



Campaign against ethnic monitoring —  
see page 3

# REAGAN REGIME RACKED BY ARMS SCANDAL

TEHRAN —

ISRAELI —

## CONTRAS CONSPIRACY

BY GEOFF PILLING

The US government is gripped by the biggest political scandal since Watergate.

Following the disclosure that money obtained from arms sales to Iran was laundered through Israel to finance the Contra movement in Nicaragua, National Security chief, Admiral John Poindexter, has been removed from office and his assistant, Colonel Oliver North, sacked.

North was directly responsible for the operations against the Nicaraguan government.

The picture in Washington is one of almost total chaos.

Announcing the laundering, Attorney-General Edwin Meese said 'There may have been other people who were working with Colonel North, who did have information about his activities.'

This directly contradicted the Attorney-General's earlier statement which claimed that only North had knowledge of the transactions.

Meese was forced to withdraw his earlier remarks.

Former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger said:

'I cannot imagine a lieutenant colonel or even an admiral like Poindexter doing this without somebody knowing.'

The same sentiments were echoed by General Alexander Haig, Reagan's first Secretary of State:

'There is much more to come in this affair. The specific knowledge of the arms shipments must lie with the Pentagon, which supplied the material. Cabinet officials were briefed on this programme at least twice to my knowledge, and information was available.'

The FBI has been called in

as speculation mounts that criminal proceedings will be taken against those responsible for cash transfers which were contrary to specific laws passed by Congress.

It is strongly rumoured that vice-President George Bush had full knowledge of the illegal transactions.

So deep is the turmoil that nobody can say with authority who knew what and who did what.

The crisis is not confined to the Reagan administration. Thatcher has gone out of her way to give absolute support for every action that the Reagan regime has taken.

She was the most enthusiastic supporter of Reagan's murderous bombing of Libya.

She has given full support to the bloody war against the Nicaraguan regime.

She backed to the hilt the imperialist invasion of Grenada.

She has been the most fervent advocate of Reagan's 'anti-terrorist' campaign.

Thatcher has always boasted of her 'special relationship' with Reagan. The question now arises: did this special relationship extend to her knowing about these illegal financial deals?

It is now revealed that the money from arms sales to Iran channeled through Israel has been used to fi-

nance Contra terrorists in Nicaragua.

She is tied hand and foot to a regime which every day reveals itself as corrupt to the core.

This crisis makes doubly urgent the campaign throughout the working-

class movement to force the Tories from office.

But workers must be warned: If the Thatcher government is in the pocket of US imperialism, then so are the Labour leaders.

A Labour government under Kinnock will join hands with American imperialism and its world-wide conspiracy against the working class and the colonial peoples.

This week Kinnock flew to the United States. His trip follows discussions with the incoming chairman of the Senate foreign relations

committee, Mr Claiborne Pell, and other influential Democrats.

His purpose was to further reassure the American establishment that they nothing to fear from a Labour government.

### Deploy

He has already given an undertaking to the Americans that they will still be able to deploy their warships in British territorial waters under any future Labour government.

Reagan used the arms deal with Iran not to free US hostages but to finance the war plans of American imperialism against the national liberation movement.

Congress was completely bypassed.

Both the debacle in the United States and the unfolding MI5 case in Britain has shown again where the real power of the state lies.

It resides not in Parliamentary institutions but with armed bodies of men and secret agencies loyal to the capitalist system.



The Manchester Martyrs march and rally was held last Sunday to commemorate the 119th anniversary of the death of the three Fenian martyrs who challenged Ireland's exploitation and oppression

## Printers: No support from TUC

BY CHRIS McBRIDE

LAST Wednesday's TUC decision not to support the sacked printworkers leaves the TUC and the leadership of the print unions — at both national and London level — in enormous political crisis.

The TUC are being forced to 'bend the rules' rather than 'rock the boat'.

Resolution 11, passed at the TUC congress earlier this year, was on the agenda, but was 'scrapped' in a vote which should never have taken place, by 25 votes to 21.

Among those voting against were electricians' leader Hammond (of course) and NUT leader Fred Jarvis.

About 800 lobbying printworkers, who were outraged by the decision, listened to Brenda Dean and Tony Dubbins after the meeting, only to hear the same empty words they have spoken throughout the dispute:

'This dispute goes on,' etc. Dean pointed out that the TUC voters in the minority represented more workers than the majority.

Newly elected SOGAT executive member Mike Hicks also appeared at a loss for answers on the way forward for the sacked men and women.

'We'll get enough support to overturn the decision at the next General Council,' he said. He and many other printworkers were demanding a re-called TUC congress.

What for? To pass another empty resolution in order for the TUC to overturn it at the next General Council, or to fail to recognise the thing in the first place? A re-called congress must demand more than that.

Isolated, empty resolutions will never force the TUC to support the printworkers as the 'Morning Star'

tries to make out. Organised practical and political activity through mass meetings of sacked printworkers and their supporters would no doubt bring out the true colours of the TUC, as did the 'violence' during the miners' strike.

SOGAT member Dennis Burnard, lobbying the TUC told Workers Press, 'They have the position of don't rock the boat. They are scared of Hammond and the UDM setting up a scab union. As long as you live under fear you can never get justice.'

Kenneth Pople, also of SOGAT said: 'It's scandalous that the TUC hasn't backed a decision of the conference. What point is there in having a TUC if they don't carry out decisions?'

Another SOGAT member Charlie Walters told Workers Press: 'If we don't get support from the TUC we

must really think about going our own way in getting support from other unions. If the TUC don't get behind us it doesn't make any difference, they haven't supported us from the start.'

It is this kind of independent viewpoint from the most militant sections of the printworkers that the Stalinists of the 'Morning Star' fear most. The initiative to organise and take action in support of the dispute at all levels, is the source of any pressure upon the TUC.

Those like the 'Morning Star' who are fighting to 'put pressure on the TUC' as of foremost importance are only deceiving sacked printers.

Now is the time for the printworkers to go directly to other sections of the labour movement for active support for their principled stand against Murdoch. The position of the TUC is clear for all to see.

### Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund

IN SO FAR: £628.94  
TARGET: £10,000

The Workers Revolutionary Party Conference on November 11, 1986 launched a Special Fund of £10,000 to be completed by February 1, 1987

We need to raise £5,000 to establish the Party headquarters in new premises and also to re-establish our printshop. We need another £5,000 for work to build the Fourth International — Trotskyist parties throughout the world linked in common struggle to lead the working class to victory against capitalism, and the smashing of social democracy and stalinism as obstacles to that victory.

These activities are undertaken against the background of unprecedented upheaval in our Party for just over a year.

On October 19, 1985, the Central Committee, by 25 votes to 11 expelled G. Healy, a leader of the movement for over 40 years. This act was a blow against all those in the working class movement who usurp the rights of members and maintain the undemocratic and despotic rule of a clique with special privileges.

The expulsion aroused the interest of Trotskyists all over the world. The WRP has been receiving telephone calls, letters and visitors clamouring for discussions on

● TURN TO PAGE 2

# Necessity for socialist planning

COMMENT BY DOT GIBSON

**IT is impossible for us to separate two news items appearing in the capitalist media.**

One is the shipwreck of 'Kowloon Bridge', stranded off the Cork coast, which followed the unexplained loss of its sister ship 'Derbyshire' in 1980.

The other is the government announcement that despite the doubling of its subsidy to Harland and Wolff, there will be 800 redundancies at the Belfast shipyard. This news came hard on the heels of the announcement that the Clydeside, Scott Lithgow shipyard would be cutting 1,000 jobs.

These reports point to the necessity for socialist planning of this important industry by the manual and technical workers in the industry.

Forty-four lives were lost in the 'Derbyshire' when it went down without a trace in the South China sea. Relatives of the dead have been demanding an inquiry ever since, but the government has refused. Now the 'Kowloon Bridge' has come to grief, MPs in the comfort of 'The House' are asking for an inquiry.

If the industry was not being run by people interested only in profit, such an inquiry would have been an automatic outcome of the tragedy in 1980; the designers, seamen and shipbuilders would have been in immediate consultation to check through all available data to overcome any problems.

And what of the shipbuilders who are about to lose their jobs?

George Arnold, AEU official in London said of the Harland & Wolff job losses: 'We are absolutely thunderstruck at the size of this cut-back, especially after so many redundancies in this industry. Ireland has separate negotiating procedures from us, but we will back any members who decide to take action.'

Tom Gillen of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions told Workers Press: 'It is another serious blow for Northern Ireland. It comes hot on the heels of other closures in manufacturing industries. The accumulative effect will be to take millions of pounds out of the economy.'

'Obviously the unions will continue to discuss with management, but the gap in order books has been recognised for some time. It is essential that Harland & Wolff is protected and additional funding is necessary. The matter will be taken up with the government's Northern Ireland Office, and it will be discussed at the TUC General Council meeting.'

At the same time, spokesmen for the unions in Clydeside and the North East are clamouring for their plight to be treated as special cases. No amount of promises by trade union officials to back up workers' action against redundancies or demands for increased subsidies will overcome the basic problem. It is 'fiddling while Rome burns'.

Millions of people all over the world are starving, in need of basic supplies of food, raw materials and equipment of all descriptions, but this outmoded profit-seeking capitalist system would rather destroy these things than transport them to the needy.

They would rather keep suspect shipping on the high seas at the risk of seamen's lives than put the problem honestly to a public inquiry.

In the meantime the slump in the shipbuilding industry is world-wide. There have been 50 per cent cuts in the Japanese yards, and 25 per cent cuts in the low-cost South Korean yards.

**Yes, there is a need for socialist planning of this important industry.**

## Tories forced to increase state spending

BY AN ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

JOHN KAY, Professor of Industrial Policy at the London Business School, contributed an interesting piece to the *Daily Telegraph* of November 24.

His heading, 'The Unpleasant Truth about Public Spending', does not imply that he is worried about Tory cuts in spending. Quite the opposite.

What is bothering the professor is that, after all their work to hack lumps out of social services, the Tories have still not succeeded in reducing the share of public expenditure in Gross National Product.

'If the government really wishes to reduce public spending as a share of national income,' says Kay, 'it must persuade people either that they don't want health or pensions; or that they should finance them in some other way.'

He says further: 'As we go into the next election, the government may perhaps be starting to see that unless it is prepared to make more radical political decisions than it has so far been willing to contemplate, the growth of public spending will be determined more by economic realities than by political ones.'

Since the end of the miners' strike many on the Left have spent their time weeping over the apparent strength of the Thatcher regime.

### Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund

● FROM PAGE 1  
the future of the Fourth International, and exchanging historical and theoretical documents on the struggles of international Trotskyism and the working class.

The WRP has at last taken its place in solidarity struggles of the Irish workers against British imperialism. The real history of the Fourth International in connection with the Chinese and Vietnamese Trotskyists is being discovered. Joint campaigns are under way to clear the names of the victims of Stalin's frame-up Moscow Trials, the proper burial of all those executed by stalinists in Hungary, and the release of political prisoners in all countries.

The Healy clique — Sheila Torrance, Corin and Vanessa Redgrave and Alex Mitchell — did their utmost to smash the Party's printing and publishing activities. They failed.

On October 23, 1986 New Park Publications published the second edition of Peter Fryer's book 'The Hungarian Tragedy' to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution.

This marked a turning point for the Party. Peter Fryer had been expelled from the Communist Party in 1956 for his support of the Hungarian revolution. He

had joined the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the WRP) and had become editor of the Newsletter, but had been forced to leave in opposition to Healy. His statements of the time were suppressed from Party members, but have been circulated during this last year.

There opens up a real possibility of developing the Fourth International. The

need for theoretical clarity and political honesty — not softness and cover up or point scoring.

Workers internationally will not be able to rid themselves of their corrupt, bureaucratic stalinist and social democratic leaderships.

The expulsion of Healy, and all the subsequent

## Another success

**THE South-West London branch of the WRP held a 'fund raising social' at a party supporter's house in Brixton last Sunday afternoon.**

Along with a pleasant afternoon discussing with readers of Workers Press, the social provided the opportunity to eat, drink and raise £125.49 for the Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund.

WRP rejected in struggle with David North of the Workers' League (USA) and others, that internationalism means subjective loyalty, and no analysis of the affects of Healyism on the International Committee of the Fourth International. We are confident that other Trotskyists will share our belief.

The Party has also exposed the politics of Michael Banda, who was general secretary at the time of Healy's expulsion. On November 8, 1986 Banda denounced Trotsky when he spoke on the platform of 'The Leninist.'

In Britain discussions and joint campaigns are taking place with other organisations in the Trotskyist movement. These are based on the

events have made the WRP more determined to re-establish our printshop to print Marxist and Trotskyist publications for this purpose, and this means building the Fourth International.

We need this fund to launch an international Marxist journal, and a theoretical journal for the WRP. We need to train some new young printers, and carry out all the necessary electrical and maintenance work to re-establish our printshop. We must urgently ensure that WRP members make journeys to meet Trotskyists in all parts of the world, and we need money for important international campaigns. We are proud to ask you to make a donation to our Special Fund.

### WRP West of Scotland branch Public Discussion

'The Scottish Working Class and its History'  
Opened by Terry Brotherstone  
Sunday November 30th, 7pm  
Blythswood Hotel, 320 Argyle Street, (near Anderston bus station), Glasgow  
All welcome

### Scottish Asian Action Committee ANTI-FASCIST MARCH

In response to the British National Party rally  
Saturday November 29, 1pm  
Assemble Blythswood Square, Glasgow  
Stop the spread of racism and fascism in Scotland NOW

### A debate between socialists: IRELAND AND THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

S. Pirani (WRP)  
J. O'Mahony (Socialist Organiser Alliance)  
Thursday December 11, 7pm  
Woodside Halls, Glenfarg Street, near St George's Road/Maryhill Road, Glasgow

## ACCUSER of CAPITALISM

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## 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 £890.96.**

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

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**WORKERS PRESS READERS, PLEASE NOTE:** The letters reprinted from 'Socialist Organiser', which appeared in 'Workers Press' two weeks ago, referred to articles about Ireland in 'Socialist Forum' Ireland 69-85' and in 'Socialist Organiser' no. 266 (from April this year). Both these are available from 'Socialist Organiser', PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

### Advance Notice MARCH AGAINST THE PUBLIC ORDER LAWS

Now to take place **November 29, 12 noon**  
Assemble Clock Tower Place, near St Jude  
Caledonian Road, London, and march against  
Public Order Bill  
March goes to a 'Call for Action' Conference  
For further details ring 01-881 2938

## HARINGEY SCHOOL MEALS PROJECT

# Organise & fight back!



'SCHOOL MEALS — We'll Defend Them!' was the theme of a conference held last weekend in Haringey, London.

Stewards and school meals workers from London, Buckinghamshire, Sheffield, Tyneside and the north of Ireland heard about the school meals campaign in Haringey and discussed how to put school meals at the centre of the political agenda and raise the issue nation-wide.

One representative from Buckinghamshire presented rotten sandwiches and fruit which had been served by the new private contractor the day before.

Earlier a Haringey parent, a councillor and a Labour MP addressed the conference and a real welcome was given to a school meals worker and shop steward from the north of Ireland.

The representatives from Sheffield have agreed to host a further conference to draw more people to the campaign nation-wide.

The campaign is not just to defend school meals, but to promote new demands about this important service. The conference was organised by the Haringey School Meals Project.

School meals is one of the services targeted by Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley for privatisation in the Queen's speech.

This means school meals workers will be forced to tender for their own jobs against private firms seeking new markets. However this is not the first attack on school meals.

The 1980 Education Act allowed councils to axe the service if they wanted, forcing them only to provide free school meals for those children whose parents claimed Supplementary Benefit or Family Income Supplement, plus facilities for children bringing their own food.

Many councils used this opportunity to cut the service, reduce staff, and introduce cafeteria and snack food with little nutritional value.

BY CHARLIE HISLOP  
Assistant secretary  
Haringey NALGO

Some councils privatised — such as Merton, where the contract meals attracted interest from environmental health officers but not school children.

This year, Fowler's Social Security Act attacked the right to free school meals.

The government has attacked this service because of the increasing trend towards automation in the catering industry and its need to find new markets, combined with the fact that the school meals service is provided mainly by women.

School meals are seen as an area of traditional women's work, and therefore they are pitifully undervalued.

Without a school meals service providing paid employment the work would have to be done for nothing by women at home.

Because the work that school meals workers do can be seen as an extension of that done in the home, it is not considered a skill and is therefore low-paid.

The Haringey School Meals Project is jointly supported by Haringey National Union of Public Employees (Education) branch and the Haringey Women's Employment Project, which emphasises the arguments about women and paid employment.

The conference, to promote the need for a national campaign, is the latest activity of the project.

During the anti-ratecapping campaign the project produced a leaflet explaining the value of the service and what a properly funded public service could be like for workers and users.

The project has brought together children, parents, teachers, school meals workers and trade unionists to discuss the issues and promote the model of:

- Healthy eating
- Food education
- Anti-racist, anti-sexist food policies
- Properly trained and properly paid staff in kitchens, dining rooms and playgrounds
- A properly funded public service
- Contact with and accountability to users
- Equal opportunity recruitment
- Organised school meal workers to promote and defend their service.

Working with the local community and the council trade unions, the project has been able to make clear demands on Haringey's Labour council.

The council has now adopted the project's school meals charter, which incorporates its demands — although it is still considering the cost of implementing them, as the second year of ratecapping continues to bite.

Councillors are supportive of the project, and Haringey's school meals are already well ahead of many areas.

Vegetarian food is readily available, while the Community Relations Council commends the service for the efforts it is making to meet the needs of ethnic minority children, following earlier criticism.

Overall, nearly 70 per cent of Haringey's school children now use the service. However there is still room

for improvement.

Some of the kitchens need new investment, and some council officers have not supported in practice the service or the project.

Head teachers often see school meals as peripheral to education and last year some schools tried to block 'taste-ins' of the new menus organised by the project.

