



SAS murders: funeral picture and Hunger Strike commemoration — p 16

Condolences

To the Editor, An Phoblacht/Republican News, Dublin.

Deepest sympathy to the families and comrades of the eight volunteers murdered by the death squads of British imperialism in Loughall. The enemies of a united Ireland are the enemies of the working class in Ireland and Britain.

Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press) Central Committee, Britain.

DOWN WITH THATCHER!

VOTE LABOUR!

NO CONFIDENCE IN LABOUR TRAITORS! BUILD REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE!

GETTING RID of the Thatcher government is the most urgent task before the British working class.

Without removing the Tories the working class cannot begin to tackle the burning issues that face it: unemployment, the destruction of the welfare state, the abolition of collective bargaining rights for the trade unions.

Thatcher has made it clear that, if elected for a third term, she will relentlessly press on with her attacks against the working class.

She will bring in more anti-union laws. She will cripple still further the health and education services. She will rob millions of young people of their right to state benefit and force them into compulsory labour schemes.

The Tories aim is clear: to smash our trade unions and drive our class into colonial conditions, while a privileged minority makes vast fortunes.

With the impending exhaustion of North Sea oil, a major economic crisis is looming. The Tories, as always, want to solve it at the expense of working people. This explains why the general election has been called now, before the world recession and trade war hit Britain like a hurricane.

In the past eight years of Tory rule the working class has gone through many bitter experiences. The state has stepped up its attacks on the working class to an unprecedented level.

During the miners' strike and the Wapping dispute the forces of the state — specially trained riot police and soldiers in police uniforms — were used against the working class.

Statement by the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party



London Bus strike — see p3

Workers Press

State Murder

MAYBE we shall not know the precise details of what actually happened at Loughgall on the night of 8 May for some time. But one thing is certain: when the SAS deliberately murdered nine people there, the organisation of violence by the British state moved to a new level.

Whether the state forces were responding to an informer's tip-off or not, their action was not designed to prevent an 'act of terrorism', but to kill their political opponents.

The murders at Loughgall should not be equated with the 'shoot-to-kill' policy of 1983. That was about shooting 'suspects', supposedly to forestall their gunfire. The action of 8 May was an ambush, whose aim was murder.

Press reports of the ninth victim, and the tenth who was wounded, being 'caught in crossfire' merely mean that the security forces blazed away indiscriminately. People at a parents' meeting across the road from the police station had to dive for cover to avoid the murderous hail of bullets.

It would be a mistake to regard the action as only an Irish incident. The MI5 and MI6 revelations have made it common knowledge that forces of this same state machine operate widely inside British political life, acting in secret, and with regard for neither law nor order.

The many stories now circulating on these matters — despite Thatcher's desperate efforts to suppress them — include more than one possible murder, as well as burglary, illegal phone-tapping and sundry dirty tricks. And most of these operations were conducted, not in County Armagh, but in London.

Five years ago, the siege of the Iranian Embassy was brought to a murderous end by the SAS. Having shadowy links with various groups of mercenaries, this force exists as a highly-trained band of killers, to be used by the ruling class, outside the law and beyond the range of the media.

Their naval counterparts also played an important part in Thatcher's war in the Malvinas against Argentina.

The response to the Loughgall killings by the British press was naturally to gloat. More interesting is the editorial comment in the 'liberal' Guardian on Monday. This was headed 'Loughgall: a tactical victory but what next?'

'There can't be much to cavil about the operation,' chirped the 'Guardian' leader-writer. 'The Provisionals were red-handed and armed as well.' Here speaks the true voice of the 'progressive' English middle class.

The military occupation of the north of Ireland is clearly the sharpest expression of the crisis of the British state. But the mounting economic difficulties of British capital imply that the methods used there show the shape of things to come in Britain.

As we saw in the organisation of the police in the miners' strike, every lesson learned by the state in action against the Irish people will be applied against British workers. Now, we are not dealing with riot control but with murder.

Loughgall contains enormous significance for the labour movement. Only the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class can prepare for the struggles which lie ahead.

Write for Workers Press!

WE ARE receiving more material than ever for Workers Press, but we want to hear from even more of our readers. Please send letters, news from your area, reports of the struggles of the work-

ing class, of women and youth, of developments in the Labour Party and Communist Party. . . We also need photographs — phone us on 01-733 3058 and discuss the best way to get them to us.

WRP Central Committee statement

● FROM PAGE 1

The north of Ireland has been a key training ground for these preparations. The use of death squads to murder opponents is the plainest possible warning of what lies ahead in Britain.

Since coming to power the Tories have systematically dismantled the National Health Service and seriously damaged the education system. Large sectors of nationalised industry have been privatised — to the great gain of the City of London sharks.

The Tories and the capitalist state have waged war against the working class. But, instead of fighting back, the Labour and trade union leaders have spinelessly capitulated to Thatcher.

