VEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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### MAMPLE S The most important task: Reconstruction of working-class internationalism BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER WRP secretary

MAY DAY is our day, he day of the working lass in its internaional unity. It is the lay when we celebrate he worldwide struggle or the socialist future.

On this same day we pay iomage to the many thouands who have given their ives in that struggle. We send ur messages of solidarity to hose in dozens of countries who still today are not afraid o face imprisonment, torture

and death at the hands of repressive dictatorships that defend the rule of capital.

On this May Day 1996 we pool dockers; can mark the beginning of the most important task of our time: reconstruction of working-class internationalism.

On this day many who are fighting for socialism will resolve to carry out over many months the hard work which has now begun to achieve that aim.

reconstruction is before our eves:

■ In the fight of the Liver-

In the mass movements last December in France;

■ In the detemined struggle over three years to bring workers' aid to Bosnia;

■ In the international support for Nigerian trade unionists and for the Ogoni people in their struggle against international capital, The living proof of that in their battle against the

Shell multinational and the military dictatorship that protects its interests;

In the turn of Bangladesh's super-exploited textile workers to international support;

In the resistance to the abuse of elementary rights, to immigration controls and deportation by millions of workers who have been forced by poverty and oppression to seek work in the US and Western Europe.

### Lessons from Liverpool

THE Liverpool dockers were faced with an employer and a government intent on wiping out any future for their children on top of destroying their security, livelihood and basic rights.

The same ruling class had abolished the rights to strike and picket for solidarity action. But a momentous decision was taken by the dockers, with lessons for the whole movement: They turned resolutely to the international working class.

First lesson: There is a ready response. Within weeks not only did international financial support begin to flood in, with pledges of international solidarity action. It was possible to organise an international dockers' conference with delegates from 15 countries and 17 ports within weeks.

Second lesson: The enemy is not this or that employer or even this or that government. It is capital. The of labour, casualisation destruction of employment rights and anti-union, antistrike laws have become the rule everywhere.

### Capital's offensive

BEHIND this is the one great fact that drives forward the reconstruction of workingclass internationalism. The last 20 years of capitalist offensive — anti-union laws, the clawing back of all past gains — is forcing the same struggles on workers in all countries.

This offensive comes not from capital's strength, but from crisis, from weakness. For many years capital could concede 'reforms' and 'welfare state' benefits to workers in the major capitalist countries on the basis of subjecting the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America to unspeakable conditions and brutal oppression.

Now finance capital can no longer be satisfied with this. Unequalled advances in technique should make for abundance and prosperity for all, but cannot so long as capital rules. Under that rule the only function of these great productive powers is the accumulation of more capital.

Capital operates globally. It searches worldwide for raw materials to plunder and for human labour-power at the cheapest price. Peoples of every nation increasingly

work to pay for the rates of interest and profit demanded by the great banks and monopolies.

### Common enemy

RECOGNITION of the common enemy, the common struggle, lies behind the special enthusiasm with which Liverpool mass meetings welcomed delegates from other countries. The same enthusiasm exploded at great mass meetings in France in December, when messages of support from workers in Germany and elsewhere flooded in.

These beginnings of internationalist reconstruction open the way to a real political alternative, a real step forward to building a world party for socialism.

### Solidarity

INTERNATIONAL workingclass unity and socialist victory are the only alternative. Social democracy and Stalinist 'socialism in one country' have failed the working class.

The disintegration of Stalinist regimes and parties, the social democrat and Labourite open abandonment of any claim to represent workers, are no loss. These collapses provide the political conditions to rapidly break down barriers between workers in different countries.

The solidarity movements already begun are highly political, not just industrial they are directed against the capitalist class as a class. They have begun to create a network and a vanguard which are the framework of new parties, part of the world party for socialist revolution.

That is the content of today's conference (27 April), called by the Liverpool dockers, of their supporters. It will be the essence of the international conference on 8 and 9 June called by the International Trade Union Solidarity and the African Liberation Support campaigns.

The Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International and the WRP/Workers Press pledge this May Day to devote all our resources to this fight for a new party, built out of the conscious coming together of all these international struggles.

We send our greetings to workers all over the world engaged in this common fight against capital. Everywhere it begins as a defence of the rights of wage-slaves and passes to the offensive: the fight for world socialism.

### Textile workers' victory

### BY JACKIE VANCE

LOW-PAID workers in north-east London have been given a tremendous boost by another victory for trade unionism at **Euroscene Textiles** following on from JJ Fast Food and Jenny Textiles.

Workers at the Euroscene factory, Harringay, have got their boss to apologise to a worker and to recognise union representation and make some improvements in conditions after six days of strike action and picketing (see picture).

They had been on strike from 17 April when the factory boss physically attacked a machinist who was then sacked.

The sacked worker was on piece work — being paid only for each garment produced - and was replacing a machine part to enable him to earn money when the boss threw a chair at him and screamed abuse.



Immediately over half of the 25 employees, who are mainly Kurdish and Turkish and members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, walked out and set up a picket

Very few of the other workers who were not union members continued to work and replacement workers whom the boss contacted refused to pass the picket line.

Textile workers from other

factories which the strikers leafletted joined the picket line — as did teachers at an adjacent school, the Vale, who collected £80 with the promise of more after hearing a strike delegation.

Euroscene makes expensive jackets for the Top Man retail chain. As well as demanding the reinstatement of the sacked machinist the strikers drew attention to the rotten wages and

conditions. Those not on piece work were paid £2 to £2.75 an hour.

There was no proper place to eat; no air conditioner, fridge or oven.

The picket line at Vale Road was usually a lively affair with constant chanting and Kurdish folk dancing and music.

The North-East London Textile TGWU branch can be contacted at 72 West Green Road, London N15 5NS.

International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign — African Liberation Support Campaign Conference address: PO Box 18, Epsom, KT18 7YR, Britain. Tel/Fax: +441372 721 550

### AN INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE

Trade unions independent of the state and the employers

Democracy in the trade unions
 Workers' internationalism

### AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Saturday - Sunday 8 - 9 June, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Near Holborn. Start 10.30am Saturday, 10am Sunday.

This important conference is convened jointly by the ITUSC and ALISC. It will follow the 'Africa Month' here in Britain. We will be discussing and deciding how to take forward workers' international solidarity in the coming struggles. Delegates will be travelling from Africa, India, Bangladesh, South America, Russia, Ukraine and eastern Europe.

Therefore, rather than have a set attendance fee we are asking you to give whatever you can towards the cost of the conference and the fares of those delegates. A draft resolution will be sent to you, and we ask you to keep in touch during the preparation of the conference and let us have any resolutions and/or written material on the issues you wish to discuss.

Child benefit, p2 ★ Liverpool dockers' support, p3 ★ May Day, p4&5 ★ Germany after 1945, p6 ★ Yale strike, p7 ★ Lebanon, p8

## Labour's latest blow at young people

Labour MPs who last week denounced the Labour leadership's plans for removing child benefit from teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 as a recipe for 'driving many more families into poverty' are

quite right.

This is the latest flagrant breach of Labour Party policy which, on the basis of conference decisions, stands for the retention of the child benefit system in full and its annual updating in line with inflation. Naturally nobody, apart from Blair's inner circle was consulted about the change in policy.

If the proposals of shadow chancellor Gordon Brown were to be implemented some 1 million families would lose their present benefit. The most vulnerable sections of society, one-parent families in particular, would be hardest hit.

For many of those families the present allowance just about makes it possible to keep

their children in further education.

As justification for this reactionary measure Brown, speaking out of the left side of his mouth, claims that under the present arrangement middle-class families use the allowance to help pay fees to private schools. He suggested last week that 25 per cent of 17-year-old pupils whose mothers receive the child allowance are at feepaying schools.

Two Labour MPs, Ken Livingstone and Diane Abbot, in a letter to the Guardian (23 April), challenged that figure, saying that the actual proportion is around one in ten. In other words, Brown's proposal will make further and higher education even more the prerogative of the better-off sec-

tions of the middle class.

In any case, Brown's claim to be withdrawing benefits from the middle class is a complete fraud. Only the week before Clare Short was stamped on by Brown and Labour leader Tony Blair when she tentatively suggested that people earning in excess of £30,000 might be asked under Labour to pay a little more tax.

Naturally the Tories seized on this further swing to the right, with Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley claiming that Brown's announcement was but the thin edge of the wedge. (This coming from Lilley is of course sheer hypocrisy: only last week he announced that poverty in Britain no longer existed!)

But whatever his motives, Lilley is right. This is a further declaration that the erosion of the principle of universal benefits (supposedly enshrined in the postwar Beveridge plans) will continue, and even accelerate, under a Labour government.

The Labour leaders pretend that the money saved from the axing of benefit will be used for 'training' teenagers. Another piece of sheer fraud.

The vast majority of so-called 'training schemes' are a complete sham, involving young people doing mindless, degrading tasks for less than a pittance. Even the very few who do get anything that could remotely be called 'training' end up with no prospect of a job.

Clearly what is needed is not 'child' allowances for young people of 16 years and over, in the controi of their parents, but a proper system of benefits and education grants to give them proper opportunities to become independent and

develop their potentials. But instead capital in its crisis drives more and more young people into poverty and desperation.

ents. At all costs these must be now be crushed. And in this reactionary mission, the ruling class

It has no future for their creative energies and tal-

has the full, unstinting support of the Labour Party leaders.

## Workers Press Defend press freedom

EVRENSEL, a daily newspaper in Turkey, has been ordered to close down by Istanbul No.1 State Security Court.

On 4 April the first court decision was made ordering that the paper should be suspended for a month. On 9 April a further order added 15 days. The paper is still being published pending appeal.

