

Wales miners must reject six-day working!

SCARGILL DEFENDS NATIONAL UNION

SOUTH WALES miners must throw out their union leaders' attempt to impose British Coal's ultimatum: accept severe worsening of working conditions or the new Margam pit will not open.

To whip miners into line, British Coal are threatening to divert capital elsewhere, which would affect construction costs and undermine the viability of the project.

British Coal's ultimatum, to be discussed at this weekend's delegate conference of South Wales miners, involves:

- A six-day working week
- Rotating three shifts (days, afternoons, and nights)
- The imposition of six 8-hour shifts in any one week.

The National Union of Mineworkers is presently committed to a reduction in the working week, an aim that would be seriously undermined if the Margam conditions are accepted.

British Coal want this deal so that they can enforce a worsening of conditions throughout the British coalfields.

Durham miners are incensed at the South Wales action in negotiating an agreement that will alter the five-day week agreement.

Attempts by British Coal in Durham to change the shift pattern at Wearmouth colliery resulted in a resolution being put at the last national conference stating that any change to the five-day week agreement would be a national question.

Gordon Argument, Durham Mechanics delegate from Wearmouth told Workers Press:

'If the South Wales area sign an agreement that contravenes the five-day week agreement they will be doing exactly what South Derbyshire did when they signed the incentive agreement in 1975.'

'They will undermine the national union and resist in making it impossible in other areas such as ourselves to resist changes in our shift patterns.'

'South Wales must decide or suffer the consequential damage to the national union.'

The South Wales NUM leaders are hiding behind the threat that the scab UDM will enter the coalfield to negotiate at Margam. This is charlatanism. It is the union right wing, together with the Stalinists, who have opposed Arthur Scargill's principled refusal to contemplate reconciliation with Lynx and Prendergast.

used deal, and to negotiate an alternative acceptable to the union as a whole.

Far bigger issues than agreements in the South Wales field are at stake. The future of the union and its leadership are at the centre of the growing conflict between Scargill and his opponents on the union executive.

● Scottish miners' secretary Eric Clarke is reported to have told South Wales officials that he will, if elected NUM vice-president next week, 'restrain' Scargill from intervening to defend national agreements in cases such as Margam.

According to 'The Independent', Clarke is opposed to the NUM national leadership 'interfering in negotiations which should properly be handled by the area affected'.

Isolate

Clarke is regarded by the right-wing and Communist Party Stalinists alike as the man to isolate Scargill in the national leadership.

Clarke is a member of the Labour Party national executive. But it is no secret that he works closely with the 'Euro-communist' wing

of the Communist Party which, since the 1984-5 strike, have become the most determined opponents of Scargill's leadership.

Not surprisingly, backing for Clarke in the vice-presidential election — which takes place on 17 March — has come from retiring vice-president Mick McGahey in a specially-published issue of the 'Scottish Miner'.

He writes of Clarke: 'Critically for our industry he has the ear of the (Labour Party) leadership.'

In a thinly-veiled attack on Scargill, McGahey goes on: 'Eric's proposals make a thoughtful, sensible programme. They might not grab the headlines but any fool can do that by saying something sensational.'

Hostility between McGahey and Scargill first developed during the 1984-1985 strike. While Scargill forcefully supported mass picketing, and defended mining communities from the police invasions, McGahey and George Bolton, his successor as Scottish NUM president, opposed such militant tactics.

● Miners from Durham will lobby the South Wales delegate conference on Sunday in opposition to the proposed Margam deal.

BY TRAVIS GOULD

Visiting the Gwent coalfield recently, Scargill spoke out publicly against British Coal's Margam blackmail.

Des Dutfield, president of the South Wales miners, has lined up against Scargill. At first he covered himself by saying that a national agreement would have to be made before the new pit could open. But the South Wales executive has now moved away from this position with Dutfield strongly recommending acceptance of six-day working at Margam.

Dutfield claims this will not affect existing contracts of employment for the rest of the industry. He argues that the South Wales miners should decide on the possibility of more jobs coming to the area.

The scrapping of national deals and their replacement by area negotiations — which many of Scargill's opponents want — marks a dangerous step back to the old Miners' Federation which ended with nationalisation.

Many miners are rightly sceptical about Margam offering more jobs. They claim that pits in other areas might close, cancelling out any jobs gained.

British Coal argues that Margam is exclusively a South Wales project, where the market for coal produced is centred on local steel works and would not affect national issues.

They also claim that the countries exporting coal to South Wales, and with which the Board will be competing, already work a six-day — some even a seven-day — week.

Miners, with their history of international solidarity, will not wear this. The biggest coal exporters to South Wales are Poland (where steel unions are suppressed) and South Africa (where operations are violently whered) and the US carried on-busting was major attacking before the NUM in the NUM in

Delegate weekend's com this a clear duty to the NUM to throw out the prop-

Labour-Unionist pact?

OFFICIAL Unionist MP Harold McCusker has been told by Labour backbenchers that his party could help keep a Kinnock government in power.

McCusker, MP for Upper Bann in the the occupied six counties of Ireland, said last week: 'I was reminded by one or two of the Labour MPs of the role I played in 1979.' At that time, Unionist MPs voted for Callaghan and enabled him to survive a vote of confidence.

Now all the Unionist factions, from those believing in 'UDI' to the hardened loyalists to Britain, are united on one thing: their opposition to Thatcher. The breach between them and the British Tories is deeper than ever.

Clearly this is seen as an opportunity to get support from the Unionists in the event of a 'hung' parliament by some Labour MPs. (Which ones? Labour Party members should ask).

McCusker is enthused by his unofficial contacts. He appeared on Channel 4 last week, railing against Thatcher — and contrasting her unfavourably with Labour Prime Ministers.

Clement Attlee, he re-

minded viewers, guaranteed support to the loyalists when the 26-county Irish Republic was formed in 1949; he also mentioned James Callaghan, who conspired with Michael Foot, chief whip at the time, to increase the parliamentary representation for the six counties to 17 seats.

McCusker says if a Labour government stuck by the Anglo-Irish agreement he 'clearly would not be interested' in supporting it. Labour spokesman on Northern Ireland, Peter Archer, says there is 'definitely no prospect of any kind of a deal with the Unionists', and that Labour have no proposals to alter the agreement. Who then are the back-benchers who clearly take a different view?

The Labour leadership are going to do nothing to dismantle the diseased six-county statelet, which relies on fascist violence, discrimination and a bloated state apparatus to keep going. The fact that McCusker is drooling with enthusiasm about the Labour Party is one more proof of it.

LEYLAND LOBBY



Workers from Austin Rover lobbied parliament last Wednesday against the sell-off to DAF Trucks: 60 per cent to DAF and 40 per cent to Leyland. The union leadership are in favour of accepting a 50-50 ownership deal.

Workers Press

Greenwich Signals

ALL serious workers will think carefully about the Greenwich by-election debacle in which the Labour Party lost a seat it had held since the end of World War II.

For many sections of the Left, the loss of this once-safe Labour seat will be seen as a disaster. This is not the position of Workers Press.

Let us clear up one thing. Blame for the defeat on the dirty smear tactics of Tory pressmen is beside the point: that is what they are paid to do. Not only is it nonsense, it is hypocrisy because the campaign against the Labour candidate was initiated not by the Tories but by Kinnock and his friends, even before she was selected.

Considerable Tory support for the victorious SDP is no surprise. The fact is that reformist crawling before the Tories will never win the middle class. The most important thing to remember about the SDP leaders is that they came from the same social-democratic stable as Kinnock and Hattersley. Owen, Jenkins and Shirley Williams were in the group that led the fight to rid the Labour Party of Clause Four, to undermine the unilateralist fight inside Party and to tie it securely to the immediate interests of US imperialism.

The Owen-Jenkins SDP merely sets the pace for social-democracy as a whole. It was entirely predictable that the Greenwich result should be a signal for stepping up Kinnock's campaign against the Labour Left.

For some 80 years the Labour Party, formed by the trade unions, has been the centre of working-class politics. Through two world wars and several periods of economic crisis the Labour leaders have kept the working-class movement safe for capitalism. It is no exaggeration to say that, throughout this period of decline of British imperialism, the Labour Party has been the most important prop of the British capitalist state.

That prop is crumbling. The industrial disputes of the last period — the miners' strike, the battle at Wapping — have been characterised by profound distrust and hostility of workers for the trade union leaders. The collapse of much of British manufacturing together with the growing parasitism of British imperialism are now finding their expression in the political field.

New layers of the working class are showing their deep contempt for this craven, bankrupt Labour leadership. The miners' strike, especially, brought many workers and youth into a direct political struggle against the capitalist state for the first time. Wapping repeated this experience. Young people — at school, in the colleges and in the dole queues — feel particularly bitter, blaming the Labour and trade union leaders no less than Thatcher for unemployment.

Sections of the middle class who were supposedly attracted by Kinnock's respectable image, have demonstrated in Greenwich once again that they are in fact repelled by it. In the past, millions of workers were prepared to vote Labour automatically. Those days are gone for good.

Those whose thinking is imprisoned within the old forms of trade-union militancy plus parliamentary Labour politics must naturally draw the most pessimistic conclusions from these changes. We do not. The crisis of social democracy — which has deepened continually especially since the appearance of the SDP — is a precondition for the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership in the working class.

Greenwich has served to indicate once more the great vacuum of leadership in the working class. It has opened up new possibilities for the Workers Revolutionary Party, possibilities which we must now seize firmly.

Outrage at Shaw inquiry result

THREE HUNDRED students and other young people demonstrated in Manchester on Monday against the decision to charge Steven Shaw with trying to pervert the course of justice.

They marched from Manchester Students' Union to the main Bootle Street police station in the city centre.

The prosecution by the Director of Public Prosecutions follows a Police Complaints Authority inquiry into the policing of Leon Brittan's visit to Manchester University Students' Union on 1 March 1985.

The DPP has also decided to prosecute three policemen: two for perjury and

one for assault.

Manchester University Students' Union has expressed outrage at the result of the inquiry.

'Despite overwhelming evidence condemning police behaviour on 1 March 1985, the PCA feels able to bring charges against just three constables, two of which are for charges of lying in court.'

'We have now learnt that the DPP is in the process of serving a summons on Steven Shaw for attempting to pervert the course of justice (a very serious offence).'

'Steven is at the centre of the allegations of police brutality and subsequent harassment. His complaints and evidence have not only been totally rejected but he now faces prosecution for exercising his basic right to speak out against unacceptable police action.'

Steven Shaw was one of

hundreds of students who assembled on the steps of the Students' Union building to demonstrate against the policies of the then Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, who had been invited to speak by the University Conservative Society. Police attacked the demonstration and broke it up.

Students were kicked, thrown down the steps, and dragged by the hair. One of the most seriously injured was Sarah Hollis, who was thrown down the steps after Leon Brittan had entered the building.

Steven Shaw helped in the campaign to publicise police brutality and defend those who had been arrested. He helped Manchester City Council's police monitoring unit to take statements from witnesses.

He and his friends were subjected to continual

harassment and intimidation by police officers. His house was broken into and he was interrogated for five hours, strip-searched, and subjected to an internal body search which resulted in his requiring hospital treatment for a ruptured anal passage.

Later he was beaten up by officers who stubbed a cigarette out in his face and left him unconscious and badly injured.

Zak Mockton, general secretary of Manchester University Students' Union, told Workers Press: 'We haven't read the 45,000-word report because it is sub judice. The summary suggests that it was the non-cooperation with the investigations that held up the report.'

'It is ludicrous to suggest this since they had 15 months and the DPP have had the report for seven months.'

'It is only another way to divert attention. We have always called for a public inquiry and our call has been supported by Manchester City Council, Manchester University Council, and Amnesty International.'

'We are not going to give legitimacy to this sort of report. It is just a whitewash. We want to know from the police what is it they fear from an independent inquiry.'

Councillor Tony McCardell, chair of Manchester's Police Monitoring Unit, said he too was outraged by the result of the police investigation:

'Steven's only crime has been to speak out against police brutality. He has had to flee the country because of what he has suffered. Yet Steven's nightmare ordeal is far from over as a result of the DPP's action.'

'I believe this decision has been made to deter other people from challenging what they feel to be police injustice. Manchester City Council, along with the University Students' Union and the Justice for Steven Shaw Campaign, will work tirelessly to see that justice is done.'

This is not the first time Manchester police have prosecuted someone for complaining about them. In 1985 Jackie Berkeley, a young black woman from Moss Side was charged with wasting police time by alleging that she had been raped by police officers in a police station.

The savage rise in prescription charges — up to £2.40, twice the inflation rate — must be opposed throughout the working class movement.

A future Labour government must be urged to abolish all such charges which are a crippling position on the poor and low wage earners.

In 1979, when Thatcher came to office, charges were 20p per item and have risen 12-fold in the last seven years.

Charges are very often higher than would be the cost of buying the drugs privately, except that many of them are only available on prescription!

There is also enormous wastage costing tens of millions of pounds, according to Peter Boardman, assistant secretary of the Pharmaceutical Society Negotiating Committee.

To overcome the high cost of the charges, doctors tend to write prescriptions for longer periods. In that way about 10 per cent of the drugs supplied are never used.

FROM A MANCHESTER CORRESPONDENT

LSE occupation ends

OVER 300 students occupying the London School of Economics were ordered out by police and bailiffs on Tuesday after the Director secured court injunctions against them.

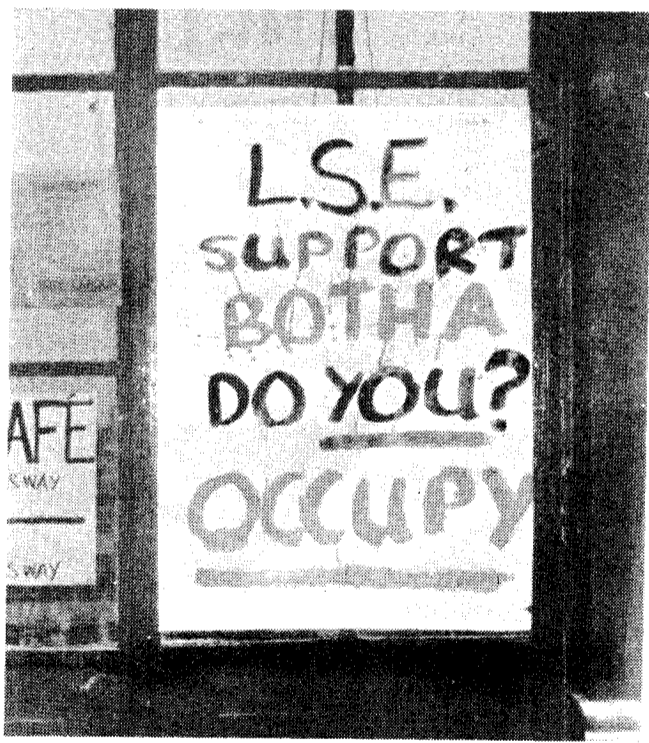
The students had been occupying the Connaught House building for over a week, calling for disinvestment of LSE funds from South Africa.

LSE student Jerry Shevills, one of the co-defendants in the court case, told Workers Press that the occupation of the administrative part of LSE started with about 40 or 50 students and grew very rapidly. The occupation held meetings every day.

'We gained support from Birmingham, Leeds, and Dundee universities and most of the London polys and colleges', he went on.

'But more important was the international support we got, from anti-apartheid activists in Sweden, Holland, Japan, West Germany, the Soviet Union, and Ireland, two groups in the USA, and the black students' union in South Africa.'

'We have also had support from the Hanger's workers in dispute, who came down with their banner. I was in



court for three hours while 500-600 students lobbied outside.

'After the bailiffs moved in we marched out peacefully to the South African embassy.'

Later that day an executive general meeting of the union was held to discuss how to carry the campaign forward. About 300 students attended.

After heated discussion it was decided to continue

boycotting the lectures and picketing all the academic governors.

It was decided to give them until 10 March, and if the negotiations failed there would then be all-out action and reoccupation of the building.

The students have the support of 75 per cent of the lecturers for the disinvestment campaign; about 50 to 60 per cent supported the occupation.

Despair of jobless youth

BY STUART CARTER

TWO unemployed young people in Manchester committed suicide recently.

The father of Glyn Roberts blamed dole queue despair for the tragedy.

Glyn and his best friend Louis McDonnough were found gassed in a car parked in woodland at Worsley. A hose led from the exhaust pipe through a car window and the engine was left running.

Thomas Roberts told the 'Manchester Evening News': 'I have seen similar

cases in the newspapers that have happened in other parts of the country and it is all part of the general scene in which the youth of today have to live.'

'For youngsters, a job is a passport to society. Without that passport you're treated like a nobody — a bum.'

'Neither of these lads had one. But they weren't bums. They were both trying to find work and simply couldn't get it.'

'Glyn went for a job as tyre fitter last week and he said they would let him. He by last Friday if he had a job. He hadn't he have thing and that we'

been the final st in with Louis had my after a the Roberts in and had row with by the DHSS just been employment be that his en stopped benefit he didn't have a caus at address.

per wo bodies were found schoolchildren on their to St Marks School.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

TERRY FRENCH IS OUT!



