

Workers Press

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Saturday November 8 1986

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Number 49

WRP launches Special Fund

THE Workers Revolutionary Party calls on all members and supporters to raise a special fund of £10,000.

Half of this fund is needed to finance the considerable international discussion in which the Workers Revolutionary Party is participating with other Trotskyists all over the world. We intend to take up

our responsibilities to the world Trotskyist movement in a way that was never possible before the explosion in the WRP.

The rest of the fund is needed to cover expenses that have already been incurred in moving the Party headquarters to more suitable premises. The cost of the rebuilding and redecorating work involved, despite the ready help

of Party members, has amounted to at least £5,000.

We are asking for the serious assistance of all our members and supporters to complete this fund by February 1, 1987.

Please send all donations to:
Workers Revolutionary Party
21(B) Old Town
Clapham
London SW4 0JT

MINERS ON THE MARCH

TWO marches take place this Saturday: one in Doncaster in solidarity with the South African NUM and one in Durham calling for the repatriation of Irish Republican prisoners in British jails.

Miners will be marching on both demonstrations. A year ago many in the labour movement said the miners had been defeated.

There were the TUC and Labour Party leaders who had done nothing to assist the strike and who were quietly pleased at the thought of their defeat.

There were the 'left' parties like the Communist Party who said the miners' 'wrong tactics', their 'violence' and their 'lawlessness' had brought defeat on their own heads.

But many trade unionists who had hoped the miners would beat Thatcher also felt there had been a defeat.

Many factories grew quiet as the news of the vote came in and men, some with tears in their eyes, turned sullenly back to their jobs.

Once more Thatcher seemed invincible. Certainly the aims of the strike were not won. The destruction of the industry has continued.

But from the minute the miners and their wives, with their banners and their bands, assembled to march back to the pits, they have been showing that as fighters, as trade unionists, they were far from defeated.

Industrial action of miners all over the country such as the Durham Mechanics' rolling strikes, the Justice for Mineworkers' Campaign, the struggle of Notts miners to organise against massive odds, the presence of miners at every picket line and demonstration up and down the country over the last year — are these the actions of defeated men?

Their strike took militant trade union action by one section of the movement to its limit. Faced with the violence and hatred of the entire ruling class they could not on their own win their demands.

But the strike was only one of the opening shots in a growing war by the entire working class against this government. And not just in Britain.

The South African miners, the Irish liberation fighters, the jailed and sacked British miners and those facing pit closures, all confront one common enemy — capitalism and imperialism.

Many bitter political lessons were learnt in that year-long strike. The question is how to continue that struggle.

In 1921 the miners were

COMMENT By Bob Myers

locked out by the coal owners. After Black Friday they were forced back to work.

But only five years after this setback the miners' actions led to the General Strike.

This time it has not even taken five years for the miners to be back in the forefront of the struggle. It shows that major class battles are on the horizon.

But mention of the 1920s requires all those taking part in today's actions to know how to prevent another defeat like 1926 when, without doubt, the miners and the rest of the trade unions were beaten into submission.

After Black Friday in 1921 many miners, disillusioned with the Labour and trade union leaders, began to turn to the newly-formed Communist Party.

Turn

But this new party, theoretically inexperienced, was unable to understand and oppose Stalin's turn away from international revolutionary leadership as he concentrated on building 'socialism in one country' and detente with the West.

The one party that should have stood out against the reformist cowards of the TUC General Council in the General Strike called instead for 'All power to the TUC!'

But in turning to Marxism, the experiences of the Russian Revolution and the building of a communist party, those miners in 1921 were correct.

The building of a revolutionary party remains the task facing the working class — not just here but world wide — to unite all those in

struggle, in Britain, South Africa, Ireland; in the industrialised countries and the plundered colonies, in the battle for socialism and national liberation.

All those leading today's actions must study Marx, Lenin and Trotsky who continued the fight for internationalism after Lenin's death.

Only on an international level can the madness of capitalism's mass unemployment and drive to war be stopped.

And only those who stand firm and fight for international solidarity, like Saturday's marchers, will be able to train themselves to lead that fight.

DAY OF ACTION

to demand

Repatriation of Irish Republican prisoners in British jails

Saturday November 8

11.30am Assemble at Northumberland Road, Next to City Hall, Coaches drop off College Street

12.00 noon March through Newcastle

2.00pm Assemble at Frankland Prison, Durham

March to Durham Prison

Rally — Speakers to include prisoners' relatives, NUM (in personal capacity)

BRING YOUR BANNERS!

Supported by Clydeside Troops Out, Republican Band Alliance, Prisoners of War Committee (Glasgow). More information from PH3, 340 W. Princes St., Glasgow G4

BOYCOTT SA COAL!

says Hatfield Main NUM

THE HATFIELD MAIN Branch of the NUM has called a march in solidarity with the South African NUM on Saturday, November 8th.

Workers Press spoke to Dave Douglas, Hatfield Main Branch Delegate who said:

'The South African NUM are in the vanguard of the struggle in SA.

'And they gave a very high proportion of their funds to the British NUM during the miners strike, which they couldn't really afford — it was a strong selfless action which showed their international solidarity.

'The South African NUM so admired the British miners that they named their union after us.

'Miners internationally have a strong fraternity, strong international links because the work of miners all over the world is very similar.

'For all these reasons Hatfield Main Branch decided to send a resolution to the Yorkshire Area Council to co-ordinate a national demonstration with rail and dockers unions.

The focus of this demonstration was to be the Trent Wharves where 30,000 tons of South African coal a month are being imported.

'To our great surprise the leadership of the Area Council under Sammy Thompson tried to talk down the resolution saying it was premature and that the Yorkshire and Humberside TUC should organise the event and were holding a forthcoming

meeting. They approached the Doncaster Anti-Apartheid who agreed to co-sponsor the demonstration and since then the Yorkshire Area AA has also agreed to support it.

All Yorkshire NUM Branches have been contacted to participate and as many nationally as could be reached.

Douglas said: 'I mean, it seems pointless to go around shops asking people not to buy tins of food when you've got 30,000 tons of coal coming in your back door.

'The demonstration is to expose this coal trade because millions of pounds are being made out of it.

'We also suspect that the coal board maybe involved in some way with the importation of South African coal although we have no proof yet.

'We appeal to all sections of the labour movement to come and support the demonstration — See Box below.

BY LYN BEATON

National

Hatfield Main decided not to wait any longer and to call a National demonstration themselves.

HATFIELD MAIN NUM

MARCH

to the South African coal import wharves,

Solidarity with South African NUM

Saturday November 8

Assemble 11.30am, Guinness Corner

Guinness, near Scunthorpe

Social Evening

7.30pm Stainforth Miners Welfare

(Coaches from Trafalgar Square non-stop picket leave 7.00am. Return fare £5)

For details ring City AA 01-837 6050

**Tower Hamlets Printworkers Support Group
Workers united will never be defeated
A MEETING OF WORKERS IN STRUGGLE**

Highway Club Dellow Street E2

Wednesday November 26,

7.30pm

Speakers from: Hangers (Limbfitters),

Silentnight, Print, NUM.

COLOMBIA: TORTURE AND MURDER

ABOUT 100 trades unionists, MPs and members of London's Latin American community protested at the Colombian embassy last week over the torture and murder of a Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) shop steward.

Everth Marin, 29, had been visiting his relatives in Colombia. On September 9, at 5p.m. he left his brother's home in the city of Cali and set out on his motor bike to do some shopping.

When he did not return his family were more than anxious. Everth had been active in solidarity work for political prisoners. There had been threats to human rights activists in Colombia. People had 'disappeared'.

Calls on the Colombian authorities for information on Everth's whereabouts brought no results.

At 3p.m. on October 10, the day Everth was due to return to London, his family and friends' worst fears were confirmed. They were told that Everth's body had been found that morning by a roadside on the outskirts of town.

He had been bound by the hands and feet. His face,

Trades Unionists in embassy protest

hands and legs showed signs of severe torture before his captors had shot him three times in the head.

Colombian workers here say hundreds of trade unionists and socialists in their country have 'disappeared' and been murdered.

They accuse officers of the Colombian army's third brigade of being responsible for Everth Marin's torture and death, and are demanding they be brought to justice.

President

Everth Marin had been well-known among Latin Americans in London, where he was president of the Latin American Workers' Association and a member of the Colombian Human Rights Committee.

He had been working full-time for the TGWU here organising low-paid workers in contract cleaning. In his

spare time he did a good deal of community work.

Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Bob Clay joined TGWU district officer Phil Pearson in a deputation which saw Colombian charge d'affaires Dr. Samper after the November 4 embassy protest.

They voiced concern at what they called a 'general deterioration of human rights in Colombia', and the growing number of disappearances and murders like that of Everth Marin.

They called for an independent judicial enquiry into bro. Marin's death. They also demanded assurances for the safety of Marin family in Cali.

The family has been under police surveillance and on the day of the funeral their home was surrounded and attacked by police. The charge d'affaires promised to report their views to his

government.

TGWU officer Phil Pearson told Workers Press afterwards:

'The delegation believes the Colombian government wants the problem to go away. But this will only strengthen our resolve to bring the murderers to justice.'

An Everth Marin Campaign Committee formed with support from MPs, trade unionists and clergymen is urging letters demanding an enquiry be sent to: President Virgilio Barco, Palacio de Narino, Carrera 8 No 7-26, Bogota, Colombia; or

The Colombian Embassy, 3 Hans Crescent, London SW1.

Copies of protests should be sent to the Everth Marin Campaign, c/o CARILA, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1, from whom more information can also be obtained.

Death sentence danger for jailed Trotskyist

A SRI LANKAN Trotskyist jailed under the Jayewardene regime's state of emergency is in danger of his life according to reports from his organisation, the Revolutionary Communist League.

The draconian emergency legislation provides for execution or sentences of up to 20 years' imprisonment for those convicted of 'resisting' police and army officers.

Brutan Perera, a leading member of the RCL, Sri Lanka section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, has been refused bail and is being held indefinitely following allegations that he resisted arrest.

Perera is in 'constant danger as long as he remains behind bars', says a report from Sri Lanka in ICFI publications.

Perera was first locked up for 44 days in May and June, together with two other RCL activists, and then rearrested on August 21.

The leader of the RCL youth movement, Viran Peiris, was also arrested then, but released three weeks later.

The repression directed against the RCL and other Sri Lankan working-class organisations has intensified particularly this year as the regime's attempts to crush the

Tamil liberation struggle, which the RCL has consistently supported, has failed.

The latest organisation to join the protest campaign is the Communist League of Australia.

A letter, of which we have just received a copy, was written while Peiris was still incarcerated, and sent to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner making 'the strongest possible protest at the continued jailing of Brutan Perera and Viran Peiris'.

The letter, signed by Andy Blunden on behalf of the League, states: 'Their jailing, without charges, is an outrage and an unwarranted attack on democratic rights fought for so many years by the people of Sri Lanka.'

'Members of the Communist League (Australia) have written to you previously and as yet we have had received no reply. We intend to raise these questions in the labour movement in Australia in order to have these comrades freed.'

British trade unionists and working-class organisations are asked to write letters of protest to the Sri Lankan High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London SW7, and to join a weekly picket there at 12 noon each Thursday.

Did MI5 help Mossad plot?

WHAT part did British security services play in the grabbing in London of a scientist who had blown the whistle on Israeli nuclear weapons development?

Mordechai Vanunu disappeared after checking out of the Mountbatten hotel in London's West End on September 30. He had earlier given information to a British newspaper saying Israel had 100 nuclear bombs in its arsenal.

On October 28, it was reported that the 31-year old nuclear technician had been remanded by a Jerusalem court pending indictment on spying charges.

Scotland Yard has said it has no evidence Vanunu was kidnapped, and does not intend to continue any investigation.

But friends of the Israeli scientist are certain he did not return to Israel of his free will. Two versions of what might have happened to Vanunu have appeared in the press.

According to the US magazine 'Newsweek', the scientist was lured to the South of France by a woman acquaintance, and persuaded to take a yacht trip. Agents of the Israeli secret service, the Mossad, boarded the yacht and took Vanunu off, transporting him to Israel.

Vanunu's Australian friend Reverend John McKnight regards this as unlikely. He believes the scientist was kidnapped in London.

'He told me he feared attempts by the Israelis to get him back to Israel because he had given public details about Israel's nuclear arsenal', the Anglican clergyman said. Until September 30, Vanunu had kept regularly in touch by phone. 'He would not have changed that pattern by just going off without someone informing me'. (Daily Telegraph October 21).

Well-informed journalists are also sceptical about the yacht story, pointing out that

it could be a tailor-made piece of disinformation from Israeli intelligence.

By making the operation happen at sea, it avoids the legal and diplomatic embarrassment of a kidnap on the streets of London. Instead it can be made yet another thrilling yarn of Mossad dering-do

According to a story in the London 'Standard', there is evidence Mordechai Vanunu was kidnapped and flown to Israel from an airport near London.

This suggests a successful re-run of the attempt to kidnap Nigerian politician and businessman Omaru Dikko in July 1984, with the scientist drugged and smuggled out of the country in 'diplomatic baggage'.

If that did not happen, how was Vanunu taken out of Britain without the knowledge of airport officials?

Mossad

Was there any official collusion in a Mossad operation?

Reverend McKnight says he is certain his friend was taken out of Britain against his will. He also suggests the British security services could have been involved.

Reverend McKnight has discovered that Australian intelligence knew on September 11 that the Israeli scientist was leaving Sydney the next day to give his story to the press.

He believes they would have passed this information

on to MI5, and probably to Mossad.

Accusing the security services, Reverend McKnight says 'It was either immoral complicity or inept stupidity on the part of the British.'

Rumours have been circulating in Israel that three Israelis jailed in Britain for their part in the Dikku kidnap attempt might be released soon as part of a three-way deal by British, Israeli and Nigerian governments.

Heroes' welcome for reinstated drivers

MERTHYR's four victimised bus drivers returned to work on Tuesday afternoon to a heroes' welcome from their brothers behind the wheels whose unity had ensured their return.

The four drivers were interviewed by management on Tuesday morning after the interviews were postponed at the last minute on Friday afternoon.

A letter from the Board of Directors, four Labour councillors, claimed it would be an act of good faith on the

drivers' side if the wheels turned on 'D-day', Monday morning, first day of the new private company.

Their intervention completely exposed the lie that the manager has a free hand in hiring and firing and that the councillors had nothing to do with it.

Most of the drivers felt that this was the last straw, and talk of picket lines was rampant.

The meeting on Sunday decided that they be patient yet again and not give the man-

agement any excuses to try and split the men, which many believe to be the management tactic.

But on the Tuesday the management had used up their time and were boxed in, realising that if they did not reinstate that day, then the wheels would stop and remain that way till they did let the men back to work.

The fight now begins to get back a decent wage and decent working conditions, which have been ravaged by management.

FROM OUR MERTHYR CORRESPONDENT

CALVIN STEWART

OUR Comrade Calvin Stewart died a year ago on October 25, 1985, on the eve of the party congress which expelled Healy and his supporters.

Stewart, as we knew him, joined the Socialist Labour League in 1968 and was a founding member of its successor, the Workers Revolutionary Party, in the West London area.

He remained a committed revolutionary right through his difficult illness.



Stewart has been sorely missed as a comrade in the party's fight during the turbulent months that have elapsed since his death.

NOVEMBER FIGHTING FUND

TARGET: £2,000

LAST weekend's special conference of the Workers Revolutionary Party endorsed the proposal to publish our monthly Fighting Fund in the Workers Press. This is to inform our members and supporters of the progress of our fund and to give an opportunity to all those who support us politically to contribute to our funds. Our target is £2,000 a month. The figures we print will be a truthful account of the response we receive. So far this month we have £181.30.

Please send donations to: Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT

Coventry bus strike continues

BY KARL FORMAN

FOUR hundred striking Coventry busmen are picketing round the clock at White Street depot.

Each day there are about 50 busmen on the picket line, with a very lively atmosphere among the mainly Asian workforce. Morale is boosted by meals provided by the local Sikh temples.

The strike is over the way the rotas are worked out to make up the 38-hour week.

In April this year preparations for privatisation of the West Midlands transport system were started. In Coventry, mini-breaks were abolished and five-and-a-half-hour driving portions were established.

Rejected

Twelve days ago Coventry drivers went on strike. Last Monday drivers voted by five to one to reject the company's proposals for new readjusted rosters.

The company offered to provide two extra drivers a day for a month's trial for toilet relief, but this was rejected because drivers did not believe the relief drivers would be kept on after the month.

Drivers

'We decided at a meeting after the ballot to go for the abolition of all five-and-a-half-hour portions of work where there are no toilet facilities,' said one driver. In the long-term the drivers are opposed to all five-and-a-half-hour portions.

Driver Zarkaria said: 'The bitterness is the result of hard schedules. Shorter running times leave no time for the lads to use toilet facilities. The lads do not want any duty or part thereof of five hours or over.'

Another driver said: 'The five-and-a-half-hour plus shift is too long a time to sit on the bus where we are not even able to use toilet facilities.'

JARROW MARCHERS ARRIVE

Their demands challenge Labour

THE MARCH to commemorate the original Jarrow crusade 50 years ago was greeted by 7,500 people as they entered London last Sunday.

Norman Willis greeted the marchers as they came into Trafalgar Square — while the crowd greeted him with 'Scab! Scab!'.

The official speeches of leading Labour Party figures promised to honour the pledge of their conference saying that the real cause of unemployment was Thatcher, and not capitalism and the slump that affected the whole world.

The contradiction between the positions of those who marched and the official speakers was obvious when the marchers started to

speak.

● Tracey Davenport, a 21-year-old from Barnsley —

'I have only been on a one year YTS scheme since I left school — and I was sacked from that.'

'This new dole questionnaire is designed to deny people their right to dole and to break up families.'

● Zack, a 26-year old from Glasgow —

'I have worked for seven years and have now been on the dole for two years. All that the government has to offer me is MSC schemes.'