The charge was 'promoting one class over another', an offence under Turkish state law. Arguing for the improvement of working and living conditions can be deemed as breaching this law. The press law clause 5680 SK EK 2/1 was also invoked, and the maximum penalty (one month, rather than the minimum three days) was imposed.

Evrensel has a readership of about 150,000 in Turkey and Europe. It is owned by its readers and most of its reporters work on

a voluntary basis.

It is the only daily paper in Turkey which does not accept sponsorship by private business and which is therefore free to write the truth. It has a reputation for the integrity and responsibility of its reporting.

It is because it dares to speak freely that it has been persecuted. At its launch in June 1995, the paper was prosecuted because of one of its cartoons. Since then Evrensel has been the victim of 37 court cases and has been confiscated by the state 23 times. Its journalists have been detained and beaten up on several occa-

In January this year, the Evrensel correspondent Metin Göktepe was beaten to death by police. A huge protest campaign followed; 40,000 workers demonstrated in Istanbul.

Hundreds of reporters abandoned their cameras as a gesture of protest outside government buildings. Faxes of protest came from all over the world, including the European parliament.

However, although the police involved were temporarily suspended, no charges were brought against them. Death threats against Evrensel journalists con-

This latest attack is a continu-

ation of the Turkish government's offensive against this newspaper.

consistently speaks out for working people and the oppressed Kurdish people and is not afraid to criticise those in power.

The Turkish government's attacks on it are part of an ongoing attack on all democratic organisations - trade unions, political parties and the press generally. Turkey pretends to be a democracy and on this basis is claiming its place in the European Union.

The suspension of Evrensel confounds this claim. The regime clearly wishes to silence all genuine opposition.

In the name of press freedom and basic democracy, we protest.

We call on all democratic organisations and individuals and the press internationally to defend our right to publish by expressing solidarity with us and faxing protests as a matter of urgency to the Turkish government.

Please send your messages of support to:

Evrensel Head office (Istanbul). Tel: 00 90 212 656 3600. Fax: 00 90 212 656 0743.

Evrensel, London Office, Unit 5, Culford House, 1-7 Orsman Road, London N1 5QJ. Tel/Fax: 0171-729 8972. Fax: 0171-275 7245.

Please send your protests to: ■ No.1 State Security Court, Istanbul. Tel/Fax: 00 90 212 227

Minister of Justice Mehmet Agar. Fax: 00 90 312 417 3954.

2761.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz. Fax: 00 90 312 417 0476.

President Suleyman Demirel. Fax: 00 90 312 468 5026.

in Turkey

Evrensel is targeted because it

Workers Press responded to the appeal on the left with the following two letters, one of support and one of protest. We would urge all fighters for democratic rights to respond in their own way to help Evrensel be successful in its appeal before the court. This appeal was brought to our attention at the London support group for the Liverpool dockers in which the largely Turkish and Kurdish workers of the North-East

London Textile TGWU branch

### To Evrensel:

are key participants.

Dear Friends,

We have pleasure in enclosing a copy of the protest we have today sent, as you requested, to the court in Istanbul, the Minister of Justice, the Prime Minister, and the President. We are outraged by the order closing you down - which was made, we understand, the day after you had printed a report of a meeting in support of the Liverpool dock strike. We assure you of our determined support in your struggle for press freedom. We shall do all we can to help.

Greetings and good wishes, Mike Cooke, editor of Workers Press, on behalf of Workers Press editorial board

To No.1 State Security Court, Istanbul, Turkey.

Workers Press

Copies to: Minister of Justice Mehmet Agar; Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz; President Suleyman Demirel.

Dear No.1 State Security Court,

We are writing to protest against the court orders to close down the daily newspaper Evrensel. Press freedom is a basic democratic right and we ask that you respect Evrensel's right to criticise your actions and those of employers, and to defend the rights of workers and oppressed peoples.

If carried out consistently, the charge against Evrensel, that of 'promoting one class over another', would result in all papers in Turkey being closed down.

Apart from Evrensel, all newspapers in Turkey promote the interests of the employing class against workers. Evrensel is the only newspaper that does not accept sponsorship by private business.

The law against 'promoting one class over another' should therefore be repealed.

Yours faithfully,

Mike Cooke, editor of Workers Press, on behalf of Workers Press editorial board

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

'Have Greater Serb national ism, or its influence in the media

Letters

longer than

500 words

WILL be cut

### Inside left

### FISCal fluid

DUE for launch on May Day, Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party isn't standing candidates in every constituency yet, but seems to be catching up with Labour in some respects.

On 2 May, it fields its first local government candidates, including one each in Oldham and Tameside, Greater Manchester. But two selected to stand for Manchester city council 'have been barred by bureaucratic manouevre', according to Weekly Worker (11 April).

Greater Manchester SLP branch heard on 27 March that its previous meeting had breached procedure, because not all members had received written notice that selection would take place.

North-west organiser Phil

Griffin also argued that standing four candidates would overstretch resources. Ian Farrel is sure the Mancunian pair were dropped for their politics. He claims a branch committee member remarked afterwards 'we are not having communists coming in to do a job on the SLP'.

What about Ian Mahoney's assertion in Weekly Worker (4 April): 'There is a state of fluidity in and around the SLP project'? Has it sprung a leak before the launch?

The SLP is still 'fluid', Farrall affirms, and can be won for 'revolution'. 'In a meeting in Oldham on April 10 (was the zero a misprint?) a discussion on the election tactic produced a clear majority in favour of revolution.' Gosh, does the state know?

Though urging that everyone joins the SLP to change it, Weekly Worker reported on 4 April that the 'door-keepers' excluding people like Militant Labour (on the grounds of barring factions) were former Socialist Outlook supporters, themselves a secret faction.

Declaring 'principled opposi-

tion to all witch-hunts', Mark Fischer named ex-Socialist Movement Trade Union Committee people, alleging they had formed a 'Fourth International Supporters Caucus' (FISC) in the SLP, a 'sypathising section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec)'.

For good measure, Weekly Worker's back-page on 11 April was devoted to FISC's enthusiastic report for USec on its plans for the SLP.

Promising more, Mark Fischer said it would expose FISC's 'uncritical subordination to left reformism, its bureaucratic contempt for democracy in the movement', etc.

Sounds like business as usual. Where does working-class struggle come in, you ask? Leave it out, comrades, this is 'left politics'!

### Linesperson!

'WORRIED', of SW London, sends an item from Sunday Kicks, the women's soccer fanzine:

est Group 7, Greece 0-3 Serbia (previously listed as Slovenia).'

got no bounds?', the comrade asks

### There in spirit AN old tale: The young reporter

supposedly covering events i another town, was in his loca pub, phoning a report of a meet ing he hadn't attended, when hi editor interrupted: 'It says on th radio the hall is on fire, so you' better get down there!

Reporting the Mawhinne paint job case, Paul Cheston i the London Evening Standard Monday 15 April, says: 'As th trial opened more than 25 far Left demonstrators, with Mil tant and Socialist Workers Part banners, rallied outside th court.

My informants are adaman neither SWP nor Militant bank ers were there. So where was th Standard's reporter? His paper creative photography depar ment should have 'improved' th European Championship lat- accompanying picture, like the did with John Prescott's bottle. Charlie Pottin

London support group for Liverpool dockers meeting and social East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, East Ham E6 2RP. (District line, East Ham) Friday 3 May, 7pm till late!

Meet the Liverpool dockers! Main speaker: Jimmy Nolan, Merseyside Port Shop Stewards' Committee. Also Vic Turner (Pentonville Five) and Hillingdon strikers

Solidarity night for Liverpool dockers Benefit for the 500 sacked men

Jimmy Nolan, Hillingdon hospital worker, TGWU trade unionist Bill Hodge, TGWU Textile branch secretary Tekin Kartal, Banner Theatre, Irish singer Sean Brady, Grup Subat Türküsü, Turkish singer Rahim Çakil, Halk Oyunlari Folk Dance.

### Tuesday 30 April, 7pm (£3)

Rona Rooms, Shacklewell Lane, Hackney, E8. Organised by North-East London Textile TGWU branch

# US dockers refuse to discharge scab cargo

DOZENS of Los Angeles longshore workers walked off a Japanese vessel which was attempting to unload cargo from Liverpool.

A picket line had been established by two striking Liverpool dockers, Bobby Moreton and Tony Nelson, who were on the US West Coast to help build up support for their strike and to raise funds for their families.

Their picket brought all the US dockers off the ship and truck drivers were backed up for over

BY DANIEL ROBERTSON

wartorn Bosnia were brought home

public meeting in London on 16 April

Bob Myers, of Workers Aid, said that

Tuzla, they had picked up a woman

walking along the road. In the car

The day before, an armed man, a

Croat, had stopped her and asked

her name. When she gave a Muslim

name he shot her two-year-old child.

Her husband had been killed in the

war, she said, 'the boy is all I have

By contrast, the following day in a

some in army uniform, were singing

along to a guitar, eating and drinking

pointing around the tables — 'Serb,

Muslim, Muslim, Croat, Serb, don't

know, doesn't care, . .' Just then the

laughed the friend. 'He's a Slovene.'

cafe in Banovice, young people,

'This is Bosnia,' a friend said,

door opened and a newcomer

entered. 'At last, we're complete',

Branka Magas, of the Alliance to

Defend Bosnia-Herzegovina, who

war. The Dayton agreement

recently visited Sarajevo and Mostar,

described the destruction left by the

also formalised its divisions. Its effect

was to reward Serb aggression and

appeared to unite the country, but

to a Bosnia Solidarity Campaign

recently, driving from Zenica to

she suddenly burst into tears.