Terry French outside Deal miners' welfare club

KENT MINER Terry French was jailed at the end of the miners' strike. Throughout the year-long strike he was amongst the most determined fighters against Tory plans to destroy jobs and break up mining communities. In this interview with CHRIS McBRIDE Terry explains why he was jailed, discusses the lessons of the strike and the present situation in the National Union of Miners.

WHAT significance do you see in your jailing?

WHEN the autopsy was done on the strike . . . it became clear to me that I was jailed for such a long time to deter others from the violence that was escalating at the time . . . violence that was perpetrated by the police. It was a gut reaction from the miners that they responded the way they did.

My only importance is that my trial came up at the right time to more or less tell the people — and the working class of this country — that if you don't toe the line, this is what's going to happen to you.

I was a bit naive when I went to court but looking back at the evidence I've collected since, there was definitely a job done on me and Chris (Tazey). The same can be said for Mike Hicks. He wasn't

sent to prison for punishment, he was sent to keep him out of the way.

At the time I went to jail it was obvious to me that we weren't going to win it because of the attitude of the TUC. The way I look at it is that they were frightened of Scargill, of calling for a general strike or giving us any concrete help. If we had won that strike then Scargill would be, in their terminology, the top man. He would have the most credit, he would be the working-class hero and they were not prepared to see it.

I still believe that Arthur Scargill is one of the few trade union leaders who cares about the working class. The likes of Willis, Bassett and the latter-day ones like Eric Hammond don't give a damn about us. They've got a nice little

set-up, their membership fees are rolling in, and that's all they want. In a nutshell they are part of the hierarchy — part of the state.

DO YOU consider the miners' strike ended in defeat?

IN THE short term I see it as a defeat. Not for people in my own generation, but for anybody in the 50 or upwards generation. In the long term I think it has done some good. I'm a believer in the old adage that there is no substitute for struggle.

ON THE forthcoming NUM vice-presidential elections, French spoke about the role of Euro-Stalinist Mick McGahey:

I CAN remember McGahey standing up at the TUC conference in 1975 when the Shrewsbury picket Des Warren was in prison. He said: 'If that had been a miner in prison, he wouldn't be in there now, we soon would have had him out.'

It shows you how empty his words were. Mick did start off as a union leader with the interests of

the working class at heart, but he hasn't any more and I'm afraid at the moment, what he's advocating in Clarke is just a successor to what he has become.

FRENCH believes the scab UDM is crumbling:

Only this week we've seen the winders in Notts are back in COSA and that is a major breakthrough. I don't think Lynk and his cohorts have got long to go. Even now they're already saying the honeymoon is over. I don't know about honeymoons; they're heading for the divorce courts. They are finished but we've got to make sure it is the ordinary members' interests that are represented and no longer these barons in the coal-fields.

HE had clear opinions on a future Labour government.

THE FIRST thing is the total reinstatement of all the sacked and victimised miners. That is a must — not just for the well-being and the benefit of the NUM, but for its survival.

Durham has always been centre of the road. The roles have been reversed. Durham is the new Kent. They are the new militants and they are showing the way. I don't like to say it, but they are and all credit to them. If ever they want my help then they'll get it!

FRENCH spoke about the international implications of the struggle of British trade unionists.

ONE OF the biggest things is to go international. The companies have gone multinational and so should we. If the T&G called their members out, it wouldn't cause a dent. They are multinational companies, we need multi-national unions. It doesn't take more than four hours these days to organise a strike from one end of the country to the other.

Because of that we've got to go international. In the NUM now you've got Yorkshire, Kent, Wales. We ought to be talking about South Africa, France, Britain: they're our new areas.

TERRY spoke warmly in praise of his wife Liz.

SHE's a diamond. Through the strike she's become politicised. She knows what her role is supposed to be in life and so do I — that's a slave. I'm not prepared to go back to those days and neither is Liz, nor a lot of my comrades in Kent. As a mate there is none better than my girl.

RELEASE JAILED TRADE UNIONISTS

S WALES MINERS

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicestershire

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicestershire

DURHAM MINERS

GARY BLACKMORE: Murton — Two year Youth Custody from December 1985

MICHAEL STEPHENSON: Wearmouth — Three years from June 1986. RF8756 HM Prison Acklington, Morpeth, Northumbria

JOHN MATTERSON: Murton — Two years, three months Youth Custody from December 1985

Kent police: new look

THE Kent police corruption investigation took a new turn last week when a woman came forward claiming to have more information on the allegations. The police were then forced to re-open the investigation.

Previous efforts to investigate allegations by serving officer PC Ronald Walker that criminals were encouraged to own up to crimes they had not committed have been thwarted because vital files mysteriously disappeared from police headquarters.

Deceit

A spokesman said last week: 'With one exception, the original copies of the statements containing admissions to these offences which were the subject of PC Walker's complaint have vanished without trace.'

'It has not been possible to discover whether those statements were lost or destroyed, nor has it been possible to establish whether, if they were destroyed, this was done by accidents, or deliberately and by whom,' they added.

Walker later made further allegations about corruption and the investigation was extended to the whole of Kent.

THE FIGHT AGAINST DEPORTATIONS

Baba has a right to stay

BY JOSEPHINE BARRIE

BABA BAKHTAURA, a Punjabi folk musician who has been living in Birmingham since 1979 and has been facing deportation since 1982, will have his case heard again by the Immigration Appeals Tribunal on 17 March.

Throughout five years of vigorous campaigning by the Baba Bakhtaura Defence Campaign and the Asian community, his case has been taken to all the courts in the land, right up to the House of Lords.

On 26 June 1986 the Lords ruled in Baba's favour and directed the Immigration Appeals Tribunal, appointed by the Home Office, to hear the case again.

The Lords ruled that the adjudicator was wrong when

he did not consider the interest of the Asian community as a relevant factor in deciding whether deportation was the proper course to follow in this case.

Baba is one of more than 3,000 Black people who face deportation in 1987 under brutal racist immigration laws implemented not just by the Tories but also by previous Labour governments.

Visa controls were recently introduced as yet another weapon in the attack against black people.

The Baba Bakhtaura Defence Campaign have organised a picket of the tribunal at 10a.m. on 17 March outside Thanet House in the Strand.

● For further details contact: Baba Bakhtaura Defence Campaign, c/o 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.

Support grows for Viraj

BY SUE GWYER

INCREASING support for the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign was shown by the vast array of speakers at the public meeting called by the London support group on 2 March.

Viraj Mendis has been in sanctuary for two months in the Church of the Ascension, Hulme, Manchester.

Represented on the platform were the City of London Anti-Apartheid group as well as the national Anti-Apartheid Movement in the form of the Rev. David Haslam.

Black Women for Wages for Housework spoke of the need for a national anti-deportation movement and stressed that deportation cases should not have to be fought one by one.

Phil Marston, from Queen Anne's Gate branch of the CPSA, reported growing opposition within the Home Office to Viraj's deportation, in response to the regular Friday afternoon pickets.



David Williams, whose wife was deported to Ghana in May 1986, thanked the VMDC for giving him the inspiration to fight to overturn the Home Office decision.

A message of solidarity from Viraj was read out, and it was reported that a stone had been

thrown through a window in the church where he has taken refuge, wrapped in a note threatening: 'Viraj Mendis you must go back — either way you die.'

This was signed by the 23A Society, a small fascist band named to commemorate Hitler's birthday and St George's Day.

Since the attack Anti-Fascist Action have agreed to help protect Viraj by taking part in the 24-hour guard mounted on the church.

All organisations in the Manchester area are urged to give similar help.

International Women's Day

DEFEND THE GAINS OF OCTOBER

International Women's Day every year poses the question of the resolution of the struggles of working class women around the world for their emancipation.

This year we can assume a greater confidence than has been possible for some time, for the Workers Revolutionary Party's call for an international conference of Trotskyist organisations promises to begin to resolve the crisis of the leadership of the Fourth International and therefore of the international working class.

This week's Workers Press presents a feature on the relevance of the international call to the struggles of women against their double oppression.

International Women's Day is also an appropriate time to report a successful nurses' strike in Victoria, Australia which challenged the restraining 'Accord' between the federal and state Labour governments and the trade union bureaucracy which has tied the hands of the Australian working class for three years.

This year as the Workers Revolutionary Party celebrates International Women's Day we are deeply involved in preparations for an international conference to build the Fourth International.

The two are integrally linked, for International Women's Day is the celebration of the past struggles of women workers and a time to look forward to the future and the end of our double oppression.

An international conference, called to discuss the responsibilities of all Trotskyist organisations in resolving the continuing crisis of the Fourth International is the first step towards developing an international Trotskyist leadership capable of leading the world working class to victory.

Throughout history the struggles of women to throw off their double oppression has been an important part of the struggles of the world working class towards the overthrow of capitalism.

The call for this conference was made possible by the split in the Workers Revolutionary Party and the International Committee which began with the exposure of Healy's sexual abuse of women comrades.

This split has opened up new possibilities for resolving internationally the crisis of working class leadership. It has at once exposed the depth and nature of the crisis in the Fourth International and created the conditions for overcoming that crisis.

One of the first areas of political degeneration detected was the denial in theory and practice of the double oppression of women by the International Committee.

The results of the refusal to struggle with this question are only too painfully evident. But it is no coincidence that the repression of women within the Workers Revolutionary Party, a mirroring of some of the worst manifestations of bourgeois repression, was central to the explosion.

Nor is it coincidental that the gains made for women by the Bolshevik Revolution were among the first of the gains of that revolution to be destroyed by the Stalinist regime.

When struggling to build the Fourth International one of the important aspects of that work is

of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage-earner and as a housewife. The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class; consequently, among the women workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice.



the defence of all the gains of the Bolshevik Revolution. This involves the most bitter struggle against Stalinism and all those tendencies who capitulate to its pressure.

We must see the refusal of the International Committee to take up the struggle against women's oppression in this light. It was a refusal to defend the gains of the Russian proletariat against the attacks which had been waged against them by Stalinism.

We base the call for an international conference of Trotskyists on the resolutions and theses of the first four Congresses of the Third International.

The Comintern 'Theses on Work Amongst Women' state clearly the importance of work with women.

'The Third Congress of the Comintern in conjunction with the Second International Women's Congress confirms the decision of the First and Second Congresses on the necessity for increasing the work of all the Communist parties of the East and West among proletarian women.

'The masses of women workers must be educated in the spirit of Communism and so drawn into the struggle for Soviet Power and into the construction of the Soviet Labour Republic. In all countries the working classes, and consequently the women workers, are faced with the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat.'

The Theses make it clear to those who believe that the oppression of women can be alleviated through a struggle which shirks the decisive question of class rule that it is only through the struggle of the great working class that the basis for an end to women's oppression will be laid.

'So long as the power of government is in the hands of the bourgeois class, the proletariat has no power to organise production.

'No reforms, no measures, carried out by the democratic or socialistic governments of the bourgeois countries are able to save the situation.

'They cannot alleviate the sufferings of the working women and working men.'

The Theses make it equally clear to all those who think that this issue is not fundamental to the achievement of our goal that they are mistaken.

... the Third Congress of the Communist International maintains that the conquest of power by the proletariat, as well as the achievement of Communism in those countries where the capitalist state has already been overthrown, can be realised only with the active participation of the wide masses of the proletariat and semi-proletarian women.

'The interest of the working class, especially at the present moment, imperatively demands the recruiting of women into the organised ranks of the proletariat, fight for Communism.'

Making clear the international nature of the problem, section 6 of the Theses says:

'Woman's struggle against her double oppression (capitalism and her home and family subservience), at its highest stage of development, assumes an international character, becoming identified with the struggle of the proletariat of both sexes under the banner of the Third International for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet system.'

The second principle for our call to the international conference is the Transitional Programme and the Founding Conference of the Fourth International.

This document should have been a lesson to the WRP in its degeneration when it says:

'Opportunist organisations by their very nature concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both the youth and the woman worker.

'The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage-earner and as a housewife.

'The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class; consequently, among the women workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice.'



The third principle is the theory of permanent revolution and this too must be applied to women workers whose double oppression means their fight involves bringing their relationship to the means of production to the same level as men's, whilst at the same time fighting for the communist revolution which alone will bring the emancipation of women.

However as we develop our programmes and strategies to fight for that revolution it is important that we develop a programme of work with women which includes the minimum, transitional and maximum demands necessary to fight their double oppression.

It is equally important to give leadership within the 'women's movement' which is dominated by bourgeois feminist ideology and Stalinism, both of which try to stifle the revolutionary surge of women by arguing that the plight of women must be 'reformed' within capitalism, before we can fight for the socialist revolution.

A vital principle of our call is the defence of the conquests of the 1917 October Revolution.

As mentioned earlier, the gains made for the emancipation of women by this revolution were considerable and were among the first to be destroyed by the Stalinists.

Describing these gains in 'Revolution Betrayed' Trotsky said:

'The October revolution honestly fulfilled its obligations in relation to woman.

'The young government not only gave her all political and legal rights in equality with man, but, what is more important, did all that it could, and in any case incomparably more than any other government ever did, actually to secure her access to all forms of economic and cultural work.'

Recognising that many of the burdens faced by women arise from the role as beater and caretaker

Special Report by Lynn Beaton

NURSES TAKE AUSTRALIAN STRUGGLE FORWARD

NURSES in the State of Victoria, Australia, won a decisive victory after a 50-day strike in December.

The victory was inspirational to the Australian working class who, for the past four years, have had their hands tied by the 'Accord' — an agreement between the right-wing Labor government and the trade union bureaucracies which limits industrial negotiation to the confines of a centralised wage-fixing commission.

In return for agreeing to abide by the rules of the 'Accord', trade unionists were promised regular indexed pay increases to maintain their wages at a parity with inflation.

However, this has not happened. In real terms wages have decreased by 9 per cent since the signing of the Accord. Trade union leaders have had their hands full trying to contain their members.

Not only have workers had to suffer a real loss in wages but also many cutbacks to conditions and social services by the Federal and state Labor governments.

Many unions have taken up the cudgels, but they have either been too small and isolated to take on the entrenched bureaucracy, or stifled by their own leaderships.

In October last year, Victorian nurses walked out of the hospitals and began what became an epic and record-making strike.

Their victory has broken the hold of the Labor governments, they have at last been challenged — and by a group of workers who have been seen as among the weakest of all trade unionists: nurses.

Skilled

Traditionally nurses symbolise the special exploitation of women workers. Their work is highly skilled, requires a long period of training, carries the ultimate responsibility of life and death, requires great physical effort and mental alertness.

Whatever 'value' criteria were used, nurses should be a well-paid profession — and yet they are among the most lowly paid of all workers. The justification for this, that they have a 'vocation' and don't want economic remuneration, is fast losing currency. Nurses are demanding fair pay for the work they do.

In Victoria nurses first began to demand a pay rise in response to a campaign started by the Australian Council of Trade Unions' Working Women's Centre for 'comparable worth' — equal pay for work of equal value.

Although an 'Equal Pay Act' was passed in Australia in 1972, it has been interpreted by the wage-fixing bodies to mean only that those women who worked in occupations identical with men received equal pay. The majority of women however, are employed in separate occupations and their pay rates were not effected by the legislation.

Value

In line with a number of campaigns around the world the ACTU adopted a policy which stated that women working in traditional female occupations should compare the value of their work with similar 'male' occupations.

Nurses began to prepare a case that on this basis they were underpaid. However the ACTU leadership, realising the potential for flow-ons from a successful 'comparable worth' case — changed the focus of the nurses' case to one of straightforward work value.

Much of their case was argued on the grounds of the changing nature of nursing due to new technological development. This isolated the nurses' case from that of other women in traditional female occupations.

Three years of negotiation and

manoeuvres by the ACTU, one short strike in 1985 and one solid 50-day strike in 1987 — and the Victorian nurses have a new 'career' structure which gives them a large pay increase and brings them up to the parity of other para-medical workers.

The nurses' strike itself brought to the whole of the Victorian working class a new front on which to fight.

Militant

Only months before the strike, the old union leadership of a right-wing clique of ex-matrons were deposed by radical, militant rank-and-file nurses. The new leadership was not prepared to see any compromises and was able to support its members through to the end.

The strike saw large rank-and-file participation. Meetings were held every morning at the union head office. All nurses were invited and at least one representative from each picket line was obliged to attend.

Demonstrations and rallies were held continually, the Labor Government was under constant barrage.

The ACTU tried to intervene but were unsuccessful in their attempts to manoeuvre the 'naive

and inexperienced' nurses into accepting a package from the government which fell far short of their demands.

An interesting feature of the strike compared with the way industrial disputes are being handled here in Britain is that the government at one stage brought out the police to try and stop the nurses picketing laundry trucks going in and out of the hospitals.

The whole exercise was completely unsuccessful and was never tried again. Rumour has it the police refused to attack the nurses, believing they had a fair and just case. Clearly if the Australian government want to ape Thatcher's use of the state in industrial disputes they will have to tighten up the training of their police force.