They have failed to mount the slightest opposition to the Tory government. Indeed they have collaborated with it on every major issue: from the craven support they gave to the Tories in Thatcher's war against Argentina to their attempts to undermine the miners' strike.

Their cowardly actions are in stark contrast to the workers' determination to fight the Tories by every possible means. Miners, printers, teachers, health workers, Silentnight and Caterpillar workers and many others have made enormous sacrifices in their resistance to the Tory offensive.

It is Kinnock who is breaking up the Labour Party, sowing demoralisation with attacks on the left, on black sections, on anyone who really wants to fight for the working class.

It is precisely these betrayals by Kinnock and Willis that have enabled Thatcher to call the election at the time of her choosing. The crisis of leadership and the urgent need to resolve it: here is the central question facing the working class in this election.

The Workers Revolutionary Party has every confidence that the working class can and will both defeat this leadership and go forward to smash Toryism for good.

Millions of workers will vote Labour in the general election. They will do so not because they believe in

Labour's programme but because this is the only means at their disposal to strike a blow at the Tory enemy on 11 June.

This is why we urge workers and those sections of the middle class who oppose the Tories to vote Labour in the election.

In calling for a united vote for Labour we oppose the treachery — advocated in the 'Communist' Party journal 'Marxism Today' — of 'tactically' voting Liberal or SDP. This is a preparation for coalition.

We also disagree with the attempt to win votes for alternative socialist candidates.

But we warn the working class that a Labour government will continue the attacks against the working class from the point where the Tories leave off.

The 1974 miners' strike brought down the Heath government and put Labour in office. But the Wilson-Callaghan government betrayed the working class.

It launched vicious attacks on the welfare state, allowed unemployment to soar, imposed wage controls, slashed the education budget, continued Tory imperialist policies in Ireland, South Africa and elsewhere. Its policies prepared for the Tories' return in 1979.

Workers must learn the lesson of this bitter experience. A Labour government will be a government of big business, a government dedicated to the defence of the capitalist class and its state against the working class.

We place absolutely no confidence in such a Labour government. If Labour is elected, the working class must be prepared to defend itself by any means against such a government and if necessary to bring it down.

Millions of workers and young people face a desperate crisis. Unemployment grows; thousands are homeless; tens of thousands are herded into cheap labour schemes; millions face the destruction of the health and education services.

The whole of society is menaced by the threat of nuclear war, unleashed by capitalism to save its dying system.

This is our programme of action to mobilise the working class in its struggle against capitalism. Its main points are:

1. The complete independence of the unions from the state. Whatever government is in office after 11 June, the trade union leaders must be forced to end their collaboration with all state bodies. They were created to police the trade unions and undermine the independent strength of the working class.
2. The creation of workers' committees on a national scale to defend all those in struggle against the state, including those like the Caterpillar workers who occupy their plants to defend their jobs and families.
3. The immediate scrapping of all YTS and other slave labour schemes. The organisation of a public works programme, under workers' control, to restore full employment.
4. The expropriation of the monopolies, banks and other financial institutions, under workers' control and without compensation.
5. The breaking up of MI5, together with the police and army. The

formation of a workers' militia to protect the interests of the working class.

6. Educational facilities for all who need them. Full maintenance for all full-time students.
7. A break from all imperialist alliances, including NATO. The immediate withdrawal of all British forces from the colonial and semi-colonial countries, including the north of Ireland. Immediate restoration of the Malvinas islands to Argentina.
8. The development of a world plan to use the resources of a socialist Britain in collaboration with the peoples of the former colonial and semi-colonial countries, as well as with the Soviet Union, eastern Europe, and China. This is the only basis on which problems of world starvation and poverty can be tackled.

We say again: a Labour government cannot solve a single fundamental problem facing the working class.

The economy has continued to decline throughout the years of Thatcher government. Britain faces a growing trade war with Europe, Japan and America. By the end of 1987 a major economic crisis will hit British capitalism.

A Labour government would press home the attacks against the working class to make it pay for capitalism's crisis.

We recognise that sections of the working class still place some hopes in a Labour government. To test out these hopes the working class must demand a series of concrete measures from a Labour government:

- Abolish every anti-union law and ensure complete independence of the unions from the state;
- Scrap immediately all cheap labour schemes which have been used to enslave tens of thousands of young people; and initiate a public works programme financed by slashing arms expenditure;
- End privatisation and renationalise privatised concerns;
- Abolish MI5 and all similar bodies, whose continued existence is a threat to the future of the working class and to civil liberties in this country;
- Leave NATO immediately, close down all American war bases, and scrap all preparations for nuclear war;
- Withdraw all troops immediately from the occupied north of Ireland, and release all Irish prisoners of war;
- Break all diplomatic and financial links with South Africa and take punitive measures against any firms continuing to trade with the apartheid regime;
- Abolish all racist immigration laws.
- Release all jailed miners: they are class war prisoners, jailed by the Tories.

