

Last Saturday's 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference on the need for a new socialist party, nearly 200 attended

Photo: Alan Clark

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Liverpool dock strike

Rally

Six months!

London coach leaves 7am from York Way next to King's Cross station

Lambeth coach details 0171-737 2134

After the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference

HARD (BUTNEW) WORKAHEAD

LAST Saturday's conference on the need for a new socialist party can be counted a real

The 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference opened with speeches from Liverpool dockers and dockers' wives, organised as Women of the Waterfront, and the discussion brought in a wide range of speakers.

Trade unionists, members of several parties and political organisations — the Labour Party, Socialist Labour Party, Militant Labour, Communist Party of Great Britain as well as the WRP — comrades from Africa and the Indian subcontinent, workers in unemployed centres, pensioners, Workers Aid for Bosnia organisers, anti-asylum bill campaigners, fighters against racism and fascism, defenders

BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER **WRP** secretary

of democratic rights, opponents of the Criminal Justice Act, fighters for a socialist united Ireland, students, scientists and writers, as well as socialists from western and eastern Europe.

The main resolution of the conference is printed on page 5 of this week's Workers Press. It makes a clear call for work for a new party of the working class and not the proclamation 'from on high' of a new

What is being worked for is a new party of the kind the working class needs in its fight for socialism and not just the signing-up of individuals who agree on basic socialist principles.

The new party must come out of the struggles and the life of the working class along with struggles that aren't 'working because it is the working class that represents the striving of the whole of humanity for a better and not a worse future.

It must reflect the needs of these struggles and it must begin to take them forward in

Therefore, it is proposed that at this time the discussion on the need for a new socialist party be concentrated in the support groups to be built everywhere for the dockers' strike and for subsequent struggles.

Resolved

It was also resolved that those at the conference work to call regional conferences on the need for a new party. All these will prepare a further national conference in October this year.

out to and include the Socialties.

Five major themes are highlighted by the dock strike and came out last Saturday:

- The conference welcomed the emphasis placed on the need for a party of the working class and not 'supplied' to the working class.
- The form of work now proposed is directed deliberately at overcoming the division between the 'industrial' and the 'political' arms of the workers' movement.
- The structural crisis of capitalism brings into the struggle millions of oppressed and exploited people not organised in the traditional working-class organisations (trade unions and parties) and

The discussion must reach millions who rise up against struction of the working-class the wanton destructiveness of ist Labour Party and its mem- capital (as in the defence of bers and all those in the the environment or against various Socialist Alliances militarism). The new party and other working-class par- must strive to unite all these with the organised working

- The reconstruction of the working-class movement with the building of a new party at its centre — means in the first place the rebuilding of working-class internation-
- More and more the focus of all struggles will be the need to get rid of the antiunion laws.

We stressed in opening the conference that this must be understood as a great beginning. It is the responsibility of all of us who were at the conference to now engage in this new work. The task is a long and difficult one: the reconmovement after decades of

Confidence

But the great struggles of the working class must give us confidence. In particular, the Liverpool dockers' turn to internationalism, their recognition that they need to be a political and not only an industrial leadership, their insistence on working-class democracy, and the way they have inspired their fellow workers, show that the possibilities are great.

It will be hard work. And it will be new work. One Liverpool docker said that the last weeks had changed his life he had done things he never dreamed he would do.

We shall win in the fight for a new party if we realise that such a change is necessary for every one of us.

WHEN the deputy editor of the Financial Times, no less, writes in support of Karl Marx something funny must be happening.

But this is just what happened in the issue of 14 March when Samuel Brittan wrote a piece 'Marx should be living now'

'Karl Marx would have given a portion of his anatomy for the accurate headline in last Saturday's Financial Times "US markets in turmoil after sharp rise in jobs", said Brittan.

'It would have supported his belief that good news for the workers was bad news for capitalists and that the system could only survive with a "reserve army of unemployed".

The earlier Financial Times piece to which Brittan referred was the lead article of 9 March which had the following to say about the severe collapse on the New York stock market of the previous

'US financial markets suffered one of the sharpest setbacks of the decade yesterday in response to unexpectedly strong job figures which dashed hopes of further cuts in short-term interest rates.

In one respect Brittan is right. For he was simply drawing attention to the fact that capitalism has no interest whatsoever in employment levels, in 'efficiency', and the like. It is, and can be, concerned only with profit. Here in its way is the answer to the lie of the Labour and trade union leaders that somehow capitalism can be made to work in the interests of the working class. It cannot.

And this profit comes increasingly from speculation - in this instance speculation on the likely movements of interest rates. Stock prices in the US had risen sharply in the anticipation of a further cut in the rate of interest. The unexpectedly sharp increase in the level of employment, by dashing such hopes, brought a dramatic collapse in stock prices, and one that threatened to spill over into Europe.

For a whole weekend the financial commentators held their breath, many warning of a crash on the scale of 1987. It didn't materialise . . . this time. But nobody is fooled into thinking that the danger has gone away. So a financial crisis was threatened because more workers had (however temporarily) found jobs in north America! True, but at the same time crazy. This is the craziness of the capitalist system, the system to which Blair and company have sworn undying fidelity.

BUT there is another interesting aspect to what Brittan says. For he refers to Marx's term 'the reserve army of unemployed'. But this was not Marx's term. Marx spoke of the 'reserve army of labour'. By it Marx meant that in times of slump, workers would be expelled from the process of production, to be drawn back into that process in times of capitalist upswing.

This was certainly an accurate depiction of the situation for much of the last century, and indeed for a good part of the present one. But what Marx had to say over a century ago on this matter corresponds less and less to the reality of capitalism

The millions who are unemployed throughout Europe, north America and indeed the capitalist world as a whole are permanently or semi-permanently so. Thus over 50 per cent of those out of work in Britain have been so for more than a year. Many young people have never worked, and are never likely to work — if we discount the various fraudulent so-called 'job creation' schemes, which are designed only to disguise the real depth of the

The development of science and technology, far from raising wealth and with it human culture, more and more threatens to destroy that culture. That such a staunch representative of the capitalist class as Brittan can sense this, however dimly, s certainly a sign of the times

More letters on page 7

WE WELCOME LETTERS SEND THEM TO: WORKERS PRESS, PO BOX 735, LONDON SW8 1YB

An off-the-cuff response

SOMETIMES an immediate and off-the-cuff response can be useful, so here is mine about last Saturday's 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference.

- The conference certainly contained the ideas needed to develop a working-class party that will sustain itself and grow into the next century.
- The conference revealed that proclamation and abstract phrases wither before reality. The presence of dockers and their partners was a constant reminder that it is their practical activity that has raised the theoretical question of building independent working-class political leadership off the textbook page and into the lives of workingclass people.
- The conference revealed how far we have to go: the deference to Scargill from some delegates, the notion that the Socialist Labour Party was beginning the business of party building was so clearly London-

Not one delegate who was pro-SLP approached me after my statement about the SLP in the former mining areas to discuss the point I made about the SLP's inability to make inroads in our communities.

■ I was delighted with the resolution which took the work forward, particularly with the recognition that we need a 'Policy Research Unit' that will provide research and guidelines for our work in hammering out a programme and building a new

Every single bourgeois party engages in theoretical debate, position papers and policy analysis. A new working-class party without the most formidable alliance with scientists and intellec-

BiH, Republic Committee

at dividing the country along ethnic lines.

Letter from Bosnian miners

To miners' unions and other organisations of working people

For nearly four years the miners, their families and all the people

Our miners' union and our miners have resisted this division but

we have suffered appalling hardships. Many miners volunteered

to go to the front to defend their communities. Many have been

killed. Those who remained at work have tried to maintain some

production without which the cold and darkness for our people

would have been even worse than it was. But it has been a hard

Following the Dayton peace the actual fighting has stopped but

the problems have not gone away. Now many miners are being

machinery and limited markets because of the collapse of other

manufacturing industries, there is not enough work for us all to do.

Against great difficulties we have kept our union alive through the

war. We want to make sure our union continues to be able to help

asking you for help in the same way that in the past we have given

We would like to send to Britain the following delegation to discuss

our problems with you: Fikret Suljic (president of federation), Luka

Bradaric (vice-president of federation), Resad Husagic (secretary

of Tuzla miners), Tihomir Babic (mining technician and translator).

Uganda '96

African Liberation Support Campaign/Uganda Joint Working

Platform for Democracy: 'Building a task force network for

democracy'. To April 1996.

Umoja Theatre, The Base, 59 Bethwin Road, Camberwell, London

SE5, 1pm-6pm. Sundays 10 and 24 Mar, 7 and 21 Apr

Case 4, Sunday 24 March: The National Liberal Party (NLP) and

comparative parties in Africa

We look forward to meeting you as soon as possible.

Tel: 00 387 75 212 111 ext 594. Fax: 00 387 75 821 422.

Fikret Suljic, union president, Tuzla, 11 March

Address: Mije Kerosevica Cuje 1, 75000 Tuzla

help to other workers around the world when they had problems.

But right now our situation is very hard. We need help. We are

demobilised and need their jobs back but with destroyed

struggle. We have worked throughout the war without pay. All

equipment is worn out and much is now useless. Our mining

towns have often been surrounded and blockaded.

We are facing privatisation and an uncertain future

defend the rights of our miners.

of Bosnia-Herzegovina have suffered a terrible aggression aimed

From Autonomous Trade Union of Coal Mine Workers, Republic of

tuals would be nothing more than a trade union organisation. That is not to say we cannot make our own intellectuals and scientists

There is more to be said. These are snapshots of a 'big meeting' - I'll soon be reporting at my local meeting on the issues raised at the conference. Thank

John Rees

A long way to go

THE need for a new workingclass socialist party along internationalist lines, outlook and policy is an immediate require-

conference on 16 March, I made the discovery that there is still a lot of hard work ahead to accomplish this historical task and that we have a long way to go.