● Richard Mostyn from Leeds

'I have been on YTS. They promised us jobs but it was just talk. I

BY JOHN OWEN

am on this march to prove that blacks aren't just pot-smoking layabouts. I am out looking for work.'

● Steve Pile, 20-year old from Sunderland —

'The whole of the north-east is being laid waste by the Tories. They should be thrown out now.'

'P.S. I'm not a barbarian.'

● Ken White, 26-year old from Jarrow, —

'We've got to stop the scrap heap of people being created by this Tory government. We've got to get it out now.'

● A veteran from the 1936 march, Jimmy Buggan —

'200 men marched off to here 50 years ago to fight the system. That's what you have to do.'

● Tom Belison, north-east region of the boilermakers' union

'The government's latest attack is this questionnaire. If you get it wrong, you get your dole stopped. But they don't say what will happen if you get it right.'

● Alison, 20-year old from Bedford, —

'I want the right to a decent home and a job. I have to wear second hand clothes, eat cheaply. All I want is the basic right to necessi-

ties in life.

'I have a seventeen month old baby — what happens if she is ill? She can't go to hospital because the Tories are closing them down.'

● Joel Jebacker, an officer of the CGT (French TUC) —

'Dear comrades, we too have recently marched from Paris to Lyon for work. What both of these marches show is that workers are not prepared to give up their basic right to work.'

'French and British capitalism is not stronger than us. Long live international workers' solidarity.'

The Greenham Common peace women donated £50 to the marchers.

Showing solidarity at Wapping

BY ALAN CLARK

THERE was a tremendous welcome for the Jarrow marchers as they led the printworkers demonstration to Wapping last Saturday night (November 1).

After being on the road for four weeks following the footsteps of the first Jarrow march 50 years ago, they walked proudly in front of the 2,000 printworkers and their supporters to the gates of Murdoch's plant where his papers are now produced by members of Eric Hammond's union EETPU.

As the march proceeded along the Highway women from the newly formed Women against Murdoch (WAM) presented each Jarrow marcher with a 'Don't Buy the Sun' badge.

When the march finally reached Virginia Street some of the marchers spoke to the crowd.

Those that spoke said that they were marching for jobs and the right to work, also the right to belong to a union.

Inspired

March organiser Oz, said, 'The Jarrow march of 1936 was inspired by one major factor, that was the closure of the Palmers yard in 1934. Now in 1986 thousands of

men are being laid off on the Tyne from the shipbuilding yards.

'Just the other year the brickworks were closed in Jarrow. Two years ago they closed the last pit in Jarrow, Bold Colliery,' Oz explained.

Future

'In Jarrow,' he said, 'there is a working population of 16,000 people, of which 9,000 are unemployed. There are only 103 job vacancies in the job centre half of which are MSC.'

'That is the future of people in Jarrow — that is the future facing people in this country.'

Oz went on to say, 'We have been marching as the Jarrow marchers did 50 years before, for the right to work, the right to a decent level of income, the right to decent housing and the right to decent health care and welfare benefits.'

He finished by saying he didn't want to see on the one hundredth anniversary of the Jarrow march in 50 years time people still marching for jobs.

'I want to see' he said, 'the people in the 23 towns and cities that we passed through celebrating on the streets the fact that we have had full employment for the past fifty years'.



OUR PICTURES show the Jarrow marchers on the way to Wapping last Saturday — where they were warmly welcomed by the sacked printworkers and their supporters

Bill Freeman, London Machine Branch, SOGAT, and member of the Morning Star faction of the Communist Party, spoke on behalf of the printworkers.

He said that the Jarrow march was an indictment of Thatcher's 'Victorian values' and that the only way to achieve the objectives of the Jarrow marchers is with a strong effective trade union movement.

'That's precisely why this government has sought to attack the miners and the printworkers,' said Freeman.

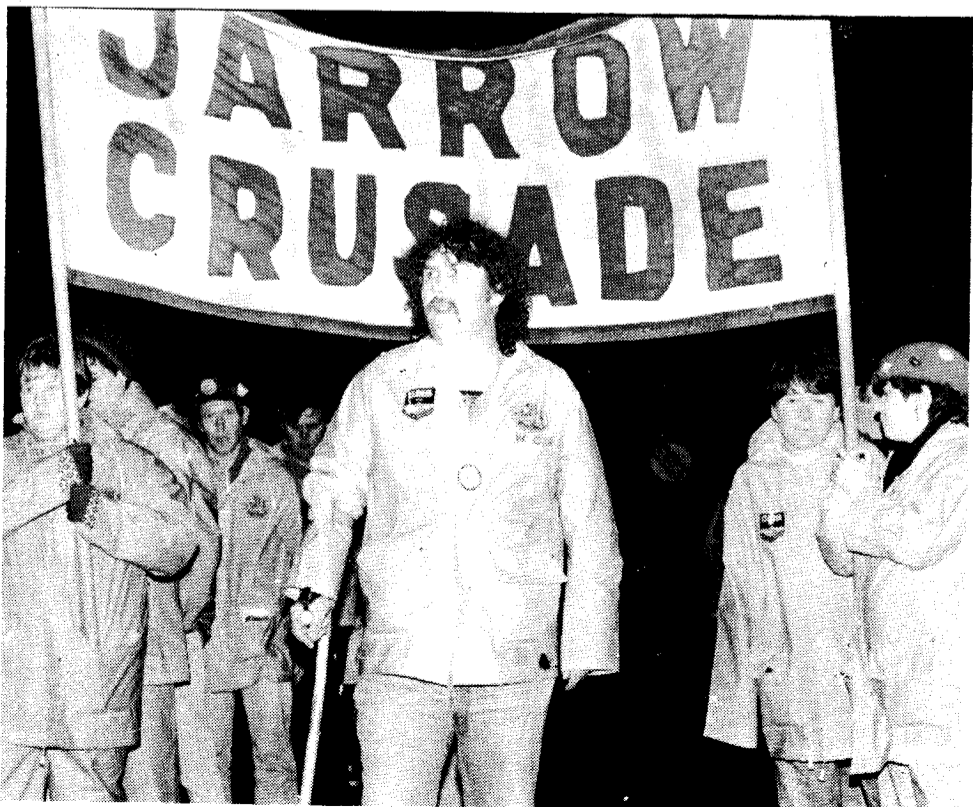
'The Labour Party and trade union movement are supporting the Jarrow march this time, unlike the first march 50 years ago.'

Unity

'But the trade union movement as represented by the TUC have got to recognise

we can only build that strength and unity on principle. You can't have principles with snakes in the nest.'

He went on to explain what he meant: 'Murdoch is aided by the EETPU. They've got to be made to toe the line and stand four square for trade unionism or be thrown out of the movement.'



MURDOCH'S COMPENSATION TRAP

BRENDA DEAN and Tony Dubbins have both sent out letters to their members strongly urging them not to accept compensation on an individual basis from Rupert Murdoch's News International.

Anyone found accepting the payment could find themselves severely censured or expelled from the union.

What has angered the sacked printworkers

more than anything is the fact that the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) also sent a letter in the same envelope as Murdoch's, making themselves available to help anyone who wants to accept the money.

The ACAS letter says that the company will not re-enter negotiations with the unions, therefore any dismissed employee accepting the *ex gratia*

payment will have the full benefit of their experience.

Murdoch's letter requires anyone taking up the offer to sign a release document confirming that they have ended all association with the strike.

Workers Press is pretty confident that the sacked printworkers will reject Murdoch's dirty offer, just as they have his other two offers.

SCABBING: TOP LABOUR MEN IMPLICATED

'YOUR Caring Sharing Co-op' is probably still selling scab furniture — thanks to leading Labour Party members and other bureaucrats who oppose moves to black it.

A recent Co-operative Union Special General Meeting heavily defeated a resolution to stop selling beds from Silentnight, the Lancashire firm where workers have been on strike for 16 months for union recognition.

About 40 per cent of Silentnight products are sold by the Co-op, as well as substantial amounts of furniture from Morris of Glasgow, which has been strike-bound even longer.

The stormy Co-op Union Special General Meeting took place in Manchester on October 4.

Fifty per cent of delegates represent the Co-op Wholesale Society (CWS) which is run as a heavily-bureaucratized commercial concern: all of these voted against the Silentnight black.

But even among the other 50 per cent, the Co-operative Retail Society delegates, only 400 of more than 800 voted for blacking.

Scandal

The CRS delegates, who are democratically elected by shareholders and have always retained more or less of a connection with the labour movement, were heavily pressurised by Co-op management.

A still greater scandal is that leading Labour Party members were involved. These include:

- CWS chairman Jim Mason, also chairman of the North West region of the Labour Party, one of the strongest opponents of blacking.

- CRS chairman Brian Hellowell, also chairman of the Co-operative Party, an active Labour Party member and possible parliamentary candidate in Huddersfield. Hellowell used his casting vote at a crucial meeting of the CRS board of directors to oppose blacking, the action which triggered demands for last month's SGM.

- Bill Farrell, a leading member of the CRS management and president of the Co-op Union and member of the Labour Party. It is believed that he threatened to resign if the blacking motion was passed.

In the run-up to the SGM, the CRS regional committee were circulated by the Co-op management to persuade them to oppose the motion which called on the organisation to 'stop selling Silentnight products until the strike is over'.

Management representatives, who are entitled to attend regional committee meetings, in some cases reversed the stance of areas which had supported blacking moves.

The Co-op is one of Silentnight's biggest outlets, and when more than 300 workers walked out of the Lancashire bedding factory in June last year, defying a major scabbing operation, they appealed to the 'right wing of the Labour movement' to step in.

Motions from Co-op branches demanding a total black were left in abeyance as CWS management tried to mediate between Silentnight unions and the violently anti-union management.

The bargaining attempt

fell victim to management intransigence.

At the Co-operative Party conference in April, feeling was running high among ordinary shareholders who constitute the party's rank and file.

A resolution calling on the Co-operative movement, and 'in particular, CRS and CWS not to purchase any good from Silentnight bedding while the dispute continues', was carried overwhelmingly.

Numerous board and regional committee meetings and the CRS general council voted for blacking.

But when the issue came before the Co-op board of directors, the vote was tied — seven elected members representing the retail side of the movement voted for the blacking and seven appointed by CWS management against.

Chairman Brian Hellowell used his casting vote to declare the motion lost. The Co-op's political committee voted to censor him and left wing activists demanded the SGM.

CWS secretary David Wise, an opponent of blacking, continued to justify stocking the scab beds on the grounds that mediation was still possible.

Andy Love, political secretary of the Co-op London Region, sent out a circular rubbing the chances of 'arbitration' and pointed out 'the reality of the FTAT and the strikers is bitter disappointment'.

Love's letter described how, at a meeting held by CWS chief executive Dennis Landau as 'a breakthrough', Silentnight management had rejected a deal under which the union would call off the dispute and a three-month cooling off period would follow, after which Silentnight



When 300 Silentnight workers struck 16 months ago, management appealed to 'the right wing of the labour movement' for assistance. Above: defiant picketing continues

would agree that the situation would 'normalise'.

The strikers could offer nothing more except their blood. Co-op left-wingers say the affair has betrayed the movement.

'Right from its early stages, the Co-op had a relationship with the Labour Party,' London Co-op Political Secretary Andy Love told Workers Press.

'Most societies, except Leeds and Northern Ireland, have connections with the Labour Party.'

'But we suffer from the

same difficulties as other Labour movement organisations — we are always at the mercy of those who get active and take positions.'

The Rochdale Pioneers, who formed the Co-operative movement in 1844, as a non-profit making democracy with their 'sense of social purpose', will be turning in their graves.

The Silentnight strikers are still outside the gate. The Labour movement must call to account the cowardly bureaucrats who have helped Silentnight union-busting.

Health visitors reveal Bed-and-Breakfast scandal

BY BERNARD FRANKS

A MAJOR SCANDAL of official health neglect in the case of homeless families living in Bed and Breakfast hotels is revealed in a report published as a part of the Tower Hamlets Health Campaign this week.

It reveals that 800 families who normally live in the borough have been put into accommodation miles away from the borough — in Bayswater, Hounslow, Haringey and Finsbury Park where their District Health Services are not available.

Yet thousands of properties in which people could be accommodated are left empty in Tower Hamlets itself.

The report quotes a recent Health Visitors Association exposure of health hazards in hotels and of the consequent epidemic of accidents, mental disorders and infections.

The HVA national survey

detailed the horrific effects of hotel life, particularly on children. These include:

- High accident rates owing to unguarded fires and stairs, improvised cooking arrangements and no proper means of escape.
- Much higher rates of vomiting, chest complaints, scabies and other infections, over half under-fives not immunised and serious risk of major outbreak of polio or diphtheria.
- Severely retarded development in walking and talking owing to no play facilities and over-stressed and depressed parents.

A local GP is quoted as saying that families moved out of the area are frequently refused consultations by local GPs and have to travel back to Tower Hamlets in order to see one.

At the other end of the process a Health Visitor in Bayswater, where there are more than 300 Tower Hamlets families, told the Health Campaign:

'Tower Hamlets families are put in the worst hotels, stay the longest and have the

least support.'

She added: 'There are Tower Hamlets children with special needs here whose care is totally disrupted and neglected. They should never be put in hotels. The families should have top priority for permanent housing.'

An example is given of a pregnant woman sent to Bayswater who was refused registration by six GPs when she sought ante-natal care. One offered to put her on his private list.

In consequence she had to travel for over an hour on the train to see her original GP.

These Tower Hamlets examples constitute a tiny fraction of the people suffering the terrible consequences of Tory housing and health policies.

Yet the situation in this particular borough also reflects years of appalling neglect by a Labour council which put up no fight for those they professed to represent, and which eventually had to pay the humiliating price of being ousted at the last Council elections by the Liberals.

KNOWSLEY NORTH

Boycott Kinnock's man — vote Hallsworth

BY FRANK FITZMAURICE, Secretary, WRP Liverpool branch

THE EXECUTIVE Committee of Knowsley North Labour Party has unanimously decided to boycott the Kinnock-imposed Labour candidate George Howarth in the by-election on November 13th.

It is the feeling of Labour Party activists, of different shades of political opinion, that the principle of the right of the local Party to select and re-select its own candidate is more important than success at the polls.

A large majority for Howarth, which seems likely in view of the intense hatred of the working class in the area for Thatcher, will be used by the Kinnock leadership to justify its anti-working class and anti-trade union policies, and will intensify the witch hunt that will follow the by-election.

Labour Party members claim that there is a hit list in existence with the names of 42 Knowsley left-wingers on it. Very few of these are Militant supporters.

In fact, the left wing are annoyed with Militant for pre-empting the decision of the Executive Committee by declaring support for Howarth. In these circumstances, where the Kinnock leadership has disenfranchised the Knowsley North Labour Party we applaud the decision of the local Labour Party members to reject the right wing imposed candidate.

The most significant outcome of the Labour Party conference in Blackpool in October was the witch-hunt against the left.

There will be an attempt to drive out of the Labour Party all those who oppose the right wing.

The elitist Kinnock clique

rides roughshod over local Labour Parties and brings in full-time trade union officials to run the elections.

This campaign against the working class lines up with the needs of the ruling class to smash every basic right and prepares the ground for an extreme right wing Labour Government if elected at the next general election.

Indeed the capitalist media has been backing Kinnock enthusiastically ever since the Labour Party Conference — they are ready to ditch Thatcher who is more and more becoming a liability.

We therefore call for unity with the Labour Party members to boycott Howarth in the by-election.

Although we have a number of important disagreements with the Revolutionary Communist Party, in the given circumstances it is worth examining the policies of their candidate Dave Hallsworth. He calls for:

- Jobs for all
- Decent housing for all
- No to the Tory law-and-order campaign, against discrimination and for self-determination for Ireland.

In spite of his silence on the question of the witch-hunt, which is not mentioned in the election address, a vote for Dave Hallsworth would be a way of observing the Constituency Labour Party's boycott and using the by-election to make a stand against the witch-hunt. The Liverpool Branch of the Workers Revolutionary Party therefore calls on voters in Knowsley North to:

- Boycott right-wing Labour Howarth!
- Vote for RCP Hallsworth on November 13th against the right wing witch-hunt.

VIRAJ MENDIS WELCOMED IN TYNESIDE

THE CAMPAIGN against the deportation of Viraj Mendis took a great step forward this past week as trade unionists from Tyneside and Durham joined in the struggle.

WRP members from Manchester had telephoned party activists in the north east to meet Viraj at Newcastle railway station and to give him every assistance to draw in support from the trade unions in the area.

The dramatic response from the area was overwhelming, as Viraj explained to Workers Press:

'The links between the organisations in the area are so close that at every meeting I have attended I have immediately received invitations to speak at two or three further meetings.

'So much so that there are now too many meetings for us to cover. In the twenty-four hours that I have been in Newcastle the prospect for support from working class organisations shows what can be achieved in the fight against racism.

'On Thursday night, for example, on Tyneside we had to cover four meetings within two hours — and we have still to attend miners' lodge meetings later in the week.'

The tour started with a meeting of the CPSA in Longbenton which Viraj addressed for twenty minutes. The response was immediate with forty copies of the 'Viraj Mendis Must Stay!' pamphlet being ordered.

A decision was taken to send a letter to the CPSA Home Office branch congratulating them on their stand in support of Viraj Mendis and urging them to do more to help.

THE CIVIL and Public Services Association (Queen Anne's Gate and Provinces Branch) in a press release dated October 31 and headed 'CPSA Oppose Racism', states:

'This government's continued discrimination against blacks is highlighted not only by this outrageous treatment of Viraj but also by the introduction of their blatantly racist new visa requirements and their refusal to implement sanctions against the South African regime.

A letter to Waddington at the Home Office protesting at the attempted deportation is to be copied and circulated for the maximum involvement of the members. (The CPSA has 10,000 members in the Longbenton centre.)

Next stop was the Benwell Law Centre in Newcastle which ordered thirty copies of the pamphlet.

The Black Womens' Group fully supported the campaign and are to work with the CPSA and other supporters to organise a coach from the area for the Manchester demonstration later this month.

