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# DEFEND THE UNEMPLOYED!

**THOUSANDS OF unemployed and their families face the immediate threat of severe hardship and starvation as the Tory government implements further savage attacks against those out of work.**

**This is a message from the capitalist class and its Tory government as the Jarrow marchers arrive in London for their rally in Trafalgar Square this Sunday.**

Thousands of trade unionists and Labour Party members will turn out to greet the unemployed marchers, mainly youth, at the end of this epic march that began on October 5 from Jarrow in the North East of England.

No amount of pleading from Neil Kinnock or TUC leader Norman Willis as they address this rally will deter the Tories in this brutal onslaught against the unemployed.

The time to stand up and be counted is now.

**Who will defend the unemployed?**

Will these leaders organise the strength and the power of the working class against this hated Tory government or will they 'debate' over the issue of statistics and figures as they have done up to now?

## Harassment

On Monday morning every Unemployment Benefit Office in the country will begin a systematic campaign of intimidation and harassment against unemployed people signing on for the dole.

Some officers began to implement this policy on Friday.

Claimants will be asked to fill in a 12-point questionnaire without advice or assistance and if they do not supply the correct answers sought by the Department of Employment their benefit will be suspended immediately.

The purpose of this exercise is to establish whether a person's 'availability for work' — which is described in Workers Press' recent Restart investigations — is considered by the Adjudicating Officer to be 'a state of mind'.

Secret instructions to the DHSS include the question 'Are you prepared to move to a job anywhere in the UK within 24 hours?'

If the answer is 'no' the person's benefit will immediately be stopped.

Other questions include asking the person if they can make immediate arrangements to look after children,

BY HUGHIE NICOL

elderly relatives or disabled members of the family.

If the answer is 'no' benefit will be stopped.

If the claimant says he will only work at a job for a certain wage, benefit will be stopped.

Benefits will also be stopped if the claimant refuses to work unsocial hours.

Labour MP for South Shields Dr David Clark commented: 'Politically there are no votes for Mrs Thatcher in the unemployed and the poor.'

'This government has decided to wage war on the poor, the old, underprivileged and the sick.'

'They want to bring people to their knees to make them touch their hats and grovel.'

Fellow Labour MP for Jarrow, Don Dixon, said: 'This is the 18th time the government has tried to fiddle the unemployment figures.'

'You would need a City and Guilds to answer some of these questions.'

## Price

In areas of mass unemployment with 180 people chasing every single job and some housing estates having 80 or 90 per cent unemployment, the working class are already paying a heavy enough price for the capitalists' slump with 5 million unemployed.

As the Jarrow march began on October 5 the Tories were enraged and one MP slandered the marchers as 'barbarians'.

It is no coincidence that as the march nears its end the Tories again home in on the attack against the unemployed.

This march has stirred

many bitter memories amongst the working class when people realise that, in the 50 years since the original Jarrow Crusade, very little change has taken place and it has served to focus attention onto the lack of progress or any justice for the working class and particularly those out of work despite successive Labour governments.

After the continued acceptance of YTS, Community Programmes and the new Restart schemes what real hope or confidence can Neil Kinnock give to the youth of today?

In Wakefield these youth refused a council invitation to visit their boatyard project because it was an MSC scheme.

One marcher explained: 'We are marching for jobs, not toy jobs'.

## Wisdom

What words of wisdom will Norman Willis utter to the activists who will turn out to greet the unemployed marchers as they arrive in London?

As local trades councils and unemployed groups frantically prepare campaigns for Monday's dole signing and make preparations to assist those victimised, the Kinnock leadership stands completely discredited in their pompous debates and press statements in response to the Tories' savage attack.

The unemployed must turn to all those workers in struggle and join with them in solidarity taking every opportunity to attack and destroy this hated government.

Mass rank and file movements must be built in the localities to facilitate the independent action of the working class.

Sacked miners, printers, the unemployed must mobilise now on joint campaigns to develop this movement.



WHAT message will Norman Willis have for the unemployed when they reach Trafalgar Square, London, at the end of the Jarrow March? Here the marchers are seen braving the rain as they come into Leicester

**Critical stage for Mendis fight — see back page**

**30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**Newcastle**

**Thursday November 13  
7.30pm**

**Irish Centre opp.  
Gallowgate Bus Station  
Nearest Metro: St James's  
Main Speaker: Peter Fryer**

# ANGER AT COUNCIL HOUSE SELL-OFF

FROM A STOCKPORT CORRESPONDENT

STOCKPORT'S Labour Group leader and its housing spokesperson have been collaborating with their opposite numbers in the Tory and Liberal camp to sell off whole streets of the town's council housing.

Councillors Mobbs and Bagnall have carried out this action without consultation or approval of their District Labour Party or colleagues on the Labour benches.

Kale Green and Brinnington Wards — representing the threatened areas — have passed motions opposing this, with Kale Green advising and Brinnington instructing the Labour Group not to proceed.

A trade union branch, TASS No.10, has passed a motion opposing the sale of council houses. This has been sent direct to the Labour Group.

The deal so far is that one

of the three Housing Associations that has been approached will purchase huge chunks of the Adswold Estate by making payment in 'kind', i.e. renovating some of the remaining council-owned property.

This is in an effort to avoid the restrictions imposed by the Thatcher government on the spending of capital receipts gained from the selling off of council houses.

Only 40 per cent can be spent on renovating existing council houses.

Mobbs has stated in the local paper that this is the way of dealing with the problem council estates in Stockport. Anger is mounting in the working-class areas affected.

One council tenant commented: 'It may lead to the end of Mobb rule in Stockport, but not the Labour Party.'

## Bail refused

THE SRI Lankan authorities have refused to release on bail Brutan Perera, a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist League of Sri Lanka.

Pereira has been arrested for the second time in recent months for his stand in defence of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. A member of the RCL youth organisation, Vivian Peiris, who was arrested together with Pereira has now been granted bail.

The refusal to release Pereira means he could be held in prison indefinitely while charges are prepared against him.

His continued imprisonment is part of the increasing repression of the Jayawardene government against left-wing organisations in Sri Lanka.

We call on all workers' organisations to support the campaign for Pereira's release and for all charges against the Sri Lankan Trotskyists to be dropped.

# Campaign to defend Sri Lankan Trotskyists

Following an appeal from the International Committee of the Fourth International, the Workers Revolutionary Party has circulated other Trotskyist organisations internationally asking them to campaign for the release of two Trotskyists jailed in Sri Lanka. We print below two replies.

From the Revolutionary Workers' Party, Sri Lanka

Workers Revolutionary Party  
Central Committee  
England

October 12, 1986

Dear Comrades,

We received your letter of September 18 on the subject of the international campaign for the release of Brutan Perera and Vivian Peiris, members of the Revolutionary Communist League, Sri Lanka, which is affiliated to the 'International Committee of the Fourth International' (ICFI), who are under arrest under the Jayawardene regime.

We are in full support of an international campaign for their release, which you have proposed.

We are certainly willing

to join such a campaign and do whatever is possible for us jointly with other left groups and parties in that regard.

We too have our political differences with the RCI and the ICFI, but that will not prevent us in participating in the international campaign you propose.

We know some of the members of this group and shall take steps to have them contacted.

While we hope to be fully in this campaign for the release of these two members of the RCI, we would like to state that our organisation, the RWP, does not consider all groups claiming to be Trotskyist as Trotskyist. We would refer to the RCI (ICFI) as ostensible Trotskyists.

Yours fraternally  
Edmund Samarakkody  
for Political Committee

From Lutte Ouvriere, Paris

October 15, 1986  
WRP  
London

Dear Comrades,

We received your letter dated September 18 only on October 2!

We can assure you of our full solidarity with the Trotskyist militants who are submitted to repression in Sri Lanka.

Unfortunately, we do not see what more effective actions we could take than those which have already been taken. But at least it is possible for us to protest and inform about the cases of the two comrades in our press.

We would be very grateful if you could send us all the documents available about their cases so that we can explain them a little bit more to our readers.

You can mail them to our address in Paris or give them to the comrade who represents us in London.

Yours fraternally  
Dominique Chablis  
For Lutte Ouvriere

# Union fight going strong — 18 months on

ROY TEARSE

AS WE go to press we have received news of the death of Roy Tearse.

Roy Tearse was one of four Trotskyists arrested in 1944 under a conspiracy charge after leading 50 engineering apprentices — thousands of whom struck work against being conscripted into the mines and who were demanding nationalisation of the coal mining industry.

Next week's Workers Press will contain an obituary on this wartime British Trotskyist leader.

STRIKERS at Morris of Glasgow are now in the 18th month of a bitter dispute in defence of trade union rights and the 40-hour working week.

The employees are members of FTAT; the company is a member of the Scottish Furniture Manufacturers Association, which implements wages and conditions in accordance with mutual agreements reached at

national level, known as the National Labour Agreement for Furniture Manufacturing Trades.

Three years ago, Mr. Robert Morris, one of the company directors, approached the workforce to inform them that the company had financial difficulties — he requested that they work a 41-and-a-half hour week at the basic rate for a period of one year to help avoid redundancies.

At the end of the year, the company felt that it was not entirely free from difficulties: the variance of the contract undertaken by employees to work 41-and-a-half hours was therefore allowed to continue for a further period.

Since then, the company's financial position has substantially improved, extra workers have been engaged and an extension has been added to their premises.

The employees sought a meeting with the company to withdraw the unusual variance of their contract and return to the terms and conditions of the National Labour Agreement.

The company would not even discuss the situation and the trade union intimated that it would no longer

agree to continue with the variance from the National Labour Agreement and that the employees would return to the terms of their original contract.

On Friday May 24, 1985, the majority of employees stopped work after completing their 39-hour week.

Without discussion the company dismissed all 29 employees involved: since then an additional six employees have been dismissed for refusing to cross the picket line.

Morris has hired some skilled and semi-skilled men and young boys just out of school, to cross our picket line — none of them are trade union members.

He has been getting veneer panels from a company in Leeds and importing tables and chairs from Italy. This clearly shows how unskilled his scab workforce is.

Early in the dispute, we had some success with drivers not crossing our picket line, most of them members of the transport union.

Morris has got around this, partly by hiring non-union drivers at great expense.

We had non-union drivers from Hull bringing tables and chairs from Italy — until we visited Hull docks, where

By Brian McKee, Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union Shop Steward at Morris Ltd, Glasgow. This article is compiled from an information sheet on the strike.

we were introduced to shop steward Les Sharp.

I told him of four companies who had crossed our picket line: he phoned all four while we were there and told them that if they crossed our picket line again, they would never pick up anything from the docks. We have not seen any of them since.

None of the other dockers we went to would touch Morris's material either. Morris got around his import problem at great expense again by hiring Italian drivers and roll-on, roll-off trailers which go through Dover without the dockers' involvement, drive to Glasgow — then all the way back to Italy empty. (Very costly!)

We have recently found out that the Italian company supplying the tables and chairs has gone bankrupt, so there is no dining room furniture to go with his wall and lounge units. He has had to change his advertising magazines and get a new supply of tables — also very costly.

We have had individual

success with independent stores boycotting Morris and also some success at trade shows.

One buyer showed us an order for 750 units from Morris which he cancelled when he heard our case: the estimated value was £375,000.

Our problem is in larger stores like the Fraser Group and the Co-operative Society. We have sent a concerned letter to the Scottish Labour Party asking why the Co-op — who are affiliated to the labour movement — are stocking Morris furniture (made by scabs).

Helen Liddell, Scottish Labour Party Secretary, replied that the CWS had taken a policy decision on Morris's but individual branch managers overlooked it.

At Brighton, the TUC resolved unanimously to ask the Co-op to stop buying and selling Silentnight beds during their dispute.

I have written to Campbell Christie, Scottish TUC General Secretary, requesting that they do the same for the Morris strikers.

**BOOKS**

LONDON · GLASGOW

The Paperbacks Centres

28 Charlotte Street, London W1P 1HP  
Tel: 01 636 3532

10/12 Atlantic Road, Brixton, SW9  
Tel: 01 274 8342

389 Green Street, London E13  
Tel: 01 470 1388

321 Hope Street, Glasgow, G2 3PT  
Tel: 041 332 8881

**BOOKS**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

After Labour Party Conference — Which way for the left?

Wednesday November 19, 7pm

Carlton Centre, Carlton Vale NW6

(Behind petrol station nearest tube: Kilburn Park)

Alan Thornett (Socialist Viewpoint)  
Graham Topley ('International')  
John Simmance (WRP Central Cttee)

**MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP**

Bryant Street Methodist Centre  
off West Ham Lane  
(nearest Underground: Stratford)

Sunday November 9, 7.30pm  
'Revolutionary Movements in Latin America'  
Speaker: James Dunkerly

Sunday November 16, 7.30pm  
'The Permanent Revolution and Ireland'  
Speaker: Billy Campbell

# Cots — not cuts! — says lively rally

BY JOHN SIMMANCE

THIRTY mothers with their babies led last Saturday's demonstration against the threatened closure of West London hospital.

Trade unionists from the area and from the Hammersmith and Fulham Trades Council were joined by delegations from the disputes at News International, Silentnight and the Hanger's artificial limbs factory.

On the way to a rally on Hammersmith Town Hall steps, the march stopped outside the hospital. Chants of 'cots not cuts!' and 'Magic out!' rang out.

It was a lively and spontaneous march — a political rally unlike the protest demonstrations of five years ago which banned political slogans.

Mothers from all over the country have come to the West London maternity unit, which has a high reputation for its emphasis on natural childbirth methods.

The Health Authority argues that there is an 'over-provision' of maternity beds

in this part of London and that they need to save £33 million by the end of 1994.

Other closures and the cutting of even more acute beds at hospitals like the Charing Cross would be needed to save anything like that figure.

There is in fact a shortage of maternity beds. Nearby Queen Charlotte hospital turned away 172 cases in the first six months of this year.

Most serious of all, the hospital's Special Care Baby Unit, where premature and delicate babies are given a chance of life, would not be replaced if the Riverside Health Authority's plans to close the hospital are approved at its meeting on November 27.

The campaigners will picket that meeting. In the meantime they are organising a series of public meetings.

The response to Saturday's march showed that the campaign has enormous popular support.

# Scottish teachers: PROTEST STORM AT MAIN INQUIRY

SCOTTISH TEACHERS are being warned to reject a deal on pay and conditions of service which is a 'fundamental attack on trade union rights'.

Boots chain store boss Sir Peter Main, with an inquiry committee dominated by business managers, is recommending:

- Extra powers to head teachers — including the supreme right to decide which teachers are employed at his or her school — and the creation of a new and divisive grade of 'senior teacher';

- Eleven duties including exam presentation, curriculum development and catchalls like 'participating in the administration and organisation of the school' to become contractual obligations;

- Instead of the straight pay increase for which they campaigned for nearly two years, Scottish teachers' salaries to be put up gradually over the next 18 months, with a widening gap between ordinary teachers — particularly in primary schools — and head or 'senior' teachers;

- Extension of the working week in schools by two hours.

All-out rejection of the Main package is being pressed for by the newly-formed Scottish Federation of Socialist Teachers, set up at

a well-attended Glasgow conference two weeks ago, where left-wing groups from Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Dumfries, Lothian and Aberdeen agreed to join forces.

Activists from Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) branches in Ayrshire, Central Region, Fife and Renfrew were also at the conference, which is now circulating a meticulously-argued anti-Main leaflet throughout Scotland.

The leaflet points out that the Main inquiry hopes to replace the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee, which fixes teachers' pay, with a review body which 'will effectively remove the basic trade union right of the EIS to negotiate future improvements'.

