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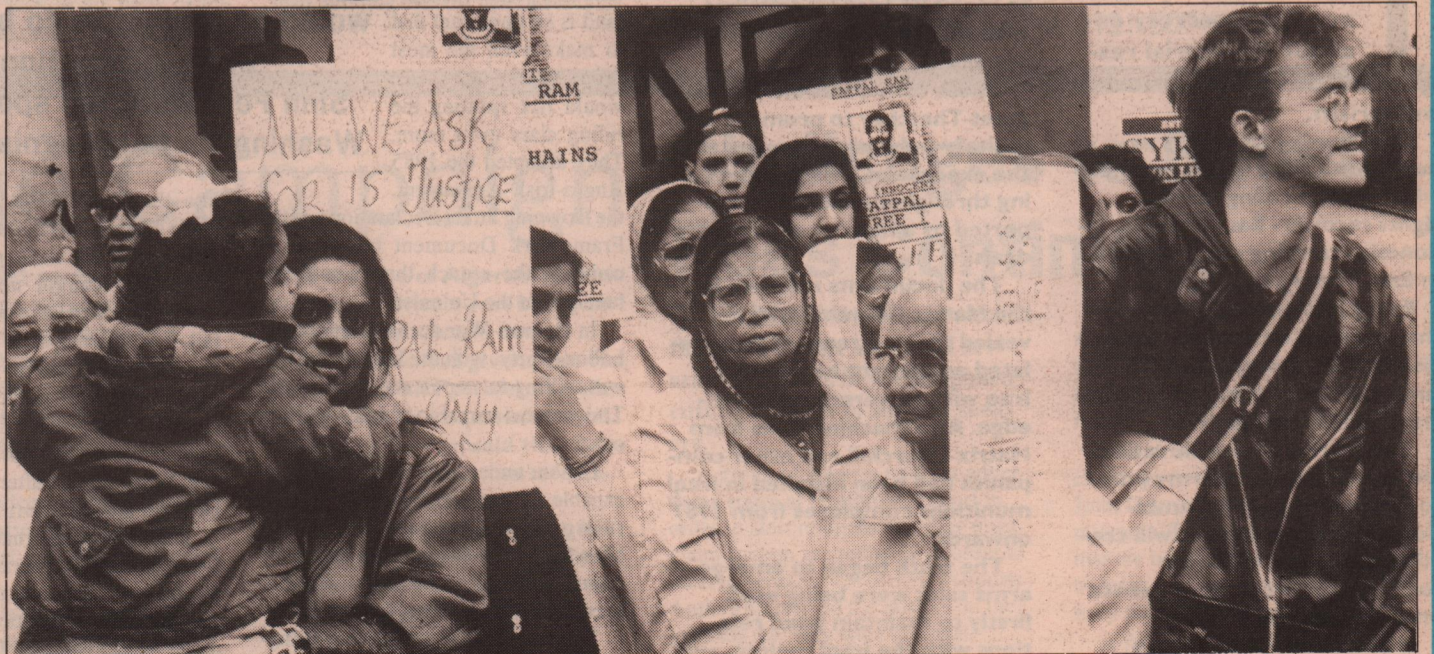
Racism and fascism  
on the rise across  
western Europe  
Centre Stage

# Socialist OUTLOOK

# Stop Tory Asylum and Immigration Bill

**T**he Conservative government's latest racist law is facing defeat.

Their Asylum and Immigration Bill will force employers to act as unpaid immigration officers. Like the pass law system of apartheid South Africa, every black person will be victimised. It is designed to whip up racism and chauvinism.



The Conservative government's latest racist law is facing defeat

**Mobilise for March 23 ARA demo**



# There is no British solution in Ireland

**IT'S HARD to say whether the Canary Wharf bomb which blew John Major's Irish strategy is the beginning of a new IRA campaign or a short, sharp shock to prod the British into the negotiations they promised before the IRA cease-fire.**

Peace in Ireland was to be the crowning achievement of Major's term as Prime Minister.

Perhaps the end of the cease-fire was simply a blunder by the British. After all, they and the Unionists could have had a very favourable deal. Sinn Fein had accepted the notion of Unionist "consent" and it is clear from at least the 1995 Ard Fheis, that they were coming round to the idea of an internal settlement, which would of course be presented as a "stepping stone" to eventual unity.

There are lots of areas where treating the whole island as a single entity makes sense, not least in relation to European Union Structural Funds.

Business leaders have already made big strides towards "unifying" the country. A few committees looking at agriculture, tourism and economic development North and South, together with a built-in role for Dublin in guaranteeing the position of the Nationalists, would probably have been enough.

"Self determination" would be exercised by simultaneous referendums North and South to produce the necessary "consent". No British with-

## EDITORIAL

drawal, no ending of partition and the copper-fastening of the border. A John Major success. Exit stage Right.

There are other possibilities apart from the blunder theory. Perhaps, beset by enemies all round, leadership elections and Scott Inquiries, Honest John just let Ireland slip to the back of his mind.

Perhaps he has been a fervent Unionist all along and is only now showing his true hue.

But none of these make any sense given the deal the Tories could have got and at so little cost. All they had to do was to get the Unionists to the negotiating table.

If the IRA had signed up, as seemed likely, to the "Six Principles" of the Mitchell Report they would have had not only to renounce violence and give up their arms over a period. They would also have had to commit themselves, in advance, to going along with whatever agreement came out of the all-party negotiations.

In effect, Mitchell demanded a higher price for entry to negotiations



British won't be prodded into negotiations any more than they were forced into making concessions by 25 years of armed struggle

than in previous British documents.

Yet Major side-stepped in favour of Unionist leader David Trimble's "elections" stunt and attempted to stuff it down the throats of Dublin and the SDLP as well as Sinn Fein. Careless behaviour, at the very least, from someone who regularly parrots on about "consent".

The conclusion is stark: Major was looking for a break and decided that breaking on elections would be preferable to breaking over the report of an international commission, led by an American.

There are two possible explanations: either he is so scared of losing his Westminster majority that he will do anything suggested by David Trimble, or maintaining a presence in Ireland is so important that to make even the most meagre concession would risk splitting the ruling class even more. They accepted the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, the Downing Street Declaration and the Framework Document but when it came to the crunch they would not break from the Unionists.

In the post-War decolonisations the Labour Party, with the help of the US, was willing to step in and do what the Tories were incapable of doing, pulling out.

Labour under Blair seems totally incapable of providing options for the ruling class. The best he and Mo Mowlam can manage is to try to be more Unionist than the Tories. Another reason why Major went for war.

The Tories have clearly been stringing the Republicans along; softening them up for the negotiations everyone expected well before the 18 long months that have elapsed since the IRA dumped arms.

The Communiqué from Major and Taoiseach John Bruton in November,

issued ahead of Bill Clinton's visit to Ireland, promised talks by the end of February.

The British reaction to the report of the Mitchell Commission was the last straw for Republicans because it took away any prospect of those talks. In the end, there was not split in the IRA over ending the cease-fire.

Ending the cease-fire was a mistake. The British will not be prodded into negotiations any more than they could be forced into making concessions by 25 years of armed struggle.

More importantly, the negotiations will not deliver what republicans want—British withdrawal and a united Ireland. Because even before going

sustain it.

It cannot be reformed. No internal settlement will work. The rights of the Unionist minority on the island must be protected in any settlement: they have no veto on unity.

No settlement is possible without withdrawal of British armed force.

It's been clear for some time, as the British raised one obstacle after another to even talking to Republicans, that they believed they could gain through clever political tactics what they could not achieve through armed force - a re-enforcement of partition underpinned by "democratic" elections and guaranteed by Dublin.

All these too-clever-by-half tactics

achieved was a growing opinion even among non-nationalists in Ireland and elsewhere that the British were not honest brokers but were part of the problem.

Sinn Fein were too spellbound by the movers and shakers in Dublin and Washington to recognise what was happening or to do anything to mobilise and build on this. In the end, only mass action, North and South, will force the British to leave.

There is a clear danger of civil war in Ireland as a whole now. The British will continue to support the Unionists and Loyalist murder gangs. They would be quite happy if this led to a decisive defeat for Republicans. They would be only too pleased to play "peacekeeper" and "honest broker" in whatever settlement comes out of that.

It could be the first case of "re-colonisation" the British have managed. Those in the Republican Movement who believe in "pure" armed struggle uncomplicated by "politics" should remember this.

February 11 1996

## Tory terror

Paul Walker

**THE SCOTT Report is not about secrecy or about Ministerial resignations. It is about British militarism.**

Two-thirds of Britain's exports go to third world regimes with blood curdling human rights records - Saudi Arabia, Indonesia (carrying out genocide in East Timor) and Nigeria.