If it hadn't been for the Liverdockers, Women of the Waterfront and some clear speakers like Cliff Slaughter and John Rees, the conference would have floundered. There was no real down-to-earth discussion and all some people were doing was tub-thumping.

conference there must be more organisational thought on how we can ensure people can participate more fully in the overall development of the workingclass socialist party. The October conference must be extended to a format must be different from the 16 March conference.

This is only a suggestion. My own feeling is there need to be workshops/group discussions on topics such as:

- Working-class internation-

from our own class!

you for organising the event.

Having gone to the 'discussion'

As we prepare for the October weekend at the very least and the

- Democratic centralism.
- Why we cannot support
 - Parliament or revolution.

- Unemployment.
- Education/NHS cutbacks. Homelessness.
- The environment.
- Working-class history. ■ The Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism.
- Trade unions, workers' control and syndicalism.
- Developing our own media. These are just some ideas and

are not being presented as hard and fast. They are subjects which need to be looked at very thoroughly in our organisational development and progress.

BMcD London SW2

Morals, leadership and education

IT IS unclear what James Young is arguing in 'We must rediscover history and culture' (9 March).

Is he arguing against those who think that workers need Marxist intellectuals to help them develop socialist conscious-

Or is he arguing that socialists will gain a 'crucial avant-garde directing role' over the class struggle if only they live up to their 'egalitarian and libertarian ideals'?

If it is the latter, then Young shares with the world's religions the notion that leaders will gain the authority to direct the masses by virtue of their moral qualities.

He forgets Marx's insight that alienation, exploitation and oppression constantly intervene to prevent the best leaders from living up to their ideals. Communism, from this perspective, is no moral ideal. It is the social reality in which individuals can, for the first time in history, live as decent human beings.

The idea of leadership as moral direction is an ancient one. In the 18th century it was superceded by the idea of a philosophically and scientifically enlightened leadership. In turn, this was negated by a leadership both furthering Marx's critique of political economy and practically committed to proletarian self-emancipation and class con-quest of political and economic

For example, it was not workers' recognition of Marx's moral qualities that brought him into the First International. It was his intellectual achievement. Despite their inability to live up to moral ideals, workers will welcome contemporary Marxists into any new emerging international through an appreciation of their intellectual calibre.

Marxist leadership is rarely found in the intelligentsia. Capitalism created this insecure social layer precisely to control and confuse the thinking and activity of the proletariat worldwide. Because so many members of the are employed intelligentsia directly or indirectly by governments, their political and ecoideas tend to social-democratic and national-

On the other hand, there are only a few workers who have the leisure or resources to develop themselves as Marxist intellectuals. A Marxist newspaper, therefore, would need to be clear that its chief role was to educate its readers in philosophy and political economy. No such newspaper can flourish without a milieu that encourages people to 'dare to know', to develop concepts for themselves and to think critically. The training of Marxist leaders therefore requires regular, well-structured lectures, classes and study groups.

James Young writes of the 'unconscious' socialism Marx found in the writings of 19th-century poet and novelists. This is not true of today's creative writers. The best of these tend to reflect the misery, misanthropy and barbarism of a decaying capitalism.

intelligentsia wordlwide had made most contemporary work ers into 'unconscious' socia democrats or nationalists. A pristine socialist consciousness wil not be created by bringing the most militant leaders of the proletariat into a political party This has always been a mystica idea. A disciplined and thorough programme of Marxist education

Now that Stalinism is dying socialists have the best chance to go beyond Marx's, Trotsky's or Luxemburg's achievements since the Bolshevik revolution. Despite the work involved, it will be easier because socialists stand or

Paul B. Smitl

Socialist Labour Party

IT IS good to see that my long letter has provoked a respons from both north and south of th border and I'm pleased that Terr Brotherstone (Letters, 9 March considers that it 'merits deep thought and wide discussion'.

As regards the Militan Labour launch of their counte initiative to the SLP — the Socialist Alliance — I really need convincing that despite the apparent open nature of the Scottick Socialist Alliance — 1881 tish Socialist Alliance, Militan Labour has had a 'Road to Damas cus' conversion.

They have a long history as a 'enclosed order' and in London a least there are no signs of publi meetings being organised as preliminary to a national launc of their new organisation. No one advertisement for any meet ing of the Socalist Alliance ha yet to grace the pages of Militan In reply to Andrew Burgin three years of discussion has pro duced a conference to discuss new party. All well and good. Bu are we any nearer getting t grips with the sort of structur your average active trade union ists would want to join in order t fight for socialism? I think no The accent has always been o winning 'new forces' and discus sions with the LIT to build ou selves into a new party.

Burgin expresses the alterna tive strategies well. Do we as contend appeal to existing force battered, to a large extent disillu sioned and often defeated in som key struggle - miners, docker lefts leaving the Labour Part after decades of membership. O the purely mythic working class of Burgin 'the working class itself, not "burnt out" but over coming its own crisis of leader ship through struggle an rebuilding its organisation internationally' plus the 'man young people' involved in wha he calls 'non-Marxist' campaigr (i.e. non-class campaigns).

Now again in the best of a

possible worlds we could appoin tion our resources so as to cove all sorts of campaig resources are slim and we have t prioritise those areas central t reinvigoratiog the class strugg and giving the working class one again a sense of its historic mi sion — the overthrow of capita ism. Other forces will be won socialism only to the extent the the workers give a lead. The over whelming response from va-sections of the middle class to th first demonstration called i defence of pit closures indicate that this old Marxist maxim is a true today as it always was. Now is the working class turn

ing to the SLP? I think that it wi and particularly after the ele tion of a Labour governmen This despite the Stalinist const tution with its bans and proscrip Our job is not to use the 'con

stitution' question as a barrie but to see it as a necessary strug gle against the ideological rem nants of Stalinism within the lef in Britain and internationall and the best place to conduct thi struggle is within the SLP itself.

Mike Howgat

OR FAX 0171-387 0569

Socialism and the health service

BY STUART CARTER Psychiatric nurse

SCARCELY a week goes by without a tragic story of someone dying because of deficiencies in the health service.

Last week an official inquiry ten-year-old reported how Nicholas Geldard from Stockport died from a brain haemorrhage while being shunted between four hospitals because no paediatric intensive-care bed could be

On the same day top trans-plant surgeon Sir Roy Caine revealed that 11 of his patients had died in the past year waiting for liver transplants because of a shortage of adult intensive-care

Thursday last week national newspapers highlighted the case of Anthony Smith who suffered from severe paranoia. A month after discharging himself from Derby City general hospital he stabbed to death his mother and 11-year-old brother.

He left a note on his brother's body saying, 'I am sorry David, I love you', then handed himself in at his local medical centre where he told staff: 'It was inevitable.'

In response the health minister evades his responsibilities, as usual, by ordering reviews, reorganisations and, for the mentally III, supervising registers.

However, without resources to provide more beds, more staff and better care these measures make no difference. Meanwhile the move from a planned health service to one ased on the 'internal market' causes ever more chaos and makes it more difficult to prevent such tragedies.

It also means that no health worker's job is secure and no department is safe from closure.

Disillusioned staff are leaving the NHS in increasing numbers and there is a growing problem of nurse shortages. According to figures from the NHS management executive, the turnover of registered nurses, midwives and health visitors has risen from 11 per cent in 1992 to 20 per cent in

The number of registered nurses in the NHS fell by 2.2 per cent between 1989 and 1994 but rose by 70.4 per cent in the private sector (as we know they were all trained by the NHS).

A Gallup poll by public service union UNISON showed that 62 per cent of nurses had considered leaving the NHS in the last year and their top reason was 'the changing nature of the NHS', which was cited by 77 per cent.

Ministers, health service managers, economists and various other commentators would have us believe that rationing of health care is necessary because the demands on the NHS are ever increasing but the resources available are limited.

They say the situation will become worse as people live longer and because medical science has advanced and people therefore expect treatment for more and more things.

This argument is false but it suits right-wing ideologists who want to cut back public provision of health care and boost the pri-

Firstly, we need to look at what makes people ill in the first place and then do something to prevent it.

Good health is not just dependent on the availability of medicines and treatments for illnesses. The health of the popula-tion can be improved by better reduced poverty, better school meals, pollution control and fighting industrial diseases, providing better preventative and primary care and other social measures.

For example, it is well known that unemployment is linked to higher rates of heart disease. Unemployment is also linked to higher rates of depression and other mental illnesses

A recent study of 200 people who had suffered severe mental illness found that only one had a job. It was part-time and they lost it after six months.

The provision of a decent job or some kind of meaningful occupation for a person who has suffered severe mental illness will give them some stability, boost their self-esteem and confidence, provide social contacts and prevent their isolation, give them an income with which to enjoy life more and is more likely to keep them well and out of hospital than any supervision register.

So by improving public health the demands on the health service to cure illnesses can be reduced.

Secondly, advances in medical science actually make many treatments cheaper. For example keyhole surgery and laser treat-ment has reduced the cost of many operations.

Such treatments are quicker, simpler and safer for the patient, with a lower risk of complications, a quicker recovery and a shorter stay in hospital.

Similarly many more drugs and medicines can be made very cheaply, except that the drug companies sell them at a large profit while they are under

Thirdly, the bureaucracy of the internal market is a drain on

diverted to patient care.

In the US, half of health expenditure is on administration. In Britain we are moving this way as enormous amounts of time and money are spent on accounting and contracting.

For example, in the North West recently, several trusts put in rival bids to provide a specialist neurology centre for the

Drawing up a bid and preparing to provide such a service costs thousands of pounds for each trust. However, only one trust wins the contract.

In this case the regional health authority awarded the contract to Manchester Royal Infirmary because it was slightly cheaper than its nearest rival Hope hospital in Salford.

