

# Workers Press

25p

Saturday November 15 1986

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Number 50

## WRP SPECIAL FUND

IN SO FAR: £21.75 TARGET: £10,000

THE Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund of £10,000 is needed by February 1, 1987.

Half the fund is needed for the international work of the party. The party is participating in discussions with groups throughout the world Trotskyist movement in a way which was never possible before the explosion in the WRP last year.

The other half of the fund is needed to cover expenses already incurred in moving the party headquarters to more suitable premises.

The collection of the fund has only just begun, and we are asking all members and supporters to find ways of helping with this very necessary fund-raising.

Please send donations to: WRP, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT

# REPATRIATE IRISH POWs!

## says strong Tyne Rally

**A LIVELY demonstration demanding the repatriation of Irish Republican prisoners in British jails hit Newcastle and Durham city centres last Saturday.**

The march, headed by posters demanding 'Repatriation Now', and its ranks swelled by four Republican flute bands from Scotland, had a powerful impact on crowds of shoppers in Newcastle's main pedestrian precinct.

After making their point in Newcastle, the demonstrators travelled by bus to Frankland prison complex outside Durham where four Republican prisoners are serving life sentences.

The bands' Republican marching songs and the cheers of the demonstrators rebounded off the gaunt 15-foot walls.

At Durham prison, where Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer are incarcerated following the Brighton Bomb show-trial, another loud and defiant demonstration was staged, after which a rally was held in a nearby hall.

Isobel Anderson, Martina's sister, told the audience of the horrors of strip-searching that Martina had suffered along with Ella O'Dwyer and women at the new Maghaberry jail in the north of Ireland.

'The women feel they are being raped — and that's what strip-searching is.'

Anne-Marie Keenan, secretary of the committee representing relatives of POWs in Britain, told the rally:

'We want to see the same attention given to the Irish POWs in Britain as is given to the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six.'

'As far as we are concerned, they are all innocent. None of them have ever had a fair trial: they were all tried on the front pages of the daily papers.'

Relatives are being sentenced to treatment 'as se-

vere as that of the prisoners' because repatriation is refused', she said.

James O'Neill of the Republican Band Alliance said: 'We supported these Volunteers while they were on active service; we will continue supporting them as long as they are in prison'.

Dave Temple, of the Durham Mechanics' section of the miners' union, speaking in a personal capacity, said that miners were changing their attitude to the Irish struggle, because during their own strike they saw the police occupation of their pit villages, their comrades beaten up and jailed.

'We are here today because we are up against the same thing: the British state,' he said. 'We are determined to bring home to the working class here what the real situation in the north of Ireland is.'

● The Day of Action was organised by the Glasgow Prisoners' Aid Committee, Clydeside Troops Out Movement and the Republican Band Alliance, the Crossmaglen Patriots, Wolfe Tone, Spirit of Freedom and Kevin Barry Memorial flute bands took part, along with trades unionists, Irish solidarity organisations and political groups



THE REPUBLICAN Bands Alliance heads the march from Frankland to Durham jail and (below) the vigil outside Durham jail. Another picture, back page



## Banda and Stalin: not a handskake but a deadly embrace

MIKE BANDA, formerly general secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party, has appeared in public and denounced Trotskyism.

Banda, who was expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party earlier this year, spoke in London last Saturday on the platform of The Leninist, a faction within the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The rally, attended by approximately 35, was to celebrate the October Revolution.

Banda, who has not been seen in public since October 1985, used the occasion to describe Trotskyism as a 'centrist exorcism' and Trotsky himself as a petit-bourgeois motivated by pique.

Trotsky's works, he said, should occupy a 'special place' in political libraries alongside Proudhon, Kropotkin and Bakunin.

Banda said he would soon be publishing his position.

These rantings contained implicit, bordering on explicit, if not obscene, justifications of Stalin and Stalinism.

Trotsky, he said, could never forgive Stalin for succeeding Lenin. Nor could he ever forgive Stalin for implementing the economic programme of the Left Opposition in 1929.

Denouncing Trotsky and Trotskyism as based on the false use of analogies in its explanation of the rise and role of the bureaucracy, Banda proceeded to use the most grotesque analogies himself as the basis of his own position.

Briefly, he compared the English bourgeois revolution led by Cromwell with the October revolution of

1917.

Cromwell, representing the objective forces of history, created the conditions for the development of the productive forces under capitalism.

The bourgeoisie correctly suppressed the working class for 200 years — it was historically necessary.

Similarly, the big question in the Soviet Union was, and is, the development of the productive forces.

Finally, it should be noted that Banda had fulsome praise for Gorbachev and his ilk.



FORMER WRP general secretary M Banda

# BUS DEREGULATION: LABOUR HAS NO

# POLICY!

**'A RETURN of 25 per cent to 30 per cent on the purchase price is required by the buyer.'**

Such a realistic return is necessary to make the company in its present state a reasonable investment.

So says 'Bus Business' the bus industry newspaper, quoting the example of a bus company in a deregulated area.

200 new bus companies have put services on the road since D- (deregulation) Day — October 24 1986.

The deregulation of all bus services outside London has resulted in the loss of 11,000 drivers' jobs in public transport undertakings throughout the country, and the breaking up of the co-ordinated and integrated services together with massive fare increases.

A fare of 80p has gone up to £1.40 in Liverpool; in South Yorkshire 300 per cent and 400 per cent fare increases have taken place as a result of the withdrawal of Council subsidy.

## Cut-back

At the same time services have been cut at all times of the day.

The massive cut-back in services and sacking of drivers has left the transport authorities with thousands of surplus buses, which are now flooding onto the second-hand market.

Prices as low as £3,500 for a 1972 bus and £17,500 for the newest double decker have resulted in the collapse of the bus manufacturing industry.

To give some idea of the difference — the 'Metro' buses bought last year by London Transport cost £87,000 each.

The increasing use of

second-hand buses and cut price wages resulted in chaos in some areas.

In Rochdale Yellowway Motor Services had five of its 12 second-hand buses break down on the first day.

In Hertfordshire Jubilee Coaches could not find enough drivers to work at the pay they were offering and two of the services it was due to operate in Stevenage were taken over by London Country.

In Surrey Thandi Coaches could not get buses in time to operate the services, so motorway type coaches were used, but some of the drivers did not know the routes and passengers found the high steps of the motorway coaches made it difficult for them to get on and off.

All the deregulated routes have to be run for 3 months, and therefore by mid-January there will be massive fall-out of private bus companies.

Busmen say that January 24 will be 'C' for crunch day!

For those millions of working men and women and their families the deregulation of bus services has meant higher fares, less reliable and less safe buses.

In the months to come it will mean massive cuts in the bus services available outside the rush hours.

For bus workers it means longer hours, worse driving conditions and an onslaught on their earnings.

In London, where deregulation has not yet taken place, the London Regional Transport (a quango appointed by the Government) is pushing ahead with its as yet unpublished plan to break local services up into borough-size area bus companies, each with its own name and wage scale.

The main trunk commuter bus services would then be put out to private profit-

making companies, who are looking for the 25 per cent — 30 per cent return on their investment that 'Bus Business' refers to.

The attack on public transport under the Tories was masterminded by Ridley, one of Thatcher's hard line right wingers.

## Profits

Now the four main Transport Acts have broken up Britain's publicly owned bus network, the task of ensuring the profits for the private companies has been handed to John Moore, the new Secretary of State for Transport.

He spent six years as a junior Treasury Minister and is a proven hard line Thatcherite.

The Labour Party's response to this onslaught on the transport needs of the working class is to have no front bench spokesman on transport.

Bob Hughes, who lost his place in the shadow cabinet elections, is to continue to be the Labour spokesman on transport because the right winger who replaced him turned down the job of transport spokesman.

Long waits at bus stops, unsafe buses, higher fares, loss of school and hospital buses affect every family every day.

The bus service that no longer runs because it does not make a profit affects every family.

The loss of bus services which means that the old, or those who are unwell, or families with young children cannot get off the estate, or travel to see the rest of their family, or get to the hospital.

These become very big problems every day.

But because the solving of these problems means a

radical change in the way society is organised, because it would mean massive investment in new buses, new services, because it would mean challenging the right of the finance managers to decide which bus services should be run, the Labour Party leaders drop public transport like a hot brick.

One of the most important developments of the fight to defend public transport over the last few years has been the growth of a number of community based Transport Campaigns which have begun to demand a say in the type of service that should be run, the kind of buses which should be used, and the most economic fares that should be charged.

Faced with a grass roots demand for a say in the running of bus services, the Labour leadership turns its back, suspecting that Labour Party members will want to choose their own candidates next!

The main transport unions, T&GWU and the NUR have had heated words with Kinnoch in the last year over the lack of a transport policy.

Kinnoch's response is to have no front bench spokesman on transport, and no commitment to rebuild the public transport network.

Local demands for an expansion of bus and local rail services under the control of local transport unions and transport users must be supported.

The demand for an end to the lives of passengers and drivers being put at risk by the headlong chase for profit must be raised in every community.

In most areas it has already been raised.

It seems a simple demand, but it scares the Labour leaders stiff.

# Marriott workers win fight

BY ROBIN BURNHAM

**WORKERS at the American multi-national, Marriott In Flight Catering, of Faraday Road, Crawley, have just won an important victory against 'lead-hands' (foreman).**

It concerned the treatment of workers in the wash-up and sanitation departments, but was relevant for the whole workforce.

About a month ago a letter was given to the union in the factory and the management by a number of workers who complained about the 'lead hands' stationed in the wash-up.

The complaints were as follows: Women were being sworn at and being insulted, the conveyor belt was being speeded up, the lead hands were being given more overtime than other workers and that one lead hand had clocked out the other (this is a sacking offence — indeed one young worker had gone 'down the road' a while ago).

The letter stated 'Was there one law for lead hands and one for workers?'

One of the managers had a meeting with the department concerned (to which I belong) which started with 'those of you who don't agree with the letter (which he had in his hand) can leave'.

This was before the contents had even been read out! A protest was made and he eventually read it out.

When he came to the issue of impoliteness he tried to brush it off by saying under pressure the lead-hand would just say 'do this'.

I asked if that excused being rude.

He said no. He didn't want to see swearing etc, by lead hands to workers and vice versa.

(No mention was made of swearing by managers to workers — was this really just a slip up?)

We were arguing for the removal of the lead hands.

He had the view that the lead hands were doing their job and that he trusted them against the majority of the workers.

However investigations would be made.

The union meeting afterwards decided to stick for the removal of the lead hands and put forward names which we wanted as replacements.

I was elected along with another bloke.

the loss of 24 per cent of the rail workforce since 1979.

The audience, who probably remembered Dewar's unwelcome boast on the eve of the 1982 one-day strike that the NUR had 'fully collaborated' in the introduction of flexibility, were understandably unsympathetic to his predicament.

# Rail workers fight de-manning

BY HILARY HORROCKS

ward any concrete measures to stop de-manning, closures and privatisation.

Neil Milligan, ASLEF acting secretary, warned that Labour governments had continued the closures programmes begun by Tory minister Lord Beeching.

His union had serious doubts about the control over transport of local authorities which, he said, set up the danger of fragmentation and privatisation of the national rail and bus networks.

Platform speakers, especially Strathclyde Regional council transport chairman Malcolm Waugh, who defended the council's de-manning policy, were sharply challenged by railmen in the audience.

Pat Devitt, of Glasgow

**ANGER at depot closures and staff cuts was voiced in Glasgow last week at a railway workers' meeting addressed by union officials.**

NUR leader Jimmy Knapp, speaking at the first public meeting called by the Federation of Rail Unions, warned that the next 18 months would be 'the most critical of the century' for rail workers.

If the Tories were returned to government, he said, they would not rest until they had achieved their declared aim of returning every rail job to the private sector.

'The de-humanising of public transport is an issue with the public,' said Knapp. 'We need an exact strategy to combat these attacks.'

Apart from urging the election of a Labour government however, none of the platform speakers put for-

# JAN REBANE

JAN REBANE, who worked at the Lambeth Trade Union Resource Centre, died suddenly at the weekend of November 9, 1986.

He will be greatly missed by friends and colleagues. The funeral is to be held on Monday 17 November 1986. Contact 274 4000, ext 372 for arrangements.

\* \* \*

MEMBERS of the Workers Press Editorial Board were shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden death of Jan Rebane.

In 1986 Workers Revolutionary Party members in Lambeth were able, for the first time in many years, to return to work in the trade unions. During the campaign in support of the Contracts strikers in the North East, Jan Rebane and the Lambeth Trade Union Resource Centre were a great help in getting support for them in London. We only knew him for a short time but knew him to be a principled fighter for the working class in the Lambeth area. Workers Press extends condolences to his family, friends and comrades.

## NOVEMBER FIGHTING FUND TARGET: £2,000

**WE ask Workers Revolutionary Party members and supporters to contribute to the funds we need to maintain and develop Workers Press. We have a target of £2,000 a month. Each week we will print an accurate account of the money we have received. So far this month we have £395.23. Please send donations to: Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT**

I argued for asking management for a trial period of no lead hands.

However, if this was rejected it was important that we chose our own people.

I said I was prepared to be a lead hand if no-one else came forward, but pointed out that 'our' lead hands should represent the workers and warned that pressure is always put on the lead hands to do the management's bidding.

This was agreed and put to management by our shop steward.

Both points were rejected. We then voted to ban overtime.

On the second day of the overtime ban the management told us that overtime was compulsory.

It was supposed to be in our contract (when I challenged he couldn't produce the evidence). He said that if we didn't do overtime other than for family reasons we could face disciplinary action.

He was told not to threaten us.

Things became heated. We clocked out and had a meeting outside.

The following day at a union meeting of all the workforce, a resolution was passed that if any of us were victimised then the whole workforce would ban overtime.

Some days later the General Manager came to us with a proposition.

The wash-up supervisor from the other Crawley factory would be drafted in to watch over the wash-up and see what the problem was.

Any problems — talk to him.

The lead hands were to continue and we were supposed to work normally! This was rejected.

We voted to stand by our original demand — remove the lead hands.

After a long meeting of all shop stewards representing Crawley and Heathrow with the management the following was agreed.

The male lead hand was to be removed from the wash-up to a special cleaning project (the health authorities had said clean the place up or be closed down — this resulted in unlimited overtime to do a proper job, the first time in at least a decade!)

Agreement had to be made with the union before he could return to the wash up.

The same with the female lead hand who at present is in hospital.

During the course of this struggle many lessons were learned such as:

1. At least one person wasn't in the union (although being in a union at his previous place) because he considered in the past that the union wasn't strong enough.
2. Meetings were held regularly in workers houses to decide and to boost moral.
3. Workers demanded to go in with the shop stewards at talks with management.

Without being disrespectful to the shopstewards, this stated that the workers were in control!

In an unconscious way the workers were demanding a form of 'workers control'.

It must be said here that this is a process.

Who can decide how and what demands will come forward.

## Picket against 'benefit policing'

A LIVELY picket braved driving rain at Liverpool's plush Adelphi Hotel last Monday.

Merseyside Trade Union and Unemployed Centres organised the picket against the latest Tory attack on the unemployed.

The Hotel is presently being used to train so-called 'Claimants Advisors' or 'Dole Snoopers' at £200 a head in an attempt to intimidate people off the dole register and deprive them of benefits.

This latest attack is an extension of the government's Restart programme. These 'Fraud Squads' would be better employed investigating the big swindles that take place in London banking circles and stockmarkets, not harassing the unemployed, who are already struggling simply to survive on the present low level of benefits.

The idea behind the scheme is to make more savings from the social security budgets, even though £600 million was saved in unclaimed benefit last year — according to figures produced by CPSA militants who describe the move as a 'benefit policing exercise'.

These Tory attempts to make propaganda for the next general election by bringing down the unemployment figures, do not deter them from their real aims of smashing the welfare state, as they see the profits from North Sea oil rapidly drying up.

# CPSA members and unemployed to fight social security cuts

BY CHRIS McBRIDE

A MEETING called by Lambeth Trades Council Unemployed Sub-committee last Friday to develop ways of organising the unemployed raised the question of the role of the civil service union CPSA in the fight against benefit cuts and cheap labour schemes.

CPSA South London Area Secretary John Ford told the meeting: 'We are facing a series of attacks by the government.'

'While there is a rise in unemployment, DHSS staff numbers are going down — and the problem is beginning to spread from London outwards.'

Speaking of the new 'schemes' being imposed on claimants, Ford said: 'We are being used politically by the government. New procedures are creating problems.'

'The real story about Re-Start is that if you don't attend a Re-Start interview you will be suspended.'

'In the last few weeks, over two thousand claimants have been suspended for failing to attend Re-Start interviews. The essence of the schemes is not being made public by the government.'

