



All out in  
Liverpool —  
2 December

# CAR WORKERS READY TO STRIKE

**VAUXHALL car workers' four to one vote in favour of strike action has brought the prospect of industrial action closer.**

This strong pro-strike vote follows the walk out at Ford's Dagenham and Southampton plants following the company's refusal to cut the working week or increase its 4.75 per cent pay offer.

Car workers are particularly angry because management are refusing to match big productivity increases with either higher wages or reduced hours.

Manual workers at Vauxhall's factories in Luton and Ellesmere Port voted by 5,201 to 1,425 to strike in protest at the company's offer of a 3.5 per cent pay increase and one in line with inflation next year. In the run-up to Christmas this was a remarkable vote.

The Ellesmere Port vote in particular now makes possible a united action by Mersey dockers and car workers.

**A united march of dockers and car workers in Liverpool on 2 December could be the launch-pad for a powerful industrial movement against the employers and the Tory government.**

A vital part of the union claim is the demand for a reduction in working hours from 39 to 37.

In a high turnout, the vote in favour of action short of a strike produced an even bigger majority of 5,971 to 684.

The two unions involved — the Transport and General Workers Union and the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union — were expected to give Vauxhall seven days' notice of industrial action, including a full overtime ban and a two-hour weekly stoppage that would reduce the working week unilaterally.

But this action seems unlikely to shift the car bosses who are determined to resist the car workers' claims.

Vauxhall's personnel director,

## BY THE EDITOR

Bruce Warman, said 'We could be heading for a dispute. There is a gulf between us.' Warman insisted that there could be no backing down on the demand for a shorter working week.

'If it's over something as important as that we'll have to take the dispute,' he said. 'We are not prepared to reduce the working week because that would make us uncompetitive.'

Another official told the union that the company's offer was the best available in 'stagnant market conditions'.

Bill Morris, the TGWU leader, warned Vauxhall that unless it delivered a 'substantial improvement on the existing offer then industrial action is inevitable.'

■ The walkout by Ford workers expressed growing anger as they see their wages and working conditions falling steadily behind their fellow car workers in Britain and the rest of Europe.

Basic rates at Vauxhall are £20 more than at Fords, and £30 more than at Jaguar, a Ford subsidiary, where the working week is two hours less than in the Ford plants.

Fords in Germany work 2 hours less a week, have much higher wages and about 2 weeks more holiday per year.

Ford convenors were due to meet to decide what steps to take in pursuit of the claim, with some calling for company-wide action.

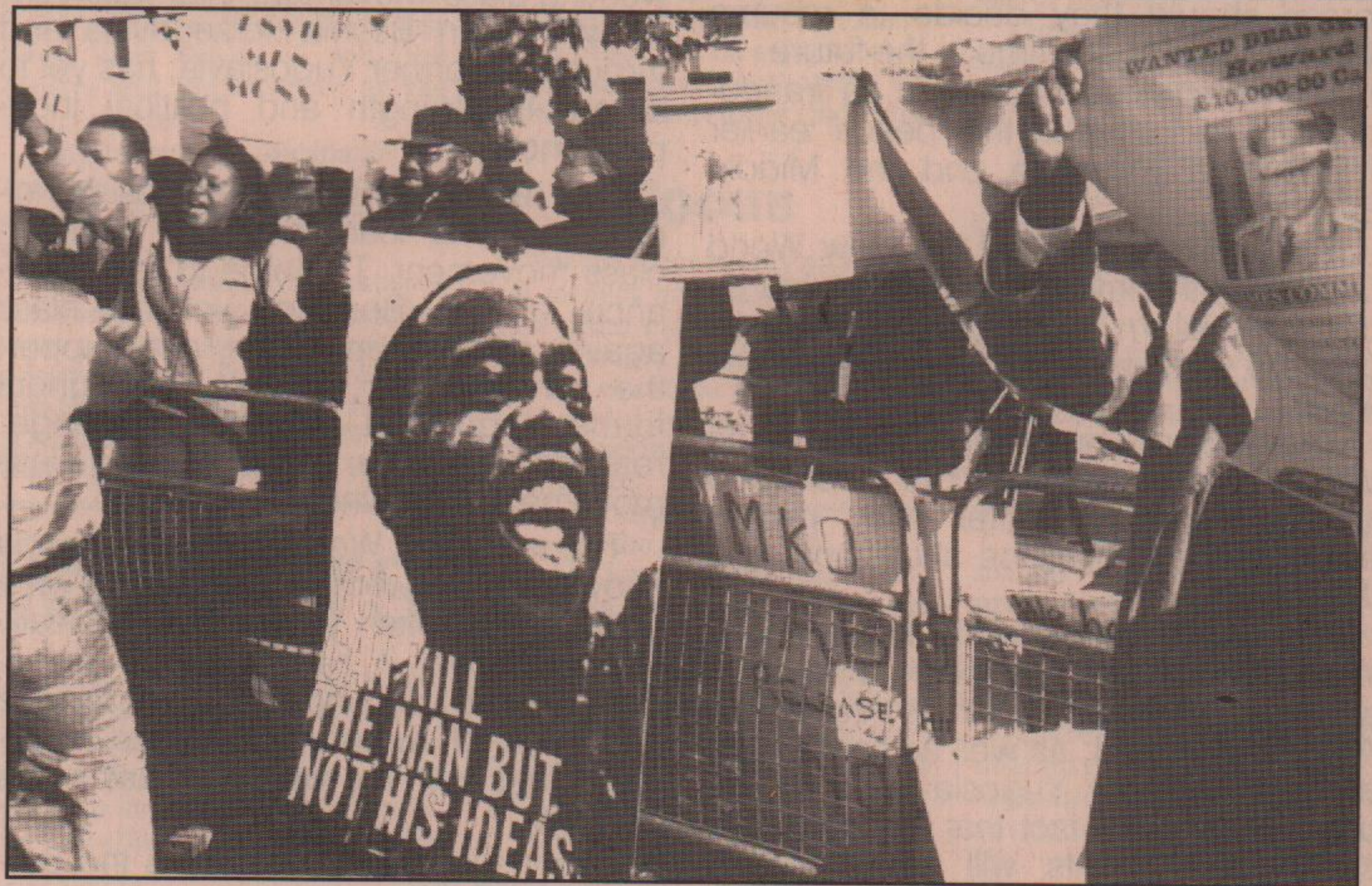
Fords usually have three bar-

## Angry protest at Nigerian embassy

ANGRY Nigerians and their supporters were prevented from approaching their country's embassy in London when they demonstrated on 17 November over the execution of human rights campaigner Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight comrades.

Police herded the protesters behind barriers on the opposite side of the street. Tempers flared when they found themselves confronted with a pro-Abacha demonstration on the opposite corner. Inquiries revealed this to be a rent-a-crowd paid to hold smart posters opposing any embargo on Nigeria.

The Ken Saro-Wiwa protest started at a picket in Whitehall, opposite 10 Downing Street, where about 150 people assembled demanding an end to the British government's supply of



arms to the Abacha dictatorship, an embargo on Nigerian oil and a campaign to expose Shell's role in destroying rich farmlands and the rain forests in the Niger delta.

Among the banners was one from Lambeth UNISON

protesting at the deportation of their member, Nigerian-born Abdul Onibiyo, on 26 October. His daughter, who was with the UNISON delegation, said that the family have no idea as to his whereabouts or safety.

Led by young men carrying

two 'blood-spattered' coffins with wreaths on top, the picket turned into a singing, shouting march up Whitehall.

Office workers at lunch and sight-seeing tourists stopped in their tracks, looking on sympathetically — some joined in.

## Build solidarity with Liverpool dockers

THE whole of the workers' movement should build solidarity with the 500 sacked Liverpool dockers, and turn out in great force on the march and rally in Liverpool on 2 December. This will be the fifth community march and rally that the docks shop stewards' committee has organised.

From the outset the dockers have resisted all attempts to limit the action to the picket line, or even to mass pickets. They have:

■ Insisted that privatisation, meaning big hand-outs to shareholders, but unemployment and casualisation for workers, is the 'new world order' — the dockers' fight is a fight for every worker;

■ Produced thousands of copies of the 'Dockers Charter' which is campaigning for the 500 dockers to get their jobs back and for a public inquiry to open the books of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company;

■ Insisted that the main place for the pickets is out on the streets, in the workplaces, shopping centres and housing estates, selling 'Dockers Charter', explaining the issues and building the resources for the fight;

■ Not restricted this struggle to Britain — the fight is being taken out internationally — to Europe, Australia and Canada.

The reason is simple — work-

ers' internationalism must be built — the future of our children and grandchildren is at stake.

Already the East Coast sector of the International Longshoremen of the US has responded, and the 36,000 tonne 'Atlantic Conveyor' was turned away from the port of Liverpool.

Dockers are on their way to Australia, where dockers and miners are fighting against the proposed imposition of individual contracts, to Canada and Dublin, and one has just returned from Spain.

Now is the time to hit back, and the dockers are leading the way.

## SUPPORT THE LIVERPOOL DOCKERS 2 DECEMBER DEMONSTRATION:

10.30am Assemble at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Hope Street, Liverpool

11.00am March

12.00noon Rally at St. George's Hall

'Dockers Charter', 50p (20p for unwaged) from Jimmy Davies, Secretary and Treasurer, 19 Scorton St., Liverpool L6 4AS. CASH WITH ORDER. P&P must be included: 1 copy 20p; 5 copies 50p; 10 copies £1. Orders above this can be arranged. Telephone 0151-207 3388 or 0191-222 0299.

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Admission: £1.50 (£1.00 concs.)

The next lecture in our series will be given by István Mészáros, one of the outstanding Marxist intellectuals in the world. He is author of 'Marx's Theory of Alienation' — for which he was awarded the Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize — and 'The Power of Ideology'.

Mészáros will speak about his new book, 'Beyond Capital'. This is a book that represents the author's life work; it takes issue with the apologists who claim that capitalism is a permanent system. In discussing the present state of capitalism, the author provides a powerful exposure of a system that, he contends, can only renew itself at the cost of increasing its problems and can only delay, but not avoid, its eventual collapse.

## Workers Press Meeting — change of date

WE have decided to postpone the 10th anniversary meeting of Workers Press that was scheduled for 9 December. We do so because of a march and rally in London to be held on that day organised by the People's Embargo for Democracy in Nigeria. For details of the demonstration contact 0171-924 9033 or 0956 132143. Details of the re-arranged Workers Press Meeting will be published next week.

# No peace in Bosnia

AFTER talks which over-ran their deadline and nearly broke down, the presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia signed a US-brokered 'peace' agreement in Dayton, Ohio last week.

