

AN APPEAL from the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), a Trotskyist organisation in Nicaragua, was considered at the recent congress of the WRP.

Several of their members now require urgent medical attention as a result of their intervention in the class struggle in Nicaragua. The International Workers League (IWL) has launched an international to provide the necessary funds for the PRT. Other Trotskyist organisations have been asked to contribute.

The recent WRP congress agreed unanimously to support this campaign, and to collect at least £1 from every Party member. All branches must

collect this money as soon as possible.

The life of our comrades in Nicaragua is at stake!

We call on all our readers and supporters, as well as other Trotskyist organisations in Britain, to back this campaign.

● Please send all donations immediately to: Nicaraguan Appeal Fund, Workers Revolutionary Party, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS.

POSTAL STRIKE

PHONE us before posting because of our local postal strike — see page 13.

DEFEND SHARON ATKIN!

DOWN WITH KINNOCK'S WITCH-HUNT!

THE REMOVAL of Sharon Atkin as prospective Labour candidate for Nottingham East is the latest pre-General Election attack by the Kinnock leadership against any opposition to its rule in the Labour movement.

Atkin is a prominent member of the Labour Party Black Sections and one of the 31 surcharged Lambeth Councillors, amongst the few who defied the Tories and refused to set a rate.

Workers Press salutes Nottingham East Labour Party's decision to reject the candidate imposed on them by Labour Party headquarters. This stand must be backed by the widest campaign in the labour and trade union movement throughout Nottinghamshire and the Midlands.

If Nottingham East decides to run the candidate of its own choice, it must be supported throughout the working-class movement.

Labour front bencher Clare Short last week called for a private inquiry into Atkin's removal. She hoped the issue would be settled by a 'quiet and sensible discussion'. It will not.

Many on the left accuse Kinnock of preparing to blame the left for an impending election defeat. The issue runs far deeper than this.

Kinnock is shouting loud and clear to the ruling class of this country: Have not the slightest fear. A Labour government will continue to attack the working class — its basic rights, its standard of living and its organisations.

Kinnock used last week's conference of the Welsh TUC to attack Atkin:

'I take this action — we take this action — because we are not going to be kicked around by our enemies or misrepresented by fringes, tendencies, sections or any other tassel that hangs on to the Labour Party.'

The only force kicking Kin-

BY THE EDITOR

That is why the coming election will solve not a single problem facing the working class and large sections of the middle class.

From the beginning of this century capitalist rule in Britain has depended on the loyal support given to the ruling class by the labour and trade union leaders. Either in government or as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, they have been the essential prop of bourgeois rule.

nock around is the ruling class. It is to this class, not the working class, that Kinnock is entirely responsible.

The latest witch-hunt against Black Sections follows Kinnock's systematic attempts to break the miners' strike, and to conspire with others to oust Scargill from the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers. This treachery was accompanied by the witch-hunt launched against the Militant Tendency and all those Labour councillors such as Atkin who refused to comply with Tory demands for savage cuts in local authority spending.

These attacks reveal the great weakness of the right-wing leadership and not its strength as many on the left imagine.

Kinnock's frenzied attacks express the fact that there is not the slightest possibility of another reforming Labour government along the lines of that elected in 1945.

The chronic decline of British capitalism has continued throughout the period of the Thatcher government. The economy has been kept afloat through oil revenues now in fast decline and an orgy of City speculation. Kinnock and company know as well as the ruling class that this cannot last.

Any government elected after June will face a growing balance of trade crisis and mounting protectionist moves from Japanese and US capital. Kinnock as much as Thatcher intends to make the working class pay for this crisis.

The reformist leadership of the Labour Party and the trade unions have seen the capitalist state through two world wars and the biggest slump in history.

The revelations of MI5's activities are but one expression of the crisis which now pervades the upper reaches of this state. (See editorial, page 2.)

The plots launched by the secret services against the Wilson government after 1974 reveal yet again that

power in this country resides not in Parliament but with the state, those 'special bodies of armed men' who rule whatever government is in office.

The working class enters this election with the clearest-ever crisis of leadership. The miners, the printers, the Caterpillar occupation in Scotland, the struggle at Hangers and Silentnight and the long drawn-out struggle of thousands of teachers to defend their right to collective bargaining have demonstrated the

willingness and ability of the working class to defend itself against the Tory government and the employers.

These workers have been deserted and betrayed by the majority of their leaders who have bent the knee to every Thatcher demand. A new leadership based on socialist policies is now urgently necessary.

● See next week's Workers Press for our policy for the election and the programme on which we believe that leadership must be built.

BOBBY SANDS VIGIL



A BLACK Flag Vigil to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the death Republican Hunger Striker Bobby Sands was held last Tuesday evening in Kilburn Square, London.

The Vigil was organised by the Bobby Sands Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee. It was harassed by police who informed the organisers they would have to disperse because the assembly was infringing the new Public Order Act, but this tactic was unsuccessful.

Those supporting the vigil included the Irish Freedom Movement; Wolfe Tone Society; Republican PoWs Campaign Committee; WRP/Workers Press, and Free the Framed Irish Prisoners Campaign.

John French (PoWs Campaign Committee), Charlie Walsh (WRP) and Steve Morris addressed the meeting which was attended by over 100 people.

**Workers
Press**

Dirty deeds

EVERY news bulletin starts with the latest opinion poll — front-page news in the capitalist papers. Labour and Communist Party circles are dominated by talk about 'how Labour can win'. 'Tactical voting' is a vogue topic.

You'd almost think the future of Britain, and the working class, will be decided at the coming election.

The recent revelations about the activity of MI5 exposes the fraudulent nature of this chatter. The working class has been shown again that this country is ruled not by parliament but by a state based on violence and brutality which is a law unto itself.

From former MI5 Assistant Director Peter Wright, from former Army psy-ops officer Colin Wallace and others, the jigsaw pieces are forming this picture.

- In 1974, a conspiracy began, involving MI5, certain top military brass and powerful City businessmen, to carry out 'dirty tricks' and bring down the Wilson government.

- An MI5 officer helped organise the 1974 Ulster Workers' Council strike which finished the Sunningdale agreement and 'power sharing'. (An unusual strike: the forces of 'order' — in this case the British Army — did the picketing, instead of doing over the pickets!)

- MI5 and MI6 engaged in a secret war against each other in the occupied six counties of the north of Ireland.

- In collusion with prominent right-wing Tories, MI5 ran a 'dirty tricks' campaign against Edward Heath, to remove him as leader of the Tory party. His replacement was Margaret Thatcher.

- British 'security' services burgled homes, tapped phones, planted bugs, organised smear campaigns, and framed individuals, in order to rig the course of British politics.

- There is a now a case for the immediate investigation of at least two killings of prominent figures: Airey Neave, Tory MP involved with MI5 conspiracies, and Lord Mountbatten — as well as many 'sectarian' murders carried out on both sides of the north of Ireland partition line.

Ever more evidence emerges that around 1974 sections of the ruling class, senior officers, and the security services discussed a military take-over in this country.

The Workers Revolutionary Party and Workers Press said this was happening at the time. Sceptics denounced us as 'alarmist', or worse. Whatever other things we were wrong about, we were substantially right on the nature of the state and its conspiracies against the working class.

In 1975, the WRP's school in Derbyshire was raided by over 100 police supposedly searching for a non-existent 'arms cache'. Together with the 'Observer' newspaper, MI5 was involved in setting up that raid.

When Wilson resigned in 1976 — for reasons never satisfactorily explained — his replacement was James Callaghan, subsequently knighted, now specialising in backstabbing his own party whenever there's an election coming.

Margaret Thatcher, on assuming leadership of the Tory party, went to Australia. There fellow Tories had ousted Whitlam's Labour government, via the notorious 'Camberra Coup' staged by the Governor-General, with the armed forces on standby. She was reported keen to ask them how they did it.

Callaghan and Wilson have refused to utter a word in public about these sinister events. They have yet again come to Thatcher's rescue by covering up the activities of MI5.

In every trade union and throughout the Labour Party, the right wing, as well as both wings of the Communist Party demand 'unity' to ensure that Kinnock is elected. Meanwhile the working class must passively accept their medicine from Thatcher.

Recent events have shown that Kinnock and company will be as subordinate to the state as were their predecessors.

MI5 has no intention of waiting for any election results. The latest scandal demonstrates yet again that the state will continue to rule, whoever is elected. Workers must defend their rights to organise, demonstrate, strike, and picket — in opposition to the Tories and the capitalist state.

- We demand a full labour movement investigation and exposure of the security services — including their activity within the working-class movement.

- Callaghan, Wilson, Rees and all those involved in these events must be forced to speak out and say exactly what they know about state conspiracies against the working-class movement.

USDAW conference report & analysis

FEAR of the forthcoming General Election dominated the USDAW leaders at the Shopworkers ADM held in Blackpool last week.

One delegate summed it up when he said 'If we do well on 7 May then we'll get a later election.'

Using the prospect of a third term of Tory rule to whip the delegates into line, Sid Tierney (President) and Garfield Davies (General Secretary) attempted to suppress any criticism of the right wing policies of the Labour Party leadership.

In the name of unity, delegates who submitted resolutions mildly critical of the Labour and TU leadership came under heavy pressure to withdraw them.

In this they had the tacit backing of Militant and CP supporters who did their level best not to upset the apple cart.

On Monday afternoon Kinnock was brought before the conference. In a carefully orchestrated display he distinguished himself by speaking for an hour without making a single promise or policy commitment.

Delegates mistakenly believing that Kinnock was

BY ANDREW BURGIN

promising to lead the fight against Thatcher broke into a chorus of 'Here we go.'

Kinnock, wincing at this reminder of the miners strike steered the assembly into a rendering of 'We shall overcome' — in other words, the meek shall inherit the earth; wait for your turn and don't rock the boat.

During the subsequent debate on the Labour Party, Militant also excelled themselves. Not one of their supporters argued against a resolution calling for their expulsion from the Labour Party.

It was left to WRP members to speak out against the witch-hunt.

Militant's real role of providing a left cover for the right-wing expressed itself clearly on the question of the News International dispute and the anti-union laws.

They limited the debate on Wapping to the boycott campaign and attempted to sidestep the lessons of that strike by ignoring the role of

Dean and Dubbins nationally and the Stalinists at Wapping.

The broad left briefing, which is Militant-dominated, argued against support for a Booksellers branch resolution which called for non-compliance with the anti-union laws by stating that this demand was out of date.

Importantly the conference agreed not to support the new JTS schemes (Job Training Schemes) which are a continuation of the YTS slave labour schemes. At last years conference a resolution to withdraw from the YTS was only narrowly defeated. This year the Holmes Chapel Branch voicing the fierce opposition of many delegates to these government schemes, put forward a motion placing such restrictions on collaboration as to make them almost inoperable.

The young delegate stood her ground despite intense pressure from the platform to refer the motion, and was only narrowly defeated in the vote.

The conference was remarkable for the role taken by women, who have established active regional

women's committees despite some oppression by union officials.

A delegate from Gateway stores, who are closing 200 shops, demanded a national joint shop stewards' conference to fight job losses, and met an offhand response from the platform. 'While you're "taking it seriously"', she retorted from the floor, 'I'm losing my job.'

Women delegates objected to the inclusion of the motions on child abuse and matrimonial violence in the women's debate as though these were the responsibility of women alone. And many objected bitterly to those who left the hall for this session, which included some extraordinarily frank and moving contributions.

Women in the retail trade clearly see their union as the means of overcoming the oppression they are experiencing outside as well as inside the workplace.

The determination of the youth, especially, on these questions and in their battles with retail giants like Sainsbury's who are no less than Dickensian in outlook, signals the end of the quiet life for the USDAW leadership.

CSU want to merge

BY PETER BOWLER

THE Civil Service Union (CSU) conference has decided to merge with the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) and to establish a political fund within the union.

At its conference in the last week of April, the 30,000-strong union representing non-clerical and non-scientific grades within the Civil Service voted overwhelmingly to ballot its entire membership on these two major issues.

If the SCPS pass a parallel resolution at its own conference this week, there will be a ballot of 120,000 civil servants with a recommendation to establish a new National Union of Civil and Public Servants.

The CSU conference gave platform time to COSATU spokesman and South African railway worker Zola Zembre.

'It is an important thing to speak at conference,' he said. All other union conferences in Britain had relegated the black workers' representatives to fringe meetings.

Jo Richardson MP, speaking to a conference fringe meeting, outlined the Labour Party's plans to set up a Ministry of Women with a place in the Cabinet and a budget of £10 million.

Its principal task would be to monitor the actions of other government departments, to review equal rights legislation and to promote the interests of women.

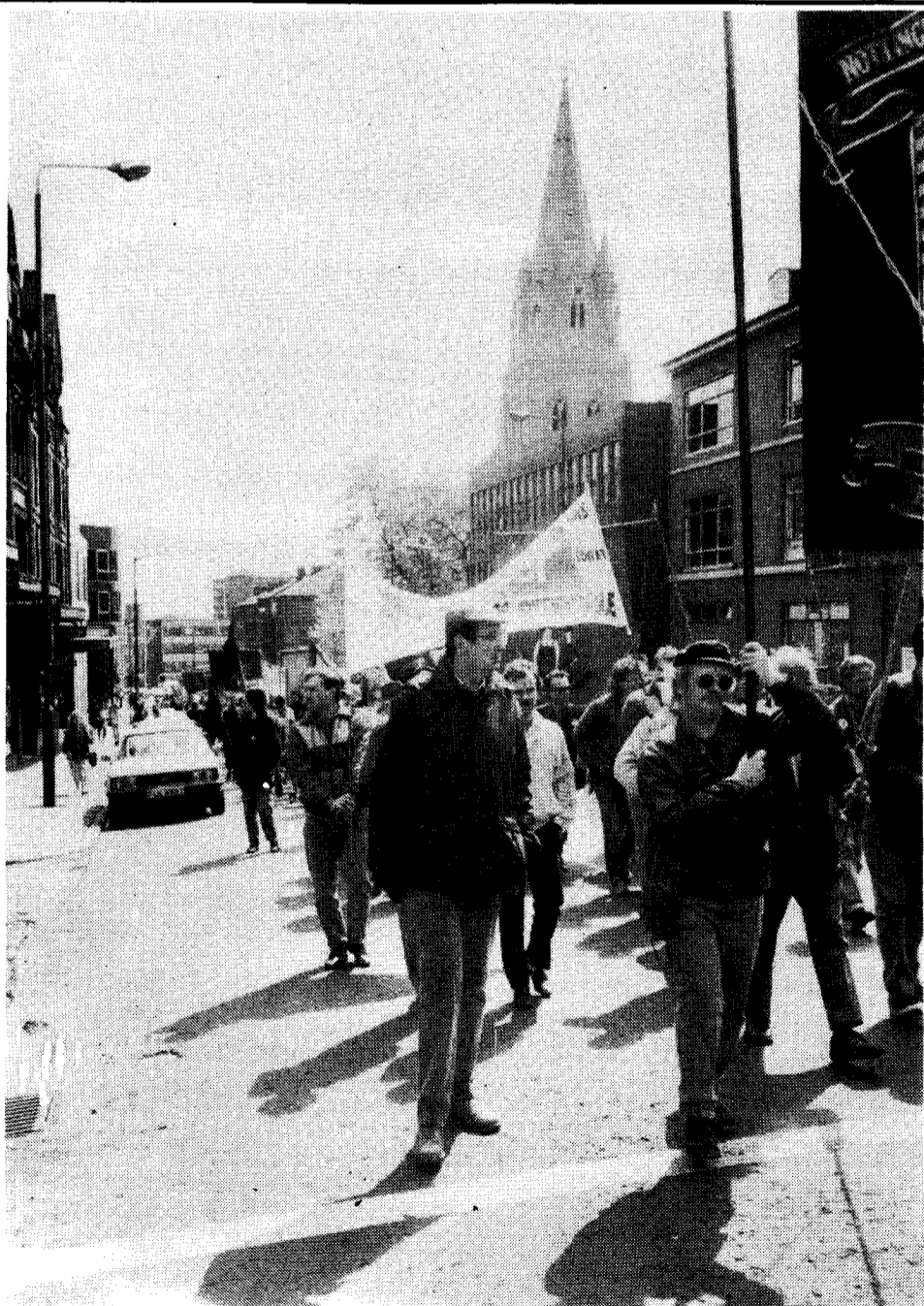
She also revealed that Labour budget plans made no financial provision to improve or extend 3- to 5-year-old nursery care. Like all Labour's socialism, it's one day over the rainbow.

