



## FOLLOWING VIOLENT ATTACK ON PICKET POLICE IN THE DOCK

As we went to press news came in that in solidarity with the sacked Liverpool dockers, the Canadian Labour Congress (equivalent to the British TUC) started a boycott on 9 October of all Canadian Pacific transactions.

This is being carried out because the company owns the shipping line, CAST, which so far has refused to remove its container vessels from the the scab port of Liverpool

In addition to hitting the company's shipping line, it also means that Canadian railway workers are boycotting the Canadian Pacific Railway, including freight and passenger (holiday) traffic.

BY THE EDITOR

**MERSEY DOCKS** Shop Stewards Committee and Reclaim the Streets (RTS) have called for a public inquiry into the violence used by special police units (Operation Support Division — OSD) against sacked dockers and their supporters on Monday 30 September at the Seaforth Container Base in Liverpool.

This was the last day of a week-end of support for the dockers who were marking one year since they were sacked for refusing to cross a picket line in September 1995.

Events were organised jointly by the stewards and RTS under the heading: 'Stop the Clampdown — Reclaim the Future'. Invitations were sent to all supporters of the dockers' demand for reinstatement.

'There was no picket violence,' said shop steward Terry Southers at the dockers' mass meeting on 4 October. 'It was police violence against our supporters. They were attacked, then arrested and then abused in the police vans and in the cells.' The dockers gave RTS a standing ovation.

Matters to be investigated are:

■ Coaches full of supporters on their way to the week-end events being stopped on the motorway

and turned back;

■ A local Union press officer knocked unconscious;

■ Supporters beaten up in police vans, and in police cells.

■ A supporter kept in Lancaster Prison for two days, charged with 'obstructing an officer in the course of his duty'.

'The police, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and even our own union general secretary, have told us that we should have nothing to do with these young environmentalists,' said Kevin Robinson, the dockers' police liaison officer. 'But it is a privilege to be part of the action with these people. They see what is happening to human beings and they act in the interest of humanity throughout the world.'

### Obligation

'We have a moral obligation to do everything possible to support them. They came to Liverpool to support us. They are peaceful people who have decided not to sit back and watch the world being destroyed.

'It is fitting that they say 'Reclaim the streets!' and we say 'Reclaim the docks!' for the future.

'One young lad from Bristol was simply sitting on the pavement peeling a peach. The police dragged him off the floor, took

him into a van and worked him over. They bent his fingers backward. He was in such a state. But they would not allow him a doctor or a solicitor. There are many such cases.

'We know that they were making an example of these young people to frighten us. But it has made us even more determined that our fight is for the future — these were people who came to Liverpool to support us. Working with them, we found that we could confide in each other as human beings should. We will never forget what they did in showing their support for us.'

The dockers have brought the whole matter to the attention of Liverpool MPs, and Eddie Loydon MP called a meeting on 11 October of the MPs with the dockers. Protest letters have been sent to the Chief Constable of Merseyside, Sir James Sharples and the Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

The dockers are looking for statements, photographs and videos for the inquiry and will call upon the Liverpool 8 Law Centre which deals with police abuse — particularly against black people — to assist.

If you have any information contact: Kevin Robinson — phone: 0151 207 3388, fax: 0151 207 0696



Police in riot gear ready to confront dockers and supporters on the Reclaim the Future march.



ONE year on and the heroic stand of the Hillingdon strikers is as defiant as ever. Last Saturday they marked the first anniversary of the dispute with a march through Uxbridge and a public meeting. Fifty three women refused to accept savage cuts in their pay and conditions when the private firm of Pall Mall took over the cleaning and catering services at Hillingdon hospital. They

have maintained the picket line every day throughout the severest weather and in the face of racist attacks.

Shop steward Malkiat Bilku declared, 'We are fighting for the rights of future generations'. She added, 'it is sad that no one from the Union leadership is present here after one year. If Unison cannot win this they can win nothing!'

### JOIN PAN-AFRIKAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS ASYLUM CAMPAIGN!

Stop deportation of African political activists;  
(Affiong Southey, Kwame Sampong  
Esther Lehou.)

**PUBLIC MEETING: Wed. 23 October  
7 pm - 365 Brixton Rd, London SW9**

### CRISIS IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT THE NEED FOR A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY

for details of the Recall Conference  
and for discussion on this vital ques-  
tion see pages 2, 7 and 8

Support the Liverpool dockers

### PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday 16 October 7 pm  
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,  
WC1.

Called by London Dockers Support Group



Workers Press

# The smell of coalition

**UP TO 30 Tory MPs are prepared to break ranks after the next election and support a Labour government led by Tony Blair, according to a report in last Sunday's 'Observer'. Many of them are linked to the Tory Reform Group, a body funded by the Rowntree Trust and supermarket boss David Sainsbury.**

According to the same report a group of Tory MPs are 'looking forward to a long-term realignment of British politics, with Tony Blair at the centre.'

The 'Observer' piece coincided with an article from Blair in the Tory 'Sunday Telegraph' last weekend appealing to Tory MPs to defect to Labour.

Whatever the truth of this particular story there is no doubt that sections of the ruling class are now actively considering how to deal with the working class should a Labour government be elected next year.

Naturally the attention of the ruling class is by no means confined to Parliament. As the police action against the dockers and their supporters in Liverpool two weeks ago showed, they will make full use of the state machine to confront the working class as and when necessary. But at the same time they are concerned with the next government and its ability to deal with the working class.

They know that such a government, whatever its precise composition, will be deeply unpopular with millions of workers as well as with sections of the middle class.

It will be one driven by the crisis of world capital to press home yet further attacks against the working class — who will have no choice but to fight back. The possibility of a revolt against the government from a minority of Labour MPs cannot be excluded.

In the past the ruling class have seen Labour governments dispense minimal reforms to sections of workers in order to ensure a degree of social peace. This is no longer possible, and therefore new ways of taking on and controlling the working class must be found.

That is why coalition is in the air, whether Labour gain an overall majority in the next House of Commons or not. It has long been rumoured that Blair is prepared to offer the Liberal Party places in a Labour-led government whether he wins an outright majority or not.

In 1931 it was the Labour party that split when premier Ramsay MacDonald led a group into a coalition with the Tories and a section of the Liberal Party. So acute is the crisis of the ruling class that a split in the Tory Party, the traditional party through which the ruling class has governed, is now more than on the cards.

Millions of workers will undoubtedly vote Labour at the coming election. They will do so hoping against hope that at least things might be a little better under Labour. They are in for a bitter disappointment. A Blair-led government will be unlike any previous Labour government.

It is for the coming shock and disappointment that will hit millions that we must now prepare. We believe the experience in Liverpool over the weekend of 28-30 September shows the way forward. Dockers fighting for the basic rights of the working class joined hands with powerful forces confronting capital's threat to the environment.

We think that this sort of action is laying the basis for the sort of movement that must be built in opposition to the soon to be completely discredited Labour Party leadership.

# Letters

WE WELCOME LETTERS

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

— OR PHONE 0171-387 0564

Letters longer  
than 500 words  
WILL be cut

## Who can't afford it?

EVERY year at about this time I take my wife Pauline and her two friends to Blackpool where they have a few days' holiday. This year it was the turn of the Labour Party to have its conference in the Winter Gardens.

Setting off back home for Leeds, I decided to call in at the Winter Gardens to pay my respects.

Standing at the main entrance wearing my 'Blair is a Tory' badge, I lobbied every delegate going in on the question of Barbara Castle's resolution on pensions (£5 increase and linking with the annual average wage increases). I knew that the badge would either get me a pat on the back or a punch on the nose. My back was patted many times and my nose is still intact. I hoped this was an indication of the way the vote would go.

Many day trippers who were senior citizens stopped and didn't need much encouragement to start lobbying. But also a number of older people, angry and confused at my opposition to the Labour Party leadership, asked: if the Labour Party could not help us then who could? Whilst being disillusioned and anti-political, i.e. 'They're all the same', they still wanted to give the Labour Party a chance to show what it could do.

I spoke to some Transport and General Workers' Union delegates who said that they were going to try to make sure the union voted for the Barbara Castle resolution. The majority of delegates I spoke to were very firm in supporting the resolution.

But the delegate who stands out was a 'yuppie'-looking young man, walking with a determined tread and, looking very important clutching his briefcase and bundle of papers. I stopped him and put the question to him — will you support the Barbara Castle resolution? He looked at me very haughtily and, after an 'intelligent' pause, looked over his glasses and made his pronouncement. 'I shall listen to the debate and then decide.' I responded by asking: 'Surely you have an opinion?' He said: 'At the moment I am opposed to the pension increase and it being linked with the national average wage increase.'

I asked whether he supported the MPs' increase in wages. No answer. 'Why did he oppose the proposed pensioners' increase?' 'We can't afford it.' 'Who can't afford it?' said I. 'Britain,' said he. At this point I nearly patted his back via his nose! So away he went into the conference to do his bit for Tory Blair and Britain.

This activity attracted the attention of the Swedish TV national news so I did an interview on why I said Blair was a Tory.

Norman Harding  
Leeds

## Let's get into the water!

THE Workers Revolutionary Party congress in July decided, on a Marxist basis, that it would dissolve itself and join with others to work for the new socialist party which the working class, itself, must build.

That means putting our resources — mainly Workers Press — into that new situation. Over the weeks since our congress, I have discussed with many others about this resolution — mainly dockers, and other trade unionists, Labour Party members and, more recently, those who were in the forefront of the Reclaim the Future events with the sacked Liverpool dockers over the week-end of 28-30 September. Mainly the responses are amazement and disbelief that

any 'left' group could come to such a decision, and: 'seeing is believing — we welcome it if you really do go ahead'.