Now Hope hospital is expecting major financial difficulties next year because of money invested in the bid and because their own highly-regarded neurology unit will have to close. It was due to move into new pur-pose built premises later this

This is just one example of the chaos and damage the internal market is causing in the NHS. A planned service would be more efficient and cost-effective.

So for the above reasons it would be possible in a socialist society to provide an effective, efficient, comprehensive, statefunded national health service.

There might still be occasional tragedies which could have been prevented with hindsight. But there would be no need for the present catalogue of deaths and tragedies week after week, from which the government are unwilling and incapable of learn-

Woman of the Waterfront speaks to Newcastle women's group

BY KEITH STANDRING

AS PART of a series of local events in support of the International Week for Women's Rights, Tyneside women leafleted Newcastle town centre on 5 March, on employment and trade union rights.

'Women on the March' was formed in Tyneside in 1994 to campaign on issues ranging from the minimum wage to collecting medicine for Cuban children.

This group was joined by 'Women on the Waterfront' campaigning for support for the 500 sacked Liverpool dockers. In under one hour they had raised over £90 from a street collection.

the evening. Newcastle-on-Tyne Trades
Council hosted a public meeting
which was addressed by Doreen
McNally of WOW.

Doreen said that the dockers lost the issue in 1989 but that 'they have now got their guts back'. She asserted that 'the historical pulse of Liverpool is the docks, due to the city's original status as a trading centre. This is why the dockers

fight against casulaisation is a fight for Liverpool workers as a

Referring with enthusiasm to the early decision of the dockers to internationalise their struggle, Doreen said 'Employers consult with each other globally to do the workers down - why shouldn't the Liverpool dispute become internationalised?' She reported that the recent, week long International Conference of Dockers organised in Liverpool had mobilised port workers on a world-wide basis in support of the Liverpool struggle and had reinforced the already considerable determination of the dockers, their families and the community of Liverpool to defeat the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

Her address concluded with an appeal to all British workers and their families to attend the rally in Liverpool on 23 March and to bring as many banners as possible.

Doreen McNally's spirited and defiant speech drew the applause of her audience and led to a detailed discussion. A collection raised just under £60.

St Patrick beats boneheads

BY JOHN O., Liverpool

JUST as people were ready for the off on this year's St Patrick's parade last Sunday, a motley crew of BNP boneheads and loyalists — most of whom sounded drunk — jumped out of the woodwork with a banner.

This caused the police to halt the procession and allow 20 or so crackpots from the year dot to sing 'Rool Brit-an-Ya'.

The entire procession was

delayed for two or more hours and eventually rerouted, leaving well-wishers and supporters who'd lined the streets stranded, wondering what was going on.

About 300 people had gathered to follow the Olive Mount Majorettes.

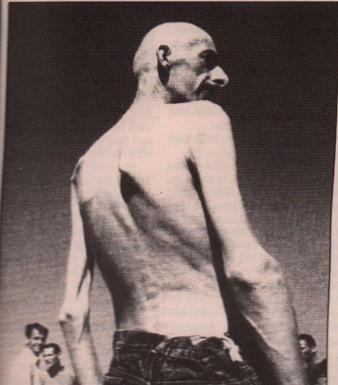
There were green shamrocks and clover tatoos galore as music from the pipe band roared into action. It was one of the first demonstrations in Liverpool over Ireland for almost two decades.

However, a successful week of activities had already gone ahead and more are planned - showing that Liverpool's Irish links are stronger than the bonehead and loyalist cranks and their police friends.

From the Bosnia Solidarity Campaign **NO BOSNIA WAR CRIMES**

COVER-UP!

Investigate mass graves - the truth must be known about 30,000 missing people!



EVERY day brings further proof, it it were needed, of the terrible acts of brutality committed by Serbian nationalists (Chetniks) in Bosnia in their pursuit of

Croatian nationalists are also guilty of atrocities - although to a lesser extent. The Chetniks are desperately trying to hide the evidence, digging up bodies and re-interring them.

They and Croatian national-

ists are protecting indicted war criminals, many of whom are in their territory — and continue to promote the filthy lie that all sides in the Balkans war were equally guilty.

The international war crimes tribunal in the Hague is trying to pursue those who carried out ethnic cleansing but is hampered by substantial underfunding.

There is a danger that it will have to be content with the prosecution of a few lower ranking individuals while those who bear the main responsibility for creating or condoing the policy of genocide go free.

NATO forces in Bosnia say that it is not their job to pursue war criminals. They have clearly stated that they will not provide security for war crimes investigators examining the sites of suspected mass graves, nor will they investigate themselves.

Karadzic, one of the few known indidted war criminals has been allowed to travel freely through NATO checkpoints.

NATO leaders are saving that

other words, the peace agreement has been made with war criminals and those who protect them.

There is no possibility of peace in Bosnia unless those responsible for genocide are prosecuted.

Coming events

INQUIRY MEETING, JUBILEE ROOM, HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY 26 MARCH Start 8pm. Speakers include Guardian journalist Ed Vulliamy and Calum MacDonald MP

DEMONSTRATION SATUR-**DAY 30 MARCH 1996** Assemble 2.00pm St Martins-in-the-Fields Church, Trafalgar Square March 2.30pm to a mass lobby at 10 Downing Street, where a letter will be handed in to John Major from Bosnia survivors of war crimes

IS THERE A MULTI-ETHNIC FUTURE FOR BOSNIA? Public Meeting TUESDAY 16 APRIL 1996 7.30pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn) Bob Myers, Secretary of Works

Release Horacio Panario! Drop charges against all left activists! Stop witch-hunt of the left!

PICKET, 6.00-7.30pm, Monday 25 March 1996. Argentine Embassy, 53 Hans Place, London SW1 (nearest tube station Knights-

HORACIO PANARIO detained (and falsely charged with public order offences) on 2 October 1995 in Zapala in the province of Neuquén, Argentina for his leading role in a demonstration organised by the Unemployed Workers Co-Ordination which demanded payment of a \$200 subsidy they were entitled to from the provincial government.

On the same day the government ordered the arrest of Alcides Christiansen (MAS member and their candidate for state governor) as well as three other members of the UWC.

This demonstration was but one of many struggles that are taking place against the IMFsponsored austerity policies of Menem and (Finance Minister)

Cavallo and applied by all state governors since Menem's re-election in April last year.

Workers, trade unionists all over the world recogbnise in the Menem government policies of privatisation and cuts in social welfare the same policies faced by workers in our own counbtry; this attempt to criminalise trade union and social protests must be stopped now.

We solidarise with the struggle of Argentine trade unionists abnd add our voice to the their demands:

For the immediate release of Panario; drop the charges and rop the arrest warrant for all the

■ Support the struggle of the unemployed for their benefits.

More details of the campaign, which arises out of an attack on an unemployed workers' demonstration in October 1995 in Neuquen, Argentina, are available. Contact address: CARA, PO Box 7268, London E10 6TX.

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

Inside left

Var games

HATEVER the real significance of China missile crisis, anyone my e or older, must have felt the irony news reports on 'China's threat to iwan's independence'.

For decades after the 1948 Chinese volution, US governments prended that Chiang Kai Shek's govnment on Taiwan (they used to call Formosa) was 'China'. It had a seat the UN as such. American magaes featured photographs of USuipped Chinese Nationalist troops rming up beaches, in preparation liberate' the mainland.

As time went on, it became evident at the boot might be on the other Meanwhile, Taiwanese

manded more from life than to proe an offshore base for the remnts of Chiang's White army. And en US capitalists started calculatthere were cheaper and more ofitable ways to penetrate 'Red' ina than with a gunboat.

Seventy years ago, fearing commust insurrection, the British governent sent troops to Shanghai and ing Kong to guard the mills and cks against striking workers. wadays, workers fighting for their hts confront an alliance of Stalin-

bureaucracy and capitalist

The Chinese Communist Party n't wait to get into bed with the big pitalists', says Hong Kong trade ion leader Lee Cheuk Yan. (Guard-

Which is what makes the recent sis so phoney. The Chinese Stalinbureaucracy is not out to chalge imperialism, but to negotiate

tter deals for itself.

Clinton knows this, but it is an ction year, and he has both foreign licy and domestic problems. Sendin the navy may not provide his Iklands factor', but the row with d' China helps take minds off the siness of 'Whitewater', if not blue-

lar joblessness. We must defend the gains of the inese revolution against an offore base for US imperialism. But iwanese people also have rights. hen the Chinese revolution was on march, it could appeal to workers

the imperialist enclaves to join it. wadays, unable to promise liberathe Stalinist bureaucracy pends on secret diplomacy, and ying dangerous games with mis-

News Line, the paper of Sheila rrance's phoney WRP, filled its fire centre-spread the other day th an official statement from the inese Stalinists, without a word of mment. Perhaps they were short of iterial. They're certainly short on

laying with guns

TER its disgusting denials that nationalists carried out mass rder in Bosnia, I half-feared Liv-Marxism would assure us nothuntoward happened in Dunblane. II, not quite. But its ever-comforteditor Mick Hume has written to Guardian on 18 March, expressconcern about calls for stricter controls, and securer schools.

Nothing like the school gym shoothas ever happened in Britain bre. There is nothing to suggest it it will happen again. So why uld we allow this extraordinary ident to determine the degree of urity, surveillance and controls we prepared to accept in our society?" Can the Campaign Against Militawhich Living Marxism sponunite with huntin' and shootin' ires, survivalists and gun-freaks duding the monarchs and pistolking members of parliament)? se the propertied classes' perrenbanner, of individual 'freedom', belief in 'our society'! And whatr happens, remember, it-can'tpen-here — even when it has.