The horror — and hopes — of

(picture).

together.

two miles from the terminal waiting to load and discharge cargo. The entire terminal was shut down.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) on the West Coast and the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) on the US East Coast have backed the Liverpool men wherever they have put up a picket.

This latest action in Los Angeles will have a direct effect on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Com-

pany (MDHC) who fired the 500 striking dockers for refusing to cross a picket line six months ago in Liverpool and for fighting casualisation in the port.

West Coast dockers have themselves been fighting efforts to open up non-union port operations and the union-busting operations in Mexico.

With US support the Mexican government has privatised ports and locked up union halls in Veracruz and elsewhere.

Shipping companies hope to

break the back of the ILWU by undercutting the unionised ports of California and and those in British Columbia in Canada.

This latest picket is sure to inspire further support on top of the 27 April conference in Liverpool and the planned city-wide strike there on 1 May.

The international response to the call from the Liverpool dockers is growing evidence that worldwide dockers are seeing the great need for direct international solidarity.

## Scottish TUC supports Liverpool dockers

Workers Fless Salurday 27 April 1990 PAGE 3

### BY TERRY BROTHERSTONE

THIS strike is 'special': it 'is unlawful under the trade union legislation of this government', transport union deputy general secretary Jack Adams told the 99th Scottish TUC annual conference, as he urged delegates to back the six-month-old dispute of the Liverpool dockers.

An emergency motion condemning the actions of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and calling on 'affiliated organisations to offer support to the Family Hardship Fund' was unanimously passed at the conference in Edinburgh last week.

In seconding the motion, Scottish miners' leader Peter Nielson remarked: 'My mind flashes back to 1984.' He detailed parallels with the miners' strike and called for 'total support' for the dockers in their 'honourable and principled struggle'.

An STUC insider later said privately that he could not recall another occasion in recent times when the congress had so openly backed an unofficial and technically illegal dispute.

There was no discussion of the motion but several speakers referred to the dockers in other debates as a way of signalling opposition to the general tone of the conference which wavered between 'New Labour' and 'wait and see'.

Vying for the 'Low Point of the Week' award were shadow Scottish secretary George Robertson and Tory minister Lord Lindsay. The latter is in charge of something at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

While the rambling, pink-faced aristo said something (but what?) about the MCC (Mad Cow Crisis), Robertson was quite clear. He delivered the pure Blair gospel: Expect no favours from us, colleagues.

Delegates listened with remarkable politeness but much preferred shadow foreign secretary Robin Cook. To adapt a W.S. Gilbert Lyric, he said 'nothing in particular but said it very well.'

### Mersey docks dispute motion carried by the Scottish TUC:

That this Congress notes that, following the breakdown in the latest talks between Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and the Transport and General Workers' Union over the Liverpool docks dispute, this dispute has reached new depths of hardship for the sacked workers and their families. We note that:

The dispute has gone on for over six months;

The union side has made every effort to come to an honourable settlement; and,

The TGWU's demand for all workers to receive their jobs back is a fair one.

We call on the Scottish TUC to:

Write to Mersey Docks and
Harbour Company condemning
its action;

Call on affiliated organisations to offer support to the Family Hardship Fund.

Cheques and postal orders for the Liverpool dockers should be made out to: Merseyside Dockers Shop Stewards' Committee. They should be sent to J. Davies, Secretary/Treasurer, 19 Scorton Street, Liverpool L6 4AS.

The Liverpool portworkers' paper, the 'Dockers Charter' costs 50p (20p unwaged) and is available from the same address (add money for postage). Bulk orders by arrangement, phone 0151-207 3388.

# BOSNIA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN. FOR MULTI—ETHNIC BOSNIA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN. FOR MULTI—ETHNIC BOSNIA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN. There was motion but referred to the debates as a opposition to the conference between 'New and see'. Vying for the conference of the conference between 'New and see'.

genocide. IFOR had stood by while Chetniks destroyed areas of Sarajevo.

Bob Myers spoke of the partisans' struggle and how their aims had been betrayed, but lived on in Bosnia's fight for a multi-ethnic life.

Relating the war and nationalism to capitalism, Bob said before the war British Steel had been brought in to advise on the future of the Zenica steel works, and recommended that 70 per cent of the workforce be sacked.

It was the same in Belgrade. Without

splitting the workers it couldn't be done. But optimism survived in Bosnia. Those wishing to divide the country had a difficult job. The question posed in Bosnia — 'Is there a future for multi-ethnicity?' — concerned our future too, he reminded us.

A lively discussion finished on a positive upbeat note when two young Bosnian women spoke, one citing a friend's recent return to Tuzla, where young people were still mixing and singing each others' songs. Both women confidently asserted their belief in a multi-ethnic future.

## South east unions say: 'No blank cheque from will have no blank cheque from

### BY MARY IDE

SPEAKER after speaker went to the rostrum of the South East Region TUC (SERTUC) AGM last weekend to demand Labour and the TUC commit themselves to repeal all anti-union laws.

At the end of the debate on TUC general secretary John Monks's very dull speech, Mick Martin, AEEU engineering union district secretary for west London and SERTUC chair, said:

'Yes, we all want to see the defeat of the Tories, we all want to see a Labour victory — but we must make it quite clear that they

will have no blank cheque from the trade unions.'

The SERTUC pensioners' committee chair declared that it was possible to use pensioners in industrial disputes. Pensioners can't be sued, nor can any union be taken to court because pensioners carry out picketting at the site of the strike, or as secondary pickets. 'Why not ask us for help?', he suggested.

Also discussed was the length of time people are forced to work so as to be able to earn a living. The SERTUC transport committee urged all trade unions to make excessive hours a Health and Safety issue in all industries.

## East End anger at death in custody

### BY BOB ARCHER

MPs, supporters and friends of the family of Ibrahima Sey gathered in East Ham last Thursday for memorial prayers before his body was flown to The Gambia for burial.

Ibrahima was killed in police station on the March this year. He had been brought to the ground, hand-uffed and sprayed with CS gas.

He had earlier submitted peacefully to arrest at his home n Romford Road, Manor Park, and had been taken to the police tation in the company of a

Over 100 people, many of them trawn from the black commutity in Newham, crowded into event, which quite spontateously took on the appearance

of a protest meeting. Relatives and family friends spoke simply but very powerfully of their grief and bewilderment at the death of a peaceful and religious man who was well respected.

Ibrahima was a well known soccer player in The Gambia and had been selected to play for the national team.

Alieu Sey, his brother, pledged that he would continue the campaign to get to the truth about Ibrahima's death when the family returned from the funeral.

'His death will not be in vain', he affirmed.

Muslim and Christian religious leaders spoke out passionately against inhumanity, repression and discrimination.

Labour MPs Stephen Timms and Bernie Grant were strongly applauded when they pledged that deaths in custody would not be allowed to go unquestioned and that the future of tests with CS gas sprays should be reconsidered.

But it was local anti-racist campaigners with a long and honourable record of fighting against discimination in east London who really expressed the strength of feeling at the event.

### **Existence**

Cilius Victor of the Shiji Lapite Memorial Committee recalled how he had only heard of Shiji's existence after his death in police custody:

'This is not a nice way to learn about the existence of another human being', he said angrily. Now the same thing had happened with Ibrahima Sey.

Assad Rehman recalled how many times he had come to

mourn a black victim of violent death at the hands either of the police or of white racists. 'Every time I think, I hope: "no more! This will be the last!".' He called for unity of the whole black community in Newham.

The Ibrahim Sey Memorial Campaign has the following demands:

CS spray trials to be halted immediately.

The officers responsible for Ibrahima's killing to be suspended immediately until an independent public inquity into his death takes place.

The Memorial Campaign is circulating a petition to the home secretary and seeking affiliations. The address is: Ibrahima Sey Memorial Campaign, PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

WORKERS	<b>PRESS</b>	IS THE	PAPER	OF THE
WORKER	SREV	DLUTIO	NARY F	ARTY

	the Workers International (to Rebuild the Fourth International) send me information about the WRP
Name Address	date
Trade union (	if any) Age (if under 21)

Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

## MAY DAY GREET

T&GWU N-E London Textile Branch ong live workers' unity! Struggle in solidarity!

May Day greetings to Workers Press readers and all workers in struggle Long live socialism!

### Workers Aid for Bosnia

sends May Day greetings to people around the world who have supported the struggle to defend an undivided, multi-cultural Bosnia-Herzegovina.

for international solidarity, for unity PO Box 9, Eccles SO Salford M30 7FX





### MERSEY PORT SHOP STEWARDS

On behalf of 500 sacked Liverpool dockers, we extend the hand of friendship to workers, unemployed and the dispossessed all over the world.

We take this opportunity to thank Workers Press for its reports and support for us and to thank all those who have taken a stand in solidarity with our just struggle for reinstatement.

for Workers International Solidarity!

Nolan - Chairman

J. Davies - Secretary

### May Day Celebration PROGRAM:

peakers:

Liverpool striking dockers representative Hillingdon Hospital striking women representative NUI president (personal capacity)

Flame - in presence of the director Ken Leach

Latin American dance and music

Beitish and Irish traditional music and songs by Terry Yarnell and ... Pieces by Iranian guitarist Sirous Malakooti

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

Tuesday 30th April 1996, 6.30 pm Admission Free

Iranian Worker's Left Unity - London Branch

### HAZARDS CAMPAIGN

### **WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY: SUNDAY APRIL 28TH**

REMEMBER THE DEAD AND FIGHT FOR THE LIVING'

awerage in the UK, 450 people are killed in accidents work, terns of thousands are disabled, hundreds of lusands are made unwell or receive minor injuries \_\_ ERM SINGLE YEAR. The annual cost to the country is imated at up to £16 billion. The government's own ery prolice, the Health and Safety Executive, say the taler majority of this is predictable and preventable directly due to the criminal negligence of employers.

whers Wemorial Day is a day for people at work to tanise events and for regional and national events to might these facts using the slogan 'Remember the and fight for the living!