Leaflets promoting the service, and the threats that it faces have been seen as 'too political'.

**Yet council services, and the need to defend and improve them, are a political issue. The major threat now is privatisation.**

The School Meals Project, pulling Haringey council with it, is setting out a clear position for defending the service.

Building a service around the needs of all the community, basing it around healthy eating, and integrating it with food education by creating a quality service, means the privateers will not be able to compete.

They want a quick snack and a quick profit.

And by building the links between workers, users, parents, and unions, the project is building up the public interest and support for the service that is needed to defend it.

The campaigns to defend many public services from cuts have failed because the public did not support them.

The services were alienating, or did not cater for the whole community, or were poor quality.

The Haringey School Meals Project is setting out a model for a public service that is worth fighting for, and worth working in.

The conference, the first Labour movement response to the Queen's speech, was about organising and fighting back.

## Labour Council Locks Out NALGO Members

BY LYN BLAKELOCK, locked-out NALGO member

LEWISHAM Council Housing Advisory Centre (HAC) workers have been in dispute with the Labour-controlled Lewisham Council for five months and on strike since September 16.

Following over 20 physical attacks by members of the public on staff at the HAC, these workers requested that the council provide protective glass screens.

Only partial and inadequate protection has been offered, including the proposed installation of 'rising screens' — sheets of steel which shoot up at the touch of a button — in the reception area.

Lewisham NALGO argue that these could prove to be a danger to staff and public alike. In the interviewing cubicles, where a large part of the violence takes place, the council have offered no security measures.

The initial response of the council was to refuse to meet the HAC staff. HAC workers took industrial action. NALGO members in other council departments then took sympathetic action in support.

The Labour councillors' response was a circular letter to each employee which said: 'if you take such action in breach of your contract from November 18 you will not be paid and you should not report for work until the dispute is resolved.'

A disgraceful and extraordinary step for a Labour Council to take: a threatened Labour lock-out!

The council carried out this threat. Employees were sent home. NALGO members in all departments of the council were called out on strike. A mass meeting endorsed this action and voted for an all-out strike by 826 votes to 603.

The Lewisham Labour Party Borough Local Government Conference has subsequently censured the action of the council by a majority of more than two to one.

Local Labour Party members, and some Labour councillors, feel the dispute has been abysmally handled and see this as the worst indus-

trial dispute for Labour since the 1979 'winter of discontent' battle with the manual workers.

The HAC workers' demand for screens has proved to be the flashpoint highlighting the housing crisis in the London Borough of Lewisham.

In the words of Cllr Moran, chair of the Housing Management Committee: 'Lewisham housing is on the verge of disaster. We are in absolute crisis.'

'The council knows it, the tenants know it, we want the government to know it too.' This declared aim stands in stark contrast to the action of the council which has turned on its own workers.

Workers Press spoke to Steve Angove, NALGO shop steward, Planning Department. His view was that the majority of the Labour councillors were aligning themselves with management and were characteristic of the present mood in the Labour leadership nationally: keeping quiet; playing the management's game; keeping the lid on the unions; stopping the more militant members.

He said the HAC members were dedicated workers prevented from carrying out their duties both by the policies of the government and this management-type policy of the local council.

'At the end of the day screens would not help the public but they would protect the workers,' he said.

The key issue is the housing crisis. By their own admission councillors have no solution.

The Labour councillors must take this problem into the community and call a borough-wide conference involving trade unionists, Labour movement organisations, tenants' associations, housing associations and voluntary groups.

The HAC workers must be supported by NALGO members and the wider trade union movement in their struggle against the council's MacGregor-like tactics.

- Meet the HAC workers' demands: screens now!
- No victimization — end the Labour lock-out!

## Picket fights ethnic monitoring

OVER the past two weeks 11 job centres have been targeted for a pilot scheme for ethnic monitoring.

Three of them in London are Southall, Brixton and Westbourne Park.

Workers Press interviewed Alec Burrell of Workers Against Racism outside Brixton Job Centre where they were taking part in the campaign against the schemes.

Southall dropped out of the scheme early last week. Management say it was for technical reasons but we know there is opposition to the scheme from the workforce at the Southall Job Centre and they were also rather worried about the response they would get from the public.

The MSC justify ethnic monitoring as an anti-racist measure — they argue it is aimed at beating racism in employment. But if you look at where the MSC are the employer, for instance in the YTS, it is clear that they run it in racist fashion.

In the Birmingham and Solihull area 20 per cent of school leavers are black, but

only 1 per cent of black people get on to the mode 'A' schemes which, bad as they are, are supposed to teach skills, unlike the mode 'B' schemes where you learn how to push a broom around.

We heard that Tooting was going to take the place of Southall in the pilot scheme. So we went there to protest and talk to the CPSA members inside.

We are informed that the manager in Tooting then rang the manager at Brixton and told him we intended to picket his Job Centre today. He then rang the national HQ in Sheffield.

Late on Thursday afternoon the MSC boss of Job Centres rang the union representative at Brixton and told him they had decided not to go ahead with the scheme in Brixton.

Our information is that the pilot scheme has now been withdrawn in Southall, Brixton and Bristol. There are pickets today at Leicester and Leeds and work is being done against the introduction of such schemes in Handsworth and Wolverhampton.

Although the scheme has



Last Monday's picket at Brixton Job Centre

been withdrawn at Brixton, we cannot be sure they will not reintroduce it at a later date. So our presence here today is to give support to the Brixton workforce, who opposed the scheme, and to

talk to people using the Job Centre.

This was only a two-week pilot scheme which is a 'feeling out', particularly of the union. It is official union policy not to carry out any form

of ethnic monitoring, but unfortunately the leadership of the section of the CPSA which covers dole offices and Job Centres do not support official policy.

Last week they offered the

management a deal whereby if they dropped the scheme at Brixton, Toxteth and Handsworth, the union would drop any opposition to it going ahead elsewhere.

# THE FIGHT AGAINST PRIVATISATION

## BRITISH TELECOM:

# WORST FEARS CONFIRMED

BY BERNARD FRANKS

**THE RECENT REPORT** from British Telecom's Union Committee (BTUC) on the first two years of privatisation confirms the worst fears of BT workers and phone system users.

The report 'A Fault on the Line' shows that, while big business has benefitted, privatisation has led to heavy job losses, worse working conditions, dearer calls, poorer service and a range of new charges for the users.

### BT structure

In line with the government's concern that management should put profits and the needs of city shareholders first, a fundamental restructuring of BT has resulted. Five semi-autonomous divisions have been created.

The largest, Inland Communications, employing 80 per cent of BT staff, is itself being reorganised.

Basic to the changes is the introduction of so-called 'profit centre' working.

The report explains that a key part of the process has been the devolution of responsibility to local managers, not only for operational questions, but also for conditions of service previously negotiated nationally.

Meanwhile the salary bill for BT Board of Directors has more than doubled to £1.1 million and the salary of BT's chairman, Sir George Jefferson, rose last year from £111,399 to £172,206.

### Phone charges

In spite of the fact that pre-tax profits to 31 March 1986 were £1.810 million, a 19-per-cent increase over the

previous year's, phone charges have continued the steep rise since privatisation.

From November 3 this year, the unit fee for local calls was cut from 5p to 4.4p but the time allowed for each unit was cut from 90 seconds to 60 (from 120 seconds to 100 on the cheap rate after 6p.m. and at weekends).

The report explains that phasing out the previous subsidy system, by which long distance calls helped to pay for local calls and also ensured that a larger number of poorer homes could afford a phone, has led to a cheaper service for business users but a dearer one for the domestic customer.

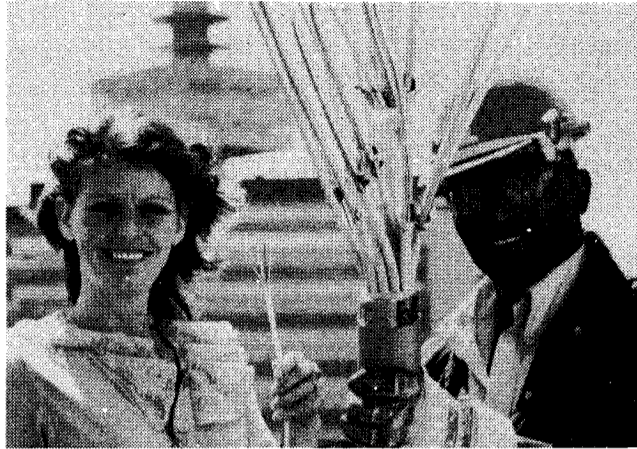
In November 1985 BT claimed that the price increases at the time only averaged 3.9 per cent.

But this, say the unions, concealed huge variations in charges.

For example, trunk calls at the standard rate rose by 18.3 per cent and all local calls rose by 6.4 per cent.

On the other hand, prices on certain well-used business routes were cut by 14 per cent.

Meanwhile the 5p call from the 5p and 10p public



**New communications technology (left) replaces cumbersome old equipment (right). But unions argue that job losses and falling safety standards have more to do with greed or profits**

phone boxes was discontinued — a rise in price of 100 per cent in this case.

The fall in charges and special rates for many business users contrasts starkly with the problem of many elderly users who have to pay the punitive standing charge despite low usage mainly to receive calls from the family and emergency purposes.

On November 3 this also rose by 50 per cent — to £13.95 a quarter.

In addition, charges are being made for the first time for maintenance of the emergency services: fire, police and ambulance, and BT is also raising installation charges by £10 (11.9 per cent) to £95.

### Jobs

The BT unions are especially concerned at the determination of management to raise profits by destroying

jobs. The total number of BT staff in 1983 was 252,649. By 1986 this had been reduced to 230,097.

The number of telephone operators had been reduced from 35,637 to 27,500 in this period and engineering and technical staff cut from 115,814 to 106,330.

With regard to the important question of the employment and training of young people, for which the Tories have the cheek to profess an interest, the number of apprenticeships has been cut from 5,400 to 526. Just 37 have been taken on this year.

The report states: 'These job reductions are not just the result of technical change. They are part of a sustained company policy to reduce staff numbers because that is what the City wants.'

During this time BT has been seeking to force up overtime working. This has risen by 41 per cent since

privatisation, the equivalent, the report says, of 15,000 jobs. The unions believe the threat to jobs is now permanent.

### Public services

Telephone operators are struggling to cope with an increased volume of complaints from the public.

These have risen by 20 per cent since privatisation in 1984.

A major problem has been that of local call boxes out of order. In some cases this has been 'solved' by removing them altogether.

### Safety

One result of the profit orientation, say the unions, is a less than sufficient concern with safety.

In the frantic rush for customers, equipment which is not safe is being attached to BT's lines. Either it is unapproved or it is approved but the relevant standards have been set too low.

This has created serious hazards for staff and users, including over a dozen cases of mains voltage being sent down telephone lines.

Three instances of staff members suffering electric shocks have been reported.

The accident situation is worse than for many years now, running at 16,000 per annum.

In the first year of privatisation, following four years with no fatal accidents, four employees were killed, the worst year for deaths in BT since 1974.

The unions say that the increase in accidents results

from a combination of low priority for safety from line managers and more pressure on them and on staff to achieve improved productivity and profits.

In particular there has been a reduction in resources devoted to safety and safety training time as well as a reduction in the staff in the Safety Division itself.

Concern is also expressed in the report at the threat to pensions as new employees are forced into inferior schemes, also at the danger to long-term prospects as research and development funding is reduced — by 11.5 per cent in the first year of privatisation alone.

One unfortunate aspect of the BT unions' report is the double-page spread complaining at the abandonment of BT's 'Buy British' policy and the threat to jobs this will mean in the supplying companies.

Total lack of socialist perspective for the industry means that the unions see nationalisation not as a step towards a society where exploitation and production for profit are eliminated, but simply as a softer option under capitalism.

This is a total illusion. The competitive rat race for profits is even more intense on an international scale.

World-wide economic exploitation can only be fought by workers uniting to end it on an international basis, in terms of the closest solidarity and joint political action, not by seeking preferential rights for home-based exploiters in the hope that a few token benefits may filter down.

# Conference plans to fight privatisation

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

**LONDON BRIDGE** (London Authorities Joint Trade Union Committee) held a one-day conference on privatisation on Friday November 21.

Attended by 75 shop stewards from ten London boroughs, the conference was called on the themes 'Keep Services Public, Win Public Support for Services'.

John Newman, GMB Islington, chaired the morning session. He remarked on the enduring nature of London Bridge which, since its inaugural meeting in Hackney on 5 March 1984, has been prominent in the rate-capping and abolition questions.

London Bridge is the coming together of joint shop stewards committee across London. It has never sought to dictate to them and has retained their support. It has never become absorbed with sectarianism.

Privatisation perhaps

would not be so dramatic as rate-capping, yet its effects would be greater in removing trade union rights, lowering pay and breaking agreements of conditions of service.

The local government Bill, now expected in January 1986, would make illegal many contract conditions based on political objections e.g., links with South Africa and equal opportunities.

Fair wages clauses and trade union clauses would probably be permitted but have none of the weight of the past.

At present self-employment and the use of self-taxing schemes like the 714 certificate are excluded on paper from council contracts yet frequently are found to exist.

Future legislation will encourage all methods to break organised labour forces.

Many councils have already been reported to the Department of the Environment for a 'poor

spending performance' by the audit commission.

They will be asked to make 'value for money' surveys, include the work specification and job descriptions in the contract documents and prepare in-house tenders in respect of their own workers.

Frances Carter of SCAT explained the future legislation in detail. Steve Bradley of Manchester City Council Trade Unions explained the work against privatisation in Manchester.

Jonathan Upton unveiled six strands of probable national level trade union thinking: membership organisation; inter-union alliances; public education; action plans on specifications etc.; alliances with the user and the need for industrial action.

Before lunch, surcharged ex-Councillor of Lambeth, Joan Walley spoke on behalf of the Lambeth fighting fund, going over the disqualification of 31 elected

councillors on 2 April 1986 for no crime other than fulfilling election pledges to preserve jobs and services. Joan is to seek a parliamentary seat in Manchester at the next election.

Discussion groups after lunch looked at specifications and contract compliance, work to win public support for public services, and Elizabeth Leicester led the group on the grant funded sector.

The final session drafted a resolution to be considered in the boroughs.

It advocates expansion and improvement of services, and cautions trade union alliances with councils in defending poor services.

Industrial action will be the policy on the prevention of the preparation of in-house tenders, and certainly the appointment of outside contractors.

The careful and extensive work of public campaigning and the reappraisal of public services, has a very short time scale.

Local authorities will be excluded from this in the new legislation and will not be permitted to

**LONDON BRIDGE** **Conference**  
Against  
**Privatisation**

**Camden Town Hall**  
(Judd St.) 9-30am - 4pm. **FRIDAY**  
**NOVEMBER 21**  
1986

for further information phone 274 7722 ext. 2010

Local Authority Services already devastated by rate capping and GLC abolition, are to be sold to Profiters. The people of London will gain nothing.

Privatisation - TODAY'S PLAGUE

**KEEP SERVICES PUBLIC**  
**WIN PUBLIC SUPPORT**  
**FOR SERVICES**

mount political campaigns.

The trade unions have a clear and independent role. They must work together, break the lies of

the Tories and win, through industrial action if necessary, the right of people to have public service based on the criteria of need.

# AQUINO SHIFTS TO THE RIGHT

**THE outcome of the abortive coup by pro-Enrile officers in the Philippines has been a significant shift to the right by the government led by President Corazon Aquino.**

In order to secure the support of Army Chief of Staff Ramos, Aquino has declared, immediately after announcing Defence Minister Enriles' resignation: 'It is clear that the extreme left has no interest in the peace that I have offered,' and gave the New Peoples Army (NPA) until November 30 to sign a ceasefire in the 17-year guerilla war.

A former general, Rafael Iletto was sworn in as the new Defence Minister.

Iletto was a US-trained soldier who organised and commanded the army Scout Rangers who defeated communist insurgency in the 1950s.

He rose to be Vice Chief of Staff following the declaration of martial law in 1972 by Marcos.

The United States immediately supported Aquino's move and praised the new Defence Minister as a 'distinguished professional soldier and diplomat.'

The US State Department has been warning Enrile not to attempt a coup and threatened to expose him in relation to property he had bought in the US during Marcos' rule.

Share values on the stock exchange began to rise following the failure of the plot and the removal of Enrile.

Enrile, the nation's jailer before throwing in his lot with Aquino, has retired to his millionaire mansion in

BY KEITH SCOTCHER

Manila and no charges are expected against him despite the fact that presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno claimed that 'eventually their target was to bump her (the President) off.'

As well as Enrile, Aquino demanded the resignation of 25 ministers including four regarded as radicals, including Labour Minister Augusto Sanchez ('Bobbit').

It appears that Aquino, herself a major landholder, was clearing the way for a military offensive against the guerilla forces who are demanding land reform.

On Tuesday November 25 NPA negotiators said they were ready to sign a ceasefire.

Previously the New Peoples Army had put the following conditions on a ceasefire:

1. Cessation of all the military operations by either side against the other.
2. Definition of what constitutes a hostile act.

## US approves measures after abortive coup



**Murdered trade union leader Rolando Olalia. Biggest-ever worker and peasant mobilisation followed his death.**

3. Disarming and disbandment of notorious CHDF units and deactivation or redispotion of notorious regular units of the AFP (Armed Forces of Philippines).

4. Disarming and disbandment of private armies and goons, religious fanatical sects, death squads and armed Marcos diehards.

5. Confinement of local police forces strictly to peacekeeping functions directed against ordinary criminal activities away from active participation in military operations against the NPA and its mass supporters.

In addition they had demanded the suspension of all arms imports by the govern-

ment during the ceasefire.

Aquino has refused these demands, but has herself demanded the disarming of the guerrilla forces.

During earlier negotiations, the army seized Rodolfo Salas, a top leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines who was acting as a consultant to negotiators.