Every job in military industry that depends on exports is subsidised by the Government to the tune of £12,500 every year, totalling £1 billion annually.

There is no economic rationale. It is about using arms sales to support imperialist ambitions. The Scott Report will create the political space for socialists to force such a debate onto the agenda.

If Britain does not export arms, it faces two problems as an imperialist power:

—To mobilise for war across the globe Britain must have technological quality and productive capacity. This can only be done at phenomenal cost, cen-

tres of technical excellence must be kept open.

—Arms exports are also used to maintain friendly relations with murderous regimes who are allies.

These considerations led Margaret Thatcher to promote the military-industrial complex at the expense of civil manufacturing throughout the 1980s supported by a number of covert deals.

The documents released in the Matrix Churchill trial revealed that a stream of arms related equipment had gone to Iraq with Government knowledge. Also machine tools from Matrix Churchill and other companies had been installed in Iraqi munitions complexes from 1987 onwards.

The truth began to emerge—arms sales were being used firstly to maintain good relations with the Iraqi regime, and later, to maintain a British security presence at the heart of the Iraqi military complex.

It was the strategic considerations that were and still are crucial to Britain's arms sales policy.

## No Pass Laws Here

# Asylum Seekers Welcome Here

Simon Kennedy

LOCKING the doors on people who are fleeing persecution is a central part of the Tories' Asylum and Immigration Bill.

It panders to the right wing myth that Britain is choc-a-bloc with illegal immigrants posing as asylum seekers.

Michael Howard's white list of so-called safe countries is an attempt to sanitise repressive and murderous regimes.

Refugees from these countries are effectively classified as bogus—second class citizens with next to no chance of staying.

The definition of a refugee is changed. It is restricted to those who can prove they are victims of the agencies of the state, excluding those who are the attacked by opposition groups where the state is unable to provide protection.

This is the case for example in Algeria, where Islamic fundamentalists have persecuted members of other groups and in some cases have pronounced death sentences on them.

The February 5 changes to benefit regulations are designed to work hand-in-hand with the new fast-track appeal system.

Anyone losing their appeal after this date will not receive state benefits. This has not led yet to existing asylum seekers being thrown on to the street, but it will do soon.

Refugees entering the country must claim asylum immediately. Given that most refugees have had to get out quickly and are in a state of fear it is hardly surprising that they do not claim asylum immediately.

Yet many people who claim asylum at the port of entry are immediately thrown into detention centres.

Other draconian measures in the bill—denial of housing to asylum seekers; checking of immigration status by housing officials; checks by employers on the immigration status of job applicants; greater powers for internal con-



trol by police and immigration officers—amount to the creation of pass laws.

All black people will come under scrutiny and be assumed to be guilty before they can prove otherwise.

One of the effects of this increase in state racism will be a greater number of attacks on black people, whether this be by far right groups or others.

Deaths of black people in custody—such as that of Nigerian asylum seeker Shiji Lapite who was murdered by Stoke Newington police—are likely to increase.

The record of the Labour Party on the bill has been inconsistent. Not wanting to be seen as the party of immigration Blair and Straw originally

wanted to achieve consensus with the Tories through an all-party committee of enquiry.

Now they claim to oppose the bill. But it is difficult to get any commitment from front-bench spokespersons that a future Labour government will repeal the legislation and reverse the cuts in benefit. At the committee stage Labour MPs abstained.

Large numbers of black people are aware that the Tories' attack on asylum seekers and immigrants is also an attack on their right to be here as citizens.

We need a broad-based anti-racist movement to fight back. It must be more than talking shop, going further than building one-off demonstrations.

## Free Satpal Ram

CAMPAIGNERS in Birmingham are calling for the release of Satpal Ram who is in the tenth year of his imprisonment following a racist attack in a Bengali restaurant.

In fear of his life Satpal stabbed one of his attackers in self defence. The Free Satpal campaign is calling for support from the labour movement, from anti-racist organisations and for the right of black people to defend themselves. A benefit will take place at the Red Rose Club in Islington in London on February 29 when Banner Theatre present their latest production, "Criminal Justice".

The campaign can be contacted at 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham (Tel. 0121-507-1618).

## Building the Campaign

**OPPOSITION to the Asylum and Immigration Bill and the governments slashing of benefits for asylum seekers is growing.**

Local campaign have been formed in most major cities. Public meetings have been organised and large numbers of coaches have been hired to take people to the national demonstration on February 24.

Local groups such as the one in Peckham in South East London are monitoring the effects of the benefit cuts and are demanding that the local council should give support if refugees are thrown on to the street. Like other labour authorities, the council has so only said that

it will not evict people who lose benefit and go into arrears.

In Islington on February 5, the day the benefit changes came into effect, children of refugees and their friends protested in a vigil outside of the town hall.

The following evening a public meeting sponsored by several local anti-racist groups took place.

Speakers included Jeremy Corbyn MP and shadow social security spokesman, Chris Smith, who stopped short of saying that a future Labour government would re-instate the benefit cuts.

Mohammed Sekkoum of the Algerian Refugee Council said

that the fate of Algerian asylum seekers in Britain was being determined by a trade deal in which Chirac had given John Major and British Petroleum a slice of the cake in a contract for oil.

Jeremy Corbyn said that Britain had never been the safe haven it claimed to be.

Successive governments, including Labour ones had failed asylum seekers and introduced racist immigration legislation, added the Labour MP.

Corbyn stressed the importance of the campaign and said that everyone should be at the demonstration on Saturday February 24.

Brian Gardner

## Challenges to Benefit Regs Continue

**OVER THE** past several weeks the government has faced several challenges to the proposed cuts in benefits to asylum seekers.

A group of lawyers paid for advertising space at Heathrow Airport in order to alert refugees that they must claim asylum immediately in order to receive benefits. The British Airports Authority banned the posters on the grounds that they were political.

Despite this on the morning of February 5th members of the Campaign to close down Campsfield—a detention centre for immigrants and asylum seekers near Oxford—handed out leaflets at the airport bearing the slogan, "Britain starves refugees".

This got coverage on BBC TV news. Bill McKeith of the campaign said "The benefit cuts will mean that asylum seekers will be starving and turn to crime in order to survive".

The government is facing a legal challenge in the High Court from the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants. The organisation claims that the benefit changes are unlawful because they prevent refugees from fully pursuing their asylum claims.

A full hearing into this question will take place sometime after the beginning of April. The judge refused to grant an injunction preventing the changes from coming into effect saying that he had no power to reverse government legislation.

Ian Wilkinson

Socialist Labour Party in  
Hemsworth by-election

# Falling at the first hurdle

Neil Murray

THE SOCIALIST Labour Party had everything going for it in the Hemsworth by-election. Yet 1,200 votes (5.45 per cent), was hardly worth boasting about.

A mining constituency in Arthur Scargill's heartland, a candidate associated with the fight against pit closures, the NUM candidate debarred from selection by Labour's NEC for the second time in a short period, the Harriet Harman schools is-

sue exploding just before polling and the possibility of a "protest vote" in a rock solid Labour seat.

The stage could not have been better set. But the SLP vote was low, by any standards. It compares poorly, for example, with that of the expelled Militant supporter Dave Nellist in Coventry in 1992.

Blair's Labour Party was not the issue. Getting rid of the Tories was. Voting Labour was the way to do it.

By all accounts the SLP did not meet the outright hostility which Labour's spokespersons



Glory days? — NUM members from Scargill's home county of Yorkshire supporting 1992 march against cuts in local services

talk of, but there was no enthusiasm for the new party.

In an interview before she was chosen to fight the seat Brenda Nixon spoke of there being little support for the launch in the area "people are just hoping to hang onto their job. But that could change with a Labour government. Workers will start making demands on it, and if they don't deliver, people will, I

hope, start to use their voices." This has now been borne out.

The result confirms much of what Socialist Outlook has said since the SLP was first mooted. It is totally out of tune with the mood in the working class that the prime task is to get rid of the Tories.

By setting up as an alternative the SLP cuts itself off from

being able to relate to this feeling.

Unfortunately, rather than recognise these realities, it looks as if the SLP will continue on its misguided course, with Scargill declaring after the result that, providing the money is available, the SLP will stand in all constituencies in the general election.

# What Assembly for Wales?

Dafydd Morgan

LABOUR proposals for a Welsh ASSEMBLY have moved to the centre-stage of Welsh politics following an agreement among Welsh Labour MPs that there will be no further discussion on the powers of an Assembly before the next election.

This has attracted intense media attention and accusations that Labour's current policy is an unworkable fudge.

These developments can be traced back to last year's Welsh Labour Party Conference, which adopted a policy document on an Assembly "Shaping the Vision".

This provided a body with no law making or tax raising powers, elected by the first-past-the-post system. No provision was made for the equal rep-

resentation of women.

