

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Manchester Town Hall,

25 July, 12 noon.

Called by Ancoats Casualty sit-in, Ardrbride supporters, Senior Coleman strike committee, Gateshead workers' support group, Ardrbride sacked workers and Trader sacked workers.

MINERS THROW OUT 6-DAY WEEK

Blow against Thatcher and Kinnock

THE DECISION of last week's National Union of Mineworkers' Conference to reject six-day working is a powerful blow against all those in the labour movement who have said that the Thatcher election victory was a defeat for the working class.

The decision is also a defeat for the unholy alliance of Communist Party members and right wingers who have worked for months to undermine the stand of NUM President Arthur Scargill against British Coal's plans for 'flexible working'.

The conference action was a well-deserved slap in the face for retiring vice-president Mick McGahey.

Right up to the eve of the conference, Euro-communist McGahey fought for the introduction of 'flexible working'.

In an interview in the cur-

rent 'Marxism Today', journal of the Euro-communists, he bitterly attacked Scargill's refusal to shift:

'If you never move an inch that is not a movement that is a monument.'

Well, McGahey has got his answer from the miners: on six-day working they have refused to budge an inch.

The conference was a strong rebuff to scab trade unionism. Throughout the debate on resolution 21, supporters of six-day working told conference that the Union of Democratic Mineworkers was waiting in the wings.

This crude blackmail attempt was put to bed by

Notts area secretary Henry Richardson when he read a letter from UDM president Roy Lynk claiming that the UDM was in favour of flexible working only in new pits.

Richardson informed delegates that all Notts miners, whatever their union, were against flexible working. To capitulate on the six-day issue would stem the flow of men from the UDM back into the national union, warned Richardson.

But the Rothesay vote is by no means the end of the battle.

● British Coal are deter-

mined to impose the longer working week. Last week British Coal chairman Sir Robert Haslam spelt it out: 'I want no one to be in any doubt — without six-day coaling, the Margam mine will not go ahead.' Haslam speaks for Thatcher who is hell-bent on imposing her policies on everybody. The collective bargaining rights of 250,000 teachers have been removed. The last remaining rights of Labour local authorities are next in line.

● A section of the NUM leadership will press ahead with their plans to collabo-

rate with British Coal. Yorkshire president Jack Taylor, in opposing the attempt to move the reference back on six-day working, warned that the National Executive Committee could not be trusted with the fight against British Coal's draconian plans.

● Several other unions are ready to step in and organise at Margam and other hi-tech pits where Haslam intends to impose a longer working week and longer shifts. Such unions include not only the scab UDM and the EETPU but also elements within the Transport and General Workers Union, led by George Wright.

Haslam warned last week that if the NUM does not accept six-day working 'there are two or three other unions who have shown some interest in working Margam and clearly we will have to have discussions with them'.

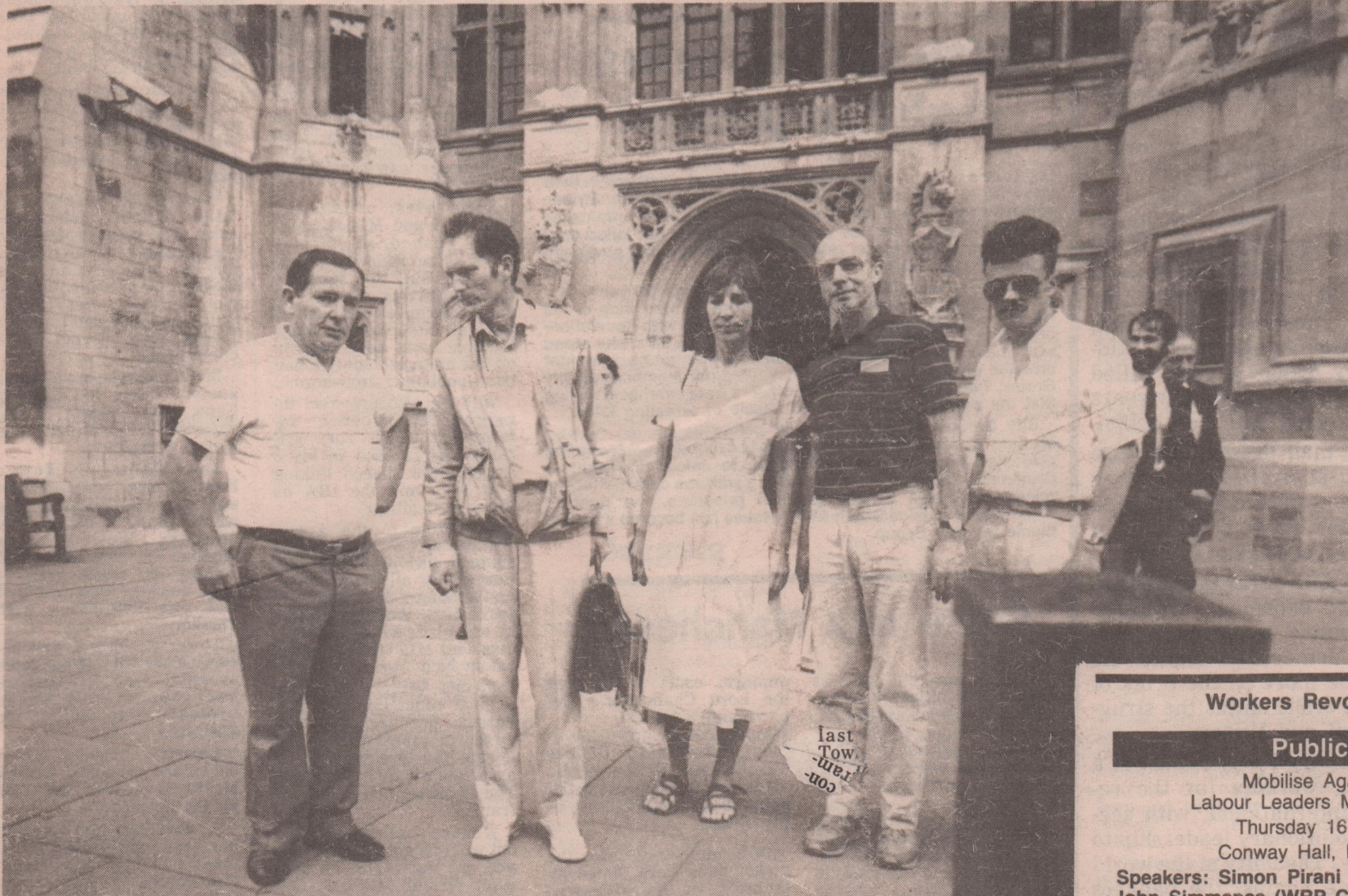
What is required is a programme to unite all those fighting against the Tory government. The miners' strike took to its very limit a purely trade union struggle.

● Scargill must now lead a fight inside the movement as a whole to demand that the trade union and labour leaders break off all relations with Thatcher.

● The fight to drive out the EETPU from the movement must be stepped up. Down with scab unionism! For the independence of the unions from the capitalist state!

● The labour leaders must back all those in struggle in defence of their jobs, their welfare services, their trade union rights.

The miners' conference was an important step forward in the fight for these demands.



Dick Delaney (left) father of Michael Delaney, 'unlawfully killed' during the Wapping Print Strike, and members of the Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group leaving the House of Commons after talks with Labour MPs. ● Delaney verdict challenged — see page 3.

Workers Revolutionary Party

Public Meeting

Mobilise Against the Tories!
Labour Leaders Must Fight Thatcher!

Thursday 16 July, 7.30p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

Speakers: Simon Pirani (WRP Central Committee); John Simmance (WRP Central Committee and AEU convenor, Charing Cross Hospital — in a personal capacity)

Workers Press

World debt crisis hits the High Street

THE CITY pages reported on Wednesday that Midland Bank is selling three of its subsidiaries to the National Australia Bank for \$1 billion, and raising another £700 million through a one-for-one rights issue. That might look like some technical financial juggling, which has little relevance for people who work for a living. But that would miss the point.

This piece of news contains every aspect of the crisis which is already affecting the lives of millions throughout the world.

In the days when the British Empire ruled OK, Midland was the biggest bank in the world. In the boom-days of the 1970s, now trailing behind the New York banks, it joined the rush to lend cash to what is still called the 'Third World'. (The idea that, in the 20th century, any bit of the world could develop independently of the rest, was always a reactionary dream: the economic interconnections between the continents grow stronger every day!)

A few rich men in Africa, Asia and South America grew still richer as a result of these loans and masses of workers and peasants faced even more desperate poverty. Military governments held down these masses, and squeezed interest payments out of them on behalf of the bankers.

Now the burden of debt has become unbearable, with millions of workers and peasants no longer willing to tolerate the burdens which repayment necessitates. South American governments are suspending their payments. Nobody really expects that the massive loans will ever be repaid.

That is why Midland, in the wake of some US banking giants and NatWest over here, has had to set aside \$1 billion as 'bad debt' provision. Selling off Clydesdale in Scotland, Northern (Ireland) in Dublin and Northern in Belfast to Australian bankers will raise part of this cash.

Midland are now owed £4 billion by Latin American governments, most of it by Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. Mismanagement of Midland hasn't helped. They bought a bank called Crocker National Bank of California a few years ago, and found it was loaded with bad debts.

But the implications of their present crisis are much greater than the question of who is fleecing who in the City. The huge expansion of debt on a world scale in the past few years puts in doubt the stability of the entire capitalist system.

In Britain, Thatcher's third term threatens to bring about struggles of enormous explosive power, as the Tories move to destroy jobs, hospitals, schools and democratic rights. As world capital stands once more on the brink of catastrophe, its banking crisis unites the struggles of workers in Brazil and Britain.

The Workers Revolutionary Party is part of a Preparatory Committee, working for the rebuilding of the Fourth International, with sections which can give revolutionary leadership to workers in every country. The unity of the world working class in struggle against the bankers and their agents is the real way to respond to the latest City moves.

'Express' jobs slashed

THE expected announcement by management at Express Newspapers of the required job cuts on the 'Daily Express', 'Daily Star' and 'Sunday Express' turned out more severe than the union chapels anticipated.

Lord Stevens of Ludgate, owner of Express Newspapers Ltd., outlined his plans — he calls it future development — at a meeting on 2 July to all chapel officials from Manchester and London.

Stevens' plan is to shed 2,500 employees: 1,000 from Manchester and 1,500 from London.

He also plans to build a new plant in Manchester and another at Broughton, near Preston, for his northern editions.

The southern editions will be printed at the Isle of Dogs, east London, at West Ferry Printers, of which

Stevens is planning to hold a 50-per-cent share.

The editorial and clerical departments will be moved to a new site on the south side of Blackfriars Bridge, south London. According to Stevens all these premises will be separate companies with their own agreements and conditions.

A letter sent out to all employees by the managing director Andrew Cameron says: 'I am pleased to inform you that, in general terms, given the co-operation of our employees, we have decided to remain both publishers and printers of our titles — both in the north and the south.'

Further on he says: 'Although a substantial reduction in the number of employees is essential, I believe that the programme of change referred to above is the best option for the company and its employees — the alternative would be straightforward contract printing: for Express to cease as printers as well as publishers.'

It was only a year ago that Express Newspapers got rid of 2,000 employees while the

year-long struggle at Wapping was going on.

It was then that new photo-composition was introduced along with a new plastic polymer plating system for the printing presses.

Even then many chapel members knew that this would only be the first bite of the cherry and that they would probably come back for more.

It is possible that Stevens may have wanted to get rid of the whole 4,500 employees in one fell swoop last year, but because of the ongoing News International dispute at the time, this would probably have been considered impossible.

Instead he was prepared to wait and do his dirty work in two stages knowing, that he had an even chance of getting away with it.

Rank and file members of the Fleet Street Support Unit (FSSU) say that the whole question facing the Express workers and others in the rest of Fleet Street is one of leadership.

After the betrayal of Wapping what chapel is going to take action knowing that

they will get no support from the union?

The fight to retain jobs is made all the harder because of the refusal of the union and Labour leadership to take on the Tory government and their anti-trade union laws.

Waiting for the return of a Labour government in five years time, as Kinnock is now suggesting, will only see the trade union movement decimated.

We don't think workers will wait that long.

Stevens wants to bring in new working practices and agreements, which will mean longer hours and longer shift patterns. Management of all newspapers are pushing for these work practices without any fight back from the union leadership.

The FSSU says that chapels must demand a shorter working week with longer holidays and no of pay.

The fight for jobs is a political one and cannot be solved without a clear political perspective and the fight for a new leadership that will not buckle at the knees.

Expert backs MI5 exposure

FORENSIC tests carried out by a leading expert have lent further weight to reports that MI5, Army intelligence, and secret psychological warfare departments rigged news media stories and plotted against the Labour government in 1974.

Commissioned to check out claims made by former Army propaganda officer Colin Wallace, international documents expert Dr. Julius Grant

tested files shown by Wallace of material he claimed to have fed the press.

According to the 'Observer' (5 July), the tests established that Wallace's notes must have been written before the information in them could have been gleaned from anything already published.

The stories Wallace succeeded in planting included a front-page sensational lead-story in the 'News of the World', 10 December 1972,

headlined 'Russia in IRA plot sensation'.

Accompanied by a fuzzy picture of a 'Russian submarine' supposedly off the coast of Ireland, the story claimed to expose a plot to 'turn Ireland into a Kremlin-controlled Cuban-style republic.'

If Wallace's creative journalism against the IRA won him promotion from the 'secret government' of MI5, Army psy ops, etc., it was against the elected Labour government that such skills were next used.

Among Wallace's notes are references to the story that Hugh Gaitskell was killed by the KGB, that Harold Wilson had links via Lord Kagan to the KGB, and that Wilson had failed to act on an MI5 report claiming then Postmaster-General John Stonehouse was working for the Czechs.

Such tales, originating from CIA and MI5 sources, were pushed at various times by pet right-wing journalists. But the forensic tests, involving analysis of paper and ink to establish its year of manufacture, show Wallace must have been in on this material before it had been published anywhere.

Wallace also provided invented 'intelligence' information which Tory MP Airey Neave used in his 6 August 1976 speech linking Left MPs and the IRA as 'those evil allies.'

According to the Army, Wallace was sacked for 'pursuing a sort of disinformation policy all of his own', and leaking a document to a journalist. Wallace claims he was made a scapegoat for dissident MI5 officers under whom he'd worked.

In 1981, while working for a local council in Arundel, Sussex, Wallace was convicted of manslaughter following the discovery of an associate's body in the river. The ex-officer claims he was framed.

Wallace's allegations about what he got up to for MI5 and the Army tie in with what former MI5 assistant director Peter Wright has said in his memoirs, which the Thatcher government has tried to ban.

Wapping road protest

DOCKLANDS residents will stop rush-hour traffic on Friday 17 July in a protest against a proposed four-lane highway which will cut a swathe through London's east end.

The highway will terminate in the middle of a Limehouse council estate with a roundabout which will be bigger than Trafalgar Square.

A packed meeting of the Wapping Neighbourhood Committee, called last week to discuss the new highway, agreed on the action in order to stop it being built.

The demonstration will be the start of a campaign involving lightning protests which newly elected left MPs will be asked to support.

Wapping resident and father of three John Rees said: 'The plans would turn the area into a death trap for all our children and our blocks into prison cells with cars rushing everywhere. This new road won't relieve traffic, just attract more commuters.'

Martin Harris, a computer analyst living in Wapping Lane, said: 'Going to the supermarket is already like dicing with death.'

Jon Alderston, Tower Hamlets Environment Trust spokesman, said: 'This whole plan is completely bonkers. We must get together to stop this road ruining the whole area. It goes nowhere and will just link one bottleneck with another.'

Tower Hamlets is fast becoming the City of London's overspill area for bankers and yuppies, with three-bedroom flats selling for £230,000.

Industry has been driven out of the area and council blocks have been damaged by the developers.

A new elevated railway has been built linking Docklands with the city's financial centre. It runs within feet of council flats, causing buildings to shake and interfering with television reception.

City Group wins right to picket

LONDON's Cannon Row police have suffered a setback in their attempts to drive the Non-Stop Picket of the South African embassy out of Trafalgar Square. Their efforts to criminalise picketers through the use of the Public Order Act failed on 2 July when a mass picket refused to move from the pavement outside the embassy.