Charlie Pottins

'Crisis in the labour movement' conference

'The working clas

Last Saturday, 16 March, the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference attracted over 200 people to discuss the need for a new socialist party and how it should be formed. We publish here a report by MIKE COOKE of the main speeches from Liverpool dockers Herbie Hollinhead and Tony Russell, Woman of the Waterfront Sue Mitchell, and WRP members Dot Gibson and Cliff Slaughter. Below we publish the main resolution passed overwhelmingly by the conference with a short report on other decisions. On page 6 we report on the

Laying the basis

DOT GIBSON chaired the meeting and opened by saying that since the discussion about the need for a new party had been started in Workers Press more than two years ago, Arthur Scargill had decided to set up his own party, the Socialist Labour

But, she said, the party discussed in Workers Press was different from what Scargill was aiming at. Workers Press believed that such a party couldn't be imposed from above. It had to arise out of the working class itself, out of millions of people, out of struggle.

The Liverpool dock strike where 500 men had been sacked for not crossing a picket line - was a central question for socialists and those working for a new party.

She reported the latest news from the dock strike that the US government had taken out an order against Liverpool dockers' leader Jimmy Nolan and the other shop stewards to stop them coming to picket the Containers Limited's 30,000-tonne ships that operate between the US and Liverpool.

When the Liverpool dockers were working they were able to turn round a ship in 12 hours. Now, with the scabs employed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, this time was extended and this reduced the attraction of the port.

US East Coast dockers' leader John Bowers had come to address a Liverpool mass meeting during the week. He said that he had come because when he had met the pickets sent over to the US to stop the ACL ships he had had the distinct impression that they meant business.

But he was not clear that they represented the dockers as a whole rather than a group of 'hot heads' in the leadership and he had come to the mass meeting to find out.

The Liverpool dockers had rejected a £25,000 pay-off offer and were going from strength to strength. They had held an international conference with 17 ports and 15 countries represented.

The conference didn't just pass resolutions supporting the Liverpool dockers but had formed a new international organisation of dockers. A steering committee is to meet in August.

The aim was to unite dockers worldwide so that no port would be left on its own and that every port would be given any necessary sup-

Gibson then described the character of the Liverpool dockers' mass meetings as 'completely open'. Any papers could be sold. The weekly mass meetings gave the Liverpool dockers' leaders the authority to carry out the decisions of the meet-

women's support group, Women of the Waterfront, was a central feature of the dispute and gave reports to the mass meetings along

Gibson said it was an honour to participate with the Liverpool dockers in their struggle and that they were laying the basis for a new alternative party, a party that would:

Oppose the anti-union laws. Oppose privatisation and casualisation.

She described how when a UNISON from described the plight of a Nigerian working for Liverpool council under threat of deportation, at a dockers' rally, those present had immediately passed a resolution opposing the anti-asylum laws.

There was a Transport and General Workers' Union shop stewards' meeting called by the Liverpool dockers to discuss action across Merseyside going on at the sane time as the conference.

Just ordinary men

THE first to speak was Herbie Hollinhead, a Liverpool dock shop steward who had been on some of the international delegations to seek support for their struggle. He described how on 27 September 1995 the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company had engineered the dispute at the Torside dock.

Eighty young dockers had been sacked within 12 hours.

They leafletted their fellow dockers but had no opportunity to get help from the union. Then, on the Thursday, they had set up a picket line and the other dockers refused to cross. The picket was continued after a mass meeting.

The employer sacked the dockers and issued new contracts, with no union recognition, which they demanded the workers sign to get their jobs back. The dockers ripped

The scab-herding company Drake International bussed in scabs from



erbie Hollinhead

Medway, Glasgow, Northern Ireland ... and Liverpool.

After a week the dockers received

'We were just ordinary men,' said Hollinhead, but the dockers had been changed by the struggle.

He described how the picket line had been organised. There was no way we could beat the police.' So the dockers had organised the picket so there were no arrests although there had been some prosecutions. The pickets behaved admirably,' he said.



At the conference a number of banners were displayed. At the front and Liverpool dockers' banners along with Workers Press council, the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign, the Campaign and Workers Aid for Bosnia.

After the dockers found there was no press coverage they sent delegations up and down the country spreading the word. Money was forthcoming but because of the antiunion laws there was no physical support.

'So we went international.' Wherever the dockers went they found others in the same position. Like in Liverpool, they were being attacked by multinational companies.

Despite their vow not to meet with those on strike, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company had been forced in the last few weeks to meet five shop stewards along with the president of the Transport and General Workers' Union. In the near future Jimmy Nolan was going over to answer the charges in the US.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company had seen £150 million wiped off its share value.

He said the Liverpool dockers were determined to oppose casual work which he described as 'a cancer in this country.'

Answering charges from Liveroool university economist Patrick Minford that the dockers just wanted to increase their pay-off, Hollinhead reported that MDHC directors got, on top of their £150,000 salary, £170,000 in share options and £30,000 in bonuses.

'We're not heroes. We just said "Enough's enough"."

He reported that travelling around Britain had opened the Liverpool dockers' eyes. They were fighting for working people's just rights, to protect the young. The new casual contracts, like those imposed at Tilbury, would result in people getting less than £140 a week and having to top their money up with

He ended by saying: 'We wouldn't crack up our picket line. We wouldn't sell ourselves short.'

LIVERPOOL docker Tony Russell

noted that the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference had brought together many people in different political parties and said that at the beginning of their dispute these parties had asked to be involved.

The Liverpool dockers had said they could and these parties had made the dispute better and had made possible the 3,000 delegations of dockers up and down the country.

The Liverpool dockers had set up picket lines around the world and their wives had joined them. The dock strike had 'turned things upside-down'.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company didn't know what to do. The police didn't know what to do,

He thanked the conference for the invitation there and also thanked those who had helped with the Liverpool dispute and those who helped produce their strike paper the Dockers Charter.

Woman of the Waterfront

SUE MITCHELL spoke from Women of the Waterfront, the Liverpool dockers' women's support group that has 50-strong weekly meetings and that supports the picket line and

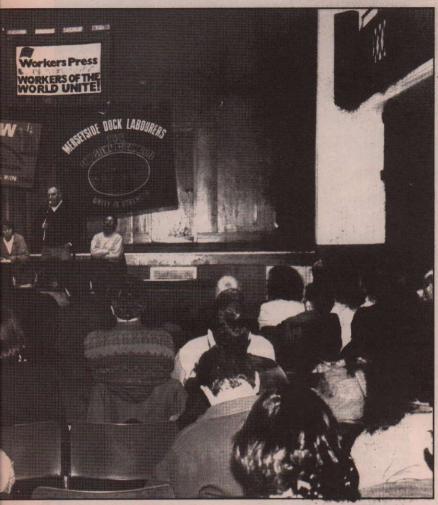
She described how before the dock strike she had been one of many. She had spent 20 years at home bringing up a family. Since the defeat of the 1989 dock strike to defend the National Dock Labour Scheme things had got worse and worse.

The two years before the Liverpool strike started six months ago had been 'the worst two years of my marriage'. She described how her husband had had to work 12- to 15-hour shifts. Her husband had been on the docks for 32 years from the

She said the dock strike lit a fuse in me'. Nobody dreamed the dockers would be given the sack. The new contract specified that there would

The need for a new socialist party

s has vast resources



ront, above the platform, there was the Women of the Water-Around the hall were banners from Tower Hamlets trades African Liberation Support Campaign, the Bosnia Solidarity

be no union recognition. Mitchell said that from her experience of just two years at work she had found 'you need a union at the back of you'.

Women of the Waterfront had been formed two weeks after the dispute started. Mitchell had turned up a day early. 'I was that keen,' she said.

Before Christmas the Women of the Waterfront had concentrated on organising parties but since then



Tony Russell

they had been on many of the delega-

Before the dispute she had thought people were just on their own. She had watched the miners' strike and cried but had done noth-

'But it happened to us and I have been so touched by the support.'

She asked how the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company could damage the 500 families. She attacked casualisation and the employers that were demanding that workers work for a 'pittance'.

She said Women of the Waterfront and others were doing everything they could to spread the word in the face of the fact that MDHC owned the press in Liverpool. 'We're here to tell you what's happened to us and we're going to win,' she said.

'It's not just our fight it's every-

body's fight.'

She described how the Women of the Waterfront had come down with a petition to John Major who had said he would do something. A week later the prime minister had backed the employer.

Labour leader Tony Blair hadn't

helped them either.

Working-class people make this country,' she said. 'After the Thatcher years, the working class has got to fight. I'm not going to sit back any more. I might just be a housewife but I'm going to fight

Gigantic changes

WRP secretary Cliff Slaughter said that he had been in politics since 1946 and had been in bigger meetings but not one as representative of the movement. He knew many of those present who were in the socialist movement and there were many he didn't know. Many there were in the forefront of the struggle.

The meeting was not based on the lowest common denominator. Like everyone else, he had been forced to recognise the gigantic changes taking place. The capitalist system was moving on the offensive against the working class everywhere. This was an expression of its weakness not its

Capitalism needed to increase its

rate of exploitation.

Resistance had to take new forms because the Stalinist system had collapsed and the Labour Party was no longer able to appeal to the working class as its party - it had openly gone over to capitalism.

Before it was able to offer workers reforms, however inadequate. Now it needed to keep the anti-union

laws. Why?

The need for a new party would be forced onto the working class. The time was now arriving and a new vanguard was being forged. And a huge army would come behind this vanguard in the fight against this government and the next.

The existing small parties were not the alternative. The new party would only come out of this move-

ment and not by sticking together these small existing parties.

Slaughter said that it was important not to be hasty in forming the new party but to prepare for the day when millions would come together.

He said that since the WRP had decided at its last congress in February 1995 to work for the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference the Labour Party had galloped to the right and miners' leader Arthur Scargill had decided to declare a new

Many would be attracted to the Socialist Labour Party. But the sort of movement that was needed was one that was not exclusive. This had been shown by the workers' democracy in the dockers' strike. Nobody had been barred from helping them.

The dock strike had been going for almost six months and had shown itself to be the most significant since the miners' strike. Not because of its size but because it was the most representative of what was happening in the workers' movement.

