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Fleet Street Support Unit Statement

THE FLEET Street Support Unit shows great concern regarding the London leadership and condemns the support given by the London delegation at the BDC conference at Scarborough last Thursday for the National Executive motion.

This motion effectively mandates the leadership to control the dispute.

Support for this NEC motion was argued passionately by Chris Robins and Michael Hicks during a 15-minute re-

cess at the conference.

As rank and file strikers we view this as a further stab in the back.

Should writs be served on our leaders and strikers, we should act directly by pulling out Fleet Street in their defence — even if it is only on a 24-hour bases.

We can only get justice from industrial strength. We cannot rely on justice from Tory judges.

Our demands as the Fleet Street Support Unit are:

- That all blacking of Murdoch's material continues.
- That no pre-prints from any of Murdoch's establishments are allowed to be used in Fleet Street.
- Mass pickets be stepped up and that full support physically and financially has to come from the trade union movement.
- That mass meetings are held with motions from striking chapels which can be discussed and debated and decided upon by the 6,000 sacked workers.

PRINTWORKERS WHICH WAY NOW?

THE DISPUTE at News International has now reached a dangerous stage. The magnificent NO vote two weeks ago to Murdoch's 'final offer' will not sustain the dispute on its own.

The leadership of SOGAT, Brenda Dean and members of the NEC, were against any further escalation of the dispute.

They certainly wanted the offer to be accepted — even if it meant no jobs in Wapping and only minimum compensation.

The 'No' vote, by SOGAT members at least, not only represents a blow against Murdoch but a no confidence decision in Brenda Dean herself.

Where does this leave the printers now? Where do they turn for leadership and guidance of the dispute?

The London District Council of SOGAT (LDC), which has been in control of the dispute in London, is dominated by Stalinists of the Morning Star faction of the Communist Party, like Bill Freeman and Michael Hicks.

It is their influence on the LDC which has kept the dispute at the level of the boycott campaign with individual acts of picketing wholesalers, etc. around the country.

This is alright on its own, but does nothing to lift the political understanding of the dispute for the members.

In fact, this leadership has studiously avoided raising the political issues involved.

It has to be said that the Fleet Street Support Unit, which was set up by rank and file printworkers who wanted to raise these issues, has not yet been able to assert any widespread influence.

Certainly it has correctly called for the escalation of the dispute but has not yet got to grips with how this can be done effectively.

If the FSSU is serious in its intentions, it must now begin to challenge the leadership of the LDC.

It must begin to raise the

By ALAN CLARK

political issues in its statements and leaflets.

Yes, we agree that they have called consistently for the rest of Fleet Street to come out in support of the sacked printers.

Now they must start to campaign to make this happen.

They must also campaign for strike committees to be set up in the other Fleet Street newspapers as a means of escalating the News International dispute and to keep it in the minds of the work force in the rest of Fleet Street.

Whenever the opportunity arises, challenges have to be made to the leadership of the LDC — such as on the Wapping picket lines or at mass meetings.

The FSSU must draw up a strategy for winning the dispute based on transitional demands — as outlined by Trotsky.

It is absolutely correct to demand a shorter working



YOUTH show their defiance and hatred of the apartheid regime in the non-stop picket outside South Africa House in London. Full campaign round-up, page 4: special WRP CC statement pages 8,9

week, union rates of pay, opening of Murdoch's books, workers defence squads to defend ourselves against police violence — all these are relevant to the dispute at Wapping.

The demand for jobs not compensation; the right to have printers doing printers' jobs can seriously raise the political issues to a higher level.

This will defeat the Stalinists — who have nothing to offer except wanting Kinnock in power as the great saviour of the working class.

But, as we said in last week's Workers Press, Kinnock will carry out many of Thatcher's policies.

Will he release jailed miners (or printers); will he be able to nationalise all those industries that Thatcher has privatised; what will he do about nuclear power and the use of British bases for American bombers?

The working class can have no reliance on Kinnock to help solve their problems.

The crisis of leadership in the working class and the trade unions is the greatest unresolved problem facing workers today.

This is nowhere more true than in the printworkers dispute.

It can be resolved, but only by defeating our present leadership on a proper perspective based on socialist policies!

● The FSSU must now think seriously about what they intend to do and what policies to pursue so that a real alternative leadership can be built in this dispute.

One year on:

'BATTLE FOR ORGREAVE' BOOK LAUNCH



TONY WARDLE and BERNARD JACKSON at the launch of 'Battle for Orgreave'

By LINDA GOLDSTEIN

JUNE 18, 1984 saw the most vicious attack on the miners by the state. It was the 100th day of their historic year-long struggle against pit closures.

Picketing was taking place at the Orgreave coking plant; but this day was to be like no other because the police had prepared as if for a military operation.

June 18, 1986 saw the launch in Fleet Street, Lon-

don, of 'The Battle For Orgreave' — one man's account of that unforgettable day.

Bernard Jackson, the author, is an Yorkshire miner, president of Wath Main branch and an obviously proud and committed member of the NUM.

He spoke at the launch of some of his experiences during the strike. Like many other miners before the strike, he had respected the

police. But since his arrest and trial that was no longer the case.

He was critical of some of the NUM leadership who talked about the terrible hardships members were experiencing. As he pointed out, miners had already gone through the pain barrier and they were prepared to fight for ever and a day.

The co-author, Tony Wardle, pointed out that, without trial by jury, Bernard and

many others would have faced long jail sentences based solely on police evidence.

The launch had an excellent photographic display of both Orgreave and other areas involved in the strike.

The book is published by Vanson Wardle Productions Ltd. £3.95

● See Kenny Thompson's review in last week's Workers Press.

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Mike Burrows reports from the South Wales Miners Gala in Swansea

MINERS SPURN KINNOCK

LABOUR LEADER SEEKS SUPPORT FROM THE MEN HE BETRAYED

OVER 2,000 paraded through Swansea to the Miners Gala at St Helens Rugby Ground, last Saturday.

Oh, stick this journalistic routine. This is what happened at the gala as I saw it:

The march itself with its jazz and brass bands, and banners from lodges and political groups was loud and colourful. Crowds patiently lined the route, resisting other appointments to salute the miners like war veterans.

As we entered St Helens Ground each banner was greeted on the microphone by our 'old friend' Eric Davies from the South Wales NUM executive, who fell silent for the Merthyr WRP banner.

Later he and his posse of walkie-talkie carrying stewards spent the afternoon rounding up 'Militant' paper sellers.

As we marched on in front of the stand a Lodge Secretary and other miners shouted comrades' names and 'Well done!'

The speeches were chaired by Des Duffield, newly elected President of the South Wales NUM. Terry Walsh, Regional Secretary of SOGAT, spoke first.

He said that his union's conference last week ended with the unity and determination to stay in the struggle at Wapping and to win the dispute.

'The lesson of the miners' strike was that no union can

win left in isolation. It is the responsibility of the Labour Party and trade unions that SOGAT win this dispute. It is about jobs and we fight the dispute on that basis.'

Walsh appealed for financial and physical support and thanked the NUM for their support. 'We stood ten feet tall and proud together in the miners' strike. We stand equally tall and proud today', he said.

Des Duffield's speech was vague and brief. He said that the next prime minister was on the platform.

Thanking 'all good friends', Duffield hoped that the next Labour government will remember how the Tories treated the miners and looked after their own class.

Support

'We have differences in the Labour movement at this moment. We have realised this in the NUM and decided to give support for the Labour Party in the next election', he said.

Kinnock spoke next, (slight heckling) leading with an election lollipop — 'We could have a Labour government, led by the son and grandson of miners.'

'If you fight to destroy the coal industry you get a knight-hood by Thatcher.' (Ironic cheers, applause).

'If you fight to defend jobs and communities you get victimised into unemployment.'



Both the power of the independent working class and its crisis of leadership could be sensed in Swansea, says reporter Mike Burrows

ment.' (loud neckling)

Kinnock had to act quick, the bandwagon! the bandwagon! (heckling louder and angrier from miners, some wearing yellow Amnesty teeshirts).

'We promise victimised men will get their jobs back under the same status and conditions as before they were sacked!' No mention of

the jailed miners, but the anger was temporarily quelled.

Kinnock then went over the old Plan For Coal, supposedly now as an opposition to nuclear power. His weak voice was getting weaker, rough and scratchy like an old record.

He saved some imperialist apologies and rhetoric for South Africa — 'Slaughter or sanctions' — 'Strong, stiff sanctions against South Africa' (not economic?) He condemned violence in South Africa. (Sudden shouts rise again).

Kinnock sat down, finished. Duffield was forced to repeat himself — 'Until there is unity in the movement, the only vehicle is another Labour government.'

Terry Thomas spoke for the NUM area Executive resolution on condemning British Coal and the Tory government and calling on the next Labour government for an investigation into appointments of those running the Coal Board.

'Get the Labour Party in and we will make progress,' he ended.

We spent the rest of the day enjoying the Miners Gala,

listening and talking to miners, although the hecklers disappeared to the bars, stalls, 5-a-side soccer, rugby tournament etc.

Many miners like those from Betws we were told refused to come because Kinnock was speaking.

I felt at the gala the strength of the independence of the working class and saw the ever sharpening crisis of its leadership.

Refused

What the miners thought, one could only ask. Terry Davies, Lodge Secretary march behind Neil Kinnock because of his record during the strike.

'The feelings of our men on the march were that, whilst we must strive for a Labour government, we were reluctant to march behind Neil Kinnock because of his record during the strike.'

'It's all right saying he will reinstate miners but he refused when the strike was on. Memories will linger. Although some sections of the Labour Party were active, Kin-

nock refused to throw the Labour Party behind the miners to any degree.

'He wants our wholehearted support but we didn't get it from him. Kinnock did not speak out for us in the strike.'

'He condemned violence in an atmosphere created by the media that violence was one-sided, by the NUM. He did not condemn police violence.'

We asked him what the Miners Gala means today.

'With the closures and even more redundancies there is a mood of despondency in the South Wales coalfield.'

'The Gala today is a place to meet those who were active in the strike, to see that those who are prepared to fight are not alone, to turn out together for a day. It shows that there is still a nucleus prepared to defend the union and fight for jobs.'

'The change of venue to Swansea has rejuvenated the Gala itself. Those who did not come will hear of this and there will be double the numbers next year.'

'It has been a great success and we must thank Swansea City Council for the use of St Helens Ground.'



Trewells Lodge 5-a-side team — runners-up in the competition. But the membership were second to none when it came to the march before the gala. 'If Kinnock marches, we don't,' they said. He did — and they didn't

RELEASE THE JAILED MINERS

SOUTH WALES

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester.

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester.

KENT

TERRY FRENCH: Betteshanger — Four year sentence from January 1985. B73383, Weald Wing, Maidstone jail, Kent.

CHRIS TAZEY: Betteshanger — Three year sentence from January 1985. A29398, Youth Detention Centre, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

DURHAM

JOHN MATTERSON: Murton — Two years and three months youth custody from December 1985.

JOHN HEMINGWAY: Murton — One year and three months from December 1985.

JOHN ROBSON: Murton — One year and three months from December 1985.

ROBERT HOWE: 22 — Affray, attempted not guilty (judge refused to allow change of plea) 21 months.

ANTHONY RUTHERFORD: 24 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 18 months.

JOHN ROBINSON: 21 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 18 months.

GARY BLACKMORE: 19 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 2 years Youth Custody.

ANTHONY HOWE: 19 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 2 years Youth Custody.

WILLIAM BELL: 20 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 18 months Youth Custody.

YORKSHIRE

MARTIN HODGSON: Wakefield — Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.

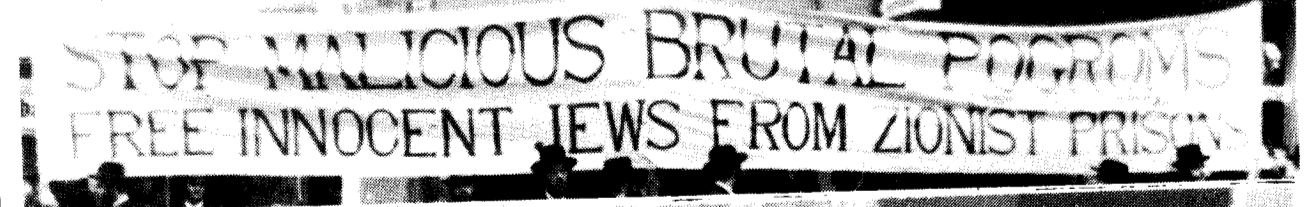
NIGEL HODGSON: Wakefield — Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.

PAUL WRIGHT: Saville — 18 month sentence. G76424, Kirkham Jail, Freckleton road, Preston Lancs.

CLIVE THOMPSON: Frickley — Three year sentence from April 1985. G79348, Ackington Jail, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9XF.

N. DERBYSHIRE

DAVID GAUNT: Shirebrook — 2½-year sentence from December 1984. E71037, A Wing, Millers Park Youth Custody Centre, Dodington Road, Wellingborough.



Orthodox Jews protesting at Israeli embassy recently over police brutality said Jerusalem police had dragged people from their homes in the early hours of the morning, and assaulted innocent people, in a crackdown on the city's ultra-Orthodox population.

A religious campaign against bus-stop advertising posters using scantily-clad women almost brought a rare unity between religious zealots and secular feminists. But besides the police crackdown, there have been serious provocations to set Orthodox Jews and secular Israelis at conflict.

In Tel Aviv, vandals sacked a yeshiva (religious seminary) tearing up prayerbooks and the sacred scrolls of the Torah, daubing walls with slogans like 'No to Khomeinism' and 'Parasites, Join the Army'. There was also an arson attack on a synagogue, and swastikas daubed.



SACKED MEN GIVEN A BACK SEAT

VICTIMISED SCOTS OFFERED NO PLACE ON PLATFORM

Workers Press at the Scottish Miners Gala

EVEN the sun beating down last Saturday on the normally damp and chilly Holyrood Park in Edinburgh could not detract from the central message of this year's Scottish Miners' Gala: the crisis of leadership in the workers' movement.

Of course that was not the theme publicly announced by the Euro Stalinist (Communist Party) — led Scottish area leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Little over a year after the heroic and never-to-be-forgotten miners' strike they contrived a new low in their opportunist descent into pacifist, 'popular front' politics with the slogan, 'For a Nuclear Free Scotland!'

Appropriately the most principled and aggressive speech came from CND representative, A Leitch, who said that the campaign against nuclear power and the threat of war must be carried on throughout the whole of Britain.

He also fired an implicit warning in the direction of fellow-speaker, Labour Party general secretary, Larry Whitty, when he said there

could be no compromise on these issues.

The heroes of last year's Gala — the men sacked during the strike and not reinstated — were this year invited to take a back seat and march with their own branches.

No sacked man was given a place as a platform speaker, although wife of victimised Monktonhall secretary David Hamilton, Jean Hamilton, spoke on behalf of the Scottish Area Women's Support Group.

Hamilton has been a candidate in the shortly-to-be-declared election for the Vice-Presidency of the Scottish NUM.

He is likely to lose the contest to incumbent Euro-Stalinist George Bolton by a clear margin owing to the electoral system for this position, based on a 'financial vote', in which a show of hands at branch meetings determines how the votes of the whole dues-paying membership of that branch shall be cast.

However many Scottish miners expect and hope that Hamilton will run for the Presidency next year when Communist Party veteran Mick McGahey retires.

McGahey's puff for Bolton's candidature at the Gala was coolly received and Bolton's own contribution created a buzz of conversation about the weather amongst a rapidly diminishing congregation.

At last year's Gala the Scottish NUM executive outraged many miners and their allies by providing a platform for Labour leader Neil Kinnock and TUC General Secretary Norman

Willis in the immediate aftermath of the strike which these two had done so much to isolate and defeat.

This year McGahey underlined the Communist Party's crisis by dogmatically pronouncing its controversial analysis that 'We must recognise Thatcherism is a new phenomenon' and that 'the central task is to defeat Thatcherism' from the platform as though it were official NUM policy.

Of course the call for the fall of Thatcher struck a chord in the audience — although McGahey made it clear he was referring to an electoral confrontation at a time of Thatcher's choosing rather than a campaign to drive her from office.

The implication that a Labour-Alliance coalition would be a real alternative to Thatcher remained for the audience to ponder on later.

Bolton was left to apologise for the fact that only 'some progress' had been made towards the aims he



GEORGE BOLTON

and McGahey had declared last year — to end the victimisations, defend the coal industry and reunite the NUM.

He admitted that 130 miners in Scotland alone remained 'outside the gates' and was loudly heckled by one protestor over the closure of Polkemet colliery near Bathgate. This was finally confirmed recently.

Another heckler was later evicted for shouting: 'We want Arthur Scargill!'

At last year's Gala, NUM general secretary Peter Heathfield earned a prolonged ovation when, clearly speaking with Scargill's agreement, he launched a stinging attack on a divisive and cowardly article in 'Marxism Today' on the lessons of the strike which everyone knew had been written by none other than Bolton.

Printworkers carrying on the fight against the Thatcher-led attack on the trade unions from the point at which the miners were forced to pass on the torch had travelled from London. They received a warm response to their paper 'Wapping News'.

In line with the rest of the official proceedings, however, they were not asked to speak from the platform, which was completed by NUM general secretary, Rodney Bickerstaffe, who cracked some good jokes, and engineering union executive — and Communist Party — member, James Airlie, who didn't.

Here to fight! Here to stay!

THE VIRAJ Mendis Defence Campaign, whose sponsors include the Workers Revolutionary Party, next month starts a march from Manchester to London, starting July 5.

The campaign has said that if Viraj Mendis is deported to Sri Lanka, the least he can expect is arrest and detention without charge for 18 months.

The march will be campaigning against the immigration laws — and to expose what is happening in Sri Lanka.

Viraj has lived in Britain for 13 years, since he was 17 years old, but he has been active in support for the Tamils, thousands of whom have been shot dead by the Sri Lankan army and police since 1983.

In late May 1986 the Sri Lankan armed forces launched a full-scale air attack on Tamil towns in the north of the country.

Hospitals, schools, temples and houses were bombed and shelled, and troops killed more with machine-guns mounted in helicopters in these latest genocidal raids.

Britain's Immigration Appeals Chief Adjudicator claimed in February, in refusing to allow Viraj to stay in Britain, that 'Sri Lanka is inherently a democracy where the rule of law applies.'

The Sri Lankan forces are trained by British and Israeli personnel and use South African equipment. Thatcher visited recently to show her support.

It was British colonial policy which combined the two nations into one for administrative purposes, while laying the basis for antagonisms between the two communities by bringing Tamils from south India in the first half of the nineteenth century as slave labour on coffee plantations established on land stolen from the Sinhala peasantry.

A 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' is used against socialists of the majority Sinhala people as well as against Tamils.

Viraj is known as a Sinhalese supporter of the Tamils' right to self-determination. There are over a quarter of a million Tamil refugees who have fled from Sri Lanka — and Viraj would clearly be risking his life if he went there.

