Comintern official, noted for his supple spine, he well knew what had been going on. Some of his best friends had been among Stalin's victims.

The CPGB rapidly seized on Togliatti's main report and circulated it (while the authenticity of the Khrush-

chev 'Secret Speech' was denied).

Togliatti's sophisticated apologetics acted for a time as a lightning conductor for the anger building up inside the Party.

It was soon outstripped by events: the Poznan revolt, the Hungarian uprising and the two Soviet military interventions in Budapest in October and November, 1956.

Up to then, many Party dissidents (including the intellectuals around 'The Reasoner') might have settled for Togliatti, together with a freer internal party life and more space for discussion in Party journals.

Hungary had complex effects.

It intensified the pressure of bourgeois public opinion on those publicly identified with the CP in their local communities and places of work.

Conversely, some felt they had to stand by the Party simply because it was in danger.

Others saw the Hungarian events as a genuine workers' uprising, complete with Soviets.

The intervention by the Red Army seemed to be completely counter-revolutionary and indefensible.

It thus raised many new and fundamental questions.

Some of these had been in formulation ever since the publication of the Khrushchev 'Secret Speech'.

How could such things take place in what was supposed to be a 'socialist' country?

Marxists could not be satisfied with an explanation in terms of 'the cult of the personality'.

They had to trace what we were to learn to call 'the Stalinist degeneration' to its social and class roots in the Soviet Union.

This raised the whole question of the history of the Soviet Union since the revolution of 1917 and led inevitably to a study of Trotsky's writings and of the history of the Left Opposition.

Significantly, practically nobody in the CP at that time was qualified to deal with the questions now being raised (hence the impact of Brian Pearce, one of the few exceptions, at the famous Wortley Hall conference later on).

The ignorance of even the most highly educated intellectuals, including those belonging to the Historians Group, was profound.

The few who did know the history of the Soviet Union — like Maurice Dobb and Andrew Rothstein — were confirmed Stalinists.

Many oppositionists thought that historical questions, and especially foreign (eg Russian) questions, could be kept out of the discussion and that it should be confined to seeing what went wrong in Britain.

Unfortunately, although they were not aware of it, the shadow of Stalin hung over them, and 'socialism in one country' had eaten its way into their bones.

The only way out of the impasse, as some of us were to discover slowly and painfully, was to read the forbidden books and to make contact with those who represented the movement which had fought Stalinism from the beginning.

We had to do this, not from the point of view of setting the historical record straight in our own minds (although that was crucial), but to find the continuity of the Marxist movement.

Only then could we contribute to the building of the revolutionary party which we knew the working class needed and which palpably the Communist Party was not.

This was no straightforward task.

Outside the CP and the Labour Party there was a multiplicity of small groups.

Some of these we knew about, like the Independent Labour Party, the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the De Leonite Socialist Labour Party.

Investigation showed that these organisations were moribund in more ways than one.

They had a few aging members, brought out papers and published pamphlets but they were not in any real sense making a bid for the leadership of the working class.

They kept on repeating old truths as part of their faith; they were sectarians in the proper sense.

Their offices and their papers were paid for largely out of the legacies of past members.

They had an atmosphere



TITO: his expulsion was difficult to swallow for many

of the funeral parlour.

It was soon clear that a distinction had to be made between these groups and those which declared themselves to be Trotskyists or Fourth Internationalists or at least had their origins in the Trotskyist movement.

The membership of these groups was relatively young and active.

They claimed to be building a movement in the working class and they presented a more or less coherent body of theory, including an analysis of Stalinism.

They were thus more attractive to those breaking away from the CP and looking for a Marxist alternative.

This point is important.

Hundreds of former CP members were looking for such an alternative but they did not automatically turn to such groups.

Many continued to look for some way of reviving the party they knew, of creating some kind of renovated CP, which would really put the 'British Road to Socialism' into practice (shades of Eurocommunism).

This was the attraction of 'The Reasoner', brought out by well-known intellectual dissidents.

They were not interested in building an alternative party on Leninist lines but in bringing out a review and carrying on a discussion.

They were steeped in ignorance as far as the history of the Soviet Union and of the international communist movement were concerned.

Their attitude to Trotsky and Trotskyism was consumed with prejudice and reflected their miseducation in the CP.

Most of those who turned in this direction were soon lost to the movement, went into the Labour Party (a few into Parliament) or formed the first cohorts of what was known as 'the New Left'.

But that is another tale. To be continued.

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PETER FRYER



The Hungarian revolution of 1956 and its brutal suppression by Russian tanks was a watershed in the history of socialism.

In October 1956 Peter Fryer was sent to cover these events for the Daily Worker. He reported what he saw — only to have his despatches suppressed and to be suspended and then expelled from the Communist Party.

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Peter Fryer's eye-witness account, first published in December 1956, had an immediate impact, bringing home to many things which they wished were not true.

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A rebel signals the successful capture of the Budapest Communist Party headquarters.

Laszlo Rajk — victim of the Stalinist purge

TV REVIEW

LAST TUESDAY, Yorkshire Television presented us with a moving documentary which dealt with the circumstances surrounding the imprisonment and execution of Laszlo Rajk.

Rajk, at one time Hungarian Minister of the Interior and then Foreign Minister, had been arrested in 1949 as a CIA spy.

This was the first shot in a wholesale purge of the Hungarian Communist Party inspired by Moscow and implemented by Rakosi, the leading bureaucrat in Hungary.

Throughout Hungary, 483,000 Party members were expelled. The purge spread throughout eastern Europe. In Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Albania, hundreds were executed and thousands imprisoned.

In the post-war period huge reparations had been demanded by the Soviet bureaucracy from Hungary.

Together with the policy of forced collectivisation and industrialisation, the Hungarian working class and peasantry were bled dry.

This formed the background to Rajk's trial.

The documentary was especially significant because it was made by Rajk's son (also called Laszlo) who still lives in Hungary.

He was only seven months old when his father was executed and his mother Julia imprisoned.

She was forced to watch her husband's execution from her cell window.

After the execution, her son was put in an orphanage. Later when she was released, Julia Rajk began a twofold campaign for the rehabilitation of her husband

and for the return of her son.

The struggle for Rajk's rehabilitation proved a successful focal point for opposition to the bureaucracy in the lead up to the Hungarian revolution.

When the regime was forced to a ree to the reburial of Rajk, 200,000 people attended the funeral.

From this event sprang the first unofficial demonstration.

In the programme Laszlo junior interviews former friends and enemies of his father in search of answers to questions that have haunted him all his life.

Why did it happen? Why did his father confess and why did others believe it?

These questions probe to the very heart of Stalinism, although only former 'Daily Worker' reporter Peter Fryer attempted to raise this in the programme.

Like everything else in Hungary at that time the Rajk trial followed the pattern of the Moscow trials of the 1930s and served the same function.

As in the Moscow trials, leading CP members and others confessed to non-existent crimes, some in their demoralisation and confusion believing this to be the only way left for them to further socialism.

So too Rajk was 'per-

sueded' to confess.

He was tortured for some weeks, but it was only when Janos Kadar, a close friend and Laszlo junior's godfather, went to see him and promised him a new life in exile that he confessed.

Today Kadar heads the Hungarian government and Rajk was executed. Bela Szasz, tortured and tried alongside Rajk, lives in exile in Britain.

Some did not care whether or not Rajk was guilty. They thought the trial was 'politically necessary'.

Peter Fryer was convinced at the time of Rajk's guilt.

In the film Laszlo junior asks him why he did not question the evidence.

Fryer replies that there was no question of doubt; he told CP meetings on his return to Britain 'I would have shot him myself'.

For Fryer as well as many thousands of other CP members, the break with Stalinism was only begun in a process which culminated in the Hungarian revolution.

From Laszlo junior's inquiries we discover that his father was no career bureaucrat but a courageous member of the International Brigades in Spain and an underground fighter against Admiral Horthy's fascist regime in Hungary itself.

Precisely for these reasons he was the perfect scapegoat.

Unlike Rakosi he had not spent the war in the Soviet Union, and having been in the west he could be accused of CIA connections.

But he was not arrested because he was a threat himself to the bureaucracy.

He had been a leading member of it, and as Minister of the Interior been responsible for the notorious AVH (Secret Police).

His trial and execution was part of the machine of terror designed to subordinate the working class to the needs of the bureaucracy.

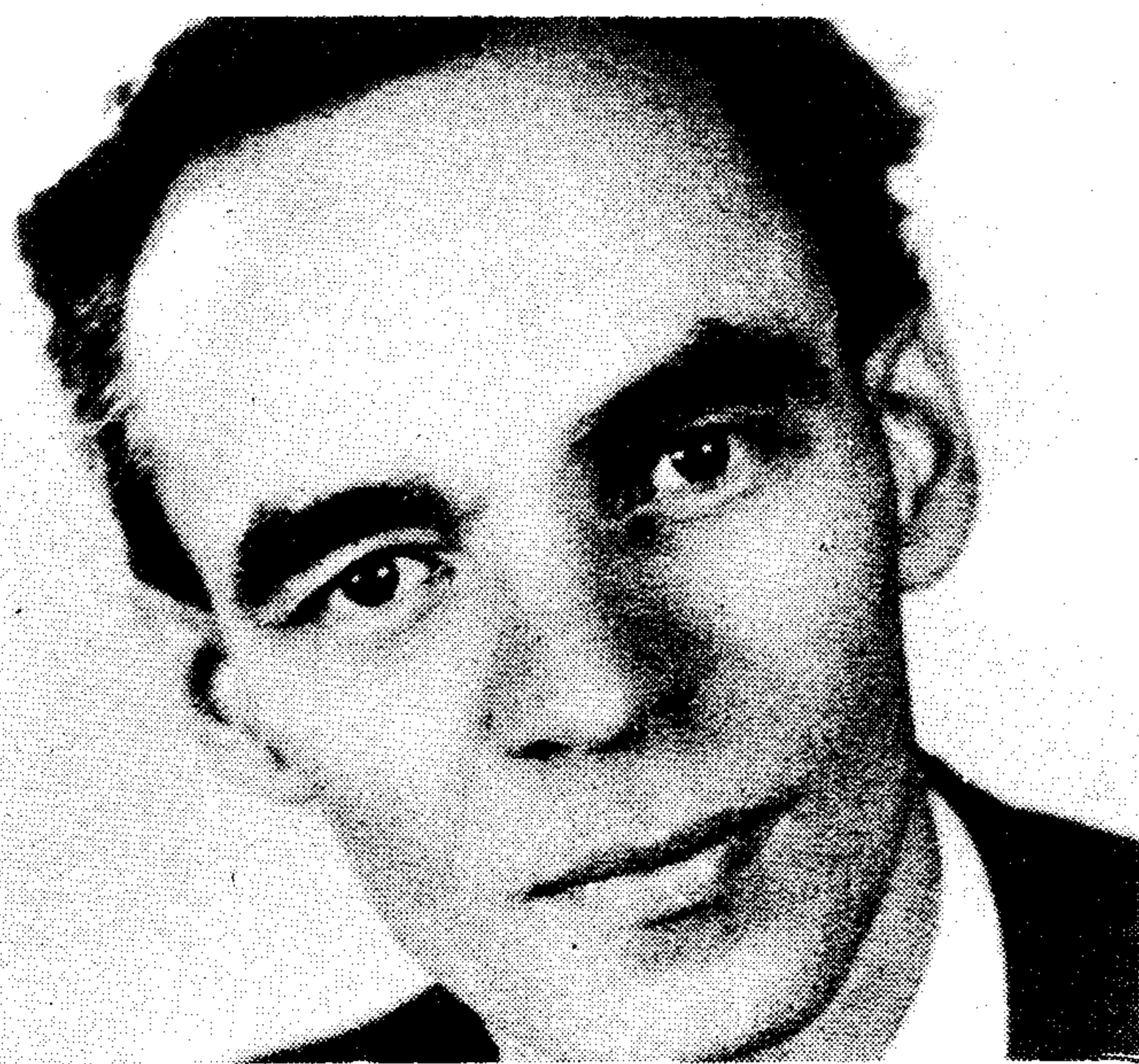
But this is not the end of the story.