How to be a Union Leader

BY NORMAN HARDING

RIGHT-WINGER John Raywood has lost his post as treasurer of the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA). He lost to Ms Chris Kirk, known in the union as a 'hard left'.

Don't shed any tears for



Nottingham Trades Council's May Day march last Saturday was mainly directed to supporting the locked-out Derby Trader workers

handshake plus a pension of £12,000 per year.

And the day he quits his job, does he still carry on his work for the union? Oh no, he starts a £25,000-a-year job as a liaison officer for Unity Trust — the labour movement bank.

Reading this in the press was the first time the

CPSA's 150,000 members heard of it. They receive an average of £85 a week, some getting as little as £63 a week.

The union is likely to reveal a £1.3 million deficit at its annual conference next month. With a trade union bureaucracy like this to fight who needs Thatcher?

McGahey supports six day working

SUPPORT for six-day working at the proposed Margam mine came from leading Communist Party member Mick McGahey at last week's South Wales NUM conference.

Retiring vice-president of the National Union, McGahey said: 'It's not just a narrow issue of Margam.'

'I've been to more than one area and I can assure you that many areas would welcome your problem,' he said.

'I would be remiss if the Scottish area offered £90 million to develop a pit in Scotland and I said "stuff it", without taking into consideration the community of Fife with the unemployment in the area.' Any area offered 800 jobs would be presented with this dilemma, he said.

Area President Des Duffield joined McGahey in attacking Scargill's refusal to accept British Coal's demands for six-day working in South Wales. Scargill had failed to find a replacement for the national conciliation machinery, and not being 'honest, realistic or consistent' in accepting new technology and its implications.

Duffield denounced as 'hysterical and mis-guided' criticism by the opponents of six-day working.

The Margam New Mine, the issue of six-day working, and the relation between the South Wales NUM and the national union dominated the conference.

Duffield has said the South Wales miners will adhere to decisions taken at the NUM's annual conference.

Renewed pressure from British Coal will inevitably push them along the road to federalism if the principled stand on and adherence to national union policy is not maintained.

BY TRAVIS GOULD

Duffield told the conference that if British Coal management tried to use the Margam issue to split the NUM, 'they will fail miserably'. National conference decisions 'must be accepted after discussion, as this is one of the democratic foundations of the union'.

To discuss shorter hours and higher wages is certainly not a betrayal, but to talk of extending the working days in any one week, even if a deal is struck to reduce the number of hours, is a retrograde step. This is contrary to NUM agreements. It would also reverse NUM policy to fight for a four-day week.

These issues will determine the union's future. They must be discussed and agreed nationally. For the South Wales executive to say they were only talking of the concept of six-day working and not actually agreeing to it; that five years time (when the pit is expected to be operational) is a long way off, and a lot of things can happen in the meanwhile; is opportunistic, and faces both ways.

This is exactly what Duffield accused the NUM of when he said it was 'tearing the union apart'.

Duffield spoke for the first time of the possibility of the project being scrapped. 'Should the coal board decide not to go ahead, then they must stand condemned and carry the major part of the responsibility of the loss of all the jobs involved.'

He explained how the



OVER 200 people rallied in Leicester last Saturday against a British National Party meeting in a local school addressed by their candidate in the local council elections. The BNP supporters were given police protection as they marched with billiard cues in cases held rifle-like to their shoulders. A number of anti-fascist protesters were arrested.

South Wales miners had kept their part of the bargain to ensure that Margam went ahead.

The board's three conditions were: six day working, government financing, and money from the EEC.

Duffield warned the board if the other conditions 'are not met then the whole basis of previous discussions is meaningless and I warn them now that if they think they can press their advantage further still by attempting to provoke a breakaway from the national union, then they will fail miserably as those others have failed before.'

The problem posed by Margam and the intransigence of the board is pulling the union apart in South Wales and to a certain degree nationally.

The basis for the preservation of the union as a national body is outright opposition to local deals and in particular the attempted imposition of six-day working at Margam. The road back to federalism is the last thing they want at Sardis Road.

Picket against racist council

SUPPORTERS of the Tower Hamlets Homeless Families Campaign and Unity Against Racism picketed Old Street Magistrates Court last Tuesday when three men appeared following a protest at a council meeting in the east London borough the previous week.

BY MARTIN WESTWOOD

racist immigration laws.

When the families finally are united, many find it virtually impossible to find proper accommodation.

Tower Hamlets lies in the path of advance of the financial district eastwards from the city. House prices have rocketed.

In desperation, many Bangladeshi families have turned to the council for emergency accommodation.

They then find themselves trapped in one room bed-and-breakfast accommodation a long way from the Brick Lane area where many of them would be able to find work.

The eviction decision follows the council's scheme to place homeless families on a boat moored in the Thames. Tower Hamlets council dropped the idea, but it has been taken up by the Tories as a 'prison hulk' for detaining new immigrants.

Now the council have decided to designate them as 'voluntary homeless', implying that they have homes — or something — to go 'back' to in Bangladesh.

This simple 'administrative decision' would enact

the 'repatriation' policy of the most rabid right-wing racials.

Already 42 families have had notices to leave their hotels, 40 of them from Bangladesh, and ten families have been turned into the street. There are another 958 families in council-provided bed-and-breakfast hotels.

Legal challenges are under way, but a packed and determined meeting of over 150 people last Saturday decided that they could place no confidence in these methods, and that a campaign must be mounted to drive the Liberals back.

The Homeless Families Campaign are fighting on an eleven-point programme of demands.

These include withdrawal of the threat of eviction from emergency accommodation. The campaign also demands that, like other councils, Tower Hamlets should devote at least 50 per cent of their available dwellings to the homeless.

The meeting also heard proposals to occupy the 3,000 empty properties in the borough under the direction and protection of the campaign, and appealing to tenants' associations for help and support, and to call upon NALGO members working for the council not to handle the eviction notices.

● Condemn the despicable racist decision of the Liberal council!

● Support the occupation of empty flats by those evicted; defend them against legal manoeuvres and racist attacks!

● Draw on the lessons of the Wapping dispute; build links with the Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group, already tested in struggle!

● Build defence committees around the occupied property, under the direction of the Unity Against Racism campaign.

● Labour councillors must disrupt the business of the council. No 'business as usual' while a single eviction notice is outstanding!

● Raise the issue in trade union branches and trades councils!

Wales TUC buries issues

LAST WEEK'S Welsh TUC conference buried every important problem facing the working class. It made out that everything in the garden is rosy and the Labour Party will march with the trade union movement to victory in a forthcoming general election.

The NUM's 'unity' motion, seconded by the EETPU, set tone for the entire conference.

Every motion committing the Wales TUC to a policy which might have rocked the boat even a little was defeated.

The motion calling on a future Labour government to return to public ownership all the industries privatised by the Tories since 1979 was defeated by about a three to one, although it was supported by the public sector unions NUPE and NALGO.

The only motion passed without general council approval was one from the South Glamorgan County Association of Trades Councils, opposing the Job Training Scheme in its entirety and calling on the general council to campaign against its use in Wales.

While there was very little criticism of the right wing leadership, Scargill came under heavy fire from the Wales TUC chairman Lyn Tregonning who said:

'The Wales TUC will not tolerate demagogues who cross our borders and accuse the finest body of men in the trade union movement, men who have had their bodies torn apart and their lungs filled with dust in the bowels of the earth, men who in my opinion by their courageous pragmatism during the miners' strike, saved the NUM nationally from being destroyed.'

'None should dare to call them collaborators; thousands of Welsh NUM pioneers must have turned over in their graves at that shameful unfounded accusation.'

Des Duffield, president of the South Wales miners, thanked the Wales TUC for their support over the Margam issue, and said the South Wales miners had tried to 'practice a little bit of socialism' and consider the interests of the unemployed.

TRADE UNIONISTS in the northern region have formed an organisation called Tyneside Anti-Apartheid Trade Union Committee which will oppose all attempts by the region's companies to maintain or create links with South Africa.

Included in a press release from the secretary of the region's National Union of Railwaymen is the following:

'Railwaymen in the north

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

east are disgusted at the news of the killing of our fellow workers in South Africa.

'This is clearly the act of a government which persists in the anti-trade union attitudes and brutal pursuits of apartheid.'

'We shall do all in our power to lend assistance to the South African railwaymen.'

Tyneside anti-apartheid

Campaign organiser Steve Bishop said: 'We will do all in our power to stop any South African imports coming into this country. We shall also be asking trade unionists to boycott any exports to the apartheid regime.'

Unions already affiliated to this campaign include: NUPE, NUT, GMBATU, T&GWU, ASTMS, UCATT, NUR, NUS and the northern region TUC.

Palestinians call for support

TWO Palestinians attended the recent conference of the National Union of Teachers on the invitation of the national executive. They came to seek support for the Palestinian cause, especially for those living in the occupied territories.

MARTIN RALPH, on behalf of Workers Press, interviewed Janul Shehada, general secretary of the General Union of Palestinian Teachers, and Yousef Allam of the Palestinian Trade Union Federation.

BY MARTIN RALPH

history can be found — defeats in battle and so on. Nothing is said about great events or great poets.

The military authorities can close a school or university at will.

Students are not supposed to be absent for more than 15 per cent of the time, but many students spend more than 15 per cent of their time in prison. They can be dismissed from the school or university for this.

Another trick happens over exams. Students are arrested during exam time so they miss some papers and cannot receive matriculation.

All teachers have to condemn the PLO or they are thrown out. Any book that mentions the PLO or Palestine is confiscated. Every year about 200 books are confiscated, and some teachers have to teach without books.

WP: What do you want the teachers in England to do?

JS & YA: Understand our conditions; inform students and pupils of the real situation; express solidarity with our actions; and remind the British people that they have a responsibility to correct the situation that they helped to create with the use of the British Mandate in the first place.

It is important to educate the teachers about the Palestinian situation and the solution — which is not a matter of merely sending money. There has to be a political solution.

We want the right of self-determination within an independent Palestinian state. We demand the right of the PLO to represent the people in any negotiations as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

We need to build links between the British trade unions and Palestinian trade unions by exchanging delegations from our countries. We would like to twin trade unions, schools, and towns.

Support for Medical Aid for Palestinians is also important. Projects for health, educations and trade unions should all be supported. This type of help would give mor-



al as well as practical support.

In this country you have facilities like TV, videos and computers. In the occupied territories we have nothing.

It is important to highlight the links between Israel and South Africa, as well as Israel's links with the Contras in Nicaragua. The same weapons that kill Nicaraguans and South Africans also kill Palestinians.

The Histadrut, the second largest employer in the country — it's in the armaments, steel and construction industries — refused to impose sanctions against South Africa. Its link with apartheid must be stopped.

Some British trade unions have links with the Histadrut. You cannot treat with oppressor and oppressed as the same.

An 'Education and Palestinians' group has been set up. Anyone in education is welcome to join. Its address is: 'Education and Palestinians', Ad Hoc Committee on Education and Palestinians, PO Box 196, London WC1X 0AT.



'Depriving the most vulnerable'

CUTS in free school meals and lack of welfare staff threaten the health of many of Britain's poorest children.

This warning comes from the Health Visitors' Association, which has held a major conference on schoolchildren's behaviour.

BY CLARE COWEN

Half a million children will lose free school meals from April next year. Families who now obtain free meals through family income supplement will receive a sum yet to be fixed when family credit replaces the benefit.

But the HVA fears the amount will be inadequate as 63 education authorities in England and Wales increased meal charges for primary schoolchildren in 1986 — and 26 of them charge more than 65 pence.

Authorities will be banned from giving free meals under discretionary schemes to children in low-income families which do not qualify for official help.

HVA school nurses' group spokesperson Penny Vine said:

'The government is committed to a national education curriculum — but not a national school health programme for children. More

— while in 1979 the figure was less than 900,000, under 12 percent of all schoolchildren.

● The school meals budget has been slashed by over a third, from £415 million in 1984/5 to £280 million in 1986/7.

● Nutritional standards for school meals were scrapped in 1980, despite evidence that this food provided a third of children's daily energy intake and the only decent meal for many deprived children.

● Hardly more than 3,000 school nurses cover 24,000 schools in England to fight the effects on children's health of mass unemployment, poverty and bad housing.

● Reports claim the numbers of school medical officers and children's doctors reflect wide regional differences and fail to meet growing demands.

school nurses are needed to ensure that all schoolchildren have their health checked every year.

'Rather than reduce support for school lunches, this support should be extended and breakfasts served for the mounting tide of children whose families cannot afford good diets.

'Instead, the government's measures are further depriving those who are most vulnerable.'