Blow

The victory of the nurses has not only won them a pay increase and career structure which sets precedence in valuing 'women's' work, but it also struck a blow against the government's proposed cuts to health care.

Most important of all it has opened the way for other groups of workers to break the hold that the Labor bureaucracies have held over them.



Nurses making their point at a march in Victoria Dec. 1986

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH

Saturday March 7, meet 11.00 at Tower Hill tube to march to rally 1.00 at Jubilee Gardens, SE1 with speakers.

SOLIDARITY

Solidarity with Irish Republican Women. Send solidarity cards (available 60p for 16 from Women in Troops Out Movement, PO Box 353, NW5 or phone 609 1743) to the following in Maghaberry Prison, Old Rd, Upper Ballinderry, Lisburn; Alice Taylor: Dolores O'Neil; Jennifer McCann; Ellen McGuigan; Cathy Stanton; Patricia McDaid; Marie Wright; Mary McArdle; Pauline Quinn; Jackie Moore; Anna Moore; Patricia Semple; Regina Gallagher; Maura McConville; And to Durham Prison, Old Elvet, Durham to Ella O'dwyer (D25135) and Martina Anderson (D25134). All of them are subject to the degradation of strip-searches: details of the campaign against strip-searches from the above address.



of children, the revolution made this task a social responsibility and established state services to free women from the sole burden. Trotsky describes:

'The place of the family as a shut-in petty enterprise was to be occupied, according to the plans, by a finished system of social care and accommodation: maternity houses, creches, kindergartens, schools, hospitals, sanatoria, athletic organisations, moving-picture theaters, etc.

'The complete absorption of the housekeeping functions of the family by institutions of the socialist society, uniting all generations in solidarity and mutual aid, was to bring to woman, and thereby to the loving couple, a real liberation from the thousand-year-old fetters.'

This was an enormous task, and necessarily needed a great deal of experimentation to find appropriate social re-organisation.

Before it was very far under way, the Stalinist bureaucracy was reversing the process. At first it undertook a conscious policy to run down the communal kitchens, laundries etc., so that men and women preferred to return to own domestic hearth. Trotsky described:

'But home-cooking and the home washtub, which are now half shamefacedly celebrated by orators and journalists, mean the return of the workers' wives to their pots and pans — that is, to the old slavery.'

'It is doubtful if the resolution of the Communist International on the "complete and irrevocable triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union" sounds very convincing to the women of the factory districts.'

One of the first acts to liberate women was legalising abortion and in a sense this issue is symbolic of the regime's attitudes.

With the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy abortion was once again made illegal. The state took the official position that women have no right to decline 'the joys of motherhood' in a society which has no unemployment.

In other words women have no rights over their own reproductive activity, they are merely instruments of the state.

The rehabilitation of the family began with attacks on abortion and quickly became a nauseating reflection of the cloistered sentimentality which the bourgeoisie of all countries forces on the working classes.

Trotsky was so horrified by this process he said: 'the leaders are forcing people to glue together again the shell of the broken family, and not only that, but to consider it, under threat of extreme penalties, the sacred nucleus of triumphant socialism.'

'It is hard to measure with the eye the scope of this retreat.'

On this International Women's Day as we look forward to rebuilding the Fourth International we are taking up the struggle to defend the gains made by women in the Russian Revolution.

In doing so we also take up the struggle against the betrayals of the Stalinists in their misleadership of thousands of women who have come forward over the last 20 years to fight for their emancipation.

Steered away from revolutionary politics by Stalinism many of these women have been misled into fighting a gender battle instead of a class one.

We look forward to the resolution of women's struggle against their double oppression with the victory of the world revolution and urge women to take this fight into the revolutionary movement and join with us in building the Fourth International.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

White House World-Wide Web Tower brands 'Teflon' President

PRESIDENT Ronald Reagan, once dubbed the 'Teflon' president (what ever went wrong, it didn't stick to him) has been severely dented by the report of the Tower Commission, which investigated the 'Iran-Contragate' affairs.

Having heard two contradictory versions from Reagan of what he knew about the secret arms deals with Iran, ex-Senator John G. Tower's review board concluded from the evidence that Reagan had approved the transactions in advance — whether he remembers or not.

On secret US backing for the right-wing Contra terrorists fighting against Nicaragua, funds and arms sent in defiance of Congress and behind the backs of the American people, Tower's report quotes several internal documents showing Reagan knew what was going on.

The Commission found plenty of evidence that Reagan's White House henchmen showed contempt for their own so-called 'democratic' system and disregard for legal restraints. Its report says it steered clear of determining 'criminal culpability' because this was outside its brief.

Congressional inquiries and a criminal investigation are still to come.

Tower, a conservative Republican and Reagan supporter, did his best to avoid blaming the President outright. The report speaks euphemistically of Reagan's 'management style'.

'I don't believe that the president wittingly misled the American people', Tower told reporters, commenting on Reagan's public statements last November.

'I think the president was convinced of the veracity of what he was saying.'

The report says Reagan's concept of his Iran initiative 'was not accurately reflected in the reality of the operation.' Or, as Tower claimed, the President 'was not aware of a lot of the things that were going on.'

If this is the best Reagan's

own political supporters can say for him, it has not impressed either politicians or the public. 'He'll never again be the Reagan that he was before he blew it', commented a leading Republican.

The Tower report 'came close to picturing him as a man who sometimes inhabited a fantasy land', commented a 'New York Times' analyst. In California, where Reagan's rise to the White House began, a poll showed three-quarters of the public believed their President had been lying.

Evidence in the report shows Reagan's top security aides engaging in political philosophy, as Robert McFarlane to Colonel Oliver North:

'If the world only knew how many times you have kept a semblance of integrity and gumption to US policy they would make you Secretary of State. But they can't know and would complain if they did — such is the state of democracy in the late 20th century.'

The Tower report has also come across documented evidence of the international

scope of the Reagan-Contra conspiracy. For instance:

BRITISH ARMS: A memo from North to McFarlane in March 1986 claimed Short Bros. of Belfast were willing to assist arrange a deal for the Contras to receive Blowpipe anti-aircraft missiles and launchers. The company would also send technical representatives to show how to use them.

AID THREATS: Costa Rican president Arias Sanchez was threatened US economic aid would be cut off if he publicly exposed a secret airstrip built in his country for the Contras. Admiral Poindexter told Colonel North 'You did the right thing, but let's try to keep quiet about it.'

The president of another, unidentified Central American country — understood to be Guatemala — provided 'extraordinary assistance' in getting \$8 million in weapons to the Contras in 1985, a North memo says.

Shortly before this, the

Reagan administration sought a \$30 million increase in aid to Guatemala.

SAUDI CASH: Testimony from McFarlane showed \$30 million was provided to the Contras in 1984-5 from 'personal funds' of a foreign official. Off-the-record, sources say this came from the Saudi royal family. The Sultan of Brunei has been mentioned in similar connection, though he says he wasn't aware where the money was going.

ISRAELI ARMS: Besides finding Israel was heavily involved in the Iran arms deals, the Tower Commission found a memo from Colonel North that the Israelis had offered to send military instructors to train the Contras. (Israeli defence minister Rabin has denied this.)

The Tower report confirms that Rabin did make a secret deal with the US to ship Soviet-manufactured weapons to the Contras.

Arrest warrant 'amazes' Vatican

THE VATICAN has expressed 'amazement' at the warrant issued by Milan magistrates for the arrest of Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, in connection with the Banco Ambrosiano affair.

The American archbishop is being charged as 'an accessory to fraudulent bankruptcy' in Italy's biggest bank failure.

Italian police have been unable to serve the warrant because Marcinkus, who heads the Institute for Religious Works — the Vatican's bank — holds a Vatican diplomatic passport and lives in the papal city.

Banco Ambrosiano was forced into liquidation with massive debts in August 1982, two months after its president, Roberto Calvi, had been found hanging from Blackfriars Bridge in London.

Calvi's family refused to accept a British inquest's verdict of suicide. A second inquest returned an open verdict.

The banker, a member of the now-banned P2 masonic lodge, had disappeared from his Rome flat while preparing an appeal against conviction for illegal currency export. He was also due to face trial on fraud charges.

A few weeks after his body was found, several major European banks reported Banco Ambrosiano had defaulted on payments.

The Italian authorities held the Vatican's Institute of Religious Works (IOR) directly responsible for Banco Ambrosiano's collapse.

The bank's Luxembourg-based overseas holdings company had lost about \$1,400 million through loans to Panamanian-registered companies recommended by the IOR, and said to be owned by it.

Archbishop Marcinkus and two of his executives were asked to come to Milan and help with inquiries. The Vatican's Secretariat of State returned the letters to the Italian ambassador, saying its citizens were not subject to Italian jurisdiction.

No Money

Marcinkus waited until late October 1982 before making his first public statement, insisting the IOR had no involvement in Ambrosiano companies.

The Vatican said the IOR itself did not manage the companies involved, and had received no money from the Ambrosiano group.

However, in May 1984, the Vatican bank signed a deal with Banco Ambrosiano's liquidators, agreeing to pay creditor banks up to \$250 million of a \$406 million final settlement against Calvi's bank.

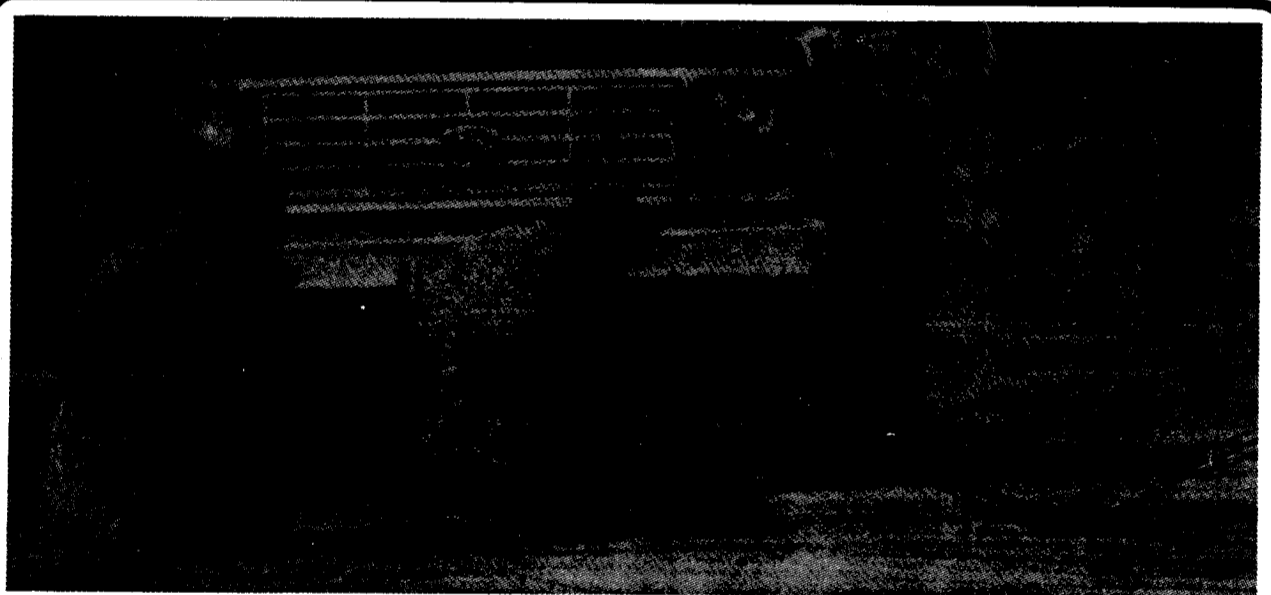
The IOR said it agreed 'in recognition of moral involvement' but 'on the basis of non-culpability'.

In recent years, as pressure dropped, Marcinkus has ventured from the Vatican's walls, playing golf near Rome and taking holidays in the United States.

The American archbishop could be extradited from the United States, but Italy has no extradition treaty with the Vatican. Under Mussolini's 1929 concordat, a Vatican statement last week reminded Italy, 'the central departments of the Catholic Church are exempt from interference by the Italian state.'

The statement said news of the warrants against Marcinkus and two top bank executives had caused 'amazement' in the Vatican, because it was such a long time since the Banco Ambrosiano collapse, and there did not appear to be any new elements in the case.

The Vatican rejected complaints from the Milan magistrates that Marcinkus had refused to co-operate with inquiries. It said the archbishop had offered 'substantial' co-operation, providing 'numerous memoranda and notes'.



IN BUNKER, Missouri, Verna Turner, aged 55, and her husband Robert Ray Turner have to dig up roots to make a living.

In the winter, the earth is frozen so hard that it is impossible to harvest the wild sumac roots.

'I went out the other day and worked myself half to death,' said Verna. 'I

BY VICTOR STOCKPOLE

couldn't even get one of these onion sacks half full.'

The going rate was 85 cents a pound for sumac roots, and 50 cents a pound for the bark, which is used in medication, teas and air fresheners.

Verna Turner worked for nine years at the Independent Stave Co.; before she was laid off two years ago she was making \$4.65 an hour.

After that, they suddenly found themselves with no way to support themselves and were forced to go out into the Mark Twain National Forest to collect roots.

Coffee slump

THE price of coffee — Brazil's major earner abroad — slumped to a four-year low on the international market last week.

Dealers blamed fear that Brazil might dump coffee on the world market in a desperate bid for foreign exchange, bringing a downward spiral. Earlier in the week, US officials tried to cut Brazil's 30 per cent agreed market quota, saying they feared price rises.

Brazil recently suspended interest repayments while it tries to negotiate a better deal on its huge \$109 billion foreign debt.

The banks want a new austerity plan to hit workers and poor peasants. President Sarney fears attempting it without showing some resistance first.

Finance Minister Dilson Funaro, in London last week, urged European creditors should be more independent of the big US banks. Tory Chancellor Nigel Lawson told him Brazil must solve its problems with the banks, and reach agreement with the IMF.

Nazi Goes Free

BY LISE BAUER

A HAMBURG court has ruled against proceeding against the former SS-Obersturmführer Arnold Strippel, because of 'his poor health'.

Strippel, now 76, was responsible for the brutal murder by hanging of 20 Jewish children in April 1945, when he was in charge of the Neuengamme concentration camp in Hamburg.

The children, aged between 5 and 12, had previously been abused for medical experiments such as infection with TB and other viruses. At the same time, Strippel had ordered the murder of 4 prisoner nurses and 18 Russian prisoners of war.

A tribunal had investigated these murders and six of the Nazis involved were sentenced to death.

But Strippel had escaped the trial by disappearing before its start. He was recognised in 1949 by an ex-prisoner and brought to trial, charged with numerous murders in the concentration camps of Buchenwald,

Natzweiler, Majdanek and Sachsenhausen, where he had held leading positions. As a result he served 20 years in prison. He was released in 1970.

However, the Hamburg children murders had not been taken into account in this trial. Although charges were laid against Strippel in respect of these crimes as early as 1963, when he was still in prison, he was not formally committed for trial until 1979, 16 years later, and even then proceedings were not initiated!

Many protests were made against the slow justice by both lawyers and the relatives of the children, who held their own 'tribunal' in Hamburg last year, in protest.

This latest court ruling, allowing this murderer to go scot free, has outraged not only the children's families, ex-prisoners of the Neuengamme camp and many lawyers, but also the community at large.

Old-school tie Moscow style

WELL-OFF Soviet bureaucrats may pay more than £2,000 — an average worker's annual pay — for their child's special pre-university tuition, a Moscow paper has revealed.

Moscow has about ninety 'special schools', mostly in districts where top bureaucrats and managers live. A survey by 'Moskovskaya Pravda' found only six per cent of the pupils in lower forms were children of manual workers. By the time the upper forms were reached, the proportion could drop to zero.

Equipment

These schools often enjoy superior equipment not found in ordinary schools, thanks to influential parents, the paper said.

Parents also paid for extra tuition to help their youngsters into prestigious places like the Institute for International Affairs, a way to Fore-

ign Ministry and other careers with good pay and travel abroad.

'Zhivago' Author Reinstated

WRITER AND poet Boris Pasternak, best known in the West as author of Doctor Zhivago, has been posthumously reinstated in the Soviet Writers' Union — thirty years after his expulsion.

Pasternak, winner of the 1958 Nobel prize for literature, has been praised in articles in 'Literaturnaya Gazeta' by poet Andrei Voznesensky.