Norma Kitson, wife of David Kitson who spent 20 years as a prisoner in South Africa for his part in the armed wing of the African National Congress, was arrested along with Revolutionary Communist Group leader David Reed. Two MPs who stood with them directly outside the embassy entrance were not arrested on the grounds that 'they were not members of City Group'. Two Cannon Row police officers were overheard saying that the police 'didn't want the hassle of arresting MPs'.

City Group's victory came just before its Annual General Meeting the following Sunday, and was a morale booster for the delegates who pledged to continue to defend the right to demonstrate against apartheid. Along with the demand for the release of South African political prisoners, the right to demonstrate outside South Africa House has become a central theme for City Group.

Strike hits Manchester

PICKETS were out again at government offices in Manchester last week as the civil servants' union CPSA — continued its regional programme of action before a rotating on all-out strike later this month.

The CPSA had decided to continue its agreed action after one of the other unions, the SCPS, had decided to suspend 'action' and to negotiate with the Treasury.

One of the liveliest and largest of the pickets was

amongst court workers at the Lord Chancellor's Department.

Most DHSS and Unemployment Benefit Offices were closed to the public although work was still being done in other parts of the offices.

In a number of cases the picket lines were joined by members of the SCPS who were not happy with the decision of their executive council to call off the action.

ANCOATS LEADER Support 25 July

SUPPORT is growing for the 25 July Conference in Manchester, from workers in direct struggle, union branches, trades councils, and shop stewards' committees (see advert on page 1).

Martin Ralph, on behalf of Workers Press, asked Billy Mason, one of the leaders of the Ancoats sit-in, why he thought the 25 July conference should be supported.

It is the people in struggle who need this conference. We have a lot to discuss. We started the sit-in with over 200 people. It was the residents who opposed the closure of the casualty unit.

The unions disagreed with the closure; they held token strikes and helped financially. They should have come totally out on strike.

Jobs were going because the casualty closed and we were fighting for them. We had nothing to lose with no jobs and no casualties. What is there to lose by taking action?

Finance is a big problem for maintaining the sit-in, and for travelling. We have been, for example, to Liverpool, London and Glasgow.

What we need is a central office like the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

There is nothing to help workers in struggle unless you are in a big union. We should have an office in every town with expertise from all the workers who have been in struggle. The campaign office is good but if it's not helping actual campaigns it is no good.

In Manchester we have put Labour in office: they should help us. I don't think we are getting the same support from Labour as when we first started.

We have had different responses. Some say they can't help us; some say they will and then don't help; some help, to further their own career. Once a struggle starts those that help you should see it right through.

During the elections the people running for office helped us. Once they got where they wanted to go they didn't give the same support. You can understand this with some because they don't have time, but this isn't always the only reason.

That is why we need the experience of all those in struggle. If every union had one representative at an office to help campaigns they would have enormous power.

If a union did its job you wouldn't need an organisation like this. The unions have the power but they don't use it. Thatcher does.

Everyone who is in struggle or who wants to support struggle should attend this conference.

Though we would have to go on till midnight to get everything discussed that needs to be discussed, I think this conference should have a wide attendance.

London children are most deprived of all

THE Inner London Education Authority's annual pupil survey shows that London's children suffer 'disadvantage much greater than anywhere else in the country'.

Almost half ILEA's 290,000 pupils receive free school meals. In Tower Hamlets 72 per cent of primary school pupils receive free meals, and 42 per cent have unemployed parents.

'Denying resources simply allows disadvantage to pass unchecked from one generation to the next', comments Barrie Stead, chairman of ILEA's schools sub-committee.

Delaney verdict challenged by persons unknown

THE VERDICT of unlawful killing in the case of Michael Delaney, who died during the printers' strike, has been challenged anonymously.

Nineteen-year-old Michael was on his way to a friend's house in Wapping when he was hit by a scab truck as it left Rupert Murdoch's print fortress.

At the inquest the coroner directed the jury to return a verdict of death by misadventure. They had followed his advice in a number of previous cases but he was visibly shaken when they resisted pressure from him and returned a verdict of unlawful killing.

Unlike procedure in a court of law a coroner is not obliged to draw the obvious conclusion of such a verdict and name the killer, who would then be tried.

The Director of Public Prosecutions also refused to bring the driver to trial, leaving the Delaney family with the almost impossible task of raising the huge sums necessary for a private prosecution.

But now the Attorney General has received an application to overturn the verdict altogether.

This would be done by referring the case to the High Court, where the

BY PHIL PENN



MICHAEL DELANEY

verdict could be quashed or another inquest ordered.

Michael's father, Dick Delaney, heard the news after leaving the House of Commons on Monday where he had been discussing the case with Labour MPs.

'It's disgusting', he said. 'If the law took its proper course then the driver would be prosecuted and that would be that.'

Referring to the inquest and the DPP's inaction, he said: 'They have done their best to cover it up. The coroner was disgusted when he did not get his own way. So we know now that this is a cover-up'

TNT, Rupert Murdoch's scab trucking outfit, 'were given a free hand by the police to do what they liked', he said.

Robert Higgins, the driver whose truck killed Michael, 'showed no remorse or sympathy. His attitude was that he couldn't care less. We won't accept it! Just because we don't have any money or power doesn't mean that we can be treated like dirt.'

The Michael Delaney case and the coroner's rules, allowing police to withhold evidence and denying inquest juries the right to name those implicated in a verdict, were the subject of Monday's House of Commons meeting which had been requested by the Tower Hamlets Workers' Support Group.

Ironically, as the discussion proceeded, a TV monitor in the room announced the start of the debate on the takeover of the 'Today' newspaper by Rupert Murdoch.

Mildred Gordon, newly elected Labour MP and member of the left-wing Campaign Group, promised to raise support for the case with as many Labour MPs as she could.

John Rees, for the Support Group, also asked for help from those such as Ken Livingstone, who were talking of the need for extra-parliamentary action, in the fight against the property speculators in Wapping and London's Docklands Area.

Camden in crisis

CAMDEN Council met last week amid tight security and introduced a preliminary package of cuts in jobs and services.

The full council meeting agreed to implement a report from the Policy and Resources Committee which demanded:

- A freeze on job vacancies
- A total ban on new spending
- A cut in overtime and
- A halt to the employment of temporary staff.

Such is the crisis atmosphere in the council that the decision to freeze vacancies was pre-empted by senior council officers on the Monday before the meeting when they put a block on council recruitment advertisements.

The budget deficit for the current financial year is £11 million. These measures will only partly reduce that figure, therefore the report also proposed that 'a budget scrutiny team be established for each department to complete a budget scrutiny exercise and to report to the Policy and Resources Committee on 8 October with recommendations for reductions in spending and increases in income, including such recommendations as may appear necessary for changes in service standards and policies'.

Tory councillors in the council chamber and right-wing Labour councillors in the Labour group meeting prior to the meeting both argued that such an exercise was only putting off the fateful day.

BY ANDREW BURGIN

Camden's chief executive Frank Nickson, in a letter to councillors, outlined the legal position.

He made it clear that 'a failure to complete the budget scrutiny exercise by 8 October could place the council in serious risk of illegality'.

Whatever the financial problems the council faces this year, they are dwarfed by the expected budget deficit in 1988/89. The Policy and Resources Committee report puts that figure at £60 million.

To deal with such a resource gap could mean redundancies of between 25 and 35 per cent of the council's workforce.

The failure of Kinnoch to win the election for Labour has blown a hole through the 'creative accountancy' strategy of the council.

Juggling

Many councillors hoped that by borrowing from the banks and juggling the balance sheets they could stave off serious cuts until the election of a Labour government.

Following Thatcher's reelection they are in a state of despair, consequently only eight councillors voted against these initial cuts.

Even amongst these eight there appears confusion: Councillor Kate Allen, speaking against the Policy and Resources Committee report, did not rule out cuts in the future but felt that there had to be fuller discussion with the trade unions and the local communities.

However most Labour councillors want to avoid such discussion at all costs.

At the Labour Group meeting on 29 June which was lobbied by Camden Joint Unions and various political organisations, a majority of Labour councillors voted to abandon the meeting rather than discuss their position on the cuts in front of the lobby.

Security

They had to meet secretly the following day to agree the cuts.

Not one of these Labour councillors was elected to implement the policies of the Tory government.

Whining that they have no choice and that in some mysterious way they are actually protecting jobs and services has no foundation and is a real expression of the utter bankruptcy of reformism.

These councillors are putting themselves in a position reminiscent of the township 'councillors' in South Africa who cannot live in the communities they 'represent' but have to be protected night and day by the security forces.

The beginning of a similar process we saw in Camden last Thursday when the Town Hall security guards patrolled the building with walkie talkies fearing an invasion by disgruntled workers and residents.

Councillor Allen commented in the Council meeting on the tightened security and on the fact that Town Hall staff had been turfed out of the building prior to the meeting and that Councillors had been asked for

identification to gain admission to the Town Hall. This was, she said, a new practice.

There has been some talk recently by left councillors and their supporters about a mass resignation from the Labour benches. We believe that such a protest would achieve nothing.

The councillors who should be forced to resign are those who voted on Thursday and intend to continue voting for cuts in jobs and services. They must be replaced by those prepared to fight.

The eight Labour councillors who defied the Labour whip and voted against cuts must have whole-hearted support. The cries of 'expel them' which greeted their stand means that they are now added to the list of all those that Kinnoch needs to drive out of the Labour Party. Kinnoch and his allies would be overjoyed at the mass resignation tactic.

The campaign against this latest round of cuts is in its infancy, there are already resolutions to the trade unions involved for certain action.

Beyond

This fight back must go beyond those unions directly involved, it must stretch out into the community and mobilise all those in Camden and in the many other boroughs similarly affected who will face the brunt of the attacks.

Furthermore there is a real need for such a campaign to link directly with the workers in pay and conditions struggles in the teachers and civil service unions.

Tobacco workers call for support

BY SUE WILSON

ON 25 June the London Tobacco Company sacked all the workers in the packing department of their north London plant.

The day before one of the workers had been suspended for refusing to handle a new machine part which had been added to the work without prior consultation or negotiation with the union.

The other workers in this department, all women, came out in her support, after which they were all sacked on the spot.

A new production manager had been brought in four weeks earlier. The sacked workers believe he was brought in to smash the union, TASS, and that the new work system was being used as a provocation.

They feel that management is trying to use this dispute to frighten other workers away from the union. Some of them have in fact left the union since the dispute. At first several other workers refused to cross the picket line, but the number still refusing has dwindled.

In an attempt to combat these fears the strikers have made placards saying: 'Join us now - don't be intimidated'; 'Today it was us - who is next?'; 'Solidarity means sticking together'.

Lorries making deliveries are being told to report to management when they arrive at the plant. Many drivers are sympathetic and don't want to cross the picket line.

Official

However, management have been telling them that this is an unofficial dispute despite the fact that TASS has made it official. So the lorry drivers have been crossing the line.

The picket line was visited by workers from the Hangers dispute who came to support the strike.

Wages in the packing department are the worst in any tobacco company in Britain. The highest take-home pay is £100 per week. The union was asking for another 8 pence per hour to work the new system.

Management's attitude was clearly shown in the treatment of one of the workers, who had been with the company for 16 years. Her personal belongings were handed to her in a rubbish bag!

The case went to arbitration on Monday and the finding was in favour of the workers. The arbitrators said the workers had been unfairly sacked.

The workers are now waiting to hear what proposals are made and whether management will accept them. They are still prepared to fight and would welcome any support. Already workers from the Hangers dispute have visited the picket line and pledged support for the strike.

● Donations to TASS, Tobacco Section, 9 Station Parade, High Street, Wanstead E11 1QF.

● Support welcome on the picket line: 40 Chichester Road, N9.

NUPE demands release of Themba Nxumalo

THE National Union of Public Employees is campaigning for the release of Themba Nxumalo, general secretary of its sister union, the Municipal Workers' Union of South Africa.

Nxumalo, who visited Britain last summer, is held under section 29 of the Internal Security Act, which allows for him to be held indefinitely for interrogation purposes, with no right to legal representation or visitors.

Ten branches back Hehir

TEN branches of the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians have nominated Dominic Hehir in September's ballot for London regional secretary.

Hehir is currently disqualified from holding office for five years, following a disciplinary hearing at which he was charged with bringing the union into disrepute by publicising allegations of ballot-rigging and other alleged malpractices.

His case is due to be heard in the High Court on 21 July.

Support grows for Viraj march

A LARGE turn-out is expected for the national march this Saturday against the threatened deportation of Viraj Mendis.

The march assembles at 12 noon outside Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square.

Viraj, who has lived in Manchester for 13 years, has played a central part in winning 16 anti-deportation campaigns in Manchester. He has taken sanctuary in Manchester's Church of the Ascension.

How the Tories cook the books

EXACTLY how the Tories fiddle the published figures about health and the National Health Service is shown in a recent publication of the Radical Statistics Health Group.

'Facing the Figures' shows that the increase in nurses and midwives between 1978 and 1985 was around 32,000 and not the 63,000 claimed. And this 32,000 increase was more than offset by a reduction of over 36,000 ancillary staff.

Waiting-list statistics have been fiddled in the same way as the unemployment figures. All the same, numbers on waiting lists actually rose between September 1985 and September 1986.

'Facing the Figures', which costs £3.95 plus 50p postage and packing, is available from Radical Statistics Health Group, c/o BSSRS, 25 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL.

Thatcher's 'No' to cancer test inquiry

BY RAE HUNTER

ON 2 JULY Mrs Thatcher rejected the call for an independent inquiry into Liverpool's cervical smear mix-up. The mixed-up tests were performed in the Women's Hospital between March 1983 and December 1985.

Eleven Labour MPs, led by Eddie Loyden (Garston) and Ann Clwyd (Cynon Valley) had demanded that the government set up an independent inquiry, but Mrs Thatcher said it was not necessary.

'Because there have been some mistakes does not mean that one should condemn the whole system', she declared. But this is precisely the danger. If there is no public inquiry,

many women will now feel that such a test is useless.

It is — and has been — a very valuable test to catch cancer before it develops fully and thus save lives.

Liverpool Community Health Council are very concerned. They wish to represent women who have come to them but have been repulsed, as seen from this letter from their secretary, Margaret Thomson, to John Moore, Secretary of State for Social Services, dated 24 June 1987:

You will be aware of the recently revealed errors which occurred in the reading of cervical cytology slides in laboratories at the Women's Hospital in Liverpool during the period March 1983 to December 1985.

As a result of the errors 487 women have been recalled for further tests; 100 of those have undergone treatment and a number have had hysterectomies performed.

The Community Health Council was first informed of the errors on 15 April 1987 and invited to attend the Internal Review being planned. This

invitation was later withdrawn but, upon representation to the chairman of Liverpool Health Authority, Mr J. Fitzpatrick, it was reinstated.

Our view, and that of the women involved who contacted us, was that the Community Health Council should be allowed to represent patients by full participation in the Review. Despite this we accepted Liverpool Health Authority's offer to attend as observers only.

When the Review commenced on 3 June 1987 the Community Health Council representative was denied access despite our agreement to the condition of total and binding confidentiality. Throughout the period the Community Health Council has acted in a completely responsible way.

Thus the Review is to continue without Community Health Council or community participation; this arrangement and our experience of it so far does not encourage us to believe that full information about the incident, or the issues involved, will be made known to the public.

On evidence we have gathered it is apparent that the secrecy surround-

ing the Review has reduced women's trust in the effectiveness of screening programmes.

It is extremely important that women retain trust in screening procedures, and in order to restore public confidence we call upon you to set up an independent inquiry empowered to review all evidence, interview all witnesses, and recommend guidelines for safe laboratory procedures.

It is also essential that the Community Health Council should attend the inquiry on behalf of patients.

We believe that the women whose lives have been put at risk by this incident, professionals with responsibility for similar services throughout the country, and women who will use screening services in the future, should have full access to the proceedings and findings of the inquiry.

Copies of this letter were sent to Fitzpatrick and to Sir D. Wilson, chairman of Mersey Regional Health Authority.

The Community Health Council told Workers Press that the Liverpool Labour MPs would be demanding a suspension of parliament on Wednesday evening, 8 July, to raise the matter again.