One of the dockers had said that his life had completely changed because of the strike. But they were not changing into people like 'us' in political organisations.

All in the working-class movement had to change. In the past the political groups had to swim 'against the stream'. But now the political movement could swim with the stream on the crest of a real wave in the movement.

A new understanding was needed of the relation between the vanguard and the working class. It was not a 'vanguard' imposed from outside onto the working class but a vanguard that came out of the workers' movement itself.

Slaughter said the fight was not for the sort of 'nationalisation' with control remote from the working class and that gave cheap prices to big business subsidised by workers. What was needed was nationalisation that brought these industries under the control of the working

He attacked the idea that there was not enough money to support the benefits that people needed to survive. 'There's more money about than ever before,' he said.

He said an investigation of public finances was needed and that just as when a company said there was no money 'we say "open the books" so with state finances we need to see who gets what and who needs it.'

Slaughter criticised the view that 'Marxism' was struck in tablets of stone like the Ten Commandments but that Marxism had to study the needs of people today.

He said that this was particularly so when companies like the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company had its hired academics such as Liverpool university professor Minford to



Sue Mitchell

write adverts for it attacking the dockers. Minford was a representative of the 'rational expectations' school of economics. But what was 'rational' about capitalism.

Marx had criticised the view 'capital employs labour' which reflected the way capital worked. The need was for labour to employ 'capital' for its ends. 'Do people only exist to amass capital?', he asked.

Capital now needed super-exploitation of those in work and to dispense with those out of work.

There were people who were 29-years-old on the estates in many cities and towns of Britain who had never had a job. Did they have no

The sparks of resistance would

bring many changes in the movement. There had been a discussion in the WRP about whether there were any 'new forces' coming forward in the working class.

'The working class has vast resources,' said Slaughter. 'The working class made these docks.

Slaughter referred to the speech made by ex-miner Billy Pye at the Liverpool international dockers' conference and published last week in Workers Press where Pye said: '[T]his system cannot ultimately be made to work on our behalf."

Pye had called for an internationalist association of workers, of worker with worker. Such an association would also contain those who strictly speaking were not workers or trade unionists. It would also contain layers that tacitly supported the working-class vanguard which would bring them into struggle for a party to better represent the work-

What was needed was not a proliferation of small parties but a party with provision for all socialist tendencies to work inside it. It shouldn't be a half-way-house party but a bringing together of the working class for the destruction of the capitalist system.

What was need firstly was a network to support the dock strike that would become a network after that dispute was over ready for the next struggle as 'money in the bank', a body for the new party. The network would have to be built internation-

There were some easy but wrong answers to building a new party. It had been a mistake by Arthur Scargill to announce his new party despite the fact that he had rightly earned great respect in the workingclass movement for standing up to the attacks on the miners.

There was a need to work with members of the SLP and in the Socialist Alliances for regional conferences and discussions throughout the length and breadth of the country about a new party and not to wait for the big attacks that would come from a Labour government.

Decisions . . .

Working class NEEDS a new party for socialism

Liverpool dockers' benefits advice worker WILL THOMSON moved the main resolution of the conference. GEOFF PILLING supported the resolution on behalf of Workers Press. It was passed overwhelmingly:

THIS conference resolves that the working class needs a new party for socialism. Now the task is to take the discussion on the programme, organisation and the formation of a new party as widely as possible into the working class.

We affirm that it must be a party of the working class, formed out of its struggles, and not a party 'supplied' to the working class.

Conference constitutes a steering committee, open to all present and all who share this common objective. The next tasks are

■ To organise in every area a report meeting on this conference.

To participate actively in the

main struggle of the day, building a network of support committees for the dockers. This network can be the basis of permanent working-class organisation to support such struggles.

The discussion in every area should firstly centre on how to unite the working class on the problems confronting the dockers, and at the centre of this need for unity is the urgent need for a socialist party.

Out of the dockers' fight must come the bringing together of the vanguard of the working class in one

We must seek every avenue of discussion and united action with members of the Socialist Labour Party and discussion participation with the Socialist Alliances in various areas.

The steering committee should work to set up a 'Policy Research Unit' to assist in all struggles.

Conference resolves to reconvene

in October this year to discuss the

A motion from MARTIN RALPH of Socialist Voice was withdrawn in favour of the main resolution. ANNE MURPHY from the Communist Party of Great Britain provisional central committee put forward a motion calling on 'all partisans of our class to join the Socialist Labour Party in order to forge a revolutionary party'. This was heavily defeated.

The conference sent its greetings to the Autonomous Trade Union of Coalminers in Bosnia, welcomed a proposed visit of a Bosnian miners' delegation and agreed to circulate their appeal letter (see page 2) 'with a view to raising the money needed for their fares'.

The conference also voted support for Irish Republican political prisoners and demanded their unconditional release.

OUTSIDE the school gates the flowers fade and wither. But the pain that tore our hearts when the news from Dunblane Primary School first came through shows no sign of fading as the days go by.

Of all the hundreds of thousands of words that have been spoken and printed about that swift, efficient massacre of 16 little children and their teacher, four stand out as a disgusting abdication: of judgement, of understanding, of responsibility: 'Politics is silent today.'

It was Tony Blair who spoke those words in the House of Commons on 14 March. And his statement eclipsed even the singular maladroitness of the queen's opening of the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds a mere couple of days after the Dunblane massacre.

Instead of pretending that the mass murderer Thomas Hamilton was some kind of one-off aberration, that he was an inexplicable sport rather than the sick product of a terminally sick society, Newlabour's leader would have done better to stay silent himself.

Does Blair not understand that the political and the personal mingle inextricably? That they mingle in the same abominable event? That they mingle in the same stunted, meagre life of 43 years, from its beginning to its bloody end?

Perhaps Blair prefers not to understand. Perhaps he and his canny public relations advisers reckon there are more votes in silence than in stating the truth that, for millions of people in Scotland and elsewhere, brutality and violence — often casual, facile, habitual brutality and violence — are rooted deep in the culture, and that in a comparatively short period they have become an inescapable part of everyday existence.

'Wherever you are in Scotland,' wrote Andrew O'Hagan in the *Guardian* (14 March), 'you don't have to travel far in any direction to find children whose ambition it is to own a gun or hold a knife....

People are living lives at the very edge of extremity; thousands of Scottish youngsters are killing themselves with drugs; pensioners are being robbed and sometimes murdered for the price of a few Temazepam capsules; random terror and ramraiding are among the things to get high on if you're a teenager; many more thousands of people are going missing than ever before....

'We can hate Thomas Hamilton, but we need to know where he came from. He didn't come from nowhere either: he came from Scotland.'

The headline to O'Hagan's article speaks of 'a society which ... is showing signs of deranged and violent breakdown'.

OF Thomas Hamilton's early life we know little and may never know much. His childhood was, it is said, 'confused'. He had been brought up, we are told, to suppose that his mother was his elder sister. The couple he thought were his parents were in fact his grandparents.

grandparents.

His wretched father, who deserted him when he was only 18 months old, now says: I can't live with this I can't take it. I brought

this monster into the world.'
But 'monsters' are made, not born. To label Hamilton thus, to call him 'evil' and leave it at that, is to revert to the dogmatic certainties of the middle ages, when a visiting comet, or the conjunction of planets at the hour of a person's birth, or simply 'original sin' dating back to Adam and Eve, were accounted responsible for

evil deeds in later life.

We need to ask — though it may of course prove impossible to find out — what was done to

PERSONAL COLUMN

Hamilton in childhood and adolescence, or what in the way of love and human warmth was withheld from him in those early years, to produce a personality variously described as 'a misfit', 'reclusive', 'hostile', 'unapproachable', 'sad', 'secretive', and 'completely isolated'.

We need to ask how such a reputedly disturbed person came to be granted a gun licence in 1977, and how he came to be in possession of permits entitling him to possess not one, not two, but six lethal weapons: two .357mm revolvers; two 9mm pistols; a 7.6mm rifle; and a .22mm rifle.

We need also to ask what useful purpose is served by the existence in Stirling, as in many other places, of a shop largely devoted to the sale of such deadly weapons and of the ammunition that is fired from them.

Perhaps the inquiry that has been set up, under a senior Scottish judge, will have the courage to question closely, as has not been done hitherto, those who profit from the manufacture and sale of these weapons — though the small-arms trade, with its royal seal of approval, is of course merely a microcosm of something the British government fosters and profits from on a vastly larger, international, scale.

NO, Mr Blair, 'politics' must not, cannot, shall not, remain 'silent' in the face of those bullet-riddled children's bodies, mown down on the threshold of life by a gun-toting psychopath.

The grieving parents deserve a more rational and more penetrating response than Blair's blinkered sentimentalism which refuses to see the Dunblane atrocity as part of a wider, sinister pattern

Before our eyes, and at an ever-accelerating pace, capitalist society is sinking into barbarism. W.B. Yeats wrote prophetically:

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere The ceremony of innocence is drowned.

There can have been few of us who did not weep for the murdered five-year-olds of Dunblane, whose eager-eyed, hopeful innocence was suddenly and savagely drowned in blood.

And many of us who wept openly when we saw that unbearably poignant class photograph of the victims-to-be are still, days afterwards, weeping inside at an irreparable insult to humanity.

Hundreds of miles from Dunblane, among those who have no connection whatever with the affected families, the pain lingers. The pain those families and their neighbours are enduring does not bear thinking about.

But weeping is not enough. We

must also understand.

And, whether Tony Blair likes it or not, there can be no real understanding of this tragedy that is not basically a political understanding.

The guns belonged to Thomas Hamilton. The finger that squeezed the trigger was his. But the society that created this murderer created him precisely in its own image.

Within that demented brain there was focused, as by a burning-glass, all the greed, selfishness, violence, and brutal egotism of a decaying social system.

And we cannot begin to think straight about Dunblane, nor can we begin to come to terms with the horror and the pain of it, unless we keep this at the forefront of our minds.