This is understandable since working class politics is generally accepted to be 'the masses' voting Labour in elections and the small minority in 'left' organisations who, from their ivory towers, tell 'the masses' to break with their traditional organisations. A comrade from Iran recently explained it this way:

'It is as if there is a big ocean and the workers are in the water with huge waves crashing around them and they are fighting for their lives to keep their heads above water and against the sharks that want to kill them — capital and its supporters in the Labour and trade union bureaucracy.'

'On top of the water, in boats, are the various "lefts" shouting down to the workers — "Keep up the fight! If you do it the way we advise, you can win!"'

It would be misleading to say that carrying out our resolution is easy — even the youngest members of the WRP, who went through the 1985 and post-1985 events (expulsion of Healy, Banda, Torrance, Redgrave, Hyland) have been in it for over 20 years!

Surely some of the letters and contributions to the 'new party' discussion from members show that disagreements, misunderstandings, hesitations and old methods do not disappear with the passing of a resolution. I refer directly to Mike Howgate (letter, 28 September) and Simon Pirani ('new party' discussion, 28 September)

I, for one, am not worried if members wish to publicise their criticisms and explanations about hurt feelings or accusations of being ignored etc. And I do not think it matters if these are not directly answered — for sometimes a reply appears to be merely a different interpretation of events, or a list of the same feelings from the other side. The main thing is that Marxism-Trotskyism will neither be defended, nor developed within the confines of a select group.

We must and will put our resolution into practice, and have already begun to do so.

The editorial board of Workers Press has changed — there are now as many non-members as members of the WRP on it.

We are working with others who will assist us to make the necessary changes to get into the water.

Dot Gibson  
WRP Central Committee

## We can't have enthusiasm here!

IN recent months, I was pleased to see several new bylines in Workers Press, accompanying articles on issues from strikes in Turkey, or in NE London, to Reclaim the Future.

I took this as a breath of fresh air, and a sign of growth at last.

How naive I was! Mike Howgate tells us (letter, 28 September) that people like Chris Knight, whom I'd only come across at Dockers Support meetings, belongs to something called the 'Radical Anthropology Group'. What next?! Are we to be infiltrated by radical philosophers and geographers, or anarchist astro-physicists? And to think that only yesterday, Mike was concerned about the young and supposedly uneducated on the Bosnia Solidarity picket.

We ought to have been suspicious when Knight and 'his supporters' (as Mike Howgate calls them) praised Dot Gibson's work for the dockers' cause and expressed enthusiasm ('acted as cheerleaders', as Mike im-

aginatively puts it) for the perspective adopted at the WRP congress. (Ever modest, Mike doesn't mention that his alternative proposal, of dissolving into the SLP, received two votes, his own included).

It's clearly not enough to have a WRP comrade, editing the paper, nor rely on guidance from the WRP political committee. We need someone like Comrade Mike Howgate checking articles, and the political antecedence of the contributors, to ensure sobriety, and prevent unruly elements bringing in anti-authoritarianism, and spontaneity.

We've let people who disagree with the WRP's 'new turn' have their say, but we must make sure that people who agree with the move for the new workers' party don't use the pages of Workers Press to make calls for action, or show enthusiasm for anything. We must tell them straight, 'You can't do that there 'ere!'

Topsy Turvey  
SW1

## It made me feel ill

WHEN I watched the Labour Party conference on television, it made me feel ill.

It was apparent to me that with such a government the future is bleak and sinister for workers. There was dangerous-

nationalism and explicit statements about attacks on our quality of life.

It was not the content of their speeches alone — their language and presentation made my stomach turn over, especially when I compared them with the old days in Manchester, when I listened to that good old socialist Bill Rust speaking in the street, standing on a box.

And the way Prescott is used and is willing to be used. He is the one they wheel out to attack the Tories with his working-class accent, giving the impression of 'cloth-cap' socialism. But the content of his speeches was no different from Blair's.

I have two great-grandchildren. What will happen to them?

We certainly must build a new socialist party, and I am going to come to the 23 November conference.

The discussion in Workers Press is interesting, and shows that there are different viewpoints.

I think that it is necessary to build a united movement under conditions in which all these different views can be thrashed out while we are all fighting together.

We have to give workers confidence. It is up to us to convince them that there is a way forward for socialism.

Eddie Weller  
Norwich

## WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?

The International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign regrets that, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Festival of SE Asian Food and Music, due to take place on 12 October has had to be cancelled. Those who have bought tickets will receive the money they paid. Apologies to those who were looking forward to the event.

16 Oct 7 pm London Support Group for the Liverpool Dockers. PUBLIC MEETING, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn

16 Oct Annual Worldwide Day of Action against McDonalds - contact 0171 713 1269

19-20 Oct — Sat. 2-5.30 pm Leeds University — Open discussion on past, present and future work of defence of a united, multi-cultural Bosnia-Herzegovina  
7.30 pm — late — social evening, music, food etc.  
Sun. 11 am — 2.30 pm National meeting of Workers Aid for Bosnia.

2 Nov 9 pm — 2 am — Benefit for Reclaim the Streets featuring FREETOWN AND FIN DE SIECLE, Canterbury Arms, Canterbury Crescent, Brixton SW9.

5 Nov Assemble 9 a.m. STOP THE COPEX ARMS FAIR. Non-violent, sit-down blockade and ceremony in remembrance of all torture victims.  
Littleworth Common (off A307, Portsmouth Road, opposite Sandown Racecourse.

12 October — Day of Solidarity with McLibel defendants and McDonald workers — Picket your local store. For leaflets and information 0171 713 1269

23 Nov. Direct Action Conference in Brighton (details 01273 685913)

23 Nov. 11 am — 5 pm Recall Conference — NEED FOR A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1

London Support Group for Liverpool dockers meets every Thursday, 7.30 p.m. Kings Head, Swinton Street off Grays Inn Road (near Kings Cross station)

Hillingdon Hospital Support Group meets every Sunday 11 a.m. at Uxbridge Civic Centre.

**PLEASE SEND US DETAILS OF EVENTS WHICH WE CAN INCLUDE IN THIS LISTING EACH WEEK:**

Phone 1071 387 0564, Fax: 0171 387 0569  
or post to PO Box 735, London, SW8 1YB



# Defend the African freedom fighters!

BY JACKIE VANCE

OVER a year ago two opponents of Abacha's military regime in Nigeria were arrested and jailed. One of them, the director of the Civil Liberties organisation, was released lately. The other, the secretary-general of the Democratic Alternative is still locked up.

During interrogation they were continually asked, 'What do you know about Ms Affiong Southey? Who are her contacts? What are her activities in Britain?'

The concern of Abacha's torturers and thugs for Julie Affiong Limene Southey's activities is shared by their friends in the British government.

On 10 December 1996 her appeal against refusal of asylum rights in Britain came before an Immigration adjudicator. It is the next stage in the attempt to send her into the hands of the Nigerian military junta and certain death.

Affiong Southey is a political activist - a fighter for human rights and a socialist. She fled Nigeria and came to Britain in 1990 and since then has campaigned for refugees and black peoples' rights and worked tirelessly to expose the British state's collaboration with the atrocities of the puppet regimes throughout Africa,

and particularly Nigeria.

She escaped from Nigeria when the army was hounding her and other leaders of the National Association of the Nigerian Students (NANS). Many of her colleagues had been arrested and incarcerated in maximum security prisons.

The Nigerian state was looking for revenge. She and other student leaders had campaigned for improved conditions on the campuses where, in many cases, there

Ahmadu Bello university. Using dogs and horse whips she and many others were badly beaten and locked up.

Affiong studied political science at Ibadan university in Oyo state, western Nigeria, and law at the university of Lagos. After the 1989 riots against the SAP the whole country was aflame and one of the government's first acts of reprisal was to close down the universities because the student movement had mobil-

ised up. She was unable to live at home and fled to Britain on a holiday visa which was the only way to get out of Nigeria.

Since coming to Britain Affiong has developed the links with the Nigerian opposition groups. She is co-ordinator of People's Embargo for Democracy in Nigeria (PEDEN) and a founder member of the Campaign for Independent Unionism (CIU).

Britain continues to send a flow of arms to the Abacha regime despite its killing of thousands of the Ogoni people, imprisonment of trade union leaders, and assassination of opponents.

All this helps to ensure that British companies like Shell, which play a major part in Nigeria's economy and state repression, remains profitable.

Affiong is an executive member of the African Liberation Support Campaign (ALISC). Two other ALISC activists, Kwame Sampong from Ghana and Esther Lehou from the Ivory Coast, are also having their appeals against refusal of asylum rights being heard soon.

In all three cases the deportation process is happening much quicker than normal. It is part of the Tory onslaught against refugees and asylum seekers already begun with the Asylum Act.

Affiong says that there are many reports that western European governments co-operating to build massive refugee camps in desert areas of Africa - it is believed one is planned in Morocco. These capitalist states are preparing for the mass deportation of refugees. Before they can do this the Tories must try to deal with the political activists and leaders among them.

Affiong Southey has no illusions about deportation. 'I will be arrested on sight at the airport, taken to an unknown destination and "disappear".'

The Pan African Freedom Fighters Asylum Campaign (PAFFAC) has been started to stop the deportations of her and the other political activists. It will be a political campaign explaining that the brutal immigration laws flow from the nature of the capitalist system.

It will fight for support among refugee and community groups and the trade union and labour movement. A widely representative steering committee is necessary - the first meeting will be held at 365, Brixton Road, London SW9 on 23 October at 7.00 p.m.

\* Workers Press will carry profiles of Kwame Sampong and Esther Lehou in future issues.

**'We are not economic refugees looking for a better life in western economies. We are all political refugees fleeing from the devastation that western economies have caused in our countries. It is your economics that make our politics that make us refugees in your economies'**

A. Sivanandan

was no running water.

But they had also linked up with the movement of Nigerian workers against the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) imposed by the World Bank which were impoverishing large sections of the Nigerian people.