The real purpose is to impose the diktat of US imperialism over the Balkans — whatever the reservations, policies and particular interests of the other imperialist powers who are also trying to establish their positions in the area.

This is no peace. The division of Bosnia is being enforced, and the 'ethnic cleansers' rewarded, and that is why the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina has no moral obligation to honour any 'agreement' it may be forced to sign under imperialism's duress.

Indeed it remains the responsibility of the working-class movement internationally to support the Bosnian people, and side with their government and armed forces should they decide to resume their struggle at any time in the future.

The US-imposed peace is as fraudulent and as fragile as the 'peace' earlier imposed in Palestine and the Middle East.

This is the 'peace' of the New World Order that the imperialist powers, led by US imperialism, are seeking to force onto the workers and poor people of the world.

There is no order and there is no peace. The assassination of Rabin and its consequences after the 'peace' established in Palestine show how true this is.

The imperialists seek to impose their World Order with the help of regional and national leaders such as Arafat, and Adams in Ireland, as well as some leaders in the former Yugoslavia. They are used despite the fact that the course of subsequent events will soon destroy them.

There can and will be no peace in the

# Workers Press

Balkans so long as imperialism dominates, and nationalist warlords like Karadzic and Mladic, Milosevic or Tudjman are allowed to carve out states based on 'ethnic' privilege and 'purity'. For the underlying causes of the conflict remain exactly as they were.

'If you look at the results from Bosnia to Haiti, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, it proves once again that American leadership is indispensable,' says President Clinton. But the US ruling class is as divided and uncertain over Bosnia as its NATO allies. Clinton wants a peace agreement to wave before presidential elections, but the House of Representatives has voted to block deployment of US troops. We could see Russian troops doing imperialism's police work in the Balkans.

What sustains the facade of imperialist strength, enabling the US to determine events for the time being, is that the working-class movement internationally, as well as in Bosnia-Herzegovina and throughout former Yugoslavia, has yet to assert its strength and political independence.

The responsibility for this lies principally with the leaders of the working-class movement. To come to the assistance of the Bosnian working class against national oppression, and support the struggle of workers throughout former Yugoslavia, means to challenge reactionary forces in the working-class movement everywhere.

The record of Workers Aid for Bosnia shows this can be done. Starting with small forces, often young and politically inexperienced, it has begun a movement in the working class, in Europe and beyond, which has started to re-forge links with the working class in the Balkans.

This is just a beginning. It is the continuation of this struggle, to re-establish working-class internationalism, that is the

decisive question in exposing and defeating the machinations of imperialism, so clearly seen in Ohio.

## Liverpool dockers: a scabby attack

THE capitalist press has largely blacked out news of the strike of the Liverpool dockers. If other workers know about the intense struggle being waged on Merseyside for the right to work under trade union conditions it is largely thanks to the efforts of the dockers themselves.

'New Times', the weekly of the Democratic Left, formerly the Communist Party of Great Britain, has been less coy. Its 11 November issue opened up a vicious attack on the dockers ('Chasing an imaginary tradition').

■ It condemns the leaders of the strike for having refused to cross a picket line mounted by fellow dockers!

'New Times' says: '... the dockers' stewards should have led their members through the picket lines placed by the Torside dockers, however difficult this would have been. It would have meant father being picketed by sons.'

And further: 'Many of the traditional shibboleths of trade unionism are an invented tradition of the 1980s.'

This is a slur on every worker who for over 200 years and more has fought for the right to picket. This right is not an outdated phrase invented in the 1980s. It is one of the most important weapons and principles in the struggle against the employer. Many have laid down their lives in defence of the right to picket.

The Liverpool dockers stand in this honourable tradition. They know that they are fighting not just for themselves but for generations of workers to come.

■ 'New Times' tells the dockers that the struggle cannot be won:

'But despite widespread local support, few local people believe the dockers will "win", that the stewards will get back on the docks and things be as they were. The least worst outcome is reinstatement of a majority of the dockers, decent severance terms for the rest and the principle of union recognition of the docks retained. Few would put money on even that happening.'

This is not the voice of the working class. It comes from those reactionary sections of the middle class, including the trade union and Labour Party leaderships, who more than anything hate today's growing mood among workers for a settling of accounts with the employers and the government.

■ 'New Times' denounces the resort to industrial action:

This is an 'appeal to a version of the movement's history, a romantic past betrayed by the brutal realities of the present.'

Naturally 'New Times' does not say how this 'brutal reality' came into being. The working class faces a battery of anti-union laws because for more than a decade the trade union leaders, with the exception of Arthur Scargill, have refused to mobilise the strength of the movement in political and industrial action against these laws.

Like the official leadership of the movement, 'New Times' accepts completely the anti-union laws: they are a 'fact of life' and must be obeyed without question.

When such people talk about the need for 'political action' they mean that the working class must accept whatever the employers dish out and 'wait for a Labour government'.

Fortunately the dockers in Liverpool as well as thousands of other workers on Merseyside and beyond have rejected this reactionary advice.

# Letters

WE WELCOME LETTERS  
SEND THEM TO: WORKERS PRESS,  
PO BOX 735, LONDON SW8 1YB  
— OR FAX 0171-387 0569

## New socialist party

HAS the WRP jumped the gun in calling the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference for a new socialist party on 24 February 1996?

Here in Brighton we have held five 'Trade Unionists for a Socialist Party' meetings with bus workers, engineers, building workers, printworkers, students and Labour Party members in attendance.

All are disillusioned with the Labour and trade union leaderships, but are not yet ready to commit themselves to an alternative.

I feel that more discussions on the nature of a new party and its relationship to the working class in the new conditions following the collapse of Stalinism is needed over an extended period of time if we are to achieve our aim of a new party.

I am concerned that the conference on 24 February will be seen by some attending our meetings as putting the cart before the horse and they may drop out of future discussions.

B.R. Avey  
TGWU Brighton

University in Aberdeen'. Owing to a misunderstanding I had not realised the piece was going to be published so soon. Some clarification is needed.

The story was, in the main, a draft statement by the WRP leadership the previous weekend. Along with other WRP members I have been appointed by the Party to take an initiative in creating and storing records relevant to the career of Gerry Healy, and his expulsion from the Trotskyist movement.

John Spencer, who belongs to no political party, had been previously consulted before the draft was agreed and has now confirmed his willingness to cooperate with the project.

As I teach history in the University of Aberdeen, I am in a position to ensure the safe-keeping of such material as we can gather.

I am also involved in a project to expand the Labour History archives already held in the University Library, and am in discussion with librarians concerning the inclusion of materials relating to the Trotskyist movement.

Anything sent to me, however, will be regarded as temporarily held in Aberdeen, and would certainly remain available for transfer to a more central location once a suitable one can be found.

Although, as the article made clear, this particular project began with interest in Healy, it would be absurd not to try to encourage the submission of other material relevant to the history of Trotskyism, which might otherwise be lost.

However we are well aware that there already are important Trotskyist archives in existence. It is hoped to be able to cooperate

with those archives, perhaps even exchanging copies of particularly interesting sources. There is certainly no intention to try to establish a rival institutional base for such material.

Reports of 'a Trotskyist archive' in Aberdeen, therefore, as well as being ambiguous, are perhaps a little over-enthusiastic.

That said, I hope, there will be a good response to the appeal, and that those who may be reluctant to regard themselves as participants in history, with recollections and documentary records of importance to future generations of scholars and militants, will overcome their modesty and help us to create a collection of raw materials necessary to tell the story of our movement.

Terry Brotherstone  
Aberdeen

## Greetings for Bosnia

I HAVE just taken delivery of a greetings card from Zeljka Mudrovic which costs 80p. It is not a Christmas card.

It is suitable for all occasions: Christmas; Easter; New Year; Passover; Ramadan; Yom Kippur; Diwali; birthdays; bar mitzvahs; the triumph of world socialism; Bosnian victories; mass suicides of John Major, his cabinet, Sir Alfred Sherman, the Serbian Information Centre, the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, the editorial soviets of Living Marxism, the Morning Star, etc., etc.,...

Tom Carter  
Somerton, Somerset

The card is available (in glorious

technicolor which unfortunately wouldn't reproduce well in black and white) from Zeljka, c/o The Flying Post, PO Box 185, Exeter EX4 4EW. Tel: 01392 79356.

## Corrections

THE Workers Press's research department has pointed out a couple of inaccuracies on the map of the Balkan region in the article 'Macedonia and the Balkans' (11 November).

Firstly, the Istrian peninsula is given over to Slovenia, whereas in reality it only has the northern part with a short frontage on the gulf of Trieste — the 'Slovene littoral' in diplomatic jargon.

Secondly, a large stretch of the Adriatic coast is shown as belonging to Bosnia-Herzegovina including Dubrovnik where it has only a small outlet near, but not including, Ploce. This dates from the 1699 arrangement to put a bit of Turkish territory between the lands of Venice and Ragusa.

An event missing from the article that should be studied is the 'ethnic cleansing' of Greek-inhabited areas of western Asia Minor which resulted from Turkey's (Soviet-backed) war of independence in 1922.

The Greeks expelled from their ancestral homes in that region were resettled in Greece, largely in Aegean Macedonia. This changed the ethnic composition of that region to a significant extent.

The political consequences of this figured in the dispute between Greek Communist Party leader Pouliopolis and Moscow which resulted in his defection to the Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky.



Seizim / Photo by Sabun Memagic Zima / Winter

## 96 JANUAR-SIJEČANJ-JANUARY

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Sponsored by WAR ON WANT. This calendar is published by the PA BAH © Printed by TELPS. Newmarket-Queen's-All proceedings will go to establish the activities of the PA BAH.

THE Photographic Association of Bosnia-Herzegovina its trying to resume activities despite the great difficulties imposed by the present war.

But this is impossible without your support. The Association has produced two sets of greetings cards and a calendar with 12 photographs portraying the beauty of Bosnia through its landscapes. Either is ideal for Christmas or the coming New Year.

A set of four cards costs £5. The calendar is selling for £6. Prices include post and packing.

Send your orders with cheques to: Faruk Ibrahimovic, 45 Burlington Close, Elgin Avenue, London W9 3LY.

All proceeds will go towards the purchase of photographic materials and equipment and will be taken on the next Workers Aid to Bosnia convoy.

## Trotsky archive

IN LAST week's Workers Press an article appeared under my name and the ebullient headline, Trotskyist Archive to be set up at

# Ken Saro-Wiwa and the environment

Comment by STEVE DRURY

THE murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight comrades by the Nigerian military dictators makes the sharpest conceivable point about the single-issue politics of the environmental and many other movements.

