

# REJECT THE LAMBETH WITCH-HUNT



## Scabs still trained at Timex

BY ANDY McFARLANE

THE Labour Party leaders are using a by-election in Lambeth to whip up an atmosphere of hatred against the borough's workforce and those fighting to defend local services.

A month ago unsubstantiated allegations that £9 million was 'missing' from the south London borough's Directorate of Operational Services (DOS) and direct labour organisation (DLO) were spread by the Tory press.

Rumours were spread by prominent members of the Labour Party that the Fraud Squad had been called in.

The impression was created that former council leader Ted Knight — who, along with 30 other Labour councillors, was barred for five years after refusing to carry out government cuts — was somehow involved in the alleged corruption.

Stories were told that the recent £6.50 per week rent increase for council tenants was being used to repay the 'missing' £9 million.

There is no truth in these claims. No evidence has been produced to support them.

The Fraud Squad is not involved in the borough.

Not a single council official has been named in connection with the allegations.

Neil Kinnock and the Maxwell press dished out such treatment to NUM leaders Arthur Gargill and Peter Heathfield after the miners' strike. They were both later exonerated.

### Determined

Leaders of the Labour Party determined that Knight and others will never again stand as Labour councillors.

The witch-hunt was led by Labour MPs Kate Hoey and Keith Hill. With no evidence, they demanded that the council be called in and the Lambeth DLO broken up.

The Labour group in Lambeth led the attack on the DLO. The closure was halted only because expelled and suspended Labour councillors and the Tory group (the latter on their own reasons) voted against the proposal to close it.

For Labour's leaders the issue isn't the Tories but those working to provide services to the community. Labour Party members who are used to bow down before the government's commands.

In last week's by-election in Angel ward the Labour candidate, Stephen Cooley, issued a letter containing demands for a 'new start'.

The first was 'full support for

BY THE EDITOR

the police and any action they may wish to take'.

This is an insult to the people of Lambeth, especially black people, who for years have been on the receiving end of police violence and corruption.

The Labour leaders say nothing about this well-known and well-established corruption.

All Cooley's fire is directed at the council officials on the basis of supposed corruption. Saying that the DOS has been 'revealed as the alleged centre of widespread corruption and rotten administration' he set up a hotline asking the people of Lambeth to 'root out' this alleged corruption.

### Wreckage

His leaflet says not a word in criticism of the Tory government and the wreckage they are responsible for in Lambeth and towns and cities up and down the country. His hotline is not available for the borough's 35,000 unemployed, 10,000 homeless people and other victims.

At a meeting in the borough on 27 February a call was made for a workers' inquiry into the real situation in Lambeth. This must be acted upon immediately. The trades council, local trades unionists and community organisations should elect a committee of inquiry.

It should call in experts — accountants, lawyers, architects — to assist its work, and examine all aspects of the council's activities, including:

- Deals with private companies and details of their profits.
- International bank loans.
- Sale and mortgages of local amenities and council property.
- Full details of interest charges paid to the financial institutions.
- The council says that two-thirds of all rents in Lambeth go to banks to pay interest charges.
- The impact that cuts in council services are having on the lives of ordinary people, including the unemployed and homeless.

This must be made the basis for a conference open to everybody in the borough, which can work out how to defend the DLO and how local services can be run for the benefit of Lambeth residents.

## Where Labour leaders stand

EACH day brings fresh evidence of where the Labour Party leaders stand:

■ With the police. This is an arm of the state which has an unenviable record of corruption, racism and violence. The stench left after the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, and other notorious cases has seen all confidence in the police evaporate — even among sections of the middle class.

■ Labour frontbencher David Blunkett calls for forced-labour schemes for under-21s. Naturally Blunkett wants them to be paid a 'modest' wage — which will be nowhere near his parliamentary salary.

■ Labour shadow home secretary Tony Blair outdoes the Tories on 'law and order'.

When the Tories turned their fire against Archbishop Hapgood's mild criticisms of the government's 'crusade against crime', they quoted Blair to show how 'reasonable' the

Opposition had now become.

■ Labour Party general secretary Larry Whitty last November sent out instructions to all Labour authorities telling them how to cut services in compliance with Tory demands.

This is the 'new' Labour Party that Smith, Blair and others now call for. It is a party that would have no connection with the working class, would drop any pretence to be 'socialist', even in words. It would be modelled on the openly capitalist Democratic Party in the US.

As the capitalist crisis deepens and the attacks of the Tories against the working class become more frenzied, so the Labour leaders move ever more openly to attack the working class.

It is widely known that if Kinnock had won last year's election one of his priorities was to introduce state funding of parliamentary parties.

The aim was clear: to allow

the Labour Party leaders to sever all connection with the trades unions, with the organised working class.

The Labour Party was created by the unions. The unions decided they had to send their own representatives to the House of Commons to overturn the legal attacks that was then in full swing against them.

Today the Labour leaders accept the laws that now exist against the rights of trades unionists. Indeed, it was Barbara Castle who first tried to introduce such laws after 1964 in Wilson's Labour government.

A question is being now posed for millions of working people involved in defending themselves against the onslaught of the Tory government: is not the time approaching when the working class will have to build a new party, a genuine workers' party, to replace the Labour Party?



Ashiq Hussain, a 21-year-old taxi driver, was brutally murdered in a racist attack in September 1992. He had gone to help another driver who was being racially abused by three passengers. One of the men then stabbed Ashiq. This man has now been charged with murder. The others are facing charges of assault and violence. At a committal hearing, one of the men hurled racist abuse at Ashiq's uncle and tried to provoke

him into a fight.

The Ashiq Hussain Memorial Committee organised a picket of the court where the men were appearing on 23 February (above). They are campaigning for justice, and fighting against racist attacks and murders. They can be contacted at TAMC, PO Box 1854, Camp Hill, Birmingham B11 1NJ.

Story and photo by Mark Salmon

SCABS continue to be trained at Timex by staff members of the Manufacturing, Science and Finance union and the sacked workers' own union, the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU).

A meeting last Tuesday between the workers and representatives of the MSF and the AEEU was chaired by the Scottish TUC, which called for a national demonstration in Dundee on 20 March. And called on union members in the plant not to do sacked workers' jobs.

The AEEU has also called for the training of scabs to stop.

AEEU Scottish organiser Jimmie Airlie was heckled last week by sacked workers, who are resisting management-imposed wage cuts and working conditions. The workforce feel that the national leadership is their main obstacle.

Airlie had arrived to tell the assembled workforce of the planned talks. As one woman calmly put it to him: 'We've had a lot of help from the union locally, but nationally they've done bugger all. Where have you been for three weeks?'

Airlie sarcastically thanked her for her 'nice question'.

### Angered

Pickets last Wednesday were angered by what they saw as a police provocation. As scab buses were leaving, four of the workers were forcibly arrested and led off over some earlier alleged incident involving scabs. Pickets feel the four were identified from police videos.

On Monday morning production was held up for an hour when a car was parked at the factory gates ahead of the arrival of the scab buses. An alternative entrance was worked.

The factory gates were superglued shut on Sunday and scabs had to walk through the crowds to another entrance.

The attack on the Timex workforce could be repeated in other plants, shop steward Charlie Malone has warned.

Employers' plans for temporary cheap labour are advancing in six plants he had visited in Edinburgh to win support for the Timex fight.

At Timex, management are still having difficulties recruiting scabs. Deputy convenor Willie Lesslie said the buses going in had more to do with getting at the pickets' morale than with production. As at Albacom two years ago, many of the scabs recruited would be untrainable.

# Some lessons from Manchester

THE CONFERENCE organised by the North West Miners' Support Groups Network in Manchester last weekend again highlighted the role played by many so-called 'left groups' in the struggle against the Tory government.

These groups came along, yet again, to squabble among themselves and to advise the working class what it 'has to do'.

A resolution moved by members of the Communist Party of Great Britain was lost, but it led to an unproductive discussion around its central theme:

'That the National Miners' Support Network should involve representatives and delegates from other sections of the working class. The united action — up to and including a general strike — that our class as a whole needs to beat back the Tory attacks must be organised. If the TUC continue to refuse to do this, then clearly other bodies must take the lead.'

The resolution was opposed by some on the grounds that nobody but the TUC was in a position to call such action.

'We must realise the smallness and weakness of our forces,' was the dominant mood among such delegates. 'Nobody in this room is in any position to call a general strike,' said one speaker.

\* \* \* \* \*

THIS is not the point. The real issue is that the movement of the working class that erupted behind the miners in October must be built up, broadened and deepened — and that only in the course of this build-up can the strength of the working class be mobilised against the employers and the government.

Only out of such a real movement can calls for actions by the whole of the working class against the employers and the government emerge.

Such a build-up is possible only on the basis of an uncompromising struggle against the reformist leaders of the labour movement who have done everything to isolate the miners, contain the movement, and prepare for its defeat.

Those who, in the guise of speaking about their own weakness, confine their activities to putting so-called 'pressure' on the TUC and oppose any action outside the 'official' movement are in fact aiding and abetting Willis and company in their effort to behead the movement of the working class.

At the same time others who say: 'If the TUC doesn't do it, then others must' are themselves sowing illusions in the current leaders of the Labour movement. Speaking in support of the resolution quoted above, one speaker said: 'We must remember that the TUC did not call the 1926 General Strike.'

But the TUC, under enormous pressure, DID call the strike — only in order to contain it and prepare to call it off when they felt strong enough to do so.

The fact is that the movement must be developed and built at every point against its official leaders, whatever these leaders are doing. (Such a build-up will of course involve the placing of demands on the present leaders as part of the struggle to clarify the movement about their real role.)

\* \* \* \* \*

THIS remains the task: how can the working class regain control of its own movement? How can it wrest it from its present leadership that wants to tie it to the needs of the employers and the capitalist state?

One thing is certain: it will do so only to the extent that those at present engaged in the struggle seek at every point to broaden the struggle — to turn outwards to forces organised and unorganised, the employed and the unemployed.

That is what the organisers of this conference set out to do.

The experience showed that this involves a conscious struggle against those who wish to limit the movement, to confine it, to make it subordinate to their own narrow ends and purposes.

This became clearer in the course of the discussion in Manchester. For that reason alone the calling of the conference was more than justified.

# Letter

## Put forward the socialist alternative to the 'welfare state'

THE EXCHANGE between Geoff Barr and the editor of Workers Press (Letters, 20 February) shows the need for a fuller discussion of the so-called 'welfare state' and of Marxist attitudes to reforms under capitalism.

The genesis of the 'welfare state' can be traced to insurance systems against illness and unemployment, introduced for a section of the working class by the Liberal government in 1911.

The schematic model was Germany, where Otto von Bismarck set out in the 1880s to steal the thunder of the Social Democrats (then an ostensibly revolutionary party), and bind the working class more closely to the state. It was not accidental that this party's leaders supported their 'own' country when war came in 1914. Germany still has probably the most elaborate welfare system.

Although facing no revolutionary party, the ruling class in Britain was conscious of the revolutionary potential of the working class. It thought it worth paying ransom to the top layers of the working class in the shape of social reforms. But it had other motives.

