

Saturday January 24 1987 WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY £10,000 Special Fund

IN SO FAR: £8,546.86 TARGET: £10,000

The Workers Revolutionary Party urgently needs the last £1,500 of the Special Fund. International visits to Ireland, Europe, Australia and the Americas have cost a great deal. We agreed to spend £5,000 on international work. Already a large part of it has gone. We are sure you support this work politically but we need you to support it financially as well. We have been spending the fund — on the international work and moving the party offices and printing facilities.

Please keep the contributions coming in, large or small. We are aiming for 50 donations of £100 — to raise £5,000 — plus all smaller amounts!

Please send donations to: WRP, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

**BLOODY SUNDAY** COMMEMORATION

Sunday 25 January Speaker: John Noonan Assemble 2.30pm Creggan Shops Rally at Free Derry Corner DERRY

1pm Saturday 31 January Carlisle Street Rally at City Hall SHEFFIELD

# APPINGETTE

THE year-long dispute at Wapping has now reached a decisive stage.

For the last 12 months thousands of print workers have fought a daily battle against an army of specially equipped and trained police protecting Rupert Murdoch's Fortress Wapping.

The fight at Wapping is a continuation of the miners' strike.

● The same issue is at stake: the right of workers to belong to unions that can fight for their interests.

● The main enemy is unchanged: the Tory government and the capitalist state.

Over £14 million has been spent in this policing operation. This follows the £2,400 million deployed by the Tories in their efforts to smash the National Union of Minore such is the determined. Miners — such is the determination of the ruling class to break the independence and fighting capacity of workers.

The printers' willingness to struggle for their jobs and living standards is a tribute to the combativity of the entire working class.

Thousands of printworkers have rejected Murdoch's efforts to buy them off and force them out of the struggle.

Workers nearing retirement have spurned offers in excess of £20,000. Like the miners before them they have declared that their jobs and skills are not for sale.

Wapping gives the lie to those who have written off the working class in the aftermath of the miners' return to work.

While the printers have risked their homes, their

### **Play banned**

JIM ALLEN's controversial play about the wartime role of Hungarian Jews has been cancelled.

Despite full-house previews and good advance booking for its proposed five-week run, its director, Max Stafford-Clark felt obliged to take this last-minute decision because our determination to proceed with the production was out-weighed by the great distress it would cause to sections of the community'.

While expressing his highest regard for the author's integrity, Stafford-Clark has been forced to retreat in the face of a strong Zionist lobby. BY GEOFF PILLING

savings and possessions to defend the rights of the working class, the trade un-ion leaders have been in abject retreat.

From day one, the aim of these leaders was to break the fight at Wapping and force a settlement on Murdoch's terms.

Their cowardice is demonstrated by:

● The TUC's refusal to expel the scab EETPU.

• The acceptance in practice of Thatcher's anti-union laws.

Fleet Street Support Group leader Larry Hyett was dead right when he told a Lambeth rally last week:
'If we want to win this dispute we have to confront these laws.'

This has been the central question since the very first day of the fight at Wapping. The print unions SOGAT and the NGA have been involved in a political struggle against the Tory government. Only a leadership able to start from this fact and its implications could prepare the way for victory against Murdoch Murdoch.

Union leaders Brenda

Dean and Tony Dubbins have deliberately avoided the struggle to mobilise the whole of Fleet Street, the printers in Manchester and the rest of the country in united action against Mur-doch and the Tory govern-ment

They have hidden behind the 'Don't buy the 'Sun' slogan.

serious worker Every knows that this campaign, on its own, is utterly in-adequate and will never bring News International to

Dean and the SOGAT leadership will now use the rejection of the 58p levy as an excuse to try and wind down the struggle. What it in fact expressed was a lack of confidence by a section of the membership in their leaders leaders.

Many printers were not prepared to see what they believed would be 50p of this money go to the funds of their union when the leaders were in full retreat.

The same TUC that has washed its hands of the Wapping dispute has passively

watched unemployment riswatched themployment ris-ing monthly, industries being run into the ground by City sharks, the elderly kil-led this winter by Tory poli-cies and homelessness and poverty increasing across the country.

They have done nothing to lead even the slightest cam-paign in the working class against this destruction of jobs and living standards. In practice they have collaborated with the Tory govern-

The hour for real action in defence of the Wapping printers has struck.

They need all the financial support that can be raised throughout the movement. But industrial action by the rest of Fleet Street and printers in Manchester and elsewhere is imperative if the struggle is to be taken forward to victory.

Sackings have already started on Fleet Street and in Manchester where last week the 'Daily Mail' announced plans for big cuts in its labour force.

The fate of every printwor-ker now depends on the out-come of the Wapping struggle.

See 'Printers speak out' —



**Workers Revolutionary Party MANIFESTO** 

'A Programme for the Crisis' 50n

Available from: Workers Revolutionary Party, P.O. Box 735, London SW9 7QS. Cost 50p + 15p p&p.



TELECOM STRIKE BITES —

#### Workers Press

# Good for a few

THE GUINNESS scandal is only the latest, and certainly not the last, to hit the City of London.

Last January Guinness made a bid for the Scottish whisky firm Distillers. Guinness finally won in struggle with a rival bidder, the Argyll group. Guinness was successful in its £2.8 billion take-over because during the bid's critical period its share price mysteriously rose by a quarter. This greatly increased the value of its bid. It has now been revealed that the shares went up because of illegal share dealing.

One of the country's richest businessmen, Gerald Ronson, head of the Heron Corporation, last week admitted that he took part in illegal share transactions organised by Guinness to help it gain control of Distillers. He has repaid the £5 million 'success fee' paid by Guinness for his services. He also had an undertaking that Guinness would compensate him for any losses sustained due to changes in share prices in the take-over struggle.

This fee is equivalent to the money ten workers continually employed and on average wages could hope to earn throughout their lifetimes. Ronson's fee came out of a secret £25 million fund with which Guinness directors used to persuade a large number of international share dealers and investors to buy its shares. This is a breach of company law which forbids companies to provide financial assistance for the purchase of their own shares.

Ronson's disclosure follows the resignation of Guinness chairman and chief executive Ernest Saunders. The merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell also lost two of its leading figures last week. Chief executive and deputy chairman Christopher Reeves and head of corporate finance Graham Walsh left after an internal probe into the role of the bank during the take-over fight.

#### **Asset stripping**

The Guinness scandal comes immediately after the withdrawn bid by BTR for Pilkington Brothers. Secretary of State for Trade and Industry Paul Channon (a member of the Guinness family) had refused to refer the bid to the Monopolies Commission. Here was a crude case of asset stripping. BTR were interested in grabbing Pilkington's because of their considerable research and development budget. Workers in St Helens rightly feared that the take-over would bring savage job losses for the 5,000 employed by Pilkington's.

Labour's call for a strengthening of regulatory bodies in the City is as worthless as the rest of its policy. Who controls the so-called regulatory bodies? It is equivalent to James Anderton checking over the affairs of the Greater Manchester police.

There are currently four separate Department of Trade inquiries into activities in the Square Mile. Speculation is rife that Burton Group will be the next company visited by DTI officials. These investigations might not be completed for years and Channon — a prominent member of the Guinness family — has already hinted that they might not in any case be published.

The take-over mania is not simply the reflection of a few greedy individuals. It is symptomatic of a decadent capitalism in decay. In its heyday capitalism was able to build up industry. In its decline it is forced into the destruction of what it formerly created. No amount of regulation and reform, as Kinnock and company propose, can deal with this incurable system which condemns millions to unemployment, poverty and homelessness while allowing a handful of speculators to accumulate vast fortunes.

Only a socialist policy which aims to put an end to capitalism can reverse this soaring social crisis.

### FIGHT DEPORTATIONS!

#### **March backs Walter**

BY JOHN OWEN

ABOUT 150 people marched from the Carribbean Centre in Toxteth to the Immigration offices in Liverpool to protest at the attempt to deport Walter Yao last Saturday.

Watter, who has lived in this country for 15 years, went to visit his dying father in Ghana but was delayed there by his father's death and his own illness.

#### **Britain**

On his return to Britain he was asked for a visa from Ghana.

Walter spoke at a rally at the end of the march outside the Immigration Offices: 'I ask this government to show some compassion. I've been married for seven years, my



wife has lived here 27 years. I ask the Home Office to

Also speaking was Liz Drysdale from the Defence Committee. 'We must remember that the Labour Party brought these Immigration laws in and the Tories only strengthened them.'

• For further information contact Linda Patterson, CRC Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, Tel: 051-709 6858.

#### **Family fears death**

BY JOSIE BARRIE

RAHIM Mashadimirza, his wife Djamileh and their twoyear-old son Ronad are under threat of deportation to Iran.

The family came to Britain in November 1985. Since then a friend and leading opponent of the Ayatollah Khomeiny regime whom they sheltered for eight months in Tehran, has been imprisoned and tortured.

If they return to Iran they fear the penalty for harbouring opponents of Khomeiny would be death without trial.

The Home Office has turned down their application for political asylum, but considerable public pressure and new evidence have forced the Home Office to agree to reconsider the case.

The new evidence includes a letter from Amnesty Inter-



national and a letter from leading expert Dr. Roger Owen, Director of St. Anthony's College Middle East Centre, Oxford, substantiating the family's fear of return to Iran.

● The Mashadimirza Family Support Campaign (MFSC) meets every Tuesday, 7p.m. at South Manchester Law Centre.

### Silentnight Keep Fighting

BY MARTIN RALPH

SUPPORT is already building up in the labour movement for the Silentnight strikers in disgust at their treatment by the Furniture Timber and Allied Trade Union (FTAT) leadership.

Nottingham and Stockport Trades Council have written to FTAT expressing their opposition and have also called on the TUC to support the strikers.

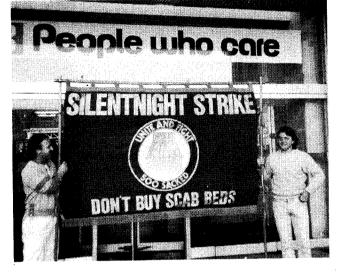
The appeal against FTAT's general executive council decision is continuing.

The union has declared the dispute unofficial. In the January issue of the Record (FTAT's paper) they go even further.

They say 'GEC by unanimous decision have terminated the strike'. The implication is obviously the strike is over.

According to Terry Bennett, one of the Silentnight strike leaders, at last year's TUC conference the FTAT retiring general secretary, Ben Rubner, castigated the Co-Op for not banning the sale of Silent Night beds.

Terry said 'The FTAT



leadership by turning their back on the strikers are going further than the Co-Op. Are they saying the public should now buy Silentnight products?

The leadership are desperately trying to sell out the strike.

At the same time as trying to force a section of its membership out of a struggle for their jobs, the union is busy with a recruitment drive.

We await to see if the executive council is willing to recruit scabs. It was reported before Christmas in the Financial Times that one reason FTAT withdrew sup-

port was that they wished to take the seat of the national executive panel which represents various interests in the industry.

The chairman of the panel is none other than Tom Clarke, the chairman of Silentnight.

It is increasingly obvious that the drive to keep the working class in order as the basis for Kinnock's election campaign is the real political reason.

The so-called 'new realism' therefore makes use of all opportunist trends within

cure this aim.

In the Lancashire Evening Telegraph on January 15 John Lee, Junior Employment Minister and MP for Pendle, wrote about unemployment and industrial decline. He said 'Let's start boasting of our successes and what we have going for us in the north-west.' He then mentioned certain industries and added 'in Pendle we have...an excellent recovery from Silentnight'.

In the same issue Jack Straw Labour MP for Blackburn omits to mention the Silentnight strike once. He does make great play of 'top priority to the region'.

Yet the industrial aid for the north-west he is talking about already exists. The Tory financial aid is aimed at keeping wages down and unions out of firms such as can be found in Pendle's two enterprise zones. On this point Straw says nothing.

In February Kinnock will be launching Labour's election campaign. He is scheduled to meet Labour councillors in Leeds.

Essentially the message will be: keep your heads low and make sure that everyone else does. As the Silentnight dispute shows, to try and keep the struggle of the working class within the confines of the interest and outlook of the reformist and Stalinist trade union leadership is to restrict the fight against the Tories.

## BBC bans defence exposure

THE existence of a secret £500 million defence project is being kept secret from parliament. Its exposure in a BBC programme has been banned by Director-General Alasdair Milne.

Suspicion grew last week that the ban was made under government pressure. Sir Clive Whitmore, permanent secretary to the Minister of Defence, was aware of the programme, along with a number of senior Tory MPs.

Milne claims the ban was imposed because the film 'could represent a breach of national security.'

The journalist Duncan Campbell rejects this claim. Campbell arranged for a showing in the House of Commons on Thursday last week.

Labour MP Robert Sheldon, chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, says that parliament has been deceived. All projects over £200 million should be disclosed in the Public Accounts. This item was missing.

But Sir Gordon Downey, the Comptroller and Auditor-General denied Sheldon's claim. He said Sheldon had been told of the secret project on condition that he kept the information to himself.

A previous chairman of the same committee, Lord Barnett, a former Labour MP, pulled out of an interview when he became BBC vice-chairman.

The ban came after the BBC's assistant director general, Alan Prothero, had given the go-ahead for the fim, one in a six part series, 'The Open Society'.

### **Leicester Labour crisis**

A CRISIS is threatening Leicester City District Labour Party following a vote to defy the party's ruling National Executive Committee.

It follows a row over the re-selection of City Council leader Peter Soulsby to fight Spinney Hill Ward in the May council elections.

Ward opponents of Soulsby and his fellow candidate Rashid Owen Almura, attempted to quosh a vote by secret ballot which selected them.

Senior NEC officers decided the opponents had acted illegally and stated the two nominations stood.

But after a close vote last week, a meeting of the district party decided to disregard the NEC and go ahead with a new selection meeting this Friday — a move which has further split local party members.

Only 25 delegates were present at the district meeting out of a possible 69 and they voted by just 13 to 12 to defy the NEC.

In a new move by supporters of Soulsby, about 65 local party members have sent a petition to the NEC supporting him and complaining of alleged intimidation by his opponents.

Secretary of the district party Paul Gosling said: 'We have received reports that irregularities occurred in the selections at Spinney Hill and we are seeking to resolve matters in the near future in conjunction with the NEC.'

### Spanish veteran expelled

FORMER assistant general secretary of the Communist Party Bill Alexander is no longer a member of the Party. He is one of 21 members of the Sydenham branch of the party effectively expelled by the 'Eurocommunist' executive.

Alexander, a commander of the British batallion of the International Brigade in

Spain 50 years ago, has been informed by letter that the executive regards him as a 'former member'.

The decision ten days ago was based on the refusal of the Sydenham, Kent, branch to accept suspension. No charges have been laid against Alexander and he will have no right to appeal to the party congress at its November session.

THATCHER'S

**BRITAIN** 

### Telecom strike bites

WIDESPREAD stoppages by British Telecom engineers last week hit services throughout the country as 95,000 workers came out in support of their wage claim and defence of working con-

BT management have offered a 5-per-cent pay increase, tied to worse working conditions. The National Communications Union (NCU) has demanded a 10-per-cent no-strings rise.

The action has hit business communications throughout the country and there are plans to spread the action to hit the ma-jor world financial centres. Some BBC and Independent Television News video links were disrupted

If the action continues it will hit state information and communication services directly. Switchboards at Thames Valley police stations in Oxford and Aylesbury were last Wednesday able to receive only 999 calls.

SEVEN thousand engineers in Wales came out on Wednesday in a one day stoppage affecting all parts of the region.

This followed the demand of the South Wales district committee of the union for an indefinite national strike.

On Monday engineers were suspended at three depots for refusing to work overtime. In the Merthyr Tydfil depot ten workers were sent home. The branch decided immediately on a 24-hour walk-out.

There were walk-outs at other depots where men had been sus-

On returning to work the fol-lowing day the Merthyr engineers were asked to sign declarations that they would work as instructed.

They refused because this would have meant going against the National Communication Union's national action. The engineers called other areas to support them with a one-day action.

The clerical section of BT South Wales have voted unanimously to walk out if members are suspended. They have also voted not to cross engineers' picket lines.

PHIL HOLT, Merseyside chairman of the BT union committee spoke to Workers Press.

This morning (Wednesday) our members reported to work and all of them were asked to sign a form saying they would work as directed by the man-agement,' which means to be at their beck and call 24 hours a

No union would accept this our lads refused. They were all locked out. The management even locked the emergency services men out.

It's a unique situation: even the full time union officials are locked out of their offices.

The men are picketing all the main exchanges in the Liver-pool area. We've got a system of

#### **City solid**

BY DANNY CHAPMAN

IN LONDON the strike is very solid. London City Internal District is still out indefinitely.

A mass meeting on Tuesday agreed to stay out indefinitely whether management sent anyone home or not, because of management tactics to pick on the weak branches.

We are a strong branch, and they wouldn't have sent anyone home from our branch.

In the Midlands, members have

flying pickets out, telling the men on the gates what is going

The main driving force of the dispute was the strings that were attached to the pay claims. These strings include longer hours, total flexibility of labour, serious erosion of promotion prospects, and they are now even trying to force us to work overtime.

In a place like Liverpool this is disgraceful where there is mass unemployment.

been sent home until they sign agreements to work normally as instructed, which includes Saturday working.