AS Prince Charles and Lady Di were shown round the 'updated' Brixton police station by Sir Kenneth Newman last Tuesday, the real story of what goes on inside when the royals turn a blind eye was told by these demonstrators against deaths in police custody. A poet distributed his poem (see below) during the demonstration.



Death in custody

Every six days or so
ah prisoner ent got no blasted place else
tu go but de morgue.
It kyar be coincidence when so much ah
dem die
but cause cops and prison warders do it
only freaks like me does ask why

Ah man in ah cell ha no rights at all
none ah yuh fren don turn up
no matter how loud yuh call
many ah dem ent commit no crime
so how yuh could expect dem tu do any
time

Every day in de lockup atrocities done
tu ah defenceless prisoner outnumbered
ten tu one.
once in dem torture cells brutality begins
bruises don show on ebony skins
so in Brixton and Ashford deh killed
Richard Campbell
a fact de authorities know damn well
dem blame he death on self neglect
as if de rasta 'Cartoon' didn' have no self

respect
Right out in de open de SPG beat up
Blair Peach
dey bump off de gentle New Zealander
in an protest march, no more will he
teach
Jim Kelly an innocent up north was
kicked tu death
dem seh de drink killed him, smell de
booze on he breath

Barry Prosser in Winson Green
was murdered by two screwy men
rewarded with holidays so could do it
again
Middleweight boxer Paul Worrell go be
British World Champ de pundits all said
nobody coulda foresee he would soon be
dead
murdered by men whose uniforms were
blue
murdered by men who vowed tu keep de
Queen's peace

an be true tu de sovereign
but dat kyar be de true way
All ah we aitin fuh ah appropriate day

Colin Roach in Stoke Newington links ah
lengthening chain
ah lotta we ent go stan by an let i happen
again
dem have ah suicide theory
but Colin ent kill heself, he was too happy
ah dotin mum and hard workin lovin dad
dem don soun like no recipe fuh bein so
sad
as tuh kill yuhself
how come nobody ent see de shotgun
on he way through de streets an de fuzz
shop doors
when yuh check on dat yuh could see
more an more flaws
in de police version

Pidaps already have too much power
most would agree
yet dey want lots more tu mek we less

free
we gotta fight any infringement on we
liberty
otherwise is a police state in dis country

Jimmy Davey from Coventry spent his
last days in custody
his guilt will never be seen
cancelled out by ah life support machine
hustled in tu help wid inquiries
he had no chance wid he lifelong
enemies

De nex victim fu de cemetery could be
me or you
or yuh only child
ah hope yuh construe de meaning ah dis
protest in verse
arrest de cancer now before it get worse
arrest de cancer before it get worse

Every five days or so ah prisoner got no
place tu go
but de morgue **Michael Arch Angel**

THE WAY FORWARD AFTER THE ELECTION

FOLLOWING the Tory election victory on June 11, workers and Labour Party activists all over the country have to decide what steps to take now, under the third Thatcher government.

WORKERS PRESS is firmly of the opinion that the fight must begin now — there is no point in waiting five years for the next election,

in the hope that a Labour government can be elected in place of the Tories.

The Labour leaders must take up a fight against Thatcher — now! Major struggles are ahead of us in defence of even more working-class gains which the Tory machinery, like a rapacious beast, is set to destroy. We publish below an interview by Robin Burnham with a Labour Party member in

Crawley, Sussex, attempting to evaluate the errors in the Labour Party campaign. She calls for a united front by the left inside and outside the Labour Party to campaign for common issues.

We welcome views from workers anywhere in the country on the way forward after the election, on how the fight must be conducted now.

'Labour ran a scared campaign'

Why did Labour lose the election?

OUR campaign was patchy. The only thing we really did was to present Kinnock and the leadership well.

We came across caring about some of the policies but there were a lot of gaps and we didn't get across to people what voting Tory really meant.

Locally and nationally we were very worried about the SDP. I think we concentrated a lot of our efforts on trying to get votes from them.

In the end people weren't sufficiently frightened not to vote Tory and they weren't sufficiently motivated to vote Labour instead.

We accepted, wrongly, that sections of the population could be better off under the Tories.

There was little mention of the youth. Should Labour have taken a stand against YTS?

YES. I think we would have gained votes if we had done that. There is a general consensus around, certainly from canvasses I did, that YTS is bad and young people are being ripped off.

I don't agree with Labour's election policy of reform of YTS from £27 to £35. I don't think capitalist businesses should be able to offset their labour costs against the state.

That is just working people paying other people's wages. If we are going to have a capitalist system, which the capitalists want us to have, the least they can do is to pay the wages.

I think there needs to be more education in the Labour Party on many things and YTS is one of them. I think the time has come for a campaign locally and nationally to abolish YTS.

There was little mention of women in the election campaign. Why?

I THINK there was more

mention of women than ever before but I don't think it was pushed enough as an issue. Generally the Labour Party fought quite a scared campaign in some ways.

Women's issues have become ones that the Labour Party is frightened of speaking out on because of what might be said about them in the media.

We shouldn't think like that. The important thing is to say something, whether people agree or not.

The Labour Party has been afraid of being ridiculed for being in favour of gays, lesbians, blacks and women — the so-called London factor.

The party is frightened of appearing to have militant feminists in it and scaring off the sexist vote. Unfortunately, campaigning for equal pay for women may be considered a waste of time in a society where 4 million are unemployed, probably a lot being women.

Do you agree with the policy of crèches at factories?

YES, but Labour had a policy of ideally offering every child between three and five a nursery place within a certain time.

That lets the bosses off bearing responsibility. Any form of state provision does that.

Why was there little mention of trade unions?

LABOUR failed to tell how it is. Everyone said it was an emotional campaign but I think people need reminding that the rights of unions have been eroded severely under this government: rights that ordinary people like themselves fought for, were prepared to die for — and did die for.

We did, however, promise to repeal a lot of anti-union laws but keep the secret ballot which I think is fair enough. I think possibly Kinnock should have made a strong stand against these laws.

The Tories proposed out-



'Labour had a policy of offering every child between three and five a nursery place . . . however, that does let the bosses off bearing responsibility.'

lawing union disciplinary action against an individual who continued to work after a strike vote in a secret ballot. This should have been opposed by Labour.

What was good about the campaign?

WE DID touch on what it was all about, better than 1983. I don't think having a glossy and presentable campaign is enough to win but unless you do that you can't win.

I'm glad to see we got that bit right. I liked the way we talked about the health service that was created by Labour. I actually heard 'socialism' mentioned during the campaign, unlike 1983.

What was bad?

IT WAS empty. A gloss on top of nothing. Labour still 'promised' 3 million unemployed. The health service issue didn't mention nationalising the private drug companies under workers' control, which I want to see.

We were scared to say anything much because of what the media would say. We did however go for-

ward with the unilateralist position on nuclear weapons in a courageous sort of way. I don't think we lost the election on this issue.

But we did come across as defensive on the anti-union laws.

Why was the left quiet during the election?

I DON'T know. I don't think it was consciously done by the leadership. It couldn't have been, could it? I didn't keep quiet. Up to a point it was a duty for the left to have spoken out and said what they thought.

However we have to be aware that the capitalist press are waiting to jump down our throats. Some people went too far and decided not to say anything meaningful.

Thatcher made great play about 'choice' for parents in education. Should Labour have taken this issue up and said they supported 'real' control, like Croxteth school in Liverpool and Ancoats hospital, Manchester, which were occupied and then run by the community?

YES. I think that is one of the things Labour did wrong.

Our strategy was that we assumed automatically that we would win all the seats in the north and the ones we had to win were in the south where people didn't want 'revolutionary' solutions put forward to problems they didn't face (privatisation of the cleaners at Crawley hospital is the opposite of this).

It's almost as if we tried to fool people in the south to vote for us because we were not really socialists.

What do you think of the post-war 'nationalisation' under Labour?

WE WERE naive if we thought that by nationalising the coal mines we could re-

lieve workers and consumers of the pressure capitalist economy puts on them.

Workers Press policy of nationalisation under workers control would be relevant to ordinary people. I would like to see an in-depth article in the paper on this and other points you put forward in the election.

DO YOU agree with our call for a trade-union and labour-movement inquiry into MI5 concerning the coup attempt on the Wilson government?

YES. I think we should build a nationwide campaign on this. We have to ask how we have a system that could allow this coup attempt to be considered.

Why weren't Wilson, Callaghan and Kinnock for an inquiry, even one that was by MI5 investigating MI5? Who was involved? What were the links — CIA, Freemasonry etc?

Who in the labour movement knew about the coup attempt at the time? Why did they keep quiet? How much of our taxes go to finance this hidden part of the capitalist state to attack our democratic rights? We should know.

In fact we should have a balance sheet of where all our taxes go. More to the point, workers should decide where the money is spent.

What will the left do now? What should they do?

I THINK they will sit around for awhile, licking their wounds with their fingers crossed. I think they have given the leadership the benefit of the doubt on a number of issues.

It will now depend on what the leadership does.

I would like to see the left inside and outside the Labour Party form a united front to campaign for common issues — workers democracy (Knowsley and Nottingham), against YTS, against the cuts, for example.



'Labour still "promised" 3 million unemployed.'

Dictatorship Plan, USA

LIEUTENANT Colonel Oliver North, the man at the centre of America's 'Contragate' scandal, helped draw up a plan to put the United States under military dictatorship.

The secret plan, said to have been endorsed by President Reagan three years ago, would suspend the constitution and place the entire country under martial law.

The government would be replaced by a Federal Emergency Management Agency. Military commanders would take over state and local government.

Former White House security aide North has begun giving evidence before congressional hearings into the Iran-Contra arms deals. US arms were secretly shipped to Iran, and the proceeds used to finance right-wing Contra terrorists fighting Nicaragua.

This affair has already shown the Reagan gang's cynicism and contempt for America's long-proclaimed 'government of the people, by the people'. The deals took place while US statesmen were urging other governments to ban arms to Iran, and while the US Congress had officially halted aid to the Contras.

The plan for military dictatorship in any 'national crisis' is consistent. It is also, after all, the kind of thing the CIA has fostered in one country after another — Greece, Chile and, most recently, Fiji come to mind.

Exposed

The martial law plan for the United States has been exposed by the 'Miami Herald', which got hold of a memo dated 30 June 1982, written by John Brinkerhoff, outlining contingency plans for dealing with nuclear war, civil insurrection, or military mobilisation.

Brinkerhoff was deputy to Louis Guiffrida, then director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Brinkerhoff's plan resembled an earlier plan Guiffrida had produced proposing martial law measures to put down an envisaged nation-

wide uprising launched by black militants.

The Brinkerhoff memo was written to form part of an executive order that Reagan would sign, then file away with the National Security Council, ready to be brought out as soon as there was a crisis.

Col. North joined Reagan's National Security Council in 1981, acted as the link between FEMA and the Council, and helped FEMA draw up the plan, according to the 'Miami Herald'.

The paper says North was at the centre of a 'parallel government' involving former national security advis-

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

er William Clark and late CIA director William Casey.

Among activities they organised were US spy flights over Cuba and Nicaragua, and the 'leaking' of false information to the press to help boost backing for the Contras.

In August 1982 Attorney General William French Smith was worried enough about the military rule plan to write to national security adviser Robert McFarlane, warning of dangers, and urging delay in signing.

'I believe that the role assigned to the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the revised execu-

tive order exceeds its proper function as a co-ordinating agency for emergency preparedness', Smith wrote.

He said there were serious legal and policy objections to the creation of an 'emergency czar' by the agency.

However, sources in Washington say Reagan signed an executive order in 1984 revising national military mobilisation measures to cope with a civilian crisis.

The 'Miami Herald' spotlight on North's role in the Reagan administration's strategies comes after weeks of negotiations between Congressmen and the Marine Corps lieutenant-colonel, allowing him to set conditions under which he would agree to give evidence in the 'Contragate' scandal.

This grovelling performance before their military 'servant' — North's salary in his Pentagon job is paid by Congress — is yet another symptom of the realities of capitalist 'democracy' in the United States and its NATO allies.

Servile

But the deference shown by Congress is positively 'radical' compared to the servile attitude of America's top union bosses. Throughout the Iran-Contra scandals the leaders of the AFL-CIO unions have refused to utter a word against the Reagan administration, let alone launch any inquiry of their own.

Indeed, the AFL-CIO's own international department, and those of some constituent unions, continue to drag the name of American trade unionism through the mud by serving as conduits for CIA funds and conspiracies in several countries.

The fact that the rulers of the world's strongest and richest imperialist power have already drawn up their contingency plans for military dictatorship in the USA shows that the ruling class is far more advanced than most labour leaders in its estimation of what the capitalist crisis may yet require.



Saudi cash, US arms, South African pilots

THE US House Foreign Affairs Committee's sub-committee on Africa has been told that the South African company Safair, linked with the South African forces, leased planes to the CIA's Southern Air Transport, flying arms to the Contras.

The committee has also heard from Saudi-born businessman Sam Bamieh that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia agreed to fund CIA-backed forces in Angola, Afghanistan and Central America, in exchange for US AWACS 'early-warning' planes.

Saudi cash helped the CIA get around the 1976 Clark amendment under which aid to right-wing Unita forces in Angola was illegal. Congress was persuaded to repeal this amendment in 1985.

In March 1986, CIA boss William Casey flew to South Africa for talks with Botha. Later, Major-General Secord met Southern Air pilots in San Salvador and told them South African crews would be joining those flying weapons to the Contras.

Congressional investigators have found that Safair regularly serviced Southern Air planes in Johannesburg.

The Angolan government is now investigating whether Southern Air planes flying under contract to mining companies in Angola might also have been carrying out reconnaissance and arms drops for the South African-backed Unita.

More dirty tricks

EX-CIA 'technical services' specialist Glenn A. Robinette has admitted he was paid \$4,000 a month to dig up 'dirt' on opponents of US backing for the Contras fighting in Nicaragua.

Robinette, called before the committee investigating 'Contragate' to testify about a \$16,000 security system installed at Colonel Oliver North's home, had described how he faked bills at North's request when the scandal broke. The system had been paid for by North's associate, retired Major-General Richard Secord, presumably out of funds diverted from Iran arms deal profits channelled through the Credit Suisse bank.

In 1986, Secord paid Robinette to dig out any 'derogatory' material he could find on the Christie Institute, which was backing critics of the Contra war. The ex-CIA man was sent to Costa Rica to try to buy any information that could be used to smear two US journalists there, Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan. The two had accused Secord and others of links with gun-running and drug-smuggling operations.

Robinette also tried to set up Jack Terrell, a disillusioned mercenary who had returned to America with details of North's secret activity in Central America.

A report in 'Newsweek' (6 July) says Robinette approached Terrell three or four times last July 'proposing lucrative business ventures — and pumping him about North's operation'.

The US magazine says Robinette's records also suggest he was in touch with the FBI at the time. FBI officials later said they had got 'a tip' that Terrell threatened President Reagan's life. Terrell was interrogated by the FBI for two days — though they never asked him about the supposed 'threat' to Reagan. Terrell also suspects his papers were searched last autumn when the Washington offices where he worked were burgled.

Singlaub's memo

RETIRED US General John K. Singlaub proposed a scheme whereby China would 'produce an ongoing supply of Soviet-compatible arms' to be sent via Israel in return for Israeli weapons.

The USA would top up Israeli arsenals with latest hi-tech weaponry in return, according to a four-page memo obtained by US Congressional investigators.

The idea was that Soviet-type arms would be forwarded to CIA-backed 'freedom fighters' in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Ethiopia etc., the memo said, so they could pretend the weapons had been 'captured' from the 'Soviet-backed governments'.

Singlaub, head of the rabidly right-wing World Anti-Communist League, has denied that his scheme ever got off the ground. But Senator Paul Sarbanes has pointed out strong similarities between the Singlaub memo and a scheme set up by Colonel North and General Secord, known as 'Democracy, Inc.'



SINGLAUB

Allende No2 for trial

CLODOMIRO ALMEYDA, vice-president of Chile during Salvador Allende's reformist government, before the military take-over, is being put on trial by the Pinochet regime.

Almeyda, thrown into Capuchinos prison for having returned home to assert his right to live in his country, is facing three main charges.