The socialist teachers argue that Main 'represents the most fundamental attack on trade union rights' and quotes a paragraph of it which states:

'A further common feature (of review bodies), shared with the police, has been the

abandonment of the right to take industrial action.

'We hope that feature would also characterise the education service . . .'

The leaflet also warns of Main's plans for increased powers to headteachers and 'senior management' and scornfully rejects 'the divine right of headies'.

The Main package has already provoked a storm of protest from Scottish teachers.

Within hours of its publication, Grampian EIS denounced it as unacceptable. Lanarkshire have followed suit.

A mass meeting of Glasgow teachers voted by 670 to 90 for a call to reject Main outright.

But the EIS executive statement in response to Main 'implicitly accepts' many of the report's assumptions, says the leaflet.

The leadership's recommendation for a ballot is a 'shameful abdication of leadership', say the socialist teachers.

They are calling on a Special General Meeting of the EIS next Saturday (November 8) to reject the package outright.

Particular anger has been levelled at 'left' executive

members, including EIS president Kathy Finn, who says the Main deal is 'unacceptable, but unrejectable'.

The socialist teachers say the deal can and must be rejected and that the campaign for improved conditions of service and better money for lower-paid teachers must go on.

Throughout the two-year battle on Scottish teachers' pay, militants insisted that any increase could not be linked to conditions of service.

Now, say the socialist teachers, this principle has been abandoned.

The socialist teachers' federation 'will as a first step organise a united campaign against the Main package and will create a forum for the exchange and clarification of views and policies', stated a resolution passed at the Glasgow conference.

Their fiercely-fought campaign in defence of basic trade union principles shows a way forward to English teachers too, who face similar dangers of contractually-binding duties and increased management power from the Coventry Agreement.

As the EIS discusses Main at next Saturday's SGM, left-wing English teachers will be lobbying ACAS talks on their contracts in Nottingham.

Unity must be built between teachers, other school workers and parents to defend education from the Thatcherite standards of Main and Coventry.

Their anti-union proposals — 'radical changes that will foster morale and public esteem', as Main calls them — not only savage teachers' trade union rights but threaten the fabric of state education.

# LONDON'S AMBULANCE CRISIS

CUTS in ambulance services are leaving thousands of elderly and disabled Londoners without ambulance transport.

London Health Emergency has uncovered a document of the London Ambulance Service (LAS) which reveals:

- A 30 per cent reduction over two years in all categories of non-emergency patient journeys
- A 10,500 weekly reduction

in the number of 'walking' patients (mainly elderly and disabled) — a fall of 44 per cent

- While ministers boast of rising numbers attending day hospitals, LAS expects to carry 1,200 fewer day patients each week than last year

- An 11-per-cent cut in patient journeys between 1977 and 1984

- The LAS falls well short of DHSS standards for emergency response. This



The elderly are severely hit by cuts in the ambulance service

puts up to 25,000 Londoners each year at extra risk — but the LAS considers it 'acceptable bearing in mind the traffic congestion in London'.

The LAS is rushing its new 'Short Term Programme' through with only a one-month 'consultation' period.

It spells out three choices to cut £400,000 in each of the next two years:

1. Increase productivity by 15 per cent

2. Cut the number of non-emergency patient journeys by another 6,000 a week — 21 per cent of the current workload

3. Raise upwards of £800,000 to finance an extra 80 staff, from the 30 London District Health Authorities.

This would clearly pass the burden of the cuts from the ambulance service to the hospitals, which are already making cuts.

pay back money stolen from them in the recent pay award

- To restore a conciliation machinery within the industry

- To stop the closure of Seaham pit.

# Dawdon colliery strike success

DAWDON colliery was the latest to be halted when the Mechanics picketed the pit out earlier this week.

A total of five pits have now been brought to a standstill in the one-day strikes of the Durham Mechanics over the past six weeks.

NUM members have joined with the Mechanics in industrial action and refused to cross picket lines in action against British Coal.

The Durham Mechanics had allowed the Dawdon pit emergency safety cover and sent some of their own members into the pit.

However this decision was soon rescinded and the emergency safety cover withdrawn when the colliery management started boasting of the number of men crossing picket lines.

Pickets told Workers Press: 'It is a bit off when

the management count not only staff and managers but also the men we allow in to cover emergencies.'

Over 4,000 tons of coal were lost as 1,800 men joined the strike.

As in earlier actions, the buses turned up empty as NUM members decided to stay at home and respect the Mechanics' picket lines.

Lodge officials and pickets were in no doubt about the success of the Dawdon strike in line with the recent past actions.

Several wagons were also turned back, some carrying chemicals and others carrying steel girders, destined for the colliery yard.

All the lorry drivers without hesitation decided not to cross picket lines.

The Mechanics' action is to continue until every pit in the Durham area has been out.

**HATFIELD MAIN NUM**  
**Solidarity with South African NUM**

**MARCH**

to the South African coal import wharves,  
**Saturday November 8**  
**Assemble 11.30am, Guinness Corner**  
**Guinness, near Scunthorpe**  
**Social Evening**  
**7.30pm Stainforth Miners Welfare**  
(Coaches from Trafalgar Square non-stop picket leave 7.00am. Return fare £5)  
For details ring City AA 01-837 6050

# Poverty is on the increase

NEARLY 2.8 million people in Britain are living below the poverty line, according to the latest report from the Child Poverty Action Group and the Low Pay Unit.

Between 1979 and 1983 (the latest figures available in detail) the numbers increased by 33 per cent.

The report draws attention to the way people on low pay are subject to high taxes which bring them below the level of supplementary benefit.

But of course it is unemployment which is the main cause of poverty.

The majority of those living in poverty are of working age, but unable to find a job or unable to work through ill health.

The gap between the low paid and the highest paid is widening, says the report, and a 'steady stream of benefits cuts' has made the situation worse.

'The Rising Tide of Poverty' is published by the Low Pay Unit, 9 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1 and the Child Poverty Action Group, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

**CONFERENCE FOR TRADE UNION**  
**SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Saturday December 13, 11am - 6pm**  
**Carrs Lane Church Centre**  
**(off High Street, near Birmingham Central Station)**

Called by: Lambeth Joint Trade Union Committee,  
City of London Anti-Apartheid Group  
For further details ring Bronwen Handyside,  
01-274 7722 X2010 (Office hours)

# Lord Denning, the Royal Prerogative and the Guildford Four

COMMENT BY PHIL PENN



In 1972 the jailed dockers were released after the intervention of the Official Solicitor in the Appeal Court under Lord Denning. Above: Docker Vic Turner carried high by jubilant dockers

IN 1980, during one of the many legal battles to get justice for the Birmingham Six, Lord Denning made his famous speech declaring that the men would have to remain in jail in order to protect the good name of the police.

The police were accused of beating confessions out of the men. Denning said:

'Just consider the course of events if this action is allowed to proceed to trial. If the six men fail, it will mean that much time and money will have been expended by many people for no good purpose.

'If the six men win, it will mean that the police were guilty of perjury, that they were guilty of violence and threats, that the confessions were involuntary and were improperly admitted in evidence and that the convic-

tions were erroneous.

'That would mean the Home Secretary would either have to recommend they be pardoned or he would have to remit the case to the Court of Appeal.

'This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say: It cannot be right these actions should go any further.'

Recently however, although unable to bring himself to say anything further on the case, he has commented on the case of the Guildford Four.

'I have seen only a little of the material in the Maguire and Guildford cases in which convictions were obtained for revolting acts of terrorism,' he said, 'but enough to make me doubt whether the right men were caught.'

He opposed the suggestion that the case should be referred back to the Court of Appeal. It is not that simple, he said.

'Protestations of innocence, continuous over many years, and support from distinguished persons, confront what appears on paper to be a weak case, but none of this can be admitted and weighed in a court of law.'

The way out of this, he said, is to use the 'Royal Prerogative.'

This is one of the mechanisms by which the state can release victims of its repression without endangering the machine that put them there in the first place.

Such a mechanism was used in the 1972 dock strike.

The government bit off more than it could chew when it decided to lock up five dockers. A general strike was building up and in order to defuse the situation a character called the Official Solicitor was brought in to get the state off the hook.

The Appeal Court, with Lord Denning presiding, set aside the previous judgment. The dockers were released.

It was a purely tactical move which allowed the government to continue its war against the dockers at a later date when they closed all the traditional London docks.

In the case of the innocent Irish prisoners, both their imprisonment and their suggested release are purely the result of tactical considerations in the war against the Irish people.

During the 1970s bombing campaign the Labour government, no doubt after consultation with the military, decided upon a new tactic with which to fight the war.

They set in motion an operation which was to have a dramatic effect upon the Irish community in Britain for over a decade.

In order to drive a wedge between the Irish community and the Republican movement, the order was given to arrest large numbers of innocent people.

The police, under pressure to produce results following a hysterical anti-Irish press campaign, were given carte blanche to beat confessions out of the prisoners.

Of course the enormous capacity for ineptitude in the British police force means that they can almost certainly be relied upon to arrest the wrong people but, in order to ensure success the Prevention Of Terrorism Act was rushed through parliament.

They now had seven days to kick the 'truth' out of the accused.

During the trials and subsequent appeals the sole criterion used by the judiciary for conviction or otherwise was the tactical requirements of the state.

In the case of the Birmingham Six it was obvious that the men had been severely beaten.

scornfully dubbed the 'Brit left'.

Intimidation was stepped up. A thousand people a year were arrested under the PTA. People became afraid of being raided and framed.

Even some previously militant republicans disapproved of their literature.

Recently however there has been a growing fighting mood in the Irish community.

Since the miners' strike large sections of the population have also seen the violent nature of the state and are seeing the Irish struggle in a new light.

In 1985 the Prevention of Terrorism Act was challenged and beaten for the first time when Doctor Maire O'Shea led a campaign against the attempt of the state to frame her.

Campaigns were launched this year for the release of both the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four.

The recent concern of those such as Lord Denning and Lord Scarman to 'see justice done' is of course most welcome — and they should be encouraged to act on their statements.

We should not forget however that for these people justice is a purely tactical consideration.

The hostages have served their purpose. They are now more of a liability than an asset.

For them justice is necessary in order to head off the growing anger in the Irish community and above all to prevent the possibility of unity with the British working class.

The British ruling class are well aware that wars are won by those who know not only how to attack but how to retreat in order to attack on another front.

## Beaten

In order to protect the credibility of their confessions it was suggested that the men had been beaten by the screws when on remand rather than by the police.

After the successful conviction of the Six the screws were tried and acquitted.

The Irish community knew that the arrest and conviction of the Guildford Four, the Maguires, the Birmingham Six and Judith Ward was not the result of an overzealous police force and judicious blindness.

They knew that hostages were being taken in reprisal raids to create fear and divisions.

It worked. Not only were most of the Irish community silenced but they were also deserted by what were

## 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.  
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.  
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.  
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

**ALBANY**  
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS  
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.  
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.  
BILLY GRIMES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

**GARTREE**  
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP  
ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.  
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.  
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.  
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

**FRANKLAND**  
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham  
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085  
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.

**WORMWOOD SCRUBS**  
DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

**WANDSWORTH**  
VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

**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.

## MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Organised by Workers Power  
Every other Wednesday, 7.30pm  
Upstairs at the Landor Hotel  
Landor Road, SW2 (Clapham North)  
November 5: The Moscow Trials 1936

## WRP IRISH COMMISSION

Public Discussion Group  
Irish Solidarity Work  
Principles, programme and future prospects  
The Cock Tavern  
23 Phoenix Road, London NW1  
(between Euston and Kings Cross stations)  
Sunday November 9, 7-9.30pm  
The struggle in Ireland  
How to defeat British Imperialism.

# The battle at Murdoch's 'Fortress Wapping'

## Leadership questions are being posed Print Support Groups meet again

**THE MAGNIFICENT 'NO' vote by the sacked News International printworkers has put the bankrupt London print union leadership under pressure from the membership.**

So much so that the Print Support Group Liaison Committee at Caxton House, headquarters of SOGAT, called a meeting of print support groups at the Highway Club last Wednesday night.

Sacked printworker and SOGAT member John Laing, who has played a major role in setting up the print support groups, chaired the meeting and urged delegates not to get bogged down with petty differences on which way forward for the support groups and the dispute.

The first speaker at the meeting was NGA member Mike McCarthy, a supporter of the Morning Star.

Speaking of the role of the Support Groups, he told the delegates that:

**B CHRIS McBRIDE**

laws, the police and Rupert Murdoch.

John Laing pointed out that, 'People want to fight to win — as you can see by the latest ballot result'.

Referring to a letter sent to print chapels at the beginning of the strike that only sacked print workers could picket the plant at Wapping, he told the delegates that the print union leadership 'had kept people away from Wapping and had ran away from the strike — like in the miners strike'.

Referring to another letter sent out by the SOGAT NEC which threatened to 'discipline' its members through the union, Laing said that 'whole groups of activists had been threatened by their own union'.

'Out of the eleven point plan drawn up by the SOGAT leadership, only one point mattered — that this dispute remains in the hands of the national leadership'.

He was absolutely correct

when he told the delegates 'there is a massive gulf between us and the national leadership'.

He spoke against balloting for a national levy as a ballot was not necessary under the constitution and finished off by telling the meeting that 'the print support groups will play a major role in escalating this dispute'.

John Laing is from the SOGAT clerical branch which has just passed a resolution in favour of a 24-hour stoppage of Fleet Street in support of sacked and threatened print workers.

Many of the delegates were concerned that the London leadership was waving white flags on the question of organising a proper blockade of the plant.

### Stroll

One delegate from Tower Hamlets Print Support Group told the meeting that, 'Hicks and Freeman have turned what was once a picket into a peaceful stroll down the road'.

Mike Hicks and Bill Freeman, both from the 'Morning Star' wing of the Communist Party, (Communist Campaign Group) have come under fire from many pickets for not organising proper picketing when large mar-

ches reach Wapping on Saturday and Wednesday nights.

Hicks has told a large gathering of printers on the so-called 'picket' that 'anybody who throws things at the police or promotes violence in anyway whatsoever was a "police provocateur"'

Two people are in jail through actions in support of sacked printworkers and the support groups meeting has passed a resolution (moved by a supporter of 'Workers Press' who was arrested at Wapping) to set up a Release Jailed Printers Campaign which will affiliate to the 'Justice for Miners Campaign'.

Many delegates felt that the meeting represented a turning point in stepping up the fight against Murdoch and the treacherous union leadership of the print unions.

● Another meeting of Print Support Groups is planned to organise carrying out the decision of Wednesday's meeting. This will take place on 19th November at 7.30pm at the Highway Club, near Murdoch's Wapping plant.

The support groups are organising two marches in support of sacked printworkers. Details can be obtained from UPSG. 01-733 5670.



LARRY HYETT: spoke from the floor



JOHN LAING: 'there is a massive gulf between us and the national leadership'.

# Police attack 'Women Against Murdoch'

**POLICE violently attacked the Women Against Murdoch (WAM) march when it reached Wapping on Wednesday night, October 29.**

The new group, only formed that evening, had already marched from Blackfriars Road — where they had just set themselves up — to Tower Hill.

Many more women joined them on the demonstration to Murdoch's plant, where the police tried to force them into Wellclose Square.

Some of the WAM demonstrators said there was no need for the police violence as they were already off the road and on the pavement, causing no trouble.

One woman was arrested in the confrontation. The main march that night — of the sacked printworkers and their supporters — was outraged when they finally reached the Highway via a different route, again opting for different tactics, as they did a couple of weeks ago.