Ford told the meeting about some of the government's future attacks on the unemployed. 'A new scheme is to be the Claimant Advisory Service. The crux of the

job of the claimant advisors is to drive off 30 claimants in order to earn their own wages.'

He also spoke of the new 'Availability Test': 'The new form asks: "Are you looking for work? If so, can you provide evidence?"'

Ford told the meeting: 'If you don't, you will be suspended — 95 per cent of new claimants in Weybridge have been suspended.'

'Special attention will be paid to suspend blind or handicapped people because they cannot work.'

'There are lots of other schemes in order to use us as political tools. The system is going to grind to a halt.'

He was very concerned ab-



JOHN FORD



Mick Gavin (T&GWU) with jailed and sacked miner Dennis Pennington (right) at the Lambeth meeting

out the role of the union leadership on the issue. 'They said to me that they cannot take these issues up because they are political issues. A struggle without official backing is what faces us.'

Speaking about the frustration amongst claimants, he told the meeting that assaults upon DHSS staff are understandable and can be justified.

'Private heavies have been withdrawn because it is too dangerous.'

'What about us? You have to put a stop to procedures which create frustration amongst claimants.'

Many in the audience were very shocked at what they had heard. Ford summed up his valuable contribution by saying: 'The way to fight these problems is to have a campaign between the CPSA and the claimants in the Lambeth area.'

Sacked News International printworker and SOGAT member Larry Hyatt, speaking from the platform about the union leaderships' attitude towards unemployed workers, told the meeting:

'The Wapping dispute is not just about sacked printworkers, it is about the right of workers to organise themselves — and that includes the unemployed.'

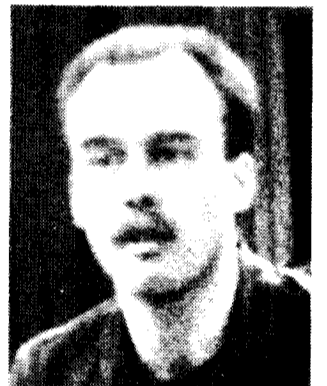
'We must take control of our own unions with the help of the unemployed. A shorter working week is the kind of programme which has to be put forward.'

'The policy of "New realism" put forward by our Labour leaders is the source of youth demoralisation.'

He finished by saying: 'We must open the doors to the unemployed.'

Dennis Pennington, jailed and sacked miner, told the meeting that the 468 sacked miners were being used as an example of what will happen to anybody who fights this government.

He said: 'When Labour gets in power, hopefully the men will be re-instated.'



LARRY HYATT

Mick Gavin, a militant from the transport union and president of Tower Hamlets trades council, attacked the TUC and Kinnock for doing nothing for the unemployed and 'aiding the division between employed and unemployed'.

He said: 'Is it any wonder that the unemployed feel abused after what the Labour leadership has to offer?' and described the trade union and labour leaders who spoke on the Jarrow platform as a 'shower'.

'The only way of organising the unemployed is to build a fighting movement, not to wait for a the Labour Party.'

To take the campaign forward, the meeting decided to organise a further meeting in the Lambeth area.

For further information on the Campaign Against Social Security Cuts, contact Adrian Wilson at the Lambeth Unemployed Centre on 01-733 5135.

## Health authority backs down on closure

BY STUART CARTER, Prestwich Hospital NUPE

FACED BY mounting opposition, Salford Health Authority decided last week to drop their plan to close Prestwich Hospital Nursery.

Over one hundred staff from Prestwich Psychiatric Hospital struck for three hours to lobby the health authority meeting.

Many hospital workers whose children attend the nursery would be forced to give up their jobs if it closed.

The health authority recently announced plans to close the main part of Prestwich Hospital and sell off the land.

They expect to raise £25 million by doing this and say that the money would be used to provide alternative facilities in the community.

All the unions at the hospital oppose the closure, not because they are against community care but because they want to see it being implemented properly rather than being used as a pretext to close the hospital and raise money.

The decision to close the nursery next June demonstrated that the health authority was mainly concerned with cutting costs rather than improving facilities for staff and patients.

Nurses, domestics, cooks, porters, nursery nurses and children crammed into the health authority meeting and fired questions at the managers for over an hour.

In response, District general manager Mr Foster said that the nursery closure would be withdrawn and the waiting list reopened.

Trade unionists pointed out that the nursery was opened when the hospital needed to recruit women workers and that by closing it they would be throwing these workers out of a job.

Prices for the nursery have also risen considerably in the last few years.

Also at the meeting were delegations from other Salford hospitals.

The health authority, which has an annual budget of £73 million, has treated more patients so far this year than ever before and will consequently be overspent by £1.8 million by the end of the financial year in April.

Proposals that were discussed were the closure of wards or the banning of all but emergency admissions to Hope general hospital for three months.

Professor Anderson, a member of the health authority, declared that if he was told to stop seeing patients for three months he would refuse and that medical staff at Hope hospital had recently met and unanimously decided to do the same.

Nurses from Ladywell Geriatric Hospital explained that they had been told to

watch how much milk and butter they used and that diabetic patients had their diabetic jam and marmalade stopped.

When they threatened to go to the press the jam was restored.

A councillor member of the authority said: 'It isn't right that we should have to match services to the funds available' and said that on a recent visit to a ward he found patients drying themselves with pillowcases because there weren't enough towels.

Hospital workers know that the towels run out regularly every week.

A nursing tutor complained that wards were short staffed yet newly qualified nurses were not being offered jobs.

On the future of Prestwich hospital, Prestwich Hospital

Authority Chairman Dr Beswick claimed that nothing would be done without staff being consulted first.

When domestic staff pointed out that they had not been consulted about their jobs being put out to tender he said that there was nothing he could do because he was under instruction from the Regional Health Authority and the DHSS.

It was pointed out that if he was really interested in the welfare of the patients and staff he would fight with them against Norman Fowler, not carry out his instructions.

The lobby was a successful start to what promises to be a long fight to defend the health service in Salford.

While it was a minority of Prestwich hospital workers who went on strike it strengthened our argument within the hospital that services can be protected by taking action.

### Socialist Press

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**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)

# THE TEACHERS' FIGHT

Powerful Nottingham demonstration:

# TEACHERS' SAY NO TO BAKER AND EMPLOYERS

**TEACHERS from the two largest unions showed their contempt for the latest offers on pay and conditions at the ACAS talks in Nottingham.**

A demonstration called by the schoolmasters' and women teachers' union NAS/UWT started the day's events last Saturday with over 2,000 teachers demanding no sell-out.

National Union of Teachers (NUT) members joined the march to show solidarity with the NAS/UWT rank and file.

This was followed by a mass lobby called by LAPAC (an NUT rank-and-file movement) for the start of the ACAS talks.

Teachers had travelled long distances and many were part of delegations from their areas.

The Coventry Agreement, which welds together pay and conditions of service, has been closely followed by teachers since August, when it was first proposed.

The anxiety of teachers over what is involved and outright opposition to the deal was seen in the week of the half-day strikes called by the NAS/UWT.

'The massive support for our strikes and demonstration shows the membership is willing to fight', Barry Talbot, NAS/UWT national

executive member told Workers Press.

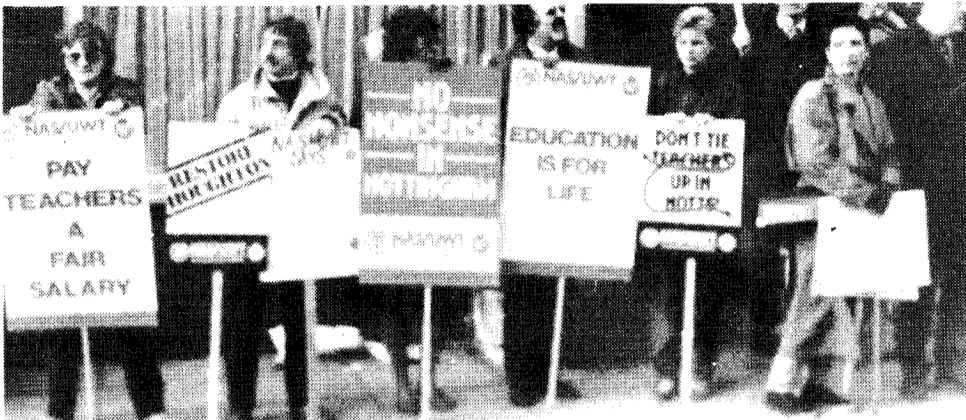
He continued 'We have put up the temperature and it has made feelings go through the roof this week. We have focussed national attention on the Nottingham talks.

'This has led Kenneth Baker, Education Secretary, to make a new offer. It is a major tactical error by the government, they have made it clear they can find more money, they have admitted it.'

Talbot then briefly outlined his executive's position on the offers.

'It is really a question of time and money. There is not enough money for the changes the government and employers want. They will have to pay for everything they want.

'If they want compulsory staff meetings, parents' evenings, five days extra and 1,300 hours per year they will have to pay for them.'



Teachers from the NAS/UWT demonstrating in Nottingham last Saturday

So, for the NAS/UWT leadership it is a matter of money — if the price is right they will deliver the teachers bound and gagged.

Is this the position that has kept rank and file teachers moving for the last 18 months?

The opposition is connected with the deterioration of school buildings — which are often health hazards, the overcrowded classrooms, the lack of interest of children in studying for examinations that lead to the dole queue and the consequent frustration of teachers.

Teachers in primary and secondary schools often do

not have enough time to prepare materials and lessons.

They have seen their salaries drop to 30 per cent below comparable salaries in other professions.

Many teachers want a straight pay rise. They refuse to sell conditions for money.

In fact they want an improvement in conditions.

The employers offer:

- 33½ hours — 28½ hours of teaching, registration, assemblies etc plus five hours at the head's discretion.
- Class size limit to be flexible.
- An entry grade for new

teachers.

● Teacher appraisal.

● Five periods of non-contact time in secondary schools — three to be available for cover, the other two available in emergencies.

● An end to special schools allowance.

● No non-contact time for primary schools.

● Other contractual duties.

Payment for which would be stretched over a considerable length of time.

At a LAPAC meeting after the lobby, Ian Murch, national executive member, said:

'The Baker offer only confuses the issue. It contains extra money for certain teachers, but it means an end to free collective bargaining.

'The Coventry Agreement is even less money than the Baker offer. However both are grossly inadequate.

'The NUT executive should be fighting for its own claim.

'The executive lost faith in the membership's fighting spirit last summer. This had developed from when they lost their overall majority in Burnham.

'They sought to overcome the problem by manoeuvring with the other teacher unions. A continued campaign this term would have meant disturbing their 'normal' relationships in negotiations.'

Bernard Regan, NUT national executive said that 'Baker was hoping to make union leaders put their own members' heads in the noose.

'Yet every major city except one and many rural areas had expressed opposition to the deal. All NUT members should campaign for a no vote in the ballot.'

Local authorities are already mounting an attack on teachers refusing to cover for absent colleagues.

Nigel Varley from Avon

told the meeting 'Avon authority are keeping alive the spectre of MacGregor.

'They are attempting to dock money from teachers who refused to cover after one day.

'In a recent ballot 80 per cent voted in favour of taking action.'

Avon teachers plan a rolling action of 3-day strikes over the issue.'

One other contribution that must be mentioned came from Marie Price — Notts Women Against Pit Closures. She said:

'We and NUM Silverhill branch express our solidarity for your action. We are more sympathetic now than at the start of your campaign.

'We got solid support in our struggle from the NUT. We will do everything in our power to help your fight. You are fighting for our children's future.'

The NUT leadership do not see it this way. They oppose the Baker deal but are using many arguments and tricks to persuade their membership to accept the Coventry Agreement.

They say accept the Coventry Agreement or you will have the Baker offer forced on you.

The recent NUT newsletter delivered to most schools says 'Those who cried "a plague on both your houses", as though there were a "third way" on offer, have, in practice, prepared the way for the Baker diktat.'

'Leadership', they say 'is not about permanent opposition — the strike and irresponsible path favoured by the self-righteous for whom any settlement, including the ideal one, would be a sell-out.'

These screaming attacks are increasingly directed against their rank and file. The right wing, the Communist Party and the Maoists speak with one voice reminiscent of a hoarse preacher desperate to fill a dwindling congregation.

LAPAC should circulate all associations in England and Wales with information against the deal.

The opposition against the Coventry deal could be the basis for a broad rank and file organisation covering the entire area of the union.

It could also be the start of a united campaign between the rank and file of the NUT and the NAS/UWT.

The NUT leadership must be made accountable to its membership. The campaign for a no vote on the Coventry Agreement must be the first step in this direction.

## EIS Special General Meeting: SCOTTISH TEACHERS REJECT MAIN PACKAGE

BY JOE EYRE

**THE biggest teachers' union in Scotland voted overwhelmingly to confront the government at a Special General Meeting in Edinburgh last Saturday.**

In a mood of serious determination, the 400 delegates of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) considered every major detail of the government's pay and conditions 'package' — and then rejected it.

The EIS, which represents over 80 per cent of Scottish teachers, campaigned for over two years for an independent pay review, backing their demand with wide-ranging strike action and a strict work-to-rule.

The government finally set up an inquiry under ex-Boots boss Sir Peter Main, but insisted that conditions as well as pay be part of its remit.

When Main reported, he recommended a pay increase of 16.4 per cent from October 1986 — but also in-

sisted upon a whole of host of extra duties being written into the teachers' contracts: an increase in the powers of head teachers, the scrapping of the teachers' negotiating machinery and its replacement by a permanent pay review body and the introduction of a new procedure to make it easier for employers to sack teachers.

Tory Scottish secretary Malcolm Rifkind couldn't accept even this. In line with Thatcher's public sector pay policy, he insisted that the pay increase be phased in over two years.

In the first major debate of the SGM, the EIS delegates voted unanimously to oppose Rifkind.

The only major disagreement arose over an amendment from Glasgow local association, which would have committed the EIS to submit a straight pay claim by December and to renew their campaign of industrial action to secure it. This move was opposed by the executive.

Speaking for the amendment, Iain McCalman of Glasgow delivered one of the best speeches ever heard at an EIS meeting. His intervention was ably assisted by Tom Connor of Glasgow and Norman Bissell of Lanarkshire.

In summing up for the executive, Stalinist Les Fulton was able only to launch an outrageous personal attack on supporters of the amendment. Clearly, the executive had lost the argument — although they did have the necessary support to win the vote by a fairly narrow margin, thus gaining the possibility of a 'flexible' implementation of policy, so dear to the right wing and Stalinists.

The next major debate concerned the Main report itself and this was rejected by an overwhelming majority — only half a dozen delegates voted in its favour.

The membership of the EIS is now being balloted on

Main with a strong official recommendation to vote 'no'. Already, the union has taken out adverts in the Scottish press arguing for a no vote.

The membership is also being recommended to support a national one-day strike in early December and a continuing campaign of strike action, coupled to a strict work-to-rule, against any trade-off of pay and conditions.

The union leadership is confident of winning a large majority against Main's proposals. If they are right, then the scene is set for a serious confrontation with the Thatcher government — which could both embarrass the Tories in the run-up to a general election and also act as an example to all trade unions in the public sector.

Scottish secretary Malcolm Rifkind is already threatening to introduce legislation to impose increased duties on Scottish teachers: obviously such a move, unilaterally destroying the conditions of a group of workers by law, would heighten the political content of the dispute.

**Tower Hamlets Printworkers Support Group  
Workers united will never be defeated  
A MEETING OF WORKERS IN STRUGGLE  
Highway Club Dellow Street E2  
Wednesday November 26,  
7.30pm  
Speakers from: Hangers (Limbfitters),  
Silentnight, Print, NUM.**

## Latin American struggle in photos

**AFTER THE DICTATORS** is a photographic exhibition sponsored by War on Want campaigns and being shown in Oxford, London, Birmingham and Cardiff over the next few months.

Uruguayan Julio Etchart's photographs show the struggle of unions, women's organisations and peasants' associations in the poverty-stricken countries of South America where 150 million people live in absolute poverty while their governments — supposedly now democratic rather than military — owe \$360 billion to the western banks.

Etchart himself was jailed in Uruguay after the 1973 coup, and his pictures show his enthusiastic welcoming of the explosion of political struggle against the brutality of the dictatorships.

Above: Montevideo, Uruguay, 1985 — Mothers and relatives of those who disappeared at the hands of the military regime demonstrate demanding an inquiry into the circumstances of each case — an unresolved problem since the ending of military rule.



## Upsets in Washington and Tehran as Arms Trade cover blown

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

US Secretary of State George Schultz was stung into openly attacking President Reagan, though State Department officials said resignation rumours were 'pure speculation'.

