

Wapping voice on SOGAT NEC

DELEGATES DODGE RESOLUTION 11

THE recent election of Mike Hicks and Bill Freeman on to the National Executive Committee of the print union SOGAT could be a big step forward for the 5,500 sacked printworkers provided the two new delegates stick to their pledge to fight for jobs and trade union recognition at Wapping and Kinning Park.

The result of the last attempts by Murdoch to buy off sacked printworkers through 'pleading' to individual printworkers leaves a strong message for Hicks and Freeman.

That is, to fight any further attempts by SOGAT leader Brenda Dean and Co. to sell out the demands of the sacked printworkers.

As Arthur Scargill said in an article in the 25 October 'Wapping Post' about the printworkers' November 8 ballot result: 'The SOGAT-NGA-AEU decision to keep fighting against Rupert Murdoch's multinational butchery is not only a tribute to the struggle thus far, but to the heart and soul of trade unionism.'

'Our National Union is ready to respond to fresh invitations to join our brothers and sisters in the print, never forgetting their magnificent support for us during the long miners strike.'

He continued: 'It is up to the entire movement, with the leadership of the print unions and the TUC, to provide effective action on Wapping now.'

Due to the severe crisis of leadership throughout the dispute, both at national and London level, the sacked printworkers have just suffered a minor setback.

Despite a dispute between print union officials and Murdoch over figures, around 1,000 printworkers have accepted individual agreements from News International.

Speaking of the agreements made, the editorial in this week's 'Wapping Post' (of which Bill Freeman is the editor) correctly says: 'The result of this "ballot" has been an even bigger majority against selling out principles.'

But the editorial also goes on to say: 'He has also exposed those who have never really been with us and who have now sold out their unions, their workmates and themselves.'

Sacked printworkers and other trade union militants will draw important lessons when they ask themselves why nearly 22 per cent of the sacked printworkers capitulated to Murdoch.

Is it because they never wanted jobs and trade union recognition at Wapping? Is it because they considered Murdoch's pitiful buy-off attempts a 'fair deal'?

Or, is it because the national and local leaderships have created de-

BY CHRIS McBRIDE

moralisation among some printworkers, through the scaling down and pacifying of picket lines and through lack of any real attempts to escalate the dispute beyond the Boycott Campaign which is clearly not enough to win the dispute?

The isolation of the sacked printworkers can now be overcome, and a proper picket of the scab newspaper plant be enforced.

That is if 'Morning Star' men Hicks and Freeman, who have manned the demonstrations at Wapping right from the beginning of the dispute, fight on — and off — the NEC to enforce the demands of the most militant sections of printworkers, and the group of printworkers from the Fleet Street Support Unit, which include:

- Calling on other unions including Fleet St workers to participate in effective, organised picketing of Wapping.
- Joint meetings of Machine Chapels.
- Regular mass meetings of printworkers, organising strong secondary picketing etc.

Printworkers should also note that Mike Hicks, Bill

Freeman and the 'Morning Star' proclaimed that resolution No.11 at September's TUC conference, calling upon the TUC to 'actively enlist the involvement of all the affiliated unions in stepping up the demonstrations' and to 'give increased support to the boycott campaign' against the 'Sun', 'News of the World', 'The Times' and 'Sunday Times' was a 'victory'.

In reality it has turned out to be little more than empty rhetoric.

The 'Morning Star' reported in their comment column: 'The result, and the debate, on Wapping showed that, when faced starkly with an anti-union issue, the movement knows where it stands and will act accordingly.'

The 'Morning Star' represents opportunist politics in the workers movement. What has the TUC done about the 'anti-union' issue of the EETPU organised scabbing at Wapping?

As SOGAT NGN chapel FoC George Hall correctly pointed out: 'The TUC position regarding the EETPU is nothing more than a slap on the knuckles for them. The guts are within the amendment which was ruled out of order (instructing the EETPU not to cross picket lines).'

No doubt, Hicks and Freeman will be watched very closely by sacked printworkers as the intensity of the dispute develops and requires a leadership that will not capitulate.

Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund

IN SO FAR: £317.06 TARGET: £10,000

THE Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund of £10,000 is needed by February 1, 1987.

Half the fund is needed for the international work of the party. The party is participating in discussions with groups throughout the world Trotskyist movement in a way which was never possible before the explosion in the WRP last year. The other half of the fund is needed to

cover expenses already incurred in moving the party headquarters to more suitable premises.

The collection of the fund has only just begun, and we are asking all members and supporters to find ways of helping with this very necessary fund-raising.

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

FIGHT FOR A GENERAL ELECTION NOW!

BY CYRIL SMITH

MASSES of workers and important sections of the middle class hate this callous, mean and parasitic government. But instead of mobilising this feeling to force out Thatcher and Co., the leaders of the Labour Party now oppose any suggestion that an election must be called at once.

It is a scandal that, with 4 million jobless, devastation of the welfare services, attacks on education, health and unemployment benefits, Kinnock and Hattersley allow the Tories to undertake their cynical preparations for an election at their own time, without more than a whimper of protest.

Hattersley actually accuses Thatcher of sneakily calling an early general election to forestall the next sterling crisis.

Clearly, the Labour leaders fear an election, and are now enthusiastic participants in a plot to keep this government in office. In this, they are aided by union leaders, who hold back the demands of their members with exhortations to 'wait

for the Labour Government.'

Meanwhile, the conservatives proceed with the privatisation of industry. They sell it off cheaply to their friends, with a handsome rake-off to the computerised sharks of the city, using the proceeds to try to buy votes from an understandably bewildered middle class.

The middle class are not unwilling to fight. The long drawn out teachers' struggle proves that. What the middle class lack is decisive lead-

ership fighting on socialist policies.

In the ranks of the traditional left gloom and despondency predominate, reflecting this cowardice of the right wing leaders.

As the fluctuations in successive opinion polls merely reflect the fortunes of the Liberal-SDP Alliance, their spirits fall.

In the latest issue of the Communist Party's glossy monthly 'Marxism Today,' Stuart Hall gives us a learned sociological explanation of why the nightmare of Thatcherism has to go on for a lot longer.

At what pretends to be the opposite pole, the Healy-Torrance News Line keeps on parroting the call for a general strike, effectively the same demand for inactivity based on the self-same fear of Thatcher.

But the miners' strike last year, like the determination of the Wapping printers today, showed the tremendous potential for struggle contained in the British working class movement.

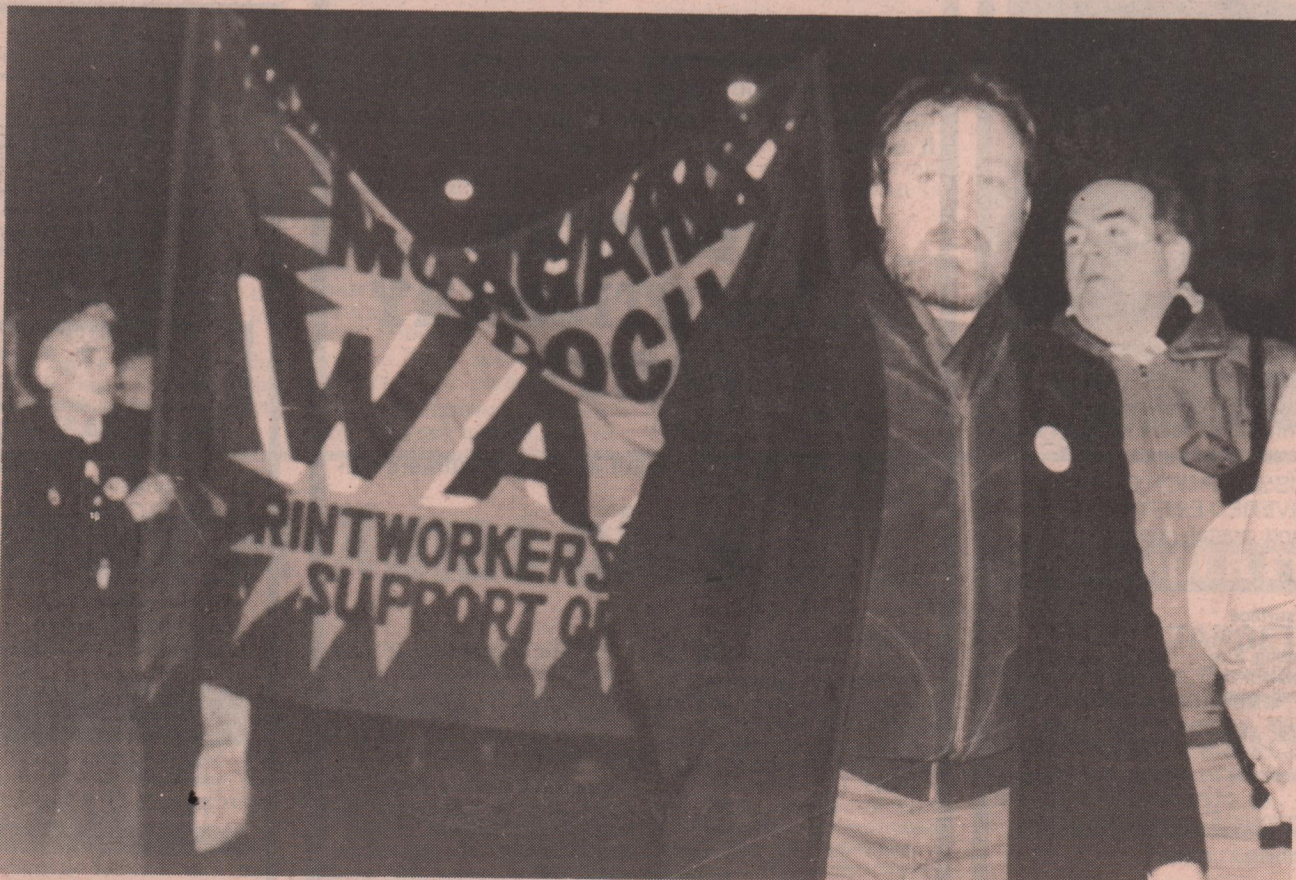
The building of support groups indicated the powerful response from every section of the working class and the middle class.

The cowardice of the left actually expresses their terror of this same power.

To force this government out of office implies getting to grips with this treacherous labour and trade union leadership, whether or not a Labour government replaces the Tories.

That is why we say don't wait for the Tories to decide a date for the general election to suit themselves.

Join the Workers Revolutionary Party. Mobilise all those who stand opposed to this Thatcher government to build the movement to bring the Tory government down.



Bill Freeman (centre) and Mike Hicks (right): 'Morning Star' men who have manned the big demonstrations since the beginning of the printers' dispute.

SECRET Japanese-style agreement revealed

ENGINEERING NEGOTIATIONS

SECRET negotiations involving over 1 million engineering workers in a Japanese-style agreement with the Engineering Employers Federation and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions have just been revealed in the minutes of an executive council meeting held on November 6, 1986 which have recently been circulated.

These negotiations, which have taken place over 18 months by a sub committee now led by newly elected right-wing AEU president Bill Jordan, have been discussing a number of headings with the engineering employers:

1. **Harmonisation of conditions of employment** which the EEF will only agree to reaffirm their desire to make progress.
2. **Efficiency in the engineering industry.** Both parties commit themselves to a better utilisation of resources and working time. Bill Jordan in his report to the executive council did not expand any further on this.
3. **Employees' involvement.** This was not expanded on either but is typical of a Japanese agreement of getting the workers to police themselves and come up with ideas for increasing productivity.
4. **Procedure and recognition.** This is a separate agreement within the talks which opens up the way to introduce single union agreements. Jordan's aim is to make the AEU the predominant union and wipe out the smaller unions in the engineering industry.
5. **Demarcation.** The CSEU would recommend to its constituent unions eliminating demarcations and other restrictive practices which is the basis of manning levels on the production

lines as well as craft groups.

When taking into consideration new technology such as computer controlled machines this would be devastating, causing untold redundancies.

7. **Non-cash pay.** The unions would undertake to assist in the transition of non-cash pay and monthly pay.

8. **Use of working time.** Discussions at domestic level would be initiated to achieve the best use of working time and the reduction of non-productive working time. Examples tea breaks, washing up time.

This would mean greater exploitation by increasing the working time in the shift and raising output.

9. **Variation in weekly working hours.** Where businesses are seasonal or undergo other predictable fluctuations the parties would encourage the flexible pattern of weekly hours to match the demand.

(i) It would be open to the parties to domestically mutually agree the flexible pattern which best suited their circumstances.

(ii) Where such agreement was not possible the employer would nevertheless be able, on due notice, to introduce some variations on his own initiative.

The EEF would be prepared to limit this variation of scheduled hours to a maximum of 5 times

8-hour shifts and a minimum of 4 times 8-hour shifts. The CSEU would wish to have an upper limit of 39 hours.

(iii) Working time is varied by either (i) or (ii) above when averaged over a period not exceeding 52 weeks would be required to equal normal day working or shift working hours.

Overtime premiums would be payable for hours worked outside but not within scheduled hours.

Changes this drastic are not even in Japanese agreements and would mean virtual scrapping of the guaranteed week, overtime premiums and the introduction of casual temporary labour.

10. **Annual hours.** It would be permissible to assess working time on an annual basis by domestic agreement.

11. **Normal working week.** Subject to implementation, conditions outlined in 12 below, working hours for manual employees would eventually be reduced from 39 to 37-and-a-half hours a week.

There would be no reduction for those on 37-and-a-half hours or less.

12. **Implementation.** Providing that the cost saving and efficiency-improving measures outlined above have been endorsed and accepted at domestic level the reduced working week would be implemented without loss of pay on domestic pay settlement dates.

If endorsement and acceptance at domestic level had not been reached by a date to be specified then the status quo would prevail.

13. **Timing of reduction in hours.** Discussion on timing continues. The EEF

would insist on a significant pause between the signing of any national agreement and the date following which companies would implement reduction in working time on their own domestic pay settlement date.

The EEF is also seeking a staged implementation of 37-and-a-half hour week.

'What Jordan and the sub committee is proposing is nothing more than the destruction of bitterly-won rights for engineering workers established over decades.

Jordan hopes that the AEU will be the one union accepted by the engineering employers, in the meantime swallowing the smaller unions with the smashing of demarcation lines across union boundaries.

This fear is borne out by the significant number of trade union officials at the meeting who spoke about their reservations.

It was finally agreed by a vote of 16 to 7 with three abstentions that Jordan's report was endorsed and that the draft report would be referred to the individual executives for further discussions.

Another resolution passed was that the views of the unions be sought for consideration by the executive council at their meeting to be held on Thursday December 4.

● All engineering workers must totally reject this deal.
● Lobby the meeting at the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London, on Thursday December 4, commencing at 9a.m.

● AEU members must demand the recall of the national committee to instruct the executive council to stop all talks with the EEF on the proposals and to disband the negotiating sub committee.

MANCHESTER MARTYRS: Their deaths were not in vain

BY SUE GWYER

THE COMMEMORATION of the death of the Manchester martyrs takes place on Sunday, November 23 in Manchester.

Their deaths were not in vain. Their courage, audacity and martyrdom serves as a rallying call to those who continue to struggle against Ireland's exploitation and oppression.

On September 11, 1867 two Fenian leaders, Colonel Thomas Kelly and Captain Timothy Deafy, were arrested in Oak Street Manchester and held by police on suspicion of conspiracy.

Kelly and Deafy had recently returned from service in the American Civil War.

On his return, Kelly became commander of the Fenian forces in Britain and Ireland and immediately planned an uprising.

The rising took place on March 5 and 6, 1867.

There was no coherent plan of operation other than the desperate hope that the insurgents might hold out long enough to be accorded belligerent rights by the US and thus precipitate that long-cherished Anglo-American War which had become so imbedded in Fenian mythology.

Defeat was followed by widespread arrests and heavy sentences for the convicted.

In England and Ireland it had become painfully obvious that Fenianism, which had begun with the specific object of maintaining secrecy, was honeycombed with

government agents.

The crushing of the uprising and the subsequent arrest of its chief organisers Kelly and Deafy were partially the responsibility of the infiltration of the Fenian secret brotherhood by informers.

While Kelly and Deafy were being transported in a Black Maria across Manchester to Belle Vue jail on 18 September 1867 they were freed after an attack on the convoy by local Fenians.

In the attack a policeman was killed.