● Last year over 1.1 million schoolchildren ate free meals — almost one in five

SURVEYS conducted for the Medical Research Council show that children born in 1946 were healthier than the generation that followed them.

■ In the first generation 139 per thousand children aged up to four were admitted to hospital against 200 in the second generation.

■ Eczema was treated among 2.2 per thousand children in the first group and 12.3 per thousand in the second.

■ Among children aged up to four in the first group, 6.2 per thousand were treated for asthma, compared with 18.9 per thousand in the second group.

'I want my job back but not at that price'

TWO leaders of the Dunne's Stores, Dublin, anti-apartheid dispute are refusing to accept the condition — being enforced only at the Dublin branch — that they sign a contract to handle all goods at the shop in order to have their jobs back.

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

After two years on strike and 18 months on the picket line, the tiny handful of workers in Dunne's Stores succeeded in changing the laws of an entire country.

South African agricultural produce can no longer be sold in Ireland because of the tenacious struggle of the 11 Dunne's strikers.

But strike leader Catherine O'Reilly speaks with anger about the manager of Dunne's Stores.

When they went back to work in January this year, as the law came into effect, Dunne's asked them all to sign a new contract which included a statement that they would be prepared to

handle all of the goods in the store.

In Dunne's other 64 outlets in Ireland, no other worker had been asked to sign a contract with such a clause.

Under those terms seven went back, one is pursuing a case through an industrial tribunal because she was told that her job had gone while she was on strike, and two, Catherine O'Reilly and Liz Deasey, have refused to return.

Catherine O'Reilly told Workers Press: 'I want my job back, but not at that price.'

Because they have turned down the offer of reinstatement they are deemed to have made themselves 'intentionally redundant', and

will not receive dole for six weeks.

These women have endured great financial hardship over two years, not to mention the physical hardship of sustaining a picket line for 18 months with so few strikers, and so many police.

Despite this, and despite the prospects of further hardship that they face (Ireland is not the easiest place in the world to get a job) they have decided to stick out this principled question to the bitter end.

The issue the Dunne's strikers have raised is that although an employer owns your labour power for a certain portion of the day, he cannot force you to support the apartheid state.

They see it as raising a crucial issue for all workers, how to fight capitalism while forced through the necessity of survival to participate in it every day.

Brazil's 'favelas'

FROM SIMON PIRANI
IN LATIN AMERICA

SAO PAULO, Brazil.
24 April —
MOUNTED and foot
police armed with
teargas and batons
drove 95 families of
squatters off private
land in the Vila Sao
Jose - suburb
yesterday.

The invasion was
typical of the state
onslaught against the
millions of landless ex-
peasants, workers,
semi-proletarians and
unemployed who
struggle to survive on
the edges of Brazil's
bloated cities.

Police arrested 48 peo-
ple, many of them mem-
bers of the pro-Albanian
Communist Party of Bra-
zil, who organised the re-
sistance.

Hospitals reported 30 in-
jured policemen and 15 civi-
lians — no doubt many more
were hurt but refused proper
medical treatment for fear
of arrest.

Brazil's cities have under-
gone a population explosion
due to rapid industrialisa-
tion. Today three-quarters of
the population live in them:
in 1960 it was less than half.

House-building never kept
up with the influx from the
countryside. Construction
projects were left unfinished
as building companies col-
lapsed in the economic
slump of the 1970s.

Now millions live in *favel-
las*, huts made of corrugated
iron, wood, and a few bricks,
clinging to hillsides, strung
along the banks of muddy
streams, or packed into a
few metres of space on the
roadsides.

The contrast hits you in the
face: a minute's walk from
the *favelas* are the mansions
of the middle-class and
bourgeoisie with high walls,
swimming pools, beautiful
gardens and armed private



Mounted Military Police charge squatters in Vila Sao Jose

guards permanently on duty.

But the dispossessed shanty-dwellers are only now winning the right to electricity, to water, or to a single public telephone for an entire mini-town, after demonstrations and battles with the authorities.

These are the 'lucky' ones: others like the Vila Sao Jose squatters don't yet have a roof over their heads.

Brazil's gigantic industrial expansion has done nothing to alleviate grinding poverty. Foreign investment, sky-

scrapers, cosmetics and expensive consumer goods are cheek-by-jowl with homelessness, dirt, insanitation . . . and hunger.

Official figures say that 80 per cent of the population is under the minimum level of nutrition.

One-third of the economically-active population earn less than \$45 per month, the minimum legal wage, and three-quarters earn less than \$135.

But the maximum legal rent for a family dwelling

has just increased from \$130 to \$230. To feed a family of four on the minimum — rice and beans — for a month costs about \$100.

Poverty

For the Trotskyists of the *Convergencia Socialista*, Brazilian section of the International Workers League (Fourth International), the paralysing poverty is not a cause for despair but for intensifying the political fight

inside the unions, where most of their work is done.

'Everywhere in the world there are starvation wages. Workers produce more and receive less,' says a recent IWL(FI) manifesto. 'There is one means by which this tragedy we are living in can be ended: the revolutionary struggle of the workers, youth, women and oppressed nationalities.'

These simple realities must never be forgotten by Trotskyists in the European

countries, where the working class has beaten poverty back through years of struggle.

A real understanding of the working class in the semi-colonies, and not just reading documents, is vital for the success of the International Conference to Reorganise the Fourth International, in which the Workers Revolutionary Party is involved together with the IWL(FI) and other organisations.



MPs drag women and children out of their recently-built home in Itaim Paulista, Sao Paulo

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SJAMBOK ELECTION, GENERAL STRIKE!

THOUSANDS of Black workers in South Africa responded to a general strike call from trade unions and democratic opposition last week as Botha's ruling National Party sought a vote of confidence from the all-white electorate.

The strike, solidly backed by residents of the sprawling Soweto township, reinforced existing rail and post struggles and brought Johannesburg and other cities to a halt.

It came after a week of brutal police repression against trade unionists, and a day when helmeted riot police wielding sjamboks (heavy whips) invaded the Witwatersrand university campus to stop a meeting that was to have been addressed by Winnie Mandela.

The police attacked several times, at one point firing tear gas at a line of teaching staff who had interposed themselves between police and students.

Running battles developed as students shouting 'fascist bastards' threw stones, but the better-armed and trained police, with riot shields, got the better of it. Over 120 students were arrested.

Winnie Mandela said of the day's repression, 'This is typical of South Africa'.

On May Day, about 200 police with guns and sjamboks broke up a rally in the Lenasia, Indian district by Soweto.

Earlier that week, armed police stormed the Johannesburg headquarters of the Congress of South African

Trade Unions (COSATU), and set dogs on striking railway workers meeting outside.

In true Gestapo-style, the whole block had been cordoned off by armed police while the raid took place.

Inside the building, the police fired tear gas canisters to clear out trade unionists who were singing freedom songs and refusing to leave.

The racist authorities have put around a story that four railwaymen whose bodies were found had been beaten up as seabs inside the union headquarters before being taken away and murdered.

COSATU has angrily denied this, and ordered its own investigation into the men's deaths. Eleven COSATU members were arrested on 29 April on suspicion of involvement, but another body was found a few days later.

The massive response to the political strike call by a wide cross-section of African workers is the surest sign that the racist regime's days are numbered, whatever the white voters decide.



Armed policemen leading away a student at the University of Cape Town, where students prevented security police from arresting South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union shop steward Morris Ndou last week

Reagan wants more aid to Contras

UNITED STATES President Ronald Reagan, accused of ordering the conspiracy to illegally fund right-wing Contras fighting Nicaragua, wants to increase official US aid to them now.

Leading Republican party

fund-raiser Carl R. Channel, guilty of tax fraud in connection with Contra-funding, was regularly in touch with Reagan on his efforts.

Ex-ambassador to Costa Rica Lewis Tams has insisted everything he and other officials did to help the Contras while aid was offi-

cially banned by Congress was done on White House orders.

Senator Daniel Inouye, leading the Senate investigation, says all the evidence shows Reagan knew exactly what was going on, and was 'in command'. And a poll shows 65 per cent of Americans believe their President

lied about the Iran-Contragate scandal.

Nothing daunted, Reagan now says millions more aid should go to the Contras, whose latest victims include American engineer Benjamin E. Linder, killed while working on a construction site in Nicaragua.

ARGENTINA: North's lie machine falters

BY BOB ARCHER

'A LIE can get half way around the world before the truth can get its boots on', Trotsky used to say about the Stalinist slanders during the Moscow Trials.

Now the Trotskyists of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) in Argentina face a worldwide campaign of slanders — at the hands of the so-called 'International Committee of the Fourth International' of P.Schwarz, D.Hyland and company.

Rebellion

During the recent army rebellion in Argentina, the MAS:

- Called for a united general strike to fight against the military;
- Went to the factories for a mass turn-out to flood the centres of the major cities with demonstrators and surround the barracks of the rebellious units;
- Joined with the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in rejecting President Alfonsin's 'Act of Democratic Compromise';
- Together with the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo led a walk out of the Plaza de Mayo under the

slogans: 'No negotiations! Smash the rebellion!'

How are these events reported in 'Neue Arbeiterpresse', newspaper of North's West German supporters?

In the issue of 24 April 1987 (page 3) the 'Neue Arbeiter-

presse' claims, in an unsigned report:

'However, all the "left" parties, including the centrist MAS of the late Nahuel Moreno, instead of doing so (ie. calling for the setting up of soviets) gathered to support the regime in the Plaza

de Mayo under the slogan of "Democracy or Dictatorship".

'Meanwhile President Alfonsin once more called on all the opposition parties and trade union leaders to support his government. In front

of the TV cameras all of them — with the exception of the organisation of the 'Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo' — signed the "Act of Democratic Compromise", a sort of declaration of subordination to the bourgeois state.'

The reader is left with the firm impression that the MAS supported the 'Democracy or Dictatorship' slogan (a lie) and signed the 'Act of Democratic Compromise' (another lie) and abandoned the Mothers (a third lie).

The trouble with sectarians...

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

THEY SAY if you want to be a good liar you must have a good memory. But supporters of a sectarian outfit like the North-led International Committee of the Fourth International are expected to be conveniently forgetful.

So readers of the 'Neue Arbeiter Presse' distorted version of what happened in Argentina had better not recall what they might have read in North's own twice-weekly 'Bulletin'.

On 21 April, in a front-page lead on Argentina, continued on page 4, Bill Vann says 'the masses of workers turned out in their hundreds of thousands throughout the country, demonstrating their fearless determination to prevent a return to the butchery, repression and mass impoverishment of the years of dictatorship.'

On 24 April, Vann says '... what forced the end of the coup was the spontaneous mobilization of the working class which was prepared to move against the military if Alfonsin did not.'

Vann goes on to quote a 'Washington Post' editorial: 'The size and fervour of the public demonstrations supporting Mr Alfonsin suggest that if his nerve had failed, and if the rebels had actually attempted to take over the government, the country might well have slid towards civil war.'

Plotters

Getting carried by this fervour himself, Vann goes on 'under conditions, we might add, in which the working class would quickly have hanged the plotters from lampposts, wiped out the military, and then overthrown Alfonsin himself and

established a proletarian dictatorship in Argentina.'

Allowing for the colourful imagery (we think the Argentine workers would probably find a way of disposing of right-wing officers that did not clutter up the Buenos Aires street lighting and spoil the neighbourhood), Bill Vann's confidence in the working class is welcome.

But hang on. At the end of each article we find the customary call to build a revolutionary party, a 'section of the International Committee of the Fourth International', which is 'a life and death question'.

But if the working class can not only defeat a military coup plot by 'spontaneous mobilisation', but apparently go on to install the proletarian dictatorship too, why does it so desperately need a revolutionary party?

And what of the existing Trotskyist movement in

Argentina? Vann presumably knows there is one, whether he likes to recognise it as such or not, because his paper has been busy attacking this movement, the MAS, for alleged 'betrayal' for some weeks now.

Only now when the MAS has been playing a leading part in mobilising workers against the military, the 'Bulletin' writer confines himself to attacking the Peronistas and Stalinists for signing Alfonsin's pact. In his lengthy articles, he cannot bring himself to give the MAS one column-inch, let alone mention that it refused to sign.

Silence

Maybe Vann felt that rather than tell the kind of lies the North group would expect of him, it was better to stay silent?

North's ICFI has previously attacked the MAS for tak-

ing part in a mass demonstration together with the Communist Party, omitting to say that the demonstration was against an amnesty for military torturers.

Now Schwarz attacks them for taking part in what according to Vann was a 'spontaneous mobilization' presaging revolution.

Leaving them to sort this out, we can only conclude that one great advantage the Argentine working class has is the absence of a section of the 'International Committee of the Fourth International', which would have told Marxists to stay away from these mass actions, probably up to and including the revolution itself.

Our solidarity goes out to the real Trotskyists in Argentina, our comrades of the MAS, who are building a revolutionary party in the thick of the workers' struggle. Something sectarians can never do.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

RELEASE MOUSTAPHA TOURÉ!



TRADE UNIONISTS in Africa and Europe are joining in a campaign to demand the release of Senegalese transport workers' leader Moustapha Touré and 12 of his colleagues.

Brother Touré, General-Secretary of the Senegalese Transport Workers Union, and the other 12, have been sentenced to two years jail for 'interfering with the right to work'.

It has been reported recently that the authorities intend moving the imprisoned trade unionists to a jail 250 miles from Dakar, the capital.

The background to their jailing was that union members asked for backing in a dispute with road haulage bosses, as some employers had paid no wages for months, nor made any social security contributions for the men.

The union agreed to back

its members, and the drivers removed the keys and licence plates from their vehicles to prevent scabbing.

The union officers were then charged with interfering with the 'right to work'.

There have been several reports in recent years from such bodies as Amnesty International of prisoners being ill-treated and tortured in Senegal jails. The removal of the trade unionists from the capital raises fears that they could be in danger.

This makes added reason for letting the Senegalese authorities know that trade unionists internationally are watching, and want Touré and his comrades free.

Berlin barricades

WEST BERLIN police occupied the city's Kreuzberg district in force last weekend after breaking through barricades erected by demonstrators.

About 1,000 police went into the area, where over 50 people had been arrested in clashes on Saturday. Heavy patrols continued through the district.

US President Reagan is due to visit West Berlin in about a month's time, and US security officials have been briefing the police on measures they want taken against the Left to pre-empt any demonstrations.

The trouble began on the Friday when police staged a provocative raid on premises used by the Census Bureau Information Office, where local groups had been preparing opposition to a coming census.

The police confiscated thousands of leaflets calling for a boycott of the 25 May census, first in 17 years. Left-wing groups suspect in-

formation collected in the census may be used by the state for repressive measures against squatters and others.