We decided to stay out until those people are reinstated, and also until management with-draws the threat to the day off. We will be picketing Thursday, once the 24-hour strike is over.

Those who go in we expect will be asked to sign letters. The mood amongst the members is very militant and insistent that the leadership must take a stron-

A proposition to come out indefinitely was put in the Long Distance Faraday branch, but the chairman would not take it.

### **Successor to YTS**

BY HUGHIE NICOL

YOUTH are to be slashed from the unemployment register in new Tory plans to raise a conscript army of cheap labour.

All previous schemes, such as YTS, Restart and Community Programmes, will become secondary or obsolete once the new Job Training Scheme comes into operation.

As in the past, the Tory gov-ernment is trying out pilot schemes in selected areas to iron out problems before going national. The JTS will be compulsory for all unemployed peo-ple aged between 18 and 25.

They will receive no training allowance and will only be paid DHSS flat rate supplementary benefit.

 The youth will receive onthe-job training or work place-

The MSC boasts: 'When this scheme is developed it will be more important than all the other schemes combined'.

The plans are so outrageous that already in the north-east one trade union, the lecturers' union NATFHE, has refused to co-operate in a pilot scheme at Billingham on Teeside.

DR RINA Venter, MP for the ruling South African National

Party, on a two-week trip to the UK paid for by the British government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has had

seven engagements cancelled

Protests by the Newcastle Anti Apartheid Movement

forced local businessmen and

voluntary organisations to give Dr Venter a wide berth.

massive Eldon Square shopping

centre, withdrew its invitation

after hearing reports of possible

manager, in order to avoid a politically motivated incident,

said it was thought better if 'the

Peter Rorstadt, chief execu-

tive of the North East Council on Addictions, confirmed the

council had cancelled Dr Ven-

ter's planned visit to the Mosley

Street offices after an executive

He said there was concern

expressed about the implica-

tions of apartheid and it was decided it would not be

appropriate for us to take part.'

Gordon Allanson, the centre's

AAM protests.

lady did not come'

committee meeting.

Management of Newcastle's

on Tyneside this week.

Tyneside oppose apartheid

Once youth are placed within the JTS they will automatically come off the unemployment register. They will also be disqualified from further placements on Community Programma sahamas me schemes.

The time spent on JTS schemes will not be considered

The JTS will compete with and push aside YTS and Com-munity Programmes as em-ployers are offered a free and mature workforce rather than the 16- and 17-year-olds they get under present schemes.

By collaborating in these schemes the TUC and local un-

NORTHERN Region TUC has threatened to pull out of involvement in Manpower Services Commission schemes unless the unions get guarantees that all MSC programmes will be voluntary and that the unemployed will not be penalised for refusing to take part. The region is asking the national TUC to support this move if its objections are not met.

TUC regional secretary Bob Howard said he was concerned at reports of DHSS threats to stop benefits to unemployed people not willing to take up MSC places. 'We are worried that the government is the MSC as a political tool to get unemployment below the

magic 3 million mark before the next election,' he said.

"Instead of addressing the real problems, they have been trying to move people around into different categories. Even the moderates in the TUC are now saying enough is enough."

as unemployment and will not be calculated for claiming longterm benefits at a later date. The present pilot schemes of six months will of course be extended to cover years, months, as was the YTS.

Trade unionists on area man-power boards in the north-east have voiced their concern at the way these schemes are being pushed through.

In their open letter to Dr Venter, the Newcastle Anti Apartheid Movement made it clear

that the proposed visit at the invitation of the Foreign Office was 'particularly abhorrent' to

Mr Jeremy Beecham, leader of Newcasle's City Council, has made it clear he intends ignor-

She is due to join up with with

another South African MP, Albert Northangel whose pre-sence here is also being paid for by the Tories, for a three-day visit to Westminster, where they will attend a meeting of the

Commons Foreign Affairs Com-

ing Venter's visit too.

ion leaders have become apologists for the government.

No guarantees or temporary concessions by the MSC will mask these attacks on the unemployed, particularly the young unemployed.

The Northern Region TUC decision is the first major challenge to Tory cheap labour plans. It should be supported and taken up throughout the country.

#### A resolution passed by the AEU Crawley Branch is to be sent to

6This Crawley Branch having regard to the necessity of holding collections for the trade unionists involved in the News International dispute severely condemn our EC for not calling for the expulsion from the TUC of the EETPU, whose treachery has resulted in not only the fact that the strike arose, but also the unnecessary lengthening of it. We further call on our EC to arrange a levy on all our members including full-time officials to enable our brothers in the AEU involved at Wapping to receive the continuation of their dispute benefit after January 24 1987.

#### **Shipyard strike**

AUSTIN and Pickersgill's entire workforce in Sunderland took strike action again last week in protest at washing and toilet faci-lities at the Palmers Hill outfitting

A mass meeting of men at the main yard voted unanimously to walk out until facilities are im-

#### **MARXIST** DISCUSSION **GROUP**

**Bryant Street Methodist Centre** Bryant Street, off West Ham Lane

Nearest Underground Stratford Sunday February 1, 7.30pm TROTSKYISM AND

VIETNAM Speaker: Simon Pirani

#### **God at the Home Office**

**BY JEFF JACKSON** 

GREATER Manchester's Chief Constable (it no longer seems necessary to mention him by name!) has been called in by the Home Office to 'explain'.

Following his latest outburst, on a religious radio programme at the weekend, Anderton found himself carpeted last Thursday.

The outcome of this 'particularly unusual' private meeting with Sir Lawrence Byford, Her Majesty's Inspector of Consta-bulary, seemed almost certain



ANDERTON in less God-like days

to be a call for Anderton's resignation. Especially as a group of his severest critics on the Greater Manchester police authority were be meeting beforehand.

The Stalker affair, the paramilitary-style Moors operation, his Aids speech and his subsequent justification for these rantings that he was in touch with the Almighty, have brought a barrage of disapprov-al from many of his former Tory friends and establishment supporters.

What lies behind this falling out is not, of course, Anderton's mystical claims but his failure to deal with the increasing local crime rate together with questions concerning his social life. (It would appear that many of the controversial matters arising out of the Stalker inquiry may shortly be backfiring on Anderton himself.)

## COOK-CHILL food preparation, now being intro-

duced in hospitals, schools, local authority can-teens, and restaurants, increases risks of food poisoning and reduces the nutritional quality of food, reports the London Food Commission.

Cook-chill meals are cooked at a single location and rapidly chilled. Meals are stored for up to five days and then distributed to multiple locations, where they are rapidly reheated for service to customers.

The system is being introduced into hospitals, whose managements are under pressure to renovate old, unhygienic kitchens while at the same time cutting costs.

'The Big Chill', author Julie Sheppard said: 'Reheating cooked food is always a risky business. Under cook-chill everyone has to be especially vigilant about temperature control and good food hygiene.'

Cook-chill and lengthy storage impairs nutrients. Vitamin C is most adversely affected, with losses of between 30 and 90 per cent compared with freshly cooked meals.

Cook-chill also results in job losses, changed working hours, reduction in pay, and de-skilling.

A 'feasibility study' on introducing the Youth Training Scheme into the health service has been announced by the Tories. They see it as a way of recruiting more nurses.

National Union of Public Employees national secretary Bob Jones has condemned the propos-al, pointing out that care of patients would be bound to deteriorate.

Possibly toning down its earlier objections—it said the last thing it wanted was to see entry standards for nursing lowered—the Royal College of Nursing now says it will watch the study with care.

SUPPORT is growing in the Tory Party for privatised prisons. Members of the Tory Manifesto group want this proposal included in the general election manifesto.

Manifesto member John Wheeler — a former prison governor — was greatly impressed by private prisons when he visited the USA recently. He believes private investment could deal with prison overcrowing and unhygenic condi-tions without putting an extra burden on taxa-

The Home Office Select Committee has already begun to investigate the proposal by visiting private jails in America.

Britain has not seen private prisons since the eighteenth century. John Howard, who campaigned for their abolition, gave his name to the Howard League for Penal Reform which last week published a report pointing out that private prisons would mean worse conditions and lower standards, administered by managements con-cerned only with the pursuit of profit who would not be publicly accountable.

MUSEUM charges have serious consequences for education, says the National Union of Teachers (NUT). If families are dissuaded from taking their children to visit museums a whole generation of museum visitors may be lost.

Despite clear evidence that entrance charges deter visitors, the government is determined to pursue cutbacks in arts spending at the expense of cultural access for the less advantaged.

The Natural History Museum, a perennial favourite with schoolchidren, is planning to introduce charges from April in spite of an anticipated fall of 40 per cent in the number of visitors.

Says NUT general secretary Fred Jarvis: 'It is a pity that the Prime Minister's known fondness for Victorian values does not extend to our national heritage. It was the Victorians who founded and endowed many of our greatest museums and galleries and ensured that the British public had free access to them.'

INADEQUATE funding is hitting primary schools severely, says an article in the current issue of 'Primary Focus'. A survey of 250 schools has shown that two teachers in three identify lack of funds as one of the three chief factors preventing adequate education.

READERS in the north will be pleased to hear from Thatcher that many parts of their areas are

'The road systems are excellent . pitals are excellent, in many places the airports are excellent, the railways are running,' Thatcher reassured the House of Commons last

. . .

ANOTHER leak at Sellafield this week. Twelve men are being tested for radioactive contamination after a leak in a department making fuel rods for the prototype fast breeder reactor at Dounreay in Scotland.

This was the first accident at the plant since the extremely critical Health and Safety Executive audit last December.

The 12 will have to undergo biological tests that could take up to a year

### HEALTH SERVICE CRISIS

### Labourites began cuts!

FIVE major hospital closures, ambulance services slashed, soaring waiting lists, and hundreds of beds lost.

This summarises the London Health Emergency's third major survey on the health cuts in the

BY SANDRA PENN

bed numbers by 40 per cent.

for Women closed in 1984.

This was the only hospital of its kind, staffed and run

completely by women for

After a long fight to keep it

open — including an occupa-tion — it now stands, empty

and boarded up, a stark monument to Thatcher's

I gave birth to my first

child at the South London Hospital in 1983. It was a small, personal and friendly hospital.

**Factory** 

For my second child I was

forced to trek to the massive

St George's Hospital complex in Tooting, a sprawling factory' hospital where nurses in the maternity ward complained of the high tur-

nover of patients and the consequent impersonal na-

Mothers complained that they felt they were being processed rather than tre-

St George's, enlarged to supposedly shoulder the work load caused by clo-

sures for miles around, is not

serviced well by public

For the sick and elderly

this means a long and diffi-

cult journey to keep appointments. On arrival, the sheer

ture of their work.

ated.

transport.

The South London Hospital

'This is a catalogue of disasters indicating another winter of despair for the thousands of patients who have been waiting months and years for hospital treatment,' said John Lister for the

'While other health regions have suffered from inadequate increases in spending, London's 30 health districts have suffered actual cuts year after year with more to

In Wandsworth, where I live, the District Health Authority has resorted to the biggest single closure yet planned in London: shutting down St James', Balham, a busy general hospital, together with its accident and emergency departments.

This would directly axe 1,000 jobs and at least 203 acute beds by 1992.

But even this brutal £5 million cut in service does not anywhere near the £10 million annual saving called for by the South West Thames region.

The closure of St James's could be followed by further closures to balance the

In recent years no less than 660 beds and five major hospital have closed in Wandsworth alone, reducing

#### **Robbing Peter** to pay Paul

LONDON hospitals have closed three quarters of the beds which they are sup-posed to lose by 1993 — but they have still achieved only a third of their target saving.

The planned re-allocation process whereby cuts in central London would mean more resources for the outer areas has reduced facilities for patients in inner London without releasing substantial sums for the other areas, reports the King's Fund Centre on behalf of the chairmen of the 12 Health Districts in Inner London.

The number of patients being treated is rising, not falling as the planners pre-dicted. Waiting lists and waiting times for out-patient appointments get longer. Community services for the mentally ill are threatened by the cuts.

The implications of the report are grim. Are the full cuts to be made by cutting twice as many beds as originally planned? Or is the money which was to go to the outer London areas going to stay in central London?

The resource allocation process was based on false assumptions. London was not over-provided with health care.

London's teaching hospitals have a special role, and train a third of he country's doctors. Its ageing population has a rising demand for medical attention.

The need was for extra funding for the whole country. Instead the government spread the illusion that shortages in East Anglia or Newcastle were being caused by the rich south east which had too large a slice of the cake.

size of the place means that there is an additional leng-thy trek around the hospital to reach departments like out-patients.

Wandsworth's district general manager, Enid Vincent, a keen advocate of clo-sures, informed the October 1985 DHA meeting that: 'The only way to improve services is to run them down to such a low level that no one will use them, and people will go elsewhere.

Since 1980 London has seen 32 hospitals closed, three partially closed, 21 approved for closure and a further five approved for partial closure 7,767 hospital beds lost and not replaced.

In my area the whole pro-cess was started under a Labour government with the closure of the Wear, a maternity hospital, and then the Tories continued the process with the closure of St Benedict's, a geriatric hospital which was also occu-pied by the staff who were supported by the com-

Although determined campaigns have deferred clo-sures in a few cases, the lack of support, from both union leadership and the Labour opposition, has meant that closure ultimately remains on the cards.

The pleasant grounds of St Benedict's are now being en-joyed by the owners of the luxury houses built after its

After waiting months for appointments, patients are faced with long delays at the hospital. Shortages of qualified nursing staff and tightly packed appointment lists make consultation and outpatients' departments dens of utter misery,

But for the working class there is nowhere else to go

Private medical care is extremely expensive and well beyond the reach of most families. The Tories' consistent attacks on the health service must be fought, and demand for services to be restored whatever the next government

• 'Hitting the Skids' is published by London Health Emergency at £3 including p&p, telephone 01-833 3020.

#### Labour peer sides with drug barons

A FIERCE battle over the lucrative NHS drugs monopoly has been joined by a Labour peer — on the side of the drug companies. The idea of ennobling former Labour MPs was said to be so they could do battle with the living dead on the Tory benches but somebody forgot to tell this to Lord Northfield, formerly Donald Chapman MP. When a Bill went through the House of Lords last week

stopping the NHS from buying cheap versions of such drugs as Tagamet and Zantac, two anti-ulcer drugs which alone cost the NHS £70 million a year, his Lordship sailed in on side of the drug monopolies.

Other Labour peers were a little embarrassed by his forthright approach but honest Don, a paid 'adviser' to the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries, which represents the drugs industry, is said to be confident that Neil Kinnock would not dare to move his expulsion from the Party for simply doing his job.

#### **Prescriptions** to go up?

A SECRET government plan to increase prescription charges after the next general election has been exposed by the National Union of Public Employees.

West Midlands Divisional Officer John Dempsey said the plan was 'buried' in the government White Paper on future public expenditure.

'In the financial year 1987/88, revenue from prescription charges is assessed at increasing by 2 per cent. But for 1988/89 this jumps to 8 per cent — a clear indication of plans to increase charges after the election.'

Meanwhile a survey of Health Authorities in the West Midlands shows that a shortage of beds regularly restricts hospital admissions for medical, acute and gynaecological patients.

East Birmingham, Dud-ley, Walsall and Wol-verhampton Health Author-ities have all refused hospital admissions to patients on the waiting list due to acute bed shortages while the Birmingham Children's Hospital plans to close 30 beds.

Government funding for District Health Authorities, presently in real terms at a standstill, is also due to be cut to 0.4 per cent after the

#### **Cuts mean Charity**

LIFE-SAVING intensive care equipment at Leicester Royal Infirmary has been bought with charity money because of a shortage of Health Service funds.

About £300,000 was taken from a trust fund to replace monitoring equipment which was unreliable and obsolete.

Senior Consultant Dr. Michael Pepperman said: We had already gone beyond the knife edge and this money had to be spent. We were on the verge of closing beds and theatres had we not had approval for the money.

'This hospital is one of the most efficiently run in the country. The Health Author-ity works as efficiently as it can in providing the money but in the end there just isn't enough.

The Infirmary been using monitoring machines loaned by a company because equipment was not working properly. Now 27 new machines have been delivered to replace the existing eight-year-old electronic equipment.

Dr. Pepperman also warned that the problem was only the tip of the iceberg. Equipment all over the hospital needs replacing and there just isn't the

#### REPUBLICAN **PRISONERS** OF WAR

LONG LARTIN

HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sent-

EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year

sentence, 132016. JOHN McCOMB: 17-year sentence B51715.

ANDY MUI RYAN: 20-year sentence

461576. PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence

PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence.

PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence

69204. PETER SHERRY: Life sentence

WAKEFIELD WAREFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W
Yorks. WF2 9AG
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence,

HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, BILLY GRIMES: SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence,

758661 SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd,
Market Harborough, Leics, LE16

7RP
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sent ence, 463799. STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence

758663. JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside,

Durham WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sent-BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence

PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence.

EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence. LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence

B26380.
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence B75881

WORMWOOD SCRUBS
HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane
Road, London W12 0AE
DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.
LIVERPOOL

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence

WANDSWORTH VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence,

DURHAM

HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham: MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sent ence. D25134 ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence

**REMAND PRISONERS:** 

BRIXTON
HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton,
London SW2 5XF. MICHAEL J McKENNEY: L46486
G. (DANNY) McNAMEE: L48616
WORMWOOD SCRUBS

AM OUINN: L49930 INNOCENT MEN AND

WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE: CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719. HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison

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

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

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British



DOZENS of elderly people died during the recent cold spell because the government ignored advice from the World Meterology Organisation

The Thatcher government has refused to follow WMO advice in 1979 that Britain set up a national climate research programme.