Recruitment to the armed forces during the Boer war (1899-1902) and again in 1914-18 had shown the poor physical shape of many young workers. Social reform rewarded employers and the state with an improved quality of labour force to meet the more exacting demands of modern industry.

### Reckless

Marx wrote approvingly in 'Capital' of the British workers' struggle for legislation limiting the length of the working day. But these laws would not have been upheld had they not benefited the employers as a whole. They slowed the reckless consumption of labour-power (especially the employment of children and youth) and forced the adoption of labour-saving machinery.

Later the ruling class also recognised the need for a permanent reserve army of labour kept in fair physical condition in case their labour was required; hence the institution of the dole (dating from 1911).

Until the 1930s, in Britain, the aged, sick, mentally handicapped, the widowed and orphaned, and others unable to support themselves were

treated as paupers under the Poor Law. Many could expect to end up in a workhouse and be buried in a pauper's grave.

For 'respectable' working people the Poor Law carried a dreadful stigma. It is clear that many Tories would like to see something similar restored, if not to the extent that 'sturdy beggars' are whipped and branded, and have their ears cut off.

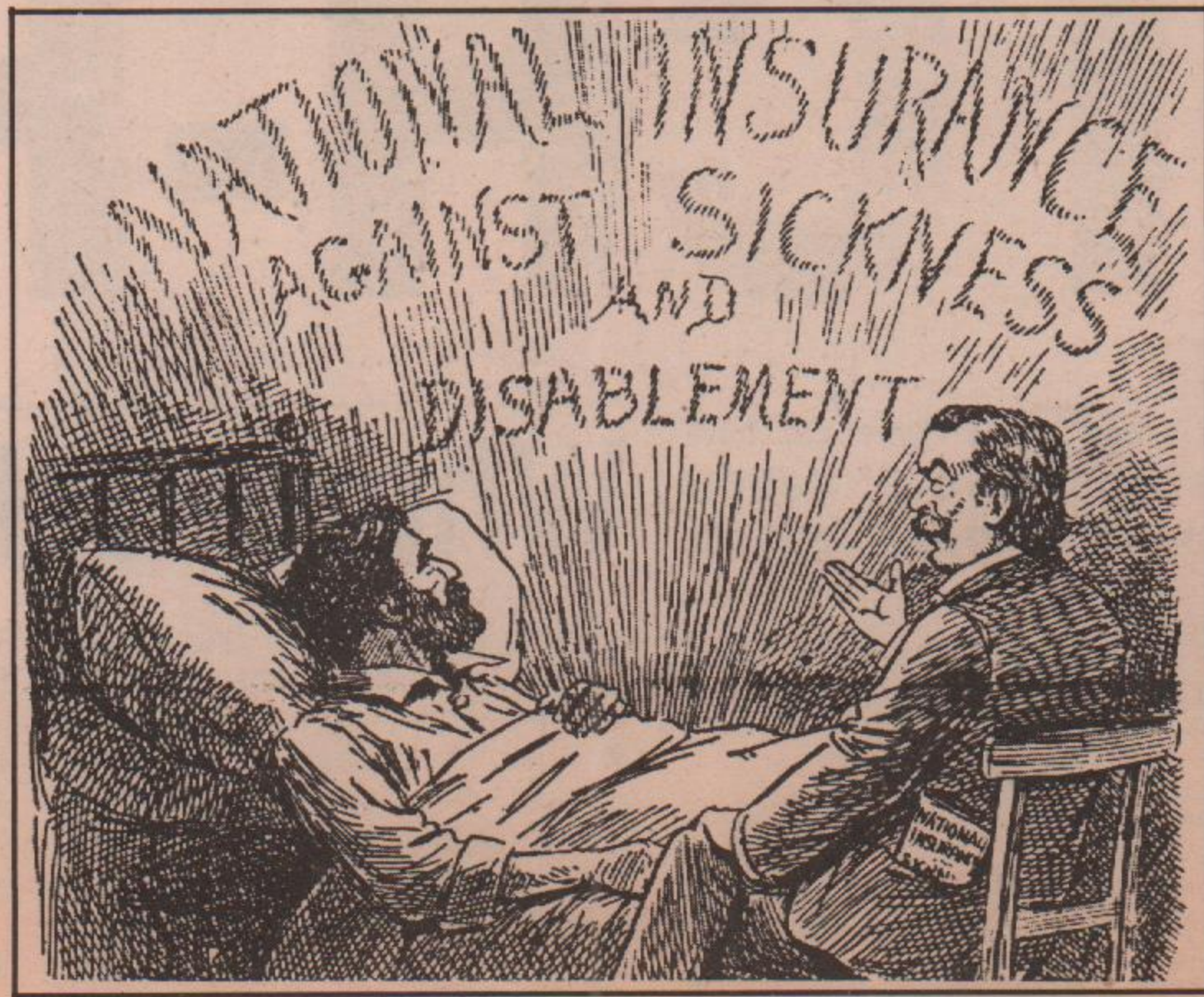
Some of John Major's proposals do recall the time when the condition for relief for the able-bodied was breaking stones in the workhouse yard.

The period after World War

redistribution of income within that class.

Is it now true, as the editor of the Workers Press maintains, that it is impossible for the Tories to maintain welfare services and 'concessions' and that they intend 'to take back everything that was conceded after World War II'?

Neither the ruling class nor the Tory Party speaks with a single voice, for the reason that there are divisions of interest within the class. They have also to think of their middle-class supporters who are, perhaps, the main beneficiaries of the



Lloyd George (depicted right), a Liberal leader, had been instrumental in bringing in insurance systems for a section of the working class

II saw the elaboration of the 'welfare state', which could be seen as another instalment of ransom. Every advanced capitalist country pursued the same policy.

It was needed to police the working class and to improve its physical condition and educational standard. The old-style proletariat was no use in modern industry.

The source of surplus value had to be qualitatively improved and the whole thing could be passed off, with the approval of the labour bureaucracy and the Fabians (who supplied the ideas), as a 'concession' to the working class or even as a step towards socialism.

The costs of social reforms were and are paid by the working class: they were largely a

National Health Service and other welfare services.

To whatever degree present-day Tories are supporters of 'market forces', this is an ideological commitment which the more pragmatic are prepared to discard in particular cases. For the more hard-nosed the aim is to cut all state services and allow the market free rein. This will mean, for example, that private schemes will take the place of the NHS or state pensions. For those who cannot afford private provision there will be a return to something like the Poor Law.

But the ruling class is divided, as the split over the Maastricht treaty shows. Many employers doubtless want to see British wages pushed down to Korean or Mexican levels. But firms like Tesco, Sainsbury and

Safeway continue to invest tens of millions of pounds in giant supermarkets on the assumption that working-class purchasing power will be maintained.

Many services under the heading 'welfare state' cannot be abolished without weakening capitalism, not only because of working-class opposition but because of the ensuing negative social effects.

Millions of the aged, infirm, handicapped, and others, now dependent upon social security, would be without means of support. Educational standards would fall: the physical condition of the mass of the people would deteriorate. Social inequality would increase dramatically. It may be argued that this is indeed what capitalism threatens. Would the capitalists gain from the breakdown of civilised standards?

### Need

Other European Community governments have paid lip-service to the need for social policy. Major's government hopes to attract foreign capital by promising lower social-security charges and wages.

It also refuses to ratify various recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (a body representing trades unions, employers and governments), including rest periods for truck drivers, protection from the effects of asbestos and harmful chemicals, and occupational risks of cancer. It has not adopted a minimum employment age or the ILO's proposed night-work regulations.

The 'welfare state' was tailored to capitalism's needs, to wean the working class from a revolutionary alternative.

The changes now being introduced by the Tories show the bankruptcy of Fabianism. The task of revolutionaries is not to defend these 'concessions' but to expose the 'welfare state' as a former part of ruling-class strategy which some sections now believe has outlived its usefulness.

We should seize the opportunity to expose the 'welfare state', and illusions in it, and put forward the socialist alternative.

Geoff Barr has raised some pertinent questions: let us have a full discussion of those points.

Tom Kemp  
Gravesend, Kent

■ The editor welcomes correspondence on this subject.

## WORKERS PRESS £3,000 MONTHLY FIGHTING FUND

LAST WEEK saw a number of conferences which set out to bring together workers in the trades unions and the communities.

We have reported on and participated in all such activities.

There is a growing discussion in the working-class movement about what kinds of organisation it needs to protect its interests in the face of the vicious Tory onslaught.

The Workers Press is part of that discussion. Central to this is the question of how to organise to draw into the common fight the strongest and the most vulnerable, the experienced and the inexperienced.

If you agree that we must develop this discussion by reaching out further into the movement and hearing what is being said in all the different areas, please consider our precarious financial position.

Last month we didn't complete our £3,000 — we raised only £2671.33. We must make up that short fall.

Bridget Leach

Please send contributions to:  
Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

## COMING SOON

**SUNDAY 7 MARCH:** 'Is there a future for socialism?', talk by Mike Howgate for the South Place Ethical Society, 3pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (tube: Holborn). Free admission.

**MONDAY 8 MARCH:** Vane Tempest vigil organised by Women Against Pit Closures on International Women's Day. Noon to 3pm. Barbecue on beach in front of colliery. Children's entertainment and creche. 5pm 'til late: social at Vane Tempest Welfare Hall.

**MONDAY 8 MARCH:** Campaign For Coal public meeting. Bridgwater Trades Council, Labour Club; speakers include Tyrone O'Sullivan, NUM. **THURSDAY 11 MARCH:** Irish Women's Defence Campaign public meeting and exhibition. 7pm, Roger Casement Irish Centre, 131 St John's Way, Islington. Benefit follows at Victoria pub, Holloway Road, N7 from 9pm 'til late.

**FRIDAY 12 MARCH:** Irish Women's Defence Campaign's picket of 10 Downing Street, starts 11am. Stop strip-searching!

**SATURDAY 13 MARCH:** David Jones and Joe Green memorial march and rally in South Kirkby, Yorkshire. Assemble at 10.30am, S. Kirkby Industrial Estate. Rally at Frickley Athletic Club.

**WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH:** Chesterfield and District trades council meeting in support of the miners (time/venue to follow). Speaker: Arthur Scargill, NUM president.

**SUNDAY 4 APRIL:** Coal Campaign benefit, organised by Derwentside council/North Durham Labour Group. 7pm, Stanley Civic Hall. Brass bands, youth theatre group, other musicians. Contact Lyn Boyd (0207-584225) for further details.

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By Peter Fryer

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## WOMEN'S PIT CAMPS

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# 'Mirror' ditches Labour

A MIRROR Group Newspapers board meeting last week effectively marked the end of its direct links with the Labour leadership.

The board reiterated its backing for chief executive David Montgomery, and rebuffed Labour peer Lord Hollick — who had brought union-buster Montgomery to the 'Mirror', and then fallen out with him.

BY PETER SALMON

The 'Daily Mirror' will maintain a 'left-of-centre' stance, said the board. (It would lose even more readers if it didn't: it is already down 150,000 year-on-year).

But gone are the day-by-day consultations, unquestioning repetition of Labour pronouncements and witch-hunts 'to order'.

Under Robert Maxwell and since, the 'Mirror' connection with Labour HQ was maintained by political editor Alastair Campbell. He left the 'Mirror' on 16 February, a week after the appointment of David Seymour as group political editor.