Saro-Wiwa and the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop) do not represent that tendency. They fought for the self-determination of the Ogoni people of the oil-rich Niger delta, oppressed through Shell, Chevron and their agents: the Nigerian military regime.

A Rooftop protest by students at Kings College Cambridge last week against the government's plans for further cuts in the student grant. Some 150 students took part in a successful two hour occupation of the college last week. The action was organised by Student Poverty Action Network (Span) as part of the build up for last Thursday's national demonstration in London. Grants have been cut by 10 per cent in each of the last two years, meaning a £430 cut for many students. The government plans to make a further ten per cent cut in grants next year.

Photo: James Hossack

The Ogoni farmers' land, their water and the rich forests that once surrounded them, have been devastated by the drive for profit and individual self-enrichment.

The Ogoni's protests have been met with massacre and 'ethnic cleansing'. Mosop, in particular Saro-Wiwa, a renowned author, took this fight to the enemy and to potential allies in

the Nigerian working class and internationally.

The 1994-95 strike by Nigerian oilworkers demanded an end to pollution and repression.

It posed a threat to imperialism, as well as to the Lagos butchers. The state murders are signs of weakness and desperation, aimed at terrorising Ogoni and working class alike.

Indeed, the cynical responses, from the UN through to Nelson Mandela, makes them a threat to similar activists worldwide. Tynpot tyrants and multinationals can now be assured of getting away with murder.

The response from many environmentalist leaders to pollution on the scale of Ogoniland and elsewhere in the 'Third World' is that capitalism has the means to prevent it, as to some extent it does in advanced countries.

The technical means to avoid such outrages are available, but this misses the main point.

The class struggle within capitalism inexorably forces down the rate of profit, and this tendency makes it increasingly less likely that means of pollution control will be implemented on the scale required.

Capitalism is incapable of resolving the problems that it creates, no matter what the outcry.

As environmental breakdown increases and its effects become more obvious, so the bourgeoisie adopts a 'green' face. Monopolists like Sir James Goldsmith finance scientific forums, the UN hosts bun fights such as Rio '92, and

governments hire big scientific names to pontificate and divert.

Ecological problems are transformed into absolutes, the ruling class refracting and projecting its own failures, its own impending collapse, into 'end-of-the-world' scenarios.

'This is Spaceship Earth: we're all in the same boat! Yet they deny the existence of 'First Class' and steerage. The same ruling class argues 'it's everyone's fault' and dresses up in green. The polluted end up with the blame and paying, not the polluters.

The brunt of environmental breakdown is always borne by the working class, the poor and the dispossessed.

When it affects the privileged strata of society, on a global scale, capitalism proclaims itself the defender of something that it has destroyed.

## Focus

Yet the focus is only on inspiring scenery and threatened, rare (and often cuddly) wildlife. The Ogoni people, Bhopal, Irian Jayas and the countless miserable lives and squalid deaths of capitalism's human victims are cropped out of the picture.

The bourgeoisie sees salvation only in the past. In its frantic appeals for conservation it sees no future. **And there is no future while the bourgeoisie remains.**

This bourgeois ethos permeates some sections of the 'Green' movement that call for an anti-technological retreat to a pre-industrial society.

No environmental group calls for more than reform or retreat.

Capitalism uses the natural world primarily as a source of **exchange values** and of profit through the exploitation of the working masses globally. That nature is a source of **use values** is of secondary concern.

Nature is **capitalised** as a

source of commodities: gold, oil, hamburgers and cocaine.

The working masses become the source of surplus value, or a direct hindrance to capitalist accumulation: both nature and people become **dehumanised**.

It should surprise no one that imperialism tries to brick up the crumbling wall that increasingly gives us a glimpse of horrors such as Ogoniland.

The liberal views of some sections of the bourgeoisie and the middle class cannot admit this true inhumanity and attempt to divert the energy of millions of concerned people, especially youth, through the ready channels of protest.

Greenpeace, for all its funds and its 'Rainbow Warriors', poses no threat to imperialism. They are tolerable.

The oilworkers of Nigeria and the North Sea, the metal miners of South Africa and the western USA, the dispossessed of Ogoniland and London are the threat.

Protest groups make front-page news. The Ogoni dig graves. Ecological problems, destitution, famine and war can only be eradicated by the conscious, social control of all the conditions of human life.

The tightening bonds that shackle the development of the productive forces necessary for that control lie in capitalism's decay. The only road is to break those bonds.

There must be the boldest initiative for international co-ordination of workers, young environmental activists, socialists, oppressed people and scientists to discuss these issues and plan the means for releasing the productive forces required.

The Workers International's call for a symposium on science at the end of the 20th century in 1996 should focus on this most practical and universal of issues.

## Lessons for Underground workers

BY MARY IDE

LONDON UNDERGROUND management hope that the agreement for a 3 per cent wage increase and 1.5 hours per week cut in rostering hours in 1996 which was accepted by the rail union RMT will now bring a period of peace on the Underground.

The other Underground unions, ASLEF and the white-collar union TSSA, had already settled for the same agreement.

One of the main issues in the dispute, the use of part-time workers, has been withdrawn for the train staff.

But the management still want to introduce it for non-

operating staff at stations, on track maintenance, etc.

The reduction in the working week by 1.5 hours is seen by Underground workers as only the first step towards the target of a 35-hour working week.

Despite the settlement, feeling is still running high among Underground workers. In the build up to the recent strikes, the management suddenly stopped deducting trade union contributions from pay. The RMT lost members and was forced back to the system of 70 years ago and had to collect union dues each week.

But in the face of the management's offensive, the RMT signed up some 800 members, most of whom were members who had

dropped out of the RMT and only a small minority of whom were former members of ASLEF. This shows that men and women are only too willing to join a union when they see it leading a struggle. But the position on London Underground is not so certain.

The withdrawal of government investment and the need to modernise much of the system means that the extra costs of the reduction in working hours will have to be found in economies elsewhere on the system.

Faced with these future battles, the leaderships of RMT and ASLEF seem to spend as much time and resources attacking each other as they do organising to deal with London Underground management.

Both unions have produced leaflets aimed at the workforce blaming the other union for mistakes they were supposed to have made in the course of the dispute.

The efforts of all rank-and-file bodies in all the unions on the system need to concentrate on building the unity of the workforce, the unity of the organisations.

Only in this way is it possible to stop the management playing off one union or one set of leaders against another.

London Underground management view the in-fighting between RMT and ASLEF activists as a great victory for them. The greatest need, in preparing for the fight ahead, is the unity of all Underground workers.

## Poles reject Toryism

BY COLIN PENDLETON

LECH WALESA, the former trade unionist who became Poland's president on the promise of prosperity and freedom, was ousted last week by voters for whom he had come to represent poverty and dictatorial threats.

The former shipyard electrician, whose Solidarnosc movement survived Stalinist martial law, was beaten in free elections by former Stalinist Aleksander Kwasniewski, with 52 per cent to Walesa's 48 per cent of the poll.

It was a defeat for Thatcher-type Tory economic policies, the so-called 'shock therapy', which brought price rises, 15 per cent unemployment, privatisation, corruption, and collapsing health and social services.

More than a third of the population is below the official poverty line, that is, 40 per cent of the 1989 average wage.

'We've had the "shock", when will we receive therapy?' has been a frequent comment throughout eastern Europe.

When pensioners were told they should have taken out private pensions rather than expect the state to care for them, that was too much to take.

But in Poland it was unclear whom to blame since Kwasniewski's Democratic Left Alliance was already in

government, having won parliamentary elections two years ago.

Walesa revealed that Kwasniewski had failed to disclose his wife's 31,000 shares in an insurance company set up by former Communist Party members and involved in scandal.

Then there were questions about whether Walesa should have paid tax on \$1 million received from Warner Bros. on film rights to his life.

One of Kwasniewski's campaign managers was accused of helping two people wanted for fraud flee the country with millions of pounds.

As journalist Jonathan Steele observed, the election result was 'not so much the return of the communists, ... as the defeat of the anti-communists' (Guardian, 21 November).

Kwasniewski, who as a junior minister in 1988 helped negotiate with dissidents like Walesa, presents himself as a social democrat these days, offering transition to the market, but at a more 'human' pace.

For younger voters particularly, Walesa's invocations of the dark days of Stalinist rule were less frightening than the present state of the country, the president's cosy up to the reactionary Catholic Church, and his hints that he would like to emulate pre-war Bonapartist dictator Josef Pilsudski.

The Church under Cardinal Glomp, once the ally of Stalinist military dictator Jaruzelski, made no effort to veil its backing for Walesa in this election.

Many workers who formerly

backed either Solidarnosc or the official, Stalinist-led trade unions, are nowadays united in fighting to defend their rights.

## Shin Bet ran Rabin killer's group

THE militant right-wing group with which the killer of Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin was linked was run by a secret police agent. The assassin himself worked as an Israeli intelligence agent abroad.

The 25-year-old, Yigal Amir, a law student who claimed divine and patriotic sanction to kill anyone who gave land back to the Palestinians, was connected with the so-called Jewish Fighting Organisation, known by its Hebrew acronym 'Eyal'.

Eyal's head, Avishai Raviv, a friend of Amir's from the religious Bar Ilan University, has been exposed as an informer for the General Security Services (GSS), or Shabak, also known by the Hebrew letters Shin Bet. Raviv was arrested after Rabin was killed on 4 November, but released on bail some days later.

*Ma'ariv*, which printed a photograph of the two right-wingers together on a demonstration, says Raviv had been working for Shin Bet for two years — the same time that Eyal has existed. He knew the murderer but didn't know or didn't report his intentions, *Ma'ariv* said.

The security services were already in trouble over their fail-

ure to protect Rabin. Four senior officers were sacked, and the director offered his resignation.

With an inquiry under way the government would not comment on the Raviv revelations. Police Minister Moshe Shahal had earlier rejected allegations that Amir was helped by someone in Rabin's police guard.

Israeli television said Raviv had handed out photomontages, depicting Rabin in Nazi uniform, at a right-wing rally last month. According to the right-wing Jerusalem Post, Shabak had promised to leave Eyal alone if Raviv kept them informed on other right-wing extremists.

Amir worked as an Israeli agent in Latvia for three months in 1992, while supposedly there as a Hebrew teacher. Israeli radio says he used a security services identity card to get within the area behind the stage at the rally where he shot Rabin.

The right-wing Likud party, religious fascists and militant Zionist settler groups, which have felt the recoil of public anger after Rabin's assassination, clutched at the Raviv revelations last week, trying to suggest they were victims of an agent-provocateur out to discredit them.