In Iran, after angry crowds had besieged the hotel where US secret envoy Robert McFarlane was staying for talks, it was claimed that the former national security adviser had sneaked in on an arms plane, but that he'd been sent packing.

Ayatollah Khomeini's regime, already showing ominous fissures as factions compete for the succession — the Islamic leader is 85 — came near to an open split over the visit.

McFarlane was said to have arrived in Iran recently on a plane carrying military supplies from Europe, according to the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Hashemi Rafsanjani.

He was using an Irish passport, and bearing gifts of a cake and a Bible.

According to other Iranian officials, Reagan's envoy had more serious goods to offer.

They spoke of aircraft spares and anti-tank missiles.

There were also talks on the return of billions of dollars of Iranian assets frozen by the US and its allies.

In a sermon at Tehran University on Friday (Nov 7), Rafsanjani said the Reagan administration was 'begging' for talks, and using the issue of American hostages in Lebanon as a cover 'to correct its past mistakes'.

'The fact that it wishes to reach Iran by this means is indicative of our definite victory and the defeat of America', Rafsanjani declared.

He claimed that McFarlane's visit had been futile, and that the US envoy had been expelled from the country.

While denying any control over Islamic groups in Lebanon, Iranian officials including Rafsanjani have indicated that if agreement were reached on arms supplies and assets they might be more inclined to use their influence.

Mehdi Hashemi, leader of the Qom-based Islamic World Liberation Movement, which has contact with radical Islamic groups abroad, was reportedly behind the mobilisation of crowds outside McFarlane's hotel.

His followers distributed leaflets calling on the masses to oust the envoy of what they call 'the Great Satan' — US imperialism.

Hashemi has now reportedly been dismissed as head of the world movement, and arrested for alleged illegal activity.

It was reported last week that an MP, Ahmad Kashani, had been arrested for distributing leaflets attacking the McFarlane talks.

Defence Intelligence chief Colonel Mohammed Katibeh was also reportedly under arrest.

Khomeini met Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri last Monday for talks to avoid a power struggle.

Ayatollah Montazeri, tipped as a successor to Khomeini, is related to Hashemi, and his son was briefly arrested with some of the latter's followers last month.

While both Washington and Tehran regimes have reasons for seeking rapprochement, each is caught up in its own rhetoric.

Reagan, some of whose keenest supporters are 'born-again' Bible-bashers preaching nuclear Armageddon, has posed before both US opinion and NATO allies as leader of a

crusade against 'terrorism'.

He also inherited from Carter the arms embargo on Iran.

The Iranian regime, despatching teenagers to their deaths in the war with Iraq, tells them they are marching 'to Jerusalem'.

While brutally crushing trade unionists and communists, the Ayatollah's regime tries to maintain revolutionary legitimacy by combining Islamic and anti-imperialist slogans.

For some time now, the Israeli government has been shipping arms and spare parts to Iran.

Some say it has been acting for the US.

In May 1982, while in Washington to co-ordinate plans for the Lebanon war, General Sharon was asked about arms deals with Iran.

He told the US reporters: 'What do you want from us? Our deliveries were made with the knowledge of the US government.'

We sell arms to Iran to help in her defence in the war with Iraq.

The US government knows about it and hasn't expressed any disagreement.

In September 1983, Sharon told reporters in Paris frankly: 'Israel has a vital interest in the continuing of the war in the Persian Gulf, and in Iran's victory.'

In May this year, an Israeli ship carrying weapons including 10,000 TOW anti-tank missiles was reported unloading in the Iranian port of Bander Abbas.

Interestingly enough, Iranian officials have referred to TOW missiles as some of the weaponry they have received from deals with the United States.

The secret US contacts

this year are said to have been ordered by Reagan personally and to have gone through the National Security Council rather than the State Department or even CIA, so as to avoid Congress getting an inkling.

For other US policy-makers the revelations of arms deals are particularly embarrassing.

In October, Secretary of State Schultz assured Arab foreign ministers that the US government was doing its utmost to stop arms shipments to Iran.

Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger during his visit to Peking urged the Chinese government to stop sending arms to Iran.

'I wonder what the Chinese think now.'

I don't know what to think myself, a Pentagon official admitted last week.

Meanwhile, French arms deals with Iran were reported last week.

It was also revealed that British suppliers had entertained an Iranian shopping team in London, securing deals for tanks, heavy artillery and helicopters, under the benevolent gaze of the Foreign Office.

The word being put around from Whitehall is that weaponry was going to be supplied to anti-Soviet guerrillas in Afghanistan, and that Iran will be encouraged to turn its attention that way.

The anti-tank and surface-to-air missiles might be used by guerrillas, but it is difficult to see tanks being used there — unless Iranian regular forces are committed.

Whatever the overall plan, it is much bigger than a few hostages, and they are as Rafsanjani says, being used as an excuse — just pawns in the game.

Wherever the weapons are used, it will be business as usual for Western capitalists.

Nothing like a nice little slaughter...

## Indian police arrest Tamils

**SRI LANKAN President Junius Jayawardene, due to meet Indian Prime Minister Gandhi this weekend, is treating as a welcome mat the mass arrest of Tamil leaders and fighters in southern India.**

While the two heads of government meet at a seven-nation Asian summit in Bangalore, there are fears the Sri Lankan army plans a new offensive against Tamils in the Jaffna peninsula.

Police in India's Tamil Nadu state, where many Sri Lanka Tamils have their refuge, raided refugee camps and liberation groups' headquarters early last Saturday morning.

They disarmed about 1,000 Tamil fighters, and held over 100 leaders for interrogation.

These were later released, but put under house arrest.

In Madras and the camps the police seized large quantities of arms and ammunition, including AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, mortars, and anti-aircraft missiles.

The guerrillas had been waiting for storms to abate before ferrying these weapons across the 20-mile Palk strait to their positions in northern Sri Lanka.

A boatload of Tamils,

either fighters or refugees, perished in the storms recently.

Tamil fighters had been expecting some government move against them since a recent provocation in Madras, which led to members of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front opening fire on a hostile crowd.

Some groups' leaders managed to evade Saturday's swoop.

But among those held were leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, V. Prabhakaran and Anton Balasingam, V. Balakumar of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation, and A. Selvam of the Tamil Eelam Revolutionary Organisation.

Tamil Nadu state officials said they would be kept under house arrest until the end of the Bangalore summit.

In Colombo, government officials treated the arrests as a response to their demands.

Jayawardene had earlier called in India's High Commissioner and said that unless action was taken against the Tamils he would not attend the summit meeting.

He is expected now to hold talks with Rajiv Gandhi aimed at imposing a 'settlement' on the Tamils, in effect by joint policing.

**WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**

**PUBLIC LECTURES**

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Debate the Revolution

# JOE LOUGHRIN reports from the north of Ireland

## LOYALIST 'DEMOCRACY'

SINCE the Anglo-Irish deal was signed last November, the self-proclaimed loyalist democrats have systematically set about wrecking the few remaining vestiges of democracy in the six-counties.

Every local council under loyalist control has been adjourned indefinitely. Most have met only once — to elect a new mayor to act as the loyalist mouthpiece and fixer in the absence of council meetings.

Not only do councils not meet — neither do council committees.

Because of this loyalist exercise in democracy the most basic requirements of local government are not met — fuel to run council trucks or heat swimming pools and other council property is not purchased, council office supplies are not ordered, planning applications pile up and community groups (loyalist as well as republican) are faced with closure due to lack of council funding.

Some things, of course, are of such supreme importance that councils simply have to meet to discuss them.

For example, the loyalists have recently called a special meeting of Belfast City Council to rubber-stamp a junket for 14 lucky unionists — they are to be sent to London to lobby MPs at Westminster against the Anglo-Irish agreement.

And this in circumstances where the unionists already have 14 MPs of their own who are refusing to go to Westminster themselves in protest at the Hillsborough Agreement!

All this monstrous ballyhoo has nothing to do with democracy.

It is, in fact, profoundly anti-democratic.

What we are witnessing is an all-out attempt by a sectarian clique to defend its own privileges — and to hell with democracy or anything else that gets in the way.

### Corrupt

So corrupt were loyalist councils in the six-counties that after 1969 they began to embarrass even the British government.

This resulted in many responsibilities (housing, education, social services and so on) being taken away from councils and administered instead by non-elected boards, executives and committees.

Sinn Fein have seven members on Belfast City Council and the unionist majority has voted to ban them from sitting on any of these outside bodies.

The seven are banned even from sitting on the management committees of community centres.

In one well-known case, Councillor Sean McKnight was removed from the committee of Divis community centre by order of the council.

The committee promptly voted to co-opt him back on and now he has the right to vote on community centre business which was not the case before the unionist ban.

One SDLP councillor expressed amazement that McKnight continued to attend meetings at the community centre in circumstances where he could not claim expenses from the City Council!

### Attitudes

No comment could more succinctly express the political attitudes of the SDLP who are completely submerged in the bureaucratic political procedures of loyalist-controlled councils.

At no time have they or the Alliance Party or the Workers Party campaigned against the ban on Sinn Fein.

They are happy, instead, to accept the hospitality of their unionist colleagues in the Lord Mayor's Parlour after council meetings — and all at the ratepayers' expense.

The treatment meted out to Sinn Fein councillors in full meetings of the council is nothing short of a public disgrace.

They are howled down by the unionist majority every time they attempt to speak.

On one occasion the loyalist rabble was led-off by the Rev Paisley's daughter blowing a trumpet. Apparently her musical talents are no better than her politics.

The intimidation of republicans and Sinn Fein councillors in Belfast is bad enough, but in Lisburn (a cauldron of loyalist bigotry and violence) it is even more serious.

Since April, loyalists have forced around 200 Catholics to flee from their homes.

It is reliably reported that the UDA targeted 12 Catholic families for special attention in the weeks leading up to July 12. All 12 were forced out.

In Lisburn there is no Catholic enclave. Catholic families are dispersed throughout the town.

## AT WORK



In such circumstances, if a Catholic family is forced out, then every other Catholic family in the vicinity have to cope with a level of fear and anxiety which guarantees their 'departure' too.

Such are the tactics of the UDA bully boys.

The internal divisions and contradictions within the loyalist camp serve only to fan the outbursts of anti-Catholic bigotry and violence.

### Control

In Lisburn, the UDA and UVF vie with each other in perpetrating acts of barbarity.

It is rumoured that McMichael is about to launch a bid for supreme control of the UDA on the basis of his performance in his Lisburn powerbase.

The local council is effectively controlled by the Rev Paisley's DUP (although they make up only a minor

ity of councillors, 10 out of 28). They have clear links with the loyalist paramilitaries.

At the end of a council meeting in June, the DUP leader, the Rev William Bettie, threatened one of the two Sinn Fein councillors.

At the next council meeting, in September, he made good his threat by turning out a team of loyalist thugs.

The Sinn Fein members had to run a gauntlet of 40 UDA men who blocked the entrance to the meeting.

Inside, a similar number swarmed the council chamber itself.

Two of them were occupying the seats of the Sinn Fein councillors and when they refused to leave they were supported by the Rev Bettie.

This followed an earlier incident at the February meeting of the council when several Sinn Fein supporters were very badly beaten.

Even more sinister, however, has been the intimidatory role adopted by

the local RUC.

The two Sinn Fein councillors are stopped by the RUC on their way to every meeting.

They are questioned and searched, their vehicle is searched and everything is done to delay them.

On one occasion they were delayed to the extent that they missed the council meeting altogether.

Often, they are stopped on their way home, too.

There could be no clearer evidence of the sectarian nature of the six-county statelet.

Sinn Fein is banned from all committees and their members abused and shouted down every time they attempt to speak in the council chamber.

Only on one occasion was a Sinn Fein member allowed to speak uninterrupted.

The Rev. Pavlov did not attend that particular meeting and was consequently unable to elicit the required response from his hounds.

All of this can be explained only by the determination of the loyalists to continue with their naked abuse of political power.

In a population of 65,000 in Lisburn district there are only around 7,000 Catholics and the loyalists are now openly boasting that all of the Catholics will be driven out.

### Shortage

In circumstances where there is an acute housing shortage, the local council has actually succeeded in preventing homes from being built.

In the early 1970s plans were prepared to build 8,000 new houses at Poleglass about three miles from Lisburn town.

Many of those who moved into Poleglass were Catholic families who had been intimidated into leaving other areas.

This was not at all to the liking of the local council which used its clout with the government to have the plan reduced to 4,000 houses in 1976 and to 2,000 in 1979.

Protestant families living in Poleglass were pressured into leaving by the local UDA in order to clear the way for organised street violence, petrol bombings and shootings of the remaining Catholics.

These are the tactics now being employed by the UDA in order to drive out Catholic families — many of whom have lived in the Lisburn area for generations.

None of this is new to Lisburn.

In the 1920s the local Catholic church was burned down and the priest had acid thrown in his face.

Again, in the early 1970s, Lisburn was one of the worst areas for intimidation and sectarian assassination.

### Violence

Such violence is increasingly infecting loyalist-controlled areas throughout the north.

At Dramore a couple of weeks ago an old lady and her son were shot dead at the door of their own house.

It is by such methods that the extreme loyalists hope to maintain their marginal advantages over Catholic workers — advantages which they see threatened by the Anglo-Irish agreement.

By insisting on their 'democratic' right to remain British, they insist on nothing less than a continued right to discriminate against Catholics, to intimidate and murder them at will.

Their hypocrisy is disgusting — not only in the light of their present tactics of bullying, intimidation and murder, but equally on their entire record of mob rule in the north.

Ever since its inception, the six-county statelet in the north of Ireland has existed as a system of legalised sectarianism and violence against the Nationalist community.

No opposition was tolerated — the flying of the Irish tricolour was made a criminal offence; the Irish language was officially proscribed; gaelic games were banned by loyalist councils; constituencies (both council and parliamentary) were ruthlessly gerrymandered to prevent the election of republicans and if, at the end of the day, the nationalist community objected to any of this, the RUC and the 'B' Specials could be relied upon to violently uphold loyalist misrule.

Even then, violence and intimidation did not stop with the state but pervaded the whole social system.

Trade unions (dominated in the main by loyalists) openly colluded with the capitalist class to exclude Catholic workers from employment.

Loyalist workers were given preferential treatment in housing and other basic necessities.

And, of course, they showed their gratitude to their capitalist masters by terrorising the nationalist community every twelfth of July by way of celebrating the Protestant ascendancy.

Loyalist extremism is a symptom of the sickness that is the British occupation of the six-counties — a sickness that will not be cured until the British paymasters of sectarianism have been forced out of Ireland once and for all.



Sinn Fein Ard Fheis 1988

The Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), which seeks to reform the all-powerful Teamsters Union in the US, is itself in need of reform as the following statement submitted by one of its members to their recent convention held in Atlanta makes clear.

TDU is only one of a legion of 'rebel' formations of rank-and-file trade unionists which have sprung up over the years in opposition to the widespread corruption and underworld connections of its parent body, the Teamsters Union, formerly under the leadership and control of the notorious Jimmy Hoffa.

TDU came into existence about ten years ago

when the short-lived TDC (Teamsters for a Decent Contract) found it necessary to organisationally distance itself from Frank Fitzsimons, one of Hoffa's closer associates.

This rather inauspicious beginning, which came about in an endeavour by the leadership to win some measure of legitimacy in the eyes of its rank and file membership, would now appear to be coming full-circle (despite its claim to be non-corruptible), if it hasn't already done so.

Certainly the national chauvinist and government-initiated calls referred to in the statement can only be viewed as a grave indication of this.

# TDU AT THE CROSSROADS

**THE RANK and file reform organisation in the Teamsters Union is TDU (Teamsters for a Democratic Union).**

TDU is at the crossroads. It can either join the massive retreat of the Teamster bureaucrats along with most of the rest of the labour misleadership or it can be a forward element of the fight-back.

To do this TDU must have a new focus. Our primary thrust must be on leading a counter-offensive against the employers rather than relying on the government's intervention 'to clean up union corruption'.

TDU's support for court cases as 'Theodous vs. Brock' wrongly promotes the illusions that the bosses' government in some way can be trusted to reform our union.

History has shown that government intervention in the unions' affairs almost always is aimed at hog-tying the rank and file.

For example, FBI agent Robert S. Friedrich is reported to have had Jackie Presser as an informer while giving him permission to pad a Cleveland union's payroll. (St Louis Post-Dispatch, Aug. 28, 1986)

TDU should orientate more towards the majority of Teamsters in lower-paid shops such as the Watsonville Cannery workers and De-

BY JIM HAYS

troit garbage drivers.