## Affair

Fifteen years ago, Seymour was National Union of Journalists father of chapel (FoC, office branch secretary) at the 'Mirror'. In the early 1980s he became a deputy leader-writer under Maxwell crony Joe Haines.

In 1984, Seymour's wife, Hilary Coffman, had an affair with David Hill, Labour Party head of communications. She left Seymour, and Neil Kinnock — for whom she was working — lent her and Hill a cottage in Wales for a weekend of gazing into each other's eyes.

Among the loves lost was Seymour's passion for the Labour Party. In 1986 he left the 'Mirror' for 'Today', then owned by Lonrho.

A year later it was bought by Rupert Murdoch's News International, who appointed as editor Montgomery, a right-wing Unionist from Northern Ireland and scab 'News of the World' editor during the Wapping strike.

## Concern

Seymour's loyalty was won by Montgomery. Once at the 'Mirror' he appointed Seymour over the head of Kinnock's big pal Campbell, a neat way of saying 'up yours' to Labour — whose new leader John Smith 'expressed concern'.

Meanwhile former 'Mirror' editor Richard Stott, sacked by Montgomery, moved to Murdoch's 'Today'. Campbell last week decided to pursue the struggle for socialism there too, and became 'Today' political editor.

Back at the 'Mirror', Montgomery has turned on Hollick, chairman of the money-broking and advertising group MAI and Labour's last link with the board.

Hollick encouraged Murdoch's 'Sunday Times' to report



'Mirror' journalists meet with miners from the North West — both are fighting for their jobs

that his row with Montgomery concerned Campbell.

But something more crucial appears to be at stake — financial control of the 'Mirror'.

The majority of shares are owned by the banks, through the administrator of Maxwell's leftovers. Two months ago Hollick was reported to have tried to buy more shares and take control. Hollick denied the reports

— but Montgomery believed them and went for him.

The whole story of board-room intrigues and cottages in Wales provides useful insight into Labour's methods. Meanwhile 'Mirror' journalists and printers are paying the price with sackings and victimisations of activists.

Just after Montgomery arrived in November, 100 non-con-

tract journalists were sacked. Then went the four-day week. Next out of the door were the NUJ FoC and his deputy, after being told that union activities were 'incompatible' with their jobs.

The 'Mirror' unions, derecognised in all but name, are holding out. The illusion of the 'Labour newspaper' has finally gone.

# Conference call to unite struggles

BY DOT GIBSON

FULL support to the rail and mining unions, balloting for a co-ordinated day of strike action, was pledged by the North-West Miners' Support Groups Network conference held last Saturday in Manchester.

A steering committee will work for: full support for the miners' fight to defend pits, jobs and mining communities, linked with the unemployed, young people, housewives and all the various community organisations which have sprung up in defence of jobs and services.

It will also meet with the Community and Union Action Campaign steering committee, elected at its 6-7 February con-

ference held in Manchester, and representatives of similar initiatives to co-ordinate and unite the struggles.

The conference took place because of disappointment at the bureaucratic stage-managing of the National Miners' Support Network conference held on 9 January in Sheffield.

## Opposed

The London Committee of Miners' Support Groups has been set up for the same reason. A speaker from that committee said that they opposed the postal ballot to elect national and regional officers of the network.

'Some people have received ballot papers, some have not, and others did not know that

they needed to be affiliated in order to take part,' she said, and expressed the mood of the majority by saying 'we elected our two representatives in an open and democratic way at a meeting'.

## Controls

The conference opposed 'the policy of import controls which sets workers of different countries against each other in the struggle for jobs'; and agreed 'to campaign for the NUM to invite speakers from the mining communities of Colombia, South Africa, Poland, Germany and other countries . . . to discuss ways of fighting together against our common enemy'.

The Burnsall strike (now in its ninth month) and the Timex

workers' resistance to the destruction of their union organisation, conditions and wages were supported.

Chris Hesford, a representative of the Leigh, Atherton and Tyldesley Miners' Support Group, put out a warning to the various political groups present:

'I am a part-time barmaid and I speak to many ordinary

people. They are angry about what is going on and want to do something.

'You should not just speak to each other. You must learn to make your arguments in a way that everybody understands, otherwise ordinary people will not want to come along and we will not build the kind of movement we want to build.'

■ See editorial on page 2

# Lambeth groups attack Labour

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

WHEN Steve Cooley, Labour candidate in a Lambeth council election, told the local NUPE branch secretary Micky Scales that along with John Smith and the rest of the Labour leaders, he could hardly wait to break the links with the trades unions, Scales did not hesitate for a reply. 'Nor can we,' he said.

At a conference called in the south London borough by the NALGO and NUPE public service unions last Saturday, Scales explained:

'This Labour group are carrying out the Tories' dirty work — why should the trades unions support them?'

The conference was called to

unite council workers and the community against the £23 million worth of cuts planned by the Labour council — and against Labour's use of unsubstantiated 'corruption' allegations spread by the national media as an excuse to close the Directorate of Operational Services (DOS), with the loss of hundreds of jobs.

## Axing

Cooley's election statement calls for the immediate axing of Lambeth's DOS over the 'corruption' allegations.

The unions are to ballot on all-out indefinite strike action against cuts, and are asking for the community's support.

Scales said that his union branch had stopped paying the

political levy to Labour two years ago — because its councillors were destroying jobs in Lambeth.

Much of the angry debate at the conference concerned Labour's foul role in the bitter struggles of the working class to retain the public services it so desperately needs.

Dick North, secretary of Lambeth National Union of Teachers, said that Labour was spending even less on education in Lambeth than the Tories demanded.

The conference voted to support Lambeth council workers if they took strike action; to set up a local committee to unite workers and community groups; and to set up a workers' inquiry into the corruption allegations.

# Oxford workers face dilemma of derecognition

BY A GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

FOR MANY workers the future of trade union organisation at their workplace is not an abstract question.

Frequently employers control almost every single aspect of employment contracts without the unions.

Thursday 25 February's public meeting at Oxford town hall organised by ex-Pergamon strikers, in the inter-union Reed-Elsevier Rights and Work Campaign, brought together shop stewards and activists from many trades unions in Oxford who face or have faced union derecognition.

## Attended

Journalists and printworkers at the 'Oxford Mail' and at Pergamon — now part of the Euro-transnational Reed-Elsevier — Transport and General Workers' Union members at car-parts manufacturer Unipart, and local government union NALGO university and county council workers were among those who attended.

Meetings where trades unionists sit in the same room exchanging the horror stories of their experiences are not unusual these days. But what are the answers?

## Clinging

NUJ general secretary John Foster, clinging to the laws, argued that only a Labour government committed to introducing the most advanced trade union legislation can begin to redress the balance.

But in the same breath he doubted whether a government led by Labour leader John Smith could deliver!

On the other hand Jenny Eadie, the National Union of Mineworkers' barrister in the latest court cases made a blistering attack on any illusion in legal fixes:

'We won!' she said. 'Still those pits are not working! Still miners are wondering whether they will have to take the redundancy pay! Law courts can't win, only action can win!'

## Leicester centre fights cutbacks

BY PAUL DAY

IN SPITE of local opposition, Leicester county council has had its bid to merge the Highfield Youth and Community Centre (HYCC) with the recently refurbished Old Moat Boys' School supported by the High Court.

The HYCC management committee had applied for a judicial review to halt the merger. On 12 February this was rejected.

The judge made clear to Abdul Osman, chairperson of the management committee, that in his opinion a seven-week consultation period during the summer holidays was 'adequate'. The judge also ignored all evidence dated before March 1992. This ruling overturned a previous court judgement last summer.

## Convince

In a press statement the HYCC say: 'It seemed that we had failed to convince [the judge] that the county council had failed to meet . . . its democratic obligations. The fact that over 6,000 people had signed a petition against the merger counted for nothing.'

The merger plans will mean the end of all adult facilities, advice and under-fives services at HYCC, and its transformation into a youth centre.

The HYCC management committee has made clear that it is not opposed to a youth centre — they already do a considerable amount of youth work, although the council has refused to allow them to employ at least one full-time youth worker.

But the plan will mean the destruction of this multi-cultural, multi-age and family-oriented centre.

The management committee is resolved to protect the centre — in the face of the council's decision to slash resources from centres all over the county.

■ A conference is to be held at 2pm, Sunday 7 March at the HYCC, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester — calling for unity with other threatened groups.

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## Inside left

### Notes about Bosnia

COMMENTING on British mercenaries killed in Bosnia, Kevin Lawlor in the so-called 'Daily Worker' (February), complained that nothing has been mentioned of British fascism's recruitment of mercenaries for Croatia's HOS, a present day formation of Ustasha. As for Bosnians being 'underdogs', these underdogs stand for ethnic reaction, and segregation on a basis of religion. All sides are reactionary in this conflict.

What racist crap! People are tortured, driven from their homes, women systematically raped, and children systematically killed — Moslem, Serb, Jew or whatever — bombed. Our latter-day Stalinists toss a remark about fascists next door, then smear the entire Bosnian people as reactionary, using Muslim fanatic stereotypes from the West's racist media.

Lawlor says Lord Owen's 'peace plan' would require imperialist troops. But Bosnians rejected this plan, which would enforce segregation, carving up their country into little 'ethnic' Bantustans.

We oppose imperialist intervention and intrigue in the Balkans. We are not 'neutral' about rape and ethnic cleansing. The working class internationally must stand by peoples fighting racism and aggression.

Those content with bemoaning media hypocrisy and repeating this isn't our war ('Socialist Worker' for instance) have no international perspective. They are just petty-bourgeois Little Englanders.

### Trouble at mill

AS the class struggle finally caught up with 'New Left Review' (NLR)? Though originating from the same post-1956 Communist Party crisis which brought many comrades to the Trotskyist movement, it has catered over three decades for those who preferred to keep their 'Marxism' academic.

Now several staff, including Hilary Wainwright, Quentin Hoare, and Branka Magas (whose book, 'The Destruction of Yugoslavia' came out recently from 'NLR' publishers Verso), have resigned, opposing well-off editor Perry Anderson's moves to place control with family trusts.

Anderson, whose theory has been that the bourgeois revolution in Britain remains to be completed, now proclaims a convergence of socialism with liberalism. With him is one-time London School of Economics firebrand Robin Blackburn, who wrote an article last year advocating 'tactical voting' — that is, helping the Liberals. So, reportedly is another old International Marxist Group member, Tariq Ali.

### Turnover

LATEST sport on the left: How many times can you be signed up for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP)? Anecdotes have replaced the previous favourite: 'How I repelled "Living Marxism" sellers.'

Somebody in 'Socialist Organisation' claimed they were 'recruited' five times on one demonstration. The 'Daily Worker' had two letters from people who were badgered to join the SWP after making their differences with it clear.

It's the turnover policy. While sending inexperienced youngsters out frenetically proffering membership cards, the SWP is expelling long-standing members who've been around long enough to worry about changes of 'line', and to question Tony Cliff's SWP leadership.

Many years ago, journalist John Palmer, then one of Cliff's lads, warned us in the Young Socialists that we were emulating the 'Lenin levy' — Stalin's 1920s tactic of swamping the party with raw, even backward, recruits to drive out opposition. Wonder what he reckons the SWP is up to?