Rajk's trial is not forgotten.

Laszlo junior is a leading member of the Hungarian



ABOVE: LASZLO junior at his father's funeral and, below, Laszlo Rajk in 1949



opposition which keeps alive the memory of the 1956 Hungarian revolution.

Laszlo has already lost his job and his apartment for his opposition to the regime.

As he says in the film: 'Some people never confessed the truth. Some people never paid the bill... I am their walking guilty conscience.'

Andrew Burgin

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Sinn Fein in the 26 Counties

THE 'NEW TOWN' of Tallaght to the south of Dublin is virtually a suburb of the capital city. Its population of 70,000 lives in a vast sprawl of housing estates, mostly local authority owned, which runs up into the Dublin mountains.

Though designated a satellite town in its own right by the planners, it has no town centre. The inhabitants of its 20,000 dwellings suffer from the lack of the most basic modern urban amenities such as local governmental administration, shopping centres, hospitals, recreation facilities, parks, etc.

The shortage of jobs produces unemployment levels of up to 80 per cent in some housing estates. These conditions are typical of working class areas which have sprung up since the late 60's with the arrival of the post-war boom to the Free State.

John Noman, Sinn Fein Community Officer for Dublin, spoke to WORKERS PRESS about the developing role of the Republican movement in these communities. The interview was held in the Tallaght Sinn Fein advice centre which is manned by a staff of unemployed members.

WHEN did SF institute this localised political service?

THE HUGE level of support won by the hunger strikes provided the basis for a new political role.

It gave us the resources to establish a firmer base in the community, to get entrenched at street level on the local issues and on the overall struggle against British Imperialism.

There was a need for this type of activity as thousands were drifting away after the hunger strike campaign peaked.

In line with the experiences of Belfast and Derry, Sinn Fein set up local advice centres in areas where the resources existed.

In Dublin there are four full time centres, two part time and a mobile service catering for others on a rota basis.

We advise and support people on their rights regarding welfare payments, medical benefits, legal aid, housing, etc.

We are not passive, we actively support or initiate campaigns for local employment, schools, medical facilities, recreation centres, youth amenities, etc.

We are the only political organization with a free time base here.

WHAT initial problems did this new role bring? What difficulties did you encounter?

IN THE beginning the state tried to stifle us through severe harassment by the Branch.

No doubt they were acting on behalf of the traditional political parties who are afraid of our political success.

This eased off due to our ability to respond by picketing the police barracks whenever someone was lifted.

Of course, our own resistance was reinforced by the political respect we won in the areas.

Local people learnt a lot about the free states priori-

ties when they saw political activists being hounded while nothing was being done about drug pushing, muggings and other crimes, supposedly because the Gardaí did not have the resources.

IN WHAT way has the political awareness and attitudes in the communities changed since Sinn Fein's electoral intervention?

WE ARE now recognised as a force that is here to stay.

We have roots here, we're a part of the local population suffering the same everyday problems of raising a family and getting on with life.

We don't just appear in flashy cars and nice suits at election times like the capitalist parties.

Of course we had to earn the trust and respect we now have by breaking through the media barrier.

Sinn Fein elected representatives are banned from appearing on TV or radio and there is the anti-Republican self-censorship of the press.

We can breach this wall of silence at the doorstep and on the streets in our campaigns.

We are able to explain the facts about the war and show its links with the problems of southern working class families.

For instance, people don't see the relevance of the Anglo-Irish agreement to their own conditions.

They would rather have the money that is spent on maintaining partition via the army and the police put to use in providing jobs, etc.

HOW STRONG now is the political base of Sinn Fein in working class areas like Tallaght?

IN 1984 as Sinn Fein Candidate for Dublin I contested the E.E.C. elections.

In Tallaght, Sinn Fein topped the poll with 1,500 votes.

Then in the local elections of 1985 our three candidates won 2,400 votes which should have won us two seats but for

the splitting of the constituencies in a deliberate gerrymander by the government.

There are 39 Sinn Fein local representatives in various local councils throughout the 26 counties.

Our work here in Dublin has been enormously strengthened with the election of Christy Bourke to the city corporation.

This has broken the official barrier.

We get very good cooperation from city and county council officials as well as employees of state agencies when we meet them on behalf of claimants who come to us for assistance.

IRELAND has the largest proportion of young people in its population.

What are the typical problems you have to deal with in relation to youth?

IN THE main our support comes from the youth and younger married couples.

There are several areas where we have made an impact.

When drug addiction became a problem in Tallaght, the state sat back and did nothing.

We helped local groups like the Concerned Parents organise meetings which were addressed by ex-addicts, mothers and wives of addicts.

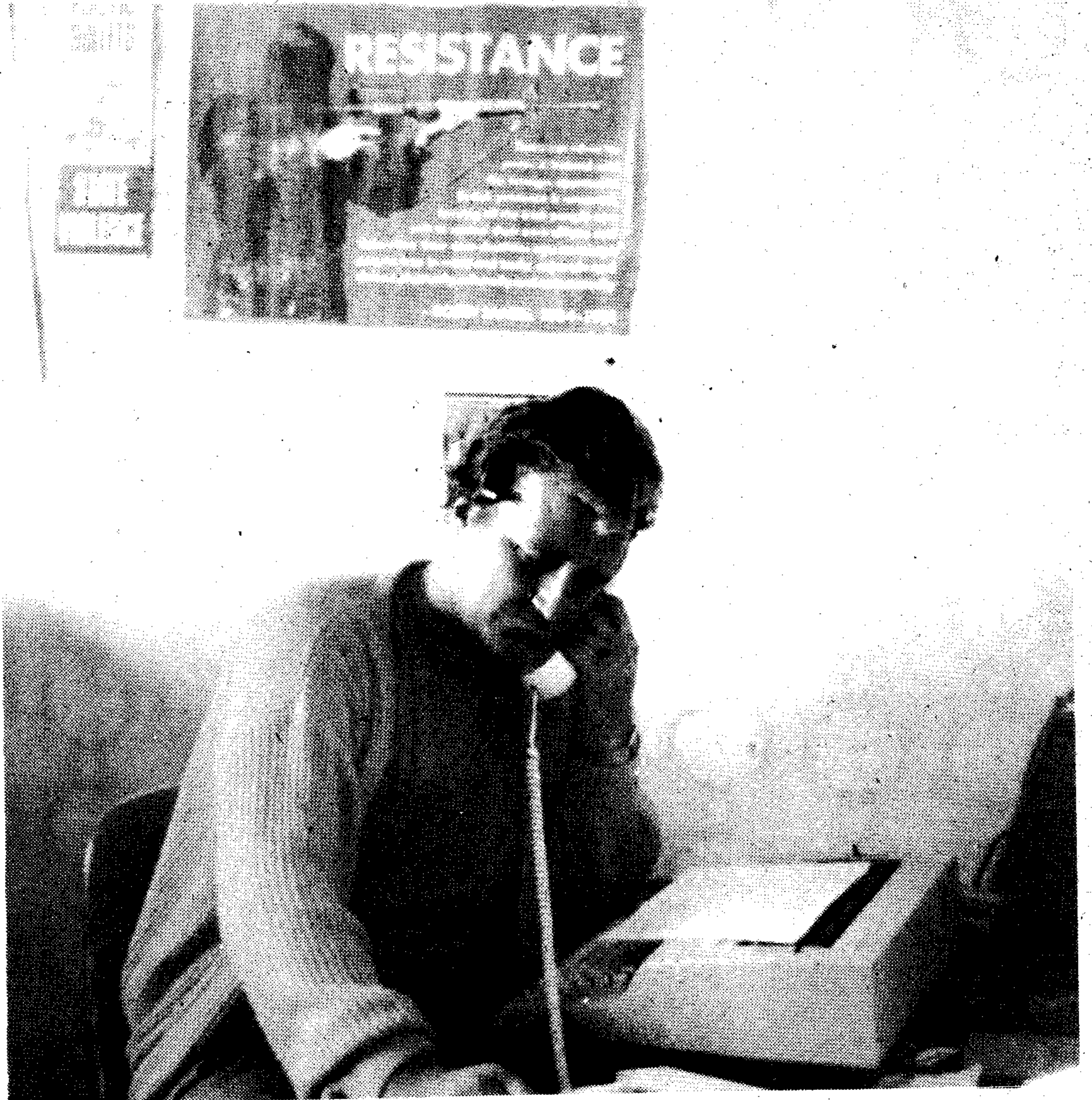
This alerted the community to the dangers of drugs.