Police detained two religious seminary students, one of whom spat on Rabin's grave and the other was urinating. In New York, where a seminar student claimed \$100,000 had been raised for Amir's defence, Rabbi Mordchai Friedman of the American Board of Rabbis said Rabin had deserved 'a bullet in the head' and his death 'was an act of God'.

## Local activists rally to JJ Food strikers

BY NICK BAILEY

LOCAL WORKERS are organising to strengthen the fight of JJ Fast Food workers who were sacked by the north London food distribution company for daring to join the Transport and General Workers' Union.

The workers, mainly Turkish and Kurdish are paid wages of between £130 and £180 for a working week that can be as long as 70 hours. There is no holiday, overtime or sick pay. Company drivers are also forced to pay £250 if their vehicle gets damaged in a road accident.

Some 40 trade unionists and local activists recently heard a report from the strikers saying

that numbers at the morning picket had been falling because of lack of money and because of intimidation by thugs who have used sticks and knives against the pickets.

Supporters decided:

■ To step up the collection of money to help the strikers who are forced to try and survive on £35 a week victimisation money from the Union.

■ To get local authorities who use JJ food to ban it.

■ To picket various JJ Fast Food outlets.

■ To step up the 6am to 8am daily picket.

For more information, donations and offers of help phone 0181-802 9804.

**WORKERS PRESS IS THE PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**  
 British section of the Workers International (to Rebuild the Fourth International)  
 Please send me information about the WRP  
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 Address .....  
 Trade union (if any) ..... Age (if under 21) .....  
 Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

# Inside left

## Making your streets away

...asingstoke they stopped the Sal-  
on Army preaching from the  
e, by order of a store manager. In  
on Keynes you can no longer cut  
ss the town centre after shopping  
rs, but must make a lengthy  
ur.

his creeping dictatorship is being  
ght about by the growing pri-  
sation of public space. As town  
res become shopping malls, com-  
cial interests take away your  
to do anything which doesn't  
money in their tills.

nd it could happen to your high  
et.

ry Environment Secretary John  
yn Gummer is working with  
s the chemist, property develop-  
own centre managers, and a con-  
ancy called the Urban and  
omic Development Group. They  
ose that store owners and busi-  
es form companies, with local  
rnment representatives, to run  
atised streets.

instead of just paying business  
s to an elected local authority,  
s could determine how money  
spent. They would engage con-  
street cleaners, and private  
e to patrol their streets (with  
d circuit television, of course). As  
he street where you live, as you  
v, the council is rather hard up,  
an't keep providing services...

azi Josef Goebbels said 'Whoever  
rols the street, controls the state'.  
ourse, in this country we do  
gs differently... well, most of the

If talk of dictatorship seems  
the top, ask yourself: if they can  
se curfews, closing a street to  
ers-by, will they tolerate demon-  
ions? If they stopped the Sally  
preaching on the corner, will  
let you speak, or sell papers?

bourgeois democracy halts at the  
of property. If the labour move-  
remains focussed on impotent,  
starved local authorities and  
upt parliamentary democracy,  
ng by their rules, we may wake  
nd our rights taken away with  
streets, ourselves treated like the  
p hustled away by private cops,  
se Private Property Rules, OK?

## Tell us more, Suzanne Moore!

*Guardian* writer Suzanne Moore  
a warm sensation in her ears on  
sday evening, 16 November? Ms.  
e, who endorsed Shadow Home  
etary Jack Straw's crusade  
st squeegee crews, had slagged  
ne 'radical press' that morning.  
*New Statesman* meeting that  
ng each speaker said something  
t Suzanne Moore, as I dare say  
tended.

ore recently claimed she had  
d the Workers Revolutionary  
y at 14, to annoy her Mum. I  
t recognise anyone she  
ibed, but it's possible. All sorts of  
cters were recruited in the mid-  
If Moore had been a media per-  
hen she might have made the  
al committee.

t my faith in her knowledge of  
Left was dispelled when she  
ed the Revolutionary Commu-  
arty of still holding conferences  
reparing for Power'. They aban-  
l that some years ago for  
ards 2000; and their latest effort  
ed 'Get a life!'

15 November, deriding those  
work 'for love', Moore claimed  
eant 'being touched up by some  
pausal male after he has  
ed ten pints of real ale'. Do a  
salary and promotion make that  
table? Does Ms Moore write  
personal experience? Tell us

Two magazines she rubbished  
ited by women, but stereotypes  
s lag behind reality.

Charlie Pottins

# Ohio steel COMPANY'S UNION-BUSTING

**In Europe and America employers determined to destroy union rights and working conditions are meeting the most determined resistance. We reprint here a report by MARIE WEIGAND in the November 1995 issue of Socialist Action which gives details of the successful battle against an American steel company already reported briefly in Workers Press**

STEELWORKERS at Warren Consol-  
idated Industries in Ohio have defeated  
the union-busting plans of the compa-  
ny which locked them out for 55 days.

They accepted new contracts at the  
end of October. Leonard Grbinick,  
Recording Secretary of Local (branch)  
1375 of the United Steelworkers of  
America, summed up the new  
contracts: 'We didn't get everything  
we wanted, but the company got abso-  
lutely nothing. Considering they were  
trying to break the union, we adminis-  
tered an ass-kicking.'

Last spring, as contract negotia-  
tions approached, the union prepared  
by surveying the membership about  
the need for improved working condi-  
tions and the demand for parity with  
the rest of the basic steel industry.

The company, on the other hand,  
prepared by stalling negotiations and  
investing in added plant 'security'.  
They spent half a million dollars en-  
circling the steel mill with a  
chain-link fence, and mounted cam-  
eras to monitor activity at the gate.

On 18 July, the membership unani-  
mously authorised the negotiators to  
call a strike if agreement had not been  
reached by 1 September, when the old  
contract was due to expire.

### Intimidation

Negotiations went on for nearly  
two months, while the company  
stalled. The union newspaper, the  
*Warren Steelworker*, summarised the  
negotiations:

'The company proposals require the  
union to make an unconditional sur-  
render of all working conditions won  
over the last 50 years.'

The company demanded that the  
union give up all work rules and past  
practices; give up all rights to sched-  
uled starting and quitting times; allow  
the company to change schedules at  
will; give up time-and-a-half for over-  
time hours unless they exceed 40  
hours a week; accept a two-tier wage  
system; permit the company to hire  
temporary employees to work up to  
180 days a year; and abolish protec-  
tions against contracting out.

### Victims of capitalism's ever-changing face

Before the 1983 merger of Republic, Jones and Laughlin and Youngstown  
Sheet and Tube to form LTV Steel, the fully integrated mill was the Warren  
Works of Republic Steel Corporation. After the merger, LTV used this plant  
as a cash cow, milking profits but refusing needed investments. Plant clo-  
sure rumours were rife.

In 1986 LTV was declared bankrupt. It sold several facilities, including its  
Warren mill. Renco Group Inc., a holding company, bought the Warren  
plant and operated it under the name of Warren Consolidated Industries  
(WCI).

Steelworkers at WCI experienced the usual bad wages and benefits condi-  
tions of the steel industry. In addition, they were forced to pay for LTV's ne-  
glect and the modernisation of their mill through additional job combina-  
tions, work-rule changes and wage concessions.

At 7pm on 31 August, management  
went through the plant ordering  
workers on the 3pm to 11pm shift to  
leave.

At the same time security goons  
from Vance Security, a notorious anti-  
union outfit, moved into place to  
secure the gates and perimeters.

The company insisted that salaried  
personnel and supervisors maintain  
production. They were supplemented  
by scabs recruited from around the  
country, who were flown in and  
housed in a local hotel. The company  
picked up the bill for their rooms and  
meals and transport, and paid them 22  
dollars an hour for a guaranteed mini-  
mum 56-hour week.

The union estimates that the com-  
pany spent between \$50 and \$70 mil-  
lion during the first month of the lock-  
out.

The company boasted that the de-  
tailed job descriptions the steelwork-  
ers had included for safety certifica-  
tion provided enough information to  
keep the plant running with scabs.  
Warren Consolidated's spokesperson  
Tim Roberts told the local paper:

'When you go to a piece of equipment,  
you see standard operating procedures  
that tell you how to run the equipment  
... Everyone knows what to do.'

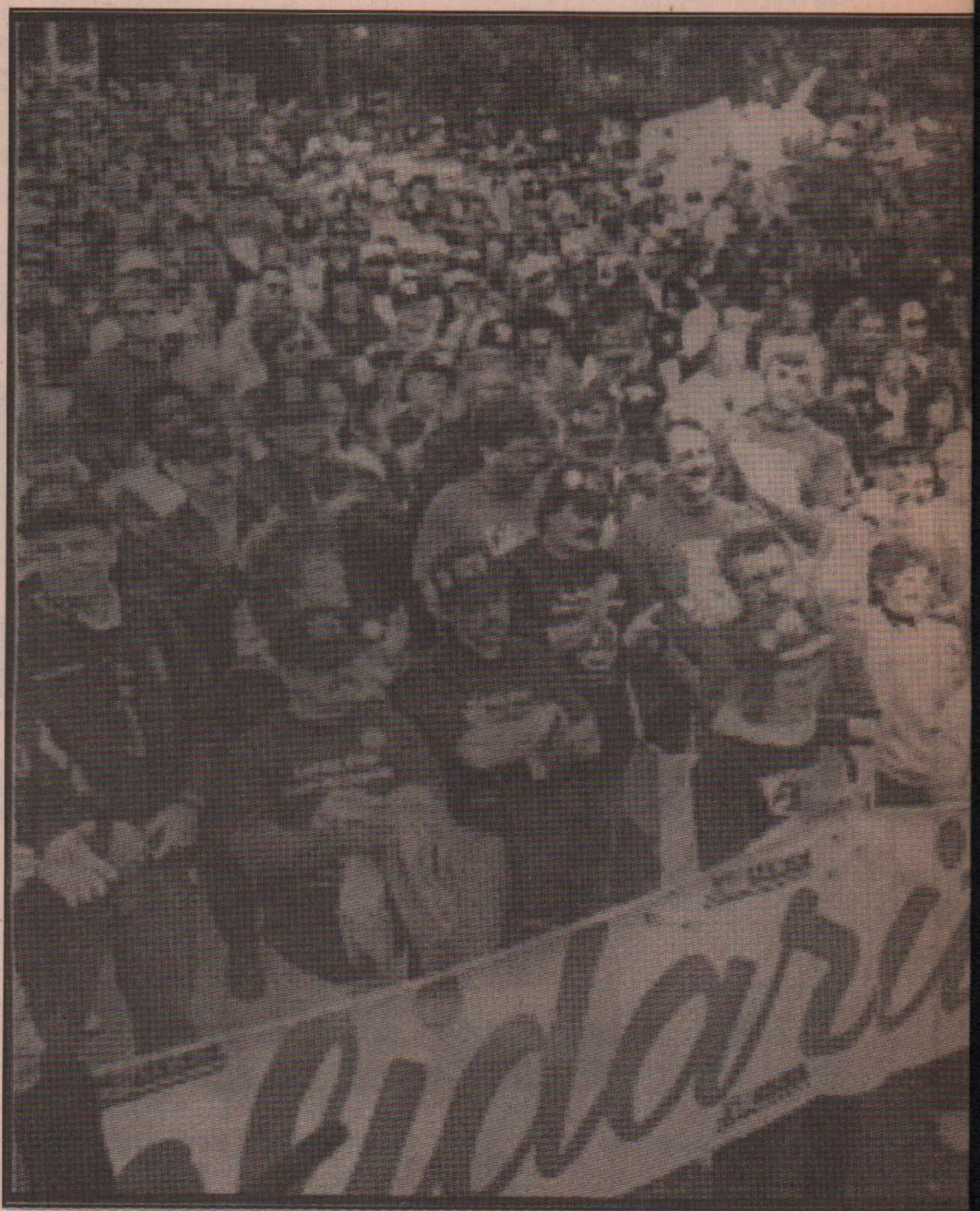
The company hoped such boasts  
would intimidate workers into re-  
turning on the company's terms. Only  
two of the 50 clerical workers in Local  
6824 crossed the picket line, and none  
of the 1,650 production and mainte-  
nance workers joined the scabs.