He has been charged by the Justice Ministry with rebellion, conducting armed sorties and negotiating with foreign sources for weapons, charges sanctioned by the President.

The armed forces of the Philippines are 250,000-strong, mobilised not against any external enemy but at the internal population and under the command of General Fidel Ramos, a cousin of ex-dictator Marcos.

Ramos was Deputy Armed Forces Chief under Marcos and a former head of the police and para-military Philippine Constabulary.

Before the February coup he indicated he believed Mrs Aquino had links with subversives and said the military 'would not allow the Communists to take over'.

The week preceding the coup attempt saw the biggest mobilisation of Philippines working class and peasant forces in living memory in response to the murder of Rolando Olalia, chairman of KMU, the largest trade union organisation and also chairman of the newly formed Peoples Party.

Hundreds of factories were closed by a general strike and over 200,000 attended the funeral on Thursday November 20.

The weakness in the organisations of the left has been in holding to the belief that they could 'pull over' Aquino towards them and isolate the right-wing and fascist forces under a radical bourgeois democracy.

**The key to the struggles of the Philippine peoples against imperialist exploitation and local fascist terrorism now lies with the Philippine working class, many of them organised in the ultra-modern factories of the multi-nationals.**

The NPA, estimated at 20,000-strong, is up against the 250,000-strong armed forces.

Seven thousand people

have died in the war in the countryside since the February 'revolution' as the military pursued the NPA and atrocities were carried out against villages and peasants suspected of supporting them.

Aquino has been preparing a military onslaught to crush the guerilla forces.

The task facing the working class and its organisations has to be understood as the struggle for power, in an alliance with the peasantry, to overthrow the Aquino-Ramos-Iletto regime, to reject any illusions of reforming the government or of joining a coalition.

Two days before Rolando Olalia was murdered, the Soviet Bureaucracy issued a statement from Moscow that it had broken off all relations, and all financial and political assistance to the New Peoples Army, clearly indicating that it supported Aquino.

It must be clear that the February 'Peoples Power' overthrow of Marcos was hijacked by sections of the military, with the support of the US, in order to head off a revolution and protect imperialist investments.

President Aquino has negotiated \$800 million in loans from the IMF and World Bank.

US aid was increased from \$200 million to \$500 million and further loans from Japan increase the burden on the exploited masses.

In return for the loans the IMF and World Bank demanded 'import liberalisation' (cutting of import tax) and a 20 per cent devaluation of the peso.

Aquino has declared she will privatise 70 wholly or partly owned corporations, modelling herself on Mrs Thatcher. They were taken over by the government in February and the Aquino government is now talking about returning them to private ownership.

The 53 million Filipinos occupying the 7,000 islands that make up the Philippines face exactly the same exploitation as they did under Marcos with all the military forces, para-military gangs and fascist death squads still intact.

Only the socialist revolution can resolve these problems.

## GUILDFORD FOUR:

### Coventry campaign launched

BY DAVE PELMAN

THE DEMAND for an independent public inquiry into the case of the Guildford Four was raised at a well-attended meeting to launch a campaign in Coventry.

The guest speakers were Christine Crawley, MEP for Birmingham East, and Dr Maire O'Shea who was herself recently the victim of a state-inspired attempted frame-up in connection with the Irish liberation struggle.

The meeting was organised by an ad hoc committee of individuals from a number of different political groups, including the Irish in Britain Representation Group, Workers Revolutionary Party, Socialist Viewpoint, Troops Out, Labour Party, and Workers Power.

Dave Hookes, from the Labour Party speaking in a personal capacity, gave the main facts of the case.

He pointed out that apart from their confessions there was no other evidence to convict the Guildford Four: no forensic evidence, no identification, in spite of a number of identity parades, especially for Carole Richardson.

No links could be established between the Four and the Balcombe Street Active Service Unit which the Court of Appeal conceded must have been involved in the bombings.

The lifestyle of the four young people, Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon, Patrick Armstrong and Carole Richardson, made them highly unsuitable for an IRA unit.

Carole Richardson, the English girlfriend of Patrick Armstrong, had a cast-iron alibi and even a photograph taken of her miles away from the bombings.

Christine Crawley spoke strongly in favour of a public inquiry, and the campaign in the Labour Group in the European parliament for such an inquiry.

Dr Maire O'Shea spoke about the political significance of the judicial frame-ups not only in the Guildford case but also that of the Birmingham Six and Judith Ward.

'They are part of the war strategy of British imperialism,' she said, 'the British state's campaign of intimidation, harassment and terror and against the Irish population in Britain.'

She talked at length about the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Paul Hill was the first person arrested under the act, and she herself was one of its victims.

Over 6,000 Irish people have been held under the Act, but only about 100 of them charged.

The ability of the police to hold people for up to seven days without access to a solicitor enabled the police to obtain confessions using methods of beatings, torture and sensory deprivation, she said.

Speakers in the lively discussion which followed emphasised the importance

of continuing the campaign even though there was now a parliamentary committee looking into the matter and a number of eminent people were supporting the campaign.

Others drew the lessons for the labour movement.

If such frame-ups were possible against wholly innocent people, then one could easily imagine the methods that would be employed against the working class in the decisive battles ahead.

Indeed there was a foretaste already in the miners' strike.

One Labour Party member said he wanted to dissociate himself from the views on British justice expressed by Labour front bench spokesman Clive Soley in a recent television programme about the frame-ups.

Soley had claimed that British justice had been a shining symbol until recently, though a little tarnished over the last fifty years or so.

This was nonsense, said the speaker: the terror methods used in the Guildford case had been routine for centuries in Britain's colonies, including Ireland itself.

Another speaker pointed out that hostages had been taken and they could be used to obtain better extradition treaties between Britain and Ireland.

The meeting closed with a decision to take the cases of the Guildford Four and the others into the labour movement in the Coventry area.

## 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 Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.  
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.  
CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.  
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

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

MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.  
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.  
BILLY GRIMES: 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 Elvet 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.

# Anti-peace law challenged

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

ON the morning of November 6, a bulky middle-aged man in a sweater strolled the foyer of the Forum hotel in Costinesti, Romania, puffing a stubby cigar and wearing a strange badge.

It read: 'I am an Israeli. Palestinians please do not speak to me.'

Lawyer Amnon Zichroni was taking precautions. He had arrived in Romania with a delegation of Israeli peace campaigners who were there to meet members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

The Israeli Knesset this Summer passed a law forbidding contact between its citizens and any organisation the Israeli government deems 'terrorist'.

Most Israelis believe this law is unlikely to be enforced against members of incoming Prime Minister Shamir's Likud party, say, who maintain links with Zionist terrorists on the West Bank, or members of the National Religious Party similarly engaged.

The new law is variously referred to as the Law Against Contacts, 'anti-PLO law' or 'anti-Peace Law'.

Since the delegation which went to Romania intended to put the law to the test, and Zichroni intended to represent them if they were brought to court, he had to stay outside the talks — and donned his home-made badge, by way of a precaution, — and a comment.

Zichroni, who is by the way well-known to many Palestinians already for fighting their cases in Israeli courts, is also currently representing kidnapped atom scientist Mordechai Vanunu.

In the meeting at Costinesti were, among those on the Palestinian side, General Abdel Razzek Yahya, the PLO's 'Finance Minister', journalist Raymonda Tawil, Imad Shekour, a Hebrew University MA who is Yasser Arafat's adviser on Israeli affairs, and PLO representatives from Rome, Athens, Belgrade and

## Israeli-PLO meeting in Romania

Bucarest.

The Israeli delegation included Reserve-General Dov Yermiah, journalist and peace activist Peretz Kidron, writer Simha Flapan, Histadrut council and CP member Elieser Feiler, Yaffa Gavish of the Histadrut women's organisation Na'amat (also CP), Adam Keller of the Progressive List for Peace, Ya'akov Ish-Shalom of East for Peace, a new organisation formed by Sefardi Jews (mainly originating from Arab countries), and Latif Dori who represented a similar group called Oriental Committee for a Dialogue but is also a member of the 'Socialist-Zionist' party Mapam.

That party had been officially cool or even hostile towards the talks, and stated beforehand that Dori did not represent it. Nevertheless several Mapam members accompanied Dori, and three staffers from the party paper 'Al Hamishmar' were there.

Before the Israeli delegation left for Bucarest, Attorney-General Yossef Harish had warned participants on October 29 that they might be put on trial on their return. The Labour Party told its members they should have nothing to do with it — 'one does not break the law', a party official told the press.

There were angry scenes in the Knesset. If they went to meet PLO members let's put them in the jail-cells where we keep more than a thousand PLO and Fatah terrorists, stormed Knesset member (and former Stern gang terrorist) Geula Cohen of the far-Right Techia party.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, of Labour, warned that a special Romanian airways flight to pick up the delegation would not be allowed to land at Ben Gurion airport. His ministry also made representations to Romania for hosting the meeting.

Likud Knesset members demanded the delegation be

prevented from leaving. A Labour Knesset member called on the police to act. Finally on November 5, running a gauntlet of Meir Kahane's fascist thugs, the delegation took their plane for Romania.

While the Israeli government was making its diplomatic protests to Romania, others too were active. On November 5, rockets hit the Romanian embassy in East Beirut. The Abu Nidal group had declared it would target both Romania and the PLO if the meeting went ahead.

We might recall how, when Shimon Peres failed in strenuous lobbying to have Palestinian Issam Sartawi barred from addressing the Socialist International, it was the Abu Nidal group that assassinated Sartawi before he could make his speech. They march separately, but strike together.

The official hosts for the meeting were to be the Romanian writers' association. On November 6, the Romanian government announced that no Romanian body, official or otherwise, would host the meeting, that Romania was simply putting its territory and facilities at the delegates' disposal.

Nevertheless, the delegations were given top-flight accommodation and top level security protection. All traffic was stopped between Constanza airport and Costinesti, and armed militia stood guard while the delegations were escorted to their meeting place in police convoys.

While Peres, Shamir and Abu Nidal had failed to prevent the meeting taking place, some convoluted petty-politicising among the Israeli 'Lefts' and peace groups, as well as cold-feet on the part of certain 'peace-niks' seems to have reduced its effectiveness.

The Israeli delegation was much smaller than it might have been — in at least a couple of cases because Mapam's Dori and the Communist Party ganged-up to bar other would-be participants.

The PLO reduced its delegation correspondingly, and since they would have been facing a fairly low-level Israeli delegation, some top Palestinian leaders evidently decided not to attend. Yasser Arafat probably had more pressing business anyway.

## Defend Bolivian mineworker Eleuterio Gutierrez!



ELEUTERIO GUTIERREZ — jailed during 1985 general strike

THE international campaign to free the Trotskyist militant miner Eleuterio from rotting in jail has made an excellent start.

Eleuterio was arrested and jailed in Oruro during Bolivia's five-week general strike in September 1985, along with other union leaders.

Nearly all the others were quickly released, so as not to provoke workers into more strikes. But Eleuterio has been held for over a year without being charged or tried.

The only 'evidence' of petty theft comes from a locally known petty criminal, Victor Rufino. This 'star witness' claimed he saw two figures jump from the window of a technical office. From a distance of 25 yards in heavy rain, he says he heard the name 'Eleuterio' used.

Rufino later withdrew a second more elaborate statement, saying he had been pressurised by the police!

The case against Eleuterio is so weak they dare not bring him to court, but they will not release him on bail either.

The reasons are obvious: Eleuterio, a leading political militant miner in the rebellious mining region of Oruro, is being made an example of during the bosses' continued imposition of a State of Siege.

Miners are leading the defence of the working class against a puppet president, 79-year-old Victor Paz Estenssoro. He is at the beck and call of world imperialism, especially the IMF, which has placed the Bolivian working class on starvation rations.

Bolivian workers are fighting ruling-class terror based in New York and London. This is why this fighting campaign must be an international class fight.

In addition, Eleuterio is a conscious political Trotskyist fighter.

He has been in the leadership of several militant marches on La Paz and was active in organising miners in the private sector to resist pit closures and job losses.

He stood in Oruro as an electoral candidate for the Revolutionary Workers Party (Lora's P.O.R., a Trotskyist party that has splintered more than the British WRP) although he is no longer a member.

Whilst the international campaign is under way in

Ireland, France (where even Mitterand's Socialist Party has contacted the Bolivians), the United States and elsewhere, I can report on some of the activities in Britain.

NUM members have best supported this campaign. North East miners have done best, among the supporters being Durham Mechanics, publicity in the Durham Miner, North East Justice for Mineworkers Campaign, etc.

Along with miners from all other areas the recently formed National Broad Left in the NUM has agreed to support the campaign. Our speaker was warmly received by the Southern Justice for Mineworkers Campaign. We must extend this to all mining areas and ask miners to respond.

After leafletting the TUC and Labour Party conferences there was a picket of the Bolivian Embassy in London (and Paris) on 30 September, the anniversary of Eleuterio's incarceration.

Labour MPs Dave Nellist, Tony Banks, Geoffrey Robinson and others have given support. The matter is being raised with the Foreign Office and promises for the House of Com-

mons. Besides the NALGO International Branch an increasing number of trade union and Labour Party branches have given support and donations — which we urge all readers to rapidly increase.

British political groups in support so far include: Workers Power, Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press), RIL, Spartacist League. No political workers' group should be left out of important international work.

The Campaign has organised a 'Latin American Benefit' in London (see advert below) to raise funds for Eleuterio and his family. Whilst in jail, he cannot earn even the meagre wages of miners in Oruro; he cannot afford legal representation; his wife and children live in a country wrecked by economic crisis and without social security.

The international nature of this campaign is already clear. Like all militant miners in jail, be it Britain, South Africa or Bolivia, they need moral and material class solidarity — Eleuterio must be supported now:

- Raise this demand in every labour movement body, trade union, Labour Party branches and regions — get donations.
- Write to: The Ambassador, Bolivian Embassy, 106 Eaton Square, London SW1 and, President Victor Paz Estenssoro, Presidential Palace, La Paz, Bolivia. Bombard the Embassy with letters from your organisations demanding Eleuterio's immediate release.
- Send donations and messages of support to 'Free Eleuterio Gutierrez Campaign' — c/o Steve Masterston, 14 Dennington House, Dennington Park Road, London NW6 1AU

### Free Eleuterio Gutierrez campaign

#### LATIN AMERICAN BENEFIT

Quilombo Espontaneo

(Latin American/Jazz Music)

Thursday 4 December 8.00 p.m.

The Old White Horse Pub

cnr Brixton & Loughborough Rds, SW9

Latin American food

Price: £2

Strikers, UB40 £1.

## Palestinians unite in counter-offensive

PALESTINIAN commanders in Lebanon have joined forces to drive Syrian-backed Amal militias from strongpoints south of the Lebanese port of Sidon.

After months of siege and attacks on Palestinian refugee camps by Amal, with its Syrian-supplied tanks, last week Palestinian fighters stormed the hill village of Magdoushe, and after an overnight battle drove Amal forces out.

Palestinian commanders said later they had relieved pressure on Rashidiya refugee camp, and that Shi'ite Amal artillery had been cleared from within twelve miles of Ain Hilweh camp, the largest in Lebanon.

The military gain also represented a political achievement. Units of the mainstream Fatah were joined in the operation by those from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front (DFLP).

The fighters are making clear that defence of their people in the camps will take

precedence over differences among Palestinians.

The united Palestinian counter-offensive is also a setback to Syrian plans to dominate Lebanon.

Syrian vice-president Abdul-Halim Khaddam has been presiding over talks between the anti-Arafat Palestinian National Salvation Front, Amal leader Nabih Berri, and other Lebanese politicians.

Meanwhile in Prague, however, Abu Jihad of the PLO met with the Popular Front's leader George Habbash, whose followers are a major component in the Damascus-based 'Salvation Front'. It was the first such top-level meeting in three years.

The Democratic Front is already inclined to a rapprochement with Fatah. If the PFLP too is persuaded to ditch Syrian President Assad's anti-Arafat alliance, then Israel and the Arab regimes may yet find themselves confronting a strong, united PLO.

## Workers smash language discrimination

WHILE right-wing forces in California are campaigning for Proposition 63 — making English the 'official language' of the state — workers in the canning industry have been celebrating a victory against such discrimination.

With help from California Rural Legal Assistance, the mainly-Mexicano workers took a 'class action lawsuit' against the State of California Employment Department and three canning companies in the Stockton area.

Now their union paper 'El Canero' (The Cannery Worker) reports that to

avoid losing in court, the Employment Department has agreed to stop co-operating with companies that request English-speaking workers only.

After years of working in canneries, these workers were being denied jobs because they were 'not qualified' if their English was not good enough.

The Employment Department settled before the case came to court. They have agreed to three conditions:

1. They will no longer fill orders for 'English-only' workers from canneries anywhere in California.
2. If any canneries in San Joaquin or Stanislaus counties ask for English-only workers they will be re-



Whatever the language, the message is the same. Workers will fight for their rights!

ported to the state Fair Employment and Housing Department (FEHD).

Department that they have been denied jobs because of their language, the Department will refer them to the FEHD.

## REAGAN'S TERRORISTS:

# Plane bomber still works for CIA

**ON 6 October 1976, shortly after taking off from Seawell airport, Barbados, the pilot of Cubana Airways flight CUT-1201, Guyana — Trinidad — Barbados — Jamaica — Havana, radioed there had been an explosion on board.**

The DC-8 plunged into the sea. All 73 passengers and crew were killed.

Now the man who masterminded the bombing is back in the killing trade. He has been identified working for the CIA in Central America, organising US-backed 'contras' raiding into Nicaragua.

The name of Luis Posadas Carriles came out during questioning of Eugene Hasenfus, the American pilot captured after his plane was shot down by Nicaraguan soldiers while flying arms to the right-wing contras.

Hasenfus described the CIA adviser at Ilopanga airbase in El Salvador — 'a Cuban-American, over 50 years old, straight hair that is turning grey, medium build and white skin,' — and identified him as 'Ramon Medina.'

Shown photographs, he picked out as 'Medina' the airline bomber Posada, however.