The UCATT branch in Crook, Co. Durham, also supported the campaign following Viraj's address to their branch meeting. They are to write to their MP and to the Home Office; members are being urged to write individual letters of protest.

A letter is also to be sent to the Wear Valley Trades Council and 15 pamphlets were sold at the meeting.

● A full report of the Viraj Mendis campaign and the response of the Durham miners will appear in next week's paper.

The government must realise that Viraj, as an active supporter of the Tamil community, faces certain persecution and probable death on deportation to Sri Lanka.

Despite this knowledge they continue their attempt to deport Viraj, a leading socialist member of the community for the past thirteen years.

We confirm our unqualified support for Viraj Mendis and demand that the Home Secretary allows him to remain in this country.

PUBLIC FORUM After Labour Party Conference — Which way for the left?

Wednesday November 19, 7pm
Carlton Centre, Carlton Vale NW6

(Behind petrol station nearest tube:
Kilburn Park)

Alan Thornett (Socialist Viewpoint)
Graham Topley ('International')
John Simmance (WRP Central Cttee)

CONFERENCE FOR TRADE UNION SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

Saturday December 13, 11am - 6pm
Carrs Lane Church Centre
(off High Street, near Birmingham
Central Station)

Called by: Lambeth Joint Trade Union Committee,
City of London Anti-Apartheid Group
For further details ring Bronwen Handyside,
01-274 7722 X2010 (Office hours)

Confed lobby sees a climbdown



OVER 500 engineers lobbied the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) executive meeting at Russell Square's Imperial Hotel in London last Thursday.

They were picketing against the surrender of conditions proposed by the CSEU in talks with the Engineering Employers Federation.

The lively picket included delegations from Liverpool, Scot-

land, British Aerospace, Kingston, GKN, Rank Xerox in Gloucestershire, and a contingent from Keetons, Sheffield, where the engineers have been on strike for 18 weeks over precisely the issues posed in the CSEU-EEF proposed agreement.

The picket clearly hit its target. Engineering union executive member Jimmy Airlie came out to report that the meeting had decided not to make a recommendation but to refer the matter back to the executives.

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Bryant Street Methodist Centre
off West Ham Lane
(nearest Underground: Stratford)

Sunday November 9, 7.30pm
'Revolutionary Movements in Latin America'
Speaker: James Dunkerly
Sunday November 16, 7.30pm
'The Permanent Revolution and Ireland'
Speaker: Billy Campbell

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

PUBLIC LECTURES

All on FRIDAY evenings
7.30pm sharp
Duke of York, York Way
Near Kings Cross

November 7
Bob Archer: The Soviet State

IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

PUBLIC MEETING

Justice For the Irish!
Smash the Frame-ups
Friday November 14, 7.30pm
Camden Centre, Bidborough Street
Near Kings Cross

Speakers: Maire O'Shea
Dave Douglass (Hatfield Main NUM)
Plus a relative of Birmingham 6
and a representative from the Guildford 4 Campaign

Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee

PUBLIC MEETING

Smash the Frame-ups
Free the Guildford 4 and
Birmingham 6
Wednesday November 19, 7.00pm
Longsight Library
Stockport Road
Manchester 12
Speakers include Ken Strath
Manchester City Councillor

ROY TEARSE

War-time Trotskyist leader

BY BILL HUNTER

ROY TEARSE, who died last month aged 67, was one of four Trotskyists arrested in 1944 under a conspiracy charge after leading an apprentices' strike.

The 50 apprentices struck against conscription into the mines and demanding the nationalisation of the coal mining industry.

Roy Tearse joined the navy at 15 as an apprentice engineer, but contracted polio and was discharged in 1937.

In 1939, he joined the Independent Labour Party in Newcastle. Like a number of young people at the time, his progress was from pacifism to Trotskyism.

In 1940 he read a pamphlet of Trotsky and came to London in search of the Trotskyist movement. There he joined the Workers International League (WIL).

He became a shop steward in the test department of the De Havilland factory in north London; won a position of leadership in the factory and became well-known in the engineering union in north London.

In 1943 the Clyde workers' committee, set up to defend workers sentenced under wartime anti-strike legislation, called a national conference which formed the 'Militant Workers' Federation'.

Roy Tearse became international secretary. He was already industrial organiser of the WIL.

At the end of 1943 and early in 1944, there was a rapid and widespread press campaign against the WIL.

The government was preparing to introduce further anti-working class legislation to curb industrial and political unrest.

Trotskyists were accused of being responsible for increasing strike action particularly among engineers and miners.

The Daily Mail of October 7 declared the Trotskyists 'play on the weariness of



Report in 'The Militant', paper of the American Socialist Workers Party, in July 1944

workers who have had four years of war and exaggerate grievances into a campaign to suppress the workers after the war.

'Why they have been allowed to have so much success is incomprehensible.'

The Labour and trade union bureaucracy were fearfully worried at the greatest wave of industrial action since the General Strike and at the growing political movement among workers hostile to the political truce.

At the beginning of 1944, no less than 40 resolutions were tabled for the Whitsun Labour Party conference demanding 'end the electoral truce'.

The following year, this movement would eject the Labour leaders out of the Cabinet.

At the end of March, 50,000 engineering apprentices went on strike.

Their rank and file organisation, the 'apprentices' guild' which had begun on the Tyne, was demanding that Minister of Labour Bevin withdraw the conscription of engineering apprentices into the mines.

The Tyne apprentices' guild, representing 15,000 apprentices had expressed the deep feeling of the young workers who, living in a coal mining area, had the common opinion that they would rather go into the army than down the pits.

One of their leaflets declared: 'The government has adopted, and is now enforcing, the so-called ballot scheme.

'By this scheme, which was introduced without consulting the lads who will be driven down the pits, they claim they will solve the coal crisis.

'But this dictatorial measure has been taken against lads, 18 to 21 years of age, who cannot legally demonstrate their hostility to, and lack of confidence in, the infamous pit compulsion scheme because we lack the elementary democratic rights of the parliamentary road.

'We apprentices declare that it is the greedy coal owners who are responsible for the present coal crisis. They have soaked the miners for generations, grown fat on the sweat, tears, blood

and broken bones of the miners.

'They have allowed the machinery in the pits to become antiquated, outdated and unproductive in their lust for profit. But the government has consistently refused to take real compulsory measures against the coal owners.

'It is against the mass of unprotected youth that further dictatorial measures are taken.'

The apprentices demanded: 'The government must nationalise the pits and operate them under the control of the trade unions.'

Tearse and three other Trotskyists were arrested in April 1944 and accused of assisting the apprentices with their leaflets and organising the strike.

They were charged with conspiracy under the Trades Dispute Act and with furthering an illegal strike.

Under the 1927 Trades Dispute Act — a punitive measure against the trade unions following the General Strike — an illegal strike was one which 'is not a trade dispute within the trade and is designed to coerce the government'.

These four Trotskyists were the first victims of this Act which had been denounced as an infamous attack on workers' rights by the very Labour and trade union leaders in the Cabinet which used it in 1944.

The Newcastle jury flung out the conspiracy charge. The four were sentenced on the charge of 'Furthering an illegal strike', but won a later appeal.

In the Labour movement at the time there was widespread support for the Trotskyists on trial.

In fact, after the trial,

Class Bias Pervades Trial Of Four Fighters For Socialism

Defendants bravely uphold their Socialist Principles, Exhort Comrades to Build Party

By Cable to *The Militant*

LONDON, June 23 — Four members of the Revolutionary Communist Party (British Section of the Fourth International), including Jock Haston, the party's general secretary, have been found guilty of "furthering, aiding and abetting" a strike declared illegal under the infamous Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act of 1927 after a trial lasting six days at the London Assizes.

Those convicted, in addition to Haston, are Roy Tearse, national secretary of the Militant Workers' Federation; Ann Keen, northeast (London) district secretary of the RCP; Heaton Lee, former organizer of na...

case has initiated a country-wide campaign to secure their release. To this end it has appealed for the raising of an additional fund of one thousand pounds.

Lee and Tearse were sentenced to 12 months, Haston to 6 months, and Ann Keen to 13 days, on the charge of aiding workers on strike. [Although the American capitalist press carried reports of the arrests, and displayed no hesitation in echoing the red-baiting smear campaign which preceded the arrests, news of the trial and convictions has been completely suppressed. — Editor.]

CLASS JUSTICE

countless examples were given by those who had been in Newcastle of the sympathy of workers in general.

A statement of the political bureau of the Trotskyist organisation (the Revolutionary Communist Party) to its members declared:

'All the comrades conducted themselves in the court in a manner worthy of our tradition. Each took every opportunity afforded him or her to present our political ideas, and in a commendable way.

Their behaviour in the witness box impressed all alike — the prosecution, the judge, the apprentices, and visitors in the gallery.

'There were a number of apprentices watching the proceedings and after the four comrades had given their evidence, they were literally flushed with enthusiasm. Those who were previously hostile became friendly.'

When Tearse and the others were sentenced they sent out a message from their cells declaring: 'We have been convicted and imprisoned because of our advocacy of the programme of the Fourth International

'We affirm that such

persecution and imprisonment will not shake our faith in the correctness of our programme.

'On the contrary, this trial has strengthened our conviction that the policy of the Fourth International offers the only road for the emancipation of the working class.'

However, within six years, not one of the four who had stood firmly against the persecution of the state was active in the struggle for the policy of the Fourth International.

They were unable to meet the changes at the end of the war.

The very successes of 1943-1944 engendered illusions that the working class would turn automatically, in the revolutionary events after the war, from Stalinism and reformism to Trotskyism.

But correct propaganda was not enough. The difficulties of finding a road to the working class were too much.

Roy Tearse became an academic and for the rest of his life was not politically active.

But his contribution in the 1940s remains a milestone in Trotskyist history.

BOOKS

THE PAPERBACK CENTRES

LONDON · GLASGOW

28 Charlotte Street, London W1P 1HP
Tel: 01 636 3532

10/12 Atlantic Road, Brixton, SW9
Tel: 01 274 8342

389 Green Street, London E13
Tel: 01 470 1388

321 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 3PT
Tel: 041 332 8881

BOOKS

Advance Notice

MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS

Now to take place **November 29, 12 noon**
Assemble Clock Tower Place (nearest tube Caledonian Road) for rally and march against Public Order Bill

March goes to a 'Call for Action' Conference

For further details see next week's **Workers Press**, or ring 01-881 2938

THRASHING OUT STRATEGY FOR SA SOLIDARITY

NEARLY 300 delegates from political groups, trade unions, students and community organisations met in East London last Saturday to discuss people's sanctions against South Africa.

The labour movement conference was organised by East London Anti-Apartheid groups from Newham, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking, Dagenham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Bringing greetings from SWAPO, the first speaker reaffirmed the call for comprehensive sanctions, the freeing of Namibian prisoners, and an end to the 20-year long illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa which is funded by Western banks and supported by Thatcher, Botha and Reagan.

Foreign mining companies made a profit of £30 million from Namibian mines this year, and British trade unionists still handle their products.

He emphasised SWAPO's opposition to the 'linkage plan' of Thatcher, Reagan and Botha which made Namibian independence conditional upon the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, which is a sovereign state in its own right.

Delegates applauded when he said SWAPO would continue the armed struggle until liberation.

Carol Trelawny of SACTU spoke of the thousands of trade unionists detained in Botha's jails since the state of emergency declared in June.

SACTU, she said, had been formed as a 'non-racial trade union' in 1955 and had joined the ANC in its underground struggle in the early 1960s when both organisations were banned.

Last year COSATU was formed as the largest ever legal trade union in South Africa and in its 10 months of existence had grown from 550,000 to 850,000 members.

She emphasised that SACTU's role was to voice those demands COSATU was legally unable to make and that they were calling for British workers to impose sanctions.

Dennis Goldberg of the ANC spoke of the critical stage the struggle had reached in South Africa. A riot situation in the townships had escalated to mass insurrection, he said.

Capital

The Botha regime, he said, is 'the gendarme of Western capital'.

It has arrested 23,000 South Africans since the June state of emergency, 40 per cent of them children.

Apartheid cannot be reformed and must therefore be destroyed.

'Forward to a Democratic Non-racial Republic of South Africa!' he concluded.

Of the six workshops arranged for the morning session, I chose to attend the one on trade unions in South Africa introduced by Carol Trelawny of SACTU.

She called for letters of protest to be sent to Botha demanding the release of detainees.

Discussion centred around how British trade unionists had implemented sanctions in the workplaces. This was a vital concern to delegates present.

Discussion of a socialist programme, however, was deliberately cut short.

Unity under the banner of the two-stage revolution seemed to be the order of the day.

BY PHIL EDWARDS

Trelawny did concede that two federations had not affiliated to COSATU at its launch though they had recently dropped their previous hostility to the notion of a non-racial union and had terminated their affiliation to the ICFTU, the International Western US International Federation of Trade Unions.

A query from a delegate about divisions in COSATU and the aims of the revolution (i.e. parliamentary democracy or socialism) was swiftly rebuffed and we were told there were no differences in COSATU.

A T&GWU official from Fords Dagenham described how Fords continued to be involved in South Africa and were still using South African-made P10 trucks.

Fords is making imports from South Africa and will cease soon, however as Fords were looking to Western Europe as the source of future imports.

The union had notified Fords management that any workers implementing personal sanctions, i.e. refusing to handle South African goods, would be fully supported.

Populists

The SWP intervention characterised divisions in COSATU with a conception of 'populists' and 'workerists', and called for more personal 'direct links'.

Trelawny vehemently opposed 'direct links' of this nature as they often endangered individuals in South Africa.

She asked 'Why are you bypassing the recognised leadership in South Africa?'

The ASTMS delegate from Socialist Action who said that the withdrawal of multinationals from South Africa could have disastrous consequences for South Africans was answered by Dominic Tweedie, secretary of the AA London committee.

He said that such a statement was clearly opposed to the stated tactics of the UDF, SWAPO, ANC and COSATU who were all calling for disinvestment.

Andy Lavender of Portsmouth NUPE spoke of the unsuccessful campaign in Portsmouth hospitals to boycott South African goods.

He explained that the campaign had been taken up in other areas.

This was supported by a speaker from the London Hospital, Whitechapel, who again spoke in favour of 'direct personal links' but was swiftly silenced by the chair.

A delegate representing the railway workers spoke of the 'rail against apartheid' campaign which had forged important links with South African trade unionists who had advised railworkers here how best to implement sanctions.

In closing, Goldberg referred to the reactionary role of the American AFL/CIO who (and I was reminded here of similar accounts of their activities in El Salvador) had organised a training session for South African workers aimed at getting them to respect the interests of capital.

He told how the AFL/CIO chairman had been forced to close a press conference when South African workers

had told the assembled journalists that they supported disinvestment.

He had then confined these workers to their hotel rooms.

Al Lomas (who has a Labour seat in the European parliament) introduced the afternoon session but the warmest reception of the day was reserved for Betty Heathfield from Women Against Pit Closures. She spoke of the vital role of women in the courts of law, the struggle between women and young men engaged in struggle for the first time and South African workers.

Force

The speaker played a CD recording of a speech by a South African worker and the words of the speech were printed in the programme. The speech was a call for women to support the strike and to support the women's struggle.

They had also demonstrated their solidarity with the struggles in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile and South Africa.

'Our conviction she said is a political conviction, in the correctness of our struggle.'

Only the exploitation of cheap labour in South Africa, where miners' wives only saw their husbands for four weeks in the year, had allowed the imports of cheap coal from South Africa during the miners' strike.

Referring to the nuclear workers picket and lobby of the Labour Party conference she said: 'When have you ever heard of a picket being paid for by the bosses?'

She continued 'Where does plutonium come from? Namibia. Who finances its extraction? South Africa. Who collects it? The British nuclear industry.'

Diane Abbott (prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney North) stressed the racist character of apartheid and said that though Dennis Healey was quick to con-



Soweto 1976: 'A riot situation in the townships has escalated into mass insurrection.'

demn this on a recent platform he made no mention of what a Labour government would do if it got into power.

She still concluded, however, with a firm conviction that a Labour government will have to implement sanctions if elected.

In conclusion, something has to be said about the treatment of the City of London AA Group by the stewards and leading members of the AA in the afternoon.

They distributed leaflets about David Kitson's experiences with TASS, who are allowing this principled

fighter to rot on the dole, betraying the promises made to him while he was in jail for twenty years in the apartheid state.

A group of three City group members stood up to heckle Ken Gill (General Secretary of TASS) and were told to either sit down or leave.

When they refused some dozen or more stewards forcibly ejected them from the hall with the use of what many delegates thought was unnecessary violence.

A slow hand clap and the chant 'let them speak' was

ignored and first members of a private security firm and then the police were used to participate in their ejection.

I will say this of the experiences within the WRP itself. If discussion of issues which bring into question the leadership of a movement are stifled, and if we are told that the business of conducting the class struggle is somehow more important than, or separate from, the activities of the leadership and its treatment of its own members, I say be wary of such a leadership.

Sanctions: action on two fronts

TRADE UNIONISTS are taking a wide variety of actions against the apartheid regime.

The latest issue of Labour Research's 'Bargaining Report' lists the actions currently occurring.

It shows actions on two fronts: in organisations with no direct investment in South Africa, pressure is being exerted to restrict or boycott South African goods.

In companies with subsidiaries in the racist state, trade unionists are demanding withdrawal or better conditions for their South African colleagues.

The report gives details of the operations of 18 major British companies in both South Africa and Britain which will be invaluable to trade unionists who want to take up this question at work.

Boycott campaigns have been widespread and effective.

The December issue of Labour Research will contain a feature on the success of the campaign by USDAW shopworkers and local pickets, following the example of the Dunnes workers in Dublin, to stop the stocking of South African goods.

The action of Portsmouth

health workers to blockade the stores earlier this year was taken up by NUPE members in Leicestershire, and the Health Authority has now agreed to phase out South African lines.