VIRAJ MENDIS MUST STAY

FIGHT THE IMMIGRATION LAWS

Manchester
JULY 5

- Stockport 6
- Macclesfield 7
- Alsager Crewe 7
- Stoke on Trent 8
- Stafford 9
- Wolverhampton 10
- Handsworth 11
- East Birmingham 12
- Coventry 13
- Leicester 14
- Rugby 15
- Northampton 16
- Milton Keynes 17
- Luton 18
- St Albans 19
- Watford 20
- London

JOIN THE ANTI RACIST MARCH JULY 26

Contact VMDC 061 - 795 3870 (10am - 5pm)

● Camden Trades Council in north London voted on June 17 to support the Viraj Mendis campaign and march. Some Communist Party delegates opposed, claiming the issue was 'not that simple' and that the TC needed 'more information' before it could decide.

NORTH-EAST PIT SACKING THREAT

By DAVE TEMPLE

FOUR hundred and seventy miners at Westoe colliery in South Shields have been threatened with dismissal notices for refusing to work holidays and weekends on maintenance work alongside UDM members.

Members of the NUM Mechanics section received letters at their homes from the pit managers saying they are in breach of their contracts.

Jim Perry, Durham Mechanics Westoe Lodge Secretary, wrote back to the colliery manager Robert Bunker telling him his members were not prepared to handle work laid down in agreement between the NUM and British Coal. Its members in the UDM were also involved.

The UDM was not a party to conditions agreed by the NUM.

Mr Bunker in his letter to the miners said:

'Members of your union branch are refusing to carry out necessary work at weekends and holidays. Such refusal is in breach of the terms of their contract of employment including the area incentive scheme.'

'Unless full co-operation is resumed, payments under the scheme will not be made with effect from June 2, 1986.'

'If the breaches of contract persist we will be regarded as demonstrating an intention to repudiate the contract and I shall be obliged to consider accepting this by dismissing the men'

Crawley Branch WRP Day Schools

Sunday, June 15 'History of Trotskyism' Cyril Smith
Sunday, July 27 'Why Marxists Study Philosophy' Dave Bruce
Sunday, August 17 'Historical Materialism' Bob Archer
Sunday, September 12 'Political Economy' Geoff Pilling
10.30am — 4.30pm

Ifield Community Centre, Ifield Drive, Crawley
Entrance: £1 per day
Creche and refreshments available

GELDOF: IRELAND'S ENEMY

ON TUESDAY last week Bob Geldof, rock singer-cum-fundraiser for famine relief, got his much sought-after knighthood — only an honorary one because he is Irish.

The medieval honours such as OBEs, CBEs and other blood-stained relics of the British empire are given to all kinds of collaborators with imperialism.

Imperialism's true servants, the trade unions leaders and Labourites who have betrayed the working class and kept the workers in their place, are rewarded with a 'sir' or 'lord of the realm'.

It may be tempting to laugh at the eccentricities of the British ruling class but behind the honours system is

COMMENT BY CHARLIE WALSH

the buying-off of workers' leaders and representatives the better to keep their grip of power and privilege.

Bob Geldof KBE is no different from the previous recipients of these awards — his job is to maintain British imperialism.

Last weekend in America he condemned the IRA as murderers, thugs and thieves and appealed to Americans not to send any more money to support the struggle for Irish freedom. For this he will become the darling of the ruling class and the gutter press.

On the same day that Geldof got his well-earned reward from imperialism, Patrick Magee was found guilty at the Old Bailey of bombing

the Grand Hotel in Brighton during the Tory party conference in 1984.

Likewise four other people were found guilty of conspiring to cause explosions at seaside resorts in the UK during 1985.

Unlike Geldof, these Irish people are victims of the British imperialist war against the people in the six occupied counties of Ireland.

With anti-Irish racism and hysteria at maximum volume, all five will undoubtedly receive long terms of imprisonment.

Beneath the long shaggy mane, the unshaven face and the tramp-like dress is a mouth, and an ignorant mouth at that, for imperialist racism.

Geldof's outburst in the USA is an insult to and slander on all Irish men and women who have fought and died for Irish freedom.

Geldof is ignorant of Irish history — and of imperialism's role in creating and continuing famine.

Ireland between 1845 and 1847 shows how colonialism creates famines: shiploads of food sailed out of the docks of Dublin and Cork while two million starved to death and two million emigrated in desperation.

Millions have responded to the call to feed the starving in Africa, but it is only by using the great technological resources available to transform deserts — in a worldwide system of socialism based on need not profit — that famine and oppression can be ended.

WORKERS PRESS
ROUND-UP

THE ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

THE POLITICS OF THE ANC

LIVERPOOL: RALLY HEARS 'POPULAR FRONT' APPEAL

LAST MONDAY, a meeting called by Merseyside anti-apartheid to commemorate the Soweto uprising raised fundamental questions of the African revolution — for those who wished to see them.

The African National Congress speaker, Siphon Pitiyana, referred to a leaflet distributed by a 'left group outside the meeting'.

The leaflet, he declared, accused the ANC of supporting the reform of apartheid in South Africa.

'It is not possible to reform apartheid,' he said and went on, 'it is not correct that we are asking for reform.'

'How can we accept that the government is reforming when either we are separated from our wives and families or we live in fear that when we come home from work we will find our children maimed or killed?'

The pre-requisite is the dismantling of the apartheid regime.

'The question of reforms is running away from the demands of the people. The first thing is to release our imprisoned leaders'.

The leaflet he referred to

had been distributed by the Socialist Workers Party and did not significantly raise the criticism of the ANC as standing for 'reforming apartheid'.

The nearest reference to this was a sentence, among several attacking Kinnock, which stated: 'He wishes to see an end to apartheid and the instigation of an ANC government which will be friendly to capitalist interests'.

How deep the ideas of the old Stalinist popular front policy had been embedded in this young leader of ANC was seen in his introduction.

He struck a chord among several Euro-Stalinists in the audience who looked nostalgically back to the 'anti-fascist alliance with progressive capitalists' period of the Communist Party.

He complained that among those who now oppose sanctions were people who had been anti-Nazi leaders.

He began by recalling that the ANC had called on Afri-

BY BILL HUNTER

can workers to join the fight against fascism during the war.

The call for colonial slaves to fight with one master against another in an imperialist war was a betrayal committed by the ANC.

The promise that by supporting their masters they could be defending 'democracy' was hollow at the time.

It has an even more hollow ring today. The regime of repression and tyranny became worse after the 'war for democracy', with the imposition of apartheid.

The overriding impression of this speech was that the speaker was fighting a bigger polemic than one with a small leaflet.

He reflected the uneasiness of the ANC at the big advance of workers in South Africa over the last years.

The speakers proclaimed that the armed struggle was the key struggle and that the ANC was building towards a 'peoples' war' — the aims of which were . . . ?

The ANC speaker made a

declaration that the struggle was for 'peace, democracy and the realisation of human dignity'.

He asked for complete support in Britain for these demands. These are the slogans of a Popular Front.

Today there are representatives both of South African capitalists and of foreign imperialist investors who will wave that banner.

They have recognised that the apartheid regime can no longer guarantee their interests.

The mass organisation of workers in South Africa poses great problems for the ANC; workers are compelled into struggle against capitalism and towards what the 'progressive' capitalists see as the throwing out of the 'baby of free enterprise with the bath water of apartheid'.

'The ultra left' said the speaker condemned us as 'ineffective'. He was obviously referring to criticism of the ANC from trade unionists in South Africa itself.

He spoke of an 'enigma'. 'The working people, he declared, were leading 'not at

the point of production, but are the leadership in the communities, the schools and in armed action'.

His next point made it clear that he sought to use the campaign in Britain to strengthen the ANC against criticism in South Africa.

'I charge you' he told the meeting, 'to be the guardians of our unity and declare the ANC to be the sole leadership. Do not sow division as do those people who engage in petty politics to suit their own sectarianism'.

The ANC is the biggest movement in South Africa but it is not the sole leadership.

Principled international socialists will not declare it is.

Unconditional support for the African revolution means that we do not put down conditions as to who is to lead it before we support it.

But that is not uncritical support and certainly not support for Popular Front politics.

The future of the African

revolution depends on the working class carrying on the struggle against apartheid to a workers republic.

A fight to defend the African revolution means nothing in Britain if it is not a class question.

The demand here of the ANC and the 'Popular Front' forces is for 'mandatory sanctions' — this was the common demand of the Church of England vicar, who made a sharp attack on apartheid, and of others on the platform at the meeting.

To sink emotions into an 'all classes' campaign to put pressure on the Tory government for sanctions is, speaking frankly, a diversion.

It lets the labour and trade union leaders off the hook.

Our job is to raise international class consciousness and carve up the hypocrisy of trade union leaders who will, for example, speak sympathetic words to the young shop workers of Dublin who struck against handling South African goods, but refused to move their unions into official blacking.

MANCHESTER: MENDIS BAN FAILS IN LIVELY ANTI-APARTHEID MARCH

ON SATURDAY June 14 the youth section of Anti-Apartheid organised a march and rally in Manchester city centre which was supported by about 600 people from a wide range of organisations and led by the People's Band and the South Africa Anti-Apartheid Bus.

Banners on the march included Stockport Anti-Apartheid, the Namibia Solidarity Committee and SWAPO Support Group, the Nicaraguan Solidarity Committee, the Viraj Mendis and Garnett Korler Defence Campaigns, Manchester District ACTSS (the clerical section of the T&GWU), Bury District Labour Party, Manchester RCG, Stockport SWP and an anarchist contingent.

Speaking rights at the rally were given to people from AA, ANC, SWAPO, Nicaraguan Solidarity, the Greenham Group and the Garnett Korler Defence Campaign.

Viraj Mendis who, like Garnett Korler, is threatened with deportation by the Home Office, was refused speaking rights three weeks before the march.

Campaigners for Viraj's cause attended since Viraj was speaking in Bradford. They were initially refused the right to speak.

Groups

The Manchester AA youth section stated that 'the rally was for AA not for other groups'.

A heated discussion took place between the secretary and a number of Viraj Mendis' campaign supporters. Eventually Chris Proctor (VMDC) was given two minutes.

The question must be asked — where to AA stand on questions of deportation? Surely the racist laws in operation in this country are an extension of the apartheid regime.

The SWP also refused speaking rights to Viraj Mendis at a meeting in Stockport on June 12 but conceded two minutes after

arguments over the question.

Can support for South African workers be limited to praise for their struggle or should Anti-Apartheid support all struggles involving racism and indeed of struggles against this Thatcher government — upholders of apartheid in South Africa?

Garnett Korler, who was given the right to speak, is threatened with deportation.

He is a black South African well known to the racist regime because of his political activity whilst living there.

He has applied for political asylum in Britain but the British courts have recommended he be deported.

He has to report to the police every week under a restriction order while the Home Office prepare their case against him.

As Garnett himself said 'I thought I had escaped persecution and that this country would help me, but now I find that I am still being persecuted'.

When Garnett spoke at the rally he called for support for Viraj Mendis and the march organised by the VMDC from Manchester to London starting on July 5.

The ANC speaker, George Johannes, said that the people who put an end to Hitlerite fascism were now supporting fascism in South Africa but the black South Africans have taken the initiative and are fighting the fascist regime of Botha.

Johannes said there was no real distinction between Botha and the neo-fascists waving the swastika in his country.

No amount of reforms could satisfy the black South Africans that the system was changing.

BY SUSAN GWYER

He said apartheid had to be destroyed not reformed. South Africa, he said, was a threat to world peace and that Thatcher and Reagan had a conspiracy of silence on the matter because of their economic interests in upholding the regime.

They were making money off the backs of the black people.

Johannes, speaking on behalf of the ANC, said 'The ANC says the black revolution is not for sale — there are no reforms which can be made.

'Only the seizure of power by the black South Africans can change the situation.'

He finished by calling for victory for the ANC and for SWAPO in Namibia.

Solution

A Nicaraguan woman spoke very briefly after Johannes and said one thing about the situation in South Africa. 'The only possible solution is a revolution'.

The SWAPO speaker who spoke next was more confident in the success of economic sanctions, believing that this was a means of resolving the situation peacefully. He condemned the US for providing UNITA bandits to fight in Angola and called for all peace-loving people to join the struggle.

A woman from the Greenham Group spoke for the 'Make the Links' campaign. This campaign, to make links between women in struggle, was formed on the basis of women's peace groups and women's miners' support committees particularly the Women Against Pit Closures from Durham.

'Make the links — break the chain' was their slogan.

ANC and SWAPO members finished the rally by singing the ANC-SWAPO National Anthem.

LONDON: DEMONSTRATORS DEFY POLICE ATTACKS

BY PHIL PENN

JUST three days before the mass picket to mark the tenth anniversary of the Soweto rising, members of the non-stop picket outside South Africa House were provoked and intimidated.

Police arrested 16. Witnesses say they pushed the white people out of the way to get as many blacks as they could.

A supporter of the UVF attacked Mervin Martin as he was speaking on a megaphone.

The man was later arrested but so was Mervin. His arm was lacerated in the police van.

The picket, which has been non-stop since April 19, has been kept behind a barrier.

On Friday evening, however, four skinheads stood on the same side of the barrier as the police. They leaned against the wall of South Africa House while they gave fascist salutes to the pickets and sang racist songs.

Unable to provoke the disciplined picket, the fascists strolled away in the company of a policeman who chatted and joked with them for about 20 minutes.

Earlier on a picket was arrested and charged with using insulting words — in an anti-fascist song.

Linda Mbeje, a Black South African, said: 'In South Africa we are used to police brutality but I did not expect to see the same thing here.'

'This is what is happening now in Cross Roads in South Africa where the police take the side of the racists.'

'In the police station I was called a wog by the police.'

'They took my photograph by force. This worries me because, while under interrogation in South Africa, I have been shown recent photographs of our comrades in exile in this country who have been here for 20 years.'

Kayode Olafimihan, a ste-



ward on the picket, said police arresting him banged his head repeatedly against the van door and punched him in the back.

He told his story at a press conference.

The doctor who examined the pickets catalogued their injuries, lacerations, bruises and weals.

Tinuke Olafimihan, Kayode's sister, suffers from bronchial spasm, a condition in which the bronchial tubes close when put under pressure.

She said that she was kicked and punched in the teeth by a police officer who then loudly exclaimed that she had bitten him.

She was grabbed by the throat and left on the floor gasping for breath.

When the police finally called an ambulance, Tinuke said the police officer told the doctor that I was asthmatic and forgot to mention that I had been throttled.

'When I was taken back to the police station I saw my brother who was unable to stand.'

'A police officer was telling him to get to his "F...ing feet"'. He said "be careful or you will fall down again and hit your head. You don't want another bruise to match the one you have already got do

you?'"

Doctor Tony O'Sullivan was told that he could not see Kayode until the police surgeon arrived.

After a while, when it was obvious that the police doctor was not going to turn up, they said that a police sergeant would have to be present for the examination.

Doctor O'Sullivan objected to this but he was told that if an officer was not in full view and hearing of the examination then it could not take place.

He said 'Kayode was limping, shaking uncontrollably and was clearly very dazed.'

'He had a large area of broken skin on his head which was oozing blood and serum.'

He said that he was told that if he insisted upon examining any of the others arrested it would considerably delay their release.

Because of this he decided to wait until their release to make the examinations.

A number of those arrested have been charged with obstruction or threatening behaviour.

However a number of them have lodged complaints against the police action and are taking legal advice with a view to laying charges against the officers involved.

MURDOCH FIGHT IS FOR ALL WORKERS LAMBETH MEETING HEARS OF 'DE-UNIONISATION' DANGER

Printworkers fighting Rupert Murdoch are waging a principled fight in the interests of all trade unionists, a meeting of Lambeth Print Workers' Support Group heard last Friday.

Fleet Street Support Unit secretary Carol Hall said the workers' recent rejection of Murdoch's 'Final Offer' had proved once and for all 'we are not greedy printworkers, but people of principle'.

The decisive lead shown by all those sacked by Murdoch was important for the inevitable battles with all Fleet Street print houses, who were going to be forced to de-unionise to remain competitive.

Warned

'Even now, TNT, who distribute Murdoch's scab journals, are well into feasibility studies on distribution for all Fleet Street journals', Carol Hall warned.

'Enquiries have been made to the NPPA about handing all their journals. This would lead to attacks on

rail jobs if paper deliveries were transferred to road delivery.

Pointing out the central role Fleet Street unions had played in deciding conditions of print workers nationally, Hall warned of catastrophic repercussions from a de-unionised Fleet Street.

She said those who had voted 'No' to Murdoch 'are prepared to fight for their heritage, now it is up to our leadership to pick up those cudgels.'

Hall urged everyone to step up the boycott of distribution and sale of Murdoch's papers, and said support groups could play an important part in the boycott, even though by itself it would not win the strike.

The most important next step in the fight would have to be 'an all-out strike in Fleet Street to act as a

BY TONY GODFREY

catalyst in focussing media attention on the politics of the strike', which were 'the Tories' plans to smash the unions.'

AUEW full-time divisional officer Les Elliott said the first his union had known of Murdoch's plans was last September, when Murdoch summoned them to a meeting which he opened by 'reading the riot act', and telling them 'things will never again be the same on Fleet Street.'

Union

On introduction of new technology, Elliott said his union along with others was 'prepared to lose jobs in negotiated agreements', as they had 'already done in other houses'.

He added that his union had helped Murdoch establish

his plant at Wapping, believing his claim of plans for a new evening paper.

However, Murdoch had underestimated how 'unacceptable it would be to have legally binding no-strike deals'.

Elliott said scabs 'should be sacked', and this had to be demanded 'not just by printworkers but by the class itself.'

Betty Heathfield, from Women Against Pit Closures, said 'very familiar strategies are being used that we have all seen before'.

These began with 'preconceived plans laid down long ago', and 'the destruction of the trade union movement is what it is all about.'

Anybody who drew any lesson from the miners' strike will know this.'

'Both McGregor and Murdoch have been backed by

the Tories and supported by a whole batch of anti-union laws.

The first demand on any incoming Labour government must be to repeal these laws,' Betty Heathfield said, adding 'They must not be allowed to leave a few on the statute books for their own use.'

If new technology was used to improve workers' conditions, provide more leisure, or introduce job-sharing with no loss of pay, it should be welcomed, Heathfield said.

Fight

'But if it means job-losses we fight it all the way.'

Julia Alterman of Wandsworth NUT accused the Tories of acting 'like a fascist government'.

In the teachers' dispute they had 'set out to destroy us, which they could not do.'

Alterman called on workers in dispute not to be con-

cerned only with pay increases that could 'be eaten away by inflation', but also to do 'as much damage to the government as possible'.

She said the teachers' action had a 'decisive effect in the defeat of the Tories in the local election'.

We should not wait until the next election to get rid of the Tories, but make sure 'they are pushed out and don't get back in', as soon as possible.

In discussion from the floor, Les Elliott was asked if he supported Fleet Street Support Group's call for an all-out strike.