**BY ALAN CLARK**

As the march reached the Caxton pub, near Murdoch's plant, they refused to move and called for the women arrested to be released.

Some of the women demonstrators of the WAM march came and joined the printworkers across the front of the march.

The police decided to make another unprovoked attack against those pickets left outside the plant where three more women were arrested.

### Advice

On advice from march leaders, the demonstration moved to Virginia Street, from where they decided to go to Lemn Street Police Station to which the three women had been taken.

By then the first of the arrested women had already been released.

Many of the pickets chanted and sang outside the police station until the three women were released in the early hours of the morning.



The banner of the WAM seen leaving Tower Hill for the demonstration to Wapping

### NHS Accommodation Crisis

#### A Conference

Jointly called by London Health Emergency and the Association of London Authorities

**Saturday November 1, 10.30 am — 3.30 pm  
CAMDEN TOWN HALL, Judd St, WC1**

Creche available; Access for people with disabilities; Nearest tube Kings Cross

● All Welcome.

Contact London Health Emergency, 335 Grays Inn Rd, WC1

### 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.

**SOCIALIST ACTION: BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM.** Weekend November 22/23, in London, a major political event with speakers, debates and discus-

sions. Details from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

**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.

**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)

**NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN Eleventh Annual Conference** London Women's Centre, Wild Court, Holborn. November 12. Open to all NAC supporters.

**WAR ON WANT: 'A Night for the People of South Africa'** Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2, Sunday November 16, 7.30pm. Those taking part in the show include Linton Kwesi

Johnson, Skint Video, Norman Beaton and Billy Bragg.

**IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT** 'Justice for the Irish! Smash the Frame-ups!' Friday November 14, 7.30pm. Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, near Kings Cross. Speakers: Moira O'Shea, Dave Douglas (Hatfield Main NUM), plus a relative of the Birmingham 6 and a representative from the Guildford 4 campaign.

## Workers Press talks to a union leader from the Philippines

# 'A democratic breathing space'

ROMEO CASTILLO, aged 34, is former president of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU — May 1st Movement) trade union organisation of the Philippines. He was arrested on July 22, 1984 for his union activities, severely tortured for nine consecutive days and charged with subversion.

He was in jail awaiting trial and death when Marcos was overthrown in February 1986. Two days later he was released.

Now a National Council member of KMU, Romeo is on a visit to Britain to campaign for support from the British working class movement. He has addressed many trade union organisations including a meeting of 40 Ford workers at Dagenham.

**COULD you give us your view of the present situation in the Philippines?**

MANY people think we have a new government, an instant government, installed by the shortest revolution in the history of the world.

They think there are no more reasons for us to struggle.

I want to disappoint those people, because the single most pronounced gain by the people in the downfall of Marcos, in their historic uprising, is a democratic breathing space.

The government of Aquino formally recognises some of our democratic rights but when it comes to economic uplifting of the people — the workers and the peasants — Cory Aquino offers nothing.

The wages remain at the equivalent of £1.50 a day. Unemployment remains unresolved.

Mass poverty and ignorance are still there and there is now a resurgence of fascism in the country.

For example, there have already been ten trade unionists killed in picket line incidents — 117 have been jailed, 79 wounded and 9 shot with Armalite rifles.

There is a resurgence against opposition and an impending crackdown on the ranks of the KMU and some other groups.

It is difficult to establish precisely the character of the present regime.

Our government is a coalition of both a military and civilian authority.

The civilians have conflicting and diverging interests.

There are ultra-rights, representing pro-imperialist and fascist interests.

There are bourgeois reformists, traditional politicians who were overthrown by Marcos, and there are 'progressive' bloes who represent the middle bourgeoisie and small bourgeois interests.

Within the civilian and military coalition each tries to influence the other or dominate the other.

We have an elected democracy but not yet a popular democracy.

Although some of our rights have been recognised, it is not enough.

The government and the people mean different things when they speak of democracy. We mean people's democracy, economic democracy.

Corazon Aquino and the Minister of Defence, Enrile, both have different views.

When the Amnesty International general secretary tried to visit the Philippines in March to investigate human rights violations, Aquino welcomed the delegation. Enrile reacted differently.

While President Aquino is for peaceful negotiations on the 'insurgency problem' and the people and the KMU welcome it, Enrile echoes the US State Department to solve it with force.

When Aquino was in the US last month, Enrile and Vice President Loray wanted a snap election.

The arrest of Roberto Salas, alleged chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, one of the negotiators, will have an effect on the peace negotiations.

It was the initiative of the

BY KEITH SCOTCHER

military to arrest him, to embarrass Aquino.

In the Labour Front the democratic space gives us a golden opportunity to advance our democratic struggle.

We have no option but to test the limits of this democratic space by persisting in our democratic struggle.

The laws, decrees and orders which were promulgated by Marcos, which are all anti-labour laws, pro-capitalist and pro-US imperialist, still remain intact and are reiterated by new guidelines issued by the Ministry of Labour.

During the May Day Rally Aquino said she was committed to do away with all those repressive laws from the days of Marcos, but this remains only a pronouncement.

We want the government to implement the pronouncement and repeal the anti-labour laws, but without an executive order they cannot be implemented.

There is no executive order — instead there is a repressive guideline released by the Ministry of Labour.

So our policy is to defy this law.

We have a policy of maximum restraint as an answer to the call of Aquino for a strike moratorium.

We did not agree with the moratorium, we could not sacrifice the interest of the workers.

In June we had 79 strikes, in August we had only 20, in September only 19.

We have had 488 strikes since March. If it was not for our restraint it would have reached 700 by now.

We are going to defy the repressive laws.

**WOULD you tell us about the experience under Marcos?**

WHEN martial law was declared all legitimate and progressive organisations were banned.

Political leaders, trade unionists, student and political activists, even the press were detained. Marcos put 70,000 people in jail.

We have 500,000 victims of 'hamletting' — people moved from the rural areas and put in the cities with barbed wire around them — based on the project of the Americans in Vietnam.

Between 1983 and 1985 alone 1,223 were tortured, including myself, 300 were victims of rape for political reasons.

In 1985 151 died in massacres, 57 died from strafing with machine guns and nine deaths were the result of bombing.

The fascist dictatorship of Marcos forbade the children a bright future. There is mass poverty — 90 per cent of the people are suffering in sub-human conditions.

This 20-year fascist rule was with the support of the US.

The US still gives military aid. The biggest chunk of the budget is allotted to the military.

The army before the declaration of martial law was 60,000, now it is 250,000 strong. The total including

the paramilitaries and the police, is about 450,000.

According to the leaders this is to solve the 'insurgency problem', but when you talk to the common people in the countryside they tell you that insurgency is not the problem but the solution to the problem.

The workers under the leadership of the KMU swore that never again will there be a dictatorship in the country, a repressive regime, or a curtailment of rights.

We have to defend what we have won and advance further.

**DO YOU see a threat from the military now?**

YES. I just avoided arrest at the airport before flying to London.

Military liquidation squads are roaming around the city to assassinate key people in the KMU as well as the New Peoples Army.

A party was created recently to engage in the electoral struggle and the popular mass movement.

It was created by workers, peasants and the middle class.

It is now a threat to the elected political parties and this is the reason for the military actions against them.

There are two major political events, the drafting of the new constitution which is to be submitted to the people for referendum by November, and the peace negotiations.

**DO YOU think there is a danger of the military taking over?**

THE ARMY, which is nothing but an appendage to the fascist structure, remains intact so this poses the danger of military takeover.

Any attempt at a military coup d'etat will be dealt with and will be answered with the hardest blows by the workers.

We are ready to launch a general strike in protest at a coup d'etat.

The military has three splits inside it.

There is the reformed Marcos movement, the Enrile-Ramos group; there is the Marcos loyalist group, about 16,000 strong; and those loyal to Aquino — we call it the yellow army, the young nationalists.

There is a possibility that the Marcos loyalists and Enrile-Ramos group will join together.

And of course there is the US. Not only do they have their investments there, but specifically their military bases, very dangerous bases.

They want not only to rule the country, but to rule the world from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean.

The Clark air base is the biggest foreign US base, about 200,000 acres of Philippine soil under occupation.

22,000 workers are employed, but we are ready to sacrifice those jobs just to get rid of the base.

We can convert it into an industrial area or farming area.

The KMU has a banner of genuine militant and



ROMEO CASTILLO

nationalist trade unionism. We believe in the leadership of the workers.

It is the workers who can give a concrete and direct solution to the problems. Workers have been tried and tested, faced starvation and threats.

We are militant, not limited to economic demands but political demands as well.

We are nationalist because we fight all forms of intervention, US and any other form of foreign intervention.

We successfully stopped the Bataan nuclear plant, north of Manila, an unsafe and very dangerous plant and the most expensive single project by the regime of the deposed dictator.

**COULD you tell us about the KMU, its origins?**

WE created the KMU on May 1, 1980 with about 35,000 workers composed of seven labour federations.

In 1982 Marcos arrested and jailed our founding chairman and 36 other leaders.

In 1984 I was arrested along with four other trade union leaders.

We are the biggest union organisation with 650,000 members. More are coming to our ranks.

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) was created and controlled by Marcos and it affiliated with the ICFTU. The British TUC recognises the TUCP.

The TUCP supported Marcos during the election, supported Marcos every time.

They did not participate in the people's revolution.

The KMU is a general trade union organisation like the TUC here, veering towards a political centre.

We have now successfully improved our alliance work

We have managed to create another labour coalition of all democratic forces within the trade union movement regardless of their international affiliations.

For example, we have now the Labour Advisory Consultative Council (LAC), a recently-created coalition of all labour centres like the KMU and the Federation of Free Workers (FFW).

Some are affiliated to the ICFTU, some to the World Federation of Trade Unions, pro-Russian.

**HOW DO you view the struggle of the New Peoples Army in the countryside?**

AS political observers and trade unionists, we support their struggle.

While we struggle against the evils of capitalism, we support their struggles against feudalism in the countryside.

Our struggles go hand in hand to eliminate these two evils. We are fanning the flames of unity of all democratic forces to fight against fascism.

**WOULD you make an appeal for the TUC to support the KMU as the legitimate trade union organisation of the Philippines rather than the TUCP?**

PRECISELY. I am appealing to them to recognise and support the KMU.

If the country continues to be dominated by US interests, US foreign capital, the British people could not benefit from it.

I am appealing to them for our international recognition because there are some reactionary forces who try to discredit us in world public opinion.

We recognise the importance of solidarity, regard-

less of affiliation and ideology, unity of all workers of the world, of all trade unionists of the world.

We are still living in conditions that are as oppressive and exploitative as South Africa.

We need international support: by recognising us, by sending petitions to Aquino to do away with repressive laws and guarantee our rights, to raise the wages of the workers, protect the workers from job insecurity, and our right to strike.

There are still over 300 political prisoners whose release we demand. We need support financially, morally and with political pressure.

We need support for our educational campaign. Our main thrust is now to develop the leading role of the workers in all forms of struggle, to enhance their leadership. We need to educate these workers.

I want to assure British trade unionists that the welfare and interest of the Philippine working class will remain the urgent task of the May 1 Movement.

In the name of justice, freedom and democracy, I appeal to them to recognise us and support us in many, many struggles to come.

Workers of the world unite against world wide imperialism! Workers of Great Britain unite against local capitalism!

Unite to liberate the workers from all forms of exploitation and oppression.

My visit to Britain was made possible by War of Want and I want to express my thanks to them.

Philippines Support Group, NUPE, NCM, TGWU, etc. pool who acceptance when me and did me in

**OCTOBER 23 1986**

**London meeting highlights the British contribution to an international campaign**

**LONG LIVE THE**



**BALAZS NAGY:** 'The bureaucracy lived in such fear of the working class that they maintained a special force of secret police, known in the factories as the SS.'

# HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

**A MEETING marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution in London last weekend was itself an historic occasion which brought together Trotskyists from many different organisations.**

**The meeting was organised by the Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press), Workers Power, International and Socialist Viewpoint.**

**An audience of several hundred heard first hand accounts of the revolution and of the traumas it sent through the Communist Parties around the world, particularly in Britain.**

**The suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviet bureaucracy was clearly a continuation of the stalinist regime's assault on the international revolution which began with its brutal offensive against the Left Opposition in Russia.**

**However, the attack on the Hungarian working class came just months after Khrushchev's famous speech denouncing Stalin. It made it clear that the denunciation was purely formal and that the Russian bureaucracy would continue to fight against revolutionary class forces.**

**It was therefore very fitting that the revolution should be celebrated by Trotskyists agreeing on the need for joint action against stalinism and principled discussion and regroupment.**

**The meeting was opened by Balazs Nagy, (Michel Varga), a leader of the Petofi circle of oppositionists in Hungary in 1956 and now a Trotskyist.**

He stressed that the revolution had taken place as an integral part of the international class struggle.

FROM the French general strike, the Algerian independence struggle, the victory of the Vietnamese national revolutionaries against French imperialism at Dien Bien Phu, the Egyptian upheavals, workers throughout eastern Europe from Berlin to Pilsen in Czechoslovakia — workers of the whole world had participated in major battles.

The transformation in Hungary and in other East European countries had begun in 1948/49 with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

It was an overturn im-

posed from above, Nagy said, but was accompanied by the mobilisation of the working class.

This was a contradictory situation — the working class was nominally master of class relations but was dispossessed of its power.

This contradiction determined the whole position of the country including its economic situation.

Before the second World War, he pointed out, Hungary was known as a 'country of three million beggars'.

After the overturn there was no more famine, people

no longer went barefoot but there was still a shortage of household goods.

It was impossible to convey the totality of contradictions that still make up the lives of the Hungarian people.

The contradiction is based on the conception that it is possible to develop socialism in a single country.

History has shown, Nagy declared, that it is impossible to create socialism on the basis of a single country. In a small country like Hungary it is grotesque.

The aim of the Stalinist

bureaucracy was to make Hungary a prime producer of iron and steel — in a country with no raw materials.

The working class paid dearly for this policy. The bureaucracy, meanwhile, lived like the old bourgeoisie, with their special privileges, their own shops, hospitals, swimming pools, resorts and bathing beaches.

As the gap between wages and prices widened, everything was sacrificed to the production of iron and steel.

Widespread speed-up introduced divisions among workers.

There was an extensive bureaucracy in the factories and workers had no trade union protection.

Organisation was on the basis of the eternal triangle — one angle was the bosses and management, one the party secretary and the third the trade union secretary.

At the slightest sign of dis-

content, police would hunt out the ringleaders.

The bureaucracy lived in such fear of the working class that they maintained a special force of secret police, known in the factories as the 'SS'.

The Hungarian economy was tied and subjected to the Soviet economy; national expression was suppressed; there was constant Russification while Hungarian language and culture was denigrated.

The developments that led to the revolutionary explosion began in 1953 with the emergence of an opposition in the party demanding reforms of the rigidity of the Stalin era.

In many other East European countries, particularly Rumania, the discontent was more sharply expressed but there was no revolution.

Why did Hungary erupt but Poland did not?

The answer was that the bureaucracy in Poland had

introduced reforms and healed the breach in its ranks.

Discontent in Hungary emerged as a sharp split within the bureaucracy itself.

In the late 1940s a similar split had emerged — which the Moscow bureaucracy had used to its advantage in the Rajk trial, the beginning of the imposition of Stalinist relations in Hungary.

The Petofi Circle, which played a big part in the opposition, was a public discussion forum where issues were debated and resolved and it became, as it were, the source for the elaboration of a programme.