Peter Fryer

'Crisis in the labour movement' conference

Working towards unity

A wide range of speakers contributed to the discussion at the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference last Saturday and it is only possible to give the first part. The report will be completed next week.

Keith Standring, organiser of the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign, congratulated Workers Press on taking the initiative of having a meeting with such an open character.

He said that he had been a socialist all his life from the Young Socialists in the North West in the 1960s up to leaving the Labour Party and beyond. He was a national officer of the GMB general union for the six years up to last October.

Tony Blair was a willing and useful tool of the capitalists and the Labour Party had recruited among those satisfied with mailorder politics.

It had become clear to Standring that a new party was needed and he left the Labour Party on May Day last year.

He had taken voluntary early retirement from his union post to dedicate himself to the task of building a new party. He said that trade unions had set up the Labour Party almost 100 years ago because the other parties wouldn't defend the movement's interests. New Labour wasn't doing this.

And yet this was the party to which the money from the political funds would go if people joined the unions now on the crest of a wave of struggle. Why should this happen? 'You don't pay people to mug you,' he declared.

The building of a new party was the task of the working class itself. It was necessary to over-throw all division and sectarianism, to overcome the division between the 'industrial' and 'political' wings of the movement. The Liverpool dock strike had shown the importance of uniting the two wings of the movement.

Militant Labour executive member **Mike Waddington** reported that his organisation's national committee had decided that it was correct to be at the conference.

He said that all serious organisations on the left were considering the question of a new socialist party. 'How can revolutionaries maximise their support?', he asked. Disunity was a curse on the British left and there was a need to normalise the relations between socialists even if they didn't always agree.

The collapse of Stalinism had removed an obstacle from in front of the working-class movement but it had also reinforced the move to the right at the top of the labour movement.

Excluded

Militant Labour had welcomed Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party initiative but it had been excluded by the SLP's constitution. In places like Scotland the Socialist Alliances supported by Militant were more substantial than the SLP.

Waddington then asked what the role of Marxists was to be in the new situation. Marxists were having to reassess the role they had played and would play in the

He reported that Militant had plans to stand 25 candidates in the general election and 120 in the council elections. But that was not sufficient to build a new party.

There was a need for socialists to examine if they could work together and discuss the situation facing the movement. It was clear that there wouldn't be agreement from the outset but disagreements had to be handled in a



Tom Mann, from starting as an 'ordinary' frightener of birds became an extraordinary workers' leader. Here he is seen speaking during the Liverpool dock strike of 1911

proper way. There were no shortcuts. Many had been through the experience of two organisations fusing into ten!

Militant Labour was prepared to work together with others for unity in action and perhaps for a broader revolutionary unity.

WRP member **Simon Pirani** said that the Socialist Labour Party was a very important development.

There were not two separate discussion: one discussion in the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference and one among SLP members. It was one discussion.

The SLP had been formed by setting down its policies and constitution in advance and it wasn't clear whether workers would join it in large numbers.

But like in the miners' strike where when the miners moved forward the leadership supported them, the SLP's character would be determined by its membership. 'The movement won't allow leaders to impose their views in future,' Pirani said.

There was a need for comradely criticism and there was a need to discuss the sort of programme needed for a future party

New Labour was saying you couldn't fight the City of London and the new party would have to meet this challenge.

Although the tasks in Britain weren't the same as in Nigeria and Bosnia there was a need for an international plan and a weakness of the Socialist Labour Party was that it didn't take up these issues.

The movement needed a new party that was bigger and better than all those that existed but there was also a need to consider what could be taken from the past experiences of the move-

In particular Pirani pointed to the founding conference of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International in Budapest in 1989.

Chris, a Socialist Labour Party member and supporter of the Weekly Worker newspaper, said he had joined that party to fight against Arthur Scargill's constitution and to have a debate on the sort of organisation needed by the working class.

He said it wasn't true that the SLP was a closed shop and that it would be a revolutionary organisation if he had his way.

He said it was time to get together and talk. The class needs us to get our ship in order,' he said.

John Rees described the situation in the former mining villages of North Derbyshire and lages in a rural context. Many of the schools in the area had to have breakfast clubs because many children were leaving home in the morning without eating. And in Lincolnshire there were children being born with horrendous defects due to the use of chemicals on the land.

His organisation, Community against Education Cuts in Worksop was fighing the voucher scheme for nursey education because it was the beginning of a voucher scheme for the rest of education.

Slogan

He said a new party couldn't be declared and the old slogan of 'Here we go' wouldn't work any more.

Ordinary people wanted to control their own movement and were preparing now to answer Blair. While the 1980s were characterised by defeats there was a chance 'to make the 1990s ours and the next century our century'.

Camden UNISON chair and WRP member Liz Leicester described the attacks on workers from her Labour-led council.

At one stage the council even wanted a 'lay-off clause' that meant it could save money when workers were surplus to requirements. This had reminded many of the situation on the docks before the National Dock Labour Scheme.

Leicester also stressed the importance of women, one of the potentially most revolutionary sections of the working class. She said there was a need to help women of the working class find their voice. One task was to reclaim International Women's Day which had been established by the working class.

Daniel Robertson spoke of science and the environmental crisis as part of the crisis of capitalism. It was not just the quality of life that was threatened but the very existence of human and all life on the planet.

He also spoke of the global health crisis and the way universities were being forced to concentrate their resources on short-term research. Capitalism wanted to use a perverted understanding of nature to defend itself.

But some of the scientific and technical developments could be used to help the movement. He pointed to the use of the internet in the Liverpool dock strike as an example.

Ian Spencer from the editorial board of the journal Critique said there was a need for dialectical thinking on the revolutionary party since the death of Stalin ism. The Trotskyist parties had been less democratic than the bourgeois parties they had sought to replace.

Sociological rather that Marxist views were often put forward at many left-wing meetings. He criticised calls for nationalisation and said that the working class should be told that unless its struggles create socialism it would be defeated.

Bill Hunter of the International Socialist League, British section of the International Workers League (LIT-CI), talked of how ordinary men and women became 'extraordinary people'.

He described how Tom Man from being a frightener of bird as a child had become a grea leader of the workers' movemen and a founder member of the

Communist Party.

Workers could not live in the old way. The Liverpool docstrike was the concentrate essence of what was happening throughout the world.

Everywhere the crisis was pushing the vanguard forwar and that was why the question of a new party was coming up.

Building worker Tony O'Brie said that the move of the Labou Party leaders to the right was s blatant that they had ditched the just demands of working people fought for over the years.

But where had the left group been in the last 20 years? The had been bound by dogma an sectarianism.

He described how his work place had been picketed by our siders who disowned the organisation of the working claitself. Of course, there was a neet to struggle against bureaucracin the trade unions. But the working class needed its organisation and had to build its unity and it movement against the employer

Afzal Tahir of the Kashmir Lil eration Movement spoke of ho religion divided the Indian sul continent against workers' inteests. Feudal relations meant the many workers didn't even hav legal rights. He was concerned about religious fanaticism in eth nic communities in Britain.

■ Apologies to the meetin

were sent by Steve Drury, leturer at the Open University who was in Eritrea and Peter Glover from Militant Labour in Liverpool said that he wanted to be there but given the situation on Merseyside, with the attacks on firefighters and council workers, was not able to attend. The JJ Fast Food workers were holding a separate meeting on their struggle the same day.

Michael Raptis ('Pablo') 1911-96

ON 17 February, Michael Raptis

— known in the Trotskyist movement by his pen-name Pablo died in Athens at the age of 85.

Raptis began political activity in Athens at the end of the 1920s when he was a Polytechnic stu-

He was a supporter of Leon Trotsky's Left Opposition and a member of the 'Archive of Marxism'. He was to end his days an ideologist of Greek nationalism.

Just a few days before his death he called in interviews and articles for a 'united national front based on the people'.

Pablo's funeral was organised by the Greek government at public expense. Many Greek bourgeois ministers, MPs, generals, ambassadors and bureaucrats together with representatives from the sections of the so-called United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec) there to pay their respects to their theoretical forebear.

Present also were ex-comrades and other onlookers attracted by the media publicity. Condolences were sent by exprime minister Andreas Papandreou, K. Simitis, Russian MPs, Iraq's vice-president and the Serb-nationalist Chetnik general Ratko Mladic.

The Chetnik leader a few weeks ago said on Greek television that he regarded Pablo as his spiritual father!

One of those carrying Pablo's coffin was the former secretary of the Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, Savas Michael.

Factionalism

FROM the first, Pablo's political career — he was known as Speros at the time — was characterised by factionalism. He soon abandoned the 'Archive of Marxism' and joined, in 1934, Pantelis Pouliopoulos's Trotskyist organisation of which future Greek prime minister Andreas Papandreou was also a member.

In August 1936 martial law was declared and Raptis was arrested. Then, without reference to his organisation or having permission from its central committee, he used the influential capitalist circles of his wife's family to gain his freedom. They established contact with the security minister and Pablo was released. He then went to Paris.

The desertion of Pablo provoked protests from the many Trotskyists who were imprisoned in concentration camps and, as a result, a big crisis broke out.

Yet their protests never emerged from the concentration camp cells, never reached Leon Trotsky, never reached the 1938 founding congress of the Fourth International in Paris, in which Raptis took part by virtue of being in the city.

From this heroic generation of Trotskyists some were killed by the fascists, some died inside prisons, others were killed fighting on the side of the partisans, while some hundreds were killed by the Stalinists. Almost none survived.

World War II

DURING World War II, when the contacts between the national sections of the Fourth International were severed, Pablo was elected its secretary. After the war he developed a political line to liquidate the Fourth International in favour of Stalinism.