There were clashes later at a May Day street festival organised by the Socialist Unity Party (pro-Moscow Stalinists) and the radical Alternative List party. A police car was overturned.

The police did not blame the two parties for the violence, but complained that events like the street festival attracted people opposed to the system.

'LIBYA' PRETEXT FOR N.Z. SECURITY TALKS

LABOUR governments in Australia and New Zealand have discovered a new 'threat' in the Pacific. Not French colonialism and nuclear tests, the huge US nuclear fleet and widespread bases, nor Japanese rearmament, but 'Libyan activities'.

Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden flew to Palmerston North airbase, on New Zealand's North Island, on 1 May, for nine hours of secret talks with NZ Prime Minister David Lange.

Hayden told Canberra MPs on his return that the main reason for the excursion was concern over what the Libyans were doing.

He declined to give any details of intelligence material that Australian ministers had reportedly received earlier in the week.

Libya is known to be developing its ties with Vanuatu and other Pacific island states. The Kanak liberation movement in New Caledonia have denied seeking Libyan arms.

In the past, Colonel Gaddafi backed Moslem insurgents in the Philippines, and there are reports now of encouragement to some groups fighting for liberation from the Indonesian dictatorship.

The Hawke government in Australia has decided to send a senior official touring the South Pacific warning governments against dealings with Libya.

Tory Threat

THE ONLY threat to New Zealand recently came not from Gaddafi but from British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe.

Attacking the Labour government's anti-nuclear stance, the Tory minister angered New Zealanders by accusing them of 'freeloading' by leaning on US and British strength for their security.

This evoked feelings about how many times Australian and New Zealand lives have been sacrificed for US and British wars, as well as prompting Prime Minister Lange to accuse Howe of 'meddling' in New Zealand politics.

Howe had told the New Zealanders that if they did not abandon their anti-nuclear policy, New Zealand's exports would not have access to the EEC. This continues the Thatcher government's line-up with France and the US against New Zealand.

The Hawke government has already abandoned previous policy pledges by allowing exports of uranium to France and other countries to resume.

What makes the new concern about Libyan activity odd is that to date, the one case of proven state-terrorism perpetrated in New Zealand was the 'Rainbow Warrior' bombing, carried out by French intelligence.

And the one case of subversion and threatened military action against an Australian government was when Gough Whitlam's Labour government was brought down in the famous 'Canberra Coup'.

The aggressors in that case were the British state, the American CIA, and their collaborators in Australia's own 'security services' — the very services to which the Hawke government is now apparently listening in its Libya scare.

Vote early, vote often

DETAILED study of **INDONESIAN** government's election success this month shows a 327.26 per cent voter turnout in one mountainous area of occupied east Timor, and a 568.39 per cent poll in an East Kalimantan (Borneo) constituency.

Polish police crackdown

POLICE in Poland celebrated May Day this year by attacking demonstrators in several cities, and arresting hundreds.

At least 20 people were injured in Wroclaw, where police waded in only three minutes after a march had begun, beating people about the kidneys. There were 150 arrests in the city, a stronghold of the outlawed Solidarnosc unions.

There were more arrests in Poznan, while in Warsaw about a dozen Solidarnosc supporters leaving a church after Mass were attacked by plainclothed security police as they tried to put up their banners. One young man needed treatment.

Ironically, the Warsaw demonstrators' banners used quotations from a recent VIP visitor, Mikhail Gorbachev, such as 'We need democracy as we need fresh air.'

In Gdansk, about 500 Solidarnosc supporters gathered after Mass, but Lech Walesa refused to lead a march, saying he would not lead people against tanks.

Attacking the Stalinist bureaucracy, those 'who call themselves workers' but were fearful of society, Walesa said:

'Those who see themselves as the vanguard of humanity have to hide behind cordons of police.'

More than a dozen Solidarnosc activists had been rounded up in Warsaw and other cities on Thursday and were detained for 48 hours. Police were out in force, some in full riot gear, in all cities.

Some local observers said

it was a quiet May Day this year. 'Order reigns in Warsaw', as the saying used to be after Czarist repressions.

About 200 people were arrested on the Sunday, as people demonstrated to mark Polish Constitution Day, anniversary of the 1791 independent Polish constitution.

The main arrests were in Krakow, where plainclothes SB men grabbed banners, and hit people with the poles. As the march continued down Wawel hill, ZOMO (riot police) made a full-scale charge to break it up.

In the textile town of Lodz, police dispersed a crowd that had gathered to lay a wreath at the monument to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, hero of the 18th century national struggle.

Hired thugs attack women

BY TRUDI JACKSON

THE German-owned garment manufacturing company, Adler, which operates in South Korea under the name 'Flair Fashion', is using hired thugs to beat up striking women workers.

In the 'Free Production Zone' all strike action is illegal.

Over a fortnight ago, 300 women workers aged between 17 and 25 used their morning tea break to discuss their bad wages and conditions. They earn between 15p-25p an hour and have to work a 72 hour week.

The women demanded a 16 per cent increase and punctual payment. The bosses replied with a lock-out and the women counter-attacked by occupying the factory.

Then the German bosses employed a hired gang to beat the peaceful women out of the factory. Eleven women and two men who had led the strike were sacked immediately. One woman was beaten up so badly she has been hospitalised ever since.

The strike leaders are all blacklisted and will never find work again.

Another demonstration to reinstate the sacked workers was answered with ten arrests. The bosses have threatened to close the factory altogether and re-open it in Sri Lanka where wage levels are even lower.

Trade unions in Germany are saying 'It is unacceptable that a rich German manufacturer is crushing human rights and answers the just demands of workers with the most naked, brutal violence.'

Mass arrests in S. Korea

SOUTH KOREAN police arrested more than 100 workers and students in the capital, Seoul, last week after saying they had a tip-off that workers from an industrial district there were planning a demonstration.

The police claimed to have confiscated petrol bombs as well as political leaflets.

A couple of days earlier, liberal oppositionists had formed a new party, the Reunification Democratic Party, urging the government to accept 'dialogue' aimed at 'democratisation, which could resolve the existing political crisis in our nation.'

The new party replaces the New Korea Democratic Party, which collapsed in April after some elements chose compromise on constitutional demands.

Korea's President Chun Doo Hwan has said he won't re-open constitutional talks, and the regime is keeping opposition leader Kim Dae Jung under house arrest.

WALDHEIM GOES EAST



AUSTRIA'S Chancellor Kurt Waldheim, banned from the United States as an 'undesirable alien' because of allegations about his Nazi past, has been invited to visit Hungary next year.

Former UN Secretary Waldheim has been accused of helping send thousands of Greek Jews to Nazi death camps, and atrocities against Yugoslav partisans.

The invitation from Hungary's Foreign Minister Varkonyi came in the same week that the Hungarian Stalinist press published accusations against opposition elements of having 'Western connections'.

'Send Gunships' — Aquino NPA USES BULLET AND BALLOT

PHILIPPINES President Corazon Aquino is calling for more US military aid to crush communist insurrection on the islands.

Addressing troops at Villamor air base, wealthy landowner Aquino complained that she had asked the United States 'time and again' for at least 120 helicopter gunships and other equipment.

About 16 government soldiers were killed last week when their convoy was ambushed south-east of Manila. They were on their way to reinforce a detachment besieged by left-wing guerillas.

While the New People's Army (NPA) is continuing the war in the countryside, the working class is organising in the cities, despite intimidation from the bosses and right-wing terrorism against trade unionists.

More than 20,000 workers took part in a May Day march through Manila, and denounced the 'liberal' Aquino government's failure to raise wages and living standards.

Trade union leaders boycotted an official reception laid on by Mrs Aquino.

The Left-wing Partido Ng Bayan (People's Party),

formed last August, is standing candidates in the elections on 11 May, seven for the 24 Senate seats and 104 for 200 lower house constituencies.

It's the first time the Left has been able to take part since 1946, when six Communist Party members were elected to congress but barred from taking their seats.

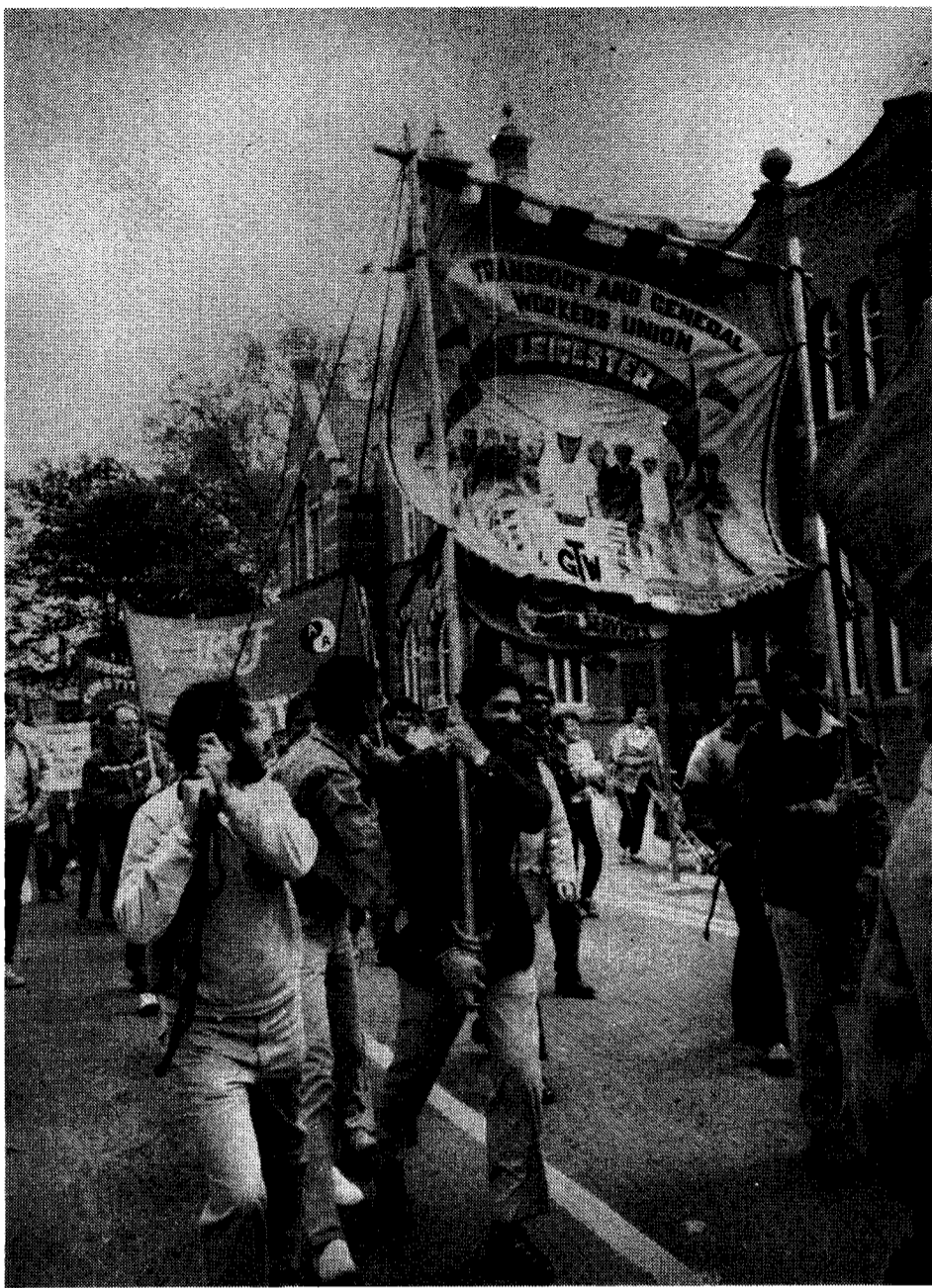
Among the seven standing for Senate are New People's Army founder Bernabe Buscayno, and ex-beauty queen Nelia Sancho who caused a sensation by joining the guerillas in the 1970s, and is now a leading activist in the women's movement.

All seven served time in jail under dictator Marcos, as did People's Party chair Fidel Agcaoli, who did ten years. Agcaoli says the movement has decided against boycotting elections because the Aquino government had gained some credibility among the people.

But the new party has no illusions that its aims of land reform, independence and social justice can be achieved through the existing parliamentary set-up.

'The problem of Philippines society is systemic', Fidel Agcaoli says, 'A Congress set up by the ruling classes will not bring about changes.'

MAY



LEICESTER Labour Party Young Socialists organised a march against racism last Saturday. Above: Dunlop workers carry the T&GWU banner



AMONG the the many colourful marches and demonstrations last Saturday was one in south London organised by the Hanger's Dispute Committee (above). The march went from Putney Heath to Bishop's Park, Fulham, for a meeting addressed by several speakers, including MP Alf Dubbs and Peter Hain.

Workers at J. Hangers, the artificial limb-making factory, Roehampton, have been on strike since last October over company plans to cut the work-force drastically and introduce speed-up. The banners and delegations on the march reflected the widespread support the

Hangers strikers have. Peter McCarthy, a left-wing MP, told Workers Press that present negotiations for the re-opening of the workforce. He stressed the importance of union rights in the fact. 'If the offer is accepted, the truth about the plight of the company and the DHS will become apparent,' he said. 'It is an offer where approximately 50% of the workforce will be reinstated. A work-



Glasgow' looks to — and t

BY HILARY HORROCKS

LAST Sunday's May Day rally in Glasgow began with a commemoration of the city's first labour martyrs, 190 years ago.

Six weavers from Calton — then a village on Glasgow's eastern outskirts — were shot by troops in September 1797 during a demonstration against the cutting of their wages.

Many of the weavers — the first body of workers in Glasgow to organise together to withdraw their labour — were exiled from Scotland, and one of their leaders was publicly whipped through the streets of Edinburgh.

Transport union leader Ron Todd, main speaker at the weekend rally, said little had changed for the labour movement in 200 years. The South African authorities were shooting strikers, and the state could adopt such methods in Britain itself 'if we are stupid enough to let it'.

DAY

Mayday! Mayday! Save our hospital!

THE fight for Ancoats hospital was at the centre of Manchester's May Day celebrations this year.

The May Day march began from the hospital, which local people have occupied to fight closure.

As the marchers wound their way through local estates, led by a Scottish band, the whole neighbourhood supported them.

At the city centre there were speeches from local MPs and MEPs about Tory cuts and steel and brass bands.

Workers Press spoke to Pat, who is active in the occupation. She had been up all night guarding the

Casualty Department but wouldn't go home for even one hour's rest, as she said she would fall asleep and not wake up in time for the march.