- Being an opponent of the regime.
- Having illegally entered the country.
- Belonging to an illegal organisation that is the Chilean Socialist Party.

lean Socialist Party.

Almeyda faces either a heavy jail sentence or at least expulsion from the country.

The Chilean Socialist Party in exile is urging protests to the court in Santiago (to Messieurs les Juges Violeta Guzman and Salvador Patiño, Palacio de los Tribunales de Justicia, Montt-Vara, Santiago, Chile).

Messages of solidarity should be telephoned to Capuchinos prison, 69.65, 131, where Clodomiro Almeyda is held.

Haiti general strike to bring down government

WORKERS in Haiti have stepped up their struggle against the military government. They have waged a general strike for two weeks now, and in several towns last week main streets were blocked by burning barricades.

The killing of twenty-five workers by troops and police who opened fire on demonstrations has only intensified anger.

In Port au Prince, the capital, troops firing rifles and tear gas drove demonstrators back into the slum areas. But there were more demonstrations in other towns.

The struggle has been the bitterest since the overthrow of the hated Duvalier family dictatorship in February 1986. It reflects the explosive growth of working class organisation, and political consciousness among the youth, in this desperately poor country.

The general strike was called at first in defence of trade unions, after the regime tried to break up the main union federation, CATH.

It has become a struggle to bring down the government,

much of the military brutality against strikers, wanted the regime to back his tougher line.

Monsignor Francois Wolf Ligonde, Archbishop of Port au Prince, complained that Haitians were 'losing their heads' and suggested they should 'take a cold shower'.

But Bishop Romelus of Jeremie — accused of being 'crazy' by Information Minister Gerard Noel — warned that Duvalierism still holds sway in Haiti. And Father Gerard Jean Juste, who described Generals Namphy and Regala as 'graduate Duvalierists', said recently that his people 'must ask ourselves how we can continue the making of the revolution in Haiti.'

Father Juste, who runs a refugee centre dating from Duvalier days in Miami, was echoing what Haitian youth, in slums and villages, have been discussing keenly for over a year; how to continue the revolution so as to gain not only democratic rights but freedom from exploitation, underdevelopment and poverty.

Burned

In one town, demonstrators burned an effigy of General Henri Namphy, the president. Namphy, and fellow National Council member Colonel William Regala, both held high rank under Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier's tyranny.

The struggle has brought splits among both the military and the Roman Catholic Church. Colonel Jean-Claude Paul, whose Dessalines Battalion was blamed for

BOMBING AND TORTURE WON'T STOP 'TIGERS'

Tamil fighters hit army

Stop hanging Poles appeal for Asian

POLISH workers' leader Lech Walesa and sixty-nine other oppositionists, trades unionists and intellectuals, have called on the Soviet Union to spare the life of a young Kazakh.

The 18-year old student is under sentence of death for allegedly inciting riots in the Soviet Asian republic of Kazakhstan last December.

The Polish petition, appealing to the Soviet government to grant a reprieve to the youth, was delivered to the Soviet embassy in Warsaw on Monday, July 6.

Many people were killed and injured when youth clashed with police in Kazakhstan's capital, Alma Ata.

The riots were sparked off after the leader of the Kazakh party was replaced by a Russian, following complaints of maladministration. But the violence of the disturbances suggested a long-festering national bitterness against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

TAMIL 'Tigers' fighting the Jayawardene regime in Sri Lanka say they will not give up their struggle for independence, whatever the regime throws against them.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam successfully raided a new Sri Lankan army camp last week, at Nellyadi, in the Jaffna peninsula, destroying the main building and killing many government troops.

The Sri Lanka Air Force recently resumed bombing what it claimed were 'guerrilla targets' around the northern port of Jaffna. Hospitals and homes were hit, and many civilians fled to India to escape the onslaught.

But despite the big government offensive, and troops taking over strategic points like the Nellyadi road junction, the military has been confined to the main roads by day, and its own bases by night.

Sri Lankan government forces are 'routinely' resorting to torture when interrogating prisoners, according to a report issued by Amnesty International.

There have also been consistent reports of past extrajudicial killings of prisoners by the security forces, the human rights organisation reported.

Referring to more than 500 people who had disappeared after being taken away by

government forces, the report said:

'We have strong reason to believe that many of the "disappeared" have been tortured, some dying as a result, and that others have been shot after arrest, their bodies being disposed of in secret.'

Methods of torture reported included tying prisoners with nylon ropes and suspending them by thumbs or toes, beating them with clubs, burning with hot poker, and applying chilli powder to wounds.

Mercenaries

There have been at least 200 'disappearances' in recent months, as the Sri Lankan army and its foreign mercenaries (who include British SAS officers), failing in repeated offensives in the Jaffna peninsula, vented their frustration on the civilian population.

A new threat appeared recently with claims by government forces of large-scale arms 'thefts' from bases, attributed supposedly to the Sinhalese JVP movement.

Combined with incitement of inter-communal hatred, exploiting bombings and massacres for which the Tamil Tigers denied respon-

sibility, this could be a cover for unleashing racist goon-squads in anti-Tamil pogroms, which the government would pretend were 'spontaneous'.

On the diplomatic front, there have been fresh efforts to have the Indian government help repress the Tamil movement.

India's airdrop of food and medical supplies over the Jaffna peninsula on June 4, spurred by Tamil feeling in India, broke the Sri Lanka government's ruthless blockade of its own subjects in the mainly-Tamil peninsula.

Pakistan and other governments — including the Chinese Stalinists — hastened to support the Jayawardene government against the food 'aggression', as did US and British imperialist media.

The Tamil Tigers declared a ceasefire on June 23 to allow delivery of relief supplies to their people. But they warned they would defend their people if the government tried to interfere with food distribution.

Last week's raid followed an attack by the British-trained Special Task Force on what was claimed to be a Tiger base camp near the east coast town of Batticaloa.

Meanwhile, reports from South Africa claim a Sri Lankan government mission has been negotiating with the white racist regime for arms and other help.

Zionist general's Solution to the Arab problem'

AN ISRAELI reserve-General and former West Bank occupation commander has urged the mass expulsion of nearly two million Palestinians, as his 'solution to the Arab problem'.

General Rehavam Ze'evi made this proposal — which some Israelis unhesitatingly compared to Nazi antisemitism — at a rally in Tel Aviv commemorating the 1967 Israeli conquest of the West Bank and Gaza.

The inflammatory call to make Palestine 'Arabrein' (just as the Nazis wanted Germany made 'Judenrein' — rid of Jews) came within weeks of a campaign of racist violence, starting in the Ramat Gan area near Tel Aviv.

An organised gang of up to twenty racist thugs smashed their way into a flat in the Ramat Avidar neighbourhood one night, beating up the Arab tenants and their guests, and smashing furniture, before disappearing.

Alon Ahmed Abdallah and his brother Wahal were taken to hospital with serious injuries.

The following night, a flat nearby was set on fire. The tenant, a Jewish woman, was denounced for being friendly with Arabs. The pattern of these attacks closely resembles those organised by fascist Meir Kahane's followers in a Jerusalem district a year ago.

Earlier in June, armed Zionist settlers staged a pogrom in the Daheisha refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

Communist Party MP Tewfik Zayyad, a former mayor of Nazareth, has demanded that General Ze'evi be prosecuted under Israel's laws against racial incitement. But the authorities are unlikely to use these laws, which many see as having been little more than a cover to introduce other laws forbidding contact with the PLO.

Ze'evi, who once ran a 'private' SAS-type outfit of Israeli officers hunting down Palestinian 'terrorists', has had top posts, serving in the Prime Minister's office under former Labour prime minister Rabin. He also toured Latin America in the 1970s, forging links with right-wing dictators and promoting Israel's important arms trade.

At the Tel Aviv meeting, the reserve-General revealed that Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, drew up plans to conquer the West Bank in 1955, but was frustrated because Jordan did not enter the 1956 Suez War.

Yuval Ne'eman, leader of the far-Right Tehya party, which General Ze'evi is tipped to join, told the meeting that Israeli Labour Party leaders had long held similar ideas to those being expressed by Meir Kahane, but were now afraid of speaking about 'the Arab problem'.

Mystery link behind Barbie defence

THE elderly lady in the working-class tenth arrondissement of Paris was in no doubt. They would have to find ex-Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie guilty of 'crimes against humanity'.

And then, quietly but with unmistakable vehemence, she added: 'And that lawyer will get his, too!'

Now Barbie has received his expected life sentence.

Of course, the old Nazi was legally entitled to representation. But lawyer Maitre Jacques Verges appeared ready to do far more than was formally required.

Verges had a 'left-wing' reputation — he once defended Algerian freedom fighters. His remarks about French colonialism's atrocities, and treacherous intrigues among wartime Resistance leaders, were not entirely new, though frequently true.

But when he tried to use these to divert guilt from Barbie, and sneered at witnesses who had suffered at the Nazis' hands, people like the woman in Paris — a veteran of both the Resistance and opposition to the Algerian war — felt he was going too far.

Was the 'left-wing' lawyer's defence of the Nazi just an odd piece of devil's advocacy to raise important issues, or was he used — wittingly or not — by more sinister forces?

Verges undertook to defend Barbie 'free of charge'. But to work without fee for four years, and bring witnesses from far afield, cannot be cheap. According to several reports, the cost of Barbie's defence was underwritten by Francois Genoud.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

a Swiss banker with a Nazi record.

The banker and the lawyer were not just brought together accidentally by the Barbie case. They are said to have first met about 30 years ago, at the height of the Algerian war.

In 1953, two years after US intelligence had arranged for its protege Klaus Barbie to find a haven in South America, CIA boss Allan Dulles decided, in collaboration with his partners in the West German intelligence service, to send a special team to Egypt.

The objective was to keep Egypt, and Arab nationalists, from turning to the Soviet Union for help, and to counter left-wing activity in the Arab world.

Through Hjalmar Schacht, former Hitler financial adviser and Reichsbank president, the US spy boss contacted Schacht's son-in-law and business associate, the ex-SS commando officer Otto Skorzeny, to head the team.

All told, no fewer than 200 ex-Nazi personnel took up position. They trained Egypt's secret police and intelligence services. They promised arms supplies. (Skorzeny had an arms business based in Franco Spain).

Francois Genoud, a long-standing Swiss Nazi, was part of the team.

Ostensibly, the ex-Nazis



BARBIE

who had found their way to the Arab world were either evading justice (as in the case of ex-SS Hauptsturmfuehrer Alois Brunner, who set up a business in Damascus and has been on close terms with Syrian security) or continuing a war against 'the Jews'.

In reality, they provided a network for the West German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) and the CIA. From about 1960, BND chief Reinhard Gehlen began collaborating with the Israeli secret service, Mossad.

One vendetta the ex-Nazis did continue was against communism. Many an Egyptian communist suffered torture in Nasser's camps, run by the Nazi-trained secret police.

In 1963, the CIA-Nazi-Egyptian intelligence network helped organise the right-wing coup in Iraq



VERGES

which overthrew Kassem's nationalist regime and was accompanied by massacres of thousands of Iraqi CP supporters and workers.

Meanwhile the Algerian national movement, the FLN, had set up a 'government in exile' in Cairo and were stepping up the war against French colonial rule.

The Kremlin's courtship of French imperialism, and the chauvinist position of the French Stalinists, meant the Algerian national movement needed to turn for help wherever it could, left or right.

Emissaries scoured Europe for arms, and found private dealers in West Germany prepared to do business. Francois Genoud, who had contacted the FLN in Cairo, set up an import-export business and the Arab Commercial Bank in Switzer-



GENOUD

land to help transactions.

Jacques Verges, who defended the famous Algerian woman fighter Djamilia Bouhired, a victim of French torturers, is believed to have met the banker Genoud during this period in the late 1950s.

The BND were suspected of helping the French 'Red Hand' terror group which murdered Algerian nationalists and their helpers. BND chief Gehlen did meet with General Salan, in 1961, supporting the OAS which opposed Algerian independence and launched a fascist terror in France.

After Algeria gained independence in 1962, Verges went to Algiers and married Djamilia Bouhired. The couple spent their honeymoon in China. Verges became a fervent Maoist.

The Algerian leaders fell out with Francois Genoud.

From 1964 to 1979 they had to wage a long court battle to regain \$15 million of the FLN war chest which the banker had run in a Swiss account.

In 1969, Verges defended three members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) on trial for hijackings. Genoud turned up to pay the costs and conferred with Verges through the case.

Convicted

The three PFLP members were convicted in February 1970. Verges dropped out of sight. Some say he was in China. He says mysteriously: 'I stepped through the looking-glass.'

Eight years later the lawyer reappeared in Paris, defending two people charged with a bombing. Again, one of them, a Swiss national, was said to be in contact with Genoud.

Was the right-wing Swiss banker's role, in underwriting and selecting clients for the 'left-wing' lawyer, a means of gaining entry to, influencing, and manipulating radical terrorist groups, for purposes quite opposite to what those used imagined?

Don't things reverse, from left to right, when they appear in a looking glass?

Whatever ex-Maoist Verges' motives in the Barbie case, the connection with Francois Genoud is worth further investigation. It may prove a vital jigsaw piece in assembling the true picture behind several apparently unconnected events that made headlines in Europe and the Middle East over three decades.

Aboriginals: a pe

A BRIEF HISTORY

BY NORMAN HARDING

IN 1779 a committee was set up at the House of Commons. Its purpose was to consider an alternative to America for the transporting of convicts.

Following the defeat of the British in the American war of independence in 1781 the need for an alternative colony became all the more urgent.

Using information gained from the Cook voyages of the previous decade the first settlement on the east coast of Australia began in 1788.

Cook wrote of his encounter with the Aboriginal people: 'They live in tranquillity which is not disturbed by the inequality of condition; the earth and the sea of their accord furnish them with all things necessary for life.'

The colony developed and by 1836, the year that Charles Darwin arrived, the population had grown to 30,000.

Darwin commented on the degrading sight of the chained gang of convicts and the vast profits being made from their labours. The Aboriginal people in the area, having been robbed of their hunting grounds, were forced to beg.

Darwin wrote: 'Death seems to pursue the Aboriginal, we may look at the Americas, Polynesia, Cape of Good Hope, Australia, and we find the same result.'

In Tasmania it was a wholesale massacre. In 1830 a legalised man-hunt was initiated. For a day's sport in the bush it did not matter if you shot a kangaroo or a man.

Disease was deliberately spread by issuing infected blankets in the same way that the American Indians were treated. The settlers were known to bury infants in the ground

up to their necks and use their heads for football practice.

Alcohol was deliberately introduced, again as it was with the American Indian. To this day unscrupulous landlords take the weekly income from Aboriginal families and ply them with drink.

The colonists murdered with impunity. The last recorded massacre in Western Australia was in 1927 when 30 Aboriginals were killed. Officially the murderers were hunting for the suspected killer of a white man.

The 30 were shot and burned whilst still in neck chains.

The use of neck chains in Western Australia was used up to as late as 1958.

No doubt many look back and view this as a shameful period in Australian history, which is now over.

The reality is that today the law, the police, the rules are being used alongside the lynching rope and the gun.

The Australian government is preparing for celebrations to mark the bicentenary of the first colonial settlement, celebrations which for the Aboriginal people ignore and deny that this process has been at their expense.

These bicentenary celebrations are being held alongside the destruction by the Australian government of the few rights gained by the Aboriginal people from previous administrations.

In the interview published on this page, Mick Mansell, an Aboriginal activist and lawyer, voices his people's aspirations to self determination and explains the background to the widespread protest movement which is now developing.

Why did the Hawke government launch such a savage attack over your visit to Libya?

ONE of the ways in which the Australian government have controlled the Aboriginal movement is by the use of funds. They have said: 'If you do something we don't agree with we'll cut these funds off.' Suddenly the government saw this reaction from the Aboriginal community saying your funds are no longer the chains by which you will control who we talk to.

They have seen this trip as a great threat to their control of the Aboriginal movement and that is why they are so upset by it.

What do you think of the record of the Hawke government in relation to the Aboriginal movement?

ABSOLUTELY pathetic. If you look at a series of Australian governments up until the Whitlam era, they totally neglected the needs of Aboriginal people in this country so that our situation was worse than many 'Third World' countries.

When the Whitlam government came in in 1972 at least they provided some resources for the Aboriginal communities which reduced the imprisonment rate, reduced the death rate and reduced the poverty.