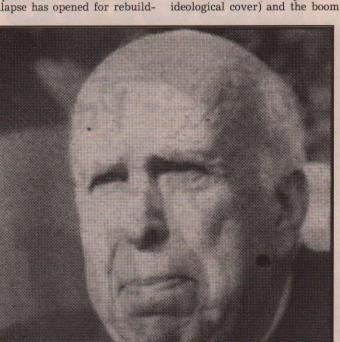
Against this 'Pabloism', the International Committee of the Fourth International (IC) was formed in 1953:

The main achievement of the IC was to resist the liquidation of the movement under the pressure from Stalinism, a pressure transmitted into the Fourth International by Pabloism. For the essence of Pabloism on the theoretical plane was its contention that the Stalinist bureaucracy had a "dual nature", in part progressive, in part reactionary. The conclusion that flowed from this was that Stalinism, under pressure from the masses, could reform itself and become a revolutionary instrument for the working class.

'Had the line of Pablo-Mandel won out, had it not been successfully challenged, then the Fourth International would have been liquidated and it would have been impossible to prepare for the great opportunities and responsibilities that Stalinism's collapse has opened for rebuildvain' (Workers International resolution congress published in The International, No.11, August 1992).

Algeria

MICHAEL RAPTIS (Pablo) disillusioned by the postwar situation within the workers' movement, a situation created by Stalinism (for which he provided



Michael Raptis

ing the Fourth International. It is necessary to approach the history of the IC in the correct spirit that is from the Marxist point of

"Those who are looking for a "pure" history, one without weakness and mistakes, will search in vain. Those who want to see an absolutely clean break between those fighting revisionism and revisionism itself will also look in which developed - abandoned the concept of the working class's revolutionary role.

He tried to find substitutes in the form of the nationalist leaders of the liberation movements. He did not struggle for a revolutionary line inside those movements but became the 'mediator between Stalinism and the nationalist leaders'. For a period he became Cyprus's consul in Algeria. Members of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International (the revisionist body formed by Pablo and Ernest Mandel) worked for the Algerian revolution. An entire arms factory was organised with limited physical means.

Theodosis O. Thomadakis, a member of the movement and technician from Greece, who had worked in this factory, wrote 11

years ago:

The central technical problems had been basically overcome. When Pablo visited the factory for the first time, at the beginning of 1960, production was in full flow. Problems arose because of the capitulation of Pablo to the petty-bourgeois leadership of the FLN [the Algerian liberation movement led by Ben Belal. These soon created an unbearable situation of disintegration inside the group.

'D. Livieratos, appointed by Pablo as the organiser of the group, was absent for long periods, employed in keeping the connection between the International Secretariat of Pablo and the FLN. He communicated to us the message that we had the right to make propaganda of our ideas. But it was strictly prohibited to make any criticism of the FLN or to recruit Algerian members into our

'Pablo made this clear during his visit, particularly to me because he saw the high status and impact of our group among the Algerian fighters. I insisted on the necessity of organising a Trotskyist force inside the FLN Between his words of advice and his threatening explanations, he said: "We don't want five, 500 or 5,000. We want the whole FLN. The leadership is close to us." He repeated the same in Greek in order to be understood better. Pablo was subservient to Ferhan Abbas and he demanded the subjection of all of us.

'At the same time, the local FLN leadership, while they treated the Algerian fighters in the most brutal way, tried to keep us at a distance from the fighters.

We are not writing the whole history . . . but we are trying to sketch the maze that the heroic struggle which a people in rebellion passed through and how it was betrayed by the Pabloite revisionists.

We have to say that Pablo because of his activities in Algeria - was arrested by the Dutch police and imprisoned for 15 months.

Expulsion

IN 1964, Pablo and his supporters were expelled by USec in a coup d'etat which took place with no democratically-based discussions inside the movement. While Pablo admired Khrushchev, Mandel deferred to Mao and the Stalinist leadership in China.

After this Pablo continued to have a small international current. At the same time he moved from country to country and gave advice to various capitalist poli-

Pablo was a personal friend of Tito in Yugoslavia, with whom he collaborated after World War II, and of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in Cuba. He was also very close to Allende in Chile and Carvallo in Portugal after the fall of the dictatorship there.

He organised the escape of political prisoners from several countries and kept personal relationships with Gaddafi, the Libyan president, right up to the end of his life a few weeks ago.

He collaborated with the

Palestine Liberation Organisation and organised international meetings for the lifting of the embargo on Iraq.

Greece

Pablo had left Greece in the 1930s and returned after the fall of the dictators in 1974. He had entered Greece illegally twice. The first time was in 1946 for the illegal congress of the Greek section of the Fourth International.

The second was in 1967 just before the dictatorship. During the dictatorship he assisted several resistance organisations. Finally he brought these organisations behind the leadership of Andreas Papandreou and the capitalist ruling class.

Pablo and his followers

played an important role in the founding of PASOK in 1974 — a bourgeois-populist movement representing Greek capital. Yet Papandreou, after he had used them, drove Pablo's supporters out of PASOK.

Return to USec

IN May 1993, USec decided to readmit Pablo and his current despite protests from the majority of the Greek section.

However, revelations in the French press about his collaboration with the Serb Chetnik leader Radovan Karadzic and with sections of the Greek bourgeoisie — as well as a series of articles in Workers Press — compelled USec's opportunist leadership to pretend they had expelled Pablo. But the truth is that Pablo had the title 'member' until his death.

End

IN his last years, Pablo eagerly engaged in defending Karadzic and Serb nationalism. It was Pablo who mediated for the meeting between Karadzic and Papandreou two years ago. The Greek press reported prominently his nationalist activity.

Simultaneously he organised several international congresses that had no relation to the workers' movement and which were financed by Greek shipowners, bourgeois institutions, and so on.

This radical cosmopolitan having abandoned the working class, then seeing his hopes for the self-reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy demolished and the leaderships of the nationalliberation movements capitu-lating to imperialism — became a nationalist!

In his everyday life he was polite and generous - as his exfollowers have told me - and he always defended those who were persecuted by the state.

Throughout his long years of adventurism and opportunism he was never concerned with a search for privilege or wealth, but was motivated by the sinthat methods he was struggling against capitalist barbarism.

The personal journey of Pablo cannot be separated from the international social framework and the international class struggle from the 1920s onward.

It is not accidental that the vast majority of his political opponents within the Trotskyist movement eventually succumbed to the same forces as Pablo.

It is time to raise again the flag of the Permanent Revolution which was slandered and distorted in so many ways by the Stalinists, social democrats and many so-called Trotskyists.

Nikos Loukidis

Letters

More letters on page 2

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Palestine and violence

I HAVE been surprised, not to say shocked, by the article 'Atrocities don't advance Palestinian Cause' by David Dorfman (Workers Press, 9 March).

Any article about this question, especially when it is the only one in that issue, should start from making clear two or three

A clear and unambiguous condemnation of the terrorism of the Zionist state of Israel which means also of Shimon Perez — against the Palestinian

They have invaded and occupied their land, they have more than a thousand Palestinian male and female prisoners in jail, many of them continuously subject to torture.

They feel completely free to kill any Palestine man or woman they don't need for work and have already killed many thousands of them. No mention is made of that terrorism in the bourgeois press.

An international conference at Charm el-Cheikh against 'terrorism' - that means against the Palestine people and in support - occupies the headlines. Israel is applauded, even when bombing the houses of Palestinians who are the relatives of the authors of the attack.

Clinton gives Israel a present of \$100 million for doing that work with the full backing of the intelligence services, etc. We should not start an article with a condemnation of killing Israeli civilians and then not even men-

A clear and unambiguous condemnation of Arafat and his co-operation with that Zionist state as the greatest treason of the Palestinian leadership.

Now Arafat has even taken over some repressive tasks from the Israeli police, against the Palestine people in the regions that are no longer officially occupied by Israel.

A clear and unambiguous support of the Palestine people and their liberation struggle.

Only after clearly stating this can we eventually discuss the methods that the Palestinian people use in their struggle. But even on that point, the statement is ambiguous.

The article in Workers Press says 'Hamas offers no way forward. Behind unreal visions of an Islamic state, its leaders want to supplant the PLO at the conference table and strike their own deals.

This is a political discussion about the petty-bourgeois leadership of Hamas and I probably would agree with the author in a lot of questions about that. Or perhaps not.

But the fact of using 'violence' is not the argument against the policy of Hamas. In the bourgeois press, 'violence' is condemned in the abstract when it is the violence of the oppressed.

Sometimes they condemn 'the violence of both sides', in abstract, as did Amr Moussa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, the host of the Charm el-Cheikh con-

But for a Marxist, violence is first of all the violence of one class against the other. Only after stating that clearly, and when no

with one class against the other, can we discuss the methods used by our class.

The Zionist state and Shimon Perez are the other class. Arafat is an agent of the other class in an organisation of our class, and the Hamas militants bombing Israeli buses are heroic fighters of our class, even when I don't agree with their method of individual terrorism.

CHARLIE POTTINS replies: DUE to an error in the 9 March

issue, my comment on the bombings in Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities was bylined as from David Dorfman. Although Dave shares similar views, I must claim responsibility.

My comment did not omit to mention that Israeli armed forces had killed Palestinian children in Lebanon and in occupied Palestine. It also accused the PLO leadership of betraying the Intifada 'for a mess of pottage', and expressed sympathy with the bitterness of Palestinian youth in the refugee

I thought this was clear and unambiguous. I didn't have time and space for a long manifesto. But I assure comrade JV, whom I welcome as a new reader, that Workers Press has consistently covered developments in the Palestinian struggle, and made its position clear.

As a communist I do not condemn 'violence' in general, because I know that the working class and oppressed peoples are compelled to use it by the vio-

I said nothing about 'violence in the abstract'; nor was that my 'argument against the policy of Hamas' (whose leadership is not just 'petty-bourgeois', but reactionary).

On the contrary, I saluted those Palestinian fighters who struck real blows against the Zionist state, by attacking military targets.

But it will take more than comrade JV's cloudy rhetoric to convince me, or most workers, that blowing up children or people travelling to work in the rush-hour is a blow for 'our class' against the state, whether in Tel Aviv or London.