'Social and Economic Responses to Climatic Variabil-

ity in the UK' was a report funded by the National Environment Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council.

Nick Read, joint author of the Report said: 'We knew that bad weather was on its way last week but waited until it had taken a grip before announcing that pensioners could receive their cold weather heating payments."

Read points out the government should have been well aware of what was happening: since 1960, there have been ten winters severe enough to cause £100 million damage or

 The cold weather is getting the blame for fractured water mains that have left thousands of families without water, filling buckets from

emergency standpipes which sprouted through the snow at the edges of the estates. The truth is that neither Bri-

tain's water mains — nor the water and central heating pipes in the council flats have had any systematic re-pair or replacement work for years. Each cold winter seems worse than the last because each winter the pipes are another year older.

### **BLOODY SUNDAY MASSACRE**

BY SARAH HANNIGAN

IT IS now 15 years since ireland — and the world was shocked by the savagery of the British Army of Occupation in the Six Counties, when 13 innocent men and boys were gunned down in cold blood by members of the Paratroop Regiment.

**Bloody Sunday, on January** 30 1972, will be commemorated in Derry this weekend as it has been every year since that atrocity with a demonstration from Creggan to Bogside along the routes of the parade on which the soldiers opened fire that fateful day.

It has long been recognised that instead of inflicting defeat and pessimism on Republican forces in the north of Ireland, the army's cold-blooded slaughter of inno-cent civilians did exactly the opposite.

It led to a new generation of young people joining the Provisional IRA and the Irish National Liberation Army, who recognised there would be no peaceful solution in Ireland as long as the British army remained in occupation.

Next week, Workers Press will publish a feature on Bloody Sunday and will report on the fifteenth anniversary commemora-

Right: HUGH GILMORE receives the last rites



'IT'S outrageous', said Alastair Logan, solicitor for the Guildford Four, of Douglas Hurd's decision not to refer their case to the Court of Appeal although he has agreed to a hearing for the Birmingham Six.

Interviewed by Workers Press, Logan made this trenchant reply to Home Secretary Hurd's claim that there is no new evidence in the Guildford Four case:

'It's an administrative invention by successive Home Secretaries that they cannot refer a case back to the Court of Appeal without there being new evidence. Section 17 of the 1968 Criminal Appeal Act does not require new evidence.'

The Guildford Four — four youngsters rounded up in an atmosphere of anti-Irish hysteria and sent down for life for the 1974 Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings — have consistently claimed that the confessions on which they were sentenced were false and beaten out of them

This was later confirmed when men captured after the siege of Balcombe Street not only claimed responsibilty for the bombings but ex-plained in detail how they were done.

Referring to the Balcombe Street men, Logan said:

# No appeal for Guildford Four



CAROLE RICHARDSON

'The new evidence that the Guildford Four had was rejected by the Court of Appeal.

'The Home Secretary is aware that there was new evidence, and he is equally aware that it is most unlikely that there will ever be any other new evidence.

'Hurd said the Guildford Four had been tried by the due process of law, but he ignores the fact that no jury has ever heard all the evi dence against the Guildford

'The Guildford Four have been deprived of the right to a trial by jury on all the



PAUL HILL



BY PHIL PENN

facts. 'In relation to the Maguires' — the family framed as suppliers of explosives to the Guildford Four 'Hurd said he was satisfied about the scientific evi-

'But he ignores the fact that Home Office forensic scientists have been saying since 1984 that the test used to convict the Maguires would not again be used as the sole evidence to charge a person with a similar off-

'In other words, if Annie Maguire had been tried in 1984 she would not have been convicted. But she was tried in 1975-76 and she was convicted.

'So although Hurd says dence his own forensic scientists are not'.

Hurd's decision to refer the case of the Birmingham Six to the Appeal Court follows a long battle by relatives for their release; the setting up of a Birmingham Six Campaign; wide cover-

The new evidence on which Hurd says he based his decision is that of a former Birmingham police officer, who has recently testified that the men were beaten by police while in custody, as they have always maintained maintained.

Their faces were badly marked when they were brought to trial, but the judge, in order to maintain the integrity of the confessions. accepted the prosecu-tion's story that the prison screws and not the police had beaten them.

After the Birmingham Six were found guity and safely locked away, the screws were tried and let off.

Gareth Pearce, solicitor for three of the men, says they are extremely realistic and are cautiously pleased about the decision.

Their caution is understandable, for their case has been referred to the same no-jury court which heard their appeal in 1976 and sent them back to jail.

The Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, and Judith Ward were all framed in 1974. They have now served 12 years of a life sentence. The Maguires served long terms in jail. Guiseppe Conlon, father of Gerard, one of the Guildford Four, died from the treatment he received in jail.

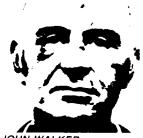
Gareth Pearce said the right place for this case to be heard is before a jury. Alastair Logan has called for a public enquiry as the only means of securing justice for these innocent prisoners.

### and no guarantees for Birmingham Six





HUGH CALLAGHAN



JOHN WALKER



RICHARD MCILKENNY



PATRICK ARMSTRONG

age of the case in a number

of TV documentaries over the last year; an excellent

book on the case by Chris Mullin; and a certain amount of horse-trading be-

tween the British and Dublin governments over the Hill-

Considering the pressure

Lords Scarman and De-

building up — now including support from such notables

vlin, 200 MPs, and the for-mer Labour Home Secretary

under whom the Six were

jailed in the first place — Hurd has done the least he

could possibly have got away

sborough agreement.

GERARD HUNTER



### **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Coalition Falls**

GARETT GERALD's Fine Gael-Labour coalition fell last week when four Labour ministers resigned rather than take responsibility for big spending cuts.

With unemployment already at record levels, Fine Gael proposed to help Irish capitalism out by hit-ting the poor even harder, cutting health and social

So determined is it on this Thatcher-style programme that it intends making it its election manifesto.

The opposition Fianna Fail led by ex-prime minister Charles Haughey is clear favourite to win elections ex-pected on February 19.

Labour's participation, not for the first time, in a coalition with the right-wing, pro-British Fine Gael, which has always represented big in-dustrial and farming interests, has left the party with little credibility in the working class.

Bologna

trial

opens

TWENTY people accused in Europe's worst ever 'peacetime' bombing have gone on

trial in Bologna, Italy, after six years of high-level cover-ups and attempts to block inves-

The 1980 fascist bombing of

Bologna railway station, crowded with August bank holiday travellers, killed 85 people and injured another 200.

Some activists in the fascist groups implicated were able

to find hiding-holes in Britain when the Italian police drag-

The prosecution has over 150,000 pages of evidence

linking the bombing with a fascist coup plot allegedly masterminded by Italy's sinis-

absentia — at last week's preliminary hearing was lodge-master Licio Gelli, still on the

run after bribing his way out of a Swiss prison four years

The P-2 lodge brought

together top politicians, bank-ers, senior Vatican figures

and high-ranking officers in

the military and secret service establishment.

The trial in Bologna has een adiourned to March 2

while courtroom security is

improved. Fears have been expressed that fascists and

their backers will use this de-

lay to further cover their tracks and evade justice.

People in Bologna who

were injured or lost family

members in the outrage have formed their own association.

and say they are determined

to see justice.

ter P-2 masonic lodge. Among those indicted — in

net got under way.

Its support for the Hill-sborough agreement con-firms its long separation from the national move-

The four ministers' action was too little and too late to save their party's reputa-

Fianna Fail, the other main Irish capitalist party, will face two new problems on its flanks in this election however. One is a new party Progressive Democrats, led by former Fianna Fail minister Desi O'Malley, and appealing to the 'new' mid-dle class.

More serious, and likely to win votes from both former Fianna Fail and Labour voters, is the challenge from Sinn Fein, which has dropped its former abstentionist policy and declared willingness to enter the Leinster House parliament.

Although the Republicans are only standing six candidates this time, how they fare in these elections could be an important indication of things to come.

of Afghan war RUMOURS of a clash between rival factions in Afghanistan's Soviet-

backed government were being discounted last week, although leaders of the governing People's Democratic Party are known to be worried how they'll fare in a diploma-

tic settlement.

The rumours spread when Soviet tanks and armoured personnel carriers were deployed in strength around the centre of Kabul, the capital, on the second day of a cease-fire proclaimed by the government.

Previous disputes in the leadership have been settled with gunfire, and it was suggested the Soviet forces might be having to keep the

The Soviet government under Gorbachev is anxious to see an end to the Afghan war, so that it can withdraw troops and improve relations with Asian countries.

In seven years of fighting In seven years of fighting, committing over 100,000 troops, planes, and helicopter gunships, the Soviet Union has gained nothing from the war. Over 30,000 Soviet youth have been killed or youth have been killed or wounded, and demoralisation has spread.

Soviet influence in Asia has suffered too, and there have been hints of unrest within Soviet Asian republics, with their Muslim population. It may have contributed to the serious out-break of riots in Kazakhstan recently.

While Afghan Muslim guerrilla leaders based in Pakistan's North-West Frontier province were publicly rejecting the cease-fire offer last week, and announcing they would step up operations, Soviet deputy Foreign minister Anatoly Kovalyev arrived in Islamabad for talks with the Pakistan gov-

Gorbachev wants out

US officials also called there. US Secretary of State Caspar Weinberger has demanded the Soviets withdraw within two weeks US military aid has been stepped up both to the rakistan dictatorship and the Afghan guerrillas, in the hope of keeping the war going.

The Pakistan regime's own vulnerability, highlighted by recent bloody inter-communal fighting in Karachi, but also effected by continuing unrest in North West Frontier, Baluchi and Sind provinces, might make it more amenable to a peace

China, which has also backed the Afghan rebels, is due to hold talks with the Soviet Union on frontier problems next month. It has been announced that 12,000 Soviet troops will be with-drawn from Mongolia.

Besides attempting to de-fend the Soviet Union by establishing friendlier rela-tions with Asian neighbours, Gorbachev may also hope for better economic ties with Japan, whose prime minis-ter Nakasone has just returned from a visit to Eastern Europe.

### Shake-up in Ukraine

EIGHT coal mine managers are facing criminal proceedings, and a senior KGB officer has reportedly been sacked in what may turn out to be a major shake-up in the Soviet Ukraine.

Ukrainian Communist Party leader Vladimir Shcherbinsky, regarded as a left-over from Brezhney's period, is rumoured to be for the chop very soon.

The mine managers, whose dismissal was re-ported by the official Tass news-agency last week, are being charged with negligence in connection with a pit disaster in December.

Many miners were killed in a methane gas explosion at the Ukrainian mine.

KGB chief Victor M. Chebrikov announced recently that one of his senior officers had been dismissed in the Ukraine, following mistreatment of a Soviet journalist.

Victor B. Berkhin was reporting for a mining magazine in the Voroshilovgrad region. According to a 'Pravda' report, he had uncovered shortcomings in the work of law-enforcement agencies

He was then arrested. charged with 'hooliganism', 'Pravda' said, and held in jail for 13 days.

'Pravda' journalists named one A. Dichenko as an official who had ordered local prosecutors to have the journalist arrested. Four days later, Chebrikov identified Dichenko as provincial KGB head, announcing he was sacking him.

Whether the law-enforcement 'shortcomings' were related to what is hap-pening in the Ukraine's important mining industry is not known. The Ukraine has been treated as a hotbed of corruption in recent Soviet press reports.

Although the Soviet bureaucracy periodically tries to clean its overall image by removing local offi-cials and managers for alleged corruption or ineffi-ciency, public dismissal of a secret police chief is less common, least of all for civil rights abuses.

Application of Gor-bachev's 'glasnost' policy in this case may indicate that the Ukraine, with both working class and national discontents underlying its politics, is to be scene of a serious political struggle.

# JOGBUND NH-GESCHAFTSFUH RUNG, SICHERT UNSERE ARBEIT

Employees of the bankrupt trade-union-owned 'Neue Heimat' housing corporation demonstrate to protest against its collapse

### **Social Democrats' slump** doesn't mean workers defeated

make a poor showing in elec-tions this weekend, despite growing workers' struggles and unrest in the middle

Christian Democrat chancellor Helmut Kohl is riding West German economy, thanks to industry benefitting from falling oil prices, and some preparedness to reflate using the Central Bank's profits.

Nevertheless there are still two million unemployed in West Germany. Important sections like miners and steel workers are fighting employers' sacking plans, while jobs and housing are big issues for youth.

Over 10,000 steel workers marched in Duisburg a fortnight ago, denouncing the Kohl government, and calling for nationalisation of their industry.

In Hamburg there have been regular fights between police and youth squatting in empty properties.

The shock of Chernobyl, and then the poisoning of the Rhine by big chemical companies, have spurred movements against nuclear power and industrial pollution. Not just the young, but even normiddle class people and far-mers have been drawn into protests.

The Social Democrats, having ditched any pretence of socialism from their programme during the boom years, and with leader Johannes Rau, like Kinnock only more so, cannot arouse the enthusiasm of the youth.

The official labour movement's embroilment in capitalism has led to ignominy, if not disaster, when union housing funds were caught up in a spectacular business

Nor can the Social Democrats turn the environmental and anti-nuclear issues to advantage, despite the in-dictment of capitalism these contain. They were taken by emerged, and on the second they have not distinguished themselves much from the Christian Democrats.

The environmentalist Greens Party will probably reap any advantage from this, and has actually acquired the image of being to the 'left' of the Social Demo-

#### writers Hungary

Thirty writers have resigned from the Hungarian Writers' Union saying the union is becoming 'arch nationalist', 'adventurist' and 'anticommunist'.

The resignations came after most of the party members were voted off the executive in November.

The last five years has seen a rapid degeneration of the relationship between the writers, party and government.

This crisis resulted in the dismissal of the editorial board of the literary monthly 'Tisza Tai' and the banning of istvan Csurka's work.

Respected novelist Miklos Meszoly said last Sunday: 'In a healthy society, when someone writes something, it is discussed, not silenced or punished."

### Lenin's last ctrunnie recalied

LENIN's attempt to remove Stalin from his position of general secretary of the Communist Party in 1922 is featured prominently in the latest issue of 'Moscow

Recalling the Bolshevik leader's warnings against Stalin's brutality, the Soviet magazine strongly attacks the way Stalin forced pre-viously independent Soviet republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics between 1922 and 1924.

After nationalist riots in Kazakhstan last month, and with the Soviet Union trying to extract its forces from the Afghan mess, the reevocation of Lenin's warnings is clearly significant.

Lenin's 'Last Testament'. expressing grave doubts about Stalin's fitness to be party secretary, was long a closed chapter for most

Soviet citizens.

In a letter to the Party congress in 1924, Lenin strongly urged delegates to find a way of removing Sta-lin as general secretary, saying he was too rude to be trusted with power.

In his fight with Stalin over the handling of Georgia, Lenin attacked the mistreatment of Georgian communists and disregard for the sensitivities of oppressed nationalities.

Accusing Stalin of acting from 'spite' and Dzerzhinsky of adapting to Great Russian chauvinism, Lenin warned against the chauvinism of the bureaucracy.

The 'Moscow News' article recalls that Lenin urged the separate republics be treated as full equals if national resentment and nationalist feeling were not to grow

### Turkey FORMER Turkish prime

minister Bulent Ecevit has been sentenced to eleven months imprisonment for making a speech during last September's by-election campaign, while banned from politics.

Although the Izmir court passed sentence on December 29, it was kept secret for three weeks, while Labour Euro-MP Richard Balfe was visiting Turkey to report on democratic rights there.

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### CIA LINK TO DRUG TRADE

REAGAN's terrorists — the CIA and the right-wing Contras fighting against the people of Nicaragua — have been linked with the international drug traffic.

Top US officials tried to cover up the racket, in which planes belonging to the CIA front-company Southern Air Transport delivered arms to the Contras, then returned with cocaine for sale in the US.

Now the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency has handed over a dossier to special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh, who is probing the Contra connection in the wake of the 'Irangate' scandal.

Investigations have revealed that between 1983 and

1985, US arms planes delivering to Contra bases in El Salvador flew back via places like Barranquilla, in Colombia, where they reloaded with cocaine and marijuana.

Witnesses who saw planes with Southern Air Transport markings there link the traffic with Jorge Ochoa, head of the powerful Colombian narcotics syndicate.

Eugene Hasenfus, shot down last October while on a supply mission over Nicaragua, was working for Southern Air Transport. From descriptions he gave to his captors, several known CIA agents, some of them Cuban emigres with long terrorist records, were identified as running Contra bases.

Although there have been rumours before of a drug trade connection, hard evidence is starting to come out for the first time.

The US magazine Newsweek has obtained statements from two men held in Miami on drug-smuggling charges that they had been working in Contra arms supply with CIA assistance.

Officers of the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency say they reported in September on arms-for-drugs trade involving Southern Air Transport, only to have their evidence discounted by the Justice Department.

An FBI inquiry into Contra smuggling activities in October was aborted on orders from Attorney -General Edwin Meese. He had been told by Reagan security aide Admiral John Poindexter that investigations might harm a 'sensitive mission' then under way.