We also alerted people to the arrival of pushers who had been driven out of inner city areas by the Concerned Parents groups.

These initiatives forced the authorities to react. Schools now have anti-drug discussions, etc. and the state is funding an agency called Community Against Drugs.

It seems that the addiction rate is falling so our actions were successful.

Our youth department helps organise local youth campaigns for training centres for training centres, youth clubs, jobs and so on.



JOHN NOMAN, Sinn Fein's Community Officer in Dublin

We don't put aside those already in community groups, we are involving those who are most alienated and who are ignored by the existing agencies.

There has been a successful attempt by us to deal with youths with a background of petty crime and delinquency.

Many have been won to political work and self organization.

Whenever local initiatives have developed, such as on building youth clubs or seeking government funding for local employment on environmental work, we have fully supported these groups.

Our participation, in fact, has exposed the fake claims of the Youth Employment Agency for the numbers alleged to be engaged on work projects, etc.

WHAT is the response of women to your policies and activities?

IN SINN Fein there is a policy of positive discrimination towards female members.

Our women's department oversees the implementation of this and also co-ordinates work on women's questions, such as contraception, family law, equal pay and job opportunities.

In the new suburban areas like Tallaght working class women are additionally burdened by the remoteness of the estates from essential services like hospitals, shopping centres, offices of government departments and state bodies and so on.

We find a big response on issues like Strip Searching and are proud of our continuous campaign against this vile practice in Maghaberry jail.

The Tallaght strip search committee is very active and effective in the area and has won the respect and gratitude of the women prisoners. (See Letter)

HOW DO you see this practical work progressing?

OF COURSE, our short term objective is to maintain our electoral success — not just for the votes alone.

By involving local people in campaigns we hope to develop their confidence in their own ability and at the same time this enables them to develop their political awareness.

In the long term this can only strengthen and accelerate the struggle to defeat British imperialism and establish the United Socialist Ireland we all need and want.

Steven Shaw book launched

'Steven Shaw has left Britain for his own safety' a press conference was told by councillor Tony McCardell, chair of Manchester City Council Police Monitoring Unit on Tuesday October 7.

The conference was called to launch Martin Walker's book 'With Extreme Prejudice', which outlines a history of continual police harassment and attacks on both Steven Shaw and Sarah Hollis.

These two students had voiced intent to make official complaints to the Manchester Police following police violence against student demonstrators on a picket of Leon Brittan's visit to Manchester University in March 1985 — and singled themselves out for 'special attention'.

Steven Shaw had proposed an independent enquiry by the PMU, with whom he had contact.

On February 2, 1986, almost a year after the demonstration, he was attacked in a Manchester street by two men who had interrogated and assaulted him at Bootle Street police station the previous year.

They broke his nose, stamped on his hands, hit him with bottles and stubbed out cigarettes on his face.

Steven had only returned to Manchester at the request of the Avon and Somerset

Manchester District and pointed at Anderton as being the man behind the cases.

Steven's father, Maurice Shaw, congratulated Walker on his book.

'Eighteen months ago, Steven had agreed to co-ordinate the investigation into the police actions on the occasion of Brittan's visit.

'I attended student meetings here and found witnesses had been intimidated into retracting evidence by the police.

'Steven is prepared to carry on with the case but, at the moment, he has gone abroad.

Workers Press will review Martin Walker's book next week.

BY SUE GWYER

police, who were conducting the internal police enquiry.

This was the culmination of a year of continual physical and mental harassment.

Martin Walker drew certain parallels between the Stalker affair and Steven Shaw's case.

Revealing

Both, he said, were involved in cases revealing facts which the police and the Home Office did not want to publicise.

However, Stalker had powerful support within the constabulary which Steven did not have.

Walker stated that both cases reflected the methods of policing in the Greater

Stop strip-searching in Maghaberry

● THIS letter was sent to the Tallaght Strip Search Committee from Maghaberry

Friends:

WE, THE WOMEN Republican Prisoners of Maghaberry jail would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the Tallaght Strip Search Committee for their efforts to try and bring around an end to strip searching in this jail.

Since November 1982, we have been systematically brutalised by the prison administration through their policy of strip searching.

Remand prisoners are especially vulnerable in that they must be stripped before and after a five minute court appearance each week.

However, all prisoners regardless of age or physical condition can fall victim to this practice.

Women of 50 to 60 years old have been stripped naked and visually inspected by

female warders. Pregnant women on their way to hospital to give birth have also had to undergo this humiliating experience.

Indeed, only a few months ago, one girl was stripped naked on her return from Oraigavon Hospital after suffering the traumas of a miscarriage.

The reality of strip searching is simply that it is used as a psychological weapon by the administration to try and break our spirit of resistance.

They have tried other forms of suppression down throughout our long years in prison and now they seek to use the ultimate insult — the moral and physical degradation of our bodies.

Their inhuman policy serves no useful security purpose. No matter how emphatically the Northern Ireland Office argues it does, the facts prove otherwise.

1. No item of importance has

ever been found during one of these searches

2. Most of the prisoners forced to endure strip searches are on remand and therefore are at no time out of the sight and scrutiny of prison guards

3. The fact that it was unheard of in this jail before 1982 suggests that other adequate forms of searching took place without criticism before that date.

Your concern and readiness in the past to act on our behalf has reinforced our spirit of resistance and with your help we feel confident that it is only a matter of time before the Northern Ireland Office is forced to abandon this shameful practice.

Our sincere thanks and gratitude goes to every one of you, and we know we can depend on your support.

Is Mise Le Mens, Women Republican Prisoners, Maghaberry Jail

WEAPONS OF REPRESSION!

Plastic bullets campaign under way



MURDERED — Ban plastic bullets! This was the reply of the 70 pickets outside Astra Fireworks as the names of the 16 people killed by plastic and rubber bullets were read out. The picket was called last Monday by the Wolfe Tone Society and the Campaign Against Plastic Bullets.

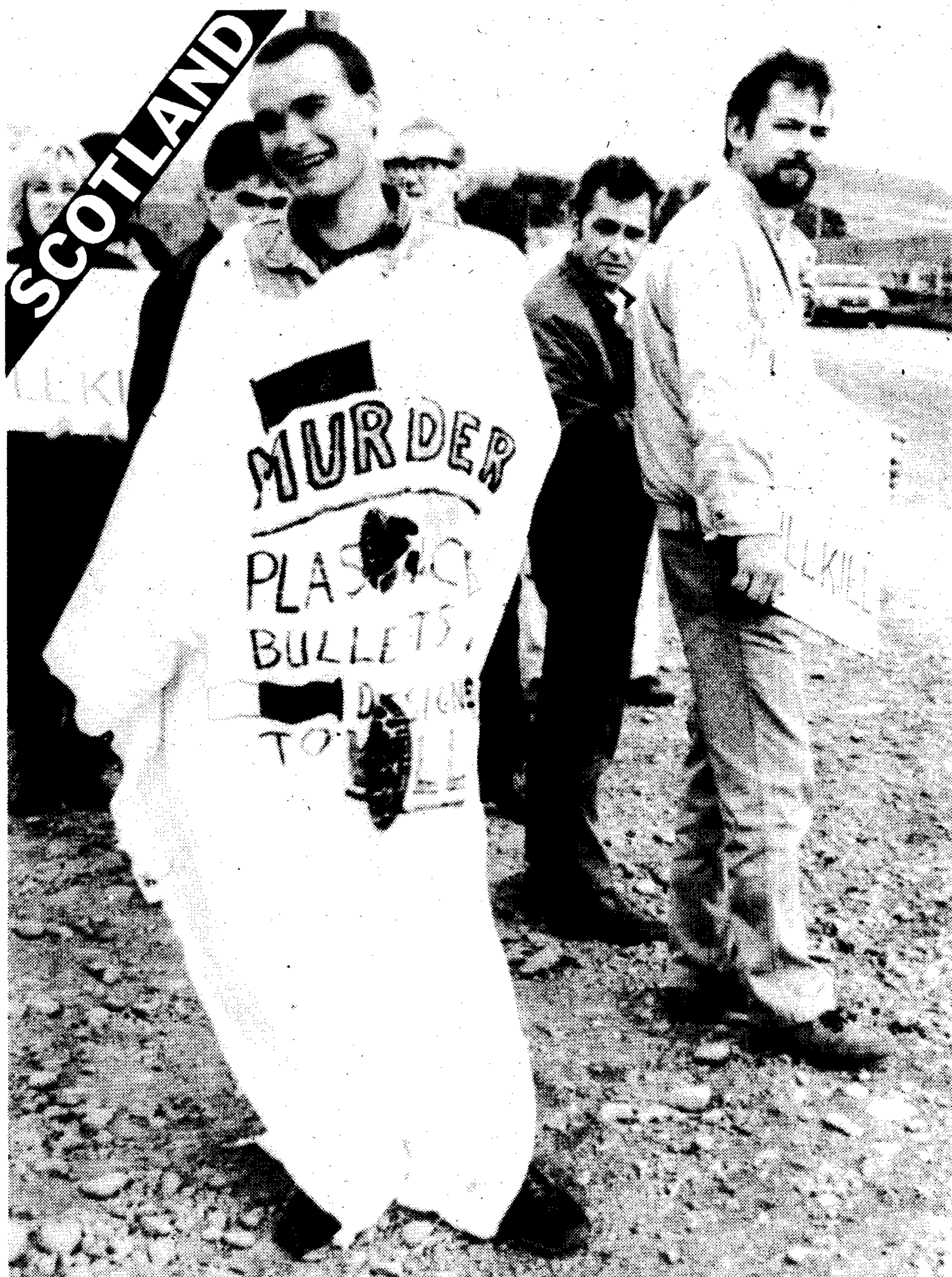
Gerry MacLaughlin told Workers Press: 'Every year the families of those killed and injured by plastic bullets picket Brocks Fireworks in Scotland. Brocks manufacture a component of plastic bullets. Astra Fireworks also produce this component and the relatives asked us to organise a picket in London outside the head offices of Astra at 162 Regent Street.'

The pickets were told of the hypocrisy of the government, as Astra Fireworks are actually banned in northern Ireland while the company continues to make large profits out of these murderous weapons.