Brent DHA and North West Thames Regional Health Authority have agreed to review their purchasing practices.

Pressure from NALGO members has been the main driving force behind the decision of 74 Labour controlled local authorities not to buy from South Africa.

Harrow recently became the first Tory authority to agree.

Civil servants, rebuffed at national level, are pursuing a boycott campaign locally.

TASS members at Imperial Tobacco in Glasgow and T&GWU members at BXL Plastics in Grangemouth have raised the question of food supplies in their centres.

In Southampton, dockers

blocked the shipment of a milling machine for the South African arms industry in September last year.

Direct action in support of workers' rights in South Africa has been taken in a number of places, including BP's Grangemouth plant, and ASTMS has taken up the case of workers in a Castrol subsidiary in Durban.

Several unions have circulated their members with information about employers heavily involved in South Africa and at a local level a number of companies have been quizzed by their employees about South African subsidiaries and associated companies.

Fred Higgs, a T&GWU regional official, sent a letter to the local branches, saying:

'The fact that stewards are asking questions on this important issue in itself will be useful in demonstrating to such companies our support and solidarity with the struggle by fellow workers in South Africa.'

Metal Box, Plessey have so far been evasive, but GEC has been forced to supply information about wage rates and union recognition

following action by APEX and T&GWU/ACTSS members in Coventry.

GEC Telecommunications reps' committee has advised members not to handle goods and equipment connected with South Africa.

Barclays, already affected by a customer boycott, is now coming under pressure from BIFU (the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union) following the resolution at the July annual conference 'to negotiate with employers to withdraw their South African investments.'

AFRICAN SOLIDARITY RALLY; Saturday November 8, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, 12 noon-6 p.m.

Programme includes: speakers from 'Lift the Bans Campaign, reports back from National Black Students Global Unity Conference (US), from Libyan conference (Lester Lewis), BCM, PAC, Kuba Assegai, a performance from Sartacus R

Food, creche, books, admission free, sponsored by Lift the Ban on Farrakhan Campaign, Cultural Awareness Programme. Tel: 01-737 0225 733 9078

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The ASTMS delegate from Socialist Action who said that the withdrawal of multinationals from South Africa could have disastrous consequences for South Africans was answered by Dominic Tweedie, secretary of the AA London committee.

He said that such a statement was clearly opposed to the stated tactics of the UDF, SWAPO, ANC and COSATU who were all calling for disinvestment.

Andy Lavender of Portsmouth NUPE spoke of the unsuccessful campaign in Portsmouth hospitals to boycott South African goods.

He explained that the campaign had been taken up in other areas.

This was supported by a speaker from the London Hospital, Whitechapel, who again spoke in favour of 'direct personal links' but was swiftly silenced by the chair.

A delegate representing the railway workers spoke of the 'rail against apartheid' campaign which had forged important links with South African trade unionists who had advised railworkers here how best to implement sanctions.

In closing, Goldberg referred to the reactionary role of the American AFL/CIO who (and I was reminded here of similar accounts of their activities in El Salvador) had organised a training session for South African workers aimed at getting them to respect the interests of capital.

He told how the AFL/CIO chairman had been forced to close a press conference when South African workers

had told the assembled journalists that they supported disinvestment.

He had then confined these workers to their hotel rooms!

Alf Lomas (who has a Labour seat in the European parliament) introduced the afternoon session but the warmest reception of the day was reserved for Betty Heathfield from 'Women Against Pit Closures' who spoke of the vital links made in the course of the miners' strike between women and young miners engaged in struggle for the first time and South African workers.

Force

The women played a decisive role in their own support groups and in the struggles of the Greenham Common women, Silentnight strikers and Wapping printworkers.

They had also demonstrated their solidarity with the struggles in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile and South Africa.

'Our conviction' she said 'is a political conviction, in the correctness of our struggle.'

Only the exploitation of cheap labour in South Africa, where miners' wives only saw their husbands for four weeks in the year, had allowed the imports of cheap coal from South Africa during the miners' strike.

Referring to the nuclear workers picket and lobby of the Labour Party conference she said: 'When have you ever heard of a picket being paid for by the bosses?'

She continued 'Where does plutonium come from? Namibia. Who finances its extraction? South Africa. Who collects it? The British nuclear industry.'

Diane Abbott (prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney North) stressed the racist character of apartheid and said that though Dennis Healey was quick to con-



Soweto 1976: 'A riot situation in the towns has escalated into mass insurrection.'

demn this on a recent platform he made no mention of what a Labour government would do if it got into power.

She still concluded, however, with a firm conviction that a Labour government will have to implement sanctions if elected.

In conclusion, something has to be said about the treatment of the City of London AA Group by the stewards and leading members of the AA in the afternoon.

They distributed leaflets about David Kitson's experiences with TASS, who are allowing this principled

fighter to rot on the dole, betraying the promises made to him while he was in jail for twenty years in the apartheid state.

A group of three City group members stood up to heckle Ken Gill (General Secretary of TASS) and were told to either sit down or leave.

When they refused some dozen or more stewards forcibly ejected them from the hall with the use of what many delegates thought was unnecessary violence.

A slow hand clap and the chant 'let them speak' was

ignored and first members of a private security firm and then the police were used to participate in their ejection.

I will say this of the experiences within the WRP itself. If discussion of issues which bring into question the leadership of a movement are stifled, and if we are told that the business of conducting the class struggle is somehow more important than, or separate from, the activities of the leadership and its treatment of its own members, I say be wary of such a leadership.

Sanctions: action on two fronts

TRADE UNIONISTS are taking a wide variety of actions against the apartheid regime.

The latest issue of *Labour Research's* 'Bargaining Report' lists the actions currently occurring.

It shows actions on two fronts: in organisations with no direct investment in South Africa, pressure is being exerted to restrict or boycott South African goods.

In companies with subsidiaries in the racist state, trade unionists are demanding withdrawal or better conditions for their South African colleagues.

The report gives details of the operations of 18 major British companies in both South Africa and Britain which will be invaluable to trade unionists who want to take up this question at work.

Boycott campaigns have been widespread and effective.

The December issue of *Labour Research* will contain a feature on the success of the campaign by USDAW shopworkers and local pickets, following the example of the Dunnes workers in Dublin, to stop the stocking of South African goods.

The action of Portsmouth

health workers to blockade the stores earlier this year was taken up by NUPE members in Leicestershire, and the Health Authority has now agreed to phase out South African lines.

Brent DHA and North West Thames Regional Health Authority have agreed to review their purchasing practices.

Pressure from NALGO members has been the main driving force behind the decision of 74 Labour controlled local authorities not to buy from South Africa.

Harrow recently became the first Tory authority to agree.

Civil servants, rebuffed at national level, are pursuing a boycott campaign locally.

TASS members at Imperial Tobacco in Glasgow and T&GWU members at BXL Plastics in Grangemouth have raised the question of food supplies in their canteens.

In Southampton, dockers

blocked the shipment of a milling machine for the South African arms industry in September last year.

Direct action in support of workers' rights in South Africa has been taken in a number of places, including BP's Grangemouth plant, and ASTMS has taken up the case of workers in a Castrol subsidiary in Durban.

Several unions have circulated their members with information about employers heavily involved in South Africa and at a local level a number of companies have been quizzed by their employees about South African subsidiaries and associated companies.

Fred Higgs, a T&GWU regional official, sent a letter to the local branches, saying:

'The fact that stewards are asking questions on this important issue in itself will be useful in demonstrating to such companies our support and solidarity with the struggle by fellow workers in South Africa.'

Metal Box, Plessey have so far been evasive, but GEC has been forced to supply information about wage rates and union recognition

following action by APEX and T&GWU/ACTSS members in Coventry.

GEC Telecommunications reps' committee has advised members not to handle goods and equipment connected with South Africa.

Barclays, already affected by a customer boycott, is now coming under pressure from BIFU (the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union) following the resolution at the July annual conference 'to negotiate with employers to withdraw their South African investments.'

AFRICAN SOLIDARITY RALLY; Saturday November 8, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, 12 noon-6 p.m.

Programme includes: speakers from 'Lift the Bans Campaign, reports back from National Black Students Global Unity Conference (US), from Libyan conference (Lester Lewis), BCM, PAC, Kuba Assegai, a performance from Sartacus R

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STALINISM IN

THIS WEEK, in our series 'Stalinism in Crisis', Workers Press interviews BALAZS NAGY (Michel Varga), who was a leading member of the Petofi Circle which played a decisive political role in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

Varga emigrated to Paris after the suppression of the revolution by the Russian army and there became a Trotskyist and a member of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

He collaborated with the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste after the 1971 split with the Socialist Labour League but broke with it shortly afterwards. He is currently a member of the 'Struggle and Continuity Group for the Fourth International' with members from both eastern and western Europe.

The interview will continue next week; in this first part, Varga discusses the early years in post-war Hungary, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the purges that accompanied it.

I WAS A member of the Communist Party in Hungary from 1944. As a young man I participated wholeheartedly in the socialist transformation of the country and became a member of the leadership of the youth organisation.

In 1949 and 1950 the Party, which although it was my party was a stalinist party, moved to expropriate the bourgeoisie — but it could not make this profound transformation without the working class.

There was a real mobilisation of workers but it was controlled by the bureaucratic apparatus.

At the same time, the party engaged in a purge of its ranks — it is in this context that you should appraise the Rajk trial.

This was a 'purification' of the party of any elements which were dubious for the Kremlin bureaucracy and its Hungarian satellite.

The whole process was conducted as a 'Fight

against Trotskyism' which is very interesting.

Even in 1944 and 1945 the party had engaged in bitter struggle against all oppositionists. Remember that in 1919 there had been a proletarian revolution in Hungary; many workers had therefore been consciously fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat in 1944/45.

The leadership of the party engaged in harsh struggles against these 'leftists'.

NKVD detachments arrived in Hungary alongside the Red Army and they came with lists on which were the name of prominent White Guards — and also the name of prominent Trotskyists or other oppositionists.

Already in 1944/45 the first elements were captured.

IN HUNGARY, say by the end of the war, would there be any following for the Trotskyist movement of any importance — people who would consciously call themselves Trotskyists?

IN THE 1930's there were very important Trotskyists. In Paris, for instance, amongst the Hungarian emigre workers, members of the Communist Party, the majority voted for Trotsky against Stalin.

A special commission was sent by the Kremlin headed by Gero — the same senior NKVD man who later smashed the opposition in Barcelona.

This commission organised a whole series of provocations to smash the organisation of the Hungarian workers in Paris.

There were more Hungarian Trotskyists in Paris than there were French, some comrades told me. This was not strictly true but it does show that that they were a real challenge.

IT WAS a self-confident organisation, then?

IT WAS not politically clear. At this time, the comrades in Hungary were members of a clandestine, illegal party (under the ferocious regime of Admiral Horthy).

I do not think that in illegality you can develop sufficient clarification of political problems.

A comrade, later organised by us but formerly a member of the Hungarian Communist Party, told me that he was one of the group in Paris and that before that had been in Germany.

He told me that they all thought that they were in a discussion; no-one realised that that there was a real break after 1933.

They didn't realise — and I think that no-one in the eastern European countries realised — the real meaning of the break and the orientation towards the Fourth International and against Stalinism.

There was a conception and a practice flowing from

it that this was some kind of 'quarrel amongst friends'.

When I read Cde Pirani's article about China and the Chinese Trotskyists who were exterminated and smashed in the war, I could not forget that, even if we have a tactic for realising the socialist transformation, we should never forget the stalinist enemy; certainly the stalinists don't forget.

I think perhaps that when Cde Peng Shu-Tse and the other Chinese Trotskyists wholeheartedly participated in the Chinese transformation they didn't realise what stalinism, even in a Chinese form, really was — and we should remind ourselves of this.

In Eastern Europe a whole generation of Trotskyists was exterminated or arrested and jailed and was thereby lost for Trotskyism.

WHEN you say they were exterminated, the GPU came into it . . . ?

THE GPU and afterwards, indirectly, the Hungarian stalinists.

THEY literally put them in the jails, shot them?

THERE ARE many examples; for instance provocations like in Hungary where there was an illegal Trotskyist organisation; the Communist Party, led by stalinists, published a 100 per cent legal review between 1927 and 1933.

In this legal review they denounced — with names — the Trotskyists before Horthy's police.

This has been a common practice of the stalinists in other countries too. You know for instance the liberal CP leader in Sudan who was hanged by Numeiry; remember Julian Grimaux in Spain, who was garrotted by Franco.

These are things which were arranged by the stalinist bureaucracy in the underground. After 1944/45 there was not only one but two or three parties led by oppositionists and Trotskyists were even inside the CP led by the stalinists.

And there was a whole

fight waged by the stalinist leadership in 1944/45 — after illegality was ended — against the leftists, who disappeared in different waves.

The last wave was the purge of Rajk but this time you couldn't find the Trotskyists or prominent oppositionists, who had already been smashed, but people who were 'dubious' because they had been in the illegal workers' movement in Hungary.

IF WE were to say that the purge extended to the ranks of the bureaucracy itself to include those who had a record of struggle . . . ?

YES, because it was necessary to have an apparatus without any problems because the bureaucracy had to mobilise the working class.

For this reason, it was necessary to assure an absolutely rigid control, without any possibility, even inside the bureaucracy, of countering problems.

IN CASE that movement of the class broke through . . . ?

YES and there was a real mobilisation of the class for this transformation. This was a break with the bourgeoisie, a break with imperialism which backed this bourgeoisie.

The bureaucracy could not realise this as a reform from above. Look, you cannot expropriate the bourgeoisie without such a mobilisation.

Therefore we are against this conception which attributes to the bureaucracy a revolutionary capacity.

The bureaucracy had to overthrow the bourgeoisie and therefore it was absolutely necessary to appeal to the masses.

But at the same time the bureaucracy could not make this mobilisation without smashing all possibility of opposition, all possibility of its finding a political expression.

HOW WOULD you describe your own position

politically at this time? Where would you say that you yourself stood in the period 1945-50?

I WAS in discussion for instance as a young communist with a comrade of my own age, who said to me, 'You know, this is a bourgeois government.' (It was in 1946).

I said, 'Perhaps, perhaps but we have, that is to say the working class has, all the key positions and we will proceed to overthrow the bourgeoisie. This is a tactic.'

He told me that he was in the social democratic party — his parents were workers and he associated with workers who were influenced by some Trotskyists who had worked inside the Socialist Party under illegality.

My friend and I discussed these problems for days and when in 1949 and 50 we were passing over to expropriating the bourgeoisie, I said to him, 'Now you can see.'

Indeed I worked very hard in the period of these transformations.

I was directing at this time agitation and propaganda section of the central committee of the youth movement.

But just as there was a purge of the cadre around Rajk, there was a more general purge and even people who were not implicated in the Rajk process were purged — like me.

WERE you expelled?

NO. IT was very interesting because so many people were involved. I cannot recall all the details after so much time but I was accused of 'collusion with imperialism' and told, 'You cannot work here.'

I was very perturbed. They went to my home. Immediately I wrote a long appeal to the Central Control Commission of the Party, since we were party functionaries even in the youth organisation.

I wrote all this to the Central Control Commission of the Party. I was sure that everything would be all

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PETER FRYER



The Hungarian revolution of 1956 and its brutal suppression by Russian tanks was a watershed in the history of socialism.

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NEW PARK

BELOW: a scene showing street fighting against the invading Russian troops in 1956. Nagy argues that the bureaucracy was obliged to stifle the working class because it had to mobilise it against the bourgeoisie in 1948-50 — and had to ensure it could contain that movement



CRISIS

The challenge for the Trotskyist movement

right. I don't understand, I would like an investigation. You can read my arguments in documents.' And I posted it.

That was in the afternoon. At night I was taken by those people who circulate at night with guns.

I was taken but I explained to the arresting officer that it was a tragic misunderstanding and I had just written to the Control Commission.

I said that he should not listen to the other leaders of the youth organisation because my case was now under investigation.

I was held for some days but because they couldn't find a cadre who would implicate me, they released me after some days.

Then another officer explained how it was very important that nothing slipped out which might 'harm the party'.

Although I was still in the party, I went to the university — I had explained that I had to have work and they put me in touch.

Although I was not implicated, they could not take me back to work for the youth movement.

YOU WERE more or less employed in the university to get you out of the way?

YES. You must understand how in these years the purge ran parallel with socialist transformation; under the leadership of the real stalinists and privileged workers all those, young or old, who had fought for socialism in the previous years were got rid of.

Many were imprisoned while many others, like me and others were assigned to the periphery of the movement.

THIS was 1949?

YES. This transformation occupied 1948, 1949 and 1950. During all this time I was wholly for the party's stalinist policies which were, for me, Communist.

SO ALTHOUGH you were perhaps a 'left' element within the movement, you still identified yourself

with the Hungarian Communist Party? Were you perhaps a 'left' element. . . ?

NO, I was not left.

YOU were just an ordinary member?

The distinction does not make sense because it was a real transformation — the working class not only backed it but actively participated in it.

Amongst organised workers there was some mistrust of Stalin because they said you cannot believe what they say about what they need in Russia, about the policy towards the bourgeoisie and so on, but even with this mistrust they were for the transformation.

Therefore there was hope, you know; we all were wholeheartedly with the transformation — and in this sense with the Stalinists.

I knew that Stalin in 1948/49 had imprisoned some leftists but we accepted the explanations that were given for this.

JUST one question. Would it be accurate to say that, far from being an isolated case, Rajk was the figure-head for a much deeper going process; not just a crack amongst top layers of the bureaucracy but an attempt to purge the entire party?

A PURGE, but it was not really inside the bureaucracy; there was no apparent reason for a purge. It was to prevent any possibility of some other voice.

THEY went right through the whole movement?

THE WHOLE movement. The Rajk process; you had a few people directly implicated but many, many people were accused of sympathising with Rajk and Tito also.

We asked the question how it was possible that Rajk was a collaborator.

It was, for us the younger generation, very difficult to believe.

He had conducted a fight against the fascists — the idea was impossible.