Affiong was first arrested in 1984 when the military regime of General Idiagbon sent in the police to break up a NANS senate meeting at

used the people and led the uprising.

When they reopened right-wing, pro-government people were installed in positions of leadership in the students' union - on her campus all radical students were disqualified.

She and others led a campaign which included the disruption of the installation ceremony.

The hounding of the student leaders was being step-

## CABLE STREET BATTLE CELEBRATED

# 'We must look to our own strength to fight fascism'

OVER one thousand turned out last Sunday to remember and honour the East End workers - Jews, communists, socialists and trade unionists - who fought the police to a standstill on 4 October 1936.

The Metropolitan Police turned out mob-handed that day to clear a path for Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts. But by the end of the afternoon they had failed to break through the united working class opposition.

Tower Hamlets trades council organised Sunday's rally in Altav Ali park, Whitechapel, a commemorative march to Cable Street, and a further rally there outside St George's Town Hall.

Henry Morris, a veteran of the 1936 battle and representing the Board of Deputies, described how the area then had been populated largely by Jewish

BY BOB ARCHER

He recalled how the League of Jewish ex-Service Men and Women based nearby in Prescott Street had trained anti-fascist campaigners at the time.

Dr Richard Stone of the Jewish Council for Racial Equality said the police in 1936 protected the Fascists, and compared it with police actions at the march in Welling some years ago.

He recalled how many Jewish refugees had entered the country on forged passports - grounds for instant expulsion under the new Asylum Act.

Gerry Gable, editor of the anti-racist magazine Searchlight welcomed the presence at last of representatives of official Jewish bodies.

Bob Crow, assistant general secretary of the RMT union, reported how the union had expelled a leading right-wing extremist and urged this march should be an annual event



Demonstrators on the Cable Street march last Sunday.

The best speech of the opening rally came from David Landau of the Jewish Socialist Group. He made four simple points:

■ We cannot rely on the state to fight racism. We must look to our own organisation and strength to defeat fascism.

■ To do that we must have a mass united movement. Small groups can do important work but only a truly mass movement can take on the fascists.

■ The victory at Cable Street depended on the self-organised Jewish working class. A lot of the big organisations were reluctant to call their forces out. But Jewish Socialists and trade unionists put out the call and others answered it.

■ We cannot trust the official representatives. The Board of Deputies and the Jewish Chronicle said 'Stay at home' that day.

Tower Hamlets Trades Council secretary Phil Ed-

wards told the rally in Cable Street:

'All our struggles must be brought together. We cannot afford to organise and discuss separately.'

He spoke of his experiences alongside Bosnian workers who had fought racist ethnic cleansing policies during the recent war.

He pointed out that the struggle against racism had to be linked to the defence of all working class rights and living conditions.

A SERIES of talks and discussions on his book 'The Power of Ideology' will be given by the noted Marxist, Professor Istvan Meszaros, in the library of Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1 (nearest underground Holborn). The first of these will be on **Thursday 31 October at 7 p.m.** Admission £1 on the door (refreshments included). Others in the series will be on **Thursdays, 7, 21 and 28 November**. O.A follow-on series of talks by Istvan Meszaros on his recent book 'Beyond Capital' is being planned for **February-March 1997**

Organised by South Place Ethical Society

## Supergrass frames Scottish nationalist

A CAMPAIGN is under way to publicise the forthcoming trial in Dublin of a Scottish Republican on charges of possession of explosives. Adam Busby, aged 47, is currently being held on remand in Portlaoise prison.

The southern Irish state is attempting to obtain a conviction solely on the testimony of a 'supergrass'. Busby's trial will be at the non-jury Special Criminal Court which is little more than a tribunal for dealing with political cases.

His supporters claim that Busby is being charged at the insistence of the British authorities. He has lived in Ireland since 1983, and in 1984 successfully appealed against extradition to Britain on the grounds that the alleged offences were political.

Since then, after every Scottish National Liberation Army (SNLA) attack in Britain there have been demands from Scottish and English MPs for action against him. This is despite the fact that there is no evidence, nor any allegation from the police, that Busby had ever left Ireland since his arrival.

In September 1994 a number of alleged SNLA activists were arrested and charged in Aberdeen with conspiring 'with the intention of coercing Her Majesty's Government into the setting up of a separate Government in Scotland'.

Busby was charged in his absence. Also accused was Darin Brown who, when released on remand, went to Dublin before the trial could take place. In May, 1995, Brown and Busby were arrested in Dublin and Brown made the first of a series of statements admitting participation in the 'treasonable conspiracy' he had been charged with in Aberdeen.

Although he also admitted a further 'conspiracy' in Ireland, Brown was not charged nor was he extradited back to Scotland. Instead he was released from police custody and, Busby's supporters say, agreed a deal with detectives from Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad in Garda headquarters in Dublin.

In return for total immunity from prosecution in Ireland and Britain, Brown fabricated statements saying he had seen Adam Busby in possession of envelopes containing letter bombs in Dublin.

These letter bombs were actually posted in Birmingham in March 1995, as the prosecution acknowledges, but Busby has been charged with possession of explosives solely on the evidence purchased from Brown.

Although he had admitted the offences, Brown's name was dropped from the indictment when the conspiracy trial took place in Aberdeen. Two co-accused were imprisoned.

In the face of criticism, including questions from the British Labour MP, Tony Benn, the Lord Advocate for Scotland has refused to comment on why Brown was not prosecuted for offences he had been charged with and which he had admitted in signed statements.

It suited the Irish government to protest to the British in the 1980's against the use of 'supergrass' testimonies in the north of Ireland. Today they are completely in hock to the leading states of the European Union and will do as they are bid in removing those who are seen to be a threat.

\* The Scottish Separatist Group can be contacted at PO Box 4960, Dublin 1.

They ask all those concerned to write in protest to: Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, The Lord Advocate's Office, 25, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1LA. Nora Owen TD, Minister for Justice, Dept. for Justice, 72-76



# Inside left

## East Enders stopped Mosley by reversing CP policy

THE Battle of Cable Street, when East End workers stopped Sir Oswald Mosley's fascists 60 years ago, has an honoured place in working-class tradition.

But at the time, it wasn't that simple.

Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco were on the march in Europe. Mosley's blackshirts, exploiting backward prejudice and the despair of long-term unemployment, were establishing themselves in London's East End, with attacks on Jewish people.

The left, the Communist Party, Independent Labour Party and others, gained support for the fight against fascism. But how should you fight it?

Was a popular front, wooing 'respectable' liberals and Tories, as Communist Party policy envisaged, more important than uniting workers? Could it risk confrontation with the state? Mosley intended to lead his cohorts through the East End on Sunday 4 October 1936. On 30 September, reporting that police had refused the Ex-Service-men's Anti-Fascist Association permission to march that day, the *Daily Worker* said:

'At Trafalgar Square however, on Sunday the YCL is holding its great meeting to collect £100 for the people of Spain.'

'A call has been sent out by the London District of the CP for workers to go in their thousands to Trafalgar Square, and after the demonstration to march through East London's streets to show their hatred of Mosley's support for the fascist attack on democracy in Spain.'

quoted in *Out of the Ghetto*, by Joe Jacobs, Phoenix Press, p.237)

The Jewish People's Council against Fascism and Antisemitism, rejecting the passivity of the established Board of Deputies of British Jews, campaigned, raising opposition to the Mosley march.

'A hundred thousand signatures were obtained in the course of a few days, calling on the Home Secretary to forbid this demonstration. In London was in ferment. The Stepney Communists sensed this,' writes Phil Piratin.

'At a joint meeting with officials of the London District Committee it was decided to ask the youth to call their meeting in Trafalgar Square and to devote the full resources of all Communist organisations to the anti-fascist action against Mosley. (*Our Flag Stays Up*, p.19).

Joe Jacobs, Stepney CP branch secretary, gives a fuller picture. 'The CP District Committee wanted the Trafalgar Square rally to go ahead because 'Spain was more important than Mosley', Jacobs was convinced that if this was won the day, 'a heavy blow would fall on the workers of East London and workers everywhere.'

Stepney branch sought a meeting with District representatives. On 29 September, the party organisers left a message for Jacobs, saying branches must bring people to two street meetings arranged for that day.

'Meetings to be kept orderly and avoid clashes', the note said. 'Keep order: no excuse for Government to say we, like BUF are hooligans. If Mosley decides to march, let him. Don't attempt disorder'. 'Time too short to get a "They shall not pass" policy across. It would be harmful stunt'. . . (Jacobs, p.33)

'They shall not pass' was already appearing on walls, Jacobs says.

Ordinary Communist Party members assumed their Party meant to stop the fascists, and

would revolt if it did not change the line.

On 30 September, District Committee representatives, including John Mahon and Dave Springhall, met Stepney branch committee members at one of their homes.

'We were treated to a long talk on the world situation in which it was stated that the demonstration to Trafalgar Square in support of Spanish Democracy was more important than Mosley's march in East London.' (p.241)

The Stepney members argued that the best way to help the Spanish people was to stop Mosley's fascists, because a victory for Mosley would be a victory for Franco. In any case, they added, people were going to stop the fascists whatever the Party said.

Late in the evening, there was a knock at the door. Pat Devine had come from a meeting at the Party centre. The line had been changed. All branches should rally at Aldgate on 4 October. That night, heartened members went out campaigning, and the slogan 'They shall not pass!' appeared everywhere.

On the morning of 4 October, police attacked Jewish ex-servicemen protesting against the fascists. But the area was roused. The Labour Party and the Jewish Board of Deputies had urged people to stay at home. The East End wasn't listening.

By 1 pm, as Mosley's blackshirts assembled at Royal Mint St., near the Tower, an estimated 50,000 people swarmed around Gardner's corner, Aldgate, where five roads meet. A tram was left immobilised by its driver. Youngsters perched on lamp-posts alerted the crowd to any point where the police tried to break through.