The programme already went far beyond that of the opposition; what had begun as a small circle of intellectuals later brought in the mass of the working class and soldiers.

It became the basis for a

● CONT. ON PAGE 8

**The meeting overwhelmingly passed a resolution moved by Balazs Nagy.**

**'This meeting of workers, youth and intellectuals in London to commemorate the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, as well as the working class organisations participating in it, unreservedly supports the struggle of the Hungarian opposition for the dignified burial of the executed and killed leaders of the Hungarian Revolution: Imre Nagy, Geza Loszoczy, Miklos Gimes, Pal Maleter, Jozsef Szilagyi — and the thousands of unknown victims of repression — as fighters for the working class and the Hungarian people, indeed for the world working class.**

**'In particular it is our decision to create a preparatory international commission for the founding of an international committee of the united workers movement to fight for this objective.**

# AN INTERNATIONAL

## A strength to the struggle for international socialism — a blow to Stalinism

● FROM PAGE 7

much wider opposition — so much so that the bureaucracy dubbed it 'a second Party' — even though the actual circle leaders said it couldn't be.

Since the Petofi Circle leaders were lacking in aims, it was the student youth who picked up the baton and were able to link the theoretical discussions with revolutionary action.

So when the students planned a mass demonstration for October 23, they came to the Petofi Circle and told them to take the leadership of the movement.

That led to the first major split in the Opposition: taking to the streets meant there was no more possibility of reform.

The movement in Hungary reproduced all the phases that are shown in every revolution and the methods employed by the masses.

The demonstration that took place involved many hundreds of thousands and led to the second split in the opposition — they could no longer control the movement and its demands had changed.

'General Strike', the workers were shouting. 'Russians go home! Down with the bureaucracy!'

They went to the government building and were kept waiting for hours to hear Imre Nagy.

Finally, the crowd split in two — one section went to the radio station to tell the rest of the country what was happening and the other to demolish the statue of Stalin.

At the radio station, armed detachments of secret police fired on the crowd. What was a revolution had become an insurrection.

Sections of the Hungarian army split off and joined the demonstration — and the situation was transformed again.

When the first Soviet tanks arrived it became a national war — all this within a few hours.

The bureaucracy opposed the revolution. Even the reform measures had only

been adopted by a tiny minority; the bureaucracy fundamentally opposed independent action by the masses.

When the working class enters into action, the collision with the bureaucracy is inevitable and leads to its break-up — including its reformist wing, the opposition.

Nowhere did we see any dual nature of the bureaucracy, Nagy said. This theory, which was developed later, is mere speculation and has no connection with the living experience of the working class.

What was true, Nagy declared, was that a section tried to head off the movement of the working class.

There was also a tiny minority who wished to re-join the working class — but they couldn't do it as bureaucrats.

But the non-bureaucratic opposition in Hungary had been wrong in their analysis of the path of reforms.

One reason was that there had been an almost total break in the continuity of Marxism, a break carried out in the most brutal manner by the Stalinists to get rid of the last remnants of any sort of opposition.

Nagy himself was very young at the time; none of the opposition knew of the Bolshevik party or about the struggle of the Left Opposition.

The historical break was complete; it was also geographical — the working class of Eastern Europe was split off from the working class in the capitalist countries.

There was another reason, he added.

In 1952 and 1953, the leadership of the Fourth International resolutely undertook the reformist path.

The significance of the International Committee was that it took up the battle against this false orientation.

Ernest Mandel says today that they too salute the Hungarian Revolution — it is not enough to salute an event after it had taken place.

It is important to define

## An attempt to make a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy — Peter Fryer

The second speaker of the meeting was Peter Fryer who said that he felt it was very encouraging that the meeting had been organised by a number of different Trotskyist groups.

Despite their various differences they were able to find common ground to come together to honour the gallant struggles of the Hungarian working class.

Fryer told us that between the two wars Hungary was ruled by the right wing dictatorship of Admiral Horthy and that the socialist economy was brought about when the Soviet army came to Hungary in pursuit of Hitler at the end of the second World War.

It was 'a sort of revolution from above — but no attempt whatever was made to harness the creative energy of the working class or to involve the masses of the people in the administration or to introduce any form of workers' democracy.'

### Regime

Peter Fryer told the meeting about his own visits to Hungary. He first went there in the summer of 1949 at the time of the World Youth Festival.

The Stalinist regime still had a certain support among the working class and the youth because of its achievements such as land reforms, the repair of war damage

and the nationalisation of key industries and of the banking system.

However he also pointed out that there was a darker side of things, such as the trial and hanging of former government minister Rajk on a trumped up charge.

He also showed the hypocrisy involved in Rajk's subsequent rehabilitation in response to pressure from the working class.

The situation in Hungary led Fryer to raise disagreements with the Communist Party in Britain and he resigned from his job on the *Daily Worker* but was asked to work out a year's notice.

He was working out his notice when the reburial of Rajk was attended by 200,000 people in a city which could not have had more than a quarter of a million inhabitants.

Party officials said at the burial that Rajk was a martyr, but many of those in the crowd observed that those who killed Rajk were still up there.

'Public feeling was almost at boiling point and seven-teen days later it boiled over,' said Fryer.

He went back to Hungary to report the uprising for the



PETER FRYER gave a powerful eyewitness account of the Hungarian Revolution in meetings everywhere with deputations coming with armbands and rifles and a general strike on.

*Daily Worker*. He arrived in a small town a few hours after a peaceful demonstration had been fired on by the security forces and 80 people had been killed.

Describing the atmosphere in the second town he visited Fryer said that 'it was a town in ferment, meet-

ings everywhere with deputations coming and going, workers with armbands and rifles and a general strike on.'

Many of the soldiers and police had gone over to the side of the workers.

Factory committees discussed whether to continue with the form of address of 'Comrade', and decided not to outlaw the Communist Party but rather to make sure that it worked in an entirely new and honest way.

They discussed how to set up an armed workers militia to keep order, and the practical measures to send supplies to Budapest where food supplies were running low.

After a few days the revolution seemed to be over and things started to stabilise.

'Power was in the hands of the armed workers, many of them in their teens, bandoliers on their shoulders, hand grenades stuck in their belts, tommy guns in their hands.'

'By the Friday night the revolution had released 5,500 political prisoners, shops were open. On the Saturday some Councils began to meet again.'

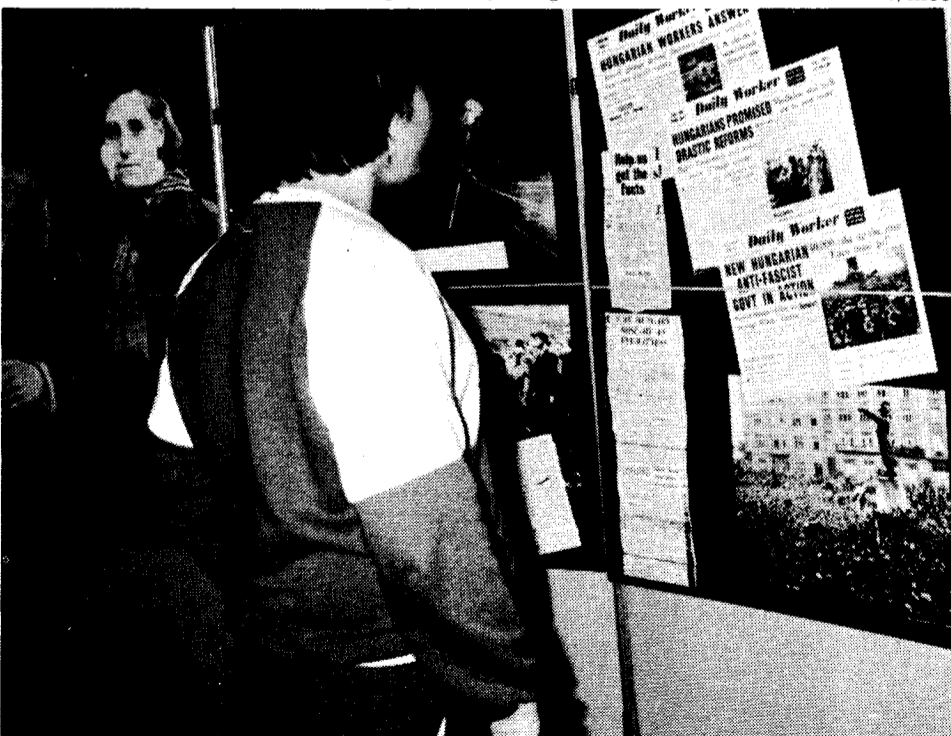
### Working

'Some factories had started working already and there were plans for the general resumption of work on the following Monday.'

'In place of the newspapers they'd had before, all saying much the same thing in much the same stereotyped Stalinist language, there were now 25 daily newspapers.'

'Everywhere I found revolutionary committees in session and mass meetings of workers in progress.'

At a press conference on the Saturday evening Fryer heard that the Russians had



Members of the organising groups worked hard to prepare an exhibition which brought together historical material about the Hungarian Revolution and exposed the swinging line of the 'Daily Worker'.

the character of the Hungarian Revolution — today few would dare to deny its working class character.

But there was a contradiction between the political and economic position of the working class, which emerged as a difference between what they said and did.

They saw their actions as

anti-Marxist; they said they didn't want the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This contradiction dominates the living movement of the East European working class and can be seen today in Poland in the Solidarity movement.

The fact that this class was cut off from its historical experience can be explained

only by its party — it could only pick up crumbs of experience, Nagy said.

It can only gain the historical experience by the construction of an international revolutionary party.

Alone and isolated they could not succeed — only in alliance with workers of other countries can they succeed.



# INSPIRATION

## Effects in Britain

Bob Pennington opened the second session of the day saying he would mainly concentrate on the effects of the revolution in Britain.

Events in Hungary and Suez helped to reshape, reform and restructure what happened in Britain.

He pointed out that Britain's role as a major imperialist power was failing. The British and French invasion of Suez had shown that 'Britain's role as a major imperialist power could only be with the kind permission of the USA.'

Pennington argued that Hungary showed the validity of Trotsky's theory of political revolution.

Trotskyists had long argued that political revolution would be the method of the working class in Eastern Europe and Hungary proved them right.

Every workers' revolution sees the emergence of Workers' Councils under the democratic control of the workers' movement.

Bob took the meeting back to the small and isolated nature of the Trotskyist movement in the postwar years.

He recalled that he left the Communist Party to join the Trotskyist movement in 1951 and that between 1949 and 1956 he was probably the only person to take such a step.

But the Trotskyist movement was aware that it was not enough to have a correct programme — it had to build a leadership in the working class, amongst intellectuals

and in the women's movement.

Pennington outlined the success of the Trotskyist movement in the period after 1956.

He felt that far greater gains could have been made but for two weaknesses.

Firstly that Healyism drove many of the workers and intellectuals attracted to Trotskyism out of the movement.

Secondly the split in the world Trotskyist movement reduced the gains of 1956.

Comrade Pennington argued strongly for a united world movement and for the division of world Trotskyism to be ended.

## The Soviet bureaucracy stands between the working class and socialism

'Those who don't understand the significance of the Hungarian Revolution will never lead a revolution against capitalism or against the stalinist bureaucracy,' Bill Hunter, WRP Central Committee, told the meeting.

He went on to say two events since World War II contained the fundamental development of workers' committees and workers' councils — the French General Strike of 1968 and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

Both were pushing towards power for the working class.

'We commemorate the Hungarian Revolution, because it was the revolutionary struggle of the working class in this period of transition.'

Hunter went on to say that it was Trotsky and the Left Opposition who gave us the possibility of understanding what happened in Hungary, the contradictions that would cause an explosion against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

'History forced into the minds of people the experiences Trotsky took into his theory — that you couldn't

reform this bureaucracy, that there are laws of development within the deformed workers' states which force people to revolution.'

'That revolution doesn't go through channels that dogmatists think it should go.'

'If the development of leadership is tortuous in this period, it's a reflection of the tortuous development of the movement from capitalism to socialism.'

There is a movement in eastern Europe now towards unity internationally.

The major contradiction between the development of the productive forces and national boundaries takes place in the struggle against the bureaucracy.

'The Soviet bureaucracy stands between the working class and socialism. It is opposed to every expression of workers strength and initiative.'

## British & international working class owe enormous debt

CLIFF SLAUGHTER began his speech by referring to the impact of the two opening speakers, saying that he felt he would be an anti-climax after Peter Fryer and Balazs Nagy.

He said that it was a justification of the bitter struggle in the WRP that it provided the conditions for both of them to speak on the same platform.

This could not have happened without the WRP split and the movement will be strengthened by the meeting.

He went on to say that there is an enormous debt which the British and the international working class owe to the Hungarian and Polish workers in 1956.

They clarified questions of world politics and the future

of the working class, which is not in the hands of the capitalist class or the bureaucracy, but in the hands of the international working class.

The alternative is the unity of the socialist revolution and the political revolution.

Slaughter talked about the British Communist Party at the time. He said that inside it there was a fight against an intractable opposition, and pointed out that they had not learnt the lessons of Hungary and were still doing the same things today.

● CONT. ON PAGE 10

## Hungarian Revolution: Motivates meetings around the world

NOT ONLY the Workers Revolutionary Party but the Trotskyist movement internationally has recognised the historical significance of the Hungarian Revolution and the need to draw the vital political lessons of October 1956.

### Spain:

The Group of Struggle and Continuity of the Fourth International (GSCFI) held a public meeting in Paris, France on October 24 and a further meeting is scheduled for November 8 in Barcelona.

### Italy:

In collaboration with the Grupo Operaio Rivoluzionario, based in Perugia, the GSCFI are holding a series of public meetings, including the working class strongholds of Milan and Turin, at which the main speaker will be the Hungarian Trotskyist Michel Varga.

### Latin America:

At the invitation of the Moreno group, the LIT (FI), Peter Fryer has just completed a tour of five Latin American countries — including Argentina, Brazil and Peru — and presented there a detailed account of his experiences as 'Daily Worker' correspondent in 1956 and his consequent expulsion from the CPGB in 1957.

The LIT also reprinted Peter Fryer's book, 'Hungarian Tragedy', in Spanish simultaneously with the English reprint to mark the 30th anniversary.

### Australia:

The Communist League organised meetings in Sydney and Melbourne which were attended by members of other Trotskyist organisations.

### Ireland:

A group of Trotskyists in Dublin have planned a meeting for November.



'It was a town in ferment, and going, workers with

promised not to send any fresh troops into Hungary. Tildy, the cabinet minister at the press conference, told the journalists there could be no Soviet attack.

'I believe that it is humanly impossible that such a tragedy could take place. It would be tragic from the point of view of the Hungarian people, from the point of view of the Soviet people, from the point of view of the whole world. This is why I believe it will never take place.'

### Shelling

Three hours later the Hungarian delegates for the negotiations were arrested by the Soviet authorities and before dawn next morning, 'that tragic November 4', Fryer was woken by the sound of Soviet guns shelling the city from the high surrounds.