New ways must be found and pushed to organise to get the mass of workers in the unorganised industries and shops.

TDU must reject the racism and chauvinism of the Presser bureaucracy centred around its support for the phoney 'Buy America' campaign.

Instead TDU must become a leader in solidarity with genuine labour organisations in other countries and promotion of the rights and organisation of immigrant workers in this country.

Local TDU chapters should sponsor educational meetings, videos, speaking tours and rallies in support of workers in other countries.

Today big business is international, shifting investment and production rapidly from one country to another. To win, labour must become just as international.

To continue to organise labour on a narrow national basis is as foolish as the tragic strategy of divide-and-lose craft unionism in the airline industry.

TDU should support rank and file movements in other unions such as the P-9 Hormel strikers, TWA flight attendants, and the New Directions movement in the UAW.

We should move towards formal links between these movements through a new national organisation of the rank and file tendencies.

Today more than ever, labour's rights are affected by government action. It is essential that TDU become involved in political affairs.

We must demand that all IBT political action bodies be directly elected by the rank and file rather than being appointed.

All political committee meetings of the Teamsters should be open to attendance by the membership.

All DRIVE and PAC funds and expenditures should be reported in detail to membership on a regular basis.

Local TDU chapters should establish political education committees and begin to discuss the need for a new political party of labour, the oppressed and dispossessed.

Local TDU political education committees could, without getting into formal endorsements, invite candidates for office to give their views on labour issues to chapter meetings and publish the results in local newsletters.

At the TDU convention in Atlanta on October 25-26, delegates should push to elect members to the TDU International Steering Committee pledged to the above ideas as a new focus.

# Viraj Mendis: N.E. support

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

AFTER three days in the North East, the campaign to keep Viraj Mendis in Britain has received great support in the working class.

The campaign against Viraj Mendis's deportation to the murderous regime of Sri-Lanka by the racist British Home Office reached a new stage after he was invited to address the 10,000-member CPSA branch in Newcastle.

On hearing his case the branch decided to support him by:

1. Writing to the Home Office.
2. Urging the Home Office CPSA branch to give more support.
3. To help finance a coach for trade unionists and supporters from Tyneside and Durham to attend a demonstration in Manchester against Viraj's deportation.

Viraj received noteworthy support from the Durham Mechanics' NUM when he addressed their executive meeting.

On hearing of his threatened deportation and of 50 people a week being deported, they immediately made a donation, ordered 17 copies of the 'Viraj Mendis Must Stay' pamphlet to be

circulated to the branches, and promised to ask their representative on the national executive of the NUM to raise the issue of giving substantial support against deportation.

Viraj spoke at unemployed centres in the Tyneside region, and was supported by the North East Regional Committee of the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign. He later spoke at the Tyne and Wear Unemployed Forum, a body that brings together unemployed activists in the region.

Forty minutes and 15 miles later we reached Durham University and its Anti-Apartheid benefit where Viraj spoke, receiving applause for his fight, and selling 16 pamphlets as well as making new contacts for a North East campaign.

The Benwell Law centre, who set up the meeting with the CPSA, gave wholehearted support to the campaign and promised to support the CPSA coach to the Manchester demonstration.

More support came from the Gateshead Law Centre with a donation, a promise of help on the campaign and the use of the centre as a forwarding address.

Wherever the campaign

has turned it has been met with encouraging support, especially in the working class.

All immigration laws (not just the new ones) and all racism must be challenged by the working class, its unions and political parties, in a united front drawing in and involving the black communities and those individuals under attack through deportations or immigration controls.

The only indifference to the campaign tour came from one Alex McFadden, secretary of Newcastle unemployed centre and a well known 'Morning Star' Stalinist.

On hearing Viraj's case he immediately argued against him speaking at an Unemployed Forum meeting later that night. McFadden then refused to take pamphlets for distributing around the unemployed centre.

This shows clearly the rejection of internationalism by the 'Morning Star' Stalinists and the Communist Party. The Durham Mechanics NUM are bankrupt, but sequestration doesn't stop them giving practical support to a communist under the threat of execution. One UCATT branch used up the last of its funds to support Viraj.

# Call for purge on Anti-Apartheid activists

BY SUE GWYER

LAMBETH Anti-Apartheid has called upon the National Committee of the Anti-Apartheid Movement to declare membership of the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) incompatible with membership of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM).

They make this call in a resolution to be put forward to the Anti-Apartheid Annual General Meeting in London on January 10-11, 1987.

At this AGM the Executive are also attempting to ratify constitutional changes which would in the future mean national individual members have to be delegated to the

AGM.

The proposed changes reduce the number of delegates as a whole and undermine the autonomy of local groups as well as taking away voting rights.

The RCG have openly attacked these proposals for constitutional change as an attempt to 'narrow the activist and participatory character of the AAM'.

The rapid move of the right is a reaction to the forces within the movement and working class in general which is calling for more and

direct action.

The Executive's attempts to bureaucratise the Anti-Apartheid Movement so as to hold back any progressive action must be opposed.

We must encourage all members to attend the AGM in order to prevent the constitutional changes being ratified.

The call for exclusion of the RCG is a first step in a witch-hunt of activists and militants within the AA Movement. Chair of Anti-Apartheid Bob Hughes, Labour MP for Aberdeen North, has obviously learnt a lot of lessons from Kinnoek's right-wing purge!

## 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.  
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.

### 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: Life sentence, 341418.  
SEAN HAYES: 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.  
ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

### LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.  
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26388.  
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

### 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.

# MANCHESTER MARTYRS

1867    1986

## COMMEMORATION



### SUNDAY 23rd NOVEMBER

Assemble: 12.30pm  
Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd., MANCHESTER 13.

## MARCH and INDOOR RALLY

**SPEAKERS:-**  
Sinn Fein  
Relative of Irish P.O.W.  
Pan Africanist Congress  
I.B.R.G.

Irish Republican Socialist Party  
Cumann NaMban veteran.  
Pakistani Wkrs. Assoc.(B.)  
Bands Alliance



### SUPPORT THE FIGHT FOR IRISH FREEDOM

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

# STALINISM IN

**THIS WEEK, we continue our interview with BALAZS NAGY (Michel Varga), of the 'Struggle and Continuity Group for the Fourth International'.**

Last week, he described the emigre Hungarian Trotskyist movement in the 1930s and his own career, which he started as a full time worker in the Hungarian Communist Party youth movement. He explained the necessity for the Stalinist regime constantly to purge its ranks to prevent any danger of the working class finding a political expression — precisely when the regime needed to mobilise the energy of the class to carry out the expropriation of the bourgeoisie after the war.

As the purge extended deeper into the ranks of the hierarchy, he himself was arrested for 'collusion' with imperialism.

Cleared of this charge but nonetheless removed from full time party work, Nagy took a job and came into everyday contact with workers for the first time since the war. This week, he describes how he came into opposition to the regime and became involved with the activities of the Petofi Circle. The interview will continue next week.



**HUNGARIAN workers fought the invading Red army with whatever weapons they had. The struggle against bureaucracy cannot proceed simply through splits within the bureaucracy, argues Balazs Nagy, but must proceed through the mobilisation of the working class. Nonetheless, we cannot sit idly by while a struggle proceeds within the bureaucracy**

WHEN I was later employed as a worker, I saw the reality of the situation and was able to make the connection between this and the process of the purges.

**WERE YOU from a proletarian background yourself?**

NO. I come from a peasant background. My father was a peasant who made me study to become an engineer — but I was very often with organised workers.

I was again with organised workers in uniform during the war. After that, my friends were all the children of organised workers and later on I worked myself in a factory.

**THIS WAS in the 1950s?**

I WAS at university. Because Stalinism — and this is my experience as well as the experience of others — cannot rule without constant purges.

In these years it was very dramatic, more brutal than now.

As a member of the Party, I was secretary of the union. My work was not prominent.

I was attacked by the Party leaders and I was expelled from the Party because I was 'anti-Soviet' and 'anti-worker'.

At this time (1952) the 'great reform' in the university was in preparation.

They told us it was very important to learn from the Soviet universities' experience.

The whole thing was that we had to imitate them. We said that we too have experience and that Hungarian universities are very old.

It was, of course, important to learn about Soviet universities and we were really very interested. The whole thing was a 'master copy' and I rather think it amounted to the promotion of young workers without any preparation.

The first promotion was very good: it involved all kinds of young workers who previously could not get into the university but who wanted to study.

The second was rather less so, but the third promotion was criminal because it enrolled young workers who amounted to nothing at all.

The Factory Committees sent to the university all those who could not hold down a job. Because the factory had no right to sack people, they sent them to the university instead — including the bad elements.

I protested about this — here I was, a great young activist, notorious in the university but was nothing on the scale of history!

This was a great scandal! I was 'anti-worker'. This was why I was expelled from the Party.

Afterwards they said that my work was very good, even in the speech where they expelled me. Therefore, 'you must work in the secondary schools'.

I refused. Two weeks later, other comrades were expelled too and we began to understand what was happening.

We refused to work in the school and we tried to work in a factory. It was there that I discovered another world: the reality of 'Socialism' and the conception of the building of Socialism.

I worked there from 1952 to 1955 and later as a driver in the big plant at Cszepl, which is like Renault here in France — the most important factory in Hungary.

It was always a fortress of

the Hungarian working class movement and the most advanced workers.

**WAS THAT true from before the war as well?**

IT WAS true in 1952 and 1953 and under the government of Imre Nagy.

In this plant I met other comrades with whom we had fought in 1944/45 and with whom we had lost contact.

For instance in Cszepl, I met three others who were also workers and I learnt what the real situation was.

I had an accident there and it was impossible to continue; the accident was due to the very poor quality of the trucks — in this case the gear box.

It resulted in a very sharp clash with the management of the garage: there were hundred of trucks inside the factory, all of poor quality and potentially dangerous.

Because there was a conflict, I had to go.

Relations in a workers' state of this type are interesting — after that, I went to meet with someone who directed a whole sector in the national radio who was an old acquaintance — a comrade inside the youth movement.

I said to him you must place me here as a driver for the radio station — which he did.

In 1955 this scandalised the bureaucracy because many people knew who I was.

The bureaucracy were always trying to re-integrate me into the Party, which I refused. They said that in the radio I could work in whichever section I chose.

**YOU WERE known as a trouble-maker by then?**

AS A dissident expelled from the Party, I finally agreed to be re-integrated into the Party in 1955 because there were the beginnings of an opposition inside the Party.

After I accepted my re-integration into the Party, the Party secretary said I must participate in Party work, particularly in educational work.

I had to conduct seminars in dialectical materialism for the members of the musical section of the radio.

I still remember these highly qualified, internationally known musicians.

The first time I went to give a seminar I said, 'Comrades, do you know what dialectical materialism is?'

I said, 'Dialectical materialism begins with facts. I am here, you know it is me, and I teach you dialectical materialism. When you speak of dialectical materialism you speak of life.'

The first time I worked in a factory in 1952 it was under the direction of the older workers.

I was working on a great big casting forge. Sometimes, when there was a break in production — not enough iron for example — the old worker who guided me would ask me, 'You are not a worker?'

I said, 'No, I am a teacher.'

He said, 'Do you know what 'Socialism' is? 'Socialism' is what you are here.'

He said to me, 'This is not socialism. Next week on the night shift (it was the three shift system there) then you must see how many people are here, not workers but the others.'

It was a small unit — we were about 100 workers for whom there were 15-20 other people, controllers and so on.



# CRISIS

## The challenge for the Trotskyist movement

When we worked on the night shift, he said to me, 'Now see how many there are!' There were three.

'This is what you need, the others — this is why we do not have Socialism'.

I understood very well. It was the same thing when I was in the university and afterwards at the radio station. The same thing.

For the leadership and management at the radio, I was the leading example of what is 'not Socialism'. Yet all the time they tried to re-integrate me.

When I did rejoin the Party, the other comrades and I said 'Now we can perhaps make something. There is an opposition beginning to form around Imre Nagy'.

Therefore I accepted an intellectual job. In reality I was occupied full-time with the organisation of the Petofi Circle.

### WITH HINDSIGHT, how would you describe the politics of Imre Nagy?

Not only he but us too, all of us thought the same; that it was essential to reform the bureaucracy and its programme.

But this reform posed the real problems — which are impossible to solve in the context of 'Socialism in one country'.

That is to say we did not realise that the bureaucracy behaves as it does not simply because it is an evil caste but because no other policy is possible within the constraints of 'socialism in a single country'.

The expression of the points in a programme of reform expresses real problems.

Without workers' power in the context of an international workers' government you cannot, for example, develop a real long-term policy towards the peasants and make the necessary concessions.

If you have got no resources other than the labour of the working class, you can only make a correct policy towards the peasants at the expense of the working class.

The problems are insoluble in one country, especially a little country.

You cannot approach this problem formally — from the point of what to do 'on paper' — this leads you the notion of self-reform of the bureaucracy.

We cannot make a correct orientation without the mobilisation of the working class and of the whole strata of intellectuals and so on.

We do, however, have to support one wing of the bureaucracy against the other — as I wrote in a recent article on the Soviet Union.

We cannot sit on the sidelines. Although change is impossible without the mobilisation of the working class, it is essential to take a stand in this mobilisation.

From the beginning, this was the main problem confronting the opposition, which split at every stage of the movement.

At the beginning, for instance, Kadar and some other bureaucrats joined the opposition. . . there were all kinds of different elements; you found all tendencies.

However, what is essential is not this opposition, which is ineffectual, but the real mobilisation which begins with the movement of the youth and the intellectuals.

Things were very different

in Poland, for example, where things developed very quickly but where there was no opposition inside the party.

If you do not have this opposition inside the bureaucracy, breaking the bureaucracy is quite impossible without a revolutionary organisation in the ranks of the workers.

If you have this, you do not need the split inside the bureaucracy.

### YOU HAVE now got a growing movement inside the bureaucracy and inside the Communist Party itself. Where does the Petofi circle fit into this? What was its position and its specific weight inside that movement? Secondly, what form was the movement within the working class taking at that time?

IT WAS at the end of 1955 that the Petofi Circle was organised.

It aimed to offer a public forum for workers and intellectuals for the clarification of some problems of science, the arts and so forth.

In 1953 oppositionists had presented their criticisms of Rakosi's regime and had outlined their programme.

This was a great liberation for people who began immediately to criticise the Stalinist regime and to consider how to change it.

The Stalinists organised by Rakosi rejected Imre Nagy and organised a counter-attack against the whole spectrum of the opposition to restore the status quo.

This became a point of reference for the Petofi Circle; the first beginnings of liberalisation and the struggle to change this regime and make a sharp criticism of socialism Rakosi style.

It was a real movement which even the Stalinists were obliged to acknowledge.

The youth organisation was instructed that it must provide something for the young intellectuals; to organise discussions and so forth.

They tried to hold back the whole movement and control it in this way.

This was the Petofi Circle or at least its official function. In reality we transformed it.

It was like a tribunal on the whole regime because we organised discussions about history, about economics, about the arts and sciences, about agriculture.

We even invited the Stalinists who were responsible for these fields and others who opposed them.

It was a discussion forum where the Stalinists were completely outnumbered; a real investigation.

For example, in history we looked for the real history of the Communist Party.

What about Rajk? How is it possible that Bela Kun was at one time a good man and at another time. . . and so on.

### WHAT about the rehabilitation of Tito?

IT MOVED from discussion to discussion. To begin with, we were only 20 or 30 people, then hundreds, then thousands.

As time wore on, we were caught between those who sought to push further forward and those who sought to control us.

We were in some difficulties about how to avoid this control. Things were pro-

ceeding very quickly in the Circle itself; we were confronted with the problem of how to organise.

I remember a discussion just after the 20th Congress in the Soviet Union; it was our tactic constantly to refer to what happened at the 20th Congress.

### WERE you aware of what had happened there — the denunciation of Stalin and so on?

NO, NOT all of it. Bits and pieces were getting through. But we had the official resolutions — that was enough for us.

We said our example was the Soviet Union — that we must apply the 20th Congress resolutions here too in Hungary.

That is to say Rakosi Out. In with the government of Imre Nagy. This meant that in Hungary we must apply the programme of Imre Nagy — and the Stalinists could not say that the Soviet Union was not being used as an example.



BALAZS NAGY — speaking at the recent Hungarian Revolution commemoration meeting

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

**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)

**Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee**  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
**Smash the Frame-ups**  
**Free the Guildford 4 and Birmingham 6**  
**Wednesday November 19, 7.00pm**  
**Longsight Library**  
**Stockport Road**  
**Manchester 12**  
 Speakers include Ken Strath Manchester City Councillor

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

### 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.

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# THE 1944 EDUCATION ACT

At a time of turmoil in the education system in Britain, **BERNARD FRANKS** looks at the Act which has formed the legislative background to education ever since the war. Heralded as the dawn of a new era, he shows it as a compromise to maintain class divisions.