'We're halfway through the occupation now', she said 'When we first started we held out a faint chance that we would win. But now, after all this time, we're determined to get the casualty department back.'

The effect of closure was likely to be serious, she said. 'I know plenty of people who have suffered nasty cuts and because of the distance they now have to travel to Manchester Royal Infirmary or North Manchester hospital. They won't go.'

'My son, for instance, who is 18, has had a bad cut and it has been

bleeding badly. But he won't go to the hospital for treatment.

'At 4a.m. this morning someone came here pouring with blood but we couldn't help. People who go to Manchester Royal, over the other side of town, have been known to have to wait four or five hours before getting treatment.

'We've had support from Manchester City Council and from the unions. But we need more local support. People feel very strongly about the closure in this area, and everybody is welcome to come here.

'We're just asking for people, nothing else. A lot of people think we're breaking the law, but we're not. We're fighting for our hospital.

'I'd like to take Mike Brown, the Chief Administrator of the North Manchester Health Authority, down to Manchester Royal Infirmary to see the Casualty Department. When I went down I couldn't believe my eyes. They treat you like cattle if they know you're from Ancoats.

'We want our casualty department back. When it's open again they can make it even better than it was before. It's only ten years old now.'



won in their campaign. Under the sacked men, there was a possibility with ACAS may lead to factory with a small the question of trade try, if this were to occur. Peter said, 'very soon of the patients which the collusion have hidden. The company has made ately £700,000 would be sacked men — but no with 40 years service

would get a maximum of £4,500.

Parent company BTR's profit for 1985/86 was £554 million. Roehampton, where the artificial limbs are made, produced approximately 500 limbs per week. Since the sackings 380 limbs per week have gone astray. This gives some idea of the suffering to patients involved.

Cathy Wilson is a Liverpool Labour Party councillor and herself has an artificial limb. She pointed out that 'mobility is a human right' and she was 'proud to be associated with a group of workers involved in the struggle against BTR' who were, she said, a 'disgrace'.



LONDON's May Day march last Friday had a number of international contingents, including Turkish and Kurdish sections, who added unaccustomed colour (above) to the evening's events!

May Day the past the future

In a speech which continually blamed the trade union movement and not its leadership for the outcome of the miners' and printers' dispute, Todd warned that the Tories intended not to smash the unions but to render them utterly subservient, 'like Hitler needed them in Nazi Germany'.

Referring to the 'tactical voting' for Alliance candidates recently proposed by Eric Hobsbawm in 'Marxism Today', Todd condemned 'those faint hearts who don't have the stomach for a fight'.

Harry McShane, veteran of the 'Red Clydeside' labour struggles of the 1920s and 1930s, spoke firmly from the rally platform despite his 96 years.

'I attended my first May Day celebration before the First World War', he said. 'This may be my last. But others must continue until the working class can take control of what is theirs'.

Todd and others on the platform paid demagogic tribute to the Caterpillar workers. But it was left to members of the Caterpillar Occupation Support Group, in leaflets specially prepared for the rally, to point out the treacherous role in the dispute of the local and national trade union bureaucracy.



WAPPING: Last Sunday the Tower Hamlets Support Group and Women Against Murdoch organised a rally and march round Fortress Wapping. Police made an ineffective attempt to stop the 'illegal' march. They made one arrest just before the march dispersed, but released the demonstrator after cautioning him.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VINCE DONNELLY

Control units and prisoners-of-war

WHAT is the aim of the new control units in prisons, given that there will eventually be a public outcry and ultimately they will be closed? I think the government will be happy enough to get say two years out of them as opposed to the nine months they achieved in 1974/75.

They will totally crack all the known 'hard men' and return them to the system 'cabbaged', as a deterrent to all would-be subversives.

The major advances by prisoners in recent legal cases are some form of defence against totalitarian regimes, but it has to be assumed that the government has worked out ways to get around this.

There is a system where bishops, TUC representatives, local councillors and MPs are supposed to make regular visits to check against torture. But this does not work because they are hand-picked for the job and are almost all secret supporters of the regime. Where are these people in Scotland at the present time?

Prisoners can disappear for long periods. It happens all the time, and these units were all built well away from the main wings.

The rules say that screws are supposed to be rotated after a year to avoid 'heavy gangs' building up but one officer has been in Leeds for 9 years and another for 4 years.

Known thugs in uniform move around the system from block to block. For instance Barry Prosser's assailant was involved in the heavy regime at Wandsworth two-and-a-half years

ago where there were daily assaults and body belts.

Albany has now taken over from Wakefield as the dustbin of the system. Privileges are at a minimum and a special heavy gang is at work. Foreigners in particular come in for all sorts of abuse. Food is interfered with.

At Leeds the brutality is brutal and regular.

A prisoner is taken from his cell, usually thrown down the stairs, kicked by each passing officer and finally given another lot by the block staff.

His food is under quota, the cells are without heating of any sort and the tiles are ripped off floors to make the cells colder.

A special noisy fan is under the floor of the strong box and cold air is blown into the cell under pressure.

Since the 1983 Mental Health Act drugs can no longer be forced on an inmate.

This has given way to increased use of body belts and restrictive clothing. Inmates are kept in the 'box' for weeks on end, often in body belts.

New officially approved 'holds' have been introduced to subdue recalcitrant inmates. This is all a load of bullshit as they still do what they have traditionally done — kick the shit out of you.

A doctor is supposed to visit the block every day but in Albany you have to make an application.

A common occurrence in all 'kicking blocks' is that the doctor does not appear for days on end.

This sort of thing can only occur with approval from on high.

When I had blood flowing freely from my ear after a kicking the doctor diagnosed 'infection' and prescribed eardrops!

Stammerheim in Germany (where Andreas Baad-

PART II

IN LAST week's Workers Press, VINCE DONNELLY, an IRA volunteer at the moment doing life in Wormwood Scrubs, told PHIL PENN about the special efforts being made to try and destroy the Irish prisoners. In Wormwood Scrubs they have been subjected to special, provocative searches, and all the signs point to the reintroduction of the torture cells of the Special Control Units which were used for a short time in the 1970s.

er and Ulrike Meinhof of the Red Army Fraction were held) was co-designed by a German builder and a Brit psychologist.

Techniques have improved since then — which enable inmates to commit suicide (a la Meinhof).

We have found from experience that at any given time a certain local nick will be designated as the kicking nick.

When it comes to public notice, for instance when an assault case comes to a county court, then the reg-

ime shifts to another nick.

These have been variously **Strangeways, Durham, Dartmoor, Winson Green, Lincoln, Wandsworth and Leeds**, though there have been others for shorter intervals.

The 'liedown' period has been increased officially to 56 days but is often extended illegally for months.

On liedown, which is not technically a punishment, a prisoner is removed to another prison without being given any reason, and kept in solitary confinement for a

fixed period.

However, one has only to ask the visiting committee who signed the extension — and, bingo, off you go the next day to a fresh 56 days in newer surroundings.

This system is used frequently to boost the promotion prospects of 'security' staff.

Reports go off to the Home Office boasting of 'foiled plots' and 'escapes' as the reason the prisoner is on liedown.

The security Principal Officer at Wakefield openly bragged about this to me in 1979.

He is now of course a Chief!

About 50 per cent of the population in the dispersals are now 'nonces' (sex offenders). Rather than being treated roughly, as the media would have us believe, these prisoners are the blue-eyed boys of the system and get all the top jobs.

Thump a nonce and you will be in the block for months on end. Let a nonce thump you and you will still be in the block!

The system uses the threat of violence elsewhere to keep the nonces in line and to act as informers and generally patrol the system.

Every time I read about a rapist in the paper and it says the inmates will sort the bastard out I feel like spewing, not so much at the offence but at the hypocrisy of those who know differently.

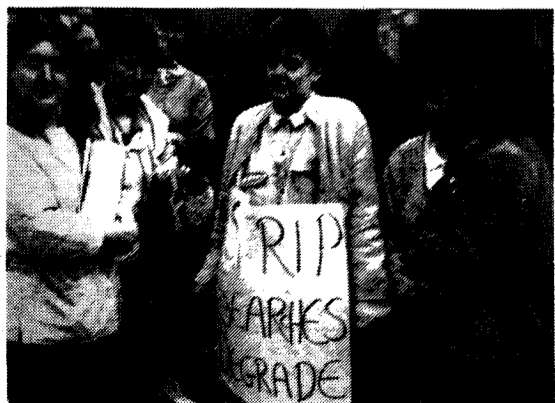
● The POWs, political prisoners and those who are prepared to stand up for their rights on a regular basis are being increasingly isolated. The fight going on inside must get the support from those on the outside. Next week Vince tells of the attempt on his life by a prisoner who was sent to kill him.

Part III next week



END IMPERIALIST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN National Demonstration

DURHAM



Saturday 13 June, 2p.m.
Coaches meet Student Union, Denelm House, New Elvet
STOP STRIP SEARCHES IN MAGHABERRY & DURHAM

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.
NOEL GIBSON, Life sentence, 879225.

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

PETER SHERA, Life sentence, B75880.
WAKEFIELD
HM Prison, Love Lane Wake-

field, W Yorks. WF2 9AG
HUGH DOHERTY, Life sentence, 338636.
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, 341418.
SEAN HAYES, 20-year sentence, 341418.

WANDSWORTH
SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
RONNIE McCARTNEY, Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE, Life sentence, 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL, Life sentence, 338635.
ROY WALSH, Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave. Braxside, Durham
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, Life sentence, 119083.
BRENDAN DOWD, Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES, Life sentence, 119034.
CON McFADDEN, 20-year sentence, 130662.
EDDIE O'NEILL, 20-year sentence, 135722.

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

WORMWOOD SCRUBS
HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE
DONAL CRAIG, 4 years.
VINCE DONNELLY, Life sentence, 274064.

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

REMAND PRISONERS: BRIXTON
HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, London SW2 5XF.
MICHAEL J McKENNEY, L46486 has now got 16 year sentence.
DANNY McNAMEE, L46486
JAM McOOTER, L583630
PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, L583630

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, 509497, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.
PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.
They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson indefinite detention.

SIX YEARS ON:

Greenham women stand firm

BY TONY GODFREY

THE WOMEN'S Peace Camp at Greenham Common — despite nearly six years of harassment by government, law, police, bailiffs, right-wing residents' groups and gangs of local vigilantes — continues to exist, defying all attempts to break it up.

Greenham was established as an airbase during World War II, when it was sold to the US Air Force for a pittance, although it was on common land.

The government got away with this act of piracy and deprived us all of an area of great beauty. It has remained a military installation to this day.

Cruise

It functions as part of the US commitment to NATO at RAF Greenham Common, operating as the 501st Tactical Missile Wing, guarded by the RAF Battalion, US NATO personnel, and Ministry of Defence police. It is more com-



Despite six years of harassment the women remain defiant

monly known, along with Molesworth, as a cruise missiles base.

The campaign against its use as a base for cruise has always been one initiated and led by women. Blockades were organised as long ago as March 1981, during the base's construction, when various camps were established.

The permanent camp, as it survives today, began at the end of a march from Cardiff by 40 women and four men, organised by Anne Pettit because she wanted to inspire 'women, not necessarily in the women's movement, but who were worried, anxious and isolated like myself'.

They arrived on 5 September

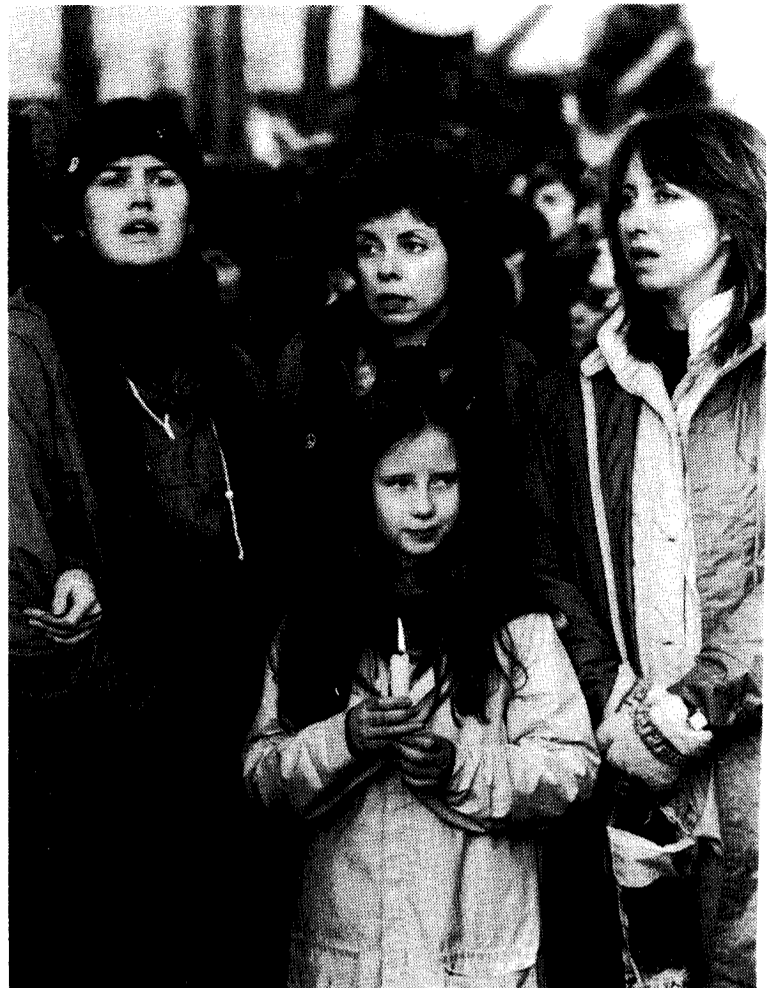
1981 and decided not to leave until the base was removed.

The decision to operate as a women-only camp was enforced from 1 February 1982. This was not just a matter of women being in the majority, or an anti-male stand.

The women wanted to raise all aspects of their double oppression in society, not simply limit themselves to an anti-nuclear protest.

With the first of many eviction orders obtained by Newbury Council due to be executed on 1 February, they were worried that the police would use the presence of men in the camp in a provocative way to wreck the camp physically.

They were also convinced that a tactic of non-violent confrontation



The campaign at Greenham has always been led by women

would be the best way to proceed in this campaign.

The constant threat of physical and sexual attacks on women, and how best to ensure their safety, is also a problem which women-only camps do help to reduce.

The rapes that have occurred at Molesworth, where there is a mixed camp, highlight one of the reasons why the women need to organise in this way.

Though there is no centralised organisation at the Greenham camp, it survives through the courage of all those involved, and their refusal to give in, no matter how many times the bailiffs order them to move — which they do almost every day and sometimes twice a day. The women's determination has sustained them through many freezing winters.