If at this time the Communist Party had had a policy of class collaboration, then it would have been impossible to believe, but we were engaged in a policy of socialist transformation.

Therefore when I read about oppositionists in the Soviet Union at the time when Stalin took some points of the Left Opposition's programme in his turn against the right, it was at this time that Rakovsky and the others capitulated; there were grounds for such a capitulation.

RAKOVSKY by this time was no longer a young man — he had been brutally treated. . .

I DON'T want to explain these things, simply to make a comparison to try and explain our situation; why we accepted these things.

I CAN understand that. It does make it clear; it was a period in which you were expropriating the bourgeoisie — as you saw it, making a social revolution.



BALAZS NAGY (Michel Varga) speaking at last week's London meeting to commemorate the Hungarian Revolution of 1956

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SUPPORT THE FIGHT FOR IRISH FREEDOM

DISCUSSION ON IRELAND

'Britain out— without conditions'

BY SIMON PIRANI
WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
Socialist Organiser, September 18

'SOCIALIST ORGANISER'S last major statement on Ireland ('Ireland After the Accord' by John O'Mahony, 'Socialist Organiser', April 10) falls into the fatal trap of attaching conditions to the demand for British withdrawal.

'We are in favour of British withdrawal but as part of a political solution which actually allows self-determination', says O'Mahony, that 'solution' being 'a federal united Ireland — in which the minority areas will have autonomy — combined with the closest link between Ireland and Britain acceptable to the Irish majority.'

Thus O'Mahony responds to the pressure of social-chauvinism, so powerful in the British labour leadership.

These conditions are necessary, according to O'Mahony, to defend what he calls 'a natural Irish minority', the Protestants, 'which according to democratic norms would have every right to special treatment as a minority by way of having autonomy in its own heartland areas.'

This minority, he claims, 'partly for reasons for protecting itself against the Irish majority — allied with a powerful section of the British ruling class against the Irish majority'.

This is a distortion of Irish history, throughout which Britain has not only (from the mid-1800s) lavished economic favours on Belfast, but also (from 1787) given the sectarian Orange gangs arms, uniforms and legal protection.

It was British colonialism that spawned religious sectarianism, not the other way round as O'Mahony suggests.

'Socialist Forum: Ireland '69-'85', published by 'Socialist Organiser', takes this unscientific methodology still further, claiming that in Ireland 'the basic problem is the split bourgeoisie' (page 21).

The basic problem in fact was British colonialism, which had taken a hold on Ireland for several hundred years and had encouraged sectarian divisions for decades before the native bourgeoisie emerged.

Surely the great problem of the Irish working class is that forcible partition took it into the imperialist epoch with one of the most basic tasks of the bourgeois revolution — national independence — not yet carried out.

This gigantic historical fact throws some doubt, to say the least, on Socialist Forum's blase statement that 'Ireland has had its "bourgeois revolution".'

This 'analysis' is bad enough.

Still worse is 'Socialist Forum's absurd claim (page 35) that 'as a general principle Marxists favour regional or provincial autonomy for markedly distinct areas within a state, together with the most decentralised possible local government.'

A quotation from the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic and Labour Party (Bolsheviks) resolution of 1913 is used to prove that the 'federal un-

ited Ireland' slogan and calls for 'autonomy' are 'Marxist'.

The RSDLP resolution was a programme of 'democratic' demands (it calls, for instance, for a 'democratic republic' in Russia, rather than socialism) advanced by the Bolsheviks as a means of putting the working class at the head of the 'democratic revolution' at that time.

The reference to 'wide regional autonomy and fully-democratic local government' referred to the specific conditions in Russia, which had a host of national minorities quite unlike any other European nation.

(The Bolsheviks continually faced the problem of these minorities' rights after they took power, and Stalin's reactionary insensitivity to them caused one of his major conflicts with Lenin in 1922).

Furthermore, the resolution's reference to fully-democratic local government is not a 'general principle', but a particular demand, flowing from the general principle of support for the self-determination of nations and for the rights of national minorities.

Demands regarding local government in Ireland would have to be worked out by Irish Marxists, also proceeding from this general principle — but under conditions which are in no way comparable to Russia, firstly because the Protestants are not an oppressed national minority but in fact have been given privileges over a long period by Britain to encourage sectarianism, secondly because the national question only arises in relation to the oppression (and partition) of the whole of Ireland by Britain.

Of course any socialist programme for Ireland would have to take into account the problem of the divided working class, demand the total freedom of religion, the rights of divorce, abortion etc and show the way forward for the working class to achieve these things.

But it is completely wrong for British Marxists in Socialist Organiser to make 'autonomy' for Protestants a central part of their programme.

In Britain our task is to put more emphasis on Irish self-determination than Irish Marxists would, to combat the social-chauvinism which justifies Labour leaders organising the imperialist occupation.

British Marxists have something to learn (with due regard to the limitation of historical analogies) from Lenin's 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination'.

There he attacks Rosa Luxemburg not for opposing the reactionary nationalism of the bourgeoisie in Poland (the oppressed nation), but because she opposed the inclusion of the demand for Poland's right to secession in the Marxist programme in Russia (the oppressor nation).

Of course Socialist Organiser is not the first British organisation to 'forget' the national question in elabor-

ating a 'Marxist' policy on Ireland.

The Socialist Labour League, forerunner of the WRP, which always lyingly boasted that it was the 'only' organisation calling for the withdrawal of British troops, actually called for troops to be withdrawn while at the same time supporting the partition of Ireland by imperialism.

In December 1968 and again in July 1969, the SLL called for, in policy statements: 'A workers' and farmers' government in Northern Ireland, breaking from Westminster, posing unity of action immediately with the workers of the South and of Britain'.

In 1970, this partitionist rubbish was quietly dropped.

But the SLL continued to stress exclusively that the achievement of socialism in Ireland was dependent on 'working class unity', countering this rigidly to the demand for a united Ireland, i.e. national self-determination.

Only since last year's split with G. Healy has the WRP seriously considered this position.

At the heart of this discussion is the question: how do Marxists develop their theoretical principles to approach specific problems in the class struggle?

Lenin's attitude to national struggles was based on the understanding that two opposing tendencies were at work under capitalism: firstly, the awakening of national movements, creation of nation states and the struggle against national oppression (this predominates in the beginning of capitalist development); secondly, the breakdown of national barriers, the creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life generally, politics, science, etc (this tendency 'characterises' a mature capitalism that is moving towards its transformation into socialism'). (See 'Critical Remarks on the National Question', chapter 3).

Marxist principles — working-class internationalism on the one hand, right of equality of languages and national self-determination on the other — are based on these conceptions.

The particular problem in Ireland is that while capitalism is very definitely in the second, imperialist stage, the Irish national question — which posed itself for solution long before many nations had reached the first stage of capitalist development — is unresolved.

Furthermore, the northern 'loyalists' who were first financed and armed by the British 200 years ago to prevent a national uprising led by the petty bourgeoisie, are still being used for that purpose today, after the problem of national oppression has come and gone in many other countries.

These particular circumstances make it more, not less, vital for British Marxists not to place conditions — either of 'autonomy' for Protestants, or even 'working class unity' — on their demand for Irish self-determination.



Commemorating the rising of Easter 1916

SIMON PIRANI'S article 'Placing conditions on withdrawal' is so full of factual inaccuracies, banality dressed up as 'theory', circular argument and plain confusion, that it is almost impossible to reply to it in a short contribution.

It is worth replying, however, because Pirani's article represents a 'theorised' version of a position that has become accepted 'common sense' on Ireland in circles far wider than the post-Healy WRP.

Pirani's basic thesis rests, as far as I can make out, upon three fundamental pillars.

1. British imperialism (or is it colonialism? Pirani conflates the two throughout the article) continued to oppress 'the whole of Ireland', preventing the completion of the bourgeois revolution.
2. The Protestant community of the Six Counties are no more and no less than an instrument through which Britain continues to dominate Ireland and oppress its nationalist population ('the northern "loyalists" who were first financed and armed by the British 200 years ago to prevent a national uprising led by the petty bourgeoisie, are still being used for that purpose today').
3. The duty of British socialists is to support the nationalist resistance and its demand for self-determination unconditionally (and — in reality, uncritically) 'to combat the social-chauvinism which justifies Labour leaders organising the imperialist occupation'.

Summary

If this is a fair summary of Pirani's case (and I have taken care to ensure that it is, as far as Pirani's convoluted and imprecise prose style allows) then we have to say that he is wrong on every point:

1. The Republic of Ireland is a developed, relatively advanced capitalist state. The Southern bourgeoisie demonstrated its real independence from Britain in World War Two and is integrated into European capitalism independently of Britain through the EEC.

It is dominated by other bourgeoisies according to the logic of modern imperialism (i.e. it is a relatively weak economy within the framework of capitalist relations) but it is definitely not a 'puppet' bourgeoisie or a colony of Britain.

Furthermore, the South (bourgeoisie and working class alike) has little interest in the re-uniting of Ireland and no serious intention of doing it — Charlie Haughey's posturing notwithstanding.

2. The Northern Protestants are not agents of British im-

perialism. In fact, they are very effective 'anti-imperialists', having thwarted successive British attempts to reform the Six Counties and impose a capitalist solution to the conflict in the North.

In addition, the Protestants were in Ireland for centuries before the 'epoch of imperialism', and made up the backbone of the original republican movement.

To call them 'settlers' comparable with, say the white South Africans, is completely ahistorical and untenable from a Marxist point of view.

3. This is the crux of the matter: do we, as British socialists, have the right to put forward a socialist programme for Ireland that goes beyond support for the nationalist resistance and the call for British withdrawal and Irish self-determination?

Pirani's answer is essentially 'no'. All this inconclusive ramblings about the applicability of the 1913 Bolshevik resolution on regional autonomy and his objection that such considerations do not apply to the Protestants (because they are not an oppressed national minority) are really beside the point — what Pirani is saying is that we don't have the right to make such proposals. They must be 'worked out by Irish Marxists'.

Such an approach is, in fact, an abandonment of the basic Leninist conception of 'critical support' for national liberation movements. It is an abandonment of internationalism, which always combines solidarity for those fighting oppression with criticism of politics that do not put the proletariat at the forefront of the struggle.

Liberal

It is the response of the guilt-ridden liberal, not the proletarian internationalist — although, admittedly, Pirani has more to feel guilty about than most, having been an apologist for the WRP's shameful vacillations between crude economism and uncritical nationalism on Ireland for many years.

The inadequacy of Pirani's approach is vividly illustrated by the response of his tendency's newspaper (Workers Press) to the Pro-

vos' announcement that all workers engaged in work (direct or indirect) for the security forces (including, presumably, large numbers of Catholics) would be considered legitimate targets.

Plainly, this was a seriously mistaken and fundamentally sectarian decision, and one that the Provo leadership has now partially retreated from. When civil servants (mainly Protestant) in DHSS offices struck against similar threats to Catholic staff from the Protestant Ulster Freedom Fighters, the Provos should have unambiguously withdrawn their ultimatum and so isolated the UVF. They did not, and a great opportunity was missed.

Ultimatum

What did Workers' Press have to say about the Provo ultimatum?

Under the ringing headlines 'Six Counties: Collaborators have been warned!', Charlie Walsh (WP, August 9) proclaimed: 'For revolutionary socialists, however, the struggle to free Ireland from the jackboot tyranny of British imperialism and its collaborators in Ireland has to be supported all the way down the line.'

'It is in this context that the IRA's warning on collaborating with the building of torture centres of the enemy has to be seen, understood and supported.'

Such voyeuristic nonsense cannot take the struggle for a socialist united Ireland forward. Actually, it can not take the struggle for 'self-determination' on any basis forward, for as long as the Northern Protestants remain implacably opposed to any moves towards reunification, they can and will impose their own 'veto', arms in hand, on the streets.

Our job is to hammer out a programme, including democratic demands aimed to break up the Protestant monolith, to achieve that. Unless it is done, all talk of Irish unity (let alone socialism) is utopian dreaming.

Pirani and his comrades are not arguing against particular aspects of 'Socialist Organiser's programme for Ireland in this context: in reality they are against us having any programme at all.

The following letters are reprinted from the weekly socialist paper 'Socialist Organiser'

'National question unresolved'

BY SIMON PIRANI
WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
Socialist Organiser, October 9

To the editor, 'Socialist Organiser', for publication.

THE DISCUSSION taking place between us on Ireland is extremely valuable.

It is a problem that British socialists have faced — and generally failed to solve — since the last century, and clarification of our positions on it is essential.

Comrade Jim Denham ('Socialist Organiser' September 25) has correctly identified three areas of disagreement:

1. The question of whether or not Ireland is subjected to imperialist, or colonial, domination by Britain;
2. The position of the northern Protestants;
3. The responsibility of British socialists towards Ireland.

Let us clarify our differences on each point.

1. I stated (SO, September 18) that the 'basic problem' in Ireland was British colonialism, which had taken a hold on Ireland for several hundred years, and had encouraged sectarian divisions for decades, before the native bourgeoisie emerged.

'Surely', I wrote, 'The great problem of the Irish working class is that forcible partition took it into the imperialist epoch with one of the most basic tasks of the bourgeois revolution — national independence — not yet carried out.'

I attacked 'Socialist Forum's claim that Ireland has had its 'bourgeois revolution'.

Comrade Denham defends that formulation, saying that 'the Republic of Ireland is a developed, relatively advanced capitalist state, integrated into European capitalism independently of Britain through the EEC' and is 'definitely not a "puppet" bourgeoisie or a colony of Britain.'

Let us leave aside Comrade Denham's reference to the bastard twenty-six county state as 'the Republic', an insult to his Irish readers which reflects his apparent insensitivity to nationalist aspirations.

Now, is the twenty-six counties a 'relatively advanced capitalist state'? In economic terms, we must qualify this by saying that while it may be 'advanced' relative to colonies or semi-colonies elsewhere, it remains backward relative to capitalist Europe.

And are we not obliged as Marxists to say why Ireland is one of the most economically backward countries in Europe?

Is it not because its economic development was

choked, throttled and manipulated by Britain? Of course.

And I use the word 'colonialism' not because I was 'conflating' it with imperialism as Comrade Denham says, but because Ireland was subject to Britain's economic domination long before the epoch of imperialism, and this has left its mark on Ireland until this day — not only in the form of economic backwardness, but in the form of partition.

Politics reflects economics, but not directly.

That is why in 'relatively advanced' Ireland, the question of national independence (in the political sense) has not been resolved; in 'relatively backward' semi-colonies in Africa and South America, it has.

May I ask again the question that Comrade Denham ignored? Has 'one of the most basic tasks of the bourgeois revolution — national independence' been carried out or not?

And is partition the result of British colonialism or (as 'Socialist Forum' claims) of a 'split bourgeoisie' in Ireland?

2. On the position of the northern Protestants, Comrade Denham has misquoted me.

I did not call them 'settlers' or (as your caption-writer suggests) equate them with the South African Boers.

I did not say they are 'agents of British Imperialism'.

I said that they were not 'an oppressed national minority but have been given privileges over a long period by Britain to encourage sectarianism'.

I said this to stress the fact that for 200 years loyalist reaction was armed, encouraged and strengthened with economic favours by Britain.

May I call in evidence the words of a British communist who, I believe, did try to get to grips with the Irish question, William Paul.

His pamphlet 'The Irish Crisis 1921' (available in the Cork Workers' Club Historical Reprint Series) speaks of the extremely reactionary nature of the Ulster capitalist class and the way it used religious sectarianism.

He explained that class divisions would prevail at the end of the day.

For the Protestant work-

ers, he wrote, 'it was Carson who demonstrated that political movements only yield to force.'

'When these workers move against capitalism, the revolutionary movement of Ulster will have good reason for thanking Carson for his magnificent work.'

Paul thus recognised that in a revolutionary situation, the militarism of Protestant workers could backfire on their capitalist masters.

I believe that such a possibility could still be realised.

But the fact remains that since 1921 sectarianism has deepened.

Today, with no revolution-

ary situation, the Protestant workers are, by and large, behind their extreme right-wing, near-fascist, leaders, who speak for the Ulster capitalist class.

These leaders, with working class support, have thwarted British attempts to impose a capitalist solution in the North, not because they are 'very effective anti-imperialists', but because loyalism, that reactionary and crisis-ridden Frankenstein created by Britain to maintain its control of Ireland, has got out of British control.

My difference with 'SO' is that they believe there is something inherently 'anti-imperialist' about the Northern Protestants.

I say that, until the Protestant workers are split from their loyalist leaders — and I

doubt whether anything short of a revolutionary situation could do that — they are attacking Thatcher, the Hillsborough deal and the RUC from an entirely reactionary standpoint.

3. Comrade Denham asks 'do we British socialists have the right to put forward a socialist programme for Ireland that goes beyond support for the nationalist resistance and the call for British withdrawal and Irish self-determination?'

As internationalists, we have not a right but a duty to learn about, and discuss with other Marxists, the methods of struggle and the programme of Marxism in all countries.

But Comrade Denham is confusing things.

My argument with Comrade O'Mahony had nothing to do with Irish socialists; it had to do with the programme of British socialists. It had nothing to do with whether we go beyond the demand for Irish self-determination, but whether we go as far as that.

I said that British socialists could not introduce a demand for a federal form of government into their own programme as a precondition for supporting Irish self-determination.

I attacked Comrade O'Mahony's phrase (SO, April 10) that he was 'in favour of

British withdrawal but as part of a political solution which actually allows self-determination', that is only in conjunction with a federal Ireland policy, that is, not unconditionally.

I did not say, as Comrade Denham suggests, that British socialists must 'support the nationalist resistance and its demand for self-determination uncritically'.

That was not my point.

My point was that British socialists had to make the unconditional demand for self-determination their own; support it not simply because it is being advanced by Republicans or nationalists, but because it is a principle without which the international working class will never go forward, without which international working class unity will never be achieved.

Let us argue about the programme for Irish socialists.

But first, let us as British socialists get our own programme correct.