The conservative government that replaced the Whitlam government introduced some initiatives such as Aboriginal land rights. This government has not introduced a single initiative on Aboriginal affairs.

On the contrary, they are taking away rights that were given to us by previous governments and they are allowing Aboriginal people to die in police custody at an enormous rate and they are allowing

ABORIGINAL activist MICK MANSELL has been virulently attacked by the Hawke Labour government for his recent visit to Libya.

Socialist Press (paper of the Communist League of Australia) spoke to Mansell recently in Sydney where he had just addressed a historic public meeting together with speakers from the Farabunda Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador and from the Philippines.

the Aboriginal imprisonment rates in this country to continue at the highest rate in the world.

They have a pathetic record.

What about the state Labour governments?

THEY are as bad as the Hawke government. What we have seen in Australia in the last five years is a strong swing to a conservative position so that so-called Labour governments have now taken over the role and function of the conservatives and the conservatives have moved even further to the right.

Aboriginal people have no representatives at all in the Australian parliament and we have no one to turn to. Consequently you get people like me who say: 'Well, if that is the case we will go and talk to other governments.'

What about the situation in respect to health among Aboriginals?

THE available figures show that the trachoma programme to some extent has reduced the shocking eye health position of Aboriginal people but even so the problems of trachoma among Aboriginals is again equal to that in many 'Third World' countries, even though there was an attempt by the gov-

ernment five to ten years ago to overcome it.

The general health situation of Aboriginals in Australia is ten to 15 times worse than that of whites and that includes Aboriginals living in the cities and in country areas very isolated from whites.

The educational standard of Aboriginal people ranges from a quarter to a tenth of that of white people. Imprisonment rates are the highest in the world.

Unemployment rates are 70 per cent in the cities and even worse in the country.

Across the board what you have is a whole nation of people who are dying of poverty, whose children die at an early age because of the filthy conditions we are forced to live in and the failure of the health authorities to respond to those problems.

This is what the Australian government is allowing to continue while it is trying to portray Australia as a 'lucky country'. It is a lucky country depending on what your colour is.

What about the situation regarding land rights?

LAND rights reached its high water mark in 1975 when the only legislation passed by a federal government was passed by a conservative government. Ever since



A Mornington Island man entertains a child with a didgeridu

People plundered

1975 the land rights discussion has not been about how much more land aboriginal people should get but how much of the land that was returned in 1975 should be taken away.

That is where the debate is today. In fact, at this very time the Northern Territory Aborigines are negotiating about retention of some powers given to them by the Fraser government in 1975 and this Hawke Labour government is talking about taking those rights away.

You talked about the sovereign rights of the Aboriginal nation. Is that the way you see the struggle proceeding now?

YES, we were a nation of people before whites invaded this country. What happened was that the Australian government said: 'Now that we have invaded them and taken away every right that they have, including the right to determine whatever they do on a daily basis, we will now impose our legal system on these people.'

In addition to that we will politically oppress them by saying: 'Whether you like it or not you have got to become citizens of this country and you have got to behave the way we tell you to and obey our laws.'

Now Aboriginal people have always said you might force us to and we may have no choice but we don't agree with it and we're never going to concede that you have the right to do that.

It has not been until recent times that Aboriginal people have been able to become organised and reiterate these arguments and say we were a nation for 50,000 years and simply because you invaded us does not mean you can take away our right to be a sovereign people.

And this thing about the Libyan trip simply brought to the surface again what Aboriginal people have been saying for the last 200 years: 'We are a nation of people, albeit being suppressed by whites.'

What particular demands do you think will be raised in relation to the question of nationhood?

I THINK the first step is for the Australian government to acknowledge that we are a sovereign people and then they can negotiate with us what that means in practice.

As a barrister and solicitor I see the practical implications of recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty such as when the land is given back to the Aboriginal people under land rights. For example, instead of subsequent governments being able to take that land away, which is currently the situation, it will remain ours forever and no white government will be able to take it away.

It also means for those Aboriginal communities in isolated areas that instead of having the white man's law apply to them, especially in disputes between Aborigines, their own law will apply, as it did for 50,000 years.

That in turn must reduce the political repression by white police over Aborigines and reduce the number of Aborigines who are carted off to the white man's prison.

Another practical factor is passports. If we use our own passports we remove the insult that is with us every time we use an Australian passport and we have to sign we are an Australian citizen by law because otherwise you might not get back into the country.

For Aborigines who want to move to the cities, the white man's law will still apply and we will conduct ourselves in accordance with his laws, so there is not going to be a dividing line in which blacks stand here and whites stand there. It is a matter of free movement of whites and blacks round this country but which is shared between them.

It is shared on the basis not only of each having security of land,



Youth protest: National Aborigines Day, Sydney, 12 July 1980

law and culture, but also respect for each other by acknowledging the rights that each nation has. That is not the situation at the moment.

You have called for Clyde Holding's resignation as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs following his attack on your Libyan visit. What do you think of the role he has played?

I THINK he has been caught up in something that is beyond his capacity to handle. On the one hand I think he has the capacity to simply hand out money to Aboriginal organisations and then represent the Australian government's point of view in saying: 'No, no more money.'

But when it comes down to responding to real needs such as imprisonment rates, death rates, the need for the Aboriginal movement to negotiate with governments outside Australia, I think he is in an area which is beyond his experience.

I think because the Aboriginal movement and the needs of the Aboriginal movement has moved away from that very basic welfare type of response, we need someone who has got a lot more experience with Aboriginal people. He does not have that experience.

Secondly, I think we need someone who has got a lot more compassion for the Australian people and I think Clyde Holding lacks that.

In terms of the Aboriginal people being able to negotiate seriously with the Australian government we need someone with whom we can sit down and get straight down to issues with. I do not think Holding is one of those people.

Do you see any chance of the Hawke government making any changes in the Aboriginal policy?

NOT unless they are forced to. That is the unfortunate thing because the Australian government, with its very pragmatic political approach, does not do anything for anybody other than business or the multinational corporations unless they are forced to for political reasons.

I think that we will have to put the Australian government on a

time limit and say unless you come up with the goods within a reasonable amount of time we are not prepared to sit back and let our people suffer any longer. If we have to get funds from overseas to keep our people alive then we will do that.

I think the time is fast running out for the Australian government.

Last night you spoke at a public meeting with representatives of the Nicaraguan government and the liberation



Aboriginal activist MICHAEL MANSELL

fighters in El Salvador. Do you see this sort of contact continuing?

IT WAS the first time I had met with those sort of groups other than in Geneva when I met a whole range of indigenous people and became familiar to some extent with their situation which is very similar to ours.

What it does is open up the minds of Aboriginal people in this country and also it allows us to educate white Australians and the Australian government that we are not just a domestic kitten that you can control aggressively and keep in a domestic situation.

We are part of a struggle of indigenous people all over the world. The struggle of indigenous people in this country is the struggle of indigenous people all over the world.

I think the quicker the Australian government realises that, the quicker we will be to going down the road of resolving things peacefully.

Do you see the struggle for national liberation in other countries as similar to the Aboriginal struggle?

YES, I think that the struggle of indigenous people in other countries for sovereign rights is exactly the same as ours. I think that the form of the struggle is slightly different in that they seem to be much stronger than we are in the sense that they are prepared to react to the violence that is being used against them whereas we are very timid and passive about that.

That has probably been our one weakness but I don't see our tactics changing. I think the Aboriginal organisations and communities will continue in a very passive and peaceful way to try to bring about change. For that reason I think our tactics are going to be much slower than other peoples'.

But hopefully if they get there quicker they might be able to help us.

Did you find the discussions with other organisations in Libya helpful?

THERE was not a lot of time but when I was there it increased my knowledge of the struggle of other indigenous people. It makes you appreciate that we are not alone in our struggle, and not only do we support them, but they support us.

Even though it is only moral support that is significant because for 200 years we have felt that our enemy very clearly is within the country and there was no one outside who knew anything about us, let alone was prepared to give us moral support.

How do you see the Bicentenary celebrations?

LAST night a young Aboriginal girl read out a very powerful poem

expressing our opposition to this. The difficulty is that the Australian government has told the public: 'You will celebrate the Bicentenary and to encourage you we will give you \$135 million.'

They could have taken an alternative approach and said let's first of all discuss and debate whether in fact we should celebrate the Bicentenary. If the answer is yes then too bad for Aborigines. We could have at least accepted that more readily than the current approach.

The government refuses a debate by withholding funds for it. So when the celebrations come next year there will be Aboriginal protests and we will be trying to embarrass the government. I think the real crux of the Bicentenary is what the Australian people are being asked to celebrate.

People are saying to me that we are not celebrating the theft of Aboriginal land, the murder of Aboriginal children, the rape of Aboriginal women and so on which happened 200 years ago. Rather we are celebrating the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the winning of the America's Cup and so on.

They are trying to live a lie because these things did not happen 200 years ago. They are celebrating something that happened 200 years ago and that something was the invasion of our country and all the atrocities that took place as a result of that invasion.

How do you see the future of the Aboriginal struggle in Australia?

I THINK that it is an exciting time. For the last five years we have been frustrated and hemmed in by a very clever and calculated government approach. Now suddenly we are able to break out of that.

The potential for determining for ourselves where we go from here has increased largely as a result of the Libyan trip. It is an exciting time for debate within the Aboriginal community itself, a time for the Aboriginal movement to consider greater options that are available to us which previously were not, and a time for white people to sit down with us and negotiate a better deal. So I am very excited about where we go from here.

The Saga of the Simon Bolivar Brigade

BY LEON PEREZ

THE Simon Bolivar International Brigade was formed in the wake of the Nicaraguan civil war by the then Bolshevik Faction (BF), today the International Workers' League (Fourth International).

The Brigade fought heroically, side by side with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

After the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship on 19 July 1979 they came into conflict with the FSLN's leadership.

● The Trotskyists of the SBIB proposed to the working class and the oppressed people of Nicaragua to advance towards a proletarian revolution. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB proposed to expand the revolution to the rest of Central America, particularly to El Salvador and Guatemala. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB proposed to expel imperialism and the national bourgeoisie. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB organised unions and working-class militants with the objective of advancing workers' democracy and the self-organisation of the working class and the peasantry. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB proposed an immediate agrarian reform and distribution of the land

among the peasantry. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB proposed the right of self-determination for the ethnic and racial minorities of the Atlantic coast. The FSLN opposed this.

● The SBIB demanded that bourgeois leaders such as Eden Pastora, Violetta Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo be sacked from the government. These same bourgeois leaders are today heading the armed counter-revolution in the service of imperialism. The FSLN defended them.

The FSLN, in collaboration with the bourgeois government and army of Panama, then ruled by General Omar Torrijos, proceeded to expel the non-Nicaraguan members of the SBIB. Their fight is today continued by the Nicaraguan Trotskyist party, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT).

Much has been written and said about the SBIB. The Unified Secretariat, of which the BF was a part at the time of the Nicaraguan Revolution, was first opposed to sending International Brigades and saw no perspectives in the Nicaraguan civil war.

Immediately after the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship, the Usec sided unconditionally with the FSLN, politically and otherwise. They supported the expulsion and repression of the SBIB.

They ordered the Central American sections of the Usec to dissolve and cease to exist. The Central Americans, supported by the overwhelming majority of Latin American Trotskyists and important groups in several European parties, refused to carry out the liquidating policies of the Mandel leaderships. They split in defence of the SBIB and of the

Trotskyist parties in Central America.

The Usec, particularly the French and Spanish LCRs and the American SWP, wrote pages and pages of slanders about the SBIB. They tried, but failed, to cover up their betrayal.

The issue will be raised again and again in many countries. This example of internationalism will be kept alive by the Nicaraguan and Latin American revolutionaries and, more and more, by the revolutionaries in all countries.

Some small sects outside the Usec also attacked the SBIB. Among them were the Spartacist League, the British Workers' Power, and the Argentinian Partido Obrero (PO).

Sects

Some of these sects even condemn the Usec and FSLN actions, formally, but add their own interpretations of events, in an attempt to explain why the SBIB shouldn't really be supported at all.

Even their criticisms of the Usec and the repression of the Nicaraguan government were made after (some months after) the SBIB was expelled from Nicaragua.

The Partido Obrero of Argentina relied for its information on the internal bulletins of a Colombian organisation called Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), which bitterly opposed the SBIB and the Colombian PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores), one of the main organisers of the SBIB.

Workers' Power relied for its own account and slanders on the PSR's and PO's articles and internal material.

The Spartacist League re-

lied on all of them and invented some slanders of its own, like the slander that the SBIB didn't really fight in the war.

Blinded by petty-bourgeois factionalism, they all missed the central point. The SBIB and the BF were fighting against revisionism and Pabloism in the ranks of the Fourth International with a principled programme.

If today there are Trotskyist parties in Central America (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Panama) it is because of this principled struggle.

Workers Press has published several articles describing the struggle of the SBIB. The Workers Revolutionary Party supports the SBIB's actions in the Nicaraguan civil war and has also declared its full support for the struggle of the Nicaraguan PRT.

Today we publish some interesting material. It comes from unexpected sources: those who are most bitterly opposed to the SBIB.

We publish a declaration of the Colombian PSR which rejects the use of any of their internal bulletins 'to discredit a leader or a national or international current'.

The PSR specifically point to the fact that they opposed the SBIB on political terms (they supported the FSLN politically) and they declare their understanding of the 'revolutionary character of the comrades that form part of the Argentine MAS, above all Cde Moreno' (one of the main organisers of the SBIB). There is a striking contrast here with those who tried to use their internal bulletins for spurious reasons.

We also publish some statements of the Commander of the Revolution, Carlos Nunez Tellez, made to the Argentinian daily 'Clarín' about the SBIB.

Those statements were made to the press in October last year when the Argentinian MAS was under attack from the government for, amongst other things, having organised the SBIB.

In those statements even those who repressed the SBIB have to admit the truth in part. These statements were confirmed by a letter from the secretary of the Nicaraguan National Assembly to the Nicaraguan PRT, who had asked for confirmation of the reports.

The third piece is perhaps the most interesting of all. It consists of extracts from a book written by Jose de Jesus de Martinez called 'Mi General Torrijos'.

Experiences

These extracts are from a chapter where the author explains his experiences in Nicaragua.

Jose de Jesus de Martinez was one of the three most important military aides of General Omar Torrijos, president of Panama at the time of the Nicaraguan revolution. He personally commanded, as Chief of Security, the operation which ended up with the expulsion of the SBIB from Nicaragua.

His book received the main Cuban literary award in 1987, the Casa de las Americas prize.

The fourth document is a letter from the secretary of the Nicaraguan National Assembly confirming the public statement made by Tellez in Argentina.

The very fact that all of these witnesses have tried to minimise their own role and actions in regard to the SBIB demonstrates the deep political effect and importance that the SBIB had in the political struggle for a re-

volutionary, Trotskyist leadership in Latin America and the world.

Contrary to many people's wishes, the SBIB experience — and what that meant for the reorganisation of the Fourth International — will not die away.

Document No.4

National Assembly Managua
13 November 1986
At 25 years, all arms against aggression

Comrade Bonifacio Miranda General Secretary of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT)

Esteemed Comrade Miranda, CONSISTENT with what we discussed recently, I reiterate that the Commander of the Revolution, Carlos Nunez Tellez, during a recent trip to Argentina, declared publicly that with regard to the presence of International Brigades in Nicaragua after the triumph of the revolution, including brigades and parties with which his party has political/ideological relations, such as the Simon Bolivar Brigade, the national leadership discussed fraternally with them on that occasion, thanked them for their participation in the defeat of the dictatorship, and asked them to let the Nicaraguan people continue with the task of reconstructing the country.

In the hope that this letter helps to clear up any misunderstandings that may have arisen, I remain, Fraternally,

(signed) Rafael Solis Cerda
Secretary of the National Assembly

DOCUMENT No.1

Bogota, 22 April 1987

DECLARATION

IT HAS been brought to our notice that internal documents of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Colombia have been used to slander the memory of Comrade Nahuel Moreno and the Movement Towards Socialism of Argentina. In view of this the Executive Committee of the RSP declares as follows:

1. That with regard to the Simon Bolivar Brigade, promoted by the Colombian PST, we held and continue to hold serious political differences so far as its conception is concerned and the method of displaying solidarity with unfolding revolutions. We believe that the aforementioned Simon Bolivar Brigade was erroneously conceived as a detachment that would displace the Sandinista leadership and, afterwards, would enter into conflict with it, which is what in effect occurred.