He said this man was in charge of military flights, supplies, and personnel for the contras operating from El Salvador. Posada also liaised with the US embassy on papers for people coming and going.

Cuban-born Posada, full name Luis Clemente Posada Carriles, used to be employed by the US firm Firestone Rubber, but was also linked with politicians under the old Batista regime.

According to former associates in anti-Castro activity, Posada joined the CIA in 1960. What is known is that after leaving Cuba on February 25, 1961, he joined other counter-revolutionaries in Miami, Florida, engaging in arms smuggling and training for sabotage.

In 1964, he took charge of training with explosives at a camp near Tampa, Florida.

In 1967 Posada turned up in Venezuela. According to the Cuban newspaper 'Gran-

ma', this was part of a plan by the CIA to shift agents and emigre groups out of the US.

Posada acquired a post with the Venezuelan secret police Intelligence and Prevention Services Division, DISIP, and a soubriquet, 'Commissioner Basilio'. He was able to pursue his revenge against the Cuban revolution by persecuting revolutionaries in Venezuela.

'Granma' says he was a notorious thug and torturer.

In June 1975, Posada Carriles set up a company called Commercial and Industrial Investigations Enterprises in Caracas, the Venezuelan capital. Under its cover he assisted Cuban emigres such as Orlando Bosch to plan a series of operations around Latin America and the Caribbean.

It was in 1975 that George Bush, now US Vice President, took charge of the CIA. According to CIA mercenary Hasenfus, the man he met in El Salvador and knew as 'Medina' boasted of being 'a personal friend' of vice-President Bush.

After Cubans went to the aid of Angola against South African and CIA-backed aggression, the US government warned Cuba that it could expect some reaction.

In April 1976, there was a machine-gun attack on Cuban fishingboats, killing one fisherman. A bomb outside the Cuban embassy in Lisbon killed two people.

In July 1976, bombs were exploded at the Costa Rica-Cuba cultural centre in San Jose, and at British West Indian Airways' Barbados office, which represented Cubana airlines.

A serious explosion on a Cubana airlines' flight on July 9 was only averted because the flight was delayed. The bomb went off in a waiting baggage truck at



**OCTOBER 1976, off Barbados: Rescue workers examine body recovered from sea. There were no survivors from the bombed airliner.**

Jamaica's Norman Manley airport, just as the plane was about to be loaded.

Posada and Orlando Bosch were also involved in bombings in Colombia and later that year at the Guyanese embassy in Trinidad and Tobago.

On September 18 explosives were planted in Cuba's Panama office.

Then on October 6, 1976, came the destruction of flight CUT-1201 just off Barbados. All 73 people on board were killed. There had been 57 Cubans — among them Cuba's Olympic fencing team, 11 Guyanese, and five North Koreans.

At a rally to honour the victims on October 15, Fidel Castro charged that the CIA were responsible.

The US State Department issued an instant denial.

On October 7, Trinidad police had arrested two Cuban emigres, Hernan Ricardo Lozano and Freddy Lugo. The two had boarded

the Cuban plane there the previous day, disembarking at Barbados without their baggage and flying back to Trinidad.

Both were naturalised Venezuelan citizens. Hernan Ricardo was an employee of Commercial and Industrial Investigations Enterprise, Caracas. On October 14, Venezuelan police arrested his boss, Posada Carriles, and Orlando Bosch.

Bosch was reported to have been trained by the CIA. Imprisoned in the late 1960s for his part in a bazooka attack on a Polish ship docked in Miami, he had broken parole and gone to Latin America.

Arrested in Venezuela in 1974, Bosch admitted two bombings at the Cuban embassy, but was released and went to Chile. That was where he set up the Cuban emigre terror group CORATU.

The Venezuelan police now uncovered links between the

airline bombers and the murder in Washington on September 21, 1976, of former Chilean Defence Minister Orlando Letelier, presumed ordered by the Chilean DINA secret police.

Barbados prime minister Tom Adams refused to extradite the two Cubans held in Trinidad, arguing that the plane had crashed outside Barbados' three-mile limits.

Trinidad and Tobago deported them to Venezuela. On November 2, Ricardo Lozano and Freddy Lugo were charged with murder, together with Bosch and Posada.

On the night of August 22, 1985, Luis Posada Carriles escaped from his 'maximum security cell' in a Venezuelan prison, walking out the main gate.

The Caracas daily 'El Mundo' reported the same month: 'Wearing a military uniform and with a new face, Posada Carriles is now in a Central American zone he

calls Post 10, at the head of a heavily armed group.'

Now Hasenfus' confession has confirmed that 'Ramon Medina' is Posada Carriles, the 'heavily armed group' are contras fighting Nicaragua, 'Post 10' is Ilopanga military airbase, El Salvador.

Noting that Reagan, George Bush and other top US leaders have praised Hasenfus and his crew as 'heroes in the struggle for freedom and democracy', Cuban journalist Juan Marrero asked: 'Will they also dare lavish the same praise on their criminal associate Posada Carriles?'

We could ask the same of well-known crusader against 'terrorism' Margaret Thatcher, who said not long ago that the contras were 'batting for freedom'. But why ask, when Tory student leaders boast of their trips to see their contra 'heroes'?

Like the CIA man who murdered 73 people.

## Barclays pulls out of South Africa

**LAST week Barclays Bank announced the sale of its shares in Barclays National Bank of South Africa.**

The Bank's chairman Sir Timothy Bevan described the move as purely commercial. But the sale by Barclay's, Britain's largest investor in South Africa, at a loss of some £48 million clearly has far-reaching implications for the struggle against apartheid.

BY BOB MYERS

The move was hailed by Anti Apartheid leader Mike Terry. 'This is an important political victory in the international campaign for sanctions.'

Two Tory MPs described it as 'an extraordinarily stupid decision' and 'an act of appalling moral and commercial cowardice.'

In fact the move is not as straightforward as these spokesmen claim.

Barclay's Bank, with

25,000 employees in South Africa, has been a target of anti-apartheid campaigners since the 1960s. Local authorities, colleges and individuals, particularly students, have closed their accounts because of the Bank's consistent support for apartheid.

In the US — where the bank is seeking to increase its market — the disinvestment lobby is growing, with

the recent pullout of General Motors, IBM, Honeywell and Kodak from South Africa.

These pressures certainly influenced the bank's decision. More important, though, was the collapse of the South African economy both as the result of the world recession and the resistance of the masses to apartheid.

The bank's profits from South Africa peaked in 1983 at £66m (13 per cent of its total profits) and fell to £10m (2.5 per cent) in the first half of this year.

Barclays had long ignored world protest over their financing of the racist regime and only began to change their tune in the 1970s with the growth of mass opposition to apartheid and slave labour inside South Africa.

The bank then began to reduce its stake in the subsidiary and relinquished majority holding in 1984 as the volcano exploded in the townships.

Last year Sir Timothy Bevan announced that the Bank had had meetings with the African National Congress (ANC) and that he now felt apartheid was 'repugnant, wrong, un-Christain and un-workable'.

This year he said the Bank would lend no more money to South Africa unless Nelson Mandela was freed.

Head of Barclays South Africa, Chris Ball, was excluded two weeks ago from Botha's meeting with top businessmen.

These views are shared by Harry Oppenheimer who has bought Barclay's holdings.

Oppenheimer makes no secret of his opinions and runs a paper 'The Weekly Mail' to campaign for them — apartheid will result in revolution and communism so find black leaders who will maintain capitalism. It has been estimated that through his Anglo American mining company and subsidiaries Oppenheimer controls 54 per cent of the stocks quoted on the South African stock exchange.

He aims to use control of Barclays to continue his search for a transition to majority-rule capitalism.

The sudden exodus of Barclays is certainly the outcome of the struggles against apartheid, in South Africa and abroad. If that opposition did not exist Barclays would still be reap-

ing its share of slave labour profits.

But the bank's ability to manoeuvre and deal with Oppenheimer and the ANC to maintain the stranglehold of capitalism in Africa as a whole is also a testimony to the weaknesses of that opposition.

The response of the General Motors workers in Port Elizabeth, demanding a say in the control of the company, made clear the need for a socialist programme in South Africa alongside the disinvestment and boycott campaign.

In Britain the decisive question is for the working class and the unions to intervene into this manoeuvring to halt all trade with South Africa and to demand its leaders fight for the nationalisation of the banks, and the return of the wealth plundered from the masses of South Africa and the oppressed nations.

# THE MOSCOW TRIALS

## We challenge British Stalinism

BY TOM KEMP

FIFTY YEARS AFTER the first Moscow frame-up trial, British Stalinists have been obliged to admit that the accused Old Bolsheviks were innocent of the charges and should be rehabilitated.

At the time, the then leaders of the British Communist Party (CPGB) defended the trials and contributed their share of abuse and slander against the victims. Inside the Communist Party then, and for decades afterwards, no criticism of the trials was permitted and many were expelled for raising the question.

The hair-raising jurisprudence of trials in which the evidence against the accused came almost entirely from their own confessions — with no cross-examination of witnesses by a defence lawyer — and the grotesque charges which the accused made against themselves were accepted without question. The fellow-travelling KC, D.N. Pritt, was wheeled in to give the trials some semblance of legality. To this day, many aspects of the trials remain obscure. They cannot be fully explained until the archives of the GPU (Soviet secret police, ancestor of the KGB) are open for inspection, assuming they have not been destroyed.

What is clear is that the confessions were extracted by force and blackmail and that the accused acted out in court a carefully prepared and rehearsed scenario. Only to a limited extent was it possible for two or three of the accused to indicate the farcical nature of the charges.

The trials were only the more visible part of the mass purges which swept the Soviet Union in the 1930s. To safeguard his personal position as the supreme arbiter of the bureaucracy Stalin was forced to crush all real or suspected opposition to his rule. His cruellest blows were struck against the leaders of the October Revolution and hundreds of thousands of loyal communists who were sent to labour camps in Siberia or the Far North without any trial at all or shot in one of the sinister prisons of the GPU.

The motives for the purges lay in Stalin's need to consolidate his position at home. He also wanted to offer guarantees of good behaviour to the world bourgeoisie.

The purges coincided with Moscow's sharp turn to the right under the threat of war from Nazi Germany and the rise of fascism. Entry into the League of Nations was followed, in May 1935, by the Pact with imperialist France. In August of that year, at the Seventh (and last) Congress of the Communist International, the tactic of the Popular Front was finally adopted. In a number of countries coalitions were formed not only with the erstwhile 'social fascists' (the Socialist and Social-Democratic parties) but also with sections of the so-called 'peace-loving' and 'anti-fascist' bourgeoisie.

Thus at the very time that the Old Bolsheviks were going to their deaths the closest relations were established between the French Stalinist leaders Maurice Thorez and Jacques Duclos and Prime Minister Leon Blum. Thorez had become a fervent advocate of an alliance with the corrupt and discredited Radical Party.

The Communist Party of Great Britain stands by the Popular Front today while wishing to separate itself from the Moscow Trials. History shows that the two were inseparably connected. By purging revolutionaries at home and pursuing them in other parts of the world Stalin offered the world bourgeoisie a guarantee of his good intentions. Many organs of the bourgeois press accepted the validity of the trials and applauded the verdicts.

Meanwhile, in Spain the republican government of Negrin allowed the killer squads of the GPU to operate with impunity in hunting down, torturing and killing left opponents of the Popular Front policy. At the start of the civil war Stalin had told Largo Caballero, the socialist leader, to ensure that no measures were taken against private property as this would frighten other bourgeois governments.

The principal accused in the Moscow Trials were not present in court: they were Leon Trotsky and his son Sedov. For them Stalin and the GPU made other arrangements. Sedov died in mysterious circumstances in a Paris hospital. After elaborate preparations, requiring a specially trained team, Trotsky was struck down by a GPU assassin in August 1940.

It is not enough to condemn the Moscow Trials. They were part of a whole counter-revolutionary policy carried out by the parasitic bureaucracy to safeguard its rule. It is not possible to condemn one part of this policy without repudiating the whole of it. In fact, it has been tacitly admitted in the Soviet Union for over 30 years that the trials were a frame-up and that the millions sent to labour camps had committed no crimes. The policy of the bureaucracy is to say as little about this episode as possible. Its own past, and thus its present-day social basis, would be called into question.

We challenge every member of the Communist Party: are you prepared to join with the campaign launched by the Workers Revolutionary Party for the full political rehabilitation of all the victims of the Moscow Trials?

## Letter to the editor of '7 Days'

This letter was submitted to *Seven Days*, weekly paper of the Communist Party of Great Britain. It was written in response to the admission in an earlier issue that the Moscow Trials were a frame-up. The editor refused publication on the grounds of length, insisting that the letter be cut by two thirds, a ludicrous evasion given the historical importance of the issues which it raised.

Dear Editor,

SO the Moscow Trials were a frame-up (Francis King in *Seven Days* August 23). Do the leaders of the Communist Party accept this discovery?

If so, what do they propose to do about it? Will they demand, as men and women of honour, that those falsely accused and executed (and in Trotsky's case assassinated) be restored in every respect to their places in the history of the October Revolution and the establishment of the first workers' state?

Will they demand that the Soviet authorities publish the archives of the Soviet secret police which organised Trotsky's assassination in 1940? If not, why not? This is the minimum they must do.

But what about the political implications of the recognition that the Moscow Trials were a frame-up? The Communist Parties of the world recruited and trained millions of workers and youth on the basis of the 'building of socialism' in the USSR.

This 'socialism' had been built under the leadership of Stalin, the organiser and inspirer of the frame-up, against the work of agents of the class enemy, tried in Moscow, 1936-1938, and duly executed.

The politics of Trotsky and his followers were slandered as ultra-left demagogues covering an actual organised conspiracy with Nazism. Trotsky and thousands of others, not only Trotskyists but also revolutionaries like Andres Nin, were butchered by Stalinist death-squads.

Yet Trotsky alone had warned many times of the coming trials (see his published writings from 1931 to 1936) and had explained the social basis which made them necessary: the rise of a bureaucratic caste which usurped the political conquests of the Soviet working

class.

This caste imposed authoritarian repression on all opposition at home, totally suppressed democracy within the Communist Party, and substituted the theory and practice of 'socialism in a single country' for the strategy of world proletarian revolution as the method of defending the conquests of the October Revolution.

On behalf of the Workers' Revolutionary Party, I challenge *Seven Days* to publish Trotsky's brief summary of these questions, in his speech 'In Closed Court', December 11, 1936 (see his *Writings*, 1935-36, pp.471-482).

This would effectively dispose of Francis King's woefully undialectical assertion that the trials arose out of only internal pressures and had nothing to do with the Popular Front policies of the Communist Parties all over the world at that time.

I can only assume that Francis King wants to have his cake and eat it, i.e., he wants now to dissociate the Communist Party from the horrific crimes of Stalin, but he wants to say that there is no such thing as Stalinism in politics here in Britain, and that furthermore it is better not to raise questions about the present politics of the British Communist Party by questioning their ancestor, the Popular Front.

As Trotsky showed many times, the trials were many-sided and contradictory. Imposing 'socialism in a single country' meant brutal repression at home, but it also meant accommodation to the bourgeoisie abroad:

*Stalin tried with all his might — remember his interview with Laval — to prove that the Comintern was no longer a revolutionary instrument. But his word was not always so easily believed. To strengthen his credit with the French bourgeoisie he thought it useful to take bloody measures against the Left Opposition.*

Trotsky goes on to say that Stalin also needs the attack to strengthen his authority in the workers' movement against the ideas of the Left Opposition, and concludes:

*This contradictory double game is a sign of the internal inconsistency of the entire politics of Stalinism as a national ruling caste, on the one hand, and as an international working class organisation (the Comintern), on the other.' (Writings, 1935-36).*

As for the Socialist International, whom King says must have been put off by the nastiness of the whole thing, it must be said that Leon Blum and the leaders of the Socialist International recognised that more than that was at stake. After the Secretary, Friedrich Adler, had issued a formal condemnation of the Trials, Leon Blum and the Executive refused any help whatsoever to Trotsky's attempt to organise a counter-trial to expose the frame-up.

As Deutscher rightly says: 'As head of the Popular Front government, he (Blum) depended on Stalinist support. Blum was embarrassed even by the International's platonic declaration against the purge. . . . (The *Prophet Outcast*, p.367).

Francis King's reference to the 1931 Stalinist lies implicating the Social-Democrats themselves is unfortunate, to say the least. At that time, of course, these gentlemen were denounced by the Stalinists as 'social-fascists', and Trotskyists were called right-wingers for criticising this sectarian outrage and fighting for the policy of the United Front.

Trotsky many times explained the pressure of internal opposition in the Soviet Union as cause of the frame-up trials and the mass repression, but he saw clearly the connection with Soviet foreign policy and the line of the Comintern. Thus: 'The charges in the present Moscow Trial are framed with the one object of exploiting international relations in order to suppress internal enemies.' (first published in *We Accuse Stalin: five documents on the Moscow Trials* April 4, 1937).

Yours,  
C. Slaughter, Central Committee, Workers Revolutionary Party

## CAMP

HALF a century after the infamous Russian Revolution to confess demand their names be cleared House of Commons next Wednesday the wave of Stalinist lies and the Communist Party in 1956 The invitation to the meet

## Clear the name

IT is now 50 years since the monstrous campaign in which Soviet Communists were imprisoned, murdered and slandered.

The Soviet government and Party of the Soviet Union admitted that these actions were the crudest frame-ups, and have 'retreated' of the men and women who were purged. But the cases of the figures, who were defendants of the Moscow Trials of 1936-1938, have not been reviewed. Some of the most important the October Revolution remain accused of being agents of fascism of forced 'confessions'.

## DE

## The case of

G.E. Zinoviev, L.B. Kamenev, G.E. Evdokimov, I.N. Smirnov, I.P. Bakaev, V.A. Ter-Vaganian, S.V. Mrachkovsky, E.A. Dreitzer, E.S. Goltsman, I.I. Reingold, R.V. Pikel, V.P. Olberg, K.B. Berman-Iurin, Fritz David (I.I. Krugliantsky), M.E. Lurie, N. Lurie.