This turns out to have been the Iran arms deals whose exposure have led to Poindexter's resignation and appearance before congressional committees.

With great media exposure last year, Reagan and his 'First Lady' launched their nationwide 'war on drugs', the scourge of America's cities. Now, just like his 'crusade on terrorism', this phoney performance is about to be blown up by exposure of what US government agencies are up to their necks in.

### KIDNAP PRESIDENT STILL IN TROUBLE

ECUADOR's President Leon Febres Cordero, kidnapped by rebel officers and forced to order release of former air force General Frank Vargas Pazzos, could be just beginning his fall from power.

Febres was seized, together with his army commander, during an official visit to the air force base near Guayaquil. His captors, some 50 mutineers ranking up to captain, demanded an amnesty for Vargas as the price of the president's release.

Air force General Vargas was accused of trying to lead a rebellion against Febres in March 1986. He had been dismissed for accusing the defence minister and army commander of corruption.

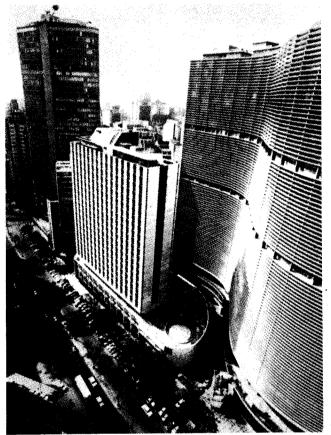
Vargas exposed various deals, such as one where a £550,000 bill for Mirage aircraft spares was mysteriously paid twice, and another involving £165,000 commission on purchase of a Fokker F-28.

Although Febres tried to smooth over the scandal, replaced his defence minister and retired a few officers, his party lost heavily in June elections. Left and liberal parties demanded the investigations be re-opened and Vargas be released.

The ex-air force chief's brother Rene leads Democracia Popular, a radical Christian democrat opposition group, with strong rural support.

Trying to stave-off left-wing and nationalist opponents, President Febres' pro-US regime has still got support from right-wing army chiefs. But his patrons in Washington have not been much help.

Ecuador has been hit by US protectionism, in the form of taxes on its oil, with hoped-for compensatory US aid failing to materialise. With the economic crisis now goes a crisis of political authority and a split in the armed forces.





The affluence of modern office buildings in Sao Paulo's business district contrasts with the poverty of Brazil's shanty towns

### BRAZIL FEARS WORKING CLASS RESISTANCE

# CALL TO CURB DEBT Frazilian repretives met with coalition partner, has tried to the coalition partner and the coalities and the coalities and the coalities are coalities and the coalities and the coalities are coalities are coalities and the coa

AS Brazilian representatives met with major capitalist creditor governments this week, the country's leading political party urged partial suspension of foreign debt payments.

The Brazilian Democratic Movement's national directorate and 22 state governors elected in November issued a joint statement saying they would 'support a decision to suspend payments on part of the debt and limit remittances abroad temporarily'.

Behind this call is fear that attacks on jobs and living standards to meet the bankers' demands will bring fierce resistance from Brazilian workers.

Big private banks in Europe, the United States and Japan hold more than \$70 billion of Brazil's debt. The bankers have warned that any move by Brazil to curb payments could have serious international repercussions.

President Jose Sarney's government, in which the

ment (BDM) is the main coalition partner, has tried to meet the bankers' demands but faces resistance from the Brazilian working class to attacks on jobs and living standards.

Politicians remember the clashes on the streets last year over price rises, the unemployed riots in Sao Paulo a few years ago, and the workers' demonstrations against the bankers' policies.

#### **Earnings**

Last week's BDM statement says: 'Debt payments should be linked to a percentage of our export earnings or of our gross national product, and interest rates should be reduced so we can dispose of our savings for the investments that are indispensable to increase national production.'

Party leader Ulises Guimaraes said what the BDM was saying was 'no to recession, no to inflation, no to reducing the pay of workers, and no exorbitant interest rates'.

The once-hailed 'Brazilian miracle' came to a rude end in the late 1970s. In 1982 Brazil emerged as the world's

## PAYMENTS biggest debtor, and the Inused armoured cars and

biggest debtor, and the international Monetary Fund (IMF) stepped in Interest payments alone since 1982 have cost Brazil \$55 billion.

Last year, Brazil had a 7.7-per-cent increase in Gross National Product, according to official figures, the highest growth rate in Latin America. Trade surpluses averaging \$1 billion a month have enabled the country to keep interest payments up to date.

But this interest now stands at \$105 billion, and Finance Minister Danilo Funaro has warned that Brazil cannot continue sending \$12 billion abroad this year without hitting its economic growth.

In elections last November, the BDM won control of both houses of Congress and 22 out of 24 state governorships. But when the government lifted price controls on many goods and services soon afterwards, huge price increases brought an angry reaction from workers who felt cheated.

Trade unions called a march in Brasilia, and police

used armoured cars and teargas to 'restore order'. Bank workers also took strike action against mergers.

Besides cutting public spending and jobs, a major target for the bankers' demands is to end the policy whereby wages are updated to compensate for increases in the cost of living.

#### Strength

Continuation of this policy in Brazil was a reflection of working class strength, shown in the big Sao Paulo strikes a decade ago, and the defeat of the military regime, allowing the BDM to

While the Sarney government negotiates with the 'Paris Club' of foreign finance to have debts rescheduled, Labour Minister Almir Pazzianoto has been holding urgent talks with businessmen and trade union leaders to try and achieve a corporate plan of price and wage controls.

#### VOLCANO SURVIVORS STRUGGLE ON

ONE of the worst natural disasters within memory. A year later, those who survived it are fighting not to be forgotten.

At 11p.m. on the terrible night of November 13, 1985, the Colombian city of Armero was engulfed by 31 million cubic metres of water, mud and stones rushing down from the Nevado del Ruiz volcano.

Some managed to escape. Those who didn't, 25,000 in all, lie buried under a sea of grey sand.

A few miles away, around the town of Lerida, thousands crouched in small tents under the wind and rain, or spent the night on schoolroom floors where they took shelter after the

According to official figures only about 1,000 of the 8,000 disaster victims in Lerida have been able to get new homes, jobs, schooling for their children.

The rest wait, watch anxiously as their children become sick through lack of facilities such as decent water supplies and sewage systems, and wonder what happened to all the aid that was supposed to be coming to them.

A reporter from Prensa Latina who recently toured the area found the survivors bitter and angry, 'demanding an accounting of the money raised to aid disaster victims, for wich there are various estimates and whose whereabouts is a national mystery'.

### Where did relief money go?

Colombia's disaster relief agency received some \$20 million in 1985-1986. People at home and abroad subscribed to relief funds. Clothing, blankets, medicine, generators were sent.

UN experts say what was distributed was inadequate for people's needs. In addition, organisation was poor. People were moved around from place to place, did not know what was happening, were not informed of the fate of missed loved ones.

Prensa Latina's Jorge Enrique Botero reports meeting anguished parents who insisted their children had been sold after the tragedy.

'That's right: sold. For many say they witnessed the rescue of their children but have not heard of them since. They have been vainly seeking them for months in aid agencies, official and pri-

vate institutions and have published advertisements in the papers — all to no avail.'

A congressional commission has said the government relief agency's accounts are dubious and much of the aid never reached the people for whom it was intended.

Besides huge salaries for the bureaucrats appointed to run the agency, there was embezzlement of both cash and supplies.

Big profits were made on land bought for housing. Bureaucrats worked hand in glove with businessmen to split the money intended for victims between them.

Even without such problems, efforts to rehouse the Armero survivors and organise jobs and facilities have fallen down through interdepartmental feuds and lack of any overall plan, Enrique Botero reports. I'early \$4 million dollars held by the International Red Cross may be lost because there is no specific investment plan.

#### Will volcano

#### erupt again?

Worse could be to come. Experts have warned that the Armero disaster could happen again.

The 1985 disaster was caused by volcanic heat melting the crater of Nevado del Ruiz and the ice above it, bringing the avalanche that engulfed Armero.

Experts say there are 350 million cubic metres of ice covering the volcano and if they ever come sweeping down many cities could be destroyed as Armero was.

A round the clock watch over the volcano is maintained by a committee in Manizales, but despite their efforts the warning systems in high risk areas may not be adequate.

The Colombian government has organised with some efficiency for a different kind of eruption, apparently. The Prensa Latina reporter says he saw hundreds of heavily armed soldiers and police in the vicinity of the refugee camps around Lerida, evidently on guard in case the survivors' anguish and anger explodes.

In Lerida, Libia Rosas recalls that at the start of the tragedy, when terrified Armero residents ran shouting 'Lagunilla has overflown' (a nearby river), police panicked and opened fire. They thought they heard 'the guerrillas are coming'.

# 22 RE



Enjoying a nice cup of tea after a long march

### Working class not defeated

BY CHRIS McBRIDE

THE working class is not defeated and is ready for a

That was the defiant message from a public meeting organised by the Lambeth Print Support Group last Monday to rally support for the twelve month Wapping Anniversary March.

Sacked pintworker, SOGAT and Fleet Street Print Support Unit activist Larry Hyett

speaking of the anti-union laws said:

'If we want to win this dis-pute and others like it we have to confront those laws. This strike is not over until the members decide.

'Unless we fight back as workers we will be beaten and abused by riot police. As prin-ters we demand the release of all jailed trade unionists. 'This meeting is to moblise trade unionists down to Wap-ping to confront the state over About police violence he whether or not workers have the right to picket. 'This dispute and the min-ers' strike are the beginning

of a transitional period.' ene Scott, sacked Silent-night worker, condemned the role of the furniture trade union executive.

- print meeting told

'Our Executive Committee of wisdom have withdrawn support for our dispute.

She explained how the union leadership sent an official to 'sequestrate' the strikers' funds and equipment needed to continue the dispute — and how they failed,

'If the leadership had acted in support of us as much as they acted to wind up the dispute, I would have been in work a year ago and not touring round meeting trade unionists and getting a political education thrown into the bargain. We're not going to give in — we've got nowhere else

Kent miner Alan Sutcliffe paid special tribute to Kent NUM leader Jack Collins. Sutcliffe was clearly very upset by Jack's loss.

He told the meeting that conditions in Wapping would be much worse than being out on strike if the fight against Murdoch was lost.

'Our industries are run by the wrong people for the wrong reasons.

'We've taken enough: let's go forward and win a victory for us all.' Surcharged former Labour councillor Ted Knight said he was very confident about the strength of the working class:

'Twelve months after the miners strike those workers are fighting on despite trade union leaders.

'We have to look at the situation because it means that workers are ready for a fight. What's at stake is not just jobs, it's trade unionism itself.'

He said that the employing class is taking the only path it can take which is to smash all the organisations of the working class.

'They are prepared to use the whole array of the state against the working class'.

He denounced 'those in our movement who use their pages to tell us that we're finished'. Mother of the Chappel of SOGAT Clerical Carrol Hall said criticised the 'Any conscious trade unionist never bought the Sun anyway. If we have any chance of ning this dispute then Fleet Street must come out.'

She said that if the anti-union laws were not confronted then no major dispute can be won.

'But this we must grasp, in order to know what is to be done. She said 'We have to build an attacking movement based on principles. We have to connect all the different sections who are coming into conflict with the state

Over one hundred and fifty pounds for sacked printworkers was collected and an appeal was made for people attend print support group meetings.

**AS THE printers'** strike enters its second year this weekend thought it would be fitting to report on some of the people involved in the dispute who would not normally get

Several of them have been the backbone of the dispute and have done things that, as they admit, they could never have done but for Wapping.

a mention.

Wellclose Square, opposite the Wapping plant, is where it all happens, where all the pickets gather and the stalls and tea vans are set up.

Ernic and Bert Bates along with **Tony Tomlinson** run a stall on behalf of the Blackhole Support Group. Everyone who passes it must buy a ticket for the nightly raffle — and God help those who try to sneak past with-out one! All three are mem-bers of SOGAT and worked in the machine room of the 'Sun' and the 'News of the World' at Bouverie Street. They are staunch supporters of the dispute and as Bert says: 'We will fight on until we beat Murdoch'.

Strike Graphics are the people who do all the designs on T-shirts, mugs etc. Tony Hall is the name behind many of these quite spec-tacular, and often controver-

Tony, like the rest of the

ALAN CLARK, member of Times' night machine chape International dispute since J Murdoch sacked his entire printing in a new purpose-b day Alan has reported the di he writes about some of the the dispute without whom the

Strike Graphics team, worked as designers and artists on the 'Sun' and 'News of the World'. He says that even after one year he won't be giving up. 'It's quite refreshing to be doing material that is so completely opposite to what we did under Murdoch: this stuff is wanted.'

The Women Against Mur-



Ernie and Bert

### A beginnin

Carol Hall, Mother of the Chapel of the 'Times' clerical chapel, spoke to Workers Press about the dispute. She attacked the electricians' union leader Eric Hammond for his collaboration with Murdoch on the planned move to Wapping.

'NO DOUBT Murdoch had watched the antics of Hammond and his henchmen at the TUC in 1984, when he laid the movement open to ridicule with his readiness to undermine the miners with his cheap jibe about "Lions led by Donkeys.'

This was the signal that Murdoch wanted — within months of the miners' strike ending he was laying the plans to launch an evening paper.

'Claiming Wapping was a green field site was the first shot to shake the complacency of the print unions, he knew Hammond would back him,' she said

'Dean on the other hand was confident that a deal could be made with Murdoch, she gave him the biggest Christmas present he could have wanted.

'Dean capitulated to Maxwell at the 'Mirror' and ended the strike within 72 hours and agreed to have the workforce cut by 2000, which clearly showed that she was not prepared to fight for jobs.

'In this corresponding week last year Dean was armed with a magnificent strike mandate from the News International chapels, ut she was ready to con 50 per cent job losses to get into Wapping. Whereas Murdoch was demanding 80 per cent job cuts, a legally binding agree-ment, no closed shop, no strike deal and so-called manage-ment's right to manage clauses.

'The strikers objectives were somewhat different — they wanted to fight for jobs and union recognition which would give the ordinary rank and file printer a voice.

'Instead we got a low profile campaign through the media, which are the very people that are out to destroy us. We got the Boycott Campaign' a consumer ban, hoping to persuade people not to buy the 'Sun'.

She suggested that most conscious trade unionists never bought the 'Sun' in the first place. 'Anyhow, how can you



A speaker at the meeting was Steve Smith (above), Father of the Manager's Chapel at Mirror Group and Secretary of the Federated House Chapels of Mirror Group, who has been suspended along with Angela Malloy, Mother of the Clerical Chapel at Mirror Group, on the grounds of 'gross mis-conduct'.

OGAT 82 and of the 'Sunday has been involved in the News nuary 24 last year when Rupert orkforce of 5,500 and started t Wapping factory. From that bute for Workers Press. Today sung hereos and characters of strike would not have been the

> ber, have also earned them-selves a place in the Square. Many of them are the wives, girlfriends or mothers of sacked printers and they have stood firm alongside their men from day one. Their banner is always on the marches and their lively the marches and their lively and cheerful singing helps to keep the pickets' spirits up when heads sometimes start to drop. The women of WAM



### an end

compete in publicity with a multi-national publishing company with all their easy access to media coverage'.

'As far as I am concerned there is only one way to beat Murdoch. This fight is just not against him; every other proprie-ter in Fleet Street has jumped on the band wagon; we have seen a jobs slaughter, we have seen the beginning of something evil, some people call it company unionism, I call it corrupt trade unionism.

'If we want the attacks to stop, if we seriously want a chance of winning, Fleet Street must be called out.' she said.

#### **Victory**

'I am confident, much more confident than I was 12 months ago, victory and justice can be achieved for our class.'

As more and more sections of the community are thrown into conflict with the state we are charged with linking these struggles together, this is our task, we can do it and we will.'

'The anniversary of our dispute must not be allowed to be the end, it must be the beginand all other women suppor-ters have decided that their place in this dispute is in the front line.

Tim Hennessey will tell you he did not support the miners during their dispute, miners during their dispute, but one year on strike has changed his mind. Tim has become best known for his selling of the 'Wapping Post' and he does this in his own inimitable style. This dispute has certainly awakened his dormant political mind. He gladly tells everyone now that he was wrong for not supporting the miners. supporting the miners.

Like many of the pickets, Tim Hennessey has become aware of what life is really

about.

The tenants and residents of Tower Hamlets have supported the sacked printers from the beginning, and their Reclaim the Streets demonstrations have often shown the printers just how they should be picketing.

John Rees, organiser of the movement, says, 'We don't intend to run away. The death of the local lad Michael Delaney strengthens our resolve to carry on.'

Police road blocks are certainly no deterrent to them. They are determined to demonstrate and march in support of the printworkers around Wapping and because of this great friendships have developed between the residents and the printers. the printers.

Support groups around the country have sprung up and have done some good work on behalf of the printwor-kers. Camden, Oxford, Lambeth, Hackney and Tower Hamlets are just a few that need mentioning for their timeless efforts in support-ing the strikers.

The tea wagons parked in Wellclose Square have been the lifeblood of the pickets. Thousands of gallons of tea have been drunk by the marchers and supporters. The biscuits, rolls, soup, and wonderful bread pudding have also been memorable. Every bite and sip has usually been more than welcome. ly been more than welcome.