Both our party and the Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International made clear from the outset its unrestricted and unconditional support for the Sandinista leadership in the revolutionary process in Nicaragua. On this point we have an important difference with the PST and the LIT (CI).

2. That these political differences, like the ones we have had with the OCI led by Cde Lambert in relation to the Nicaraguan revolution, have not given rise to a single public declaration, in the party press or elsewhere that questions the moral integrity of an international leader of Cde Moreno's standing, whom we recognise as a revolutionary fighter for many decades until his recent death.

3. That we reject the use of any internal documents to discredit a leader or a national or international current in the Trotskyist movement, and reject the methods of defamation and slander as weapons to resolve ideological and political conflicts that may arise in our movement.

4. That we reiterate that we are convinced of the revolutionary character of the comrades that form part of the Argentine MAS, above all Cde Moreno, despite the differences we have with them, as with other currents of the revolutionary movement in other countries. We associate ourselves with the MAS, convinced of their revolutionary good faith, against any campaign of defamation that seeks to question their moral integrity.

Revolutionary Socialist Party
National Executive Committee
(signed) Daniel Libreros

Document No.2

Extracts from the daily newspaper 'Clarín', the most important in Argentina, dated Wednesday, 8 October 1986

The guerrilla Commander, Carlos Nunez, President of the National Assembly of Nicaragua, made a declaration in relation to the polemical concepts expressed by the (Argentinian) President, Raul Alfonsín, on the Argentinian Trotskyist forces that operated in Nicaragua.

This declaration was made during a press conference, when a journalist from the state-owned Telam news agency asked Commander Nunez his opinion about the MAS (Movement Towards Socialism) and those who Alfonsín said were expelled from Nicaragua.

Several journalists in chorus: 'Were they expelled?'

Nunez: 'We value very much the comrades of the Latin American Simon Bolivar Brigade, which included Colombians, Venezuelans, Argentinians and people from other countries as well.'

'They fought by our side to defeat the Somoza dictatorship. They were Trotskyist combatants and we talked very frankly with them and we suggested that they return to their countries and leave the responsibility of consolidating the revolution in Nicaraguan hands.'

Document No.3

Extracts from 'Mi General Torrijos' by Jose de Jesus Martinez

One of the most dramatic actions in which General Torrijos collaborated with the national leadership (of the Sandinistas) was the following. It was a Brigade, called Simon Bolivar, formed by internationalists who did not hesitate to go to Nicaragua to give a hand.

Many of them went there before the victory. And fought. Those guys were Trotskyists. There were Germans, Swedes, many Colombians, Costa Ricans, and at least one Panamanian, Jose Cambra.

As the good Trotskyists they were, they promoted the cause of the workers and peasants. The problem was that the only place they could work, because they were allowed to, were the state-owned Sandinista enterprises. They were comfortably creating problems for the state.

It couldn't continue like that. But it was very difficult to gather them and deport them. They were all over the country. So the Sandinistas had a dubious idea, but an effective one: they sent word out that the national leadership (of the FSLN) wanted to talk to them.

I don't remember if it was Tomas Borge or some other commander. The point is that

they requested the help of Torrijos with that problem.

And the Panamanian friend accepted with pleasure; he gave them an aeroplane to take the conflicting Brigade members out of the country. General Torrijos, who had a lot of respect for my civilian rank as cathedralic, asked me to go with the plane as the security commander.

He told me explicitly that my task was to make sure that those guys were treated properly. And I left with the aeroplane at midnight — an Electra from the Air Force.

They were surrounded and captured, and driven to the airport at rifle point. I was there with another six guards, waiting for them in the Electra aeroplane.

The incident with Cambra, for example. A Panamanian officer who saw and recognised him started to mistreat him and later handcuffed him. Seated in the aircraft with his black beard and his hands crossed, he looked like Christ.

He asked me what we were going to do with them. He expected the worst. I told him they were to be taken to Panama. His only request was that his family be notified. I promised to do it and I did.

But a detail should be noted because it reveals Cambra's quality. The whole incident did not make him change in the slightest his support for the Nicaraguan revolution.

After he went back to Panama, he continually wrote in its

favour and collaborated in all the solidarity activities with the Nicaraguan people. Unfortunately that unity between the diverse left tendencies is not solid.

That is probably the price to be paid for the revolutionaries' enthusiasm. They lack the cold calculation of the reactionaries because they lack their coldness.

The Brigade members were seated on the landing strip under the attentive vigilance of the weapons. One of them was shivering with cold. I took off my jacket and offered it to him. He looked sick. At any rate, he had a high fever.

A dramatic case was that of a young German. Speaking with a strong accent, he took off his red and white armband and offered it to the Sandinista guard who was pointing his gun at him. He said: 'Don't you want to keep this as a memento?'

They looked each other in the eye, in an implied challenge to see who would give way first, who was morally stronger.

I'm not sure if it was one or two days later, Daniel or Humberto Ortega made a speech in which he mentioned the case of the Simon Bolivar Brigade. The Brigade members in jail saw the speech on television and got furious and threw their dishes at the screen, smashing it.

A few days later they were deported (from Panama) to their country of origin and I hope they will have the same political maturity as Cambra.

Letter from America



The Klan rides again

THE racist Ku Klux Klan is making a membership drive in the southern states.

After a much publicised march through the streets of the industrial town of Greensboro in North Carolina on Sunday 7 June, permits have been obtained to hold similar demonstrations in a number of other places.

The Klan chose Greensboro to initiate its campaign because of its historic connections with the desegregation movement.

It was here that four black students demanded to be served at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter one day in 1960: the opening shot in the civil rights struggle which swept the South in the following years.

It was in Greensboro that five people were killed and eight injured when the Klan last demonstrated in the town in 1979. The Klansmen and Nazi supporters responsible for the shootings were later acquitted of murder charges in 1980 and of civil rights charges in 1984, though they were ordered to pay \$400,000 to the families of the victims.

The bias of the courts was obvious, especially because most of the victims were black and were members of a small left-wing organisation, the Communist Workers' Party, which had led the fight against the Klan.

The revival of Klan activity, as well as of other neo-fascist groups like the White Patriot Party, aims to exploit racial tensions. It wants to restore a segregated society where blacks will not compete with whites for jobs and where black and white

children will again be educated in separate schools.

The difficulties experienced by the local tobacco and textile industries open up new possibilities for the Klan's racist poison to find an audience. As the wife of one of those slain in 1979, Dr Martha Nathan, has pointed out, the Klan is anti-semitic as well as anti-black and its members, on Sunday 7 June, sported the swastika.

Gowned in bright colours, the 140 Klansmen (including children), also carried the 'stars and bars' of the slave-holding Confederacy — another symbol of racialism which many blacks regard as an insult.

It is doubtful whether the Klan march won very much support of a direct kind in Greensboro. Police said only two marchers came from the town, others were from as far afield as Georgia.

A petition with 6,000 names had previously called on local officials to ban the march.

On the previous day religious, liberal and black groups held a silent march over the route to be taken by the Klan in which over 6,000 people took part. And while the Klan was marching they held another counter-demonstration two miles away.

The Klan march was heavily protected by police who, for the first time, have



Above: In 1979 police officers held suspects at gunpoint after five people were killed and eight injured when the Ku Klux Klan last demonstrated in the town. The Klansmen were all acquitted of murder.

a black chief who upheld the right of the Klan to march despite the fact that it included some of those responsible for the murders in 1979.

With the clergymen and community leaders shepherding their followers away from confrontation, the emphasis was upon racial harmony and keeping out of trouble.

A few individuals in the jeering crowd which followed the marchers carried their protest further and were arrested. They included one young man who fired a starting pistol and a black, carrying a bible and an American flag, who wanted to shake hands with the Klan leader in the name of their common commitment to Christianity.

The views of the Klan, in all their crudity, were exposed by one marcher who told a local pressman: 'I'm marching for white rights because everything is going to the niggers. They're taking away all the jobs and I don't like the breeding of whites and blacks.'

Another bore the slogan: 'Kill a Commie for Mommie', a reference to the 1979 shootings.

Although there is little evidence that the Klan has grass-roots support such slogans may strike an echo among some poor whites who blame their black neighbours for lack of jobs, poor housing and their other woes whose real cause they cannot explain. The racists, fascists and Nazi-lovers are hoping to exploit such sentiments.

The leadership of the opposition to the Klan, as well as much of the support, seems to have come from middle-class people, black and white, based on the churches and civic groups.

What was lacking was a powerful drive to bring out the working class in large numbers to oppose racism in their class interests.

Despite the opposition, and perhaps because of the widespread interest generated by the Greensboro march, the Klan is going ahead with a series of similar demonstrations in other North Carolina towns.

Appealing to the First Amendment, they seem to have convinced town officials that they have a right to disseminate their racist poison.

Without more effective, politically-based opposition, the Klan may gain a foothold, especially in places where plants are closing or cutting back on jobs or where agriculture is in decline.

GEORGE LORMIN
New York

The Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan are planning to hold a "Freedom March and Recruitment Drive" in Greensboro, North Carolina on Sunday, June 7

The people of Greensboro say:

**"THIS IS NOT
KLAN COUNTRY"**

March for unity, justice, & understanding

On Saturday, June 6—the day **BEFORE** the Klan march—
Join us in a peaceful, legal march to protest the Klan



Greensboro Police Chief Sylvester Daughtry Jr. upheld the right of the Ku Klux Klan to march and recruit. 'We will tolerate no violations of the law by any group,' he said of the planned march and the counter-demonstration called by Klan opponents.

The counter-demonstration rallied over 6,000 people who marched silently along the route of the next day's Klan march, which drew 140 people.

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.

A one-sided picture

THE ARTICLE by John Crawford, 'Wall Street Roulette' (Workers Press, 20 June), though providing a vivid description of the irrational and frenzied nature of the capitalist financial system, nevertheless paints a one-sided and ultimately misleading picture.

It was J.M. Keynes who first likened the activities of the Stock Exchange to a casino over half a century ago in his book 'The General Theory'.

Keynes's 'solution' was based on the view that providing the speculators could be curbed, all that was required was wise management by the state for capitalism to continue indefinitely.

Identifying the source of capitalist crisis with one form of capital — finance capital — is completely alien to Marx's method.

Marx's starting point in understanding crises was the growing incompatibility between the productive development of society and its outmoded class relations of production as expressed in the fall in the rate of profit.

To argue, as John Crawford does, that it is speculation 'which is driving the entire world economy' is to invert this basic tenet of Marxism.

Certainly the crisis has intensified the competition between industrial and financial capital over their shares of the total surplus value.

But what divides them is secondary to that which unites them — their fear and hatred of the international working class.

It is no accident that the chief representatives of industrial capital in Britain, the CBI, have remained solidly loyal to Thatcher despite her pro-City policies.

To simply argue, as the article does, that the monetary system 'is now parasitic on the manufacturing sector' could easily lead to the conclusion that manufacturing industry and the working class share a common enemy in international finance.

The fact is that industrial capital is itself inextricably entwined in the same speculative game. Witness the record wave of predatory merger and take-over activity on the stock exchange involving many leading manufacturing names, the Guinness scandal etc.

Indeed it is estimated that the world's largest multinational corporations now make around one quarter of their total profits from speculative movements of money.

What the article misses is the profound weakness of finance capital. Many of the speculators have undoubtedly amassed personal fortunes on the basis of shifting capital around the globe without regard to the devastating impact on jobs and whole communities.

But they increasingly resemble revellers on the 'Titanic'. For the international financial system faces two related and insurmountable problems to which the finance ministers and top bankers of the major imperialist nations have no answer.

The first is the much-publicised debt burden of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The 15 most indebted countries now owe some £437 billion, of which £86 billion is to US banks.

In the past four years, only Venezuela and Columbia have repaid any principal and their payments have been modest.

The banks involved are desperately trying to avoid facing the fact that these 'assets' are nothing more than a worthless fiction. To

do so would threaten a collapse of the entire banking system.

The second question, which has equally profound implications for the financial system is the soaring indebtedness of the US government itself.

The fragile recovery in the US economy in recent years has been artificially created on the basis of a massive state spending programme by the Reagan administration, mostly within the defence budget, financed by borrowing rather than through taxation.

In a reversal of policy which marked the period of the post-war boom, capital has been flowing into the US from around the world to finance the US government deficit.

From being a net creditor nation as recently as 1984, the US external debt is fast heading towards the trillion dollar level. As the influential International Currency Review commented recently:

'The prospect of the United States becoming a trillion dollar debtor has quite awesome implications.'

'There are no historical precedents for a country accumulating debt on this scale; and there is no reliable analytical framework for determining when the bubble will burst — as eventually it must.'

The complete inability of Reagan, Thatcher and Co. to resolve these issues at one summit after another is testimony to the powerful resistance of the international working class to any attempt to turn these mountains of credit into real value at its expense.

It is this fact which is driving the whole world economy.

Keith Gibbard
Manchester WRP

Vulnerable to cultural imperialism

TRUDI JACKSON'S report of the pop concert disturbances in East Berlin (Workers Press, 20 June) reads like a report from any of the bourgeois newspapers and is completely uncritical of the deliberate provocation of staging the concert near the Brandenburg Gate.

Her use of the terms East and West Germany supports the revanchism of the imperialist powers.

There is no doubt that the police attacked the young people but this must be seen in the context of the provocation.

How does Trudi know that the young people were representative of the German Democratic Republic youth?

How does she know that the average young person there is not involved in political activity?

One thing that impressed us when we worked there was that young people did not portray life there as perfect.

There is a continuing ideological struggle going on between the working class and capitalism which is international, and the ease of transmission of the dominant ideas of capitalism from the Federal Republic of Germany television networks makes the GDR youth particularly vulnerable to cultural imperialism.

Young people there want to acquire the cults of the West, from religion to pop. Young people there are politically active and are not uncritical of their present practices.

We must face the fact that the people of the GDR have already achieved more for the working class than we have in Britain. To dismiss that, which the report appears to do, is effectively to stand in the bourgeois camp.

The internationalist position must be to defend the gains made in the socialist countries and to push for a furthering of the revolution. One way of doing this, of course, is to build a revolutionary party of the working class in Britain.

Pat Brady and
Geraldine Thorpe
London College of Furniture

A reply . . .

THE LETTER from comrades Brady and Thorpe warrants careful consideration.

What makes the GDR youth particularly vulnerable to cultural imperialism is not simply 'the ease of transmission of the dominant ideas of capitalism from the Federal Republic of Germany television networks', as Pat and Geraldine maintain.

It is the policy of 'peaceful co-existence' propagated by Stalinism in the deformed workers states, together with the monstrous record of the bureaucratic regime.

Likewise, to describe a Western pop concert taking place near the Brandenburg gate as a 'provocation' is to dodge the real questions.

The report of which the comrades are so critical made no pretence at being a thoroughgoing political analysis. It did, however, draw out the cover-up which

the Stalinist news media tried so hard to substitute for what really took place.

The comment that there was 'no doubt' about the police attack is totally inadequate. How was that conclusion arrived at? Through the ultimate admission by the GDR itself? Or the intrepid Western capitalist news agencies?

Surely what was required was a deepening of the understanding of the bureaucracy's role. Distortions such as the one attempted by the Stalinists and the state violence against their own working class are to be judged, presumably, in accordance with their 'context'.

The use of the term 'East Germany', although strictly speaking politically incorrect, seems a minor mistake by comparison.

Certainly Pat and Geraldine appear more anxious to rush to a judgement of the original report than to come up with some rather more valuable political observations.

Young people are oppressed everywhere. Under capitalism, they suffer from unemployment and exploitation. But as a result of the betrayals of the Russian Revolution by Stalinism, there grew up an anti-working class bureaucracy, whose power spread at the end of the war, and which is also responsible for the political and cultural suppression of youth.

Whatever advances the regime in the German Democratic Republic may have made as a result of the overthrow of capitalism, it stifles every attempt of young people to free cultural development and control over their own lives.