This is in stark contrast to Labour's proposals for a Scottish Parliament, with legislative and taxation powers, elected by the additional member system and with 50 per cent of the seats held by women.

The document led to widespread dissatisfaction within the Welsh Labour Party and the formation of Welsh Labour Action (WLA). WLA aimed to strengthen the powers of an Assembly in line with those of the Scottish parliament.

At the same time, Ron Davies, MP for Caerffili and Shadow Welsh Secretary, let it be known that he favoured electing the Assembly using PR. Although never associated with the left, Ron Davies is seen by many as an antidote to the worst excesses of Blairism.

However, at no time did he conduct

an open fight within the Party, concentrating instead on pressure from within the executive. The weakness of Davies' approach is now clear. A meeting of seven Welsh Labour MPs was convened in response to his attempts threatening an all-out fight.

Most involved were opposed in principle to any kind of Assembly, while a few were roped in on the basis of opposition to PR. To his discredit Llew Smith, the only Campaign Group MP in Wales, was involved. He has consistently opposed a Welsh Assembly.

His current stance plumbed new lows, arguing that the debate could not be re-opened because Blair had instructed the last Welsh Conference to unite behind current policy! He went on to explain that people could not pick and choose which parts of the policy they liked. Ron Davies' response has

been to declare that there will not any discussion of the Assembly in May's LP Wales conference.

It is now more important than ever that Welsh Labour Action maintains its stance of opposition to the current policy and pushes the debate to the floor of Wales' Labour Party conference. It is also vital that we continue the task of taking the debate into the Welsh labour movement and building a network of

supporters.

We must also reach outward to those in Wales outside the Labour Party who are campaigning for an Assembly and to socialists in Scotland, whose debates and experiences are more developed.

While it is only the Labour Party which can deliver an Assembly for Wales, the current proposals fall far short.

## Socialist Campaign Group: Time to get building

SOCIALIST Campaign Groups from around the country met on February 3 and made important decisions about campaigning and building the profile of the network in the run up to the general election.

They also welcomed Ken Livingstone's call to increase the coverage of the Socialist Campaign groups in Socialist Campaign Group News.

Last year's AGM rejected Arthur Scargill's proposal for a new Party. An open letter is to be made available to local groups to use at meetings called by the SLP. A debate with the SLP on the day of the next steering committee meeting is planned.

A newsletter for use by local groups will be out soon with articles on key issues as well as calling on Party activists to link up with struggles such as the dockers' on Merseyside and the Campaign Against the Immigration and Asylum Bill.

There are reports of disquiet

among Young Labour groups over Labour's education policy. These groups are still growing and the left is gaining influence. Production of the youth paper is to be made more regular. The latest issue is now out.

The meeting agreed on the need for a left campaign around the General Election, calling for a Labour vote while fighting around issues like the minimum wage, repeal of the anti-union laws, re-nationalisation of public utilities, linking the left in the Labour Party and unions with campaigns and struggles going on now.

It was agreed to approach forces in the unions, the Campaign Group of MPs and others to attempt to get this important campaign off the ground.

**Pete Firmin (Officer, Socialist Campaign Group)**

• The next committee will be on March 30 in Leeds. Contact the Socialist Campaign Group at 3 Blades House, Kennington Oval, London SE11 5TW for more information.

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# Dockers dig in

Jonathan Joseph

**DOCKERS** in Liverpool have been holding monthly demonstrations since they were locked out by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

The latest march drew 1,500 people and the mood was even more militant than usual.

The TGWU bureaucracy has been trying to get the dockers to accept a deal, cobbled together with the bosses, to selectively re-employ a handful of dockers and buy off the rest. Not everyone would get this "compensation".

A mass meeting of 400 voted unanimously to reject this "offer". This is despite union bosses Jack Adams and Bill Morris calling for acceptance.

Unfortunately the TGWU bureaucracy is continuing to push for a sell-out settlement. They have now balloted striking members, dividing them up into three separate groups.

And this is supposed to be an unofficial dispute!

Thankfully the dockers resolve is rock solid. Results have yet to come in from the sacked Torside dockers and Nelson Freight. However, the dockers who were sacked for refusing to cross the Torside picket line



Solidarity from USA was shown by International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's union member Jack Harman on January 13.

have voted by 271 to 50 to continue their action.

The TGWU leaders have been a disgrace. After an initial donation the TGWU has failed to deliver any further money.

In contrast Italian dockworkers have pledged the money from one hours overtime per month, amounting to £40,000. Maybe the Liverpool dockers should join an Italian trade union!

The action of the Italian dock

workers reflects a growing solidarity. Profits have been hit by an impressive international boycott.

On February 17 an International Conference of Dockworkers will be held in Liverpool drawing in workers from the USA, Canada, Sweden, France and Italy.

A national conference is also planned. This has the support of the dockers and of the Merseyside County Association of Trades Union Councils.



Bayo Omyiola, a Nigerian threatened with deportation, addresses Liverpool dockers rally

## Lessons from JJ Foods

**FORTY-FIVE** sacked workers from JJ Foods have won a victory at an industrial tribunal. It decided they had been unfairly dismissed and that their boss had discriminated against them when they joined a union to press their claim for decent pay and service conditions.

The workers who are mainly Turkish and Kurdish are still pressing for reinstatement but if the tribunal does not enforce this they will each receive sums in excess of 5,000. Rumours abound that this will lead to the company going bust. A campaign mounted by the workers and their support group has successfully stopped a number of contracts with the firm.

John McCarthy of the support group said that through united action the company had been brought to its knees. It is, he said, an important lesson for other bosses who might think about sacking workers when they join a trade union. The success of the dispute has set in motion a campaign with the T&G textile branch in North London to fight for union recognition among low paid workers.

Ian Wilkinson

## Fascists out of our Schools

**TEACHERS AND** parents at Andrew Marvell School in Hull have reacted angrily to news that one of their parent-governors stood as the fascist candidate in the recent Hemsworth by-election.

Michael Cooper stood as National Democratic Party candidate. In May 1994 he stood as the National Front candidate for Hull City Council.

Cooper slipped onto the school governing body in an uncontested election.

An NUT member at the school says: "The staff at Andrew Marvell School were shocked and amazed to learn that one of their parent-governors, Mike Cooper, was standing for election to Parliament in the Hemsworth by-election. This organisation puts forward extreme right-wing views which are based on racist ideas.

"These views are directly opposed to the ethos of the school and the school's policy of equal opportunities for all. Teachers and other staff at the school have signed a petition calling for the removal of Cooper from the governing body."

Local anti-fascists have launched a campaign for Cooper's removal. The Anti-Nazi League has petitioned parents and houses. Cooper is trying to brave out the storm of protest claiming he "has done nothing wrong". Members of Hull Trades Council and the local National Union of Teachers (NUT) will be ensuring that the parents and teachers of East Hull are made aware of Cooper's Nazi views.

A Hull NUT member

## Support Hillingdon Strikers

Brian Gardner

**OVER 50** low paid and mainly Asian women workers have been on strike for five months at Hillingdon Hospital in West London. Their employer, Pall Mall Management, wanted to cut their wages by 20 per cent and sacked them when they refused to agree.

A company with fingers in many pies Pall Mall is involved in government-backed initiatives bringing more private finance into the health service to run services and build hospitals. To prop up the dispute it is bringing scab labour from as far away as Newcastle.

Newly elected London convenor for UNISON, Geoff Martin, said that while the company was going to great lengths to smash the dispute the women were prepared to stick it out for as long as it takes.

He added however that the dispute needs all the assistance it can get and that winning it was important in terms of the continuing struggle against privatisation in the health service.

The strikers have made links with women involved in the docks dispute in Liverpool and some of these will be attending a demonstration this coming Saturday. The demonstration starts Colham Green Hospital at 11.30 am and will march to a rally at the Hillingdon Civic Centre at 1 pm.



Strikers have made links with women involved in the docks dispute

# Sweeping racism out of Europe

**A** BARRIER of barbed wire has been built between Europe and Africa along the Spanish/Moroccan border at a cost of almost £200,000. Nothing could symbolise the meaning of the new Europe better.

The Schengen agreement is designed to close the borders around Europe to economic migrants.

The Bill now before the British parliament echoes legislation which either exists or is currently being proposed in France, Italy, Spain and other European states.

The Tories are always ready to play the race card if they think it will help their electoral fortunes. They hope the Asylum and Immigration Bill will win them votes.

But the moves in Britain must be seen as part of greater European integration.

Schengen highlights the growing economic differences between North and South—a situation in which Western European governments deal in arms and other commodities, propping up murderous and torturing regimes in the process.