And to pretend that every act violence is 'the violence of one class against another' strikes me as nonsense, especially after Dunblane.

My comment referred to the bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism. JV prefers to describe Arafat as 'an agent', thus making an individual rather than class characterisation.

The PLO is not 'an organisation of our class', as JV seems to imagine. That isn't to dismiss its importance as a national movement, in the development of the Palestinian working class.

As for Hamas, it has been backed by reactionary regimes, and its outlook has nothing to do with democratic, let alone socialist, perspectives.

It may use the most desperate Palestinian youth and their courage, but it doesn't make them class fighters, and it offers no way forward. Marxists have to be clear about these things, and about which means help advance the struggle. We are not

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Bosnia after Dayton: Time for people to meet

BOSNIANS who want a democratic, multi-cultural future for their country and all its people are urging international supporters to join them for a conference this summer on what to do in the aftermath of the war and the Dayton agreement.

The call, from the Tuzla Civic Forum, comes as former Bosnian prime minister Haris Siladzic warned that his country was being 'dismembered' under the Dayton deal.

Siladzic cited the continued partition of Mostar, and the exodus of Sarajevo Serbs — blamed on intimidation by the Serb nationalist leadership, and harassment by some Muslims.

The international community let those who could order people to leave free to finalise the job of ethnic cleansing and genocide,' Siladzic told the Daily Telegraph's Robert Fox ('Dayton deal is tearing my nation to pieces",

Accusing his former col-leagues in the ruling SDA party of abandoning their democratic aims, Siladzic said 'some political circles actually prefer to bow to the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina, living in small national ghettos, or feudal statelets.'

The Tuzla Civic Forum conisists of academics, trade unionists, professional and community workers who have striven to keep their multi-ethnic mining and industrial area together and democratic throughout the war.

Last Autumn they hosted delegates from abroad and from all the republics of former Yugoslavia attending the Helsinki Citizens Assembly.

Message

Recently, together with Sara-jevo's independent Circle 99, they took their message to the public in Serbia and Montenegro.

Now they want to spread the movement, and say international solidarity can be a vital boost. In discussions with Workers Aid for Bosnia, the Civic Forum has proposed holding an international conference in Zenica, the central Bosnian steel town which, notwithstanding the dominance of President Izetbegovic's Muslim

ing-class tradition and intellec-tual dissidence (including an independent television station NTV Zetel).

In a draft conference call sent to Workers Press, the Tuzla Civic Forum says:

FOR four years the right of all people to live and work together in peace has been subject to a genocidal onslaught by nationalists, above all by Greater Serbian nationalists. The barbaric idea of ethnically pure states has been supported, actively or passively, by all the Great Powers of the socalled 'international democratic community'.

Strength

If the civilians of Bosnia and Herzegovina had not found the courage, strength and resourcefulness to fight back against racism and fascism then today not only would there be no Bosnia left but Europe itself would be one further step along the road back to the Dark Ages.

Following the Dayton treaty the shelling has stopped but 60,000 UN Implementation Force (IFOR) troops are patrolling and preserving the lines of division created by the ethnic cleansers.

We need the solidarity of people around the world to overcome these divisions. The peace reveals to everyone the destruction of the war. All means of production are destroyed or barely functioning.

Already there is mass unemployment and now thousands of soldiers are being demobilised and have no jobs to return to. Millions of refugees, inside and outside of Bosnia, cannot return to their homes since the people who organised their violent expulsion are still walking around, free and powerful.

Mass unemployment means there can be no society of any kind. But production cannot be restarted without capital, and today that can only come from outside. Will this investment happen? Will it be at the expense of Bosnian people or for their

We need urgently to discuss our future with all the peple around the world who have stood by us throughout the war. We need help from all progressive people, trade unions, nonnationalistic parties, civic movements academic SDA, remains a centre of work- young people - everyone who

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wants to stop the further rise of

To reconstruct undivided, multi-cultural Bosnian and Herzegovina we need international solidarity to ensure:

■ The investigation and bringing to account of all those who were complicit in genocide.

■ The right of all refugees and expelled people to return

■ The restoration of production under full control of the civilians of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A strong independent trade union movement.

■ A strong independent media.

■ The overcoming of four ears of academic and cultural



Nationalist forces still threaten the lives of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Knights' of Terror in Banja Luka but it's safe for war criminals

criminal

SERBS in northern Bosnia who dare to disagree with the Serb nationalists running their area have joined Croats and Muslims as targets for right-wing terror.

Most Muslims and Croats were either killed or driven out of the Banja Luka area by the Serb Chetniks. The town is now the headquarters for British troops of the US-commanded 'peace' implementation force (IFOR).

But Dr Radovan Karadzic's nationalist 'Republika Srpska' remains in charge, and doesn't like opposition. A report in the Banja Luka paper Novi Profil says there is a 'black list with Serbs' names'.

Milorad Dodig, leader of a group in the Bosnian Serb assembly, told them: 'I heard that I am on the top of a black list. They threatened me and other members of the party leadership with arrests, and death.

Banja Luka's other newspaper Nezavisni list says a secret order of Serb national monarchist 'Knights of Revenge' has been set up on the territory of the 'Republika Srpska'.

'The Knights' are blamed for the murder of a Serb councillor

from Sanski Most who objected to Karadzic's attempt to trade his town for parts of Sarajevo.

war

Wanted

Karadzic is one Serb who feels safe on the streets of Banja Luka. He recently addressed his supporters in the town hall there, while British troops were on guard outside. NATO spokeswoman Major

Carol Haig said the troops had seen the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb 'President' several times, but didn't want to arrest him for fear of starting a firefight.

'At each sighting he was surrounded by numerous armed guards and, at times, crowds of civilians,' Major Haig told reporters. The soldiers felt unable to confront Karadzic's bodyguards. 'Had they tried to do so, civilian and military casualties would have been inevitable.'

Previously, British officers had claimed they didn't know what Karadzic looked like, or whether he was on the wanted list. NATO commanders say catching war criminals is not their business.

There are US forces with armour stationed around Han Pijesak, the main base of General Mladic. The Chetnik commander has been indicted by the international war crimes tribunal for the deaths of thousands of Bosnians. But the US troops steer well clear in case they meet him.

Fifty miles southeast, not far from Sarajevo, is Kiseljak, where Croat militia leader Ivaca Radic hangs out. He has been indicted for the killing of 16 Muslim civilians in an 'ethnic cleansing' campaign in 1993.

Game

US soldiers went to Kiseljak on New Years Day, but only for a 'Bosnia Bowl' football game.

While war criminals move freely, the freedom of movement and right of refugees to return promised under Dayton have been put to the test recently around Doboj, west of Tuzla. Bosnian forces came close to taking Doboj in their offensive before the Dayton cease-fire.

Lying in the Bosna valley north of mount Ozren, the town guards the vital neck of Serbheld territory linking Banja Luka to Serbia, which also cuts across

Late in February the Chetniks increased the number of checkpoints and began stopping visitors. Serb police and gangs have been preventing Muslim and even Serbian refugees from visiting relatives or reclaiming their homes and property in the area.

NATO's 'peace' Implementa-tion Force (IFOR), like the UN 'Protection Force' before it, has been reluctant to interfere with the Chetnik blockade. Officers say freedom of movement is the business of the UN's police force, which has hardly begun to appear on the scene.

Serge Klarsfeld, the French lawyer who helped bring Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie to trial, was expelled from Serbheld Bosnia after urging Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic to turn themselves in to the international tribunal in the

'I don't know how much time it will take for the Serbs of Bosnia to be embarrassed by them, but it will happen,' Klarsfeld predicted. But with the murderers still ruling the roost, and terrorising opponents, who will bell the cat?

Israel makes innocents suffer, and reinforces resistance

BY DAVID DORFMAN

NEWBORN infants and elderly people have been among the innocent Palestinian victims of the Israeli government's clamp-down on 'Palestinian terror' since the suicide bombings in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in which 62 people

Hanan Mustafa Zayed, 25, was being rushed to hospital by her husband Omar when they were stopped at an Israel military checkpoint on the road to Bethle-

The soldiers kept the couple there for 45 minutes, laughing as Hanan gave birth to twins in the back of the car. Hanan and Omar

hour late, with one baby dead and the other dying.

Two elderly people died in a village near Jerusalem because they could not be got to hospital, and a baby from Qalqilya died of an asthma attack while his parents were held up at an Israeli checkpoint.

Palestinian hopitals reported shortages of medicines and of medical staff who were prevented from travelling to work.

Ahmed Yunis, a physiotherapist who teaches at Bethlehem University, found himself stranded with his nine-monthold son Umaya, in Gaza, where he had gone to visit his parents.

Because of the closure they could not rejoin Umaya's mother, Jo Simister, a Quaker aid worker at Abu Dis, in the West Bank. The clampdown has caused massive unemployment and shortages.

Even funerals have been held up, and villagers have had to sneak out on mountain tracks to bury their dead.

Killing

Not satisfied with killing Yehiya Ayash — the Hamas bomb-maker whose assassination on 5 January sparked the recent bombings — the Israeli forces

blew up his family's home.

'Why didn't they punish the home town of Yitzhak Rabin's Jewish murderer?,' asked a neighbour. 'Why didn't they blow up his family's house and throw them on the streets?...

'How can there be real peace when one people controls the lives of another?

The clampdown has only served to reinforce resistance by rubbing in the fact that despite Palestinian 'autonomy', Israeli forces still occupy and dominate the country.

Many ordinary Palestinians expressed their bitterness also against Yasser Arafat.

He has been trying to impress his Western backers with his authority by ordering police raids in which, it is alleged, schools and other civilian projects run by Hamas were wrecked.

Polls show Palestinian opinion turning heavily against Arafat, only recently elected 'president'.

arrived at the hospital over an

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