If it is the case that the

youth in the GDR are politically active, it is necessary to ask in what way is this seen?

How effective the oppression of the youth in Eastern European countries is must be judged by the reports which reach us via Western news coverage. How often do the GDR youth come up against the Stalinist state machine? This was what inspired the report.

It is not true to assert that the article appears to dismiss the achievements of the working class in the GDR. The penultimate paragraph of Pat and Geraldine's letter in actual fact comes down to a defence of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Not only that. They seem to accept as an eternal fact that the major country of central Europe should remain divided, and that capitalism should rule for ever in Western Germany.

It is not 'revanchist' to challenge this reactionary outcome of the division of Europe between Stalin and his imperialist allies.

As Trotskyists, we stand for the unity of the entire German working class against the Stalinist bureaucracy and capitalism. This struggle for the reunification of Germany as a socialist state is inseparable from the struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe.

Finally, it is not enough to call for the building of a revolutionary party of the working class in Britain as a way of 'furthering (?)' the revolution.

We state unequivocally that the building of Trotskyist parties in every country as part of the rebuilding of the Fourth International is the only way forward for the working class worldwide.

When I became a socialist I thought I didn't have to go to church any more . . .

DELEGATES to the Anti-Apartheid Movement's national convention for sanctions held on Saturday 27 June could be excused if they felt a horribly familiar sensation creep over them.

After hearing Bishop Trevor Huddleston open the meeting with a sermon explaining how bad apartheid is, followed by a lugubrious Norman Willis explaining how he went on an all-expenses-paid trip to South Africa and found out how awful apartheid is, followed by lesser luminaries intoning the awfulness of apartheid, you could have been forgiven for thinking you had

wandered into church.

It was that comfortable feeling that, though nothing had been accomplished, one had done one's duty simply by being there.

The call came loud and clear from the SWAPO (South West Africa Peoples Organisation) and ANC (African National Congress) representatives present for comprehensive mandatory sanctions. That call has been made for 23 years.

The spontaneous and widespread boycotts imposed by trade unionists across Britain and Ireland (Dunne's Stores, Civil Service unions, local

government unions, shopworkers, students) prove that this call has not gone unheeded.

Workers do not need convincing of the horrors of apartheid. They need support in the actions they are taking, and encouragement to take actions they are not taking at present.

A large number of trade union organisations were represented at the convention. Instead of getting practical advice and suggestions about where and how to impose sanctions, they saw instead a backslapping exercise for the platform speakers.

A National Union of Railwaymen

delegate who spoke from the floor made the most constructive proposal of the day. She suggested the AAM should campaign throughout the trade union movement for sanctions, as they fail to do now.

Many delegates did not turn up for the second session of the day's convention. They were driven away by the pious rhetoric of leaders like MP Hughes (chair of AAM) and Filling (chair of Scottish AAM) who called for sanctions but failed to mention that they had publicly opposed the boycott of the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh last year.

Lambeth's poverty gap widens

A REPORT by independent consultants commissioned by the London borough of Lambeth shows that the poverty gap in Lambeth is widening even faster than in the rest of the country.

Measuring the effect of government policy as a whole on the welfare of Lambeth's people since 1979, the report shows that the average standard of living for Lambeth households fell by 5 per cent between 1979 and 1984.

Most of this has been caused by a dramatic increase in unemployment since 1979 and an increase in the number of people claiming benefit. Nearly half the borough's households are low-income households.

TRACTOR manufacturers Massey-Ferguson have announced High Court legal action against 'guerilla' strikes over compulsory redundancies at its plant in Coventry.

Two weeks ago the factory's 1,800-strong production workforce began a campaign of lightning strikes and stoppages in defence of jobs.

The company have announced the serving of court writs to the general secretaries of the four unions involved in the dispute.

Although 400 workers have accepted voluntary redundancy, the company are demanding a further 375 compulsory redundancies.

The company have said they will seek injunctions and claim damages against the unions if they continue 'inducing breaches of contract by employees by striking without first holding a secret ballot under the terms of the 1984 Trades Union Act'.

● The struggle of the Massey Ferguson workers to defend jobs comes directly after the ending of the occupation of the Caterpillar factory in Scotland where workers are also fighting to defend tractor building jobs.

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

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

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PERSONAL COLUMN

Peter Fryer

The language of racism

COVERING the front page of the current issue of the 'London Review of Books' is a large photograph of a black man in cap and loin-cloth.

He holds a whisk denoting high office and is seated in a carved doorway whose figures constitute a genealogy emphasising divine descent.

The caption, overleaf, tells us that he is a chief of the Bamileke, adding: 'Among the Bamileke and other forest tribes of Central West Africa architecture and village planning express social hierarchy.' (Where don't they, indeed?)

The illustration turns out to be taken from a book, newly published by Faber, called 'Primitive Architecture'.

Several pages further on, another caption, to a photograph of a white man and a black boy each standing by a bicycle, informs us that we are seeing 'the explorer Luigi Robecchi-Bricchetti with Mabruk, a native child'.

And in last Monday's 'Guardian', throughout an article on South Africa by David Beresford, he referred to 'the Buthelezi tribe', 'a particularly powerful tribe', 'the culpable tribe', and so on ad nauseam.

The word 'tribe', to describe ethnic groups in Africa, is no longer in general use among educated people. 'The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary' defines it as applied especially to 'people in a primitive or barbarous condition'.

In fact this word was not generally used in relation to Africa until the 19th century, when British expansion in that continent began in earnest. In the 18th century, as a glance at contemporary travel books soon shows, the normal English word for an African community speaking a common language had been 'nation'.

'Tribe', which connotes backwardness and inferiority, was a linguistic weapon in the mouths, and on the pens, of colonialists and their supporters. It's a lot easier to justify imperialism when you describe the peoples you're robbing and murdering as 'tribes'.

Likewise 'native'. We're all of us natives, of somewhere or other. I confess I find it shocking that the otherwise moderately enlightened 'London Review of Books' should employ a caption writer so totally insensitive to the nuances of our

language, and so totally oblivious of the deep offence that racist terms can give, that he or she can still use 'native' as a synonym for 'black'.

As for 'primitive', it was for long a convenient blanket term among Europeans for people who, for one reason or another, wore fewer clothes than was then customary in Europe. Judging a culture by its manner of dress is about as superficial a yardstick as it's possible to conceive.

After 20 years or so during which experts on non-western architecture have been careful to use the precise and neutral expression 'vernacular architecture' for what they study, I can't help but view a book called 'Primitive Architecture' with deep suspicion, even if it does bear the distinguished imprint of Faber.

The Bamileke, by the way, live in Cameroun (which I wouldn't myself place in 'Central West Africa', but we'll let that pass).

Ignorant caption-writers and others who visualise them as a 'primitive forest tribe' should listen to their traditional music, eight examples of which, recorded by Tolia Nikiprowetzky in 1965, will be found on the Ocora LP 'Musiques du Cameroun' (OCR 25).

Five of these eight pieces are from the Bamileke sub-groups Bafang, Bafoussam, Bangoulap, Bandjoun, and Bamengoum. All eight speak eloquently of a highly developed musical culture.

This music is simple where ours is complex, complex where ours is simple. From the standpoints of rhythm, polyrhythm, timbre, and texture it is western concert music that might be accounted 'primitive' by comparison.

For those, that is, with ears to hear.

Saklatvala and black sections

FROM Sehri Saklatvala, daughter of Shapurji Saklatvala, I've had a charming letter about my piece in defence of her father (this column, 23 May).

She gives me the good news that, since her retirement, she's been writing a book on her father's life — 'not a political analysis but the story of his life and the development of his political and philosophical convictions'.

Disagreeing with my statement that her father would have been

scathing about Kinnock's attitude to black sections in the Labour Party, she recalls a time when 'a group of Indian doctors approached him with a view to starting an Indian Medical Association and he rejected the idea most vigorously because it was divisive.'

'He said if they started an Indian Medical Association they must expect the existing Medical Association to exclude Indians. He looked upon anything that divided human beings as undesirable... My father, believe me, would have been AGAINST the formation of "Black Sections".'

I dare say that Sehri Saklatvala is right (though it should be pointed out that her father did serve as president of the Indian Seamen's Association that was founded in this country in 1923).

But what I had in mind was not the rights and wrongs of the formation of black sections, but the Labour Party leaders' witch-hunt against some of those who support them.

As it happens — and here of course, as always, I express my own personal view which is not necessarily that of Workers Press — I am not myself an advocate of black sections.

Black people are unlikely to seek my opinion; but, if asked, I should have to say that I don't see the Labour Party as an appropriate channel for achieving black aspirations.

But black people in Britain are not and never have been a homogeneous mass, politically or otherwise. Far from it. Like the rest of us, they have class and other social differences; generation differences; cultural differences; wide differences in political approach.

Inevitably, some layers are going to test out the Labour Party. For all kinds of reasons — no doubt including, in some cases, simple careerism — many among these will take the road of black sections.

In my opinion they are bound to find out through their own experience, sooner or later, that this road is a blind alley.

Meanwhile everyone who cherishes democracy within the working class movement is obliged to defend their right to organise in the way they think best, and obliged to oppose with vigour the despicable witch-hunt against black sections, with its ugly racist overtones.

Against such a witch-hunt Shapurji Saklatvala would have fought, on principle, with every ounce of his considerable energy. As his daughter's book will doubtless show, he was not without experience of witch-hunts, and was resolute and robust in his opposition to them.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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The Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund has moved, but only very slightly, since last week.

The position remains a most serious one.

Important work is currently underway for the forthcoming Conference to reorganise the Fourth International. Our Party's financial, as well as political contribution to that work is absolutely essential.

We urge you to give this appeal your closest consideration. Donations to the Special Fund are vital for the Workers Revolutionary Party's contribution to the work of the Preparatory Committee to organise the International Conference of Trotskyists.

PLEASE send, send, send donations, large or small, to:
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3. The Fourth International and Revisionism
4. Re-Organisation of the Fourth International

Liverpool Polytechnic Students Union
Haigh Buildings
Maryland Street, Liverpool

Workers Revolutionary Party

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Every Friday, 7.30p.m.
Duke of York, York Way, N1
near Kings Cross Station

July 10: The Russian Revolution
July 17: Stalinism and Trotskyism

LISTINGS

LISTINGS are published free by WORKERS PRESS each week for organisations in the labour movement. Please send details to arrive by midday Monday for publication the following Thursday.

BOTHA'S LAWS COME TO BRITAIN Non-Stop Picket against Apartheid banned from South African Embassy. Public Order Act used against City of London Anti-Apartheid Group. Join us to challenge unjust police action. Mass Rally every Friday, 5.30p.m.-7.30p.m., Ducannon Street, WC2.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings every Tuesday at 7.30p.m. Stoke Newington Community Centre, Leswin

Road, N16. All welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, N4 (01-991 2938.)

BRING BACK VICTORIA WILLIAMS! Campaign meetings, second and fourth Wednesdays of every month, 7.30p.m., UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, W3.

VIRAJ MENDIS WILL STAY! National Demonstration. Saturday 11 July. Assemble 12.00 noon outside Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester.)

FRANCE AFTER THE BARBIE CASE Report from Paris by Barry Smerin. Jewish Socialists' Group. Sunday, 19 July, 8pm, Friends' International Centre, Byng Place, off Torrington Place, WC1 (nearest tube: Goodge Street).

GREENHAM COMMON WOMEN'S CAMP To all women — we are still here; we still need your support! Near Newbury, Exit 13 on M4, or BR Newbury, Berkshire.

VIRAJ MENDIS LONDON SUPPORT GROUP Downing Street Protest every Monday, 6p.m.-7p.m. (Westminster/Charing Cross tubes.) Weekly organisational meetings take place after the picket.

Kashmir Welfare Society UK

Commemoration of 13 July, 1931

'Quit Kashmir Movement'

Monday 13 July, 7p.m.
Carmichael Hall, Eastwood Park
Rouken Glen Road, Giffnock
Glasgow G46

Workers Revolutionary Party

West of Scotland

Public Meeting

Tuesday 14 July, 7.30p.m.
Mobilise Against Tories NOW!
Craignek Community Centre
Shieldmuir Street
Craignek, Lanarkshire

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 letters, news from your area, reports of the struggles of the work-

ing class, of women and youth, of developments in the Labour Party and Communist Party. . . We also need photographs — phone us on 01-733 3058 and discuss the best way to get them to us.

ROBSON'S CHOICE

Classic western

ON **Saturday**, at 5.45p.m. (BBC1) yet another chance to see one of the most often repeated classic westerns of all time, Howard Hawk's **Rio Bravo**. At 7.30p.m. (C4), **Bandung File** investigates what is happening in Grenada four years after the US invasion. Lightheaded comedy with Fonda and Segal in **Fun with Dick and Jane** at 11.15p.m. (ITV).

On **Sunday**, at 7.15p.m. (C4), part six of the documentary series **The Struggles for Poland**. At 7.45p.m. (BBC2) **The Gershwin Years** and at 9.25p.m. (BBC1), the first in a four-part series on the life and work of **Ernest Hemingway**. At 10.15p.m. (C4), **Arsenic and Old Lace**, a sentimental but amusing comedy by veteran Hollywood director Frank Capra.

On **Monday**, at 1.50p.m. (BBC1), Alfred Hitchcock's **Under Capri-corn**, a period thriller set in New South Wales in the 1830s. At 8.15p.m. (Radio 4), **The Somebody**, a radio play by ex-patriate South African dramatist Bloke Modisane who died last year.

At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), **Panorama** investigates the big business of waste disposal internationally in **Not in My Backyard**. At 11p.m. (C4), **The Black and White Pirate Show**, a documentary about pirate broadcasting in Britain, followed at 12p.m. by a ten-minute visual poem from Cuba.

On **Tuesday**, at 7.30p.m. (Radio 3), Albert Camus **La Peste**, (The Plague), dramatised for radio by Guy Meredith. At 9p.m. (BBC2), Edward Dmytryk's **Farewell My Lovely**, based on Raymond Chandler's



Channel 4 continues its season devoted to American film-maker Emile de Antonio with *In The Year Of The Pig* (1969), a damning collage on the American involvement in Vietnam. Thursday July 16 at 10.30 pm on Channel 4.

novel of the same name. For something completely different, Dennis Potter's play **Follow the Yellow Brick Road**, 9.30p.m. (BBC1), made in 1972.

On **Wednesday**, at

9.25p.m. (BBC2), **Screenplay** presents a reconstruction of the recent file of Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie in Lyons.

On **Thursday**, at 10.30p.m. (C4), a chance to see Emile de Antonio's

documentary made at the height of US involvement

in Vietnam, **The Year of the Pig**. At 1.10a.m., also on Channel Four, Fassbinder's **Rio das Mortes**.

On **Friday**, at 12.10p.m.

(BBC2), Jacques Tourneur's renowned horror film, **Cat People**. At 1a.m.

(C4), Ingmar Bergman's haunting film **Shame**, with Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann.

The Elgin Marbles: Should they be returned to Greece?
By Christopher Hitchens.
Chatto and Windus, £12.95.

ALTHOUGH this book firmly answers 'yes' to the question in its title, its authors still refer to the Parthenon marbles, the friezes, columns and sculptures of classical Greece, by the name of their robber.

The book records the history of the building of the decorated Parthenon, and the philistine way in which the British ambassador to Turkish-occupied Greece hacked off the marbles and hauled them away for his private enjoyment in 1801.

It was not until he needed to raise money by selling them that he claimed to have looted them 'for the nation' — if only the government would buy them for the British Museum, where they are today.

From the day of the original theft from a country under military occupation, there was outrage in Greece. This book, supported by the British Committee for the Restoration of the Parthenon Marbles, is a powerful argument for the return of the marbles and for international collaboration to find the best way of preserving them

Behind The Lines: Gender And The Two World Wars. Edited by Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz. Yale University Press, £19.95.

A MINE of a book, not something to be read at a sitting, with articles reporting and reflecting on aspects of women's experiences of world war, in Europe and America.

Its subject matter ranges from military service and work to the literature of women. One chapter studies the diarists Anne Frank and Ety Hillesum, whose gender receded to second place as they fought to maintain an identity while being cast first and foremost as Jews, others look at gender and the poetry of World War One.

The book is full of the contradictory advances made by women in wartime — in unions, winning childcare provision — which had to be fought for again after the war.