RIMILINGHIAIM Service at Birmingham Cathedral at 11.00am twitted the wretath lawing caremony at a commemorative stone wo builders killed in the building of Birmingham Town Hall at

atth and Safety Advice Centre (0121) 236 0801

INCHESTER Commemorative event consisting of the nting of a memorial tree and the unveiling of a memorial que at the People's History Museum at 11.00am. Glyn Ford-P and Brenda Marsh, a bereaved relative, are among Markers. Greater Manchester Hazards Centre (0161) 953 4037 ITTINGHAM Shirebrook Miners Welfare Unison Brass Band time a commemorative concert in the lower display area. Warket Square, 2.00-4.00pm, supported by a display. mact Unison, Sarah Copsey, National Health & Safety Officer Hope Daley (0171) 388 2366

ILSALL A ceremony will be held at the Memorial Tree side St Martheus Church at 1.30pm. WASH, Contact George

ETER Leafleting local workers over the weekend organised

African Liberation Support Campaign

sends May Day greetings to Workers Press and all workers in struggle

### **AFRICA LIBERATION DAY**

MARCH and RALLY: Sat 25 May 96

Africa: Liberation, not Charity!

ASSEMBLE: 1 pm Kennington Park
(opposite OVAL tube station Northernline)

Rally at SHELL HQ on York Road

MARCH TO PROTEST AGAINST:

EUROPE'S NEO-COLONIAL TYRANTS IN AFRICA. Sanni Abacha (Nigeria); Arap Moi (Kenya); Jerry Rawlings (Ghana); Yoweri Museveni (Uganda); Liamine Zeroual (Algeria); Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire); Omar al Bashir (Sudan); Gnassingbe Eyadema (Togo); Konan Bedie (Iyory Coast); Paul

BEUROPE'S ARMS and OIL DEALS WITH TYRANTS which have resulted in massacres in OGONI, SUDAN & RWANDA and the SHELL sponsored execution of Ken Saro Wiwa and the

**BEXPLOITATION OF AFRICA by MULTINATIONALS.** De Beers and Oppenhelmer (Diamonds & Gold); CADBURY and UNLEVER (Exploitative Trade); LONHRO (Gold and Copper); SHELL & Chevron (Oil).

RARIST ASYLUM & IMMIGRATION LAWS which lead to deportations & death, eg. Joy Gardner; Kwanele Siziba; Joe Nnalue.

POLICE BRUTALITY and BLACK DEATHS IN CUSTODY. Omasase Lumumba; Brian & Wayne Douglas; Shiji Lapite; Ibrahim Sey. THE IMF and WORLD BANK "DEBT-GRIP" ON AFRICA.

Organised by the African Liberation Support Campaign (ALISC)

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### MAY DAY 96 WEDNESDAY IST MAY 1996

LONDON MARCH & RALLY Fighting for Workers Rights

URY PARK (Manor House Gates - by Manor Rouse Tubel 1pm onwards OVE OF ZDM MARCH TO WOOD GREEN COMMON FOR RALLY MAJOR LABOUR MOVEMENT SPEAKERS - including Liverpool Dockers, Hillingdon Hospital strikers, Arthur Scargill President NUM, Margaret Witham GLPA, Barry Camfield Regional Secretary TGWU, Barbara Roche MP (invited)



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MAY DAY MARCH DRIGANISING COMM TITEE

Supported by GLAIC, S&ERTUC, UNISON London Region, TOWU No.1 Region, Greater Luidon - ensioners Austrophysical INTERNATIONAL CHIGANISATIONS from Turkey, Kurdistan, Iran, Iran, Chila, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Italy, Spain, West Indies, Rangia Dush, Srl Lanka, India, Ireland etc. This leafirs supported by CENTURION PRESS (TU)

### LIVERPOOL DOCKERS SUPPORT COMMITTEE Address to send messages of suggest or durations to be blesspeak Part Step Serveris. Contribute to 1994s. Transport House, billingue, UNESPECO, Tue 2001 200 Fee; 01007 200 1004 Picket Drake International

14 - 16 Powis St Woolwich 26th Apr. 12.30cm

They are described as an employment agency, but the real business is to employ

Liverpool Dockers Benefit Up The Creek Greenwich A Night of Music and Comedy Compere Arthur Smith

orefathers won and for the right to collective organisation. Their fight is therefore the fight of millions of men and women throughout Britain, facing uncertainty of employment both day-to-day and long term.

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## Workers Press May/Jun

IT is clear to more and more people that the working-class movement in Britain cannot carry on as it is.

Its traditional political leadership, the Labour Party, abandons everything that in the past it at least claimed to stand for. Blair and company have dumped Clause Four, they have even ditched the traditional Labour pledge to greater equality of income.

When frontbencher Clare Short makes even the mildest noises about the possibility of taxing the rich a bit more heavily she is immediately gagged. The Labour leaders have made clear that the anti-union laws will stay in place, a clear indication that, when necessary, a Blair government will use them against the working class.

For this reason the idea that the working class needs a new political party to really represent its interests is gaining ground rapidly.

Only at decisive historical turning points does the working class contemplate such action. It does not change its parties like someone changes an overcoat.

Because increasing numbers sense that they cannot go on in the old way, the need for a fundamental change is more than in the air.

Looking back on May Day 1996 at the history of the working class movement in Britain it is clear that all the great historical turning points for the movement have taken place at time of great international changes.

Thus it was with the Labour Party, which was born (1900-1906) just as a new epoch in the development world capital was opening up - the epoch referred to by Marxists as that of imperialism — when the relatively peaceful development of capitalism was coming to an end, when an epoch of 'wars and revolutions' was on the agenda.

The working class in Britain, reflecting these international changes, found it could no longer carry on in the old way, could no longer, to use Engels's words, be the great tail wagging the Liberal Party dog.

It had to create its own party, the Labour Party, above all to change the laws that were increasingly restricting the activities of the trade unions. (Here is only one measure of the extent to which times have changed!)

Now the working class must make an even bigger change than it did at the start of the century. For today it faces a new turning point when capitalism can no longer make further concessions to the strength of the working-class movement.

It is clear on all fronts that the gains the movement made in the past are being systematically broken up by the employing class and the capitalist state.

It is often charged that the working class movement in this country has always been insular, narrow in its outlook, concerned only with 'national' questions.

In a certain sense this is true. The world dominance that British capital attained in the last century and

the creation, on the basis of that dominant position, of a 'labour aristocracy' of skilled and relatively privileged workers undoubtedly laid the material basis for such an outlook and the politics that flow from it. These remain important factors that still exist in the labour movement today and ones that will have to be seriously confronted and tackled.

But there is another side to the working class that its present day leaders are at pains to obscure: the revolutionary, internationalist side of the working-class movement in Britain. One of the purposes of our May lectures will be to bring out this side and consider its importance for today.

### **Organised**

Chartism, the movement that erupted in Britain in the 1830s and 1840s and won the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of workers, was seen by Lenin as 'the first broad truly mass and politically organised proletarian revolutionary movement' in the world.

Within the Chartist movement there was a deep division: between the 'moral force' wing - that believed that the ruling class could be forced to give way to the demands of the working class on the basis of sheer strength of argument - and the 'physical force' wing that understood that force would be necessary if the working class was to achieve its social and political objectives.

In the 'moral force' elements of Chartism we can find the embryo of the reformist leaders of the movement who sought, and seek, to tie the working class to purely parliamentary, peaceful, forms of act

Marx collaborated clo the best elements in th movement - with Geo Harney whose paper put first English translation o munist Manifesto - and, Ernest Jones.

There are many less learned from this col especially the way in w and Engels (at the time working in Manchester, t the industrial revolution tood the relationship betw ism and Chartism — in ma mass, spontaneous movem

But involvement Chartist movement was by the limit of Marx and En ticipation in the British class movement.

Although he did not International Working Me ation (set up in 1864 and la as the First International) from the outset centrally i its affairs and soon emer real leader.

It was a body deeply international struggles: and Polish independence, of the struggle in Ireland the northern states in the civil war, and so on.

At the same time it wa on one of the most elemen ciples of the working-cl ment, the struggle to importation into Britain labour during strikes.

It was in the Internat Marx gained real experien with the English trade u their leaders. The alliance

Workers Press — May/June lectur Marxism and the History of British Working-class Moven

SOME LESSONS FOR TODAY

Geoff Pilling (Workers Press editorial boar

Thursdays 9 & 23 May and 6 & 20 Ju 7.30pm

Lucas Arms, 245 Gray's Inn Road, London

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### 1. Chartism and Socialism

The world-historical significance of Chartism. 'The first proletarian revolutionary movement' (Lenin). Marx and Engels's engagement with the Chartists. Engels's Condition of the Working Class. Chartism's two wings: 'moral' and 'physical'. The relationship between socialism (Robert Owen, etc.) and the Chartists. Some lessons for the new party.

### 2. Karl Marx and the British trade union movement

The role of British trade unions in the formation of the International Workingmen's Association (The First International). How Marx saw the International and how he worked in, organised and led it.

### sectarianism in the labour The role of the petty bourg

3. Marx and the Struggl

International. The Proudhoni followers of Bakunin. The fig this tendency by Marx and its historical significance. Th the legal eight-hour day ag who wanted to separate the from the political struggle.

### 4. Frederick Engels and th tions of the Second Internat

The origins of the Second tional, founded in 1889. The struggle for mass trade unio formation. The entry of new new politics in this period. S the East End of London. played by Marx's daughter, the formation of the 'New U the International.