Present on the picket were the Irish Freedom Movement, the WRP, Proletarian, the New Communist Party and many Irish individuals who are not members of any particular group. The sponsors included several Indian and Black groups and Bob Doyle, an Irish veteran of the International Brigades.

Boycott Astra's! Boycott Brock's! Ban plastic bullets!

Neil Dempsey



WORKERS at Brock's Fireworks in Sanquor were handed leaflets asking them to put pressure on management to stop the manufacture of plastic bullets last Monday by relatives of some of those killed in Belfast and supporters of the campaign from Glasgow and Durham.

This was the final event in an action-packed tour by members of the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets from Belfast — a full report of which will feature in next weeks Workers Press.

COMMENT

'LIBERAL APOPLEXY' Chauvinism and FRAUD

CHRIS Talbot of the International Communist Party (The Hyland group split from the WRP) has given us, in issues two and three of their paper International Worker no less than 131 column inches of turgid prose — 66½ inches of which are quotations out of context and outside of any regard for historical materialism.

In order to defend his stinking chauvinism his members are to be befuddled by outright fraud.

In the September/October issue he begins with a quote from what he says is Lenin's report on the national and colonial question to the Second Congress of the Comintern 1920.

It is no such thing. What he has quoted, in fact, is Lenin's draft thesis 11(A) on the national and colonial question.

This draft was subsequently amended in commission and Lenin's report to the Congress dealt in detail with that amendment (Lenin admitting his error, horror of horrors).

This is Talbot's quote, which he took from a Lawrence & Wishart publication p.224, British Labour and British Imperialism. The amended thesis 11(A) reads:

'All Communists Parties must support the revolutionary liberation movements by their deeds. The form the support should take must be discussed with the communist party of the country in question, should such a party exist.

'This obligation to offer active assistance affects in the first-place the workers of these countries on which the

backward countries are in a position of colonial or financial dependence.' The Second Congress of the Communist International, New Park Publications, Vol I, p181.

Lenin's report to the Congress tells of differences of opinion on this subject in the commission.

'There can be no doubt of the fact that any nationalist movement can only be a bourgeois democratic movement because the great mass of the population of the backward countries consists of the peasantry, which is the representative of bourgeois capitalist relationships.' (ibid p110-111)

Sixty six years later the great mass of Ireland's population are workers.

DISTINCTION

This alters the entire composition of the nationalist movement and therefore the pressure for socialist measures. This is just where Lenin begins:

'But objections were raised that if we say "bourgeois-democratic" we lose the distinction between the reformist and the revolutionary movement... because the imperialist bourgeoisie has done every-

BY GERRY DOWNING

thing in its power to create a reformist movement among the oppressed people too.

'We believe that the only correct thing would be to take this difference into consideration and replace the words "bourgeois-democratic" almost everywhere with the expression "national-revolutionary".' (ibid p11)

Advocating this it seems 'throws some liberals into apoplexy (such as Gerry Downing, the Irish "expert" of the Workers Press). Talbot should direct his scorn at Lenin and the author of the phrase rather than at an ex-Healyite trying to redress our legacy of chauvinism.

Anyway, he says, Workers Press 'will not deceive those revolutionary fighters in Ireland who are genuinely struggling for a Marxist proletarian standpoint'. This is no one, since Talbot has no affiliates in Ireland, but we should have no trouble conning the Irish non-Marxist it seems.

After further misquotes from Lenin (the rough draft, not the agreed policy), Trotsky is wheeled out and China of 1927 becomes Ireland 1986, Sinn Fein becomes the Irish bourgeoisie (Fianna Fail,

MANCHESTER

THE URGENCY to build a united campaign to ban plastic bullets was stressed at a Manchester meeting held during the Labour Party conference.

Jim McAbe, secretary of the Campaign to Ban Plastic Bullets, told the meeting these weapons are used to try to terrorise the population in the six counties.

All present pledged to help regenerate the campaign.

The Police Monitoring Unit (PMU) of Manchester City Council is already affiliated to the campaign, but

impetus has been lost after the GLC ceased to exist since they were the co-ordinators of the campaign.

The PMU published an article in August against the use of plastic bullets in their bi-monthly journal 'Police Watch', delivered to all homes in the Manchester City area.

The Manchester City Council police authority refused permission for Chief Constable Anderton to stock plastic bullets, only to find him going over their heads directly to Home Secretary Douglas Hurd. Manchester

Fine Gael and the Unionists will be disappointed) and is equated with the Kuomintang, the counter-revolutionary butchers of the Shanghai soviet.

If (as Talbot says) we cannot 'support the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation in so far as they struggle against imperialism' (Workers Press, July 5), we must reject thesis 11(E).

ALLIANCE

'The Communist International should accompany the revolutionary movement in the colonies and backward countries for part of the way, should even make an alliance with it.' (p182). No one is advocating fusing with Sinn Fein.

But if we want a real outburst of liberal apoplexy, see Talbot attacking Sinn Fein (and the Workers' Press for agreeing).

'Trade unions should recognise the dangers that their members face by being employed in military installations and should advise their members to seek alternative sites of employment,' — Sinn Fein.

'This in the six counties where one in five is unemployed,' Talbot whines. A job is a job, collaborating with imperialism is OK if the money is right.

'A policy of this type can only bring about the greatest confusion and division.' (The Loyalists might even become sectarian, eh?) But Talbot has the answer — quote from Trotsky in 1938 mainly referring to France with little relevance to Ireland now.

Anyway, he tells us: 'It is not possible here to go into the evolution of the national struggle in Ireland, in particular the politics — past and present — of the Provisionals.'

Why bother? Were these

Police now stock them.

Tony McCardell, chair of the PMU, said they would closely follow the Northumbrian Police Committee's challenge to the Home Secretary's authorisation. If the case went to court, they would consider supporting it.

The campaign unites the fight of the nationalist community in the six counties against the use of plastic bullets and repression in general with the campaign in this country against their use here.

They are weapons of repression and British workers have a responsibility to take up this campaign whose centre is northern Ireland.

Martin Ralph

questions not solved in 1920? A sectarian working class giving their allegiance to British imperialism?

Sectarian trade union supporting unemployment (if you are a nationalist a more like 50 per cent and 11 per cent if you are a Loyalist — one in five unemployed is another FRAUD) and an unreformable sectarian statelet are factors not worth considering by our 'expert' Talbot.

'EXPOSURE'

He told us in the previous issue of the paper that we had 'erased all conception of the struggle for the exposure of the petty bourgeoisie leaders (Republicans) in front of the working class to bring about their downfall'.

I think we can safely leave that 'conception' to Thatcher, Kinnoch, Fitzgerald, Hume, Paisley and Chris Talbot.

LESSONS OF THE MILITANT WITCH-HUNT

The time to fight is NOW!

COMMENT

by Bill Hunter

ENDORSEMENT of the 'purge' machinery was far more important at last week's Labour Party conference than any resolution rejecting nuclear weapons.

For many years, right wing leaders have been unable to carry out the purges, bans and prescriptions which were a feature of the party well into the sixties.

This year, all but two small unions voted for expulsion of eight 'Militant' supporters and the majority of union leaders blocked with Kinnock on home and foreign and policy.

The argument among left Labourites has been that the left wing is steadily marching forward.

They were gaining in the unions and they had won a major victory — obtaining a re-selection process for parliamentary candidates.

This meant that the domination of the right in the parliamentary party could steadily be eroded away.

The dreams of the left, including Militant supporters, of capturing the parliamentary Labour party through re-selection have now been shattered.

The newly agreed 'National Constitutional Committee' will be a 'star chamber', an instrument for the right wing.

The whole procedure has been worked out by lawyers and Walworth Road officials studying all the past experience of repressing Labour Party lefts and Young Socialist movements.

Many defeated right wing nominees for a Labour candidature for council or parliament can now bring the weight of this National Constitutional Committee behind them.

Appeals to the Regional Labour Party are abolished and appeals now go straight to this 'Committee'.

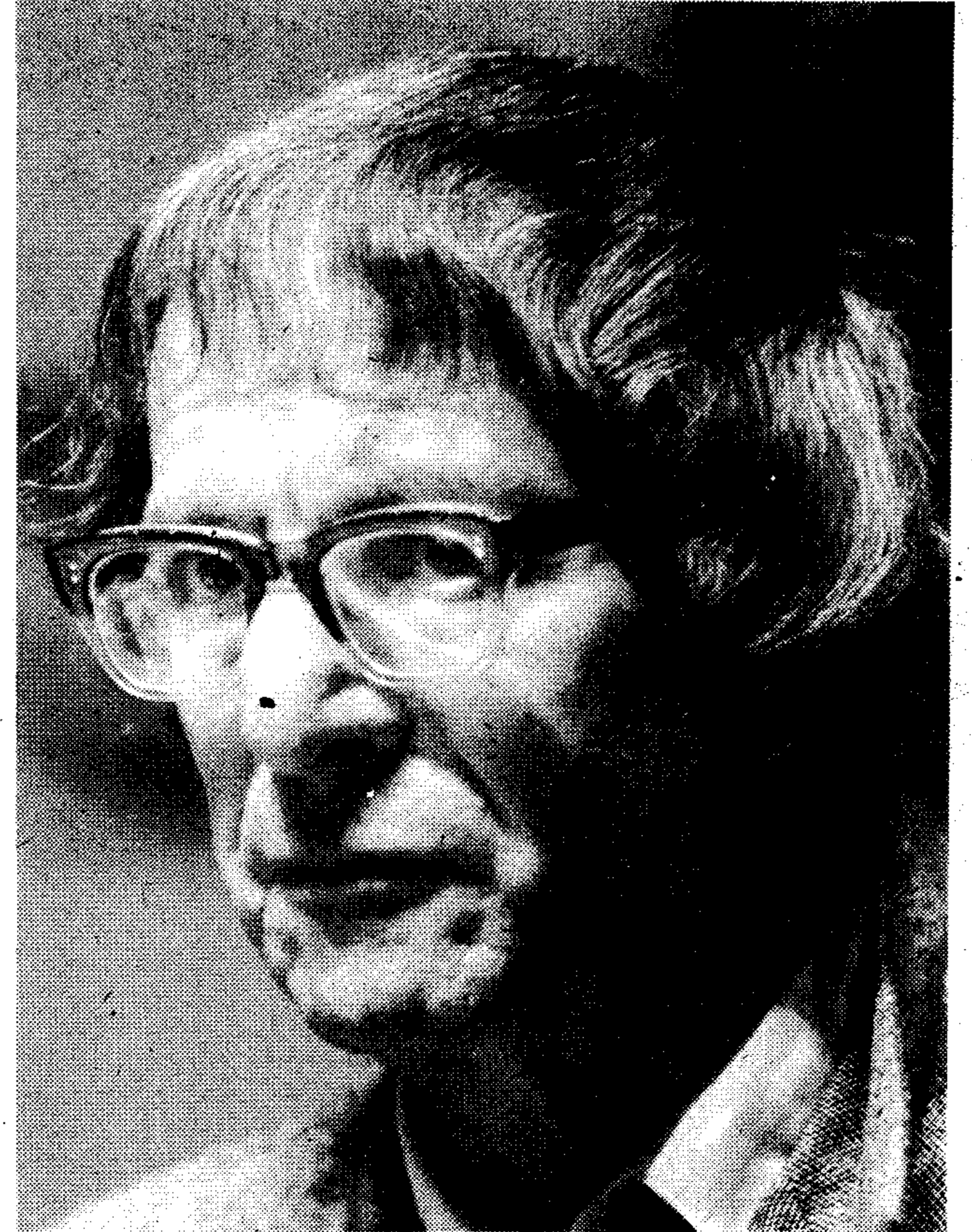
Kinnock's opposition to nuclear weapons is nothing more than a temporary adjustment to the widespread feeling against nuclear power and the distrust of American government policy.