At first aid posts in nearby streets, doctors and nurses bandaged those injured by police batons. Motor cyclists carried messages to and fro.

Barricades had been set up in Cable Street. Police charging them came under a hail of milk-bottles from women on overlooking buildings.

Crowds streamed down side streets to reinforce the barricades. Some coppers surrendered. Arriving late, Mosley was in time to get a brick through his windscreen. Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Philip Game, after pleading with the Home Secretary to forbid Mosley's march, decided to stop it himself. The East End had won, not just against Mosley's fascists, but against the state. It wasn't the end of the fight against either, but it was a decisive battle.

Piratin, elected Communist MP for Mile End in 1945, describes how organising poor tenants, whom right-wing Labour had abandoned, helped build working-class unity against the fascists. Joe Jacobs says 'October 4th was not just the result of some few days effort. . . The defeat of Mosley started way back when he failed to gain a foothold in Shadwell and Wapping, where lived the dockers of Irish descent with a strong Catholic background and a long history of working-class struggle behind them. The Jews of East London could not, in my view, have held Mosley back without support from this area. . .' (*Out of the Ghetto*, p.257).

Cable Street symbolizes working class unity against the fascists.

It was also a case when working class fighters had to stand up and give a lead to those who considered themselves communists and leaders.

Charlie Pottins

# CRISIS AND RENEWAL OF MARXISM

## BOOK REVIEW by Nick Lee

'History, Economic History and the Future of Marxism: Essays in Memory of Tom Kemp.' Porcupine Press, 1996.

Edited: Geoff Pilling and Terry Brotherstone

THE essays in this memorial to the late Tom Kemp cover such a diversity of topics as to frustrate any attempt at an overview. It is of course a tribute to Kemp's reputation as a scholar that such a disparate group of writers should have come forth to honour him in this collection. A closer inspection, however, reveals themes which recur throughout several of the essays. In this short review I have picked out one and I am conscious of having ignored others.

In the concluding chapter Terry Brotherstone gives an account of the experience of Tom Kemp as part of the generation of intellectuals emerging from the crisis in the Communist Party after 1956. He shows that while Kemp, together with others such as Peter Fryer, found their way to the Trotskyist movement, others did not.

Among the latter were those like the historians Edward Thompson and John Saville who, through journals such as the *New Reasoner* and its successor, *New Left Review*, retreated rather to an idealist or moral critique of Stalinism under the banner of 'socialist humanism'.

Notwithstanding the greatness of Thompson as a historian, manifested in his unrivalled account of the *Making of the English Working Class*, nor the tremendous theoretical influence of the 'New Left' on the generation of radicals of the late 1960s and early 1970's, the movement was not able to build either a political organisation which could replace the Communist Party nor secure even individual leadership roles in the

'events of 1968'

Brotherstone directs us to a central question arising from this account. If the crisis in the Stalinist movement in 1956 led many, like Tom Kemp, from the CP to the Trotskyist movement, why has the recent collapse of the Soviet Union not had a similar effect? His answer will not please dogmatists.

'In 1956 it was still possible to regard Marxism as a doctrine which might lose its association with Stalinism mainly by demonstrating its capacity to act as a superior explanatory tool... Today it is the very fundamentals of Marxism... which have to be both re-examined and properly asserted if this approach is to re-establish itself as the real opposition to the confusion and demoralisation engendered by bourgeois ideology.'

This theme - the crisis and renewal of Marxism, and of the working class movement from which it is inseparable - links together many of the essays in the book.

### Positive note

The collection starts on a positive note with Geoff Pilling's succinct demonstration that it is still only a Marxist political economy, starting from the character of capitalism as a global system, that is able to make sense of the current international crisis.

Any doubt that we are indeed living in a period of severe and growing crisis is dispelled with some carefully selected statistics on such topics

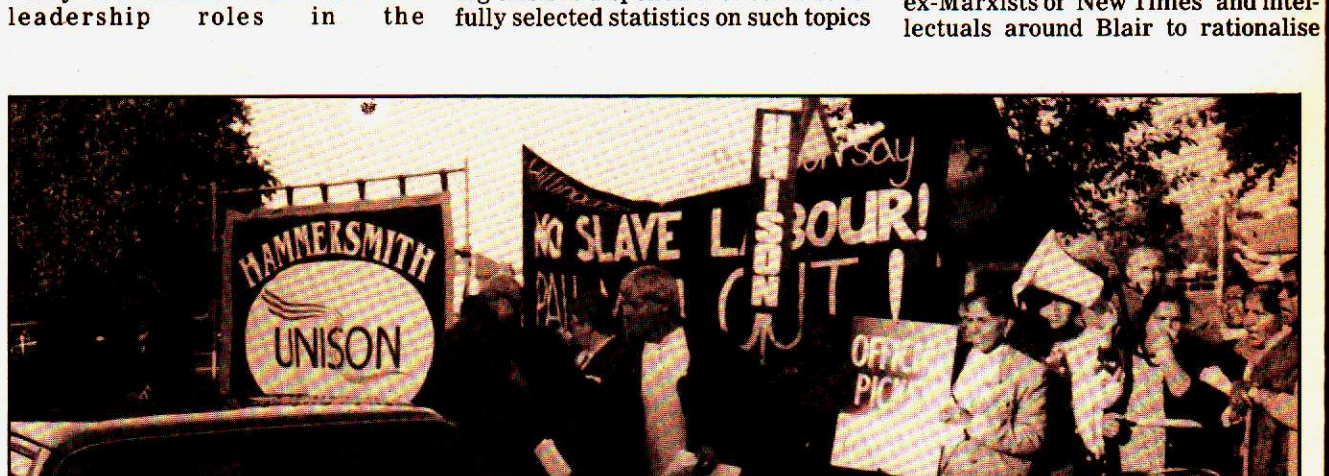
as the international growth in poverty and unemployment in the advanced capitalist countries as well as the 'third world'.

Pilling shows how the tendencies identified by Lenin in his characterisation of the modern epoch as one of imperialist decay are rapidly reasserting themselves after the long but temporary interlude of the post war boom. He traces the collapse of the Keynesian welfare state and goes on to draw the implications for the working class in Britain: the collapse of the reformist project and the impossibility of a future Labour government basing itself on any gains for the working class.

While focusing on Britain the emphasis is at all times on the impossibility of grasping the dynamic of capitalist decay outside its international, global context.

This theme is echoed by Keith Gibbard who effectively sees off the 'Regulation School' of pseudo-Marxist economists and sociologists who owe more to Keynes than Marx. He shows how the school substitutes the transition from one form of 'regulation' to another within capitalism for any notion of the necessary transformation from capitalism to socialism. Gibbard, like Pilling, starts from Lenin's theory of the epoch of imperialist decay. Not only do the regulationists ignore the international nature of capitalism - the whole is simply a sum of national capitalisms - but the fundamental contradictions of capitalism are reduced to technical problems of finding the appropriate mode of 'regulation' for particular 'regimes' of capital accumulation.

A critique of this school is of more than academic interest since they have had an inordinate influence. The thesis that the most important transition of the present period is from Fordism to 'postFordism', or a new flexible adaptive competitive capitalism which is able to restore stability after the crisis of Keynesian, has beaten out a theoretical path for the ex-Marxists of 'New Times' and intellectuals around Blair to rationalise



'Capitalism is fragmenting the the traditional white, male organisations of the working class, and replacing them with women and black workes.' (above, Hillingdon hospital workers at their first anniversary picket).



# City Lights

## German pinstripes

DURING the years of the 'German economic miracle' that lasted throughout the 1950s and into the 1980s Germany's businessmen were widely regarded as paragons of virtue. Hard working, honest, they produced some of the finest and most reliable products in the world that gained an unrivalled place in world markets.

To a degree this was always a fairy tale. Laws against commercial crime were notoriously lax and often not enforced. Legions of directors enjoyed free 'home improvements' when business was slack, and the German export performance always relied heavily on bribes to foreign buyers which to this day are still tax-deductible expenses. Tax evasion among business chiefs remains endemic.

If many ordinary people were prepared to turn a blind eye to these sort of practices during the years of prosperity this is no longer the case. Over 40 per cent of west Germans now believe that top managers are corrupt and the figure rises to 60 per cent in the eastern Lander. A book devoted to the activities of these top managers, 'Failures in Pinstripe Suits,' has become a best-seller.

The reasons are not hard to find. Mounting unemployment, the structural crisis of the whole economy, and the collapse of many firms in dubious circumstances has brought about a sharp change in the public's mood. Thyssen, Commerzbank, Daimler-Benz, Opel, VW, Siemens and Mannesmann — amongst the most famous names in German business — have all been raided recently by the police, subject to state investigation or prosecuted. Charges of tax evasion and bribery and corruption have been flying around everywhere.

Friedrich Hennemann, former boss of the country's largest shipbuilder, Bremer Vulkan, has been arrested and detained by the police pending investigations into the illegal transfer of nearly £600mn in European Union subsidies from the shipyards of the east to prop up the company's ailing yards in the west. Many are now questioning the role of the bankers who sat on Bremer's top boards yet seemed to have ignored such activities.

Daimler-Benz's former boss Edzard Reuter has been sacked following the collapse of a wild programme of takeovers that involved losses of more than £2mn and the sack for thousands of workers.

Few have fallen further than Werner Dieter, once powerful chairman of the engineering giant Mannesmann. He is under investigation for fraud, accused of placing inflated orders from Mannesmann through his private company, Hydac.

Managers at Opel and steel maker Thyssen are under police investigation, accused of accepting bribes and illicit favours. At the latter company six leading managers, including the chairman were arrested recently following dawn raids.