All shot immediately.



Leon Trotsky (1879-1940)

A REVOLUTIONARY from 1897. Arrested 1898 and exiled, he escaped in 1902. Worked in London with Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov to publish *Iskra*. Opposed Lenin at the 1903 Second Congress of the Party. Returned to Russia and was Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet in 1905. Imprisoned and exiled 1906, he again escaped and went to Vienna. Attended the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915.

Deported from France to Spain 1916, then went to New York. Returned to Russia May, 1917. Joined the Bolshevik Party in July and was elected to its Central Committee. Member of Politburo, 1917-27. Arrested by Kerensky in July.

Chairman of Petrograd Soviet and organiser of the seizure of power in October. Commissar for Foreign Affairs until February 1918, then Commissar for Military Affairs. Organiser of the Red Army. Exiled to Alma-Ata, January 1928, and to Turkey, February, 1929. Deprived of Soviet citizenship, 1932.

Allowed into France, 1933. Norway, 1935, and Mexico, 1937. Indicted and declared guilty as 'agent of Hitler' in all three of the Trials. Founded Fourth International, 1938. Assassinated by Stalin's agent, August, 1940.

## Communist Party statement evades issues

AS reported in the Communist Party weekly *Seven Days*, the CP Executive Committee on November 8 adopted the following statement:

IN 1936 a number of leading Soviet communists, including old Bolsheviks like Zinoviev and Kamenev, were placed on trial in Moscow and subsequently executed. Other trials and executions, including that of Bukharin in 1938, followed. In 1978, on the 40th anniversary of Bukharin's trial, the

EC of the Communist Party of Great Britain supported a call for his rehabilitation.

We consider that in the light of the revelations about repressions under Stalin the verdicts of these trials cannot be justified, and that, in justice to the memory of those falsely accused, and in the interests of socialism, the historical record should be set straight. In the 50th anniversary year of the 1936 trial we urge the rehabilitation of all those unjustly tried and condemned.



# TRIALS 1936-1938

## CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

A Moscow Trials, in which Stalin forced leading figures in the Party to be agents of fascism, a new campaign is beginning to be launched. The sponsors of the meeting to launch the campaign, at the meeting on December 3, include some of those who fought against Stalin in 1936-1937, as well as others who were expelled from the Party for continuing that fight. The letter reads as follows:

### Letter of the leaders of the Russian Revolution

At the start of the trials, thousands of Party members were tortured, and many Communist Party members were based on the grounds that some of the victims of the trials were prominent Party leaders who had not been Party leaders of this day or on the basis

As the recent correspondence in 'The Guardian' indicated, this is still very much a live issue for the entire world labour movement. We feel that this would be an opportune moment to raise it once again. We therefore propose launching a campaign to press the Soviet leaders to open the records of the frame-ups, and to formally clear the names of all these people, who devoted their lives to the cause of the international working class.

The letter is signed by Ken Coates, Charlie Van Gelderen, Reg Groves, Bill Hunter, Rae Hunter, Tom Kemp, Brian Pearce, Cliff Slaughter and Cyril Smith, who is acting as secretary.



Publication produced by the Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky in New York

# Defendants in the trials

**the Trotskyite-Zinovievite centre — August 19-24, 1936**

**Grigori Evseyevich Zinoviev (1883-1936)**  
 PARTY member from 1901 and Bolshevik from 1903. Arrested 1908. Published *Against the Stream* with Lenin in 1914. Returned to Russia with Lenin in April, 1917. Editor of *Pravda*. In charge of the Committee for the Revolutionary Defence of Petrograd in January, 1918. Chairman of the First Congress of the Comintern, 1919, and was its leader until 1926.



**Ivan Borisovich Kamenev (1883-1936)**  
 PARTY member, 1901. Arrested 1903. Bolshevik from 1904. With Stalin on the committee of the Caucasian Union. Re-arrested 1908. Joint editor, with Lenin and Zinoviev, of *Proletary* from 1909. Took charge of *Pravda* in 1914. Arrested and sent to Siberia. Returned to Petrograd with Stalin in March, 1917. Edited *Pravda* during 1917. Imprisoned by Kerensky in July. Chairman of the Second Congress of Soviets in October. Sent to Britain in January, 1918, then deported. Captured by White forces and held until July, 1918. Chairman of the Moscow Soviet, 1919-26.

**Ivan Nikitich Smirnov (1880-1936)**  
 JOINED Marxist movement in 1898. Escaped from prison in 1899. Re-arrested 1903 and imprisoned until 1905, when he resumed work as organiser of the 1905 Revolution. Again arrested and escaped in 1910. Conscripted into the Tsarist Army in 1916, started the first

Bolshevik military organisation. Leader of the Committee of Soldiers Deputies in 1917. Fought against Kolchak in the Fifth Army, including work behind enemy lines. Commissar for Posts and Telegraphs.

**Ivan Bakaev (1893-1936)**  
 BOLSHEVIK from 1905. Organiser of the uprising in Kamshyin, 1906. Head of the Petrograd Cheka, 1919-20. Member of Central Committee and Control Commission until 1934.

**Vagarshak Ter-Vaganian (1893-1936)**  
 LEADER of the Bolshevik Party in Armenia. First editor of *Under the Banner of Marxism*.

**Sergei Mrachkovsky (1883-1936)**  
 SON of an old revolutionary worker. Bolshevik since 1905. Arrested many times. Organiser of the uprising in the Ural region in 1918. Commander of the Ural military district until 1924, when he was removed by Stalin for supporting the Opposition.

**Yefim Dreitzer (1894-1936)**  
 HERO of the Civil War. Twice decorated with the Order of the Red Flag. Exiled as Trotskyist 1929, he nearly died as a result of a hunger strike against the treatment of prisoners.

**Isak Reingold (1897-1936)**  
 FORMER Assistant Commissar for Finance.

**Richard Pikel (1896-1936)**  
 Former secretary to Zinoviev.

**Grigori Evdokimov (1884-1936)**  
 BOLSHEVIK from 1903. Arrested, 1908 and again in 1913. Escaped from exile 1916 and re-arrested. Leading Bolshevik agitator and organiser in Petrograd in 1917. Head of the political department of the Seventh Army. Speaker at Lenin's funeral. Central Committee member until 1934.



**Leon Sedov (1906-1938)**  
 SON of Leon Trotsky. Active in Communist youth movement in Russia. Closest collaborator with Trotsky. Edited *Bulletin of the Left Opposition*, 1931-33 in Berlin. Went to France March 1933. Probably murdered by Stalinist agent in Paris. Indicted and declared guilty in the Trials as 'fascist agent'.

## Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites

**March 2-13, 1938**

**N.I. Bukharin, A.I. Rykov, G.G. Lagoda, N.N. Krestinsky, K.G. Rakovsky, A.P. Rosengolts, V.I. Ivanov, M.A. Chernov, G.F. Grin'ko, I.A. Zelensky, S.A. Bessonov, A. Ikramov, F. Khodzhaev, V.F. Sharangovich, P.T. Zubarev, P.P. Bulanov, L.G. Levin, D.D. Pletnev, I.N. Kazakov, V.A. Maksimov-Dikovskiy, P.P. Kriuchkov.**

All sentenced to death, except Pletnev (25 years), Rakovsky (25 years) and Bessonov (15 years).

**Nikolai Bukharin (1884-1938)**  
 MEMBER of the Party since 1906. Arrested in Russia, 1909, 1910. Met Lenin in Germany in 1912, and began to contribute to *Pravda*. Arrested in Austria in 1914, and in Sweden in 1916. Party Central Committee member, 1917-1934. Led the 1917 insurrection in Moscow. Editor of *Pravda*, 1918-1931. Leader in the Comintern from its incep-

**The case of the anti-Soviet Trotskyite centre January 23-30, 1937**

**E.L. Piatakov, K.S. Radek, G.Ia. Sokolnikov, L.P. Serebriakov, N.I. Muralov, Ia.A. Livshits, Ian Drobnis, M.S. Boguslavsky, I.A. Kniasev, S.A. Rataichak, B.O. Norkin, A.A. Shestov, M.S. Stroilov, I.D. Turok, I.I. Hrasche, G.E. Pushin, V.V. Arnold.**

All sentenced to death, except Arnold (ten years) and Stroilov (eight years). However, some of the sentences were not carried out.

**Karl Radek (1885-1939)**  
 ACTIVE in the workers' movement since 1889. Joined Party 1901. Worked illegally in the Polish and Lithuanian Parties, 1904-1908. Worked in Germany, 1908-1917. Attended Zimmerwald Conference, 1915, and Kienthal Conference, 1916. Helped organise first Congress of the German CP, 1919. Arrested in Germany and began negotiations with the German government on behalf of the Soviets while in prison. Secretary of the Comintern, 1920-1924.

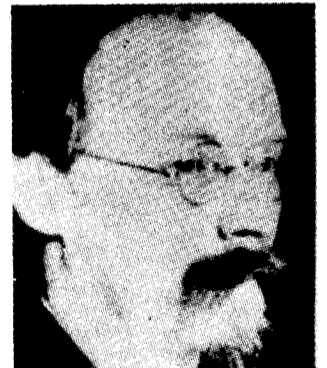
**Grigori Sokolnikov (1888-1939)**  
 JOINED Party in 1905. Imprisoned 1907-1909. Escaped

from Siberia. Served on *Pravda* Editorial Board, 1917. Party Central Committee 1917-1930. Directed nationalisation of the banks. Army leader in the Civil War. Commissar for Finance, 1922-1926. Died in prison.

**Leonid Serebriakov (1890-1937)**  
 METALWORKER. Party member since 1905. Arrested 1912 and escaped from exile 1914. Arrested after organising Moscow May Day march in 1915. Central Committee member 1919-20. His wife Galina was imprisoned in 1936 and released and 'rehabilitated' in 1956.

**Nikolai Muralov (1886-1938)**  
 JOINED Party 1905. Arrested and imprisoned 1907. Red Army Commander in Civil War. Deputy Commissar for Agriculture, 1928-37.

**Yakov Drobnis (1890-1937)**  
 JOINED Party as a worker 1906. Imprisoned 1908-14. Helped found Ukrainian CP in 1918. Fought as a partisan in the Ukraine. Shot by Whites, but survived.



**Georgi Piatakov (1890-1937)**  
 EXPELLED from school for revolutionary activity when he was 14. In 1910, he broke with anarchism and joined the Bolsheviks. Arrested and escaped many times. Leader of the Party in Kiev. Joined Lenin in Switzerland. Arrested in Sweden with Bukharin in 1916. Chaired Kiev Party committee in 1917. Appointed by Lenin to head the State Bank. Fought in the Civil War, then became a leading figure in economic planning. Played a major role in the implementation of the first two Five Year Plans. Re-elected to the Central Committee in 1934.

tion in 1919. Edited *Iszvestia*, 1934-37.



**Alexei Rykov (1881-1938)**  
 A revolutionary from 1900. Arrested 1901. Met Lenin in Geneva, 1902. Bolshevik Cen-

tral Committee member, 1905-1934. Imprisoned many times. Twice escaped from exile and re-arrested 1907. Presidium of the Moscow Soviet, 1917. Commissar of Internal Affairs. Leader in the Civil War. Politburo member 1919-1929.

**Nikolai Krestinsky (1883-1938)**

ACTIVE revolutionary from 1901, and Bolshevik from 1905. Arrested 1904 and again 1905 and 1906. Deported to the Urals 1914, he was a leader there until 1921. Commissar for Finance, 1918-1922. Deputy Commissar for Finance, 1930-1937. Withdrew his 'confession' during the 1938 Trial.

**Christian Rakovsky (1873-1941)**

A Social-democrat in Bulgaria from 1889. In 1890-1903 was an active revolutionary in Switzerland, Germany, France, Rumania and Russia. Contributed to *Iskra*. Arrested in Russia, 1907. Leader in the Civil War in the Ukraine. Leader of the Soviet peace delegation in the Ukraine, 1918. Soviet ambassador in Britain and France. Exiled to Siberia, 1928, where he became very ill. In 1934 he 'capitulated' to Stalin. Sent to Japan, ostensibly on a Red Cross mission, he was framed and arrested for 'espionage'.

● In 1963, Krestinsky, Ivanov, Chernov, Grin'ko, Ikramov and Khodzhaev were 'fully rehabilitated, and returned to honourable status'.

# WHERE IS BANDA GOING?



Mike Banda leaves the recent meeting of 'The Leninist', where he was the main speaker, followed by his brother Tony

**MR MICHAEL BANDA** was once general secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party. Since his boyhood he had been a Trotskyist. Today he is a renegade from Trotskyism and a public and vicious opponent of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Last summer he took out of the Party about a dozen other members, some of them leading members, including his brother Tony, another member since his boyhood.

Banda has now denounced Trotskyism as an 'excrescence', in his usual demagogic style. He has concluded that Trotsky and the Left Opposition, who conducted the heroic defence of Bolshevism against Stalinism, were nothing but a middle-class group, putting up a sentimental protest against Stalin's ruthless but 'objectively necessary' development of industry and building up of the Russian working class.

BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

lenism and opposed to it — was a fatally mistaken enterprise. It was misconceived and rotten from the start, an abortion.

Comrades David Bruce and Bill Hunter pointed out forcefully that Banda's method would lead him to abandon Marxism and that it was not just a debate about this or that historical question. They were absolutely right.

At that time, only six months ago, Banda began his case by repeating his well-known criticism of the speech in court in 1941 by the US Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon.

Banda made great play of Cannon's alleged failure to state clearly that he was for the defeat of his own US ruling class in the war against Hitler's Germany, instead using the court as a propaganda platform for socialism in general.

(Banda had said the same thing many years before in his obituary pamphlet on Cannon, 'James P. Cannon — A Critical Assessment', reprinted from Workers Press, October 1974. At that time, however, he said that despite his criticism, 'James P. Cannon... has written an indispensable page in the history of world Trotskyism,' and added much praise as well as criticism in addition.)

Let us point to just one indication of how far Banda has travelled. In May he was criticising Cannon for not having a defeatist attitude to the Soviet Union's allies against Hitler's Germany.

He knows that such a revolutionary defeatist atti-

tude was part of a world socialist revolutionary perspective held only by Trotskyism, the Fourth International.

The Communist Parties (Stalinism) in every capitalist 'democracy' at war against Germany followed Stalin's line that the USSR was engaged in a 'Great patriotic war' against Nazi Germany.

From this they deduced that all opposition to the 'democratic' capitalist governments of Britain and the US should be dropped, in the interests of 100-per-cent unity against the Fascist enemy.

Trotskyists were regarded as Hitler's agents and treated as such. Many were liquidated by Stalinists in the Nazi-occupied countries (France, Belgium, Greece, etc.) or beaten up or slandered in Britain and the US.

Banda has now declared, in a speech supposedly commemorating the Russian Revolution, that the defence of the October Revolution and the Soviet Union means opposing the Trotskyist programme of political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy.

He sees Gorbachov as a new kind of progressive leader in conflict with the old guard bureaucracy. (He has at least one ally in this appraisal — G. Healy!)

Now Banda should be asked: what about the 1939-1945 war? Was it not after all a war to defend the workers' state in which the bureaucracy played a progressive role, according to you Banda?

And wasn't it correct for the Stalinists to ruthlessly put down Trotskyists and any workers who insisted on prosecuting the class struggle or opposing Stalinism during the war, since that would weaken 'unity' against Nazism? That surely is the logic of Banda's present position.

Yet it stands in complete contradiction to his hysterical attack on Cannon only six months earlier! So much for logical consistency and objectivity.

What the working class requires above all is an objective and factual basis for its strategy and for understanding the problems of leadership in the struggle for power.

Indeed, Banda gives us a typical middle-class rushing from one impression to the next, a fascination with the latest book he finds or the latest 'revelation.' In the space of a few weeks his criteria for denouncing or praising a leader or a historic movement is turned on its head.

Make no mistake Banda is travelling fast, and to the right. This stance of a supposed 'Leninism' versus Trotsky is only a very temporary phase. He is just 'passing through' en route to an open denunciation of Bolshevism and all its work.

This is one of the results of the years of Healy's domination of the WRP and the International Committee — the total disorientation of men and women who came forward to build alternative revolutionary leadership but were diverted from the working class and the real heritage of Bolshevism, Trotskyism.

The WRP has rejected Banda and his whole right-wing course, and so will any forces of the working class who chance to come into contact with him.

## DAVID FRY

### IRISH TROTSKYIST

THIS obituary was written by one of David's closest political collaborators. The editorial board of Workers Press and the Workers Revolutionary Party sends its sincerest condolences to David's parents, friends and comrades at their sad loss.

ON NOVEMBER 6 David Fry died in Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, after suffering for many years from multiple sclerosis.

He was buried in the Deans Grange cemetery on November 10.

He will always be remembered for the great and courageous role which he played in the struggle to build the Trotskyist movement in Ireland.

David joined the Trotskyist movement as a student in Trinity College Dublin where he studied economics. With his long hair, David was a typical student of the time.

From the outset he was noted for his critical opposition to the bourgeois economics he was taught at Trinity. He would ask his teachers fundamental questions which invariably received weak answers. David was soon ignored by the Trinity lecturers.

I remember David at the time studying late into the night at Berkeley Library, seeking out the weaknesses of those with whom he was in discussion.

He systematically sought out the views of the various political groups and soon came to reject the ideas of the liberal, nationalist and reformist groups as well as the Stalinists and the pseudo-Trotskyist groups such as Peoples Democracy.

David came to accept Trotskyism not through some religious-type conversion but as the result of his own determined scientific study.

He came to the conclusion that the International Committee of the Fourth International was the most principled Trotskyist group but only came into contact with them after a visit he made to London.

To his credit, Gerry Healy took a personal interest in David and helped him develop theoretically.