Last but not least is Betty Primrose, who goes anywhere for the printers just as she did for the miners. You can't miss her — she's the one with badges and stickers over her coat, always carrying two buckets.



Do you need a helping hand mate





### Jailed printer's brother speaks

PAT HICKS, brother of committing more crimes three identification queries. ned print leader Mike Hicks, speaking at a public meeting last week, said Michael regards himself as a class war prisoner.

'My brother was arrested to take the head off the printworkers' marches. What the police said in court against him was a completely untrue,' he said.

Michael led the fight in the wholesale to get Murdoch's titles boycotted, unfortunately he was not to be so successful outside London, Pat Hicks said.

Hicks went on to say that the new Public Order Act was there to restrict mar-ches and demonstrations and to protect the Mur-

The City of London was

nothing ever happens to them

Hicks said that he thought Murdoch wasn't having it all his own way as last Monday's Panorama programme seemed to suggest.

Though Pat Hicks didn't say how, he said that Mur-doch could be defeated and if he is it would assist all those others in dispute.

• SOGAT National Executive member and jailed Wapping strike leader Mike Hicks had his appeal against conviction and prison sent-ence turned down at the Court of Criminal Appeal last week.

The three judges unanimously opposed the reduction of Hicks's 12 month prison sentence, of which eight are suspended.

The appeal was based on

The queries included the fact that a police witness had admitted that there were hazards inherent in this kind of identification'

With the support of his fellow judges, Lord Justice Caulfield dismissed the three points on the grounds that the incident arose from what is 'notoriously known as the Wapping dispute'.

Hicks left the dock with a smile on his face and waved to his supporters and

The Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers stated 'In view of the highly doubtful evidence against him his conviction can only be regarded as grossly unfair and

Hundreds of sacked printworkers demonstrated their support for Hicks outside the court in The Strand.

### VIETNAM AND TROTSKYISM

# The Fourth International and the Stalinist Ho

THIS article by Simon Pirani concludes our series on the history of Vietnamese Trotskylsm. Previous articles described the 1945 revolution in Vietnam which was defeated by the joint efforts of Stalinism and imperialism. This article follows the movement's history from 1946.

'INSOFAR as capitalism has created a world market, a world division of labour and world productive forces, it has also prepared world economy as a whole for socialist transformation,' wrote Trotsky, attacking Stalin's reactionary fraud of 'socialism in one country', in 1929.

'Different countries will go through this process at different tempos. Backward countries may, under certain conditions, arrive at the dictatorship of the proletariat sooner than advanced countries, but they will come later than the latter to socialism.' ('The Permanent Revolution', New Park edn. p.155).

Fifty-seven years later, the contradiction between the struggle and sacrifice of backward countries on the one hand, and the unresolved crisis of international working-class leadership and the delay of socialist revolution world-wide on the other, remains a central feature of the class struggle.

In Vietnam, a peasant army, organised under a Communist Party imbued with reactionary Stalinist ideology, achieved a crushing victory over the mightiest imperialist power of all.

Today the state founded on that victory faces hostility from imperialism on one side, from the reactionary Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy on another, from the crushing backwardness of its own war-weary rural economy on a third — and finally from the narrow nationalist and bureaucratic outlook of its own Stalinist rulers.

The problems faced by the Vietnamese workers — like those of workers in other countries — can only be considered as part of the problems of the world working class.

Their struggle is part of the permanent, international revolutionary process.

The only tendency which approached Vietnamese problems in this way was Trotskyism — and these articles, while not claiming to answer all those problems, aim to outline that tendency's history.

### The aftermath of 1945 and the war with France

It was the refusal of the Saigon workers and their Trotskyist leaders to compromise with the French-British-Vietminh carve-up of Vietnam, in September 1945, that led those forces to turn on them.

The Vietminh executed Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau and hundreds of Trotskyist cadres.

Trotskyist and nationalist forces, who had resisted the French when they had reentered Saigon, were driven into the countryside where they fought a guerilla war against the French, Britishofficered Gurkhas and the Vietminh.

Ho Chi Minh, the Stalinist leader, went to Paris and negotiated with the French, signing an initial agreement which recognised the French presence in the south on March 6, 1946.

Despite being decimated by the massacre, the Saigon Trotskyists re-organised in the International Communist Group (Union des Communistes Internationalistes), and in October 1946 issued a leaflet condemning the agreement signed by Ho, which 'offered nothing but advantages for French imperialism: the restoration of French control economic, financial and customs, and reparations for the French.'

The leaflet called on workers to maintain their political independence from the bourgeoisie, organise trades unions and fight for 'workers' liberties'. ('For a revolutionary trade union organisation', leaflet in the files of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International, Library of International Contemporary Documentation, Nanterre University, Paris).

In the north, where the Stalinists had set up the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), initial progress by Trotskyists of the Struggle group was cut short by ruthless persecution.

A report in the Fourth International's journal states that at first, the DRV had tolerated the thriving Trotskyist movement, which won wide support, and met particular success in organising women.

At one point DRV speakers had even attended Trotskyist meetings.

But after a particularly successful Trotskyist rally at Bach-Mai, 'having realised the popularity of working-class policies, and dreading their growing influence, Ho Chi Minh gave a secret order to arrest T. (the leader of the group) and other members of the Fourth International.

'But despite this they could not prevent the clandestine publication of "The Struggle", and the participation of Fourth Internationalists in the resistance.' ('Quatrieme Internationale', Jan-Feb 1948).

While ensuring the destruction of his Trotskyist opponents at home, Ho returned to Paris for more talks with the French, which dragged on from May to September 1946 . . . while

French troops swarmed across Vietnam, ready to renew open hostilities against the DRV.

Ho's policy of trying to negotiate crashed to the ground on November 23, 1946, when French ships bombarded Haiphong harbour in the north, killing thousands and signalling the start of Vietnam's bloody seven-year war with France.

There is no record of what privations and repressions the Saigon Trotskyists faced as war engulfed the country.

But a manifesto issued by their provisional central committee stated:

'To those who believe that the national liberation of Vietnam can be achieved by negotiations with French imperialism, with or without mediation by other imperialists, we say: we will not achieve liberation without a concerted struggle of the working people and peasants of Vietnam, together with the revolutionary proletariat of the metropolitan countries, hand in hand with the other oppressed peoples.'

The statement, dated July 8, 1947, recognised that the crisis of the colonial peoples could only be resolved with the progress of the world revolution as a whole.

It called on Vietnamese workers not to place their fate in the hands of the national bourgeoisie but to prolong their resistance struggle 'to accentuate the overall crisis of France.' ('Our Position', manifesto in ISFI files).

### **Contact with the Chinese section**

The relentless advance of Mao Tse-Tung's Red Army, and the disintegration of the Kuomintang forces in 1948-49 must have filled every work-



Leading figures in the post-war Fourth International (left to right): NATALIA TROTSKY, who criticised the failure to campaign over Ta Thu Tau's death; MICHEL PABLO, who advocated 'entryism of a special type'; JAMES P CANNON whose 1953 'Open Letter' declared a split in the FI



When the Chinese Red Army routed Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomintang, Trotskyists' hopes were raised. But Mao's victory led to new repressions — and became one of the forces of revisionism inside the Fourth International itself

er and revolutionary in Asia with hope.

The international significance of the Chinese revolution was clear to the Vietnamese Trotskyists, who sent one of their leading members to contact the Chinese Trotskyists in February 1949, eight month's before Mao's victory.

This delegate attended a conference of the Revolutionary Communist Party of China, which not only discussed at length the Chinese political situation, but also resolved to establish, jointly with the Vietnamese comrades, a Far Eastern Secretariat of the Fourth International, and to set up a joint cadre school.

But Mao Tse-Tung's victory in October 1949 heralded another chapter of Stalinist repression.

Many Chinese Trotskyists suffered, at his hands, the same deadly fate that Ho had meted out in Vietnam four years earlier.

The Chinese RCP moved its head office to Hong Kong, but the British colonial authorities were no more 'democratic' than the Maoists.

RCP leaders P'eng Shu-tse and Liu Chia-liang then moved to Vietnam, at the end of January 1950.

'Hardly a few months passed, however, before misfortune struck again', wrote P'eng's wife Ch'en Pi-lan. ('Looking Back Over My Years with P'eng Shu-tse', introduction to 'The Chinese Communist Party in Power', by P'eng).

'Two leading Vietnamese Trotskyists were invited to participate in a conference in the zone controlled by the Vietminh.

'We had been assured that the conference was being organised by Trotskyist elements inside the Vietminh, among them being the chief of staff of the army in control of this zone.

'The conference was scheduled to discuss the military situation and organisation problems of the Vietnamese Trotskyist movement. Unfortunately, the Stalinists had prepared a trap.

'When the conference came to an end, all the Vietnamese Trotskyists, and our comrade Liu Chia-liang . . . were arrested.'

Liu, a veteran of the 1926-7 Chinese revolution, who joined the Trotskyists in 1931 and served several sentences under the Kuomintang, died shortly afterwards in the Vietminh jail.

When Ch'en and P'eng left Vietnam fearing for their own lives, their Vietnamese comrades were still imprisoned but alive. Nothing further is known of them.

### Vietnam and the split in the FI

How did the Trotskyist movement internationally itself subject to massive repression by Stalinism and fascism alike—react to the Stalinist crimes against its sections in the east?

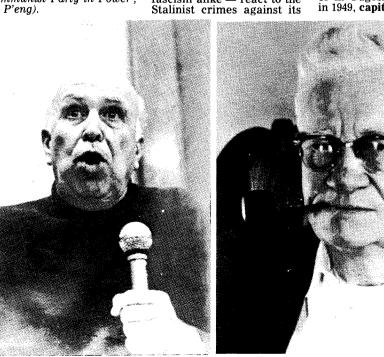
News of the 1945 Saigon massacre reached Paris nearly a year afterwards, whereupon Trotskyists there publicised it, and publicly demanded of Ho Chi Minh—who was in Paris talking to the French government—an answer for this crime.

On the other hand, Trotsky's widow Natalia Sedova (who in later years opposed the Fourth International and its defence of the USSR, condemning it as an exploitative class society), was in 1947 accusing FI leaders of relaxing the fight against Stalinism.

In a criticism of the international leadership, written together with Benjamin Peret and Grandizo Munis, she stated that the Indochinese section had been 'forgotten for so long', that 'even to demand who assassinated Ta Thu Thau has been forgotten, in order to support, without serious criticism, the Stalinist government of Ho Chi Minh, greetings from whom were so warmly hailed by The Miltant and La Verite.' (FI Internal Bulletin, 1947).

A full discussion on the FI's politics in 1947-48 is beyond the scope of this article. But in the period immediately following, there is a clearer picture.

Without doubt, the FI leadership under Pablo, which revised Trotsky's fundamental theses on the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism following the Communist Party coming to power in Yugoslavia and China in 1949, capitulated to Stalin-



### The Final part of our series

liberately covered up and minimised the repression of Trotskyists.

When the FI split in 1953, with the International Committee (ICFI) forming around J. P. Cannon's 'Open Letter' in opposition to Pablo's liquidationism, a letter from the Chinese Trotskyist P'eng to Cannon accused Pablo of trying to stifle discussion on Stalinism in the Far-East Commission of the FI's Third Congress in 1951; refusing to distribute in-formation on the wholesale arrest and murder of Chinese Trotskyists by Mao; cninese troiskyists by Mao; and concealing for four months (May-September 1953) an appeal from the Chinese Trotskyists on be-half of imprisoned com-rades

P'eng states that, with regard to Vietnam, Pablo's entryism of a special type actually meant sending Viet-namese Trotskyists from France back to their own country, with instructions to join the Vietminh, and without a clear understanding of the extent of Stalinist repres-

When the Vietnamese comrades were ready to return to their country to apply the "entryist policy", and called a meeting in which I was invited to make a speech, the chairman of this meeting made a request of me not to mention before the comrades the recent persecutions experienced by the Chinese comrades.

'I knew quite well that it was an instruction or sugges-tion from Pablo,' wrote

'Although I observed the request of the chairman, I still warned him personally that the "ostrich policy" was the most dangerous'. (Towards a History of the FI', part 3, vol 3, p.170-71, published by the Socialist Workers Party (US) 'Education for Socialist' (US) Socialists' series).

The Trotskyist group re-ferred to was built among Vietnamese workers in France during and after the

When it returned to Vietwhen it returned to Vietnam in the early 1950s, this group was split—a majority faction supporting the Pablo leadership, and a minority supporting the French Parti Communiste Internationalists (PGI) who had a minority supporting the French Particle (PGI) who had a minority supporting the factors of the particle (PGI) who had a minority support of the particle (PGI) who had a mi liste (PCI) who had opposed

This minority voted against the resolutions of the FI Third Congress along with the PCI.

We have pointed out (Workers Press, December 6) that while the ICFI was formed on the basis of opposing Pablo's adaptation to Stalinism and his attempts to liquidate independent Trotskyist organisation, that in later years the Healy-Banda leadership in the IC had itself manifested li-quidationism with regard to

But the French PCI (which founded the IC together with the SLL-WRP and American SWP) did continue to pay attention to Vietnamese Trotskyism, running classes on its history throughout the 1960s and early 1970s.

A well-known incident in the late 1960s, while proving nothing in itself, is illustra-tive: members of the United Secretariat of the FI on a Vietnam solidarity march in Paris chanted 'Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh' — and were robustly answered 'Ta, Ta, Ta Thu Thau' by a PCI con-

#### Vietnamese **Trotskyism today**

We know that, haunted by at least some knowledge of earlier repressions, and no doubt affected by the split in the FI, some Trotskyists carried on activity throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s in



P'ENG SHU-TSE who narrowly escaped from Stalinist repression in China and then Vietnam

('The Geneva Accords are a Treacherous Betrayal', July 1954, leaflet in ISFI files).

It is known that when the Vietminh reached Saigon 21 years later, in 1975, they freed from jail some Trots-kyists who had led Saigon's railway workers against the pro-American regime.

But soon afterwards, some of these comrades were rearrested by the Stalinists.

In the 1970s, with the Vietnamese struggle occupying a central place in interna-tional events, Vietnamese Trotskyists in France orga-nised a group attached to the

Having appealed in vain In 1954, when Ho signed the Geneva accords which left the south in the hands of the imperialist puppet Ngo Dinh Diem, a Trotskyist manifesto condemned his secret diplomacy.

It called for workers in north Vietnam to demand expropriation of property and imperialist enterprises, agrarian reform, workers' and peasants' control over production and consumption, and democracy for workers and peasants.

In the south the Trots-kyists advocated the expulsion of imperialism, the advance of trades unionism, and unity around slogans of national liberation, agrarian reform and democracy.

for guidance to the USFI Eighth Congress in 1975 (see Workers Press, December 6), they proceeded to issue a manifesto in 1976, calling on Vietnamese workers to carry through a political revolu-

This group of older comrades began, at the end of last year, producing a new magazine, 'Chroniques Viet-namiennes', aimed at the younger Vietnamese generation in France.

The first issue contained three letters signed by Ho Chi Minh in 1939, which prove that he personally in-itiated the slander that the Trotskyists were 'Japanese

This quarterly Frenchlanguage magazine is available from Chroniques Vietnamiennes, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil Cedex, near Paris, France. An annual overseas subscription is 85 francs.

Today we have no direct knowledge of Trotskyist activity in Vietnam itself.

But the world situation — in which movements are growing not only in Europe, Africa and the Americas, but in China and indeed an upsurge against state bureaucracy in Vietnam itself — contains great possi-bility for the building of our

CONCLUDED



### Aboriginal deaths in Custody

BY NORMAN HARDING

THE YEAR 1988 is the 200th anniversary of the British colonisation of Australia. The aboriginal Koori people do not see the event as something to celebrate. The brutal treatment handed out to the Kooris as their traditional lifestyle was destroyed continues up to this day, as the following accounts show.

#### **JOHN PAT**

FOUND dead in his cell at Roebourne on 28 September 1983. He was 16 years old. An all-white jury, acquitted the five police officers charged with manslaughter

The jury heard 57 witnesses tell how a group of drunken cops provoked a fight with a group of Aborigines, then arrested them and beat them. John Pat died, his friends Ray Smith and Peter Coppin ended

Bar attendant Catherine Parks of the Victoria Hotel in Roebourne testified in the Supreme Court that the five off-duty police officers had threatened the Aborigines and made racist remarks. She was guarded by four builder's labourers. Within minutes of

giving her evidence she was sacked and told: 'We don't want dobbers (grasses)

After her evidence Catherine Parks was given one week to leave town. It is clear that powerful mining and pastoral interests want the John Pat case buried.

A Labour MP married to an Aboriginal from the Roebourne area was threatened with libel because he had spoken out on the matter. Freelance journalist Jan Mayman went to Roebourne to cover the story and after talking to a number of Aborigines she was threatened and told to leave town. Reports of other journalists were blatantly censored.

#### **DIXON GREEN**

FROM Kununurra, North West Australia. Died in Broome Regional Prison on November 19 1985. Official verdict: heart attack.

His family aren't convinced. His brother Ken Green said: 'We found (Dixon's) front teeth knocked out, top and bottom and sand in his mouth. We also found a red mark around his neck'

#### **TONY KING**

DIED on October 31 1985 in Geralton, Western Australia. He was a Maori man married to an Aboriginal.