Already, Kinnock and Hattersley have been making it clear that they are not opposed to an American 'nuclear umbrella' to defend Europe but are simply opposed to a 'first strike' policy.

Strategy

Nuclear weapons in Europe are intrinsic to American world strategy. The Labour leaders have no plans to break from this — hence their fervent support for NATO.

They declare opposition to American bases in Britain. But the Greek party 'PASOK' campaigned just as radically against American bases and then betrayed its policies when it came to power.



PETER TAAFE and TED GRANT: dreams of capturing PLP through reselection shattered

Without an enormous mass movement in Britain, Kinnock and company will do exactly the same.

Kinnock has secured broad support from ex-lefts around Tribune, who helped him through the local councils struggle and then helped him to expel Militant supporters.

He will get the support of those leaders of the CND who, patriots like himself, oppose 'dirty' wars with nuclear weapons but do not oppose NATO.

He has the support of union leaders.

He has given assurances to the bankers of his ability to control the 'extremists'.

The bureaucracy has scored a victory over 'Mili-

tant', whose opportunist methods have reduced it to confusion.

The Militant meeting at Blackpool, and last week's issue of their paper, showed a complete inability to understand what happened at the conference or to draw any lessons from it.

The main feature of the meeting was the complete avoidance of the real tasks.

The general line was: 'After Kinnock, our turn'.

The audience was told that time and the capitalist crisis was on the side of Militant — which represented the continuity of Marxism, the memory of the working class.

Delegates to the conference who made a principled

stand against the witchhunt, generally condemned Militant's 'exclusiveness'.

What the delegates were criticising was characteristic of a sect; the Militant could not explain what the witch hunt meant for the Labour Party and the working class as a whole.

Left MPs like Clay, Roberts and Heffer showed the importance of the witch hunt in a way that Grant, Taffe and Hatton did not.

Two things were very obvious: the Militant leaders made no real attempt to involve a broad movement in defence of party democracy nor tried to run a meeting with a platform of all tendencies opposing the expulsions and the setting up of a witch hunting machine.

Delegates opposing their expulsion were angry at their refusal to speak to the conference.

Allocated

Eight of them were allocated five minutes each, but declared it was not enough and that, if they spoke, they would be participating in a setup.

In the militant of October 3, Tony Mulhearn has around 600 words entitled 'The Speech I Would Have Made'.

'This takes exactly five minutes and ten seconds to read out'.

The Militant complains that union delegations had decided their position on the Sunday before the conference started — but there was no mobilisation of Militant supporters for the Sunday and Monday.

Nonetheless there were 500 people at the Militant meeting on Tuesday — the majority bussed in from outside.

There was no mass lobbying of trade union delegations, distribution of statement or leaflets on Sunday or Monday to set out the telling points against the right wing and the way the 'enquiries' were conducted.

Waiting for things to move their way again, the Militant leaders act like people who have decided to cut their losses.

The youth which cheered Hatton's jokes on the Tues-

day night were left with nothing to face the cold reality of the Labour Party they were returning to after the conference.

The Militant had no plans for fighting back in a Labour Party where the right wing are going to build on their success at the conference and aim to clean up both the constituency parties and the youth movement.

Their rallying call at the meeting: was: Answer the attacks by raising £250,000 and build for a daily paper.

'After Kinnock, our turn' means... wait and see. The issue of the paper after the conference made that plain.

The opposition to the rightward move of trade union and Labour leaders now needs regrouping.

That will be done in struggle on policies for today where the hypocrisy and non-socialist nature of these leaders are shown: where they stand in opposition to working class struggle.

It is now that leadership can be tested, in mobilising against the betrayals of these leaders on the anti-union laws; in campaigning for working class action in support of the South African fighters; in campaigning against the witch hunt and against American and British imperialist policies.

The opposition to the witch hunt in Liverpool itself, the continuing firmness of the printing workers, the fight back now in the mines show there can be a response.

The very fact that Kinnock has to make a bow in the direction of opposition to American bases and the nuclear danger shows the great feeling that exists over Tory and imperialist policies.

The leadership of CND, Anti-apartheid or some Labour lefts together with Kinnock, may want everything seen in terms of the election of a Labour government.

However, the rank and file, and particularly the youth, want a struggle now.

It is the question of connecting with their desire for struggle which is the important one — not of waiting until 'circumstances' expose Kinnock.



Liverpool working class on the march: the rank and file want a struggle now

Readers write on the Labour Party Conference

A NUCLEAR FUDGE

I WELCOME the opportunity to write a letter in the discussion on the Labour Party Conference.

There are two things I want to raise.

First there is the fudging on nuclear questions.

There is a contradiction between talking about getting rid of bases in Britain but not getting out of NATO or getting rid of the communication bases.

There has been no discussion of political or economic strategy in relation to the United States, and the strategy which could be

adopted in terms of US hegemony.

Secondly there are fine words about South America, especially Nicaragua, but no concrete proposals to the working class about how to help Nicaragua.

Nicaragua, along with Angola, Mozambique and Vietnam are in the forefront of the fight against imperialism.

A truly internationalist workers government would offer concrete support to countries in this position.

Member of the Coventry SW Labour Party

DON'T RAISE YOUR HOPES!

THE RED flag is no more! Now it's 'keep the red rose watered!'

From now on, let us seek to win the confidence of the middle class voters, the Tory wets, the banks and finance speculators, the CBI and, of course, Caspar Weinberger.

This was the essence of the Labour Party Conference.

No more can we promise the working class any real gains.

We must rationalise and modify our policies and aims in order to keep them from expecting too much.

Instead of full employ-

ment, we will cut unemployment by two million; instead of free collective bargaining — a minimum wage (£80 per week); instead of jobs for youth we will expand the YTS.

We will get rid of US nuclear bases only if the US wants us, and we will shut down nuclear power stations only if the workers there want to go on the dole.

But this is no surprise.

Due to the decline of British capitalism, in the face of national liberation struggles and competition from abroad, they can no longer give to the working class any

real gains.

But why tell the workers this two years before they get office?

The working class has lived under the Tories for seven years.

They have seen cuts in all the social services, in wages and conditions of work, and their basic rights.

They expect a Labour Government to redress the 'evils of Thatcherism' and will be prepared to fight not just for a return to things as they were, but an improvement in the conditions they had.

The whole point of the Labour Party Conference

was to stop this struggle even starting.

'Don't get your hopes up' was the message.

The WRP is quite correct when we say that the fight against attacks on the working class cannot wait for a Labour Government.

The working class must forge a leadership through its struggles now that will be prepared to battle with the Labour traitors when they try to impose the crisis of capitalism upon the backs of the workers.

Simon Burgess,
Crawley

SKINNER AND 'LEADERSHIP'

I WAS present at a meeting at the University of Leicester Labour Club where Dennis Skinner was the main speaker.

The Silentnight strikers were present also.

Asked from all sides about the Labour leadership, Skinner said that he is responsible to himself only — he has

clean hands.

He told the audience that the Silentnight strikers and the rest of the working class were the people that mattered.

We should not spend too much time arguing about leadership!

P.H.

MINERS WERE EXCLUDED.

IT WAS symptomatic of the way the Labour Party leadership behaves towards workers when they tried to keep the miners out of the Conference — just like they did last year.

It doesn't give much confidence to any section of work-

ers who are fighting the Tories, in the benefits that the election of a Labour Government would bring them.

This was the hallmark of the whole Conference in which no contentious issues were allowed.

Ross Galbraith

A CLASS VOTE FOR LABOUR

THE WORKING class had to come through the war with vivid memories of pre-war days still fresh in their minds.

In 1945 they were demanding a better life in the coming years and would not accept the policies of the ruling class (Tories).

There was a bitter hatred of Churchill and Co.

There was a massive vote for a Labour Government and we all thought that things would be better.

We could look forward to real nationalisation and socialist policies.

But the working class was used to prop up the dying capitalist system.

The Labour Government

became a willing tool of the ruling class.

They were 'recruited' by big business to carry out its dirty work.

One of the main weapons in the armoury of the ruling class was Ernie Bevin, right wing leader of the Transport and General Workers Union, whose biggest fear was the working class seizing the power.

With bullying and making lying promises, he persuaded large sections of workers to tighten their belts, work harder and put the country back on its feet.

In other words he assisted capitalism to recover.

We are now back in a similar situation, when the Thatcher Government can

no longer carry out the job it set out to do.

It has not smashed the working class. We still have plenty of fight in us.

We have been badly bruised by unemployment and the cuts etc. but we are not defeated.

The capitalist class needs the right wing Kinnock leadership of the Labour Party and trade union leaders like Hammond of the EETPU to do its dirty work.

But this is unlike 1945. The workers do not trust Kinnock and his friends.

There is a constant discussion in my factory where many workers say that they don't see the point of voting Labour in a general election and will probably abstain.