Although Kelly and Deafy made good their escape to America, armed police moved quickly into the Irish districts and arrested 26 working men on suspicion of murder.

After a 16-day trial, five were convicted of murder and a further seven of riot and assault.

In spite of a widespread appeal against the distortions of the evidence and the ferocity of the sentences, radical expressions of sympathy for the Fenian cause and a powerful lobby for a reprieve, three men, William Philip Allen, Michael Larkin and Michael O'Brien, were subsequently hanged at the New Bailey Prison in Salford on November 23 1867.

These were the Manchester martyrs.

As O'Brien wrote to his brother shortly before his execution, he had been found guilty in a British court of law of being 'a friend to liberty and a hater of relentless cruelty.'

Their courage, audacity and martyrdom serves as a rallying call to those who continue to struggle against Ireland's exploitation and oppression

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MANCHESTER MARTYRS

1867    1986

COMMEMORATION



SUNDAY 23rd NOVEMBER

Assemble: 12.30pm
Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd., MANCHESTER 13.

MARCH and INDOOR RALLY

SPEAKERS:-
Sinn Fein
Relative of Irish P.O.W.
Pan Africanist Congress
I.B.R.G.
Irish Republican Socialist Party
Cumann Na Mban veteran
Pakistani Wkrs. Assoc. (B.)
I.R.Po.W.C.C.
Bands Alliance



SUPPORT THE FIGHT FOR IRISH FREEDOM

Newham firebombing

POLICE ARREST TAMILS

POLICE, including a Deputy Assistant Commissioner, were ejected from a meeting at East Ham Town Hall last Tuesday, November 18.

The meeting had been called following the fire-bombing of 84 Burges Road in Newham, in which three Tamils died.

The local community feel that this, the sixth firebomb attack in the area since June, is part of a violent arson campaign against Asians and blacks.

However, five Tamils who were questioned by police for several days have subsequently been charged with murder.

This is a first for the police in the area.

They have been unable to even guess who was responsible for the previous attacks.

They have refused to investigate the activity of right-wing racist groups in the area.

On the other hand, Asians who complain about racist attacks are immediately subjected to checks on their passports and residence status.

Local people lobbied East Ham police station last Friday demanding action to protect the Asian community.

None of the groups, including Newham Council which organised last Tuesday's meeting, at first seemed eager to take control of the proceedings.

Two high-ranking police officers mounted the platform.

But when a motion was put to allow them to state their case, it was clearly defeated, even following a recount.

A further motion was then put by the chair of the meeting that they should be allowed to stay in the hall, to cries of astonishment from the audience.

Retinue

This was also defeated. The chair then requested the permission of the meeting to ask the police officers if they were prepared to leave.

At this point the officers left, followed by a retinue of pressmen.

Representatives of the Tamil community made it clear they wanted the police to be present to face questions.



Cllr RON AUDLEY

Councillor Ron Audley detailed how in the course of their investigations police had stepped up their tactic of demanding evidence of validation of passports and the residence rights of those they questioned.

A speaker from the Tamil community demanded proper legal protection for the men in custody. As Audley had stated, three of them had not been allowed to appoint a solicitor.

The Tamil speaker also pointed out that the Tamil community was able to conduct its own defence as it had been engaged in 20 years of struggle for its independence.

Speakers called for solidarity with the Tamil community in the face of daily racial attacks affecting all immigrants, and called for the latest attack to be treated as a racial attack like all the others.

Mr Singh of the Newham Monitoring Project said: 'We must have no divisions in the black community.'

'Most of these arson attacks are racial attacks. Last year the Kassam family suffered the same fate. The police put the finger on Mr Kassam and held him in custody for days, while the whole of his community was subjected to harassment.

'A scar was put on him and his community.

'We want the authorities to take the responsibility for bringing the culprits to justice. Only a few days ago, an Asian man and his son were attacked by a gang of 15 near Barking Road and were hospitalised.

'But at the police station they were subsequently harassed, though the police knew the identity of the culprits.'

He supported the expulsion of the police from the meeting and congratulated all those who had called for their removal.

'It is time we defended ourselves,' he added.

A local resident, Mr Pickard, then put a resolution to



The fire-bombed house at 84 Burges Road, Newham, London

the meeting expressing outrage at the arrogant behaviour of the police in attempting to hijack the meeting. It protested at the failure of the police to investigate racial attacks in the area and condemned their harassment.

It called on councillors and council chief executives to circulate leaflets throughout the borough to publicise their opposition to racialism and called for 'a police force based on and controlled by the community.'

The motion was seconded by Andy Bevan, a supporter of the 'Militant.'

Crisis

A further resolution instructed the council to fund a local crisis advisory centre in Burges Road.

After some discussion it was agreed to set up a committee of two members each from the main minority umbrella organisations and the council to co-ordinate future meetings.

● At the close of the meeting, news was brought in that the police had held a press conference, from which Newham council representatives were excluded, to announce that five Tamils had been charged with murder.



MR PICKARD



MR SINGH

Campus anger at Xmas blow

MEMBERS of all unions on the campus at Leicester University held a joint demonstration about the unilateral action of the university authorities in cancelling the traditionally observed holiday on Christmas Eve.

The action of the university, taken without consultation, is seen by the unions as a provocation accompanied as it has been by threats of compulsory redundancies to

meet the 'financial cut-backs'.

'The Christmas eve holiday has been custom and practice as long as anyone can remember,' said Jim Strupish, a technician and secretary of the campus ASTMS branch.

'Salaries have fallen seriously behind and now even our jobs aren't safe.'

'By taking this perk away we feel the university is

trying to demoralise and divide us. Members have been angered about the action of the university who put this proposal in an informal way.

'We said we needed seven days to discuss it with our members, but the university couldn't bother to wait. This shows they aren't interested in negotiating and we feel the same will be true about the redundancies unless we

all stick together.'

The unions handed in a petition which was signed by 500 technical, clerical and academic union members as well as students and others.

A large number of those who signed were not union members, an indication of the anger felt on the campus as well as the refusal to be cowed by an increasingly dictatorial administration.

NOVEMBER FIGHTING FUND

TARGET: £2,000

WE ask Workers Revolutionary Party members and supporters to contribute to the funds we need to maintain and develop Workers Press. We have a target of £2,000 a month. Each week we will print an accurate account of the money received. So far this month we have £579.48.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Police prepare for major unrest

A NEW ISSUE of 'Policing London', the magazine produced by the Monitoring Group of the London Strategic Policy Unit, has been produced.

It is only when one reads these collected articles on the development of police policy in London that one realises how fast the ruling class is preparing its forces against major unrest in the capital city.

In a deliberate provocation, the police have listed seven housing estates where they consider unrest will take place.

They now classify estates on the scale of 'potential for disorder' on the basis of 'tension indicators' — generally the reports of the police themselves.

They use other criteria too. 'A high density of population and ethnic mix' and 'environmental factors such as the design of flats with many walkways and interconnecting alleys and a lack of facilities' are mentioned in the report.

'Disturbances between gangs', 'hostility towards police, as manifested by incidence of complaints, difficulty in making arrest' as well as levels of street crime in the surrounding area are other factors which lead to police impressions — and police behaviour towards — particular estates.

Needless to say, having identified these estates as potential trouble spots the police can now act with impunity against the residents.

Other articles included in the pamphlet deal with recent police raids, policing in schools (advice by policemen to 12-year-olds: 'You can pick up the phone and say that Joe Bloggs has done something and we can go and see that person. Your identity is never revealed'), the recent CND phone-tapping case, the Stalker affair, civil actions against police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Police Act in operation.

● *Policing London. Produced by the Police Monitoring and Research Group of the London Strategic Policy Unit. Tel: 01-633 5944.*

Maternity benefit goes

HALF a million women will lose their maternity grant when the Social Security Act comes into force next April.

One in five mothers will lose the maternity allowance — a potential loss of £530 — when it is paid through employers.

Free milk and vitamins for pregnant women and children in low-wage families will be abolished.

Maternity Emergency is a new campaign launched to fight these cuts, which will affect mothers and their babies.

Financial security around childbirth and the right to continue to work without disadvantage are central demands of the campaign.

They point out that changes in employment legislation will reduce women's maternity rights at work.

Applicants to Industrial Tribunals will have to pay a fee (around £25 has been suggested).

Pregnancy and childcare already make appeals against employers' actions difficult enough; the new payments (even though they will be refundable if the case is won) will make them impossible for many women.

Firms with fewer than 10 employees will have no responsibility to take women back after their babies are born, and women who work less than 20 hours a week will have no rights.

At present the figure is 6 employees, and the hours threshold is 16 hours, which takes in many more job-sharers and women who arrange their hours to suit their families.

● *Information about Maternity Emergency from: Maternity Alliance, 59/61 Camden High Street, London NW1 7JL*

No school for b&b kids

CHILDREN whose homeless families are being dumped in bed and breakfast hotels by London councils are in many cases missing school.

This revelation from the Inner London Education Authority follows hard on the heels of a report of health problems of these families.

Thousands of children, many from Asian families, are in bed and breakfast accommodation especially in Camden and Westminster.

School rolls have increased from 13,000 to 17,000 in this area, and ILEA have had to bring in temporary class rooms and free travel to take children to other areas.

But ILEA thinks there are still many children who simply aren't registered and get no schooling at all.

Special Fund success

A HIGHLY successful jumble sale was organised by the East London area last Saturday for the Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund (see page 1).

With only a limited amount of work — and enthusiastic participation by members and supporters — we were able to raise £197.16. Especially popular were the clothes, bric-a-brac and tombola.

REJECT NOTTS DEAL!

AN AGREEMENT between the NUT, AMMA and PAT (representing two thirds of teachers in England and Wales), and the Association of County Councils, Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Welsh Joint Education Committee on the employers' side, was signed in Nottingham over the weekend.

BY PHIL EDWARDS

This must represent a huge sell-out in teachers' conditions of service in return for only a slight change in salary levels agreed previously in Coventry.

The agreement has yet to be ratified by Kenneth Baker (Secretary of State for Education). He is at the time of writing ominously silent on the agreement which will cost the government £50million over the phased period of implementation.

There will be a review of salaries in 1988 and an overall review of the agreement in 1990.

Opposition on the NUT executive came from officers representing Birmingham, Leicester, Bradford, Leeds, Inner London and South Humberside areas, some of whom also opposed the agreement made in Coventry last month which met with opposition from teachers nationally.

The agreement is to be disowned at a LAPAC (pay action conference) on December 8 in Coventry by NUT members representing local associations from all over the country.

The NAS/UWT (National Association of Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses/Union of Women Teachers) and NAHT (National Association of Head Teachers) were opposing the agreement but cannot be relied on by teachers to mount any effective campaign against it.

The NAS is principally concerned with the level of salaries agreed and would be prepared to accept conditions of service contractually agreed 'at a price'.

The NAHT is principally concerned with maintaining, if not improving, present differentials for Head Teachers who have stood between local authorities and teachers throughout the course of the dispute.

What is needed is a fight-back mounted by teachers with the NUT and the NAS/UWT for an improvement in conditions and in the case of the NUT for an exposure of its executive's role in stamping on agreements made at conference not to tie salaries to conditions of service.

The claim made in the 'Guardian' on Monday November 17 that teachers on bottom scale 1 will receive a 62 per cent increase in salaries is a fallacious one.

Only 420 teachers nationally are currently on this scale and for many teachers (particularly those on the top increments of scale 3 and below) the increase after the first year does not amount to much more than a 2-4 per cent increase, some union members claim.

The 16.4 per cent increase claimed to be within the bounds outlined by Baker in his recent address to the Commons and in his 'open letter' to teachers (an edited version of which appeared in the 'Guardian') will not be achieved by many teachers for the next 9 years!

The downpayments agreed for January 1 and September 1987 cannot be included in any realistic figures; neither must the 5.5 per cent increase be included, since this was fought for and won before even the Coventry 'agreement' was made.

It has to be said that the issue here is whether or not teachers should accept a new salary structure in return for what potentially represents a gross deterioration

in conditions of service contractually laid down and which the NUT has openly agreed to 'police' on behalf of the state alongside local education authorities and including Labour LEA's such as the ILEA who earlier in the year threatened to deduct pay if teachers refused to 'cover' for absent colleagues during those periods designated 'preparatory' periods.

Giles Radice, Labour shadow spokesman for education, is openly begging for Baker to accept the proposals and supporting a system of teachers' appraisal and a bargaining machinery which links pay and conditions.

The maximum class size he is waxing eloquent about amounts to 33. This is actually in excess of the 30 currently agreed for teaching in areas such as inner London.

The NUT is calling a special conference in response to demands from several local authorities but intends to confine the aims of this to 'determine what advice to be given to members.'

Perhaps the most contentious issue has been over 'cover' (filling in for absent colleagues) in the course of the dispute.

Under the agreement primary school teachers are obliged to cover for unforeseen (i.e. less than 2 days' notice of absence) and secondary school teachers to cover for the first 2 days of absence whether 'planned' or 'unforeseen!'

Should anyone be told to cover for 5 periods in any one week (for scale 1 and 2 teachers this means the full

complement of their time set aside for marking and preparation) they are recompensed the excess of 3 periods i.e. only 2 periods!

The Maine proposals in Scotland were to be the basis of the agreement between the EIS and the Scottish teachers, giving more power to Heads in schools and the opening section of the Nottingham agreement refers to many of the contractual obligations of the teachers in England and Wales to be 'under the reasonable direction of the head teacher and the employing authority.'

Further to this teachers are contractually obliged to work an extra 5 days on top of the 190-day school year on school-related and in-service training to be again decided at the discretion of the head.

5 hours are added for out of school session activities such as supervision before and after school, and a further 5 hours for INSET (in-service training), staff meetings, parents' meetings, department meetings, pastoral meetings and extracurricular meetings.

The principle of safeguarding so-called 'free' periods for marking and preparation has been decisively ditched in favour of an obligation to complete their work beyond 'time which is formally controlled.'

In place of this we have 'every teacher has a responsibility to cover for absent colleagues' during such time and no class is to exceed 33 pupils 'other than in emergencies.'

Naturally the head and LEA's decide what an 'emergency' is.

Supply teachers (those recruited specifically to 'cov-

er') are to be provided 'dependent upon the availability of teachers in sufficient numbers and with suitable qualifications.'

Notably many such teachers are foreign with a procedure lasting months to investigate the validity of their qualifications and are often initially paid non-qualified rates.

This agreement not only fails to improve the intolerable working conditions teachers work under particularly in inner city areas (where the 'social priority allowance' is to disappear by 1 January 1987) but actually opens the door for any employer to bind teachers to obligations they have previously fulfilled as a 'professional duty' without adequate pay.

Teachers are no longer prepared to do this in the face of increased demands and responsibilities and cannot perform their duties in schools which are under-resourced, often autocratically run and with a background of deteriorating social conditions and lack of prospects for the youth.

Do not be diverted by the machinations of the Labour Party, the NUT and other teachers' unions who will try to convince teachers that Baker must be forced to accept their agreement.

The boot is on the other foot. Baker dictated these conditions and Jarvis and Co. knuckled under.

It is up to teachers to convince parents, students and the broader labour movement that they will not submit to these conditions.

Reject the Nottingham agreement!

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ
LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.
EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN MCCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.
ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.
PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.
TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence, 69204.
PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.
GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Wakefield, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG
HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.
CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES:
SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.
RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085
BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.
PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.
EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.
ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.
PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

WANDSWORTH

VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

DURHAM

HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.
MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.
PAUL HILL: 462778, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.
JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.
BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.
RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.
They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

The information on this list is supplied and updated by An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for which we thank them.

IRELAND

Ard Fheis: A question of how much emphasis on the electoral campaign

COMMENT BY GERRY DOWNING

SINN FEIN held its Ard Fheis (conference) on October 31-November 2 in Dublin.

It brought together 628 delegates from over 100 branches throughout Ireland. The two most heated discussions were on abortion, and the question of abstentionism.

The vote which decided to end the policy of abstentionism in the 26 counties was tense.

There were 162 votes against, but 429 delegates voted for — just 9 more than the required two thirds majority.

Sinn Fein will now take seats, if elected, in Leinster House, the Dublin parliament.

Sinn Fein has increased its membership after the Hunger Strikes with an influx of unemployed youth in the cities, particularly in Dublin. This has created the basis for Sinn Fein to break from its isolation in the 26 counties.

Taking their seats in Leinster House is the way to do this.