Without these skilled workers,  
Warren Consolidated found it impos-  
sible to maintain production. Equip-  
ment was damaged, and what little  
production occurred was scrapped.

### Mass protests

As workers discussed their re-  
sponse to the lock-out, a suggestion for  
a Labor Day parade was received with  
enthusiasm. In less than 72 hours,  
largely through word of mouth, 7,000  
people assembled in downtown War-  
ren to march in support of the locked-  
out steelworkers.

On 11 September, a 51-year-old



Over 4,000 steelworkers listen to George Becker, international pro

steelworker, Larry Jenkins, suffered a  
fatal heart attack on the picket line. As  
steelworkers prepared to attend his  
funeral, word spread of another seri-  
ous injury on the line.

A scab, wanted in another state for  
drug dealing, ran into a parked pick-  
up belonging to steelworker John  
Stamm. Ignoring shouts to stop, he  
pushed the driverless pick-up onto  
steelworker Walter Mintus, who was  
dragged over 30 feet and run over.

Security guards videotaped steel-  
workers lifting the truck off Mintus's  
battered body but made no effort to  
assist.

Stamm's four-year-old daughter  
Elizabeth, who was in the pick-up, re-  
ceived injuries to her arm.

Workers were outraged. As word of  
the injuries spread, workers gathered  
at the plant.

That night the mill was completely  
surrounded by nearly 10,000  
protesters, some arguing they should  
occupy the plant.

While union officials stressed their  
agreement to abide by limits on  
pickets and avoid violence, they made  
it clear that workers could not stand  
by while scabs stole their jobs.

On 29 September, the company an-  
nounced it would resume negotiations  
and halt scab production, citing  
picket-line 'violence'.

Furnaces were shut down the same  
day.

Steelworkers president George  
Becker told a cheering crowd: 'You ran  
those scabs out of the plant and forced  
the company back to the bargaining  
table.'

Warren is a working-class town  
near Youngstown, Ohio. Many resi-  
dents can trace their union back-

ground for several generations. S

upport for the lock-out was almost to

Many small businesses put up s  
declaring their support and some  
ferred free or discounted service  
locked-out steelworkers. A wom  
march in support of the workers d  
over 2,500 people.

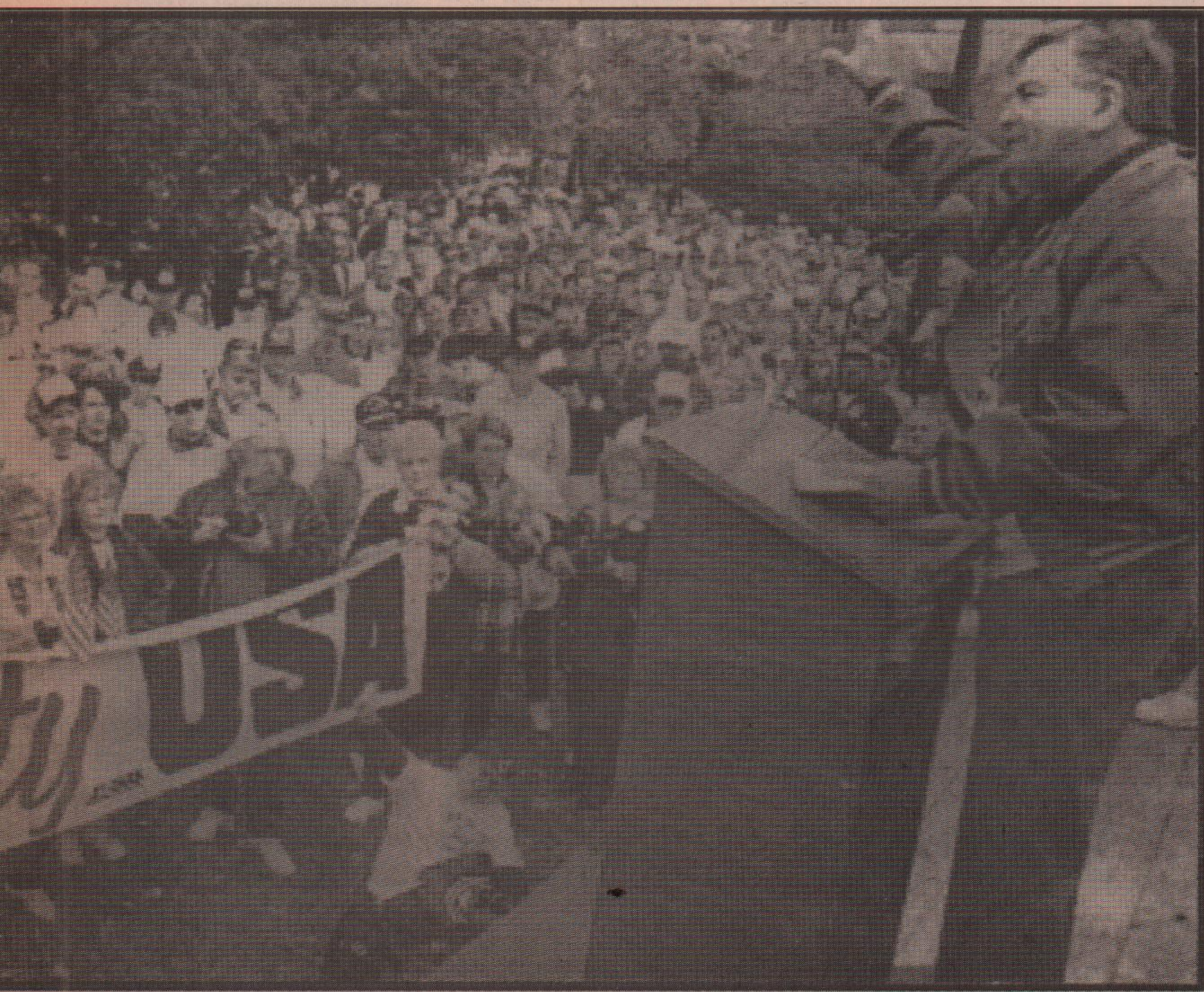
On Saturday 8 October a supp  
rally of 4,000 included steelwor  
from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, You  
town and Lorain, Ohio. Mintus,  
covering from his injuries after wo  
in hospital, was among the par  
pants.

Two days later over 1,500 wor  
crowded into a hearing called by  
Ohio Unemployment Commission  
rule on their evidence that this w  
company lock-out and they were e  
tled to state benefits. Continuing p  
sure will be needed to secure p  
ments for the 55 days they were loc  
out.

Although the company has  
promised to maintain all past p  
tices and local working condi  
some supervisors have taken it u  
themselves to retaliate against retu  
ing steelworkers by destroying the  
frigerators, microwaves and ta  
workers use for meal breaks  
threatening disciplinary action fo  
leged rule violations.

The steelworkers intend to pr  
that the bosses have miscalculated  
assuming that the financial hards  
caused by nearly two months with  
pay will cause individual worker  
give up the working conditions t  
they collectively sought to prese  
The workers have vowed to beat b  
these attacks with the same unity  
determination they displayed on  
picket line.

# Lock-out STING DEFEATED



President of the United Steelworkers of America, at a rally in Warren, Ohio on 8 October

## 'We didn't get everything we wanted, but the company got absolutely nothing'

### The steelworkers' demands and what they got

Writing to the membership of United Steelworkers of America Local 1375, local union president Dennis Brubaker summed up their struggle:

'This corporation has declared war on its workers and the community. We must dig in. It will be a long battle.'

'Victory will come when we gain all the benefits earned by steelworkers at other profitable steel companies. We are not second-class steelworkers. The company had better come to that understanding. But however long it takes, we will win.'

Local 1375 Recording Secretary Leonard Grbinick summarised the union's demands:

'All we're asking for is the pattern. We want the same wages, benefits, and working conditions as other steelworkers. We know there are problems with the pattern, but it's a lot more than we currently have.'

'Our two most important issues are pensions and a successorship clause. Most of our members are over 45, so pensions are important. Now, a member with 30-plus years' seniority only gets \$600-\$700 a month pension,

and \$200 of that goes for health insurance. The company has adamantly refused to grant us the same defined benefit contribution pension plan as other steelworkers.'

'A successorship clause is very important to us since we've seen the nameplate on the front of the plant change several times. We have to be sure that we'll continue to enjoy union protection through any future name changes.'

The settlement addressed these major concerns. It included the union's proposed wording for a successorship clause (rights if the plant changes hands). It reinstated a defined benefit pension plan. Pension improvements will raise pensions for those who retire from Warren Consolidated Industries in the future to the level of other basic steel pensioners.

Workers will receive a \$3,000 signing bonus. On 1 September 1996 a 50-cents-an-hour wage increase will take effect, and on 1 September 1997 there will be a one-off payment of \$1,000.

The agreement also includes an additional paid holiday and improved funeral leave. Medical, vision and dental plans are improved and insurance benefits are increased.