This is the outline of our programme for the general election. Workers Press will publish a fuller version next week. We invite all workers to read it and comment on it. Workers Press will open its pages for the widest discussion throughout the working-class movement.

The building of a party based on this programme is an urgent matter for the working class. We call on those who support this statement to join the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Exeter Anti Fascist Action



FOR Exeter councillors every meeting means facing Anti Fascist Action lobbyists. Tuesday 28 April was no exception.

Every councillor had to pass a line of protestors demanding that the council reverse its decision to spend £60,000 promoting William of Orange. The lobbyists express growing confidence as they know they have won the arguments and that the campaign is steadily building.

Printworkers fight to resolve leadership crisis

LAST week's meeting of the Fleet Street Support Unit expressed the need for revolutionary leadership in the trade unions — on the basis of a struggle against the treachery of the present leadership.

The unit now publish 'The Printworker'. Its aim is to defend the print industry and build a new leadership to replace Dean and Dubbins.

The speakers included: Liz Short, chair of the FSSU; Pete McCarthy, sacked Hangers worker; Ron Senshak, sacked printworker from Trader newspapers in Derby; Dave Dowsett — a bus worker active in the fight to defend London's bus service; jailed miner Terry

French; John Aitkin — standing in opposition to scab herder Eric Hammond for the leadership of the EETPU; Carol Hall from the FSSU and an Inner London Teacher's Association speaker.

Conclusion

They all insisted that during their experiences of dispute and inter-union struggles, they had arrived at the conclusion that in order to build a new leadership in the unions, links must be built between workers fighting the employers' attacks.

Solid support for bus strike

NOT ONE London red bus ran in London on Monday, the opening shot in the industrial action planned by London bus crews and engineers.

This 100 per cent response to the call for a 24-hour strike reflected the anger of London bus men and women, and their determination to block the tendering of bus routes which means attempts to cut wages and increase working hours.

In spite of appeals on Friday by Bill Morris, deputy General Secretary of the transport workers union, Sir Keith Bright, LRT chairman, refused to withdraw the dismissal notices to the 300 drivers and engineers at the Norbiton garage.

The transport workers union had made it clear to the Labour Party, in spite of the imminent general election, that the withdrawal of the sacking notices was the only basis on which the strike against the effects of tendering and garage closures would be called off.

Night bus services on Sunday evening were the first to be hit, and pickets were out from 10p.m. in some garages. By 4a.m. Monday every one of London's 51 bus garages was picketed.

In many garages crews who had been on holiday last week and who did not know the strike was on turned up for work before 5a.m. and finding the garage on strike, joined the picket line.

In some areas the uniformed London Transport inspectors refused to cross the picket line and went home.

In West London, buses on routes which had been tendered out to private bus companies refused to cross the routes of striking red buses and turned back, as did buses from London Buses' own subsidiary.

In the Croydon area, where ex-National Bus Company subsidiary London Country Buses is running on routes put out to tender, drivers refused to pick up or set down passengers in the red bus area.

In East London, Eastern

BY RAY THOMAS

National, running routes put out to tender by LRT, refused to cross picket lines and for four hours did not run at all.

At Merton garage in south London, one of the London Bus garages where all the routes go out to tender later this year, pickets leafleted the passing public and displayed posters asking motorists to 'Toot toot your support', and were rewarded with a regular honking by passing cars and lorries.