But we are arguing that we must take a class decision to vote against the Tories, SDP and Liberals.

We must build up the anti-Tory fight, put all the demands we can on the Labour Party to act on the things which affect our lives and the future of our children and grandchildren, but at the same time have no confidence in them.

This is a very difficult thing to explain, because it means that we have to build an alternative socialist leadership but workers are more and more coming to that conclusion.

Tom Stratton,
Shop Steward,
Louis Newmarks,
New Addington

MINERS WERE EXCLUDED. KINNOCK: HAWKE CLONE

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Ross Galbraith

THE RECENT Labour Party Conference in Blackpool and events inside the Labour Party remind me of the period prior to the election and in the first couple of years of the Hawke Labour Government in Australia.

Hawke was elected in 1983

replacing the hated Liberal Party Government of Malcolm Fraser.

He stated that it was his Government's intention to create half a million jobs in his first term of office and to fix up the economic chaos caused by eight years of

Liberal Party rule.

The jobs were fictitiously created through YTS schemes, the doctoring of unemployment figures and, when faced with the implications of the economy, Hawke said that the mess left by the Liberals would take many years to overcome.

The situation now is that unemployment is as high as it was when Hawke was first elected, inflation the same, and social services still in decline.

Last year, a prominent leader of the socialist left faction of the ALP was expelled and a left Member of Parliament was suspended from ALP membership for speaking out and voting against Hawke's attack on the militant Building Labourers' Federation.

The recent budget brought down by Hawke has been called the most draconian for 25 years, 18 of these under Liberal Party governments!

The trade union bureaucracy continues to support the Accord — an agreement whereby workers hold back big wage increases in order to obtain, through arbitration, increases in line with inflation and social welfare and tax reforms by the Government.

The fact is that the Labour Government has dramatically increased company profits, introduced economic changes demanded by the World Bank and the IMF with the full support of the Liberals; attacked the trade union movement's most militant sections and continued the run-down in education and social welfare.

Kinnock and Company's rhetoric sounds very similar to Hawke's prior to the 1983 election and their attack on the Militant supporters is already a step down the same road.

Gerry Beaton
Australia

CONFERENCE A DISASTER

LAST WEEK'S Labour Party conference was nothing short of a disaster for the labour movement.

Kinnock's speech to the conference had as little to do with socialism as his speech to the TUC three weeks earlier.

The march to the right amongst trade union leaders, particularly since the end of the miners' strike, expresses itself in the view of Kinnock and the right wing that the way for Labour to win the next election is to look as much like the Tories as possible.

It is true, as Dot Gibson and Bill Hunter point out, that there was a hard core from the constituencies who stood out against the witch hunt.

This was reflected in a number of very good fringe meetings and shows that there is still a hard left current which can still be mobilised even if it is smaller than before.

With the soft left and the bulk of those who comprised the Bennite movement, however, it was a very different matter.

Most of those have collapsed into parliamentary politics as Kinnock projects unity with himself as the way to get Labour into office.

The tiny number of delegates who sat down during the prolonged standing ovation for Kinnock two days after the expulsion of supporters of Militant expresses the depth of the problem.

Kinnock has won the battle on Militant in the trade unions well before conference, but it has to be said (and Dot Gibson and Bill Hunter didn't mention it) that the

problem of the left in fighting the witch hunt was compounded by the crass decision of the Militant supporters to refuse to speak in their own defence unless they were given an open session with TV cameras.

It is very true that what we saw last week was the start of the expulsions and not the end and that witch hunts cannot be effectively combated if the first consideration is publicity and not fighting the witch hunt at every stage.

Alan Thornett

LISTINGS

Listings are published free by WORKERS PRESS for organisations within the Labour movement. Please send details of any function or event you want to advertise to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Friday.

NON-STOP PICKET OF SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE. For the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa. For sanctions against the racist South African government. Outside South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, London. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

SOLIDARITY WITH SILENT-NIGHT STRIKERS. Picket 11 a.m. Morley's, 472 Brixton Rd. SW9. Saturday October 11.

SOCIALISM Organised by Lambeth Trades Council in support of SILENTNIGHT STRIKERS. Disco, Cabaret, food and late bar. Saturday October 11, 8pm, Town Hall Social Club, Brixton. Tickets £1.50 or 50p unwaged (from Lambeth TU Resource Centre, Unit 117, Bon Marche Building, Brixton).

FROM CABLE STREET TO TODAY'S BATTLES — Jewish Socialists' Group public meeting on Racism, Anti-Semitism and Fascism. Charlie Goodman (Cable Street and International Brigade veteran), Dave Rosenberg (JSG), speaker from Anti-Fascist Action. Thursday, October 16, 7.30pm. Friends House, Euston Rd.

SOCIALIST ACTION: BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR

SOCIALISM. Weekend November 22/23, in London, a major political event with speakers, debates and discussions. Details from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM. Workshops and forums on the theme of an alternative socialist strategy in Europe. October 17-19, Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth Street, London WC1. Details from Symposium, PO Box 503, London N1 1YH.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: RACISM. The spectre haunting Europe. Aston University, Birmingham, November 2, 1986. Speakers from anti-racist organisations in France, Germany and other European countries, as well as Workers Against Racism and other British anti-racists.

PALESTINE AND ISRAEL See for yourself, and meet the people. Join a tour with a difference. Jerusalem and Peace Services, 13, Goodwin St. N4. (01-226-7050) for brochure.

'ACTION DAY' BREAK THE CHAINS! Saturday October 11 — Political Prisoners' Day. City of London Anti-Apartheid Group. 12-6pm, outside South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square.

OPEN EYE WORKSHOP A catalogue of work now available. Film, Video and Animation. Videotapes on Women & trade unions, International issues, Media representations. ACTT Franchised, 90-92 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1 6EN (051-709 9460)

MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS Taking

place the Saturday after the Government's Public Order Bill becomes law. Contact Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, London N4 (01-881 2938) Creche available.

EL SALVADOR SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN Sixth Anniversary of formation of FMLN. LSE, Houghton Street, WC2, 7PM. Friday October 10. FILM: 'In the Name of the People' followed by Rally and a 'Fiesta' with food, drinks and LA music.

LPYS MASS DEMONSTRATION 'TORIES OUT' Saturday October 18. Assemble: 11.30am Southwark Park for March to Trafalgar Square — Rally and Bands.

MANCHESTER IMMIGRATION WIVES AND FIANCEES CAMPAIGN A National Demonstration and Rally against

Racist Immigration Laws. October 11, Assemble: Long-site Library, Stockport Road, Manchester at 12.30 pm. (For further information ring Loretta Loach, 061-225 5111.)

LAMBETH PRINTWORKERS SUPPORT GROUP Special Open Meeting, Friday October 10, 6.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall. Guest speakers: Irene Scott, Silentnight striker, Bethlem & Maudsley Hospitals Defence Campaign speaker and others.

RACISM OUT OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE A public meeting organised by the Oxford Hospitals Public Enquiry Committee. Wednesday October 15, 8pm Buxton Hall, Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford. Main speaker: Peter Fryer (author of Staying Power)

LETTERS

Your letters are welcome at Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT.

Unification of the Fourth International - Based on a restatement of fundamentals

I WAS pleased to read the letters from Charlie van Gelderen and Paul Stevens.

We seem to have cleared some space of misunderstandings which might have got in the way of our discussion on the future of the International.

Now let us return to the problem.

Question: Why is capitalism still with us as a world order? Answer: Because the working class has been betrayed by Stalinism and social democracy.

Question: Why have these traitors been able to get away with it so many times? Answer: Because the Fourth International has not succeeded in building itself into the leadership of the masses.

Question: Why have we not yet succeeded?

A variety of answers to this question have been proposed.

Some people say it is because the entire project was misconceived.

Trotsky should not have broken from the Comintern in the 1930s, they think.

Yes, Stalinism was brutal, but 'objectively' it was able, perhaps despite itself, to carry out historically necessary tasks.

You can't make an omelette... etc.

(Perhaps this is the standpoint of Mike Banda, or will be before long. He won't tell us what he thinks at present, so I can't be sure.)

Although this view looks different, it has a lot in common with the view that the Russian Revolution was all a mistake, that Bolshevism inevitably led to Stalinism, and so on.

To be a follower of Trotsky is to reject all such conceptions.

The imperialist stage of capitalist development did bring us to 'the eve of the world-wide socialist revolution'.

I believe more firmly than ever that the tremendous advance of technology, especially since World War Two, places firmly on the agenda not only the socialist revolution but communism itself.