The AUEW official replied that he had 'to abide by my members' wishes'.

It was put to him that he was being asked for his opinion.

Elliott replied that it was 'rejected by the engineers', and promptly sat down before he could ascertain whether he meant Fleet Street or 'Peckham engineers'.

HAS UCATT 'WEATHERED THE STORM'?

WORKERS PRESS CONFERENCE REPORT

Laings men, 'man on a white charger' battle with Williams

By GERRY DOWNING

UCATT's conference opened in Bournemouth amid extraordinary scenes. The focus of the attacks was general secretary Albert Williams.

The headline in the current issue of 'Viewpoint', the UCATT paper, is 'UCATT weathered the storm.' It remains to be seen whether Williams and the UCATT bureaucracy can do that.

The first attack came from the Laings picket which was canvassing support from the delegates.

As Williams escorted the Tory mayor of Bournemouth to his Rolls Royce, he ignored his own victimised members, causing an outburst of anger from Brian Higgins.

Betrayal

Higgins pushed evidence of the union leadership's betrayal into Williams' hand — a copy of 'The Builder', a rank-and-file journal detailing the sell-out by both T&GWU and UCATT officials and then the letter signed by Williams and the employers' secretary repudiating his own members.

Williams threw the papers on the ground and stormed back inside, pursued by the Scotsman who let him know in no uncertain terms the attitude of rank-and-file building workers.

Williams' ordeal was not over.

Motion 3, from London No 2 and Westbourne Park, said, 'This conference views

with deep concern the increasing practice of branches failing to make proper returns in union elections and recommends the executive council to take immediate steps to ensure rules on election procedure are strictly adhered to.'

Delegate after delegate rose to attack Williams and the executive for failure to ensure this fundamental democratic right.

A delegate said the union's members did not even have the same rights within the union as they have against the employers.

Those responsible should be brought to book and the sooner the Sword of Damocles hanging over Dick Miles' head is removed the better — a reference to the £4,000 outstanding court costs incurred by Miles in the Irish High Court to show ballot rigging.

Another delegate pointed out that the leadership was playing into Thatcher's hands, that it was not the candidate who was deprived of his job but that the members were deprived of their rights.

Bill O'Shaughnessy of Bow

branch said Dominic Hehir was an honest organiser who had served his members thoroughly.

Bro Higgins of Tottenham branch pointed out that Cork No 1 branch had voted 150 to nil for Veal and Cork No 2 had voted 350 to nil for Veal.

Falsify

He maintained it was impossible for 500 Corkmen to be of the one mind.

Bro Bourn said we had men in the union willing to falsify union returns.

They should not only be banned from office but excluded from the union.

Vic Heath of Hampstead branch pointed out that Dominic Hehir was banned from union office for ten years whereas another had been barred for only one year over a similar offence (circulating union branches).

The reason for this was that Dominic had challenged the executive.

Albert Williams rose to reply to the debate and claimed he had done everything to ensure fair elections in the North East.

When the aggrieved candidate went to the High Court the judge found Williams had acted 'honourably'.

Bro Miles had not gone through the union but had sought High Court assistance in Ireland, said Williams, who did not refer to the evidence heard in the Irish court.

The general secretary accused the membership of not doing enough for Bro Miles.

He said the industrial tribunal had found against Bro Flavin (not mentioning the union referee who found against the executive).

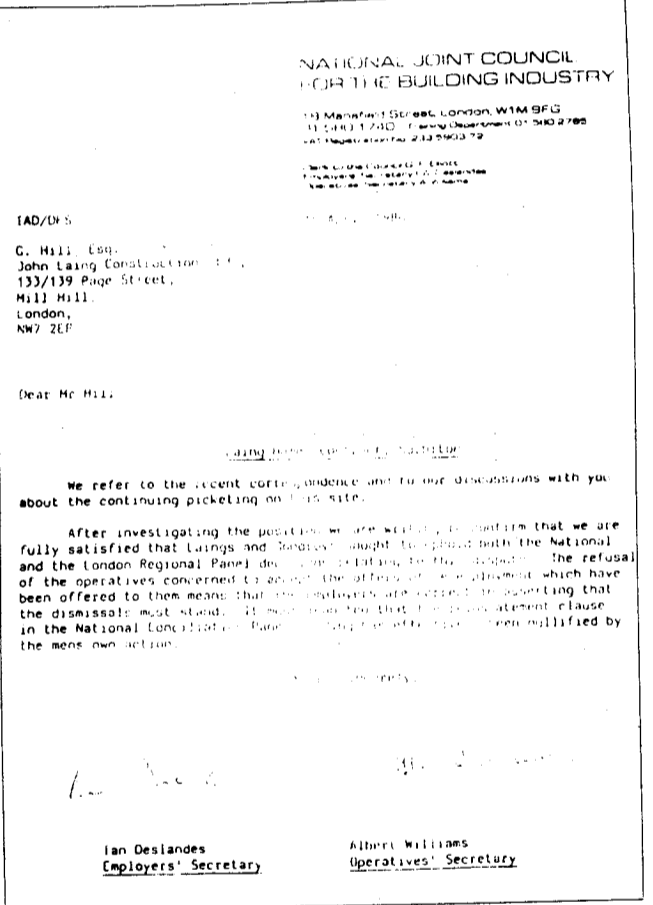
But he reserved his greatest venom for Dominic Hehir: 'This man on a white charger,' and, 'That most scurrilous letter that nauseated everybody' (I bet they were as sick as pigs).

Williams then proceeded to criticise delegates who had spoken out at the rostrum.

He made accusations that they were wasting the union's time with 'pettyfogging complaints and charges.'

Johnny Hourigan, the mover, told the conference in reply that the union had to get rid of the ballot riggers and that Hehir was one of the finest organisers in the country.

The motion was carried unanimously.



LETTER signed by Albert Williams as 'Operatives Secretary' which said:

'After investigating the position we are writing to confirm that we are fully satisfied that Laings and Jonoroy sought to uphold both the National and the London Regional Panel decisions relating to this dispute. The refusal of the operatives concerned to accept the offers of re-employment which have been offered to them means that the employers are correct in asserting that the dismissals must stand. It must mean too that the reinstatement clause in the National Conciliation Panel finding has effectively been nullified by the mens own action.'

We feel it speaks for itself

• The 'Building Worker' is a rank-and-file paper and loose organisation that meets every second Monday night at 8 p.m. at the Cock Tavern, corner of Charlton Street and Phoenix Road, London NW1. Next meetings are on June 23 and July 7. The paper contains all the details on the Laings dispute. Address for copies: c/o 223b Queens Road, London SE15 2NG.

LISTINGS

BIRMINGHAM IRISH HUNGER STRIKE COMMEMORATION RALLY. Saturday June 21, 2 pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Organised by the Irish Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee, Birmingham.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST THE LABOUR PARTY WITCH-HUNTS. Saturday June 21, 10 am — 5 pm. Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London. Speakers include Tony Mulhearn, Audrey Wise and

Linda Bellos.
SOUTH AFRICA NON-STOP PICKET: Special events on the non-stop picket of the South African embassy. South Africa Freedom Day, Thursday June 26, 1-2 pm. Saturday June 28, torchlight rally for the release of Nelson Mandela. Both at the non-stop picket, outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid).
SPARTACIST LEAGUE PUBLIC MEETING. South Africa: *Avengé Soweto! Workers for*

Power! For a black-centred workers government! Smash Reagan/Thatcher/Botha Anti-Soviet War Axis! Tuesday June 24, 7.30 pm. Friends Meeting House, Room 7/8, Euston Road, London NW1.
TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT DELEGATION TO THE NORTH OF IRELAND. Belfast, 8-11 August. Delegates invited from individuals and groups, to stay as guests of local people and discuss the Irish labour movement, Irish culture, plastic bullets, strip-searching and show-trials with

political and community activists. Join the Belfast Internment commemoration march and rally, Sunday August 10. Details from: Delegation Organising Committee, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.
THIRD WORLD FIRST. Conference on Third World Aid, Saturday July 12, 10.00 am, University of London Union.
VIRAJ MENDIS DEFENCE CAMPAIGN March 'Viraj Mendis must stay! Fight the Immigration laws' begins Manchester, Saturday July 5. Contact the campaign at VMDC,

c/o North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Hulme, Manchester M15 5AL. Telephone 061.795.3870. Meetings every Sunday at Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square, Lloyd St entrance, 7.30 pm.
LESBIAN AND GAY FESTIVAL CARNIVAL PARADE. Saturday July 5, Hyde Park, London, to Kennington Park, Lambeth, for live entertainment and open-air events. Plus 400 events throughout the country between June 19 and July 6.
GREENHAM WOODRUN-

NERS FINANCIAL APPEAL. Donations urgently needed to buy a van for the 'Greenham Woodrunners', who keep in daily contact with and supply wood to the Greenham Common Peace Camp. Contributions should be sent to J Lethbridge, Account No 12249286 type 00, Co-operative Bank, 23a St Aldgate St, Gloucester. Please send details of your meetings and events to **Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4 0JT, to arrive not later than the Monday before publication**

TROTSKYISM

LIVELY TOUR SEEKS



SHOP Stewards at Govan Shipbuilders after showing Stefan around the yard

SUPPORT FOR UNION LINK-UP

GLASGOW shipbuilding workers gave a great welcome last Monday to Stefan Bekier, who is touring Britain to win support for 'Solidarnosc' trade unionists jailed in Poland.

On Tuesday, Bekier spoke to the shop stewards' committee at Govan Shipbuilders about the repression of 'Solidarnosc' since the imposition of martial law in Poland by General Jaruzelski in December 1981.

Now the committee is to consider what initiatives it can undertake for the exchange of information between British and Polish trade unionists.

Bekier was welcomed to the Yard by convenor Sammy Gilmour and went on a guided tour of the yard, where a car ferry is now under production.

When current contracts are completed, there is no new work for the Govan yard. Trade unionists there are already preparing a campaign against the threat of closure.

Bekier then went on to meet senior shop stewards at the Yarrow Ship Yard on the other bank of the Clyde to discuss the possibility of 'adopting' a Polish shipyard and exchanging information with workers there about the struggle of trade unionists in Poland and Britain.

He also visited the picket line at Morris', Glasgow, where young workers are now in their 13th month of strike action.

The speaking tour began with a visit to the Scottish miners' Gala last Saturday in Edinburgh.

Bekier joined the miners' march through Edinburgh

and then spoke at a well-attended fringe meeting organised by Scottish Labour Briefing.

He outlined the struggle of the Polish working class against military repression for the independent trade union 'Solidarnosc' and how the movement has been maintained as an underground organisation since 1981.

Trade unionists at the meeting discussed the question of the relations between 'Solidarnosc' and the Catholic church and the dangers of counter-revolutionary activity by imperialist agents.

Bekier explained that the real risk to the socialist property relations came from the Stalinist bureaucracy who have put Poland in debt to capitalist banks and have now joined the International Monetary Fund.

Their entry fee into this capitalist organisation is that workers in Poland now face a level of exploitation reminiscent in many ways of the nineteenth century.

New laws to be approved later this month by the 10th Congress of the Polish Communist Party legalise longer working hours and, for example, allow night work by women.

On the Church, Bekier pointed out that the hierarchy had always collaborated with the Stalinist bureaucracy, although many of the clergy had supported the workers.

Following discussions with miners in Lothian and Fife, the next stop on the tour was Glasgow.

An early high point was a visit to the Govan Young Republicans Flute Band at their weekly rehearsal.

The young bandmen broke off their practice to hear a short speech by Bekier, followed by some extremely searching questions about Stalinism and the national question.

Members of the Republican Band Alliance, which organises marches in Glasgow to support the Irish Struggle, explained to Bekier that their movement also had Political Prisoners.

Bekier expressed support for them, pointing out that in 1981 his own workers' newspaper had highlighted the Long Kesh Hunger Strike.

On Monday Bekier spoke to a meeting of technical college lecturers, members of the Scottish Teachers' Union, EIS, at Langside College in Glasgow.

A public meeting was organised at the McLellan Galleries by the Glasgow Polish Solidarity Committee.

A Number of Polish refugees joined the audience of trades unionists and Republicans and there was a very lively discussion.

This week the tour goes on to the North East, with meetings planned with miners, shipbuilders and other trade unionists.

● DUE to a misunderstanding, some leaflets have been distributed in Scotland which describe Stefan Bekier as an official of Solidarnosc.

He has asked Workers Press to state that he has made no claim to speak in any capacity as an official representative of 'Solidarnosc' during his present speaking tour.

He is a member of the Revolutionary Workers League of Poland and editor of its paper 'Walke Klas'.

STEFAN BEKIER, of the Revolutionary Workers' League of Poland, is in Britain at present to win support for a campaign to release political and trade union prisoners in Poland. His tour is being fully reported in Workers Press.

In this interview Bekier speaks about what the Revolutionary Workers League is and the struggle for Trotskyism within the Polish working class. He spoke to Workers Press reporter SIMON PIRANI.

What do you see as the aim of your tour of Britain?

The clandestine movement, Solidarnosc, is passing through a difficult time.

On the one hand there is a huge resistance to the Jaruzelski regime; on the other, big attacks on the working class.

The Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) aims to build unity against these attacks, defending the movement from state repression, defending the working class from Jaruzelski's economic measures.

This defence is the starting-point for building up working-class initiatives in the future.

The building of a permanent connection between Polish workers in Solidarnosc and the workers' movement in the west is a preparation for that future.

I want to say to all trades unions and workers' organisations in Britain that verbal support is not sufficient, that it is necessary to have a real international campaign on the question of political prisoners.

We cannot fight for the rights of workers in any country without fighting for the liberation of Zbigniew Bujak and all political prisoners of the Polish junta, which claims to be 'socialist' and carries out these monstrous attacks on the working class.

What is the Revolutionary Workers League? How does it work within Solidarnosc?

The RWL is an independent political organisation, not part of Solidarnosc. Our paper Walka Klas ('Class Struggle') is produced in the west and taken in to Poland illegally.

The RWL grew out of the first Polish Trotskyist group since the war, which was formed in 1970. After many years' work in emigration, and a struggle for political clarification, the RWL first started to build actively among Polish workers with the birth of Solidarnosc in 1980.

From May to December 1981 Walka Klas was produced inside Poland, month-

ly or thereabouts.

I personally had been exiled from the late 1960s; I returned to Poland in 1981, was arrested and expelled again one month before the December 1981 coup.

After that coup, many of our comrades were imprisoned. Some of our comrades, like many Solidarnosc militants, had to emigrate or fight underground.

We are still re-organising our clandestine work; we are in the process — as is the whole of Solidarnosc — of clarifying the balance sheet of 1980-81.

Our manifesto issued last year called for the preparation of a second revolution, this time to overthrow the bureaucracy, preparing the seizure of power by the workers' councils, to regenerate the workers' state.

We also launched a united front platform to unite on a class basis all working-class opposition tendencies as opposed to the nationalist and petty-bourgeois democratic opposition.

The Alliance of the Workers' Opposition (POR) was founded independently of us, bringing together some of the working-class political tendencies in Solidarnosc. (Some details of the POR appeared in the last issue of Workers Press — SP).

In a public statement Walka Klas has supported this alliance, and asked to enter it in order to work together with the militants and oppositionists there.

Can you say more about the origins of the RWL?

In 1970, the International Committee of the Fourth International held a 'Conference of Worker Militants in Eastern Europe' in Switzerland.

It brought together activists from the students' and workers' movements in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia — together with the League of Socialist Revolutionaries of Hungary, led by M. Varga which had been in existence since 1963.

The conference decided to start building Trotskyist parties of the Fourth International in all eastern Euro-



Stefan Bekier

pean countries. The RWL was founded in 1974, at a conference held in the west.

At that time we discussed two major problems:

Firstly, the crisis and rebuilding of the Fourth International, the balance-sheet of the Pabloite leadership and also subsequently of the Lambert leadership of the OCI, which instead of fighting for the overthrow of Stalinism, adapted to Stalinism in eastern Europe, and worked not to build Trotskyist parties there but to build a type of social-democratic party.

We saw this as a big political adaptation to the petty-bourgeois democratic intellectual opposition, which based itself on 'human rights' and the decisions of the Helsinki conference.

At this time we knew very little of the SLL, only that Healy had confined himself to Britain, and was certainly not interested in building Trotskyist parties in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

The second problem we were discussing was that, following the December 1970 uprising in the Baltic ports, and the June 1976 general strike, we understood that big revolutionary movements were coming in Poland.

We were preparing a revolutionary programme to put in front of the working class — to fight for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy by revolutionary means, to fight for the

ISRAELI MP AGREES WITH ARAFAT

THE UNITED States and Israeli governments are responsible for blocking the way to a Middle East peace, a member of the Israeli Knesset (parliament) said last week.

Returning from talks with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chair Yasser Arafat, Knesset member Mohammed Miari of the Progressive List for Peace said he agreed with the PLO leader on this.

'Any man who seeks peace must go to the proper address — and the proper address is the PLO,' Miari told the Knesset on Tuesday.

In an interview on Armed Forces Radio, the Arab Knesset member told them: 'I want to say that the PLO is ready for the start of a process of dialogue with peace-seeking Israelis and with the government of Israel within the framework of an international conference.'

Miari said he had gone to meet Yasser Arafat in Tunis on June 10-11, accompanied by the Reverend Riah Abu Al-Assal, head of the Anglican Church in Nazareth, who

is general secretary of the Progressive List.

Led by Miari and retired Israeli major-general Matti Peled, the Progressive List was formed before the last Israeli elections.

It campaigns for Israeli recognition of the PLO, withdrawal from the occupied territories and Palestinian statehood as a basis for a peace which they say is the number one problem other parties have failed to face. It has two members in the Knesset.

While treated with some hostility as a rival by the Israeli Communist Party, the Progressive List has also been labelled 'the PLO in the Knesset' by Zionist commentators.

Far-Right Tehiya party MP and former 'Stern gang' terrorist Geula Cohen demanded last week that Miari be prosecuted for travelling to an 'enemy' country.

N POLAND

A Workers Press feature

WHEN Stefan Bekier visited the Morris picket line in Glasgow, where young workers have been on strike for a year demanding trade union rights, they asked him how such a stand would have been punished in Poland.

He explained that under the present military regime, such long strikes are impossible. Striking is illegal; strike leaders and activists have been sacked in their thousands and jailed.

In the last four years, about 100 workers' leaders have been killed by the SB secret police whose speciality is smashing in their victims' intestines, thus killing them without leaving external marks.

There are at present 260 political prisoners, many of whom have staged hunger strikes for political status.

These include:

- Zbigniew Bujak, Warsaw-based leader of the TKK underground trade union co-ordinating committee and a worker at the Ursus tractor factory;

- Wladyslaw Frasnuk, leader of Lower Silesia region Solidarnosc, a bus driver;

- Tadeusz Jedynak, leader of Upper Silesia region Solidarnosc, a miner;

- Bogdan Borusewicz, leader of Solidarnosc in the ship-building town of Gdansk;

- Adam Michnik, a historian and former leader of the KOR opposition;

- Henryk Wujek, a leading Solidarnosc organiser from Warsaw;

- Bogdan Lis, a Solidarnosc leader and worker in the Gdansk shipyard.