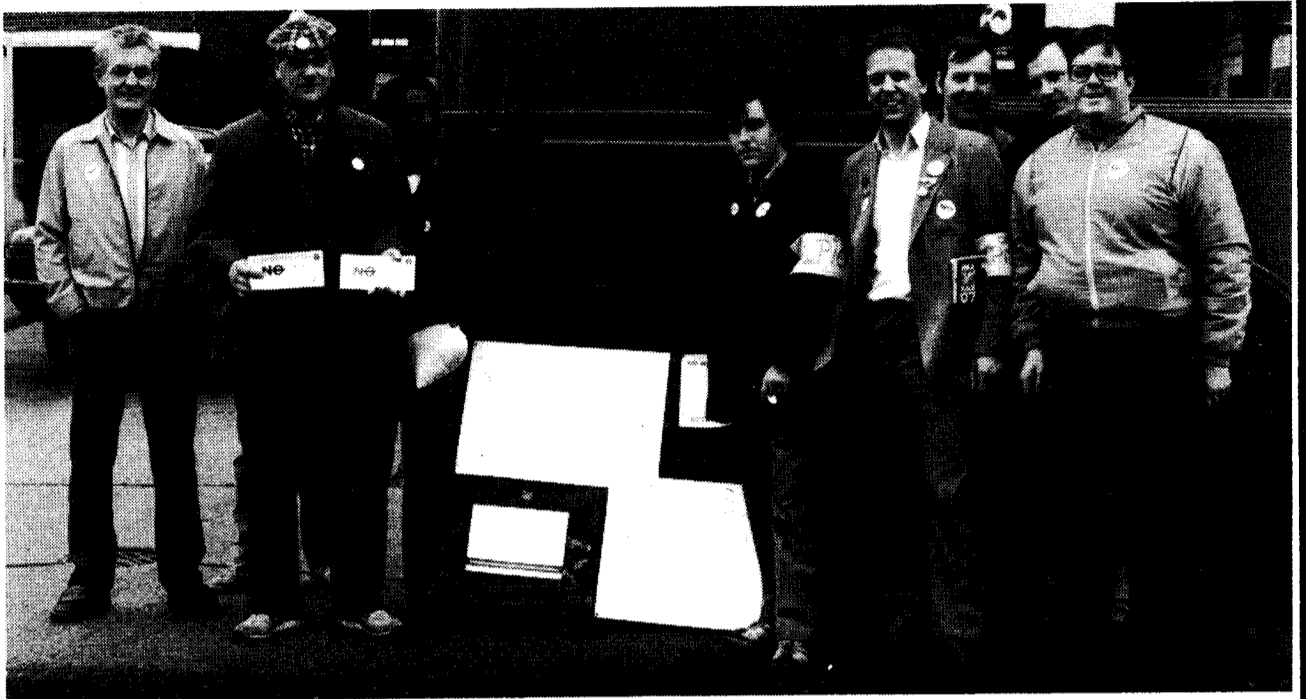
John Doyle, the T&GWU garage representative, told Workers Press: 'The public support is very good, we got a great response when we leafleted rush hour passengers walking to the underground.'

In Croydon, office and shop workers walking to work congratulated bus pickets on the stand that they were taking and wished them success.

The Central Disputes Committee met on Tuesday evening and agreed to meet again during the week to determine the day and type of action for the coming week.

In the meantime the T&GWU is believed to be considering legal action against LRT in defence of its members at Norbiton who have been sacked.

Some 400 London Transport managers have been called to an all-day session in the plush Connaught Rooms near Trafalgar Square (a box lunch provided) on Monday to be told their future. This is understood to be: longer hours, more work and no more pay.



Just two of the many picket lines last Monday, at Peckham (above) and Norwood (below)



Shipyard men reject redundancies

BY BRIAN POWERS AND ANDY McFARLANE

SHIPYARD workers at the privatised Hall Russell's yard in Aberdeen voted last week to reject compulsory redundancies. The 335 manual workers unanimously supported their shop stewards' recommendation at a mass meeting on Thursday 30 April.

The management is determined to pay-off 95 workers — beginning on 8 May — despite the Thatcher government's phoney claim to have given the yard a new order.

The existing orders on the yard's books represent at most six weeks' work. In the company's own terms, one order is simply to paint on a new name, one order an annual refit, the other orders being an engine survey, while the last is a conversion for a company whose name is 'not known' to the yard management.

The government order, claimed by Prime Minister Thatcher as her support for the yard, is for the Ministry of Defence ship 'Guernsey'. Les Castleman, shop steward's convenor and Forbes Smith, steelworkers' convenor, told Workers Press that the Tory claim is a fraud.

'We think Aberdeen North Labour MP Bob Hughes, has done a good job in trying to get us a new order', they said. 'But Thatcher is dishonest in saying this is a new order from the government.'

Smith explained that there was a 60-foot gash in the ship. 'She cannot leave Aberdeen and we expected Hall Russell to get this order anyway. So nothing has been gained from the talks with Thatcher.'

The 'Guernsey' in any case makes no difference to the management's proposed 95 redundancies, added Castleman.

The shop stewards are sure that the main cause of the decline of Hall Russell's, which not so long ago had a workforce of over 1,000, has been lack of government investment in British shipbuilding.

An Indian order went recently to a subsidised South Korean yard whose tendering was £5.6 million less than Hall Russell's.

Privatisation has hit redundancy payments, so that a skilled man with 20 years service, who could have expected £15,000 compensation from British Shipbuilders, now only gets £4,000. This adds to the bitterness which has built up at the yard.

Further layoffs at the shipyard would affect the whole community. Castleman explained that the local shops used to be full of shipyard workers but their trade has now fallen away badly.

Forbes Smith said: 'This government only needs ships and the men who build them when it suits them, as in the Falklands War. When they don't need us, they discard us.'

SOGAT strikers fight anti-union laws

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

SEARCHING FOR new ways to break through the police shield at HFW Plastics, pickets last week spread into Gateshead town centre in minibuses and converged on scabs huddled in car parks waiting to be picked up by the scab bus.