Fires

One of the women spoke of the problems faced in the winter:

'Everything becomes so much more of an effort to accomplish: cooking, washing. The cold really gets to you.'

'Then the bailiffs come round and you have to pack everything up and put out the fire. The fire is our main reason for being able to survive — we managed to keep enough wood coming to the camp.'

Many people helped us out on that score.

'We can return only when the bailiffs have gone. Nobody tells the base to go even though it's on common land illegally — just us, and we're not going.'

With nine miles of perimeter fence to patrol it is no surprise that the guards have a problem keeping everyone out. Not that any of the 'Soviet agents' I spoke to seemed concerned.

If the bailiffs are a constant nuisance to the women, the women are a constant problem for the base, cutting the wire to gain entry where they please.

Once in, they drive the vehicles round, put posters up, graffiti-spray multi-million-dollar aircraft, and harass the base as they see fit.

The women have an unbreakable code with regard to violence against people, and the only point where differences occur is over the level of direct action against the base and how far it should be taken.

The differences are resolved by there being no rule as to what you do once inside the wire.

The risk of arrest does not deter the women, even though changes in the law have made trespass a criminal offence, whereas previously they could only be charged with criminal damage.

No accurate figures of those arrested or charged are available, but many have served prison sentences and more are due in court, possibly to face jail.

HOW should revolutionary socialists view women-only camps, and what should their attitude towards them be?

For myself I don't see how it can be anything other than unconditional support for their right to organise as they see fit, to do so as women fighting for women's rights in opposition to the double oppression they face.

Who are we to turn round to them and say: 'We agree with your ultimate aims, but we will only campaign for support for you if you change your tactics'?

That is the argument of the social chauvinists, not socialists.

To leave women with a feeling that they cannot organise, break out of their isolation, and stand on their own strength in the political arena is akin to telling all oppressed that their cause is hopeless.

Under these conditions we could argue that all oppression is the result of living under capitalism and that only by the removal of imperialism itself can all our rights be secure.

After seeing such courage and determination at Greenham I came away feeling somewhat humbled. These women are not being hounded by the authorities because they are 'Soviet agents' or 'criminals', but simply because they are women and they are there.



Although on common land Greenham was sold by the government to USAF for a pittance

The overthrow of the Stuart dynasty

IN the WORKERS PRESS letters pages over the last few months Brian Pearce has made points about the 1688 overthrow of the Stuart dynasty by the Protestant William of Orange. We have published letters from other readers disagreeing sharply with Pearce. In this article **DAVE BRUCE** discusses some of the issues

WORKERS PRESS readers can only welcome the assertion that Brian Pearce 'went beyond the bounds of socialist controversy' in implying that war-time Trotskyists in Britain were unconscious agents of Hitler.

Many might also feel his implication that fighters for Irish national liberation had a sneaking and dangerous sympathy for fascist Germany was also 'damn bad form' and that the same sanction was appropriate.

The abuse in this debate has been thrown by Pearce and Pearce alone, his 'Armalites and rosaries' epithet and his gloating over the persistence of 'Londonderry' being cases in point.

(In 1609, the Corporation of London reluctantly agreed to oblige Charles I with what they felt was a poor investment — the 'plantation' of Coleraine by Scots colonists.

The scheme was never a success, attracting only, in the words of a contemporary, 'the scum of both countries' and this only in limited numbers, since by 1624 the Corporation still had 4,000 illegal Irish tenants on their book. But they did, by way of recompense, manage to rename a county and a city.)

Indignation is not to be equated with abuse but it is still a poor tool for the understanding of history. May I therefore enter the debate, citing my credentials that I have never called Mr Pearce a 'barbarian' nor advised his trepanning?

Pearce has consistently argued that 1688 was a 'Glorious Revolution' which defeated the counter-revolution of the Stuarts so decisively that, even now, Trotskyists should bedeck themselves with Orange regalia and celebrate its gains.

Others have replied that 1688 was, in fact a 'compromise' (e.g. Gerry Downing and N.M. of Dublin). This, I feel, is too vague and leaves the door ajar for Pearce to usher in his **anglo-centric** view of history which has the cheek to call itself a 'world view'.

Parliament

The 'Glorious Revolution' is the name given by Establishment historians to the overthrow of the Stuart dynasty, with its absolutist and Catholic trimmings, by the Protestant William of Orange. The monarch was no longer answerable to God (the divine right of Kings) but to Parliament — and to the House of Commons at that.

The bourgeoisie were keen to exploit their victory over their plebeian allies of the Civil War (1642-1649) — a victory which Cromwell had himself secured, not least with his campaigns in Ireland.

They turned to the Stuarts (Charles II and James II) who applied themselves to the task with relish. As Christopher Hill remarks:

'We do not know what the un-free thought, for in 1660 the shutters close. Henceforth, they exist only to be ruled.'

But the whiff of incense and the delicate touch of lace, which had seemed so sensually alluring to those bourgeois who were setting aside their Psalters by 1660 and were picking up their ledgers again, had lost their charm by 1688.

Quarrels between James II and parliament had paralysed England's foreign policy of colonial expansion which had had such an auspicious start under Cromwell's leadership.

Progress had continued under

Charles II — the Navigation Acts were designed to ensure the hegemony of English shipping and the promotion of colonial commodity production and trade and the old, aristocratic monopolies suffered further encroachment.

But this aggrandisement of the mercantile and new, commercial landowners was reflected within the Commons itself, whose Cavalier faction became increasingly outnumbered.

Slaves

It is true, as Pearce points out, that Judge Jeffreys savagely suppressed the last fling of the plebeians who rose under Monmouth in 1685. But it is also true that he fined the mayor of Bristol £1,000 for illegal dealings in slaves.²

The powerful Whig bourgeoisie may well have protested at the draconian suppression of their former allies in the West Country. But they were far more concerned to control the apparatus of suppression in their own interests.

Monmouth's abortive revolt — he breached the mandate of his own followers — marked the final break between the increasingly self-confident bourgeois and the small property owner.

That master of abusive polemic, Marx, summed up the events of 1688 as follows:

'The "glorious Revolution" brought into power, along with William of Orange, the landlord and capitalist appropriators of surplus-value. They inaugurated the new era by practising on a colossal scale thefts of state lands, thefts that had hitherto been managed more modestly.

'These states were given away, sold at a ridiculous figure, or even annexed to private states by direct seizure. All this happened without the slightest observation of legal etiquette.

'The Crown lands thus fraudulently appropriated, together with the robbery of the Church estates, as far as these had not been lost again during the republican revolution, form the basis of the today princely domain of the English oligarchy.

'The bourgeois capitalists favoured the operation with the view, among others, to promoting free trade in land, to extending the domain of modern agriculture on the large farm-system, and to increasing their supply of the free agricultural proletarians ready to hand.

'Besides, the new landed aristocracy was the natural ally of the new bankocracy, of the newly-hatched *haute finance*, and of the large manufacturers, then depending on protective duties.

'The English bourgeoisie acted for its own interest quite as wisely as did the Swedish bourgeoisie.'

Christopher Hill comments less vividly but more tersely:

'The Revolution of 1688 saw a restoration of power to the traditional ruling class, the shire



Road leading out of London: a late 17th-century Englishman's image of his land's wealth — the balance between foreign, seaborne trade (ships in the background, globe in the foreground) ordinary overland traffic (coach coming down the road, horsemen and pedlar on foot), animal husbandry (sheep, cattle, horses) and agriculture. Only industry is missing.

gentry and town merchants, as well as a change of sovereign,⁴ but clarifies the relationship with Ireland:

'In 1689, as in 1641, a Catholic revolt in Ireland temporarily liberated the country from English domination. The Patriot Parliament at Dublin restored to Irish landowners estates confiscated during the Interregnum.

'English power in Ireland was reduced to Londonderry, which endured a grim three months siege in 1689. In 1690 William himself went to Ireland. His victory in the Battle of the Boyne (July 1690) was nearly as decisive as Cromwell's campaign of 1649.⁵

The 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 was not a compromise between rulers and ruled, or the consolidation of what had been gained in the war with Charles I and endangered by the 'counter-revolution' of James II. The oppressed had already been driven off the political arena.

Rivals

The conflict was between two rival sections of the ruling class, those whose main activity was production (the bourgeoisie) and consumption (the aristocracy).

The former gained in 1688 what they had not been able to get in 1660. At that time they still lacked complete economic independence and needed the alliance with the aristocracy to defeat their erstwhile plebeian allies.

In 1688 they won themselves political rights which reflected their growing economic power. But rep-

he can side, even now, with the Peep-of-Day boys against the United Irishmen and can praise the 'thin Orange line' against fascism? How about the following?

1. The 1691 Articles of Capitulaton (Treaty of Limerick), ratified by the all-Protestant landowners' parliament in Dublin only when reinforced by specific anti-Catholic measures in 1697. (William gave the estates of James II in Ireland to his mistress, the Countess of Orkney.)
2. The 1692 authorisation by William personally of the Glencoe massacre, which started the Highland Clearances, a 150-year-long saga of near genocide which ended only when there was little left in one quarter of Britain except gamekeepers.
3. The 1695 founding of that bastion of democracy, the Bank of England (and the National Debt).
4. The policy of legislation and war which culminated, after William's death, in the Treaty of Utrecht which gave England the coveted *asiento*, the monopoly of shipping slaves to the Spanish American colonies.

What do these disparate events symbolise?

● The restoration of colonial rule in Ireland and the start of serious commercial exploitation of the colony;

● The continued policy of the destruction of all non-capitalist agriculture and the creation of a class with only its labour power to sell;

● The domination of the state by the requirements of finance and mercantile capital particularly with regard to the struggle for British hegemony in colonial acquisition and trade.

There's Glory for you!

Heroes

If Trotskyists are to 'celebrate' events or heroes of the 17th century, should we not follow our democratic revolutionary forebears, like Wolfe Tone or the founders of the London Corresponding Societies?

They were inspired, surely, by the radical, plebeian side of the Cromwellian revolution, not the slave traders and the 'democratic' landowners but the Diggers and the Levellers.

Engels did not glorify 'the progress of history' or the victorious Luther, but exalted the defeated Thomas Munzer.

It was Lenin who drew inspiration from the vanquished Jacobins rather than the 'successful' Napoleon Bonaparte. It was Kautsky, Plekhanov and the rest who lay prostrate at the feet of history and supported the 'war to end wars' of 1914.

It was those Marxists who sided with the oppressed, in history as in life, that actually made history in October 1917.

Notes:

¹C. Hill, 'The Century of Revolution', 2nd ed pps 121/2

²P. Fryer 'Staying Power', p.38

³K. Marx 'Capital' (Lawrence & Wishart) Vol 1, p.677

⁴C. Hill, Op Cit, p.235

⁵Ibid, p.220

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PERSONAL COLUMN

How 'The Newsletter' began

THIRTY years ago this week the first issue of 'The Newsletter' came off the press in an untidy printshop behind Clapham High Street and was mailed out by volunteers to its initial 200-odd subscribers.

A few months later the paper was recalling how 'it was started without capital, without staff, without an office, without a typewriter, without so much as a filing cabinet or a packet of paper-clips'.

The modest inaugural issue contained a fairly full report of the conference of Socialist Forums held at Wortley Hall, near Sheffield, a couple of weeks before.

Soon afterwards the first issue of the Forum movement's own journal reprinted that report in full, without acknowledgment. The Forum journal folded after one or two issues, but 'The Newsletter' went on from relative weakness to relative strength.

The idea behind its launching was a simple one. After that pivotal year of 1956 — the year of Khrushchev's secret speech about Stalin's crimes that was soon no secret at all, the year of upheavals in Poland and Hungary — people were resigning from the Communist Party in droves.

Many of those who had stayed in after the Hungarian Revolution, hoping for change, found no comfort in the CP's 1957 Hammersmith congress. The Stalinist leadership succeeded in consolidating its hold on the party, and the trickle of resignations then became a flood.

'The Newsletter' was started to provide a kind of safety-net for these disillusioned communists — or, at any rate, for those of them who wanted to remain communists. In the fullness of time, it was hoped, the paper would win them to the Trotskyist movement.

Let us give credit where it is due. This strategy was, so far as I know, devised by Gerry Healy. I don't know how far he had discussed it with his colleagues: not, I suspect, in any great depth.

Certainly it was he who proposed to me the launching of 'The Newsletter'; who defined, in broad outline, its character and objectives; and who made his printshop and small organisation available for its production and distribution.

Healy recognised what few on the left had hitherto been able to recognise: the degree to which Stalinism had successfully poisoned the minds of CP members, so that, even in the minds of many who now considered themselves anti-Stalinist, the

word 'Trotskyist' produced a knee-jerk reaction of loathing. It had been turned into a synonym for 'fascist'.

Understanding this large-scale poisoning of minds and devising an effective antidote of a certain subtlety was Healy's outstanding contribution in that period; and whatever went wrong later (and a lot did) it would be idle to deny the flair and imagination he showed in that effort to weave the necessary safety-net.

To glance through the first three years' issues of 'The Newsletter', as I have just done for the first time since 1959, is to see at once how little substance there is in certain legends.

'The Newsletter' was never a one-man band. Contributors in those early days included such CP and ex-CP figures as Don Renton, Hyman Levy, Brian Pearce, Cliff Slaughter, John Daniels, Brian Behan, Paul Hogarth, and Alison Macleod; even Edward Thompson sent a message of greetings, which was printed in the third issue.

From the Trotskyist tradition, William Hunter, Cyril Smith, Peter Gibson, and Jack Gale were among the early contributors.

Nor was 'The Newsletter' ever obsessed by the crisis in the Communist Party, though its original purpose meant that this was indeed one of its preoccupations, just as another preoccupation was the situation in the Soviet Union: hence the colourful account by Maurice Peltier of a trip to the USSR (reprinted as a pamphlet) and, above all, the magnificent enlarged special issue on the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution, an astonishing achievement for such a small publication and now, deservedly, a collector's item.

Two other legends, which tend to cancel each other out, are that 'The Newsletter' neglected the industrial struggle and that, on the other hand, it was 'syndicalist' in its treatment of that struggle.

As early as September 1957, the paper was declaring that 'the hour has come for the entire working-class movement to go over to the offensive against the employers and their government. Either we do this, or they will thrash us'.

Two months before, 'The Newsletter' had published the first example of what was later to become a popular feature: a 'Strike Broadsheet' produced by and for provincial busmen and Covent Garden porters on strike, and reporting how a group of the latter had been attacked by police with drawn truncheons.