Does it include the unconditional demand for Irish self-determination, or is Comrade O'Mahony right to place conditions on it?

Too much Irish blood has already been spilled because of British socialists' failure to stand firm on this principle.



The Royal Ulster Constabulary

'Ireland's capitalist progress'

BY LIAM CONWAY
Socialist Organiser October 16

WHAT A weak historical analyst is Simon Pirani! In his vision of history the world never changes.

Ireland was a British colony 300 years ago; it remains a British colony today. To suggest anything else is an insult to Irish readers.

As an Irish reader, Jim Denham's remarks offend me less than Simon's.

Simply watching Ireland as a child in the long summer holidays, I had sufficient intelligence to notice dramatic changes in the 1960s and 1970s.

New industry and housing were just some of the signs that Ireland was a developing capitalist economy.

And we must not analyse the world when considering Ireland. We must put it in a European context only.

The fact that is more advanced than some 'independ-

ent nations' in the third world is not relevant to Simon.

His point is that partition is a by-product with the same relevance today as it had in 1921, when you were lucky to find a toilet in Ireland, let alone a horse (no, an ass) and cart.

This is nonsense.

Even in 1921 much of British capitalism (supported by the Liberal Party) would have been happy to see the back of the Six Counties.

Unfortunately the other half and the Protestant majorities in Ulster were willing to threaten civil war to stop the setting up of a single Irish state.

The British State, amidst an impending post-war economic crisis, decided on a short term solution in an effort to restart business as

usual.

As for today, even if Ireland is relatively backward in Europe this is not necessarily related to partition.

Italy has been united since the 1860s, but Southern Italy is still much more backward than Northern Italy and at least as backward as Southern Ireland.

Which big bad wolf is to blame here? Ah, but national independence is 'one of the most basic requirements of the bourgeois revolution'.

Did you know that no bourgeois progress can take place in the 26 counties? — you have to have 32.

I suppose South Korea has not had a revolution as it only has possession of half of the country, not 56.

Simon's history gets worse when it comes to the Protes-

tants.

Despite the lack of historical evidence to show that Catholics and Protestants could unite on the national question, Simon thinks that 'in a revolutionary situation the militarism of Protestant workers could backfire on their capitalist masters'.

But how is this revolutionary situation to be developed without the unity of the Protestant and Catholic workers? This is virtually impossible while both see the national question — green or orange — as paramount.

Simon's inability to understand the historical process leads inevitably to the conclusion that Irish Nationalism is a seamless robe and self-determination the bottom line to which socialists must give their unquestioning support.

John O'Mahony is thus mistaken to propose federalism — as federalism means conditions on troops-out and self-determination.

Simon goes on 'self-determination is a principle without which the international working class will never go forward.'

I ask Simon: Have the Sri Lankan working class made any more progress than the Irish, for all their national independence? Have the splits caused by British imperialism disappeared from the minds of the Tamils?

Are the Turks who complain about Bulgarianisation in Bulgaria, merely the dupes of the long dead Ottoman empire?

Is the nationalist completion of 'the bourgeois revolution in Ireland' going to guarantee the rights of both communities — or present the prospect of civil war?

If you answer these questions honestly you will see that self-determination is not so simple, Simon.



Anti-Treaty IRA patrol in Dublin during the struggle against the acceptance of partition

We invite our readers to participate in this discussion by sending letters to Workers Press.

LETTERS

Why and when as well as what; In the interests of historical accuracy

SEVERAL linked issues, centred on the question of national, or 'popular' revolts, have been debated in an extended correspondence between Brian Pearce and myself.

Interested readers should examine the original correspondence in its entirety.

In any polemic, when and why what is said can be as important as what is said itself.

The relevant Workers Press issues are those of August 2, 16, 30, September 13, 20, October 4.

What follows is an attempt by one participant to clarify what may, to the casual reader, look like a fragmented sequence of replies and counter-replies spanning two months, and culminating in a strange innuendo in Pearce's latest contribution.

Pearce, at the outset (August 2), took to task Eric Hobsbawm for falsely claiming precedents for the Euro-Stalinist 'broad alliance' strategy in the Fourth World Congress (1922) of the Communist International.

In response, I sought (August 16) to enlarge on Pearce's analysis.

This involved demonstrating how on an earlier occasion Hobsbawm had ascribed similar positions to no less than Frederick Engels.

I further located Hobsbawm's campaign of text-tampering and selective quotation within the tradition of Stalinism, both as a method of historical falsification (which is the only way to give 'Marxist' credentials to popular frontism and the doctrine of socialism in one country from which it is inseparable), and as regards that content of national socialism itself.

Perhaps naively, it did not occur to me that my letter might cause Pearce offence.

Two weeks later (August 30), however, a reply was published.

In it, Pearce recounted an anecdote of dubious relevance on the theme of ultra-leftism and workerism.

More important, he offered a profoundly nationalistic interpretation of the French Revolution.

Intrigued by this, I replied (September 13), suggesting that Pearce's commonsensical comments were in fact deeply at odds with the materialist conception of the struggle between bourgeois and proletariat as one of world significance.

I argued that he was prioritising the national form of class relations and political movements over their international content.

Pearce's next contribution (September 20) contained even more red-herrings and diversions than his previous one.

Among these is his invocation of A.L. Morton's *A People's History of England*.

I will be glad to debate the uses and problems of this text with Pearce on another occasion.

For the moment, I prefer to address the immediate debate, and in the process remove some mud that Pearce has thrown my way.

It would be tedious to recite all instances of Pearce's method, which is basically to

keep shifting the terms of debate, and to indulge in misplaced sarcasm which usually rebounds on himself.

Three examples from his letter of September 20, however, should suffice to demonstrate this.

Firstly, he says of my approach: 'What he does is to wipe out all distinctions of period'.

If Pearce will be kind enough to return to my first letter (August 16), he will find reference to the 14th century German 'peasant-plebeian heresy', and its independence from 'the heresy of the burghers'.

Does this class line-up, sans proletariat, indicate that I am talking of post-1848-type political movements?

The irony is that I have criticised Hobsbawm precisely for interpreting the German peasant struggles in terms of 1930s popular frontism; that is, for subsuming 'distinctions of period' within a Stalinist analytical and strategic perspective.

Yet Pearce says nothing about this.

Instead, in the name of anti-Stalinism, he associates me with 'a certain type of mind' to which 'generalisations of a 'world-wide' and 'all-time' order have 'a strange appeal' (October 4).

The technique seems to be: ignore what your opponent is actually saying, just make the accusation, and hope that someone will believe it.

A second occasion on which Pearce imagines he has scored a point is his discovery (against me) of the importance of 'specific local factors derived from the previous histories of the different countries and regions'.

Some of those 'various specifics', as I called them, which distinguished the English and French revolutions are indicated in my letter of September 13.

Whichever phantom Pearce is disputing on this point, it is not me.

But more important is Pearce's question (again in response to my letter of September 13, which I therefore conclude that he has at least glanced at): 'what was the "bourgeois revolution" of 1905 that he mentions in passing?'

In brief, it was a high point of the movement which Lenin, in late 1907, wrote of as 'the present (i.e. bourgeois) revolution in Russia'. (*The Agrarian Programme of Social Democracy*, in Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Lawrence and Wishart, n.d., p.254.)

Why did Lenin interpret developments in this way? A clue may be found in his later distinction between the social content of 1905, which Lenin saw as bourgeois democratic, and its methods of struggle, which were proletarian in nature.

Not only was the working class the vanguard. The masses were aroused through the specifically proletarian means of the strike, even while the chief aim was the democratic, that is bourgeois, republic. (See 'Lecture on the 1905 Revolution', in *ibid.*)

Notwithstanding the symmetry of Lenin's formulation, there is a real problem here.

It is, moreover, of relevance to the differences between Pearce and myself.

In April 1905, the Bolshevik Third Congress, held in London, consolidated the programme of uniting a general strike with an armed uprising.

Two months later, in the course of the revolution, Lenin was advocating that the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party present 'advanced democratic slogans' before the Russian masses.

These, he urged, would, if realised, amount to 'the first step on the road' to socialist transition. (*The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government*, Progress, 1980, p.4.)

Does this suggest political confusion on Lenin's part? Only if the issues are approached in the most mechanical way.

Lenin at this time was working within the framework of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry'.

By this was meant a revolutionary alliance between the two classes, under proletarian hegemony, to abolish Tsarist autocracy and serfdom; that is, to realise the democratic dictatorship.

Hence the centrality of proletarian methods. Hence also the 'democratic' aims and demands.

For Lenin, as for all Marxists, what was at stake was strategic orientation to the inner class forces of the revolution, and, inseparable from this, clarification of its overall tendencies.

Trotsky, equally, opposed all Plekhanov-type alliances with the liberal bourgeoisie, and, as much as Lenin, urged the necessity of a peasant alliance.

The difference, at this stage, concerned Trotsky's insistence that the democratic tasks in countries like Russia, with belated bourgeois development, could only be realised through the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a component of the world revolution.

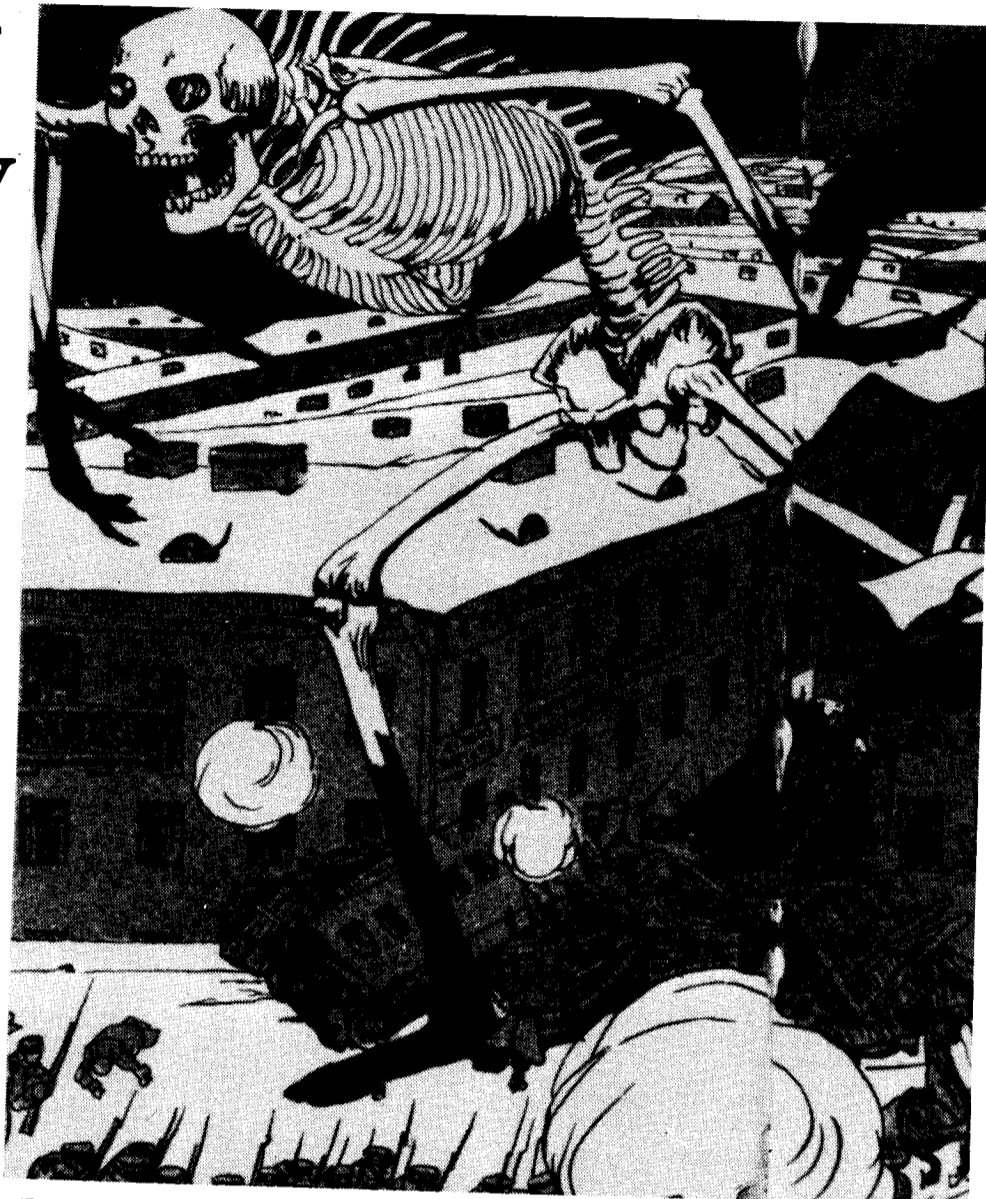
Already, in 1904, Trotsky was embryonically developing his strategic conception of Marxism as 'the class doctrine of the international revolutionary proletariat', and speaking of 'our party, to which history offers the great tasks of cutting the Gordian Knot of world reaction'. (*Our Political Tasks*, New Park, n.d., pp 9-10.)

What else but a movement towards this more penetrating grasp of the global content of proletarian leadership, the core principle of the permanent revolution, was Lenin's conclusion, in March 1917:

'Single handed, the Russian proletariat cannot bring the socialist revolution to a victorious conclusion.' ('Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers', in *Between the Two Revolutions*, Progress, 1971, p.52.)

Rather than accuse me of 'vague denunciations' which are never identified, Pearce could helpfully address the real substance of this debate.

His September 20 letter proposes that the 'unified process' of world history does not eliminate, or even render unimportant' national and regional differences.



'DEATH stalks into Moscow' — a contemporary cartoon depicts the Tzarist army's brutal suppression of the revolution

This piece of studied evasiveness obscures the most important question of all: which is essential, the 'unified process', or the 'specific local factors'?

And which is tangential or relative to the general course of social development in the epoch of world history?

The standpoint of Marx and Trotsky, which I summarised in the Workers Press of September 13, gives a clear answer.

To re-quote my own quotation, Marx's position was that the English and French revolutions 'expressed the need of the whole world as it existed then'.

Trotsky, also, left no doubt where he stood on this matter.

Will Pearce descend from his weighty agnosticism and come down for the primacy of the world process, or for that of 'specific local factors'? Or does scepticism for him suffice?

On various occasions Lenin spoke of 1905, in shorthand, as a bourgeois revolution, and I have followed his designation.

Pearce requested clarification, which I hope I have provided.

It was the experience of 1905, and above all the magnificent rise of the St. Petersburg Soviet, which decisively transformed the bourgeoisie of Russia into a counter-revolutionary class by opening its eyes to the redeeming features of Tsarism in the face of a politicised working class.

(See G. Zinoviev, *History of the Bolshevik Party — A Popular Outline*, New Park, 1973, pp.136-9.)

What can be concluded from this? Not least, that a more decisive formulation than Lenin's 'democratic dictatorship' must be sought within the permanent revolution, which is founded on the world-historic nature of the working class.

This is, or should be, an elementary assumption of Marxism.

Its roots lie not in any 'vague' speculations, but in the fact of world economy in our time.

Stalinism is the degeneration of Marxist theory and politics which repudiates this principle.

And it is Stalinism and its role in perpetuating the myth of 'people's fronts' which Pearce refuses to discuss.

Instead, echoing Hobsbawm, he seeks solace in Engels' reference to the 'German people (Volk)'.

Why does he imagine that the book in which this phrase appears is called *The Peasant War in Germany* and not some flabby alternative along the lines of 'The People's Struggle in Germany'?

Is it not because the peasantry, in spite of all its vacillations and organisational weaknesses, played a more consistent and courageous insurgent role than the various burgher factions who, with rare and notable exceptions, either in effect stood aside, or went over to the princes when the upsurge intensified?

'The People' thus differentiates in struggle. (See Engels *The Peasant War in Germany*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956, p.65.)

Why, furthermore, did Lenin write the following, in relation to the feudal remnants of pre-revolutionary Russia?

'None but a bourgeois could see only the solidarity of the interests of the whole "people" against medieval, feudal institutions and forget the profound and irreconcilable antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat within this "people".' (*What the Friends of the People Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats*, Progress, 1970, p.122.)

In the bourgeois phase of

history as a whole, and even more so in our transitional century, all national popular people's struggles have a relative character against the essential evolving social structure of humanity.

This structure hinges on the contradictory relationship between bourgeoisie and proletariat among, more fundamentally than within, nationally constituted 'peoples'.

On a world scale, the history of the working class is the history of the coming into being of one class.

The form of this historical content, abstracted from change, includes fractures along lines of nationality, ethnicity, locality, gender and other axes which benefit the bourgeoisie.

Social revolution is the material overcoming of these fractures, against capital, through a conscious social and political reckoning with all obstacles to proletarian leadership.

To ignore such lines of division within the working class is one way to be utopian.

But to elevate the social form of the nation above the relative and transient entity that it is is to endorse another type of utopianism (however realistic it may appear), and a deeply reactionary one at that.

In Hobsbawm's case it is associated with the nightmare of socialism in a single country.

Why does Pearce yet again remain silent on this? Could it be connected with his passing remark (August 2) which raises then drops the tantalising question of... whether or not the turn to the People's Front policy was correct...?

Does Pearce, in fact, suppose that the popular front may after all have been a correct policy? May it, indeed, still be a correct one?

R. Bobinska

LETTERSYour letters are welcome at Work.
21b Old Town, London SW4 0.

Tories witch-hunt gays

FOR REASONS of length, parts of my lead article the other week ('Tory Racism Conspiracy') had to be deleted. There is one issue that may not have been clear as a result.

That is when I referred to Nazi book-burnings, and persecution of homosexuals as well as other groups.

We have recently seen the Tories adopting their 'moral crusader' capes to campaign against sexual 'deviance' and for family morality.

The Tory press has been stirring up hysteria against Labour-controlled education authorities which want homosexuality dealt with in sex education, and gays given a more positive image.

This is important in helping youngsters cope with their own developing sexuality as well as those whose parents may be gays.

But in this field as others, the Tories stand for hypocrisy, ignorance and prejudice.