Workers, who at first thought they were merely in dispute with one small employer, fast discovered they were fighting Tory anti-union laws and the new Public Order Act.

Unprecedented police attacks against the strikers have raged all week with local councillors, trade union officials, strikers and their supporters indiscriminately dragged off to police cells.

On 7 May 47 SOGAT sacked members and their supporters held a lightning picket to stop scabs leaving the factory.

The police arrived in force. Before long two arrests had been made. The picket moved to the police station and recreated the scene of the previous week when over 40 pickets chanted and demonstrated, calling for the release of jailed pickets.

The police arrested the entire picket and charged them.

While sacked workers at HFW defend their livelihoods, the official trade union leadership is paralysed and prostrate.

Brenda Dean, fresh from her sell-out at Wapping, is in daily contact with the SOGAT officials.



Police seize a supporter of the HFW strikers

The central question facing the trade union movement today is defying and fighting these Tory laws.

● Donations to: HFW Plastics Strike, SOGAT Office, 119 Jesmond Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Labour threat to Viraj job

BY BOB MYERS

MANCHESTER'S Labour Council is back-tracking on its offer of a job for Viraj Mendis.

Viraj is under threat of deportation as an illegal immigrant by the Home Office and has only avoided arrest by remaining in a Manchester church since last December. In March this year, the council offered him a job as immigration advice officer.

For weeks his employment position remained an enigma with no date being given

to start his new job. Rumours of 'problems' circulated.

The council's decision to give him the £10,000-a-year job was violently attacked by the press and the Tories.

They refer to this job for an 'illegal immigrant' as an example of the 'loony left'.

Now, following Labour's loss of seats in the recent council elections and the Labour leadership's attack on black sections, Manchester Council has changed its tune.

Council leader Graham Stringer said in the local

press that Mendis and gays had lost Labour votes in the elections. So after the Labour leadership's attacks on every section of the movement that has dared fight the Tories, these same people are now blamed for Labour's defeats.

A meeting of councillors and Labour members voted down a resolution to ratify Viraj's job and instead proposed that the council offer should be conditional on Viraj being able to leave sanctuary.

In other words: only if the Home Office changes its

mind about deportation, which it has made it clear it will not do.

The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign is planning to lobby Labour Party meetings and to intervene in the general election campaign to demand that Labour sticks by its job offer and to demand the right for Viraj to stay in Britain.

An emergency resolution from the white collar union ASTMS calling on the Labour council to stand firm on the job offer is to be discussed at a city Labour meeting.

CIVIL SERVICE STRIKE

Leicester strong. . .

MEMBERS OF the civil service unions CPSA and SCPS were on strike in the East Midlands last week as part of their programme of 'rolling strikes' bringing different parts of the country out on week-long actions.

In Leicester, where many of the DHSS workers themselves are claiming family income supplements, feeling for the action is strong.

Pat Hawkins, of SCPS explained that 'low wages are eroding the quality of the service that we give.'

'In inner city areas, especially London, the turnover of staff is so high that we are not being allowed to get the job right.'

BY PAUL HENDERSON

'The management here have issued a statement saying 62 per cent of staff are out, but if you look only at union members the figure is much higher. We are asking members of other unions not to undermine our action and support has been good, with the UCW workers not delivering post.'

Whitehall

'The government has been surprised at the strength of the support we've had — even in their own heartland, in Whitehall.'

'The Treasury staff and cabinet office have all been positively vetted; if you're

not true blue you don't get your nose in the door. In spite of this they are supporting the action.'

Andy Flynn, branch organiser for CPSA members in the DHSS, had just heard their union conference had voted for three more weeks of selective strikes, a ballot on a national 2-3 day stoppage, and selective regional strikes throughout June.

'The country has been split into three large regions,' he said. 'You could call them mega-regions. We have decided to follow this with a ballot for escalations to all out strike if necessary.'

Last Tuesday morning about 20 union members picketed the home of Chancellor Nigel Lawson, who is MP for Blaby, Leicester.



CLAIMANTS UNIONS supporting the strike of civil servants in the DHSS offices organised their members to demand emergency payments from local Town Halls.

BY SUE WILSON

claimants, payments were made.

Part of the delay was because the CPSA national leadership initially made a deal with the NALGO leadership that Town Hall workers would not pay out as it would be strike-breaking.

Later the same day this position was changed and permission given for the money to be paid out.

In Hackney claimants demanding payment from the Town Hall were given food parcels. When those ran out they were given bowls of soup.

In Haringey the council

gave £1,200 to every social service department in the borough, but for one-parent families only.

However, this very quickly ran out.

Haringey NALGO agreed to make cash payments on Wednesday. On Friday several hundred claimants turned up for a rally and then occupied the Town Hall.

The council several times promised to pay but failed to do so. Claimants were offered tea and biscuits instead!

At about 3p.m., when the number of claimants had dwindled to around 100, the council called the police to evict them. There was one arrest.