David passed his first year exams with the highest grades.

He became secretary of the Dublin branch of the League for a Workers' Van-

guard and began the struggle to win the best students to Trotskyism.

He soon ran into opposition from some of the older Trotskyists who resented the struggle to turn to the working class.

It was now that David began a dogged fight to unite the movement in Ireland. As a result David was instrumental in forming the Workers League as a Trotskyist organisation covering the whole of Ireland.

He also gave his closest attention to the building of a youth movement in Ireland and took a leading part in the establishment of the Irish Young Socialists.

Branches were established throughout the country, the Dublin branch at one stage having some 100 members.

Despite devoting nearly all his time to political work David was awarded a general degree on the basis of his outstanding work during his first two years at Trinity.

He became a full-time Party organiser and gave all his resources — intellectual, physical and financial — to building the Party.

He sold his massive collection of Billie Holliday records to raise funds for the movement, a considerable sacrifice as he was a dedicated jazz fan and loved Holliday's music.

Few at the time realised the taxing nature of the work David was undertaking. He travelled hundreds of miles week after week to establish a branch of the youth movement and later a branch of the Workers League in Waterford.

He received death threats for organising Marxist classes amongst supporters of the Provisionals.

David spoke quietly and without excessive rhetoric. He was thoughtful and in debate always attempted to get to the essence of things.

One day, for no apparent reason, David drove his car into a wall and later he was stopped from hitting petrol pumps on driving into a garage for fuel.

These were the first signs of his multiple sclerosis. Once the disease was diagnosed its development was rapid. He was forced to step down from political leadership.

From around 1974 he had to live at home, getting some regular work with the 'Irish Times'.

He wrote a series of articles on multiple sclerosis for that paper. He was to become very knowledgeable about the disease.

David became incapable of walking and was soon dependent on his aged parents.

Members of the movement kept in close touch with him and sought his advice, but without his leadership the movement experienced great difficulties.

His illness became so disabling that despite the attention of his loving parents he had to move into full-time hospital care. Every day he was visited by his parents and no tribute to the fortitude of his mother and father over the next decade can be too great.

The same cannot be said of the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

They did not recognise the central role he had played in building the movement in Ireland and hardly kept in contact with him. This, combined with his worsening illness, led to a retreat on David's part.

His tragedy was that while his intellectual powers were hardly diminished, his body gradually lost its functions and for the last few years of his life he was hardly able to speak at all.

After the expulsion of the Healy/Banda leadership, a reassessment of the history of the movement is underway.

The bringing together of a collection of David's articles would be a significant contribution to that process and if a history of the movement in Ireland is prepared it would be appropriately dedicated to David's memory.

N.M.

30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE

HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

PUBLIC MEETING

LEEDS

Wednesday 3 December 7.30p.m.

Leeds Trades Club

(off Chapeltown Road)

Speaker: Cliff Slaughter

Sponsoring organisations: WRP, International and Socialist Viewpoint

WORKERS PRESS is the weekly paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party. If you wish to know more about us or are interested in becoming a member, why not fill in this form and send it to us?

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# STALINISM IN CRISIS

## The challenge for the Trotskyist movement

**TWO FACTORS in my make-up should be mentioned. My particular interest was always history and, whatever organisation I was in, I was interested in discovering its history.**

I also had this problem which people trained as historians have of being worried about the accuracy of statements, needing evidence for things and worrying when there wasn't any evidence or when the evidence was contradictory. That element was always present in me, subordinated for a long period, of course.

The other factor was that I learned Russian and worked for the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR (SCR) from the beginning of 1952 onwards until the end of 1953. I read lots of Soviet publications, old and new, and met Soviet people and so I was a bit closer to Russian reality and the development of Russian thinking than a lot of Communist Party members. These two factors are important in the background.

On the historical element in my thinking it is worth mentioning two episodes before the 1956-1957 period. When I did have my big quarrel with the Communist Party one of the central incidents was connected with the Party History Commission which was set up in September 1956. Why was I appointed? They knew I was somebody who had had an interest in Party history over the years. In 1946 I went to King Street, (then the headquarters of the CP) to one of the rehabilitation courses, as they were called, for people who had been away during the war, especially those who had been overseas, to put them in the picture about what had been happening at home during those years.

The course I attended was taken by Douglas Garman. He had the task of explaining the changes in the Party line during the war. It was most awkward for him that this particular course came just after Stalin had made his speech in 1946 in which he said that the Soviet Union's entry into the war had intensified its anti-fascist character. Well, if it had

intensified the war's anti-fascist character, then there must have been an anti-fascist element in the war to start with.

Garman had duplicated various documents, one of them being the Appeal of the People's Convention. When I read this I thought: 'There's something fishy about this: what is it?' I'd made a habit of keeping cuttings that interested me and when I went home that night I found that I had torn out of *World News and Views* the original publication of this appeal and I found that Garman had left bits out — you know, the calls for a People's Peace which were in effect saying: 'Let us stop the war and sue for peace with Hitler'.

When I came next morning I waved this about with some indignation. Garman was most embarrassed and I was told that afterwards he went to Harry Pollitt (*General Secretary of the Communist Party at the time*) and said: 'In future, Harry, you're going to have to take the sessions on the change in the Party line.'

This was one episode which showed that I was rather interested in Party history and tended to keep documents.

Then in 1949 — this was after the formation of the Cominform in 1947 — the Party was adopting a more left line. Well, people like me who had always been at heart Third Periodites and had never been happy with People's Fronts and so on were delighted with this turn. We soon discovered that it wasn't quite what we had expected — the Peace Petition business, the British Road to Socialism etc. It was apparent it wasn't the return of the 'good old days'

we had been expecting.

In 1949, however, I was well aware that there were a number of comrades who were very happy with the right-wing collaborationist line of the immediate post-war years, and were now dragging their feet, not drawing the correct conclusions from the new line as it were. Anyway in 1949 I had circulated to a lot of people I knew an article on the 20th Anniversary of comrade Pollitt's election to the Party secretaryship. It took the form of a celebration of an anniversary but of course it was about how in 1929 a lot of horrible right wingers had been overthrown with the help of the Comintern. My implication was: draw what lessons you can from this, comrades.

I got into a certain amount of trouble for this. Somebody passed a copy to Johnny Mahon who was running the London District and he sent for me and said: 'You're responsible for this, aren't you Brian? What you write is all quite true: I was there at the time. But you must realise that this is a very touchy business and people in Lambeth are using this against the Party.'

Lambeth meant nothing to me at the time but I later realised that Lambeth was a nest of Trotskyists. I was struck then by his position that it was true but you mustn't talk about these things. This duplicated article was later published by Tariq Ali (in *International*, Spring 1977).

Somebody wrote in to the SCR, while I was their 'information officer', asking if it was true that there was an Article in the Soviet Penal Code saying that if some serviceman defects, even those members of his family who didn't know about his plans must be sent to remote areas of Siberia. Somebody had told him this was the case and he was writing for information.

So I copied out the text of the Article which did indeed say that. It somehow found its way to Reuben Falber at King Street and he sent for me. He said: 'Is this really true? Has this article ever been used?' I said that its very existence must certainly be a deterrent to many people, but that it was certainly there. He indicated that it was very embarrassing to tell people these things: 'Do you really have to be so frank?'

Then towards the end of 1953 I went on a delegation to Russia with the British Soviet Friendship Society along with Rothstein and a number of others. Some experiences were relevant to the feeling I was getting that I was not thinking on the same lines as others in the Party.

When we arrived in Moscow we were asked where

THIS week we publish the first extract from a much longer interview with Brian Pearce. Having joined the Communist Party in 1934, Brian was one of that relatively small number who in the period 1956-1957 broke with Stalinism and moved towards the Trotskyist movement. A prominent historian of the working class movement, Brian Pearce contributed a number of important articles on the history of British Stalinism to the early issues of *Labour Review*, a journal he helped to edit for a period. He was also noted for his Constant Reader column which appeared in the early issues of the *Newsletter*. He is also a well-known translator, having translated a series of Trotsky's works, including *How The Revolution Armed*. It is hoped that the longer interview which Brian Pearce gave us, together with others in the series, will eventually be brought together in book form.

In this first part of the interview Brian deals with a number of issues which arose in the Communist Party prior to 1956, issues which began to make him think deeply about the politics of the Party.

we would like to go. We said we would like to see Moscow but also one of those cities that was badly destroyed in the war which had now been reconstructed. So we went to Minsk. Then I said that as a feature of anti-Soviet propaganda was the alleged ill-treatment of Moslems, perhaps we could go to one of the Moslem Republics? The Soviet officials agreed.

We went to Minsk. We went to see a play by Shakespeare: 'King Lear'. And a very good performance it was. But I couldn't help recalling: 'Wasn't there a well-known actor called Mikhoels? Didn't he use to perform in this theatre? Didn't something odd happen to him not so long ago: 1952 in fact?' Naturally one didn't speak about it but I remember that passing through my mind at the time. Mikhoels had, in fact, been killed by the secret police.

We returned to Moscow and travelled down to Caucasia. Where they were taking us to was Northern Ossetia and this was really a bit much, as it was a country of the Christian tradition and, as such, tended to be more friendly to the Russians than the other autonomous nationalities in Northern Caucasia, which were mainly Moslem.

Before going home I called on Ralph Parker in Moscow — he was the *Daily Worker* correspondent and he gave me something he'd written. He wanted me to take it and give it to the *Worker* and make it a splash on the paper. He was anxious that it should first appear in the *Daily Worker* before a bourgeois channel.

Parker had written about how in September the Special Board which used to decide on the 'administrative' exile of people (quite without judicial procedure) had been got rid of. It was very big news.

I duly turned up at the *Daily Worker* and told the foreign editor Ralph wanted this published and thought it should be the splash. He looked at it and said: 'The bloody fool . . . How does he think we can use it, let alone put it on the front page?'

I didn't quite get the point. He said: 'Brian, we've spent years and years denying any such body existed. How can we now say: "Great news, the thing's been abolished!"' I said 'Yes, yes, I see your point.'

This inevitably started me thinking more deeply. I suppose what I began to

appreciate was how resentful British Communist officials were about what Khrushchev and others were doing. He was making a lot of trouble for them.

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CONTINUED**

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CPGB secretary Harry Pollitt

# LETTERS

## Criticism of RCP stands

I AM grateful to comrade Harding of the Revolutionary Communist Party for clarifying some of their positions.

I see no reason to withdraw my criticisms.

Whatever the Red International of Labour Unions said in the 1920s, most of the nationalised industries and more important, public services in Britain are the result of the changed balance of class forces after 1945, and Labour compromises.

In effect, workers' political achievements were harnessed to modernising British capitalism. We have to recognise this contradiction and its effects in both the National Health Service and nationalised industries.

Today it suits Thatcherism to end the compromises, grabbing new areas for direct capitalist exploitation. This is both a trade union and political issue.

Workers and most middle class people too have grown used, for instance, to the idea that a decent health service should be provided as a right. Now, as a trade unionist remarked to me in Birmingham a few years ago, 'everything we grew up to take for granted is being taken away from us.'

Far from leading a real

fight to defend public ownership and services, trade union leaders have waged a largely sham resistance. After the posters and the protests, each section of workers has been left to its own devices, against a government-co-ordinated offensive.

Privatisation does mean heightened exploitation, with attacks on union organisation, wages, benefits and conditions. It also attacks social services, making profit the ruling motive.

Rather than affecting indifference, or telling workers they need only concern themselves with wages etc. (leaving other issues, like who runs the service and how, to our 'betters' perhaps?) we should be waging an aggressive campaign, not just defending the status quo, but demanding workers' control, democratic running of the health service, nationalisation of pharmaceutical and other industries for which it is a source of profit.

To say that the issue of ownership is of no interest to workers is to try and take working class consciousness backwards, not forwards. It imposes bourgeois ideology in the form of 'non-political' trade unionism.

The RCP raises the idea of

a general political fund rather than support for Labour. This is actually how union officials often presented the political fund issue. My own union leaders might well be in favour (I'm in the EEUPTU), since they're close to the SDP if not the Tories.

They could claim that backing David Owen was in members' interests because they argue these interests are served by expanding nuclear power and upholding NATO!

Some white-collar unions have still not got around to Labour affiliation. I thought this was because they had their more conservative (small 'c' or large) members to placate. But maybe the RCP will see it as making them more advanced?

Then of course, there are the big American unions which are sometimes militant on wages but have political funds without a party affiliation or pretence of socialist aims.

To propose unions break from Labour, besides ignoring the historical significance of the fact that the Labour Party was created by the unions, suggests that we think the unions are ripe for a revolutionary alternative.

But the right-wing union bureaucrats remain among the most conservative elements in the Labour Party and are pillars of the Kinnock leadership (though some would prefer something more right-wing if they could get it).

An elementary step in fighting both wings of the Labour movement bureaucracy, bringing more rank-and-file trade unionists into the fight, is to expose and challenge the way these union leaders use their weight in the Labour Party, and show it's not in the in-

terests of the working class. To try and skip this fight is really never to reach it.

There may be many issues on which we could join a united front with the RCP. But their present line on some issues puts them in practice, regardless of good intentions, in a united front with the association of Conservative Trade Unionists.

So much for my opinions. Since Cde. Harding was also concerned with refuting 'slanders', I must say something about my facts.

My assumption that the RCP had instructed its members to withdraw from miners' support groups was because a young RCP member at my workplace had joined our group there but then dropped out. The reasons I heard advanced were more or less as Cde. Harding says.

Incidentally our support group consisted entirely of rank-and-file workers. No bureaucrats put in an appearance to 'control' us.

Far from 'strengthening bureaucracy', it brought together sections of workers who had previously had little contact, so that besides working to help the miners it became a nucleus for later rank-and-file unity in our own struggles.

Concerning 'WAR', I have no doubt the capitalist press tried to witch-hunt it so as to sustain a 'conspiracy' theory about the riots. But I happened to see Fran Eden's television appearance for myself. In my view, regardless of her intentions, it was just what the press and the chief constables wanted.

Likewise, I was in the park in Newham waiting for that march to begin when the organisers appealed over the loud-hailer for ELWAR supporters to move from the front to their assigned place in the march.

After they ignored the appeal, stewards were asked to try and move them. As the altercation continued, the police moved over in droves. The incident could have endangered the march.

I don't know what Newham Labour Party members, or the Newham Seven, said afterwards, but I know what I thought at the time.

I am perfectly prepared to accept that the RCP-ELWAR comrades did not come along to disrupt an anti-racist march. I also recognise that we all make mistakes — after all we in the WRP have made quite a few in our time!

But you don't start over-coming mistakes if you dismiss all criticism as 'slanders'. (That, by the way, was Gerry Healy's standard response to any criticism of the WRP. And incidentally, he and Torrance were also against WRP members taking part in miners' support groups.)

As for 'scratching around' for criticisms of the RCP, well, some of my best friends are RCP members, but when I see something I disagree with I believe in saying so.

I don't see the point of open discussion on the Left if all we do is agree with each other. Besides, some of the issues raised are bigger than either of our organisations, and of wider interest.

From what Cde. Harding says, I don't think I've misrepresented the RCP's position. But I wasn't primarily out to score points against the RCP. Rather, to bring out some of the differences, so we can clarify the discussion in the working class. Hopefully, the exchange between us will contribute to this.

Charlie Pottins

## The truth must not be told says Marriott

WORKERS PRESS November 15th carried an article entitled 'Marriott Workers win Fight'. It was written by Robin Burnham who was involved in a struggle to remove lead hands (foremen) for bullying activity against workers in their section.

This report found its way amongst the workforce but also into the hands of management. They informed the shop steward that the reporting of the dispute by Robin Burnham constituted a sacking offence. This wouldn't happen this time but the shop steward was told to tell Robin not to do it again.

Apparently reporting of Marriott business is against their rules (agreed by the union?). This must be fought. The right of workers to report the truth about the struggle of the class is basic. Workers have a right to know the truth.

The capitalist press dare not print what is reality therefore: for instance, the news about youth dying (at least 20) and being injured (into hundreds) on YTS is only available in the papers of the working class (Newsline, forerunner of Workers Press did at least do this).

The Marriott article was valuable in that all the workers then knew the outcome. This was important because up till now the shop stewards haven't called a meeting to give a report of the victory and to thank everyone for their support.

The TGWU in the factory must reject any censorship deals with management. This must apply anywhere in the country.

Do readers know of other deals that gag workers telling the truth? Please write to Workers Press so a discussion can be made towards workers' democracy. This is an issue of vital importance to the working class.

How can workers achieve socialism without first breaking down all barriers and the bureaucracy in the unions and working class parties that stop discussion and practice of what issues the class want fought for?

It cannot be separated from the imposition of the Labour candidate on Knowsley by Kinnock and his supporters.

A Marriott worker

## More youth news needed

I WOULD like to make a few comments on the news material in the Workers Press newspaper. I would be very grateful if this following letter could be printed, to show readers the views I express on this subject.

Since the WRP has had many splits inside it, it has come to my notice that there is a lot lacking in the Workers Press. For a start there is hardly ever any news about Youth and the attacks they face from the social security, unemployment. It seems to me that every time I read the letters page in the paper all there ever is is

people writing in and agreeing and disagreeing about theory. I think it would be a very good idea if more news about youth and YTS etc. was put in the paper as it might be a good way to draw young people's interest in the WRP and politics.

Also up until a while ago I noticed that your newspaper used to have a Youth Page in it. Why was this stopped? I know that you have split from the YS, but I don't see any reason why this page wasn't continued.

It worries me greatly to see that nothing appears in the paper about Youth meet-

ings or news. I think something should be done about this. Even though you have had many splits etc. It doesn't mean that the problems facing young people will go away, if anything they will get worse. At the moment the Tory Government are trying to do something about the unemployment figures. Why? Because it is coming up to the general election.

Also I saw an article covering the new form for unemployed people (The Twelve Questions). If any one question is answered with 'No' then they get taken

off the unemployment register. I think there should have been a lot more coverage of this.