A local 'free' rag distributed in my area carried a front-page story boosting the 'Conservative Family Campaign' who claimed to have

discovered a 'plot' to undermine the family, and accused Lambeth's Labour council and local gays.

This is in a borough where working class families wait years on housing lists, struggle with increasing difficulty to pay mortgages on over-priced properties, or find themselves in totally unsuitable bed-and-breakfast joints.

Naturally, the Tory campaigners don't get worked up over these strains on the family, or that of unemployment.

The great 'threat' they claim to have discovered turns out to be that there is a book on Gay Rights in the public library, and in this book is a sentence criticising the institution of the family!

Evidently while it may be safe for local Tory busybodies to read this kind of thing so they can be 'shocked' and 'horrified', the rest of us are in danger of being corrupted by its being available on the public shelves.

Incidentally, I wonder what these great idealisers of the bourgeois family and 'defenders' of children make

of recent statistics showing that the overwhelming majority of child abuse cases happen within the home?

Or the opinion of experts that the typical child molester and incestuous rapist is often highly 'puritanical' in public?

Local gay people have protested at the Tory attempt to witch-hunt them.

'We're not anti-family', a homosexual father of two said. 'The average gay person has a family and wants to look after them whether children, sisters and brothers or parents.'

A lesbian mother rightly described the Tory group's views as 'a load of rubbish'.

'We're not out to wreck anyone's families, least of all our own,' she told the 'Streatham Guardian'.

This has not deterred the Conservative Family Campaign. 'I'm simply quoting the gays' own literature back at them', said CFC member Stephen Green, claiming the 'anti-family stance' was set out 'in books and pamphlets throughout the borough'.

He added darkly: 'We're finding out the truth about the gay community now through this type of literature.'

On the following page was a report of a court-case involving a gang of youth who had been drinking in a Lavender Hill pub and decided to go 'queer-bashing' on Clapham Common.

A young New Zealander who happened to be walking home over the Common after seeing his girlfriend home was attacked by the gang and died from 21 stab wounds.

The four youth who attacked him got two years youth custody sentences apiece. The judge said 'what you describe as queer-bashing has regularly taken place on Clapham Common. It usually takes place after closing times at pubs.'

'It is always a group attacking solo victims. It is a practice which must stop.'

Maybe the youth felt they were just returning to traditional Tory values?

I read a book once about Latin America where the au-

thor observed that whenever you hear some right-wing general talking about 'God, the Family etc.' you could safely assume he was up to something shady, or downright sinister.

I think the same applies to Tories here.

In another London borough, I see the right-wing morality squad were proposing to ceremonially burn copies of a book they objected to, because it dealt with homosexual relationships.

It was with this in mind that I thought it apposite to remind people of those other great book-burners.

I am not saying the Tories are Nazis. (Mind you some of their friends are.)

But the current homophobic offensive and sexual reaction goes together with the encouragement of racism, and functions in much the same way.

Under the ancient regime of Gerry Healy in the WRP, antiquated prejudices and hostility to gays went with the reactionary treatment of women, sexual corruption, and brutality that was un-

masked last year.

This rotten legacy of backwardness was evidently passed on to some of the youth miseducated by Healyism.

On a march to Wapping earlier this year I overheard ignorant anti-gay remarks passed by both Healy's and Hyland's 'cadres' when a gay contingent arrived.

And this after the valued work some gay and lesbian groups as well as many feminists did in helping the miners. But we know now that some self-proclaimed 'vanguards' are well behind the working class in rising consciousness.

The struggle this Party has carried out to rid itself of Healyism must be continued in the fight against bourgeois ideology and backwardness throughout the labour movement.

The fight to unite the working class in all-out struggle against capitalism requires an uncompromising opposition to both racism and sexism, and full solidarity with all minorities targeted by Tory witch-hunts and reaction.

Charlie Pottins.

An objective discussion Please

ERNEST MANDEL'S letter (Workers Press, November 1) is a million miles away from the discussion on the future of the Fourth International which is now taking place.

His allegation that I was only trying to 'justify the 1953 split' belongs to a bygone era of polemic.

Since the expulsion of Healy from the Workers Revolutionary Party over a year ago, we have been forced to re-examine, as objectively as we can, every aspect of our history.

Mandel does not appear to understand that this discussion has nothing to do with scoring points about somebody's past errors, and even less with claiming that our own past actions were always correct.

For us, the expulsion of Healy made such pastimes quite unthinkable.

My own opinion of the split of 1953 is that the issues highlighted by the 'Open Letter' of the Socialist Workers Party in November 1953 were vital to the existence of the Trotskyist movement.

But the hurried organisational split the letter precipitated made it harder to probe them to their roots.

Many of Pablo's opponents did no more than defend

'orthodoxy' against his innovations instead of seeing Pablo as reflecting objective movements.

Thus the door was left open for the same tendencies to reappear.

Mandel's argument seems to be no more than this: since the followers of Pablo welcomed the Hungarian uprising of 1956, any suggestion that there has been a tendency to capitulate to the Stalinist bureaucracy in 1953 must have been wrong.

Is Mandel telling us at this late hour that Pablo's theory and practice from 1949 onwards did not contain an adaptation to Stalinism?

What about the subsequent evolution of many groups and individuals who went along with Pablo?

Think of Lawrence and Mestre, who were Pablo's representatives in 1953, and who went over to Stalinism a short time later.

Think of Posadas, not to mention Grant and Pablo himself.

What about the open abandonment of Trotskyism by the US Socialist Workers Party today?

I am not here only talking about the organisation led by Mandel.

Over the last few weeks we

have learnt that two leading figures in our movement have revealed clear tendencies to accommodate to different wings of world Stalinism — M. Banda and G. Healy.

This is of crucial importance, because it shows that adaptation to bureaucracy was always an element within the movement.

Explanations in terms of 'cowardice', 'corruption', 'bowing to the pressure of Stalinism' or any other such phrases are worse than useless here.

Fundamental theoretical problems were raised by the growth of Stalinism after 1945.

They were covered over by

changes of terminology and left unresolved.

The resulting contradictions then gave rise to the twin tendencies either to ignore reality, or to seek short cuts through it.

There can be no doubt, I believe, that the tendency represented by Pablo's 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism' of 1953 was a departure from the 'Transitional Programme' in its conception of the political revolution against the bureaucracy.

It was based on an idea that the bureaucracy had a 'dual nature', a view which is fundamentally opposed to Trotsky's fight against Stalinism as counter-revolutionary.

It expressed a philosophical outlook quite opposed to Marxism.

It saw the world revolution in terms of some 'objective' forces, quite separate from the living struggles of classes, and the battle for scientific socialism within the working class.

This outlook led the movement to seek forces other than ourselves to lead the overthrow of imperialism — Stalinist or social-democratic bureaucracies, peasant guerillas, student power, national petit-bourgeois movements, etc.

That is why it is not a matter of who 'fully and enthusiastically supported the Budapest workers against

the bureaucracy and the Soviet army.'

What was demanded of the Fourth International was that it fought within the working class to build the world party of socialist revolution in struggle against counter-revolutionary Stalinism.

Pabloism was the turning away from this fight.

Now we are reaching a situation in the class struggle, I believe, where the entire movement internationally can at last get to grips with this theoretical degeneration.

Mandel's letter, far from being a contribution to this work, is an attempt to halt it. Cyril Smith

Not enough discussion

I SHOULD like to take up the letter printed in Workers Press on November 1 from Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, the co-authors of 'War and the International' which was reviewed in the Workers Press on October 18.

I was a member of the Workers International League from 1938 (mentioned in the book as Rachel Ryan) and a Trotskyist ever since.

I see an error in their letter. The sentence I am referring to reads 'We see again the old calumny that the WIL was "anti-internationalist".'

We must be clear on this question of internationalism.

In the review it was correct to say that before the founding conference of the Fourth International there was a unification of British Trotskyist groupings which the WIL refused to become part of.

The founding conference condemned this split and non-attendance at the conference as 'anti-internationalism'.

The split was not on political differences but on a subjective basis of personal attacks that had been made

on Ralph Lee (which were unfounded).

Because of the war this did not have an immediate effect on the development of the Trotskyist movement in Britain but did influence developments at the end and after the war.

This reference to 'anti-internationalism' does not attack the WIL for being nationalist in its general activity.

It was the refusal of the WIL to sink personal differences to become organisationally a member of the Fourth International which was commented on.

The WIL had agreement on the basic questions facing the founding conference of the Fourth International.

Agreement was absolute on the Transitional Programme, on the nature of the Soviet Union to be defended as a workers' state though degenerated, on the impossibility of building socialism in one country.

The WIL declared the correctness of the break by the Left Opposition from the Third International after the victory of Hitler without a blow being struck.

I joined the WIL on the basis of internationalism

and this was true of the leadership and members.

Yes, we spoke and thought of ourselves as Fourth Internationalists.

We looked to the Socialist Workers Party of America for books, literature and political guidance in its papers and magazines.

We stood firmly on internationalism against Stalinists and stood up to their physical violence.

I feel we were internationalist in our propaganda.

But the nub of the question is in how we considered (or did we consider?) the importance of linking our activity with the activity of all Fourth Internationalists; did we have the conception of a world party such as Trotsky had? Or was all this subordinated to national considerations?

In fact, international relations and the First Congress of the Fourth International, assumed less importance than the relations between the WIL group and the leaders of the Revolutionary Socialist League.

Therein lies the anti-internationalism of the split of 1938.

I must state that the reasons for our separation

from the International, and the fact that the WIL was not a member, was not discussed thoroughly in the WIL during the war, nor analysed by us rank and file members.

In fact, I used to think I was a member of the Fourth International.

I didn't really consider the RSL at the time — I never saw them in all my activity in factories, nor in the union, nor selling the paper, during the war.

The fact that the split had to be skirted round is itself a pointer to its subjective nature which is also clear from the enormous heat that was generated every time the question was discussed after the war.

To see this part of our history in all its aspects is very important in meeting the need to rebuild the Fourth International.

Rae Hunter

'War and the International' by Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson is published by Socialist Platform, price £5.95, or by post from Paperbacks Centre, 28 Charlotte Street, London W1, price £6.50 including postage and packing.

30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION**PUBLIC MEETING****Newcastle****Thursday November 13****7.30pm****Youth Centre 28 Lime Street
off Stephaniebank, under
Byker Bridge
Main Speaker: Peter Fryer**

REVIEWS

We say it again:

Viraj Mendis Must Stay. By the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign. Larkin Publications, 75p plus 30p p&p.

VIRAJ MENDIS faces possible deportation within weeks.

This pamphlet is testimony to the incessant struggle of the man and all those who are part of the defence campaign.

It has a simple aim: to make David Waddington, the Immigration Minister, revoke the Mendis deportation order.

With limited resources the campaign has won wide support.

The VMDC was formed in June 1984 and its highlight so far was the march from Manchester to London in July 1986.

The march was a great boost to the campaign.

The march brought it home just how many deportations occur each week in this deeply racist society.

Indeed the second slogan of the march was 'Fight the Immigration Laws!'

These laws have been with us a long time.

The labour movement itself has much to clean out of its stable on this.

In 1885 the TUC passed an anti-alien resolution aimed against Jewish immigrants.

Opposition to it was led by the Jewish community in the East End, and supported by

many others, including Eleanor Marx who saw the need to extend the campaign because of the wider implications of the resolution.

Since 1905 when the Aliens Act was passed, no government has eased, let alone repealed, the immigration laws.

Viraj Mendis spoke to five fringe meetings at the Labour Party conference this year.

One of his long-standing supporters, Jeremy Corbyn MP, called at one of these meetings for a future Labour government to issue an amnesty to all those under threat of deportation.

The defence of those threatened with deportation is one way that the working class and labour movement can show their internationalism, or reveal their chauvinism.

The pamphlet clearly shows who supported the march and what forces were ranged against it.

The marchers faced continual harassment from the police.

They tried to break their will but succeeded only in deepening their determination.

While many Labour party and trade union branches supported the campaign, some left groups were noticeable by their absence.

The Socialist Workers Party is one such group.

We were told at first that

the party does not support single-issue campaigns.

Then a general statement of support was issued, but it made little difference.

We would still like a genuine dialogue on this matter, so please write, any member of the SWP.

The campaign itself is reaching its climax.

The VMDC have asked us to include the following information:

To all supporters of Viraj's right to stay, we make a special appeal.

Help us to put as much pressure as possible on the Home Office.

● Ask your MP to sign the pledge. Ask your MP to write to Waddington.

● Write a letter yourself to Waddington, c/o Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1. Please send a copy of the letter to the VMDC. Ask your friends to write letters.

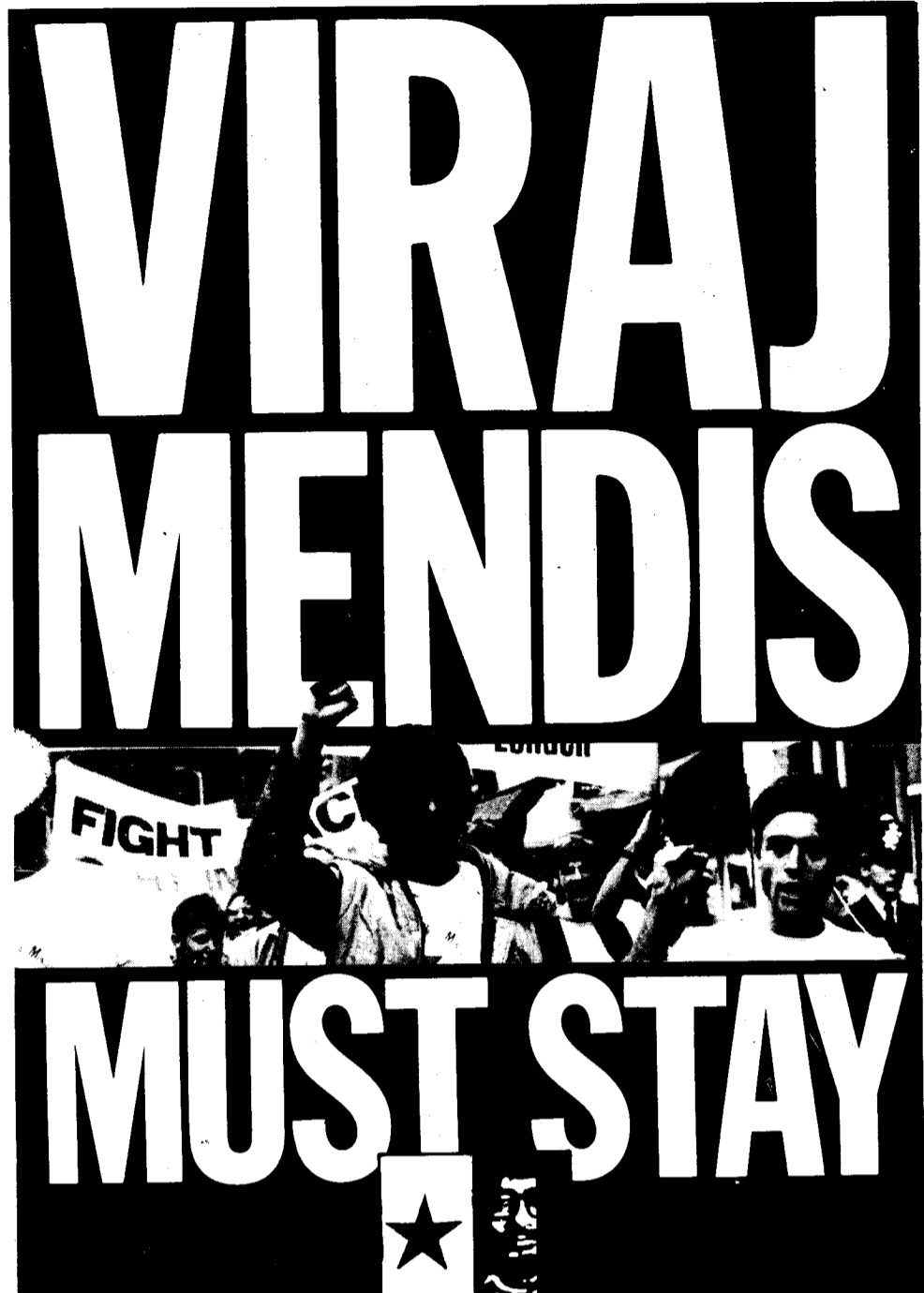
● Visit your local community centre, youth associations, trade unions, churches, mosques and synagogues and ask them to write to Waddington.

● Buy and sell the new VMDC pamphlet.

For more information, pledge forms, leaflets, stickers, badges and pamphlets write to: VMDC, c/o North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Manchester M15.

Telephone 061-234-3168.

Martin Ralph.



PROFITS FIRST

The British Industry Committee on South Africa (BICSA) and its Role in the Sanctions Debate. Anti Apartheid Movement, 13 Mandela St, London NW1 0DW. £1.

BRITISH firms with interests in South Africa have obviously been worried by the growing demands for sanctions as well as the imposition of workers' sanctions already in a number of places.

The Anti Apartheid Movement has analysed the operations of an organisation formed at the beginning of this year which claims to

speak for 54 of the biggest UK companies involved in South Africa.

BICSA claims to enable British companies to express their views in order to aid the 'dismantling of apartheid.' The AA pamphlet sums this up:

'In practice this amounts to opposing sanctions, while emphasising the progressive postures of some companies and potential of the South African government to change tack.'

The AA analyses and the statements of BICSA and shows that they are historically inaccurate and

grotesquely racist.

BICSA made the outrageously untrue statement in a submission to the House of Commons in July that 'the whites have been in Africa for at least as long as the blacks and coloureds and have nowhere else to go.'

Its usual argument is that sanctions would make Botha's regime more intransigent, but after the Commonwealth Summit, BICSA's position shifted in line with the way the wind was blowing.

The concession they offered was a voluntary ban on new investment — fairly

meaningless in the light of the fact that the 37 companies known to be members of BICSA derive an average of 10 per cent of their profits from South Africa already.