Bank workers to vote on strike action

BY PETER WINDELER

BIFU, the bank clerks' union, is to decide whether to strike against the banks' 5 per cent pay offer. A ballot has been completed in time for the annual delegate conference.

For the first time ever the banks have imposed a pay settlement without the agreement of either BIFU, the TUC-affiliated union, or one of the other staff bodies.

If the union is unable to convince its membership to

resist the imposed 'settlement', the stage will be set for the unions to disregard the unions and ride roughshod over staff on issues such as extending working hours and making staff work unsocial hours.

The executive will attempt to push through conference a motion to accept government money for union ballots.

Last year's conference decided after a heated debate to accept government money only if TUC policy changed

in favour of accepting the cash.

Last year the executive, supported by Stalinists, opposed rank-and-file speakers who did not want the union to take this step towards losing its independence from the state.

It was said privately that one of the reasons to oppose outright opposition to accepting government money was 'not to rock the boat' with regard to Labour's election chances.



OCCUPIERS at the closure-threatened Ancoats casualty unit celebrated their 100th day of occupation last Monday.

Meanwhile staff at nearby Springfield psychiatric hospital, part of the massive North Manchester General Hospital complex, were occupying their canteen, which the hospital administrators want to close.

Other trade unionists at the hospital were giving the occupiers full backing. They are paying a 50p weekly levy to pay their wages.

Lightning strikes are being held by catering staff, supporters, radiographers, physiotherapists and domestics in support of the occupiers.

Banners hanging from the occupied canteen say: 'Enough is Enough' and 'No More Cuts'.

The canteen is one of two canteens on the complex. The announcement of its closure came only weeks after catering workers were told that the health authority had accepted their in-house tender to continue running catering services.

Edinburgh May Day

ASSASSINATION attempts against left-wing cabinet ministers would have followed a Labour victory in the 1979 general election, journalist Duncan Campbell told a May Day rally in Edinburgh.

Airey Neave, the MP who masterminded Thatcher's take-over of the Tory leadership in 1975, was a central figure in the recruitment of a network of assassins whose task would have been to destabilise a Labour government, he said.

Neave himself died following a car-bomb explosion at the House of Commons in 1979.

BY TERRY BROTHERSTONE

Campbell, whose 'Secret Society' series was at the centre of the recent police raid on BBC Scotland in Glasgow, devoted most of his speech to an attack on the operations of the 'secret state'.

He explained that government had used spies since the 18th century against

domestic 'subversives' but that organised surveillance dates from the fear of the working class and of 'Bolshevism' after World War 1.

Since the early 1970s there have been increasingly authoritarian efforts to 'bolt down the hatches' against the emergence of any information that would show 'the true nature of those that are in government'.

The suppression of two of his recent programmes was part of this pattern, he explained. Malcolm Rifkind, Thatcher's Secretary of

Will NUPE stop the rot in the NHS

WHAT IS NUPE going to do to stop privatisation and cuts in the National Health Service, often carried out under the guise of community care?

BY STUART CARTER PRESTWICH NUPE

This is one of the vital questions that NUPE members in the NHS must answer at this year's conference of their union.

NUPE leaders must not be allowed to get away with their usual evasion: that we can halt these attacks by getting a Labour government elected.

If a Tory government is re-elected next month, NUPE and other health service unions will have to defend the NHS, one of the major gains of the working class in this country.

All over the country, in one health authority after another, private firms are winning contracts for hospital laundry and other domestic services. Many hospitals are using nursing agencies to staff their wards.

Competing with capitalist employers to cut costs by submitting in-house tenders is no solution.

A nationally co-ordinated campaign of industrial action is needed to strike at health authorities who intend to give contracts to private firms.

Where private contractors are already operating there should be no co-operation. Health authorities and the press should be bombarded with complaints about falling standards and negligence.

The union must campaign to win nurses' support for ancillary workers and domestics.

If privatisation is not halted the next step will be to give nursing agencies contracts to staff whole hospitals.

Thatcher's government has hijacked the concept of community care to provide a cover for closing mental hospitals and making cuts.

While in the past many have been institutionalised by unnecessarily long stays in mental hospitals, the union must not be afraid to speak out against the hypocrisy of Tory 'community care'.

Health authorities are not being given extra funds to provide suitable accommodation and support in the community.

Former mental patients are filling up bed-and-breakfast accommodation in seaside towns such as Southport, Eastbourne and Hastings.

Private nursing-homes and lodging-houses are making massive profits by accommodating ex-patients, receiving £120 to £170 a week from the DHSS for each resident.

In 1985 the number of private rest homes in the country rose by 50 per cent.

As NUPE reports have shown, safety and care standards in many of the homes are abysmally low.

Big business is now moving into this 'growth area'.