I would like to see the Workers Press and WRP doing a lot more about the youth, instead of just sitting about talking about it. In my opinion there could be a Youth Page at least. But then again I don't know the problems there may be.

Remember young people won't come to politics automatically, they need to be brought into politics and shown the way to fight

against the attacks they face. I not only show a lot of concern about the youth, there are many other things that have to be fought on such as Apartheid, Printers Strike etc.

I hope to see more news in the paper in the future. I not only just complain about the lack of coverage — the coverage of other things is pretty good. Maybe just a little too much theory and not enough practice?  
A.G.

### LISTINGS

Listings are published free by WORKERS PRESS for organisations within the Labour movement. Please send details of any function or event you want to advertise to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Friday.

**NON-STOP PICKET OF SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE.** For the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa. For sanctions against the racist South African government. Outside South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, London. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

**MEMORIAL RALLY in protest against the murder of trade union leader, Rolando Olalia** Solidarity with the Struggle of Philippine Workers for Justice. 30 November, 2.00pm at Philippine Consulate, Cumberland House, Kensington Road, London W8

**CITY OF LONDON AA Group Dayschool** Sunday December 7, 10.00am — 5.30pm. Polytechnic of Central London, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 (nearest tube Baker Street)

**A STRIKING EDUCATION** The story of the SILENT-NIGHT strike in photographs taken by the strikers themselves. Available for hire as a portable exhibition. To hire, contact: Josephine Kelly, FTAT Strike HQ, 9 Frank Street, Barnoldswick, Lancs., BB8 5AE (0282-816709)

**ACTION CONFERENCE '86** Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign, Against Deportation & All Immigration Controls. Saturday December 6, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8. 10.00am — 5.00pm Speakers include Bernie Grant, Rages Bala and Shahid Syed. Workshops and Report-backs from many Groups. Followed in the evening by BENEFIT, featuring Orchestra Jazira and Support. Disco and Bar. Club of Man-kind, 1a Amhurst Road, E8. Tkts £3.50, £2.00 UB40.

**APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA, RACISM IN BRITAIN: YOUTH FIGHT BACK** Meeting organised by Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! to discuss the role of young people in the struggle. Wednesday, December 3, 6.30pm at PCL, 115 New Cavendish Street, London W1.

**RAGGED TROUSERED CABARETS** Sunday November 30, 8.00pm at The Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QQ. Featuring Surfin' Dave; Ian Kelly; Lowlife Lol and Jenny Clair. Also, Friday December 5, 8.00pm at Lamorbey Labour Hall, Wellington Avenue, Black Fen, Sidcup, Kent. Featuring The Rhythm Rascals, John Hegley plus Special Guest Iba. Both shows £2.50, £1.50 concessions.

**FREE ELEUTERIO GUTIERREZ Campaign** Latin American Benefit, Quilombo Espontaneo (LAJazz). Thursday December 4, 8.00pm at The Old White Horse Pub, corner Brixton Road and Loughborough Road, SW9. £2.00, £1.00 strikers, UB40.

### MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Bryant Street Methodist Centre  
off West Ham Lane  
(nearest Underground: Stratford)  
Sunday November 30 7.30pm  
'Reformism'  
Speaker: Steve McSweeney

### Socialist Press

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## LETTERS

Send your letters to Workers Press, 21b Old Town, London SW4  
OJT. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial  
Board. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

# Political differences at AAM conference

I SHOULD like to reply to P. Waterhouse ('Socialist Action') and the points he raises in his (her?) letter in 'Workers Press' (Nov. 22nd) with reference to my article 'Thrashing out Strategy for SA Solidarity' ('Workers Press' Nov. 8th).

I should like to say first of all that the 'method of slander and misrepresentation' is not a characterisation of my article and that I was, in fact, expelled by 'the old Healyite WRP' and rejoined soon after Healy's expulsion.

I am reassured to see that 'Socialist Action' is a supporter of disinvestment in the withdrawal of multinationals from South Africa and can only say that I reported what I heard and would welcome any comments on what was said in the workshop at the East London AA conference that weekend. I am happy to say we are in com-

plete agreement with 'Socialist Action' on the question of the withdrawal of multinationals for SA and will therefore, say no more about it.

Some of the other points you raise, however, bring out some of the political differences which were glossed over at that conference. I am fully aware that the conference had a dual role and would agree that the 'educational aspect is important'. I found it extremely 'educational' precisely because of the way in which political issues were dealt with, or in one or two cases stifled.

You say that the ANC and SWAPO have the 'correct programme for that struggle (the national liberation struggles), for the revolutionary overthrow of apartheid' but say nothing further about the nature of such a revolutionary overthrow as

envisaged by the ANC or indeed, the actual programme of the ANC.

I would refer you in particular to the article by Moletsi Mbeki ('Workers Press' Oct. 4th), a member of the ANC in Zimbabwe, and to the article by Bob Myers, 'Stalinism and the ANC' ('Workers Press' Nov. 1st). Bob Myers points out that 'our unconditional support for the ANC will never be uncritical and details the perspective of the ANC embodied in its Freedom Charter, 'for an end to apartheid and majority rule; for parliamentary democracy'.

It is no coincidence, of course, that the SACP (South African Communist Party) has precisely this limited and extremely dangerous perspective since the SACP seeks to establish a bureaucratic stranglehold over the movement in South

Africa and divest it of its class character in order to forge an alliance with petty bourgeois elements and pressurise the white bourgeoisie to 'abandon apartheid'.

Mbeki points out that the 1962 programme of the SACP, 'The Road to South African Freedom', characterises organisations of black workers as 'people's organisations'.

You say further on that the WRP 'fails to play any role in building the mass anti-apartheid movement in this country'. I think perhaps you should be 'more charitable' and recognise that I attended the South London Conference with a view to participating in that movement as a delegate nominated by my local teachers' association and as an active Trotskyist.

The pages of our paper have contributed weekly some considerable space to South Africa and the role of British workers in the fight against apartheid. The front page of issue 49 of 'Workers Press' (Nov. 8th, 1986), for example, clearly shows that we are active in the NUM in mobilising workers to impose their own sanctions and take that struggle throughout the working class.

I supported the affiliation of our local association to the AAM and have been active in the school in which I teach in raising funds for detainees in South Africa and their families through COSATU.

Our party is also campaigning for a conference to discuss workers sanctions (we do not call for 'people's sanctions') called by Lambeth Joint Trade Union Committee and the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, the latter of whom you appear to summarily dismiss in your letter.

If the issue of Dave Kitson was 'irrelevant to the day's proceedings' I would ask you in what sense was the conference 'educational'? Some of the people I spoke to, who were active in political organisations on the left, and also a steward I spoke to, confessed ignorance on this issue!

Gill played an active role in TASS to break their promise to Kitson to fund his fellowship at Ruskin College and throw this veteran fighter against apartheid onto the dole.

I was on the picket outside of South Africa House some years ago alongside Norma Kitson, UB40 (the rock-reggae band) and other supporters who campaigned for his release. I say they were correct to openly heckle Gill, who had a prominent place on the platform, as the AAM seems determined to block any discussion on the question, and will do so in future. Furthermore, the ANC has yet to answer precisely why Kitson was expelled!

In closing, the security guards were present in the hall when the City AA group were expelled and I was by no means the only delegate with objections to the manner of their expulsion. My article noted that the police were called and were present outside of the hall after the City AA delegates were expelled from the hall but the two sentences were condensed into one by the editorial board so that it read as if the police were directly involved in their expulsion.

Phil Edwards (East London and Essex WRP)

# Super-optimism in lead article

THE LEAD article by Cyril Smith last week (22nd Nov) showed a fundamental inability to understand the class struggle as it unfolds.

Cyril is confused by the developments in the working class and the middle class over the last period, but instead of being encouraged to overcome this he is allowed to spread his confusion on the front page of Workers Press.

There are various points that I would like to make about his article, and the fact that they are slightly unconnected is due at least as much to the nature of the original as to my inability to connect them.

I shall start with the paragraph that reads 'The building of support groups indicated the powerful response from every section of the working class and the middle class.'

The word to emphasise here is obviously every. It surely does not need me to document here instances where the above is proved false. What is necessary is that we come to terms with the method employed here and throughout the article.

Such super-optimism was (and is) a trade mark of the News Line and in fact concealed fear of the State and despair about the ability of the working class to overthrow it.

It also served to drive the members of the party into blind activity, with the promise of victory, sooner rather than later.

The indications that Cyril is falling into that same old style of writing, and thinking, are definitely there in the rest of his article.

His preoccupation with the middle class, and his inability to really analyse where it stands in relation to the class struggle today, is but one manifestation of this.

Cyril tells us that 'important sections of the middle class hate this callous, mean and parasitic government'. He also tells us that the middle class is 'understandably bewildered' but it is 'not unwilling to fight'. And finally,

as we have already seen, it is *en masse* supportive of the establishing of support groups for workers in struggle.

Now, where does the middle class actually stand?

The answer is that a part of it hates the Tories, part of it is bewildered, part is willing to fight, and part of the middle class is supportive of using new and progressive methods to enhance the struggle against this government and its friends in big business.

The above is not meant to be a stunning analysis of where the middle class is politically, but it certainly recognises that sweeping generalisations, especially

where they contradict one another, do nothing to further our understanding of the class struggle. On the contrary, they inhibit our understanding.

There is another indication that Cyril perhaps didn't give a lot of thought to his article and instead fell back on the old method of listing vague generalisations and finishing with 'Join the Workers Revolutionary Party'.

He says that the Labour and trade union leaders are 'enthusiastic participants in a plot to keep this government in office'. I would have thought that Cyril would have known that the 'conspiracy theory' has been

junked by most people who consider themselves socialists for quite a long time now.

There has been in the past, especially in periods of war, times when social democracy has actually 'plotted' with the ruling class to keep the workers from rebelling against the State. Undoubtedly this will happen in the future, as more sections of the working class and the middle class raise demands that the Labour and trade union leaders will not fight for.

But to imply that this is the way that bourgeois democracy usually works, and is working just now, is quite wrong. Under Healy the way

this was manifested was that everyone was in a conscious plot to stop the Workers Revolutionary Government from taking power, which of course it was going to do in the very near future.

Cyril does not quite go this far, and instead uses the idea of a 'plot' to convince his readers that social democracy is a nesting ground for cowards. By going on to 'demonstrate' the strength of the working class and the fear of Thatcher rampant in the Communist Party and the Healyite WRP, Cyril feels that he can call on his readers to 'Join the Workers Revolutionary Party'.

If only the building of the revolutionary party was as

easy as that!

There is no way that we can build the WRP by writing articles giving a brief summary, in this case a bad one, of the situation as it stands. This method of writing would discourage the advanced layers of the working class from joining a party, not encourage them to do so.

The only way we can go forward is by actually participating in struggle, and to do this we need a clear analysis of the situation, not confused rhetoric.

Neil Dempsey

Editorial note: A reply by Cyril Smith will appear in next week's Workers Press.

## 1956 commemoration

This is the reply written by Balasz Nagy and others to the statement made by oppositionists in eastern Europe calling for the commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution. Comrade Nagy (Michel Varga) spoke at the meeting called in London on October 26 to commemorate the events of thirty years ago. Part of his interview dealing with his experiences before and during the revolution appeared recently in 'Workers Press'.

We, Hungarian, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav Trotskyists, members of the Fourth International and working to build revolutionary parties of the working class, salute the call made by the opposition of four countries (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, German Democratic Republic) for the commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

We add our voice to yours when you declare that 'the tradition and the experiences of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 remain our common heritage and our inspiration'.

In supporting this call in opposition to the oppressors and slanderers but also against the false friends of 1956, it is our duty — to the workers of our countries as well as to you, oppositionists — to state clearly the distance which separates us.

In the first place, it is of the greatest importance to restate that the fundamental tradition and experience of the Hungarian Revolution is that it was carried out and led by the working class.

And that it therefore follows that, if it declared neutrality as the sign of its rejection of both capitalism and the Kremlin bureaucracy, nonetheless by its very nature it cannot be neutral in the struggle of the workers of the whole world against the capitalist exploiters and oppressors, the Kremlin's allies.

To be faithful to the Hungarian Revolution means, today, to say clearly that the workers' councils, genuine organs of the revolution, defended the collective property of the factories and thus could not be harmoniously integrated in a capitalist Europe.

This means finally that we must declare that the Hungarian Revolution left us the heritage that it is necessary for us to unite with the Europe of the working class and reject the Europe of the capitalists, even when it is started up by social-democrat governments.

This means the building of the United States of a workers' councils' Europe.

In addressing ourselves to the friends of the Hungarian Revolution, we define the latter clearly as the international working class, the youth in struggle for freedom all over the world, the workers of five continents.

First and foremost, the workers, peasants, youth and intellectuals of our countries need clarity in showing who are the true friends of the revolution and in showing which Europe they can integrate with.

The real commemoration of the revolution imposes on all of us, as well as upon all in the ranks of your opposition, to remove any equivocation, to get rid of any ambiguity about the aims and objectives of the workers of our countries.



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

It is in this spirit that, in saluting your call, we have commemorated the Hungarian Revolution with workers, youth and their organisations in Paris, London, Genoa, Florence, Rome, Foligno and Barcelona, inspired by its message.

Paris, 14 November, 1986.

Janos Borovi  
Balasz Nagy (Hungary — Michel Varga)

Cyrill Martin (Czechoslovakia)  
Nicolas Parodi  
Mihailo Ristic (Yugoslavia)

Correspondence: Clavier; B.P. No. 6055; 34030 Montpellier Cedex, France.

Footnote: The French text says 'membres de la IV Internationale a reorganiser', meaning that these comrades are organised for rebuilding the Fourth International.

# REVIEWS

## The Irish Civil War and what it still means for the Irish people

The Irish Civil War — and what it still means for the Irish people. By Frances M. Blake. Information on Ireland, £1.75. Distributed by Turnaround Distribution, 27 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL.

AT THE beginning of the Easter Rising James Connolly told his men to hang onto their guns should the rising succeed because some of their allies would not be prepared to go through to the end.

This book is the story of the confirmation of that prophecy five years later.

Although the 1916 Easter Rising was crushed, the Republic was proclaimed and a guerilla war began against British occupation in 1919.

The last general election held for Britain and all Ireland took place in 1918.

Sinn Fein, which had been founded in 1905 by Arthur Griffith, won a decisive majority of the seats in Ireland.

Griffith was a conservative on social and economic issues and supported the idea of a dual monarchy for Britain and Ireland but with separate parliaments in London and Dublin.

Most of those imprisoned after the Easter Rising were released within a year and their presence strengthened the incoming republican elements within Sinn Fein.

Sinn Fein's successful candidates met and set up the first *Dail Eireann* (the Irish people's own national assembly) to organise their own national administration.

Although soon declared illegal by a British decree, the *Dail* continued to function even when forced underground and with many of its democratically elected representatives imprisoned.

From 1919-21 the IRA's battle with the British crown forces intensified.



British troops marched out of their barracks as the Free State troops marched in.

The IRA's courage and determination, aided by growing popular support, forced the British to parley with Irish politicians and to seek to gain at the conference table what they were unable to win in the field.

Negotiations between British and Irish representatives began in London at 10 Downing Street on 11 October 1921.

The Irish delegation was led by Arthur Griffith.

Griffith conceded to Lloyd George that six counties in the north could opt out of a united Ireland.

The treaty was signed in London on the night of December 5-6 1921, after two months of talks and under Lloyd George's sudden threat of 'immediate and terrible war' if the treaty was not signed that same night.

The treaty was in reality a glorified form of Home Rule at best.

Ireland was left under the British crown, including an oath of allegiance to be taken to King George, his heirs and successors, and to add insult to injury the Irish state was required to vote an annual sum towards the royal revenues.

Moreover, the treaty cemented the 1920 Act which had partitioned the country.

With the help of the Church, the press and the British, Griffith and co. then returned to Ireland to sell the deal.

One leading pro-treatyite, Kevin O'Higgins, interpreted the treaty with total disregard for either its binding legal implications or for the six separated counties of the north by saying: 'It removes all English control or interference within the shores of Ireland.'

The British were jubilant.

Lloyd George told the cabinet that 'the terms of the oath to be taken by members of the Parliament of the Irish Free State are remarkable and are better in many respects than the terms of the Oath of Allegiance ordinarily required in Great Britain.'

What follows is the story of the civil war, the part played by the national bourgeoisie, the press, the Church, the Republicans, and women. (All the women TD's and the women's branch of the Irish Republican Army opposed the treaty and voted against it).

The heroism of the republi-

cans was only matched by the vicious methods employed by the Free Staters, with the help of the British, which shocked the world.

Information on Ireland is a voluntary group which publishes information about the situation in Ireland that is of concern to people in Britain but is not available through the national media.

Although the book is only 68 pages long it is so well written that it easily does the job for which it was intended and still has room for pictures.

Quite rightly it is said at the end of the book that the course of the current propaganda war, and the nature of political parties in the 26 counties, should be seen in the historical context of the civil war years.

Otherwise much from Dublin would be incomprehensible, as for instance its long lasting co-operation with Westminster over the six north eastern counties and its reactionary attitudes towards the national struggle.

For those who want to get an understanding of contemporary Irish political history this is a good place to start. Phil Penn

COUNTY Kerry was a Republican stronghold and it took time for the Free Staters to crush its resistance, which they did with systematic brutality.

In March 1923 a Free State officer, accused of habitually torturing prisoners, was killed by a trigger-mine ambush on a lonely road.

The next day 9 IRA prisoners, one with a broken arm, another with a fractured wrist, and one crippled by spinal injuries after their torture in the local barracks, were brought by lorry to a country wood near Ballyseedy. There they were bound with ropes and roped together round a land-mine which the Staters had prepared and which they then exploded.

Bits of bodies were scattered far and wide. Pieces of flesh were left hanging on the trees.