Co-operation between European bourgeoisies to stop

economic migration, and to classify the vast number of asylum seekers as bogus, is now at an unprecedented and sophisticated level.

This Centre Stage looks at the history of state racism in Britain expressed in the Immigration and Asylum Bill, the battle for immigrant rights in Germany and the struggle against the new legislation in Italy, arguing that we need an international socialist opposition to the capitalist European project—one that defends the right of free movement across all international borders.

## Simon Deville

IMMIGRATION controls are a relatively recent means through which to encourage racism. They became an essential part of re-defining the British national identity in the context of an imperialist power that could no longer rule the waves.

Throughout British history large numbers of migrant workers have come to Britain. This has been a result of both repression in their country of origin and of the needs of British capital.

Up to the Second World War it was Irish, Jews, Poles, Ukrainians and Cypriots have made up the largest groups.

Of all these it was the Irish and Jewish immigrants who faced the most hostility from the "indigenous" population. Marx wrote in 1870 that "Every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life."

There has been a small minority of black people in Britain for centuries, and a long history of racism against them.

At the end of the second world war there was a shortage of labour power. The British government positively encouraged people to come here.

In 1948 The British Nationality Act guaranteed the right of all Commonwealth citizens to live and settle in Britain.

From the war until the mid 1960s there were relatively high levels of immigration, particularly from the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent.

The lack of housing stock, particularly in the inner-cities, created a perceived competition between black and white workers.

Racism, and black resistance to racism, built up throughout this period. In 1958 there were major disturbances in Notting Hill and Nottingham.

A fight between some black and white people in Notting Hill was followed by a large angry mob of white people attacking any West Indians in sight.

This was portrayed as being a "race relations" problem rather than one of racism, and was used to generate a new political consensus between the main political parties based around limiting immigration and introducing race relations legislation.

Thus racism was to be dealt with



Anti-fascist fighter Charlie Goodman arrested in East London Cable Street battle, 1936

through a combination of restricting the rights of victims of racism and through state censorship. Both strategies ultimately promoted further racism.

The 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act restricted immigration from the commonwealth to those who already had jobs waiting for them, or who had essential skills.

Having just been elected in 1964 the Labour government brought in new laws setting limits on the numbers of immigrants.

In 1968 Enoch Powell delivered his infamous "rivers of blood" speech.

In the context of a growing militant

civil rights movement in the USA, Powells speech was able to tap in to popular fears and to legitimise popular racism. British culture under threat from "alien" cultures was the theme.

Though the Conservatives formally distanced themselves from Powell, they recognised the potential of racism to win them votes.

In 1971 The Immigration Act effectively reduced the status of non-white immigrants to that of "alien", unless they could prove that either they or their parents were born in Britain.

Thatcher consciously spoke about "floods of immigrants" coming into the country, even though this was

clearly not true.

In 1988 the Tories introduced the further legislation that abolished the right of family reunion and made overstaying on a visa a criminal offence.

The Schengen Agreement signed in 1985 paved the way for the development of a common set of racist laws throughout Europe. This is one piece of Schengen the British government is keen on.

The 1993 Asylum and Immigration Act represented a move towards a common policy with the aim of restricting the right of entry of asylum seekers and the creation of detention centres to lock up asylum seekers.

## Vibeke Bach Madson of the Danish socialist paper *Socialistisk Information* reviews our recent book 'Ending the Nightmare'

THE BRITISH paper *Socialist Outlook* has published a small book on racism and fascism. It gives an excellent introduction and background information, both on what racism and fascism represent, and to the political reasons why racism and fascism raise their ugly heads. It also makes some suggestions on how to fight back.

It contains eleven chapters in three main parts; a historical section, which looks at the nature of fascism and its development in Italy, Germany and Spain along with a chapter on fascism and homosexuality.

There is another section on fascism in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Britain and France. The final part is concerned

with racism in Britain today.

For those of us who do not know a lot about the history it is a very good description of the most important events, going back to the start of fascism in 1919-39.

There is no doubt that the question of racism and extreme right-wing movements is centrally placed in political developments in Europe.

The economic crises which started in the 1970s and mass unemployment have created an instability in European politics which creates room for the far-right. It is therefore necessary for the left to discuss what the far-right represents, whether there are real fascist movements and to put them into a historical context.

It was a grave mistake that the left in Italy, Germany and Spain did not stand together and fight fascism at the time of its early growth.

In Germany the Communists—under direction from Stalin—went as far as saying that the social democrats and the fascists were one and the same thing. It is of course quite the opposite: we have to unite with the social democrats to fight the fascists, before we can

win over the social democrats.

Another important element in the fight against fascism is the struggle against racism—a central part of our society and the state apparatus, whether it is racist asylum laws which keep refugees out, or the oppression of minorities. Here, the fight against the criminalisation of asylum seekers and for their democratic rights are

important issues.

Fascism and racism have to be fought against—but racism cannot finally be eliminated without replacing capitalism with socialism.

I think the book has its strength as an introduction to certain issues/countries.

If I had to highlight a weakness it would be that the different contribu-

tions overlap with one another and do not always go into sufficient detail.

The purpose of the book is of course political, to explore the problem of racism and fascism from the perspective of how to fight and eliminate it. People in Europe have an alternative—mobilisation of the working class, mass organisations and collective action.

## Ending the Nightmare

Socialists against racism and fascism

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**Ending the Nightmare**  
Socialists against racism and fascism





George Thompson

**T**HE BANNING of the Komala Kurdistan association and the closing down of the Kurdish Parents Association cultural centre in Munich are the latest acts by the Government against the Kurdish community.

Already most Kurdish groups in Germany have been outlawed, for alleged sympathy with the PKK (a communist organisation fighting the Turkish regime), thousands of Kurds are facing prosecution for "carrying on with banned associations" and political exiles are being deported to face the brutal Ankara regime.

The Executive of Komala Kurdistan were mostly Germans, but it was declared a foreign association by a Court and banned.

The authorities claimed it was damaging German interests and the friendly relations established between the peoples of Germany and Turkey.

Turkey is Germany's main ally in the Middle East. The Kohl government gave its leaders £3.5 billion pounds last year.

In return, German arms companies, seven hundred of which are based on Turkish soil, have earned massive profits by supplying weapons to a Turkish army slaughtering Kurds.

In the international arena Germany has turned a blind eye to Turkey's human rights record and supported its successful bid to get a Customs Union with the European Union. In domestic affairs it has unleashed a wave of repression against an "enemy within".

The Parents Association taught Kurdish children the Kurdish language, banned in Turkey and not offered in Germany, despite there being a Kurd population of half a million. The police said the Cultural Centre's activities were

## To all the anti-racist campaigns and immigrant associations in Europe

Dear friends,

**S**PURRED on by a chauvinist campaign lead by the National Alliance and Northern League the Italian parliament has voted for a new decree. If transformed into law it will mean terrible restrictions on the rights and status of immigrants in Italy.

Thousands of immigrants and Italians have demonstrated in cities across the country, and subscribed to our call "Don't

wipe out our rights". Groups of immigrants have gone on hunger strike in Rome.

The decree of November 18 pays lip service to many of the principles which we have fought for, such as the provision of health care and the legalisation of work. But nowhere are there any practical proposals.

On the other hand, those bits of law that are being immediately implemented are racist and discriminatory. These include

- deportations without appeal on the mere suspicion of an offence or of anti-social behaviour
- not carrying an identity card is now a crime
- immigrants awaiting appeal are to be put in detention centres
- entry for work is blocked

other than for seasonal work

Last year there were 60,000 deportations. Up to 40,000 people are turned back on the Italian border every year. Most of them are refugees from places such as ex-Yugoslavia and Kurdistan.

The government justifies its law by pointing to other European country's restrictions.

We ask you to join with us in showing that there is another Europe, one that condemns the violation of human and civil rights. Show support by campaigning against Italian embassies and consulates.

Senza Confine co-ordinates over 150 campaigns throughout Italy, we want to show that our campaign is part of a movement throughout Europe.



"Party — Struggle — Victory" declare the banners of the MLKP-R

Photo: Paul Mattsson

directed by the Bavarian leadership of the PKK.

In the smear campaign, the liberal paper, the Sueddeutschen Zeitung described it as a "moletoov cocktail filling station".

On November 30, the news of the closure of the Centre was broken to its Committee members by armed police who smashed down their doors in the middle of the night.

In Bayern 16 associations have been banned and the Kurdish people have been robbed almost completely of their democratic, political and cultural rights.

The response of the Kurdish community to the latest out-

rage, was to occupy the Cultural Centre. The State ordered in special commandos, and a spokesperson said the situation would be dealt with in the "usual Bavarian way".

The radio lied that the Kurds were going to throw their children out of windows, because a Kurd was seen at a window with a child (it was a Parents Association!).