But this will bring out a contradiction.

The IRA and Sinn Fein are constitutionally bound not to attack the government in the 26 counties.

But it was here the republic was defeated by the British-supplied Free State army in the civil war in 1922.

Without the overthrow of the southern state in revolution, no 32-county socialist Ireland is possible.

Fitzgerald, the 'free state' premier, immediately called for an all-party coalition to prevent Sinn Fein entering the Dail.

He also said in an interview with the Belfast Telegraph what the purpose of the Anglo-Irish agreement was:

'We have no desire to be involved in the process of Northern Ireland any more than is necessary to tackle the problem of the IRA and eliminate it.'

Like the free staters of 1922 who murdered 77 republican prisoners of war by such methods as blowing them up with land mines while they were tied together, no southern government will allow Sinn Fein to threaten the state by parliamentary means.

The danger of capitulating to reformism was there in the other major debate, on abortion.

Last year's Ard Fheis passed a confused resolution

which allowed abortion only in cases of rape, incest and danger to the mother's life.

The 'we recognise women have the right to choose' tacked on the end of it was amended so that the right to choose was deleted.

This was with the support of the Sinn Fein leadership who cannot have been confused in 1985.

This year, the most progressive motion on abortion was from Derry. It lost by 117 to 212, with some strong political women speaking against the leadership.

Was the move of the leadership against this resolution at all connected with electoralism and the 'need to appeal to the people'?

There was a walk-out by some 15 or so delegates when abstentionism was defeated.

The delegates who walked out may have abandoned the struggle, but those who opposed and those who abstained and remained are troubled.

When Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said 'we came too far too fast' on the abortion question, and when An Phoblacht editor Rita O'Hare was forced to come to the rostrum for a second time to state that popularity was not the criterion for a revolutionary party, all the contradictions of a nationalist movement were revealed.

The question for Sinn Fein is: is the ballot box and armalite in the north to be supplemented by the ballot box only in the south?

The pressure from the working class was clear on the social issues.

Motions demanded an end to the dumping of nuclear waste in the Irish Sea, opposed 'neighbourhood watch' schemes and demanded an end to the criminalisation of homosexual acts.

Thirteen motions on housing with eleven from Dublin created another clash.

The Ard Chomhairle (leadership) opposed motion 32 which 'viewed with concern' the sale of council houses and the £5,000 to tenants to buy private houses.

The leadership pointed out the difference between the cities and rural areas where home ownership was traditional.

Ghettos

Delegates pointed out that the policy of sales is making ghettos of areas like Tallagh and Ballymun which were left with only the unemployed who could not afford to buy.

The motion was passed against the Ard Chomhairle advice.

The weakest section was in the debate on the economy.

Although motions against emigration and unemployment came from many branches, the Ard Chomhairle resolution was vague in the extreme on solutions.

Their motion 93 condemned all the ills of capitalist Ireland yet could only say 'Sinn Fein commits itself to working for an alternative

economic programme which would have as its central point the generation of viable non-exploitative work for all the people of the country.'

In contrast two important motions were referred back.

The one from the Frank Stegg Cumann (branch) in Dublin identified the root cause of unemployment as:

- British rule of the six counties

- economic constraints imposed upon Ireland through membership of the EEC

- the capitalist economic system in Ireland which makes private profit the determining factors in investment decisions

The one from Waterford Cumann demanded:

'that Sinn Fein seeks a moratorium on all foreign debt repayments pending the achievement of full employment.'

The 26 county state is number four in the world in terms of foreign debt per capita.

The debate on the trade unions supported the printworkers at Wapping, the corporation workers of Limerick, Dublin and Cork in their strike action.

Fraternal greetings were sent to the 108 strikers in the Shelburne Hotel.

A huge collection was taken for the staff who were in the fifth week of their strike against their employers Trust House Forte.

The Ard Fheis was told that of all its hotels through-

out the world, only the Shelburne and the one at Dublin airport were unionised.

Big emphasis was placed on the prisoners of war, and the repatriation of POWs in Britain.

Gerry Adams spoke on this in his presidential address and stressed the responsibility it placed on the movement to provide for their dependants.

With over 1,000 POWs and now with the possibility of losing some of the Noraid American money, international support from elsewhere will be sorely needed.

The Ard Fheis supported the Ard Chomhairle motion affirming support for national liberation movements throughout the world but dissociating themselves from the Red Army Faction, Direct Action and the Red Brigade.

There were further motions passed in favour of sanctions on South Africa, supporting the ANC as the liberation movement.

Stalinist-type motions from Duin Laoghaire condemning Solidarity in Poland as a counter-revolutionary arm of the United States and NATO were withdrawn.

The position on neutrality and non-alignment was reaffirmed.

Gerry Adams spoke on a motion to set up a broad-based H-blocks-type national committee to campaign on neutrality and opposition to NATO bases which was passed almost unanimously.

We must demand

End strip searching Ban plastic bullets Repatriate PoWs

COMMENT BY CHARLIE WALSH

THE strip-searching of Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, Irish Republican prisoners of war in Durham prison, along with the strip searching of Republican women prisoners in Maghaberry prison in the North of Ireland, has to be exposed, condemned and campaigned against throughout the entire labour and trade union movement in Britain.

Strip searching is torture through sexual harassment. The women who undergo this barbaric, degrading and inhuman treatment consider they are being raped.

Throughout the many years of struggle for Irish freedom, the British state, its prisons, police, army and judiciary have resorted to the most barbaric measures when dealing with Irish political resistors in an attempt to crush and destroy them.

Strip-searching is but

another link in that chain of repression.

The Irish Prisoners Appeal has asked the labour and trade union movement to pass resolutions condemning this horrific practice and to expose the British state's treatment of Irish women political prisoners in British and Irish jails.

In conjunction with street meetings, public meetings, pickets of the Home Office etc., they ask people to write to their Labour MPs calling on them to force a debate in Parliament on the issue of strip-searching.

Despite the fact that prisons have all kinds of metal detectors and body scanners which can examine the prisoners' bodies thoroughly and detect anything being hidden, the authorities still persist with strip-searching and body searches.

This is not a security matter as claimed by the Home Secretary but a measure designed to degrade and humiliate the women and break their spirit.

We cannot rest until we have achieved a victory for these brave Irish women prisoners of war in British and Irish jails.

The resolution which the Irish Prisoners Appeal propose for trade union branches, trades councils and Labour Party branches states:

'We totally condemn strip-searching which has been and is being carried out on a systematic basis in Durham and Maghaberry prisons in a way designed to humiliate, degrade and intimidate women prisoners.'

Degrade

'We believe that strip-searching is not as is claimed by the Home Office a security measure but is an act of intimidation intended to degrade and humiliate the prisoners and is a cynical attempt to break the women's resolve.'

'We believe strip-searching is nothing short of torture and sexual harassment.'

'Ella O'Dwyer and Martina Anderson are strip-

searched because the British government has a policy of harassment of Irish political prisoners in British jails.'

'The women in Maghaberry prison in the North of Ireland are also subjected to continual strip-searching for similar reasons.'

Two other issues which need to be raised are the use of plastic bullets by the police and army in the occupied six counties and the repatriation of Irish prisoners of war to jails in Ireland.

The deaths and injuries caused by plastic bullets have never been fully reported here in Britain.

Recently, Workers Press has done some excellent articles/interviews with the victims and relatives of those killed or maimed by plastic bullets. The full horror of such weapons has begun to emerge.

But this was only the beginning.

We need to intensify the campaign and, as with strip-searching, we must either organise or support campaigns of street meetings, public meetings, pickets etc.

to bring home to the working class here the terrible deaths and injuries these weapons have caused mainly to members of the Catholic working class community in the occupied six counties.

Ban

We must get resolutions passed at trade union meetings and trades councils condemning their use and calling for a ban on them altogether.

The British government imprisons Irish political prisoners in English jails using them and their families as political hostages in a blatant breach of basic human rights.

British soldiers convicted of crimes in Ireland are sent to England to serve their sentences.

Britain has even demanded the repatriation of mercenaries from jails in Africa.

Similarly, loyalists convicted of crimes in Britain are allowed to serve their sentence in a prison in Ireland near to their relatives.

But when it comes to Irish

PoWs, the British have disregarded their own Home Office guidelines for the location of prisoners as close to their homes as possible.

The PoWs do not demand repatriation for their own benefit.

The demand is to help their families.

Many relatives, particularly the elderly, have had to forego visits to their loved ones because of the distance, hardships and harassment involved.

The disgraceful treatment of the relatives must stop.

It is not unknown for relatives to arrive at a particular prison after travelling many miles only to be informed that the prisoner has been moved to another prison which of course involves more travel and expense.

● *The Irish Prisoners Appeal, to which political organisations, trades unions and trades councils can affiliate, can be contacted at: IPA, c/o Lambeth IBRG, 245A Colindale Avenue, London SW9 8RR.*

Donations, which are badly needed by the IPA, can be sent to the same address.

GENERAL MOTORS STRIKE

S.A. riot police attack strikers

A THOUSAND striking General Motors workers were attacked by riot police with batons, dogs and whips as they attempted to stop strike breakers entering General Motors' Port Elizabeth plant on Monday 17 November.

Sixteen were arrested. 2,000 went on strike on October 29 against what they see as General Motors' 'disinvestment' sleight of hand. At first 2 plants were occupied but the management called in security forces and drove out the strikers with rifles and sjamboks.

The strike was in response to a proposed deal consisting of a local management buy-out with General Motors retaining a financial interest.

This move is seen as a ploy with General Motors admitting that the decision was based on a financial imperative.

The subsidiary has made repeated losses and it is questionable whether the new company can survive.

Failure would mean liquidation with no pay out to the workers.

The strikers are demanding severance pay from General Motors and the li-

quidation of the pension fund.

It is planned to continue producing General Motors' models in the plants but with the new management not bound, as General Motors was, by the American Sullivan code of employment practices or US restrictions on sales of vehicles to the apartheid state.

Port Elizabeth was once a thriving centre of South Africa's motor industry but has now one of the country's highest unemployment rates, 60 per cent among black workers, and 30 per cent among whites.

Ford

The nearby Ford plant was closed earlier this year when Ford (SA) was merged into SAMCO, producing Mazda based models with Fords maintaining a shareholding.

The management helped to utilise the unemployment to help it break the strike.

On Thursday 13 November 567 strikers were sacked and scab labour hired.

The strikers proposed to return to work conditional on the 567 being rehired, and to continue the fight from within the company.

Management has told the

2,000 to return to work or be dismissed.

The police attack came when pickets snatched company identity cards from the scabs and threatened them with 'necklacing.'

Freddy Sauls a leader of the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union said 'the only way they (General

Motors) can break the strike is with the security forces.

'They can't break the strike by hiring scabs.

'That's impossible because the scabs are staying in our townships.

'And scabs will be 'conscientised' and influenced in the townships where they live.'

Release Brutan Perera

THE Revolutionary Democratic Group has pledged its support for the campaign to demand the release of Sri Lankan Trotskyist Brutan Perera, who faces a possible death sentence.

A letter to the Workers Revolutionary Party from the RDG backs the campaign and offers, within the RDG's resources, to publicise the issue in the workers' movement.

Perera was arrested under the Jayawardene regime's emergency legislation in May, released after 44 days and then re-arrested on August 21 along with another Trotskyist, Viran Pieris, who has since been released.

Perera has been refused bail and is being held indefinitely, following allegations that he 'resisted arrest'. Any charges that involve 'resisting' police and army officers carry a sentence of up to 20 years imprisonment, or death, under the draconian emergency laws.

Perera is 'in constant danger as long as he remains behind bars', the Revolutionary Communist League, to which Perera belongs, has stated.

The repression directed against the RCL and other Sri Lankan working-class organisations has been intensified particularly since the regime's attempts to crush the Tamil liberation struggle, which the RCL has consistently supported, have failed.

● BRITISH trades unionists and working-class organisations are asked to write letters of protest to the Sri Lankan High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London SW7, demanding Perera's release, and to join a weekly picket there at 12 noon each Thursday.

Mine disaster shows dangers

THE DISASTER in the Kinross Gold Mine in South Africa left 177 people dead.

The long series of appalling accidents in the apartheid state's gold mines is examined in the latest issue of *Labour Research*.

Gencor, the company which runs Kinross mine, has refused access to European mine safety experts who agreed to inspect it on behalf of the South African National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

Inflammable materials and toxic gases were allowed

to escape and non-flameproof welding equipment was used underground in a deep mine with difficult ventilation.

It is clear that the poverty wages mean that there is always a higher number of black miners crammed into the area, so that when something does go wrong there are more fatalities than there would be in other countries.

Labour Research points out that the poor relations between the white managers and the black miners contribute to the poor safety standards.

Production methods lead to dangerous practices; teams of between 8 and 10 black miners report through their black team leader to a white miner charged with safety responsibilities, but he gets paid the productivity bonus while not himself doing the dangerous work.

Since the NUM won the right to negotiate with the employers in 1983, safety has been their number one priority.

Death rates in South African coal mines are about six times as great as in Britain.

After 68 people were killed in an explosion at Hlobane mine in 1983, the mine owners were fined R400 (£100) and a shift boss and miner were each fined R200.

These derisory fines on the owners clearly do not act as a deterrent, and miners have been suspended for refusing to work in areas they consider unsafe.

In other incidents, disputes have led to mass sackings.

Gencor fired 20,000 miners in January this year at Impala Platinum Mines after a four-day dispute.

MACHEL: SOUTH AFRICANS ACCUSED

THE Soviet Union has blamed South African forces for the Mozambique air crash in which President Samora Machel and 33 other passengers were killed on October 19.

A Soviet report says the South Africans used a powerful radio beam to confuse the plane's instruments, so that the crew thought they were homing on Maputo airport's beacons.

Widespread suspicion of South African responsibility had been expressed by African leaders, and led to angry demonstrations in both Mozambique and Zimbabwe. But until last week the Soviet authorities withheld judgement.

South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha boasted on November 7 that his men had found documents on the crashed plane revealing a plan by Mozambique and Zimbabwe governments to help a revolt against Hastings Banda's regime in Malawi.

Survivors had alleged earlier that South African troops who arrived at the site of the crash first searched the wreckage for documents, ignoring the trapped and wounded.

Malawi's right-wing Banda regime has been accused of helping South African-backed forces infiltrating Mozambique.

POVERTY PROFITS



'SUSPEND payment of the external debt,' demand these trade unionists marching in Mexico City. Hit by world recession and falling oil prices Mexico has sacked workers and taken austerity measures as the big capitalist banks still demand their profits.

In the last four years Latin American countries have had to pay \$100 billion to the banks, due to huge investment loans in the 1970s. Living standards in some countries have fallen 50 per cent as a result.

Usually it is the poorest who are being hit hardest. In Brazil, thousands of children are expected to die this year of malnutrition. 'Wealth is now being transferred from the developing countries of Latin America to the industrial countries of the North at the rate of \$30,000 million a year,' observes the charity War on Want.

● This week, the struggle against impoverishment was

brought home to the City of London, whose big banks' huge profits are coming from debt payments from Latin America. One of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, clutching a fistful of banknotes, appeared on Lloyds Bank's familiar Black Horse in leaflets given to Lloyds customers.

Barclays' eagle was depicted clutching unfortunate human beings in its talons in another leaflet. War on Want Campaigns, who produced the leaflets, say the big banks have 'actively promoted the harsh economic measures which, across Latin America, force up to 150 million women, men and children to live in absolute poverty'.

The campaigners say unless there is a change from the policies pursued by western governments and financial institutions, there is no hope for improved living standards in poorer countries.

CONFERENCE FOR TRADE UNION SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

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

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

US Congress passes racist law IMMIGRANTS UNDER ATTACK

SOME of America's poorest workers are being attacked by anti-immigrant legislation supported by both Republicans and Democrats.

Racist cops and fascist thugs have taken their cue to step up violence against immigrant workers.

Under the Simpson-Rodino bill passed by Congress, it will be illegal for employers to hire foreign workers without appropriate documents.

The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) police will be empowered to enter any farm or other workplace without warrant, and question workers whom they suspect of being 'illegals'.

The Left-wing American paper 'Fighting Worker' says the Simpson-Rodino Bill 'represents a compromise between the narrow racists who want to drive out "foreigners" and the big agricultural interests, restaurants, and sweatshops which want to continue exploiting illegal workers at starvation wages'.