Charlie Pottins

# The spirit of pessimism

**TOM KEMP concludes his review of the recent Channel 4 series, 'The Spirit of Freedom', on the modern history of the French intellectual movement, which was presented by Bernard-Henri Levy**

## Intellectual degeneration

THE French surrealist artist Louis Aragon, despite earlier reservations, went all the way with Stalinism, using in its support all the prestige he had acquired as surrealist poet and novelist.

Levy's analysis is far too superficial to plumb the real reasons for Aragon's degeneration, or that of those leading scientists, historians and literary figures willing to proclaim Stalin the greatest 'savant' of the time.

The attraction, Levy tells us, was 'more religious than political' and in his estimation many of them 'knew'.

('We need a GPU' appeared in one of Aragon's poems. Did he not notice, on his visits to Moscow, some old friends no longer turning up to greet him?)

Levy chooses to say nothing about the Left Oppositionists who were among the first victims of the Gulag. That they were virtually wiped out in the purges. And that it was the Fourth International, formed in 1938 by Trotsky and his supporters, which gave a true account of what was happening in the Soviet Union.

## The rise of fascism

WITH the rise of fascism a new factor of division tore apart the ranks of the French intellectuals.

Some were attracted to what they saw as a movement of virile youth scornful of worldly comforts and out to build a new world. A world different from the corrupt bourgeois society with its scandals and sordid ambitions which they knew in France.

A whole group of pro-fascist, anti-Semitic writers appeared, impressed by the poetry of torchlight processions and marching soldiers.

A minority, yes, but France's capitulation of June 1940 — for the extreme right 'a divine surprise' which got rid of the hated Third Republic — gave them their chance.

While some intellectuals took the risks of the Resistance, others chose the path of collaboration with the Nazi occupant. More, they were ready to proclaim the most obscene anti-Semitism; not even the children should be spared, one of them wrote.

The writer and doctor Louis-Ferdinand Céline, whose early novel 'Journey to the End of Night' was praised by Trotsky, was to spit the worst of these obscenities.

And the more 'respectable' Vichy regime of the senile bonaparte, Marshal Philippe Pétain, went even further than the Third Reich in the application of anti-Jewish laws while its police rounded up victims for the gas chambers in the East.

With its new slogan — 'Work, Family and Fatherland' — its youth camps and adulation of the Marshal, it seemed to achieve the goals of the right-wing intellectuals, the anti-Dreyfusards.

## The anti-fascist culture

ON THE other hand there was 'the anti-fascist culture', much influenced by Stalinism, therefore not to be idealised, says Levy.

After the defeat by Nazi Germany there was confusion and chaos in all classes of French society and in all parties and movements.

The August 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact was followed by the rounding up of prominent Stalinists. Others (especially elected representatives) made themselves as inconspicuous as possible.

Revolutionaries calling for the defeat of their own imperialism did not know which way to turn.

With the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the French Communist Party (PCF) was able to re-assemble its forces and built up a predominant position in the underground resistance movement on the strength of a pro-Soviet and ultra-national line.

It was this which attracted into its ranks thousands of young middle-class people and leading intel-



André Malraux made many striking poses for the republican movement

lectuals who would not normally have come into contact with the party, to which many of them now pledged a complete and unreasoning devotion.

The PCF took over the 'anti-fascist culture' which it had helped establish during the Spanish Civil War, to which Levy rightly attaches a great deal of importance — though apparently he does not know the difference between the anarchists and the POUM, led by the former associate of Trotsky's, Andrés Nin.

But many of these anti-Stalinists perished in the cellars of the GPU operating on Spanish soil and independently of the Popular Front government. Artist and novelist André Malraux here emerges in an heroic role, though it lay more in striking

poses than in making a real contribution to the action.

With the history of the Spanish Civil War written to serve its purpose (compare George Orwell's account in 'Homage to Catalonia' with that of the party hacks), the PCF became a powerful force among the intellectuals who admired 'Stalin: the thinker in a soldier's uniform'.

On the occasion of Stalin's death (on 6 March 1953) the artist Pablo Picasso, one of the PCF's great prizes, was asked to make a portrait of the great man. He produced a sketch of a young, rather perky looking Stalin, scarcely recognisable. The party leaders were horrified. Aragon, who had commissioned the portrait, had to recant; Picasso never did.

'They told me to draw', Picasso said, 'that's fine. As for politics: go play in the garden.' He kept his party membership, at least nominally; his name was too valuable for the party to lose.

## Communist Party on the decline

NEVERTHELESS, during the 1950s, already the PCF was on the decline, as some of the episodes to which Levy calls attention show. There was, for example, the Kravchenko trial in which a Soviet defector took action for libel against the PCF's literary weekly, 'Les Lettres Françaises', in 1949.

What it came down to was whether or not there were labour camps in the Soviet Union. Kravchenko was able to bring witnesses to establish their existence.

Included among them was Margarete Buber-Neumann. She was sent to a camp after the purge of her husband, the German Communist leader Heinz Neumann, and was handed over to the Gestapo during the period of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

Among those presenting evidence for the existence of the camps was the ex-Trotskyist David



Berlin wall's destruction: the end of a decade that began with Althusser killing his wife in a fit of dementia

# Stalinism II



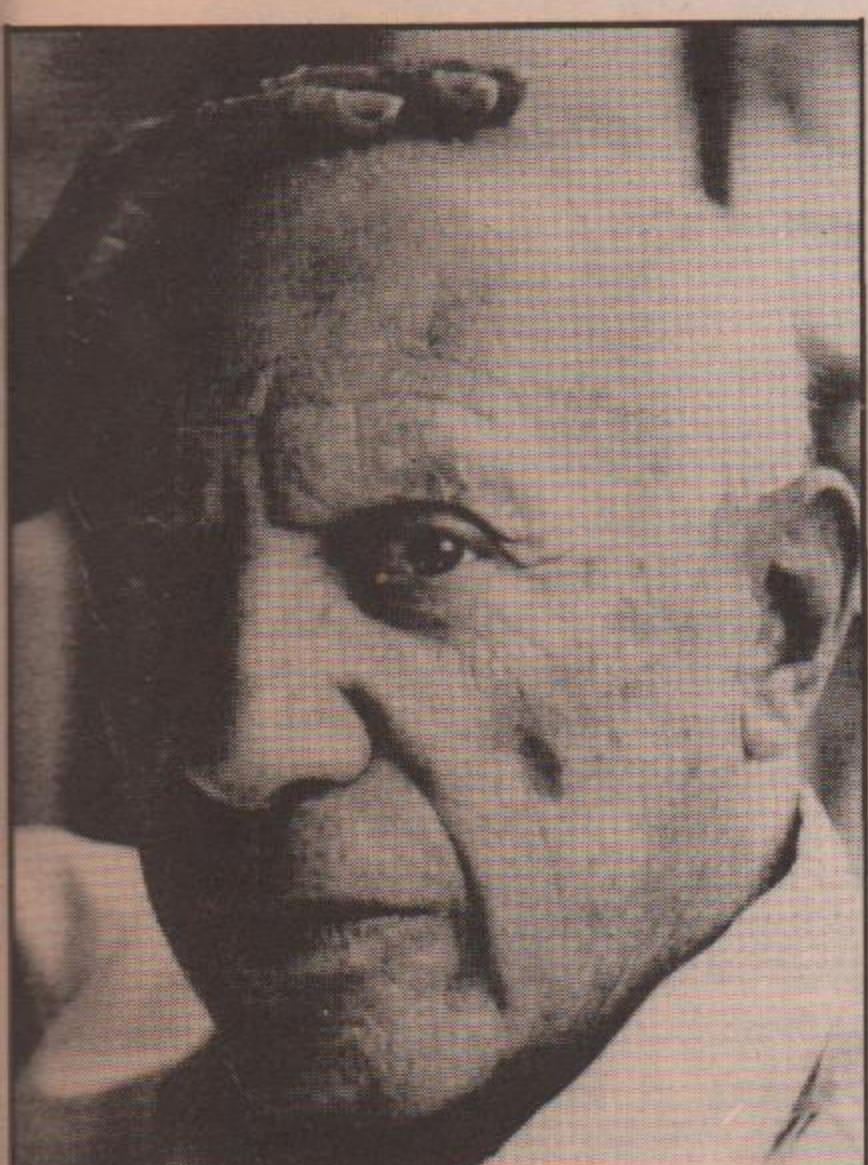
in Spain without making any real contribution to the action

Rousset — who had persuaded Jean-Paul Sartre of the existence of the camps without changing his attitude towards the PCF.

According to Sartre, the danger was that to denounce them publicly would play into the hands of the anti-communists. This is of a piece with Sartre's hostility to Trotskyism.

The Kravchenko trial was closely followed by the trials of supposed Tito-ites in eastern Europe, the expulsion of a number of French intellectuals for Titoism, and the indictment of two prominent PCF leaders — André Marty and Charles Tillon — for a similar offence.

There was a certain connection. The PCF provided material for the trial in Prague of Arthur London, who had connections with the



Pablo Picasso

French leadership. These and other happenings in the Stalinist world began to shake the support of some of the hitherto party faithful.

Another serious blow came with the Algerian war, as Levy points out. The PCF, by abstaining on the vote for special powers asked for by the government of Guy Mollet, gave tacit support to French imperialism. Although it later altered its position, the Algerian war saw a decline in its influence.

peasants and workers to behave as expected, put away foolish things and were mainly lost to sight until Levy unearthed his old comrades for this programme.

With Stalinism discredited and the failure of Castroism or Maoism to take its place, the 1970s and 1980s saw a pattern of confusion in intellectual circles.

New gurus appeared, such as Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan. Many turned to the so-called 'Third World' where there seemed to be better prospects of revolution.

If the workers wouldn't rise, some said, then the only way to get rid of corrupt bourgeois society was through the deed.

Forgetting everything which Marxists had written about the danger of the individual with the bomb trying to act as a substitute for the mass movement, groups like Direct Action and the German Red Army Faction turned to terrorism.

Sartre was not slow to give his endorsement, as did a number of other intellectuals.

The fragmentation and break-up of the movements of the 1960s and the steadily declining influence of the PCF and the CGT (its arm in the trade union movement) went on remorselessly.

With the belated discovery of the Gulag many found an excuse to opt out of political life; like Levy, they supported good causes, but not parties.

Although Sartre died in 1980, lesser gurus have had their day, not least Louis Althusser, perhaps the most brilliant apologist for Stalinism the French intelligentsia has produced.

According to one of his friends, the Catholic philosopher Jean Guitton, he hoped to bring about a reconciliation between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Vatican.

After Althusser had spent several hours discussing with Cardinal Garrone in Rome, Pope Jean-Paul expressed interest. But before a meeting could be arranged, the 'Marxist' Althusser had become a wife-murderer.

At the start of the decade in which the Stalinist regimes were to collapse and the Berlin wall was to come down, in a fit of dementia Althusser strangled his wife and spent the rest of his life in a psychiatric hospital. He died in 1990.

Perhaps, with the Pope's help, the bureaucracy could have been saved!