It seems that not everyone stopped to talk to Bekier when he visited the Young Republican Flute Band. Right: With lecturers of the EIS at Langside College, Glasgow. Below right: on the picket line at the Morris furniture factory in Glasgow — who have been out for over a year



ment responsible to such a congress.

When everybody else was saying that the Gdansk agreements were a victory for workers, we said that it was only a first battle, that workers could not win freedoms — not even the right to free trades unionism — by signing an agreement to 'respect the leading role of the Polish Workers' Party' and 'respecting the military alliances with the Kremlin'.

The military coup of December 1981 proved this.

We fought against the dominant illusion that a 'national agreement' with the government was possible and could solve the questions facing the working class.

Very soon — with the general strike movement of March 1981 and its subsequent last-minute cancellation by Lech Walesa — our stand was understood by many workers.

We started to recruit more quickly. Walka Klas became widely known.

In May 1981 we held a conference on the need to build a workers' revolutionary party. Our slogan for that conference was 'Return to Lenin'.

We won working-class cadres, mainly in the Silesian coalfield and in the tractor factories in Warsaw.

In September 1981 Solidarity held its first national conference. We characterised this as the first workers' parliament in the history of Poland or in fact the whole of

eastern Europe.

The conference posed the question of power — but did not solve it; it had an inherent tendency to transform itself into Poland's first national soviet.

There were two major tendencies at that conference. Firstly, those who wanted the movement to impose 'self-limitation', not to question the state power and to come to a national agreement between the PUWP, the church and Solidarnosc.

This was the line of the KOR and 'moderate' leaders like Walesa.

Secondly, the representatives of the most militant factories were putting the slogan of organising workers' control of the factories and the economy, of fighting for free elections — and proposing general strikes, occupations and 'active strikes' as a means of obtaining these ends.

There was a third element at the conference, the nationalists of the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), radical anti-Russian nationalists.

With our small forces, we put forward the call for a government responsible to Solidarnosc and its congress.

The three main points of our programme were:

- Freedom of trade unions, freedom to organise political parties, free elections, dissolution of the repressive anti-working class state forces, the bureaucrats who had organised repression to be brought to trial;

- Independence of Poland, break with the Warsaw pact, fight for a free federation of workers' republics of central and eastern Europe, renunciation of all foreign debt to imperialist bankers;

- Workers' control of the

factories and the whole planned economy.

These were our policies until the military coup of December 13.

It is interesting that after the coup the bureaucracy accused the Trotskyists of being behind a conspiracy in Solidarnosc and used this slander to justify the coup itself.

We waged a campaign denouncing this as an attack on Solidarnosc.

Despite the extremely small size of our organisation, the bureaucracy were terrified that the radicalisation of the workers would soon intersect with our revolutionary programme.

FREEDOM FOR IMPRISONED POLISH TRADE UNIONISTS! FREE JAILED BRITISH MINERS! REINSTATE SACKED MEN!

Stefan Bekier is speaking at all of these meetings.

LEICESTER

Tuesday June 24, 7.30pm
Unemployed Workers centre
Charles Street (above A.A. office)

Chairman: Zbigniew Wojcik, Speakers: Stefan Bekier (Revolutionary Workers League of Poland), Mick Barnes (Bagworth NUM), Paul Henderson (ASTMS)

LONDON

Thursday June 26, 7.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

Chairman: Zbigniew Wojcik, Speakers: Ron Spurway (President, Croydon Trades Council), Cliff Slaughter (WRP CC)

Meeting sponsored by Rob Clay MP and Eric Heffer MP

WALES

Details to be announced

All speakers appear in a personal capacity

BOLOGNA FASCIST LONDON LINK

A FORMER Italian intelligence chief and the grand master of the now-outlawed P2 freemasons lodge are among nineteen people now charged for the 1980 Bologna station bomb outrage, in which 85 people were killed and over 200 injured.

Others accused include known fascists, members of the so-called Armed Revolutionary Nuclei (NAR) — some of whose associates have been living in London since 1980.

General Pietro Musumeci, former head of SISMI (military intelligence), his then deputy Colonel Giuseppe Belmonte and the late General Palumbo (who died in 1984) have been named as bomb conspirators, along with P2 Lodge grand master Licio Gelli, now believed to be in South America.

Another 'London connection' is that Gelli, who escaped a supposed top security prison after being arrested in Geneva three years ago, is also wanted for questioning about the mystery death of Milan banker Roberto Calvi, found hang-

ing from Blackfriars bridge on June 17, 1982.

Like the 1969 bombing of a crowded bank in Milan, the object of the Bologna atrocity was to get the blame put on left-wing groups and create conditions for a right-wing dictatorship.

Gelli was almost drawn into investigations of another bombing, that of a train carrying trade unionists to a rally, in 1974.

His influence among the magistrates — one of whom was his son-in-law — may have helped close that file at the time.

In 1981, however, the 'P2'

scandal broke with revelations of a secret masonic order linking top politicians, army chiefs and bankers and implicated in numerous shady business deals and political conspiracies.

Roberto Calvi, arrested that year for illegal export of capital was a P2 Lodge member, as was Michele Sindona, who died this year.

The Italian fascists' NAR have seemed to find London an attractive haven.

In 1980, Alessandro Alibrandi, wanted for killing a young communist in Rome, fled to Britain along with Roberto Fiore and others.

They are said to have attended meetings of the neo-Nazi League of St George here the following year.

Alibrandi spent part of 1981 in Lebanon, training with the Christian Falangists.

After his presence in London was exposed in a Grana-

By CHARLIE POTTINS

da television 'World in Action' programme he returned to Italy secretly and was gunned down by Rome police.

Fiore remained and has been joined over the past few years by a number of other NAR members, several of whom have been convicted in absentia by Italian courts.

It is believed they have been in touch with fascist organisations in Britain.

Tory Home Secretaries Leon Brittan and Douglas Hurd, between preaching to the rest of the world about 'sheltering terrorists', have repeatedly cited EEC freedom of movement regulations to explain why the Italian fascists cannot be sent back.

However, wanted NAR member Serena Depisa was successfully extradited recently.

● The Bologna bomb trial is due to start next Spring and expected to last some months.

VICTORY TO THE REVOLUTION!

**FOR
WRP**

THE CENTRAL Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party hails the revolutionary forces of South Africa resisting the brutal racist regime.

In particular, it greets with respect the young comrades and children who show great courage against the barbaric state forces of apartheid.

We are confident that through their courage in the ruthless and violent struggle that has been forced on them, these young heroes will achieve the aim inscribed on their banners in the past: to open the door to education and culture and to the wealth extracted by white capital from their parents.

We are conscious that we speak in the country that has been the bastion of imperialism. No other ruling class

can equal the record of the British imperialists.

Terrible as were the ravages of other capitalist nations in Africa, the British ruling class surpassed them all in the numbers of Africans it enslaved, the land it stole, in its colonial wars, its internments, tortures and murders.

The Union Jack was truly a butchers' apron in Africa. Our revolutionary internationalist duty is ceaselessly to remind British workers of this and of their consequent responsibility, indeed bounden duty, to unconditionally

assist the struggle for freedom in Africa.

It is also true that the interests of British workers are bound up with those of Africa. British capital and finance exploits both.

Both have need of ending capitalist exploitation and of planning joint resources of skills and materials in a socialist world free from war.

British capital has benefited from apartheid in extracting great profits from cheap and forced labour.

While the Boer landowners benefited from stolen land, the black occupants who were evicted became a pool of cheap and controlled labour — a source of wealth for the big mining combines, the capitalists, their agents and their families.

Apartheid arose precisely to guarantee that labour and control it. The British capitalist exploiter savagely re-

sisted any organisation of the African worker.

Now, the growth of power and self confidence on the part of African workers is compelling these capitalist owners to seek to preserve their exploitation in other ways than through the apartheid government.

However, trade union organisation continues to be resisted by the employing class in South Africa more violently and mercilessly than it was in Britain in the last century.

The British gentlemen and ladies on the boards of African companies do not hesitate to use the racist state to suppress struggles of African workers.

They fear the independent development of working class organisation. They have encouraged the company union formed by Chief Buthelezi, leader of the reactionary Zulu Inkatha move-

ment, whose followers form many of the police-backed vigilante gangs.

There is little doubt that Buthelezi's Inkatha, (originally encouraged by the ANC in a serious opportunist error), is now backed by US imperialist interests.

Today, however, the great and powerful deciding factor in South Africa is the working class. Occupying the centre of the South African stage, they are thereby at the centre of the world stage, for the South African revolution is set to shake the world.

Less than a decade ago, after Soweto, middle-class sceptics still stood in awe before the apparent might of the South African rulers and dismissed the potential strength of the African masses.

Today, these rulers are on the verge of destruction, desperately driven into ferocious repression, with an insane idea of a final confrontation to crush the Africans once and for all.

A spectre haunts South Africa! It haunts the board rooms of the companies which have made great wealth out of the blood and sweat of Africans; it haunts the Commonwealth so-called Eminent Persons; it haunts both British Tory and Labour leaders; it haunts the handful of 'moderate' African Uncle Toms. It is the spectre of the African revolution!

Spectre

To be more accurate: it is the spectre of the African permanent revolution! Trotsky put it that a semi-colonial or semi-feudal country could only win freedom if its democratic revolution passed over into a socialist revolution, and further, that such a revolution could only be made permanent as part of the world revolution.

Before the Russian Revolution of 1917, Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution meant the correct conclusion that the working class in Russia could not stop



WINNIE MANDELA

short at overturning the Czar and setting up a capitalist democratic republic.

They must make the Russian revolution a revolution which ended capitalism. This they did.

The fear of this in South Africa was summed up by Dr Zach de Beer, a director of the mining giant Anglo-American Corporation, when he said:

'We dare not allow the baby of free enterprise to be thrown out with the bath water of apartheid.'

The international backers of the South African regime in high finance and big business, who have coined enormous profits from the subject of African masses, are now pulling away their support from the apartheid government.

Feverishly, they are trying to find allies among black leaders. What they hope can be the cement for such an alliance is the joint fear of mass insurrection.

They would dearly like a black middle class on which to rest and are prepared to develop it as their ally.

The American Chamber of Commerce, has published a document for its 200 members. It suggests they should encourage black workers to settle in white areas and refuse to register staff under segregation orders.

It then goes on to call for the setting up of a fund to help blacks who wish to set



South African dockers. Workers here and in South Africa face same enemy.

PEOPLE the world over are watching the struggle of the South African masses.

The courage and anger shown in the daily TV coverage of men, women and children, armed only with sticks and stones, facing Botha's troops, has made everyone ask: 'How can I help?'

Uppermost for socialist movements in Britain must be the mobilisation of the strength of the British trades unions. It also raises the question of the political developments inside South Africa.

Given the speed of events and political repression, it is difficult to obtain accurate information. Workers Press certainly welcomes any assistance in this field.

Clearly lack of knowledge does not concern Alex Mitchell, author of the 'News Line' (Saturday, June 14) front page 'Editorial Board statement' and the report by a 'foreign correspondent' on page 5 of the same issue.

Trade Union

'News Line' says, 'We call on trade unions to send funds to arm the African workers who cannot defeat the Boers' war machine with Molotov cocktails and sticks and stones'.

I ask Mitchell two simple questions. Are you going to move such a resolution at your next NUJ branch and, if you are, (which I doubt), what address is the money to be sent to? Such a practical detail is not mentioned.

The reality is that at the present time any money collected for any purpose in the trades unions would be sent to the African National Congress (ANC).

But Mitchell tells us on page 5 that the ANC is meeting Nazis, is working with the UDF, a 'multi-racial, multi-class group

allied to the church and white liberals' and is backed by 'groups that are white, petty bourgeois or bureaucratically managed' and is conducting 'a peaceful non-violent struggle'.

So, come on Brother Mitchell, where do we send the money? People are dying with their sticks and stones. They need more than thin air.

The 'foreign correspondent' has a total ignorance (or is it deceit?) of the political movements in South Africa. Amongst the 'white or petty bourgeois or bureaucratically managed' groups listed by Mitchell as supporting the ANC is COSATU, the Confederation of South African Trade Unions, and in opposition to these groups we have 'the main left wing support is with the "comrades" and the black consciousness Azanian organisations.'

Let us try and clear this rubbish up: The ANC is a national liberation movement dominated politically by the Communist Party who try to limit the struggle in South Africa simply to the fight against apartheid.

This has been CP policy globally since Stalin rediscovered the Menshevik dictum that the working class must play second fiddle to the national movement in the colonial countries.

Stalin's opposition to Trotsky's 'Permanent Revolution' and the lessons of the Russian revolution led the Communist Party to defeat in China and has been repeated with the loss of millions of working class and peasant lives in Spain, Greece, Vietnam, Indonesia, Chile — the list is endless.

Despite this the ANC is unquestionably the most influential movement in South Africa and those seriously fighting not just against apartheid but for the socialist revolution have to take that seriously.

It is easy to dismiss the ANC from the editorial room in London. It is another thing to do it in Soweto.

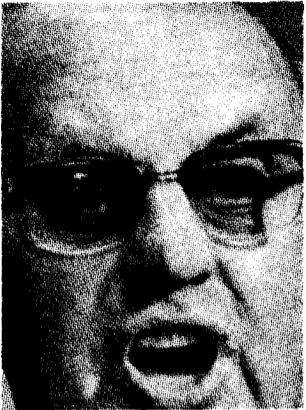
The first significant expression of dissatisfaction with the ANC came in the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) which emerged after the wave of strikes in the early seventies.

**ARMCHAIR
ALEX AND
THE AFRICAN
REVOLUTION
COMMENT BY
BOB MYERS**

AZANIAN

WORKERS SANCTIONS NOW!

Central Committee Statement June 15 1986



Prime Minister BOTHA

up in business.

No doubt, in their minds, was the experience of meeting discontent in the black ghettos of America by creating a privileged layer of black businessmen.

Betray

Those who seek to confine the struggle in South Africa to democratic demands, or a simple removal of apartheid conditions, must eventually betray the mass struggle.

The Communist Party Stalinists' insistence on a 'stages' theory, taken from Me...shevism, belies any claim to prestige from the Russian Revolution.

It cannot be the way to mobilise and unite the Black working class, since it takes away their independence and historic role.

That perspective only helps big international capital and must end with the corruption of black leaders in alliance with black capitalism under the continued domination by imperialist combines, a development plainly to be seen in Zimbabwe.

The basic division is between those who want victory for the oppressed Africans, led by the black working class and the black youth, and those who want to defend their own position.

It is the latter who preach non-violence and moderation, and seek only to mount



ANC President Oliver Tambo

pressure on the apartheid regime to retire from the scene before Africans develop their full power in an armed movement of the masses to smash their oppressors.

British workers — miners in particular — have recently had a taste of this type of middle man, like Kinnock, who give spurious advice on violence and whose pacifism assists the violence of the state forces against those fighting in defence of communities.

What then of the moderates' advice to the African oppressed, who are condemned to their ghettos, whose children are killed and beaten, who are harassed and murdered, imprisoned and tortured? To preach non-violence to them is to preach subjection.

The oppressor's crisis of policy is not something to be used for an alliance with sections of them. The bankers' concern is not over the racist regime's brutality, but whether it is stable enough to protect their investments, their exploitation.

Those capitalist governments and firms who want to put pressure on the apartheid regime to dismantle political suppression do so in order to continue their economic oppression.

They cannot build freedom and democracy for the African worker on the basis of their continued exploitation of him, particularly in the

present crisis when capitalism in the metropolitan countries is forced to attack trade union rights.

The current vicious State of Emergency measures of the apartheid regime bear the mark of desperation. While the rat, cornered, is the more dangerous, the isolation of the regime and the inability of foreign capital to carry on in the old way are factors which give great possibilities of victory for the African masses.

That victory can only be the complete crushing and smashing of the apartheid state and the setting up of an Azanian Republic, with power in the hands of the black workers.

Such a victory would have an electrifying effect on the working class throughout Africa and would be an effective blow to all the counter-revolutionary movements backed by imperialism in Angola, Mozambique and other countries.

It would also be an enormous blow to the centre of world imperialism — the rulers of the United States. It would spur forward the consummation of the colonial revolution in Africa by making it permanent, through placing it in the hands of the working class.

Weaken

It would thus strike a blow at imperialism everywhere and weaken the enemies of British workers who are attacking trade union rights in Britain.

Every worker with a grain of internationalism, of class consciousness, wants the end of apartheid in South Africa. But that means the victory of the black African social revolution. There is no other way.

In Britain, the working class and its organisations must take the generally expressed desire to end the repression of the African masses beyond platonic sympathy.

If the capitalists apply sanctions they do so for their

own ends, which are not the ends of the African workers.

British workers and their organisations must put on their own class sanctions, meanwhile seeking, by all means possible, to make class links with African workers and give them every assistance.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Spanish Revolution. Workers and intellectuals of Britain mobilised support and action in favour of the workers and peasants of Spain.

They looked on the Spanish revolution as their revolution. No less, perhaps in fact even more so, is the mighty revolution in South Africa, our revolution.

In July 1976, after the uprising in Soweto, the Australian Council of Trade Unions imposed a one-month ban on the handling of all cargo from South Africa and on all South African-owned or registered vessels and aircraft.

British labour organisations and leaders must be now forced to give real assistance to South African masses.