Demonstrators outside the Centre pleaded with the troops not to use arms or storm the building. German and Turkish fascists descended on the scene to fight supporters of the occupation.

It was ended by negotiation,

but the promises given to the Kurdish occupiers before they left were almost immediately broken—most are now imprisoned.

The local mayor agreed to allow the Kurds a cultural centre without politics. However a major part of Kurdish culture is their tradition of resistance against repression. Their New Year celebration Newroz is a festival of resistance.

The Kurds are not giving up their politics to satisfy Kohl. Last June they organised in support of Kurdish freedom, the largest demonstration in Germany for decades. 200,000 people marched, but few from the

main parties of the German left.

The RSB/ Vierte Internationale, (Revolutionary Socialist League-Fourth International) has been very active in support of the Kurds fight against persecution in Turkey and Germany. Comrades have gone to court for giving out leaflets in support of their struggle. In Bavaria, they have helped form a Solidarity Committee.

Real German friendship with the Kurds is being attacked by the State. A stronger German State must be resisted, and defence of the Kurds' human rights in the country is essential in this struggle.

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France: Public sector revolt

# Resisting the right

Simon Kennedy

AS ITALY enters a second year of rule by an unelected government observers may be forgiven for thinking that the biggest threat to democracy comes from the parties of the centre rather than the right.

Unable to replace the Christian Democrats as the centre pole of politics Italy's government remains prone to sharp changes and sudden crises.

President Oscar Scalfaro had to consult with 20 groups in parliament before appointing lawyer Antonio Maccanico as prime minister in January. Some like to pass the present period off as a passing problem of "transition", or as a temporary re-emergence of old ways that will soon pass.

Nothing could be further from the truth. While the government's crisis and the rise of the right has deep roots in Italy's post-war political arrangements, it is also a product of very modern developments.

On the face of things the right should be weak after the wave of corruption scandals. After the mass mobilisations of last year, the mass movement should easily be able to veto the austerity policy currently being put together by the tough-talking Maccanico. But this is not the case.

In the post-war period Italy's parties had to operate through a methodically organised system of patronage. Party members were given privileged relations with public institutions.

This "Assistenziale" gave weak parties both a mass base and permanent government deliberately designed to exclude the Italian Communist Party. The Cold War provided a bogey man to keep the bloc together. But it was not only the 'thaw' after 1989 that threw the order into crisis.

The patronage system cost a lot of money. It piled debt onto debt—two thousand trillion lira at last count—that, when combined with large-scale unpursued tax evasion by the middle classes, stored up massive economic



Berlusconi has his television — Italians reply with demonstrations

Photo: Il Manifesto

problems.

On top of this Italy went through a process of capitalist restructuring in the 1980s that undermined public provision in education, health and housing to the benefit of individual consumption.

This particular combination of assistenziale and economic restructuring gave the mass movement of last year a special form.

The general hostility to corruption was combined with a widespread discontent not only to established parties of all shades, but also to the very notion of public intervention into the economy. This demoralisation with national political institutions also encompassed the unions.

This meant Berlusconi was able to ride upon the wave of discontent and to put together a very effective electoral bloc resting on partners who had very programmes, were formally opposed and held in low esteem.

The combination of the far right Alleanza Nazionale and Northern secessionist Lega Nord proved too unwieldy to implement the changes to pensions and see off the challenge from the magistracy.

But the right remains strong.

Berlusconi's control of television gives them a mouthpiece to translate the monetarist message into popular language—in the same way Murdoch gave Thatcher *The Sun*.

The strength of far right authoritarian populism needs an urgent response from the left. The ex-communist PDS has moved massively to the right. It was the main prop of the Dini government.

The class-struggle party which emerged from the old CP, Rifondazione Comunista, has become the only effective left alternative. Rifondazione was almost the only party which consistently opposed the pension changes.

It has led an international initiative against Maastricht and opposed sending troops to Bosnia. The party is against collaboration in the government.

## 'Rifondazione' rebuilding Italian left

RIFONDAZIONE must act simultaneously on the political and social front.

We must present ourselves as the only party which struggles consistently for democratic demands. This means demanding elections as soon as possible, so that the population can express themselves on all the questions under debate.

It also means working for a project

of radical social transformation. We need to develop our thinking about programmatic matters too. A national conference is planned for the end of March.

But we must thoroughly transform ourselves, so as to become a party which can not only organise large demonstrations from time to time, but above all builds living, sustained connections with the masses, in factories, in transport services, the civil service

and in each district.

We have to train new supporters who will turn their back on the bureaucratic ideas and behaviour which have had too great an influence on the development of the workers' movement, and contributed to the serious defeats which we have experienced.

Livio Maltan

• Edited from the February 1996, *International Viewpoint*.

## How left union led French strike wave

Pete Hooper

FRANCINE Bavay from the French trade union SUD (Solidarity, Unity, Democracy) last week spoke about the background to the December strike movement to a packed meeting organised by *Trade Union News*.

French Prime Minister Juppe's social security plan came as a big shock after Chirac's populist Presidential platform.

The government announced at the same time a massive one-third reduction in the rail budget, including the closure of one-third of the rural network.

At first the plans were quietly received before rail workers and the Paris Metro went on strike on November 24, staying out for the duration of the events. The strike movement rapidly spread to other public sector workers.

At France Telecom where Francine works, SUD called on workers to take action. 21 per cent went on indefinite strike while others, keeping their powder dry for the forthcoming

fight against privatisation, came out on days of major demonstrations.

The movement spread throughout France—although it was most strongly supported in the poorer south and west of the country where dependence on public sector employment is greatest.

The movement did not extend to the private sector, although private sector workers generally supported it as a proxy for their own action in more difficult circumstances.

The Communist Party-led Confederation General du Travail (CGT) leadership only called for the withdrawal of the plan under pressure from militants at its annual conference. The Force Ouvriere confederation unusually took a militant line. Joint CGT-FO demonstrations were organised, the first since their cold war split in 1947.

The CFDT union leadership, close to the Socialist Party, supported the government throughout. However, rank and file CFDT members fully participated.

Under the impact of the strikes, Juppe was forced to withdraw much of his plan, including the increase in pension contribution years and the en-



French unions were able to draw millions of youth into struggle

Photo: Rouge

tire rail budget cuts plan.

The increase in social security contributions went through though. Francine explained that it had not been lost on French workers that those, such as the rail workers, who had fought the hardest lost the least.

The December movement has changed the balance of forces in French society, which would make the inevitable further attacks much more difficult.

A realignment reflecting this new reality within the French trade union

movement is now taking place. The CFDT is now openly divided as a result of its leaderships betrayal of the movement and its refusal to hold an emergency conference to discuss its role.

Already 700 rail workers centred on the Gare du Lyons and the Marne Valley have voted to join SUD.

Given that only about ten per cent of workers are trade union members in the best organised sectors in France, this is equivalent to perhaps 7,000 in British terms. Further splits from the CFDT can be anticipated.

SUD was itself formed in 1988 as a split from the CFDT and will soon be the majority union in France Telecom and is growing rapidly in the postal service.

SUD is led by militants on the far left and members of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International, play a leading role.

Finally Francine called for support for and participation in a proposed European wide demonstration against unemployment, planned to coincide with the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference on the Maastricht process.



Mandela's post-apartheid South Africa hits its second anniversary

# ANC's national disunity



Salim Vally [centre] on the platform at a recent meeting sponsored by the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action

**Post-Apartheid South Africa has hardly lived up to the dreams of those who fought long and hard against the tyranny of racist capitalism. We spoke to SALIM VALLY, the national media officer of the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action [WOSA] about the Government of National Unity and the future for the workers' movement.**

**Q. What is the Government of National Unity's record to date, especially in relation to the much heralded Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)?**

SV: The RDP was supposed to address the problems of poverty but it is clear to us that the RDP has got some fundamental flaws which will militate against meeting its goals.

The RDP waxes lyrically around the poverty of the people and the need for redress but this is supposed to happen through economic growth. Through the social partnership of capital, labour and the state, the economy will grow and peoples' needs will be met.

In practice the aim is really to make South African manufacturing goods competitive internationally.

But South African goods cannot compete in the international market with the Pacific rim countries, its just not possible. The social contradictions in South Africa, the poverty and the level of unemployment (50 per cent

plus), will militate against that scenario.

And so the premise from which the RDP starts off, that we can have economic growth based on the kind of investment that's coming into the country which is non-productive, speculative, buying real estate and shares on the stock exchange doesn't create jobs.

The direction is a 30-70 society. Seventy per cent of people are marginalised and only 30 per cent, the middle classes and some sectors of the working class, highly skilled, highly organised workers will benefit.