## Finding alternatives

BY THE 1960s its student branch was in revolt and the events of May-June 1968 saw the young intellectuals revolting not only against bourgeois society but also against the PCF.

Some found an alternative in Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution; many leading 'lefts', including Sartre, made the pilgrimage to Havana.

Che Guevara became a role model for a generation of left-wing youth. The young Regis Debray, scion of a bourgeois family, after military training in Cuba, went to Bolivia to start a guerrilla movement.

Soon arrested, he spent some years in prison. Returning to France, sadder and wiser, he took on the more congenial role of one of French President Francois Mitterrand's advisers.

Support for Cuba collapsed when Castro (heavily dependent on Soviet aid) supported the military intervention in Czechoslovakia.

Then came the brightest god that failed, Mao's China with its promise of equality and democracy (Levy's tone becomes nostalgic). Mao's rule proved to be as bloody as that of Stalin.

Maoist influence was maintained for a few years after 1968. Sartre emerged as a seller of the Maoist paper 'La Cause du Peuple'.

The leaders, mostly disillusioned by the failure of French

## Capitalist apologetics

MASQUERADING under the title 'The Spirit of Freedom' Levy has brought together all the old arguments against socialism and Marxism.

From what it selects from history, from what it leaves out or treats in a one-sided way, his programme is a model of capitalist apologetics.

The main sources of his diatribe are to be found in the writings of Raymond Aron, Albert Camus, the later Malraux and above all Solzhenitsyn.

One of the main forms of distortion is to be found in the identification of Marxist-socialism with Stalinism. One of the tragedies of the 20th century is that many intellectuals have made that confusion and thus entrusted their consciences into the hands of the murderous Stalinist bureaucracy.

An explanation of this aberration, and the dire consequences it had, demand an analysis of capitalist society in decline and the Stalinist betrayal of the European working class totally different to the method used by Levy.

Meanwhile the struggle must go on to show that it need not have ended in the Gulag — and will not when the working class really holds power.

# City Lights

## Japan's economy sinking

NOBODY now believes that an economic recovery is imminent in Japan. In fact the slump in the land of the 'economic miracle' — already worse than at any point since 1945 — is getting even worse.

'If the real economy does not recover in the next three to six months, there could be a big crisis,' says Andrew Ballingal, a leading analyst of the Tokyo stock exchange.

Reference to the real economy is crucial. The crisis that has already struck capital-starved Japanese banks has now begun to hit industrial producers. Until now many considered these the strongest in the world.

The 'Financial Times' (24 February) described the current Japanese situation as involving 'the most comprehensive, complex and severe economic crisis since the end of the second world war'.

Manufacturers are paying the price for the overproduction of the late 1980s, which means that car and electronic goods makers in particular are now carrying huge stocks of unsold products.

Personal savings are rising rapidly as people attempt to safeguard against an increasingly unsure future.

The financial sector is overshadowed by banks' bad debts, a prolonged slump in share prices, and low trading volumes on the stock exchange.

For exporters the problem has been compounded by the sharp rise of the yen against the dollar over the past three weeks, which has the effect of making Japanese exports more expensive in world markets, while at the same time reducing the price of imports into Japan.

US Treasury secretary Lloyd Bentsen's call last week for a 20 per cent appreciation of the yen against the dollar caused consternation among Japan's exporters, and revealed the extent of the tensions now existing between the major capitalist power blocs as they fight for a greater share of trade in stagnant or declining markets.

Many Japanese companies are holding their fire for the moment, living on short-term borrowings, waiting to see whether the economy picks up before shedding large numbers of workers. But the economy is not picking up and big cuts in the workforce, in capital spending and in other costs are now inevitable.

The electronics firm JVC showed what is in store when it announced recently the closure of its production facilities in Holland and Germany.

Car maker Nissan, facing a 13 per cent reduction in total Japanese car production over the last year, followed hard on JVC's heels when it announced the first ever car plant closure since 1945. It has doubled its forecast of pre-tax losses. The last time Nissan made a loss was in 1946.

Its plan to close the 29-year-old Zama factory will mean the destruction of 5,000 jobs, nearly a tenth of the labour force. Measured against European or US experience this may seem small beer — by Japanese standards it is dramatic.

Nissan bosses have made clear that these are no ordinary cuts but involve a drastic restructuring of the whole company. It is significant that 80 per cent of the job losses have fallen on the white-collar office workers who in the past have held the most protected jobs. Nissan says that its aim is to stay

profitable, even if there is zero growth in sales for the rest of the decade.

Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, Japan's largest company, announced a 22 per cent profit drop for the six months to September and said it was reducing its labour force by 30,000 from its present 200,000 total.

Akio Tanii, boss of the world's biggest consumer electronics firm, Matsushita, resigned last week in the midst of a loan scandal, tumbling profits (they have fallen nearly 60 per cent in the last three years), and acute embarrassment at having to recall 700,000 defective fridges.

Matsushita was founded in 1918 and came to exemplify what were long considered the cardinal Japanese virtues — high volume production at low prices but extremely high quality.

It operated a policy of life-time employment — a sickly song was sung each morning by the workers about how everybody's efforts were in the noble pursuit of the happiness of all.

Matsushita — which trades under the name of National, Panasonic, Quasar and Technics — for years rolled on remorselessly, making few mistakes and taking fewer risks. But a leading company executive said recently that a US style of management was now imperative with more hiring and firing.

The real danger to the whole economy is that the current industrial decline will feed back onto the already fragile banking sector.

With falling corporate profits, there is now little incentive to buy stocks and shares and, as the industrial recession deepens, the banks' bad debts will mount. What was in the past considered the strength of Japanese capitalism — the close interlocking of the banks and industry — may well prove its Achilles' heel.

## Thumbs down for Clinton

THE former chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Martin Feldstein, has written a devastating article in the 'Wall Street Journal' blowing sky high Clinton's claims that the measures outlined in his recent budget proposals will reduce America's yawning budget deficit.

Feldstein argues that the new spending on various social programmes announced by the new president will far outweigh the savings from increased taxes and cut-backs elsewhere. He calculates that in four years' time the budget deficit will be even bigger than today.

He is especially scornful of the proposed 25 per cent cut in defence spending on the grounds that this will never be passed by the Congress.

Like many others, Feldstein is sure that Clinton will not be able to squeeze the amount of money from the rich that his plans require.

If the rich find ways of converting only 10 per cent of their taxable income into non-taxable income, all Clinton's anticipated receipts will disappear.

Many are now expressing fears that higher corporate and energy taxes will raise both production costs and the disposable income of American households.

Looks as though John Smith and the rest of the hapless Labour leadership have backed yet another loser.

NOT to laugh, not to weep, but to understand. That was how the 17th-century philosopher Baruch Spinoza summed up one of the most compelling ethical imperatives of the rising bourgeoisie.

He believed that reason should and should be applied to human affairs, and that it furnished human beings with a morality based, not on divine commandments or the teachings of theology, but on human need.

It was the revolutionary optimism informing that phrase of Spinoza's which made it one of Trotsky's favourite maxims.

Compare and contrast this optimism, this firm faith in the power of reason, with the terminal pessimism of the bourgeoisie 350 years later as the system it built and profited from teeters on the brink of the abyss:

'Society needs to condemn a little more and understand a little less.'

With these revealing words, which even the Archbishop of York felt were 'unwise', John Major opened the floodgates. The bourgeois press has been washed ever since with condemnation, mainly of young people, with obscurantism, and with fervent declarations about the essential wickedness and depravity of our species.

A friend in Scotland has sent me cuttings of two articles in the Scottish press commenting on the murder of two-year-old James Bulger. Like many commentators in the English press, these two writers use this horrific deed as a peg on which to hang highly reactionary conclusions.

To Allan Massie, writing in Scotland on Sunday, 'the truth is that men and women have always been capable of appalling cruelty, often perpetrated for no apparent reason other than self-gratification'.

Nowadays, he goes on, we inhabit a world where morality is held to be relative, where the suggestion that one thing is absolutely better than another is dismissed as elitist. . . . Self-gratification becomes the only principle by which society encourages the individual to live.

'The freedom of everyone to pick and choose remains; and this means that many, without apparent guilt, will choose evil. 'Why should they feel guilt, when the message insistently broadcast is that the individual, in a world of relativity, should make his own line, seeking to satisfy his own aspirations and thus find self-fulfilment? . . . If it is all a matter of personal taste, how then can there be moral standards?'

John MacLeod, in the 'Herald', goes further.

'Man — and I mean human-kind — is wicked', he writes. This is an elementary truth. . . . There is, in each of us, a great dark well of evil — a pit of egotism, pride, malice, greed, hatred, blackness and lust. We are disciplined . . . by fear of consequences.

'Total depravity does not mean that every man and woman, boy and girl is totally depraved. It does mean that every human being has a nature which, ultimately, is morally defective. We are flawed in this regard. . . .'

'Most of us live in "enlightened self-concern". We have the sense to see better long-term profit in staying out of court and out of jail.

'But all seek our own way. . . . And the power of this depravity, without notice, and without warning, can overwhelm any of us.'

MacLeod attacks 'an oligarchy of secular liberal humanism . . . in high positions in the media, in education, in medicine, in the mainstream Churches, in social welfare, in the legal establishment, and stockpiled in the mighty establishments of local and national government'.

Their error is to 'believe in

the perfectibility of human-kind', to 'despise absolute moral precepts', and and to 'delight in the "multi-cultural" and the "liberal" and the "caring"'

To this 'ruling class entrenched in power for nigh on three decades' MacLeod attributes our filthy cities, the growth of poverty, the alleged escalation of crime, and the abuse and murder of small children.

These two articles are tiny gems of non-comprehension. Like our prime minister, these writers turn their backs on the knowledge gained over decades by those who have studied crime and its social causes.

In so doing, they turn their backs on any glimmer of hope about improving the human condition. For what hope is there if all of us are irremediably wicked, with that internal 'great dark well of evil' poisoning each one of us?

These writers, like John Major, are telling us that poverty, bad housing, hunger, unemployment, and the hopeless prospect of being without a job for the whole of your life have nothing whatever to do with crime.

They are telling us that crime is caused by original sin, and that nothing can be done about it except to strengthen the police, give them greater powers, and get tough with young offenders.

It's a sure sign of the depth and gravity of the crisis that the ruling class and its mouthpieces turn their backs on reason in this way, calling openly for 'less understanding'.

Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad. And those who sense obscurely their own doom, and that of their system, respond by raising their hands before their eyes and stuffing their fingers into their ears.

'Marrow' or 'mara' — or both?

SEVERAL speakers of 'Geordie' have taken issue with me, in a good-natured way, over my spelling one of their most cherished words as 'marrow' ('John Patten's speech patterns', 13 February).

Dave Temple protested that he didn't say 'one of my marrows', as I quoted him, but 'one of me maras'. And John Leslie Duffin, who lives in Leicester and describes himself as 'an exile from Ashington, Northumberland', has written to me pointing out that 'a marrow is a vegetable' and kindly enclosing a 'Vocabulary of local dialect' reproduced from the 'Newcastle Weekly Chronicle'.