For six years the police had been trying to solve a series of rapes in the Geralton area, with a big media campaign. Tony King was in the area being patrolled

by the police. He was chased and caught, and held in a bear hug from which he was rendered unconscious. There was no attempt to resuscitate him. Official cause of death: asphyxiation and coronary arteriosclerosis

(hardening of the arteries).

A trial-by-media branded King as the rapist although there was not a shred of evidence and at the time of some of the attacks he was in Perth. His family commented: 'They killed a black man and thought he would be a good scapegoat for the unsolved rape attacks.'

ROBERT WALKER

DIED August 1984 in Fremantle jail. He was dragged

from his cell in the middle of the night by the warders and brutally beaten on a lawn in full view of dozens of

#### **ON VISITING PRISONERS**

Mr Warden-in-Charge/ Why do you lock me Into a room, A locked room in a locked block/

A locked block in a locked prison complex, Heavily guarded/ To visit with people/

through mesh net grills/ Who are also locked away from me?

I won't run away. . . I live on the outside, And that's a prison/too/ Regulated by twelve million citizens Who play warden to each

And twelve million clocks That measure out our 'time'.

Mr Warden-in-Charge/ I feel so sorry for you/ With your giant keys for your giant locks/

Locking people/in/out Don't you see that the choice Of the prison within Or the prison without/ Is no choice/??

I live in a prison/ and I don't run away from there Do 1??'

**Bobbi Sykes** 

From her collection 'Love and Other Revolutionary Actions'

Surveys throughout the 1980s have consistently shown Aboriginal people are jailed at least ten times more than white Australians.
Overall imprisonment rate is about 60 per 100,000. For Aborigines it is 726 per 100,000, worse in some states than others (see graph). In South Australia Aborigines who appear in court were found to be four times as likely to receive a prison sentence as their white counterparts. In 1982 they accounted for 1.9 per cent of court appearances, but 37.8 per cent of people sent to jail. Dispossession, brutalisation, destruction of families and culture, a racist legal system and racist police

all make Aboriginal people the most imprisoned group in the

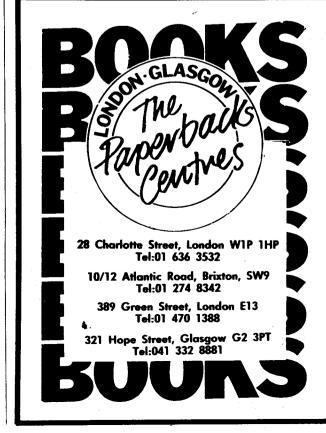
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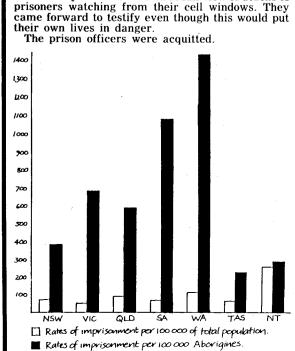
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### LETTERS ===

### **EURO - COMMUNIST** UNMASKED

IN a series of articles in 'The Guardian' Seumas Milne has been studying what he terms ary economics'.

In concluding his study on 14 January Milne traces the whereabouts of some of the so-called, 'strong group of Marxist economists of the mid-1970s'.

Many of these economists at the time were members of the Communist Party. Milne says that in the 1970s, when not engaged in theoretical work, the second, more practical concern of these radical economists was to flush out the Labour movement's alternative economic

I find this hard to believe having only been educated in the Communist Party's politics of the 1980s. However Milne ensures us that this was a strategy that the Communist Party pioneered.

A decade later Milne accuses these so-called 'radic-

al' economists of 'melting away or lapsing into silence' He blames this on the retreat of the Labour left since 1981 and the Labour defeat of

Milne talks to Bob Rowth-orn who now belongs to the orn who now belongs to the CP's Euro-Communist wing and is on the editorial board of 'Marxism Today'. Rowthorn, one of the 'esteemed' group of strong Marxist ecogroup of strong Marxist economists of the mid-1970s explains why he feels there is so much confusion among radical economists today:

The problem is less to work out why there is an economic crisis and what it means, but more what the model of socialism in the advanced capitalist countries should be'.

So Rowthorn, who calls himself a Marxist, an economist and a communist believes it is not important to analyse why there is an economic

crisis and where it comes

Rowthorn goes on to show us what he truly believes. In his very next sentence, he

> 'I have become a left reformist. The crisis has been long and drawn out but I can't see the agencies of change and I'm not convinced about socialist answers any more

So here we have it, the Eurocommunist unmasked. Not a series of quotes from some estranged member of the Euro-communist wing but from an editorial board member of 'Marxism

Rowthorn obviously believes Marxism is irrelevant today judging from his com-ments. How can these people continue to call themselves communists!

> Sue Gwyer Manchester WRP

#### GEOFF PILLING'S lead article ('Tories Manslaugh-WRP POLICY ter', Workers Press, 17 January 1987) concerned the suf-**ON HOMELESS** fering of workers, especially the old, due to the severe cold.

Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editorial Board. Letters over 500 words will normally be cut. Letters should arrive by first post Monday at: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS,

and should include sender's address.

It is an issue in the minds of millions at this time. The article lifted the lid on the hypocrisy of the Tories and also the inadequate response of Labour MPs and trade union leaders.

Labour had accepted the Tories' late move to give a £5 freeze pay-out while union leaders asked for £10. The lead article correctly stated 'the elderly and the home-less don't want Tory or Labour charity'.

However, is this money charity? What do we pay taxes for? Don't workers accept paying tax for social services — heating allowance included? I heard one old ledy on the mode services. old lady on the radio saying she would keep the heating on regardless of cost.

The Labour Party should be demanding from the Tories that they tell people to keep the heating on and that they (the Tories) will pay out every penny of the extra heating bill of low-income groups such as the old, unemployed, single parents etc. That will show who is really for keeping workers alive and who isn't. The article ended: 'The elderly and the homeless don't want Tory or Labour charity. They want policies which guarantee everybody as of right a proper standard of living. The trade union and Labour leaders must be

made to fight for such policies. It is, literally, a life or death question.' No policies are actually stated. The WRP manifesto of June 1986 does include a

policy for the homeless. I

'In each area, committees of workers and tenants must survey the housing stock and make proposals to requisition unused office premises which can be used for temporary accommodation for homeless families.

(It incorrectly leaves out Labour councils. Commun-ity groups should ask Labour councils to join with them in such action. Town Halls, schools, council property should also be thrown open to the homeless.)

This is a temporary measure. The manifesto also

calls for longer term solu-

60 The nationalisation of the banks, insurance com-panies and the land is the only sure foundation on which every worker can have a decent home.

 Open the books of the big building firms to show where the profits go to make the case for workers' control.

● No sub-contracting out: nationalise the building industry without compensa-tion under workers' control!

• Expand the local authority direct labour organisations; abolish the anti-DLO legislation.

We call on trade unionists and Labour Party members to consider such measures and to fight for a future Labour government to implement them.

I don't have any confidence that the Labour leaders will do this. However millions still have illusions in Labour. So comrades, test out your leaders.

Robin Burnham

### THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE STATE

AN exceptionally muddled unsigned editorial appeared in Workers Press under the misleading title 'State Power and National Security' (13 December 1986).

- 1. The State/MI5 conspiracy (1974-1977) was directed at the Labour government and only indirectly at the labour movement which the writer seems to think are identical.
- The writer only found it 'ironic' that the democratically elected Labour government was subjected to state subversion, failing to recognise that this unprecedented and changed relationship between state and government was a reflection of the changing correlation of class forces in the mid-1970s.
- The Labourites are incapable of defending themselves, not because they can only take office, but because they are indis-solubly wedded to the state and imperialist capitalist system, which slakes from the semicolonised enormous pro-fits, a portion of which are used by the capital-ists to buy off, create and sustain a labour aristocracy in which the Labour Party is rooted.
- The writer's demagogic phrase 'parliamentary set-up' dissolves two matters into one. Parliament bourgeois institution won by the bourgeoisie in opposition to the reactionary arbitrary dictates of monarchical feudal rule.

It houses democratically elected governments through the working class exercising its bourgeois democratic right to vote, won in struggle against the bourgeoisie and aris-

Only someone influenced by Stalinist 'Third Period' ultra-leftism could deduce that the MI5 case exposes Labourite stories about the democratic nature of 'the par-liamentary set-up'. This is to deny the existence of bourgeois democratically elected governments, through collapsing that and the anti-democratic, unelected state into one.

- The reactionary and undemocratic nature of the state does not express the crisis of the ruling class. That has always been its nature whether the ruling class is in crisis or not.
- 'Contradictions in the British State' are not 'revealed' in the opposition of sections of the middle and ruling classes. This is tantamount to saying that the appearance and essence of phenomena are not disclosed in that phenomenon itself but only in and through other phe-nomena, the mystical view of 'god-believers'.
- It is equally mystifying to speak of the 'speed at which . . . changes have taken place in the US, Britain and France'. An old Healyite device, it replaces the necessary Marxist analysis which determines not 'speeds'

but economic movement informing changing class correlations.

Healy's ultra-left references to 'speedy develop-ments' were nothing more than an involuntary admission that he was taken by surprise. And

Because he and his theoreticians failed to base themselves on a consistently up-dated Marxist evaluation of the unfolding world economic situation, which would have permitted closer approximation to the materialist basis of changing international class correlations.

Consequently, whilst the forms of development might 'surprise', its modified essence would not, permitting preparedness for the essential line of class developments. In the absence of such analyses, the WRP was subjected by the Healy leadership to political lurches, officially sanctioned as the result of the 'speed' of the class struggle.

As for 'editorials', unsigned editorials combining mysticism with ultra-leftism, philosophico-political twins, inseparable and necessary to each other, it is not these, but less speedily written and Marxist ils that the working class requires.

Norah Wilde

### **OUT OF ORDER**

BRIAN Pearce's reference to 'The boys with the rosar-ies and the armalites' in last week's Workers Press is out of order.

If Pearce wishes to contribute to our developing understanding of Irish issues and is concerned about the relationship between religion and the armed struggle he should prepare a sober contribution on the subject. If, however, all he can do is produce cynical and bigoted off-hand remarks he would do well to keep them to him-

On the same page as Pearce's letter is another one from R. Bobinska. He writes: 'The editor of Workers Press suppresses my concrete analysis of the Wright case . .

Bobinska would seem to think that not printing his every word amounts to censorship. Having read the public argument between Bobinska and Pearce the only thing that seems to unite them is their arrogance.

And speaking of arrogance we come on to C. Smith's 'reply' to N. Dempsey's letter of the previous week.

'Dempsey was clearly angered by my suggestion that Thatcher could be removed. 'I believe the N. Dempsey letter voiced a feeling of de-

spondency widespread on the left. . 'They regard the Kinnock leadership as immovable'.

All without a shred of evidence, all based on Smith's 'I believe'. Smith then becomes really obnoxious by equating N. Dempsey with Healy.

'Healy too it must not be forgotten was driven to despair by the end of the miners' strike, he too pinned his hopes on sections of the Labour bureaucracy'

People who had contact with the WRP prior to Octo-ber 1985 will be familiar with this method of 'reply'. If anyone dares oppose you, first invent positions never put forward by your opponent. ('Capitalism will rule forever' is a particularly good one) and attack him on that.

An important technique to try is guilt by association. Before October 1985

favourites were A. Thornett, J. Archer, O.C.I. liquidationists' and others.

Associate your victim with Associate your victim with people and you were well on the way to liquidating any opposition. Comrade Smith learned well — he equates N. Dempsey's views with Healy's Healy's.

Near the end of his 'reply' however Smith really goes off the rails. He reveals to us that 'N. Dempsey's letter carries a subliminal mes-sage' "give up this talk of a British and world revolution" it whispers'.

If Comrade Smith really hears whispering from the pages of his Workers Press he would do well to seek medical help.

As to what messages Smith's subconsciousness received he is of course the only authority. Smith would have done well to answer some of N. Dempsey's points instead of relying on smears, inventions, and subliminal whispers.

B. Dempsey Glasgow WRP

### THE NORTH/SOUTH

AT WORK last week, in the presence of some supporters of left reformism, I was having an argument with a Rety (RCP) member about the front page of their paper 'The Next Step', which I considered highly sectarian.

The front page said: 'It's not North Versus South but us against the bosses'. The argument went something like this: 'I agree with you that the

only solution to the North/ South divide is the overthrow of capitalism, but these brothers here don't. And who knows, maybe they are right. I don't think they are, but I am not going to demand they agree with me.

'What I do insist upon, however, is that the depth of the destruction of jobs that has taken place since 1979, the devastation of whole communities and towns in "the North", means that the struggle against the Tories must be intensified.

'The movement against Thatcher should be encouraged, developed, broadened in opposition to all those who

we must wait for the election of a Labour govern-ment, in opposition to those that say they disagree with Kinnock but say the struggle against him must wait until after the election when a Labour government will come into conflict with the working class.

'Kinnock is in conflict with the working class now. Incidentally, that is why we called for a vote for the RCP in Knowsley — in opposition to all those who say the real struggle against Kinnock is yet to come.'

Imagine my disappoint-ment then when I picked up the (Workers Press, 10 January 1987) and read:

. not the north-south division but that between a tiny group of rich idlers who are ripping off millions in share dealings and a growing army who face winter without jobs, decent housing and social services. and social services.

As far as I can see there is essentially no difference be-tween the RCP's formulation and that in Workers Press.

I have always understood Marxism as principally a

guide to action, not simply the counterposing of a class analysis to all other analyses on the basis that it is more

I thought we broke from Healy to get away from the maximum programme as the answer to all ills.

What am I supposed to do in my union (I work in the civil service) and the union bureaucracy's adaptation to it? Tell the members in Liverpool, Newcastle and Manchester to do nothing because there is a more real fight against capitalism just around the corner?

We have come a long way since the split. We had a whole congress to adopt a Manifesto which started the road back to the Transitional Programme. Let's continue down that road and not slip back into the old sectar-

We may lose members to left reformism in the pro-cess, but as Peter Jones remarked in the summer be-fore the split, that is a price we cannot afford **not** to pay.

Peter Money Manchester

### TRANSPORT POLICY

YOUR article on bus deregulation (Roy Thomas, January 17 edition) was a little confused on political detail.

You claim that the Labour Party has no 'Front Bench spokesman on transport'.

This is not so. His name is Bob Hughes, and you must know him because you spend much space attacking him elsewhere in the same edi-

Mr Hughes is no longer a Shadow Cabinet member, because he was defeated by the Right in this year's election, but that is not the same

I realise it is not done for a Trotskyist journal to display a parliamentarist obsession, but if you are going to mention such things you should get them right.

You are also wrong to say that the Labour Party prom-ises to 'renationalise' bus companies.

This was specifically excluded from the Party's new transport policy statement on the urging of the relevant trade unions.

The document refers to public ownership at the local authority level, and to statu-tory planning of bus ser-

This sounds like the community control of which you assert that the Party is 'terrified'.

Your criticism would be better directed if you questioned whether the Party is prepared to spend resources required to implement this

Again, you may not wish to be slaves of detail when it comes to a bourgeois party, but I am sure the working class expects you to attack on the right ground. Good of you to take an

interest though.

Ian Willmore

### LETTERS ===

## THE IRISH REVOLUTION

GERRY DOWNING should expand on his article of January 10 ('Revolutionary Strategy in Ireland').

What is 'the Irish revolution' he speaks of, when he asks: 'Which class will lead the Irish revolution?' Obviously he does not mean only the socialist revolution, since only the working class could conceivably lead that.

He means the bourgeoisdemocratic revolution in Ireland, one of whose principal aims is national unity and the expulsion of British imperialism. He should say so. The 'Irish revolution' is a confusion.

Having said that, Comrade Downing is of course right to insist that, as Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution states, 'the complete and genuine solution of the tasks of achieving democration is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.'

Furthermore: 'No matter what the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in individual countries, the realisation of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organised in the Communist party (today, the Trotskyist party).'

Clearly, then, not under the leadership of the IRA or any of its military or political organisations, however 'left' they may sound.

The 'growing over' of the democratic into the socialist revolution does not complete the socialist revolution. That can be achieved only at the international level.

One feature of Comrade Downing's article puzzles me. From the Popular Front and the Civil War in Spain, he leaps 33 years to 1969-1970. What about the role of the IRA in the intervening years?

How did the bourgeoisnationalist movement confront World War II and the struggles of the war and post-war periods?

As for Comrade Downing's reference to David Reed's book ('Ireland: the Key to the British (sic) Revolution') as 'excellent', how is this commendation to be squared with Comrade Downing's own statement that 'Reed denies the fact that the working class has a central role to play'?

(In any case, this is further confusion — the working class does not have a 'central' but a leading role.)

My last comment is not a

minor one. Comrade Downing tells us that the 'excellent' Reed makes 'biting comments on the role of the British middle-class left (including the Socialist Labour League/Workers Revolu-

tionary Party under Healy).'

I believe Gerry Downing is a member of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party. Has he discussed and found agreement in that Committee that the SLL/WRP was part of 'the British middle-class left', or is he making this attack as an individual — in the columns of the WRP's paper?

I defy him to show how the policies of the SLL, on Ireland or on any other question, were 'middle-class'.