In the US community care and the closure of mental hospitals began in the 1970s. But, as a 1986 American Psychiatric Association report said, it was never properly funded or organised.

Where programmes for community support were

funded at first, they were soon the victims of government spending cuts.

Three million people in the US are now homeless. It is estimated that one-third to one-half of these people are mentally ill.

NUPE must lead a national campaign against government plans, including the occupation of hospitals and wards earmarked for closure.

The DHSS and health authorities are trying to rush through closures before alternative facilities are ready and before patients are adequately prepared.

For some patients, who may have spent 10 years or more in hospital, the hospital is their home. At least in hospital they do not have to face prejudice, loneliness, and exploitation, which may be their future in 'caring' communities.

If they do not want to leave, NUPE should defend their right to stay and should fight for improved standards in hospitals.

The NUPE leaders must be instructed to throw the union's full weight behind all struggles against cuts and privatisation.

The members of the local community who are at present occupying Ancoats casualty unit in Manchester to prevent its closure must be given official backing.

Workers like those at Addenbrookes hospital in Cambridge, who fought bravely against privatisation, must be given NUPE's immediate national backing.

NUPE leaders should be told that empty talk must end and the fight must begin. The future of the health service is at stake.

State for Scotland, now had his own 'Belgrano' — his prior knowledge of the police raid on the BBC, he said.

Rifkind has refused to correspond on the issue with West Lothian Labour MP, Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP most active in exposing the operations of the state.

Campbell visibly embarrassed Kinnock's shadow

Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar, main speaker at the rally, saying the Labour leaders were 'running away from issues and redefining socialism in comfortable terms'.

Dewar did not so much redefine socialism as fail to mention it. His rapid-fire delivery was interrupted by only one halfhearted burst of applause when he pledged

that a Labour government would set up a Scottish Assembly.

The rally of several hundred was the best organised for some years and followed a march along Princes Street of over a thousand. There was a warm reception for speakers from the Scottish National Party and the Communist Party.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VINCE DONNELLY

Control units and prisoners-of-war



There were prison strikes in Albany and Parkhurst over about two years. The inmates were in control and this aggravated the Prison Officers Association (POA) hardliners.

One day the mufti (riot squad) ran across the yard during exercise in full gear to attack a few demonstrators on the roof of the mail bag shop. The inmates countered by entering the wings and smashing through to the roof.

The usual post-riot regime ruled in Albany for 18 months. I was sent to **Norwich** for about nine months until the end of January 1984, then to **Gartree**.

By this time I knew from various small events that I had been 'targeted'.

After three months at Gartree the shop I worked in had a go-slow and no-work campaign due to increased quotas. As a cleaner on a fixed rate I was not directly involved but for some reason it was all put down to me.

A tactic used frequently at Parkhurst was then used on me. A 'nutter' who specialised in holding cons up with large scissors and taking their baccy, in full view of screws, was suddenly planted in my shop one afternoon.

Within minutes he informed me that he 'had to kill me with the scissors'.

I proved to him that this was impossible, but he was again returned to the shop after being discharged from hospital.

The cons rallied and forced management to remove him as they could see I would have to finish him, thereby falling into the trap.

Next day I got a lie-down at **Winson Green**. On 'lie-down', which is not technically a punishment, a prisoner is removed to another prison without being given a reason, and kept in solitary confinement for a legal maximum of 56 days.

Two weeks after I got back, the management tried to draw me into negotiations over the shop action which had continued. I refused, saying that it had nothing to do with me and was suddenly moved to **Lincoln**.

The boot was being laid on. I was threatened upon arrival but it was a week later before the attack came. It happened without warning on a Sunday morning.

The head thug tried it on his own initially but the rest appeared when I gave him a bit of stick. Then later I got a kicking in the 'box'. Again they all came running when

the big one took some more stick.

I was moved after five weeks to **Wakefield** where a red band (trustee) attacked me, again by surprise, but something happened to him and he fainted.

I spent 12 months there in the unit, where I got 56 days for the Lincoln 'assault', and eventually a total of 140 days for further 'assaults' on block screws.

At that time the cages in Wakefield were being used continuously and illegally. The strip cell was being used for spells in excess of the statutory provision.

There are two special cells

known locally as the 'nut cracker suite' and they were being used for two lads who had killed other prisoners. One of these had been in the unit for seven years, almost nine now, in sub-human con-

ditions despite not being on punishment. Eventually he was moved to Leeds local for five weeks, and then to Frankland.

Frankland was designed for lifers and as a no-aggro nick but when I arrived there the boot boys were in full flow. A short protest against the chief behind it slowed it almost to a stop.

He was caught red-handed using local 'heavy' cons to attack Irish and Cockney category 'A's'. It was due to come out in a court case in January 1986 but it was called off because the number one witness was conveniently found to be 'mental' and despatched to a psychiatric unit.