This confirms that 'mara' is indeed the accepted spelling in the North East. Now, when I wrote that piece I had no idea how to spell the word. I did think of putting 'marrers'; but nothing looks more patronising than trying to reproduce someone's pronunciation in non-phonetic script ('wot' and 'ses 'e' and 'youse', and even 'Let's Talk Strine', all seem to me unacceptable for that reason).

So I did what I always do when in doubt: I looked the word up in the 'Shorter Oxford English Dictionary', where it appears as 'marrow'. I'm told there's a ballad in the 'Oxford Book of Ballads' where it's also spelt in that way. When I've had a chance to consult the 'English Dialect Dictionary' — where I expect to find that several alternative spellings have been in use over the years — I'll report back.

Peter Fryer

ONE of the people who had gone to the conference of the Fourth International in Budapest was a shop steward in a big factory. Because of the direction the union leaders were now taking it was impossible for him to go to Budapest to represent the union. He just went as an individual.

Some of the shop stewards, who now supported the ANC's Freedom Charter, found out he had gone. On his return they started to ask why he had gone? Who had paid his fare? Who gave him a mandate to go?

The stewards started spreading the rumours amongst the workers. They told them that he had gone abroad without permission. That he had been paid by the South African government. That thousands of rand had been made available to him to disrupt the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and so on.

They reported all these things to a mass meeting without any proper consultation with the two comrades who went to Budapest. They wanted the workers to remove this man. In fact to say that he had been paid by the government was really to call the workers to kill him, because that was what was happening to spies at the time.

Permission

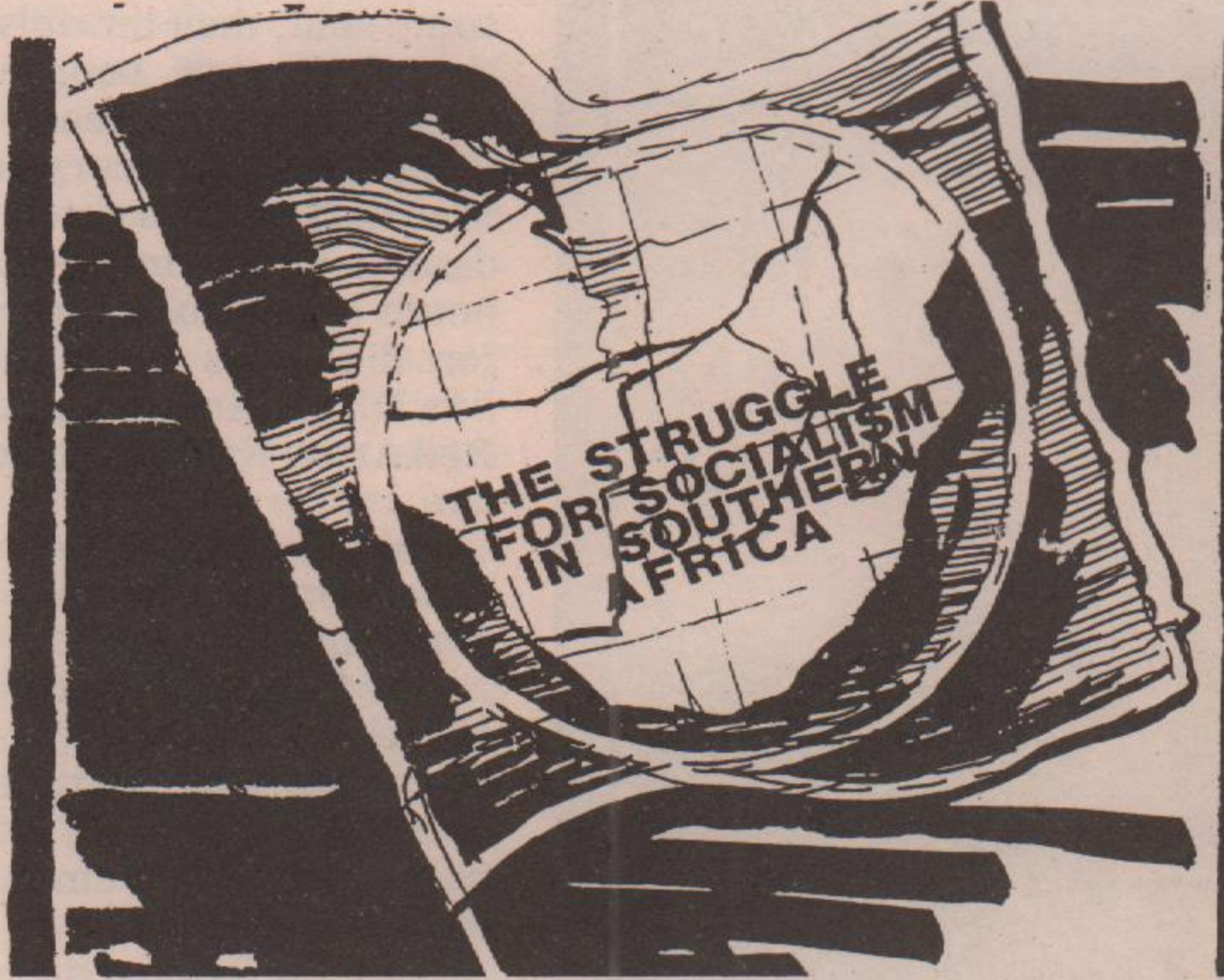
The workers knew that in the past anyone who went anywhere had to get permission from the union and had to report back. That was our democracy. What they didn't see so clearly was that the union leaders were themselves acting behind everyone's back.

So now our comrade got up in front of the workers and explained why he went. That he had to know about the struggle for socialism. That he had gone as an individual because the union no longer fought for socialism. That workers in Britain paid his fares.

Then the workers asked the other stewards 'What is wrong with this man going to learn about socialism? That is what

This week's article, the eighth part in the life-story of a South African socialist, looks at the smears used against two comrades fighting for an independent workers' party.

These comrades attended the 1990 conference in Budapest which launched the Workers International, of which the Workers Revolutionary Party is a part. They were fighting against the African National Congress's Freedom Charter and the notion of majority rule as the first stage to socialism



we have been calling for all this time. This is what we have been singing about for years.'

The shop stewards couldn't answer that. Then they started organising in our comrade's section in the factory. Trying to get the men to deselect their steward. They succeeded in making the men call a section meeting.

Again he explained why he went to Budapest. He explained about socialism, about all the things he had learnt at the conference. The workers supported him.

The same lies were being spread through the union outside the factory. A meeting of the local (branch) was called where all the shop stewards from different factories were present. The same accusations were put now to both people who

went abroad. They explained that they wanted to form an independent workers' party.

So then people said why do you want to form a party when we have COSATU and ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP)? They replied that they had no problem with COSATU. That is the union but it is not a political party. They are against the ANC because it is not the workers' party and they are against the SACP because it is totally subordinated to the ANC.

Turned

The people in the local turned on these shop stewards who had spread the rumours; they told them that they had been distorting things and that they must go back to the factory and

tell the truth to the workers. All this was taking place just when the ANC and the SACP had been made legal by the government. Many workers were worried that the alliance of the unions with these two organisations was never discussed by the workers.

In the unions the officials suddenly became recruiting officers for the ANC and the SACP, coming into the factories with recruitment forms. But in the big factories the workers were against that.

They asked 'Why must we join the ANC and the SACP? When we were fighting for our unions these organisations were nowhere.' They knew for a long time that the ANC was not a workers' movement and they couldn't distinguish the SACP from the ANC. All the leaders of the ANC were leaders of the SACP. People saw them as the same thing.

Launch

One day I met a man I used to work with. He told me that he had gone with four friends to the launch rally of the SACP. That was a 12-hour return journey for them. He wanted a workers' party. At the rally the SACP gave out recruitment forms. But now two months later he still hadn't filled his in.

All this gave us new contacts. The rumours spread many miles. People who knew me rang me up to check these stories. Then I could tell them the truth and invite them along to our discussions. Some of them came but most still followed the union leaders. But sometimes, even months after talking, people are coming to contact us now that they see we were right.

So, even though it was very difficult for us to organise with no money and with all the union officials against us, we began to get people to our discussion forums who wanted to find out about our ideas of an independent workers' party in South Africa.

Continued next week.

Watch out

Head of crime

THE duplicitous life of J. Edgar Hoover, the subject of BBC2's TIMEWATCH (24 February), brought to mind Brecht's famous remark about how robbing a bank was no crime compared with owning one.

For, although posing as an intrepid crime-fighter, a model of fidelity and complete integrity. Hoover — head of the FBI for almost 40 years — was to all intents and purposes a criminal.

Hoover was a virtuoso whose repertoire ranged from corruption, using the resources of the FBI for his own personal gain, to the blackmail of J.F. Kennedy and numerous other politicians.

Not least, of course, he was also, as the programme made clear, in the clutches of organised crime, which in America meant the Mafia.

Hoover was a devotee of illegal off-track betting. He was photographed many times making completely legal ten-dollar maximum bets at racecourses, but his real bookmakers were the Firm.

With them he gambled thousands. When he won, they paid out in full; when he lost, his debts were forgotten. That was how they came to control him.

The Mafia were also able to persuade him to turn a blind eye to their activities because they had proof of his sexual orientation. They were said to possess photographs of him in compromising situations.

During the decades he was in charge of the Bureau, Hoover always denied the existence of

the Mafia, describing reports to the contrary as 'boloney'. Under these conditions organised crime mushroomed.

The CIA naturally had a complete file on Hoover's corrupt activities. He, in turn, covered himself by tapping the phones of and carrying out surveillance operations on many top US politicians.

It was evidence that he collected on Kennedy's extramarital promiscuity which prevented the president from moving against Hoover.

A law unto himself, Hoover never hesitated in using the resources of the FBI for his own personal ends. He raged when a turd was found on his pristine lawn, demanding that the perpetrator must be found.

In violation of all FBI regulations, no stone was left unturned as agents were assigned to track down the defecator. Following an extensive investigation, a lab report confirmed the offending faeces belonged to a raccoon.

Hoover was a criminal from whatever angle you viewed him. The FBI was used to keep tabs on trade union militants. It was also the tool of senator Joe McCarthy's anti-communist Committee of UnAmerican Activities.

And Hoover was also a de-



SOUTH: In 'Broken Mirrors' African women challenge the concept of a male god on International Women's Day (Channel 4, 8 March)

viant according to the criteria of his own class. His private face was in violent contradiction to everything he claimed to uphold publicly. In short, the personification of bourgeois US hypocrisy.

Anton Mactonian

Selected films

THE MORTAL STORM (1940). Blistering anti-Nazi propaganda from Frank Borzage about destruction of German family in the 1930s. James Stewart, Frank Morgan and Margaret Sullavan (Saturday, 2.35pm, Channel 4). BIG PARADE (1986). Story of six of the 400

volunteers who must endure a year's training to take part in China's National Day Parade in Tiananmen Square. Directed by Chen Kaige (Saturday, 12.10am, BBC2). HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY (1941). John Ford's multi-Oscar version of Richard Llewellyn's popular novel (Sunday, 1.45pm, Channel 4).

In sight

Saturday 6 March MOVING PICTURES. Leading directors Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou discuss Chinese cinema four years after the Tiananmen Square events (9.15pm, BBC2).