Consolidated Goldfields derived 44 per cent of their worldwide profits from South Africa.

Other firms support the anti-sanctions campaign because it would affect their business although they do not directly make profits from South African investments. Associated British Ports and Overseas Containers are members of BICSA.

BICSA's concern, argues the AA, is for its members' investments in South Africa, but it musters support by concentrating on the effect of sanctions on the UK economy and the unemployment they would cause.

They ignore the detailed studies which have been done which show that at worst only a handful of jobs would be lost, and say that 120,000 jobs are dependent on South African trade and investment.

BICSA argues for better education for black south Africans and other adjustments to end the 'inefficiencies' which they perceive in the racist economy.

BICSA's stand, says the AA pamphlet, is looking 'increasingly tattered'.

Corporate decisions made on normal commercial criteria are leading BICSA-member companies like Hill

Samuel and NEI to reduce their stake in South African subsidiaries.

Assets have halved in value in sterling terms in the last three years.

There is no altruism in their actions, only fear of revolution and collapse of the apartheid economy.

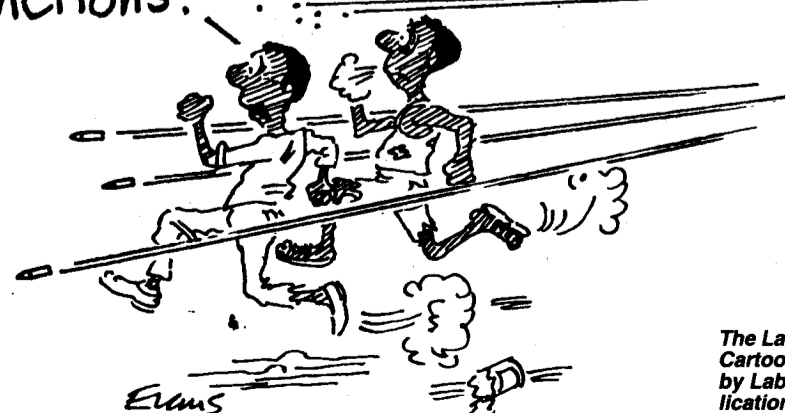
BICSA is, says the report, urging a measure of political reform, but their real actions speak louder.

'Strikes continue to be met with force by multinationals as well as by South African corporations, the migrant labour system is still intact, an effective colour bar still prevents black promotion, companies still top up white employees' wages while on military service, they still pay their taxes to the government, and they still facilitate the transfer of vital technology to South Africa.'

Bridget Dixon

COSATU, South Africa's largest non-racial trade union, says that disinvestment or the threat of it is an essential and effective form of pressure on the South African government to end apartheid.

It's nice of Mrs Thatcher to think we might be hurt by sanctions!



The Labour and Researches of Evans: Cartoons of Phil Evans is published by Labour Research Department Publications, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF, price £1.50

Tobacco. By James Wilkinson. Penguin, £2.95.

SMOKERS' children are prone to respiratory infections, coughs, ear infections and all the risks including hearing loss associated with it — all from passive smoking.

People who work with smokers have a high risk of cancer.

James Wilkinson's new book says future generations will look at twentieth century smoking-related deaths with the same mixture of horror and dismay as we look at the Black Death.

Those who are addicted pretend 'it won't happen to me.'

The facts tell a different story. Of 1,000 young adults who smoke regularly, one will be murdered, six will be killed on the roads, and 250 will be killed by tobacco.

A smoker of 20 cigarettes a day can expect to lose five or six years of life.

The tobacco monopolies push their wares into poorer countries where tobacco's effects are less well-known. They direct their advertising at younger age groups — even introducing products like 'Skoal Bandits', sachets of snuff which are sucked and carry a massive risk of oral cancer.

Beating the Ladykillers. By Bonnie Jacobson. Pluto, £3.95.

WHILE CIGARETTE smoking declines in the industrialised countries, the death toll among women rises inexorably both there and in the poorer countries.

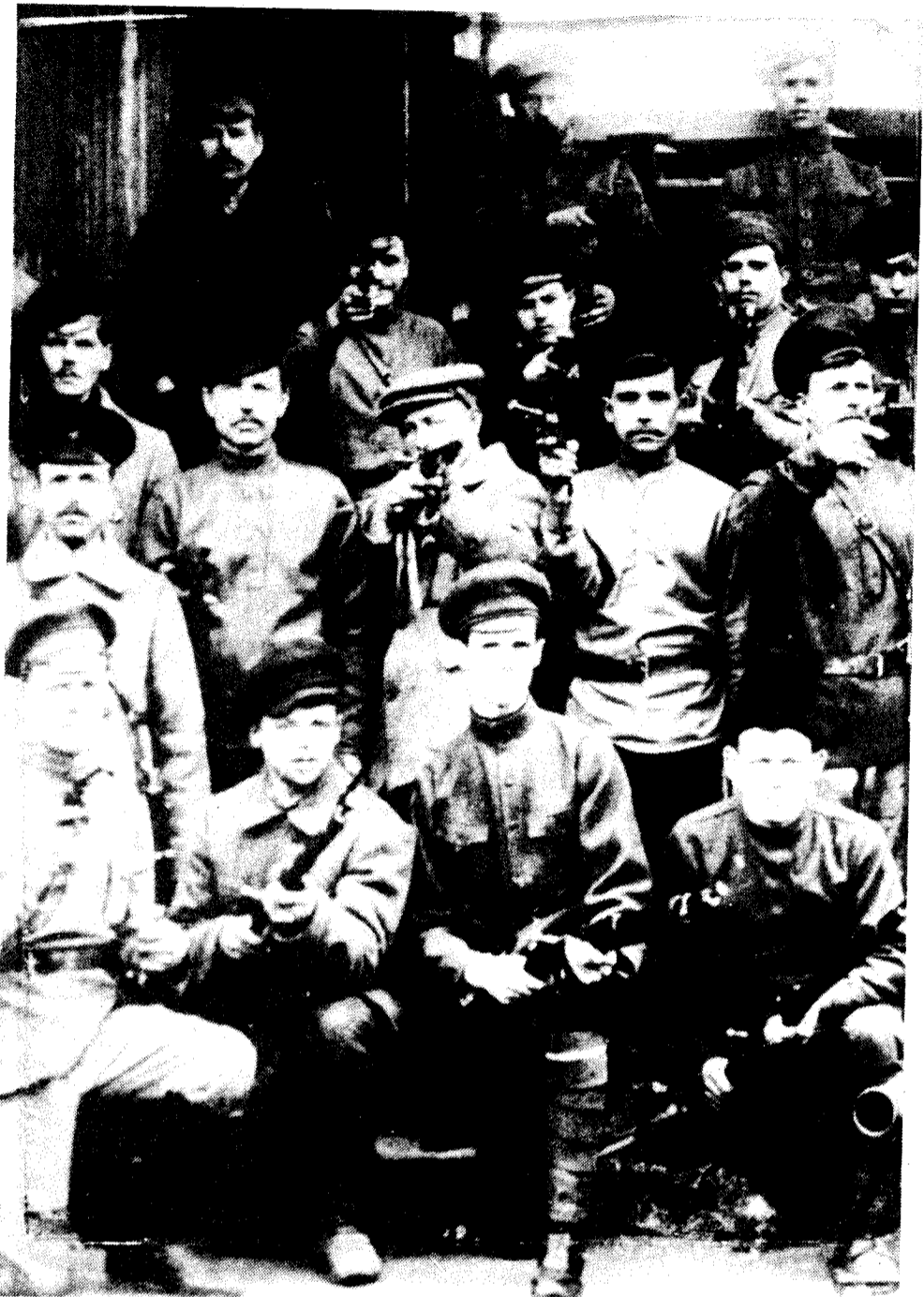
Bobbie Jacobson's book is both an account of the increase in smoking and a practical guide to counter the pressure put on women by the tobacco industry.

REVIEWS

Trotsky's life in pictures



Trotsky was scarcely more than a schoolboy when he joined the revolutionary movement. He was won to Marxism by his first wife, Alexandra. They were both exiled to Siberia by the Czarist authorities in 1900.



A Red Guard unit in Moscow in 1917. From armed Bolshevik workers such as these and from the disintegrating elements of the Czarist army, Trotsky forged the Red Army which smashed the counter-revolutionaries and the British, French, German, Austrian, Japanese and US armies of intervention between 1918 and 1921.



In May 1917, Trotsky travelled half-way across the world to take a leading role in the Russian Revolution. Despite previous disagreements with Lenin, the two were in fundamental agreement on the course of the revolution and its place in the world revolution. This picture shows Trotsky, arriving at Petrograd's Finland Station, calling for the preparation of the proletarian revolution.



Stalin, the protagonist of socialism in one country and the policy of peaceful co-existence with imperialism, had to move to decapitate the world revolution by the mass murder of the genuine revolutionaries. Ramon Mercader (Jaques Mornard) was the GPU assassin who wormed his way into Trotsky's house in Mexico to deliver the fatal blow at Stalin's command. Mercader is shown here after a pistol-whipping by Trotsky's bodyguard, Harold Robbins

Trotsky: A Photographic Biography. By David King. Introduction by Tamara Deutscher, commentary by James Ryan. Basil Blackwell, £19.50

CERTAINLY the most complete photographic record ever produced of Trotsky's life

David King has devoted years to assembling photographs of Trotsky.

The book ends with a wide selection of photographs on the assassination of both Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov at the hands of agents of Stalin's secret police, the GPU.

Many of these photographs were first rescued from oblivion during the campaign of slander and lies known as the investigation into 'Security and the Fourth International', which tried to make an amalgam between known Stalinist agents and leaders of the Socialist Workers Party (US), notably Joseph Hansen.

Much of the material used in that 'investigation' now plays its true role in rounding out the pictorial record of Trotsky's life.

Bob Archer

HISTORIC TURN FOR SINN FEIN

IN AN HISTORIC *Ard Fheis*, delegates narrowly gave the Gerry Adams leadership the required two thirds majority to end abstentionism and enter Leinster House.

Adams got just nine more votes than required. At the announcement of the vote, former Sinn Fein president Ruairi O'Bradaigh walked out with some fifteen delegates and set up a rival group, Republican Sinn Fein, at a meeting at the West Conuty Hotel, the birthplace of the Provisionals in 1970.

The debate was long and fierce but in the end the alliance between the northern resistance fighters and the Dublin working class proved victorious.

Gerry Adams opened the attack in his presidential address on Saturday.

He said the policy of abstentionism was correct in 1918 and 1919 but by the mid-

twenties, Leinster House had been established and recognised as a parliament by the people of Ireland. To continue with abstentionism was to cut Sinn Fein off from the people.

Stickies

The former leaders of Sinn Fein who had entered Leinster House and betrayed the Republican movement — De Valera in 1927, Cumann na Poblachta in the late forties and the 'stickies' (now the Workers Party) in 1970 — were never Republicans.

Adams called for an educational programme for the members of Sinn Fein.

The debate on Sunday saw

BOOST FOR NOTTS NUM

AN INTERIM Tribunal hearing held to exonerate Mick McGinty, vice president of the National Union of Mineworkers, who was sacked from Ollerton Colliery last month decided that the Coal Board should re-instate him and that he should receive all wages lost.

The Tribunal agreed with the NUM that McGinty had been sacked not because of any unsatisfactory work record but because of his union activities.

The Coal Board's actions were an infringement of a section of the Employment Act which allows unionists the right to recruit and distribute union literature.

The Board has refused to reinstate McGinty until a full Tribunal hearing has taken place but they must honour the decision of the Interim Tribunal and pay him full wages while the full hearing is pending.

Because the case put by the NUM was so strong and the Coal Board offered very little evidence, it is believed that a full Tribunal will uphold the decision made last week.

However this will not be binding on the Coal Board who can refuse re-

BY LYNN BEATON

instatement and instead offer compensation.

The case for McGinty was clearly strengthened by the industrial action taken at Ollerton the day after he was sacked.

90 per cent of the men at a pit which has a 66 per cent UDM membership stopped work and brought the pit to a halt for 24 hours.

Action

This action confirmed that both NUM and UDM men were convinced that McGinty had been victimised and they were not prepared to stand for it.

Ray Chadburn, Notts Area NUM President told Workers Press: 'The Board plans to take the NUM out of the

field altogether.

'They were keen to get rid of Mick because he had been very successful at Ollerton recruiting for the NUM. Ollerton has 30 per cent NUM membership.'

The decision of the Interim Tribunal is a victory for the NUM in Notts as it establishes clearly that they are legally entitled to recruit members and distribute literature at the pits despite the Coal Board's attempts to intimidate NUM members to stop them doing so.

Last week the first Notts pit to be closed since the strike of 1984/85 officially ceased production and NUM members are being harassed and intimidated over job transfers.

It is being made clear that transfers will only be given to members of the scab UDM.

Since the 1984/85 strike in Notts the NUM have been forced to work in an underground way as they did between 1926 and 1937 when Spencerism dominated the Notts Coalfield.

The UDM have a union

office at each pit, a telephone and a noticeboard. They have access to management for discussion of grievances, facilities to hold meetings at pits, in canteens and in miners' welfare.

They can distribute leaflets and newspapers at the pit head and they can conduct ballots.

They regularly meet with management at pit level and at area level.

The NUM are denied all these facilities and many NUM activists have been threatened with dismissal for the distribution of NUM literature or merely for discussing the advantages of strengthening the NUM in Notts.

Despite all of this the NUM is still continuing to challenge the authority of the UDM in the pits, and is still recruiting members.

The decision of this Interim Tribunal will strengthen the ability of NUM to organise in Notts and boosted the morale of NUM members in the area but they still have a long battle ahead of them.

over ninety delegates lining up to speak. The real fears of reformism expressed by some delegates — 'if you lie down with the dogs, you get up with the fleas' — were used by the O'Bradaigh faction to split the movement.

But in the end it was the support of the IRA, the political arguments of Gerry Adams and his supporters and the vital intervention of veteran Republicans like John Joe McGirl and Joe Cahill that carried the day.

● Next week's Workers Press will carry a fuller comment on the Sinn Fein *Ard Fheis*.

'Fight for North Sea Jobs' - Socialist candidate

SAVAGE attacks on the merchant fleet and the destruction of North Sea jobs are highlighted by North Sea oil worker Neil Rothnie, who is standing in the National Union of Seamen's Executive Council elections this month.

'The destruction of the fleet, the move to flags of convenience and "agency" labour agreements are resulting in job losses and wage cutting,' states an open letter from Rothnie, a candidate in NUS region 4 for the Deck Department NEC seat. 'On the North Sea the boom has come and gone,' the letter continues.

'To the great shame of the entire labour and trade union movement the industry remains largely unorganised.

'With the exception of the recent successful two-day strike by our members organised on supply boats, wage cutting and redundancies go unchallenged.

'The options which face us are clear. The union, along with the wider trade union movement, must adopt a strategy of struggle in defence of our independent organisation.

'If we don't, the government will castrate the movement and enmesh us in a web of anti-union and anti-working class legislation, and turn the whole country into a low-wage haven for exploitation by big businesses.

'The union must immediately launch an aggressive campaign to recruit North Sea workers. We must offer these men the chance to fight back.'

The prospect of a Labour government offers no guarantees, says Rothnie, but we must address ourselves to it.

'We must demand that they break with all anti-union legislation and adopt measures to strengthen the unions, defend workers and curtail the exploitative activities of big business.

'We must call on the prospective Labour government to nationalise British shipping and the oil exploration industries.

'I believe that only in this way can our seafarers be assured of a fair share of work on the European trade routes and on the British and Norwegian sectors of the North Sea oil fields.'

Outlining an internationalist stand on jobs, Rothnie says: 'Our position on "flags of convenience" is clear.

'We oppose them. They threaten our jobs and our lives.

'Improvements in wages, conditions and safety have

been painfully extracted from British shipowners.

'If we defend the Red Ensign, it is for one reason and one reason only, to defend these gains.

'This year's biennial general meeting called for "protectionism" against all foreign ships. This is dangerous and in my opinion wrong.

'Our union must have no special relationship with British shipowners.

'These same owners who want our support to fight off foreign competition have laid off our members and attacked our wages to maintain their profits.

'They flag out their fleets when it suits them and replace our members with unorganised and unprotected foreign seamen at slave-labour rates.

'Our natural allies are foreign seamen. If elected, I will fight to make this unity a working reality.

'The owners want to play off Norwegian against British and European against Third World seamen.

'This is not on... there must be no deals or preferential treatment for this or that company.'

● Any NUS members prepared to assist Neil Rothnie in his election campaign are asked to phone him on 041-423 0461.

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN

HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.

JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.

EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.

GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.

JOHN MCCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.

ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.

PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST

HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.

PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.

PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.

TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.

PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD

HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.

SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.

CON MCFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.

NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY

HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.

HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.

BILLY GRIMES: Life sentence, 341418.

SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

GARTREE

HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP

ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.

RONNIE MCCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.

STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.

JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

FRANKLAND

HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085

BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.

EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.

BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.

GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.

PATRICK MCGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

HULL

HM Prison Hedon Rd, Hull, Humberside

ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

WANDSWORTH

VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

DURHAM

HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.

MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.

ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire

PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.

PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.

JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.

HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.

JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.

BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.

RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs

PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

CANTEEN WORKER ON NUM LODGE COMMITTEE

A CANTEEN WORKER has achieved a breakthrough in the National Union of Mineworkers by being voted on to the NUM Lodge Committee at Murton Colliery in Co Durham.

Pat Curry said: 'My appointment to the committee has astounded a lot of the men, but it has

been accepted and welcomed by everyone.

'They are pleased that the tiny minority of women at the pit are taking an interest.'

Pat, who works in the pit canteen, continued: 'I hope this will be a breakthrough for women and that more of us will get involved with the NUM.'

'It is important that we

should because our jobs are just as much at stake as the men's when a pit comes under threat.'

Although all pits employ women in the canteens it is very rare for them to be elected onto NUM committees. A few years ago a woman was elected to the Nottinghamshire coalfield branch committee.