## NGS: 1 May 1996

## e Lectures

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Marx and these leaders in many ways constituted the axis of the work of the International and, once more, there are important lessons to be drawn from this experience for today's tasks.

If Marx was at the heart of the First International, then his life-long friend and collaborator, Frederick Engels, was at the centre of the preparations for the founding of the Second International in 1889. So was Marx's daughter, Eleanor, a tireless and courageous worker in London's East End.

She became an organiser for the new Gasworkers' Union and taught Will Thorne, one of the prominent leaders of the New Unionism, to read and write.

The struggles in the East End of London had a decisive part to play in the formation of the new International, as did the emergence of mass trade unionism among dockers and other groups of workers.

The outburst of mass trade unionism was inspired by the struggle of the most exploited sections of the working class, women in particular. It was thanks largely to Engels that the significance of these events was understood and acted on.

These developments clearly have much contemporary relevance, given the long struggle of the Liverpool dockers and the awakening of trade unionism among some of the lowest paid workers in parts of London today.

We cordially invite you to our May Day lectures. Anybody interested in the past and future of the movement is warmly invited to participate in the discussion.

On international workers' day: Workers of the World Unite!

> CROYDON TRADE UNION COUNCIL



representing 20,000 trade unionists in Croydon

### Kashmir International Front

### May Day greetings to **Workers Press readers!**

May Day is even more important than 20 years ago because it is now understood that workers should, as Marx said, be united from North, South, East and West. The natural historical growth which will ultimately create one world will only be achieved through the class struggle.

Kashmiri workers also struggle along the same lines in alliance with the working class of India and Pakistan against narrow-minded nationalism, fascism and fundamentalism, which are tools in the hands of the ruling class to divide the workers. The workers of the Indian sub-continent have come to realise that India was divided to avoid questions of class and nationalities, and that is why we have faced crisis for the last 47 years. The confrontation between states is actually against the working class and poor classes.



Victorious dockers greeting the end of the 1889 strike, one of the most significant in the history of British trades unionism

### International Trade Union

### Solidarity Campaign

On this May Day - the workers' day. 1996 — we send our warm comradely greetings to workers and their families throughout the world.

We send a message of solidarity and support to workers in struggle.

We particularly convey our special respects and pledge of solidarity to the following labour activists:

Frank Kokori — General Secretary of Nigerian Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers, detained since 4 July 1994 following the strike against the military dictatorship in Nigeria.

Milton Dabibi — General Secretary of the Nigerian Oil and Natural Gas Workers, arrested in February 1996 and detained without charge. 12 Trade unionists in Mexico City -

alleged leadership of Mexican bus drivers union - SATAUR-100, imprisoned for claiming independent unionism. Jorge Garcia Ramirez and Ruben

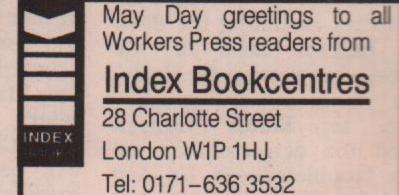
Ventura Galvn — Human rights lawyers on indefinite hunger strike in support of the SATAUR-100 detainees.

Bongani Mkhungo - ITUSC comrade, in hiding with his family in South Africa following a violent physical attack whilst leaf-letting the COSATU anniversary rally in Durban in support of striking Transkei nurses and calling for COSATU to end its political alliance with the Government of National Unity.

We salute you all!!

We in the ITUSC commit ourselves work unceasingly for the establishment of an international and internationalist association organised workers and communities of resistance.

United with our fellow workers worldwide we say on May Day 1996 the class struggle is as alive as ever it was, and together we have a world to win — for socialism!!



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### May Day greetings from



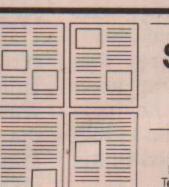
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### Sheer waste

ON the television news on 18 April I saw Mohamed al-Masari briefly interviewed after being told he would not after all be deported to Dominica but could stay in this country for four years, and bring his family in.

'Is this a victory for you?' asked one reporter.

'I see no need to use a military metaphor', was Masari's courteous and subtle reply.

were evidently wasted on Heather Mills, home affairs correspondent of the Independent, who started her story thus (19 April):

'The Saudi dissident Mohamed al-Masari was last night claiming a victory over the Government.'

Masari did win a victory of sorts, but he went out of his way not to claim one. To assert that he did is the sort of thing that gets journalism a bad name.

### East London lie machine

FOR another example of what gives journalism, and certain kinds of journalist, a bad name you don't need to look further than the Newham Recorder, an east London sheet notorious for what local people call its 'lie machine'.

Following the death of Ibrahima Sey in police custody on 16 March Recorder editor Tom Duncan rushed in to bad-mouth the protest demonstration.

Sey, a 29-year-old father of two and a former policeman in The Gambia, was arrested outside his home in Manor Park after a domestic dispute. A friend went with him to Ilford police station.

When he got there he was set upon by a number of police officers, handcuffed, and sprayed with CS gas. He died within minutes.

According to a post-mortem report, his death was the result of 'hypertensive heart disease'. This greatly puzzles all who knew him, for this young man was a dedicated footballer who had been selected for the Gambian national team.

The protest demonstration was attended by the dead man's close family and friends and by members of the local community, including local councillors and refugee groups. There were also representatives of various religious bodies, including the Revd David Haslam, head of the Churches' Commission for Racial Justice.

Even so, Editor Duncan attacked the demonstrators as 'outside troublemakers'. He said the Socialist Workers' Party had crawled from under a stone to stir up hatred of the police.

Then, in his 10 April issue, he published a letter from the Ibrahima Sey Memorial Campaign, which, though it was sent on paper with the distinctive Campaign letterhead, is wrongly attributed to the Newham Monitoring Project.

Duncan returned to his vomit in his comment on this misattributed letter. Publishing a photograph of the demonstrators carrying placards claiming that Ibrahima Sey was 'murdered by police', he produces a minor masterpiece of innuendo and malice.

'The Socialist Workers' Party', writes Duncan, 'know how to take full advantage of situations like this....

'The people in our picture', he adds hastily, 'are probably not members of the SWP, but that's no excuse for spreading blatant lies....

'We're being asked to believe that the police carried out a vicious attack in full view of a witness. To put it mildly, that would be incredibly stupid....

'The fact that a CS spray was used in restraining him adds another dimension to the incident, but there is no reason at this stage to say it contributed to his death....

'[T]here is a vast difference between a truthful interpretation of the facts and the scandalous stories being spread by the Socialist Workers' Party and their mischievous cohorts.'

Now, I hold no brief for the

## COLUMN

SWP. They can stick up for themselves and no doubt will. But it has to be said that this pernicious twaddle about 'outside troublemakers' is the oldest right-wing trick in the book.

It has been trotted out for two Such courtesy and subtlety centuries or more to explain away every strike and protest movement, every action by working people who have dared to stand up for themselves.

Its use to rubbish the Ibrahima Sey protest is a calculated insult to the dead man's family and friends - and to the people of Newham, who have no need of 'outside troublemakers' to arouse their grief and anger at this outrage that was committed in their midst, at this fourth death in police custody over the past year, at this 15th death in police custody over the past five

One of the first tips I was given as a junior reporter on a local paper 50-odd years ago was the need to keep well in with the police.

They were, I was adjured, an excellent source of information, and nothing should be done and above all nothing should be printed — to impair our good relations with them.

Tom Duncan has learnt this lesson well. A police public relations officer couldn't have done a better whitewashing job.

To this blatant insult offered to the local community and to his readers' intelligence, Duncan last week added the injury of suppressing a number of letters the Recorder had received challenging his defence of the police including one from Ibrahima Sey's widow correcting his version of the events leading to her late husband's arrest.

That Duncan couldn't find room for any of these letters proves his bad faith. The Newham 'lie machine' seems to be in safe, and none too clean, hands.

### From the horse's mouth

CONGRATULATIONS to Red Pepper on its initiative in securing an article by John Alderson, former chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, attacking Michael Howard, the home secretary, and Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary.

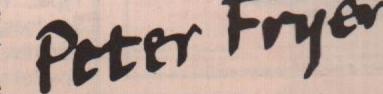
Little of what Alderson writes will be new to Workers Press readers. Howard has turned Britain into a police state, he says; MI5 operates 'almost like a cancer, infiltrating and destroying trust', and its new role in combating ordinary crime is 'one of the most worrying developments of modern times'; Straw, in his fear of breaking the consensus on crime and punishment, is guilty of moral cowardice; the control of crime 'is constantly being equated with the diminution of liberty'.

For years this paper has been saying much the same. To have our stand endorsed from such a quarter is indeed refreshing.

### What the 'Wobblies' called themselves

REVIEWING in the Guardian (19 April) James Mackay's Allan Pinkerton: The Eye Who Never Slept (Mainstream, £20), Ian Thomson perpetuates a common error. He calls the 'Wobblies' the 'International Workers of the World'. The Fowler brothers, in the first edition of their Modern English Usage (1926), made the same mistake.

But 'IWW' in fact stood for 'Industrial Workers of the World'.



## PERSONAL The German Working class after 1945

### BY BOB ARCHER

SQUARE kilometres of major German cities were completely flattened by allied bombing. Areas which escaped complete destruction showed shattered walls, windows and doors.

This was what faced the German working-class movement after World War II and what met Professor Theo Bergmann on his return from exile in April 1946.

In the annual lecture organised by the magazine Revolutionary History Professor Bergmann described attempts to rebuild an independent working class movement in Germany after 1945.

The material conditions were horrible beyond imagination.

The transport system was badly damaged. Bridges which had escaped allied bombing had been destroyed by the Nazis as the end of the war approached.

A journey which today takes two hours then took a whole day as passengers had to get out and cross rivers in small boats.