Sunday 7 March THE SOUTH BANK SHOW: 'I Berlioz'. Tony Palmer's new film explores the dreams and fantasies of the composer who died a broken man, believing he was a complete failure (10.50pm, ITV).

Monday 8 March WORLD IN ACTION: 'The Poison on Your Plate'. Examines the increase in the number of food poisoning cases in Britain over the last four years (8.30pm, ITV). PANORAMA: 'Arming for Islam'. Khomeini's successors are said to be spending a fortune in seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction (9.30pm, BBC1). SOUTH: 'Broken Mirrors'. Documentaries from Ghana, California, and the Philippines celebrating International Women's Day (11pm, Channel 4).

Tuesday 9 March ASSIGNMENT: 'White Man's Burden'. Report on the increasing influence of US and World Bank on Africa's economy and politics (7.45pm, BBC2).

Thursday 11 March THE LATE SHOW. Special programme devoted to Frank Zappa, with contributions from members of 'The Mothers of Invention' (11.15pm, BBC2).

Friday 12 March ARENA: 'Zhang Yimou'. The acclaimed Chinese director, whose films include 'Red Sorghum' and 'Raise the Red Lantern', talks about his life and work (9.30pm, BBC2).

JJ

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

# Irish women fight prison regime

MAGHABERRY jail is divided into two sections — one for women and one for men.

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) tries to depict Maghaberry as a model jail with a liberal regime and a relaxed atmosphere. While this may be the case in the male section of the prison, it certainly is not on the women's side.

Discrimination against women may nowadays be increasingly looked upon as unacceptable, but the women say that the NIO has blatantly practised just that policy since Maghaberry was first opened in 1986.

Male prisoners' visits begin at least one hour before the women's and special arrangements are made for children who visit male prisoners: child minders are brought in to stop disruption, and for others creche facilities are available.

## Crammed

Women are crammed into a small, over-crowded visiting room. Creche facilities are not provided, so children are left to amuse themselves with scarcely any toys and are regularly hurt and injured while playing near chairs and tables with sharp corners. The visits' poor conditions and lack of privacy puts a strain on even the strongest of relationships.

The women's education building has been closed numerous times at a moment's notice while the men's functions normally.

Female education classes have been cancelled altogether, while the men can have evening classes several times

On 2 March 1993 it was exactly one year since prison warders sexually assaulted 21 Republican women prisoners in Maghaberry jail in the north of Ireland, beating and forcibly strip-searching them — a tactic used only against the women in the jail.

Those women and others are now to take the Northern Ireland Office to the High Court on 18 March, charging it with sex discrimination. In this article, ALICE CHRISTIE describes the reasons given by the women for their step of going to court. We print it on the eve of 8 March, International Women's Day.



Adolphe Strakhov's 1920 revolutionary poster celebrating 8 March

a week unhindered, in addition to other educational facilities.

Republican women are held on three wings in Maghaberry and are cooped up on the wings for long periods. They are deprived of inter-wing association unlike the male wing — where 82 men can come together in one block

for recreation. Women are denied contact with others, and the mental stimulation necessary for long-term imprisonment.

Exercise periods for women consist of a statutory one hour in the morning, with the possibility of one hour and 15 minutes in the afternoon — but the yard is regularly closed in the afternoon. The men are guaranteed a total of six hours' exercise a day and their yards are open every evening.

A tennis court was built in the women's section of the jail last year but has never been opened. Male prisoners have use of playing fields, video games and pool and snooker tables — all of which are denied to the women. Male prisoners have also been entertained by pop stars, theatre companies and disc jockeys.

Censorship of literature coming into the prison has been an ongoing problem.

Political and feminist material, books of poetry, magazines and daily newspapers have all been forwarded to

the NIO and classed as a 'security risk'. Photographs of family and friends are regularly sent to 'security', where they are scrutinised before being classified as a 'possible risk' and sent away.

THE WOMEN believe they are being discriminated against for two reasons — because they are women, and because of their politics.

The men who are sent to Maghaberry are those who are defined by the prison authorities as 'conforming' — they have asked to stay in a prison which does not segregate Republicans from Loyalists and common criminals.

## Penalised

Women at Maghaberry retain their identity and discipline as Republicans.

For protesting about conditions and drawing attention to the double standards operated by the NIO, women have been heavily penalised individually by loss of remission, periods in solitary confinement and having visits cancelled.

They have also been penalised collectively by the continuing denial of inter-wing association and exercise facilities, and by the imposition of abysmal visiting conditions.

The women feel they must continue to raise these issues because no one should have to change their political ideology in order to live in a humane environment. And because no woman should be expected to accept anything less than is offered to a man — whether inside or outside a jail.

Bronwen Handyside reports

# Two nations



## Sir Blunkett and the Tories' dragon

TORY Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley has found an ingenious solution for the major financial problems facing trust status hospitals, which are more and more finding that they cannot treat patients towards the end of the year because they have run out of money.

In response to surveys from the prestigious royal medical colleges and the British Medical Association showing that many people are being denied care because of lack of funds, clever Mrs Bottomley has decreed that patients who need urgent treatment must receive it, and hospitals must 'phase' their care to avoid the end-of-year freeze on treatments.

Mrs Bottomley has written to Paddy Ross, chairman of the consultants' committee, saying:

'Whatever the particular local circumstances, there can be no question of patients requiring urgent investigation or treatment having it delayed because they come forward towards the end of the year.'

In her best and brightest Tory 'let-them-eat-cake' mode, Mrs Bottomley forgot to explain how hospitals could do this without eating into their budgets for the following year.

There can be little doubt that the Tories have collectively lost their feeble grips on the reality they themselves have helped bring about — but what about the Labourites?

Lo! In the distance comes charging that brave and noble knight, Labour's shadow health minister David Blunkett, brandishing his lance and shouting:

'For her to suggest that hospitals must end their restrictions on patient activity without acting to suspend the NHS internal market, or make additional money available is quite simply dishonest!'

Can this be the very same valiant Sir Blunkett who a mere few weeks ago said that if Labour took office it would retain trust status for hospitals?

Let me leave you with just one piece of advice, my old buddies. Have your heart attacks before Christmas.

And if you are over 65, try not to have any at all — for two-thirds of coronary units will not now admit you when you hit retirement age. (Just when you thought you would have plenty of time to fit in a occlusion or two.)

## Those mean b\*\*\*\*\*ds again

IN ANOTHER triumph for what passes for the human spirit among Tories, a bill which aimed to outlaw discrimination against disabled people was blocked by the government.

Using a technicality, all a Tory whip had to do was yell the single word 'Object' to deny the bill its second reading in the House of Commons.

Nicholas Scott, Minister of State for Social Security, said in a debate that it would not be 'the right way forward' for the bill to

proceed further. Using his gift as an orator, Mr Scott said discrimination against disabled people was 'silly', but that had to oppose the bill because it would cost the government a business huge amounts of money.

## Lie back and enjoy it, advises the Pope

FROM that sympathetic and forward-looking thinker, the Pope of Rome, comes the advice to Bosnian women impregnated by systematic mass rape not to have abortions, but to give birth to the children.

The 'Guardian' reports that the Pope told the raped women 'Do not abort. Your children are not responsible for the ignominy violence you have undergone.'

They were advised to 'accept the enemy' into them, and make him the 'flesh of their own flesh'.

Even the Muslim clerics of Catholic Croatia, where the women are trying to rebuild their shattered lives, made more progressive statements in response to the Pope's advice.

The Pope however remains firm in his convictions.

'These images of God must be respected and loved,' he said.

The Pope urged the predominantly Catholic community where the women are trying to resettle to 'gather round the sad, offended women and help them transform the act of violence into an act of love'.

An Italian newspaper quickly boarded the Pope bandwagon. The Milanese newspaper 'Corriere della Sera' published a front-page editorial headlined 'And I Say He's Right' — they did not specify whether they were referring to the Pope or God.

This is the same paper that had multiple orgasms over a young Italian mother who chose to die rather than abort her baby. Having refused any treatment for cancer because it would harm the foetus she was carrying, she died in horrible pain a few months ago. Her baby, born prematurely, lived for ten days.

The edition of 'Corriere della Sera' which followed the Pope's pronouncement again discussed the nature of womanhood whose 'wondrous passivity was made to pardon, accept, nourish, procure, nurture and protect — lovingly sacrificing herself'.

The young mother and her baby are both no doubt safe in the arms of Jesus. The raped Bosnian women are living as traumatised refugees in a strange land. In Poland, the Pope's native country where the Catholic nationalists are in power and abortion has been banned, thousands of women are dying as a result of backstreet abortions.

Meanwhile the Pope and his editor of 'Corriere' — both, coincidentally, men who run a very low risk of being raped or getting pregnant — are knocking back the vodka and Chianti respectively, feeding their faces and basking in the respect and admiration that their offices require.

If you have any material for this column, please send it to me Workers Press, PO Box 735 London SW8 1YB.

# LAS: cheapest system costs lives

BY HELENA FOX

THE collapse of the London Ambulance Service computer system, which it is alleged caused the death of 26 people on 26-27 October 1992, has only caused two casualties in the higher echelons of the service's management structure so far.

Chief executive John Wilby resigned in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, and chairman Jim Harris resigned as a report on the breakdown was published.

The report points to massive incompetence and mismanagement at the top, a total disregard of the workforce, and an

ering its quality or reliability.

The only people who come out of this tragedy with honour are the ambulance workers themselves.

In 1989-90 they were involved in an industrial dispute massively supported by the patients and whole communities protesting at the deteriorating services. That action focused attention and raised the alarm about the cuts and their cost in the lives of those needing emergency treatment.

Nevertheless from 3,000 workers on the operational side of the service at that time, the number has fallen to 2,100 today.

This places even more stress

## costs lives



The ambulance workers' strike three years ago signalled the alarm at the impact of the cutbacks and de-staffing

workers at the control centre.

Ambulance workers had complained that the system was being put into operation without being properly tested and without the sufficient and adequate training of either the crews or the control staff.

When the breakdown occurred an ambulance crew from west London was sent to an accident in south-west London only to find that another crew had

been sent from another area. They then found themselves to be outside of the computer's range.

'I did not know where we were! We lost confidence', an ambulance driver said on Radio 4's 'Today' programme.

These experiences underline the necessity for these services to be under the control of those who work in them and those who use them.

**'Ambulance workers had complained that the system was being put into operation without being properly tested and without the sufficient and adequate training of either the crews or the control staff'**

unholy rush to get the computer system operational.

These men were carrying out a government directive. The South-West Regional Health Authority, which controls the ambulance service throughout the capital, is obliged to buy the lowest tender, unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

According to the report, the authority had accepted the cheapest tender without consid-

on ambulance crews engaged in a life-saving job — crews who need to know that their back-up system is reliable.

Before computerisation there was a team of trusted and experienced switchboard operators working directly with the ambulance workers.

The computer took the human element out of the connection between the ambulance workers and the

## Moroccan trade unionist jailed

NOUBIR AMAOUI is one of Morocco's leading trade unionists. He is Secretary General of the Democratic Labour Confederation (DDT) and has been an outspoken critic of the government and the monarchy in Morocco.