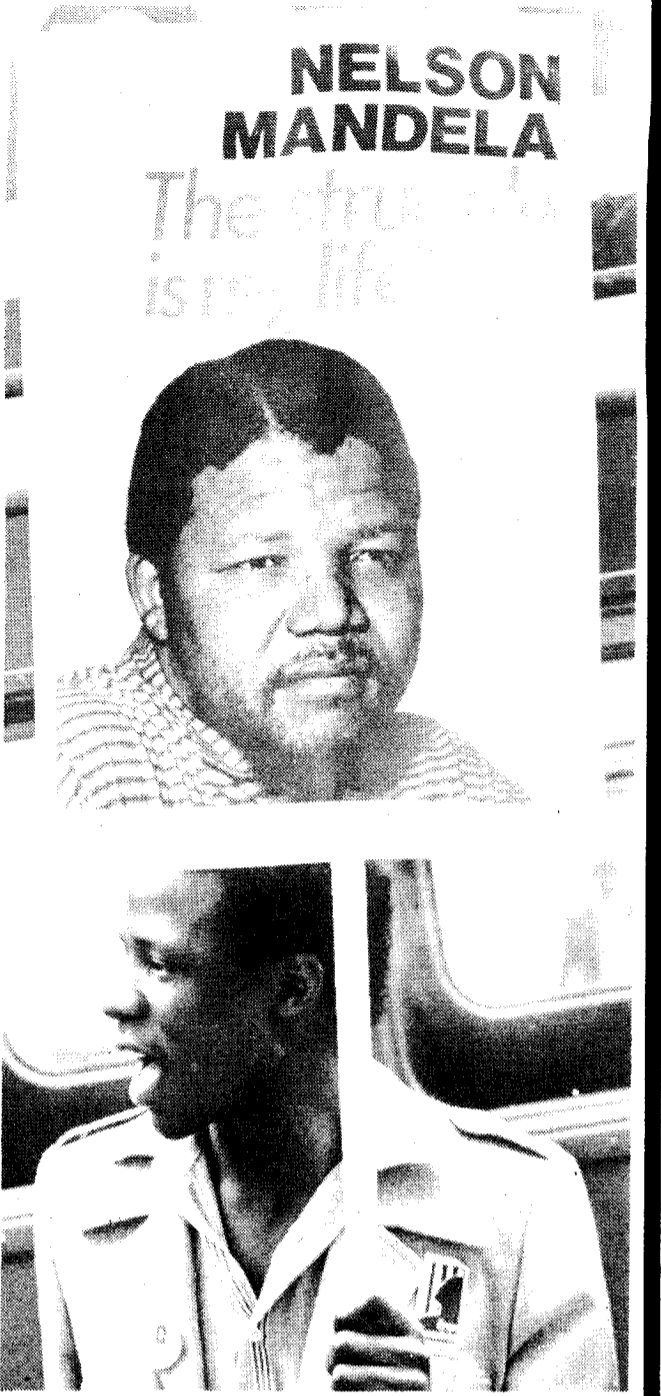
At most, the shopworkers' union USDAW and others have given words of sympathy and vague promises to support their members if they take action on South Africa.

In other cases, union bureaucrats have stifled rank-and-file proposals for action, for fear it would bring them into conflict with the Thatcher government. Such cowardly positions must be fought.

All real internationalists must campaign for their unions to take a stand. Those like the Portsmouth hospital workers who 'blackened' South African produce must have full, effective backing.

Leaders must be compelled to take forward campaigns for action on South Africa.

We will support all those fighting to smash the racist regime, regardless of our differences with them. We reject the Stalinists' insist-



ence on monopoly support for those they influence in the African Nationalist Congress (ANC), and their frequent attempts to dismiss or slander other organisations.

This goes with their cover-up for those in the labour and union bureaucracy in Britain who condemn apartheid's 'immorality' but resist taking real action against it.

Fighters

While saluting the heroism of ANC fighters like Winnie and Nelson Mandela, we reserve the right to criticise the ANC or any other movement when we see fit.

We also support the right of African workers to organise as a class, independently, as the real vanguard of the African revolution.

The important statement of De Beer describes the prospect of permanent re-

volution, with the working class as a force being driven into a struggle for power.

What is posed here is the development of a leadership — a party — that is consciously based on building a leadership of the working class that will go to the end.

Trotskyism alone is based on the permanent revolution and a Marxist programme for this epoch of war and revolutions and one which can realistically guarantee the revolution on an international plane.

The Workers Revolutionary Party pledges all assistance for the development of a Trotskyist leadership in South Africa.

We invite all those who earnestly desire a victory for the Azanian workers to enter into discussion with us on how such a leadership can be built as part of rebuilding the Fourth International.

Both the ANC and BCM had organised trade union movements but the recent rapid growth of trades unions has been in unions not connected with any of the political parties.

In December 1985 most of these unions came together to form COSATU, Confederation of South African Trade Unions — our 'white or petty bourgeois or bureaucratically managed' organisation, according to Mitchell.

Listen to Moses Moyekiso, secretary of the Metal and Allied Workers Union. 'The Charter (the ANC charter) is a capitalist charter. We need a workers' charter that will say clearly who will control the farms, presently owned by the capitalists, who will control the factories, the mines and so on. There must be a change of the whole society.'

'Through the shop stewards council people are opposed to this idea that there will be two stages towards liberation, that we must clean up capitalism first then socialism. It's a waste of time, a waste of energy and a waste of peoples' blood.'

How much better the 'petty bourgeois bureaucrat' describes the situation than the 'Marxist' Mitchell.

Organisations

The theme of independent working class organisations, separate from the populist ANC, runs throughout recent trade union developments and is strong in the student movement, particularly in the Cape where the student leadership fought to end the student boycott precisely on the basis of students alone being unable to overthrow Botha and of the need to use education and the schools in the development of the theoretical struggle and unity with the older generation in the trade unions.

('Apocalypse Now Mitchell' would undoubtedly have opposed this 'retreat' by the Cape leadership particularly as they stress there lies ahead a long bitter battle for socialism in which there are 'no short cuts').

Independence is being developed hesitantly given the strength of the bourgeois ANC. And while stressing their independence from the ANC, COSATU are for a united front with it against apartheid, hence their support for its legality.

The emergence of the independent working class creates the grounds for the building of a socialist movement. But Mitchell sees only 'petty bourgeois bureaucrats'.

Where does he see the future? In the BCM and the comrades.

The BCM was a development in that it based itself on blacks without the ANC's reliance on 'progressive sections' of the white capitalist class. But events in Zimbabwe where black rule solved nothing for the vast majority of blacks dealt a severe blow to this movement.

The growing civil war has seen the youth bearing the brunt of state attacks. Some are attached to various tendencies but in the main the 'comrades' have emerged from a total absence of traditional leadership.

The comrades are undoubtedly the most courageous and fearless force in South Africa but as a whole it remains a spontaneous movement.

In Britain, Mitchell and Healy tell us that socialism can only be achieved through their own party... while in South Africa the future lies with a non-party, non-socialist spontaneous movement. Everything else is 'white, petty bourgeois, bureaucratic'.

The comrades are the future of the socialist revolution but only to the extent that a Bolshevik party taking forward the struggle of Trotsky for the decisive role of the working class in the colonial revolution against the class collaboration policies of the Stalinists is built.

The asserting of working class independence, while vital, if it is not developed into a revolutionary Marxist movement will, as history has repeatedly shown, eventually succumb once more to the popular front of the Stalinists.

The slogan of arms as a demand in the unions at present is an avoidance of any concrete solidarity action that will both help the South African revolution and also expose the treachery of the TUC leadership.

That is why the 'News Line' rubbishes activities like that carried out by Spartacus R in attempting to organise a boycott of South African goods in Brixton.

Mitchell's analysis is opposed to everything that Marx, Lenin and Trotsky fought for — a vanguard working class party. Mitchell, who came to the WRP from Fleet Street, has learned nothing about Marxism.

How to assist the African revolution? Every real solidarity action must be supported and encouraged. Trade unionists must fight in their unions for a South African boycott imposed by their unions.

Unilateral

Unilateral action by either stewards' committees, branches or groups of workers must be fought for to set a lead. Links must be established with the emerging trade unions in South Africa.

Any attempt to stifle the working class voice from South Africa by the Stalinists must be opposed.

And to everyone involved in these struggles, here or in South Africa, read Trotsky's 'Permanent Revolution' — study the history of the Communist Party's role in the colonial struggle and join the fight to build a revolutionary party.

Yes this does leave the supply of arms which the blacks so desperately need unresolved, but it is in the development of the struggle in South Africa and here that 'insoluble problems' will be solved, not in Healy's head.

Forward to the Azanian socialist revolution.

FREE THE GUILDFORD FOUR!

LAST SATURDAY the Guildford Four Campaign Committee held their first street meeting to bring to the streets of Kilburn the case of the four innocent people held in jail for 12 years.

Kilburn, in west London, has a large Irish population and is also the area where some of the Guildford Four were living before they were arrested in 1974.

A number of different organisations supported the lively campaign and worked side by side collecting signatures for a petition calling for the release of the Guildford Four.

Paul Hill's aunt Teresa and his sisters Liz and Marion tirelessly collected money and signatures. They gave out thousands of leaflets and explained the details of the case to interested passers by.

Part six of the Guildford Four series will appear next week.

This week KEN LIVINGSTONE, who supports the Guildford Four campaign, explains in an interview with PHIL PENN why he supports the call for their release.

Having just seen the conditions in which the so-called 'Brighton Bomb' trial took place, where those protesting against its show trial nature were arrested, what do you think of the allegation that the Guildford Four were victims of a media show trial?

We have seen in these trials that immediately after the arrests a climate of hysteria is created. Streets are closed off and huge convoys of police run back and forth in the run up to the trial.

During such trials public relations speeches are made by the prosecuting counsel which the press faithfully report. Often these trials start at unusual times.

The 'Brighton' trial which we have just seen, started just two days before the London Borough Council elections. You come away with the conclusion that it is basically a PR job to try to build support for the police and opposition to a united Ireland.

The Guildford Four are innocent but there are those who would say that no Irish political prisoners are guilty, that the guilt lies with the British government who refuse to give Ireland its liberty. What would you say to them?

There are different positions depending upon which prisoners you are talking about. The Guildford Four are clearly innocent. That has been demonstrated with all the evidence that is required.

The state knows that they are innocent. That is reflected in the much lower level of security around them in prison than is usual for those prisoners where the state believes that they are actually guilty.

You are also in a position where there is a complete double standard operating. Undoubtedly in any war you get a whole series of accidents and over-the-top use of power by all sides.

You cannot have a war

without a lot of innocent casualties.

What we see is massive hysteria every time a Republican unit makes an error as they did at Harrods, but a complete cover up and whitewash whenever the British army goes berserk as they did when they shot 13 Catholics to death on Bloody Sunday.

The commanding officer was decorated and no-one went to prison.

When British troops have shot the faces off children with rubber and plastic bullets they have never gone to prison for it.

It is quite obvious that the RUC were operating a shoot-to-kill policy which has been covered up. People got off. This is what I mean by double standards.

My broad view is that as soon as we can bring the war to a conclusion you do what you do at the end of any war. That is all the prisoners held by any side should be released.

What do you think is the solution to the question of Ireland?

There is a short answer to that: we have to go.

There is nothing that Britain can do in Northern Ireland except continue to prop up the present power structure, which is literally decades of discrimination against the nationalist minority.

The idea that we are there holding the fort or keeping sides apart is nonsense. We are there supporting the likes of Paisley and Molyneux and that is why British troops are not seen as impartial or neutral.

After decades of gimmicks, ideas and ploys there are no gimmicks left to try.

There is no way that Britain can rule Ireland without an apparatus of terror and repression and the sooner we realise that and go the better.

What do you think of the role of Labour governments in the past on the question of Ireland?

Their role has been indistinguishable from the role of Tory governments. It is important to bear in mind that throughout the last two hundred years both the major political parties in Britain have been imperialist parties.

In the last century it was the Tories and the Liberal imperialists and as the Liberals were replaced by the Labour Party that also took on all the basic policies of an imperialist party.

Whilst there have been examples like India where because of economic pressures a Labour government has been prepared to get out, there is no evidence that the Labour Party in government has ever done anything other than continue to defend imperialist interests.

Lastly, would you like to send a message to the Guildford Four campaign?



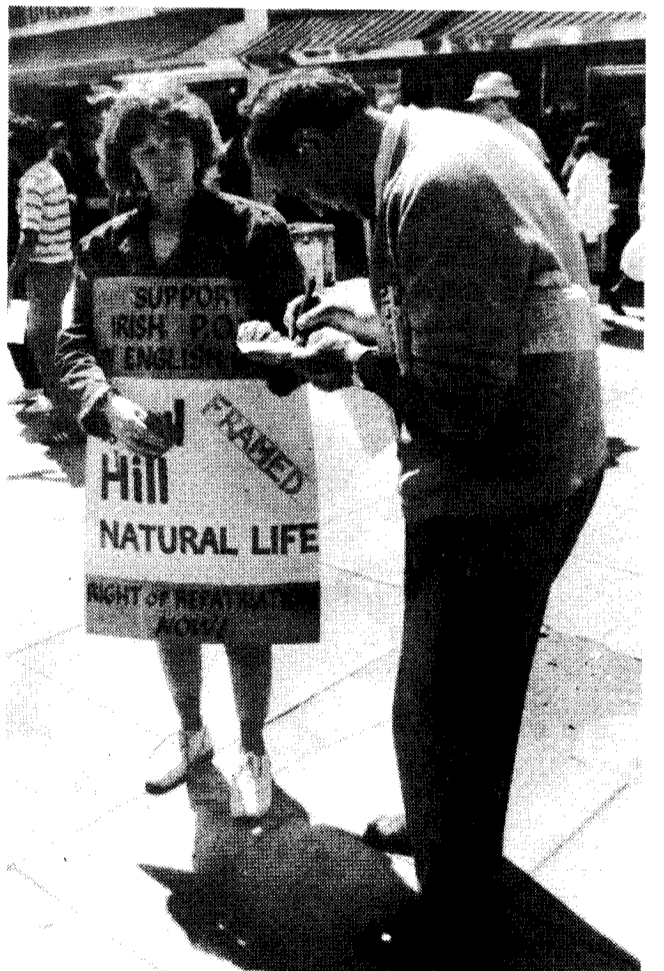
Yes. I would like to pledge my support and make it clear that there is no doubt that they are innocent and at some point when they are freed we will have a major reparation to meet for the loss of their liberty.

Above: Ken Livingstone with Paul Hill's sister, Liz, last Saturday

Right: One of the many Saturday shoppers who signed the petition.

Below: the placard that tells all.

Bottom: the poster display that attracted attention on Kilburn's busy High Street



REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN

HM Prison Long Lartin, S Littleton, Evesham Worcs, WR11 5TZ

LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.

JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.

GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.

RICHARD GLENHOLMES: 10-year sentence, B32955.

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

EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.

HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.

PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.

STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence, 758663.

NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence, 879225.

WAKEFIELD

HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

ANTHONY CLARKE: 14-year sentence, 726381.

SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.

CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.

PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.

NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY

HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence, 69204.

GARTREE

HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP

ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-

year sentence, B32954. JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635. RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.

FRANKLAND

HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham

PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.

EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.

BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.

PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.

HULL

HM Prison Hedon Rd, Hull, Humberside

MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085.

WORMWOOD SCRUB

HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Du Cane Rd, London W12 0AE

ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

ON REMAND AWAITING SENTENCE/BRITON

HM Prison Brixton, PO Box 369, Jebb Ave, London SW2 5XF

MARTINA ANDERSON

ELLA O'DWYER

GERRY McDONNELL

PETER SHERRY

PAT McGEE

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON

PATRICK ARMSTRONG

GERARD CONLON, PAUL HILL,

JUDITH WARD, HUGH CALLAGHAN, JOHN WALKER,

BILLY POWER, GERARD HUNTER, RICHARD McIL-KENNA,

PADDY HILL.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

WHAT IS HEALYISM? PART TWO

A reply to the Healyite statement of May 30 1985

LAST WEEK'S article showed how the Healy group ran from the party to the state to try and smash the Workers Revolutionary Party after the corruption of its leaders had been exposed.

This was shown to rest on a ground of political ferment flowing from the movement of the class — a deepening social and political crisis expressed most sharply in the miners' strike.

The split in the party centred on basic ideological questions of whether corruption — here of a particularly heinous type — could be condoned within a revolutionary leadership.

The struggle exploded on the issue of 'Revolutionary Morality'; the standards of life to which revolutionaries should aspire as a precondition for leadership.

It moved rapidly beyond this stage — those who believed that the moral issues were the essential question became quickly disenchanted, not just with Healy, but with the party that threw him and his followers onto the street (from where they bounced into the lawyers' waiting rooms).

The explosion in the WRP unleashed a flood of political discussion on a myriad of issues, organisational (daily paper, trade union and youth work, etc), historical, political and philosophical.

As this proceeded, it became clear that the issue of corruption was the semblance of a much deeper problem. To an extent, the immediate issues both revealed and concealed the real questions.

Alongside those who held that the form of the problem was paramount, that 'Revolutionary Morality' was — and is — the key issue, were those who said that the form did not matter at all.

This tendency said that, by and large, moral issues were settled questions — when unprecedented experiences showed precisely that they were not.

All that was needed, it seemed, was to 'defend the heritage', to rescue the by-and-large unblemished banner from a temporary lowering so that a new generation of self-appointed leaders could proceed in much the same way as before.

Some things could be questioned but others — even where they had shown themselves to be suspect, like 'Security and the Fourth International' — not only should not, but could not, be doubted.

Two tendencies reached but one conclusion — and that the same as the Healy group — that the WRP was a finished, degenerate 'Banda/Slaughter', 'Slaughter-Banda', 'Bruce/Hunter' or 'Gibson/Bruce' clique of right-moving centrists.

This convergence of views must surely find its organisational expression, even if it goes no further at this stage than a shared fascination with legal proceedings.

How long before the various tendencies find common ground, not in a platform to build a movement (they are much too disparate for that), but in the need to oppose, to destroy, the development of our party?

Ask just one question: how did our photographer know that there was to be a Healyite meeting in Leicester last week? (See last week's Workers Press).

The rapprochement is already underway.

If it is as leaky as a skewered sieve, that is only a sign of its unstable nature.

Learn

The question to which we must address ourselves is this:

Has the split in the WRP any historical significance? Is it more than simply the break-up of a hopelessly sectarian clique into a mass of fragments?

Is there anything to learn from the degeneration of this movement or should we simply wipe the slate clean (equal but opposite to saying that the slate does not need a wipe at all)?

The explosion in the party has created the conditions world-wide for a complete re-evaluation of Trotskyism, a negation of the previous period which both preserves and destroys what has preceded this stage.

Every great change in history is anticipated by the break-up of the political, ideological and philosophical presumptions of the old.

The degeneration of feudal philosophy was tackled by the great bourgeois philosophers, especially Bacon and Descartes.

They did not seek to label the old with given philo-



FOUR Idols, one icon. Left to right, Banda, Mitchell, North and Healy. Subjectively asunder but united on the need to silence the membership of the WRP. Will this unity find an organisational form? Marx wrote on how the movement of the working class breaks up the sects, who then desperately try to re-impose their control over the movement. Will history verify him anew?

sophical categories; they passionately argued that the old learning had degenerated beyond the point where it could be argued over.

Bacon called the old method the 'Idols of Learning', false gods, so to speak, which had to be destroyed. And destroy them he did.

In this ruthless questioning, he actually preserved, went back to, all that was best in the old culture — few were as learned as Francis Bacon.

The same is true of Marx. Bourgeois philosophy reached a peak in the German classical idealism of Hegel.

But to develop beyond that point, to maintain the great gains that Hegel had made, his work had to be turned on its head — every nuance, shade or proposition had to be questioned.

If the WRP does not share the erudition and genius of

these great men, it does seek to learn from their spirit.

The Trotskyism of the movement since 1940 has, in a sense, run its course. We shall establish its continuity in, and only in, the struggle to break it up, to deepen it, to re-examine every aspect.

The party has thrown out of its ranks almost every one of its recognised leaders — and every single one of those who enjoyed the confidence of Healy: the motley accord of tax-gatherers, dubious Murdoch-trained or public-school educated journalists and eccentric actors who make up the public face of his rump.

This has made us stronger, not weaker. Every party member shares in this process, the elected leadership (properly elected for the first time, incidentally) reflects this strength.