'Fighting Worker' says the Bill will mean increased checking of papers and harassment of all workers who look or sound Latin, Asian, Arab or African, no matter what their legal status is.

As big US banks and interests step up their exploitation of poorer countries, rising unemployment and deteriorating conditions in America's 'backyard' — Latin America — and elsewhere forces thousands of

poor people to risk illegal entry to the USA.

They hope desperately to get a small slice of the fabled American prosperity they have heard about, or seen in movies.

They become prey of the worst exploiters, the slumlords, racketeers and racists.

Fear of police raids and deportation is bound to deter immigrant workers from showing a high profile by organising. With the increased risk that they won't get another job, workers will be intimidated from standing up to an employer, or leaving a particularly bad sweatshop.

Clause

So the anti-immigrant law can worsen exploitation, and undermine all workers' living standards.

One part of the new Bill praised by liberal Democrats is an 'amnesty' clause. Some illegal immigrants who entered the US before 1982, and have lived there continuously since, or farm workers who worked for at least three months between 1985 and 1986, will be allowed to turn themselves in to the INS and apply for legal status.

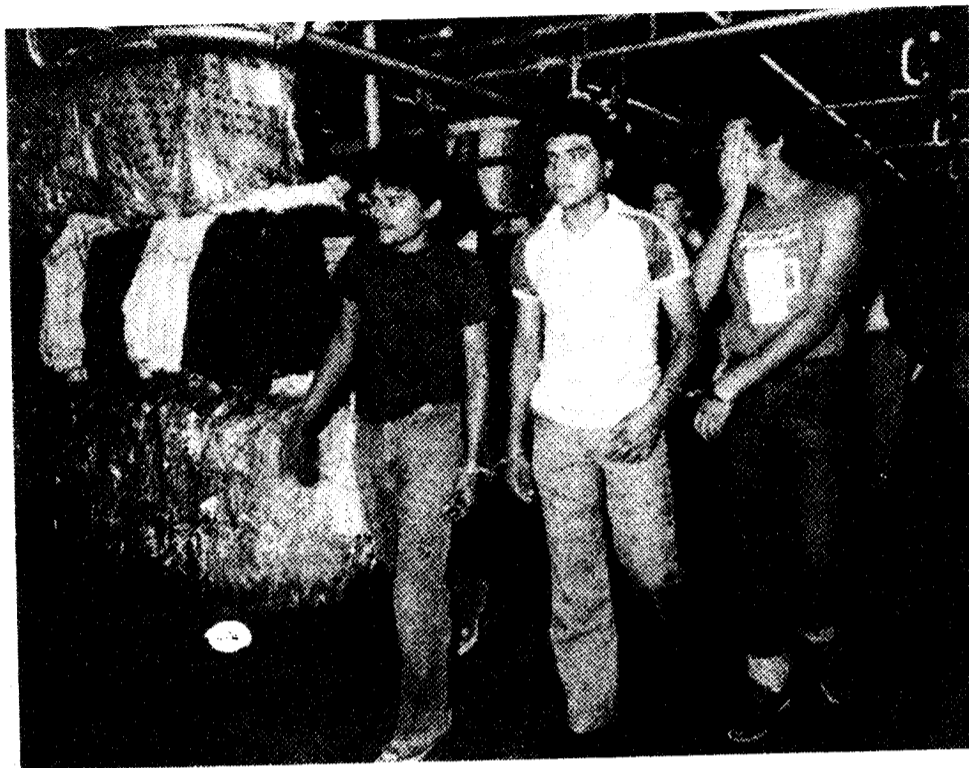
All sorts of reasons can be used to declare these 'amnestied' workers ineligible for naturalisation and deport them. It has been estimated that only about 10 per cent of workers now in the US illegally stand any chance of getting legal status.

In both Britain and the United States legislation of this sort has been used in the past to pick on any immigrant worker who showed any fight for their rights and their class.

Another piece of legislation being pushed in the state of California is an 'English Only' law aimed at Spanish-speakers and others. (Ironically, considering California was once largely Spanish-speaking.)

Under Proposition 63, as it is called, English would be declared California's 'official language'. Bilingual education, election materials, court interpreters and telephone emergency services could all be hit.

In effect, those not native English-speakers are being told they are second-class. Right-wing racists are going around accusing immigrants of not being interested in learning English, and saying they should be forced to learn or leave.



Immigration service police arrest immigrant workers in California sweatshop

'Fighting Worker' points out an added hypocrisy to this. 'California's English as a Second Language (ESL) programmes are underfunded and overcrowded. Immigrants are being blocked from learning English.'

About a million school-age youth in California belong to language minorities. By pushing the 'English-only' chauvinism, the right-wing is finding an ideological pretext for keeping them down, for the worst education, lowest-paid jobs, inadequate medical and social services, and discrimination in the courts.

The racists of the Ku Klux Klan have turned to harassing immigrants, setting up 'border patrols' to attack

people. In California's Central Valley, farm workers have been chased off roads and into drainage ditches by racist cops, and denied medical attention in hospitals.

In the week the new anti-immigrant law was passed, the INS in San Diego staged a special operation which led to the brutal arrest and deportation of 2,800 workers.

'Fighting Worker' attacks the lies of union bureaucrats who have said foreign workers take jobs from US workers. 'In fact it is the employers and the no-fight bureaucrats who are responsible for the layoffs and factory closures,' the paper says.

The paper calls on Amer-

ican-born workers to unite with immigrants to fight for jobs and control over the workplace, and against racist laws.

'American workers have much more in common with other workers than with the US capitalists and politicians,' 'Fighting Worker' says. 'Any worker who wants to come to the US should be able to and all immigrant workers should have full democratic rights.'

'Fighting Worker' is published monthly by the Revolutionary Workers League, a sympathising section of the International Trotskyist Committee. It is available from RWL, Box 1297, Detroit, Michigan 48231, USA.

US bankers want China debt

LIKE Mephistopheles greedily anticipating Faust's temptation, or pushers looking to hook a high-spending client, US bankers are rubbing their hands at the prospect of lending huge sums to China.

'China will be in a position to absorb \$40 billion of capital from world markets in the next five years', according to Alan Fishman, vice-president of Chemical Bank.

The Chinese government has already borrowed \$930 million from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and repaid \$550 million. This month the IMF announced another \$600 million loan subject to approval by its executive board.

Reports from a US-Chinese symposium on finance held in Peking last week say China's overall borrowings will increase from last year's total of \$7 billion to over \$10 billion a year over the next five years.

About \$2.5 billion will come from bodies like the World Bank, \$1.5 billion from direct investment, and the rest in commercial loans.

Since 1982 China has floated 17 bond issues, mostly on the Tokyo exchange, but also in Hong Kong and Frankfurt. They have been held up from entering the London and New York markets until China honours pre-

revolution bonds.

The Chinese government wants to finance development and trade. The bankers are urging it to borrow more heavily and get deeper in their clutches.

Eugene Atkinson of Goldman and Sachs attributed Chinese caution to a 'cultural obsession with having things in balance and an ambivalence about being in debt to foreigners.'

But Michael Ipson of Chemical Bank thought falling foreign exchange reserves and direct foreign investment would persuade the Peking authorities to seek more loans.

US bankers' keenness to lend money to China is unlikely to stem from enthusiasm for the Revolution or concern for the people's progress. Behind it are the slump in capitalism, the debt crisis in Latin America, and the difficulty of finding safe places to invest for profit.

The bankers hope that China will be an even bigger borrower than Poland was. Presumably they are also relying on the Peking bureaucracy to discipline its working class more effectively than the Polish Stalinists could.

PHILIPPINES:

Murder provokes general strike

A GENERAL STRIKE swept Manila in response to the murder of Rolando Olalia, chairman of both the 500,000-strong KMU (May 1st Movement) trade union organisation and the Peoples Party.

The mutilated and shot bodies of 52-year old Olalia and his driver were found on Thursday 13 November, the day after they disappeared after a union meeting.

BY KEITH SCOTCHER

Strikes began on Monday as the news of the murders spread. The strikers are demanding that the assassins are found and punished.

Over 5,000 workers and students marched to the armed forces headquarters on November 14 to denounce the murder and Defence Minister Enrile, whom they hold responsible.

Organisers said that 120 factories in Metro-Manila were closed, 68 in Cebu, 39 in Southern Tagalog and central Luzon, and all factories in Bulacan.

The murder occurred just before President Cory Aquino returned from a trip to Japan to negotiate loans, and heightened fears that a military coup by Enrile and army chief Ramos was imminent.

ers reported that large quantities of Uzi machine guns were imported by Enrile's National Defence and Security Group who were then practising from dawn to dusk.

The troops, whom Enrile calls 'my boys,' have been attacked by Aquino as 'self appointed messiahs.'

Enrile, who has been holding anti-Communist rallies around the country, has been trying to force her hand against the left-wing, especially the New Peoples Army that controls large areas in the Philippines with the support of local populations.

When NPA leaders negotiated with the government for a ceasefire, the army seized



CORY AQUINO

alleged Commander Rodolfo Salas who has been charged with rebellion and murder.

Attacks on workers have continued unabated under Aquino.

On October 4, dockworkers on strike in Bohol were fired on by armed goons aboard company trucks, resulting in one dead, 30 wounded, and five missing believed dead, shot after they dived into the water to escape.

MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Organised by Workers Power
Every other Wednesday, 7.30pm
Upstairs at the Landor Hotel
Landor Road, SW2 (Clapham North)

MACLEAN AND

JOHN MACLEAN (1879-1923) and JAMES CONNOLLY (1868-1916) were representative of the best elements in the social democratic Second International, which brought together the European, and some extra-European, socialist parties from 1889 to 1914.

By an appropriate coincidence, both are being commemorated this week in their birthplaces, Maclean in Glasgow, James Connolly in Edinburgh.

The leadership of the Second International irrevocably betrayed the working class and socialism when it sided with the bourgeoisie in its respective countries at the outset of World War I.

Yet although the positive side of the international's work was carried forward most decisively by Lenin's Bolshevik Party in the October revolution, remembering and rediscussing the lives of fighters such as Maclean and Connolly remains an important responsibility for socialists today.

Connolly, the son of Irish immigrant labourers in Scotland, began campaigning for socialism in the 1890s, and devoted the rest of his life to

BY TERRY BROTHERSTONE

the struggle for the emancipation of the working class internationally, and for the freedom of Ireland from the British Empire.

Leading

He became a brilliant socialist journalist, whose work was known throughout Europe and the US, and a talented trade union organiser, first in the United States, where he played a leading part in organising the Industrial Workers of the World from 1905 to 1908, and then in Ireland, where together with Jim Larkin in the Irish Transport Workers' Union he brought union orga-

nisation to vital sectors such as the Belfast docks for the first time.

Connolly, who never separated the issue of national liberation from the struggle for socialism, arguing that the two were inextricably linked, became the leading political, and later military, fighter for an Irish socialist republic.

Although he never fully grasped the significance of Marx's insistence that 'the beginning of all criticism is the criticism of religion', his contribution to Marxist theory, as well as to revolutionary practice, still lives on and, indeed, remains to be fully appreciated today.

Following his leading role

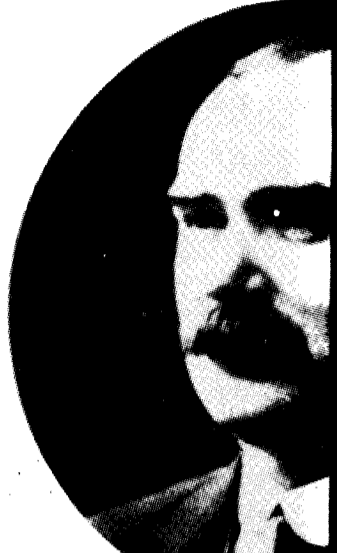


JOHN MACLEAN

in the 1916 Easter rising, Connolly was judicially murdered by the British at Kilmainham jail, Dublin. The savagery of this act — the wounded Connolly was taken in front of the firing squad strapped to a chair and blindfolded — no doubt reflected the fear generated in the British ruling class by

the rising, an event which may be seen as one of the most important moments in the international revolutionary process leading to the Russian October revolution a year and a half later.

Like Connolly, Maclean was, above all else, an internationalist. Brought up in poverty by his mother, who



JAMES CONNOLLY

was a refugee from the brutal Highland 'clearances', he made his way through school and university to become a school teacher.

Joining the socialist movement around 1903, he soon established himself as the most dedicated organiser and propagandist for the movement in Scotland, and

'Scotsmen, stand by Ireland'

THE revolutionary internationalist John Maclean was one of the few British socialists who gave unambiguous support to the Irish 1916 uprising and to the Republicans in the independence struggles of 1919-1923.

This article was written in the Glasgow socialist paper 'Vanguard' in July 1920, when war against British occupation raged throughout Ireland, and left-wing Republicans and socialists were organising strikes, and in some places soviets, in the hope of carrying through a social revolution.

Maclean's attack on J. H. Thomas is an example to socialists today who are raising the Irish question in the working-class movement.

On Tuesday, 8 June, there appeared in 'The Glasgow Herald' a leading article entitled 'The Army in Ireland' in which it virtually stated that Britain with blockhouses and wireless apparatus intended to crush the Irish into submission as Britain crushed the Boers 20 years ago. Readers should note that this declaration of war on Ireland was made after a deputation from the NUR headed by Mr J. H. Thomas met Mr Lloyd George at 10 Downing Street on Thursday, 3 June, to explain the obvious to anyone — why the Irish railwaymen refused to handle ammunition.

Mr Lloyd George told them that submission to the Irish railwaymen would be a 'complete abdication of government'. Then he explained the position from the standpoint of the British government. 'In Ireland we have had within a very short time

48 murders of police and 128 attempted murders that failed. The men were shot down in the street, men of the same race, men of the same religion, leaving wives and children behind them, who were simply carrying out the elementary duty of any force of that kind — the preservation of order. The police have nothing to do with the rights or wrongs of the controversy.'

Policemen have to do with every political controversy and struggle, as they are used as government agents against any class, faction, or nation opposing the government and the class and nation it represents.

The Irish police have been particularly active against movements for Irish political independence and Irish police have raided Irish houses innumerable in the British government's fight against the Irish race. Such police are scabs and traitors to their race, and are treated as such. Irish secret societies have disposed of some of the 48 killed, but Dublin Castle has had its toll as well to justify the army's occupation of Ireland.

Lloyd George expects too much when he imagines that a high-spirited race like the Irish are going to carry ammunition to the men who will murder their own comrades or even themselves in their off-duty time. If refusal to handle ammunition in such circumstances is a breach of 'good government', then all good men and true will be against 'good

government'.

The Irish are not against 'good government', but against bad government. British government to them is bad: Irish government is good. Bad government ought to be always resisted, and this the Irish are doing.

Three times since 1918 the



J.H. THOMAS

Irish, by 'democratic' vote, have agreed to the principle of Irish independence by a 4 to 1 vote. Instead of getting independence from the 'world's greatest democratic country' Ireland has got an army with aeroplanes, tanks and other blessings of civilisation and an armed police.

Irishmen have been and are being murdered. From a communist point of view the greatest murder was that of Jim Connolly, and Jim was worth an army of Irish police traitors.

Lloyd George need not whine over the dead 48 policemen when he, with Asquith, is responsible for the murder of a wounded man, a man who fought openly for his race and his class, the wage-slave class. Mur-

ders committed by Irish patriots are but retaliation, and are as justifiable as the murder of Germans to save the independence of Britain, to say the least of it.

Lloyd George and his government played their part in overthrowing Bela Kun and giving free scope to that 'butcher' Horthy, who has already wiped out thousands of good communists or people suspected of being communists; Lloyd George and his government are responsible for the blockade of Russia and the wars on Russia from within as well as from without, leading to the death of thousands of men, women and children through starvation and disease, Lloyd George and his government are responsible for the cold-blooded murder of over 500 people at Amritsar and hundreds in Egypt during 1918 to terrify races we are not fit to govern.

Mr J. H. Thomas absolutely accepted Lloyd George's position; in fact, even before he went. The visit but served as a means of placing the responsibility for the treachery on the government and of bluffing the members of the NUR. He seems to have been able to persuade his executive committee to advise his Irish members to return to work and to advise that they ought to handle ammunition for Ireland, Poland and Rumania.