Speaking on the BBC programme 'Prisoners of Conscience', Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, explained that the crime for which Noubir is now serving a two year sentence concerns 'defamation' and is connected to an interview he gave to a Spanish newspaper in March 1992.

In the article Noubir said that most Moroccans live in



Noubir Amaoui

appalling misery, that corruption flourishes and that the government does nothing to stop this.

He said that the government must be taken apart and destroyed.

This was quoted widely and Noubir was arrested when he arrived for work one morning at his union's headquarters.

His trial was condemned by international observers as grossly unfair.

Noubir has been put in a cell on his own and access to his lawyer and trade union officials is severely curtailed.

**Greetings to:** Noubir Amaoui, Sale Prison, Sale, Morocco.

**Appeals to:** His Majesty King Hassan II, Palais Royale, Al-Mamouniya, Rabat, Morocco.

Please keep greetings short and do not discuss politics — remember the prison authorities will read them.

Even if Noubir Amaoui does not receive these greetings, international mail is noted by the authorities.

Appeals should be brief, factual and polite.

Give Noubir Amaoui's full name, place of detention and the fact that he is a trade unionist. Again avoid politics and an aggressive tone.

Write in English unless you can get them properly translated.

# WHO SUPPLIES THE GUNS?

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

## ARE Serb snipers killing Bosnian civilians with British-manufactured weapons?

The weapons are designed by the German company Heckler and Koch but may have been made under licence by Enfield Production in Britain.

And Russian T-55 tanks and anti-aircraft missiles are being supplied to Serb forces under a deal signed in January with Russian army and KGB generals, amid rising fears in Belgrade of US intervention including bombing.

Germany has armed Croatian forces, partly with weapons from the old east German forces. Western arms supplies have been shipped to Croatia through the Chilean Cardoen company, which previously provided a conduit for arming Iraq.

Some have gone directly to the Croat fascist militia with which German and British neo-Nazis have been gaining experience.

## Trips

Right-wing Russian nationalists have been raising forces for the Serb Chetniks, and joining weekend trips to loose off a few rounds on civilians in Sarajevo.

Russian TV reports hundreds of Cossacks fighting in Bosnia.

According to last week's 'Observer' (28 February), Western governments 'are anxious not to point the finger at the

Russians now, since they are counting on Moscow to pressure the Serbs into accepting the Vance-Owen peace deal.'

With the Royal Navy officially policing the UN arms embargo, the media is sparing the government the embarrassment of reporting NATO, let alone British, weapons reaching the former Yugoslavia, and are in Serb hands.

## Proudly

But German-based reporter Tim van Beveren, who visited the Croatian war front in 1991, says a Serb irregular proudly showed him a nearly brand-new Heckler and Koch MP-5 sub-machine gun.

'Very good,' the Serb said. 'Better than a Kalashnikov. Good quality. Made in Germany.'

Van Beveren reports: 'Later I also found numerous H&K G-3 SSG sniper rifles in the hands of Serbian irregulars in Bosnia' ('Balkan War Report', January 1993).

'We have never delivered them and we have no idea how they got there,' a spokesperson at Heckler and Koch's company headquarters in Oberndorf, Germany, said in 1991, when asked about weapon shipments to former Yugoslavia.

Then last year, the tune changed.

Andrea Franke of H&K said the weapons must have come



Running from the gunfire in Sarajevo: the guns and bullets are getting through the blockade

from Enfield Production in Britain.

'Heckler and Koch Oberndorf has never delivered weapons to Yugoslavia. Therefore those MP-5 and G-3 types could only be licence-produced weapons....'

'Unfortunately, Heckler and Koch Oberndorf does not know how many weapons have been delivered from Enfield, but be-

cause of a shortage of barrels during the production in Enfield, Heckler and Koch Oberndorf has delivered some barrels from their production to fill the gap.'

This might explain German markings on the barrels, Van Beveren says, but not the 'Made in Germany' tags on some of the weapons. If the German company was just passing the buck,

however, the British government and arms manufacturers seem to have preferred keeping quiet to issuing denials.

Behind the pious UN speeches, Western imperialists and their Russian partner in crime are carving up Yugoslavia and its peoples in the most barbaric way, and finding a market for their last big profit-making industry, death.

## International Women's Day — 8 March Support the women of 'Woman's Own'

ON International Women's Day (8 March) there is to be a demonstration outside the producers of 'Woman's Own' and other women's magazines to protest against threats to maternity rights, health and safety and other negotiated conditions.

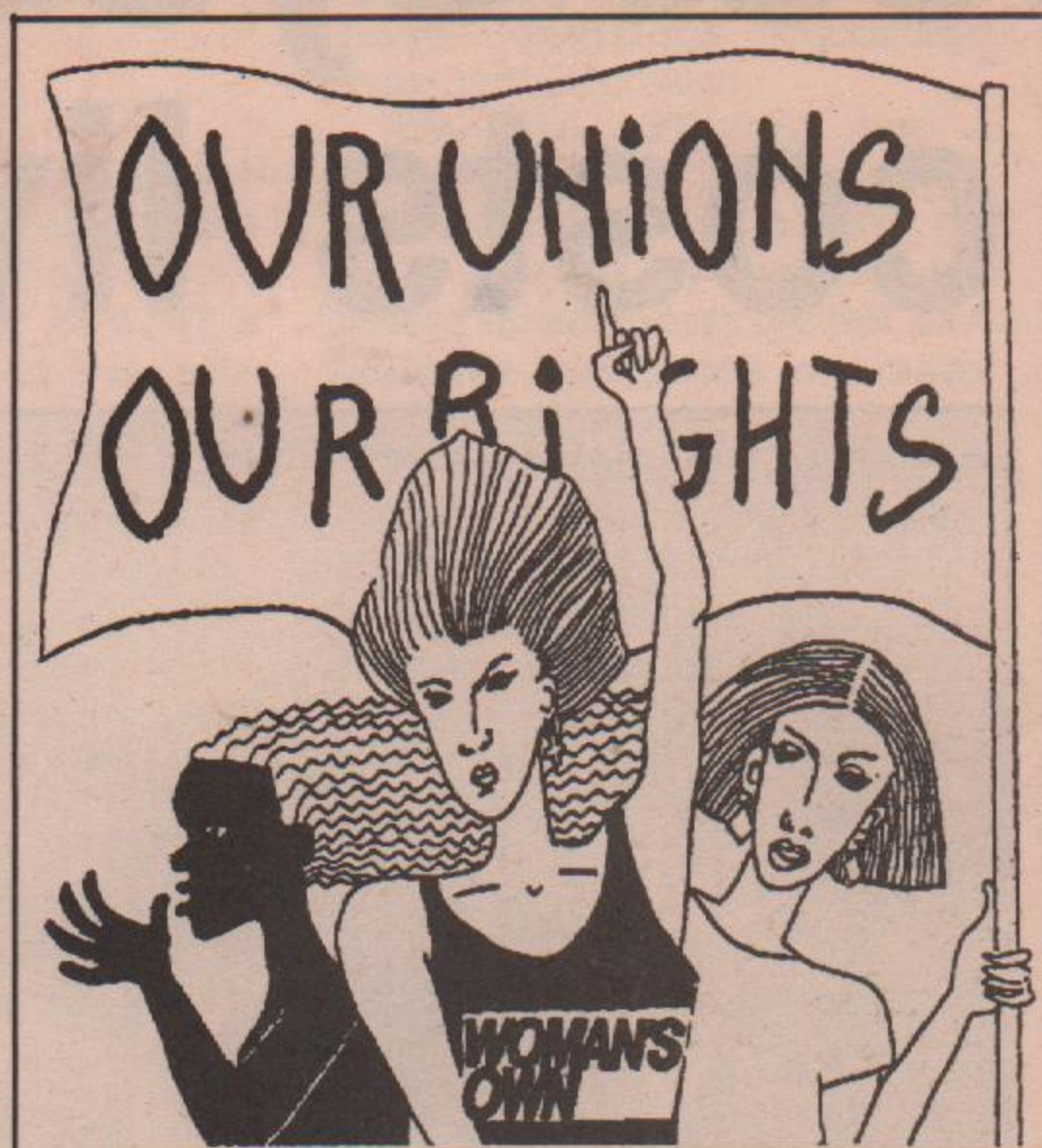
IPC magazines, which publishes these magazines and is part of the Anglo-Dutch giant Reed-Elsevier, is planning to take away union rights from their 10,000 staff in Britain — mostly women!

Reed-Elsevier, like many other European companies, is taking advantage of the denial of union rights in Britain.

The IPC workforce face reduced staffing and redundancies with less compensation. Speed-ups, overwork and the increase of stress are all components that contribute to the 'Repetitive Strain Injury' suffered by many keyboard operators and can mean being disabled for life.

The demonstration is at 12noon, 8 March, outside IPC, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1. Tube: Waterloo.

International Women's Day feature: 'Irish women fight prison regime', page 7.



## Bureaucracy of steel

TOM KEMP comments on an item in last week's 'City Lights' column on 'East Europe's steel'

THE difficulties facing the iron and steel industries in the former 'peoples' democracies' are the direct result of the Stalinist policies imposed upon them after 1945.

Each of them was to have its own heavy industry which was given priority in an imitation of 'socialism in one country'.

The section of the bureaucracy which headed the steel, heavy engineering and armaments industry was the most powerful.

The fact was, however, that resources were channelled into these industries which could have been more effectively used elsewhere.

Proper planning would have ensured that the requirements of the Comecon coun-

tries were met from those countries most suited for iron and steel production.

By the 1970s moreover, as intensive industrialisation proceeded, relatively more resources should have been directed into consumer goods industries with a scaling down of the iron and steel industries.

Meanwhile their antiquated technology had disastrous effects on the environment.

The case of Romania is particularly bizarre. Although the country is not well endowed with coal and iron ore, after Nicolae Ceausescu fell out with the Kremlin bureaucracy he was determined that his country should have its own iron and steel industry, resulting in the building of capacity greatly in excess of Romania's needs.

In dealing with the economic problems of the east European countries the responsibility of Stalinism should not be overlooked.

## Full speed ahead for China's privatisation

ON the back of a working class with no political or trade union rights, the Chinese Communist Party government is steaming on with 'reforms' of the economy in the direction of capitalism.

Later this year, the Chinese Communist Party plans to further relax price controls on grain, edible oil, coal, crude oil, electricity, steel and rail freight. These are among the few commodities which still have price controls. During the 1980s the Chinese government steadily relaxed most other price controls.

Economists fear that scrapping these controls will fuel in-

flation which is already at 14 per cent for last year in the major cities, with the working class footing the bill for price reform.

Other changes in the direction of capitalism include a growth of 79 per cent in total registered capital of private companies, last year. The value of private output climbed 67 per cent. There are now 139,000 registered private enterprises in the country.

On top of this are the unregistered millions of people who scrape together a living by hawking cigarettes and trinkets, washing cars at street corners and selling tea from curbside stalls.

## Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International Public discussion meeting

Rebuilding the Fourth International — rebuilding the working-class movement

Thursday 25 March, 7.30pm  
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.  
(Holborn tube)

Speakers include:  
Cliff Slaughter (Workers International Executive)  
and Peter Gibson (WRP central committee)

Followed by discussion

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