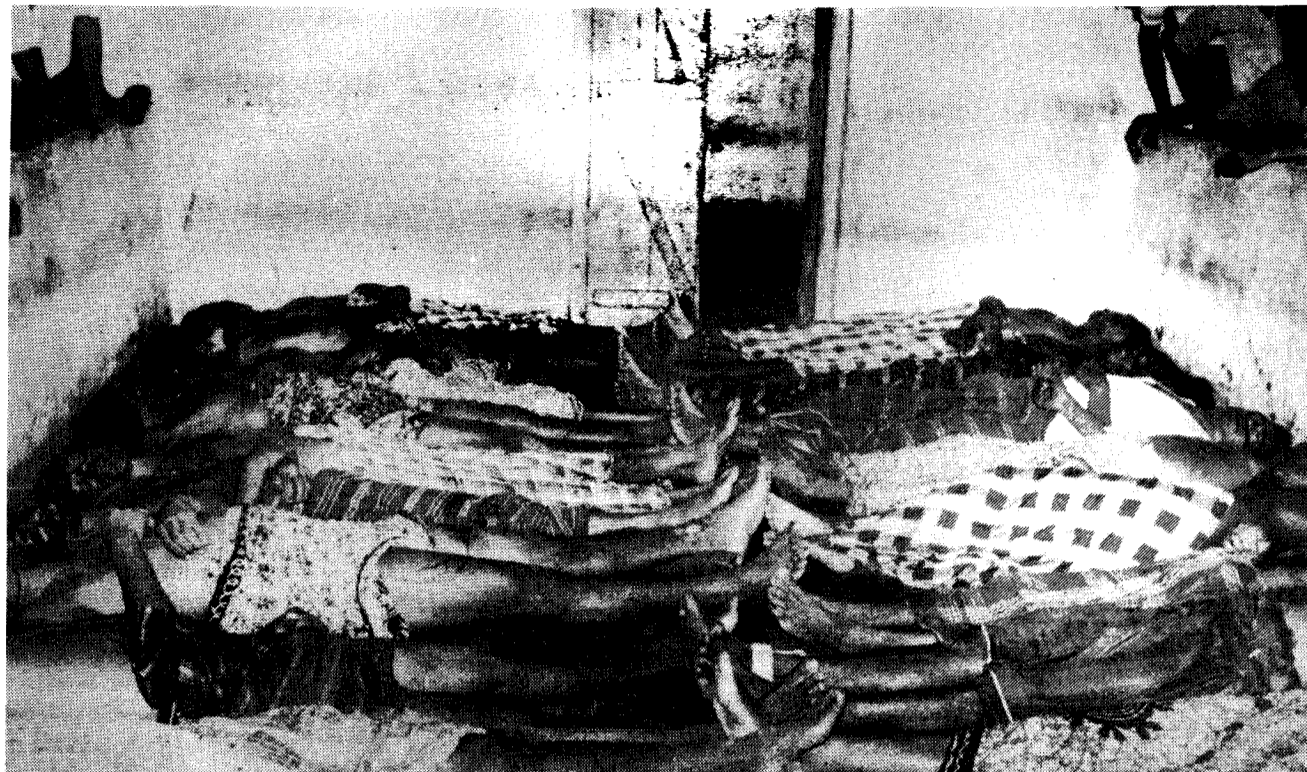
Soviet citizens will be able to read 'Zhivago' for the first time next year, when it has been announced to appear in

the literary monthly 'Novy Mir' in three or four instalments.

When it first appeared, 'Zhivago' and its author were subject to an official campaign of hostility. Pasternak died two years after receiving his Nobel prize.

Voznesensky, who has described Pasternak as 'a symbol of intellectual freedom', hopes to turn the novelist's dacha at Peredelkino into a museum. He is also preparing a film on Pasternak, to include contemporary writers discussing artistic freedom.

Thatcher's hand in Sri Lanka war



The bodies of youths after they were rounded up and machine gunned at Othiyamalai village in the district of Mullaitivu

TORY Prime Minister Thatcher is to be questioned about government backing for a secret mercenary force of ex-SAS men that has taken part in the Sri Lankan government's murderous war on the Tamil population.

Thousands have been killed in this racist war. Hundreds of civilians have been taken away by the Sri Lankan government's Special Task Force, and never seen again. Detainees have been tortured, then forced to dig their own graves before being executed. Others have died under interrogation, and their bodies been burnt.

Sri Lanka's prime minister Jayawardene last week ruled out negotiations with Tamil freedom fighters, saying the war must go on. Sri Lankan forces are blockading the Jaffna peninsula, stopping essential supplies reaching the population there.

The Special Task Force was set up in 1984 by a team of ex-SAS officers. The British government helped Sri Lanka's Jayawardene regime with credit for gunboats, and new coastal radar. But on Foreign Office advice, a 'private'

security company was used as cover for the military team.

The firm, KMS, is headed by ex-SAS Major David Walker. It's team in Sri Lanka has included an ex-SAS colonel and adjutant. Mercenaries, including South Africans and racist ex-Rhodesian SAS thugs have gone to Sri Lanka on \$20,000 a year tax-free contracts.

The Ministry of Defence reportedly supplied new automatic rifles from the Royal Ordnance factory not yet available to regular British Army units.

It is being claimed some British officers quit the Sri Lanka assignment, arguing indiscriminate terror against the Tamil population had spoiled chances of success.

This hardly fits Tory government claims that Tamil refugees had no reason to flee the island!

Evidence from the US is that KMS also sent mercenaries to join CIA-backed contras in Central America. Labour MPs are questioning Thatcher about meetings with Major Walker, and KMS links to government departments.

Marxist Editor held in Israel

AN ISRAELI court has refused bail to left-wing journalist Michael Warshawsky, one of four people arrested when police raided the Alternative Information Centre (AIC) in Jerusalem, using 'anti-terror' laws.

Police disclosed during the magistrates' court hearing on 18 February that one reason for their raid was a report the Centre was preparing on Israeli torture and interrogation methods against Palestinians.

They also admitted they had been tapping the AIC's telephones 'for a long time'.

The 16 February police raid came while Israeli troops were repressing Palestinian strikes and demonstrations in the West Bank and Gaza.

Set up in 1985, the Alternative Information Centre provides information for journalists and visitors on conditions and struggles in the occupied territories and within Israel.

The police have closed it down for six months, using a 1980 amendment to the Prevention of Terrorism Act which makes it an offence to 'identify' with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

This can be, and is, used by the police to ban anything from a newspaper to a Palestinian flag, even badge-size.

In court, police lawyers accused the AIC of having acted on behalf of the PLO, and rendering services to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and unspecified 'front organisations' in the occupied territories.

The example they cited was that the Centre was preparing publication of a research paper on Israeli interrogation and torture techniques, with advice on how to resist them.

This study was said to have 'operational significance' for an illegal organisation.

The prosecution also charged that the AIC had received money from illegal organisations and was in possession of illegal litera-

ture. During their raid, police had taken away large quantities of literature as well as office equipment from the AIC's West Jerusalem office.

In a statement to the court, Warshawsky said AIC was established thanks to the donations and subscriptions of friends and supporters, helped by a loan from Ithaca Press, a London publisher.

He said all the Centre's published material was legal. Any literature which the authorities considered 'illegal' found in the office was unsolicited material which came through the post, no different to that which many press offices and journalists received all the time.

The magistrate agreed to release AIC co-operative members Ronnie Heiman, Ghada Abd al-Jabar and Hana Jalaji on bail, but acceding to a police request, ordered Warshawsky detained for another seven days.

Michael Warshawsky is a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist League, ('Matzpen'-Marxist), Israeli section of the Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec), and editor of its journal.

He has been active in such campaigns as the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, the Committee Against the War in Lebanon, and more recently, the Committee Against the Iron Fist, which unites left-wing Israelis with Palestinians resisting Israeli repression in the occupied territories.

Michael also worked to organise support for Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear technician kidnapped after revealing details of Israel's nuclear weapons capacity to the British press.

The attack on the Alternative Information Centre and detention of Michael Warshawsky is an escalation of the Zionist state's moves to suppress information about what it is doing.

Workers Press declares full solidarity with Comrade Warshawsky and his colleagues, and urges readers to protest to the Israeli embassy demanding his release and the dropping of charges.

Turkish planes bomb Kurds

TURKISH air force planes have bombed Kurdish areas of Iraq in a new offensive against Kurds fighting for national freedom.

Over thirty warplanes flew over the Sirat, Era and Alanis areas of Iraq-Kurdistan on March 4, attacking what were claimed to be guerrilla camps, hideouts and store-places.

The air raids, which followed a large-scale military operation against Kurds within the Turkish border, was carried out under a 'hot pursuit' agreement with the Iraqi government, Turkish officials said.

'Within the framework of the existing agreement between Turkey and friendly and neighbouring Iraq, Turkish air forces started and completed with success an air operation against murderers who try to disrupt the peace and stability of our country', an official announcement said.

The daily 'Hurriyet' reported that Turkish commando squads had crossed the border into Iraq the day before the bombing raid, from Tasdelen village.

The government claims Kurdish guerrillas killed 14 villagers at Tasdelen, in south-eastern Turkey, on February 22.

Their homeland divided by four countries, the Kurds have long fought under various leaderships for national self-determination. In Turkey, governments have generally refused to admit a Kurdish people exists, and have severely repressed Kurdish language and culture.

Recently, retired army officers have been sent in to replace Kurdish-origin school heads and speed-up 'Turkification'.

The Turkish regime has also been stepping-up a policy of 'grouping' Kurdish villagers in new 'residential zones' under military surveillance. It has set up a pro-government militia, known as 'protectors', paid about \$40 a month for informing on and helping track down Kurdish activists.

There have been reports that 'protectors' can earn 2.5 million Turkish lira bounty-money for bringing in a dead Kurdish 'separatist'.

Success for striking workers

BY TRUDI JACKSON

THE 3 month old strike, the longest ever in Turkey since the military coup of 1980, came to a victorious end at the Netas telephone exchange factory.

More concessions were won by the workforce than have ever been achieved before. The trade union was stripped of all its assets but the strategy of starving the strikers back to work was defeated with the aid of international support.

The workers demand for a 70 per cent wage increase was met with 40.5 per cent (just enough to cover the rate of inflation) and child benefits and heating allowances increased by £85 per year.

Netas is a part of the Canadian Northern Telecom although 49 per cent of the shares are owned by the Turkish Postal and Telephone Company and 15 per cent by the Turkish Naval Foundation.

This year it is planned to

introduce telephone exchanges with a capacity of 800,000 lines.

The State bosses tried everything to set an example in order to prevent any further outbreaks of protest against the economic policies of prime minister Turgut Oezal.

They rang up families and put pressure on the women at home. They arranged 'tea parties' in scabs' homes and promised to promote them to managerial positions.

These promises were not kept.

Youth killed in Nablus

ISRAELI troops shot a Palestinian youth dead, and wounded another, in the occupied West Bank town of Nablus. Officers said a patrol shot the youth because they ran away after being ordered to stop.

Singlaub's Treasure Hunt

A FANATICALLY right-wing retired US general, who organised arms supplies and training for the Contras fighting Nicaragua, has turned up in the Philippines — supposedly on a treasure hunt!

Major-General John K. Singlaub, president of the World Anti-Communist League, arrived in Manila claiming he was there to look for the legendary lost treasure of General Yamashita, Japanese commander in the Philippines during World War II.

There have been reports that he has put up \$50,000 to get diving operations started off the southern Luzon coast.

The story goes that Yamashita hid a vast fortune in plundered gold, jewellery and Asian art objects at the end of the war.

American prisoners of war are said to have been used to bury the loot, or place it on hulks scuttled offshore, before being killed so the hiding places remained secret.

Yamashita was executed for war crimes in 1946. Some Japanese experts have said the treasure never existed. But in 1981, a bulldozer accidentally unearthed a

hoard of gold bullion, coins, antiques and jewels in southern Luzon.

Singlaub's record and political activity — he used to boast he was 'Ronald Reagan's secret weapon' — make people highly sceptical about his new adopted role as 'treasure hunter'.

When the US Congress voted to stop funds to the CIA-backed Contras, Singlaub became a leading figure in the 'private' right-wing war machine secretly promoted by now-disgraced Reagan security aid Colonel Oliver North.

The retired general boasted he was raising half a million dollars a month from wealthy right-wingers to fund the Contras. Singlaub also set up supply runs for arms and mercenaries.

Working with individuals around 'Soldier of Fortune' magazine, he founded a so-called 'Institute for Regional and International Studies' at Boulder, Colorado, a training base for Contras and mercenaries.

Since arriving in the Philippines in November, he has been meeting leading right-wingers, including former associates of exiled dictator Marcos.

Intelligence

Philippines national intelligence chief General Luis Villareal, himself heading an affiliate of the World Anti-Communist League, has said meetings with Singlaub were just 'briefings'.

Singlaub told a radio interviewer: 'Any discussion that I'm in any way involved in any political activity is a total lie.'

Whether the buried loot of General Yamashita is really needed to boost the World Anti-Communist League's reputedly ample funds, or fund an anti-communist private army, or the whole treasure-hunting story is just a tongue-in-cheek cover for Singlaub's real mission, one thing is clear.

The Philippines people should see this Yankee freebooter off their islands — and boot his local chums out with him!

Message received from Maria Tolly (Singer/Songwriter):

“I condemn the News Line group for collaborating with the police in sending a political opponent to prison.

Being the active man he is Phil is being missed. However, I feel sure that because of his political beliefs, integrity and unlimited energy in fighting for justice, Phil is a freer man behind bars than those who passively walk the streets.”

(Maria has donated a tape of her songs to be raffled at Phil's benefit on Saturday evening at the Lambeth Social Club.)

From the House of Commons

Dear Dave (Temple),

Thank you for your letter. I am concerned about the jailing of Phil Penn and I shall table a Parliamentary Question about this case.

Trusting this is acceptable,
Sincerely,

Ron Brown MP

The following letter has been received from Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee:

Dear Phil,

At our last meeting our members were outraged to hear of your imprisonment with the assistance of the narks of the News Line.

Everyone remembers you for your assistance when we organised our first public meeting on the Guildford Four last year.

Your imprisonment is not the only case where News Line and the bogus WRP have co-operated with the state against class fighters. They have played a similar role in their policies and actions towards Ireland.

We send you our solidarity and look forward to seeing you when you get out. In the meantime we will use your case to further isolate the News Line/WRP in the working class movement.

Yours fraternally,
Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee

THE JAILING

WRP

Workers Revolutionary Party

PO Box 735
London SW9 7QS
Tel: 01-274 7271

9 February 1987

Dear Comrades,

THE JAILING OF PHIL PENN

One of our comrades, Phil Penn, has been jailed for 12 months, eight months of it suspended, for assault. He is a highly respected member of our Central Committee, a party member for 18 years, active in the trade union movement and recently in campaigns such as that on the Guildford Four.

Our concern in this case is that members of another organisation claiming to be part of the labour movement were, apart from the arresting officers, the only police witnesses. This would be like miners giving evidence against miners in the recent strike.

As you may know, in October 1985, the Workers Revolutionary Party expelled its former leader Gerry Healy for sexual abuse, violence and slanders against members of the organisation; charges he never contested. A small group of party functionaries — including Corin and Vanessa Redgrave, Sheila Torrance and Richard Price — supported Healy and were expelled by the majority. This group then formed a bogus party calling itself the 'Workers Revolutionary Party' and publishing a newspaper, 'News Line'.

Phil Penn was arrested and charged after a demonstration called by the print unions at Wapping, on 3 May 1986. The events, as reported in court, were as follows:

- In the 'News Line' of 1 May 1986, the Worker's Notebook column carried a crude and provocative attack on Phil, insulting his intellect and presenting him as ignorant and illiterate, speaking in grunts.

- On the 3 May Wapping march, as the conflict between demonstrators and police became increasingly fierce, Phil went to fetch his camera. Once away from the main body of demonstrators, he came across members of the Healy-Torrance group. They verbally abused him, taunting him with quotes from the above-mentioned article. He refused to be provoked.

- Four of them, Richard Price, Eric Rogers, Paul Williams and another man, then attacked him physically — in Price's case with banner-poles — and knocked him to the ground. In defending himself, Phil damaged the eye of one of his assailants. Only Phil was arrested.

No organisation calling itself socialist would collaborate with the police against members of the labour movement. This is a point of principle. But members of the Healy-Torrance group eagerly acted as police witnesses. Three of the four men who attacked Phil did not appear in court but two women members of the Healy-Torrance group gave evidence which Phil vigorously contested. Had he been found guilty on the charge of wounding with intent, he would undoubtedly have been given a much longer custodial sentence.

This is not the first time the Healy-Torrance group have acted in this way. Six of them appeared as police witnesses in Sheffield Crown Court in January this year after an incident between themselves and members of the International Communist Party. On this occasion the court did not believe them and the defendant was found not guilty.

We should point out that members of the Healy-Torrance group again attacked and beat up Phil Penn on 8 June 1986 in Leicester. They used sticks and knives. The police wished to prosecute his attackers, but, as a matter of principle, Phil refused to act as a witness and the case could not go forward.

We are asking all labour-movement organisations to condemn the anti-working class actions of the Healy-Torrance group, which were responsible for the jailing of Phil Penn. Messages of support and inquiries should be sent to: Workers Revolutionary Party/Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS.

Yours fraternally,

Dave Temple,

Chairman, Workers Revolutionary Party/Workers Press.

A reply to the Workers League

BY DAVE BRUCE

LAST WEEK, we reprinted a statement from the US 'Workers League' purporting to denounce the connivance of the rump 'WRP' in the jailing of Phil Penn.