During the 1958 strike of London bus workers a regular weekly 'Strike Bulletin' was produced as a supplement to 'The Newsletter'. It was largely written by strikers themselves, and proved so popular that delegates used to come from the garages on press day each week to carry away their parcels for distribution.

As for 'syndicalism', I think those who make that charge have forgotten the part the paper played in the formation of the Socialist Labour League, and in combating

the quite ferocious witch-hunt, in the Labour Party and the press, that followed its formation.

Of course 'The Newsletter', in those early years, did have many faults and shortcomings. But there are two aspects of it in particular that, as its editor for two-and-a-half years, I look back on with pride.

First, its consistent opposition to racism. We reacted to the 1958 anti-black riots in north Kensington with the headline 'Sweep the racials off the streets' and a call for the formation of workers' defence squads. This earned us a visit from the Special Branch and a threat of prosecution for 'seditious libel'.

The other thing I felt proud of, as I brought through those yellowing files, was the letters column. Our policy was to publish the letters of those who disagreed with us and, sometimes, expressed their disagreements very sharply.

We answered them with facts and arguments, not with labelling, name-calling, or invective. This, we believed, was the best way to win young people to revolutionary socialism.

That is still my belief.

The old Guards

THE newspapers tell us that a 17-year-old currently being trained as a Grenadier Guardsman will be the first black member of the brigade in its entire history.

The press officer who put out this story should consult Lt-Gen. Sir F.W. Hamilton's 'The Origin and History of the First or Grenadier Guards' (1874), in which there is a picture of one of the regiment's black drummers in 1792.

By 1772 the Grenadier Guards, like many other units of the British army, had black 'time-beaters' playing bass, tenor and side drums, and cymbals.

This tradition continued until 1840, when Francis, the last of the blacks in the Grenadier Guards, was discharged.

Martinique-born Francis is said to have been the black military bandsman who, strolling down the Strand one day, was accosted with the question: 'Well, blackie, what news from the devil?'

He knocked the questioner down, remarking: 'He send you that — how you like it?'

Peter Fryer

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GREENHAM COMMON WOMEN'S CAMP To all women — We are still here; we still need your support! Near Newbury — Exit 13 on M4, or BR Newbury, Berkshire.

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, Trafalgar Square. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

VIRAJ MENDIS BENEFIT Tuesday 12 May, 7.30p.m. — midnight. London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67 Cowcross Street, EC1 (Farringdon tube). VMDC Video. Cabaret: Maria Tolly; Christopher Eymard; Horns of Jericho; Zubop Trio; Ken Hughes. Disco: DJ — Rankin Josie. £2 waged, 75p unwaged.

SOCIALIST PLATFORM Public Meeting: 50 Years Since the Barcelona Events of 1937. Speakers: Staff Cotman (ex. POUM) and John Sullivan.

Saturday 23 May, 7.30p.m. Duke of York, York Way, Kings Cross.

BOBBY SANDS COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE Fortnightly meetings to organise a march in London at the end of June commemorating the deaths of the 10 Irish Republican Hunger Strikers in 1981. Next meeting 7.30p.m. 13 May, 203 Seven Sisters Road, N4.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings every Tuesday at 7.30p.m. Stoke Newington Community Centre, Leswin Road, N16. All welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, N4 (01-991 2938).

BRING BACK VICTORIA WILIAMS! Campaign meetings, 7.30p.m., second and fourth Wednesdays of every month. UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, W3.

TALK POLITICS WITH THE RCG Weekly discussion meetings every Sunday 7p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1.

12 HUNGER STRIKE MARTYRS Commemorative March and Rally, Saturday, 9 May. Assemble 12 noon, Central Exchange Hall, Sparkhill Park, Stratford Road, Birmingham. Invited speakers include: Sinn Fein, IRSP, PAC, PLO, Strip Searches and PoW Campaigns. Organised by Irish Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee TIOCH AR LA.

POSTAL DISPUTE

MEMBERS of the Union of Communication Workers came out on strike at the Brixton, London SW2, sorting office on Friday 1 May, following Head Office attempts to impose extra staff on the office. Other sorting offices in south London, including our own Stockwell office, have come out in support.

For this reason readers' letters have been delayed and we are therefore holding our letters page for this week and will resume when the dispute is resolved.

TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A Magazine of Marxist Theory
Volume 1 Number 1 March 1987

Contents

Introducing *Tasks of the Fourth International*
One Year Since Healy's Expulsion, by Geoff Pilling
'What Is To Be Done' in Historical Context, by Tim Peach
In Defence of Thought, by Chris Bailey
Trotskyism in Latin America, by Oscar Poma
27 Reasons and No Explanations, by Dave Bruce
The Class Nature of the Bureaucracy, by Gerard Laffont
A Reply to Comrade Laffont, by Cliff Slaughter

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ROBSON'S CHOICE

LAST Monday on Channel Four, following a thoroughly pretentious feature film by Jean-Luc Godard, a totally unpretentious, but thoroughly useful documentary was screened called Don't Eat Today, or Tomorrow.

Made by a Dutch team in Argentina, it managed to explain in language that was easy to grasp how the country had been turned from one of the wealthiest into one of the most impoverished in Latin America in little more than a decade.

It showed how imperialism and its agency the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had collaborated with the native bourgeoisie in destroying the industrial base which had been built in Argentina in the post-war period.

By the mid 1950's the wave of nationalism generated by Peron had resulted in the expulsion of many multi-nationals from Argentina. The nation could provide for many of its basic needs, including fuels. By restricting imports, by in effect depriving the US of a substantial market in which to dump its goods, local manufacture had grown rapidly. These were halcyon days when the best beef was slaughtered for local consumption, rather than earmarked for export.

Parallel with this process of internal development which brought many gains for the Argentine working class, Peron and his entourage were plundering the national coffers.

Suddenly Argentina was in difficulty and needed to raise loans abroad. They were difficult if not impossible to obtain.

The working class had to be driven back if Argentine capitalism was to be restored to its former strength. The military coup of 1976 created the necessary opening. The first thing they did when they seized power was to restore a free market economy. Import restrictions that protected young and often

inefficient local industries were lifted.

The IMF within days granted the Junta a substantial loan. Private banks from Japan, the US and Europe recognised the green light and poured loans in Argentina's direction.

The stage was set for the native bourgeoisie to fleece the masses. They achieved this by employing two separate but interconnected mechanisms.

First was the weapon of physical repression that led to the disappearance of 30,000 men, women and children and the crushing of virtually all political opposition. Second was the overvaluation of the Argentine peso which permitted the bourgeoisie to buy dollars at getting on for one-fifth of its real exchange value and stash them away in numbered accounts in Miami and Geneva.

The ruling class and their agents in the officer corps had a field day for eight years before the bubble burst. Foreign bankers loaned money for this or that enterprise, but much of this was appropriated by individuals, converted into hard currencies and hidden. This, as director Rob Hof pointed out, is how the external debt was created. The bulk of the funds that might have been available to pay it off are earning interest outside Argentina for the private speculators who stole them in the first place.

In conclusion, the idea that the Argentine masses borrowed heavily in order to live well while producing no new wealth, thus ending up with a huge external debt, is a stinking lie!

The ruling class and the military must pay; it's their debt. The working class has already paid with thirty-thousand lives.

* * *

As we advance towards summer and the days get brighter TV programmers obviously assume that the minds of viewers get correspondingly lighter. There is less and less to interest the serious viewer. On

Saturday, for example, only one programme caught my eye, **Arrows of Robin Hood**, (1.20p.m., ITV), a Soviet version of the classic yarn.

On **Sunday**, there is Verdi's opera **Othello**, (7.45p.m., C-4) and **Discovering Portuguese**, a six-part introduction to the language and the people (10.40p.m., BBC1). Dominating the evening, however, is Jack Gold's **Escape from Sobibor**, on ITV starting at 9p.m., a dramatised account of the events that led to a mass escape by nearly 300 Jews from the Polish death camp in 1943.

On **Monday**, ITV launch the first of three programmes called **War on Drugs** (10.30p.m.). The next two can be seen on **Tuesday** and **Wednesday** at the same time. At 10p.m.(C-4) you can see **Lebanese director Heini Srour's Leila And The Wolves**, and at 11.45p.m.(C-4) a filmed account of the political situation in Uruguay after the ending of military rule.

On **Tuesday**, a film for television at 9p.m.(BBC2), **Something About Amelia** followed by **Two Nations** at 10.50p.m.(BBC1) may be worth a look.

On **Wednesday**, American modernist Larry Rivers takes charge of the electronic paint box on **BBC2** at 9p.m. in **Painting with Light**. At 9.30p.m.(BBC1) a documentary account of the largest-ever gold robbery: **Gold**. At 10.20p.m.(BBC2) you can see **Duncan Campbell's** next expose in **Secret Society**.

On **Thursday**, Derek Jarman's acclaimed portrait of 17th century Tuscan painter, **Caravaggio**, superbly photographed by Mexican cinematographer Gabriel Berstein, is at 9p.m.(C-4). For insomniacs, starting at 1.15p.m.(C-4), **Sergo Paradjanov's** superb film, **The Colour of Pomegranates**.

On **Friday**, a portrait of Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini is presented by **Omnibus** (10.25p.m. on BBC1) and, to round off the evening, **Joan Crawford in Sudden Fear**, starting at 11.15p.m. on BBC2.

REVIEWS

The man who probed too well

The Stalker Affair. By Frank Doherty. Mercier Press, £3.95

JOHN STALKER, the Manchester Assistant Chief Constable who was suspended while directing an official inquiry into the RUC's shoot-to-kill tactics in the north of Ireland, has now left the police force.

Although he was reinstated after allegations that he had broken the police code of conduct were found to be groundless, he was only back a short while before he handed in his resignation. It appears that he was shunned by Chief Constable James Anderton and other top officers.

In interviews Stalker's remarks have been guarded, but he has refused to rule out suggestions that he was victim of a conspiracy.

He told listeners to the Irish radio station RTE: 'There are still things to be discovered. There are still things to come out. I'm not going to say one way or the other.'

'I'm certainly not saying there was a conspiracy, but I think it's a wise man who can say there wasn't.'

Frank Doherty's book builds up a convincing body of evidence which suggests that Stalker's removal from the RUC inquiry was engineered by British Intelligence, especially MI5.

Stalker's inquiry was not the usual cover-up, and he showed signs of going in too far for his political masters.

A special unit of the RUC, 'E4', had been used to 'eliminate' Republicans against whom convictions could not be obtained. E4 was a top secret unit controlled by MI5 and trained jointly by the SAS and British Intelligence in England.

Who authorised the establishment of such a unit and its shoot-to-kill policy? Doherty's research suggests that approval would have had to come from within the Cabinet office, involving top ministers and possibly Thatcher herself.

Doherty's book is also an account of British Secret Service operations on both sides of the border in Ireland.

From the evidence of four former British Intelligence officers and three former agents, he has built up a picture of the security forces' activities, some of which were illegal, some downright criminal.

Two of the former officers, Captain Fred Mulroyd and Captain Colin Wallace, have been featured in TV documentaries and have given information for a series of articles in the 'New Statesman'.

Mulroyd's superiors put him into early retirement, saying he had become 'mentally unstable'.

Mulroyd, trying to correct this slander, was prepared to reveal details of his former activities as a military intelligence officer.

As a result Doherty is able to expose not only E4's shoot-to-kill policy but also the fact that its surveillance arm (E4A) regularly carried out surveillance across the border in the Irish Republic.

He also exposes the existence of a high-ranking officer in the Gardaí, codenamed 'the Badger', who used his position to clear areas in which E4A and other security personnel might be working so that they did not stumble upon checkpoints or roadblocks near the border.

Stalker's probe into the circumstances of the killings, especially those of Roddy Carrol and Seamus Grew

in 1982, would have discovered all this.

He would also have found out that British Intelligence had on occasions given information and police clearance to loyalist murder gangs to kill leading Republicans on both sides of the border.

Doherty describes incidents where British covert operations, involving illegal activities in the Irish Republic or infiltration of the Irish security forces, were exposed in the Irish press.

The Irish government's response was inaction and a strange reluctance to protest to the British government.

One example shows that MI5 tried to interfere with the political process in the 26 counties to secure a government more favourable to British purposes.

An innocent man was held by the RUC's E4 unit in Fermanagh when he should have been giving evidence for the prosecution in a court case against the Irish Justice Minister's brother-in-law, who was charged with assault.

Suggestions that the minister, Sean Doherty, might have arranged for the arrest wrecked his career and seriously undermined Prime Minister Charles Haughey.

Once Stalker began his investigation it was like pulling on a ball of string. The more he teased out the more there seemed left to unravel. He had to be stopped.

Stalker himself seems to have understood this. Speaking on Granada TV during his suspension, Mrs Stalker said that her husband feared for his life during the course of his inquiry.

As Doherty says, 'John Stalker is a level-headed senior police officer of almost 30 years' experience. If he told his wife that there was a risk he might be murdered to keep him quiet, then it must be assumed that he had good reasons for his suspicions.'

The actual 'taking out' of Stalker was far less dramatic.

In March 1985, a year after Stalker's inquiry began, poison-pen letters began to circulate in Manchester, making a number of allegations about leading members

of Manchester Conservative Party.

One of these was Kevin Taylor, a businessman accused of fraud and crooked land deals, amongst other things.

None of the allegations in any of the letters has been proved, and their sender remains anonymous.

In September 1985 Stalker submitted a preliminary report to RUC Chief Constable Jack Herman.

The massive report is alleged to have contained sufficient evidence to bring prosecutions against RUC officers. It lay gathering dust.

Stalker became impatient and in May 1986 told James Anderton he was going back to Belfast.

The Home Office told him that it was 'inopportune', but Stalker, armed with a letter of support from the Northern Ireland Director of Public Prosecutions Barry Shaw, was adamant. Stalker arranged to travel to Ireland on 3 June.

He never got there, because he was suddenly suspended.

The police produced a 1981 snapshot of Stalker and Kevin Taylor, seized during a raid on Taylor's home two weeks' before.

Stalker was allegedly suspended because of his connection with Taylor, against whom allegations of criminal activities had been made.

Stalker was reinstated in September 1986 but did not get back his job on the RUC inquiry.

Taylor has since tried to sue James Anderton for false allegations, but has got nowhere.

Stalker was prevented from investigating further into MI5 involvement in Ireland and making revelations which would have jeopardised the Anglo-Irish agreement.

Doherty's book is fascinating reading for all opponents of the British state.

As Doherty points out, intelligence accounts for 10 per cent of British defence expenditure: £12,000 million. It has always been extremely well protected from publicity.