Naturally, the Irishmen refused to accept the EC's advice. They cannot be expelled as they would at once join the Irish Transport Workers' Union, the proper place for them in the long run, especially now after Thomas's speech at Battersea on Sunday, 6 June.

He is reported as follows: 'Nobody could accuse me or

my colleagues of want of sympathy with Ireland, but I for one would never condone the murder of innocent soldiers and policemen who were doing their duty.'

The government has seized hold of the NUR advice to its members to assume that the British workers will condone any bloody deeds in Ireland. As the 'Glasgow Herald' acknowledges, it is rushing troops into Ireland and is holding others in readiness. The 'Glasgow Herald' seems proud of the fact that Scottish troops mainly are being used as the tools of the government as they can be relied on to pay strict attention to the 'business'.

To every Scottish lover of freedom, to every Scotsman who has felt proud of Scotland's political and religious fights against England for freedom, the blush of shame must come when we learn that Scottish boys are to be used to prevent by murder the Irish race from attaining that very freedom we have been taught our fathers fought to preserve.

It remains to be seen whether the Lanarkshire miners will agree to a one-day strike for Ireland, and if that will be the signal for a general Scottish strike to force the withdrawal of Scottish lads from the cold-blooded murder of the Irish.

This is the greatest question confronting Scotland today, for if speedy action is not taken a horrible tragedy will be enacted, and Scotland will be disgraced for ever. This is more important than protesting against higher rents or the high cost of living. It is acquiescing and participating in the murder of a race rightly protesting its own right to rule itself.



The Irish Citizen Army, led by James Connolly

CONNOLLY



others internationally in declaring 'the chief enemy is at home'.

He threw himself into the shop stewards' struggles to protect workers' rights in the munitions industries and the successful fight led by the women of Govan and Partick against rent-profiteering.

But he will be best remembered, and rightly so, for the day — May 9, 1918 — when he condemned the capitalist system and its bloody imperialist war from the dock in the High Court in Edinburgh.

Accused of sedition — and not long released from a cruel spell in the notorious Peterhead prison — he proudly rejected the authority of the capitalist court to make a 75-minute-long address, directed above all to the working class. It included a firm defence of the Bolshevik revolution and remains to this day a living link between that decisive event and the British working class and socialist movement.

Although Maclean never joined the Communist International, whose debates in its pre-Stalin years are

essential reading for anyone who seeks to understand the continuity of revolutionary Marxism, he himself played a vital role as one of that small decisive group of socialists which maintained the struggle for internationalist principles when the war broke out.

'The world working class revolution began with the action of individuals,' wrote Lenin two months before the Russian revolution, 'whose boundless courage represented everything honest that remained of that decayed official "socialism" which is in reality social-chauvinism. Liebknecht in Germany, Adler in Austria, Maclean in Britain — these are the best-known names of the isolated heroes who have taken upon themselves the arduous role of forerunners of the world revolution.'

The form of the current commemorations in Scotland is as important as their content. Both arise out of the decisions of labour movement bodies, themselves engaged in conflict with a Tory government which, by basing its vicious assaults on democratic and social rights



Early Communist leader Willie Gallacher beaten unconscious by police, George Square, Glasgow, 1919.

on a brazenly class-inspired ideology in a manner unparalleled in peacetime Britain at least since the depression of the 1920s, has created conditions to place the method of Marxism back on the agenda of the whole labour movement.

The Lanarkshire Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) has organised the John Maclean Memorial Lecture, being given by the Stirling University historian Jim Young, during the week which

marks the 63rd anniversary of Maclean's premature death on November 30, 1923.

And the Labour-controlled Edinburgh District Council has put on an exhibition about Connolly at the City Arts Centre to commemorate the 70th anniversary of his execution by the British in May 1916.

Along with the miners and printworkers, the teachers have shown themselves to be some of the most intransigent opponents of the author-

itarian bullying of the Thatcher gang, while the Edinburgh District Council has been involved in a bitter campaign against government attempts to enforce cuts in jobs and services.

The link between past principles and present struggles is the new factor, in what has been a prolonged struggle by small groups of dedicated people, to keep alive the memory of Maclean and of the links between James Connolly and Scotland.



Connolly in 1916 in the Easter Uprising which proclaimed the Irish republic

New edition of court speech

JOHN MACLEAN's speech from the dock on May 9, 1918, a classic statement of internationalist and communist principles, is being republished by New Park Publications.

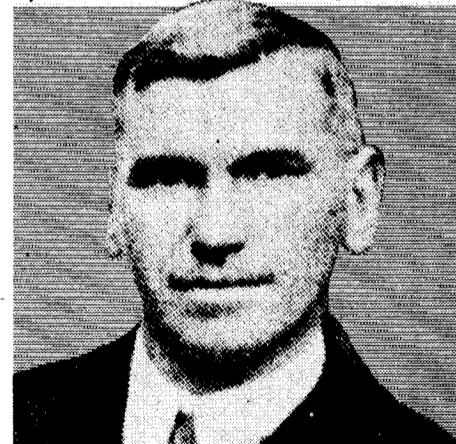
'I am not here, then, as the accused; I am here as the accuser of capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot,' Maclean told the jury in his 75-minute denunciation of British imperialism and the slaughter of World War I.

'It would be a very bad thing for the workers of the world if a revolution were developed and carried through to success in Germany and no similar effort were made in this country,' he said.

Without neglecting the strike struggles raging on the Clyde and the 'ca' canny' policy by which workers re-

ACCUSER of CAPITALISM

John Maclean's Speech from the dock, May 9th 1918



fused to relinquish their trade union rights during the war, Maclean also spoke fervently in defence of the Russian revolution and of Trotsky's stance in the Brest-Litovsk negotiations which were going on at the time.

The new edition of the speech, edited by Terry Brotherstone, includes notes which give valuable biographical and historical background. This too-often-neglected work of one of

Lenin's greatest contemporaries is a must for all socialists and trades unionists.

'Accuser of Capitalism', price 75p (discount for bulk orders from trade union, student and political organisations), is available from New Park Publications, 10-12 Atlantic Road, London SW9 (01-274 8342); distribution in Scotland by Hope Street Book Centre, 321 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 3PT (041-332 8881).

Lanarkshire Association EIS

JOHN MACLEAN MEMORIAL LECTURE

Wednesday November 26th, 1986, 7:30 pm
McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.

Speaker: James Young, lecturer, Stirling University. Platform: Nan Milton, daughter and biographer of John Maclean. Chairman: Norman Bissell, convenor EIS Strathclyde executive.

Tickets 50p, from Lanarkshire EIS, 25 Gordon Street, Glasgow G1.

'SING A REBEL SONG'

An exhibition about James Connolly

November 8-December 6, 1986
Open Monday-Saturday 10a.m.-5p.m.

City of Edinburgh Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh

Admission free: presented by Edinburgh District Council

LETTERS

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Aids: Social or individual responsibility

LAST WEEK (15 November) Workers Press published a review of Peter Tatchell's book 'AIDS: A Guide to Survival'.

I am writing, not so much to comment on this book, although it seems to me to be a perfectly legitimate self-help manual, but to take issue with Brian Dempsey's review which, to my mind, revealed an astonishing lack of knowledge about AIDS and an implicit prejudice against gays.

For the sake of clarity I refer first of all to one of Brian Dempsey's later paragraphs where he rather patronisingly points out that 'for those at risk from AIDS' Tatchell's book is 'highly recommended'.

Perhaps he is unaware that AIDS is a sexually-transmitted disease which affects heterosexuals as well as homosexuals.

Up until now (and very unfortunately for them) the disease has largely been confined to homosexual men, but this is only the case in the West; in the parts of Africa where this disease is endemic it affects men and women equally and there seems to be little doubt amongst doctors that the disease is spreading out into the heterosexual community here.

All sexually active individuals are becoming increasingly at risk from AIDS and the shameful and callous disregard of its horrors by government and society at large because it was believed to have affected only a minority of people is no longer appropriate to the problem.

Gays, of course, still bear the brunt and it is because of this and because of their isolation that they have been the first to attempt to combat the disease and its social effects.

It is true, as mentioned in the review, that those who believe they may have been

in contact with the disease can be blood-tested for AIDS virus antibodies (known as the HTLV-3 antibody test).

A positive test means a likelihood of developing full-blown AIDS at some stage although the present state of medical knowledge means that doctors can give very little information or advice to their patients.

This uncertainty must be bad enough but many gay men who have been proved antibody positive have also found sympathy and comfort just as difficult to obtain.

Even those who have gone on to develop AIDS are sometimes badly treated in hospital through ignorance and fear.

Despite all this, many gay men believe it is socially responsible to be tested to help to prevent the spread of the disease.

Peter Tatchell's demonstration of this attitude is condemned by Brian Dempsey and described as one of the 'weaknesses' in his book.

The other main 'weakness', according to Dempsey, is 'that the emphasis on coping is placed with the person with AIDS and not on society as a whole'.

What sort of unrealistic nonsense is this? The answer surely is to have 'cures and preventions' but so far medical science has not come up with a cure and preventative measures taken by individuals are our only recourse.

However distasteful it may be to Brian Dempsey, a change in sexual behaviour is necessary, especially for high risk groups.

It may be unpalatable, but the facts must be faced.

And I would be interested to know why this suggestion offends him so much.

Why, for instance, is it 'ultra-right' to suggest the common use of condoms and other 'safe' sex practices?

'Hugging' was only one of Peter Tatchell's 'safe' sex suggestions, others including 'oral, anal and vaginal sex using the skin'! (I would also point out that, in future, many women will also be insisting on the use of condoms by their partners to prevent the increase of cervical cancer and consequently changes in sexual behaviour may affect an even wider section of the population!)

Some right-wing elements in society may be advocating a change in 'moral attitudes' but Peter Tatchell certainly isn't.

Of course, all the resources that are necessary should be pumped into medical science to enable a cure for this killer disease to be found but in the meantime those self-help groups such as the Terence Higgins Trust and Body Positive must not be condemned but encouraged and assisted.

A campaign for government funding for them should be taken up by all left-wing groups.

These organisations are not the 'self-appointed consciences of the community' nor are they interested in presenting a 'respectable,

discreet' image to 'bigots', they exist because there was no other help for AIDS victims in the past and the suggestion they will eventually become the 'moral policemen of the gay community' must be deeply offensive to gays.

In fact, the opposite is true.

These groups represent the independence and strength of working class organisations when it is necessary for them to take action to protect themselves and their communities.

They too will be seen 'as a reflection of the attitudes of

gay people to the AIDS crisis' — attitudes, that is, of courage, frankness, compassion and determination.

Finally, I call on Brian Dempsey to explain what he means by 'the enormous self-oppression (how do you do that?) of gay people and the depths that some elements in the gay movement have fallen to in the face of the AIDS threat'.

Such an outrageous statement needs clarification and justification before it can be commented on.

L.M.
Manchester

Is 'safe-sex' middle class?

HAVING just read 'Aids and the moral policemen' by Brian Dempsey, I feel compelled to reply to what I consider a superficial and facile attack on Peter Tatchell and on those whom Brian Dempsey describes as 'the self-appointed consciences of the gay community'.

I am pleased to see the Workers Press finally treating issues of lesbians and gay rights as a serious political subject and am pleased that reviews of lesbian and gay literature are included in the paper.

However I feel this review imposes a crass analysis onto Tatchell's discussion of 'safe sex'.

Dempsey states that advocating 'safe sex' is reactionary, is middle class, and places the emphasis on individuals to change their behaviour rather than on social campaigning to prevent and cure the disease.

He states that the 'safe sex' campaign is 'to prove to the bigots that the nice little

middle class gays with mortgages, two cats and a car are respectable, discreet and willing to react to 'god's wrath by changing their behaviour'.

I completely reject Dempsey's analysis.

'Safe sex' is a means of reducing the danger of contracting a horrible and fatal disease.

The gay exponents of safe sex are not moralistic, nor are they all middle class, they advocate a practical response to a very real danger, which Dempsey seems to ignore.

To advocate the practice of safe sex is not to advocate middle class lifestyle nor to perpetuate reactionary attitudes towards sex or relationships.

The accusation that lesbians and gay men are all middle class or that all espouse reactionary and middle class values is quite common amongst left wing organisations and has previously been used by the

WRP to discredit and attack lesbian and gay activists and organisations.

I have observed a lessening of this stereotype recently in Workers Press but Dempsey's article only serves to reinforce the stereotype.

If Dempsey or other contributors to Workers Press wish to test their assumptions about the class background of lesbians and gay men they should visit lesbian and gay pubs, clubs and political organisations and see how many middle class people they find.

They should also be aware of the large contribution made to the trade union and labour movement by lesbian and gay activists, both working class and middle class.

Lesbians and gay men have always been active in progressive movements, but we have not always been open about our sexuality, often because of hostility such as that displayed by Dempsey.

Lesbian and gay activists

and organisations have been consistently campaigning for a societal response to Aids, and we have worked through the trade unions and labour movement and through gay campaigns and organisations such as the Terence Higgins Trust.

Far from reflecting 'the enormous self-oppression of gay people and the depths that some elements in the gay movement have fallen to in the face of the Aids threat,' these organisations and activists have been fighting for lesbian and gay rights in a hostile climate.

They have been challenging media myths and hysteria and have been providing practical and emotional support for ill and distressed people.

If lesbians and gay men exhibit self-oppression, it is largely a result of the oppressive attitudes and practices which surround us and are perpetuated even by those organisations such as Workers Press, which should know better.

Maire Critchley

Overshadowing hostility?

AS ONE of the organisers of the recent east London Anti-Apartheid Movement labour movement conference I must say that at first glance it was welcome to see a full page of Workers Press devoted to the proceedings of the day.

Careful reading however, soon dissipated that first sentiment.

It is clear that the article was written from the standpoint of a tendency standing outside of the AAM and in essence hostile to it.

It was that hostility which overshadowed the often very good quotes taken from the range of speakers featured at the conference.

As to the purpose of the conference.

It was not merely to discuss the prospect of people's sanctions, although of course that was an important part of it.

Its function was twofold. First to get across to the

labour movement of east London the politics of the liberation forces of southern Africa, the ANC and SWAPO.

This educational aspect is important.

These organisations are leading the national liberation struggles of their countries, with the overwhelming support of the masses, for one simple reason.

They have the correct programme for that struggle, for the revolutionary overthrow of apartheid.

As several of the speakers pointed out the victory they are fighting to achieve over the racist regime will benefit workers all over the world, not just in Africa.

The second function of the conference was to start to organise in the labour movement the main campaigns of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, around the political detainees, sanctions, the consumer boycott, solidarity

with the non-racial trade unions etc, etc.

Thus it had both an educational and an organisational aspect to it which you failed to grasp.

This is not really surprising as your organisation fails to play any role in building the mass anti-apartheid movement in this country.

There are two further points I should like to make.

As a supporter of Socialist Action the reference to one of our supporters from ASTMS arguing against the withdrawal of the multi-nationals from South Africa was somewhat baffling, on two counts.

First Socialist Action had no supporters from ASTMS at the conference.

Secondly, even a casual read of our paper would clearly show its policy is a complete break by Britain from any links with South Africa.

Just read issues 144 and 145 of June 20 and 27, 1986 and this is obvious.

If I were the charitable type I might put this down to ignorance on behalf of the reporter.

However, it is tempting to remember the old Healyite WRP, the method of slander and misrepresentation.

Perhaps I should be more charitable.

As you say in the article '...the main campaign of the Anti-Apartheid Movement is to get across to the labour movement of east London the politics of the liberation forces of southern Africa, the ANC and SWAPO.'

They came to the conference with no other purpose than to disrupt it.

They attempted to deny TUC Chairperson Ken Gill the right to speak against apartheid.

There was no intention on their part to constructively participate in the conference.

They wished merely to introduce the issue of Dave Kitson, irrelevant to the day's proceedings.

They were, quite rightly, ejected from the hall by the stewards.

The town hall security guards, and the police whom they called, but who never entered the main hall, played no role in this.

This ejection was necessary to protect the democracy of the meeting, of the AAM and the workers' movement, none of which the City AA have any interest in.

Fortunately this minor blemish had no effect on what was a very successful event in the political life of east London, and of the AAM.

Perhaps the comrades of the Workers Press would do better to join in the building of a mass movement of solidarity with the revolution in southern Africa, rather than defend the antics of a sectarian current whose aim is to disrupt that movement, and attack the leading organisation of the South African liberation struggle, the ANC.