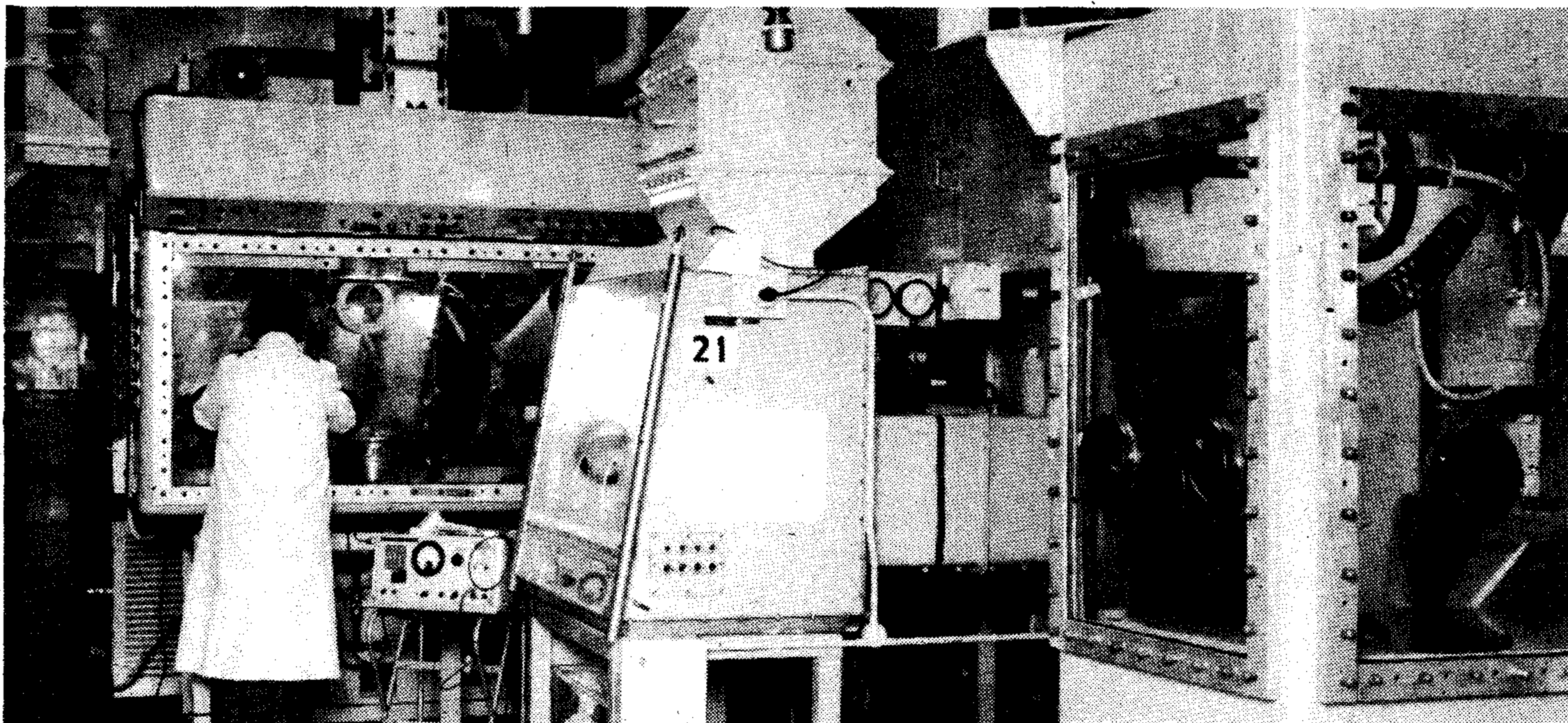
What is sometimes called the 'stabilisation' of capitalism after 1945 was actually a period of the accumulation of the most powerfully explosive historical contradictions.

But during the half-century since Trotsky called for the formation of the Fourth International, the thinking of all sections of the workers' movement has been more and more pushed back from the recognition of this reality.

This is true, not only within the ranks of social democracy and Stalinism, but also among those who fought for Trotsky's programme.

We became used to words like 'crisis' and 'leadership', but their meanings became blunted.

We fought fiercely over



Nuclear laboratory: 'I believe more firmly than ever that the advance of technology places firmly on the agenda not only socialist revolution but communism itself'.

many important issues — and many unimportant ones too! — but lost sight of their vital significance.

In the process, Trotsky's ideas were adapted to a circle existence, which fitted into the abysmal level of thinking prevailing in the workers' movement at large, and, even more significantly, into the dominion of the bureaucracies over that movement.

We became used to the idea that capitalist property relations had been bureaucratically overthrown in some countries, and forgot that

these were the exceptions, not the rule, of the world proletarian revolution.

Adaptation took two opposite forms.

Under Healy's leadership, shrill declarations that the revolution had already begun, and so on, concealed a deep scepticism about the future of communism.

Banda brought this into the open, and I for one will be eternally grateful to him for this.

More commonly, adaptation appeared in the form of complete absorption in sing-

le-issue campaigns and rank-and-file activities, always of a purely defensive character.

Trotsky's Transitional Programme was domesticated, transformed into some commonsense slogans which in reality never went beyond the bounds of the existing order.

I am convinced that we are now in a situation where the International can make a new start.

But this demands a fresh look at all our past work, and a restatement of the entire body of Marxist theory.

Nothing less will do.

No, of course 'complete agreement on history' can't be made a prerequisite for unity.

If it comes to that, we shall never see complete agreement on anything, this side of the grave.

But what we don't want is a reshuffling of groups and organisations, in which, amid all the talk of 'regroupment', fundamental issues of theory will be shelved.

Cyril Smith.

Why bar the City Group?

IT HAS been most welcome to see City AA's Non-Stop Picket regularly featured in Workers Press and the support that your comrades have given in practice to the picket is testimony to a non-sectarian approach.

However, I must draw attention to the response I received when replying to an advertisement in Workers Press to a dayschool on South Africa in Coventry on September 20, 'sponsored',

the advert reads 'by International and Socialist Viewpoint'.

I spoke first to Matthew Jones, who said that the City AA could not speak or even attend, as the conference was 'for our supporters'.

True, on checking back, I see that the advert says in small print 'Invitation only'.

But what is the objection to City AA and why advertise the event if you don't want people to come?

The next person I spoke to was Hugh Richardson, who said he would refer it to the committee, but didn't expect that City AA would be able to speak from the platform.

I said that that was understandable, that we would like to hear what Lambeth Trades Council, Birmingham Youth Against Apartheid and other speakers had to say anyway but we would like to approach the other delegates at the conference about the Non-Stop Picket, especially as there had been a new wave of arrests.

When I phoned back Hugh Richardson the next evening, Thursday September 18, he said that it was too short notice and that City AA could not attend.

City AA is well used to exclusions; such methods have never deterred or deflected our members from campaigning against apartheid.

But at a time when the 'Guardian' and the 'Morning Star' refuse to report the picket or the vicious police harassment picketers receive, the Non-Stop Picketers deserve a better response from so-called 'Marxists'.

Neither have I seen 'Inter-



The non-stop picket: 'Such methods have never deterred our members'.

national' or 'Socialist Viewpoint' of the picket line, where they would be most welcome.

Would Messrs Jones and Richardson please explain the political basis of their decision to exclude City AA?

Yours in the struggle
Andy Higginbotham
Joint Secretary,
City of London Anti-Apartheid

Where are they now — after a year?

ON OCTOBER 10, it will be exactly 12 months since the occupation in Runcorn.

During this time, many ex-comrades have, for their own reasons, lied about the various events during the occupation.

I am writing now to try and explain what the occupation meant for me.

From the first, when we stopped Healy's supporters from distributing the News Line, I believed that the paper had to be stopped and the membership had to have control of the printing machines to prevent anyone from trying to cover things up.

As became clear later, what was more important was the need to read, the need to understand clearly who was who in the occupation and what were the politics they were now trying to put forward.

Only in the struggles and discussions in the occupation did Trotsky's writings stop just being words on paper; they became part of the struggle of today.

The events as they happened will be written about more clearly in the future so no one can twist the story of what happened.

To analyse the positions of different tendencies and to understand the positions within the occupation it is necessary for us to ask: where are they now?

Firstly, there is the ex-minority, refusing to discuss with anyone, claiming they don't need to, as they are the revolutionary movement.

Then the Banda brothers: M. Banda, for example, threatening to sue anyone who calls him a Trotskyist. But really, no one should sue him for spending 35 years impersonating a Trotskyist.

Peter Rickard.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
West of Scotland branch

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

The tasks of the Fourth International, the degeneration of the International Committee and the 1971 split

Tuesday October 28, 7.30pm
McLellan Galleries
Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow

All welcome Admission 50p, unemployed 25p

Workers Revolutionary Party
West of Scotland branch

LECTURE SERIES

MARXISM AND THE WORKING CLASS TODAY

Tuesday October 14th, 7.30 pm:
'The family and the struggle for socialism'

All lectures at the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Bryant Street Methodist Centre
off West Ham Lane
(nearest Underground: Stratford)

Sunday October 12, 7.30pm
'The Events of 1956 in Hungary'

Speaker: **Phil Edwards**
Sunday October 19, 7.30pm
'The Lessons of the Hungarian Revolution'

REVIEWS

WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

Women in the World: An International Atlas. By Joni Seager and Ann Olson. Pan, £7.95.

WHERE in the world women live clearly affects their health and life expectancy, and the sort of work and life they can expect.

Yet 'in the world of women there are few "developed" nations', say Joni Seager and Ann Olson.

In their new atlas which tries to show women's lives, all too often invisible in official statistics and atlases which map them, they show that there is no simple continuum from rich to poor countries in the experience of women.

In Haiti, for example, five per cent of employees in the media are women — and in Japan only two per cent.

This makes a nonsense of the second map in the atlas, which portrays 'women's status' on an index from zero to 100.

Such indices are always problematic, because they are always adding unlike things. Here the flaws are fundamental.

Not only are statistics sometimes collected on different bases, but to map across all the countries of the world assumes that the social relations of production are the same, when they manifestly aren't.

But generally, as these

maps tend to show, when a people's situation is bad, women fare worse than the men.

Eighty per cent of refugees are women and their dependant children, and so the atlas includes a map of refugees.

In this section they give a special map to the Palestinians, living in their thousands outside their homeland.

Seager and Olson map other things which affect women worse than men — poor nutrition, polluted water, long hours, poverty wages.

Their atlas provides 40 full-colour maps which literally map out the relative position of women throughout the world — backed up with detailed sources and further information.

Child marriage, contraception, abortion, divorce and family law, work, farm work, migration, all these are mapped.

With the help of sometimes gimmicky graphics, the atlas plots topics as wide-ranging as cosmetic sales, beauty contests, the circulation of Playboy, educational opportunities and infant mortality.

Sometimes adequate comparable information simply isn't available, and the authors present examples.

Office cleaning in Britain,

roadbuilding in Nepal, electronic assembly and garment making in Mexico are all 'job ghettos' of women's work.

'Women earn less than men in the same job category' the authors demonstrate with United States statistics; although it is also true in Britain, they don't have figures for enough countries to present a table or map.

Seager and Olson admit there are topics they would like to have included but for which material simply isn't available or would be hard to map — women and shelter, disabled women, women in the arts.

Some of the maps have been included to make propaganda points — the distribution of women's refugees, for example, to which the authors are obviously committed.

But it would be inappropriate to criticise the inclusion of particular subjects.

This is a first attempt at presenting fundamental questions about the social, economic and personal state of women in the world in an eye-catching form.

It should reach a wider audience than some of the surveys of women internationally which inevitably proceed country by country and in which overall trends are much harder to observe.

Bridget Dixon

A Short History of African Art. By Werner Gillon. Pelican, £9.95. Gillon surveys the art of a continent which, as he explains, could only be thought of as 'primitive' and 'darkest Africa' before the richness of the culture was known.

He explains how the art forms differ from one part of Africa to another and how contact and migrations between nations are shown in the art.

Sculpture takes pride of place, but he includes other forms of art and architecture, including the massive constructions of Great Zimbabwe, begun in the fourth century.