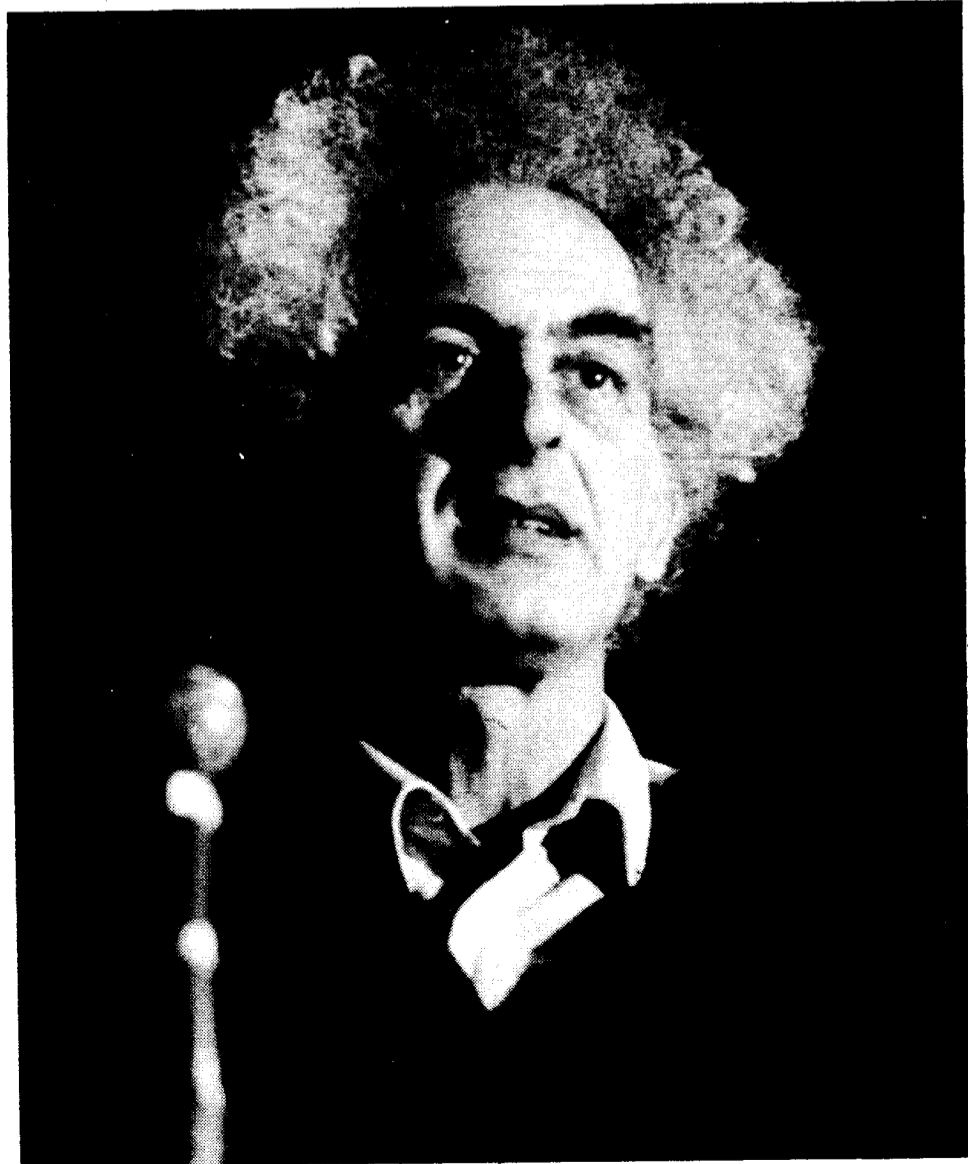
Armed resistance was quickly defeated, but resistance continued in the form of a general strike which lasted weeks and in some areas months.

'In my view the Hungarian Revolution was an attempt to make a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy,' Fryer concluded.

The Stalinists justified the Soviet invasion by saying that the Revolution was going to restore capitalism to Hungary, but Fryer pointed out that there were two barriers.

Firstly the leaders themselves were clear that they didn't want a return to capitalism and secondly the workers were armed, had occupied the factories and had elected workers councils.

There is no way, said Fryer, that armed workers will hand over their workplaces to capitalists.



GEORGE KRASSO: 'Two hundred and fifty thousand Russian soldiers and tanks came to destroy the revolution. There was war between Russia and Hungary.'

# 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

## LONG LIVE WORKERS COUNCILS

### DOWN WITH STALINIST BUREAUCRACY

#### LONG LIVE THE IV<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL



Left to right: Bill Hunter (WRP Central Committee), Bob Pennington (Editorial Board of International, Steve McSweeney (Workers Power) Cliff Slaughter (WRP Central Committee), George Krasso (Socialist Oppositionist and veteran of the Revolution) made up the platform of the second session of the meeting.

### ANNOUNCING A NEW EDITION OF

# HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY

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.

He saw people in arms demolish a regime of fear and poverty and take power in their own hands. He saw security police atrocities — and the people's terrible revenge. Then he watched appalled as a nation's new-born freedom was relentlessly crushed.

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.

Thirty years later his Hungarian Tragedy, now published by New Park Publications with a new introduction by the author, still stands as a model of journalistic insight and integrity and is as valuable now as it was in 1956.

Published on October 23 1986

Price £2.95

ISBN: 0 86151 072 6

New Park Publications Ltd.

10-12 Atlantic Road, London SW9 8HY

01-274-8342



#### ● FROM PAGE 9

'They were as much opposed to the Hungarian revolution as they are to the British revolution,' he said.

'Mick McGahey proudly announced that he had tipped off the Coal Board about the miners' strike, and Jaruzelski supplied Polish coal to try and break the miners.

'The bureaucracy knows that the way forward for the working class is the unity of both these struggles, against the capitalist class and the Stalinists.'

He said that 1985 in the WRP produced parallel conclusions to those of the Left Opposition in 1936 — that the only way to fight was to go back to basic questions.

'Marxism is not based on socialism in one country but on permanent revolution. In the underdeveloped countries the working class is the only class that can be brought into play even for a democratic revolution.

'Revolution cannot be completed on a national scale, it is part of an international struggle and requires an international leadership.

'There will be no self reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

'We are now going back over what the Fourth International had learned: the theory of the "dual nature" of the bureaucracy is a fraud.

'Their nature is to defend their privileges which contradict the interests of the working class.

'To preserve themselves they sacrifice revolution in every country in the world.

'The lesson that we must draw is that we are not just talking about the past, but the future of the Hungarian revolution.

'The question is, can the lessons be learned and put into action.

He went on to explain the way the platform at the meeting represented this continuity.

Peter Fryer, he pointed out, joined the movement and then left. Varga joined and then contact was lost with him after 1971.

## The Revolution was the only eastern European Revolution that was victorious — George Krasso

THE last speaker was George Krasso, who spent seven years in prison for his involvement in the Hungarian Revolution.

He said he was not a Trotskyist but he agreed with many of the conclusions which Trotskyists draw.

'The Hungarian revolution', he said, 'was not defeated. It was the only (Eastern European) revolution that was victorious.

'Two hundred and fifty thousand Russian soldiers with tanks came to destroy the revolution. There was war between Russia and Hungary.'

Krasso attacked the hypocrisy of the Western countries which provided cover for the Soviet invasion through their attack on Suez.

He said 'After the 20th Congress of the Party and after Khrushchev it was a very difficult thing for the Soviet Union to make war

against another socialist country.

'There was collusion between capitalist countries and the Soviet Union so that the West got Suez and the Soviet Union got Hungary.

'But the West did not in fact get Egypt. In the United States, President Eisenhower was just elected.

'He said openly that the US Government never urged a small country to rebel against a big power that could not be defeated.'

Krasso also made the point that the British press over the last couple of weeks had been saying it was a mistake for Hungary to rebel against the Soviet Union.

He said, 'If this was a mistake this means that nothing can be done against the Soviet Union.'

He pointed out also that Czechoslovakia and Poland were defeated and said that the Hungarians got more results from their revolution than perhaps others did.

He also commented that there was not one revolution in Hungary at the time but two.

He said that the first was made by the reform faction of the Communist Party who were not revolutionaries and who did not know they were preparing for a revolution.

Their long standing reformist work and propaganda made them unsuitable for revolution.

'They did want change but not radical change. In contrast with the very stupid centralised Soviet Union economic method they wanted another one.

'They also wanted some limited independence. They wanted a rise in living stan-

dards but did not want to abolish class differences.

'What they wanted was something different from the earlier regime but not enough for the people.

'The reformists were trying to stop the revolution while promising everything.

'They wanted to disarm the workers and wanted to stop the General Strike at the time when the Russians were about to attack Hungary.'

Krasso said the bourgeois press always over-emphasise the aspects of national independence and parliamentary democracy, but overlook the socialist aspects to the Hungarian Revolution.

He pointed out that today Hungary still has many great problems:

'Two million people live under the poverty line. The new reforms are making unemployment and giving a free hand to the managers'.

Krasso finished by alerting the meeting to the existence of a small group known as the Democratic Opposition who are looking to give voice to the sentiments and problems which are not usually spoken about.

Just recently 122 Hungarian, Polish, Rumanian, Czech and East European dissidents made a common declaration about the Hungarian Revolution.

Krasso said this was a very important thing because if there was common action by the Hungarian, Czechoslovak and East German people it would be very easy for the Stalinist regime to be overthrown.

# HORMEL STRIKERS CALL FOR BRITISH SUPPORT

ON AUGUST 17, 1985 1,500 members of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Union went on strike in Austin, Minnesota. What followed has been one of the bitterest confrontations in the history of the American labour movement.

Strikers from the Hormel plant have come to Britain with members of the Support Groups which have been set up to keep their 15-month strike going. They are campaigning for support for their dispute which has brought them into conflict with the union leadership.

This strike is certainly as important to the American working class as the miners' strike was to the British.

BY GERRY DOWNING

Over a year after the strike began, on September 12, 1986, workers approved a new contract.

Their Local, P-9, had been put into receivership by the parent union and they had reorganised themselves as the North American Meat-packers Union.

The vote for the new contract was 1,064 for and 440 against.

Ninety per cent of the scabs inside the factory accepted the contract, and about 50 per cent of the strikers.

There is no guarantee that the strikers will ever be rehired by their employer, George Hormel, either at the Austin plant or at the plants in Fremont, Nebraska or Ottumwa, Iowa.

Workers there were dismissed on the spot for honouring P-9's roving picket lines.

The background to the strike is the long series of 'concessions' and wages cuts imposed on American workers with the collaboration of the union bureaucracy over recent years.

At Hormel, the 'concessions' included a speed-up and deteriorating working conditions — and job cuts which brought the workforce down from 7,000 to 1,540.

In the Austin plant, the injury rate in 1984 was 202 per 100 workers, compared to 33 per 100 in meat packing generally.

In fact in Hormel major concessions have been made in 16 of the last 23 years.

Holiday and sick pay were reduced and workers can be dismissed immediately for taking part in strikes, boycotts and pickets.

P-9 members were earning \$10.69 an hour until October 1984 when wages were reduced to \$8.23.

Before the strike Hormel offered an increase to \$9 an hour.

\$10 was offered to P-9-ers to cross picket lines, and \$9 to new scabs in January 1986.

By 1989, workers will be earning \$10.70 an hour, an increase of just one cent over 1984 rates!

Hormel had a 31 per cent increase in profits last year.

The vital significance of the strike was pointed out in an article in the New York Times on February 15:

'Jay Foreman, the present unions' senior vice president and executive assistant to Mr Wynn (the president), said it might be necessary to lift the union's strike sanctions and place the local in receivership so the strike could be formally ended.

'Some labor authorities say a key to the bitterness that exists is that the strikers' strategy of confrontation would, if successful, demonstrate that the parent union's tactics of accepting concessions regarded as necessary and of maintaining essentially cooperative relations with companies are incorrect.

'These are the tactics of most American unions, and a rank and file victory at Austin, this argument holds, would demonstrate tactics at other unions are wrong too.'

P-9 faced Hormel and the organisation of picket-busting scabs, the National Guard brought in after their successful blockade of the plant on January 20 and the combined efforts at breaking the strike of the entire union bureaucracy.

The AFL-CIO (the Amer-



Above: the wives of Hormel workers shut down the corporate headquarters (March, 1986). Below left, Jim Guyette, former president of Local P-9 during his visit to Britain; (middle) a young supporter of the strike; and (right) Jake Cooper unloads bread donated by the Support Committee. Thanks to Socialist Action of the USA for the American pictures

ican TUC) never denounced the actions of the governor in sending in the National Guard.

Jane Kirk, AFL-CIO president, called the policy of the UFCW president, William Wynn, 'wise and sound'.

Wynn campaigned against the sending of funds to P-9's emergency hardship fund, set up because the strike pay of \$40 a week couldn't begin to feed the strikers' families.

He went so far as to publish and distribute nationally a 'Fact Book on Local P-9/Hormel, Austin, Minnesota' with a long list of lying denunciations of P-9.

He tried to end the strike by a postal ballot to undercut the local.

In early January both the union-organised ballot and the one held by the local produced a 3-2 majority

against the new contract.

Eventually Wynn abandoned all pretence at democracy and union principles, put P-9 into receivership and recognised the scabs in the plant.

One of the most important developments in the strike was the formation of the Support Committees.

These paralleled the miners' support groups here.

They organised collections of food and money for the strikers.

Beginning in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St Pauls, they spread to Boston, New York, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Cincinnati and Detroit.

Jake Cooper, veteran Trotskyist leader of the 1934 Teamsters strike and member of the 'Socialist Action' group, organised massive

food deliveries from the Twin Cities throughout the winter.

On September 1 they had 15 tons.

The second, on October 19, had 6,000 pounds of chickens, 1,500 loaves of bread, 1,500 dozen eggs, and three tons of potatoes.

Jake says the lessons of 1934 were learned in the flying squads and the democratic central strike committee:

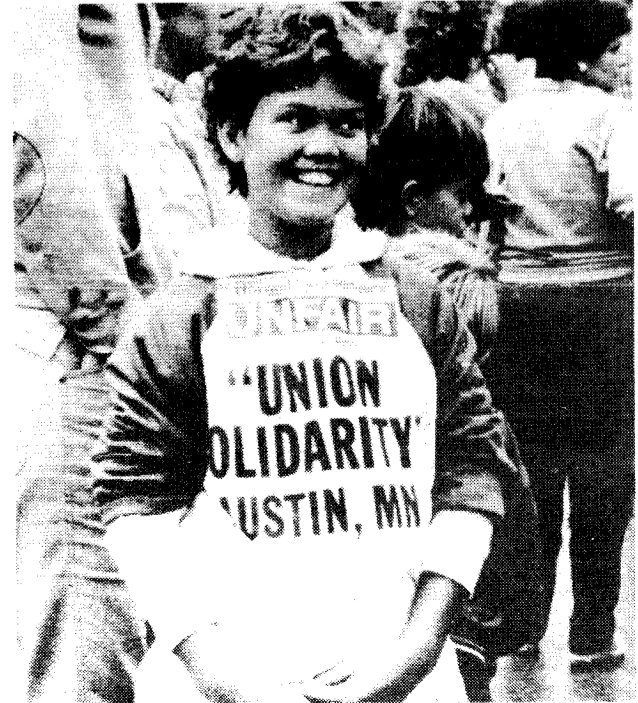
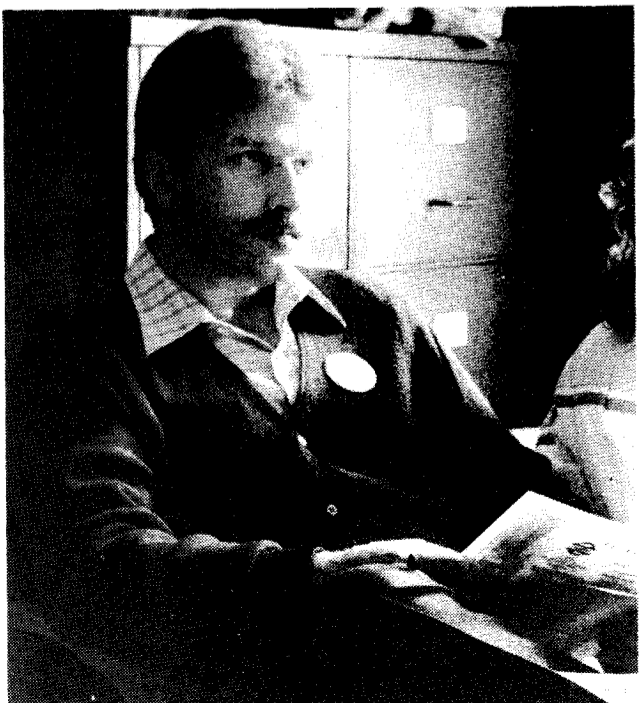
'The only way to make the Hormel company retreat in its violent attacks against the workers — an attack which has seen the workers lose their cars and then their

homes — is to follow the example of the fighting movement of the 1930s.'