Commerzbank is under investigation for aiding tax evasion and for underpaying taxes on its profits while Thyssen is also charged with having diverted funds given to it for part of the 'restructuring' of the economy in the east.

Alfons Godde has recently been sent down for seven years for stealing millions from Krupps, another giant steel company.

The chief of another company is accused of having hidden £300mn losses on disastrous Saudia-Arabian plant contracts by balance-sheet manipulation. VW chiefs stand accused of industrial espionage against US car giant General Motors.

This is only the tip of the iceberg. Capitalism has always been closely associated with crime. In

fact trade in drugs now rivals that in arms as the most important commodity sold on the world market. But the fact that this connection is becoming more and more open is an indication of the depth now reached in capitalism's crisis.

## Whither the Single Currency?

WHETHER Europe ever has a single currency may seem a matter for fat-cat bankers and big business and be of little concern to millions of ordinary people. Yet in order to try and get their finances in order and establish such a currency governments throughout Europe have been slashing their spending on health, education, and the social services. This has brought untold misery to millions and unemployment, even on the doctored official figures, to well over 20 million. And the numbers are rising.

The name of the currency (the 'Euro') has been chosen, but whether it will ever appear in anybody's pocket, even after all this suffering, is more and more doubtful. For as the date for its planned 1999 inauguration draws closer, division among Europe's bosses intensifies. We all know that the Tory Party in Britain is split from top to bottom over the entry of the pound sterling into a single European currency. And the disagreements in the Labour Party, like many others, papered over at Blackpool last week, are just as severe.

A growing row between France and Italy flared up only last week as French president Jacques Chirac accused the Italian government of resorting to book-keeping tricks so that it could meet the terms of entry into a single currency. Chirac said that the lira was not at the moment compatible with a single market in Europe, a statement which brought a threat from Italian prime minister Romano Prodi to cancel the planned Franco-Italian summit.

Last week Prodi admitted that Italy may resort to creative accounting to be ready for monetary union:

'If others carry out window dressing, we can do the same,' he said. 'If the French get away with it, then we can show them a trick or two, he added.

He was referring to the attempts by the French to privatise the state-owned telephone system in order to improve the government's financial position. This has been approved by the European Commission while Portuguese moves along similar lines — involving the sale of the state-owned BNU bank — have been blocked.

What the French, and even more the Germans fear is that if countries such as Italy stay out of the common monetary arrangements they will be able to devalue their currencies and thus steal a march in the struggle for exports. For the lower the value of a country's currency the cheaper its exports and the dearer its imports. When Britain was driven out of the European Monetary System in 1992 the pound slumped and this gave British exporters a significant advantage in world markets against their French and German rivals.

In order to stop the Italians and the Spanish from repeating this move, some European statesmen now advocate that the rules for the common currency should be relaxed. But this simply brings another danger to the fore. If countries are allowed into the common currency system on the nod, on the basis of cosmetic budget measures, this would mean that the new currency would be fatally weakened.

Under these conditions it is almost certain that the Germans with Europe's strongest currency would refuse to sanction such a move.

Threadneedle



Reclaim the streets activists march in support of the Liverpool dockers.

**'capitalism, particularly in its period of decay, exploits and oppresses not just in class terms but through the dimensions of sexuality, ecology and in other ways and thus resistance comes increasingly from a number of different directions.'**

facts of social stability might be explained.'

Secondly, he urges a revision to the way Marxists have portrayed the working class as the 'primary progressive agent' in favour of taking seriously the idea of radical movements as 'looser, less determinate coalitions of class, gender, racial, ethnic and environmental interests.'

To some readers this may well be regarded as a wholesale capitulation to petty bourgeois notions of 'new social movements' substituting for the working class. But on another reading it can be seen as an appeal for a more accurate notion of how the working class develops and reproduces itself.

Koditschek argues, in my opinion correctly, that a tendency by Marxists to write history as that of 'white European working class men' needs to be challenged. Indeed it has been for some considerable time: the established work of socialist feminist historians like Sheila Rowbotham on the history of women's participation in class struggle comes immediately to mind. Koditschek mentions many others in his copious bibliographical footnotes.

This orientation goes some way to countering the pessimism mentioned above. Capitalism may well be fragmenting and dismembering the organisations of the traditional white male working class but at the same time laying the foundations for new layers of female and black workers to develop new forms of organisation and consciousness.

Such a perspective is distinct from that of the displacement of the working class as the central agent in the struggle for emancipation. Koditschek appears in his essay to both embrace and reject such a view. On the one hand he urges the deconstruction of the 'false universalism of the proletariat' in the same way as the latter deconstructed the false universalism of the bourgeoisie. Yet he is rightly sceptical of the currently fashionable postmodern movements.

These attempt to entirely displace the notion of emancipation shared in some ways by both Marxism and the bourgeois enlightenment, with a con-

tingent plurality of 'emancipations' unrelated to any transformation of the capitalist system as a whole.

One can perhaps detect a third element in his essay: that capitalism, particularly in its period of decay, exploits and oppresses not just in class terms but through the dimensions of sexuality, ecology, and in other ways and thus resistance comes increasingly from a number of different directions.

The key issues for Marxists however remain: firstly, capital is the moving ultimate force behind these oppressions — not some reified 'masculinity' or human obsession with meat eating and fossil fuels.

Secondly these disparate mobilisations have to find it possible to weld themselves into a coherent movement for the replacement of capital as the driving force in human affairs.

But here there is still a continuity with the work of Marxist historians like Thompson for whom, as Koditschek notes, class is a 'process' not a 'thing'. It is continually reproduced and remade.

## Central issues

I have dwelt at length on Koditschek's essay because it brought together what seem to me to be central issues which will have to be expanded on and debated as part of the development of a new form of working class organisation.

There is of course much more in this book of essays. There are contributions on such issues as French and South African economic development — reflecting areas to which Tom Kemp himself contributed.

Also there are two essays on philosophy, by Cyril Smith and Istvan Meszaros, both on aspects of the relationship between Hegel and Marx.

It is of course a reflection of the richness of this collection that there will be other threads and continuities which will appear more obvious perhaps to other reviewers.

And that is a fitting tribute to the Marxist whose untimely passing was the occasion for these essays.

M

the abandonment of the welfare state and reconcile themselves to the state and to the attack on the working class, begun by Thatcher, all in the name of a new, postmodern, 'diversity'

Something of the real nature of this new 'diversity' is illustrated by Richard Farnetti in his essay on the role of Japanese companies in Britain. He shows how the 'Japanese model' of the company as a happy family, rather than deriving from a nebulous Japanese 'culture' was very much the produce of the, US supported, violent destruction of working class organisation by hired thugs after the Second World War.

Its importation into Britain in the form of Toyota, Nissan et. al., has much the same aim through a slower and less violent process of plant location in areas of weak working-class organisation and the development of new forms of management-union relations.

Farnetti ends on a pessimistic note. His main message is that these new forms of industrial relations, based on defeats of the working class in Japan, will contribute to the further dislocation and 'the disintegration of working class organisations established through more than a century of furiously fought struggles'.

Thus we arrive at the problematic outlined by Terry Brotherstone. The fundamentals of Marxism are indeed at stake if the current logic of capital is simply that of the destruction and fragmentation of traditional forms of working class organisation without laying the basis simultaneously for new forms of struggle. Unintentionally or otherwise, Farnetti portrays a negative landscape devoid of preconditions for new forms of struggle and organisation.

## Marxist Theory

This goes right to the heart of Marxist theory. The working class is both part of the productive forces and the agency that will overthrow the capitalist social relations. But if, in the epoch of imperialist decay, capitalism acts as a restraint on the development of the productive forces does it not also act as a restraint on the development of the working class? Farnetti's essay is posing this question though he does not put it in this form.

One type of answer to this question that has emerged in recent years is of course to displace or revise the notion of exactly what is meant by the working class. This issue is taken up in some detail in the chapter by the historian Theodore Koditschek. His essay begins with a substantial review of the rich tradition of Marxist historical writing in Britain, in particular by those who came out of the Communist Party History Group — Maurice Dobb, Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawm and of course Edward Thompson: the same group to which Brotherstone refers.

Koditschek then moves on to echo Brotherstone's argument that today, unlike in 1956 the fundamentals of Marxism have to be re-examined.

He introduces two themes. Firstly he characterises these historians as guilty of a one-sided stress on conflict and struggle at the expense of continuities and stabilities in capitalism and thus 'willfully removing from their intellectual armoury many of the conceptual tools with which the



## Black music and white composers

A FRIEND who read what I wrote here a few months ago about non-western influences on western music asked me the other day who was the earliest white composer to show the influence of black music.

Was it perhaps, my friend asked, the Bradford-born composer Frederick Delius (1862-1934)? Having lived in Florida as an orange-planter in 1884-85, Delius included in his first work for full orchestra, Florida — Tropical Scenes for Orchestra (1887), a piece called 'Daybreak'.

This is an orchestral version of the Kalinda, the neo-African stick-fighting dance of Louisiana and of Trinidad and elsewhere in the Caribbean, which was described by a French missionary in Martinique in 1694.

Florida, to be sure, predates by six years the last symphony of the Czech composer Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904), which is titled *From the New World* (1893), was written during his three-year stay in New York as head of the US National Conservatory, and shows that he had been listening to African-American 'spirituals'.

And Florida predates by 17 years the ragtime-influenced Golliswog's *Cake Walk* of Claude Debussy (1862-1918).

But Delius was himself anticipated by some 40 years, by the American composer and virtuoso pianist Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869).

My friend had never heard of Gottschalk, which scarcely surprised me, since 'America's first nationalist composer', as he was called, was until recently either ignored or slighted in most histories of music, including histories of US music, and in pretty well all musical encyclopedias.

The 9th edition (1955) of the *Oxford Companion to Music*, for instance, refers to his 'simple piano pieces', which 'were for years very popular because of their sentimentality and pianistic charm', adding snootily: 'But they belong wholly to a past phase of musical taste.'