Stuart Carter

PUBLIC LECTURES

A series of four lectures by Cyril Smith

2. Subject and object (8 May)
3. Individual and society (15 May)
4. Theory and revolutionary practice (22 May)

FRIDAY evenings

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Workers Revolutionary Party
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Day School

The Struggle to Re-organise the Fourth International
Speaker: Geoff Pilling (Workers Press editor)
Sunday, 17 May, 11a.m. — 5.00p.m. — Blythswood Hotel, 320 Argyle Street, Glasgow

Workers Revolutionary Party
West of Scotland Branch

Public Classes

The WRP's Call for an International Conference of Trotskyists — Sunday 10 May
Lectures Start at 6.00p.m.
Blythswood Hotel, 320 Argyle Street, Glasgow
(between Central Station and Anderston Bus Station)
Speaker: Joe Eyre

EXPOSED!

Police antics in social club

HERTFORDSHIRE's Deputy Chief Constable John Bennion has denied reports that hidden cameras at Bishop's Stortford Police Social Club recorded heavy drinking at late-night parties which included police officers having sex on a snooker table.

The cameras were fitted after money went missing out of the till (surprise, surprise) but the recordings, according to Bennion, only reveal officers taking money and helping themselves to drinks for several weeks at the end of last year.

He also said that four men and one woman, three constables and two sergeants, 'all voluntarily put in their resignations'.

Crime

'My main concern was to remove these officers from the police force... nobody likes colleagues committing crime. I was pleased they decided to resign.'

Members of the constabulary are well known for their opposition to sex on television — is it because it is too uncomfortable?

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BUUNS

CLASS STRUGGLE ... USA ... CLASS STRUGGLE ... USA ...

The 'Molly Maguires'

SYLVIS' death robbed the National Labor Union of its leading organiser, as explained in Part II (25 April 1987) and it collapsed.

The collapse was due to the abandonment of the programme that Sylvis had fought for: sustained union militancy and the struggle to unite black and white workers in a single union.

Instead the inexperienced leadership succumbed to what came to be known as 'greenbackism' (the utopian plan to take the heat out of the class struggle by greatly increasing the quantity of paper money in circulation, thereby increasing the spending power of the masses).

Employers launched a concerted attack on the living standards of the working class. Agricultural prices dropped and wages fell. Dividends, however, held firm.

In 1877 it was estimated that one-fifth of the workforce would never work again. Two-fifths were working no more than six months in the year. Less than one-fifth had regular jobs and the wages of those employed had been cut by 45 per cent.

Out of 30 national unions only eight remained.

During the Civil War Daniel Drew had said: 'It's good to fish in troubled waters'. Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller along with many others found that this was just as true in a depression. Cheap labour and cheap materials were at their disposal.

The unemployed began to fight back and demonstrate, demanding work not charity. These demonstrations were viciously attacked by the police.

In 1877 there was an agreement reached between the Democrats and the Republicans: if the conservative Democrats in the South dealt with the negroes, the Northern Democrats would support the Republicans in their efforts to attack the workers and farmers.

As an example, in the period following this agreement, negroes continued to be murdered in the South while troops were used against textile workers in Massachusetts and miners in Pennsylvania.

The miners organised local unions in 1864. The Working Men's Benevolent Society of Carbon County, Pennsylvania, was formed.

An Irish immigrant, John Siney, an ex-chartist, became president of the WBA at the Schuylkill County. Earlier in the year twenty-thousand anthracite miners had unsuccessfully staged a four-month strike on the question of the eight-hour day.

Although the leadership of the WBA favoured arbitration, the union was forced to call a strike in the spring of 1869. The leadership attempted to call off the strike after

PART III OF A FEATURE SERIES BY NORMAN HARDING

only four weeks with many of the miners continuing the strike until August. This strike was also unsuccessful.

Franklin B Gowen, the man who organised the mine-owners, led the campaign against the WBA. He accused them of being a foreign conspiracy to overthrow society by force and violence. This charge and the trials that followed in 1873, with Gowen the prosecutor in many of them, resulted in the execution, imprisonment or banishment of all its leaders.

The build-up to these trials really started on September 6, 1869 when one-hundred and seventy-nine miners were trapped by fire in the Avondale mine, Penn., Luzerne County.

The owners had refused to construct a second entrance or an escape exit. Thousands of miners stopped work, brought work to a standstill, and converged on Avondale working a shift system to blast a second entrance to reach the trapped miners. After two days all one-hundred and seventy-nine bodies were recovered.

As the bodies were laid out neatly in rows, John Siney jumped onto a wagon and addressed the thousands of miners present: **'Men: if you must die with your boots on, die for your families, your homes, your country, but do not longer consent to die like rats in a trap for those who have no more interest in you than in the pick you dig with.'**

Thousands of miners that day joined the union, even though they knew that joining the union could mean injury or death. They understood that the trade unionists in the eyes of the law were no better than thieves.

Amongst those joining the union at this time were a group of young men whose fighting and organising ability which all the forces of the state could not stop. They were: Tom Munley, Mike Doyle, Ed Kelly, Jim Carroll, Jack Kehoe, Hughie McGeehan and Tom Duffy, all members of the Irish fraternal order, the ancient Order of Hibernians, the so called Molly Maguires.

These men were to become the militant leadership of the miners in the WBA.

Their chief opponent was F B Gowen who was organising the employers into an association. Gowen was bringing Siney, the WBA president, under his influence and calling on the miners to accept a policy of arbitration as opposed to strikes.

On July 29, 1870 the mine owners agreed to recognise the union, the first such



Thomas Duffy saying goodbye to his family before being lynched as a 'Molly Maguire.'

agreement in the history of the USA. This was used by Gowen, through Siney, to try and control the union. Gowen knew that if he got rid of Munley, Doyle and Co., he would have a better chance of influencing the union.

To do this he employed Alan Pinkerton, the founder of modern industrial spying, with a retainer of 100,000 dollars. Gowen was one of his first customers

Pinkerton chose as his

chief spy one James McParlan, an Irishman and self-confessed murderer, who was to join the Hibernians in order to collect evidence that could lead to militant union members being charged and hanged.

Because trade unions were deemed criminal conspiracies, any method could be used against them.

Terror was unleashed! Armed bands of vigilantes

known as the Modocs, and coal and iron police, waylaid, ambushed and killed militant miners.

Gowen used the press to condemn the rank-and-file miners who were leading the fight-back as Molly Maguires.

After months of struggle and bloodshed the miners had to accept a twenty per cent cut in wages.

With the union severely weakened, and a section of the militants driven off the coalfields, the militants of the Ancient Order of Hibernians were determined to carry on the fight.

Gowen retaliated by encouraging mine operators to issue arms to the foremen, resulting in militants being shot and thrown down mine shafts. Even this did not deter these militant organisers.

Gowen tried again. He called in McParlan, the Pinkerton spy, who in three years had failed to collect any evidence, and made plans for a series of frame-ups. When Pinkerton agents were unable to invent a conspiracy they often committed murders and other crimes themselves and blamed them on the miners.

The atmosphere was such that calling a miner a Molly Maguire was sufficient to have him hung, never mind the evidence.

The first 'trial' opened in May 1876. McGeehan, Carroll, Duffy, Boyle and Roaritty were charged with the murder of Benjamin Yost, a patrolman in a mining com-

munity. The killing of Yost was carried out by one Jimmy Kerrigan who, in order to gain his own freedom, testified that the accused men were guilty.

Kerrigan's wife said that her husband was testifying against the miners because he had an agreement with the state.

The five were sentenced to death.

In another trial Mike Doyle, Ed Kelly and Jack Kehoe were convicted of the 'murder' of Langdon, a boss who had been killed fourteen years previously. Four other miners were condemned to death for a 'murder' a previous court had already declared them innocent of. On this occasion the evidence against them came from McParlan and Kelly the Bum who, according to testimony said, 'I will squeal on Jesus Christ to get out of here'. He was being held on a murder charge. The charge was dropped.

Tom Munley, one of the most militant of the union leaders, was accused of the murder of Thomas Sanger, a mine foreman. There was no evidence against him, only his union militancy and the label of being a Molly Maguire. He was sentenced to death.

Nineteen men faced the scaffold. On June 21, 1877, at 10.55a.m. McGeehan and Doyle mounted the scaffold steps holding hands. Doyle said to McGeehan: 'Hughie, let's die like men'. And that is how they all died.

Next week: The Great Rail-strike 1877.



James McParlan a Pinkerton recruit who became Gowen's star witness in many of the Molly Maguire trials



Thomas Duffy



James Carroll



Thomas Munley



Edward J Kelly



Michael J Doyle

Workers Press

Saturday May 9 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

London's buses to strike

ALL LONDON red bus garages, engineers, drivers and conductors have been called out on a 24 hour strike on Monday 11 May.

Last Tuesday's call from the Central Dispute Committee came after an hour-long stormy meeting between the 25-strong Joint Trade Union Committee and London Buses chairman Telford Beesley.

At that meeting he refused to put off the tendering of bus routes which has led to 250 drivers and engineers at Norbiton garage getting sacking notices.

These drivers have been told there would be no redundancy because they could have jobs driving their own buses on their own routes at £36 per week less and for seven hours per week more.

Angry committee men accused Beesley of insulting the workforce when he walked out of the meeting after an hour to attend a St. John Ambulance meeting.

The busmen's Central Disputes Committee, representing the craftsmen and bus mechanics in the garages and the London Bus Committee of transport union, was set up following the announcement of the 9-1 vote for industrial action the week before.

The trade union committee covering all 15 unions with members working for London Transport, has called on the national executives of all their unions 'to take such action as is necessary to oppose compulsory redundancy and competitive tenderings'.

At a 1 May meeting with Sir Keith Bright, chairman of the London Regional Transport Quango, NUR and UCATT leaders forced an indefinite postponement of the compulsory redundancy notices to 40 London Transport building workers.

Since then, Sir Keith has

refused to meet the busmen's committees to discuss postponing bus tendering.

It has become quite clear in the discussions that London Transport are aiming to keep the building workers, railmen and bus crews separate to avoid a united struggle of all London Transport workers during the General Election.

It was also made quite clear to the NUR that Sir Keith Bright's aim was to cut Underground staffing levels by 50 per cent by 1995. He had just come back from a tour of Japan and was full of praise for the Japanese system.

● Speaking at the May Day demonstration in Croydon, south London, London Bus Committee chairman Peter Gibson warned that the attack on bus workers' wages and hours could not be separated from the struggle of the teachers for better education standards, nor of those in the health service for better hospital care.

'Only last week,' Gibson said, 'a report by an American Management consultant recommended a 30-per cent cut in London's bus services which would result in no bus services at all to some estates, hospitals and very few weekend or late evening services.'

Gibson concluded by saying 'Nothing short of public transport being under the control of those who use it, and those who work in it will produce a transport system to meet the needs of London's working people and their families.'

Caterpillar rescue plan collapses

SIR MONTY FINNISTON'S plan to save the Caterpillar tractor plant has collapsed.

Former British Steel chairman Finniston became chairman of a company called Multi Purpose All Terrain. Operating from a factory at Nairn in the Highlands, it claimed to have over 1,000 orders for a vehicle called the Paca, named after a South American rodent capable of high speed over land and through water. It soon transpired that there were no firm orders but simply commitments to buy subject to manufacturing capacity being available.

MPAT hoped to obtain temporary rent-free accommodation at the Caterpillar plant while negotiations to buy the plant proceeded. It was this decision that persuaded the workers to end their occupation.

From the start businessmen were sceptical that a vehicle for which only three prototypes existed could have been so speedily and successfully marketed. Doubts also arose about the past business experience of David MacWatt, deputy chairman of MPAT and the man behind the Paca project.



Police presence has frequently been heavy on the HFW picket line

Police use Public Order Act against pickets

SOGAT branch secretary, John Simpkin, who was arrested on the HFW picket line in Gateshead last Friday, is to be charged under Section 4 of the Public Order Act.

Last Wednesday there were seven more arrests, all on obstruction charges, when women from Contracts joined the picket outside the police station.

The Contracts workers have offered to give advice and help the HFW workers set up a support group.

During last Friday's picket a massive police presence sealed off the road to the factory and dragged the women and young girls from the factory entrance to make a path for the bus load of scabs, some of them non-union labour recruited from the Tyneside dole queues.

A mass picket organised by local trade unionists in support of the HFW strikers was forced back on to the pavement to clear the factory entrance. Following the arrest of John Simpkin and Newcastle Labour councillor Nigel Todd, the picket then dispersed to reform outside

BY HUGHIE NICOL

Gateshead police station.

Thunderous chants of 'Release the pickets now!' brought AEU scaffolders working on the police station out on strike in support of the pickets.

Police chiefs tried to appease the large crowd by promising to release the two arrested if the picket dispersed. When this was refused and the chanting continued, two more arrests were made.

One of them was to be charged with 'incitement' under the Public Order Act, but these two were later released without charge when leading Communist Party member A. McFadden made a deal with the police to dis-

perse the picket if they were released.

John Simpkin was later bailed to appear in court on 19 June.

He told Workers Press: 'The number of police on the picket line was excessive and we protest at the rough handling of the women by the police.'

'Any sense of even-handedness has now disappeared as the police are seen to be working directly for the employer.'

Newcastle City councillor, Nigel Todd, who was charged with obstruction was also bailed to appear on 19 June. 'These arrests were clearly politically inspired and I think they deliberately selected the two of us.'

I had publicly criticised the management of HFW the previous day and John is also a local Labour council-

lor as well as the branch secretary of SOGAT.

'The police strategy was to make selective arrests and give me a warning shot for having spoken out in defence of the HFW strikers.'

Both councillors explained they had received a lot of public sympathy and support for the strikers when canvassing for the local elections.

The massive police presence and the rough handling of pickets has only made HFW strikers more determined than ever in the fight to secure their jobs.

In their sixth week of strike action the 47 SOGAT members are adamant they will not be intimidated.

● Donations to: HFW Strike, SOGAT, 119 Jesmond Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1NL.

WORKERS PRESS

Public Meeting:

Women in Struggle

Speakers: Lynn Beaton (WRP); Jane Kingsland, NUTGW shop steward, Contracts; Carol Horne, HFW sacked worker; Ann Brooks, HFW Strike Committee; Fiona Nicol (WRP) Chair.

Thursday 7.30p.m., 14 May
Blue Bell, High Street, Gateshead

MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS

Evening of Solidarity

A Benefit Concert

Thursday 21 May 8-11p.m.
Camden Centre, Bidborough Street
(nearest tube: Kings Cross)
£5 waged, £2.50 unwaged