In 1969 the Workers Press, in front-page lead articles, in editorials and in features and reports written by several comrades who went to the north and participated in the struggles, stood alone in fighting for the defeat and withdrawing of British troops, while the 'middle-class left', including the Socialist Workers Party, welcomed those troops as the 'lesser evil'.

In the years between 1975 and 1985 Healy's policy of avoiding any clash with the British state produced the reactionary line, in the WRP, of outright condemnations of IRA bomb attacks in Britain.

That was a manifestation of the way Healy's regime introduced British middleclass policies into a proletarian organisation, the SLL/WRP.

In 1985, the process of degeneration involved in that was arrested, Healy and his allies defeated, by the WRP itself.

This dialectic Downing ignores, preferring simply the label 'British middle class'. He thereby slanders the work of hundreds of comrades who fought to build the proletarian revolutionary party, always against that 'British middle-class left'.

That fight had eventually to be fought inside the WRP, against Healy, Redgrave and Co. And it was fought. And we won. Don't forget that

J. Upward Bradford

PS. The caption under a photograph accompanying Comrade Downing's article says: 'Many of the best fighters of the Communist Party of Ireland perished on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. This group includes Frank Ryan.' This may lead some readers to think Frank Ryan was killed in Spain. So far as I know, he was taken prisoner and then taken to Germany. Perhaps Comrade Downing can tell us what happened to him subsequently.

### 1688 AND ALL THAT

BRIAN PEARCE'S letter on 1688 (Worker Press No. 58 January 17 1987) was disgraceful.

What world does this petty-bourgeois academic live in where racist abuse like 'the boys with the rosaries and the armalites' is used to describe Irish revolutionary fighters?

Many of these fighters are socialists, who put their lives on the line to defeat British imperialism whose bloody history Pearce seeks to gratify by misrepresenting Trotsky.

Yes, I'm sure the Workers Revolutionary Party would be against celebrating the Cromwellian revolution of 1640 and 1650 despite its great progressive nature.

Cromwell may have cut the head off Charles I to popular acclaim but his butchery of the Irish nation, his suppression of the diggers and levellers (the left wing of his army) confirmed the bourgeois nature of the new order.

Trotsky only recommended we take his determination to uphold 'the interests of the new, bourgeois social system . . without holding back on anything', as a lesson of how we should serve the interests of the in-

ternational working class today.

History has transformed puritanism from the revolutionary, bourgeois ideology of the 17th century into the racist, fascist expression of white Anglo Saxon protestant supremacy, from the north of Ireland, to the Southern States of the USA to South Africa.

It is sad to see a former Trotskyist, who has obviously become totally alienated from the struggles of working class people, giving credence, even if 'from the standpoint of world history' to so repressive an ideology.

The events of the 1640s are referred to by bourgeois historians as 'the civil war' yet 1688 is to them a 'glorious revolution'. This is because Cromwell did a thorough job in overthrowing the old feudal state and as Trotsky says 'what had been written by the sword could not be wiped out by the pen.'

This was what set the basis for industrial Britain and domination of the world market. 1688 was a compromise by which the landed aristocracy regained a share of power but in the new order. For the ruling class it was glorious because it was a compromise not a revolution at all

**Gerry Downing** 

### MARXIST SCHOLAR

WE DIDN'T need a fine Marxist scholar like Brian Pearce to tell us (Workers Press January 17) that the English bourgeois revolution was a great step forward for history.

His talents would be better employed examining Irish history, and particularly the way in which imperial Britain has attempted to manipulate sections of the bourgeoisie, middle class — and sections of the working class too — for its reactionary ends. He could thus fill a serious gap in Marxist literature.

Another point. I never heard anyone celebrating 1688, but every July 12 tens of thousands of Orangemen celebrate 1690. Does Brian Pearce think it strange that WRP members don't participate?

During their strike, Scottish miners from Protestant communities were seen charging police lines interspersing chants of 'You're Gonna Get Your F...ing Heads Kicked In' with ... '1690'!

In Stirling, the local Orange band — almost all miners or their sons — led a May Day parade playing 'Here We Go'. But these were heart-warming exceptions to the rule.

Orangeism is a breeding ground for reactionary religious bigotry, and — in Ireland — loyalist violence. Men with petrol bombs, sledge hammers and a readiness to kill, drive Catholic families out of their homes, shouting '1690'.

If the IRA step in to defend communities, Trotskyists must unhesitatingly support them

Simon Pirani

# BUT IS IT ART?

COMRADE Mick Daly's review of 'Handsworth Songs', in last week's Workers Press raised a question which I, for one, would like to see developed in the columns of our paper.

Not having seen the film I am, of course, not in a position to give an opinion but what interested me was the fact that Mick described it as 'very poetic and imaginative' and 'an art film' which 'ends up telling us very little'.

I suggest that if 'Handsworth Songs' tells us very little about the political importance of the riots in Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham, and I do not dispute the possibility for a moment, then it fails artistically.

('Citizen Kane' was an art film too, Mick.)

Jeff Jackson

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Let us know about them and what you think of the content of the Workers Press in general.

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WE HOPE you like the new columns in Workers Press. Please carry on sending letters with comments, criticisms and suggestions for improvements.

We are trying to make our paper more readable, reflecting the policy of the Workers Revolutionary Party and open to views and comments of other working class parties and organisations.

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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.

London Anti-Apartheid.

A STRIKING EDUCATION The story of the SILENTNIGHT strike in photographs taken by the strikers themselves. Available for hire as a portable exhibition. To hire, contact: Josephine Kelly, FTAT Strike HQ, 9 Frank Street, Barnoldswick, Lancs., BB8 5AE (0282-816709)

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings are held every Tuesday, 7.30pm, Stoke Newington Community Centre,

Leswin Road, N16. All are welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, London N4 (01-881 2938)

JOINT MEETING AGAINST MASS VICTIMIZATION Organised by SE Region Justice for Mineworkers Campaign; sacked workers from Silent Night, Hangers and News Interational. Speakers: Peter Heathfield (NUM), Liz Short (Printworkers), Alan Barnes (Hangers), Irene Scott (Silent Night). Friday 7.30pm, January 30 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

IRELAND: A SOCIALIST SOLUTION A debate jointly called by Workers Power, Socialist Organiser and Workers Press at Ornway Hall (small hall), Red Lion Square (near Holborn tube), Friday January 30, 7.30pm. Admission 50p.

BRING BACK VICTORIA WIL-LIAMS! Victoria Williams is an Acton woman fighting for her right to return, having been deported to Ghana last May. (Under British Immigration Laws nearly 3,000 black people were deported in 1985.) First meeting to plan the campaign, on Friday January 23 at 7.30pm; West Acton TU Centre, 33 High Street, Acton W3. Further details co BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX. Details of Campaign co BM BOX 4835, LONDON WC1N 3XX.

THE SIEGE OF WAPPING The Ministry of Power presents a multi-media Benefit for Sacked Printworkers. Friday January 23, 8,00pm at Hackney Empire Theatre, 291 Mare Street, London E8. (Box Office Tel: 01 985 2424)

GRENADA: Invasion, Occupation and Show Trials. Now the Truth. A Conference on the flagrant denial of legal rights, at St Mathews Meeting Place, Brixton Hill, London SW2, Saturday January 31, 2.00pm - 5.30pm. Further details from New Jewel 19 Committee, 216 Lambeth Road, SE1 (Tel: 01-733-379, 800-1097)

IRELAND — IS PEACE POSSIBLE? A Public Debate Clive Soley MP vs John Fitzpatrick RCP. Monday January 26 at 7.30pm, Shepherds Bush Village Hall, Bulwer Street (corner of Wood Lane and Shepherds Bush Green) For further details ring Fiona Foster 01-729-0414.

### The way forward for the anti-apartheid struggle

### Key is workers' Constitution was the main issue sanctions

BY ANN WACKETT

BOB MYERS' account of the Anti-Apartheid AGM in Workers Press (17 January) illustrated the cynical tac-tics used by the AAM leaders to stifle opposition.

It described how Workers Power and the Workers Revolutionary Party allied with the City Group and the Revolutionary Communist Group against the constitutional changes.

Those, like Socialist Action, who fell for the line that a delegate-based AGM was more democratic and more working class were ignoring

The aim of the constitutional changes was to stifle democratic debate and reduce the likelihood of organising working class action.

For us the key to effective solidarity with the masses of South Africa/Azania is workers' sanctions.

Our aim is a trade union our aim is a trade union boycott of all goods and services to and from the Pretoria regime, coupled with the building of material links with COSATU and other workers' organisations.

The action of the Dunnes strikers, of NUPE hospital workers, of Southampton dockers, Scottish TV workers and others show that workers' sanctions are possible.

Anyone who has witnessed the pathetic inaction of the bourgeois 'world leaders' knows they are necessary.

The record of the trade union leaders shows the need for a rank and file initiative.

The AAM, however is founded on a completely different perspective: that of persuading the 'international community' — in reality the international capitalist class — to isolate South African capitalism and bring it to the negotiating table.

This strategy flows directly from the popular frontist strategy of the ANC and the South African Communist Party.

It is no surprise to see

British Stalinism at the forefront of defending this strategy.

The City Group shares this fundamental perspective.

Behind the City Group's complaints about the form of the AAM's activity lies complete agreement about its objectives: ruling class sanctions as outlined in the AGM's motion 18 voted for by the City Group.

The strategy embodied in this resolution relegates working class action to a secondary and subordinate

Bob Myers' article was ambivalent towards the City Group.

We must unite with them against the AAM leaders and in support of the non-stop

But the City Group disrupted the trade union de-bate and voted against our attempt to extend the time given to discussing trade union action.

We should not advocate fusion of the Campaign for Trade Union Sanctions with the City Group unless the City Group radically alters its view of the centrality of workers' sanctions.

The AAM leadership victory on the constitution does not fundamentally change our attitude to the AAM.

It remains a popular front. The chief priority is to build the campaign for Trade Union Sanctions, drawing into it those sections of workers taking action now against apartheid, and the trade unions and Labour Parties at present affiliated to the AAM. This cannot be done by ignoring the AAM.

As long as workers' organisations entrust the lead-ership of the anti-apartheid struggle to the Anti-Apartheid Movement we must fight for workers' sanctions in the AAM itself and fight for affiliation to the AAM on this basis.

It is this fight that can shatter the cross-class alliance of the AAM and remove it as an obstacle to real workers' sanctions.

By BRONWEN HANDYSIDE, National Steering Committee Campaign for Trade Union Sanctions Against Apartheid

in a personal capacity

VARYING degrees of horror were manifested at the Anti Apartheid Movement AGM at the 'uncouth' behaviour and tactics of the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group: near apoplexy on the platform and refined gri-maces of distaste from members of Workers Power and the International group.

The Workers Revolutionary Party more or less whole-heartedly partici-pated with City Group.

Other political groups would not have been there if it had not been for the determined struggle waged by City AA over a period of years.

One criticism of City Group was that they did not sufficient attention to the debate on workers' sanctions and voted for that discussion to be cut short.

City Group was right to focus on the constitutional amendments as the crucial

The changes make it impossible for individual members to attend the AGM, let alone influence policies, including that on workers' sanctions.

The justification for the change from individual to delegate-based representation is that the AAM has expanded to 15-20,000 mem-

Local branches have hundreds of paper members who have signed a form at some the Non-Stop Picket outside South Africa House which have a real and visible im-

Most AA groups seem happy with trivial and ineffective propaganda work.

The project occupying the most passion and dedication from Lambeth AA at present is an attempt to smash the trade union sanctions campaign. There is no question that the order to do so has come down from the upper echelons of the AAM.

#### **Reinstate City Group!**

point in their lives and never done anything since, and perhaps 30 hard-core people who attend meetings.

The reason for the changes is to get shot of City Group, who have embarrassed the leadership for too long by showing up their reptilian inactivity—and to be able to do likewise to any other group which sticks its head over the paraget over the parapet.

The AAM will only expand to a genuine membership of thousands if it involves itself in activities like campaign-ing on workers' sanctions or

If the energy now being used was channelled into a determined campaign for Lambeth workers to impose sanctions, a blow would be struck at the South African economy.

A campaign of this nature must expand the membership and the significance of Lambeth AA. Applied on a national scale it would transform the AAM.

The size of the mem-bership of City Group re-flects the fire and courage of the non-stop picket. Out of 600 delegates at the AAM conference, City AA brought 200, most of them youth.

City Group were correct to kick up the biggest stink they could over the cynical treachery of Hughes and Spilling in opposing the boycott of the Commonwealth Games.

This is a basic question are our leaders accountable or not?

The way forward for the AAM now is for members to fight tenaciously for effective campaigns, particularly on the issue of trade union sanctions, but also to fight for the recognition of the Non-Stop Picket, and the re-instatement of City AA.

The Trade Union Sanctions campaign has already pushed the AA leadership into avowing — belatedly — that they are going to do something about workers' sanctions.

They only decided to do so after the Lambeth Trades Council campaign was mounted. They now propose to launch their March Month of Action around workers sanctions in Lambeth.

Let us see what they do and meanwhile continue to try to work with them on our campaign.

A campaign for the reinstatement of City Group raises identical questions to the trade union sanctions campaign. Why does the national leadership try to destroy groups which are carrying out effective work in opposition to apartheid?

The difference between the sanctions campaign and a campaign to support City AA is that it is City Group which unleashes the most hysterical virulence.

We should not be afraid of

The organisation which is most hated by a bureaucratic leadership is the one which is the most threaten-

What the AAM leadership fears in City Group is not the Revolutionary Communist Group, but the youth and their passion, iron will and hatred of the bureaucracy.

It seems to me we must think again if we were embarrassed by City AA, because what we were uncomfortable about is the fight of youth against one of the dirtiest bureaucracies I have come across.

The fear being raised about the Trade Union Sanctions Campaign Against Apartheid now is that it is in danger either of suffering taint from City Group, or of being 'taken over' by it.

This is the identical fear which has been voiced and acted on by the national AAM. Nobody is in danger of being tainted by uniting with a principled struggle. On the contrary.

Equally, our sanctions campaign is in no danger of being taken over by City AA.

We must acknowledge that so far, they have a finer track record than ours — let us hope that we can fight as hard as they have, let us assist them in their struggle, and let them assist us in

It is the same fight.

### PERSONAL COLUMN

ment's AGM in London on 12-13 January

Uproar against the bureaucracy at the Anti-Apartheid Move-

#### **How apartheid** started

ACCORDING to Edward Norman, writing in last week's 'Times Literary Sup-plement', apartheid began in South Africa when missionaries got the idea of 'separating the races, as a device for preserving the blacks from corrupting contact with white culture'

Not until the 1940s, Norman adds, were the Afrikaners able to enshrine their concepts of racial control in law'.

There are two serious errors here. First of all, apartheid was introduced to South Africa not by missionaries but by British administrators. Nor was it introduced to protect black people, but to provide white colonists with a source of dirt-cheap labour.

The pioneer in setting up 'Native Reserves' was Sir Theophilus Shep-stone, Diplomatic Agent in Natal (1845-1853) and afterwards Secretary for Native Affairs (1853-1875).

During his first four years in Natal he persuaded most of its black inhabitants to move into the locations and to do manual work on white farms and in white homes at very low wages. By 1860 about 80,000 Africans were settled in the Natal 'Reserves'

With the discovery of diamonds (1867) and gold (1886), the black agricultural community in South Africa was diverted into these new industries. No other place was open to blacks but that of low-paid unskilled labour.

In the second place, 'racial control' was locked into the law of South Africa, not in the 1940s, but in the 1913 Natives Land Act.

This embodied the policies of separation, in both land and Parliamentary representation, that had been advocated by the Native Affairs Commission of 1903-1905, chaired by Sir Godfrey Lagden, a director of the South African Gold Trust.

Lagden envisaged an economic col-our bar and pass laws to regulate an adequate workforce of cheap black labour. His Commission was entirely made up of British members, and its report clearly set forth two features: territorial segregation, and political

The 1913 Act, which gave apartheid the force of law, was wholly based on Lagden's principles, and the British government admitted as much in 1913.

Edward Norman is an eminent historian of religion. He really ought to do his homework before entering the field of South African history.

He might do worse than start with a careful study of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane's book The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa (New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1979).

Magubane makes it clear that unless we understand the legacy that British imperialism left behind in South Africa we can't begin to understand the present-day struggle there.

#### **Boomerang effect**

I WAS sorry to see Workers Press accused of plagiarism last week. I'm sure it was all a misunderstanding.

To my mind, plagiarism means not just borrowing a few facts, but passing

off whole passages written by somebody else as one's own work.

Several really glaring instances of literary plagiarism, one or two by wellknown authors, have come to light in the past few years. Each time the culprit has preferred discreet silence to any form of apology.

Plagiarism is an odd kind of theft, in like the wages system - many otherwise high-minded people don't see it as theft at all. In some people's eyes the written word is fair game, and the only bad thing about passing off someone else's work as one's own is getting found out

I've twice had work of mine lifted in this way. On the first occasion the culprit came up with the excuse that he'd been so impressed by what I'd written that he'd taken very full notes. These had unaccountably got mixed up with his own manuscript and retyped without quotation marks.

The second time was when someone working in the same field asked me to supply him in advance with a section of a book I was writing, to help him with

Soon afterwards that section appeared in a periodical under his name, almost word for word and without acknowledgment.