Yet some of Gottschalk's compositions for solo piano foreshadow quite astonishingly the ragtime that was to become a craze some 30 years after his death, and some of them brilliantly reflect the rhythms of the black dance music he heard during his lengthy stays in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

It is not too much to say that in Gottschalk's music Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) joins hands with Scott Joplin (1868-1917).

Gottschalk was born in New Orleans, which like many other seaports was a great musical melting-pot, had the largest black population, both slave and free, of any American city, and, a generation later, was to become the birthplace of jazz. He was brought up in the city's Vieux Carre district, the so-called 'French Quarter', where he heard a lot of African-American singing and music-making.

A child prodigy as a pianist, he was sent to Paris at the age of 13 to complete his musical education. Chopin attended his first public performance, and said to him: 'Give me your hand, my child. I predict that you will be the king of Pianists.'

And for the rest of his life Gottschalk made a living as a touring virtuoso in the US, the Caribbean, and South America.

In those days before gramophone, cinema, radio, and television, such itinerant entertainers were of enormous importance in the dissemination of all kinds of music. And, if they had any reputation at all, their concerts were packed out, as Gottschalk's generally were.

In the three years 1862-64 he travelled 95,000 miles and gave no fewer than 1,000 recitals. Often mobbed by adoring schoolgirls on his travels, he was in this respect

## PERSONAL COLUMN

the 19th-century forerunner of the 20th-century pop star.

He was only 15, and still a music student in Paris, when he composed three piano pieces which, with their syncopated melodic lines and catchy rhythms, electrified the French public. For European concert audiences this was their first taste of African-American dance music, albeit mediated through the mind of a classically trained composer.

These three pieces were *Bamboula, danse des negres*, *Savane, ballade creole*, and *Le Bananier, chanson negre*.

To these three he added, in 1854, *Le Banjo, esquisse americaine*, which gives a convincing keyboard version of banjo strumming and includes echoes of the well-known ditty *Camptown Raes*, published four years earlier, which I'll come back to in a minute.

These four pieces are sometimes grouped and played together as a 'Louisiana Suite', but I'm not sure that Gottschalk himself ever did so.

In other piano works, such as *jos Criollos, Reponds-moi, Souvenir de la Havane* and *Souvenir de Porto Rico*, and in the cantata (or miniature opera) for soprano, tenor, baritone, and orchestra, *Escenas Camestres*, Gottschalk revels in the dance rhythms that today are often called 'tango' or 'habanera'.

He is fond of combining such heavily accented rhythms in the bass with, in the melody line, the jagged syncopations that somewhat later would be the hallmark of the cakewalk and of ragtime.

Gottschalk was also a pioneer in the use of Afro-Cuban percussion in 'classical' orchestral music. The second movement of his Symphony No. 1, titled *La Nuit des tropiques*, composed in 1859 while he was staying in Guadeloupe, calls for the bamboula and other neo-African drums.

All these innovations struck his audiences as highly exotic, and generated much excitement.

Gottschalk was of course a 'classical' composer. But he was by no means the first white American composer to be inspired by the black music he heard around him as a child.

I mentioned *Camptown Races*. This 'Ethiopian' song was composed by America's first great song-writer, Stephen Collins Foster (1826-1864), whose *Oh! Susanna* and *Old Folks at Home* were other early examples of the imitation and, it has to be said, exploitation of African-American musical styles by enterprising white composers.

But even Collins wasn't the first go-getting white composer to work this rich vein. He was preceded by Daniel Decatur Emmett (1815-1904), the minstrel-show banjoist, fiddler, singer, and comedian who wrote *Dixie*, a song which, greatly to his chagrin — for he was a Northerner — was adopted as a patriotic marching song by Confederate troops in the US civil war.

Emmett was a prolific, if highly derivative, composer who wrote about 70 published songs for the minstrel shows as well as numerous banjo tunes.

The British Library has a copy of Emmett's [sic] *Celebrated Negro Melodies*, published in 1843 or 1844, which includes such pieces as 'Dandy Jim from Caroline', 'Old Dan Tucker', and 'The Boatman's Dance, in imitation of the American Negro Boatman'.

And this is as far back as I've been able to trace the black musical influence — though there is a clear hint of what is to come in the 'Negro job' included in *A Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs*, published in Glasgow as early as 1782.

*Peter Fryer*

# Cyril Ramaphosa — a study in betrayal

Comment by Keith Standing, General Secretary INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

I READ with considerable interest the South African Appeal (Workers Press, 14 September) for urgent funds to help comrade NM and his family, following his being shot in an evident attempt on his life.

## Brutal

This brutal action was not dissimilar to that taken against comrade Bongani Mkhungo.

A leading member of the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign, he was attacked for nothing more than leafleting the COSATU tenth anniversary rally with a call for support for the striking nurses in ex-Transkei, and a demand that COSATU remains independent of the state.

The COSATU stewards who carried out the attack on comrade Mkhungo were clearly directed by the ANC, whose role against the progressive elements in the workers' movement of South Africa imitates the role of Stalin's GPU in the Spanish Civil War.

These activities by the ANC against the workers' movement raise massive concerns about the aims of the ANC and its leadership.

One case in point is Cyril Ramaphosa, who was trained by the British TUC and was much vaunted by its self-seeking social democratic bureaucracy.

Ramaphosa has come full circle. From general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in South Africa to general secretary of the ANC, chief ANC negotiator at the World Trade Centre and chair of the Constituent Assembly, he has now left parliament to serve on the board of New Africa Investments Limited (NAIL).

His first job at NAIL was to spearhead a bid for Anglo-

American's 48 per cent holding in Johnic — a company that has interests in the media, food, motor vehicle manufacturing and brewing industries, as well as in the retail sector.

A group of black businessmen and trade union pension funds put up about R4 billion for the deal. In the event Ramaphosa successfully secured a 20 per cent holding in Johnic.

In all these positions Ramaphosa has remained true to the section of society he elected to serve — the black middle class.

As general secretary of the NUM he was part of the COSATU bureaucracy which up to this day suppresses the fight of the working class for socialism.

## Recall

We only need to recall the events of 1987 when the mineworkers launched their strike, which shook South Africa's capitalist class to their very bones. The strike grew so rapidly in scope that the workers were threatening to challenge the capitalists and the state for control of the mines. The mining bosses panicked. How to stop this strike was the life and death question that every capitalist took to bed each night.

They produced the age-old method used by capitalists all over the world — offer a compromise which contains a few privileges for the leaders, but leave the basic relationship between boss and worker unchanged.

It was Cyril Ramaphosa and his bureaucratic friends who accepted this compromise. It was they who stopped the strike even though the best fighters of the workers' revolution rejected this.

We can see the results of this betrayal. The workers still work and die under the

same conditions in the mines.

The revolution was derailed. The capitalists still own and control the mines. Their profits continue to pile up each year. The black middle class demonstrated its worth to the capitalist class. For the right price, they could be used to deflect workers' revolutionary struggle at every step.

Cyril Ramaphosa's 'successful' cover and the 'respect' that the capitalists show him is due to this fact and nothing else. As general secretary of the ANC and at the World Trade Centre, Ramaphosa continued on the same path.

The negotiated settlement was aimed to divert the masses from revolutionary struggle. It aimed to get the people to drop their reliance on their own, independent organisations and militant action to solve their problems.

'Continue with your normal lives while we negotiate to solve your problems' is what the ANC tried to teach the people. But to continue normally as before meant to continue to work for the bosses, 'not to disturb the fragile economy', to accept that the capitalists will exploit you for ever.

## Elections

The elections and the government which came out of these negotiations aimed at precisely this. It ensures the ruling-class position of the capitalists by safeguarding their ownership of all the means of production — the mines, the factories, the farms, everything. It also tries to ensure that the working class will remain a poor and exploited class.

The new South African constitution does the same thing. It contains all the

rights and interests needed to protect the interests of the bosses and the capitalist system as a whole.

It contains none of the rules and rights important to give the working class majority the chance to take control of society.

## Illegal

The liberation of the working class from exploitation is illegal under the constitution. Cyril Ramaphosa and his friends have served capital well.

His move onto the board of NAIL means that he has become a capitalist himself. It also completes the project which the local and foreign capitalists launched in the 1980s. That project was to make the ANC and the aspirant black middle-class which it represents, part of the system, and to get them to help suppress the fight for a revolution.

Anglo-American and the imperialists had to give them a chance to become 'big businessmen' as well. In other words, to give them a chance to share in the exploitation of the labouring masses.

This is what the members of the black middle class really dream about — to become rich capitalists themselves. For this dream, they will sell out the workers, suppress their struggle, simply do anything to please their benefactors. They are the enemies of the South African worker. Let no worker forget this for one minute.

In their struggle to rebuild the trade unions and workers' movement on the basis of independence from the state, democracy within the unions and workers' internationalism, comrades Mkhungo and NM walk tall, whilst Ramaphosa and his ilk grovel to imperialism.

## Jobless German recovery

By Bob Archer

THE German engineering union IG Metall has reported that business actually picked up in the mechanical engineering sector during 1995, when employers and the media were moaning about high costs and competition from more efficient foreign economies.

Taking 63 firms employing 303,000 workers and turning over 75 billion deutsche marks, the union shows the net profits had risen by 114.6 per cent over the 1994 level.

In 1994, profits were 7.5 per cent of capital invested, the union's researchers report. In 1995 this rose to 11.2 per cent, itself a quite dramatic improvement.

Comparing 1995 to the previous year, these firms increased their turnover by 7.5 per cent and their gross profits by 60.4 per cent.