We have started talking with movements, within Bri-

tain and all over the world; with groups and parties aspiring, like ourselves, to Trotskyism.

All of these comrades face the same general problem, even if it was the WRP where it was expressed most sharply: how do we break out of the isolation that has characterised the Trotskyist movement for four decades?

The WRP's internal relations expressed in the sharpest form a character of any isolated group: they were a reflection of its relation with the working class.

The chains that increasingly came to keep the international movement apart from the class broke at their weakest link, in the party that reflected this contradictory problem in the most acute way.

This discussion is invaluable in our own education and we prize every part of it. But we bring to it one priceless component: the knowledge that the heritage of the movement is ours.

We claim no exclusive credit for its gains but are confident that we can participate

in a real development of Trotskyism.

To begin with, we must start to explain the problems of the Fourth International.

Were these the fault of its leaders (Healy as much as anyone else) — or were they 'products of their time'?

Is it the movement of classes in society that determines our thinking, qualities and characteristics or is it (as Healy and Banda both assert) that the qualities of the individual determine the course of political events?

Has the period moulded its political parties — or does their development express laws which is independent of, and primary to, the general movement of history?

Why did the period of the second World War and the post-war epoch fail to produce leaders of the calibre of Marx and Engels or Lenin and Trotsky?

Has the explosion in the WRP a necessary (not the same as inevitable, by the way) aspect. Can it be explained materialistically?

To be continued

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REGULAR DHSS PROTEST

By CHRIS McBRIDE

ABOUT FIFTY people demonstrated outside the DHSS head office recently in opposition the Fowler Review: new Tory proposals to smash up every section of the social security system.

The picket, which assembles on the first Thursday of every month, was organised by various trades councils, unemployed centres and old age pensioners organisations.

Norman Crouch from the SPCS (civil servants) union told the pickets that the 'review' included cuts in housing benefit which amounted to four hundred million pounds.

'People on family income supplement will lose free schools for their children' he said.

Referring to the Tory party leadership he said that 'they had to get their whips out' in

order to stop the growing pressure from the back benches.

He pointed out that the facilities at the DHSS 'were utterly useless' and also mentioned the fact that people under the age of twenty five will be worst hit.

Another speaker was Gary Hollingsbee from the youth section of the 'News Line' group who told the pickets that 'the attacks on the unemployed were inseparable from the Tory attacks on the trade unions and the youth' and that 'the trade unions must open the doors to the unemployed to unite the employed with the unemployed'.

People from Camden Unemployed Action Group, Camden Claimants Union and Lambeth Unemployed Centre were among the pickets.

Some of the pickets feel it is necessary to 'step up the action'.

- IRISH WOMEN PRISONERS ARE STRIP-SEARCHED IN BRITISH JAILS
 - PLASTIC BULLETS ARE SHOT IN TO CROWDS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND
 - THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT SOLVES NOTHING: IT MEANS MORE ARMED REPRESSION
- British workers must take a stand on Ireland

COME TO A

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE ON IRELAND

Saturday June 28th, 10:30 am - 5:00 pm

City Halls, Candleriggs, Glasgow

Speakers invited: a Sinn Fein representative, a prisoners' relative, Liz Hill (sister of Paul Hill of the Guildford 4), the general secretary of an Irish trade union, and from the EIS and the NUM (in a personal capacity).

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A motion will be proposed for the formation of a 'West of Scotland Campaign for a United Ireland'

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LETTERS

The Editorial board of Workers Press welcomes letters on any topic from all our readers. Please address them to The Editor, Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London, SW4 0JT. Pressure on space is acute; some letters have been

waiting for publication for weeks, others have simply not made it.

Please try to keep your letters short — they have much more chance of getting printed.

While we try to print letters as they arrive, we reserve the right to edit letters to give everybody a chance. Where letters have been edited, this will be indicated.

Workers Power — heritage and inheritance

I WOULD like to comment on something that was raised both by Bill Hunter at the discussion conference held in Nottingham, on the 'History of Trotskyism' (April 26) and by a participant from the WRP at the Communist Forum (June 8) which took place in Reading.

Namely that Workers Power, 'ashamed' of its State Capitalist past, downgrades the significance of the struggle against Cliff's advocacy of State Capitalism within the British section in 1950 — which led to his neutralist position in the Korean war.

Workers Power, as a group originating from the International Socialists (now the SWP), could not instantly and automatically overcome the limitations of our tradition.

When we emerged from the IS in the early 1970's — as a result of a political fight against the IS capitulation to British chauvinism concerning the Irish national liberation struggle — we still bore the imprints of the parents that created us.

Surely this is something the WRP is trying to grapple with after the expulsion of Healy and Co.

Before we publically presented a position of the USSR, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba etc. as degenerated workers states, a long period of democratic discussion was undertaken within the organisation.

This is why the time gap appeared so long before we discussed our State Capitalist baggage.

What was the seminal issue that led to our change of position? It was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and all the political issues it raised that created a dynamic that led to a theoretical re-appraisal of our State Capitalist stance.

The position we adopted was one which refused to call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops (although we did not support the initial invasion) as this would represent a victory for counter-revolution in the region and would endanger the defence of the Soviet Union.

Defend

At the same time, we did not call for political support for the bureaucracy but recognised that the best way to defend the USSR is to build a revolutionary leadership of the Afghan workers and peasants in Afghanistan.

Obviously, we recognized the contradiction between our position in this concrete situation and our maintaining that the USSR was State Capitalist — leading to programmatic change on this question.

In contrast, it was the Soviet invasion of Finland and Poland that led Burnham and Shachtman to capitulate to bourgeois public opinion and to reject the

theory of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers state.

However, when the British section entered into political struggle with Cliff on this question of State Capitalism, it was unfortunately not based on the dialectical method that Trotsky had utilised in relation to Finland and Poland.

Instead, it was based upon the empirical impressionism of Pablo.

The stance of the British section on the Korean War, whilst correct as a political position, was based on the false methodological premises of War-Revolution (in which the present objective conditions could put Stalinism on the revolutionary road, despite its subjective intentions) adopted by a meeting of the International Executive Committee in 1949.

It was Lenin who made the fundamental point in his polemics with Bukharin on the 'Trade Union' question that anyone can eclectically adopt a formally correct political position (Bukharin was attempting to combine elements of both Zinoviev's and Trotsky's position on the trade unions to bring about party unity at any price).

The real question to be asked is 'does it represent a capitulation to Trotsky's false methodological approach on this occasion?'

Trotsky was wrongly separating the crucial poli-

tical task of cementing the links between the vanguard and the mass of the working class and peasantry from the economic task of the development of the productive forces — as contained in his flawed conception of the total integration of the trade unions and the state.

Bukharin's half-way house accepted the fundamental premises of Trotsky's false approach, so representing political capitulation.

This historical analogy is used because our scant attention to the battle concerning State Capitalism is not due to deviousness but the notion that, methodologically, far from this struggle leading to a re-arming of the cadre in the dialectical method — the correct political position adopted is merely an episode, along with others — it lead to the centrist degeneration of the FI.

Trotskyism

Furthermore, did the British section at the time of the Korean War put forward a position of revolutionary defeatism or merely tail-end the Bevanites, in line with their closet Trotskyism?

Perhaps comrade Hunter could enlighten us? After all, the USFI British section 'formally' supported Argentina in the Malvinas War but with a method inherited from Pablo and Hansen's conception of National Liberation struggle (kept very quite most of the time, I hasten to add) so as not to offend their trendy CND friends.

The only contribution (that I am aware of) of any theoretical significance, is Ted Grant's 'The Marxist Theory of the State'.

Maybe someone could review this pamphlet for Workers Press?

The FI of the early 1950's was facing a task of immense theoretical development, in line with the changing situation.

Ironically, it was Pablo himself, in his article 'Where Are We Going', that pointed out the need to understand the dialectical nature of Stalinism in the new objective conditions of the post war period.

It was the tragedy of the FI that his empiricism masquerading as dialectics was

never challenged.

Instead it was answered at the level of sterile orthodoxy, amidst repeated cries of liquidationism.

His valid remark and challenge was taken up only by himself — but in a profoundly opportunist manner.

Consequently, the IC never understood that Stalinism's counter-revolutionary character is contradictory: its general quality, representing accommodation with world imperialism, can lead in specific concrete circumstances to the overthrow of capitalism in a counter-revolutionary manner.

Indeed this failure to appreciate the relation between the universal and the particular is the reason behind a supporter of Mike Banda at the Reading meeting putting the following questions to Workers Power supporters present: 'How can you have a counter-revolutionary overthrow of Capitalism? Didn't Mao lead a successful revolution?'

I want to mention at his point that, as a member of Workers Power, I wholeheartedly endorse the political characterisation of the Vietnamese Trotskyists made in Workers Press No 27.

If (and I suspect they do to judge from the Reading meeting) the followers of Mike Banda still see the Vietnamese Trotskyists as 'sectarian', this is a political crime of an unpardonable nature, representing an apology for the past articles of Mike Banda on this question.

(An empirical subjective response, if ever there was one!)

At the Reading meeting, I stated that a contradiction existed between Gerry Downing's approach in his article and his centrist methodological adaptation to petty-bourgeois nationalism concerning the Irish National Liberation struggle.

I would like to take this opportunity to correct any unintentional impression that may have been conveyed at the meeting: that this represents an equal political crime or error, ranking alongside the Banda apologists' position on Vietnam.

Obviously, his position springs from a healthy subjective response to the need

to solidarise with the forces fighting the British occupation of Ireland and revulsion against Healy's chauvinism on this question.

Unfortunately Gerry's subjectivism has led him to essentially regard Sinn Fein as an 'adequate Blunt Instrument' of revolution in Ireland, as was made clear in his contribution at the recent 1916 Dublin Commemoration meeting of the Irish Socialist League.

So he has effectively repudiated the need to build a revolutionary socialist party in Ireland.

Finally, in closing, I would like to answer the following question: 'Why aren't Workers Power mentioned, in their book on the history of the FI?'

The answer, quite simply, is: we were not significant at the time to be in it!

Most of our members were mere twinkles in their parents' eyes at the time the important episodes of the centrist degeneration of the FI were going on.

As a result, all we can say is how a principled revolutionary opposition to Pablo could have been constructed.

This is not smug hindsight — or dismissal of the history of the FI and the 'struggle against Pabloism' — but a Marxist characterisation of what historically took place and what is necessary today to build a revolutionary international on a principled basis.

Grown

However, since the publication of our book (written jointly with the Irish Workers Group) the 'Movement for the Revolutionary Communist International' has been formed and has significantly grown in the recent period.

Consequently our theoretical contribution can now acquire a practical content — in helping to create the programmatic basis around which a principled revolutionary international can be built.

I dare say that, if a new edition of the book on the FI came out, the MRCI would rate a mention!

Phil Sharpe
Nottingham Workers Power



US marines in Korea

More on the Vietnamese Trotskyists

I WAS greatly interested to read Gerry Downing's article on 'Vietnam and Trotskyism' that appeared last week.

As least finally the revolutionary working class leadership in that country is starting to get some of the credit due to them for their courageous struggle against French imperialism and Stalinist treachery.

Perhaps it will finally start to get through to those calling themselves Trotskyists that a pre-condition for Ho Chi Minh's peasant guerrilla warfare, and the Stalinist set-up that resulted from it was the physical annihilation of the Vietnamese working-class movement — the rank and file by the French and the leadership by the Stalinists.

Far from being 'based on the working class', as stated by 'Fourth International' magazine in 1968, the only relationship between the Vietnamese Communist Party and the working class has been one of hostility since the late thirties.

It is a peasant-based bureaucratic/military clique, exactly as Trotsky analysed the Chinese Com-

munist Party under Mao.

If anything, the cover-up on behalf of the Vietnamese Stalinists is even worse, and goes back further, than Gerry states it.

On June 27, 1947, Natalia Trotsky was already complaining that 'support to our section has been forgotten for so long, and where even to demand who assassinated Ta-Thu-Thau has been forgotten in order to support, without serious criticism, the Stalinist government of Ho Chi Minh, greetings from whom were so warmly hailed by 'The Militant' and 'La Verite'.

When the Chinese Trotskyist leader Peng Shu-Tse wished to warn the Vietnamese Trotskyists in France who were about to return to Vietnam in the fifties about the repression of the movement in China, he was prevented by the International Secretariat apparatus — and the Vietnamese were arrested almost as soon as they got back.

As late as February 5, 1974, the Bolshevik/Leninist Group of Vietnam was appealing to the 'Tenth World Congress' even to publicise their existence

among the sections of the 'United Secretariat', complaining that they had received 'no help whatsoever from the International'.

The 'Newsletter' of the SLL, on the other hand, was proclaiming that Ho Chi Minh personified 'all the anti-imperialist hatred and fighting spirit of the colonial peoples' (September 9, 1969).

Speaking of personification in history, I notice that the Healy organisation's political committee, in a statement dated May 30, modestly described its mentor as 'the founder of the movement in Britain'.

This must be news to Reg Groves, Margaret Johns and others still around.

Such supporters of Healy as are not too busy reading his recommended Moscow textbooks on dialectics might notice that he does not appear in our history of the British movement ('Against the Stream') until page 275, only a dozen pages from the end of the book.

We must have slipped up in our researches somewhere!

Al Richardson



Vietnamese fighters... hampered by the leadership of the Communist Party

LETTERS

What price a Pottins history?

WITH THE expulsion of Gerry Healy and his clique from the WRP, many of us on the left have welcomed the new openness of your organisation.

We have found the frankness and honesty something which others on the left would do well to emulate.

It was therefore with a certain degree of surprise that I read the letter from Charlie Pottins (Palestine and Labour — set the record straight) which borrowed a political method that I thought had been discarded.

A number of crucial facts were completely omitted, others distorted, a few merely invented with personal attacks substituted for a serious political analysis of what went wrong in the Labour Committee on Palestine.

Yet even Pottins has to admit that, from day one, Knight was intent on winding up all activity, whereas the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine has continued to gather support despite the political climate inside the Labour Party and the wider movement being adverse for a number of reasons.

These include the witch-hunt, memories of the Lebanese invasions fading with the advent of the Labour Zionist coalition in Israel and the divisions inside the PLO.

Founded

I am not now, nor have I ever been, a member of Matgamna's Socialist Organisation.

When Andrew Hornung (who is now no longer a member) and myself founded the LCP on June 30 1982 at County Hall, London, it was out of a desire to unite all anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian forces in the Labour Movement.

Indeed I proposed Ted Knight as Treasurer and Penny Cole as Press Officer.

I was soon to discover however that Knight and Cole were more interested in factional manoeuvring than unity.

This crystallised out at the founding conference that Pottins describes.

On the morning of the Conference, the Steering Committee held a meeting at which Knight announced that some 100 LCP members had applied to join via the Labour Herald offices.

However, the application forms had been 'stolen' from his office but he had faithfully recorded them in his blue book.

After inquiries by The Guardian established that no burglary had occurred, Knight's story changed.

The forms had been 'lost' when had moved offices.

We were faced with what turned out to be 100 members of the WRP, marshalled by Sheila Torrance and Alex Mitchell, who had had no contact with the campaign, had expressed no previous interest and in some cases did not even know what conference they were attending, arriving merely in order to supply a block vote to Mr Knight.

This was not merely undemocratic but unacceptable given that we were a Labour Committee on Palestine which had just won a major victory at the Labour Party Conference, when the Norwood/Hackney N resolution, sponsored by a number of CLP's, had been passed.

To have had members of another political party, controlled by G Healy and funded by certain Arab governments, in an artificial and rigged majority spell disaster for the LCP.

That is why we walked out and that is what Pottins 'omitted' to mention.

Instead Pottins devises a conspiracy theory involving all sorts of machinations within SO.

Let me set his mind at rest.

Matgamna was nowhere about, it was I who argued for and persuaded others, including SO members, that we should walk out.

Those who left included the majority of LP members there, members of the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen), Palestine Solidarity Campaign members and the majority of Palestinians.

Regained

Despite the support of Ken Livingstone (who now sponsors the LMCP) we rapidly regained all but one of the original sponsoring MPs (and some additional ones) plus all the original affiliated CLP's and TU's.

The question of the composition of the Steering Committee is irrelevant given it was elected by a rigged conference.

In any case Knight and Cole held the major offices.

We realised then that if Knight was prepared to go to all these lengths it could only be because, in Pottins own words, 'the Healy-Mitchell former WRP leadership had no perspective for future work.' Time has vindicated our decision.

Pottins quotes independents like Alf Filer to support his case — yet 18 months later Alf admitted to me that he and others had been used by Knight.

Alf has since given his support to the LMCP and worked with us on the Labour Movement Conference on Palestine in May 1984, which had over 150 labour movement delegates.

The same applies to the Palestinian member, Yusuf.

It is simply untrue, and Pottins knows it, to suggest that we 'wanted the LCP committed to a more 'Rejectionist' policy, condemning the PLO's relations with Arab regimes and denouncing 'Zionism' in every sentence.'

Our proposal, as contained in point nine of our Programme, was 'Opposition to any actions by Arab governments which run counter to the aim of Palestinian self determination.'

Similarly, all we wanted was one explicit declaration that the LCP, unlike the bourgeois-arabist Labour Middle East Council (chaired by MP Don Concanon and Ernie Ross MP), which Knight unsuccessfully tried to link up with, would be anti-Zionist i.e. opposed to the racist, colonialist and expansionist nature of the Israeli state.

If it had been proposed, we would have opposed support

for Peace Now (which the Zionists used at that particular time to show how 'democratic' Israel was) because the latter is racist (Jewish only), did not call for complete withdrawal from Lebanon as opposed to the 40 Km line, and was led by serving Israeli Labour Party army

officers.

Other 'facts', such as Alf Filer being shouted down or my alleging that others 'were in the pay of Arab reaction', are false.

Pottins' attempts to categorise me as a 'super-rejectionist' are also untrue.

I simply support the concept of a democratic, secular state of Palestine and I believe that to call for a 'two



Knight

states' solution is, in essence, to call for an imperialist solution in which there will be a Palestinian bantustan and a bloodbath of the left.

Pottins attempts to see the guiding hand of Matgamna behind this are equally mischievous.

Matgamna, who is now busy courting all manner of left Zionists, has never supported the democratic, secular state.

Nor is it true that we have given support to one section of the PLO rather than another.

As point four of our programme states, we are in 'solidarity with the PLO as the chosen representatives of the Palestinian people'.

Pottins asks us from the sidelines why we don't mobilise around concrete demands 'such as Labour recognition of the PLO'.

But this is exactly what we did at the last Labour Party Conference when Campaign Group MPs such as Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner, who have never before associated themselves with the Palestinians, signed a statement distributed by the LMCP calling on the NEC to recognise the PLO unconditionally.

I enclose a copy of our programme and, space permitting, you are welcome to print it.

I am sorry that Charlie Pottins feels so bitter about what has gone before that he deliberately distorts our position.

However, let me reiterate what Anna Wagstaffe stated.