Jim Guyette, former president of UFCW local P-9, is on tour in Britain. He spoke at fringe meetings at the Labour Party conference and had a particularly warm welcome in the mining areas.

The strikers are asking for resolutions of support and for a boycott of Hormel's products, particularly Spam.

Money and resolutions should be sent to: United Support Group, P-9 Emergency Hardship Fund, 316 Fourth Ave, N E, Austin, Minnesota 55912.



# LETTERS

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

## Split in the Fourth International and the Hungarian Revolution

WORKERS PRESS published a letter by Cyril Smith in its issue of September 13, 1986 stating the following:

'I think we are obliged to undertake a really objective study of the International's history, not just to find out who was to blame for its difficulties, or establish just who did what to whom, but to prepare a fundamental advance in theory.'

'In particular, the split of 1953 must be carefully examined.'

Excellent resolve. So far, so good.

But Comrade Cyril Smith also published an article a few weeks earlier (Workers Press August 23, 1986), which carries his interpretation of the 1953 split:

'In 1953, a more important split occurred in the International.'

'Michel Pablo (Raptis), who had become the Secretary, tried to adapt the policies of the movement to the apparent might of Stalinism.'

'In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the bureaucracy was going to liberalise itself, he said, following the ideas of Isaac Deutscher.'

'And if the Chinese CP could lead a revolution, why not the French?'

'Against him, several groups fought to defend the heritage of Trotskyism, especially the characterisa-

tion of Stalinism as counter-revolutionary.

'The "destabilising" moves of Khrushchev in 1953-1956 appeared to many people to confirm the predictions of Deutscher.'

'But the eruption of the Polish and Hungarian struggles certainly did not.'

'To some of the people who took seriously Pablo's theory about the "self-reform of the bureaucracy", the workers of Budapest ought really to be condemned for joggling the elbow of the Moscow leaders, derailing the train of reforms by driving it too fast.'

'Their actions, in any case, were doomed to defeat from the start.'

'This position was clearly stated by Deutscher, but privately held by many others.'

'This is not a "really objective study of the International's history" but just an attempt to justify the 1953 split, not on the basis of documentary evidence but of allegations about positions "privately held" by anonymous and mysterious "many persons".'

Could Comrade Smith tell us who these persons are and what role they played inside the FI in October/November, 1956?

In fact the whole FI majority, with which the Socialist Labour League had broken in 1953 on the assumption of its 'Pabloism', fully and en-

thusiastically supported the Budapest workers against the bureaucracy and the Soviet army in October/November, 1956.

It identified with their struggles.

It saw in them the first full scale model (of which the GDR workers' uprising of 1953 had only been an embryonic form) of the political revolution against the bureaucracy, which Leon Trotsky had predicted would occur, and for which our Transitional Programme had prepared the movement.

We took the same attitude towards the Prague spring of 1968-69 and towards the Polish workers' upsurge of 1980-81.

The basic assumption on which the 1953 split was based, to wit, that the FI majority was 'capitulating to Stalinism' was thereby disproved by events.

No attempt to substitute

the analysis of 'private thoughts' for clearly established documentary evidence of public statements and public political actions can distort that picture.

It follows that the 1953 split had been a mistake.

The SLL's refusal to join the 1962-1963 reunification had been an even graver one.

Comrade Cannon recognised these facts implicitly when he based his first prudent approval of initial moves towards reunification, starting from 1957, on the recognition that both wings of the International had reacted identically to the Hungarian Revolution.

This was already clear in 1956-57 to anybody who looked at reality objectively.

For Comrade Cyril Smith it should at least have become clear thirty years later.

Ernest Mandel

## Sri Lanka — setting the record straight

WITH reference to your letter of September 8 we have to state as follows:

1. We are surprised to learn that the group led by Michael Banda has claimed that they have fraternal relations with the Revolutionary Workers Party — Sri Lanka. We have not yet seen this in any publication of this group since it split from the WRP.

In any event we have to state categorically that, if such a claim has been made by this group, there is no basis for it.

2. We have seen that a photocopy of a document from our group, 'The Fourth International — Where We Stand' has been republished by their organ 'Communist Forum', which also contains an advertisement for some factional documents of the Banda group.

While we cannot object to

a group claiming to be Trotskyist republishing any of our documents which we have released, we certainly have objections if any impression has been created that the WRP has fraternal relations with such a group, when this is not the case.

And we certainly have objections when this particular publication contains advertisements for factional documents of the Banda group.

Accordingly, we are lodging our objections with the Banda group in this respect.

While we desire, as far as possible, to maintain good personal relations, especially with groups claiming to be Trotskyist, we are concerned not to allow satisfactory personal relations being confused with fraternal relations — which connotes political agreement.

Political Committee, WRP.

## Capital and commodities

I WOULD like to reply to the letter from Brian Thomas of Workers Power in Workers Press (October 18) in which he still tries to say Marx distinguished between capital and commodities, although I now see the ground has shifted to Marx distinguishing between money-capital and commodity-capital, which is certainly different.

Let's get one thing straight: commodity capital cannot be distinguished from capital, it is one and the same thing.

As Marx says, and now even Brian Thomas, industrial capital moves from money-capital to productive-capital to commodity-capital.

Now the central question in this polemic is this: can capital be distinguished from commodity-capital?

To attempt to do so would be to distinguish between, say, man and old-age; as man and old-age are conceptually unconnected they cannot be compared, and to distinguish would be nonsensical.

Yes I am unaware of the 'debates that have raged this century over the distinction'.

What Marx was most concerned about was that Capital (Das Kapital) should be accessible to the working class, and does not the debate over 'under-consumptionism' 'over-consumptionism' or even 'just-right-consumptionism' denigrate an accessible and scientific work upon the capitalist system and the class struggle it produces?

Not only that, but such a debate can have only one purpose... sophistry.

Peter Windeler

## Defend the armed struggle in South Africa!

BRONWEN HANDYSIDE'S article on the development of the National Sanctions Campaign (Workers Press, September 27) raised many vital issues especially for trade unionists.

It demonstrates that the WRP has moved a long way from the reactionary politics of T.G. Healy.

I feel, however, that one issue needs clarifying: that of our view of the armed struggle.

We have to make crystal clear that we are in favour of the armed struggle and that South Africa can only be freed by armed revolution.

Having said that we should also recognise, as Workers Press has done, that guns alone are not the answer.

Indeed without a rising movement there would be no use for weapons.

Armed force brings to the fore certain ambiguities in the situation:

1. The degree of anger runs ahead of political consciousness. This is in large measure the result of the South African government whipping up divisions within black communities.

Force is often misused by blacks and it is turned against the wrong targets.

Against this it must be stated that the killing of agents of the authorities in the townships has been an essential part of the movement.

Without these killings the South African police and army would dominate by destroying any leadership and organisation as soon as it developed.

2. While the liberation movements need weaponry to fight the South African state, the same guns can be turned against other liberation movements.

Do we therefore say that movements should not be armed?

Comrade Handyside's article said: 'Would not the ANC, if they accepted such a fund (which they show no signs of doing), use the resultant weapons to knock off any bona-fide revolutionaries who happened to be around?'

This seems to suggest that the armed struggle can or should be held up until the working class is politically ready.

There is no way in which we in Britain can defend that position.

We can support the struggle but we cannot arbitrarily alter its course of development.

Our activity certainly affects the issue but it is not the principal determinant of the pace and direction of developments in South Africa.

Trotskyist forces can only come forward through the movement in South Africa not through holding it up.

They may well find themselves fighting off attacks from movements looking for a deal with imperialism.

It is our duty to help them to do this.

The Healyites are fundamentally wrong and reactionary. It seems to me that they introduced their campaign principally to disrupt the National Sanctions Campaign.

They like an isolated campaign of slogans, not a living labour movement fighting against the Botha regime.

For us the prime issue in South Africa is the building of a movement/party of the Fourth International.

This means that Trotskyists must emerge as the practical leaders of working class movements in the real work of those movements.

Our key role here in Britain is to develop, in the working class, a political understanding of the issues of revolutionary internationalism.

The boycott campaign does this.

Lambeth Trades Council is doing an enormous service to the whole labour movement in fighting on this campaign.

The demand for funds for arms fudges the core issue. It requires supporters to do little more than put their hands in their pockets, i.e., it is the ideal charity for the radical poseur.

The Healyites, as Bronwen Handyside says, dodge the political issue of the development of a South African Trotskyist movement and with it the theory of permanent revolution.

They bury it all in macho image-making.

Those fighting Botha have never claimed that any lack of arms they suffer is a result of a lack of funding.

They have called for a workers' boycott. We should answer that call.

Geoff Barr.

IN THIS week's Workers Press, two items from last week's paper are reprinted: a letter from E Mandel and a review of Wendy Savage's book on page 14.

In most areas, these articles were unavailable last week as pages 13 and 14 were removed from the paper.

This action was taken by comrades in the Workers Revolutionary Party who objected to some comments in a letter published in error which they regarded as a slanderous attack against a section of workers who have been involved in a long, tough, trade union struggle.

The Political Committee of the WRP last week endorsed the action of comrades who sought to stop the item being circulated.

Advance Notice

### MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS

Now to take place **November 29, 12 noon**  
Assemble Clock Tower Place (nearest tube  
Caledonian Road) for rally and march against  
Public Order Bill

March goes to a 'Call for Action' Conference  
For further details see next week's Workers  
Press, or ring 01-881 2938

## DAY OF ACTION

to demand

### Repatriation of Irish Republican prisoners in British jails

**Saturday November 8**

11.30am Assemble at the Haymarket,  
Newcastle

12.00 noon March through Newcastle

2.00pm Assemble at Frankland Prison, Durham  
March to Durham Prison

Rally — Speakers to include prisoners'  
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

All on **FRIDAY** evenings  
**7.30pm sharp**  
**Duke of York, York Way**  
**Near Kings Cross**

**Bob Archer: Revolution and the State**  
**November 7**  
**Bob Archer: the Soviet State**

## LETTERS

## The W.I.L. — an internationalist movement

THANK YOU for the review you printed of our last book in Workers Press (October 18).

We can only welcome your support for our idea of an archive or library to train the cadres of the movement and to arouse interest in its history.

Even more gratifying is the initiative you have taken to open up a free discussion on the movement's history, which can only serve to clarify the issues that so perplex it at present.

Certainly the publication of the discussion on the WIL Central Committee in 1942-43 to which you refer would be a good start.

But most of all we are glad to note that your review is written in a firm but comradely spirit, as contrasted with the tone adopted towards our first book in Labour Review in January 1983.

In the same spirit we feel we can be just as forthright in taking up the points you raise.

Perhaps we can start by disposing of incidental slips that only serve to cloud the debate.

It is not the case that the WIL 'split away from the unified organisation' as set up by the 'Peace and Unity Agreement' in August 1938.

They simply refused to take part.

They had left the Militant Group, its largest component, nearly a year earlier.

Equally erroneous is the final remark to the effect that Trotsky 'allegedly' promised the Trotskyists 'millions after the war'.

A speech made on the exact date of the appearance of your paper forty eight years ago has Trotsky claiming that 'during the next ten years the Fourth International will become the guide of millions, and these revolutionary millions will know how to storm earth and heaven' ('Leon Trotsky Speaks', New York 1972, p.298).

We can only agree, on the other hand, that our source material towards the end of the book is uneven in quality, because of the tight and clandestine organization of Healy's 'Club'.

Historical sources vary in quantity and quality in any case, but we are at a loss to understand the remark that we 'rely on the stories and even gossip of people who were outside the Group led by Healy'.

The interviews in our

penultimate chapter are all with those who were in the 'Club' at the time, and all the material analysing the WRP in the last chapter is drawn from the published statements of one or another of the groups issuing from the split.

Nor is the data 'in print' any richer or more extensive than we provide; Mickie Shaw's biography of Bob Shaw has only two pages, and the two documentary collections by yourselves and the SWP do not begin until the fifties.

In any case, we only overlapped into that period to establish the basic political character of Healy's 'Group', which merits a full treatment in its own right.

More important than these incidentals are the political issues your reviewer raises.

We see again the old calumny that the WIL was 'anti internationalist'.

Can this really be said of a group whose exposures of colonial atrocities led Tory MPs to try to suppress it, which made contacts between Trotskyists abroad and the world movement, which fostered and encouraged German socialists over here and defended the German proletariat from racist slander at Neath and which led damaging strikes — all in the middle of an imperialist war?

If we take it to mean the attitude to the Fourth International itself the accusation rings no more true.

It adopted the proletarian (or American) Military Policy when the official section did not; published the Transitional Programme when the official section did not; and refrained from replying to the public attacks made upon it by the International Secretariat.

When we recall that the Militant group never obeyed the directive to publish the statement exonerating Lee, it is a strange form of internationalism that is being advocated here.

Is there a scrap of evidence to prove that the WIL was nationalist?

The remark that we 'see the split as correct' is something of an understatement.

It is not ourselves, but history that saw it that way, in the long drawn-out agony of the RSL's disintegration starting within weeks of its appearance, the panic-stricken desertion of two of its leaders at the time of the Newcastle trial and the WIL's successful activity and growth.

However, this statement pales into insignificance beside the comment that 'it was Healy and the Minority who raised the correct question in 1945'.

The truth is that in maintaining the International Secretariat's absurd position that nothing had changed in 1945, the Healy tendency represented a flight from reality on this and every other question, a flight that has taken on the velocity of a rocket since.

For not only did they refuse to come to terms with the post-war changes but they held onto their foolish perspective of a slump within six months through the longest boom western European capitalism has ever experienced.

It is this that makes the following remark that 'it was the Minority who continued the struggle for Trotskyism' not a little bizarre.

It can only be accepted as good coin if we take Trotskyism to mean not the struggle for the independent politics of the working class but the sowing of illusions in Stalinists (Tito, Mao and Ho Chi Minh), Social Democrats (Bevan, Tom Braddock) and dubious Islamic figures (Messali Hadj, the Ayatollah Khomeiny and Muammar Gadhafi).

The nub of all the differences comes in the philosophical points raised, showing as they do that Healy's legacy yet remains in the WRP.

Far from seeing theory 'in academic terms' (our attitude to academics is well documented, for example in Two Steps Back, p.viii) we see it in dialectical ones, and by this we do not mean the sort of dialectics appearing in the modern Moscow textbooks reprinted by the WRP, bearing as they still do the mark of the notorious theoretical chapter in Stalin's Short Course history of the CPSU.

For we re-affirm that one of the attributes of science lies in its predictive value.