How principled it seemed! 'Despite our differences, etc etc. . . . But support like this makes one hope that Phil sleeps with his back to the wall and one eye on his cell door.'

The statement denounces Healy and the scurrilous role he played. All very correct. But Sheila Torrance and her group are never mentioned. Why not?

Since all the information about Phil Penn's scandalous treatment has come from Workers Press, Workers League leader David North can scarcely claim ignorance of the real situation.

The rump 'WRP' has split — we have reported this in our press and stressed how Torrance and Healy managed to sink the differences between themselves and with the state to secure Phil's imprisonment.

Indeed, though Healy has maintained a customary silence, Torrance is on record as protesting that Phil 'should have got longer'. But North scrupulously maintains his silence over Torrance's role in the WRP split.

Is he hoping for a Hyland/Torrance regroupment so he can snatch the Holy Grail of a 'daily' paper — or will he even ditch the fast shrinking 'International Communist Party' to secure this glittering prize?

Whatever, concern for the principles at stake in the Phil Penn episode come second to manoeuvre. North is using Phil Penn for his own purposes. If he wants to deny that charge, let him denounce the role of Sheila Torrance forthwith — and we will withdraw the accusation, also forthwith.

Next point. North accuses Healy of adopting the methods of SWP leader Joe Hansen in the use of violent provocation, quoting the 1966 Tate Affair as a Hansen-led set-up aimed at discrediting Healy as a violent man.

In 1966, North was a teenager, still in Glee Clubs and Bobby Sox, but definitely not in politics. The 'Tate Affair' occurred in Britain — a long wet journey from North's college campus.

His claims to intimate knowledge of the Tate Affair are therefore suspect — a suspicion that is deepened when we take this oppor-

tunity to record that the WRP has on file a sworn statement from one of the comrades who was instructed by Healy to assault Ernie Tate.

As if it were not enough to take the opportunity of Phil's incarceration to make a pass at the Torrance group and accuse a dead man of a crime, North also takes a swipe at Phil — while he is unable to reply.

He accuses him of playing a 'disgraceful role' in the WRP/ICFI split of early 1986 by 'standing by' and 'supporting' the use of police in the faction fight of the time.

The facts of the incident to which North refers are well known — and have been admitted to by members of the 'ICP' — North's British co-thinkers:

The Hyland-led group in the WRP staged a provocation outside a Congress of the WRP in London. A neighbour called the police when she heard hysterical shouting and screaming. Three local police turned up but our stewards were able to calm the situation down, prevent arrests and send the worthies of the force on their way. That's all — and North knows it.

Phil's only brush with the law occurred in Leicester, when he refused to collaborate with the police following an attack on him by members of the Healy/Torrance group — a principled stand that, without doubt, encouraged the second, more serious, provocation.

To accuse Phil — while in prison — of collaborating with the police when he is on record as doing precisely the opposite takes courage of a special kind. The Leicester incident is a little more topical than the 1966 'Tate Affair'.

North's statement ends with a call for class-conscious workers to 'campaign for Phil Penn's release'. This is a fraud. Phil has received a custodial sentence of four months before remission.

We do not categorise Phil as a class-war prisoner. That would be an insult to, for example, Irish PoWs who face as many decades inside as Phil does months. Nor would we equate the treatment of Phil with brutal harassment of Brutan Perera.

What we did ask was for the labour movement to denounce and explain the role both of the Healy and the Torrance groups — and to explain what was implied in collaboration with the state. That was all. This the Workers League has failed to do. We hope they will correct that mistake.

Message received from Carole Richardson, one of the innocent Guildford Four prisoners:

“I send my best wishes to Phil, to Sandra and their two children, Amy and Terry, and I hope the time in prison doesn't drag too much for Phil.”

Message from the Durham Mechanics:

The Executive Committee of this Association discussed your correspondence of 9 February 1987 which dealt with the issues surrounding the jailing of Phil Penn.

They decided that a letter of support should be sent to the Workers Revolutionary Party, together with their complete condemnation of those responsible for the prosecution of the WRP member.

It was considered that the action of the former members of the WRP were totally anti-socialist and go against the principle of working class solidarity.

I have also been instructed to circulate copy of the correspondence to branches within my association and this has been done.

Wm. Etherington
General Secretary Durham
Mechanics
National Union of Mineworkers —
Group No.1 Area



Phil and daughter Amy

ING OF PHIL PENN

More messages

I WOULD like to express the feeling of disgust and anger which was felt by the members and followers of the Communist Internationalist League concerning the downright reactionary position of the Healy-Torrance group towards Comrade Phil Penn.

It is well known that this group (like their counterparts in Greece) with ease use the police against

political opponents in the Trotskyist movement.

This tendency of theirs is a clear expression of their conciliation towards the bourgeoisie and their embodiment into bourgeois legality.

This time taking the responsibility for the jailing of a comrade they have shown that they have reached an extreme end in their reactionary downfall.

We join together with you to denounce them.

G. Lucas
(For KDE)

Publisher of 'Ergatiki Drasi'
Executive member of the National Building Workers Union, Greece.

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WRP, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS. Tel: 01-274 7271

The sum needed to assist Phil Penn's family over financial problems directly caused by his jailing will be taken from the proceeds; the rest will be donated to the Free the Framed Irish Prisoners Campaign.

What you can do...

- Raise the jailing of Phil Penn in your union branch, trades council, support group, etc. Phone 01-274 7271 for copies of the circular letter (see opposite page) explaining the case.
- Write to Phil Penn: No. L27055, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Ducane Road, London W12 0AE (registered post is best).
- Send messages of support for Phil and reports which we can print in Workers Press. We will have a special column each week while he is behind bars.

Sandra says

IT IS not insignificant that women were used by the Healy-Torrance 'rump' in the court against Phil. Their abuse of women has not stopped. The rump embroidered their evidence in court and I'm sure they would have been prepared to perjure themselves had it been necessary. It was a very thorough effort on their part to make sure the outcome of the case was that Phil would get sent down for as long as possible.

It was significant that Phil's case was heard at Southwark Crown Court where practically all arrests made at Wapping were put to trial. One court official commented there had been a surprising number of custodial sentences passed throughout the dispute, even on minor charges.

The judge stated that he had to make an example of Phil. He was asked to take into consideration that this was a first offence, that Phil had a wife and young family to support, including a three-month-old son, that he had a steady job, a house with a mortgage etc. I feel strongly that these things were not taken into consideration, that the judge was blinkered by the 'Wapping factor'.

Phil told me only vultures would turn up on the day to see him receive his sentence. The vulture did turn up — in the form of Mary McEntegart who had already given evidence against Phil. She was exposed in court for embroidering her evidence — the defence barrister likened her statements in the witness box to a theatre performance. Even the jury had to laugh when she suggested Phil had picked up one of his attackers and used him as a battering ram against the other three!

Ray Athow sat in the press box taking notes on behalf of the 'News Line' but nothing has appeared in their paper about Phil's case. I don't believe they can justify this one to the workers' movement. Acting as police prosecution witnesses where there would be no case had they chosen not to appear shows that this was a conscious decision to send Phil down. This is a serious breach of working-class principles.

How far will they go? They now have a history of using the state against other sections of the workers' movement. They are a dangerous element in this movement and must be driven out. This time it was Phil and he got four months. Next time it will be someone else and they may get four years.

When Amy was young Healy was always sending Phil away to work. The result was that Phil never saw her growing up. Now we have Terry and the shadow of Gerry Healy is still looming over our lives. Phil will miss the first important months of Terry's life.

Having said this, Phil's sentence is a meagre one compared to those dished out to the Irish prisoners of war and the framed Irish prisoners. My sympathies go out to all the wives and families of these prisoners.

In spite of everything Phil is in very good spirits and hopes that the campaigns he has been involved in will forge ahead and the fight to free the framed Irish prisoners will continue. He hopes that all the groups on the left will be able to unite on these basic principled questions to make the campaign successful.

Solidarity on the left was instantaneous in support of Phil. Despite enormous political differences all groups have reacted in unison to this question. There has been a tremendous response: endless phone calls of support, letters, donations of money and offers to look after the kids.

Phil says the letters he has received have been an enormous source of strength to him. I urge people to keep sending the messages — he is receiving them all.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to everybody and invite you all to the benefit organized for Phil. Phil will face this ordeal with the same strength that he showed throughout the split.



Phil's wife Sandra and son Terry

No gangsterism among workers!

Solidarity with Phil Penn!
Down with gangsterism in the ranks of the workers!

25 February 1987

Comrades,

We were very indignant when we received Cde. Dave Temple's letter about the jailing of Phil Penn and the disgusting behaviour of the Healy faction, expelled from the WRP, which was responsible for it.

All our solidarity for Phil Penn! All our indignation for his cynical persecutors!

We are in solidarity with Phil because your comrade's freedom is needed so that he can fight, as he always did, for the workers' cause. But those who use political differences — however grave — to justify the fact of helping to jail a working class fighter deserve nothing but condemnation.

We are in solidarity with Phil's principles in rebutting, in his defence, the methods of his persecutors, which were to ally themselves with capitalist justice against political opponents. To open up political disputes between working-class groups to the class enemy is to deliver oneself into their hands.

It is particularly repugnant to us that Healy should associate the name of Trotskyism with these methods.

As Trotskyists we are definitely committed to eradicating from the workers' movement the methods implanted there by Stalinism, and we think that this task justifies and requires the broadest collaboration between all the tendencies and organisations claiming to belong to the revolutionary workers' movement.

Communist greetings on behalf of the Political Bureau of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario de Espana (section of the Fourth International)
Anibal Ramos

From Cllr. Mick Woods

Despite the political differences which divide socialists the most basic principle we all hold to is unity in action against the State.

By using the Wapping picket for sectarian attacks on other socialists and then running to the police and giving prosecution evidence the News Line group have crossed that class line and cannot be seen as part of our movement.

Best wishes to Phil Penn and his family and comrades.

They can imprison the revolutionary but never the revolution.

Cllr. Mick Woods
Brent

of political opponents.

The duty of all workers' organisations, and in particular the Trotskyists, is to unmask the perpetrators and to participate concretely in driving them from the workers' movement.

We take this opportunity to remind you that we are entirely ready to support the formation of an International Tribunal against these methods.

Please convey to Phil Penn and to your party our warm greetings and our support as well as that of our sections, whom we will immediately inform of your message.

For the International Secretariat
Michael Faure
The Fourth International
(reconstructed)/'La Verite'

IN REPLY to your letter of 9 February 1987, we assure Cde Phil Penn and the Workers Revolutionary Party of our complete solidarity against the slanders, physical violence and false testimony organised against him by members of the Healy-Torrance group.

These contemptible methods must be banned from the workers' movement, like all methods introduced by Stalinism.

We salute Phil Penn for his courage in the face of his attackers, his dignity before the slanders and his principled stand in the face of the base proceedings of his aggressors with the police.

In the course of the last 15 years, the kind of methods used by Healy have poisoned the leadership of several other Trotskyist organisations.


They have contributed to discouraging the thousands of young fighters recruited in the 1960s and 1970s to the battle to develop the Fourth International.

Our organisation has been attacked since 1972 with similar actions by the Lambert-Just leadership of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), notably the campaign of slander against the ex-member of our tendency Michel Varga.

This was the pretext to provoke, particularly in France, more than 70 physical attacks against our members between 1972 and 1980.

But recent years have shown that the working class and the youth shun and distrust the authors of these methods, for these actions are nothing more than a smokescreen for a flight in the face

Jolyon Ralph



Sri Lankan repudiation of Banda

This letter from a Trotskyist of a great many years is a searing indictment of Banda. It is perfectly true that Mike Banda and his tiny group make no impact at all on the British working class today. However, an analysis of the reactionary sources of the ideas they express is of great importance.

This comrade Samarakkody does. We believe he is wrong when he says that the struggle against 'Pabloite revisionism' took Banda and Healy straight into the Stalinist camp. Rather, they embraced the same 'objectivist' theories as Pablo.

However, while making these positions on the article, we are extremely pleased to publish it.

Banda's letter

My dear Edmund,

This issue of Forum is going to shock you. It is the product of 40 years' pursuit of a wrong line and the implementation of a method which had nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism. Of this I am absolutely convinced. You, I and a lot of others were all victims of Trotsky's bogus dialectics and his completely subjective attitude to the USSR.

He knew nothing about Leninist party building as Marlen's revelations prove and his concept of a world party was inseparable from his apocalyptic conception of the political revolution in the USSR and the 'collapse' of Stalinist Bonapartism.

These are not questions of incorrect perspective. They are methodical and epistemological questions.

Trotsky never grasped the basic category of irreversibility in science and society. This led him to the bizarre and grotesque speculations about the USSR and the disorientation in the post-war Fourth International particularly after Stalin's death and the execution of Beria. We've been going around like headless chickens since 1938.

That's why the FI split and collapsed in 1953. Believe me — no amount of regroupments, fusions and international junketing is going to revive the FI. It's dead.

We need a new movement (not another damn world party) based on a dialectical critique of Trotsky and Stalin. I've only started but I don't intend to give up no matter how difficult this is.

As a starter I'd urge you to read Martin Walker's excellent account of contemporary Russia — 'The Waking Giant'. The Trots are in for an era of savage shocks which will make the 20th Congress seem like a mundane affair.

Next week I'll send you a copy of my speech on the anniversary of the Soviet Revolution. In case of confusion I must state that my support for the Gorbachev reforms does not imply support for the policy of 'peaceful parliamentary transition' and peaceful co-existence as opposed to proletarian internationalism.

I don't think we can ever develop Marxism without being iconoclasts at the same time.

All the best,

Yours fraternally
Mike

P.S. We shall publish your letter and material on '27 Reasons' in the next issue.



M. BANDA

Samarakkody's reply

Dear Mike,

Received your letter (undated) together with copy of Communist Forum Discussion Bulletin No.4 of November 28.

1. This issue of Forum containing your document 'What is Trotskyism? Or Will the Real Trotsky Please Stand Up', which I read through, did not at all, as you expected, 'shock' me. Not at all.
2. The members of our organisation, the Revolutionary Workers Party, and myself had kept ourselves informed about your evolution from the time we met you here in Sri Lanka, where you, very strangely, were spending a six-month holiday when Rome was burning — when the other leaders of the Workers Revolutionary Party were grappling with the problems of the continuing crisis of the organisation since the expulsion of Healy.
3. While in Sri Lanka you made several visits to my house. On two dates, you met with our group and gave a report about the events leading to the expulsion of Healy etc. and the WRP crisis.

During those meetings and discussions, we saw your state of serious disorientation as the inevitable by-product of the explosion of Healyism, while you were still the general secretary of the WRP in October 1985.

From your discussions and your prolonged stay in Sri Lanka, away from the scene of struggle within the WRP in an on-going crisis of your party and the 'International Committee', it became clear to us that you were moving out of the WRP. From a subsequent report off Cliff Slaughter, which was published in the WRP Internal Bulletin, we found that our impress-

ions in regard to your political orientation were not outside the mark.

Slaughter had reported that when you were leaving for Sri Lanka you had expressly stated that you were quitting the WRP and that Cliff Slaughter and another member had sought to persuade you not to take that course of action, but to remain within the organisation and to struggle jointly with the politically still healthy members for the regeneration of the WRP.

In any event, since your return to England, you and a few others round you were out of the WRP. And now you have travelled very far and very fast. You have, for some time now, been denouncing Trotskyism and Trotsky. And this is the content of your document 'What is Trotskyism? Will the Real Trotsky Stand Up?'

Nay more, you have by this document given yourself a passport to enter the counter-revolutionary world Stalinist movement and get yourself an honoured place in the Stalinist firmament.

Your method is subjectivism, which I reject. My conclusions about your present orientation is not the result of any emotional reaction to your denunciation of Trotskyism. Not at all. Your document has made it crystal clear where you have arrived at.

Your 40 years of 'struggle' in the company of Gerry Healy against 'Pabloist Revisionism' and 'pro-Stalinist liquidationism' has taken you straight into the Stalinist camp. In your document you categorically say that the Stalin faction during the struggle of the Trotsky-led Left Opposition represented the working-class.

You also say in your document: 'What Trotsky refused persistently to recognise in its awesome and contradictory reality was that Stalin — the proletarian Bonaparte — represented the revolution in permanence!'

In your letter to me, you write: 'It's dead (the Fourth International). We need a new movement (not another damn world party) based on a dialectical critique of Trotsky and Stalin.'

You will no doubt be critical of Stalin — but your position is simply critical support to Stalinism. You say we need 'not another damn world party'. You know, Mike, that very long ago, before you understood the 'truth', Stalin acted on this understanding when he dis-

I can assure you that genuine Trotskyists need have no bother about you or your whereabouts politically.

solved the Third Communist International during World War II.

Yes, today you will reject my conclusions about your political orientation, but tomorrow you will not have any discomfort in this regard. You would have got used to the 'new reality' you discovered.