*'THE 1944 Act reflected a conscious attempt to move with the trend of politics created by the war, while ensuring that reform was carefully moulded to Conservative Party ends'. (R.A. Butler, 'The Board of Education and the 1944 Education Act' by Kevin Jeffereys, 'History', October 1984.)*

**WORLD WAR TWO brought massive destruction to the education system in Britain but thereby provided a basis for a major restructuring.**

This was achieved only in the context of heading off radical reform of the pre-war class-ridden hodge-podge.

Elementary education was free to all up to the age of 14, but better could be had at a price.

Only a minority of pupils went on to take up secondary education, 14 per cent in 1938. These were mainly fee-payers.

A sprinkling of free scholarship places were available for those able to pass the stiff examinations but too poor to pay.

In the harsh years prior to 1940, scholarship pupils often had to refuse the places they had won at more advanced schools and look for work on the basis of the qualifications they had so far gained.

Higher education was the preserve of the rich, again with a token few free places for those sifted out of the ranks of the poorer classes.

Just four elementary school pupils in a thousand eventually reached university.

For the fee-paying pupils at all levels, teaching emphasis was on asserting authority and giving leadership.

For the children of the working class it was a matter of acquiring minimum work skills and subordinating themselves to their alleged social superiors.

The first concern of Britain's rulers during the war emergency, in regard to education, was to prevent anyone taking the opportunity of major upheavals to drastically change the system.

They were soon off to a good start. The outbreak of war meant that the plans first advanced in 1918 to raise the school leaving age to 15 were shelved yet again.

Under the weight of wartime evacuation and bombing, in addition to the loss of thousands of teachers to the forces, the education system collapsed entirely.

By 1940, 430,000 children were receiving no tuition at all.

Thousands of evacuees were being half-taught in church halls and impoverished classrooms by parent stand-ins or ex-teachers brought out of retirement.

A million other children still in the towns lost out when their schools were requisitioned for Civil Defence purposes.

Two-thirds of school premises in both Manchester and London were taken over

in this way as emergency depots and air raid wardens' centres.

In April 1940 teaching unions and other organisations called for the re-establishment of compulsory education as a matter of urgency.

They warned of the extreme dangers of a steep rise in illiteracy and of a physical and psychological deterioration of the young if the situation remained unchanged.

A major increase in the incidence of vandalism was cited as a symptom of a serious malaise.

Such appeals were guaranteed to receive a favourable reception from the military authorities who, as on so many previous similar occasions, were concerned about the poor physical condition and low literacy level of forces recruits.

Soon, all the hushed-up appalling inadequacies of the past were being thrown into sharp relief by the flames of burning towns and cities.

As in the case of the national insurance and health service agitation, a great clamour arose, not for restoration of the old system, but for something far better.

Demands were made by unions and Labour teachers for equality of education at all levels and a school leaving age raised to 16.

Again, as in the case of social security and the health service, it was Dunkirk and the fall of France that concentrated government minds wonderfully on plans for reform.

Organisations employed by the state to eavesdrop on everyday conversations and report on morale generally warned that it was not enough to appeal to patriotism or to promote victory over Germany as an end in itself.

Something positive had to be offered as a reason for fighting and suffering the blitz.

Many promises were made by British capitalism of the good life to be won by victory over its rivals. However, this ardour for reform quickly evaporated as the military threat receded.

Concerned at the radical turn discussion of education policy was taking, the Board of Education began to formulate plans of its own.



Children line up for evacuation from the cities during World War II. By 1940, 430,000 children were receiving no tuition at all and thousands of others were receiving improvised education.

The result was a Green Paper entitled 'Education after the war', printed in June 1941 and circulated confidentially among selected head teachers and education chiefs.

In terms of secondary education, it was little more than a restatement of the pre-war Hadow and Spens reports, calling for a rigid class-based tiered school structure — Hadow for grammar and secondary modern schools, Spens adding technical schools.

But it emphasised the need for 'equality of opportunity' and 'parity of esteem' between the different types of secondary institution.

However, when the Board's president, Herwald Ramsbotham, seemed to be taking the report at its face value and began to talk in terms of its implementation after the war, complete with the panic proposals from the early dark days of the military setbacks, his term of office ended abruptly.

Having gone beyond his brief, Ramsbotham was immediately kicked upstairs i.e. elevated to the peerage.

As in the case of the removal of Ernest Brown who had favoured a salaried doctor service in 1941 there was general concern at an apparently pro-reform minister being toppled.

Ramsbotham was replaced as president of the Board of Education by R.A. Butler, the Tory son-in-law of the industrialist Samuel Courtauld.

Prime Minister Churchill evidently saw in Butler a man to do what he was told, someone to hold the line against pressures to make positive commitments to major change. Butler also saw himself this way.

As part of the diversionary process, he appointed a committee to discuss school subjects and examination policy. It was put under a man who had complete contempt for equalising concepts.

Cyril Norwood was a former headmaster of Harrow School, a strong Empire man and a profound believer in the dominant role of religion in education.

With him on the committee were prominent grammar school heads and university examination board chiefs.

In these circumstances it was no surprise that a mass of alternative literature and discussion arose in the labour movement.

A Council of Educational Advance was set up by the TUC, the Labour Party, the Co-op, the National Union of Teachers, the Workers Education Association and other organisations.

This too was a diversionary mechanism, for retain-

ing the initiative with the labour movement establishment and preventing more radical views taking hold.

Again, as in the case of health and welfare and in spite of the wartime chaos, there came into being a mass of emergency provision which would not have been contemplated prior to 1939.

For example, the vital need for technical personnel led to a rapid escalation of

major training programmes in technical colleges and universities.

Over 6,000 state bursaries were awarded for two-year university technical degree courses and nearly 4,000 engineering cadetships were established.

Once the panic of imminent invasion had passed the Board of Education began discussions towards yet another policy document.

Official contributions took a strongly conservative line, expressed in a concern to maintain the old structure and to retain control in the hands of the pre-war education overlords.

Correlli Barnett, a historian essentially hostile to the wartime and post-war reforms as imposing an unwanted call on capital, details the great emphasis on religious discussion during these new preparations in his book 'The Audit of War'.

He states that 'the whole process that led to the 1944 Act turned on negotiating a

deal between government and churches over the future of church schools within a reformed structure of state furnished education'.

Between 1941 and 1944, he says, the diaries of Butler's parliamentary secretary, Labour man J. Chuter Ede, 'were stuffed full of skull-emptying sessions with gentlemen of the cloth on the topic of how they could continue to run a large proportion of the nation's schooling

thanks to the tax payers' subsidy'.

The sole preoccupation was with structure, not content of education, says Correlli.

Questions on specific issues — technical education, the universities, secondary schools, the school curriculum — were all hived off to special committees of experts.

However, by 1942, when for the first time military victory seemed a possibility, the block to positive action had to be overturned by the government itself.

A new burst of interest in post-war reconstruction threatened to result in a mass of plans for education which would undermine what was, in effect, the key to the social control exerted for centuries by the British ruling class.

The grammar school/council school division, the independence of the religious schools and even the public schools themselves were all apparently threatened with extinction.

From stalling everything, the Tories and their Labourite supporters rushed to take a lead in proposing concrete measures and legislation.

In July 1943 a white paper was published entitled 'Education reconstruction'. This advocated secondary education for all and the establishment of a Ministry of Education.

At one point it appeared to attack the earlier concept of segregation at 11: 'There is nothing to be said in favour of a system which subjects children at the age of 11 to the strain of a competitive examination on which not only their future schooling but their future careers may depend.'

However, it then went on to advocate a three-tier secondary school system which would involve 'allocation' at 11.

Although the plan ran directly counter to many of the reforms being discussed on the left, not one amendment was proposed.

Just at this time the Norwood Committee on Curriculum and Examination in Secondary Schools published its report.

This professed to have discovered three 'rough groupings' of children with 'different types of mind' which should be taken into consideration.

There was, it said, 'the pupil who is interested in learning for its own sake, who can grasp an argument or follow a piece of connected argument', i.e. management material.

There was the 'pupil whose interests lie in the field of applied science and applied art', i.e. scientific types.

Thirdly, there were those 'who deal more easily with concrete things than with ideas... abstractions mean little to him... his horizon is near and within a limited area, his movement is generally slow.' Such were manual types.

Naturally different kinds of secondary school were needed for these different kinds of mind.

Critics quickly pointed out that this theory of types of minds conveniently fitted the tripartite structure that the government was bent on introducing.

The London County Council condemned this rationalisation of the existing system, which was being developed, not out of differences in human aptitude but from economic and social divisions in society.

The report was merely an invention of the old guard to perpetuate the divisions and protect privilege.

Its main pre-occupation was with grammar schools and university entrance.

The 1944 Education Act provided free compulsory primary and secondary education from the ages of five to 15 and optional extra tuition thereafter.

Hailed at the time by some on the left as a revolutionary measure, it was for the Tories a massive victory as a rearguard defence of a class-based education system in general and of the public schools in particular.

The Act converted the Board of Education into a Ministry and its President into a Minister.

Parents were made legally responsible for seeing that their children were educated up to leaving age.

Three progressive school stages were defined: primary, secondary and further education.

It would be compulsory for education authorities to supply all three and pupils to attend unless special exemption was given.

A host of non-controversial improvements were made, softening the needs created by the wartime devastation and for future soldiers, but also covering for the lack of real change.

Provision was made for special schools for the physically- and mentally-handicapped as well as for pre-school nursery education for the under-fives, although attendance at the latter was not compulsory.

Where hardship existed for school attenders there would be special provision. School meals and milk, available to all, would be cheap or even free for those in difficulty.

Education authorities were required to provide clothing and transport where needed, and recreation facilities.

Cultural activities and medical examinations for

all. Even lodgings must be made available where a problem existed.

However, little detail was given on primary schools, and no commitment was made to limiting size of classes.

The main concern at this level was preparation at the age of 11 into unspecified types of secondary schools. The age was chosen allegedly on the basis of psychological and physiological factors.

In fact, this was simply a rationalising of the logistics of achieving a division convenient to the number of available places at grammar schools.

If a fifth or a quarter of places available locally were at grammar schools, then miraculously, the 11-plus would reveal that exactly that percentage of local children were intelligent enough to take them.

Meanwhile, in regard to the secondary-modern schools, it would certainly prove a problem to give an institution 'prestige' and 'esteem' that is entered by failing an examination.

In fact, the three types of secondary education proposed by Norwood and the White Paper — grammar, secondary-modern and technical — were not named in the Act, apparently leaving open the matter of what form secondary education might take.

In theory, the all-in multilateral schools (today's comprehensives) called for by sections of the labour movement, might be a viable possibility.

In practice, the three-tier system was the only one discussed by the authorities and the Act was purely a piece of enabling legislation for this system alone.

The Act also placed an obligation on local authorities to provide further education beyond school age.

Attendance was to be compulsory for all young people between the ages of 16 and 18 for at least one whole day or two half days a week.

Students, parents and employers were warned not to resist or impede such attendance on pain of fines and possible imprisonment.

### *Post-war reconstruction threatened to result in plans for education which would undermine the key to the social control exerted for centuries by the British ruling class.*

The obligation on young people to take up further studies in this way was never subsequently enforced, but the compulsion on local authorities to provide it and employers to allow time off remained (Section 46, Education Act 1944).

The recompense to the church institutions which had agreed to support the introduction of the system was the saving of the grammar schools in their existing form, the protection of the public, i.e. private, schools from state takeover and a compromise deal with religious schools to incorporate them into the new set-up while giving them a measure of religious autonomy.

In particular, there was a problem of providing the latter with the funding to extend, modernise and re-equip up to the newly required standards without this leading to calls for their nationalisation.

This was solved by offering each school individually one of three options: Controlled, Aided or Special Agreement status.

Controlled Status meant that local education authorities maintained the premises, bore all running costs, appointed teachers, nominated two-thirds of the man-



The 11-plus system left millions of children in secondary modern schools with inferior facilities

aging or governing board and required specific religious teaching to give way to non-denominational instruction.

Under Aided Status the school had to meet a proportion of its development, capital and repair costs.

In return it would keep its denominational rights and appoint a majority of its governing Board, which in turn appointed teachers.

The third category arose from the existence of 230 Special Agreement schools deriving from the 1936 Education Act.

These depended on an accommodation between individual Church Schools badly in need of cash, and the local authorities which supplied it in return for negotiated concessions on choosing teachers and governors.

These schools could now choose to retain their existing status or could opt for either one or the other State categories or for private 'Independent' status.

The 2,000 Catholic schools and half the 8,000 Church of England establishments opted for aided status, a further 130 schools opted to return to their Special Agreement arrangements. The rest took controlled status.

This was not surprising in view of the fact that only 200 of the Church of England's elementary schools had been built since 1905. The great majority of the remainder were badly in need of major renovation (753 schools on the Board of Education 'sub-standard' list belonged to the Church of England).

In return for their support in accepting streamlining of the system, the churches were also rewarded with a compulsory act of worship to start the day and compulsory religious education as the only obligatory subject in every type of school.

The Act therefore greatly increased the role of religion in local authority schools.

'Independent', i.e. private, schools, including the 'public' schools, the nine top private institutions with high tuition fees backed up by huge endowments and the patronage of the establishment elite, were untouched by the Act.

Butler had set up the Fleming Committee, chaired by a Scottish judge, to consider their future in relationship to the new State system.

Privately he had assured the Tory 1922 Committee that 'the public schools would be safeguarded after the war' (Kevin Jeffereys, 'History', October 1984).

Another area of contention ignored by the Act was the Universities. On the basis that these came under a different authority, the University Grants Committee, no plans were advanced to open them up to working class students on a mass basis, or ensure free provision similar to the State schools.

In regard to teachers' pay, this was to be fixed by the existing wage negotiating machinery, the Burnham Committees.

A major flare-up occurred over this issues during the debate which reflected the essential conservative nature of the whole affair.

Worried that the huge burden thrown on women teachers by the war was not sufficiently recognised or rewarded, a section of Labour backbenchers combined to defeat Butler with an amendment for equal pay for women teachers. It was passed by 117 votes to 116.

In the Cabinet Labourites Attlee and Bevin shared Churchill's fury at this 'culmination of a course of irresponsible conduct pursued by certain Members of the House' ('Attlee', Kenneth Harris, page 227).

They agreed to work together to defeat the disgraceful principle of equal pay for equal work.

Hours later, Churchill blasted away the opposition by re-raising the issue as a question of confidence in himself and his running the war. On this basis the backbench amendment was overturned by 425 votes to 23.

The Education Act then went on to receive royal assent on August 3, 1944. While containing some innovating aspects in terms of streamlining the previously muddled system, it had sidetracked major change.

Parents and pupils, for example, were mentioned only in terms of their duties, not of their rights.

In 'The Peoples War' Angus Calder comments that 'Butler had obeyed Quinton Hogg's injunction that Conservatives confronted with an apparently irresistible tide towards fundamental change should keep cool and seek to divert it' (page 628).

Butler had been given twin tasks and had done them well: giving the civilian and soldier masses an alternative talking point to the red-hot issues of Beveridge and the nationalisation of industry, while acting quickly to head off similar devastating changes to education.

Jeffereys, in his 'History' article remarks that Butler was satisfied that he had added little that was new but had simply succeeded in 'codifying existing practice'.

He adds: 'Butler in fact remained convinced in private that he had safeguarded his own party's essential interests — diversity and variety among the State schools, the place of religious instruction and the autonomy of public schools.'

But all the compromises and deceptions could not have been achieved without the full agreement and active participation in the swindle by the Labour leaders.

The key role in this respect was played by Chuter Ede, who bore the brunt of the discussions with the churches.

In fact the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) stood far to the right of other organisations such as the National Association of Labour teachers, which believed equality of opportunity could be achieved by introduction of multilateral schools.

The PLP, on the contrary, backed the tri-partite system of secondary education and accepted the fraudulent 'Parity of esteem' — the cover for continued grammar school predominance — as a viable concept.

'The Times' noted that in the two-day debate on the original White Paper 'not a single voice was raised in favour of holding up or whittling down any of the proposals for educational advance' ('Attlee', Kenneth Harris, page 227).

Butler himself wrote later of the Act: 'Its provisions were broadly acceptable to moderate and progressive Conservative opinion and consistently supported by Labour men' ('Attlee', Kenneth Harris).

Why was this? For one thing Labour leaders were desperate to rush through 'something on account' (Chuter Ede's own words to Butler) in respect of social policy.