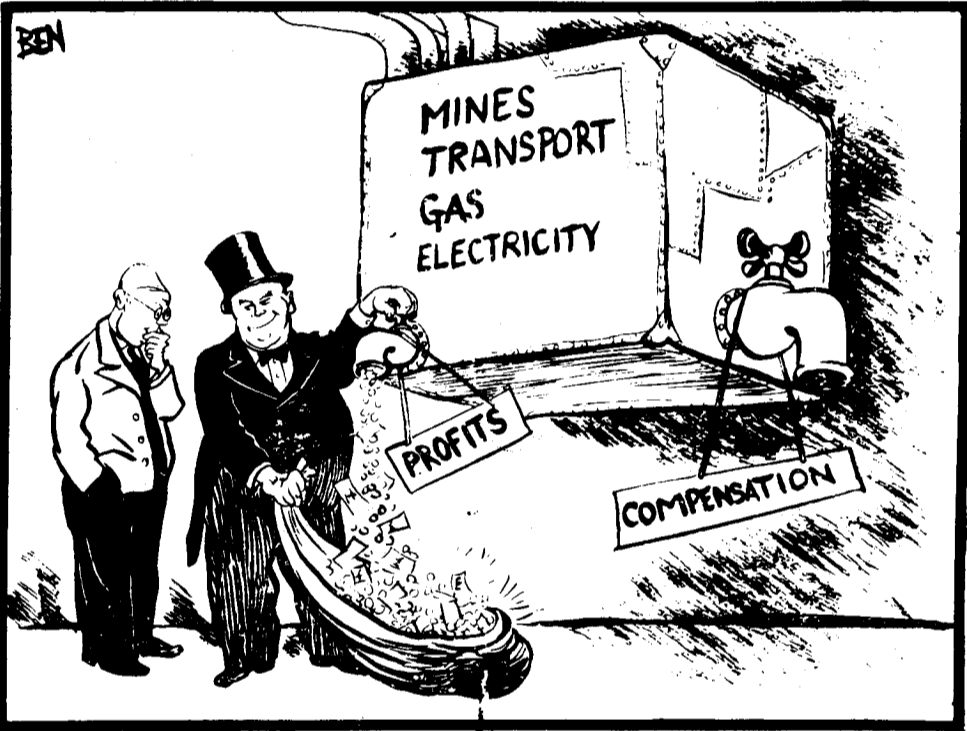
If such and such circumstances are present, if such and such factors are interacting, within certain limits the result is predictable.

Of course there are wider variables in Marxian social science, and the human element of consciousness come into play — within certain limits ('men make their own history, but they do not make it in conditions of their own choosing').

For if a number of predic-



The Revolutionary Communist Party May Day March, 1946



'AFTER NATIONALISATION, WE'LL USE THE OTHER TAP'

A cartoon from 'Socialist Appeal', newspaper of the RCP.

tions making up an integrated thought complex are largely borne out (as with the Majority of the RCP's perspectives for the next 30 years) that can only, in our opinion, demonstrate that the Marxist method is at work.

But the continual predic-

tion of an imminent slump for the same length of time has more to do with the Book of Revelation than the dialectic.

Finally, it is not a very weighty argument to say that Sam Bornstein was in the WIL/RCP.

So was Bill Hunter, and he

played a more prominent part, especially towards the end, when Haston was grooming him for the leadership.

Is it not time, after nearly 40 years, to take a more balanced view?

Sam Bornstein  
Al Richardson

## Theatre

The Hostage. By Brendan Behan. Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn, North London.

THE PRODUCTION of 'The Hostage', Brendan Behan's classic play, at the Tricycle Theatre in Kilburn is a huge success.

The tiny theatre's layout is just perfect for so human, hilarious and tragic a play, where rapport with the audience is everything.

The set is so well done, the action spills into the audience again and again (watch for flying missiles!)

The play has an eventful history and if the edge of hatred for British imperialism is blunted as it was in its last production 14 years ago, then this play becomes an anti-Irish and anti-IRA diatribe.

Behan himself saw this happening and was none too complimentary to Joan Littlewood, who rewrote it in 1972 to suit the anti-Irish pre-

judices of the time.

Pat, played by Eric Richard, is excellent and undoubtedly speaks for Behan himself.

He is cynical, political and very scornful of the right-wing IRA of the 1950s and 1960s.

The IRA officer works for the St Vincent de Paul Society.

He boasts of the defeat of the communists in the IRA and he says: 'The man who is most loyal to his faith is the one who is most loyal to his cause.'

'Have you got the initials mixed up? Are you in the IRA or FBI?' asks Pat.

He also boasts of his defence of the seizure and division of the land of Lord Tralee in 1925 which IRA headquarters stopped.

There is plenty of earthy Irish wit in the house full of prostitutes of both sexes.

The interwoven plots as

each character comes forward to assert himself or herself and challenge their oppression makes this fascinating on all levels.

But deadly serious is the hatred of imperialism.

Even the pro-British will not inform on the hostage held as a young IRA volunteer awaits execution in Belfast.

Best performances are from Eric Richards as Pat, Meg (Eileen Pollock) and Miss Gilchrist (Heather Tobias).

The British soldier, David John, who can't understand why he is to be shot in the morning and Teresa, the not-so-innocent skivvy who falls in love with him, are very professional for such young performers.

Dubliners say the accents are not authentic, but most people were too busy laughing to notice.

Gerry Downing



BRENDAN BEHAN

## REVIEWS

# The Wendy Savage

## Affair

HEALTH AUTHORITY chiefs in London's Tower Hamlets have told consultant obstetricians they must start working with their re-instated colleague, Mrs Wendy Savage, by next week. District General Manager, Mr John Alway has given the four doctors until November 10 to make space for Mrs Savage in obstetrics and gynaecology clinics. So far they have refused to accept Tower Hamlets Health Authority's decision to re-instate her after she was cleared of charges of professional incompetence.

Last week Mrs Savage published her own account of the affair. Referring to her suspension in April 1985, she writes:

'I realised then what millions of other people in this country already know — that the loss of your job is a shattering experience.'

Pointing out that she was fortunate not to share the financial anxieties of other sacked workers because she was suspended on full pay, she adds:

... but the allegation of professional incompetence, and the abrupt ending of my active role of looking after patients and teaching students was devastating.

... loss of my job was like bereavement.'

Wendy Savage was not the first doctor to be accused of incompetence — nor will she be the last.

What is unusual in her case is that the people making the accusations against her were her fellow-consultants and the head of the academic department in which she worked.

Her supporters were — and are — local mothers, family doctors, midwives, nurses and medical students.

In most other cases of medical incompetence, the plaintiffs are former patients and, more often than not, the accused doctor is allowed to continue working while the allegations are examined.

'I and many of my supporters saw my suspension as part of the continuing struggle about who controls childbirth, and it was on this ground that we chose to fight ... but at a deeper level, I knew that this battle was about the way doctors relate to and work with each other, and about the fact that I am not a member of the "establishment" and saw no reason to conform to the medical profession's unwritten, but well understood "party line", especially if I thought this was not in the interests of patients.'

One unwritten law is that disputes within the profession are not made public, for fear it should cause loss of authority and confidence in doctors in general.

Initially, Mrs Savage did all she could to avoid making public statements about her suspension and the allegations she faced — a nicety not always adhered to by her accusers.

Eventually, however, she decided her best course of action was to change her solicitors — since they too were part of the medical establishment that was attacking her.

Her new solicitor, who has stayed with her throughout the campaign, was Brian Raymond, who successfully defended the civil servant Clive Ponting in the 'Belgrano secrets' trial.

It was he who advised her not to avoid the public support but to use it to advantage.

'Your power in the court is

directly proportional to your power outside the court,' he advised her when they first met.

The Wendy Savage Support Group had been launched within weeks of her suspension and they co-ordinated the widespread local — and national — anger in the form of meetings and demonstrations and a collection for defence funds which eventually reached £60,000.

As it happened the Defence Fund was not needed in the long run.

Public support for her stand eventually pushed the Medical Defence Union into taking a stand on the issue after the health service enquiry had finished: it was decided that they would pay the legal costs of her fight.

Referring to the decision to 'go public', Mrs Savage says:

'The public campaign was, I believe, essential if justice was also to be a factor in the resolution of my suspension. But there was another, more important, aspect of the publicity.'

'Women throughout the country have realised that they have the right and the power to see that the health services they get are the ones they want.'

Many more women have certainly realised that they have the right to see that the health services they get are what they want.

Whether that can be translated into the power to realise these services is another issue and one which trade unionists throughout the National Health Service face daily.

However, every struggle which raises these issues

and puts them on the agenda for solution is a positive step on the road towards the attainment of a health service based on the needs of present and potential patients and not the constraints imposed by administrators or government policies that aim to undermine all the gains of the past 38 years since the foundation of the health service.

The long-term issues of political control of the NHS will be decided in a protracted struggle over many different sectors and will depend on the outcome of the class struggle against both Tory and Labour governments.

The fact that many women today have the confidence to voice their opinions and demands on these questions is as much a result of the battles of the women's support groups that arose in the miners' strike, and the repeated conflicts by NHS ancillary and nursing staff over pay and conditions, as the specific socio-medical issues raised in the childbirth campaign.

The fact that Mrs Savage's suspension was not about incompetence in five childbirth cases — selected out of many thousands she has handled — was clearly de-

A Savage Enquiry — Who Controls Childbirth. By Wendy Savage. Virago Press, £2.95.

monstrated at the month-long public enquiry in February this year.

Of 59 original charges, 55 were found to be invalid or insubstantial.

In four instances there were criticisms of her management — three of which she had accepted as errors and said so the year before.

But Mrs Savage's obstetric colleagues in Tower Hamlets continued to oppose her return to work.

Two weeks ago some were threatening to resign themselves!

However, when invited to do so, they declined.

They have proposed that she should only work at the Mile End site of the London Hospital or that they should be transferred elsewhere.

One of the issues that sharply divides Wendy Savage from some fellow consultants is their practice of taking private patients while continuing to draw large salaries from the NHS.

There have been repeated complaints that NHS patients are the losers.

It is also public knowledge that facilities provided by the NHS are rarely adequately paid for by private users.

Mrs Savage has listed six important issues arising from her suspension:

- Birth and power — who controls childbirth?
- What kind of services do women want — and who is going to decide on the kind of care that is offered to them?
- Accountability — of the District Health Authority and of doctors
- Incompetence — how is it defined? How is it measured?
- Disciplinary procedures for doctors in the NHS — can they be improved?
- Academic freedom and the role of professors and senior lecturers

On the first question, she points out that the twentieth century has seen the power of obstetricians — mainly men — rise to unprecedented heights.

Today, only one per cent of women have their babies at home.

Increased medicalisation and intervention at birth have proceeded without good scientific evidence that they are justified.

Perinatal mortality rates — deaths of babies between the seventh month of pregnancy and the first week of life — have fallen and continue to decrease.

But, she argues, it is probably as much due to improved living standards and easier access to abortion and contraception as to intensive care facilities and high technology in the form of foetal monitoring, induction of labour and surgical delivery by Caesarean section.

The rising rate of Caesarean section in childbirth is an issue on which Mrs Savage has strong feelings.

She points out that this method of delivery now accounts for between 10 and 13 per cent of all births, depending on where one lives.



The Wendy Savage campaign attracted the support of local mothers, family doctors, midwives and trade unionists

In the US, however, the rate is over 24 per cent and still rising.

The justification for this method is that the risk from operations has fallen, and that Caesarean guarantees a normal healthy baby.

Neither of these assumptions is true.

Mrs Savage points out that while the risk of Caesarean section is much lower than ever before, 'all surgical operations carry a risk ... Caesarean is no exception.'

'What is clear is that it is safer for the woman to have a vaginal delivery — and moreover she has less "morbidity", that is infection and haemorrhage and other rarer complications, and she recovers more quickly from a normal birth ...'

Statistically, about one and a half to twice as many babies die following a Caesarean operation than if they are delivered head first vaginally.

Some of the risk is because the mother may have already had a complication which led to the need for surgery.

'My philosophy, in which I am not alone, of involving the woman in the decisions about her care, means that the obstetrician must relinquish some power,' she points out.

On the question of the type of services, Mrs Savage has this to say: 'My own feeling is that there needs to be a partnership between the consumers and the providers, both medical and administrative.'

In obstetrics and gynaecology services there is a particular problem in that the

majority of consultants are men, but the consumers are all women.

But of course, the main problem affecting the provision of services throughout the NHS is continuous and ever-increasing cutbacks in finance that are closing hospitals and wards, driving underpaid staff out of the service and leaving those remaining facing increased pressures and tensions.

When it comes to accountability, Mrs Savage is extremely critical of the medical and administrative chiefs.

'The fifteen months of my suspension from my post at the London Hospital and the subsequent enquiry has been a terrible waste of NHS funds.'

'It has damaged relationships between the GPs and obstetricians in Tower Hamlets and it has reduced, both at the service level and personally, choice for women in the district, especially those women who want a woman obstetrician and gynaecologist ...'

'How is it possible that the chairman of the Health Authority and a handful of doctors could set in motion an enquiry costing an estimated £250,000 at a time when the impoverished district of Tower Hamlets is cutting beds and services?'

To whom are they accountable, she asks.

These are questions which are asked daily in the NHS as staff — both medical and administrative — question policies and decisions that undermine the service and threaten patients' wellbeing and health.

It is no accident that the

public debate over the control and provision of medical care in childbirth resulted in the 'Savage Enquiry.'

Ultimately, of course, it concerns the political issue of the provision of the entire facilities for health care — and the issues of health and disease in future generations.

There is no doubt that Mrs Savage's contribution on these issues will be long remembered.

Her account of her ordeal is a model of lucidity which explains all the complicated decisions that face obstetricians, and all medical staff, seeking to provide the best possible care within the constraints of lack of funds, staff and inevitable overwork, leading to mistakes and casualties.

It also details the political wheeling-dealing by the managers of the Tower Hamlets Health Authority in conjunction with Mrs Savage's fellow obstetricians in selecting five unrepresentative childbirth cases as a basis for ill-founded charges of incompetence.

Mrs Savage's peers have acknowledged that she is far from incompetent.

While still suspended from her job, she was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians, one of the highest accolades the profession has to offer.

The issue that remains to be settled, of course, relates to the competence or otherwise of the members of her profession who brought the original charges against her, and of the administrators who used scarce NHS funds to back them.

Sarah Hannigan

# Stalinism and the ANC

ITV's documentary gave a brief glimpse of the history and policies of the African National Congress which, in the words of the presenter, is 'a government in waiting'.

The ANC was formed after the Boer war, when the conflicting white groups reconciled some of their differences in the 1910 Act of Union and united in their determination to exclude the blacks from political power.

The ANC veterans saw that the great fight of those early days was to overcome tribalism and create one nation of the African people.

In the face of land expropriations and evictions just prior to World War One, the ANC sent two delegations to see Lloyd George who met them with sympathy and gave them nothing.

During the war, the ANC suspended their activities and urged men to fight in defence of Britain. Africans were recruited but not given arms.

At the Versailles treaty, the ANC leaders hoped they would gain some justice but the door was shut in their faces once more.

But now the Russian Revolution was reverberating around the world.

A South African Communist Party was formed but it was, by and large, active only amongst the white working class and the ANC remained largely hostile — suspicious both of the white leaders and 'foreign ideology'.

The depression of the 1930s saw a decline in ANC activities. During the second World War, blacks again served unarmed in the allied army.

## Dissatisfied

During the war and immediately afterwards, a new, younger generation came into the ANC, mainly into its Youth League: people like Sisulu, Mandela and Tambo, who were dissatisfied with the conservatism of the old guard.