## City Lights

### German question Mark

LAST MONTH Germany celebrated five years as a united nation. Perhaps celebrated is the wrong word, for it was a muted occasion. And for good reason. For the prospects for a united Germany look far from sanguine. Indeed whether the country is yet united in any deep sense of the word is open to doubt.

The take-over by the west is far from producing a self-sustaining economy in the new eastern Länder, despite the over £200bn of public funds poured into the east for economic 'reconstruction'. There are looming economic and social problems in the country as a whole that look increasingly difficult to resolve.

German industry, in many sectors previously unrivalled, is facing increasingly stiff competition from Asia and even from parts of eastern Europe.

In the past, thanks to a reputation for high quality and a concentration of expertise in the investment goods sector, Germany was able to maintain its strong presence in export markets, despite a high-valued D-Mark. Employers were prepared to give in to the demands of the workers in order to keep production lines flowing.

But these achievements have been at a high cost. Since 1991 industry has shed 1.13 million workers, a loss of nearly 10 per cent of its labour force. Unemployment is now about 3.5 million, with one in seven out of work in the east. Even then the level in the east has been kept artificially low because of the large numbers of state-financed early retirements.

The trade unions were able to impose standard wage contracts throughout the country, with the result that firms in the east, where labour productivity is much lower, were unable to compete. The consequence is that employers in the east are making local agreements with the unions which allow for greater labour 'flexibility' — that is longer hours, harder work and lower wages.

The more Germany strives to meet the terms of the Maastricht treaty's condition for monetary union — which demands a strong D-Mark — the more exports are threatened. Many members of the *Mittelstand*, the small to medium sized companies, are now investing heavily abroad in production facilities to avoid the consequences of the strong D-Mark and high domestic costs.

There has been much talk about the need to make inroads into the country's expensive system of welfare benefits, but so far nobody has been willing to draw the sword, knowing that the consequences of such a move would be considerable political protest and social unrest.

Only last month, for instance, experts of the three parties that form the governing coalition — the CDU/CSU and FDP — gathered for a four day conference outside Bonn to crack the problem of how to restrain the galloping costs of health care, only for the meeting to break up in acrimony after a few hours.

Yet the employers know that something will have to be done. At present the cost of social security is borne in equal degree by employers and workers. In total such costs account for 40 per cent of wage costs, and are largely responsible for making the country's labour costs the highest in the world. For those looking for cuts, the main focus of attention are health costs and the level of retirement pensions. The government has taken some initial moves to break up the system.

After 1992, expensive drugs were put on a black list where cheaper alternatives were said to be available and certain allegedly 'non-essential' services — such as convalescent holidays — were withdrawn.

The Bonn government is making increasingly threatening noises about the costs of the German pension scheme. It has already proposed that those who retire early should receive reduced pensions, even lower than their level of contributions would warrant. This would be a grave blow for many, especially those in the east. There has also been talk of raising the retirement age from 65 to 70.

In all, while Germany may remain the strong man of Europe, its growing contradictions threaten to prove just a little stronger.

### City fat cats

NO SOONER is one measure to 'curb' the astronomical salaries paid to top directors announced than the City's fat cats dream up devices to make sure that they will lose no weight.

The recent Greenbury Report into top company pay condemned the six or seven figure sums being doled out to directors heading companies that were making heavy losses — 'payment for failure,' as Greenbury called it.

In an effort to curb growing anger among small shareholders, Greenbury proposed some mild, and mostly voluntary, changes to the way in which company directors are paid. The real cost of the often lavish pensions paid out to directors must henceforth be declared. 'Remuneration Committees' with 'independent members were to be set up to make recommendations about pay.

Despite a lot of noise about the damage that such measures would do to British industry — notably from Lord Young, chairman of Cable and Wireless — Britain's top companies are carrying on regardless. The latest wheeze is to pay big company directors huge 'success payments' for doing little more than the job for which they were being handsomely paid for in the first place.

Take the case of Sam Chisolm, chief executive of BSKyB. Poor fellow was struggling along on a meagre £392,000 a year salary (to you and me around £7,000 a week). But before you reach for your wallet to give Sam a helping hand, let me tell you that he was recently given an extra £2.7 million bonus for looking after the latest flotation of BSKyB shares at the end of last year.

Whether Chisolm had much to do with the success of the flotation is open to doubt, given that the company paid out some £50 million in underwriting and advisers' fees to make sure the venture was a success.

### Hard labour

The NHS is not far behind the City when it comes to its treatment of top executives. Take the case of John O'Brien, aged 52 and chief executive of Cheviot and Wansbeck NHS Trust.

He has just received a half-a-million-quid redundancy package after 11 months in his job. His pay-off for early retirement 'in the interests of the service' is made up of £41,000 compensation for loss of office, together with £414,000 which will be paid into his pension fund. The money would be enough to pay for 150 hip replacements or 600 hernia operations.

Assuming you were earning £4 an hour, generous for the sort of minimum wage the Labour leaders want to fix, I calculate that you would have to work over 60 years to get the sort of sum that the fortunate O'Brien took out of the NHS.

Threadneedle

# This judge is an ass

## PERSONAL COLUMN

tims when the eldest was 12 years old and capable of cooking for herself and the other two, and of washing their clothes.

Some 12-year-olds in this country have yet to acquire elementary domestic skills; others however prove themselves formidably competent and responsible when put in charge of younger children.

In some cultures, a female of that age is no longer regarded as a child but is expected to shoulder most if not all of a young unmarried woman's household duties, including the care of young children and babies.

In the countries ravaged by imperialism — Bangladesh is a case in point — many 12-year-olds, indeed many eight-year-olds, have to work long hours in field or factory. Wherever there is extreme poverty, childhood, like the average life-span, is extremely, tragically, short.

A 'serious crime' to leave a 12-year-old to look after brothers aged seven and five for a week? So what words remain in this judge's vocabulary to describe the brutal assaults on children and even babies that feature almost every week in the newspapers?

As for the 'widespread sense of outrage', whom is the judge trying to kid? This has never been, and is not now, a pressing concern of our judges.

TWO other things need to be said about this savage punishment.

First, has Judge Wickham ever had to look after two lively children on his own for a week, or a day, or even a few hours, let alone month after month during the greater part of their infant years? I doubt it.

I can testify from experience that single-handedly and conscientiously caring for one small child for a mere eight hours is among the most physically and mentally exhausting tasks any human being can undertake. It sure beats sitting on a bench in a wig and sending women to jail.

Anyone who had such personal experience would surely have tempered justice with mercy in a case like this — would have found it in his heart to be more understanding of, and more sympathetic to, the plight of a single mother who 'took a chance' by clutching at the opportunity of a week's break from a relentlessly demanding routine.

Old communities have disappeared; old traditions of mutual help and neighbourliness have been largely eroded. Where can a single mother turn for help when she needs it?

The short answer is: nowhere. And in fact, for all the devoted hard work of so many of them, single mothers are being systematically demonised in our society. They are fair game for politicians and press alike.

A judge with the merest spark of imaginative insight into the daily lives of millions of poor people in this country would not have made an example of this wretched woman, would not have punished her children by depriving them of their mother for 273 days and nights.

Second, and above all, why should it be taken for granted that the female parent must automatically carry the can? Why wasn't 'Dad', who so dishonourably evaded his responsibilities, put in the dock beside the mother of his child, to take his due share of censure and punishment?

After all, he too put 'personal pleasure' before his son's welfare. Yet he is free while she goes to jail.

Truly is it said: the law is an ass. And that is just what Judge Wickham is.

*Peter Fryer*

# FUTURE STRA

We publish below the 'Discussion Paper On the Consequences of The Labour Party Special Conference, April 29, 1995 and The Labour Party Annual Conference October, 1995' by Arthur Scargill to which we gave our first response in last week's editorial 'Scargill and the need for a new socialist party'. We publish it because it has now been widely circulated in the labour movement and has even, we are told, been posted on the internet! Scargill wrote this paper as an individual member of the Labour Party and not as leader of the National Union of Mineworkers

FOR YEARS, the Left inside the Labour Party has generally accepted that while the party might from time to time adopt right-wing policies it has always been possible to fight to reverse those policies — because the party's constitution has been committed to the eradication of capitalism, the establishment of socialism and common ownership.

That perspective has been held by many on the left who while not individual party members belong to party-affiliated organisations and support 'left' policies.

This acceptance was based on the fact that the party constitution embodied in Clause IV a commitment to common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange; a commitment not introduced (as is generally believed) by two middle-class Fabians in 1918, but which (like proportional representation) sprang from the trade union movement and socialist groupings that were in existence before the Independent Labour Party, Labour Representation Committee or the Labour Party were even founded.

It is commonly agreed that the Labour Party was born out of the trade union movement and various socialist groups with the aim of creating a parliamentary party to give expression to a socialist political agenda in the House of Commons.

At the time of its formation, the Labour Party had both a constitution and policies which projected a socialist philosophy, policies and programme.

Its affiliates included the Communist Party, Co-operative Party, various socialist societies and trade unions whose members were automatically regarded as being members of the party.

For example, candidates for parliament and local authorities were selected at meetings where trade unions were allowed to send substantial numbers of delegates; even if they were not in individual membership of the

party they were accepted as members as a result of belonging to affiliated unions.

The newly-formed Labour Party made clear its aim of abolishing capitalism and establishing a socialist society — an object which many trade unions incorporated into their own rule books.

The party was also firmly committed to proportional representation not because it believed in consensus politics but because it recognised that true proportional representation is a class issue.

It is significant that this constitutional demand was ditched by Ramsay MacDonald and other party leaders who not

only supported the first-past-the-post system but capitalism itself.

The aim of common ownership as set out in Clause IV was introduced in two stages: in 1918 and in 1929. Rather than hint at an unspecified objective, it was designed to clearly commit the party to a strategy for achieving socialism.

The party later became a so-called 'broad church' because the 'modernisers' of the time wanted to embrace sections which were not committed to a fundamental change in the nature of society. The term 'broad church' was introduced to assist the right wing, not the left.

cally dismantle Labour's commitment to socialism — a process in which the 'spin doctors' merely put a media gloss on the machinations of the leadership.

The debacle over Clause IV exemplifies this point very clearly indeed.

Some of us repeatedly warned prior to Labour's 1994 annual conference that the party leadership would attempt what Gaitskell had failed to do 30 years before, and try to ditch Clause IV.

Nobody should have been surprised when Blair, in the Leader's address to annual conference last year, announced his intention to get rid of Labour's fundamental commitment to common owner-

ship. The significance of the leadership's position and the conference vote 48 hours later rejecting that position was not taken seriously enough on the left, either in the party or the trade union movement.