**Q. The Government of National Unity has recently been talking about privatising national assets and although COSATU has threatened strike action they have called off their actions at the last minute. What is happening?**

SV: The whole privatisation issue is vitally important for the workers movement in this country. Privatising state assets is really the crowning glory of the pro-boss faction in the ANC.

We fully support those unions in

tween trades unions, regardless of which federation they belong to, other left political parties including the Communist Party, to come together to oppose privatisation.

It needs to be said that some people in the ANC leadership who were called left wingers are the ones who are pushing privatisation.

The first action against privatisation was a two hour action and was called by COSATU at a time when many factories were closed. The bourgeois press called it a failure.

COSATU also called off the one day strike on the 16th January because they believed that the state had conceded the need for more discussions. The state however has made it publicly known that they haven't conceded anything to the union movement.

**Q. What do you feel are the priorities for the South African working class in the coming years?**

SV: I think the main issue is the right to work. Every time workers demand higher wages or a living wage or the right to strike (which has been severely curtailed since the Labour Relations Act was passed last year, workers can no longer strike around issues of dismissals) they are always told that they are being ungrateful, and that they should be thankful—they have a job at all given the numbers of unemployed.

The President has said that we have to tighten our belts. This was mentioned quite vociferously by the leaders of the ANC during the recent nurses strike, who condemned the nurses in the most reactionary kind of way.

The large numbers of unemployed in this country are used as a battering ram against the organised workers to threaten them and also to keep wages low. So we have an ongoing campaign

**Seventy per cent of people are marginalised and only 30 per cent – the middle classes and some sectors of the working class, highly skilled, highly organised workers – will benefit**

COSATU and NACTU (National Council of Trades Unions) who have come out against privatisation.

The trades union leadership's quandary is that they don't want to rock the boat, they don't want to show up the government for what it is, which is basically a capitalist government.

We are attempting to appeal directly to the rank and file to challenge the compromises made by the leadership and are calling for a united front be-

around the right to work, and of course an issue like privatisation makes it even more important because we know privatisation will mean even more unemployment.

And the other crucial issue is around democracy within unions. Because of the whole social contract approach this has resulted in more and more of a gap between the rank and file and the leadership.

Democracy, the undertaking of mandates and reporting back to the membership was something the union movement in South Africa was very proud of but that is fast being eroded.

Unions leaders now sit on tripartite bodies like NEDLAC (National Economic Development and Labour Council) which brings together representatives from capital, the state and labour and makes decisions that affects hundreds of thousands of workers.

Of course the only way this can be seriously addressed is through the formation of a political party—a mass workers party—which is also on the agenda for this country.

**Q. How far are we from the formation of such a party?**

SV: We need to be very careful. We could proclaim a mass workers party tomorrow but it wouldn't be mass. For us it won't come about until a significant number of workers them-

selves understand the need for a mass workers party and take it upon themselves to form such a party.

The last thing we want to do is substitute ourselves for the working class so what we've been agitating and working in the unions, working with unemployed youth, in mass constituencies to get them to understand the need for a mass workers party.

Already the National Union of Metalworkers in South Africa, the second biggest union in the country, has passed a resolution supporting the formation.

We've had discussions with the executive of the Communist Party in various regions but unfortunately they are still tied to the ANC and in fact many of them have taken positions that are to the right of the ANC.

Many of the CPs leading cadre are a part of the state machinery and more and more the GNU is coming out in favour of capital and is simply endorsing the dictates of the IMF/World Bank.

We have also had discussions with AZAPO and some leading members have written articles supporting the idea. But at the moment it is the nationalists who hold sway.

There are important constituencies in both AZAPO and the PAC, workers and youth, who we have been appealing to. Discussions are ongoing.

## WOSA and the 1994 elections

**Q. WOSA stood in the 1994 elections as part of the Workers List Party. There was a lot of criticism of that tactic amongst the far left around the world. How successful do you feel you were?**

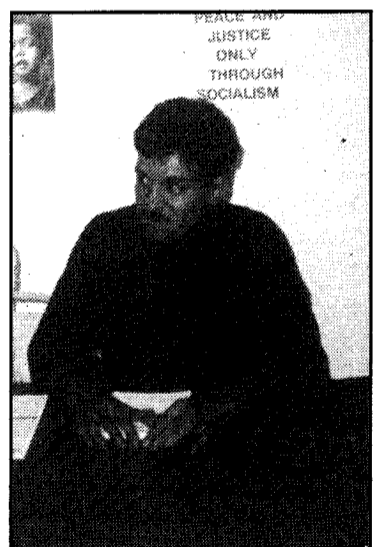
SV: We have had a number of post mortems since the national elections and we feel that the tactics have been very fruitful, not only for WOSA but for the left generally.

We did not agree with the negotiated settlement. We also knew that the cards would be stacked against us but nevertheless we felt quite strongly that would be a platform from which we could put across our point of view.

We have no illusions in parliamentary democracy and so it was a purely tactical propaganda exercise.

We were opposed to the "guiding principles" which included the right to hold private property—these were non-negotiable principles—all of which basically maintained the power equilibrium between those who held power throughout Apartheid and the masses who didn't.

We were at pains to stress that none of the nationalist parties will be able to deliver the goods despite the promises;



Vally: our position has been vindicated

that the Apartheid Debt would militate against any real intervention by the State to address peoples everyday problems. And that these problems could not be addressed within the framework of capitalism as long as the conglomerates maintained control of the economy.

We didn't get a lot of votes, a few thousand, but nonetheless we were heard across the country and our position has been vindicated. We were involved in the process in order to put across our political message and we succeeded.

The ANC leadership breathed a sigh of relief when they didn't get a two thirds majority.

They wanted to share power with the Generals, the National Party and the Inkatha freedom Front in this so-called Government of National Unity.



# World Bank bully boys of the new imperialism

JOHN LISTER reviews the new *Notebook for Study and Research* double issue: *IMF/World Bank/WTO: The Free Market Fiasco*, edited by Eric Toussaint and Peter Drucker

RUMOURS of imperialism's demise have been greatly exaggerated. Far from dying away with the granting of formal independence to many of the ex-colonial countries, imperialism has found new and devastating mechanisms to promote its exploitation of the raw materials, cheap labour and captive markets of the so-called Third World.

Three of these devices—the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organisation (formed from the GATT agreement of 1994)—are explored in this new booklet in the series of *Notebooks for Study and Research*, edited by Eric Toussaint and Peter Drucker.

Although some of the contributors are Marxists, the notebook, subtitled *The Free Market Fiasco*, does not confine itself to a Marxist framework of analysis.

As the foreword explains, it combines the work of the Fourth International's International Institute for Research and Development with those of the Brussels-based Committee for the Cancellation of the Third World Debt (COCAD).

As such, it is intended as a tool in the hands of a broad international network of movements that have come together around the theme *WB/IMF/WTO: Enough!*

It also serves to link up the work of leading academics, journalists and Oxfam's senior policy advisor with that of some of the FI's leading campaigners.

The result of this collaboration is an impressive array of remarkably up to date empirical information, facts and figures which lift the lid in particular on the real activities and impact of the terrible Twins of the 1945 post-war Bretton Woods economic settlement—the IMF and the World Bank.

While both organisations have masqueraded—with some success—as bringers of aid to the world's poorest and most indebted countries, this pamphlet relentlessly piles up the evidence to prove that they have in fact acted as



'March for Land and Dignity' from La Cumbre to La Paz, Bolivia. More than 400 members of indigenous groups protested at over-exploitation of rain forests by big business.

the brutal bootboys of imperialist banks and multinationals.

The debts and borrowings of Financially Dependent Countries have proved hugely profitable for the bankers in the imperialist centres. According to the OECD, debts from FDCs amounting to just \$900 billion in 1982 resulted in debt service payments of \$1.5 trillion over the following ten years, including the repayment of almost a trillion dollars of principle.

But by 1991, despite these enormous payments siphoning wealth from the poorest nations to the richest, the FDCs' total debt had increased by 64 per cent to \$1,478 billion.

The Bank and the Fund exploit this growing indebtedness of Third World countries to impose stringent monetarist policies which devastate their national economies, opening up new avenues for imperialist multinationals. Countries which reject the demands and preconditions of the Bank and the IMF find themselves cut off from private creditors and government loans.

In July 1992, over 50 countries were subject to IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) under which they are required completely to subordinate their economy and social policy to paying off the outstanding debts.