The workers' productivity went up by 4.6 per cent, but the number of jobs went up by only . . . 0.5 per cent. Incidentally, the union



German workers facing lay-offs and unemployment

spent six months late last year and early this year telling workers that they had to accept a deterioration in overtime pay and working practices to cement an 'alliance for jobs' with the employers and the government.

The figures show that increases in productivity bolster profits but do very little to create jobs.

In any case, German engineering employers are not going to make a single concession they don't have to in the upcoming contract negotiations.

Union second-in-command Walter Riester has warned that employers are demanding longer working hours, a deterioration in agreements about holiday pay and Christmas bonuses and cuts in sick pay.

While engineering workers in the former DDR are set to get the 38-hour week next year, there is still no agreement on overtime arrangements there.

Employers are campaigning to cut the money spent on training young workers, Riester warns, while new arrangements

which protect the wages of older workers who work part-time have had little take-up.

While the union may argue that the employers can afford to give a little, the firms obviously feel that 'lean production' is the way to a successful future.

There will almost certainly be further moves on their side to break up the blanket, legally-binding contract negotiations which have done so much in the past to sustain wages and conditions for workers in Germany.



## The need for a new socialist party

### Expulsions continuing in SLP

PHIL Bowen's letter (Workers Press, 28 September) raises the question of how a revolutionary party can and must be built.

However the following question must be counterposed: can revolutionaries work within the Socialist Labour Party without compromising their principles under pressure from a counter-revolutionary, anti-Marxist leadership? My own personal and others' experience teaches otherwise.

On 9 September I was forced to resign from the Hull branch of the SLP because the branch membership categorically refused to oppose my threatened expulsion.

Because of my principled opposition to the constitution of the SLP, I received a letter threatening expulsion if I did not cease to campaign in the branch against the bureaucratically imposed constitution. On the pretext that the branch would be dissolved if they supported me in opposition to [Pat] Sikorski [general secretary] and [Arthur] Scargill [chairman], the branch members refused to oppose my expulsion and thus I was, in essence, compelled to resign.

Lenin says somewhere that 'experience teaches' and how right he is. Experience has taught me that it is simply not possible for revolutionaries to openly fight for Marxism within the SLP without risking expulsion from Sikorski and co.

The only alternative is to be forced to descend into the abyss of conspiratorial politics with all the hideous chicanery and psychological rubbish which goes with it.

The leadership of the SLP has formulated the constitution (with the backing of the overwhelming majority of the membership) to actually prevent Marxists from actively and openly participating in the life of the party, i.e. effectively excluding revolutionary work from its inception.

We print three more personal responses to the initiative taken by the WRP towards building a new socialist party. Each week we aim to print a selection of views on this. Anybody interested in taking part in this discussion should mail, fax or e-mail (see back page) contributions which should be 300-400 words in length.

It is a rehash of the worst practices of the labour bureaucracy but with a 'left' face. In fact, the SLP bureaucracy and its trade union affiliates are merely the 'lefts' of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy simply organised in a separate body.

Its outlook, in the final analysis, must represent the interests of the ruling class and not workers. Scargill is merely the personification of this tendency in the labour bureaucracy.

The new socialist party, which is historically necessary if the working class is to build socialism internationally, must be based on Marxism. It will not grow out of an amalgamation of the remnants of 'left' social democracy with the fag end of Stalinism.

The theory, practice and revolutionary traditions of Marxism must be carried forward in this epoch. They must become the guiding principles in the construction of the new party.

In this respect, the lessons of defeat which Trotsky drew between 1923-1940 must become integrated as absolutely vital elements in our practice as revolutionaries. Without this, the road to victory cannot be opened up.

Likewise we must learn, reify and put into practice the lessons of the 'Healy period' in the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The new party must be animated by the very best traditions of working class democracy.

Its leaders will be elected by the membership. They will be accountable to that membership and subject to democratic recall at any time. They will be subject to removal and disciplinary action by the membership.

All measures must be incorporated into its practices

and organisation which will prevent it from becoming the bureaucratised centralised abomination which was Healy's WRP.

It must be a 'bottom up' workers' (i.e. revolutionary) party and not a 'top down' centralisation without any internal democracy.

The new party must be built and fought for within the wider context of rebuilding the Fourth International (i.e. of rebuilding the Trotskyist movement).

For those comrades who reject Trotskyism (including the majority in the Revolutionary Platform grouping in the SLP) Marxism is not expressed in its highest form in Trotskyism. But Trotskyism is the highest form of Marxism and, accordingly inherits and takes its revolutionary content to its highest level.

To reject Trotskyism is to reject Marxism in its highest form. It is to fail to grasp the vital historic significance of Trotsky's life of struggle, especially that period from 1923-1940. As a Trotskyist, I call on all those who are fighting to build a revolutionary Marxist party to join the movement initiated by the WRP and attend the recall conference on 23 November in London.

**Long live Trotskyism! Rebuild the Fourth International!**

Martin Shaw  
Hull

### Whose 'old habits'?

SIMON Pirani thinks Geoff Pilling's statement that the existing party has become 'a barrier' is 'strange'; but says he agrees 'in a certain sense'. I don't think Simon understands what we are saying.

The WRP is not proposing

to commit hari kiri because 'leading members' made a wrong analysis of the fall of Stalinism.

Our policy is not decided by a few 'leading members', but by the membership, through congress. Were we over-optimistic, thinking changes in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe reflected the strength of the working class, and the beginning of political revolution? Perhaps. We tried to correct this acknowledging the damage done to working-class consciousness under decades of Stalinism.

Let's look at the other side. Wasn't our position, that of the Workers International for Reconstruction of the Fourth International, better than those who saw the fall of the Berlin Wall as tragedy, trusted the Stalinist bureaucracy to defend 'actually existing socialism', and concluded capitalism had secured its future?

Were the Russian comrades, with whom Simon worked, right to oppose the Moscow coup, or being 'one-sided'? And, since Simon thinks we need reminding of Stalinism's legacy in Bosnia and elsewhere, how come it was the Workers International, with its poor analysis, and even poorer resources, that tried to do something about this?

Simon complains that the WRP 'has made little progress' to 'rebuild the Fourth International'. But we talked about changing our relationship with the working class. Urging workers' unity between East and West, and the need for parties in every country, we re-asserted the vanguard role of the working class. And we recognised that re-constructing the Fourth International is inseparable from rebuilding the strength of the working class.

Comrades in South Africa put their lives on the line defending working-class political independence. We initiated practical solidarity between trade unionists in Britain, France and Bosnia. Working with refugee workers, the International trade union solidarity conference attracted people from 20 countries. The dockers' struggle we support has taken international

dimensions. But this isn't 'building the Fourth International', says Simon!

So who is suffering from old 'habits'? Gerry Healy neither invented nor practiced democratic centralism. His regime couldn't have tolerated our new party call, or the international strategy of which it forms part.

After years of protesting any detraction from 'vanguardism', Simon Pirani in a minority, decides democratic centralism's to blame, and the Party 'a barrier'. But to what?

Charlie Pottins

### Disappointing

CLIFF Slaughter's response to my points about the 'new party' is disappointing.

On the 'fall of Stalinism'. He claims I 'opposed' a 'dialectical analysis'. No. I criticised parts of the Workers International second congress resolution, and sections of a joint statement by the WI and the International Workers League. Long after my criticisms were published (see the 'International', nos. 15 and 17), not a single supporter of the one-sided, politically-flawed positions opposed has responded. Instead of doing so, Cliff erects a position he falsely claims to be mine and knocks it down. Please, read what I wrote.

On Bosnia. Cliff accuses me of being 'sceptical' about undertaking 'revolutionary practice'. This is a fantasy. If Cliff intends seriously to discuss this, he should publish in WP:

(a) any record of anything I said, wrote or did to back up his allegation, and

(b) an account, which I can provide, of my part in the work of the WI vis-a-vis Bosnia. Will he?

On 'inner-party struggle', a relevant example of the methods I propose to drop is the petty campaign of restrictions on me writing in WP.

It began two years ago. Through the paper, direct questions were posed to me about my views (as they have been now, by Cliff). The issue then was 'critical support'. I submitted a reply, no longer than dozens of other WP articles, asking that it not be cut without me being consulted. It was cut in half without consultation, and a WRP central

committee member was given space to write a pseudonymous attack on my butchered article. On two further occasions — when I tried to make points about Richard Gott and Croatia — WP published attacks on my articles which strayed from serious discussion into playground abuse and insults. After that, I almost gave up. But I didn't.

I proposed to write a comment on a subject I knew about, the Hemsworth by-election. This was rejected.

A comment was published by another comrade who was so unfamiliar with the issue that s/he made elementary factual mistakes.

I was permitted to publish comment only AFTER the by-election and AFTER a quizzing by the editor about what I would say. In future, he added, I should write news reports but not comment articles. After 24 years' WRP membership, two of them as editor, I thought this was ridiculous.

My protests about this, not least to Cliff Slaughter, were to no avail. My position is in sharp contrast to that of other 'well known members of the WRP', to coin Cliff's phrase. Most of these get space in the paper to write what they want, when they want.

I am not a prima donna wanting to pontificate. I do not even want that many column inches. But why should there be petty, undignified obstacles to my participation in debate?

THIS is the sort of 'inner-party struggle' I think should stop.

On the 'new party'. After being told my comment articles were unwelcome, I never considered writing at length about this. When all readers were invited to submit letters of under 400 words, I did so.

It's a bit rich for Cliff to complain that my letter contained 'vague hints'. With such a word limit — from which Cliff, among others, is exempt — how could I do more than make 'vague hints' about such big issues? As for 'inuendos', these are imagined by Cliff. (He asks me, 'is the implication that...?' — that's an old trick.)

On democratic centralism and the rebuilding of the Fourth International. Let me have more space, and I'll answer Cliff's questions.