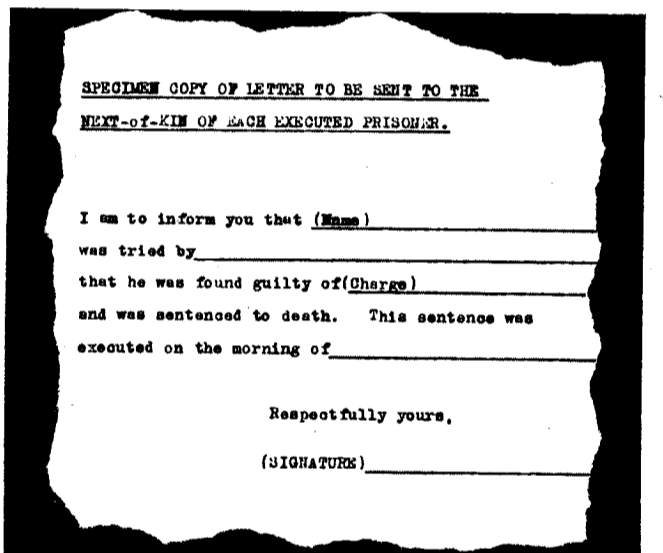
But by a freak blast one man was thrown clear and unharmed into a ditch and managed to escape unseen, his clothes scorched off him, with a severed hand tied against his wrist.

A few days later five more IRA men were killed by the Staters with a mine used in the same way, but on that occasion all five had first been shot in the legs to prevent any more miraculous escapes.

A subsequent low-key inquiry whitewashed all concerned. The Free State's immediate response was a military order that all Kerry prisoners 'who die while in military custody' must be buried by troops at the place of execution.

This was to avoid repetition of the violent scenes when families opened the coffins at the funerals and saw the contents.

And the Catholic bishops, so vocal on some matters, remained silent about what the crows ate in Kerry.



A standard letter intended to be sent to relatives of those prisoners executed by the state during the civil war.



Liam Mellows.

Rory O'Connor.



Richard Barrett.

Joe McKelvey.

ON SUNDAY 8 December 1922, four Republican prisoners, Liam Mellows, Rory O'Connor, Richard Barrett and Joe McKelvey, were woken in Mountjoy jail and told they were to be executed without a trial.

The year-old Free State government was taking a callous reprisal for an IRA attack the previous day which had killed a Leinster House deputy.

So shaken and nervous were the firing squad that the victims of the judicial murder were at first only wounded, and had to be finished off with no less than 9 bullets.

The Free Staters then began a series of secret court martial executions which shot IRA men in groups of two or three throughout the 26 counties usually the morning after their trials. There were 77 official court martial executions.

Throughout this period the Free Staters took on the outward trappings of the Republic: the tricolour flag, the claim to the 1916-1921 tradition, even the name *Dail Eireann* for their Leinster House parliament.

While they claimed that Connolly and Pearse would have backed their 26-county state, they executed, imprisoned, deprived and threatened those who carried on the fight of Connolly and Pearse.

### TV

## MAKE-DO AND MEND

*says Mrs Sew-and-Sew*

Mrs Sew-and-Sew with one of her many ideas for economising in Britain during World War II.

## Imperialist war — not people's war

A People's War. Channel 4, Monday November 24

THIS programme was of a certain interest, but very superficial.

It started from the premise that World War II was a people's war. This was certainly not the Trotskyist opinion of the war.

We said: 'This is not a war for democracy against fascism. It is an imperialist war.'

Churchill was not interested in fighting fascism. He had already made the statement that he preferred Mussolini to communism.

To talk of a 'people's war' would have required an armed working class in conflict with the ruling capitalist class.

But in 1939-1945 the capitalists were very much in control and using the coalition government of Tories, Liberals and Labour Party, as a means to hold back a working class struggle.

The programme dealt

mainly with the rationing of food — bacon, butter, sugar, tea and meat — and the tremendous growth of farming, and record harvests.

What it did not say was that even with rationing, poor people ate better than they had in the unemployed days of the thirties.

In the thirties, many workers could not afford to buy more than bread and food like bananas was dumped in the sea instead of being given to children.

Milk was emptied down drains and land in Britain left uncultivated — in America, wheat was burnt — because it was unprofitable to grow food for the hungry.

Naturally, the war changed this. Everyone's labour was needed, so British restaurants were set up which provided a good meal quite cheaply.

Factories had canteens. The working class were kept fed because the production of munitions was essential to the capitalist class.

Rae Hunter

# REVIEWS



Gerulf Pannach as Klaus Drittemann in 'Fatherland'

## Stalinism is not socialism

**Fatherland, directed by Ken Loach. (UK, 1986).**  
**The Wall Driller, directed by Gyorgy Szomjas. (Hungary, 1985).**  
 This week we review two more films shown at the London Film Festival.

WHEN director Ken Loach picks out graffiti in an East Berlin street which proclaims that 'Stalinism is not socialism' and that 'capitalism is not freedom' he is speaking for the central character in *Fatherland*.

Klaus Drittemann's search for what he calls 'true socialism' can only be found in a conscious struggle against counter-revolutionary Stalinism on the one hand and a deep-rooted legacy of European fascism on the other.

Drittemann is a *Liedermacher*, a song-writer, who like his concert-pianist father is obliged to migrate West because 'the people in charge don't like what I sing'.

His opposition to the bureaucracy began with the song 'Hands off Red Prague' and led inexorably to permanent unemployment.

In a supererfluous press conference in West Berlin, organised by an American record company who hope to sign him up, Drittemann insists that he will not be drawn into criticising his own country, and to everyone's chagrin he sticks to his guns.

### Censorship

In reply to a cringing welcome from the West German minister for the arts, Drittemann slams Western capitalism's sham freedom, citing media censorship as an example (Ken Loach should know!)

He then adds, witheringly, 'Thank you for welcoming me as a German and not as a Turkish or Tamil immigrant', to which the minister can make no reply.

Gerulf Pannach, who plays Drittemann, is utterly convincing in his first screen role.

Coincidentally, Pannach and his partner Christian Kunnert, were themselves expelled from East Germany after being arrested in the mid-1970s for 'state hostile agitation'.

Between them they wrote and performed all the music for *Fatherland*.

If the film has weaknesses — and it undoubtedly has — they flow from the produc-

er's inability to raise sufficient finance to do full justice to Trevor Griffiths's superb screenplay.

As the makers explained, after a screening last week at the London Film Festival, the original budget called for £1.5 million.

The film you see on the screen was made for £750,000 — and that took eighteen months to raise.

Under these conditions cuts were inevitable, undermining Ken Loach's efforts to establish a broader visual context for the events that unfold in the film.

But despite these very material limitations, not since 'After a Lifetime' has Ken Loach turned out a more richly-defined or technically accomplished film, and he is right to stand by it as he does.

*Fatherland* will eventually be transmitted by Channel Four — no date set, as yet — and in selected cinemas, according to the producers.

Trevor Griffiths' original screenplay will be published by Faber and Faber.

A brief word must be said about *The Wall Driller*, a more sloppy than hearty comedy looking at free en-

terprise capitalism in contemporary Hungary.

The director, Gyorgy Szomjas, has obviously never paused to consider the historic contradiction implicit in the graffiti referred to earlier.

### Restoration

Szomjas clearly believes that capitalist restoration in the deformed workers states is a good thing, in other words, that capitalism is freedom.

In introducing his slender work at the National Film Theatre, (the story of a call-girl racket and of a disgruntled factory worker who throws in the towel, buys a power drill and goes into business on his own) Szomjas referred to Gorbachev's recent legislation legitimising black-market businesses in the USSR.

He considered this a very 'positive development', but was at pains to stress that Hungary had led the way! The Healyites will no doubt concur.



Janos Ban and Renate Sztaler in 'The Wall Driller'

# SCIENCE

## Poisoned river

AS A 75-mile long spillage of weedkiller flowed down the Rhine into Holland last week, concern and anger was being voiced by officials and the public over the way the big chemical companies have poisoned rivers and endangered people.

The West German Research Ministry published a study showing levels of toxic chlorinated hydrocarbons dumped by the Rhine and other rivers had not significantly declined in the past 10 years.

If the level of pollution continued unchanged so the amount kept accumulating. 'We fear that irreparable damage to the entire North Sea eco-system may be inevitable,' they warned.

In Switzerland, school-pupils protested outside the Ciba-Geigy company, which had admitted accidentally spilling 400 kilos of herbicide Atrazine into the Rhine on October 21.

In West Germany's North Rhine Westphalia state, Environment Minister Klaus Matthrisen attacked the BASF chemical company for only admitting in drips and drabs to the full extent of its weedkiller spillage, and said the company's information policy was 'scandalous'.

Investigations began into whether BASF, responsible

for the 75-mile long spillage on November 21, had violated pollution laws.

Experts were also still asking whether Ciba-Geigy had told the whole truth about its earlier spillage. The concentrations of herbicide found by West German scientists had been higher than they would expect from Ciba-Geigy's admitted 400 kilos.

It had been thought at first that the spillage was related to a fire at Ciba-Geigy's Sandoz chemical warehouse. But examination of Ciba-Geigy's records show the spillage started four hours before the fire at the warehouse.

Meanwhile another Swiss company, Hoffman La Roche, reported an escape of toxic liquid from its factory near Basle on November 24.

Coming as people in Germany were just recovering from the fears aroused by Chernobyl, the river poisonings are arousing strong feeling. Pollution and the threats it poses could well become a major political issue, if they are not already.

Even a spokesman for the conservative Federal government has accused the chemical industry of being irresponsible, and said the big companies public information policies left a lot to be desired.

Put another way, big companies like Ciba and BASF, despite their effect on everyone's life, are in business for private profit, and responsible above all to banks and shareholders. They are not used to being accountable to the public, or telling people the whole truth about what they do.

● Polish rivers are becoming open sewers, and measures to make them safe are way behind, according to a recent report in the Warsaw paper 'Dziennik Ludowy' ('People's Daily').

The paper said more than half the rivers in Warsaw province were so polluted as to defy classification. A beach on the river Wkra, once regarded as the cleanest, had to be closed to bathers earlier this year.

Lake Zegrzynski, a big artificial lake near Warsaw, with many holiday camps on its shores, is now polluted.

The paper said more and more chlorine was being used to make Warsaw's drinking water safe. The city's first waste treatment plant on the river Vistula is not expected to go into service until next year.

Warsaw is reported to be the only European capital except Tirana still dumping untreated sewage in its river.

## Sellafield leukemia deaths

**CHILDREN who live near nuclear power stations have a vastly increased risk of leukaemia, an International Radiological Conference heard this week.**

The conference, sponsored by Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, heard that there had been a 35 per cent increase in childhood leukaemia around the power stations between 1969 and 1974.

Between 1963 and 1980 the overall increase in the killer blood disease was greater than 20 per cent.

The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority has said that leukaemia, because it so rare, appears in clusters by chance — and it just happens by chance that these clusters appear to be near power stations!

John Urquhart, the author of the study, said that the epidemiological data show the cynical absurdity of this claim.

### 'Three Times'

'These data clearly indicate that children living in the vicinity of nuclear facilities are running health risks much greater than has hitherto been realised, or admitted.'

The conference also heard of the dangers for workers in the nuclear industry.

Dr Valerie Beral of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine showed that the mortality rates for the nuclear workforce are **three times** higher than those predicted by the International Commission for Radiological Protection.

Conference organiser Dr Robin Russell-Jones summed up the research.

'The time has finally arrived for the nuclear industry to face up to its responsibilities.

'We have a cluster of childhood leukaemia at Sellafield with a statistical probability of one in a million.

'We have another cluster at Dounreay with a statistical probability of one in 50,000.

'It cannot be coincidental that the two most significant clusters of leukaemia so far identified in the UK are located in the immediate

vicinity of the only two re-processing plants in the UK

### Vicinity

'Both workers and public are currently being exposed to unacceptable health risks as a result of the activities of the nuclear industry.'

# BOOKS

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**389 Green Street, London E13**  
Tel: 01 470 1388

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# BOOKS

## Reject Nottingham deal!

BY JIM STEAD

**The majority of the executive of the NUT gear up for the big lie as they go for the 'yes' vote on the Nottingham agreement.**

In reply to those who say the executive have traded conditions of service for pay, Don Winters (national treasurer) says in *The Teacher*: 'I resent the suggestion that I and others are lying when we tell you that that never happened and that we preserved the line between the two.'

In fact their thrust is to say those who disagree and use their rights within the union to disagree are enemies of the union.

Such language should be listened to.

The threat is that they are willing to police this deal. It will certainly need policing if it goes through.

The redrawing of teachers' conditions is the central danger in the agreement.

● It will mean an increase of work every day measured in hours and an increase in working days each year.

● Every teacher will have a job description which will be reviewed at least once a year and can be altered without the teacher's agreement.

● Authorities will have the power to withhold increments and introduce a system of appraisal.

In virtually every sphere of a teacher's life, conditions of service will worsen.

It is a charter for individual negotiation which is a major threat to collective bargaining.

It would open the door to the trend that by combining individual job description and appraisal with money leads to individual bargaining.

It would lead therefore to undermining and severely weakening the unions.

The teachers Workers Press has spoken to this week say they want a flat rate increase now with no strings.

Failing that, they want an improvement in the conditions for education within schools.

A large current exists against the deal. The more discussion there is, the greater the opposition grows.

This is the main reason why the conference and ballot are being rushed through. The vote will be narrow either way.

Teachers must redouble their efforts in the campaign for the NO vote.

The agreement would also be the key for the Tories' plans for central government control over education.

It could easily be used to

coerce teachers to implement MSC plans for education and curriculum control.

Kenneth Baker, Education Secretary, made no mistake when he said he was mainly interested in the productivity part of the agreement: It is a productivity deal.

It is fitting that Jim Ferguson, a Euro-communist member of the executive, joins the right wing in defending this deal.

It was leading members of the Communist Party, Foulkes and Haxell, who helped bring in productivity deals in the electricians' union in the 1950s.

The essence of a productivity deal is the intensification of labour and there is much in the Nottingham deal that would introduce a direct increase of labour by teachers.

As one old book put it: 'The basic concept of the productivity agreement is to abolish the right which workers have always had — and on which the trade unions were built — to put up the price of their labour and increase their standard of living.'

A relatively small pay increase will be accompanied by many changes.

Each one has its aim of altering conditions that will increase the workload of teachers.

Significantly, no improvement in staffing is actually guaranteed. There are only vague promises for the future.

A National Joint Council for teachers' pay and conditions will be set up by this agreement to continue the drive for productivity.

This productivity deal, however, will come in under new conditions.

Enormous pressure is being exerted on the executive of the teachers' unions to clear the decks and conform to the line of the TUC and Labour Party leaderships. The basis of this pressure is unity at any price.

The executive must control the rank and file and pave the way for a Kinnock Labour government in which Kinnock will be fighting for a new social contract.

The control of the teachers by the imposition of this agreement will be one of the proofs that Labour can deliver the goods and maintain sound capitalist order.

Kinnock needs the TUC to discipline trade union members.

His schemes will need such props as Fred Jarvis (NUT) as president of the TUC.

The NUT executive are

said to have various plans to attack their opposition in the rank and file. They are continuing Kinnock's assault on Militant.

It is said they are working along the following lines:

● Re-draw the electoral areas in order to keep out left-wingers from the national executive.

● Restrict the right of associations (union branches) to circulate other associations with their views.

● Limit the amount of local subs that associations can raise, i.e. money that is under the control of local associations.

The language of the executive is the language of union leaders planning to unleash an attack on democratic rights.

This tendency also depends on the growth and coherence of the left-wing and the ability of its leadership to show boldness in

organisation and implacable hostility to the executive.

A long fight for the leadership of the union is now placed on the agenda. Success will depend on convincing the rank and file that an alternative leadership exists that will be responsible to the membership and fight for conference policy, that will not bow to the pressure of the state or political parties, whether Tory or Labour.

## Defend the union!

### Strathclyde teachers defend rights, jobs and education



A THREAT that Strathclyde teachers who refused to take oversize classes would be 'deemed to have broken their own contracts' — i.e. would get sacked — drew a sharp response last week.

Schools in Lanarkshire held a one-day strike and lobbied the Strathclyde regional offices in Hamilton (above) to protest at the Regional Council's anti-union behaviour.

Threatening letters to teachers were withdrawn last week as a result of the action.

But the national leadership of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) teachers' union, keen to sign a deal which would get the issue off the agenda before pay negotiations be-

gan, agreed to 'softly, softly' reduction of numbers in composite classes, with a target of 27 pupils per composite class in 1987-1988, in response to teachers' demands for a target of 25.

At the 100-strong lobby at Hamilton, Lanarkshire teachers' leader Drew Morrice had said the sack threat was more serious than the right-wing Main Report on pay and conditions of service.

'They are now threatening to sack people for taking official industrial action; they are trying to pass judgement on our Annual Delegate Meeting decisions,' said Morrice, Lanarkshire president of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS).

'It is a total denial of

trade union principles by the Labour Party in Strathclyde.'

Norman Bissell of the Strathclyde EIS executive assured the striking teachers they had 100-per cent backing from the union, which was prepared to spread the action if needed.

He read from the Labour Party's Strathclyde Regional election programme of May this year, which stated that composite classes in school should not exceed 25 — precisely the issue of principle, and educational standards, on which the dispute has exploded.

Teachers who tried to enforce the policy by refusing to take oversize classes received the disciplinary threats.

'They are taking away our right to strike on this or any other issue. It's all about intimidation,' said Bissell. 'There's no way we are going to accept this.'

He pointed out the Main report was proposing that teachers' contracts should specify their readiness to take 'assigned classes' — an apparently innocuous phrase which could mean that sack threats like Strathclyde's could be backed with the force of law.

● This is the second reaction to Strathclyde's increasingly anti-union policy: last week the region's firemen struck against manning cuts and are now awaiting the findings of a mediation committee on their dispute.

#### 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)