In your letter to me, under reference, you say: 'You and I and a lot of others were all victims of Trotsky's bogus dialectics and his completely subjective attitude to the USSR. He knew nothing about Leninist party building — and his concept was inseparable from his apocalyptic conceptions of the political revolution in the USSR and the collapse of Stalinist Bonapartism.'

Here I must strongly protest.

While you are free to hold any views on any matter, you have taken far too much for granted. Our organisation and myself object strongly at your attempt to give a coloration that we solidarise with you in your anti-Trotskyist, pro-Stalinist and anti-Marxist orientation and activities.

You know well that we, the RWP, claim to be a Trotskyist group which is even now engaged together with our co-thinkers in rebuilding the Fourth International.

It is your right to change your views and reject Trotsky and Trotskyism. I do not think that your renunciations and denunciations of Trotsky and Trotskyism could in any way be a problem for genuine revolutionaries, Trotskyists, who are engaged in the task of rebuilding the FI.

I do not consider it necessary to make this a complete political response to your document and letter to me. However should I and the RWP think such a response is necessary that could well be done in due course. However, I think it



E. SAMARAKKODY

would be enough for the present to point out what should be well known to you, that your anti-Trotskyist positions and the arguments you have trotted out to support your case is nothing new.

Incidentally, it is very difficult to notice your own comments which are buried in the long quotations of the well-known anti-Marxists James Burnham and Max Shachtman, who left the Socialist Workers Party (US) when they found themselves defeated and in a minority at the end of the factional

ism necessarily affects today's and tomorrow's concrete political issues — and political parties, programmes and struggles are based on such concrete issues.'

You know well Trotsky's reply to Shachtman: '... Shachtman's betrayal — not a mere mistake as I wished to believe last year — is now clear, an outright theoretical betrayal. In other words, "no one has yet demonstrated" that Marxism is of any use in the struggle of the proletariat... This is nothing else than the renunciation of Marxism, of scientific method in general, a wretched capitulation to empiricism.'

You know also that at the end of the factional struggle in the SWP (US) the minority led by Burnham and Shachtman split away and regrouped in the 'Workers' Party'. However, shortly thereafter, the real leader of the splitaway minority who you have referred to in your document as 'a trained philosopher' who 'knew' better than Trotsky on dialectics, left the 'Workers' Party' saying he completely rejected Marxism, to which he believed the 'Workers' Party' had still some adherence.

I think in this regard it is relevant to mention that you (Mike) believe it a small mistake of Shachtman when subsequently he, Shachtman, wrote that Trotsky's characterisation of the USSR as a 'degenerate workers' state' was an error and that the bureaucracy was a new class.

You also seek to support your anti-Trotskyist diatribe by a quotation from Isaac Deutscher. Deutscher was an eminent journalist and specially a student of the events of the October Revolution and the post-revolutionary history of the USSR. He claimed to be a Marxist but made no claims to be a revolutionary leader who was in the struggle for the proletarian struggle. He had a penetrating insight and had a vision of world events from Olympian heights.

In his writings on the October Revolution and the events that followed, he went deep into the writings of Lenin and Trotsky. Deutscher held Trotsky in high esteem. He was never a Trotsky-baiter or hater. Of course he had his disagreements with Trotsky. Deutscher's views on Stalinism were well known. He mistakenly believed in a self-reform of the bureaucracy. His mistaken views have been shown as mistakes by history.

And finally, and logically, you

have sought to get support for proving Trotsky's dialectics as 'bogus' from the most appropriate sources — the Kremlin counter-revolutionaries. In your document you had summoned courage to say that Trotsky had got the correct 'answer' from 'Theodore Oizerman, a Soviet academician trained in the Leninist tradition in the USSR!'

So Mike, you have been able to discover the 'Leninist tradition' in the counter-revolutionary Stalinist mire of the ruling echelons in the Kremlin! I shall now leave you and your politics. I can assure you that genuine Trotskyists need have no bother about you or your whereabouts politically.

Yours truly,
Edmund Samarakkody

The decline of the Communist Party of Great Britain...

'I cannot understand why the "Socialist Appeal" is neglecting the Stalinist party. This party now represents a mass of contradictions. Splits are inevitable. The next important acquisitions will surely come from the Stalinist party.'

TROTSKY, 'In Defence of Marxism', p.138 New Park Publications.

BY JOHN REES CHAIR — TOWER HAMLETS PRINT SUPPORT GROUP

Introduction

I was forced out of the CPGB in 1984 along with many comrades. The last two-and-a-half years of bitter class struggle have confirmed that we had to go: the CPGB has now entirely entered the milieu of radical bourgeois democracy.

The major problem is that many of my comrades still believe they were forced out of the party by alien 'de-gutted Marxists' and that the task now is to reform the party, using the 'Morning Star' and the Communist Campaign Group as the cutting edge of such an exercise.

It is dangerous to scoff at this strategy. There are no vacuums in politics, and with the departure of the CPGB from the labour movement the new heir apparent, led by men such as Mick Costello (former CPGB industrial organiser) and Mike Hicks (print union leader and jailed militant), is ready to move in.

There is no break between the Communist Campaign Group (CCG) and the pre-Euro CPGB. Political continuity is maintained by its general staff, e.g. Tony Charter, 'Morning Star' editor, and the CCG's orientation to the programme of 'The British Road to Socialism' (1951).

Historical Notes

IT IS valuable to proffer some historical examples of this orientation and method. Three names spring to mind: J.V. Stalin; Harry Pollitt; and 'capitalism's most dangerous man in Britain', Bert Ramelson.

Since the 1920s Stalinism has formed the political outlook of Britain's Communist Party members. 'The British Road' is based on international notions of peaceful co-existence with imperialism (holding the tiger by its tail!) and an adaptation to bourgeois democracy. Both these positions accurately reflected Stalin's concern to maintain spheres of influence within which the international status quo was upheld.

Bert Ramelson (industrial organiser of the CPGB back in the 1960s and 1970s) created a reputation in the movement as a tough cookie. His method welded militancy to the politics of 'The British Road'. On his instructions, in a pub in Stepney, the powerful unofficial dockers' movement stepped back from embarrassing the new 'left' leadership of the T&GWU and disbanded itself.

Ramelson was instrumental in

bringing out the engineers at Saltley Gate — a powerful militant display which was not harnessed politically because the vital factor in Ramelson's method was the construction of democratic unions through left leaders.

'Mass democratic action' — a favourite phrase of CPGB general secretary Gordon McLennan — was just that: an action which provided a stage army to hasten democratic processes elsewhere in the trade union movement, and not to stimulate independent revolutionary action of the proletariat.

It is pertinent to point out that such demonstrations were used by Czechoslovak Stalinists in order to outflank social democrats in the struggle for power in Czechoslovakia after World War II.

The British Communist Party was also located in a Marxist tradition, going back to the 1880s, which was steeped in sectarianism and propagandist methods. British party comrades had a pathological fear of building a mass party. The party was a family. Harry Pollitt fully realised this problem, but his prescription for success was based on peaceful co-existence and adaptation to bourgeois democracy.

In the 1950s this led party full-timers to moot the possibility of liquidationism. John Gollan (general secretary after Pollitt) raised this here in Scotland (H.McShane, 'No Mean Fighter', p.245), but after it was put down its

ly led to the change in the name of the 'Daily Worker' to 'Morning Star'.

Let us be clear: this was no phenomenon of the 1960s alone. In World War II the appeal of the party was towards a democratic and patriotic people, as opposed to the industrial proletariat. That is why the party's membership reached over 50,000 in World War II. The appeal was patriotism and the war effort: propaganda given a theoretical basis in the various plans for war production and for 'winning the Peace'.

The Present

BY 1979 the CPGB was in a bad way. It took the most reactionary government in years to split it asunder. The CCG took as its departing point the victimisation of leading members like Mike Hicks and David Whitfield in the London District.

However, after a painful period in which literally hundreds of members were mobilised in support of the victimised, the CCG held on to the 'Morning Star' and began plans to create an alternative centre of Stalinism in Britain.

This in itself led to a drift of members — back to the CPGB; into the wilderness; and into trade union work.

Because of a lack of perspective

The printers' strike is salutary. It was led by Hicks, Field, and Freeman (CCG), and yet in the borough where the strike took place the CCG consistently failed to intervene and win printers and local people to their political perspective. It was almost as if one could smell the fear of being tested politically in a strike struggle which has much graver political implications for our class than even the miners' heroic struggle.

The CCG stands for the leading role of the working class in a Broad Democratic Alliance. Unfortunately the understanding of that leading role is based on industrial strength rather than on the political task of the working class to emancipate itself.

Therefore militants in the CCG often interpret the slogan in purely syndicalist terms, whilst its intellectuals discuss who belongs to the class in terms of the economic muscle of various strata, e.g. the teachers and civil servants.

The aridity of this perspective has left a small number of comrades wondering about what direction to take. But decisions are never made in a vacuum either, and the miners' strike, the printers' struggle, and the national liberation struggle in Ireland have been stern schools for revolutionaries. It is clear that the trade union movement cannot fulfill its task without a strong rank-and-file movement with a conscious revolutionary political leadership.

pelled into the struggle have the veil torn away by the 'beat bobbies' whose friendly faces turn to snarls the minute the worker wants to do something on the picket line.

Murdoch's attack on his workforce exposed the private ripping off of socially produced wealth, and the government's new Green Paper, containing further attacks on our trade union movement, completes the triangle of exploitation.

What is required is a bridge between a class enmeshed in struggle and the conscious fight for socialism. In Murdoch's case that was clearly a demand for socialist nationalisation of the print industry, as opposed to Kinnock's social-chauvinist call for 'British bosses for a British print industry'.

The Party

SO MY departure from the CPGB, the years of bitter involvement with miners and printers, the witnessing of the destruction of health and education while teachers have put up such a valiant struggle, have reinforced within me the belief that our class requires with the greatest urgency the construction of a mass revolutionary party.

Such a party cannot be modelled on sectarian notions of the 'political family'; nor can it be a top-heavy faction-ridden bureaucracy staffed by paper-sellers. It must be a party in which the local workplace branch or community branch is the fundamental unit, so that workers who join can feel and exercise political power and organisation from Day One.

It is my plea that in these difficult days we instil confidence and certainly in our people, that we get down to the task — in which all contributions have a validity — of building towards socialist revolution.

This is the way we will build our leadership and cadres, and prepare for our children a world of growth and hope.

In the words of James Connolly, 'The great only appear great because we are on our knees. Let us rise.'

and the road forward for revolutionaries

outside the programme of 'The British Road', the CCG has consistently failed to build a national organisation of militants. No matter what they say about times changing, they have not been able to wield the industrial influence they had in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

Left and right reformists have collapsed before the state and the bosses. However, capitalism is not omnipotent. Its state is more and more revealed as an oppressive and complex system of armed men, secret service agents, the judiciary, and its parliamentary wing at Westminster. Workers im-

defeat didn't prevent the liquidation of factory branches and reorganisation of the party on a ward basis.

This general orientation, which went through various twists and turns, lay at the heart of the CPGB crisis in the early 1980s.

It was more a long-drawn-out saga than an explosion. The leading antagonists hid behind rules and constitution. And control over the 'Morning Star' was made an article of faith for both sides. These facts merely expressed the deeper crisis: that the CP had become irrelevant to the working class.

The fall in party membership, the fall in 'Morning Star' circulation, and the decline in party influence in the higher echelons of the labour movement paralleled its deepening concern with 'political breadth' and appeal to the middle strata in the 1960s, which ultimate-



Part II of CAUGHT IN THE ACT will appear next week.

Socialist Press

Monthly journal of the Communist League of Australia

Subs: 12 issues £8.50, 6 issues £4.25.
PO Box N93, Petersham NSW 2049, Australia

LETTERS

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.

Total silence over Mozambique

AS internationalists, we have the responsibility to take up the Labour Party and trade union leadership on their total silence regarding the latest problems of starvation and war in Mozambique where the anti-government MNR guerrilla movement is backed and financed by the fascist regime of South Africa.

(The Tory government vetoed a call for sanctions by the United Nations against South Africa, therefore endorsing the politics of Botha destabilising the government of Mozambique.)

Even the capitalist media has highlighted the situation in Mozambique with the idea of suggesting charity as the answer.

What is the answer to long-term unemployment in the western world, how can it be linked to starvation in the so-called 'Third World'?

The trade union leadership is completely bankrupt on the question of saving jobs let alone creating jobs. Their answer is to wait for a Labour government.

The Workers Revolutionary Party's answer, having no illusions in a future Labour government, is fight back now!

Take up the example of the Caterpillar workers who, when faced with a life on the dole, staged a 'work-in', built and donated a tractor for Ethiopia, proving there was a need for their products. This also answers those workers who say that if they put sanctions on South Africa they would lose their jobs.

Workers in British Leyland who also face redundancy should do the same. Let all workers being laid off take up their trade union leaders on these big questions, put them on the spot through their branches.

There has been a call from Mozambique through the charity organisations for trucks, planes, clothes, food etc. Why are the Labour and trade union leaders remaining silent? Do they care? If they do, then let them say so! Make them act on their words.

To all members of the National Union of Seamen I would like to say this: only this week it became known that the EEC is sending billions of tonnes of butter to New Zealand to be made into lipstick, hair oil etc.

This is sickening while children in Mozambique, Ethiopia are suffering from malnutrition. Discuss this pressing matter. What can you do to resolve this?

I would say personally take this butter to Mozambique, refuse to take it to New Zealand. Human life is more important than breaking your contract with your employer or incurring the wrath of the hated Tory government.

I am sure the millions of workers and youth would come to your defence, those youth especially who have shown through Live Aid, Sport Aid and the more recent School Aid that they want answers and would see the 'real job creation' instead of the phoney government job schemes.

Any section of workers who want to fight job losses and starvation and who take such actions would get the support of these sections of workers and youth.

The WRP are posing the question of an 'international plan' and asking others in the labour movement to discuss ways of using the latest technology and resources of the western capitalist countries facing mass unemployment to solve starvation.

We believe that no one problem of the working class can be solved within national boundaries. We consider this the most important question facing humanity today.

Phyllis Maginnis
Liverpool

Reexamine Healy's sexual abuse: the abandonment of Marxism

HEALY's sexual abuse was the complete abandonment of Marxism and communist principles. It not only reflected the most decadent degeneration of the capitalist system today, but was tinged with mediaeval and even more primitive forms of social oppression.

In every single case, all the different groups which split off from our party following October 1985 separated Healy's sexual abuse from his abandonment of Marxism — but it was in fact the highest expression of his bourgeois political and theoretical positions.

From the birth of Trotskyism in the period of major defeats for the working class internationally, through the war, into the period of economic boom that followed, the Trotskyist movement was throughout its history confined to small numbers of people in a period unfavourable for the development of mass revolutionary parties.

Necessarily, through the isolation of Trotskyist groups, great distortions and problems emerged in the development of revolutionary leadership: the objective conditions existed for such degeneration and corruption within the movement.

It was the development of precisely the opposite conditions, revealed in the historic, determined battle of the miners' strike, which brought forward the objective conditions for the break away from this degeneration of our movement.

The revolutionary party can only develop in line with the objective material conditions. It cannot develop outside of these or separate from them.

At the centre of the historical development of Healy and the corrupt bureaucratic clique — a long time back — was an abandonment of the struggle to build revolutionary leadership and mobilise the working class for the seizure of power. It was a capitulation to bourgeois ideology, opportunism.

Having abandoned the struggle for revolution and confidence in the working class to carry it out, Healy set about getting for himself what he could out of the party which had been founded to achieve the world socialist revolution.

This involved him developing his methods and techniques to establish complete, overall, dictatorial control of the party, to transform it into an instrument for himself. This was what drove him in his depraved sexual abuse of the revolutionary women cadres within the party and his brutalisation and humiliation of the men as well as women cadres.

His method to achieve this was to find the weak point, the Achilles heel, of each cadre in order to break up his or her self-confidence and to crush any independent thought. This led, when any misgivings might arise over Healy's method, to the cadres believing there was something wrong with them because they could not grasp Healy's methods — they believed it was their own lack of understanding of Marxism.

Through this destruction of cadre which involved bringing them under Healy's complete control, the party totally abandoned the most important basic principles of communism. The clearest expression was the most base oppression and abuse of women comrades akin to the dark ages.

The lack of struggle in the

party as a whole against the oppression of women provided the background for this type of oppression of women cadre to exist unchallenged within the party.

It comes as no accident that the forces who supported Healy in the split go from that depravity to complete participation with the forces of the capitalist state as police witnesses in jailing Cde Phil Penn.

This reactionary tendency, characterised by Cliff Slaughter as near-fascist in an aggregate at the time of the split, showed their position in Corin Redgrave's remark: 'We're neither for nor against corruption, we're for revolution.'

In other words, principles could be abandoned in deciding the means to achieve the end. This degeneration now has its clearest expression in the crossing of class lines to become the only police witnesses to jail Phil.

In 1964 it came out that Healy had had relations with a young comrade, with serious subsequent problems. Sections of the party leadership refused to confront what had happened and turned away from Healy's actions, which were swept under the carpet. That danger of turning away still exists now.