They wanted more militant action. They slowly gained control of the ANC and the two lawyers — Mandela and Tambo — emerged as leaders in campaigns like the defiance of unjust laws. The South African Communist Party (SACP), who in Stalin's 'Third Period' had attacked the ANC as bourgeois-nationalist, were now working within its ranks.

ANC influence grew and, at the Capetown Congress of the People (1956) with representatives of blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians, the Freedom Charter was established as the demands of the ANC.

As a result of the Congress 156 people were tried for treason. After a three year trial, they were all acquitted.

The white government prepared for fresh attacks on the Congress.

Divisions also now emerged in the ANC — an 'Africanist' movement developed which opposed the influence of the whites and said that only black Africans could decide their own fate.

After bitter internal strife, these members were expelled and formed the Pan African Congress (PAC).

The ANC now also followed the PAC in declaring that peaceful opposition was no longer enough.

Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) was formed by the ANC to carry out acts of sabotage.

The state hit back rapidly and arrested the majority of the leaders of Umkhonto (MK).

Eight of them, including Mandela, were jailed for life. These jailed men, most of them on Robben Island, have become heroes of the mass movement.

As Winnie Mandela said, 'When we go to visit them, it is they who inspire us'.

Mandela to this day remains unbroken, refusing Botha's offer of freedom in return for a pledge of opposition to violence.

Again, another new generation took the struggle forward when Soweto erupted in 1976.

The youth protested at being taught in Afrikaans.

In clashes which left 2,000 dead, many youth saw the need for armed training and left to join the ANC in exile, going to camps in Zambia and other front-line states.

This influx of youth led to an increase of MK guerrilla attacks. It also laid the basis for the ANC activity during the last two years of non-stop opposition by the masses to apartheid.

Pictures of Mandela and the ANC colours are illegally carried on every demonstration and, through the United Democratic Front (UDF),

**Spear of the Nation: The Story of the African National Congress. ITV, Tuesday October 28.**

ANC supporters have widened their alliances.

The documentary not only recounted this brief history, it also allowed some of the leaders like Oliver Tambo and Joe Slovo, to speak.

What came across were two main themes — first was the resistance of the masses and the ANC leaders, their courage and determination, despite all the repression, to get their freedom.

Second was the perspective of the ANC leaders, which aims to persuade the South African whites and the imperialist governments to abandon apartheid.

The Reverend Trevor Huddleston, who was presented with a medal at the Capetown Congress, said of the early ANC that it 'was too trusting'.

Listening to the present leaders, the hope that the leopard can change his spots is still there.

Oliver Tambo called for the rest of the world to impose sanctions so that 'the whites would abandon apartheid'.

## Armed

Even the adoption of armed struggle did not change this basic conception of pressure on the whites.

Of course, what underlies this outlook is the basic aim of the ANC embodied in the Freedom Charter — for an end to apartheid and majority rule; for parliamentary democracy.

The representatives of the Anglo-American Corporation and the black African Chamber of Commerce both made it clear that they saw in an ANC government the only hope of ending the unrest and continuing business.

Many groups on the left in Britain have criticised the ANC.

But in one way, the criticism is misdirected. The ANC is what it is — a bourgeois party — and has always stood solely for majority rule and parliamentary democracy.



ANC Youth League leader Nelson Mandela (behind microphone) and Transvaal Indian Congress president Yusuf Dadoo speaking on the steps of Johannesburg City Hall in 1945

It has the strengths and weaknesses of all such movements throughout the colonial and ex-colonial countries.

What the documentary did not touch on — and where criticism should be directed — is the SACP.

Slovo, who was only billed as the head of MK, is in fact the leader of the SACP.

Workers Press printed an article on October 4 by Moeletsi Mbeki, an ANC member who clearly said that it is the SACP which has betrayed the fight.

They claim the mantle of the Russian Revolution, they attract the youth who want to be communist — and in practice they have abandoned the struggle for the working class to take power.

They have continued with Stalin's policies (resurrected from the Mensheviks) of the two-stage revolution — first the bourgeois democratic then, at some point in the future, the socialist.

The Menshevik theory was buried by the actions of the Russian working class under the leadership of the Bolsheviks who established that only the dictatorship of the proletariat could carry through the democratic tasks of the revolution.

At least in Russian in the early 20th century, with its huge peasantry and little industry, the Menshevik theory had a certain rationale.

Today in South Africa, with an advanced capitalist economy and a large organised working class, the SACP have to do conjuring tricks with their policy of 'colonialism of a special kind' to justify the first

democratic stage of the revolution.

Having abandoned the struggle for socialism, the SACP becomes apparently united with the aspirations of the ANC but in reality becomes the ideological break on any political development within their ranks.

Time after time, a new generation in South Africa has grown frustrated with the perspectives of democratic reform and sought to escape the bureaucratic stranglehold of the SACP.

Because the latter are the owners of the heritage of 'Marxism' and 'class analysis', each new movement towards more militant action appears to take a step back in its ideas; the nationalism of the PAC, the non-class attitude of the Black Consciousness Movement, the trade unionism of COSATU.

## Blocked

But these ideological steps backward were because the SACP blocked the path towards Marxism.

In the programme there was not one word from Slovo about socialism or the working class — only repeated efforts to persuade the viewers of his reasonableness.

The point is, as Mbeki said in his article, the bourgeois democratic stage laid out by the SACP would certainly be better than apartheid — but it is not a necessary stage on the road to socialism.

Given the relationship of capitalism and apartheid in South Africa, it is probably not even a possible stage.

It is a blind alley into

which the hopes, efforts and struggle of the African masses are being criminally led.

Socialists in Britain must give unconditional support to the ANC and all the liberation movements.

Our job is to fight for the demand of Tambo for us to isolate apartheid.

In the past the WRP described the ANC as Stalinist and then did nothing.

Today, we have to be a driving force in the working class in Britain to halt all trade with South Africa.

Only then will our differences with the ANC be listened to by any one worth talking to. But our unconditional support for the ANC will never be uncritical.

And we warn the masses that the SACP are betraying the fight and that they are the main obstacle to victory.

To Slovo's first stage of the revolution, we repeat Lenin's warning to the working class about the Mensheviks:

'They tell us the coming revolution will be a bourgeois revolution.'

'We say of course. That is why we say to the working class "Have no trust in the bourgeoisie". Trust only your own organisations, your own arms, and your own class.'

The pictures in the film of the youth firing on the Hippos in Soweto, of Botha's arrogant statements of defiance and of the ANC's lack of socialist perspectives cried out for a Bolshevik party with Bolshevik policies.



New generations of youth came into the struggle in Soweto, 1976

## Shell's apartheid hypocrisy

SHELL'S condemnation of apartheid amounts to hypocrisy, the International Metalworkers' Federation said last week.

Shell owns a half-share in the Rietspruit mine where 86 miners were sacked when they took time off to attend a memorial service for dead colleagues and where the remaining miners were forced to return to work at gunpoint.

The IMF, which has 14 million members affiliated,

was asked to take up the case of the dismissed miners and is not satisfied with Shell management's arguments that they have no say in the running of the mine.

Shell's managing director, Mr van Wachem, has sent a letter to executives of the massive multinational affirming Shell's dislike of apartheid policies in response to a boycott of Shell products in the United States and the Netherlands.

Herman Rebhan, general secretary of the IMF, pointed out that multina-

tionals are increasingly adopting the policy of condemning apartheid in words, but in South Africa refusing to recognise black unions.

Most multinationals, he said, refuse to pay the families of workers detained under the state of emergency.

'We have reports of families starving to death because the breadwinner is detained, while at the same time employers are parading themselves as anti-apartheid moralists,' said Rebhan.

Saturday November 1 1986. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

# ENGINEERS MUST NOT SURRENDER THEIR CONDITIONS

BY CHRIS BAILEY  
AEU Branch Secretary,  
Cambridge and Newmarket delegate to AEU Divisional Committee 21

**IN EXCHANGE** for an unspecified cut in the working week, trade union leaders in the engineering industry are proposing what is being called 'the sale of the century' of trade union rights.

Union negotiators from the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, after two years of secret talks with representatives of the Engineering Employers Federation, are prepared to concede:

- Complete flexibility of labour. An end to craft demarcation conceding the right for management to move workers from one job to another.

- Complete flexibility of hours. Hours to be agreed on a yearly basis. Weekly hours to be varied according to employers' wishes.

This would have a dramatic effect on overtime and shift payments.

In addition there would be no obligation for employers to pay for 'non-productive' time — washing, meal breaks etc.

- Joint union bargaining. Effectively eliminating the role of the small craft unions and preparing the way for Japanese-style union deals.

- No reduction in hours for

those workers already working less than the 39-hour week.

The overall effect of the deal would eventually lead to employers using a small core of workers to do a variety of jobs with many other workers being used as casual or temporary labour as and when required.

It is completely in line with the kind of deal made by the EETPU at Wapping.

The AEU has already been responsible for similar single-union deals with the Japanese multinationals Nissan and Komatsu.

The deal presently under discussion would establish such deals as the norm for the engineering industry.

Negotiations with the 5,000 firms in the EEF always set the precedent for the whole of the industry.

It is no secret that the pace

of the sell-out taking place has been considerably accelerated by the recent election of Bill Jordan as president of the AEU.

Jordan has been in favour of such deals for some time and along with Gavin Laird, the general secretary of the union, has openly been canvassing for an amalgamation between the AEU and the EETPU.

At a recent meeting of full-time officials of the AEU, Jordan made it clear that he wishes to scrap elections for branch secretaries, district secretaries and Divisional organisers in the union.

Only national executive positions would be elected.

Other union positions would be appointed by the Executive Committee, bringing the AEU rule book in line with that of the EETPU.

Jordan intends introducing this rules change by a direct ballot of the membership, thus avoiding the normal democratic procedure of the union via branches, district committees and National Committee.

The precedent for this was set last year when the AEU Executive Committee balloted the membership over acceptance of Tory cash for ballots.

Members of the National Committee, including leading members of the Communist Party, only argued about the wording of the ballot paper; they did not oppose the principle of using a ballot in this way.

They therefore effectively removed the role of the National Committee as the highest policy-making body of the union giving the EC the power to bypass it.

Opposition in the AEU to the CSEU proposals has been enormous.

The AEU executive has been flooded with resolutions from branches, district committees and divisions, opposing the deal.

Many of these resolutions, including one from Division 15 (Merseyside), are demanding that all negotiations be halted until a recall National Committee has been able to discuss the proposals.

'Engineering Gazette' the rank-and-file engineering bulletin has called for a lobby of the CSEU executive from 8.30am when it meets on November 6 at the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London, WC1.

The Workers Revolutionary Party Trade Union Commission calls on all members and supporters of the party to organise the maximum participation in this lobby.

# AEU printers defend jailed colleagues

BY LAWRENCE JENKINS  
SOGAT (in a personal capacity)

ON A GREY afternoon on Tuesday October 28, at 1.30pm, a crowd of around 1,000 printworkers and their supporters assembled outside the the AEU headquarters in Peckham.

The demonstration was called by AEU printers in support of jailed colleagues Dave Payne and Robert Tetaur who were both jailed for six months for fighting for the right to work.

Dave Payne is also a Labour councillor for Southwark, one of the three councils being taken to court by Murdoch for boycotting News International publications.

Before the march started on its way to Wapping, AEU's Gavin Laird and Bill Jordan addressed the crowd.

They looked extremely uneasy as they were both heckled by bitter printers who know the stand that the AEU leadership have taken in the TUC General Council on the Wapping dispute.

As usual, Michael Hicks from SOGAT's London Central Branch, an NEC member and also a prominent member of the Communist Party, controlled the pre-march gathering and allowed Jordan and Laird to make their empty speeches with no criticism whatsoever.

The march was then on its way to Wapping; first stop Southwark Town Hall, where councillors and staff came out — some joined the march, others applauded.

On towards Walworth Road and Labour Party headquarters with stickers, leaflets and carrier bags being handed out on the way.

Afternoon shoppers showed their support as

many recognised their friends who were on the march.

This dispute, as with the miners' strike, permeates right into the working class.

We finally reached Labour Party Headquarters where we were greeted by staff and party members. Jack Payne, Dave Payne's brother, stopped the march and told the crowd that the general secretary of the Labour Party, Larry Whitty, would speak to us.

A nervous Larry Whitty, in the same vein as Jordan and Laird, made an empty speech saying how bad Murdoch was, ignoring remarks and shouts from the crowd that Robert Maxwell was still a Labour Party member.

Demonstrators shouted their disgust that there was not a single banner or anti-Murdoch poster anywhere to be seen in the Labour Party buildings.

Whitty was hastily given some posters to put up.

Jim Brookshaw, AEU printer, thanked Larry Whitty and remarked that if the Labour Party leadership were to show the same enthusiasm in supporting sacked printers as it had in expelling its own members, 'We would all be very grateful'.

This drew a cheer from the

crowd and we were on our way again.

We neared the Elephant and Castle, passed the London College of Printing and then onto Southwark Bridge, where a small incident involving a policeman flared up.

Marchers refused to move until we got our way — which we did!

Then on to Wapping. By now it was raining and the light was fading.

Drivers watched from their stationary cars and vans the display of defiance, resilience and solidarity for jailed trade unionists.

This dispute had sown seeds of doubt in the minds of the onlookers that we have to accept unemployment, imprisonment and the destruction of our rights as normal everyday practice under Thatcher.

As we passed Tower Hill and then down the Highway to Fortress Wapping, it was now dark and the marchers sang 'Rupert, we're back!'

And we were!

- As a SOGAT (RIRMA) member, I would like to draw attention to the fact that there was no official campaign for this march or for another on the same day.

No information had been sent to my chapel office and, when enquiring at RIRMA house for the details, no-one had any concrete information to give me.

I was advised to telephone Caxton House Operations Room. If FoCs/MoCs had been instructed to raise these issues with their members, no doubt we could have increased the size of the marches many times and, in the process, involved more printers in the dispute.



THIS BANNER was on the Wednesday evening march to Wapping. The Support groups are campaigning to defend the jailed men and are going to link up with the miners' 'Justice' campaign — see story page 5

## Viraj Mendis: Fighting to win

VIRAJ MENDIS' campaign against his threatened deportation to Sri Lanka is nearing its crucial stage.

The meeting between Viraj's MP and Home Office minister David Waddington may take place in the next two or three weeks.

In Manchester, a march is planned on the Saturday before this meeting takes place.

The Public Appeal appearing in the Guardian on October 14 proved to be a springboard for the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign (VMDC). Many new people have

come forward and taken active roles in the campaign.

As we go to press, the first of the weekly pickets on Fridays outside the Home Office is taking place between 1.00 and 2.00 p.m. Jeremy Corbyn, MP will be handing in petitions to Waddington. The VMDC calls for all readers to support these weekly pickets.

An 'eleventh hour' post card campaign has now been launched to bombard the Home Office with messages of support for Viraj's case.

VMDC is determined to pressurise Waddington into retreat.

It has produced a 32pp

pamphlet, 'Viraj Mendis Must Stay', outlining Viraj's heroic fight.

It brings to light the situation in Sri Lanka facing Viraj should he be deported and outlines the campaign's activities including the march from Manchester to London.

Copies (price 75p & 30p P&P) and more details available from VMDC London Support Group, BCM Box 5909, London, WC1N 3XX. Phone 01-837 1688.

VMDC continues to meet every Thursday, 7.30 p.m. at County Hall. All Welcome.

● We are organising to win.