Domestic consumption is forced down, and production for domestic

markets cut back in order to prioritise production for export. A typical package includes:

- a forcible devaluation of the currency, pushing up prices of food, fuel, medicines and other valuable commodities
- a cut in wages with the "liberalisation" of the labour market and scrapping of any minimum wage
- massive cuts in state spending, cutting back the civil services and closing down or imposing charges for health and education
- blocking state spending on infrastructure and investment projects, opening the way for multinational construction firms
- eliminating subsidies and price controls—which often triggers a crisis in agriculture
- scrapping protective import quotas and tariffs, prompting the collapse of domestic manufacturing industry and creating profitable openings for imported goods and even heavily subsidised food imported from the EU.

privatisation of profitable enterprises, handing over new opportunities for profitable investment by imperialist banks and corporations at bargain prices, while any cash realised is channelled back into debt service payments

- far-reaching reforms of taxation—to tax the poorest while granting lavish tax breaks for foreign capital—along with deregulation of banking, and liberalisation of capital movements

While the IMF restructures the economies of FDCs, the better to funnel profits out to banks in the northern metropolis, the World Bank has established a squalid record of promoting investment projects which rape and destroy the natural resources and environment, causing huge misery.

In April 1994 the Bank admitted that 192 projects it had funded had resulted in the "involuntary relocation" of 2.5

million people, two-thirds of them in Asia, with another million to be displaced by further schemes in 1995-96. Bank-sponsored dams and other projects have done untold additional damage.

The Bank itself helped precipitate the disastrous African famines of the 1980s by its forcible deregulation of the grain market, opening the way for dumping of US grain surpluses, squeezing traditional food crops out of the best agricultural land in advance of the drought which followed.

Zimbabwe, the bread basket of southern Africa, saw a 90 per cent drop in its maize crop in 1992, while tobacco crops destined for export, on the best land, registered a bumper harvest.

in some sense a transitional demand, leading from today's problems and needs of the masses, towards the need for socialist revolution.

It is hard to imagine imperialists being peacefully pressured into such policies by force of intellectual argument.

However, this also raises the question of who must lead and carry through the fight for such far-reaching policies, and here the political limitations of this volume are most obvious.

The widening inequalities between rich and poor in the Third World, rich and poor in imperialist countries, and between wealthy creditor countries and Financially Dependent Countries are repeatedly discussed, but not in terms

of social class; nor are any explicit political conclusions drawn out on the type of programme and policies which logically arise.

Indeed the names Marx and Lenin, and the very term imperialism, are signally lacking from the pamphlet, despite the vivid way in which it implicitly demonstrates the present-day realities of imperialist exploitation.

Lenin's conclusion from his analysis of the nature and role of imperialism in 1916 was to redouble the fight for a conscious revolutionary party based on the working class.

That task remains to be carried through today, both in the imperialist countries and in the Financially Dominated Countries where 1.3 billion people currently eke out an existence on 80 cents a day, and billions languish in absolute poverty.

This valuable pamphlet must therefore be read in conjunction with others in the IIRE series, and with the writings of Lenin and Trotsky and the national section of the Fourth International which are fighting both for the cancellation of the debt and for socialism and internationalism.

## The World Bank exploits growing Third World indebtedness to impose monetarist policies which devastate their national economies

This 120-page pamphlet—with extended studies of the impact on Latin America, Africa and the Russian Federation—rehearses in detail and with many examples the ways in which the grip of imperialism has tightened on the windpipe of Third World and dependent countries.

But it is at this level that the Notebook stops short. The analysis goes no further than explaining how these various arms of capitalist and imperialist exploitation work on a day to day level.

The solutions proposed, though some are radical, fall short of any outright call for, or discussion of, socialism or social revolution.

Some are straightforward reformist demands, such as "regulatory policies that carefully monitor the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions and democratise the structures of the central banks". Others are more bold.

Of course, it is possible in some ways to view the central policy proposal—the cancellation of the debt—as

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## FEEDBACK

Socialist Outlook welcomes readers' letters. Address them to 'Feedback', PO Box 1109, London, N4 2UU. Letters over 300 words are edited for brevity and concision.

### Unfair to 'Militant'?

HAVING READ Peter Taaffe's book "The Rise of Militant" I found Nigel Danby's review (SO 95) incredulous.

On Vietnam Militant's slogans were clear: "for the withdrawal of US imperialism and all imperialist forces" (p.26). However, "while Militant supported the struggle of the workers and peasants for national and social liberation, it did not uncritically support the Stalinist leaders in North Vietnam". Militant recognised "because of the social forces involved, predominantly peasant masses, any successful regime to emerge would be based on the model of China or the Soviet Union. With a planned economy, but ruled by a one party totalitarian regime" (p.25).

On Northern Ireland the September 1969 Militant declared "For a United Workers Defence Force - Withdraw British Troops - Disband B Specials and police thugs - for jobs, schools and homes, take other monopolies - Catholic and Protestant Workers Fight for a United Socialist Ireland." (p.41)

In the unions Militant has been at the forefront of rebuilding CPSA's "Left Unity" following the Communist Party's splitting of the Broad Left in 1984. Within my own union Militant has participated in re-forging the left through the Campaign for a Fighting and Democratic UNISON.

Unlike Nigel Danby I would have no hesitation in recommending Peter Taaffe's book to any socialist. Not just because it records a thorough social, economic and political analysis of the past thirty years, but because it provides a testament to the heroic international struggle of the working class.

Phil Culshaw

### CPRF isn't socialist

"RUSSIA: REACTION on Hold?" (SO 95) was confused and confusing.

The writer seems unable to make up his mind whether or not we should welcome the success of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation in the recent parliamentary elections. He says that "reaction is on hold" and that "the result makes late capitalism's triumphalism begin to look somewhat premature". However, elsewhere he states (correctly) that the vote was not in favour of socialism "as such" and that the Communist's programme was for a "more gradualist introduction of capitalism". The writer also states that the CPRF has been publicly against the war in Chechnya, and yet he also points to the strong Russian nationalist element in the Communist's vote.

In an apparent reference to the Communist Party the writer says that "classes do not throw aside their historic organisations without testing them to the full". Is the CP an organisation of the working class? The CPSU was part of the bureaucratic apparatus of Stalinism, in a fusion of party and state. Its successor organisations reflect the interests of the bureaucracy, but also attract the votes of many workers in the military-industrial complex. Elsewhere, the writer doubts whether the vote means that the Russian working class is "resuming their (sic) forward march". Which march is this, exactly?

The Russian working class has been atomised and repressed since the 1920s. The USSR remained a degenerated workers' state because the bureaucracy defended (because they were the source of its power) the organs of collectivised property. After 1991 that defence was abandoned and the USSR's successor states



'Militant' drew comparison between Mao's regime and Vietnam

are capitalist states in that the state apparatus promotes, builds, and defends private property at the expense of the still massive state section, which it is attempting to sell off. The immediate task in Russia is the defence of the remaining gains of 1917. The Communist's victory may give the Russian workers breathing space in this task, but the CPRF cannot usefully assist in, let alone lead it.

Those workers who voted for the Communists and against the anarchy of the market must be won to the task of building a new revolutionary leadership. Only then can we talk again about the East being red.

Nick Davies,  
Swansea

### Support for Liverpool dockers

AS A REGULAR reader I would like to comment on SO 95. The international coverage was excellent as usual and the anti-racist stuff was fine but for "Britain's best selling socialist fortnightly", I would expect the coverage of the docks dispute to be better.

The support groups mentioned are only those set up by Trades Councils.

Oxford's Disputes Support Group has also been re-activated, and dockers are speaking on official platforms in London. Both GLATC and Workers Press are trying to set up London

Support Groups, and Birmingham TC is now setting one up. In Scotland Militant have organised support. In England where Trades Councils are weak(er) Militant and the SWP have attempted to raise support. Like Workers Press, the SWP's efforts have been half-hearted and in some cases almost counter-productive.

This year's Annual Conference of Trades Councils in May will prioritise the dockers and call upon all Trades Councils to set up Support Groups. Last year we made several successful interventions not least around the Welfare State Network (WSN).

In Oxford we have been discussing the Socialist Labour Party. We all have reservations but Oxford Militant Labour recently organised a successful meeting which proposed to set up a Socialist Forum. Personally, I would support this but they have suspended their initiative in favour of working with the Dispute Support Group.

There are many unique aspects of the Docks Dispute and to my mind it's the most important since the miners strike. International solidarity is amazing but the response of the (official) trade union movement so far has been disgraceful.

Surely a paper like Socialist Outlook with its many trade union supporters could be doing more?

Andy Gibbons,  
Oxford Trades  
Council Secretary,  
personal capacity

## WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR

**UP AGAINST** mass unemployment, rampant employers with savage anti-union laws, and a war on hard-won public services, the working class in Britain faces a real crisis – an avoidable crisis created by the historic failure of its official leadership.

Socialist Outlook exists to build a new type of working class leadership, based on class struggle and revolutionary socialism.