It is your choice comrades, and your political funeral should you choose wrongly.
P. Waterhouse

Teamsters' Big-Fish

THE PIECE in last week's Workers Press on the Teamsters Union coincided rather well with a visit to Britain by its current boss, Jackie Presser.

'Boss' is not an accidental description. Presser's annual salary is said to be in the region of half a million dollars!

The union itself, of course, was expelled from the AFL-CIO nearly 30 years ago and has remained outside the official labour movement ever since.

With a present membership of somewhere around the 1.9 million mark, nearly half of whom are women, Presser is considered to be the most powerful union leader in the whole of the United States and, at 60 years old, in a literally unchallenged position of office.

At 21-stone he is a very big fish in every sense.

The Teamsters Union was alone in backing Reagan in the 1984 Presidential elections.

Their anti-drugs campaign has the added 'appeal' of Sylvester Stallone's assistance.

This number one box office movie star has featured in the union's publicity material, alongside the massive bulk of its boss, and is shortly to be seen in the role of a Teamster who wins the arm-

wrestling championship of the world.

(Further proof, if such were needed, of the reactionary character of Stallone's contribution to US Imperialism's propaganda machine.)

Presser's bureaucratic pedigree began with his father, William; Cleveland, Ohio's underworld 'jukebox czar' in the 1940s, who was recruited by Jimmy Hoffa.

During the early stages of the Cuban revolution, both Hoffa and Presser were allegedly involved in gun-running — to Castro and to Batista.

In 1974, an indictment by PROD (Professional Drivers' Council for Safety and Health) — another Teamster reform organisation — charged that union officials were pocketing huge incomes.

Jackie Presser's reply was 'We will go along with the philosophy of private business, which is, basically, if you have a demanding executive job with major responsibilities, you should be appropriately rewarded for performance'.

Presser's dynastic rise to power, as one local observer put it, 'is a process which makes even the most dubious British union election look ultra-democratic' by comparison.

Jeff Jackson
(SW London WRP)

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LETTERS

Knowsley Election: Legitimate alliance

I WOULD like to take up some points in the two letters in the Workers Press, about the Knowsley North by-election and our statement on it.

Firstly, points have been raised about the RCP which certainly needed to be raised, and it would be valuable if a discussion could be offered with the RCP comrades on these points, possibly through the letters pages of the Workers Press.

We agree with the points raised in the letter from the Manchester area, and we made it plain to the RCP that we would call for a Labour victory in a General Election.

We also made it clear that we were calling for a vote for their candidate to allow workers to express their opposition to the witch-hunt, and support the boycott for the imposed candidate, as the Manchester letter says, without crossing class lines and voting for the Liberals.

They replied that the witch-hunt was irrelevant, they welcomed our support for their candidate but disagreed with our reasons for

giving it.

In his letter, Comrade Charlie Pottins says that the fact that the local Labour Party allowed itself to be provoked into a boycott of the imposed candidate 'is an issue in itself'.

He then says in the conclusion of his letter, that workers in the area might just as well vote Labour as an anti-Tory vote!

This makes it one and the same issue.

Saying vote Labour is saying vote for Howarth, which means that the boycott was a mistake, or that it was irrelevant, (which is akin to the RCP position).

In the view of our branch the boycott was not mistaken or irrelevant or a 'tactic', but the defence of a principle.

Labour Party members in the area regard the selection and re-selection of candidates by local parties as a principle which they are determined to fight for even if it means their expulsion from the party en bloc.

It is in relation to this principle that we applied the tac-

tic of calling for a vote for the RCP candidate.

The Kinnock leadership certainly provoked the local Labour Party in Knowsley by imposing a candidate on it, with the aim of instituting a full scale witch-hunt there, to complement those already in operation in St. Helens and Liverpool.

Still, workers have always come out in defence of their interests in response to provocations by employers, government agencies and the like.

Were the miners wrong to respond to management (and government) provocations announcing the closure of Cortonwood Colliery and so starting the year long strike?

Nearer to home, were we wrong to be provoked by the Banda brothers into occupying the party print shop in Runcorn?

They acted as we know, in a completely opportunist manner, yet they helped, by this action, to raise up the forces which were to drive them from the party and expose their politics.

The expulsion of the Healy clique, and later the Banda clique, opened the possibilities, which comrades have taken up in many areas of work, of becoming involved in, and starting to give leadership in, the struggle of the class.

The witch-hunt in the Labour Party is a necessary, major part of the Kinnock leadership strategy in making itself respectable in the eyes of finance capital by hounding socialists from the party, in order to carry out attacks on the working class, to prove their credentials as loyal servants of capitalism.

This is the leadership the Knowsley party is fighting and that is the reason why I believe we were right to call for tactical support for the RCP candidate in Knowsley.

It was a legitimate temporary alliance with a legitimate party of the working class for a strictly defined objective.

On our part, the defence of the local party against the witch-hunt, and both parties were aware of the other party's position.

Frank Fitzmaurice.

No fixed rigid formulas

I WOULD like to congratulate the Liverpool comrades on their position taken during the Knowsley by-election regarding the Revolutionary Communist Party.

I was sorry to see the sectarian position adopted by Comrade Pottins in last week's Workers Press, his letter seemed to be written for the sole purpose of having a pop at the RCP.

For many years we have stood candidates in both general and by-elections, campaigning in much the same way as the RCP have done.

This work gave us the opportunity to express the views of the WRP to a wider audience than was usually possible, to get some TV coverage and to recruit a few members.

We never expected to win but it seems to me that this case called for a less cynical outlook.

In general a call for an anti-Tory, Labour vote is correct, but things do not happen in general, they happen under particular circumstances.

The same can be said for political leadership, it has not only to be guided by general principles but this guidance is of no use if it is unaffected by what is happening on the ground.

The advantage of Marxism is that it allows things to be seen, not in a fixed, rigid, dead way, applying formulas worked out years in advance, but in movement and change, motivated by contradictory forces.

No doubt the RCP have done some dreadful things in the past but then they would be well within their rights to point out that so have we.

Personally I would have been only too pleased to see an RCP MP for Knowsley.

It would have undoubtedly given the Kinnocks something to think about and would have given us a chance to see what the RCP are made of.

My only criticism of the Liverpool decision is that it should have been said earlier and louder.

Phil Penn

The questions are much deeper

THE RESULTS of the Knowsley by-election show that many workers used their vote to protest against Kinnock's imposed man.

Kinnock's attack on the elective principal was answered in three ways: the boycott of the election, a vote for the liberal candidate or a vote for the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP).

Each in its own way was a protest at the developing attacks on the left within the Labour Party by Kinnock and the right wing.

Comrade Pottins is wrong to separate one aspect of the vote and tell us part of what we already know about the RCP.

The most important question is how do you support a section of workers and Labour lefts that want to fight Kinnock now?

Secondly how do you encourage those workers that want to use their vote but not for Kinnock in these circumstances?

I think the Liverpool WRP's call for a vote for the RCP was correct in the concrete circumstances.

It was issued after the decision of the Knowsley constituency party to boycott the election. It cannot therefore be separated.

The logic of Comrade Pottins' argument means we would have to say: 'Labour activists and workers, you were wrong to boycott the elections.'

Now we learn Mr. Ray Gill North-West regional organiser and by-election agent i.e. Kinnock's hatchet man, will step up the action against the Labour Party in Knowsley North.

Labour activists face expulsion. Three constituency parties in Merseyside are either suspended or disbanded.

Militant say vote for Kinnock's man and then continue the fight!

Do we support Militant on this position?

Yet some workers will want to fight by using their vote. A section of workers did cross the class divide and vote Liberal.

The only solution in this case was a vote for the RCP.

The Workers Press has already explained how the witch-hunt in the Labour Party is the forerunner of an outright attack on the democratic rights of the working class.

Surely as a revolutionary party we have a duty to support the various fights within the Labour Party and the working class as they combat the witch-hunt in the Labour Party.

In so doing we build those forces that are prepared to defend the working class in future battle.

I think this discussion raises deeper questions about the nature of the Labour Party and parliamentary elections.

Do we call for a vote for Kinnock under any conditions?

Do we want a Labour Government at any price?

We cannot answer these questions entirely in advance. Part of the answer lies within the development of the working class and its attitude to the Labour Party and Parliament.

Martin Ralph

RCP reply: 'Unfair criticism'

It is fair enough for Charlie Pottins (Workers' Press, Saturday 15 November) to object to the decision of Liverpool WRP members to campaign in support of Revolutionary Communist Party candidate Dave Hallsworth in the Knowsley North by-election.

It is not legitimate however to justify this by distortions of RCP positions and slanders of the type often produced in the past by Gerry Healy's News Line.

The RCP never instructed its members to drop out of miners' support groups during the miners' strike, for the simple reason that we never supported these groups in the first place.

While we were among the first to organise practical solidarity work — collecting money and food, etc — we did not give our support to committees which were set up under the control of the labour bureaucracy and served the purpose of strengthening its capacity to mediate between the mining communities and the state.

We did not oppose a 'yes' vote for the political levy just because the union leaders ran cynical campaigns that disguised the fact that virtually all these funds would go to the Labour Party (though we certainly pointed this out).

We campaigned for trade unionists to set up political funds to be spent on objectives consistent with workers' interests, rather than wasting money financing a party which consistently acts against the interests of the working class.

Our argument against supporting public ownership of industries and services has nothing in common with syndicalism.

In fact it follows the traditions of the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions in the early twenties.

The point is that whether

workers are employed by private capitalists or by the state acting in the interests of capital in general, workers' first priority is the defence of jobs, wages and working conditions.

Workers have no interest in defending one form of capitalist exploitation (public ownership) against another (privatisation).

The job-shedding, wage-cutting consequences of union acquiescence in in-house tenders as an alternative to privatisation in the health service should alert all militants to this danger.

Charlie's allegations about the Workers Against Racism campaign sponsored by the RCP are old slanders.

It is worth pointing out that while everybody now recognises the problem of racist attacks, we were the first to organise direct action to deal with the problem and bring it to the attention of the labour movement.

It is simply untrue that any WAR representative 'claimed credit' for the inner city riots.

When this accusation was made by the gutter press at the time, we categorically denied it.

The allegation that we disrupted a Newham Seven demonstration has long been circulated by sectarian Labour Party supporters in Newham who resented the success and popularity of our campaigning work in the area.

Why on earth should we attempt to disrupt an anti-racist demonstration? The allegation is absurd.

Apart from these points, Charlie seems to be scratching around to find something to disagree with in our Knowsley election platform.

Our demands put forward a basic platform for working class unity at a time when the Labour Party is moving further to the right to appease the demands of the

establishment and improve its position in the opinion polls.

It was encouraging to see that the WRP in Liverpool recognised this basic class issue in the Knowsley North by-election, and worrying to see that others in the WRP are inclined to take the sort of traditional sectarian line which could only help to put Kinnock's stooge in Westminster.

In the months leading up to

the general election, building a coherent working class alternative to the Labour Party must be the top priority for the left — and this project cannot be the property of any individual organisation.

The future of the working class after the election — whichever party wins — will depend upon it.

Alan Harding,
RCP election agent, Knowsley North

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

PUBLIC LECTURES

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

November 21
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November 28
'Questions and Answers' (General discussion on whole series of lectures)

Trade Unionists For Democracy in Knowsley North

Rank and File Union Delegates are fighting to raise funds to pay for legal costs incurred fighting the imposition by the Labour Party NEC of the elected candidate. It has cost up to £14,000 to date.

AN APPEAL TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Donations can be sent to Mrs. I. Rowe, The Treasurer, Trade Unionists for Democracy in Knowsley North, 12 Linslade Crescent, Northwood, Kirkby, Liverpool.

Please make all cheques payable to Trade Unionists For Democracy in Knowsley North. A receipt will be sent to all contributors.

Varga on the WRP split

From 'COMBAT INTERNATIONAL', Journal of the Groupe de l'Opposition et de Continuite de la IVE Internationale (Varga) No. 18-18, July/Aug. 1986

SPRINGTIME

FOR nearly a year now we have been witnessing true springtime in the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of Great Britain.

It began with an unexpected — not to say incongruous — event, as is often the case at the start of an important development.

Gerry Healy, undisputed leader of the party for 40 years, was expelled for — sexual abuse.

With him, a considerable number of members were also discarded, mainly journalists and entertainment people (Mitchell, the Red-graves, etc.).

But very soon the outbreak of this scandal revealed a whole method of building and running the party completely alien, not only to democratic centralism, but to the most elementary communist principles.

It turned out that we were not just dealing with Healy's sexual practices, just as in

the past the right of the first night was only one, quite secondary, attribute of the lord of the manor.

Healy also used blackmail and threats against comrades who resisted or criticised him, he took all important decisions on his own and acted behind the backs of the elected party leadership.

Thus he concealed before it, for example, his monstrous dealings with the Arab bourgeois nationalist leaders.

The discussion, which first focused on the problems of Healy's method, very soon opened up on to political and theoretical problems. It

could not have been otherwise.

The party reacted against the lord of the manor Healy, whose sexual abuses were only an aspect, the one to serve as detonator for a whole process of political and theoretical clarification.

A thoroughgoing discussion has started, to a large part in public.

The WRP has held numerous conferences and, above all, its weekly paper, Workers Press, has opened its columns to an exciting and passionate discussion in its correspondence section, which has often taken up four whole pages.

In this discussion, WRP members have taken part, but also those who had been unjustly expelled at various times like Alan Thornett, as well as all other organisations of the working class movement, from the Labour Party to the Communist Party, led — of course — by those who call themselves Trotskyist, whether pabloite or anti-pabloite.

Nothing like it has ever been seen in the history of the movement!

Naturally it is impossible here to give an account of the whole of this discussion.

But we can say that all questions are approached and examined right across the whole past and present political and theoretical positions of the WRP.

At the centre, of course, is the party's recent history, a serious examination of its political problems — in Britain as well as on the international scale — through a critique and self-critique of the WRP's orientation and the role of its leaders.

We can only recommend to all militants to read this rich correspondence published in Workers Press.

What is so striking in this process of clarification is that it has realised a democratic centralism scoffed at for so long before — and today still trampled on in the vast majority of organisations whose leaderships call themselves Trotskyist.

Among those latter ones, there are some who keep secret their conference venues even to militants who wish to make an appeal to them, not to mention those who do not hold congresses at all.

In the face of this travesty of Trotskyism — defender of democratic centralism against Stalinist tyranny — this creative discussion in the WRP heralds, apart from its own, the regeneration of Trotskyism in general against its perverters.

Once started, it was necessary for the WRP to have the courage to carry through this process to the finish.

And that was no easy matter.

Because we are not dealing with any old organisation, like some, who are ready to change their past and present positions all the more easily because they never concern themselves with questions of the movement's history.

The WRP not only forms part of this history, but was one of its most important creators.

The SLL, the WRP's predecessor, was one of the founding organisations (together with the American SWP and the French PCI (Later OCI) of the International Committee to break with Pablo in order to reconstruct the Fourth International.

To be sure, that difficult path was travelled through with much hesitation, ambiguity and uncertainty — and also with a strong dose of pabloist carryover.

THIS WEEK we reprint an article written by BALAZS NAGY (Michel Varga) of the 'Struggle and Continuity Group for the Fourth International' with his views on the split in the Workers Revolutionary Party in October 1985.

Part 3 of the 'Stalinism in Crisis' interview with Varga on the Hungarian Revolution will appear in next week's Workers Press.

But in spite of these very heavy burdens — of which the slanders against Hansen and Wohlforth and the opportunism regarding the Arab and Islamic petty-bourgeois leaders were not the least — the SLL and later the WRP have contributed to the defence of Trotskyism in Britain.

The best proof of this is this renaissance of the party which we are now witnessing.

There is only one kind of party that can undergo such a regeneration.

And that is the one which — instead of 'riding out the storm' — places itself into the main stream of history; which fights for a place in the heart of the Fourth International (unlike the critical spectators who remain and have always remained on its fringes); and which contributes to the fight waged by the Fourth International.

That is why we agree with the majority of this party and not with those who, criticising its past, wanted to liquidate the continuity.

Thus we support the WRP against those for whom Gerry Healy's mistakes were the mistakes of the whole Fourth International since its foundation, and also against those who saw the will to re-examine and clarify everything as a break with the continuity and traditions of the Fourth International.