We would be more than happy to work with members of the WRP. Now that you have removed Gerry Healy and Co from the WRP, we would not expect you to repeat the past practices of his group and try to 'take-over' the LMCP but to work from within, expressing your disagreements where you have them, as WRP members did at our recent AGM.

We would hope that, one day, Mr Pottins would also feel free to accept this invitation.

Tony Greenstein
Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine.

This letter has been slightly edited.

Workers Press hopes to publish the programme of the LMCP in the near future. The volume of correspondence provoked by Cde Pottins' letter precludes so doing immediately — Editor

Brent: Palestine and Labour Party policy

IN HIS reply to the letter from the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine, Charlie Pottins makes several statements about Socialist Viewpoint supporters in Brent East Labour Party.

These need to be challenged for their factual inaccuracies and dubious implications.

Comrade Pottins begins by stating that LMCP supporters around Socialist Viewpoint in Brent East CLP raised the issue, not of support for the PLO, but of expelling the Zionists.

In fact we proposed that Paole Zion be disaffiliated from the Labour Party, that is that it have its position of being able to send delegates to local parties and direct to national conference (as a 'Socialist Society') taken away.

Is Cde Pottins in favour of an Israel-backed Zionist organisation enjoying this privileged position, incidentally one which they and the Labour bureaucracy deny to

Black Sections?

We did not propose the expulsion of Zionists from the Labour Party. This motion would still have allowed them to be individual members.

Furthermore, around the same time, Brent East CLP re-affirmed its support for the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and for a democratic secular state of Palestine, hardly an avoidance of policy issues.

Pottins goes on to say that 'Brent East got foisted on it a spokesperson for the then Syrian-backed Palestine Salvation Front and the usual sterile debate between Rejectionists and Zionists.'

He casually neglects to mention that one of the speakers, on the instigation of SV supporters, was prominent anti-Zionist Moshe Machover, a supporter of Matzpen.

Pottins follows this up in

classic 'guilt by association' fashion to state 'since then, not-so-red' Ken, their prospective MP, has accepted an invitation to Israel from the 'left' Zionist party, Mapam.'

Someone who knows as much about Brent East CLP as Pottins claims to should know that SV supporters, together with others on the left, opposed and organised against Livingstone's selection as parliamentary candidate following his sell-out of the GLC rate-capping struggle — incidentally at a time when the WRP was still failing to criticize him for this.

Similarly, we oppose his concessions to Zionism.

The clear debate on the policies needed by those who support the Palestinian struggle is not helped by Cde Pottins' distortion of facts.

Pete Firmin

Socialist Viewpoint supporter and member of Brent East CLP.

A WRP's eye view of the LCP fiasco

AN UNDERSTOOD rule of the WRP was that members did not join organisations other than their trade unions without checking first with the Party centre.

Permission was only given if an undertaking was given that Party work would not suffer!

As a Party committed to the cause of the Palestinians, there was every reason why individual members should join organisations in support of the Palestinians and the PLO.

This was not apparently a major concern until the founding of the Labour Committee on Palestine in the Autumn of 1982.

WRP members from all over the country were brought to London, had a levy collected from them and were sent off in small groups to Lambeth Town Hall; the leading member of each group was given a slate of candidates (which included Andrew Hornung and Tony Greenstein) for the steering committee.

As no explanation was given — an explanatory meeting prior to the conference did not materialise — I assumed that our presence was part of the support being given to Councillor Knight.

The impression given to Party members that our intervention was 'hush-hush' was obviously not shared by Alex Mitchell and John Spencer who behaved so as to draw attention to themselves, including booing and hissing among others, Alan Bott.

The behaviour particularly of Alex Mitchell throughout the proceedings would certainly not have been tolerated in a trade union meeting.

Another distraction was the serious game of 'hunt the membership book' involving Penny Cole and others of the opposing factions.

The focus of the meeting was the film of the aftermath of the massacre in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatilla: profoundly moving and striking.

If anything, this should have brought up short all the manoeuvring and accusa-

tions and united all those involved in common cause to promote the Palestinian's case and highlight the murderous intentions of Syria and Israel.

In passing, may I say that the full-length version of 'The Palestinian', made by the WRP film unit, contained the harrowing and gripping sequence about the Tal al Zaatar camp.

The showing at the Kensington Town Hall, attended



ALEX MITCHELL — no handshakes this time but surely his role needs investigating?

by many weeping Arabs, brought home with a shock the horror of the butchery that took place then.

The interval that followed this sequence was recommended by Sheila Torrance as the best place to make the collection for funds (for the WRP of course).

Prior to the 1983 annual meeting of the LCP, Torrance took on the job of writing out application or renewal forms.

These were handed out for signing using different pens (and varied hands). Virtually anyone who walked into her office was press-ganged or cajoled into carrying out this task.

The Party turn-out for the meeting was poor compared to 1982. To give the impression that LCP members were coming from all over the country, most of us who attended were given other names to sign in with, but

without basic information such as address and whether we were entitled to the reduced entrance fee through being unemployed.

A moment of uncertainty was passed over at the registration desk, although, by chance, I was aware that 'I' came from Merseyside.

The absurdity of the situation became laughable when the person sitting next to me forgot who she was supposed to be!

Although supposedly enrolled as a member of the LCP, I never received any newsletters, even though I specifically volunteered to sell them at my trade union branch — putting my real name and address on a sheet for the purpose at the 1983 meeting.

One wonders whether the whole show was merely a vehicle for Cllr Knight, despite his intervention at the Labour Party Conference.

It must be said that during 1983, the LMCP did attempt to unite with the LCP.

A letter from Andrew Hornung did suggest discussions between the two steering committees and that the 'membership of a united campaign be open to all except those who are members of parties standing candidates against the Labour Party'.

This meant the WRP. The letter adds 'This does not, of course, rule out joint work with other parties'.

As far as I am aware talks never took place. Anyway the LCP faltered after the 1983 meeting.

It is, of course, important for the different groups on the Left to have their own programmes and perspectives on all issues, but that should not be a barrier to discussions between and within groups.

It is the vitriolic attacks on individuals who are putting down events as they saw them and remembered them that put up barriers.

Point-scoring and spleen-venting serve no useful purpose when unity of cause is necessary.

Geoffrey Thurley
Lewisham.

BOOK REVIEWS

The futility of a simple explanation

SWP's 1950s cosmetics debate: more questions than answers

Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women. By Joseph Hansen and Evelyn Reed. Pathfinder Press, £5.95.

THIS BOOK presents a debate initiated in the American Socialist Workers Party newspaper 'Militant' in 1954 around the role of cosmetics and fashion in the capitalist exploitation of women.

It raises not only issues in the content of the debate but the very methodology of the SWP in the 1950s.

It immediately asks whether the cosmetics industry forces women's submission to use its products simply to feed its greedy coffers or whether it has a more sinister role in maintaining the suppression and exploitation of women for the whole capitalist class.

Or, for that matter, whether cosmetics are a perfectly healthy, normal form of body decoration.

This debate leads to complex questions of class, beauty and sexual attractiveness, the material realm of their

historical development and speculation about 'socialist society'.

This raises a major question for Marxists — the development of capitalist social relations and the origin of women's oppression.

On this matter we are confronted with articles by Evelyn Reed based on her anthropological studies.

The debate begins with an article written by the then editor of 'Militant', Joseph Hansen, under the pen-name of Jack Bustelo. It is a slick, sarcastic attack on the advertising tricks used by the cosmetics industry to induce women to need their products and keep profits high.

He raised the ire of women members of the SWP who felt that his style ridiculed women who used cosmetics as much as the companies who produced them.

Their outrage was understandable because his tone, though tongue-in-cheek, was contemptuous:

'Please, girls, don't let a

cutback on the job mean a cutback on cosmetics. If you take a layoff, don't lay off the lipstick.

'Remember, to keep up prosperity, keep up your make-up.'

The next contributor, a woman member of the SWP, felt that Hansen had refused to deal with the actual problems women face in dealing with social pressures to use cosmetics:

'Rather than presenting women as a little ridiculous we have to know what they want, sympathise with them and then translate their desires into action by showing that they can get all these things only through socialism . . .

'Whatever beauty a woman has in her early years . . . is quickly dissipated among the working class . . . The wealthy are beautiful because the poor are wretched.'

Hansen replied with a second article completely different in tone. He discussed comparative attitudes to beauty throughout history and placed them on a materialist basis.

He then apologised if his tone offended — and stated his appreciation of women with disgusting tokenism:

'As for the so-called ordinary women, whether housewives or workers, I think they are beautiful, no matter how toil-worn or seasoned in experience, for they are the ones who will be in the forefront of the struggle to build a new and better world . . .

Useful

'I think that when capitalist society finally gives way to socialism . . . not much in the bourgeois lumber room of morals and beauty will prove very useful.'

His 'don't worry girls, your problems will dissolve after the revolution' completely negates the need to organise among women around issues which concern them.

Several women responded with angry retorts. They felt their problem had been side-stepped.

They struggled to understand the contradictions posed for them by the use of cosmetics while at the same time asking for guidance to deal with them.

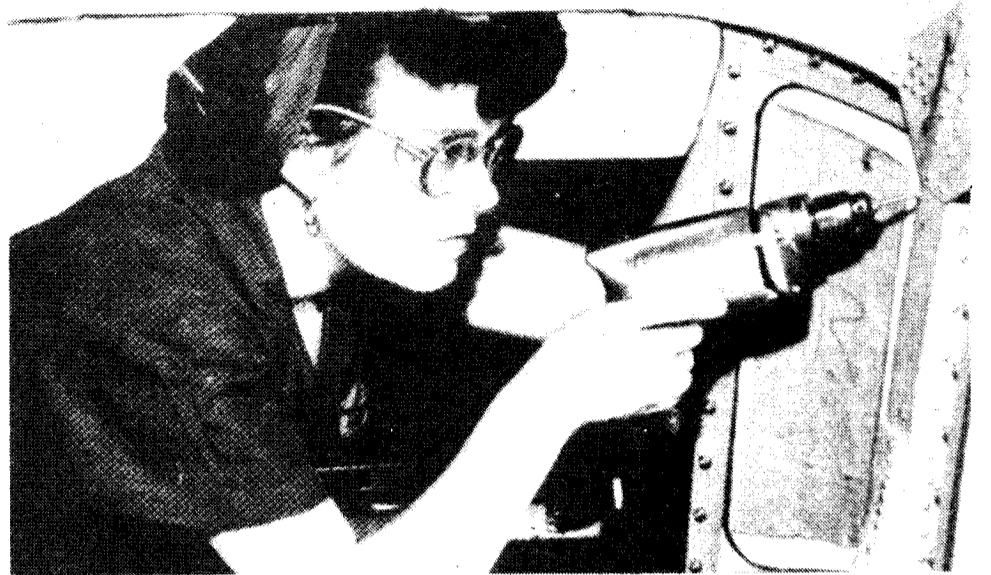
Some women pointed out they had to wear cosmetics to secure and maintain employment, others argued it was their right to wear them if they chose, and still others complained that as working class women they had lost their youthful bloom quickly and wanted a chance to recreate it with cosmetic help.

Through all the contributions there is anger at the need to conform to an image created by men. One example:

'Mr Bustelo may laugh at cosmetic "improvement" and sexual accentuation and ridicule the women victims who concentrate on this to the detriment of the rest of their personalities; but the capitalist system has conditioned him, and men in general, to respond to this kind of sexuality — often without knowing what he is responding to.'

The debate is moved to the pages of the SWP's internal discussion bulletin, where both Reed and Hansen offer materialist analyses of these questions.

Evelyn Reed brings it back to its class foundations: 'The contradictory position of the comrades arises out of the notion that questions concerning women in



A woman riveting aircraft during World War II

the realm of sex, beauty and so on transcend class lines.

'The discussion, therefore, is taking place in an abstract void apart from history and the class struggle. This notion arises out of the bourgeois myth that the needs of all women in the realm of sexual beauty are identical as women.'

Reed gives a brief critique of bourgeois feminism and disputes the falsity of its position with reference to changes in modes of fashion and attitudes to beauty throughout history and in different societies.

She disputes sexual competition among women as natural or universal, that it is the capitalist mode of production which has necessitated it.

She also deals with the 'fashion profiteers', agrees that women suffer enormous pressure to succumb but she says:

'This does not mean that we must accept these edicts and compulsions complacently, or without protest.

'The workers in the plants are often obliged to accept speedups, pay cuts and attacks on their unions. But they always and invariably accept them under protest, under continuing struggle against them, and in a constant movement to oppose their needs and will against their exploiters.'

Hansen develops the argument that cosmetics are fetishes.

Overcome

He shows how product advertisements are aimed at sexual insecurities which they promise to overcome. He discusses proletarian morality, concluding:

'We can confidently expect women of the revolutionary socialist movement to transcend bourgeois standards and give leadership as Marxists on this important ideological front.'

As an 'expert' he introduces Gloria Swanson, the film-star, who discusses at great length whether women should lie about their age!

This book deserves greater study than I have been able to give it here.

Not only is its content fascinating, but it offers an opportunity to discuss the methodology of the SWP.

In 1954 America was clutched by reaction. US imperialism was obsessed with its cold war against the Soviet Union and indulging anti-communist witch-hunts at home to destroy the union strength built up in the 1930s.

Why did the question of women and cosmetics raise such interest in the SWP? It certainly was not the vital issue of its time.

Could it be that it marks a turn away from the industrial battles of America's working class?

On the other hand, America was wracked by a reaction against the gains made by women in the 1930s and during the war.

The US imperialist propaganda machine, fresh with its lessons and expertise from fascist Germany, reached a pinnacle in its desperation to return women to submission.

Its highly stylised portrayals of women as doll-like housewives and its insistence on this as the accepted state of femininity and womanhood dominated US bourgeois culture throughout the 1950s.

Fifteen years after this debate, it was taken up again by the women's movement of the late 1960s.

The movement's first focus was on make-up and fashion, which became symbolically represented by the burning of bras.

To understand our history and the degeneration of the Fourth International, the ideological links between the SWP and the women's movement, and the influence and role of the SWP in that movement, must be understood.

Freeing women from the tyranny of cosmetics and

fashion is not a bad thing. But how far does it lead to any real change in the position of women?

The extent that the movement softened the dictatorship of cosmetics can be seen from the standpoint of today, when much of the text seems quaint.

That the SWP involved itself in questions of women's oppression is important in the light of the later refusal to deal with this issue of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Hansen's introduction of Gloria Swanson 'made radiant by the alchemy of Hollywood' shows strong links with bourgeois feminism.

The debate took place one year after the Fourth International was significantly weakened by the split which followed Pablo's assertions that Stalinism could be revolutionary.

In later years we were to see little difference in attitudes to and involvement in the women's movement by the SWP and the Stalinists.

The book can't fail to be of interest to anyone who wants not only to know the facts of the history of Trotskyism but also to understand it in all its complexities.

Lynn Beaton



"A Skin You Love to Touch"

By Harry Platt

The cover of a Jergens Lotion advertising brochure provided the slogan 'a skin you love to touch'

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The Workers

Bread and Wine. By Ignazio Silone. Dent Everyman, £4.95.

TROTSKY said of Silone's best-known novel 'Fontamara' that it is characterised by 'revolutionary passion . . . raised here to such heights that it creates a truly artistic work . . .

He knows how to see life as it is, to generalise what he sees by means of the Marxist method and then to embody its generalisations in artistic images.'

In 'Bread and Wine' Silone wrote again about the Italian peasantry that he knew so well, but from which he was exiled by Mussolini's fascism.

The novel follows a communist leader back from exile, disguised as a priest. The bread and wine of the title have religious significance, but they are also the simple food friends eat together.

But Paolo/Pietro, the book's hero, speaks out not only against the tyranny of fascism, but also against the degeneration of Stalinism.

Silone wrote while the

Moscow trials were in progress and he was experiencing the bitterest disillusionment with the movement to which he had given his youth.

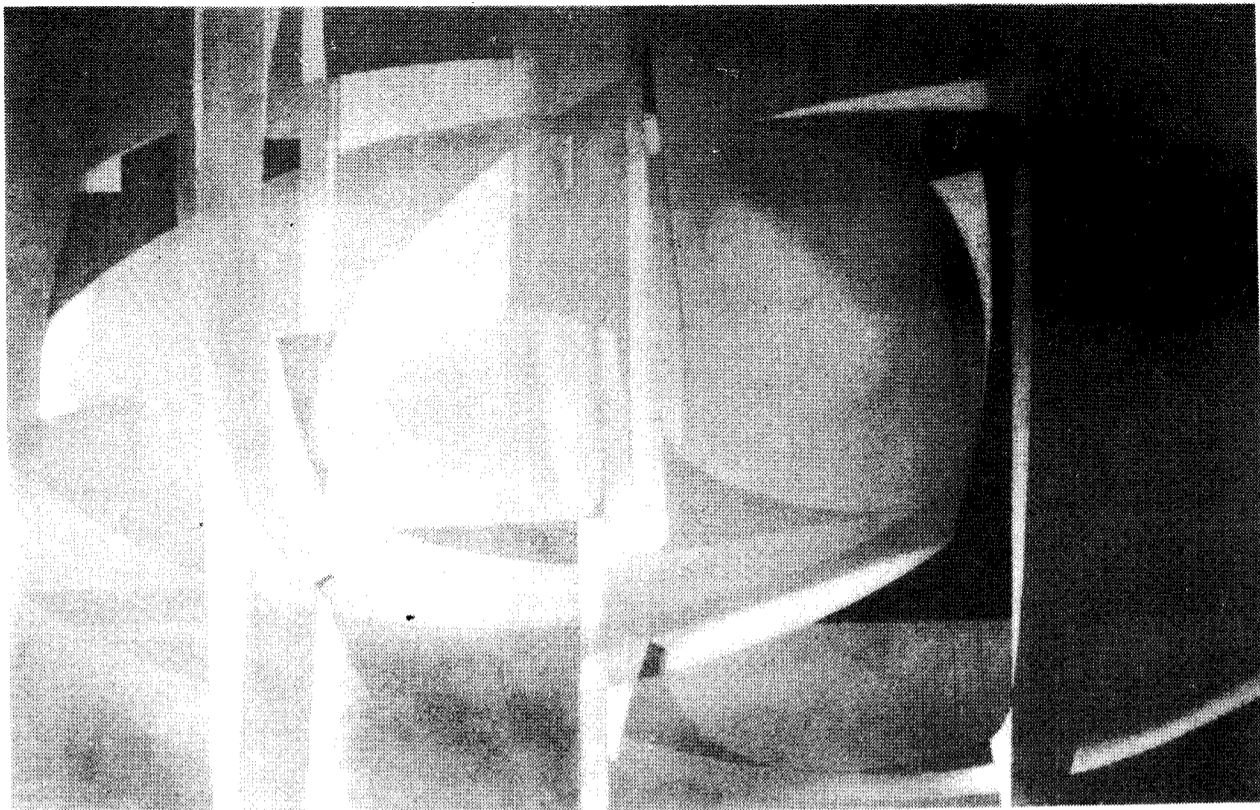
Pietro describes the excesses in the Soviet Union and is clearly disoriented by them. He is a simple man, who in spite of his lack of religious faith is attractive as a confessor to the poorest peasants who meet him in his disguise.