The capitalist class, driven by its own crisis, and politically united by its need to maximise profits at the expense of the workers, has had determined, vanguard leadership by a brutal Tory high command.

The Tory strategy has been to shackle the unions, and to fragment and weaken the resistance, allowing them to pick off isolated sections one at a time.

In response, most TUC and Labour leaders have embraced the defeatist politics of 'new realism', effectively total surrender, while ditching any pretence of being a socialist alternative. Every retreat encouraged the offensive against jobs, wages, conditions and union rights.

New realism is the latest form of reformism, seeking only improved conditions within capitalism.

We reject reformism, not because we are against reforms, but because we know that full employment, decent living standards, a clean environment, peace and democracy, can never be achieved under capitalism.

Nor, as we argued long before the collapse of Stalinism, could these demands ever be achieved under the bureaucratically deformed workers states and degenerated USSR, whose regimes survived only by repressing the working class.

We are a marxist current, based not on the brutish totalitarian parodies of state marxism, nor on the tame, toothless version of 'marxism' beloved by armchair academics, but the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Our socialist alternative is not based on parliamentary elections or illusions of peaceful legislative change.

We fight to mobilise and unleash the power of the working class to topple the corrupt and reactionary rule of capital and establish its own class rule.

We struggle against fragmentation by building solidarity, to unite the various struggles of workers, the unemployed, of women, of pensioners, of the black communities, of lesbians and gay men, of students, of youth – and of those fighting imperialism in Ireland and worldwide.

Socialist Outlook is above all an internationalist current, in solidarity with the Trotskyist Fourth International, which organises in over 40 countries.

Unlike some other groups on the British left, we do not believe a mass revolutionary party can be built simply by proclaiming ourselves to be one. This degenerates into sectarian posturing and abstention from struggles in the labour movement, playing into right wing hands.

Nor do we believe that the demands of women, black people, lesbians and gays or the national demands of people in Scotland, Ireland and Wales should be left to await revolution. The oppressed must organise themselves and fight now for their demands, which are a part of the struggle for socialism.

But propaganda alone, however good, will not bring socialism. The fight for policies which can mobilise and politically educate workers in struggle, must be taken into the unions, the Labour Party and every campaign and struggle in which workers and the oppressed fight for their rights.

To strengthen this fight we press for united front campaigns on key issues such as racism and fascism – in which various left currents can work together for common objectives while remaining free to debate differences.

If you agree with what you see in Socialist Outlook, and want to join with us in the struggle for socialism, readers' groups meet in cities across the country.

Contact us now, get organised, and get active!

### Get organised! Contact us now!

I want to know more about Socialist Outlook.

I would like to sell Socialist Outlook.

Please send me your introductory pamphlet:— 'Socialism After Stalinism'. I enclose a cheque for £1.00 payable to Socialist Outlook.

Send me details of the Socialist Outlook Fourth International Supporters' Association.

Name .....

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Return to: Socialist Outlook, PO Box 1109, London, N4 2UU.



# Socialist OUTLOOK

Canary Wharf bomb is a result of the British occupation of Ireland

## Britain to blame

**T**HERE can be no doubt where the blame for the Canary Wharf bomb lies—at 10 Downing Street. Every bomb and every bullet is a result of the occupation.

By calling for elections in a ger-

rymandered state and thereby reinforcing the unionist veto, John Major carried out an outrageous provocation.

He must have known that a resumption of the military campaign—if that is what it is—was inevitable.

There will be only one channel

through which the course of Irish peace will flow. That is by the occupying colonial power leaving and a process of Irish re-unification in train.

Nothing less will deliver peace to the island of Ireland—on these questions there must be no equivocation.

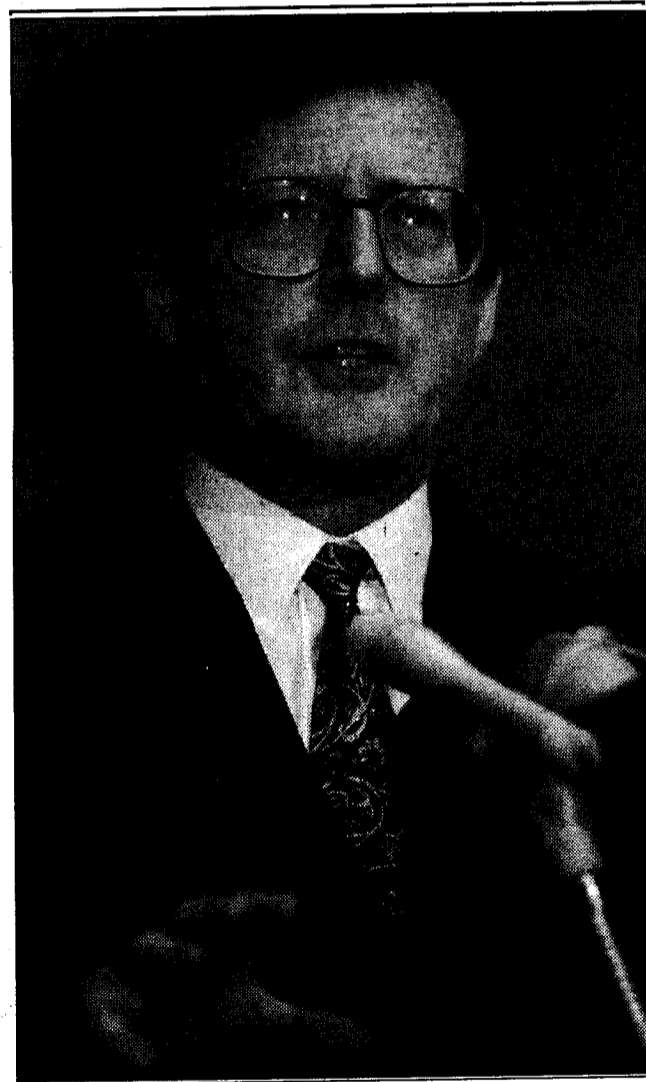
The whole Sinn Fein strategy of engaging in a so-called peace process based on a framework document that did not question the Unionist veto, and thus the existence of the border, is flawed.

Diplomatic manoeuvres which have depoliticised the nationalist community are at a dead end. Sinn Fein has to draw a negative balance sheet of this approach.

Moves to a strategy based on mass mobilisation of the nationalist community against the occupation are now essential. This is counterposed to the resumption of a campaign which is centred on military resistance—another dead end.

The ejection of the occupying forces will be achieved neither by quiet diplomacy nor by bombs that can be heard across London.

A 32 county political campaign that will begin on the terrain of democratic questions—such as the release of political prisoners—is needed. Such a campaign will only ultimately be secured by the creation of a 32-county socialist republic.



David Trimble: Unionist pressure behind break-up of 'peace process'



Blame for the Canary Wharf bomb lies at 10 Downing Street

## Britain must pull out of Ireland now

**FOLLOWING** the end of the ceasefire we carry the following statement from John McNulty of the Irish Committee for a Marxist Programme, the Irish section of the Fourth International

**THE ENDING** of the IRA cease fire and the bombing of Canary Wharf in London underlines the illusion and unreality of the Irish peace process.

The British government were given 17 months of peace and the clear willingness of the republican leadership to compromise and settle for a great deal less than the just and simple demands for an end to the British occupation and Irish re-unification.

The republican leadership was tied within the constraints of a "nationalist family" with Irish capitalism and had retreated on a whole series of issues.

Even the most incompetent imperialist government could have imposed a settlement. The fact that the British government has not means that there is no stable and peaceful solution in Ire-

land on offer from imperialism.

As the peace process wore on the fluffy clouds of aspiration around the Downing Street declaration and the framework document began to drift away. Emerging from the mist came the strategy that Britain had pursued since the fall of the old Stormont regime—the return of a local assembly under Unionist control with only the most minimal of concessions to the Catholic middle classes.

Britain's ally in Dublin, John Bruton, had called the demand for elections to a new Stormont "a mistake" and the continuance of this demand

following the breakdown of the ceasefire "pouring petrol on the flames".

This would have only been true if there had ever been a genuine peace process.

What we have had is an imperialist offensive—one that will now intensify.

We identify the British occupation as the cause of the violence and support the right of the Irish people to use violence in response.

We oppose a bombing campaign in England. Stripped of any possibility of mass or class action it becomes pure militarist adventure that can only damage the cause of Irish democracy.

The whole "peace process" leaves republicanism much weaker. Twenty five years of a failed militarist strategy have been followed by illusions in Irish capitalism and British imperialism that have proved totally false.

Now we have a movement confused and divided following both strategies at once!

The crocodile tears of Major, Blair and company will be followed by a renewed offensive. It is the duty of socialist to oppose it, and explain the basis of a real peace can only come when Britain pulls out of Ireland.

Belfast, February 11, 1996.