They feared a recurrence of the 1918 'trick' of keeping Labour in government until victory was assured, then throwing it out and restoring

pre-war standards.

Clearly the intervention of the working class and the election of a Labour government was not a factor in Labour thinking at this stage.

When the Fleming Committee finally reported, it proposed not abolition of the Public Schools but subsidies and the sanctioning of tax evasion to help them continue in existence.

In return they would make 25 per cent of their places available to state sector pupils, apparently a provision justifying their continued existence.

Again this put-up scheme for protecting vested interests was not challenged by Labour MPs and it was essentially the Fleming recommendations that remained as the basis for policy in this area.

When Labour came to power in 1945 it had the peoples' mandate to take any measures it thought fit towards sweeping away the Butler system and establishing a socialist plan for education.

The abolition of all private education and the introduction of multilateralism would have been a first step in this respect.

It is true, it would have had to be just one aspect of wider measures to nationalise industry and commerce and run them under workers' control if a drift back to the old class-based structure was to be prevented.

But nothing of the sort occurred or was even attempted.

The Labour Ministry of Education under Ellen Wilkinson — once 'Red Ellen', heroine of the Jarrow March and authoress of the labour classic 'The Town that was Murdered' — simply endorsed the Butler Act.

The pre-war class divisions of the piecemeal provision of those days were carried over into the new universalised structure.

Grammar schools retained their prestige, their superior facilities and their lower teacher/pupil ratios.

The new secondary moderns were steadily improved, but as custodial institutions for teaching elementary work skills to those who were considered academic failures — at 11 years old!

Meanwhile, the public schools and private education in general, now under Labour government protection, continued unmolested and profitable in the role of training up the establishment elite and the captains of industry and commerce.

# LETTERS

Send your letters to Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4  
OJT. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial  
Board. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

## Knowsley election: Look before you leap

I DISAGREE with the Liverpool WRP's statement advocating a vote for the so-called Revolutionary Communist Party in the Knowsley by-election.

I realise this is under special circumstances, with the Kinnock leadership having arrogantly imposed its own choice on the local Labour Party and provoked them to boycott the campaign.

But whatever the arguments about the boycott tactic, which is an issue in itself, I don't see how we can endorse the RCP as an alternative.

Their demand for a ballot during the miners' strike is well-known. Where I work, an RCP member dropped out of the miners' support group, apparently on instructions from his Party, who claimed support groups helped 'the NUM bureaucracy'.

During the battle over the unions' political levy, RCP members opposed the campaigns for a 'Yes' vote on the grounds that union leaders were not telling members it meant support for Labour.

As though union members didn't know what it was about! Workers treated the issue as a Tory attack, and voted accordingly. It was a class question.

Again, in the fights over privatisation in hospitals, local government etc., RCP followers have come up with the pure syndicalist argument that workers need only concern themselves with

wages, that who we work for does not matter.

The pattern seems consistent. Whatever the battle being waged, the RCP comes up with ever-so-militant-sounding arguments why it's really the wrong battle, and we should be somewhere else. Any resemblance between their line and the right-wing is of course, purely coincidental.

Before they started trying to get involved in workplace issues, the RCP made their name with such fronts as ELWAR (East London Workers Against Racism). To take up the issue of racist attacks was commendable, and I'd hesitate to criticise the individuals who got involved where others wouldn't.

But a criticism heard from some young Asians in East London was that whereas they were trying to mobilise the community to defend itself, RCP was trying to substitute a few heroes for the community.

Certainly they seemed very keen on getting publicity for themselves. When the first inner-city riots broke out and police chiefs were trying to say it was all the work of 'Left-wing extremists', up popped a spokesperson for RCP-ELWAR on TV to claim credit for her group.

The first demonstration in support of the Newham Seven — youth arrested for organising against racist attacks — was nearly wrecked at the beginning when ELWAR members insisted

on marching at the front (though they'd not organised it) and refused to obey the stewards.

(As a fracas threatened, police began moving in and could easily have stopped the whole march before it started.)

Maybe the RCP has grown out of such things now, but what has it grown into?

Frank cites the 'policies' RCP is putting forward in the Knowsley election? But what policies?

Their leaflet lists as 'proposals' demands like 'A job for every worker' and 'decent housing for all'. Great! Hasn't every candidate you ever heard promised things like that?

Under jobs they say: 'We demand that the bosses and their government provide every worker with a job at a living wage — or the equivalent in benefits if they cannot come up with work'.

Which is not quite the same thing as saying 'a job for every worker', is it? Maybe the RCP will argue that by making such demands they are 'exposing' capitalism's failure to deliver. But haven't Liverpool workers seen that for themselves already?

Nowhere in the RCP leaflet, apart from a vague call for 'a working class party that can really change the system', is there any proposal for dealing with the ownership of industry and the power and capitalism.

So while the RCP leaflet criticises the Labour council's failings, and says Labour policies nationally 'are little different from those of the Tory wets', it comes up with no explanation as to why Labour has let down the working class, or how its proposed new working class party 'can really change the system'.

All we get is 'We need action now'. Like the RCP posters in London which simply claimed it as 'The Party of the Future'.

Empty, meaningless slogans which are the hallmark of the opportunist demagogue who assumes workers are too thick to follow anything else.

There is no point in revolutionaries intervening in an election campaign unless we use it to raise the class issues and broaden the audience for socialism.

I don't see how we can raise political consciousness by endorsing a frivolous gimmick.

I sympathise with the frustration of working people in Knowsley faced with an invidious choice. **But in the absence of a worthwhile socialist alternative, they might just as well vote Labour as an anti-Tory vote — and meanwhile organise to reverse Kinnock's coup before the next general election.**

Plus, of course, organising in the neighbourhoods for the battles coming up — whoever gets in.

Charlie Pottins.

## The issues need to be clarified

THE CALL made by the Liverpool branch of the WRP for a vote for the RCP in the Knowsley North by-election has generated much discussion in Manchester.

I believe the fundamental basis upon which this call is made must be clarified and explained further.

First, it must be stated that we do call for a Labour victory in the General Election.

However, in Knowsley, where the right wing of the Labour Party have imposed Howarth as a candidate, the Executive Council of the Labour Party has called for a boycott of "Kinnock's" man.

There is, I believe, a section of the working class which will follow this line but this does not necessarily mean they will abstain from the vote.

We should indicate that there is an alternative to this section of workers which does not necessitate a crossing of class lines and a vote for Liberal.

We call for a vote for David Hallsworth, RCP candidate, in this light.

It is no accident that the Liberal candidate, after an initial virulent attack upon Militant, has since retreated from this position.

The Liberals recognise the possibility of winning votes from Labour.

In calling for a vote for the RCP we offer an alternative to the Labour imposed candidate but still ensure a vote for a party on the side of the working class.

The Executive Council could not themselves call for a vote for Hallsworth as they would open themselves up to expulsion.

Left Labour Party activists in Knowsley already believe they will be next on the list in Kinnock's purge.

We must, in situations such as Knowsley, take class positions — I believe the WRP branch in Liverpool has done so but did not clarify its position in the statement produced in last week's Workers Press.

Sue Gwyer

## 'Bad Men'

SAM BORNSTEIN and Al Richardson, in a letter in Workers Press (November 1) declare that they are at a loss to understand a comment I made in my review of their book on the history of the Trotskyist movement in Britain.

They write that they cannot understand 'the remark that we rely on the stories and even gossip of people who were outside the group led by Healy'.

This statement in my review referred particularly to the period at the end of the forties.

Here, it is not true that the interviews were with people who were in the 'club' at the time.

Ellis Hillman, for example, is quoted as an authority for the 'club' before 1953, but who was not in the 'club' until 1953.

My objection is that the book is permeated in this section with the subjective 'bad man (or women)' theory of history. Let us go through some of it.

On the fusion between the old RCP and the 'club' led by Healy, we have the comment that 'Healy, supported by the International Secretariat, refused to allow fusion with the old majority unless he was giving a majority on the leading bodies of the old organisation'.

In the interests of historical accuracy at least, it must be reported that, in the leadership of the RCP, there was no struggle over the minority taking the leadership of the fused organisation.

They had the experience of entry and we were accepting their tactic, with an organisation that was disintegrating.

The book goes on in the same vein; after the fusion 'Healy had about a year to use the apparatus to smash his opponents before the next conference' and then: 'Up and down the country he

went, dissolving, amalgamating and splitting branches apart at will'.

Let us just take one or two facts. Tony Cliff was never expelled from the fused organisation, for the reason that he was never a member.

He drifted out of the RCP around 1947 when he went to Dublin University.

Ted Grant was expelled from the North London branch for inactivity about a year after the fusion in 1949.

The EC of the club and the IS rejected the branch's expulsion.

The reason for this given by these bodies was that the fused organisation should be allowed to settle down and, the conflicts such as this should be avoided.

The books declares that there were 'wholesale ejections of Cliff's supporters'. The authors make no attempt at an analysis of the political reasons for the conflict with the faction which supported Cliff in his 'state capitalism'.

A number of members of the faction broke publicly with the position of the movement in support of North Korea against the attacks of imperialism.

In fact, the political differences could not be contained in one organisation.

Members of the faction were asked to give an undertaking to accept the discipline of the club in public activity.

This they refused to do and they were expelled with the exception of three members, two of them members of the national committee of the club.

These three made the following statement to the National Committee: 'The comrades present denounce the split, infraction of discipline, and formation of a separate group by the 'state capitalists' who are now outside our club. They pledge

## Connolly's writings

AFTER THE recent meeting calling for the International Conference, I engaged in conversation with a comrade from Ireland.

During the course of our discussion we discovered that both of us felt the writings of James Connolly, the Irish revolutionary socialist leader, had been much neglected.

Connolly's works, I would contend, are amongst the most significant contribution to left-wing political theory that has emerged in this part of Europe over the last hundred years.

Connolly has been castigated by many for his religious leanings and, in a sense, there is some credence in this analysis.

However, one reading of Connolly's polemical writings against Fathers Kane and MacErlane S.J. would show such a simplistic interpretation of his religious attitudes to be, at best, superficial.

As exponents of the dialectical method, we must understand the contradictory nature of Connolly's position on the religious question.

I will let Marx put the point more succinctly.

'It is the greatest irreligion, it is the arrogance of worldly reason; to separate the general spirit of religion from positive religion; this separation of religion from its dogmas and institutions is the same as asserting that the general spirit of justice should rule the state, distinct from particular laws and the positive institutions of justice.'

And religious minorities, such as the Catholics of Ire-

land or the Huguenots of France, appeal, in their struggle against oppression, not to religion, but to the "rights of man".

'All that Christianity teaches about the state is obedience to the authorities; and so Christianity gives no criterion as to the goodness or badness of a state.'

'This can be judged only in the light of human society and of human reason.' (Rheinische Zeitung).

This religiously ambiguous position of Connolly's did not obscure his ability to cognize in a scientifically socialist way — for example his masterly analysis of the labour theory of value in his polemic against Father Kane S.J., in his political writing 'Labour Religion and Ireland', where Connolly sees the labour theory of value for what it is, i.e. the singular ability of labour power to create value in the capitalist market place — and not the more simplistic classical economic interpretation.

(I would have liked to develop in full Connolly's Marxist interpretation of the labour theory of value here. However I do not feel that this is the place to do so).

Also, I feel that it is significant to point out Connolly's attitudes towards class and internationalism — bearing in mind 'our' declared intentions at this time.

Connolly writes 'I have always held, despite the fanatics on both sides, that the movements of Ireland for freedom could not and cannot be divorced from the world-wide upward movements of the world's democracy.'



JAMES CONNOLLY

'The Irish question is a part of the social question, the desire of the Irish people to control their own destinies is a part of the desire of the workers to forge political weapons for their own enfranchisement as a class.'

Indeed Connolly's contribution to the industrial workers of the world was not without significance, but that's another story.

All of Connolly's theory and practise reached its conclusion with the building of the Irish Citizens Army, a workers' militia, out of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

The ICA took part in the 1916 rebellion alongside the more nationalistic Irish volunteers.

The ICA up to, and through the rebellion, kept themselves philosophically apart from the pure nationalists on

class lines, thus prompting Lenin to call the ICA the 'first Red Army'.

I cannot overstate the significance of Connolly's works to all who consider themselves revolutionary socialists.

I would have liked to have developed further the works of Connolly but, as with his views on the labour theory of value, I feel that there is not space here to do so.

I will leave you with two quotes, from the Irish comrade first mentioned:

He said 'Whenever I get into difficulties, I go back again and again to the writings of Connolly'.

And from James Connolly 'Be moderate' (song) 'Our demands most moderate are — We only want the Earth!' P.M. Winters (Formerly P.M. London) North London WRP

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# LETTERS

## USec — sleight of hand

THE EXCHANGE of letters over the last six weeks between Cyril Smith of the WRP and Paul Stevens and Charlie van Gelderen for International has been very revealing.

All the comrades' contributions have revolved around the issues raised in the document *Perspectives for an International Discussion* published in Workers Press on July 5.

I would like to enter the discussion on behalf of Workers Power.

The first point relates to that slippery beast 'Pabloism'. The original document states that Pabloism 'revised the fundamental tenets of Trotskyism' and calls the USec 'revisionist'.

Indeed, a condition of unity 'with all those standing on the Transitional Programme' is the 'fight against Pabloism'.

Stevens wrote to object that this precluded an open discussion with the USec.

In his reply Smith surrenders the point without any explanation.

This is significant because, having done so, there is very little left to distinguish the approach of International and Smith to the question of international regroupment and re-building the Fourth International.

The eight principles of the *Perspectives* document and Stevens' four are very simi-

lar with one exception to which I will return later.

Acceptance of the following principles are deemed enough: the method of the Transitional Programme, permanent revolution, building FI sections and the position on the workers states. These are called 'programmatic planks' by Stevens.

Smith's reply to Stevens is inadequate. Instead of questioning the real value of these 'planks' (full of dry rot in the case of the USec), he insists that the only way to avoid the fragile unity of the 'lowest common denominator' is to 'prepare a fundamental advance in theory' and subject the history of our movement to a searching re-examination.

Theoretical re-elaboration is, of course, essential. The nature of the post-war boom, the changing forms of imperialist domination are two examples. They underpin and render scientific our programme.

But as revolutionaries the point of our theory is as a guide to practice and indeed, is the ultimate verification of theory.

Programme — understood as the totality of principles, strategy and major tactics (united front, General Strike etc) — provides the key reference point for unification of revolutionary forces.

Different theoretical con-

ceptions, for example, concerning the mechanisms of imperialist exploitation of the semi-colonial world, are no problem if we do agree on the strategy and tactics to fight imperialism.

Exactly the same is true of historical disputes such as the nature of the 1953 split in the FI, or Healy's attitude to the Bevanites.

The key is what lessons do we draw today for our political practice now.

What is decisively important to agree about is that we should conduct revolutionary tactics towards reformism in a manner completely different to that gross opportunism involved in Socialist Outlook's relations with left reformism and the setting up of centrist papers.

This brings us back to 'Pabloism'. Many Workers Press readers are aware from reading our book *The Death Agony of the FI*, that we reject this as a scientific political term.

It was a smoke screen behind which Healy obscured from view that fact that he shared, and was also the architect of, many of the positions (deep entrism, adaptation to Stalinism) that he loaded onto Pablo's shoulders.

The task is to go beyond demology and dissect whether the declarations of principles by particular groups are carried out in

practice.

For anything but a sect, principles and strategy find their living expression in tactics adopted in the class struggle.

Some tactical questions can, of course, be contained within a healthy organisation, but other so-called tactical differences may well reveal major systematic differences of strategy and principle.

In itself, for example, a difference about whether to devote more or less resources to Labour Party work is a controllable tactical difference.

But we would argue that a 'tactical' refusal to place demands on Benn to stand and fight Kinnock, or not to fight the witch-hunt up to the point of facing down the threat of disaffiliation in fact reveals major differences of strategic approach to fighting reformism.

Stevens wishes to gloss over this distinction.

But their letters also throw out a challenge on the question of Pabloism. Stevens and van Gelderen resort to bluff and deceit on the record of the USec. Stevens says that:

'If the accusation of "Pabloite liquidationism" is to be made to stick, real facts about how, when and where the USec has "capitulated" to Stalinism, petit-bourgeois nationalism etc etc have to

be produced and real facts about how the USec gave up the fight to build revolutionary parties have to be enumerated.'

Fine. We will only deal here with Nicaragua.

It is symptomatic of the International's method that, although van Gelderen mentions in passing that, for them, Nicaragua is a workers' state, he does not see fit to draw attention to this not unimportant 'fact' and its significance for the prospects of unity with the WRP — who do not hold this view.