Movements were tightly restricted. For example trains from the British occupation zone to the US zone had to be sealed when they crossed through the French zone.

Not only were there millions of demobilised soldiers; millions of ethnic Germans had also been expelled from East Prussia, Danzig, Silesia, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere and driven westwards into Germany.

Normal supplies collapsed and barter flourished in a black market which saw town dwellers flooding into the countryside to trade things for food.

The farmers got rich but also had problems buying animal feed, since imports were almost non-existent.

The German working class worked extremely hard to



Soviet soldiers plant their flag on the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin

rebuild an economy shattered by war and then defeat and occupa-

Bergmann described this as a period of 'primary accumulation' when the necessary capital for industry had to be assembled afresh.

Reduced almost to 'the physiological minimum' workers laboured to lay the foundations of economic growth.

During the collapse of the Nazi regime, workers' committees sprang up which included all tendencies and currents in the former workers' movement.

Their immediate aim was to liquidate the Nazi state. Their preparation started in the period just before the German defeat.

They carried out genuinely independent political activity

before the occupying forces licensed officially approved political parties.

There were strikes and demonstrations against starvation and against the dismantling of industries by the occupying pow-

In the beginning, the occupying powers suppressed trade union activity. A process of de-Nazification started which dealt first with the small fry. By the time it got round to the big fish, the 'zeal had faded'.

In the puppet governments the allies established, Communist Party members were often given the department of social affairs. They then went round to the workers telling them not to strike as their factories were dismantled and industrial products removed.

### Disbanded

workers' committees themselves were quickly disbanded.

Nevertheless the circumstances of the defeat of Nazism forced even conservative forces into odd positions. In 1947 the newly-formed Christian Democratic Party under Konrad Adenauer accepted socialism in its party programme.

Before victory, the allies had agreed on the 'Three D's': de-militarisation, de-Nazification and de-cartelisation. But as the cold war developed this was quietly dropped in the west.

Professor Bergmann is a supporter of the Arbeiterpolitik (Workers' Politics) Group which continued the work of the Communist Party Opposition (KPO) of Brandler and Thalheimer, German Communists whose views came close to those put forward by Bukharin in the CPSU. His views on the Stalinist state

established in eastern Germany under the Soviet occupation are

skyists. Above all he expressed confi

therefore not those held by Trot

dence that it would by no mean have been impossible to establish socialism even in this corner of single country.

Nevertheless he had many interesting things to say abou what the Stalinists did there.

All independent activities of the working class were stifled The Stalinists had some suppor for the unification of the Social Democratic Party and the Com munist Party in the east into th Socialist Unity Party (SED), bu after 1949 all dissidents started t be purged.

The SED in the east was muc more subservient to the occupy ing powers than the SPD in th west.

Workers at the Salzgitter stee works in the west and Zeiss i Jena in the east did organis against the conditions of th occupation. The Zeiss workers seeing plans for their entire fac tory to be transported to th USSR - offered to build the Rus sians a new factory instead.

They were knocked bac Their plant was dismantled an left on a railway siding to rot.

Trade unions were gradual re-established in the west, bu some of the older union leader from exile had little confidence in the German working class t organise itself. One of ther Tarnow, would have preferre simply to take over the Na Labour Front.

Others like Otto Brenner ar Helmut Schmeiss were mor militant.

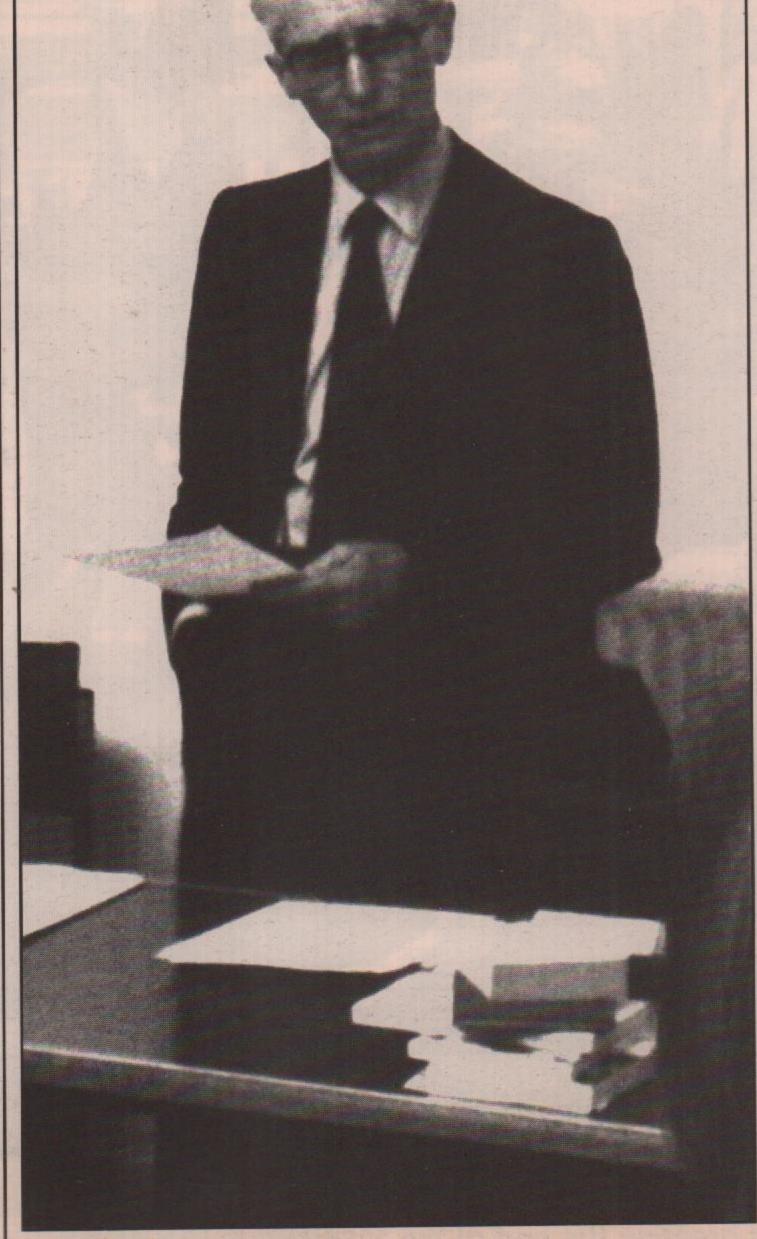
Representatives of the Amer can trade union federation AFL/CIO for a long period checked the activities of Germa trade unionists.

Once again Revolutional History has picked on an unusu aspect of an extremely important

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Professor Theo Bergmann

## No contract, no peace!

BY BRIDGET LEACH

YALE, the prestigiuous US university in New Haven has now been disrupted by over two months of trade union disputes which raise the questions of casualisation, sub-contracting and trade union recognition.

Students affected by the strike have given their support. Nine students who occupied the president's office on 8 April were charged with criminal trespass and 22 others with obstructing free passage on the steps outside.

Members of the Student Labor Action Coalition (SLAC) began their sit-in calling on Levin, the university president, to support binding arbitration.

The group presented an undergraduate petition calling for the shift of Yale's temp-hiring from a for-profit agency to a nonprofit social service organisation, and statements of support for Locals 34 and 35, who have been on strike, including one from the Black Student Alliance at Yale.

I think this just shows the Yale administration's refusal to deal with the issue of the strike in any constructive manner,' said SLAC member Francis Engler after the police were called. 'The administration has embarked on a mission to break its unions and it is willing to pay any cost, including the arrest of their own

Earlier in the day, students rallied in front of Sterling Memorial Library at an announcement of a trust fund to hold students' lees and only pay them over to the university when the contract negotiations are resolved.

Students then marched to Beiecke Plaza to hear the results of



Bob Proto, president of Local 35 at Yale University, addressing union members in Beinecke Plaza on 27 March at the start of their month-long strike

the meeting with president Levin.

'We went into this meeting looking for a sign that Yale was negotiating these contracts in good faith and that normal services would be restored as soon as possible,' said SLAC member Gabriel Snyder.

'If Levin is not even willing to talk to students, it is difficult to believe that the administration is negotiating with our best interests at heart.'

Yale students have increasingly shown concern for the lack of university services due to the strikes, including closed dining halls, curtailment of custodial and maintenance services, and limited access to many other university facilities.

The employees on strike have been from two locals of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees International, Local 34 which represents clerical and technical workers and Local 35, the service and maintenance workers.

Yale provoked the first strike of Local 34 by drastically cutting dining hall workers' pay and denying them the guarantee of alternative maintenance work in the summer when the dining halls are closed. Now the university has demanded that any future jobs will be subcontracted.

### Boast

This would enable it to boast that it provides a living wage, job security and decent health care and pension benefits — while newly-hired canteen staff working alongside existing workers would get \$4 an hour less and would work for contractors who would have no other jobs to offer in the summer months.

Dining hall workers can expect to have their pay cut from

\$23,000 to \$10,000 a year — that is, from £15,000 to £7,000.

Yale is New Haven's biggest employer, accounting for one in seven jobs in the town. Local 34 is roughly 80 per cent female, half of Local 35 members are women, 60 per cent are black or Latino.

A recent Village Voice article by Adolph Reed Jr. says that Yale's 'commitment to break its unions and reduce its employees' quality of life is motivated in a uniquely clear and unambiguous way by anti-labor ideology and corporate greed' and is not because the university, whose income is growing, is in financial difficulties.