Operation Millenium: 'Bomber' Harris's Raid on Cologne, May 1942. By Eric Taylor. Robert Hale, £12.95.

OVER 13,000 homes totally destroyed and 45,000 people made homeless; 36 factories destroyed and 300 more severely damaged. A death toll of 469, with over 5,000 people injured.

That is the record of one night's horror raid on Cologne, 30/31 May 1942, which was largely the responsibility of one man, Air Marshal 'Bomber' Harris, armed with a thousand bomber planes.

Taylor's book is full of stories to glorify the heroism, suffering and deaths of the airmen who flew the night raids under the commander many regard as a war criminal.

He allows only a few paragraphs of doubt, reporting on the airmen who went to Cologne after the war and saw what devastation they had caused.

'We knew we were setting fire to ordinary men, women and children in their homes,' says one bomber air gunner. 'It left us confused and we didn't feel proud of ourselves.'



Liv Ullman stars in Ingmar Bergman's bleak study of the effect of War. *The Shame* (Skammen) 1968. 1.00 am, Friday July 17 on Channel 4.

BOOKS

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BOOKS

REVIEWS

Highest moral principles

Perdition: A Play in Two Acts.
By Jim Allen. Ithaca Press,
Paper £4.95, cased £12.

BARBARISM. genocide, annihilation are perhaps too weak a collection of words to describe the fate that befell East European Jews during the World War II.

To say the figure 6 million is easy, but to grasp what that means is perhaps far harder. That a play dealing with this should arouse controversy is understandable.

However, the hysterical and McCarthyite tactics used against the author of this play require further explanation.

The controversy surrounding this play first came to light in the 14 January 1987 edition of the 'Guardian'. An article entitled 'Re-writing the history of the Holocaust' appeared.

Written by journalist David Rose, this article dealt with the play 'Perdition' by the socialist playwright Jim Allen that was to have been staged by the Royal Court eight days later.

The article was the opening shot in a press campaign that led to the theatre's artistic director Max Stafford-Clark withdrawing the production 36 hours before it was due to open. The play has yet to find a theatre to stage it.

The play that provoked such excitement takes place in a court room in Britain. The year is 1967 and the court is hearing a case of libel against a doctor, Ruth Kaplan, who has accused a Hungarian emigré Doctor Yaron of collaborating with the Nazis.

This fictitious setting aroused such 'hot air' because it was based on a real trial that had proved to be an ideological Achilles heel for the Zionist movement.

The real libel action was brought by the Israeli Government on behalf of Rudolph Kastner. The action was brought against a right-wing Zionist Malkiel Greenwald who had accused Kastner of collaboration with the

Nazis.

Greenwald's libel against Kastner was divided into four headings by the trial judge:

1. Collaboration with the Nazis
2. Indirect murder or preparing the ground for murder of Hungarian Jews
3. Sharing the plunder with the Nazis war criminals
4. Saving these war criminals from punishment after the war.

After a 200-page summing up, the judge found that charges 1, 2 and 4 were true and therefore not a libel.

Because charge 3 was not fully proved he fined Greenwald a symbolic one Israeli pound and ordered the government to pay the cost of the action.

A few years later however, this verdict was overturned at the court of appeal.

The substance of the allegation against Kastner was that he collaborated with Eichmann in suppressing evidence of the slaughter of Hungarian Jews at Auschwitz.

He had done this in return for a promise by Eichmann to allow 1,600 Jews to escape to Switzerland: these included Kastner's relatives and friends as well as Zionist notables.

Greenwald claimed that if Kastner had informed the Jews of the fate that was to befall them many more would have escaped, and the figure of over 500,000 Hungarian Jews murdered by the Nazis would have been drastically reduced.

The Kastner case is the background to this play. The first act deals with the prosecution's case against 'Ruth Kaplan' for libel. The didactic method of the play is used to show how such collaboration was possible.

To argue he has been libelled, 'Yaron' calls several witnesses, amongst them a member of the Hungarian Communist Party and a Labour member of Parliament.

Yaron's argument is that



Auschwitz, where thousands of Hungarian Jews were sent by Eichmann in 1944. The Nazi boasted how deals with leading Zionist Kastner had helped his murder plan.

his relations with the Nazis were dictated not by personal preservation but by circumstances. It is to Allen's great credit that the character of Yaron comes forward not as a caricature but as a real figure caught by virtue of his ideology in a tragic situation.

This point was made by the play's would-be director Ken Loach and Andrew Hornung in an article in the 'New Statesman' (20 February 1987) when they wrote:

'Was this cooperation simply the responsibility of weak or wicked individuals? No, it had its roots in the ideology of Zionism, the movement to create a separate homeland for the Jews. During the Third Reich, Jewish emigration to Palestine became the priority with rescue to other countries a secondary consideration.'

The second act of the play is a powerful piece of writing. This act consists of Ruth Kaplan's defence to the charge of libel. She gives evidence explaining her allegations against Yaron.

She is subjected to the intellectually dishonest arguments of being a self-hater, as well as innuendos concerning her mental health.

The most telling point in her allegations against Yaron is when she states:

'Politics shapes the man. This tells us more about Zionism than Doctor Yaron.'

This shows Allen's arguments to be a million miles away from any 'bad man' theory of history.

Central to the play's argument against Yaron's collaboration is the evidence given against him by Orzech, a former member of the Polish Communist Party who was imprisoned by Stalin.

Orzech was handed over to Hitler as part of the dowry for the Hitler/Stalin pact. Orzech later escaped, joined the Bund and became a fighter in the historic resistance of the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto.

Orzech took a Marxist view of anti-Semitism. This he explained while giving evidence:

LAWSON: *Can I ask, then, why did you choose Communism?*

ORZECZ: *Because I took the Marxist view that the problem of anti-Semitism could not be solved in isolation. That it was part of the general sickness of capitalist society.*

It is the character of Orzech that is used to show that Jews did fight back and that the culture of the Jewish people at that time contained a strong socialist tradition.

The play shows how Zionism and Marxism contain two diametrically opposed analyses and solutions to the genocidal tendencies that the imperialist epoch has presented to the Jewish people.

For the Zionist, anti-Semitism is a permanent feature of gentile society, an original sin that has always and will always be present.

The category is stripped from all historical economic and social determinants.

The solution for the Zionists derived quite logically from this analysis, it is quite simply to run away. One of the founders of Zionism, Herzl, in his diary gave expression to this view in the following way:

'In Paris . . . I achieved a freer attitude towards anti-Semitism, which I now began to understand historically and to pardon. Above all I recognised the emptiness and futility of trying to "combat" anti-Semitism.'

In opposition to this view, a Marxist analysis looks at the material roots of anti-Jewish racism in class society. It is no accident that the mass extermination of the Jewish people took place in an era of intense capitalist crisis.

In Germany, in particular, the fascist party made the Jews scapegoats for this crisis. For a Marxist, the eradication of the conditions that breed this oppression is part of the struggle to eradicate capitalism.

The fate of the Jewish people and the working class are inseparable.

The evidence of collaboration between Zionist leaders and the Nazis is quite clearly a major embarrassment to the Zionist establishment. This accounts for their hysterical and vitriolic reaction to the play.

What these people are in fact complaining about is a work inspired by the highest

moral principles: that of internationalism and socialism.

This volume contains the revised text of the play that was not first performed at the Royal Court Theatre on 22 January 1987. Included are essays by Lenni Brenner on the historical background to the play plus a note by Akiva Orr who attended the Kastner trial.

The volume also contains letters of support written by Erich Fried, Noam Chomsky and Maxine Rodinson, as well as a selection of letters from several national daily and weekly newspapers.

That such collaboration took place is proved by the notes contained in this volume by Lenni Brenner and Akiva Orr. Noam Chomsky gives us a clue why the Zionists reacted so hysterically to this play:

'There are, incidentally, masses of material in Hebrew on the unsavoury record of the Zionist movement with regard to the Nazis and the Holocaust victims, and there are very serious issues with regard to the behaviour of the American Jewish community both during and after the war, that have yet to be properly explored. The purpose of the hysterical response to Allen's play is, surely, to guarantee that all of this will be kept under cover.'

Jim Allen has written a fine play that must and will be staged. History will be its vindication.

Roger McGuinn

Publication of 'Perdition' a big blow against Zionism

AT A well attended press conference on Tuesday playwright **Jim Allen**, film and stage director **Ken Loach** and the distinguished Viennese poet and translator **Erich Fried**, whose parents were murdered by the Nazis and whose grandmother and many other relatives perished in the gas chambers, defended 'Perdition's' integrity on every level and condemned the Zionist lobby for attempting to suppress the play.

They paid tribute to Ithaca Press, the publishers of **Perdition**, for having the 'balls' to publish despite the barrage of unsubstantiated lies

and abuse hurled at the play and its author in the capitalist press.

'If Jewish communities, Jews or Zionists,' Erich Fried pointed out, 'try to deny that there was Jewish cooperation (with the Nazis) or start nit-picking in order to belittle this Jewish cooperation, then we are in trouble . . .'

Record

'I think it is very important that Jews in general should not try to say "our record is absolutely clean and all these things are calumnies", but should show the real facts — then there is nothing to fear.

'On the contrary, it will be in the long run best because as Jews one does not have a bad case for Jews under Hitler, in spite of what collaboration took place outside the camps and inside the camps by capos.'

Ken Loach outlined the de-

spicable role played by the British press in attempting to suppress 'Perdition'. He cited the 'Morning Star' and Workers Press as the only notable exceptions.

'The first shot,' Loach explained, 'was the way "The Guardian" in particular allowed itself to be used by one of its correspondents to put forward a propaganda piece under the guise of investigative journalism — which was not of course investigative at all.

'It investigated the point of view of those who wanted to see the play stopped, and interviewed Jim (Allen) in order to get ammunition to use against us. This was really conceded by the journalist in question, David Rose, when I had that argument with him on the radio.

'All the main newspapers,' Loach added, 'carried a major piece, a main feature article, or a leader article, or a leading diary article attacking the play. Now this does not happen by chance.

'It was well organised, we

know who by, we know the groups involved, and the press — either through willingness or through laziness — allowed themselves to be used to suppress this play and allowed the pressure to build up against the Royal Court Theatre.'

The play was due to open at the Royal Court Theatre when it was suddenly axed by Max Stafford-Clark. Ken Loach explains what happened.

Dishonest

'The intervention at the Court, at board or council level as they call it, was dishonest and dishonourable.

'The council met opponents (of the play) at private meetings from which Jim Allen, myself and the cast were excluded.

'They have refused to meet Jim while they have been prepared to listen to the likes of Gilbert, Weidenfeld and their crew. This disregard for writers in a theatre

that has proclaimed itself a writers' theatre I think is disgusting — and they have never explained this.'

Jim Allen gave another telling example of how persons in position of authority prostrate themselves before the Zionist conspiracy to suppress the truth about their own past.

'About eight months ago,' Allen reported, 'I was commissioned by the BBC to produce "Perdition" as a television play, and in February of this year Ken and I had a meeting for over an hour with a senior producer at the BBC and with the Head of Plays, and we discussed the problems involved, mainly revolving around the intervention of Martin Gilbert who said it was lies and so forth.

'But we left the meeting with the understanding that we would resume the discussion and that perhaps at a later date we would arrive at a very definite commitment.

'And then on 3 April,' Allen

continued, 'in the Jewish Chronicle, about two weeks after Michael Checkland took over as Director General of the BBC, I read this:

'"Mr Michael Checkland, the new Director General of the BBC, has given an unequivocal assurance that the BBC "have no intention" of producing the play on Zionism by Jim Allen, the author of "Perdition".' The assurance is given by Mr Michael Checkland to the General Secretary of the Zionist Federation, etc.'

'Now, it's incredible!' exclaimed Allen. 'I can't think of a one political party in the country that had an in with the Director General of the BBC; that can go there and say:

'"This play is critical of the tendency I represent, therefore it must not be shown." — without any discussion, without any consultation with myself or with Ken, or the senior BBC producer involved. We get this bald statement — end of story!'

Senior Colman fight for jobs



SENIOR COLMAN strikers held a successful demonstration and rally in Manchester last Saturday.

Like Silentnight before them and others at present, Senior Colman workers are in a prolonged dispute now, fighting for their jobs.

Strike committee member Tony Lowe commented on developments in the strike and what he sees as the important issues involved.

Sacked

'The latest news is that McGuigan, the managing director, and Pegg, the financial director, have both been sacked. They are being paid for the way they have handled the dispute.

'It is said that they misinformed the group directors on the effect of the strike. It shows the pressure we have maintained has produced results.

'The blacking of Senior Colman products is one of the most important issues. It is the road to victory. To black their goods is the only language they'll understand.'

At the rally Pat Carney, deputy leader of Manchester City Council, said that they were 100 per cent behind the strikers.

'The council has a complete ban on the company goods. This needs emphasising. We want all Labour councils to take the same stance,' Lowe insisted.

'We want the councils to state publicly what they are doing on the blacking.

Target

'Professor Smith is another target. He has been economic adviser to Thatcher and was on the board at Silentnight. He has been appointed to British Rail, and on 31 August is to become chairman of British Aerospace.

'The shop stewards from British Aerospace in the north west have agreed to set up a meeting to discuss this. We need to put pressure on the board to stop the appointment.

'Another aspect of importance is of course finance.

Senior Colman strikers have participated in calling the national conference in Manchester on 25 July.

'This conference is a basis for developing unity with all workers in struggle,' Lowe said.

Learn

'It is important to learn from each other. For instance, Silentnight were the ones who first told us of the importance of a blacking campaign.

'It took months for them to learn but they told us about their experience in the first weeks of our strike.

'The conference will also be a way of overcoming the isolation which exists between the strikes which are going on at the moment and in generalising the experience of all of these disputes.'

Thomson sackings

THOMSON Regional Newspapers has sacked its 200 journalists working on the 170-year-old 'Scotsman' newspaper in Edinburgh in an attempt to introduce new technology, more working hours and staff cuts.

The sackings — for 'gross misconduct' — came this week after a three week strike by NUJ members in opposition to management demands, which appear to be preparations for turning the Scottish national daily newspaper into a local newspaper for the Edinburgh area.

A week after the strike started, NUJ members from the sister newspaper, 'Edinburgh Evening News', joined the dispute.

The owners are refusing to negotiate and the strikers have compared management's behaviour with that of Rupert Murdoch during the Wapping dispute.

'Explosiveness beneath surface'

THE STATE of shock and bewilderment amongst delegates at the Tory government's re-election was expressed throughout the week in the questions: What on earth will she do next? Will she really carry out her plans?

General secretary Ron Todd said it for everybody in the debate on MSC schemes:

'Are they going to take young people out and shoot them to take them off the unemployment

A comment on the Transport & General Workers Union Conference by Dot Gibson

register? The explosiveness beneath the surface of this conference is because the majority have more than a sneaking conviction that the answer would be "yes".'

In every debate — MSC, agency labour, unemployed centres, transport, wages, the health service, education — union members came through with the same basic proposition expressed by Brian Fordham of Region No.1 Passenger Transport: 'We must defend industrially what we have lost politically.'

Busmen, lorry drivers, health service workers, engineers, waterways workers, building workers all agree that there can be no question of waiting five years for another general election.

The time to fight is now. But this meant different things to different delegates.

Peter Gibson, London busworkers' chairman demanded that the union get off the MSC boards now.

Ron Todd, describing the Tory government as 'half-hearted' (!), told delegates there were two issues that would force the union off the MSC boards. One was Norman Tebbit's compulsory works scheme, the other was the benefit-plus scheme. Todd said:

'Let's fight the proposals first and if they push them through then will be the time to consider leaving the board.'

This failure to give the necessary lead to build up the mass movement against the Tories is highly dangerous.

If the Tories 'push them through' (and given their hundred parliamentary majority, Ron Todd knows there's little doubt they will) then the unemployed will already be conscripts, forced labour, and if they refuse to co-operate they will be lawbreakers before any fight from the union leaders.

The absence of any debate about the union's participation in the MSC schemes, let alone a decision to withdraw from them is a serious question for the whole of the working class.

The trade union leaders refused to organise a united fight to defend the miners and print-workers and mounted no struggle to support the campaign for the release of the jailed miners.

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