The article on Healy's sexual abuse (Workers Press, 6 December 1986) and Norah Wilde's letter about it (Workers Press, 20 December 1986) were welcome. I regret there has not been more discussion.

In Norah Wilde's estimation of incest she rejects the definition and analysis made by a group, the Incest Crisis Line, who are completely immersed in the study and research of this phenomenon and are in active struggle to overcome the problem in society.

They define incest as 'sexual abuse by someone in a position of power and trust'. Norah throws this out of the window, disregarding that this group are highly professional people who went through the problem themselves.

The essence of Norah's letter is that Healy's sexual abuse was criminal rape, not incest or incestuous rape. But that is to denigrate and patronise the large number of women cadres within the world Trotskyist movement who were persistently sexually abused by Healy. It is to say they had accepted being raped — some for 20 and more years.

What happened was that Healy, having thrown in the towel in the struggle for revolution and chosen the path of opportunism, abused the revolutionary aspirations of the whole cadre and above all the women cadres of our movement for his own ends.

He used the unswerving determination to make the revolution, embodying all the sacrifices required to build revolutionary leadership, to impose his regime of sexual abuse and complete control over party cadre.

The impact of Healy's sexual abuse on the women cadres can only be likened to incest. The effect of a historically most revered leader in the world Trotskyist movement forcing his victims, all of them party cadres, to succumb to his sexual advances was mind-blowing for the victims.

This can only be likened to incest. A person in a position

of power over a victim, such as a parent, by forcing the victim into sexual relations, has a similar devastating effect.

The victim always considers there is something wrong with him or herself and not with the abuser, is unable to cope with the reality of the situation, and is paralysed to act on it.

The victim feels he or she is in the wrong, not the abuser. This is very far removed from the reaction of a victim of rape. The fact that the person carrying out the abuse has the complete confidence, trust and respect of the victim is the source of the damage.

Norah Wilde's letter states that this analysis of Healy's practices is mystification, but her letter mystifies it even further through her distortion of reality: she relegates all of Healy's victims to victims of rape.

If it were possible to explain what took place so simply, with the label of rape, then one should draw the conclusion that all those victims — an important section of the cadre of the world Trotskyist movement — having put up over a long period of time with physical coercion without challenging it, would be unlikely to be revolutionary fighters and would find it nearly impossible to take up the role of leadership within the party and the class.

In fact it would be the gravest of errors for the party to blame the victims for the abuse to which they were subjected. This would in fact prolong the decades-long domination of the Trotskyist movement by bourgeois class methods in the approach to the double oppression of women in society — which continues to be a pressure on the party up to this day and is a continuing danger.

The Incest Crisis Line is quoted in the original article as saying:

'It is quite common for those in authority to turn away from sexual abuse when it is reported — they feel emotionally unable to cope with the problem, so prefer to believe it is not happening.'

On the one side in the party and amongst many leading sections is a desire to move on from the painful and distasteful revelations of the long drawn out criminal actions of Healy. This expresses the reaction just quoted above.

On the other side there are large sections in the party who write off the sexual abuses of Healy, condemning his victims as spineless elements who capitulated and accepted rape, this being a convenient way of explaining away and rationalising what took place.

The question still remains as to how it was possible for this unbelievable degeneration to exist within the heart of the international Trotskyist movement for so long, acting as a vehicle for the disarming and liquidation of the movement.

Healy's insistence on his personal control over the IC necessitated keeping the Trotskyist movement as minute groups, enabling them to remain under his total power. This had a detrimental effect not only on the IC but indirectly on all Trotskyist groups throughout the world.

None of this can be under-

stood through separating 'politics' and 'theory' from the anti-communist practices expressed by the sexual abuses of Healy. Any attempt to move on from analysing and examining the long era of Healy's sexual abuses because of its painful nature can only disarm the party in its theoretical work and political development.

The party also has to learn to be able to protect, defend and care for Healy's victims worldwide, who in many cases have become casualties of the battle. A movement that cannot defend past gains of the working class can never carry the struggle through to revolution.

The domination of bourgeois ideology in the form of the lack of struggle by the entire membership against the oppression of women within society as well as in the party was the backcloth against which Healy's horror crimes took place. In this way his methods dominated the whole party. These pressures and this training still operate.

Unless throughout the party we begin to strive for an understanding of the unification of Healy's practices and the political and theoretical degeneration that our movement has undergone, we will never overcome the bourgeois conceptions in the party about women, raise the party to a Marxist level on these questions and educate a true Marxist cadre.

In 'Revolution Betrayed' Trotsky says: 'The position of women is the most graphic and telling indicator for evaluating a social regime and state policy.' So too it is an indicator for evaluating the position inside the party.

The development of the objective situation propelled forward by the miners' strike brought forward the

material conditions for the party to rise up and defeat Healy and his bureaucratic clique. But this is only the start of the battle, because our party requires an entire re-education in the basic principles of Marxism to forge a revolutionary leadership.

If the miners' strike transformed social relations in the course of the class struggle in Britain and internationally, so also did it end the old relations in the world Trotskyist movement.

Just as in all revolutionary upsurges the most oppressed and unexpected layers came to the forefront of the struggle, the miners' wives were the backbone that enabled the miners' strike to endure for a year. This in its turn transformed this layer into their opposites — from housewives into leading class and political fighters.

So also a parallel development took place within the party. Following the development of theoretical opposition to Healy, the most oppressed layers within the party took up the lead in the struggle against the most basic bourgeois class pressure of the oppression of women in society dominating within our movement.

The most unexpected layers who had been deliberately maintained in the greatest theoretical backwardness — the 'manual labourers' — were propelled forward in the explosion within the party right into the forefront of this historical struggle.

Are we to let these forces sink back to where they were before? This is a danger that confronts us today.

Or is there to be a struggle to unify the enormous historical, theoretical and political knowledge within our movement with this leap that emerged through the explosion to establish a real understanding of what happened within our party?

This has yet to be achieved and never will so long as a separation between Healy's sexual abuses and his 'political' and 'theoretical' degeneration takes place.

One of Healy's many victims

Confusion on Simon Bolivar Brigade

WHAT a confused man is Ralf Carls who wrote on the Simon Bolivar Brigade in last week's Workers Press (28 February). He tries to compensate for his own confusion by slipping an arrogant and vicious sentence into the cracks in his letter.

'Tricky Moreno', he calls Moreno. His organisation tells a 'big lie', he says. Surely, the Workers Press must reserve the right to ensure that letters are free of such personal abuse?

Before Ralf Carls launches into a discussion he should learn to take a serious position on serious questions. He faces both ways on the scandalous action of the Unified Secretariat in its attack on the Simon Bolivar Brigade — volunteers who went to fight in the revolution in Nicaragua.

He says that the Unified Secretariat had an 'opportunist' policy as if he was talking about somebody having pimples. Obviously, in his scale of condemnations, the action of the Unified Secretariat ranks far less than those of their victims. It is very significant that his venomous attacks are reserved for those who suffered imprisonment for attempting to carry out revolutionary policies.

He writes: 'Without openly

saying so, they want to give the impression that the construction of the SBB by the Colombian PST was the adequate way to build up a revolutionary party.'

He then tells us: 'This is a big lie (Politically speaking)'. His method is thus to imply a position for his opponent and then proceed to call him a liar for having it!

Obviously Ralf Carls finds it very difficult to get beyond the world in his own head.

He informs us: 'Certainly we could discuss the formation of an International Brigade as an integral part of the united front and certainly one could send one if you have the resources.' One could, couldn't one? In fact, the kindest thing one can say is: 'Please comrade, stick to "Dungeons and Dragons".'

'... we never deny', he writes, 'sending our comrades in "other" countries to openly fight for the revolutionary programme!' The exclamation mark is his and certainly all readers will be astonished that he and his associates in Workers Power have a phantom army.

Finally: 'The MAS stagnates...' he declares. I would only wish that principled Trotskyists everywhere were stagnating like the MAS.

Bill Hunter

LETTERS

Dates in Irish history

I WOULD suggest that to find the right answer a person should first understand the question. With this in mind I shall attempt to unravel N.M. of Dublin's letter (Workers Press, 14 February) which I consider to be a confused blending of both fact and conjecture.

To begin, N.M. suggests that Trotskyists have attempted in Ireland to identify 1916, 1798 and 1641 as the principal dates in Irish history.

Let me remind N.M. that the main tool for Trotskyists along with dialectical materialism is historical materialism, the Marxist analysis of society in history. Therefore Trotskyists view all history as important.

However Trotskyists, bas-

ing themselves on the struggle and primacy of the working class in this period, have no trouble in identifying Easter 1916 as the principal date in Irish history, for it was there that the working class fought as a class for itself through taking part in that rebellion of the Irish Citizen's army (read Trotsky and Lenin on this question).

N.M. goes on to extol the values of 1688 and the constitution. It was nothing more than a gentleman's agreement which sought to ameliorate between contending classes and class entities, the church, bourgeoisie, aristocracy and monarchy within the embryonic capitalist state.

On the question of the counter revolution of James

II and Charles I, I would concede that this is by and large correct, however it leaves out the total effect on Ireland as a whole with respect to the restoration of Catholic rights, as the late Cde Jack Gale wrote in his short but excellent book 'Oppression and Revolt in Ireland':

'The restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 made little difference to Ireland. True, the Catholic James II repealed Cromwell's Act of settlement, but in practice nothing was done to restore the land to its former Catholic owners.'

In fact the act of Settlement was replaced later on by the barbaric penal laws

under N.M.'s much vaunted 'democratic' British state.

N.M.'s reference to Ashe leaves me at best bemused. What Provost Ashe had done only extended to the gates of Dublin university — which at that time was a bastion of protestant ascendancy.

Anyhow it would seem that petty-bourgeois philanthropic notions extended beyond this to other well-known examples, Dean Swift being one of them. However, such enlightened views only held sway with a handful of individuals and never made a jot of difference to the oppressed peoples of Ireland.

I found N.M.'s letter unsatisfactory and misleading, for a person reading it might assume by its tone that it had been a succession of Republicans and Catholics which have stopped the 'democratic' state of Britain allowing a degree of autonomy to the oppressed peoples of Ireland in the period 1688-1690 and after.

Where there might be slight mileage in such an argument let us not forget that it was the 'British democratic state' that underpinned the class system in Ireland. As a result all the petty-bourgeois ideas of Republicanism and reaction of Catholicism in Ireland have been, and are, contingent on the British colonial and imperial presence, in that order.

Let me assure N.M. that while the WRP will support unreservedly but not uncritically the Republican movement, we will not be subsumed into purely nationalistic politics. Indeed if we did not work alongside Republican elements we could isolate ourselves from potential class fighters, negate our duty in our support of anti-imperialist tendencies and we could also be accused — quite correctly — of being sectarian.

However, it is true that we must build the party in Ireland and develop a programme for the Irish dimension.

To conclude I would suggest that if N.M. wishes to understand the real 'material factors' in Irish history he or she should look to the role of butcher when looking at British attempts to rule in Ireland, rather than placing his cards on the British 'gentleman's' agreement of the constitution, or the even more gentlemanly aspirations of past Provosts of Dublin university.

P.M. Winters
North London WRP

Norah's vote of thanks.

I WISH to thank all participants in recent exchanges in Workers Press concerning my letter which dealt with the exceptionally confused theoretical content of Cyril Smith's article 'State Power and National Security'.

I extend my thanks to J. Robinson for reminding us that there are still some comrades around, such as himself, who believe that 'serious discussion' is furthered by suppressing contributions with which he personally disagrees.

I would like to thank Workers Press for taking no notice of him.

My warmest thanks to R. Goldstein who appears to have clarified, to J. Robinson's satisfaction, the latter's mistaken idea that I hold a reformist view of the bourgeois democratic capitalist state.

I thank J. Peters for introducing a moment of comic relief when, in offering a letter for publication, he contradicted his own sombre criticism of the editors, viz., that they had failed to keep off the pages of Workers Press disagreements between Party members.

To D. Bruce I extend my appreciation of his acute observation that the great majority in our Party who have not previously had the opportunity of expressing political or theoretical ideas, are now struggling to overcome the lethal consequences of this legacy from the

past, a matter which cannot be over-estimated.

Finally, I welcome P. Fryer's questions concerning my letter, whilst noting that they were directed to the wrong person.

More recently, P. Fryer stated in his reply to D. Bruce: 'Wilde wrote . . . at a higher level of abstraction than I am able to follow,' and added: 'If her ideas have substance and validity, can they not be addressed in simpler . . . terms?' (Workers Press, 28 February 1987).

Peter is coming close to suggesting that terms he finds difficult and unfamiliar are of doubtful validity.

Is this his view of the terms employed in 'Capital' (Marx); 'Logic' (Hegel); 'Ulysses' (Joyce) or 'The Theory of Relativity' (Einstein) etc.?

Or does he not agree that every science, including Marxism, develops its own specialised terms, which have to be mastered in the course of studying theory?

For the use of everyday, commonsensical terms and language is inadequate and an ideological barrier to theoretically penetrating the laws of motion governing nature and society, whilst the demand for 'simpler terms' is usually the cry of affronted common sense (bourgeois ideology) in the face of necessary and unavoidable difficult theoretical work.

In this instance, my letter

was not directed at the general reader of Workers Press, but to cadre familiar with Marxist theory. Constrained by the 500-word limit, it took an inevitably condensed and concentrated form.

It presupposed cadre's knowledge of the theory of imperialism; the theory of the state and its contradictory bourgeois democratic form; the theory of dialectical logic materialistically understood; and an historical materialist understanding of the basis of social change.

Nor did I, nor could I, elaborate on these theories as a whole as I would have wished, but was obliged to confine myself to dealing with them only at the point at which Cyril's errors conflicted with them.

That is why, when I noted the character of some of Peter's questions directed to Richard, it occurred to me that no one, in the space of 500 words, could fully answer those questions except Peter himself through studying Marxist theory.

One side of the discussion has thus had the unexpected and useful consequence of stimulating his desire to understand theoretical matters. In this respect I am sure, therefore, he will be assisted by the editors of Workers Press who might draw his attention to some suitable Marxist texts.

Norah Wilde

LISTINGS

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

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

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)

NICARAGUA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN Club Sandino, 144 Upper Street, Islington, London N1. Set up by the Campaign, this new club will be opening on 5 March. For details ring 01-608 0686

SOCIALIST HEALTH ASSOCIATION National One Day Conference: A New Agenda for Public Health, Saturday 21 March, Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, NW1. 10.30a.m.-4.30p.m.

FROM RESISTANCE TO REBELLION An exhibition of Asian and Afro-Caribbean struggles in Britain. Multicultural Education Centre, Leeds, 7. March 2-13, Phone 0532 623 448 for further details.

LABOUR BRIEFING Youth Day School: 'Youth and Sexuality'; Saturday 21 March 10.00am-4.30pm. For details of venue etc. phone Fran (01-431 0357) or Mike (01-769 6803)

DEFEND THE WOMBOURNE 12 Defend Lesbian and Gay Rights. Planning meeting every Thursday at 7.30pm, The Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 (Finsbury Park tube)

GEORGE ROUCOU DEFENCE CAMPAIGN National Lobby, Friday 13 March 12.00 midday — 2.00p.m. Immigration Appeals Office, Aldine House, New Bailey Street (across the Irwell), Manchester. Bring your banners!

CITY OF LONDON Anti-Apartheid Group National Demonstration and Rally, Saturday 14 March. Assemble Whittington Park, Highgate (near Archway tube) at 1.00pm; march to South African Embassy

CHUMMUN SISTERS DEFENCE CAMPAIGN House of Commons Public Meeting, Monday 9 March, 6.30p.m. Speakers: Mariam Chummun and Marion Gaima, trade unionists both facing deportation; Jeremy Corbyn MP, Alf Dubs MP (time permitting); Gloria

Mills NUPE Equal Rights Officer.

BRING BACK VICTORIA LIAMS! Campaign meetings take place on second and fourth Wednesdays of every month at, UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, Acton (7.30 p.m.)

LESBIANS AND GAYS SUPPORT THE PRINTWORKERS Public Meeting, 'The Lessons of Wapping'; Duke of York, York Way, Kings Cross, 7.30p.m. Wednesday 11 March. Speakers: Liz Short (SOGAT), NALGO,

LGSP, Left Out and others.

6th INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR Radical Black and Third World books. Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, Kings Cross, 26-29 March. Concerts, readings, exhibitions, films, forums and panels will also be taking place (Fair events also being held 18-21 March in Manchester, and on 1-5 April in Bradford. Telephone 01-272 4889 and 01-579 4902 for details)

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AIDS: Product of Imperialist War Drive?

THERE has been huge publicity and discussion about AIDS in the media in recent weeks, but the origin of this killer virus is still presented as a mystery. The BBC TV programme last Friday 'AIDS — the Facts' claimed that 'nobody knows for sure' where the virus came from and left it at that.

However, many scientists now believe that the AIDS virus is man-made.