Here was a party leader blatantly acting contrary to the constitution — an offence which has been used to expel numerous good party members.

Yet many leading left figures in the Parliamentary Labour Party and in the trade unions failed to see the implications of what was taking place.

In certain ways, the response of that section of the left which failed to act and/or campaign in defence of Clause IV is the same response we saw at this year's party conference from all those who are so desperate to remove the Tory government that they are prepared to adopt any measure and accept any proposal made by Blair and the leadership.

The significance of last month's constitutional changes including the ditching of Clause IV has not been fully appreciated by many left comrades who should know better.

They believe it is still possible to reverse the 'setbacks' suffered as a result of Blair's destruction of Clause IV and abandonment of fundamental socialist policies.

**We therefore have to decide if we are prepared to carry on supporting a Labour Party, which now embraces capitalism and the 'free market', or take a decisive step towards establishing a party capable of not only resisting capitalism's attacks but of fundamentally changing society — in other words, establish a Socialist Labour Party.**

## IS THE LABOUR PARTY SOCIALIST?

IS THE Labour Party socialist?

In addressing this question it is essential to examine the party's policies together with the constitutional changes which have been systematically introduced over the past four years, including one-member, one-vote, reduction of the trade union bloc vote, and now the abandonment of Clause IV and introduction of new rules and a constitution which embraces capitalism and adopts the 'Market Philosophy'.

Labour is now almost indistinguishable from the Democratic Party in the United States, Germany's Social Democratic Party and, nearer home, the Liberal Democrats.

It is interesting to note how Labour has changed its policies on all the fundamental issues which have been determined by the party conference over many

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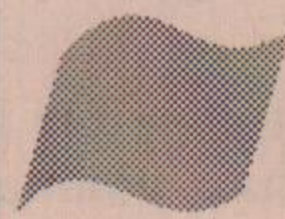
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# STRATEGY FOR THE LEFT



Arthur Scargill

years — including privatisation, national minimum wage, unemployment, pensions, health care, education, Europe, nuclear disarmament, anti-trade union legislation and the party itself.

Where does Labour now stand on these issues?

### Privatisation

LABOUR has abandoned not only its commitment to common ownership but its policy on public ownership and privatisation.

For example, the party has made clear it will not renationalise privatised industries, but will merely use the 'excess' profits of those industries and utilities to help pay for a programme of works and education.

This means that Labour intends to leave our key industries, including the utilities, in private hands.

A party committed to socialism and common ownership would insist that Labour will renationalise water, electricity, coal, gas, British Telecom, and all the public industries and services which have been sold off over the past 16 years — including our railways.

### National minimum wage

THE Labour Party, while undertaking to introduce a statutory minimum wage, refused to agree a formula or state a figure; even more significant, the party accepted that any minimum wage could only be introduced in consultation with 'social partners', including the CBI and the Institute of Directors.

In other words, a statutory minimum wage will only be at a level acceptable to our traditional class enemies.

The pressure on this issue applied to trade union leaders at the TUC conference in Septem-

ber was designed to accommodate a social 'partnership' or 'co-determination' policy.

### Unemployment

LABOUR has always had a commitment to full employment — but the party now says: 'No one pretends we can solve unemployment overnight' — a clear warning that unemployment will continue under a Labour Government.

But a Labour Government could solve unemployment even within a capitalist society — overnight, provided it introduced a four-day working week with no loss of pay, banned all non-essential overtime, and introduced voluntary retirement on full pay at age 55 — measures which are fundamental to the regeneration of Britain, but which are anathema to private enterprise and capitalism.

It is economic insanity to pay out £10,000 per year to keep a worker unemployed while half that amount would eliminate unemployment straightaway.

### Pensions

THE Labour Party is already departing from the essential principle of 'universal' pensions, and is looking at ways for people to 'put together' income from public and private sources.

In other words, workers are going to have to pay an additional 'insurance policy' to guarantee a minimum standard of pension — and even then its value would be questionable.

### Health

LABOUR's pledge that it will 'establish regional centres of excellence' and retain the 'beneficial freedoms' of fund-holding is typical of how vague its commitment is to restoring and rebuilding the NHS.

Britain spends less on health care than most other 'advanced' Western countries, and a Labour Party which was serious about protecting our National Health Service would commit the resources necessary to enable it to provide health care on demand, providing for everyone from the cradle to the grave.

### Education

LABOUR's pledges on nursery school places, infant school class sizes and the needs of all pupils, students and teachers are hollow without an accompanying timescale; nor do they address, the demise of opportunity, and aspiration, for working class children over the past 16 years.

Tragically, Labour continues to support privileged private education which is a vital prop to our class-ridden society.

### Europe

THE Labour Party, which was once implacably opposed to the European Common Market, is now one of the most ardent supporters of this bastion of international capitalism, out-doing the Tories and Liberal Democrats in enthusiasm. Labour's about-turn on this issue is of major economic and political importance; it represents a betrayal of all that the party stood for.

### Unilateral nuclear disarmament

POSSIBLY the most shameful about-turn, however, is that on unilateral nuclear disarmament.

After years of campaigning in favour of banning all nuclear weapons, Labour has now become pro-nuclear — in a world torn by regionalised and imperialist wars from the Middle East to the

Balkans, from South East Asia to Latin America. Labour should have been seen to be campaigning for an end to all nuclear weapons and a reduction of at least 50 per cent in defence expenditure. The vast resources which go to fund death and destruction should be used instead to rebuild our industries, public housing, health care and to end unemployment.

### Anti-trade union laws

LABOUR — although well aware that picketing, solidarity action and the right of unions to determine their own rule books without state interference are all regarded as human rights by the United Nations' Charter — has declared that in government it will **retain** the vicious laws which have been used to boost unemployment and enforce low pay over the past 16 years.

In other words, Labour is happy to pursue the Tories' aim of rendering trade unions ineffective and compliant.

### The party constitution: Clause IV

IN DITCHING Clause IV from the constitution, Labour has **erased** its commitment to the aim of common ownership without which social justice, economic democracy and socialism are impossible.

Last month, New non-socialist Labour demonstrated its covenant with capitalism by its disgraceful refusal to endorse first-class socialist Liz Davies as a parliamentary candidate.

It had no difficulty, however, in embracing into party membership Alan Howarth, a Tory MP who voted for the policies and philosophy of Thatcher, including the butchery of health care, education, mining and other basic industries and services.

### Labour's new rules

LABOUR's new rules and constitution can only be described as an unmitigated disaster that make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, for people within the Labour Party to campaign for socialism — **which is no longer constitutionally enshrined as a vision to fight for.**

The new rule book allows the party's NEC (among other changes) to amend the rules and constitution at any time by calling a special conference at which only the NEC can submit amendments to the constitution.

CLPs, trade unions and affiliated organisations will have no right to do so — just as on 29 April at the special conference.

This means that the party leadership can submit an amendment to any clause in the constitution in two-and-a-half years' time — i.e. in April 1998 — and irrespective of whether that amendment is carried or lost, any further amendment to that particular clause will be prevented for a further three years, right up to 2001.

This strategy could be deployed literally *ad infinitum* to prevent, for example, restoring the commitment to common ownership to Labour's constitution.

### A DILEMMA FOR SOCIALISTS

TODAY we have a sanitised Labour Party which Blair has admitted should be called Social Democratic.

Socialists faced with this new situation must decide what to do.

Do we meekly accept 'New Labour'? Do we passively concede

that the party has abandoned socialism and any commitment to common ownership?

If so, why were we all opposed to the policies of the Gang of Four and the now-defunct SDP? — because those are the policies which New Labour (now constitutionally indistinguishable from the Tories and Liberal Democrats) has adopted.

Do we, and others who feel as we do, stay in a party which has been and is being 'politically cleansed'?

Or: do we leave and start to build a **Socialist Labour Party** that represents the principles, values, hopes and dreams which gave birth nearly a century ago to what has, sadly, now become New Labour?

There are and there will be those — including highly respected comrades — who insist we should stay inside the party and 'fight'; but such an attitude fails or refuses to recognise that the party's constitution now effectively prevents this.

Opposition will also come from those who say that any 'rocking the boat' can only benefit the Tories.

We have been through all this before.

The first Labour candidate who stood at a by-election in Barnsley in 1897 was heckled and stoned by **miners** who believed that by representing Labour he was harming the Liberal Party's chances of election to government.

As late as 1910 there was still a large body of opinion in the trade union and labour movement which believed that the movement should support the Liberal Party — and that it was not the role of trade unions to be directly involved in politics.

Today, socialists in the Labour Party and those who are active in affiliated organisations face the same dilemma as did our forebears who broke with the Liberals. If history was to repeat itself, nobody could be genuinely surprised.

Can we continue to exist — let alone try to be active — within such a party?

### SOCIALISTS AND THE FUTURE

I BELIEVE the case for a Socialist Labour Party (SLP) is now overwhelming — but if such a party is to be born it must be on the basis of class understanding, class commitment and socialist policies.

A Socialist Labour Party would require a simple socialist constitution and a structure designed to fight our class enemies. This structure would demand an end to internal wranglings and sectarian arguments.

If a Socialist Labour Party is to be established, it must be done on the following basis:

1. Convening a special 'discussion conference' to which all those committed to founding

such a party should be invited with the aim of formulating a constitution and structure for a Socialist Labour Party;

2. an inaugural conference to be held ideally on 1 May 1996 — May Day having great significance throughout the international Labour movement;
3. the new party and its constitution would have to ensure that its members and affiliated organisations **control** the party through its national executive committee. Never again should we have a situation where the parliamentary party takes control of the apparatus, and the political tail wags the dog;
4. if a Socialist Labour Party is established it should commit itself to fight every parliamentary seat — on the principle that parliament is but one element of democracy, a body in which expression must be given to the political philosophy and issues advanced by our class.

### THE CHALLENGE FACING ALL OF US

IN THIS situation, we do not have the luxury of time; sooner rather than later a Socialist Labour Party will be born.

Today, radical opposition in Britain is symbolised not by the labour and trade union movement, but by the groupings such as those which defeated the poll tax, the anti-motorway and animal rights bodies, Greenpeace and other anti-nuclear campaigners, and those fighting against opencast mining.

These are now the voices of protest and direct action, reminding us that only through direct — including industrial — action and defiance of unjust laws can we achieve real advance while a moribund Labour Party and trade union hierarchy pleads with citizens to accept and submit to those laws.

The environmental and community activists are doing a good job, but, inevitably, their aims are 'single purpose' with no clear political perspective. It is a tragedy that the Labour Party is not at the centre of co-ordinating and organising such campaigns.