Local 34 was on strike for a month. At the end of March when Local 35 started its month-long action 770 of the 1,170 members signed up for picket duty. A packed rally at Beinecke Plaza

### echoed to shouts of 'No contract, no peace! Tower Hamlets launches education campaign

BY PHIL EDWARDS

SPONTANEOUS reaction to a urther cut by Labour-controlled lower Hamlets of £1.25m in the ast London borough's education udget brought about 500 teachs parents and schoolchildren rom primary and secondary chools on to a protest.

The march started from Altab li park and went through the eart of Whitechapel on Saturay 20 April.

The march, organised by ACE (Fight Against Cuts in ducation) in Tower Hamlets, as supported by ELTA (East ondon Teachers Association), Bangladeshi Teachers Associiton and by Tower Hamlets Uni-Tower Hamlets Socialist orkers Party and Tower Hamts TUC.

There were also banners from any local schools with delegarticularly from the primary

The cuts will mean redundanes in schools among ancillary aff, failure to fill teacher vacanes, resulting in increased class

BY NICK LEE

doubtedly the most widely

'Windows' is

CROSOFT's

sizes, and possibly cuts in other areas such as the SLS (Special Learning Support service).

The SLS provides individual support for children excluded from schools who cannot cope with the school environment.

The shortfall in the coming year for many schools will amount to hundreds of thousands of pounds. While heads are desperately trying to avoid redundancies, which would mean a confrontation with the unions, there will be cuts in resources and eventually redundancies will be unavoidable as national trends are showing.

The witch-hunt of 'incompetent teachers' by Ofsted (Office of Standards in Education) backed by the capitalist press, was a deliberate preparation for these redundancies.

The relatively new Labour authority in Tower Hamlets has repeatedly stressed its commitons of parents and children, ment to education but only now proposes a campaign against cuts from government spending because it has misjudged the mood of teachers and parents.

> Heads right across the borough met recently with local

school governors and have jointly called for action in unprecedented unity with the National Union of Teachers and other education unions.

Every school in the borough invited parents and children to attend carefully prepared meetings in one school in each of the former seven 'neighbourhoods' (set up under the Liberal Democrats) on 23 April.

A call was put at these meetings there could be a call from heads and governors for parents and school pupils to walk out of schools on 1May and march on the education department in Mulberry Place on the Isle of Dogs. Heads and governors have asked teachers not to strike on that day in order not to divert attention away from the parents' action.

Meanwhile, teachers in the NUT are beginning to pass motions in their schools for unofficial action on 9 May. The union's national action committee refused to sanction official strike action following an indicative ballot.

It is indicative of the sort of lies and distortions propagated by the press that during the NUT

conference we were told by union general secretary Doug McAvoy's friends on the Daily Telegraph among others that he had 80 per cent of the membership behind him on the so-called 'democracy ballot'.

In fact the turnout was less than 30 per cent. In McAvoy's election to office the turnout was also less than 30 per cent.

In Tower Hamlets the turnout was less than 40 per cent but 80 per cent voted for strike action.

McAvoy and the action committee represent a real barrier to developing a campaign with the full resources of the union behind

Nevertheless, the parents and pupils can continue to develop a protest movement and, if they do walk out on 1 May, it would be a timely reminder to them that this is international workers' day and that speakers should be organised for the May Day rally in Finsbury Park.

Speakers from the May Day march should also be sent to any rally organised by parents and teachers. This has to be seen as a part of forging a real unity in the working class.

### London bus workers strike back against longer hours

BY ROY THOMAS

SOUTH EAST LONDON bus drivers working for a subsidiary of the multinational Stagecoach company were on strike on Friday 19 April.

The 850 workers rejected the union committee recommendation to accept the changes that Stagecoach were demanding, and voted to strike. The first 24-hour strike took place last week with only two scabs crossing the picket line.

The management were preparing a two-and-a-half hours per week increase to an average 43 hours for 30 per cent of drivers. For the rest, a one-hour-perweek increase to 41 hours.

The management also proposed to take away attendance and Christmas allowances bonuses and do away with overtime rates.

Stagecoach also want to introduce 'Profit Related Pay' which union activists believe would save the bus company £1m a year. The phrase Stagecoach keep using is 'salaries for profit' but they have lost a great deal of money as a result of not operating bus services in south-east London which they had tendered to do because of the strike last week.

Once again, long working hours has surfaced as a central issue around which workers on the buses and in other industries now face increasing struggles.

**Bronwen Handyside reports** 

## nations



### Class and 'no class'

PRIVATISED catering workers on British Rail trains are to have their wages reduced from £3 an hour to £10 a day for a nine-hour shift.

They are to be put on a 'commission-only' pay which, they have been told, is 'an opportunity to write your own pay cheque'. They will be paid 20p in the pound commission whenever they sell more than £50 worth of food and drinks.

Rail staff point out that it is extremely difficult to take more than £50 on most services and the quality and price of the refreshments make it extremely difficult to persuade BR travellers to buy more.

I am sure everyone who has travelled on BR trains will agree with them on that. Unless they are issued with handguns, and given permission to hold to ransom, they will not be able to persuade most people to buy dried up sandwiches and cardboard cartons of warm Ribena at the prices charged on the railways.

But there is light at the end of the tunnel for these catering workers - and for the homeworkers who currently make 60-70p an hour, the shop assistants who get £1.66, the hairdressers who amass £1.43, the hotel night porters with £1.85 and the office juniors making £2.25 an hour!

For according to Prince Edward (and he of all people should know) there is no longer a class system and there are opportunities for everybody out there.

Forthright Edward told the Daily Mail: 'We are for ever being told we have a rigid class structure. That's a load of codswallop. In many cases there are more opportunities than ever to do just about anything you want.'

So why don't you BR catering wallahs stop complaining and just pull yourselves up by your own bootstraps like Prince Edward (third in line to the throne) had to do?

In an interview broadcast on ITN on 11 April, Edward told the nation that having a title (and a huge private income from his mother, the Queen) actually means that he has to work harder than everybody else in order to be taken seriously.

### and the class system RATHER confusingly, in the very

same week that Edward announced the end of the class system, Labour's deputy leader John Prescott told the press that he is middle class. Taxed by Radio 4's Today pro-

gramme presenter with being 'just another middle class party for the middle class' Prescott said that the cap fitted very nicely thank-you - or perhaps it was a bowler hat.

Prescott's announcement followed the severe drubbing given to Labour's shadow transport minister Clare Short when she declared that middle-income earners like herself should pay more tax.

The only problem with Labour's increasingly triumphal wooing of the middle class is that whole sections of middle-income earners are daily being reduced to the level of the working class by mass redundancies and smashing of wage levels and conditions among white-collar workers.

### 'Saddest day' as parasites divorce

REPORTS of the divorce of Duke and Duchess of York show that Fergie spends £384,000 a year on staffing - on a butler, cook, nanny, gardener, cleaner, dresser, lady-in-waiting and two personal assistants.

In 1995 she spent £80,000 on clothing, gifts and social evenings and another £52,000 on parties. Her annual rent is about £72,000.

She was in debt to the tune of about £3 million when a po-faced Queen said she was not going to bail her out.

The Duchess of York saved her own bacon by having a super idea about a friendly little helicopter. The fact that at the time she was still the Duchess of York had absolutely nothing to do with such a big sum being paid for such a tiny little idea.

She will have to have a few more good ideas if she is to sustain her lifestyle. In August 1994 she borrowed £100,000 to take her children and servants to the Cote d'Azur for six weeks.

In January 1996 she took a trip to America, staying in £1,400-anight suites at an estimated cost of £20,000. In March 1996 she went to Qatar for a horse race, and later she went to Miami to visit her latest boyfriend.

In the same month she spent time in Paradise Island in the Bahamas for £500 a night. This is not to mention the perpetual skiing holidays she seems to be on.

Last year in New York she spent £3,000 on hand-made shoes and boots. Her hairdresser charges £150 a time and she also spent about £50,000 for 12 dresses from a top designer.

But I think all that money is well spent when you look at the level of culture she sustains.

When she met reporters on her skiing holday after her divorce papers had been filed, it was only after some heavy prompting from the newshounds - 'How are you feeling?', 'Feeling pretty sad?', 'Is it a sad day for you?' - that a beaming Fergie said it was the saddest day of her

She went on to say 'We'll take every day as it comes. Every day is a new day', and that she and Andrew would remain 'the bestest of friends'. It made you realise what it was about her that would make an American publishing firm cough up £3 million.

### Mother of them all

BUT it's the poor old Queen I feel sorry for, arriving at her 70th birthday to find two enormous divorce settlements are going to make a severe hole in her income.

Not only is she having to pay income tax, and for the rebuilding of Windsor Castle, and for the minor royals removed from the Civil List, but Di and Fergie have every intention of taking her to the cleaners. Rumours are that Diana is going for £10-15 million.

I bet that cast a bit of a pall over the palace birthday festivities last week.

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

### DC, the packing company mark, hired to distribute Winss 95, used prison labour from

ed operating system for permal computers with millions of ers around the world. The latwersion 'Windows 95' was mehed last year with one of the expensive media campaigns er seen from the computer lastry. Bill Gates, the boy wonhead of Microsoft, is one of world's richest men.

Users of Windows software w be interested to learn that it s at least partly manufactured mg prison labour. According to unter Punch (15 March), a radimewsletter based in Washing-Twin Rivers Correctional

Windows 95 on US prison life Center in Monroe, Washington state, for part of the job.

Prison labour was also used to pack tens of thousands of units of Microsoft Office, another major software product, as well as hundreds of thousands of Microsoft computer 'mice'.

According to the report, 'the state of Washington is a pioneer in the use of prison labor and recently built a 56,000-square feet factory near the Monroe prison.

'Companies employing prisoners pay \$4.90 an hour, the minimum wage in Washington, of which somewhere between \$1.80 and \$2.80 ends up in the prisoners' pocket. The rest is deducted for the "cost of corrections", a victims' compensation fund, and to pay state and federal taxes.'