My second plagiarist had a book out last week. The 'New Statesman', 'New Society', and 'City Limits' each asked me to review it for them.

This put me in a painful dilemma. For all I know, it's a good and highly original book, and nothing would have pleased me more than to say so. But suppose I had felt it necessary to be critical, even severe?

Those who knew the background might well have doubted my objectivity and suspected me of paying off an old score — a practice sadly not unknown among book reviewers.

In the end I solved the problem in the only possible way: by declining to review the book.

This is what might be called the long-term boomerang effect of plagiarism. It's as good a reason as anv. I suppose, for writers not to indulge in it.

#### **A sinister** development

BRITAIN's racist immigration laws are used, amongst other things, as a device to behead the trade union movement by deporting local leaders.

That is precisely what is threatened in Manchester, where George Roucou, a UCATT shop steward in the City Council's Direct Works Department, is to be deported unless the movement rallies round and prevents it.

George, who hails from the Seychelles, has been in this country for 12 years. Deportation would mean separation from his job, his Wythen-shawe home, his wife, and his three children

The George Roucou Defence Campaign has called a demonstration for Friday, February 6. It assembles at All Saints, Mancunian Way, at noon and sets off at 1p.m. There is a rally in the Town Hall at 2p.m.

This demonstration has the backing of the Manchester Direct Works Joint Shop Stewards Council (UCATT). Other unions have pledged their sup-

Readers who can help by handling leaflets, or in other ways, should phone Vanessa Young on (061) 234 3168.

#### **Note to snipers**

AS Lunderstand it. I'm free to write here as I please, and am not required to toe any party line. In fact I wouldn't write anywhere on any other terms.

This is said less from arrogance, or self-advertisement, than to answer in advance those who spend a large part of their lives sniping at Workers Press.

I haven't joined the Workers Revolutionary Party. In my opinion writers on the left make a more effective contribution if they stay clear of organisational

But having been described in the 'Sunday Times' a couple of years ago as 'a Marxist of integrity' — now there's a poison label decorated with flowers for you! — I see it as a sign of integrity that Workers Press has opened its columns to opponents, critics, and even a few mavericks.

I hope my contributions will stimulate debate. And I welcome corrections of the mistakes I'm bound to make.

PETER FRYER

### REVIEWS

### **BOOKS**

## Vivid memories you can't kill...



A noose is lowered as TUC General Secretary Norman Willis speaks at a rally in

You Can't Kill the Spirit. By Jill Miller. Women's Press, £4.95.

I WAS asked to express my views on the book 'You can't kill the spirit' by Jill Miller.

As a miner's wife actively involved with the Betws Women's Support Group as treasurer during the miners' year-long strike, I can identify with most of the events that the women in the Abertillery Women's Support Group encountered.

The early childhood memories, collection of food and its preparation in the kitchen at the Institute (or in the Miners' Welfare Hall in my case), fund raising, food parcel preparation and distribution, picket-line duty, public speaking, rallies and marches, the Christmas party and present distribution, the shortages of money and fuel and the sorting out of priorities, clothing collection and distribution, the happy and not so happy times spent at the strike centre.

The pressures and tensions and the emotional traumas and anger felt towards the government, police and media due to the slanderous statements issued about the miners' leaders and their supporters especially at being called 'the enemy within', the noose incident at Port Talbot, the fantastic local, national and foreign support, the long-lasting friendships, the unity among those fighting for the survival of the pits and communities, the disappointment at the scabs and the recollection of the first day back at work, marching in unity, banner flying.

In the book, one incident stands out: the adamant way each woman vows that their group would not disband, even after the strike ended and the group would have served its purpose. It would still continue.

Reading the book brought back some vivid memories to me of the strike although to me the book lacks atmosphere and I would have liked it to be less vague about instances during the strike.

As I see it, the book is an opportunity for the women to air their personal views.

As all the women bar possibly one were involved in the same activities and had similar upbringings, the book gets very repetitive to the point of getting tedious (I've heard all this before!!)

As for Jill's contributions in between each life history, well, what can I say, they were mostly quite irrelevant.

Not a book for my bookshelf, I'm afraid.

Judith Evans

## Top managers benefit from asset strip

Privatisation: Paying the Price. By Labour Research. £1.15.

THE GOVERNMENT'S contracting-out programme has already cost 71,000 jobs in the public sector and another 330,000 are threatened.

These figures are presented in the latest pamphlet from Labour Research.

It reviews the government's asset-stripping spree which began with the sale of ICL in 1979 and shows what has happened in the parts of the public sector where work has been put out to tender.

The City's cut in fees and commissions for privatisations since the election of the Tories in 1979 has been £407m — which includes £123m for British Gas alone.

While workers have been badly affected by the selloffs, the top managers have benefited enormously.

The chairman of Cable and Wireless, Sir Eric Sharp, has seen his salary rise tenfold in the five years since privatisation.

The Tory story about the way the privatisation programme has increased the number of shareholders has to be seen in the context of the slice of the cake the big shareholders have.

At British Telecom, three quarters of the shareholders—1.2 million people—own just 7.3 per cent of the shares.

At the other end of the scale, 1,313 individuals and institutions — less than 1 per cent of the shareholders — own 36 per cent of the BT shares.

Strong unionisation in the

formerly nationalised industries has resisted the destruction of pay and conditions. The exception has been British Rail hotels.

However, jobs have been lost both before and after privatisation.

British Airways staff has been cut from 53,600 to 38,900 since 1980 in preparation for its sale.

Associated British Ports have cut their workforce by a fifth since they were sold.

Pension rights have suffered, even in companies like British Airways where the sale has not yet taken place.

In the case of the contractors moving into the public sector, the impact on jobs has been massive, but for those left, conditions have worsened.

Holiday entitlement has been slashed, sick pay wiped out, and working hours altered so that employees, often women, lose any protection from employment laws and become casual

The report shows the falling standards of service once the contractors move in; where performance has been monitored, it is between a third and a quarter below the specified level.

The report also shows contractors overcharging, and the way a handful of firms — almost all of which make donations to the Tory party — have come to dominate the contracts, with BET and Hawley holding 62 per cent of council cleaning contracts, 46 per cent of civil service cleaning and 53 per cent of NHS domestic service contracts.

**Bridget Dixon** 

### ROBSON'S CHOICE

THE first feature article in Radio Times this week — while rumblings about BBC management's blatant censorship of programmes gets louder by the hour — is designed as a sop for supposedly backward viewers.

It's entitled 'Taking Sides' and purports to be a background piece introducing the series Split Screen (Wednesday, 10 p.m., BBC2) which this week deals with sex education in schools. But it is nothing of the kind.

By underlining the 'exceptional' nature of this series, which presents programmes which are 'unashamedly partisan', the article sets out to strengthen the ideological hold on the producers and viewers alike.

The producers on this series are 'just hired hands' we are told. 'They've not had to waste any of their time ensuring balance and impartiality' (my emphasis).

The implication being, note well, that the remainder of the time BBC producers are devoting their skills to 'ensuring balance and impartiality' and that this is what responsible viewers have come to expect.

This myth, peddled by the ruling class, the corollary of which is that the BBC is independent of government, is a load of cobblers, as media analysts might admit if they were tempted to speak the truth.

Every British miner and his family, every printer, every black youth in St Paul's Bristol, knows that there is no more 'balance and impartiality' on the BBC than there is in the class struggle.

Having said that, I have to admit that on **Saturday** I will allow myself to be hijacked by the BBC at

7.25p.m. (BBC2), a Tchaikovsky piano concerto followed by his glorious 'Pathetique' symphony.

Interesting to note that like Beethoven, with his last piano sonata, Tchaikovsky breaks with classical tradition and makes his last movement a slow one. A few days after the concerto's first perfomance the composer died.

Later on Saturday at 9.55p.m. (BBC2), Robert Altman's film **Thieves Like Us** followed at 11.55p.m. (BBC2) by Nicholas Ray's film debut **They Live by Night.** 

Lie in on **Sunday**. Get up in time for Everyman's My Father's World at 10.10p.m. (BBC1) which looks at the Mennonite community in central Canada.

I know of a similar community in Paraguay who tried to pick up where the expelled Jesuits left off. They didn't have much influence in spreading the good word, but they did invent a remarkable lacquer that was virtually impervious to damage.

They made artefacts of wood, machine-turned, and one of the most popular lines produced by these confirmed teetotallers was whisky 'glasses' made of quebracho, a local hardwood, which they protected with their secret lacquer or polish. I can't wait to find out what their Canadian cousins get up to.

Christopher Morahan's After Pilkington will be worth a look, (10.10p.m., BBC2), which will leave you in the right frame of mind to sleep through yet another round of snooker.

On **Monday** there is **Wild-life on One** (8p.m., BBC1), introduced by the genuinely enthusiastic and seemingly



Hope: Turkish director Yilmaz Guney's examination of social injustice

ageless David Attenborough, and **Donna** at 10.55p.m. (C4) which looks at the women's movement in Italy.

If you want lighter fare try Comes A Horseman (10.30 pm, ITV) a well-made film by the director of Klute.

Tuesday offers Harold Pinter's Betrayal (9p.m., BBC2) adapted for television by the author and directed by David Jones, followed by a choice: the documentary Attack on Liberty (10.30p.m. ITV) or The Twentieth Century Remembered (10.50) p.m., BBC1).

The former is an account of the Israeli attack on a US

spy ship during the Six Day War, the latter is an interview with the thoroughly discredited, ex-general secretary of the TUC who used to be plain Len Murray but in return for services rendered is now known as Lord Murray of Wapping (sorry, Epping Forest).

I will go for Len. If I cannot stand it, I will choke the telly and turn on Radio 3 to hear Music from India at 11p.m., a recital by the imperishable sitar player, Nikhil Banerjee, on the first anniversary of his death.

Wednesday is no strain on eye or ear. There is little of interest aside from Yilmaz Guney's film **Hope**, (10 pm, C4). Don't miss it.

Thursday: Computer addicts might get some useful hints from Equinox: What They Don't Tell You When They Sell You a Computer, 8.30p.m. (C4), though from the title you are likely to get more than hints.

As I have already shot my bolt, I'll tune in to Pinchas Zukerman and the ECO in a performance of the great D Major Violin Concerto by Beethoven, 8.25p.m. (Radio

Friday offers more choice. Arena at 9.30p.m. (BBC2) has a feature on Dennis Potter, author of the Singing Detective, and Conversation Piece 11.20p.m. (BBC2), a feature film by veteran Italian director Luchino Visconti.

At 10.30p.m. Channel 4 presents Fritz Lang's brilliant 1944 production The Woman in the Window with T. G. (sic) Robinson in the leading role.

If you want to rest your eyes, try tuning in to Barrie Keeffe's radio play Frozen Assets, about a Borstal Boy on the run (7.30p.m. Radio 3).

• If you want to go out, try and see Malcolm, a moving and thoroughly entertaining first feature from Australia — if you can find it.

# orkers

Saturday January 24 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

## **DISGUST!**

DISGUST was the main emotion of Caterpillar workers on sit-in duty last week.

'They promised us we were secure until 1992. In fact they said 1100 people were safe more or less indefinitely,' said AEU member John Brown.

· 'This is not a pit that has run out of coal or a steel mill which is running over-capacity. A former manager phoned, saying that out of 27 years on this site, Caterpil-lar has been profitable in 24 of them. And we are closing.

'Of course we weren't sup-posed to know about this. It only leaked out in the "Financial Times".

Jim McGuinness, an EET-PU member, said: 'Here are 1100 guys with their backs to the wall.'

Jim, believing his job se-cure, took out a large bank loan to pay for double glazing the day before the clo-sure announcement.

#### Sixth job

He pointed at a tractor and said: Two months ago, the Secretary of State for Scot-land sat on that tractor, saying he was putting his hopes in it. Now where are

Mick McPake, an AEU member on the occupation team, is the walking incarnation of the Scottish industrial wasteland. 'This is my sixth job. Every single my sixth job. Every single place I have worked in is now closed,' he said.

'First was a job at Coopers Fine Fare, then the Auchengeich pit, the White Horse whisky bond, Burroughs at Cumbernauld and

Bathgate BMC. Now after seventeen years I am losing my job here, and my wife is being made redundant from the Black and White whisky bond at Stepps, at the same

Tam Wilson said: 'Every company that comes to Scotland stays 25 years and then gets out. When we were told gets out. When we were told about this package deal "for the future", young men made mortgage and HP commitments. One young lassie took out a mortgage last week. Now they have been dumped."

### CATERPILLAR OCCUPATION



Workers guarding the occupied Caterpillar factory at Uddingston, Lanarkshire, and (below) posters at the main entrance

BY TAM WHITE WEST OF SCOTLAND WRP

THE occupation of the Caterpillar factory at Uddingston, Lanarkshire, is the first time since the miners' strike that the bosses and the state have been challenged in such a direct manner. 500

An occupation means the workers are in control of the means of production. Nothing can be done without their say-so. They have thrown down the gauntlet to the bankers and the capitalist state.

The confident action of the Uddingston workers also gives the lie to the idea that the miners' strike was a decisive defeat for the working class. If that was so, how would such action be possible?

An occupation, in fact, takes the fight for jobs on to a higher plane. If the pits had been occupied and all the phoney meetings with

the NCB stopped, the NUM fight would have taken a different course.

An occupation presents an opportunity for the involvement of the community and the working-class move-ment. Caterpillar must become a focus for the energies of all those ready to fight this government.

The reins of the Uddingston struggle must be put in the hands of an occupation committee elected by the workers themselves. They workers themselves. must guard against the professional conciliators who would like to make a deal with the Tory secretary of state Malcolm Rifkind and would be happy to see another capitalist company come in, keeping half the present work-force and giving way on trade union rights and conditions.

#### Reputations

This is what happened at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, where trade union officials like Jimmy Airlie built up undeserved reputations.

The Caterpillar issue must be taken up now by the whole labour movement. Its future depends on this.

My own experience at Tal-bot was that a decision was taken by a mass meeting in January, giving the shop stewards authority to take any action they deemed necessary to safeguard jobs against the threat of redundancies. When the notice of closure came in April, many leading stewards ran about like headless chickens, print-ing a weekly newspaper, and holding a series of meeting with Allan Stewart (minister at the Scottish Office).

They decided to remain undecided, while the axe hanging over their head was



being sharpened to a fine point. Not a job was saved.

This time the fight has started the right way, with an occupation. Now it must be stepped up and the whole labour movement must be brought in to it, actively. Other factories threatened with closure should be occupied and the fight linked to Uddingston. This is an ideal way to start a campaign to bring down this Tory government.

• The destruction of jobs at Caterpillar and countless other companies in the west of Scotland highlights the necessity for trades unions Labour Party and all working-class organisations to adopt the policy of nationalisation under workers' control — not only of the factories, but of the banks, sharedealing and swindling cen-tres like the city of London, and insurance companies.

This is the only way in which unemployment can be stopped. A Labour govern-ment working with the socalled 'alternative economic strategy' will do nothing to challenge the power of the multi-nationals and monopo-lies who are devastating in-

• The Falkirk branch of the EETPU last Monday voted full support for the Udding-ston workers. Every union branch, Labour Party and shop stewards' committee should follow this example.

### A worker's view

ROBERT BOYES, AEU member and a skilled turner at Caterpillar, told Workers Press:

6When our union was told about the closure, they said to the company, 'let's have talks about it'— they refused even that.

Then we held a meeting nd decided to occupy. Nobody voted against, and at the next mass meeting only one hand went up against.

#### No choice

We had no choice. The closure was announced in a short statement, in the middle of a cold spell when many workers were not even in the factory, right at the end of one shift. There was a danger we would actually be locked out.

They said the rundown of the factory would take a year, that we would all be employed until the fair (summer holiday), and some until next New Year. We didn't trust them trust them.

At the best of times managements don't tell the truth.
And in this case they wouldn't even sit down and

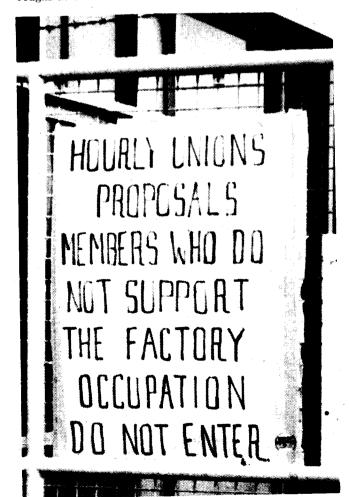
talk about it for ten minutes.

Personally I have feared this sort of thing for some time. Workers here were conned. All the normal pressures people are under, to be good timekeepers, to keep their noses clean, were doubled, because we were working for the future.

We were going to be 'the most automated of all Caterpillar's factories'; we had plaques on the wall — like they do in the Soviet countries — saying we were the 'plant of the future'; we had glossy magazines about investment. Compare all that to the reality.

I was expressing doubts about our security, and unfortunately I've been proved right. Now we have taken action. But I believe personally you can't change the system only by fighting for something when you are left with no option; you have to fight on a long-term basis — how you live, what you buy, what you vote — not just stick your foot in the dyke on occasions like this.

Closure will be devastating for me, a single man, never mind someone with a wife and family. I have been 21 years in Caterpillar. The system's not changed in that



A poster warning workers who don't support the occupation to