One scientist in particular, Professor Jakob Segal, has published devastating evidence which pinpoints precisely the time and location of the AIDS virus' origin: 1977 in a top security US military research laboratory, Block 550 in Fort Detrick, Maryland, USA.

Professor Segal, former head of the Institute of General Biology at Humboldt University in East Berlin, specialises in research into proteins, higher protein systems and their genetic structures.

In an extensive interview with the West German radical daily 'Tageszeitung' (18.2.1987), Professor Segal explains how he came to investigate the origins of AIDS:

'When, in August 1985, the theory was spread in the media that AIDS had arisen when a hitherto harmless virus living in the green monkey in Africa was transferred through bites to humans and mutated into the AIDS virus in the human body, this seemed to me so improbable that I decided to investigate.'

Identification

The theory was first advanced by a US virologist, Dr Max Essex, although scientists all over the world disproved it immediately.

The spread of such theories by scientists constituted nothing less than 'conscious deception', says Professor Segal.

The first successful identification of the AIDS virus was in the spring of 1983 by Professor Luc Montagnier at the Pasteur Institute in France.

Three months later, the virus was also identified in the US by the Bethesda

Laboratory led by Professor Gallo, who named it HTLV III.

The suggestion was that it was a virus related to two other newly-discovered viruses, HTLV I and HTLV II, both of which produce cancer of the T-cells, (cells which control the production of anti-bodies against infection in the human body.)

The AIDS virus turned out to be fundamentally different from cancer-inducing viruses.

The latter do not destroy the T-cells, but they produce a cancer in, maybe, one cell in a million, leaving the other 999,999 cells intact to continue functioning.

Entire

The AIDS virus, on the other hand, destroys all the T-cells, causing the entire immune system to break down and leaving the body defenceless against normally harmless infections.

Recognising the AIDS virus could not possibly have arisen through mutation from Professor Gallo's HTLV I and HTLV II viruses, scientists then began to search for other groups of viruses similar to the HTLV III (AIDS) virus.

One of the characteristics of AIDS is its long incubation period, so they looked at a group of viruses which have an incubation period of similar length and which affect mainly hooved animals such as horses and goats.

One of these proved to be very similar to the AIDS virus: the so-called Visna-virus, which affects sheep and is found particularly in Greenland.

A remarkable discovery was then made.

Although the genetic structure of the Visna-virus is almost identical to the HTLV III (AIDS) virus, the Visna lacked just one single 'piece', a piece which was present in both the HTLV I and HTLV III (AIDS) viruses.

In the words of Professor Segal: 'The AIDS virus is a Visna-virus from which somebody has cut out a piece and exchanged it for another.'

He specifies: 'We are dealing here not just with any piece that has been exchanged: it is the piece which contains the hereditary ability to produce the particular kinds of protein that enable the virus to latch into the human T-cells.'

And he elaborates: 'As

BY LISE BAUER

soon as the virus was given the possibility to fix itself onto a certain type of cells, it was made into a virus which is infectious for this type of cells.'

Is it possible that this kind of exchange of genetic matter could have occurred naturally? Professor Segal is certain that such a mechanism does not exist, one reason being that viruses do not reproduce sexually i.e. they lack the ability to combine genes.

He says: 'There is no normal biological way in which the exchange of genetic matter could have taken place. HTLV III was therefore created either by a miracle or by a technique which we have known and perfected for about two decades: through genetic manipulation.'

'It is, of course, no accident therefore that this virus did not arise 2000 years ago but only since we have this technique.'

Who, therefore, created this virus, where, when and why?

Professor Segal is certain that only genetic technicians could have been involved who had access to a top security laboratory of the type 'P-4', i.e. one specially designed and approved for experiments with morbidic agents (agents causing disease) and which features the strictest possible safety measures, because of the great dangers of such experiments.

Such laboratories are rare and very expensive.

The first type 'P-4' laboratory was opened in 1977 in Block 550 of the US military research institute in Fort Detrick, Maryland USA.

Since the relevant techniques had been developed many years before, Professor Segal is certain that experiments involving genetic manipulation of morbidic agents must have taken place in Fort Detrick immediately after the opening of the 'P-4' laboratory.

Including

'Why else would you need a P-4 Lab? It must therefore be assumed that products of such experiments were in existence by the end of 1977. Including the AIDS virus.'

Professor Segal explains

that experience has shown that the human body has developed certain defences against ancient illnesses.

But there are no defences against new types of diseases: for example, whole Red Indian tribes were annihilated when measles was brought over from Europe.

That is, of course, why the military has a special interest in the development of new diseases.

But how did the AIDS virus get out of Block 550 despite all the safety precautions?

It is well documented, not least by the recently published United States Congress reports on experiments involving the effects of radioactivity on the human body, that experiments with viruses and other morbidic agents, too, are done on human guinea-pigs.

These are 'volunteers', mainly prisoners with very long or life sentences, who are promised release if they survive the experiment.

Infection

Since AIDS starts with a phase resembling a slight infection (intermittent fever, diarrhoea, rashes) which disappears after a short time and no further symptoms occur for many months or several years, the conclusion must have been drawn that the newly-manufactured virus was ineffective and the prisoner-'volunteers' released after a few months.

Fort Detrick, being situated in the state of Maryland, is not far from the city of New York.

Professor Segal is certain that New York was therefore the obvious choice for these ex-prisoners to begin a new life in the anonymity of this big city.

In addition, many long-term prisoners adopt homosexual practices during the long years of their confinement — not surprisingly they would choose the gay milieu upon their arrival in New York.

This explains, according to Professor Segal, the fact that the first AIDS cases appeared among the gay



'One of the most terrifying diseases ever to afflict humanity is the direct result of imperialism's unrelenting drive for more horrific weapons'. Above: NATO chemical warfare manoeuvres in the 1980s

community in New York in 1979.

This would also correspond with the incubation period of AIDS, particularly when taking into account that these people had been given massive doses of the virus by injection, which possibly shortened the incubation period somewhat.

Segal deals with the theory that AIDS originated in Africa. Despite the most thorough research he was unable to trace an AIDS case in Africa before December 1982.

He thinks the most likely way the killer virus came to Africa was through foreign visitors such as tourists, technicians and commercial travellers, who passed it on to African prostitutes.

The Paris AIDS-Congress held in June last year featured no less than 17 different papers all proving conclusively that AIDS could not possibly have originated in Africa.

Explaining the persistence of this myth, Professor Segal says: 'When colleagues, who can be expected to be familiar with the subject literature, still propound the Africa-thesis in the media and public discussions, then this is conscious deception in

order to conceal the US-origins of AIDS from the general public.'

Professor Segal has no illusions that the US military or the US government will ever allow the admittance of responsibility for developing the AIDS virus.

He also thinks it unlikely that any of the men who unwittingly brought the virus out of Fort Detrick are still alive.

But he concludes: 'The circumstantial evidence is overwhelming. There is no other scientifically defensible theory about the origins of AIDS, nor its first appearance in New York.'

'As far as a scientific statement can be made with certainty at all, we can safely say: AIDS is man-made in USA.'

If Professor Segal is right, this means that one of the most terrifying diseases ever to afflict humanity is the direct result of imperialism's unrelenting drive for more horrific weapons.

It means that US imperialism is directly responsible for the deaths of thousands of people, maybe millions in the next few years, as surely as if it were dropping bombs onto their homes.

ROBSON'S CHOICE

THE ITV programme **First Tuesday** in the best traditions of investigative journalism, keeps hammering away on behalf of the Guildford Four.

Last July they reported the facts surrounding the Guildford and Woolwich bombings and forced the Home Office to review the case since it was patently obvious that the criminal jailing of the Four, solely on the basis of forced confessions retracted in court, pointed to a serious miscarriage of justice.

But the Home Secretary has so far refused to re-open the case on the flimsy ground that no new evidence had been presented.

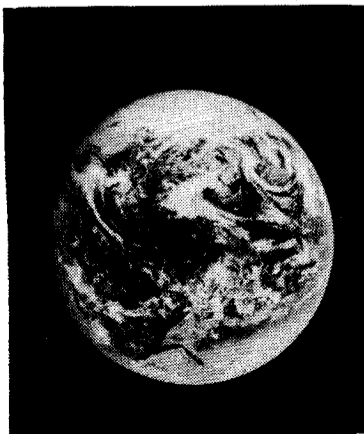
So last week **First Tuesday** presented new evidence for all to see — in the form of an independent witness who can account for Paul Hill's whereabouts at the time of the Woolwich bombing. Let the Home Secretary try and wriggle out of that one!

* * *
On **Saturday** at 8.15p.m. (C4) a chance to see the final part of **Pioneers of Socialism**. Infinitely more rewarding will be part-two (of four) of Ingmar Bergman's **Fanny and Alexander** (9.35p.m. BBC2) followed by **Sawdust and Tinsel** at 10.55p.m.

Howard Hughes' **Hell's Angels** (justly famous for its air-stunts and Jean Harlow, not necessarily in that order) is on **Sunday** (2.30p.m. C4). At 5.15p.m. on **BBC2 Thinking Aloud** comes from the USSR, and bears all the signs of being a big boost for Gorbachev's 'new turn'.

For nostalgia I will look at **Armchair Theatre**, (9.15p.m. ITV), which this week features a play by Robert Muller.

On **Monday** there is **Panorama** (9.30p.m. BBC1) which last week gave an excellent account of the 'Arms for Iran-Contras' scandal



Earth, Thursday, 10.30p.m. ITV currently rocking the White House. It is worth keeping a wary eye on current affairs programmes like **Panorama**, **This Week**, **News Night** and **World in Action** precisely be-

cause they do not announce the topics they are going to deal with in advance. One can often be pleasantly and usefully surprised.

Tuesday (10.30p.m. ITV) offers the first of a new three-part series called **Earth: The Shadow of Humanity** — a serious attempt to take stock of man's impact on the eco-system.

'The first one is an analysis of the ecological state of the planet,' producer Richard Broad explained, 'and attempts to raise the ecological debate up a notch. We're not talking about dying whales, we're talking about serious impacts on life-support systems.'

'Nature provides us with a lot of free services, like rain, which we take for granted. But we cannot take them for granted because they can break down.'

'The second programme is a sort of history of the emergence of

ecology as an idea and discipline. It's called **The Killing of the Green**, and it starts with the war, with the bomb really, and it traces the way in which ecological ideas first got into scientists' heads and later into general consciousness.'

On **Wednesday** **Fay Weldon's Heart of the Country** continues at 9.25p.m. (BBC2).

On **Thursday** a social curiosity produced by the Maysles brothers, in 1975: **Grey Gardens** (10.45p.m. C4).

On **Friday** **Arena** looks at the work of Soviet filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky who died in 1986 not long after quitting the country of his birth. **Jules Dassin's The Naked City** is at 11.15p.m. (C4) — well worth a look for sheer entertainment.

Robson's Choice will reappear in three weeks' time.

Workers Press

Saturday March 7 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

Write for Workers Press!

WE ARE receiving more material than ever for Workers Press — but we want to hear from even more of our readers!

Please send your letters, news from your area, reports of working-class struggles,

the latest developments in the Labour Party and the Communist Party. . .

The response we have had to our past appeals means we have had to hold over a large number of reports and features for future issues:

● Next week we begin a

series on the Simon Bolivar Brigade.

● We will have more news on the preparations for the International Conference, including the second part of the article by Janos Borovi 'Caught in the Act' plus a

series of articles by Bill Hunter.

● An important six-part series dealing with the political situation in South Africa and the tasks of Trotskyism is also planned.

● Material from America will include a special interview with veteran American Trotskyist Leon Goodman as well as our regular column 'Letter From America'.

THOUSANDS MARCH TO SUPPORT CATERPILLAR

ABOUT 8,000 trade unionists, representing all the major industries in the west of Scotland, demonstrated last weekend in support of workers fighting closure by occupying the Caterpillar plant in Uddingston.

An impressive banner, featuring the 'Pink Panther' tractor which the workforce has built for Band Aid, led a large delegation from the factory at the head of the march.

The demonstration — organised by the Scottish TUC — was swelled by contingents from factories as far away as Dundee and from many local unemployed workers' centres. Tannochside Miners' Support Group, on the threatened factory's doorstep, brought a banner proclaiming support for the sit-in.

One of the liveliest delegations, from the Golden Wonder crisp factory in West Lothian — also threatened with closure — arrived with a sparkling banner inventively made out of colourful crisp packets.

The march's militant mood was largely wasted on the uninspiring route, which wound from Uddingston, through country roads and private housing estates, to a rally at the Caterpillar gates.

On arrival marchers gave a hostile reception to Tory MP Michael Hirst, who claimed to be 'as dismayed as anybody' by the US management's decision to close the plant.

But in fact his message was not much different from that of the Labour Party and

BY HILARY HORROCKS

trade union speakers on this class coalition platform assembled by the Scottish TUC, which also included Scottish National Party and Alliance MPs and church leaders.

MP Donald Dewar, Scottish TUC secretary Campbell Christie, and Communist Party leader John Kay all emphasised that the campaign must be directed towards changing the management's mind and 'putting pressure' on the Tory government.

Their speeches could have been made ten years ago: none referred to the latest round of Tory anti-union proposals, and none recommended physical solidarity by other workers for Caterpillar. Instead they confined themselves to calls for financial aid.

Harry McLevy, AEU regional officer, drew attention to the international support won by the Uddingston workers.

'If you have the courage to fight against the multinationals you will attract support,' he said, pledging that there would be no settlement unacceptable to the Caterpillar workforce.

The international implications of the dispute were taken further by speakers from the Caterpillar plants in France and Belgium.

'At the moment we are playthings in the hands of the multinationals,' said the Belgian delegate. 'We must establish a European union.'

He proposed a march on



The Scottish Region GMBATU banner joined that of the 'Golden Wonder' crisp workers and many others on the march

the European parliament to demand that money received by Caterpillar bosses should be put towards providing work for European workers.

Plant convenor John Brannan reported that Scots dockers and unions at the Coatbridge container base had voted not to move Caterpillar parts.

The fight had also been boosted by donations of between £500 and £2,000 from Scottish miners, the EIS teachers' union, Govan shipyards, Hoovers, Cambuslang, John Brown Engineering, Clydebank, and Rolls-Royce, Hillington.

'Rifkin hasn't told us anything he didn't tell us five weeks ago,' said Brannan. 'The MPs in the House of Commons should get up off their backsides.'

Maguire exposes frame-ups

BY MARTIN RALPH

ANNE MAGUIRE gave a vivid account last Saturday of the beating of Paul Hill and Patrick Armstrong by police, and the humiliation she herself was subjected to as police tried to make her confess to taking part in the 1974 Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings.

She was speaking at a public meeting in Manches-

ter Town Hall on the cases of the Guildford Four and the Maguire family. The Guildford Four were framed and sentenced for life for the Guildford and Woolwich bombings.

Giuseppe Conlon, father of Gerard Conlon, one of the Guildford Four, came over from Belfast to stay with the Maguires while he arranged for legal representation for his son.

Police raided the Maguires' house a few hours after he arrived. They arrested Anne Maguire, her husband, her brother, her sons Patrick (13) and Vincent (17), Giuseppe Conlon, and a neighbour, Pat O'Neill, who had called in to arrange for a babysitter.

Traces

Forensic scientists claimed to find traces of nitroglycerine in a pair of kitchen gloves, and all seven were framed and sentenced for manufacturing explosives.

Speakers at Saturday's meeting were Anne Maguire, who served ten years in jail; Patrick Maguire, who served three years; Theresa Smalley, Paul Hill's aunt; and Lisa Asten, a witness at the trial of the Guildford Four, who was at a concert with Carole Richardson on the night when Carole was supposed

to have been planting bombs in Guildford and Woolwich.

Anne Maguire told the meeting about Judith Ward — framed and sentenced to life for the M62 coach bombing in 1974 — with whom she served her sentence in Durham jail's top security wing. She said people could help Judith by campaigning to have her moved out of Durham and off Category A status.

Patrick Maguire spoke of the beatings the police gave him in their vain attempts to make him plead guilty. Since he was only 13 at the time the police acted illegally by interrogating him without a guardian being present.

He, his brother, and his father were still suffering. Because of the convictions, they could not get jobs.

Theresa Smalley, who has been trying to expose the frame-ups for years, said that at first the Irish government and embassy didn't want to know, and friends and witnesses were frightened to come forward in case they too were arrested and framed.

The meeting, organised by Lancashire Birmingham Six Campaign, passed a resolution to be sent to the Home Secretary and elected a committee to carry forward the campaign.

● See 'New evidence' review — page 16

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Bryant Street Methodist Centre
off West Ham Lane (Tube: Stratford).
Sunday 8 March 7.30pm.

Continuation of discussion on WRP call for an international conference of Trotskyists in 1987.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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Workers Press
Readers' Meeting
Monday, 9 March, 7.30p.m.
Clapham Baths
Clapham Manor Street
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PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday 18 March 7.30p.m.
Carlton Centre, Granville Road, London NW6
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For a public inquiry into the beating and framing of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four!

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A Magazine of Marxist Theory
Volume 1 Number 1 March 1987

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