Simon Pirani

## Bob Pennington remembered - by Bill Hunter

**IT WAS sad news that Bob Pennington had died alone on a bench in Brighton.**

I worked closely with him in the north at the end of the 1940s into the 1960s. He was an energetic organiser and propagandist, a humorous companion with a gift for repartee.

To be sure, he was infuriating at times as he sometimes made impressionistic generalisations and had a tendency on occasions to cut corners but he had a will to fight.

There was certainly no doubt about his contribution to Trotskyism during the time I knew him closely. From what I know of him in very recent years, although he was not active, he still adhered to the principles of Marxism.

The last time I met him was in 1987 when he represented the British section of the Fourth International led by the late Ernest Mandel (United Secretariat) in discussions with the Workers Revolutionary Party after the expulsion of Healy [WRP leader].

Bob was born in Walkden near Manchester. His mother was a mill-worker all her life.

He had gone to a secondary school and when he left at age 16 he had several jobs. He worked down a mine, but had trouble with his feet. For some time he was in the RAF.

Mary and John Archer [leading Trotskyists] met him in Blackpool in 1947. They had some discussions then with him on Trotskyism. He had been for a brief period a member of the Young Communist League in the Walkden-Atherton area. The next time they met him was three or four years later in Leeds, where he was working on the buses.

He joined the Trotskyist club in 1952 and for a time lived in an attic in their back-to-back house.

They recruited a number of students at Leeds university, including Jack Gale. The students and youth nationally who were gathered around the paper 'Socialist Outlook' were active in the League of Youth which the Labour Party leaders had been compelled to set up in 1950.

In the early 1950s they sought to turn the League towards young workers. Bob Pennington was a delegate to the 1952 conference and there criticised the report from the platform on education because it said nothing about education for the forces, where British youth at that time were compelled to spend two years of their lives. He demanded that the trade unions should have the right to conduct educational work

among the armed forces.

When Bob became an organiser for the Trotskyists, he spent half his time in Leeds and half in Liverpool. By this time he was married with a child and a house in Leeds, but moved over to Liverpool in 1955.

At the time of the struggle with the break of the northern dockers into the Blue Union, that union set up an office in Liverpool and Bob Pennington was officially employed to assist in recruitment.

There are tapes of an interview he gave to Dave Baines in 1982 on this period. Together with tapes of other Merseyside leaders, Danny Brandon and Bill Johnson, they are an invaluable record.

Their contributions justify the picture of the 'prison break' by dockers given in my book 'They Knew Why They Fought'.

Bob's considered recording of 1982 also contradicts some of his conclusions in an article he did for the International Socialistists in a brief period during which he was a member of that organisation in the sixties when he broke with the Socialist Labour League [forerunner of the WRP]. This was the organisation led by Tony Cliff which later became the Socialist Workers Party. In the 1970s he was an organiser for the International Marxist Group [United Secretariat]

and became a leader of the 'Socialist Outlook' group until the late 1980s. An article he wrote as the last big dock strike of 1989 was ending, paid tribute to the struggle of the Blue Union.

He made his contribution to the other great experience of Trotskyism at this time — the crisis inside the Stalinist movement following Khrushchev's 20th Congress of the CPSU speech and the Hungarian revolution. On Merseyside, we gathered around Trotskyism a large most virile active group that had formed the Young Communist League — young miners, building workers, factory workers and shop assistants.

It was Bob Pennington's job to assist them in their struggle for Communism in the face of the shocks which had hit them. Almost all of them had come up through a school of hard contradictions.

Bob made his mark on them because he gave them that assistance. Those who are alive today will all confirm that.

A conversation recently with one of the North West leaders of the YCL at the time, who was among the first group to join us is significant:

'He would defend us right through in a fight, and we took him — warts and all. It was an exciting time and he helped to teach us that we could keep all the idealism of Communist promise in life and confront the horrors of Stalinism.'

### WATCH THIS SPACE!

**IN REPLY to a letter from Mike Howgate (Workers Press, 28 September) Chris Knight has written an article and not a letter.**

**We propose to publish this next week in the 'new party' discussion on this page**

**There is great interest in this discussion, and other comrades are asking for more space to express their views..**

**Therefore, in the run-up to the 'new party' conference, on 23 November, we will publish other longer articles — 1,000 to 1,500 words, and would ask any reader who wishes to take the opportunity to publish in this series to book a space.**

**Please contact the Editorial Board by letter, fax or e-mail — for details see back page.**



# Strike shakes Serbia

Continuing the report from Rade Pavlovic

**THE strike of workers at the Zastava arms plant in Kragujevac has a great importance on the eve of Serbia's elections.**

Both government and opposition smell victory, but in terms not of who is strongest but who is weakest.

Serbia has had enough of these politicians, in whom 60 per cent of the population have no confidence.

The armourers of Kragujevac have thus hurled a stone into the stagnant pond, raising hope, but also an agonising question - who will translate this wish for change into political terms, when it is evident that what happens at the top of the state, and the elections are something else?

The real Serbia, that of the workers, does not have a party of its own to represent it in the elections, and will be under only rudimentary organisation, without a political programme.

Neither the bureaucracy nor the opposition has any concrete political programme, and for good reason!

The opposition is for rapid and general privatisation of factories - without specifying who will buy them, at what price, and what will become of the workers sacked.

Milosevic and his wife

who runs the party of Stalinists and generals, propose to sell the posts and telecommunications, electricity and petroleum industries, no less, to Anglo-American capitalism.

They wish to follow the Hungarian example which brought in its train sackings and price rises (including 70 per cent on electricity), even though Yugoslav (or Serb) securities are at the bottom of the world table for obvious reasons.

It is the lasting surrender of national assets of prime importance to imperialist profit, in order to put fresh millions of dollars in the state coffers, emptied and systematically run down by a bureaucracy organised like the Cosa Nostra.

So, despite the trade union combativity of the Serb workers, which will become even bigger in the near future, there is no guarantee of victory coming soon.

The November elections, in the absence of a workers party, are reduced to a false choice of voting for today's thieves or those of tomorrow. There is the risk of serious deceptions and dangerous divisions among the workers.

The Serb workers, by their own trade union means, have attained bigger things than extracting respect from the 5,000 police sent to Kragujevac to protect 'order'; but they cannot solve the big political issues - war in Bosnia, tension in Kosovo, refugees in and from Croatia, massive youth unemployment, economic retrogression - by purely trade union means.

They need their own programme and political organisation. This glaring contradiction, the fact that in Serbia there is a working class which is socially powerful, but extremely weak and disarmed politically, is extremely painful today, when the time factor becomes decisive.

There is a deep, but narrow and immediate, trench between the basic, vital demands, such as

payment of wage arrears and the overthrow of the rotten regime of the bureaucracy, incapable of meeting these demands without endangering the whole set up by which hard currency, Deutsche Marks, find their way into their private pockets.

The slogan most repeated and applauded at Kragujevac was 'down with the thieves!'

So to defend their mini-

mum living wage, the Serb workers are inevitably pushed towards a general strike.

But a general strike in a country so full of deep discontent and bitterness, is not like a peaceful general strike run by officials in a country with reserves and room to negotiate.

A real, massive general strike in Serbia would signify the overthrow of the regime.



Bosnia Solidarity Campaign demonstrating last year against the cover-up of war crimes and the appeasement of Milosevic. Now the Serbian working class is flexing its muscles and threatening to settle accounts with Milosevic.

## Union a go-go

'EXOTIC' dancers at San Francisco's Lusty Lady Theater have voted 57-15 to be represented by the Service Employees' International Union, which mainly organises workers such as cleaners and janitors. The workers were concerned with job seniority, shift scheduling, working conditions and health insurance.

Sporting 'Union Yes' garter belts, the dancers began organizing after they realized that customers were videotaping them from behind the one-way mirrors through which the dancers are viewed, and that their images were showing up on the Internet and in videos.

(from AFL-CIO news)

## Croat journalists acquitted

TWO Croatian journalists charged with defaming President Tudjman have been acquitted.

The prosecution of Viktor Ivancic, editor of the Split-based satirical weekly *Feral Tribune*, and journalist Marinko Culic, had been condemned by Croatian trade unionists and civil rights campaigners.

Bosnian solidarity campaigners protested at Croatia's London embassy (see Workers Press, 28 September).

The acquittal is a setback for the Tudjman government's attempts to curb press freedom.

Trade unions are fighting layoffs in Croatia's shipbuilding, textile and oil industries, along with unemployment facing demobilised soldiers.

Union leader Hasim Bahtijari said there would be demonstrations regionally and nationally 'because the social situation has got worse since last year and the government has not responded to our demands'.

# UNITE THE STRUGGLES!

## CRISIS IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

### THE NEED FOR A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY

#### RECALL CONFERENCE:

Saturday 23 November 11am-5pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

(Holborn tube) Entrance: £7 (unemployed £1)

Millions of workers are hoping that Labour will reverse Tory legislation. But a Labour government will attack the working class in defence of capital, illusions will be shattered and millions of workers will react. A new party is needed - and that needs preparation.

The Liverpool dockers have led the way in rebuilding internationalism and the understanding that the working class must overcome the false separation of the political and industrial struggles. Thousands of young people organised by 'Reclaim the Future' joined the demonstration and picket of the dockers on September 28-30.

These questions have been the basis of our discussions on the need for a new party over these months.

As a result of the last Workers Revolutionary Party congress in July, we will be proposing to the conference in November that a new transitional organisation be formed of those who think that such a party of the working class must be built.

We believe that such a party can only come about on the basis of Marxism.

With the creation of such a transitional organisation, the WRP would dissolve itself and make its resources available to the new organisation.

For details write to: Steve Ballard, Secretary, Socialist Steering Committee, c/o Index Bookcentre, 28 Charlotte Street, London W1P 1HJ, or phone 0181-889 7255. Tickets £7 (unemployed £1) cheques/POs payable to 'Socialist Steering Committee'

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