Just like a salesperson who always avoids talking about price!

In Nicaragua since 1979, the USec has capitulated to the petit-bourgeois nationalism of the FSLN and has abandoned the fight to build the FI in Nicaragua.

Before the July 1979 revolution which overthrew Somoza, the USec were in favour of repudiation of foreign debt, expropriation of the national capitalists and a government which excluded representatives of the ruling class and Constituent Assembly.

Once the Sandinistas were in power they denounced those (in the USec!) who called on the FSLN to break with the Popular frontist GNR and those who called for a Constituent Assembly.

Worse, they denounced the Colombian sympathising

section of the USec, the PST, for organising the Simon Bolivar Brigade inside Nicaragua.

The FSLN expelled them for organising 70 trade unions and the USec, far from seeking to build a section, proclaimed it was necessary to act as *loyal militants in the framework of the organisation which led to the overthrow of Somoza*.

Up until recently, the Mandeliste wing of the USec confined its praise of the FSLN to calling it a 'Revolutionary Government' instead of the bonapartist regime it was and is.

But now they have joined the SWP (US) in hailing Nicaragua as a workers' state and the FSLN the dictatorship of the proletariat. (See 12th Congress resolution.)

And yet all this is glossed by affirming the need for... permanent revolution; by a sleight of hand which insists on the need for the FI in order to complete the transition to socialism but hides the fact that they do not see a need for political revolution in Nicaragua.

Keith Hassell,  
Workers Power.

● Editor's note: this letter is dated October 15, but has been held over for reasons of space. We apologise for the delay, which is due to our desire to spread the discussion as widely as possible.

## widens its net

themselves to operate the discipline of the club and break all connections with Cliff and his group.'

I would add, that, at this National Committee meeting, Healy declared that two of the three were only making this declaration because they were going to Sri Lanka and they wanted clearance from the British section to join the Lanka Sama Samaj Party. He and the Banda brothers voted against the majority acceptance of their statement.

However, I agree, that 'the nub of all the differences come in the philosophical points raised ...'

The sentences on these points in the letter are very interesting and significant, in that they substantiate the very criticism they are attempting to answer.

I wrote that the authors saw theory in academic terms. This had nothing to do with an attitude to academics. Bornstein and Richardson bring in their criticism of academics as a defence. It has to do with telling history from a 'watch tower' in Deutcher's term.

The authors express this again in their letter, when they take me up for declaring that marxism is not a science of prediction but a science of perspectives.

They write: '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 (In Marxian social science? Not in reality? BH) and the human element of consciousness comes into play within certain limits ('men make their own history, but they do not make it in conditions of their own choosing').

They return to repeating what can only be described as a metaphysical (in the

marxist sense) conception of history: History as a collection of factors including 'human consciousness' which 'comes into play'.

They quote Marx but give him a mechanical and deterministic interpretation. Which, of course, shows their eclecticism as this contradicts their 'bad men' theory of history which sees the history of the trotskism as the good leaders being outmanoeuvred by the bad.

Circumstances do not immediately and directly create an individual's qualities; men are not just products of their environment. There is a dialectical interrelationship between the individual and circumstances.

There are involved here very important and very profound questions. They are among the questions which, in expelling Healy we have been forced to take up anew one reason being the contradictory nature of the relationship of Healy with the revolutionary movement.

The book and the letter do not face or answer the contradiction that while the majority of leaders of the RCP may have made correct analyses, it was the minority who continued the struggle for trotskism. Bornstein and Richardson continue to say that these leaders made correct analyses.

Of course, they said correct things, with their hand on the door knob and while ready to say: 'Goodbye'.

Revolutionising practice cannot be separated from theory or placed in the history of trotskism as one of the 'factors'. Knowledge is not attained passively but by seeking to change the world.

The authors write: 'For if a number of predictions making up an integrated thought complex (!) are largely borne out (as with the majority of the RCP's perspectives

for the next thirty years) that can only, in our opinion, demonstrate that the Marxist method is at work.'

Were it so simple, then, armed with a computer, revolutionaries need never lead the cloisters. In the end, however, the decision rests with the struggle of social forces.

Let me put the conclusion I expressed in the review in a different way:

The economic predictions were really the minor prophesies. The major prediction of these leaders of the RCP was very quickly invalidated. This prediction, was in fact the whole premise of the discussion and implicit in their writings; without it the discussion had no purpose. It was, that the leadership they were giving would develop a revolutionary movement.

Lastly, declaring Sam Bornstein a member of the WIL had nothing whatever to do with any condemnation but more with identifying the source of what I called his 'we wuz robbed' explanation.

I certainly was a member of the RCP, joining in 1944. I have made a number of mistakes in my life which was that of a revolutionary fighter. Some of those were grave mistakes and I take this opportunity of saying one of those was in supporting 'Security and the Fourth International' and participating in the attack on what I and others alleged was the 'platform of shame' which defended the honour of Joseph Hansen.

But one action was not a mistake, and that was in 1949, supporting the fusion with what was then the former Minority faction led by Healy.

Bill Hunter

## Write to the POWs

SOME time ago, I made an appeal in Workers Press for party members and supporters to write to Republican prisoners of war incarcerated in British jails and to jailed miners to show solidarity with them and to let them know they have not been forgotten.

As it is now approaching Christmas, I make an urgent appeal again for our members and supporters to remember these prisoners by sending them a Christmas card.

The jailed Republicans, jailed miners and now the jailed printers are fighters for freedom and for the working class and are our comrades in struggle.

At last Saturday's meeting in Durham following the successful picket/demonstration outside Frankland and Durham prisons, a letter from the Irish Prisoners' Appeal in support of the day's action was read out.

It called on people to write to Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, who are still being routinely and systematically strip searched in Durham prison.

Charlie Walsh

### MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

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

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

### 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.

**PICKET AGAINST POLICE HARASSMENT OF NON-STOP PICKET.** Outside Well Street Magistrates Court, near Oxford Street. Wednesday November 26, 10 am. Amanda Collins, who was sexually assaulted by male police officers when she was arrested, appears in court on that day.

**WOMEN'S EVENT ON THE NON-STOP PICKET.** Thursday November 27, 4-8 pm.

**PALESTINE AND ISRAEL.** See for yourself, and meet the people. Join a tour with a difference. Jerusalem and Peace Services, 13, Goodwin St. N4.

**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)

**MARIA TOLLY SINGS FOR THE TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT.** Plus speaker from the Guildford Four campaign. Tuesday November 25, The Mermaid, Stratford Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham 11. Wednesday November 26, Merseyside Trades Union Resource Centre, Hardman Street, Liverpool 9. Friday November 28, Leeds Trades Council Club, Savile Mount, Leeds 7. Saturday November 29, The Broomspring Centre, Broomspring Lane, Sheffield.

**BIRMINGHAM TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT MEETING.** The 'Birmingham Six' are innocent. Speakers: Chris Mullin, author of 'Error of Judgement', Siobhan McKenny, daughter of one of the jailed men, and Clare Short MP. Tuesday November 18, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

**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.

**SOCIALIST ACTION: Building an Alliance For Socialism.** Weekend November 22/23, in London, a major political event with speakers, debates and discussions. Details from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

# REVIEWS

## NAZISM IN THE 1980s

**Against Racism and Fascism in Europe. Prepared by Andrew Bell. Published by the Socialist Group of the European Parliament**

THE RACIST Front National gained 34 seats in the French Assembly this April, to add to its ten deputies in the European Parliament.

British racist and neo-Nazi groups are much smaller and fragmented, but lack of electoral success has not prevented escalating racist violence.

Britain is also an important centre for international fascist terror.

Evidence that organised racism and right-wing violence have been growing in Europe led MPs in the Socialist Group of the European Parliament to press for an official inquiry.

After some resistance from Tories and Christian Democrats, the inquiry was set up, chaired by Labour MEP Glyn Ford (Greater Manchester East). Its report was drawn up by Greek Christian Democrat Dimitrios Evrighenis.

Andrew Bell's pamphlet presenting its findings for a wider audience, locates the threat from the fascists in the crisis of capitalism.

'In the despair generated by mass unemployment, or inflation rates which destroy wage and savings levels, or savage cutbacks in social provision upon which millions may depend, it becomes progressively easier for the right to step forward and point the finger at scapegoats upon whom the blame can be put.'

Noting that in countries like Spain fascist regimes installed by the military had less opportunity to use the racialist weapon, the report says 'race, where it can be made into an issue, is merely a convenient pretext to gain support... while the principal target is 'democracy itself, and especially the parties and organisations of the left.'

When this is linked with racism, it may lead on to genocide — the attempted slaughter of whole peoples.

Perhaps the most useful

parts of this pamphlet however are those examining the current threat.

The report notes that the National Front in Britain gained considerable votes in the 1970s 'in certain declining industrial areas with significant black and Asian populations.'

The Tories 'moved rightwards to accommodate them', it observes, climaxing in Thatcher's notorious 'swamping' speech in 1978:

... people are really afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture... the British character has done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped, people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.'

Thatcher recovered votes from the National Front by stealing its clothes, as this government's policies have shown.

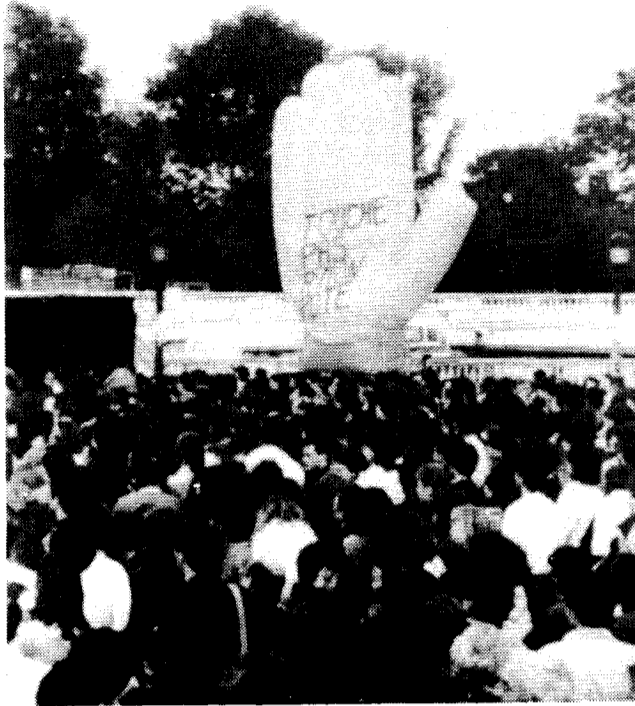
However small the fascist groups remain, racist violence has escalated. The report says:

... self-defence groups have been formed, especially within Asian communities, in the face of an apparent inability by police forces to get to grips with a virtual terror campaign being waged in inner city areas. In some instances almost entire families have died in night time arson attacks on their homes.'

In West Germany, Turkish workers and Vietnamese 'boat people' have been attacked by organised racist gangs.

Hundreds of people have been killed in Europe by Nazi and fascist terror groups carrying out a 'Strategy of Tension' which they hoped could pave the way to fascist dictatorship.

The Bologna railway station bombing in August 1980 and the Munich Oktoberfest outrage were to be followed by a terror bombing at the Notting Hill carnival, if it



**Demonstration in France of the anti-racist group SOS-Racisme, June 1986. The slogan reads 'Touche pas a mon pote' (Hands off my mate)**

hadn't been that the neo-Nazi plan was leaked to an infiltrator, Ray Hill.

The existence of an important British link in the European fascist network is evident.

'One of the principal sources of Nazi literature has been the Historical Review Press, based in Brighton, England.'

In 1982, seven Italians wanted on terrorist charges were arrested in London, but attempts to extradite them failed, and they remain at large here. Two German Nazis convicted on bombing charges had been arrested at the country home of a British sympathiser.

The League of St. George, a right-wing outfit whose origins go back to the Mosley movement, is believed to have helped set up a safe-housing network in Britain for fascists on the run.

Well-known historical wri-

ter David Irving has worked to put together a 'new Right' of Tories and extremists in Britain.

He has also made frequent speaking tours in West Germany for Dr. Gerhard Frey's Deutsche Volkunion, which is 'seeking to rehabilitate the Third Reich.'

Asian and Afro-Caribbean people in Britain, Turks in West Germany, Arabs in France are all targeted by the racists.

Nazi antisemitism has been kept in the back of the shop while racist groups were putting up a 'respectable' front for votes, or expressed in 'coded' phrases.

But the Nazi 'Jewish Conspiracy' theme remains there. Jews are accused of a conspiracy to flood Europe with Black people and force 'race-mixing' on the whites.

French National Front leader Bernard Antony attacks 'Marx and Rothschild' and

the propensity of Jews to occupy all the key posts in western societies'.

While memories of Nazism were still too fresh, some racists and fascists denied any connection. Others are proud of their genocidal heritage.

Neo-Nazi groups in Britain and Sweden distribute propaganda to schoolchildren telling them the Nazi holocaust was all a 'hoax' and 'don't believe your teachers. They are lying about Hitler.'

For the initiates, there is no pretence — the promise of unrestrained violence, sadism and mass murder is part of the appeal.

Fascist recruitment of frustrated working class youth through encouragement of football hooligan gangs, as a way of training lumpen thug squads, has gone with the growth of a cultural 'new right' among reactionary academics.

The European MPs' report brings together serious researches by anti-fascists in many countries, presenting a very full picture of what is going on.

The weaknesses in approach and outlook are those of its authors' parliamentary reformism.

While describing the Nazi conspiracy theory they do not locate it socially in the frustrations of the petty-bourgeoisie, nor consider the use the ruling class might make of Nazism, as it did in the 1930s.

Recognising that anti-immigrant racialism influences workers in metropolitan capitalist countries, and that the immigrants are from the former colonies, they do not look into the underlying historical connection with imperialism.

Social democracy was a link in the chain.

Focussing on the apparent successes fascist and racist groups have had among youth, they do not look further.

Unemployment and industrial decline are cited, but not the point that these were presided over for

periods by reformist governments — that is by the very parties to which the workers looked for protection.

Although the report urges full employment as a priority, it is not a call to workers and youth to unite for such aims, but to enlightened government to promote them. Indeed the authors confess:

'There is no disputing, however, that Europe and the rest of the industrialised world face a period of economic difficulty which, even with the most skilfully designed policies, will not be resolved in the short term.'

'For better or worse, we have to face the reality that for some time to come, racist and far right groups will have a favourable environment in which to operate, so...'

So on to the various palliative and anti-racist policies which might be pursued through education etc.

That the crisis of capitalism is not seen as other than a favourable environment for fascists is because these reformists honestly remain part of capitalism. Its crisis is theirs.

They can neither see nor offer any alternative.

Blaming the working class for racialism is a way for middle class liberals and reformist bureaucrats to find scapegoats for their own bankruptcy.

At least the European 'Socialist' MEPs' report is better than the late GLC's moralising posters however. It does see some of the links between racism and social crisis.

To say 'Never Again' to Nazism requires an informed fight against all racism and fascism, and a struggle for socialist leadership.

The European MPs' report is a useful contribution to the former. Andrew Bell's booklet should be widely available and read.

● Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the Labour Group of MEPs, c/o 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1.

## Aids and the moral policemen

**AIDS: A Guide to Survival. By Peter Tatchell. Gay Men's Press, £3.50.**

associated with AIDS.

Tatchell himself points out the negative implications of being proved anti-body positive, but claims that the dangers arising from being tested are less important than adopting a positive attitude.

Some of the risks mentioned include being sacked from your job, evicted from your home, and ostracised by your family and friends!

Just try to feel positive through all that!

The other weakness which underlies the previous one is that the emphasis on coping is placed with the person with AIDS and not on society as a whole.

Government and media reactions are only raised on page 95 of this short book.

While Tatchell correctly criticises government and

media, one for inaction and the other for over-reaction, he does not emphasise a campaign for a prevention or cure but sees the responsibility lying with the individual to change their lifestyle.

In common with the main AIDS charity, the Terence Higgins Trust, Tatchell calls on those at risk to engage in 'safe' rather than 'dangerous' sex.

One example of what is considered safe sex is hugging!

No-one, with the exception of the ultra-right, would suggest the way to stop sexually transmitted diseases is to change sexual behaviour.

Surely the answer is to have cures and preventions available that are both free and effective.

Only in 1967 in England and 1981 in Scotland was sex between males decriminalised (provided you are at least five years over the age of consent for straights) and now the self-appointed consciences of the gay community are telling us to limit our sexual behaviour.

The idea is to prove to the bigots that the nice little middle class gays with mort-

gages, two cats and a car are respectable, discreet and willing to react to 'god's wrath' by changing their behaviour.