He says repeatedly that one man speaking out against oppression and dictatorship is enough to break its stranglehold, and he clearly speaks about the internal organisation of the Communist Party as well as the country subjected to dictatorship.

If one sick man can get out of his bed to scrawl dissident slogans on the walls, then there is hope.

This is a book of anger and optimism, newly translated to become available in Dent's paperback series which already includes Silone's better-known book 'Fontamara.'

REVIEWS



WORK IN PROGRESS by William John Bunting

Young Scot 'lifts mystique' from modern painting

Abstractions: an exhibition of paintings by William J Bunting. Carmichael Fine Art Gallery, 156 Ifield Road, Fulham, London SW10, from Saturday 21st June to Sunday 29th June, 11 am to 6 pm.

AN EXHIBITION opening in London next week by a new Scottish artist, William John Bunting, raises important questions about future directions in modern painting.

His work is uncompromising in its abstraction and makes no concessions whatsoever to recent fads in the art world.

Such flavours-of-the-month as spray-painting the top of the Alps or rubber tyre buildings on the Embankment are strictly out for Bunting.

Nor does he fit neatly into

the category of being part of the new Scottish wave which has recently landed on the London and New York art shores.

The paintings are entirely abstract. They do not refer directly to external natural phenomena of any kind or express feelings about anything other than the relationship of forms he conjures up.

He uses shape, colour and texture to create structures. These essentials he pursues with a relentless energy and passion in his painting.

One of the most interesting features of the exhibition is the photographs of the various stages in the construction of one of his major works.

In these he demonstrates a concern to tear away much of the mystique which surrounds modern art and in-

stead to begin to explain the complex processes involved in creating the inter-relationships of forms which are at the core of worthwhile painting.

Martin Baillie, former art critic of the Glasgow Herald, has said of Bunting's approach: 'The sustained concentration over each work, though not paraded, makes itself felt... his is... a consistent unswerving drive to a necessary goal... there is something classical to such intellectual control'.

The exhibition is dedicated by the artist to two men: one is R.H. Wilenski, an art historian and theorist whose book 'The Modern Movement in Art' published in 1927 provides a definitive basis from which to pursue an investigation into the needs and functions of art.

The other is William Baillie, an outstanding artist who yet awaits recognition, who was Bunting's art teacher and remains his friend.

Bunting acknowledges his debt to them in the tribute: 'their labours have shaped my own'.

The actor Fulton Mackay, no mean judge of character and quality, says of Bunting: 'I met the painter W J Bunting when he was a student in Edinburgh about 1973.

'What struck me then was the purity of his intention as an artist and this exhibition of his work convinces me that that early vision has grown in him until now we are seeing the first mature fruits of its fulfilment.'

You have a rare chance to catch this exhibition of Bunting's paintings in London at the end of June.

Norman Bissell

TV PREVIEW



REG GLENN as a young man and today; he and other survivors of the Battle of the Somme talk about what it was like to go over the top in July 1916 in the documentary 'Lions Led by Donkeys', repeated on Channel 4 to mark the battle's 70th anniversary. Wednesday June 25, 10.00 pm

Saturday June 21

8.30 pm, Channel 4. **Pottery Ladies: Miss Cliff, Miss Cooper, Miss Rhead and all the Forgotten Girls.** Final programme in the series about three women pottery designers of the 1920s, as well as the thousands of anonymous girls who painted the pottery.

11 pm, Channel 4. **Billy Budd.** (1962) b&w. Compelling film of Melville's classic story of the press-ganged British sailor whose purity and innocence provokes the vengeance of a sadistic master-at-arms, and his captain's crisis of conscience as Budd is inexorably doomed.

Sunday June 22

6.15 pm, Channel 4. **Maids and Madams.** Don't miss the repeat showing of this award-winning film. It shows the obscenity of the lives of the black South African women who can only afford to bring up their own children by abandoning them to bring up those of the white 'madam'. Most chilling are the interviews with the liberal whites who in the guise of assisting the blacks in fact provide a labour agency.

Monday June 23

9.30 pm, ITV. **Brideshead Revisited: Et In Arcadia Ego.** Start of another chance to see the lavish and stunning dramatisation of Waugh's exploration of the spiritual agonies of the English upper classes.

10 pm, Channel 4. **Open The Box: Sheer Filth.** Does the television really create riots from Southall to South Africa, copy-cat crimes, bad behaviour in school children, consumerism, picket-line violence, permissiveness and promiscuity?

Tuesday June 24

9 pm, Channel 4. **Brideshead Revisited: Home and Abroad.** Second episode of Waugh's nostalgia.

10.30 pm, ITV. **The Disappearance of Azaria Chamberlain.** The bizarre disappearance of a baby in the Australian outback, which rocked Australia when the parents said she had been taken by a dingo and the courts said no. The mother was unexpectedly released from her murder sentence earlier this year. The programme examines the doubt which still surrounds the case.

Wednesday June 25

10 pm, Channel 4. **Lions Led by Donkeys: The Battle of the Somme.** Nearly 60,000 were slaughtered on the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916 — the heaviest losses suffered in a single day by the British Army. Ordered to march directly into the fire of the German machine guns, the German General Ludendorff said the British were 'lions led by donkeys'. This documentary talks to some of the few survivors.

Thursday June 26

11.10 pm, Channel 4. **Free Voice of Labour: The Jewish Anarchists.** The years from 1880 to 1905 saw the peak of the Jewish anarchist movement, largely made up of immigrant sweatshop workers in the United States. This programme interviews the anarchists themselves, now in their eighties, their children and grandchildren and sympathisers, intercut with archival newsreels, photographs and popular songs of the period.

Friday June 27

10.30 pm, Channel 4. **Life's Cycle: The Agony and the Ecstasy.** Final programme in the series, examining the despair suffered by those unable to have children. In Britain one in eight couples wishing to have children will need to seek medical help to bear their first child, and one in every six couples will have difficulty in achieving a second pregnancy.

Press fiction round-up

The Heat's On. By Chester Himes. Allison and Busby, £2.95.

If He Hollers, Let Him Go. By Chester Himes. Pluto Press, £4.95.

CHESTER HIMES wrote 20 novels, most of which expressed the black American experience of the 1940s and 1950s in the thriller genre.

'The Heat's On' is just such a novel, a hilarious but bitter streetwise thriller starring the two black detectives Coffin Ed Johnson and Grave Digger Jones in a city summer in which Coffin Ed goes 'beyond the line... outside of human restraint'.

These are men provoked to that point.

Himes writes stories without heroes, just a cast of larger-than-life characters. His first novel, 'If He Hollers Let Him Go' has also been republished after years of unavailability.

Paradise Postponed. By John Mortimer. Penguin, £3.50.

CONSENSUS politics and

the changes since 1945 feature in John Mortimer's new novel, getting its first airing in paperback.

Its hilarity is shortly to be transformed into a television series which will preserve the same mystery that the book does until close to the end: why a CND-supporting, publicly-protesting country vicar has apparently left his shares in the family firm to an archetypically property-tycoon and Tory MP.

Mortimer said he was writing a novel about how Britain had changed since the war, and the political complexion of the government and the colour schemes of the characters' flats change carefully with the decades.

But I think it has to be read much less seriously, as a romp through the lives of some caricatures of the middle class — the country doctor, thwarted in love by his brother, the media-man unfaithful with his assistant, the spy who gets into each decade's moneyspinner, the vicar's wife with her preference for simplicity and in-

stant coffee.

The book is slight, and tententious — and funny.

What Comes Naturally. By Gerd Brantenberg. Women's Press, £2.95.

'DAUGHTERS of Egalia' became an enormously popular feminist novel in Norway and in Britain.

Now the Women's Press has made available Gerd Brantenberg's earlier novel, a curiously structured monologue by a young Norwegian lesbian to an audience which is not revealed until the end of the book.

Angry at the way in which Norwegian gays found it almost impossible to meet and even find out that there were other people who felt as they did, even on the university campus, the narrator harangues as she tells her own story.

There are episodes of humour — new lovers hiding in trees in the rain and calling excitedly to a passerby who admits that she too is gay, hasty assembling of a

camp bed as the landlady taps on the door, and above all surreptitious assignments with newspapers under the arm.

It seems very slender but it leaves an impression behind.

Suspects. By David Thompson. Picador, £3.50.

FILM CRITIC David Thompson rounds up the usual — and the not-so-usual — suspects in this stylish novel.

Its form is not chapters but potted biographies filling in the before-and-after of film characters like Ilse Lund and Rick Raine from 'Casablanca' and Norman from 'Psycho'.

'Citizen Kane', 'Double Indemnity', 'Laura' — there is clearly a brooding, ominous feel to the films that have provided a fruitful hunting ground for Thompson's fiction.

Film buffs will appreciate the nuances; without a certain amount of knowledge, its a curio.

Bridget Dixon

Saturday June 21 1986. Newsdesk 01-720 2000

Derby forge Rail/Rolls link

THE LATEST onslaught against British Rail engineering workshops and Rolls Royce was the focus of a public meeting of 150 in Derby last week.

Speakers included NUR leader Jimmy Knapp, former railway union-sponsored Labour MP Philip Whitehead, and Derby South Labour MP Margaret Beckett.

Beckett, who spoke first, referred to Tory denationalisation of British Telecom, the forthcoming sell-offs of water, gas and electricity, and talked about how cut-backs and privatisation had been aimed at profitable sections of BR and BREL.

The railways under a Labour government would receive more investment and the industry could be saved, she said.

Whitehead recalled the mobilisation in 1971 against the Tories on the future of Rolls Royce, which was eventually nationalised by the Tories.

But now the whole future of the city of Derby was at stake. With the plans of the present Tory government in denationalising RR and the cuts in BR workshops in Derby.

A call for a joint campaign

BY ZBIGNIEW WOJCIK

on RR and the railways is beginning. The city had a common cause to fight on.

European countries had increased the building of new rolling stock, freight and public transportation in the light of the Channel tunnel project.

In Britain however, production of new stock was being cut-back and investment slashed, said Whitehead.

One option the Tories were considering is the sale of prime sites to General Motors (USA), he added.

Jimmy Knapp reminded the meeting that on his last

visit to Derby in February he had predicted cuts — but these were worse than thought possible. The constant drain on jobs, skills and resources as closure followed closure was like the work of the expert poisoners of ancient Rome, he said, killing without anyone knowing what was happening.

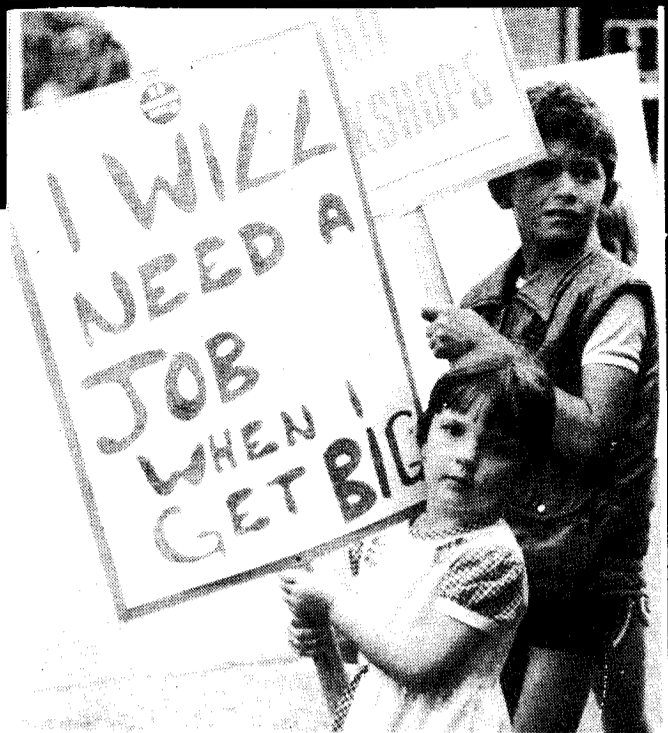
The message was becoming clear: 'No-one is safe in any of the workshops,' said Knapp.

The danger was that the Tories would take away the prime sites of Crewe, York and Derby from BREL in order to present a slimmed-down, attractive package for sale.

On the question of the Channel tunnel, no investment is seemingly being allowed for the rail industry. This could only mean the railways face denationalisation on a large scale, said Knapp calling for a 'yes' vote on the ballot to fight for the future of BREL.

But the call from Knapp and Whitehead for a united campaign against closures, cut-backs and privatisation must not be left at the level of words.

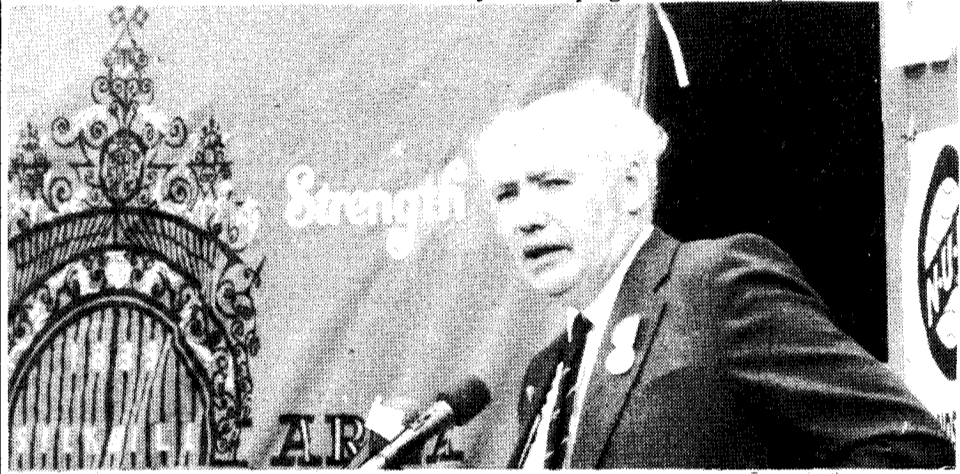
The Tories are exhibiting a clear strategy. The miners' strike of 1984-85 showed the Tories will not listen to pleas for negotiations. In each industry there must be a massive struggle organised the government's plans which go hand-in-hands with the Tory legislation aimed at



crushing trade union rights.

Derby is for the chopping block and the Rolls Royce and BREL workshops there can give a lead to the rest of the country by uniting to

oppose all redundancies, closures and privatisation schemes. A Community Defence Organisation must be built and promoted to unite all sections involved.



JIMMY KNAPP speaking during the 1984 one-day strike on British Rail workshop closures. Above: What is the future for communities if their major industries are destroyed?

TANKER FLEET JOB CUTS

By HUGHIE NICOL

THOUSANDS of seaman are facing sacking and wage cuts as two of the world's largest deep-sea tanking companies react to falling oil prices.

Shell tankers are to follow BP Shipping in wanting massive through cut savings in its large UK-registered fleet.

Shell are demanding job losses, changes in working conditions and have threatened to move a large part of its fleet out to foreign flags.

A Shell spokesman said

that a restructuring was necessary to make the fleet viable and profitable.

BP announced that it was to register its oil tanker fleet outside of the UK and 1,700 jobs would go.

The National Union of Seamen see this move, breaking the union agreement and recruiting non-union labour from third world countries to crew the tanker fleets, as a cost cutting exercise.

MURDOCH FIGHT DOMINATES SOGAT CONFERENCE

DEAN'S SEASIDE HELTER-SKELTER

SOGAT's biennial delegate conference was overshadowed by the News International dispute.

During the week, hundreds of sacked print workers travelled up to Scarborough to lobby the conference, clearly hoping for an escalation of the dispute after they had rejected by ballots the offer of money in compensation for loss of jobs, and union recognition at Wapping.

The mood of the older men who had worked for the 'Sun' for many years was similar to that of the younger print workers, as was the case with delegations from London branches.

Many were clearly upset by the handling of the dispute by the executive and general secretary Brenda Dean.

For the first two days of the conference, rumours were going around of emergency motions calling for her resignation amid talk of a break-away union being set up in the London area.

A week before the conference, general president Danny Sergeant sent a letter out to every branch condemning the behaviour of members at a meeting organised by the London district council where the general secretary was booed from the platform.

The feeling in the conference from the first day was of hostility between the London delegations and the national executive.

Complaints were made from the chairman of standing orders three times during the conference about certain incidents in Scarborough concerning newsagents and writings on walls about Brenda Dean.

The Socialist Worker Party were made to take down their posters that surrounded the conference hall.

Strikers who lobbied the conference hall and strikers from NI said they felt they were being made out to be lepers.

There were three emergency re-

solutions. One was from the London Central Branch that the executive supports action taken to protect jobs in the wholesale distributive section in London.

This is threatened by redundancies because the work is being taken over by TNT distributors, of which Murdoch is the main shareholder.

A further part of the resolution was for the executive to press the TUC General Council to issue further directives to the EETPU on the crossing of picket lines at Wapping, and to stop recruitment at Wapping and Kinning Park. This resolution was carried unanimously.

Black

The second resolution, from the London Machine Branch, called on the executive to instruct wholesale members of SOGAT throughout the country not to distribute or handle Murdoch's papers.

This resolution, if adopted, would have clearly put the union back into the hands of the sequestrators.

During the debate Brenda Dean pleaded with the delegates not to take this course but to vote against the resolution.

Branch secretaries outside the London area took her advice and the resolution was heavily defeated.

A third resolution, from the National Executive, urged escalation of the boycott campaign, special days of boycott to be organised, a lobby of parliament, and demonstra-

By BOB BELL

tions throughout the country, special big turn-outs at Wapping and Kinning Park — for which different regions of the union would have special responsibilities.

Brenda Dean, moving the resolution, gave a commitment from the NEC that the fight was seen as one for jobs and trade union recognition at Wapping.

The London District delegations were going to vote against this resolution prior to it being moved by the General Secretary.

However, they asked the President to be allowed 15 minutes adjournment before a vote was taken.

They then came back and voted for the executive resolution. It was passed unanimously.

Many of the delegates were unhappy that three-and-a-half days of conference was taken up on proposed rule change alterations, whereas important internal and policy-making time were confined to just over a day.

There was one resolution on the coal-mining industry, from the London Machine Branch, which stated that the conference deplored the decision of the SOGAT executive to instruct its delegates to the 1985 Labour Party conference to vote against the motion on reinstatement and amnesty for miners — after the Society had voted in favour of the miners' at the 1985 TUC conference.

The decision of the executive to vote against at the Labour Party conference was a 'betrayal of our colleagues in the NUM and all our members throughout the country, after all their sterling work for the miners and their communities, and contrary to the spirit of the decision taken at the SOGAT biennial conference in 1984,' the resolution stated.

It was carried, against the advice of the executive.

MARCH

FOR FREEDOM IN NAMIBIA & SOUTH AFRICA!



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