BALAZS NAGY (Michel Varga) speaking at the recent Hungarian Revolution commemoration meeting in London

recently formed Trotskyist groups and organisations in the Eastern countries! This is certainly no 'ordinary' centrism-opportunism.

Of course, there are revolutionaries amongst its ranks, but all the same, this organisation and its politics are incompatible with the renewal of the WRP and the Fourth International.

We think that only on the basis of a firmness with regards to continuity, such as is shown in the renewal of the WRP — but betrayed by the PCI — is it possible to

criticism; to break completely with the past mistakes; to effect a complete renewal.

What other party — outside of the Fourth International, continuity of Bolshevism — can do the same?

It is enough to pose this question in order to understand why the tendencies and organisations of the British labour movement are turning towards the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Many revolutionary militants sense that, faced with the isolated Stalinist party, this time there is a real and concrete possibility to gather together the vanguard of the proletariat of this country and to unite it in its Marxist party.

On the international scale, the spring in the WRP will give new impetus and provide the basis for a new development in the construction of the Fourth International — all the more so because the Workers Revolutionary Party has solid traditions and international links and because it is determined here as well to break with the sectarian conservatism and opportunist politics of the Healy leadership.

However, it would be untrue to say that there are no disagreements between the WRP and us.

Serious differences do exist between us.

Notably and rightly in relation to the continuity of the Fourth International after 1972.

But we are convinced that we can undertake their necessary clarification in a fraternal way, with mutual trust, in order to resolve them in the course of the common battle for the building of the Fourth International.



GERRY HEALY: Expelled for sexual abuse

The WRP was right to reject and fight these positions whether they emerged inside the party or came from outside.

Certain comrades in the WRP, who might be tempted to turn towards Lambert's French PCI, would do well to examine that organisation with the same thoroughness.

Since 1972/3, the OCI (Later PCI) has degenerated.

After splitting with the International Committee in 1972, abandoned without a fight by Healy, it has passed through a long period of attempts to liquidate Trotskyist parties and unprincipled manoeuvres with Hansen, Lora and Moreno.

At the same time, in the class struggle in France, it has degenerated into an appendage of the left radical-democratic reformist bureaucracy.

This organisation has been involved in the slander campaign against Michel Varga and his comrades as well as physical attacks against their organisations.

It has tried with every means to liquidate the re-

construct the Fourth International and its British section, for which the regeneration of the WRP has opened up a new stage.

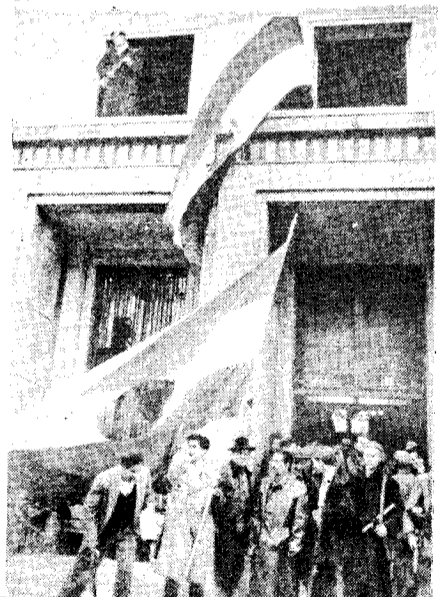
A new stage, because the significance of this development is considerable internationally, too.

First of all, it is important because of the very fact that a Trotskyist party has been capable to undertake a hard and severe process of self-

ANNOUNCING A NEW EDITION OF

HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY

PETER FRYER



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

In October 1956 Peter Fryer was sent to cover these events for the Daily Worker. He reported what he saw — only to have his despatches suppressed and to be suspended and then expelled from the Communist Party. He saw people in arms demolish a regime of fear and poverty and take power in their own hands. He saw security police atrocities — and the people's terrible revenge. Then he watched appalled as a nation's new-born freedom was relentlessly crushed.

Peter Fryer's eye-witness account, first published in December 1956, had an immediate impact, bringing home to many things which they wished were not true.

Thirty years later his Hungarian Tragedy, now published by New Park Publications with a new introduction by the author, still stands as a model of journalistic insight and integrity and is as valuable now as it was in 1956.

Published on October 23 1986

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30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE

HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

PUBLIC MEETING

LEEDS

Wednesday 3 December 7.30p.m.

Leeds Trades Club

(off Chapelton Road)

Speaker: Cliff Slaughter

Sponsoring organisations: WRP, International and Socialist Viewpoint

FILM REVIEWS

Courage behind the camera

LOWEST OF THE LOW by Jorg Gfrorer and Gunter Wallraff and **BITTER TRUTH** directed by Zoltan Varkonyi, two films about human exploitation, shown last week at the London Film Festival.

AS THE 30th London Film Festival nears the end of its first week one can say that at least two films worth noting take as their starting point the exploitation of human labour — in one case for personal profit, in the other for personal prestige.

In **LOWEST OF THE LOW**, Jorg Gfrorer and campaigning journalist Gunter Wallraff show the plight of 'guest workers' in West Germany today.

And they show it in raw close-up as it has never been seen before.

It must have taken enormous courage and firm conviction to disguise themselves as Turkish and Italian labourers, load an ultra lightweight camera into a specially designed bag, together with recorder and monitor, and make contact with the 'job agency' or 'slave dealer', and then proceed to break every sacred law in the fatherland.

But this they did, video recording as they went from job agency to job site and back again to the agency in an effort to extract a miserly wage from the 'slave dealer' who systematically short-changed them.

'I have to hold the camera bag as high as possible, and point it downward so as not to get the neon tubes in the picture, or the automatic shutter would shut straight away.'

'But now I am familiar enough with the angle and don't need to surreptitiously check my picture on the little monitor built into the bag.'

In this way the team filmed where filming is strictly forbidden: in the bowels of an August Thyssen steel mill in Duisburg, for example, and the experimental wing of a large pharmaceutical company where the poverty-stricken are hired to test new drugs.

But usually they were hired as 'contract cleaners' to do the filthiest and most hazardous jobs that no German trade unionist would touch with a barge-pole — 'We inhaled metal dust and it sparkled, with every colour under the rainbow'.

With an audacious stroke that has to be seen to be believed the film makers themselves created the climax of the film.

Associates of theirs, posing as government agents, contact the 'slave dealer' and make him an offer he cannot refuse.

They offer him a lot of money if he can provide a labour force of six to clear up the mess inside a nuclear power station where a radiation leak has just occurred.



'Lowest of the Low': shot with an ultra lightweight camera loaded into a specially designed bag by the two film-makers disguised as immigrant labourers.

They lay down only two conditions.

The labourers must be 'guest workers' and they must return to their country of origin the minute the work is done (the clear implication being that six radiation-induced deaths in Turkey will not be easily traceable to a contract-cleaning firm in Bavaria!).

This time, having seen him operating, no-one gets a prize for guessing that the

'slave dealer' will accept the assignment.

He explains (as if we didn't know) that he considers himself to be a good social-democrat with abiding concern for the underprivileged who should be allowed whenever possible — to earn an honest buck.

This documentary, which was preceded by a book, has shaken the German establishment to its foundations.

Writs have been flying, Redgrave-style, and court injunctions have prevented the film being shown on German television (though it has been seen in many neighbouring countries and the makers have high hopes that it will be shown in Britain on Channel Four).

Gfrorer and Wallraff are being sued for invasion of privacy, trespassing and all those other sacred cows that holders of private property hold dear.

It should be added that the film-makers remain shamelessly unrepentant, and so they should.

* * *

THE BITTER TRUTH, by veteran director Zoltan Varkonyi, in quite different way is equally courageous.

It was completed in February 1956 and immediately suppressed.

In the thirty years elapsed since the Hungarian Revolution this angry parable has lost none of its potency.

It focuses on an ambitious civil engineer.

Sztanko is hale and hearty and a party man to his cuticles.

He is due to start work on a new project — a huge grain silo — which if completed on time will bring him much prestige.

He enlists the help of an old friend, Palocz, a highly qualified engineer who trained in Belgium while he was in exile.

They start the job together and it looks like plain sailing. But not for long.

For all his bluster, for all his claims to being the best bricklayer in the region, Sztanko is inept and prone to cutting corners.

One day, his friend, Palocz, spots a crack in one of the load-bearing walls and appeals to Sztanko to halt the work on safety grounds.

Sztanko dismisses his appeal with contempt.

He is living under a lot of pressure; running the project, having an adulterous affair, gambling into the early hours, hitting the bottle, and not necessarily in that order.

Rumours have been rife among the workers on the site for a few days, but no-one was prepared to speak out.

To condemn Sztanko was tantamount to condemning the party.

To keep quiet was to risk death.

Palocz's discovery brings the truth out into the open and resolves the contradiction.

Workers, men and women, down tools and stage a sit down strike.

It is at this point that the film hits hardest.

Who should wield power? The self-seeking Stalinist bureaucrats or the Hungarian masses pledged to socialism?

The working class needs a silo to store grain; a silo that will stand on firm foundations for decades.

Sztanko — minor party hack that he is — wants to rise in the party bureaucracy.

A project completed on schedule is the kind of language his superiors appreciate.

So, build on, and trust to luck! In reality he has already sown the seeds of his downfall.

And when it comes, it comes swiftly and mercilessly.

As he sits nervously on the edge of his chair, drawing heavily on his cigarette, trying to win a wager by dropping the last match onto a match-tower balanced on the tip of a wine bottle without bringing the whole, fragile, edifice tumbling down, the wall collapses not far away, killing the only worker whose narrow sense of party loyalty blinded him to the dangers.



'Bitter Truth' completed in February 1956 and immediately suppressed: Sztanko and Palocz start a job together which looks like plain sailing; but not for long.

REVIEWS

Philosophy and Scottish history

The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect: the Problem of Generalism and Specialisation in Twentieth Century Scotland. By G.E. Davie. Polygon, Edinburgh, £17.95.
A Century of the Scottish People, 1830-1950. By T.C. Smout. Collins, London, £15.00.

CHRISTOPHER SMOUT's history of the 'Scottish people' between 1830 and 1950 is likely to be widely read. It is elegantly written and easily grasped, telling part of a relatively familiar story much more accessibly and with greater and more authoritative detail than before.

There are chapters, each of which is almost a self-contained essay — on conditions in the cities; life and work in the rural areas; Highland and lowland; working in industry; and wages and living standards. Unsurprisingly, Smout concludes that 'in the middle decades of the 19th century one of the attractions of Scotland to a capitalist... was cheap and plentiful industrial labour, whether provided by lowland craftsman, cleared Highland crofter, or Irish immigrant' (p.112); and that, from 1830 to 1940 at least, 'the expectations of the working class were a hard life, a poor house, and few material rewards'. (p.131)

Poverty

The author then documents the role of alcohol in alleviating the effects of poverty for some, while reinforcing its persistence; and writes about sexual mores in a manner which, though more voyeuristic than analytical, contains some interesting information. His chapters on religion and education on the whole help to

debunk some of the more persistent bourgeois myths about the generally beneficial role of the Scottish churches and schools system.

All this is cast in the form of commentaries on the dilemma posed by Smout in his first chapter: why was the Whig judge, Lord Cockburn, proved wrong when, terrified by the growth of Chartism in the 1840s, he predicted social breakdown? Smout picks this question up again at the end with two apparently rather incongruous chapters on radical and socialist politics up to the time of the Attlee Labour government.

Property

His answer is basically that the property-owning class was flexible enough to stave off social revolution — just! — and that 'socialist idealists' failed to understand the working class. It is a familiar and eclectic writing of history, 'materialist' in its description of circumstances but 'idealist' in its analysis of change, or the lack of it.

Yet it is freshly done. And it certainly helps open the way for a consistently materialist account of Scottish history, setting developments such as the Highland Clearances and the grotesquely rapid creation of industrial Clydeside (perhaps not paralleled until Russian industrialisation in the early 20th century) in the context of the evolution of capitalism as a world system, and the emergence of the working class as a real social force, oppressed and revolutionary at the same time, and not merely the object of sympathy.

It is also interesting that Smout chooses to announce the whole enterprise as a refutation of Marxism (p.3), both because he never makes it clear what 'Marx-



ist' accounts of Scottish history he thinks he is refuting and because he consistently avoids another theoretical debate which the Edinburgh philosopher, George Davie, has been trying to provoke for years.

For Davie, a vital philosophical question of the 19th century and today is 'how the central tradition of Western philosophy inherited from Descartes can critically assimilate the classical philosophy of Germany from Kant through Fichte, Schelling, Hegel to Feuerbach' ('Edinburgh Review', 74, p. 108).

For Marxists the answer to this question lies pre-eminently in Engels' great pamphlet, 'Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of Classical German Philosophy', and in the exemplification of the relationship of theory to practice pioneered in the 'Communist Manifesto' (1848).

But Davie's philosophical enterprise, which began a quarter of a century ago with 'The Democratic Intellect' and now carries forward with 'The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect', proposes a different path via the Scottish 'common sense' philosophers (who were a major influence on American bourgeois philosophy) and the attempts of their disciples to develop an idealist policy to make class society humane via a supposedly egalitarian and philosophi-

cally-oriented, protestant education system.

No one who has seriously studied Marxism from the standpoint of the needs of the working class will be tempted to embrace Davie's outlook, but his intellectually intense work is of significance both because it raises the fundamental issues of the theory of knowledge, and of the relationship of theory to practice, within the sceptical temples of British bourgeois learning; and also because it provides — indirectly — some inspiration for Scottish nationalism.

Philosophy

One of the many stimulating things that Davie argues is that historians like Smout write modern Scottish social history as little more than a descriptive component of modern utilitarianism, assuming that the great debates 'about philosophy' are a 'meaningless irrelevance' ('Crisis', p. 261).

Nothing but advantage can come from following Davie's insistence on the need to return to the central philosophical discussions of the early 19th century, even if those with less faith than his in the capacity of universities to act as beneficent moulders of capitalist society will not want to follow him far on his subsequent intellectual journey.

Accuracy on Wallace

William Wallace. By Andrew Fisher. John Donald, Edinburgh, £6.50.

Not many 12th century political leaders still find themselves celebrated regularly by modern political parties, yet the Scottish National Party — rampantly confident again of being able to exploit the Kinross Labour Party leadership's headlong retreat from socialist principles in the face of Thatcherite bullying — ended its recent conference with a lusty rendering of 'Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled...'

William Wallace was executed by Edward I of Eng-

land in 1305. The lack of more recent historical heroes is not the least manifestation of the SNP's difficulty in making credible the idea that they can belatedly establish a separate capitalist nation north of the Tweed.

Andrew Fisher has honestly and readably assembled what little is definitely known about Wallace in a book which will be of interest to those concerned with historical facts rather than atavistic rhetoric.

He has assisted anyone who sets out to determine the real basis of the Scottish Wars of Independence (1296-1314) and has added to John Donald's admirable list of publications on Scottish history.

Framed Prisoners Case

Beyond Reasonable Doubt. Yorkshire Television for Channel 4, Sunday November 16.

IN 1974, during the IRA bombing campaign, 18 people were arrested in Britain and on the basis of forced false confessions were given long prison terms.

One man died in jail, his son and ten others were given life.

Last Sunday the final part of the story of the frame up of 17 of these innocent people was told in a Yorkshire Television documentary on Channel 4. (The 18th, Judith Ward, was for some reason not included.)

The programme documented the cases which are becoming better known as the Guildford Four, the Maguire's and the Birmingham Six.

In the case of the Guildford Four the impression was given that the arrests were the result of the 'unorthodox' lifestyle of the four victims.

There was no mention of the police methods employed or of the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act which gave the police seven

clear days to do as they pleased.

The frame-up of the Guildford Four began with beatings so brutal they could not walk.

In Paul Hill's case a gun was then loaded in front of him and he was threatened with death, but it was only when they convinced him that his fiancée was about to undergo the same treatment that he agreed to sign the police confession, thinking that he could withdraw it later.

The brutality of the police did emerge briefly in the film, however, when Paddy Hill of the Birmingham Six told the story of his interrogation in a conversation which had been secretly recorded.

He told how the police beat him up, dragged him around by his hair, stood on his ankles and put lighted cigarettes to his eyelids.

In spite of these omissions (the result of pressure from above), the programmes have done a great deal to draw attention to these cases and those who put them together should be congratulated.