Most AIDS charities are fighting to get government money and he who pays the piper always calls the tune.

These AIDS charities are in danger of becoming the moral policemen of the gay community and doing the job of Thatcher's reactionary government.

To sum up, on a personal level, for those at risk from AIDS and those who want to know the risks and the medical facts of this disease, this book is the best that is available and is highly recommended.

No other book is as up-to-date and most importantly as clear and honest to non-medical people.

It will also be seen, rightly or wrongly, as a reflection of the attitudes of gay people to the AIDS crisis.

As a document for public reading on AIDS it reflects the enormous self-oppression of gay people and the depths that some elements in the gay movement have fallen to in the face of the AIDS threat.

Brian Dempsey

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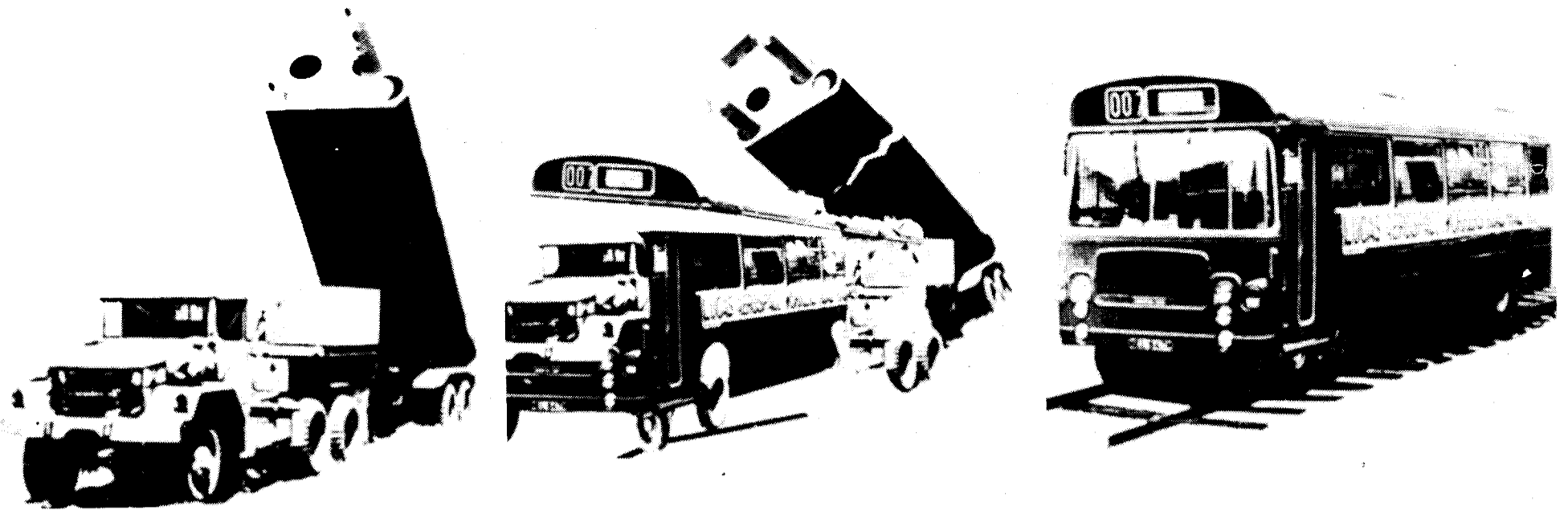
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# REVIEWS



## The future of Defence industries

# Alternatives — or an international plan?

About Turn. Text by Bill Evans. Photomontage by Peter Kennard. Pluto Press, £2.95.

ABOUT TURN is an attractively produced book that is a mixture of easy-to-digest arguments and facts interspersed with some very effective photomontage from Peter Kennard.

The central theme is that job security in defence industries is threatened for a number of reasons.

There is the recent cut-back in the Defence budget, the increasingly capital-intensive nature of defence technologies, and the politically sensitive nature of some defence programmes which can lead to their cancellation, for example Trident.

The workers in these industries should therefore prepare Conversion Plans, that is, ways in which their skills and the technological resources of their industry can be used to produce socially useful products for which there will be guaranteed markets and therefore jobs.

This is of course an attempt to generalise from the well-known Lucas Combine shop stewards Alternative Corporate Plan.

The book provides a succinct summary of their ideas.

To support this proposal they marshal a number of arguments which have an underlying *leit-motif* close to social patriotism.

For instance, the Tories are undermining Britain's economic competitiveness by excessive defence spending.

The authors point out that the strongest post-war capitalist economies are those that have the smallest Defence budgets.

West Germany and Japan spend only 9 per cent and 2 per cent respectively of their total research and development (R&D) budgets on de-

fence, whereas Britain spends over 50 per cent.

So presumably, the book is arguing that the Tories are acting against Britain's interest and therefore are unpatriotic.

They also attack the 'spin-off' myth, that is, the idea that Defence R&D creates technologies with useful by-products for the non-defence economy.

Again the evidence from West Germany and Japan can be used in this connection.

The authors are at pains to point out that they are not against defence spending as such but rather against the 'excessive' amount in Britain.

There are also echoes of the Brandt Report.

A cut-back of 4-5 per cent in the global military budget would double the funds available for development.

### Report

In fact the spirit of the Brandt Report is present throughout.

How irrational not to say stupid to spend so much on arms and defence if this will actually undermine the economic system they are supposed to be defending!

The Arms Conversion programme will thus help to stabilise the economic system.

At this point one begins to speculate about the possibility of disingenuousness on the authors' part.

The book has been published by Pluto Press in association with the Greater London (Livingstone) Council's Conversion Unit.

Taking it at its face value, it does not attempt to answer any of the questions that would occur to Marxists.

It does not attempt to suggest what are the historical

determinants of the present grotesque distortion of the productive processes on the planet; whether there is a hidden or not so hidden agenda for the imperialist 'Defence' programme.

Precisely why has the global military budget risen by 30 per cent in real terms in this decade?

Why have the leading capitalist powers decided not to accept the logic and rationality of the Brandt Report?

Surely it is in their own long-term interest to spend some of the money at present being used for defence on financing the transfer of development technology to the underdeveloped countries and so build up potential markets for their other products?

No answers to these questions are to be found in this book.

However to be fair it is obviously intended as a propaganda weapon for the Arms Conversion strategy, rather than a comprehensive analysis of capitalist imperialism in the epoch of its decay.

It is clearly intended to have a very broad political appeal, from sensible Heathite Tories to left-wing Labourites, taking in Euro-Stalinists on the way no doubt.

The basic assumption is therefore that the capitalist system can be tamed, diverted away from its tendencies towards wars of destruction.

It appeals to workers' and capitalists' self-interest and particularly attempts to convince workers that a sane arms conversion programme can be implemented if only reason and common-sense prevail.

From the point of view of revolutionary Marxism this is dangerous and misleading nonsense.

The book is both ahistorical and parochial in its stance to boot.

Ahistorical in that it ignores the whole bloody history of this century alone in which capitalism has 'renewed' itself through global wars of immense destruction both of material capital and human labour power.

It is parochial in that it appeals to British workers to solve their own problems of mass unemployment, British solutions to British problems.

Revolutionary Marxism starts of course from the opposite point of view.

It sees destructive war as of the essence of capitalism's search for solutions to the instabilities of its anarchic, competitive system.

It starts also from the assumption that, in the epoch of imperialism, there are no national solutions to national economic problems.

There can be no solution to Britain's problems that can be proposed separately from confronting the global, world-historic crisis of the productive forces in conflict

with the social relations of production.

Revolutionary Marxism seeks to bring forward programmatic demands that link the crisis of poverty, hunger, destitution and insuperable indebtedness of the Third World to that of the growing mass unemployment in the advanced capitalist countries.

It brings forward practical proposals to unite the interests of the workers and peasants of the imperialised world with those of the unemployed masses of the industrialised world.

Such demands would place no faith in capitalist corporations to convert from arms production to development technology for instance.

Rather it would demand

that the trade union leaders campaign for the funds to be made available to set up publicly-owned, worker-controlled enterprises to make such technology.

Of course such a plan may necessarily involve a reduction in defence spending to provide the funds.

Finally the authors appear to have learned no political lessons from the failure of the Lucas Plan.

In fact they are careful not to tread on any Labourite toes.

They do not attempt to explain why the 1974-79 Labour government failed to use its 'enabling state' power to force Lucas to accept the Plan.

But that would require a Marxist theory of the state.

Dave Pelman



Peter Kennard's photomontages illustrate what is meant by conversion plans — like the Lucas Aerospace Road-Rail bus (above) the shop stewards' plan proposed to replace arms manufacture

## SCOTS FIREMEN IN STRIKE ACTION

THE STRATHCLYDE firemen's campaign against cuts in manning levels culminated in strike action last week.

The Labour regional authority plans to axe 128 fire jobs.

The 2,000 Strathclyde men struck for one hour last Saturday night after Strathclyde region council leader

BY LYNN BEATON

Charles Gray and other officials turned down proposals from the Fire Brigades Union to cut costs without destroying jobs.

The council are insisting on their own package, which will mean fewer men attending fires in Strathclyde, which

has the highest number of fire deaths per head of population in Europe.

'We proposed a package saving money through loss of casual overtime payments and capitalisation of fire equipment; the region turned it down. We called the strike after a two to one majority ballot vote,' said Fire Brigades Union regional secretary Dave Patton.

# DEAN DUCKS FIGHT

## London leaders hand it to her on a plate

'SOGAT is financially crippled' says Brenda Dean, leader of the biggest print union involved in the Wapping dispute in a special edition of the union's monthly journal which has just been released.

At a mass meeting of over 2,000 of the sacked printers last Monday evening, November 10, called by Dean in central London, she said that the union was going to ballot the whole membership for a 58p levy.

The union journal says, 'The brutal truth is that the union is financially crippled and has no alternative but to seek a levy for six months on the entire membership.'

'What has happened is the the sequestration and legal costs which we have faced as a result of the News International (N.I.) dispute have slashed the total assets of the union in half.'

'Once again in the history of our union, our enemies

have attacked the very being of our union.'

Dean goes on to say in the statement, 'If Rupert Murdoch pursues us in the courts, as he can under the current state of the law, then he will bankrupt SOGAT.'

The meeting heard Dean

say that the eyes of the media and the membership were on this meeting, mainly because they wanted to see how many would turn up.

That way they could gauge how many might be taking the offer from Murdoch.

'I'm glad to see so many here tonight', she said, 'it's obvious that he won't get his 51 per cent.'

Most of what Dean had to say was to convince everyone that she was committed to the dispute and always had been and it was better

now that any argument that there may have been between us has now been healed; so let's get on with the boycott campaign and get the levy balloted.

Many members wanted to speak but it was the sight of a leading London member almost throwing himself at the feet of Dean, saying, 'Welcome back' that must have made many militants feel sick.

Some of the other print-workers that spoke wanted to know whether or not those members that took Murdoch's dirty money would be expelled. The feeling of the meeting seemed to be that they should.

Other speakers spoke angrily about Norman Willis, TUC General Secretary, and his statement in the Guardian last weekend, where he was saying the

sacked printers have no chance of an improved offer (from Murdoch) unless they publicly drop their demand for the removal of the electricians and TNT distribution drivers from Wapping.

Others who spoke said we should have nothing to do with Willis and the TUC.

Some speakers spoke in favour of the boycott campaign and the unions plan to hold boycott days in every branch of the union.

One speaker said we didn't need boycotts, what we needed was to hit his lorries.

A point was made by one of the printers that Fleet Street should be stopped for 24 hours if we are sincere in stopping Murdoch at Wapping.

Another made the point that we should have someone as ruthless for us as they have for them and that we

should stop making plans for the anniversary and make plans to win the dispute as soon as possible.

A leading London member jumped on the call for a 24 hour stoppage by saying that if we had done that then Murdoch's papers would be the only ones to appear.

Someone in the audience shouted, 'Not if we have 25,000 people there he won't!'

The meeting ended with the printers singing their favourite song at the moment, telling Rupert Murdoch to stick his money up his...

But most rank and file members came away knowing that Dean had not really said anything. The London leadership had fallen over themselves to give the dispute back to Dean and she accepted it with thanks.

## POLICE BAR LOCALS FROM KNOWSLEY MEETING

KIRBY residents were surprised and indignant last Friday night when they turned up for a 'public' meeting in the town — only to find that they were barred from entering.

One of those barred from the meeting — called by the Labour Party right-wing to drum up votes for their candidate in this week's by-election — was local Labour Party chairman Jimmy Maginley.

Liverpool area secretary of the National League for the Blind and Disabled, Jimmy Richardson from Northwood, who is also a Labour Party member, was physically prevented from going into the meeting by police — who did all the 'stewarding' for Kinnock's bloc.

Even local Kirby voters were barred. Entry was by ticket only and the ticket holders had been booked in from far and wide.

Contingents from Manchester, Newton-le-Willows, Halewood and Huyton were identified by a lobby outside — who had gathered after they had been refused entry.

Angry Labour Party members tore up their cards and joined in the chanting outside.

The blatant lack of any policies for the area has been shown up in this by-election to such an extent that the careerism of the candidates is thrown sharply into relief.

Against this background, the RCP have been campaigning vigorously and making, no doubt, some very valuable experiences.

The general feeling among the working class seems to be that, while they admire

BY JOHN OWEN AND FRANK FITZMAURICE

the comrades for the campaign they are waging and despite their opposition to the witch-hunt, a vote not cast for Labour is a vote wasted.

Meanwhile Labour Party activists in the area have set up 'Trade Unionists for Democracy in Knowsley North' which is an 'organisation of rank and file trade unionists fighting to raise funds to pay for legal costs incurred in the struggle for democracy.'

They have two aims: one is to help raise the money for the legal costs already incurred in their High Court action to try and stop a candidate being imposed on them (£14,000 to date).

The second is to get Labour Party and trade union branches to send resolutions to the NEC condemning the attack made on democracy in Knowsley North.

● Donations should be sent to:

Mrs I. Rowe, Treasurer, Trade Unionists for Democracy in Knowsley North, 12 Linslade Crescent, Northwood, Kirby, Merseyside.

## SE region 'Justice'

BY JOHN SIMMANCE

DELEGATES representing the Kent NUM, Women Against Pit Closures, miners' support groups and trade unionists met last Saturday at Hammersmith Town Hall to launch the South East Region of the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign.

Billy Etherington, National convenor, brought greetings from the Durham Mechanics, who are involved in one-day strike actions on a weekly basis to demand the reinstatement of miners.

He explained how the national campaign was launched just over twelve months ago at the Labour Party conference.

Since then, regional campaigns have been established in the north-west, Notts, the Midlands, Yorkshire, the north-east — and even in the south-west region.

He explained that the solidarity fund had nearly run out and that it was vital to raise money for the victimised men and their families.

He called on the TUC to write to every union to affiliate to the campaign.

Liz French (Kent Women Against Pit Closures) spoke of the plight of her husband, Terry, who, after he spoke at a fringe meeting at the TUC Congress, was moved back to Wandsworth prison.

After some pressure he has now been moved to a semi-open prison at Bexhill-on-Sea.

She said that the sacked Kent miners are being offered government employment schemes and that they are being put on a special list.

If they refuse these schemes, their dole money is stopped.

'We cannot wait for the Labour Party; it has now been three years since the campaign started and there is ter-

rific pressure on families.

'It is worse when you live in a mining community and you see your neighbours going to work at the pit.

'We must step up the campaign and put pressure on the Labour leaders to demand their release.'

Terry Harrison, the sacked NUM branch secretary, said, 'The miners are not on their own. At Silenight, Hangers and Wapping, the management, backed by the government, are doing the same thing to others.'

Paul Langton, from the Hammersmith and Fulham Miners' Amnesty Support Group, spoke on the way the campaign has developed since July, when the NUM set up its London office.

He said there had been problems in getting speakers on occasions.

'From this conference, we now hope to resolve that problem.'

He said that the centre of the campaign had been justice for the jailed and sacked miners but we are also in the fight against pit closures and the extermination of the UDM.

'In March 1987, we want to prepare a mass anniversary demonstration in London which we hope can be bigger than this year's. We intend to organise another "Heroes" concert — which was such a success this year.'

After a lengthy discussion, a committee of 14 was elected from the region.

What you can do:

1. Invite a victimised miner or a woman from the Women Against Pit Closures to speak at meetings, day time or evening. Contact the London miners office: 01-603 1831.

2. Affiliate to the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign, c/o Durham Mechanics, 26 The Avenue, Durham, DH1 4ED.



CROSSING THE TYNE BRIDGE as the march leaves Newcastle on its way to Frankland and Durham jails to demand the repatriation of Irish prisoners of war. See story, page 1