A Socialist Labour Party would be able to galvanise mass opposition to injustice, inequality and environmental destruction, and build the fight for a socialist Britain.

We therefore have to decide if we are prepared to carry on supporting a Labour Party, which now embraces capitalism and the 'free market', or take a decisive step towards establishing a party capable of not only resisting capitalism's attacks but of fundamentally changing society — in other words, establish a Socialist Labour Party.

4 November 1995

## Bosnia — Solidarity not Charity

An account of the August Tuzla Trade Union convoy  
Produced by Tony Samphier, NUJ delegate on the convoy

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# BOSNIA: US-imposed partition 'deal' must be smashed!

**THE United States government has succeeded for the time being in imposing a rotten partition deal in Bosnia. The agreement signed in Dayton, Ohio, by the presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, allows:**

■ Serb nationalist forces to hold on to territory around Banja Luka, in northern Bosnia, which they seized in 1992 and have largely 'ethnically cleansed' of Croat and Muslim inhabitants, by evictions and massacres.

■ Serb forces to remain in possession of towns like Zepa and Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia, which always had a Muslim majority, and where thousands of people were massacred after the UN handed them over this Summer.

■ Croat nationalists to keep their grip on areas of western Bosnia and Herzegovina, seized either with tacit UN encouragement in 1993, or during more recent offensives; and treated by Croatia's President Tudjman as Croatian territory for his purposes.

Tudjman flew back to Dayton on Monday, when the talks were stalled, giving the impression before he left Zagreb airport that he was only going to sign. But it is understood the Croatian leader was used to put extra pressure on the Bosnian delegation.

The Bosnians had said on Monday night that the talks had broken down and they were going home. US officials extended their deadline and Secretary of State Warren Christopher kept talks going for more than 22 hours.

The Bosnian government did gain some concessions, though nothing like what the Bosnian people have fought for, nor what the Bosnian army stood to gain by continuing its advances.

Sarajevo will come under one unified municipal administration, although in a compromise that will suit both separatists and religious elements, 'ethnic' districts may have their own institutions and schools.

## Beleaguered

The Serb Chetniks will not be allowed to take Gorazde, as they would have done under plans produced last year by the French and British governments. Instead there is to be a Bosnian corridor to the beleaguered town.

In last minute moves, the Bosnian government was awarded land near Bihac. The Serbian

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

government's demand for a wider Posavina corridor, linking it with Serb-held Banja Luka, which would have meant further 'ethnic cleansing', has been balanced by a Bosnian demand for a Brcko corridor, inevitably cutting across it. This issue is due to be settled by arbitration within six months.

## Opposition

President Tudjman faced strong opposition in Croatia to any territorial concessions in the Posavina area. The HVO militia in Posavina warned it would attack Serb positions.

The Brcko corridor would of course be the northern route to Tuzla, which UN forces refused to open to relief supplies when Workers Aid for Bosnia demanded this two years ago.

Workers Aid could discuss with Bosnians the possibility of campaigning for the northern route, in the glare of publicity from Dayton.

The arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina is to be 'progressively' lifted. The US government has promised, in line with the previous Paris agreement, to arm and train the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) army; the 'carrot' part of pressure to keep a 'Muslim-Croat federation'.

The UN Security Council was called together on Monday, expecting to discuss suspension of sanctions against Milosevic's Serbia.

US ambassador Madeleine Albright said it would be premature to do anything. Within 24 hours the position had altered. Sanctions were to be fully lifted.

President Milosevic also told Belgrade television that Tudjman had offered a land swap, involving the town of Mrkonjic Grad, north-west of Jajce. Besides conceding Serb claims in western Bosnia, this is a strategic blow against Bosnia.

Two years ago Croat HVO forces influenced by Tudjman abandoned Jajce to the Serb Chetniks. They regained it without a shot this Summer. By

holding on to this old Bosnian capital they have prevented the Bosnian army's Fifth Corps from Bihac linking up with the Seventh Corps. Mrkonjic Grad stands on the main road from Bihac to Jajce.

While supposedly recognising a sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and providing for an elected 'multi-ethnic' parliament, the Dayton agreement leaves the country divided between three mini-states — Serb, Croat and 'Muslim', with the latter two 'federated', for what that's worth.

The agreement still has to be enforced on the ground. Bosnia's Fifth and Seventh Corps, whose determination to fight their way home was hardened as they uncovered the mass graves of Serb Chetnik victims, will feel cheated of the victory they glimpsed.

Their commanders spoke of fighting on regardless, to retake towns like Prijedor, where some of the worst Chetnik atrocities were committed.

In Sarajevo, people's relief at the thought of being spared another Winter under siege was tempered with realisation that they and their values remain under threat.

The talks were watched with trepidation by people in Tuzla, Bosnia's northern working-class stronghold. The agreement leaves them within gun range of Serb nationalist forces, leaves the question of road access unsettled, and recognises the ethnic division they resisted.

## Refugees

Tens of thousands of Muslim refugees from Zepa and Srebrenica, encamped around Tuzla, are told their towns will stay under Chetnik rule.

Although the agreement provides for the right of refugees to return, that remains on paper. The Croat HVO forces in Jajce and Mostar have shown no willingness to let Muslims return, nor to treat 'federation' as more than a euphemism for apartheid.

In the midst of the talks President Tudjman promoted the leader of his HDZ party in Bosnia, Dario Kordic, who had just been indicted for crimes against humanity.

In Pale, the indicted Serb war criminals Mladic and Karadzic said they would resist the agreement.

Misha Gavrilovic of the Serb Information Centre in London, who seems to have a season ticket to BBC microphones as well as the ear of Labour 'lefts' like Benn, spoke as though Serbs were threatened with 'ethnic cleansing' by their victims.

President Clinton's wants to send 20,000 US troops as part of a NATO 'Implementation Force'.

'If we do not do our part in a NATO mission, we would weaken the alliance and jeopardise American leadership in Europe,' he warned Congress.

But the House of Representatives insists both houses must approve any spending on deployment of troops. Some 800,000 US civil servants were sent home

without pay on 14 November because Congress could not agree a budget.

The Dayton agreement does not mention Kosovo, where the mainly Albanian-ethnic population remains under Serb military rule and threatened with further 'ethnic cleansing'.

Many people in former Yugoslavia say that is where the war really began, and where it will end.

This US-imposed agreement cannot offer peace to Bosnia, because it reinforces the divisions which brought war.

If the Bosnian people decide not to allow it to be the basis for permanent partition, but use it as a breathing space to prepare for future liberation struggle, who can blame them?

The working-class movement internationally must stand by the Bosnian people's national struggle, the better to assist the united struggle of workers in former Yugoslavia and throughout the Balkans for a just, democratic peace.

# Support Sardinian miners!

From Alastair Wilson in Rome

SARDINIAN miners have occupied their pit in a battle against privatisation and pit closures.

They voted to take over the Nuraxi Figus pit because no maintenance was being carried out, and they feared it would end up in a condition where it would have to be closed anyway.

The miners have declared that the managers are incapable of running the project, and taken over control themselves.

The coal mines in the Sulcis area, south-west Sardinia, are the only ones in Italy. Over the past decades the number of mines has been gradually reduced, till only two are left. Sardinia has very high unemployment.

Whereas parts of the north of Italy are in full boom, and some jobs have been created, none of this has benefited the South, and Sardinia has been hit particularly hard.

In the north of Sardinia a publicly-owned chemical plant is also

being privatised, with a sizeable reduction in the workforce, and many other small firms are also threatening redundancies.

The miners have always been a symbol of Sardinian working class militancy. The mines are publicly owned, belonging to the Carbosulcis group, part of the state energy board ENI.

It decided to go for the closure of the pits but the miners' struggle stopped it. As a result the miners were laid off, receiving pay without any coal being produced. ENI then proposed privatising the mines.

A plan was drawn up to build a gasification plant so that the coal could be processed into gas. Sardinia is the only part of Italy without a natural gas supply.

The gasification plant would have created jobs and saved the mines, providing a clean supply of energy, without having to import gas from abroad.

The workers worked out the cost of such a plan, showing that it would actually be competitive and beneficial to the whole com-

munity, not only saving jobs but creating new ones. The plan has never been put into action.

The Italian state is privatising a huge chunk of its property. ENEL, the state electricity board, actually makes a profit and is very attractive to private speculators.

As a private firm it would be in the position of a monopoly. Now ENI is also to be privatised. It is quite clear that ENI did not want a private buyer to come into the Carbosulcis pits. They preferred to close them rather than create a competitor to ENI and ENEL.

The original idea was to find a private buyer who would run both pits and gasification plant. The problem was the initial expenditure on the gasification plant.

## State

To attract a private buyer the state would have to provide an initial subsidy, but the government seemed unwilling to meet the expenditure.

In the summer of 1994, having lost their patience, 500 of the 1,000 or so miners of the Nuraxi Figus pit took the overnight boat to Rome and marched straight to the prime minister's office.

They almost managed to storm the building, but were stopped at the last minute. Berlusconi was then prime minister, supposedly the hard man who was going to sort out the workers.

Within a few hours of the miners arriving under the prime minister's office Berlusconi had signed an agreement giving the

go-ahead for the subsidy to build the gasification plant.

The miners had shown the rest of the working class that the new right-wing government could be beaten.

Step two was an international tender to find a buyer for the pits. Only two companies have come forward. One is a US company, Westmoreland.

However all the private offers involve sacking half the miners. In fact it seems private buyers are only interested in the gasification plant where coal imported from abroad (Poland, South Africa...) would be processed.

After over a year of waiting the miners have taken up the struggle once more.

On Saturday 11 November, there was a demonstration in Carbonia, the main town in the area, with the school students coming out in solidarity with the miners.

The miners came out of the pits with 15 huge vehicles and drove through the town with the students.

The workers are discussing calling a local general strike in the Iglesiente area of Sardinia (the whole south-west of the island) and possibly a general strike of the whole island.

If the pits close the area will be transformed into an industrial desert with no future for workers and youth. The miners of Sardinia need all the help and solidarity they can get.

Messages of solidarity should be faxed to the following number: +39-781-660573, addressed to 'The Carbosulcis Miners', with 'PER ANTONIO TIDDIA' at the top.

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# Greek police arrest 500 anarchists

MORE than 500 Greek anarchists have been arrested during police raids in Athens.

The arrests were supposedly carried out to find those involved in anti-police disturbances during the annual commemoration of the Athens polytechnic stu-

dents' massacre by the Greek Military Junta's forces in the 1970s.

Family and friends of those arrested have called for their release and have mounted protests outside the Athens police HQ.