Microsoft Windows certainly is the operating system of the

future!

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Saturday 27 April 1996

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## Massacre hardens Arab resistance

ISRAEL'S killing of over 100 refugees who had sought safety in a UN camp in south Lebanon has stiffened resistance to the aggressors, not only from Hizbullah guerrillas but from their allies, the Arab masses. Israel's US backers will feel the hatred that has been aroused.

With aircraft flying regular sorties over Lebanon, the Israeli armed forces could not have been unaware that the camp at Qana was a UN base. They fired five shells into a compound crammed with civilians, killing 102, and wounding many more. Many of those hit were children.

As shell-shocked people searched hospitals for injured relatives, many unrecognisable, Shimon Peres's Labour government described the attack on 18 April as

BY DAVID DORFMAN

an 'accident'. Its gunboats, artillery and planes continued the war.

Hizbullah replied with more katyusha rockets fired over the border. In response to US and French diplomatic intervention, Hizbullah secretary-general Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said there should be a return to the US-brokered 1993 agreements.

Hizbullah would stop firing

rockets if the Israeli attacks on civilians in Lebanon were stopped, and there were guarantees against Israeli air raids on Beirut. But it could not surrender its right to fight Israeli soldiers in Lebanon, Nasrallah added. 'So long as there is occupation, there is resistance.'

In Damascus, President Hafez el Assad of Syria reportedly told US Secretary of State Warren Christopher the same thing, adding that Syria was not prepared to act as 'Israel's gendarme'. US diplomacy was not helped by the Clinton administration's persistently blocking condemnation of Israel.

'Washington is to blame for the bloodbath committed by its strategic ally in Lebanon,' said one Syrian newspaper. 'Those who fail to

condemn the Israeli crime at Qana are not honest or serious in their peace efforts,' commented another.

In Cairo, a group calling itself the Vanguards of Conquest warned that it would target Americans and Israelis around the world in retaliation for what had been done to Lebanon.

### **Forces**

More significantly, there were demonstrations condemning the Israeli action in Gaza, Nazareth, Jerusalem — where Palestinians and Israeli Jewish peace campaigners joined forces - and Beirut.

Lebanese Christians, insensed at their country once more being the victim, voiced support for the Islamic Hizbullah, urging it to

rename itself the Lebanese Resistance.

Clinton's plan to unite 'moderate' Arab states and Israel around a US-led crusade against 'terrorism', scapegoating Iran, has blown up in his face.

Most annoying for Washington, its imperialist hegemony in the Middle East is being undermined by the French and Russian governments pursuing their own diplomatic initiatives. If the latest polls from Israel are anything to go by, even the war aim of winning this year's elections may have misfired, for Peres and Clinton both.

The British government's backing for Zionist aggression has continued. The obnoxious Michael Portillo said in Israel that every

nation had the right to 'self-defence'. He didn't extend that right to Bosnia, nor to Lebanon. Does anyone blame Muslims for drawing conclusions?

After Labour MP George Galloway raised the Qana attack, Michael Heseltine expressed condolences 'for the UN soldiers'.

Continuing the appalling standard set by its Bosnian coverage, BBC radio avoids the word 'war', describing artillery barrages and bombing of civilians as 'fighting between Israel and Hizbullah'. Two days after Qana it referred to 'the recent upsurge in violence' as though some hooligans were throwing beer cans.

As for Labour . . . er, does it have an opinion, or leave such matters to the master?

## Left makes gains in Italian elections

BY NICK LEE

LAST Sunday's Italian general election brought to office the centre-left coalition dominated by the former Stalinist PDS (Democratic Party of the Left).

The 'Olive Tree' coalition led by economist Romano Prodi is likely to dominate both houses of parlia-

Prodi's first words were: 'Italians have voted for calm.' He added: 'We will govern for all Italy.' Many Italians will indeed breath a sigh of relief at the arrival of genuine 'new blood' in government.

Since the corruption scandals of a few years ago brought down the ruling Christian Democrats and their Socialist allies the country has witnessed a thinly disguised recycling of the corrupt old guard politicians.

The most recent incarnation of this was media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, now on trial himself for corruption — interspersed with governments of 'technocrats' led by 'non-political' financiers.

The outgoing prime minister Lamberto Dini, whose 'technocratic' task was to bring the public finances under control — i.e. to decimate wages, pensions and public services — has formed his

own party and thrown his lot in with Prodi and the PDS-led coalition. But Prodi will no doubt live to eat his soothing words. The real message of the elections seems to be further polarisation.

The neo-fascist-led National Alliance (AN), led by Gianfranco Fini, increased its share of the vote — though less than expected after a fascist splinter group lured away potential supporters in Italy's deep south.

### Scrap

Meanwhile Massimo D'Alema, the PDS leader, said the time may now have come to scrap the hammer and sickle which still adorns the party's logo.

Such 'Blairite' sentiments rest uneasily alongside the fact that the coalition will have to rely on the support of the 'unreconstructed' Communist Refoundation (RC) with which it had struck an electoral alliance.

The RC central committee, meeting immediately after the election results, resolved to use its influence to reintroduce automatic indexing of wages and pensions against inflation, an immediate attack on unemployment, reduction of the working week, and fiscal reform involving an increased tax on profits.

### 'Everything is not OK' Silajdzic Bosnia-Herzegovina' with a 1,000strong rally in Sarajevo on 13 BY CHARLIE POTTINS April, he said he would stand against President Alia Izetbegovic

BOSNIAN opposition leader Haris Silajdzic has warned against any complacency about the results of the Dayton 'peace' agreement.

'People have the feeling that everything's OK. But it's not OK,' said Silajdzic, on a visit to London last week. What we have under the surface is the division of our country.

'Bosnia and Herzegovina has practically no external borders now, yet it has 16,000 well-armed international troops sitting on the dividing line inside the country.

'How can we talk about fair and free elections, reconstruction, re-integration of Bosnian society, if we do not have our borders intact?"

This was fertile ground for a bigger and wider conflict, expremier Silajdzic warned. He said he had asked Malcolm Rifkind what conditions Britain had required for human rights, and on Kosovo, before recognising rump Yugoslavia. As for Croatia, if it wanted better relations it must respect Bosnian sovereignty.

### **Expanded**

'That's not the case now. We see parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the control of the HVO are an expanded Croatia - same uniforms, same flag, same currency and the promotional portraits of their president — in our country. Federation only exists on paper. What we see on the ground are two police forces, two armies, and attempts to create two economies.'

In a letter to the Sarajevo Association in Paris, Silajdzic has warned that 'Bosnia is under a threat of disintegration and creation of national ghettos. If it happens, fascism, whether we like it or not, is a winner.'

The former prime minister resigned from the ruling Party of Democratic Action (SDA) in January. Launching his 'Party for

in elections in September. Organisers said representatives from 58 municipalities were at the rally.

The new party's programme stresses Bosnian sovereignty and a multi-cultured society. The party's leadership includes exministers, academics such as Mustafa Imamovic (dean of law at Sarajevo University) and chemistry professor Igor Gaon, and from industry, Hamdija Kulovic, director of Zenica iron and steel-

### Majority

A poll published in the Sarajevo magazine Dani this month shows Silajdzic as most popular politician, with 40 per cent support in urban areas, as against 26 per cent for Izetbegovic. In most towns a majority also said they would vote for Silajdzic's party. The exceptions were Gorazde, and Tuzla, where refugees now outnumber local citizens.

At a rally in Zenica on 15 April, Izetbegovic hit out at opponents for failing to credit his government's achievements.

'They do not say that peace has come. People are not being killed anymore. The dying has stopped. Half of Bosnia has been defended. A strong army was created almost from nothing . . . The Bosniak nation was saved from extinction ... They remain silent on these very important facts.'

Accusing opponents of creating 'bad will' and basing their hopes on 'foreigners', Izetbegovic tried to play up suspicion that cosmopolitan Silajdzic was out of touch with ordinary people. Denying that the SDA was only interested in a Muslim rather than 'Bosnian' Bosnia he urged 'reconcilitian' between peoples.

'We want multiculturalism because that is Bosnia, Silajdzic said. 'If you draw lines it must be

### Izetbegovic and Silajdzic

in blood — that is what the war criminals did. Multiculturalism is based on experience in Bosnia over hundreds of years before the UN. His party's aims were to broaden decision-making, institutionalise democracy, and offer the choice of a 'Bosnian Bosnia' to the electorate. 'Our views are shared by the majority of the population of Bosnia.'

'Bosnia is pluralistic by itself. We have been what Europe wants to be a long time ago. Throughout our history problems came across our border, never from inside.'

Tuzla's multi-ethnic society could be a model for the rest of Bosnia, mayor Selim Beslagic told the newspaper Nasa Borba, on 17 April, backing Sejfudin Tokic who has launched the election campaign for the Union of Bosnian Social Democrats. Tokic said the USBD had 40,000 members, including some in Serb-held

regions. He predicted Serb and Croat nationalist parties would come apart under internal contradictions, although Izetbegovic's Muslim SDA would be a tougher nut to crack because of its populism. Both men stressed the USBD's appeal to all Bosnians, regardless of community.

Renegade Muslim businessman Fikret Abdic, whose followers in Bihac fought alongside the Serb Chetniks, has apparently switched to Croat patronage.

Abdic, living in Croatia since Bihac was liberated, has launched his own new party, the Democratic People's Community (DNZ). Abdic boasts that he got more votes than Izetbegovic in 1990.

Croat police recently arrested five Bosnians in Senj, allegedly a hit squad sent to kill Abdic. Some newspapers suggest this was a publicity stunt arranged on the pretender's behalf.

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