What is disturbing in this superbly illustrated book is that almost all the photographs are of objects stolen from Africa and now in museums like the Central Africa Museum in Tervuren where the Belgians put the plunder from Zaire (Congo), or worse still were taken at Christies or Sothebys or in private collections.

Perhaps the emphasis on sculpture, then, is because this is the art form most easily shipped and most frequently collected.

(The picture shows a sixteenth century ivory figure from Owo in West Africa.)



Volcano of the oppressed erupts

Untouchable! Voices of the Dalit Liberation Movement. Edited by Barbara R. Joshi. Zed Press, £6.95.

DALIT does not just mean 'untouchable'. The word, which can most closely be translated 'the oppressed ones', asserts a fight back against oppression.

The history of the movement struggling against caste violence and discrimination is expressed in a collection edited by Barbara Joshi.

As well as documents from the Dalit struggle, it also contains poetry such as 'One day I cursed that mother-fucker god' and a popular song translated as 'Rise People'.

The song asks why 'a drop of water is fenced in with thorns', a reference to the segregation of the wells which means untouchables often have to carry water over long distances, and ends:

'The deformity of purity which crushed humaneness,

The volcano that was cast outside the village has erupted,

Rise up people —

The book's editor presents it as a human rights question, but the book goes some way towards explaining the economic basis for the oppression of India's 105 million untouchables.

As the recession deepens and conditions worsen in rural India, the untouchables become both more exploited by the landlords and scapegoats for the poverty of the touchables.

90 per cent of untouchables live in villages, and over half of them are landless.

The big landowners exploit the division between the touchables and the untouch-



In the play 'Kalokhachy Garbha' ('In the Womb of Darkness') a Dalit leader is bullied by high caste villagers

ables, and only the Dalit themselves make the connections with other landless people and women. They refuse to accept the 'linked oppression of caste and class'.

The book's introduction attacks India's 'leftwing' parties for failing to fight against the bigotry of the majority and forge class unity.

The 1973 statement of the Dalit Panthers, inspired by the Black Panthers in the United States, is more explicit.

They accuse the politicians of looking from election to election, and make a powerful call for organisation and action against injustice.

The book shows how that

action has grown since the 1970s.

The fact that there are currently 10,000 officially acknowledged attacks on untouchables each year is both a measure of the problem — and an indication of growing resistance.

Chris Dixon

Armed and punitive policing comes home to roost

Britain's Civil Wars: Counter-insurgency in the twentieth century. By Charles Townshend. Faber and Faber, £14.95

BRITISH imperialism produced a parliamentary democracy, with all its deep illusions, resting on the profits of colonial despotism.

Justify

Charles Townshend's book looks at how this maintained and tried to justify its rule.

... for all the strength of its image, the British unarmed police system was seldom exported ... an alternative model, the armed and centralised Royal Irish Constabulary, dominated colonial policy.

From Ireland, ranging through the Middle East, Asia and Africa he brings together a valuable detailed study of British repressive methods.

In 1919 an administrator in India wrote of the value of 'punitive police' — whose cost must be born by the people they are sent to quell — in forming 'a proper public opinion'.

In 1947, an official Internal Security manual listed 'punitive searches', 'raids of a disturbing and alarming na-

ture, particularly by night', 'collective fines, seizure of property, demolition of houses, taking hostages, using forced labour' as measures that might be used.

There are one or two things in Townshend's book that query — like his description of the British 'reprisal' killing of innocent civilians at Croke Park, Dublin, as a 'shoot-out'.

But by and large, while looking at civil war from the rulers' standpoint, Townshend is academically detached enough to give a usefully objective picture.

He also brings to attention aspects I wasn't aware of before — like the RAF's keenness to serve as a 'policing' arm between the wars.

There are also struggles I knew little or nothing about — the Malabar uprising, the Bengali 'terrorists'.

Roost

Now that Britain no longer 'rules the waves', the methods of armed and punitive policing have come home to roost, not only in occupied Ireland again, but increasingly in once-'liberal' Britain. This makes Townshend's book relevant and useful reading.

Charlie Pottins

See page 9 for review of First Tuesday on Laszlo Rajk

Saturday October 11 1986. Newsdesk 01-720 2000

Tory MP slanders jobs march

'BARBARIANS' was how Tory MP Piers Merchant of Newcastle Central described Jarrow marchers as they set off on their march to London to retrace the steps of the 1936 Hunger March.

This outburst was against three youth on the march for daring to dress as 'punks' — according to Merchant the reason for them being on the dole!

Youth unemployment on Tyne and Wear represents 55 per cent (140,000) of the total out of work in the region.

The youth faced the full brunt of the industrial carnage meted out in huge doses to the northern region.

The massive presence of youth amongst the thousands who turned out for the rally to send off the Jarrow 86 march was a tremendous confirmation of the willingness of youth (of all dress and styles) to fight back against this Tory government.

Merchant, associated in the past with extreme right wing groups before standing as a Tory candidate, branded three of the young unemployed marchers as 'a disgrace to the North east.'

The fact is that they are prepared to march 300 miles to London to demonstrate their hatred for this Tory government and against unemployment.

The march was supported by large delegations of trade union banners and the people of Jarrow who thronged the

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

route out of the town clapping and cheering as the marchers set off on the 50th anniversary march.

Noticeably, applause and approval were expressed by townspeople as the miners' banners of Durham passed, including the 'Justice for Miners' campaign.

This showed the many contradictions posed by the march itself.

The propaganda exercise of marching through the country highlighting unemployment and calling for the election of a Labour government is in itself insufficient in the wake of the Labour Party conference decisions.

It was the strength of the working class that brought forward confidence and applause in the streets of Jarrow.

The miners' banners, with the other trade union contingents, expressed the real anti-Tory content of the 50th anniversary of the Hunger Marches.



YOUTH bear the brunt of the Tory onslaught on north-east jobs — now they are slandered by the wretched Piers Merchant MP for fighting back. Right: it is fifty years since the original Jarrow march — and the banner is back on the road

Wearside rejects payoff plans

Sunderland shipyard workers continue to stand firm against British Shipbuilders plan for massive redundancies and major attacks on working conditions.

Mass meetings of both Sunderland shipbuilders and Austin and Pickersgill have unanimously rejected North East Shipbuilders latest plans for the shipyard on Wearside.

Austin and Pickersgill's 1,000 workers were in an angry mood as they arrived for their mass meeting, after receiving a letter sent out that morning by the yard's management.

The bosses were hoping to divide the workforce and put pressure on the shop stewards to accept the deal offered.

The letter said: 'We very much hope you will speak to them, indicating your support in reaching a sensible and practical agreement with the company.'

The full page letter then warned:

'The local agreement must be concluded by the 31st October 1986 if backdating of the improvement is to take place, otherwise the increase can only apply from the date of the agreement.'

BY HUGHIE NICOL

The Austin and Pickersgill men were offered £1,144 lump sum payments, to be paid in three stages over a period of time — conditional on the demands of the yard management being met by the workforce.

On hearing the conditions laid down by the yard bosses for this money, the meeting decided unanimously to reject the deal.

The letters were to be collected in and handed back to management by shop stewards.

Shop stewards explained that management were still insisting on compulsory redundancies and that management intend outside contractors to be used to do the work.

The yard management want changes in work practices where tools of any trade may be used by any other trade or ancillary workers.

They are insisting on full interchangeability which cuts across all the trade unions' rule books and all past agreements.

The main issue is compulsory redundancies which eliminate entire trades within the yard and contractors are to be brought in to cover their work.

The main groups affected are painters, cleaners, blacksmiths and joiners.

Subcontractors also work in other trades at peak periods of demand.

Catering and yard security are also to be done by the subcontractors.

Every trade is threatened by this plan as welding and machine installation is also covered.

Shop stewards have warned the men that the companies have decided these redundancy figures based on a permanent undermanning of 17 per cent to generate work for subcon-

tractors.

340 more pay-offs are required by the bosses at Austin and Pickersgill and only 80 have volunteered.

Shop stewards have publicly warned the yard management that 'if need be we are prepared to take industrial action'.

One shop steward told our reporter:

'Apart from being dissatisfied with the money offer, our members are totally opposed to the strings attached.'

'We are totally opposed to compulsory redundancies with the prospect of outside sub-contractors taking our work.'

With both of the nationalised shipyards on Wearside prepared to fight on this issue of redundancies the battle lines have been drawn for this coming period.

North East Shipbuilders were forced to back down only last month as Austin and Pickersgill men took action to defend 20 men laid off without pay as pickets stopped contractors entering the yard.



NORTH-EAST MINERS STRIKE AGAIN — PAGE 3

BY GEOFF HARTNELL

The North East Region Justice for Mineworkers Campaign has made tremendous gains in the past week.

Delegates to the North East District Council of NALGO meeting in Cleveland voted almost unanimously to donate £500 to the campaign and to purchase a further £500 worth of fundraising items from the Justice stalls.

Delegates also decided to circularise all branches in

North-East Justice Campaign marches on

the district requesting them to affiliate and raise money for the campaign.

This was followed by a number of events organised by the regional committee for the Justice campaign which was elected from a previous public meeting in the area.

First was a meeting held between sacked miners and unemployed activists at the

Newcastle Unemployed Centre.

Plans were made for joint actions to highlight the case of the sacked and victimised miners throughout the area.

The Northern Region TUC were a prime target and campaigners held a highly successful lobby of their meeting in Darlington.

Trade unionists, sacked miners and unemployed

activists joined together to leaflet the meeting and demand action by trade unions in the area in defence of the victimised men.

A sacked miner was allowed into the meeting to address delegates and the Northern Region TUC decided to elect two delegates to the regional Justice committee.

They also agreed to circu-

late all affiliated organisations with forms for the campaign, with a recommendation to affiliate and to advise them to ask speakers to their meetings.

A team also covered the Jarrow 86 march last Sunday, and trade union delegates were canvassed as they lined up for the march and rally.

British Coal headquarters

in Team Valley were the next target as talks were being held between the NUM and the coal bosses on the Seaham closure.

This was held on the same day as the second of the one-day pit strikes took place at Westoe colliery in South Shields.

As these strikes gather momentum the regional Justice campaign plan to forge ahead and have organised a public meeting in Gateshead for November 20 to draw in the maximum support.