Phil Penn

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MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

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

Sunday November 23 7.30pm
'Marxism and the Trade Unions'
Speaker: Richard Goldstein

Sunday November 30 7.30pm
'Reformism'
Speaker: Steve McSweeney

Advance Notice

MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS

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

March goes to a 'Call for Action' Conference
For further details ring 01-881 2938

REVIEWS

Inequality
in death

Class and Health. Edited by R G Wilkinson. Tavistock, £12.95.

DEATH, the great leveller, in fact strikes very unevenly and Britain is becoming even less egalitarian.

Since the 1930s, the way the death rate has varied with occupations has worsened.

The mortality rate for an unskilled worker in 1931 was about 11 per cent higher than the average; now it is 66 per cent higher.

By contrast, the mortality rate of a professional worker is only two thirds of the national average, and in 1931 it was only ten per cent less.

What this difference in the mortality rate means is a difference in the total life expectancy of about seven years.

'Class and Health' is a collection of academic studies which confirm and explain this point.

Wilkinson sums it up by saying that 'class differences in health represent a double injustice: life is short where its quality is poor.'

The research shows that the death rate for top civil

servants is only a third of that for the lowest grades of civil servants. Unemployment considerably increases the death rate.

One study by the government's own census department followed up 1,000 men who were 'looking for work' at the time of the 1971 census.

Over the next ten years, more of them died than the national death rate. They were especially prone to diseases like lung cancer, and more of them committed suicide than the average.

The book draws attention to a number of factors which increase the inequality — including food, with workers' diets generally deteriorating especially since the end of rationing in 1951, and with sugar consumption soaring.

It also points out that the formation of the National Health Service in 1948 did not stop the rise in differential rates of illness and death.

Curative medicine is powerless to deal with heart disease, strokes and the many occupational illnesses, and there are also class differences in use of the health service itself, even without taking into account private medicine and insurance schemes.

PEACE IN PICTURES



Peace Snapped. By Rupert Hopkins. Podivn Books, 56 Cleveland Mansions, Widley Road, London W9 2LB. £7.95.

RUPERT HOPKINS' earlier collection of photographs in 'The Peace Camp Book' have been added to for this new book of black and white images which start with the 'sense of power and energy' which radiates from Greenham Common Peace Camp.

Hopkins sees his work as a contribution to the struggle against 'weapons of mass destruction' and political prisoners.

His pictures are full of

hope and show the many different faces of those drawn into the movement demanding peace.

The last pictures in the book were taken in September this year at Bradwell in Essex, where villagers protested against the proposal to site a nuclear waste dump in their area.

● Above left: Bradwell, September 1986. Above right: Greenham Common, December 1982.

RAINBOW WARRIOR:
French colonial
policy continued

Poisoned Reign. By Bengt Danielsson and Marie-Therese Danielsson. Penguin, £3.95.

THE FRENCH state's murder of the Greenpeace photographer when they sank the *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland Harbour triggered off the republication of this book by two residents of Tahiti.

They show that the *Rainbow Warrior* affair is not surprising in the light of a history of complete disregard for the Polynesian people by their French rulers.

The French exploded 115 nuclear bombs in the Polynesian islands between 1966 and 1985.

The Danielssons' argue that although there were shocked reactions to the attack on Greenpeace, it did not raise sufficiently the question of what had been done to the people of those

islands.

It is, to this day, impossible to calculate how many deaths from cancer have been caused in those islands.

International pressure forced the French to publish some figures in 1983 — but they showed a lower than average cancer death rate, because they only used records from two hospitals.

The hundreds who had sought treatment from private doctors, local quacks, the highly secretive Moruroa military hospital, or doctors in New Zealand and France were simply left out.

Test reports published earlier had given readings for radioactivity which had simply ignored the seven islands nearest to the test sites, although these each had a population of between 50 and 500.

In 1968, the 50 residents of Tuereia were given a 'holiday' in Tahiti — but they then went back to their

homes polluted with radioactivity and carried on eating contaminated fish.

The Danielssons are forced to conclude that the terrible cyclones between January and May 1983 were a mixed blessing, sweeping away the fallout from the islands.

They use the term 'nuclear colonialism' for the way France has treated the area.

Mitterrand continues to describe Polynesia as an integral part of France.

One result of this apparently enlightened attitude to colonies is that the referendum on continuing the tests was conducted in France, not in Polynesia!

The islands achieved nominal self-government in 1977 and yet only in 1982 were they able to insist on using their own Tahitian language in the Assembly.

In the early 1960s when the French were looking for a test site, shortly after losing Algeria and the possibility of a Saharan testing ground, their eyes fell on Polynesia.

The leader of the anti-colonial opposition, Pouvanaa, was arrested and imprisoned until he was too old and broken to lead his people.

Tuamotu Island had then only one drawback for nuclear testing. It had no airfield.

This had long been a demand of the local people, and it was one that was granted

in double-quick time.

The build-up to the first explosion in 1966 was tempestuous, with particular political opposition and ultimately street-fighting as the Foreign Legion arrived.

'Poisoned Realm' is a remarkably detailed book by two partisans in the struggle against French colonialism.

They show with anger and anguish the truth which followed the categorical statement of the French government in 1963 that 'not a single particle of radioactive fallout will ever reach an inhabited island'.

Bridget Dixon

Employment law

Employment Law under the Tories. Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8UF. Price 95p.

The legal onslaught upon the trade unions by the Tories has been succinctly set out in this helpful and informative pamphlet by the Labour Research Department. The law before 1979 and today is described in distinctive style showing how much of a legal stranglehold the Tories have over the unions. Also included is a table of fines imposed and charges awarded against the trade unions since 1982 which show a total of £1,104,051.

No solution

Sinclair and the Rise of the 'Sunshine' Technology. By Ian Adamson and Richard Kennedy. Penguin, £3.95.

ONCE THATCHER'S favourite, the emperor of British entrepreneurialism, Clive Sinclair has been found naked time and again.

Yet the myth that his mixture of invention and innovation for small business somehow holds the key for the Tory-planned revival of British industry is worth debunking, even if Adamson and Kennedy make heavy weather of it at times.

Sinclair's dream was a PR-led marketing strategy for personal products.

Adamson and Kennedy

dismiss the projects one by one.

Wrist radios ('technological infantilism', Adamson and Kennedy call this 20-year Sinclair project), the C5 car (a 'disastrous trajectory', with the vehicle company going down with £6.4million debts in November 1985) and the QL ('mass delusion', a product launched before there was a single working model).

Sinclair was knighted in 1983 for his services to British industry, and others will undoubtedly follow his path, particularly when it comes to making cheap components in low-wage areas.

Adamson and Kennedy's book points out that there is no solution the Sinclair way for 'moribund capitalism'.

Sugar: white and deadly

Pure, White and Deadly. By John Yudkin. Viking, £9.95.

IF ONLY a fraction of the health hazards associated with sugar were known about any other food additive, it would be banned.

Cyclamates, for example, are banned in many countries, yet the prohibition is based on experiments in which rats were fed the equivalent of a human consumption of 12 pounds of sugar a day for 40 or 50 years.

Rats fed the equivalent of a normal daily intake of sugar suffer serious health effects — including enlarged and fatty livers, enlarged kidneys and a shortened lifespan.

Dr Yudkin's book has attracted widespread criticism since its first publication in 1972. He deals with this opposition largely by showing the links between these

scientists and the sugar industry which funds their research.

He demonstrates that sugar is at the very least an unnecessary item in the diet.

While epidemiologically it is impossible to prove that sugar is the major cause of coronary thrombosis and many other illnesses, the correlations between high sugar intake and disease are so strong that the evidence cannot be dismissed.

Eyes, teeth, skin, joints — and more profoundly the hormones which affect growth — are all adversely affected by sugar. It is therefore particularly harmful for children.

The latest American research has shown that the school performance of New York's children improved when their diet was improved, especially by reducing their sugar intake.

Several chapters of Yudkin's book are devoted to discussing just how to cut down on sugar consumption.

Tower Hamlets Printworkers Support Group
Workers united will never be defeated
A MEETING OF WORKERS IN STRUGGLE
Highway Club Dellow Street E2
Wednesday November 26, 7.30pm
Speakers from: Hangers (Limbfitters),
Silentnight, Print, NUM, Sinn Fein, Justice
Campaign, Kenmure Plastics.

STRATHCLYDE FIREMEN FIGHT JOB LOSSES

'No intention of going back on our knees'

BY HILARY HORROCKS

FIREMEN in Strathclyde, Britain's largest local authority, have fired warning shots across the bows of right-wing Labour councillors who are trying to enforce spending cuts.

A show of strength by the Fire Brigades Union — a solid one-hour lightning strike, and a national demonstration in Glasgow last week — means that mediators will begin work next month knowing that job losses will be fiercely resisted.

Strathclyde firemen, who are statistically more likely to get killed on the job, and deal with Europe's highest rate of fatal fires, have long been in the front line of resisting cuts in manning levels.

When the region proposed cuts involving 128 job losses, they put forward their own package consisting of savings from casual overtime payments, slightly increasing the life-span of fire engines, and capitalising communication equipment spending.

Charles Gray, Strathclyde's right-wing Labour leader who is hoping to show council workers' unions who is in charge, said the FBU's alternative proposals were 'practical, but not acceptable'.

But after last Friday's demonstration, he agreed to send the dispute to a team of three mediators: former Stirling University principal Sir Kenneth Alexander, STUC general secretary Campbell Christie, and Professor Tom Carbery of the Strathclyde University Business Studies School.

Gray changed his mind after firemen travelled from England and Wales to join their Scottish colleagues to march through Glasgow and lobby the Strathclyde Region HQ.

NALGO members, on a half-day solidarity strike, and teachers who are in the



Firemen from all over Britain demonstrate against proposed loss of jobs in Glasgow.

midst of their own dispute, were also on the protest.

FBU general secretary Ken Cameron told the rally: 'It's a disgrace that a Labour-controlled authority is doing Thatcher's job for her'.

He said that a leading councillor had told him: 'When you come back on your knees, it will be 208, not

128, jobs that will go.'

To deafening applause, Cameron said: 'we have no intention of going back on our knees.'

'If mediation fails, there will be more lightning strikes, and if the council decide to ask the government to send troops in here, they will be taking on the whole fire service.'

Davie Patton, Strathclyde FBU chairman, condemned the media for accusing firemen of criminal irresponsibility. The truth was the opposite: last year management had refused leave to a badly burned fireman to visit relatives overseas.

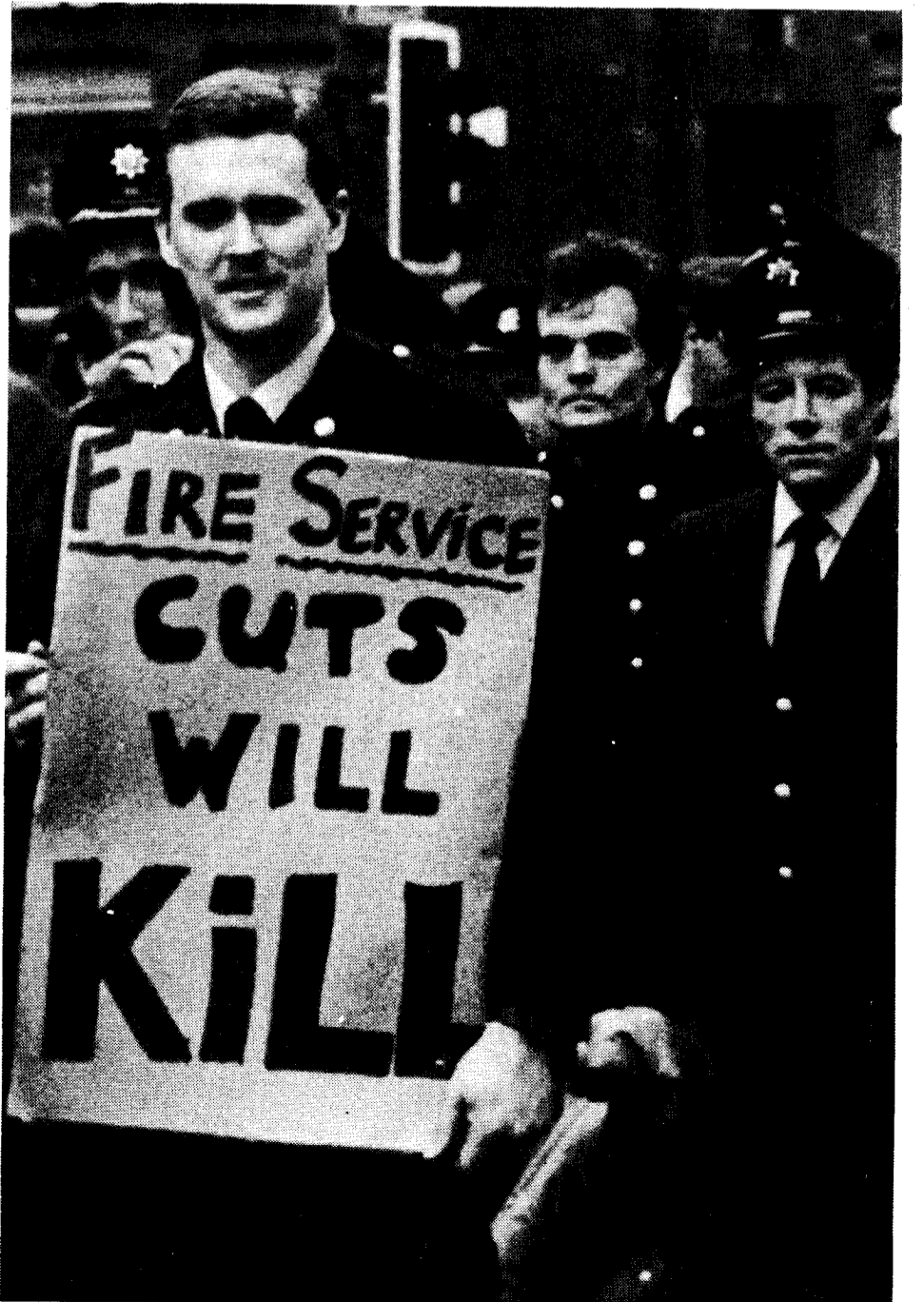
Scottish FBU executive member Ronnie Scott stressed the support from other workers for the demonstration. Cambuslang trades council and unemployed workers' centre had joined the demonstration.

Regional councillor Margaret Dick and Glasgow city councillor Jim McVicar denounced the authority leadership for threatening to call in troops to fight fires.

Jack Collins, Glasgow secretary of EIS, the teachers' union, said: 'The government are trying to call us irresponsible. But the real figures out of the proposed pay deal mean that 6,000 teachers will receive less than 10 per cent, and younger teachers less than 3 per cent.'

In a separate struggle with Strathclyde region, teachers were protesting at the failure to provide cover until a colleague had been off work for six days.

A sacked Wapping printer, denouncing the Tories' claims that the News International strikers were hooligans, said: 'Join the growing number opposing the Tory government and fighting for our rights.'



Unions protest KMU murder

BRITISH trade union leaders have protested to President Cory Aquino of the Philippines over the murder of KMU trade union leader Rolando Olalia.

Ron Todd (TGWU), Rodney Bickerstaffe (NUPE) and Brenda Dean (SOGAT) have all sent a protest on behalf of their unions, while Todd has also sent a letter to Thatcher on the subject.

KASAMA, the newsletter of trade unionists in solidarity with the KMU union, has called for protests to be sent from union branches and other organisations to:

Philippine Embassy,
9a Palace Gardens,
London W8

and
President Cory Aquino,
Malacanang Palace,
Manila,
Philippines.

Trade union supporters of the KMU in Britain plan a demonstration on November 30 to protest the killing. Details will be announced in next week's 'Workers Press'

In the run up to Olalia's funeral last Thursday, a right-wing politician and businessman linked to the military was shot dead.

David Puzon, his driver and a friend were killed when his car was riddled by automatic fire.

The dead man had links with defence minister Juan Ponce Enrile, one of the clique who broke with former president Ferdinand Marcos to bring Aquino to power.

It was rumoured that Puzon, a wealthy businessman, had refused to pay 'revolutionary taxes' to guerrillas. But military authorities in the area where he was killed indicated that the death may have been connected with business matters.

Last Wednesday a bomb went off in a department store, injuring 35 people. The same day, two police chiefs in Pampagna province were killed in a suspected guerilla attack.

● See: 'Murder provokes general strike', page 7.