After only two and a half months I was sent from there to **Durham** local for a lie down, despite being on my best behaviour!

On return I was kept 5

PART III

VINCE DONNELLY, an IRA volunteer doing life in Wormwood Scrubs, told PHIL PENN in parts I and II how the system has been used to try to destroy Irish political prisoners.

This week he ends the three-part series by describing his own treatment in prison: the sudden and unexplained moves, attempts to attack and to provoke him — and what happened when a prisoner was sent to kill him.

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Intimidation, harassment and torture . . .

PoW escorts: a notable feature of late is the size of the escorts: car loads of armed police and an armoured landrover with darkened windows which reputedly carries a machine gun and a heavy duty armoured, arrogantly blocks the overtaking lane on the motorway.

I had 12 bike outriders and a series of police cars, all the outward and visible signs of a para-military police — the object being, not so much a special escort for the IRA baddie but to acclimatise the public to the antics prior to their all-out assault on politically minded proles of Britain — for which the extra prisons are now being built.

Blocks: I have noticed a pattern on my travels. The blocks are being sound proofed, the air in-take is minimum, perspex is being put over the existing windows with only a few tiny half inch holes drilled for air — contrary to the European Convention on prisons.

Bed bases are being removed, cold air is being pumped in during winter and hot air in summer. There is an increase in fans of a certain pitch also.

In Frankland a cell is used where natural light is excluded, the light is on 24 hours a day with excessive

heating with no intake of air, either natural or from the ventilation system.

This is known as the 'greenhouse' and guys are kept in there until they crack.

The Board of Visitors has fobbed off all complaints about it. It is obviously an experiment on direct orders from the Home Office.

In Wandsworth block every other cell has no furniture or bed base; object to anything at all and you are turfed in there.

There are plenty of cells in Wandsworth block in spite of the overall nick overcrowding!

Similarly Albany has all beds removed and papers are held back on punishment.

The deputy governor at Albany is in fact a noted behaviourist specialist. He went to the Kesh after the IRA burned it down to observe their pattern sleeping in the open for a few weeks after the riot.

When at Long Lartin in the 1970s he regularly gave lectures to the SAS on crowd control.

In such hands is the future well-being of the inmates.

days in the block and suddenly moved to **Leeds** again. I was told 'don't take anything with you as you won't be needing it'.

In other words a kicking was laid on.

This proved to be so and I got 56 days 'cellular confinement' (for cellular read solitary) for allegedly butting a screw!

My ear poured blood for a week. By now I could see the hand of the 'control' chiefs at Home Office.

I was moved to **Albany**, which had become the hard-line dispersal prison instead of Wakefield. I was given no job and locked up most of the day.

When I requested a job I got a lie-down at the **Scrubs** again, no job and all day lock-up.

The food in the block was being interfered with by a pair of screws who had also been involved in assaults on inmates in Wandsworth in 1973/74.

A complaint about this and a further request for work got me about ten weeks in the Scrubs block.

From there I was moved to the block in **Wandsworth** after requests to know who had signed the extension of the 10/74, which extended the lie-down beyond the legal limit.

Four weeks in Wandsworth and then on to **Durham** on 11 December 1986.

I remained there until 16 February 1987 when I was moved to **Walton** after again requesting to know who had authorised the extension. Three weeks at Walton, moved out on the day my sister-in-law was due to visit me.

She had phoned that morning and was told to come — at the same time I was being moved out!

Anyway I arrived here at **Wormwood Scrubs** although the governor refused to have me on D Wing when I was on lie-down last here.

There's a rather odd attitude to me here which marks me down for something else. I've been told at Durham that no dispersal prison is prepared to take me.

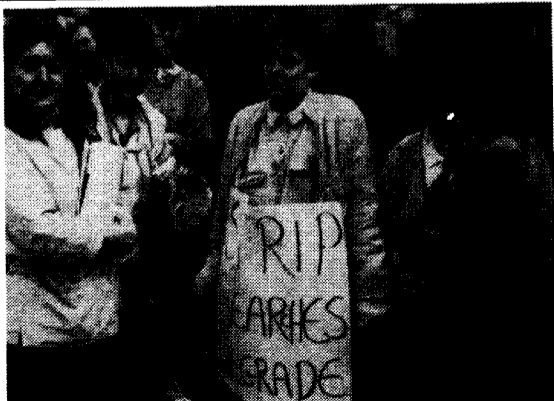
Obviously someone is manufacturing character profiles which don't accord with facts.

CONCLUDED

WORKERS PRESS welcomes all reports on the treatment and struggles of other prisoners of war and political prisoners.

END IMPERIALIST VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
National Demonstration

DURHAM



Saturday 13 June, 2p.m.
Coaches meet Student Union, Qenelm 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 SHERRY, 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,
SEAN HAYES, 20-year sentence, 341418.

WANDSWORTH
SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicestershire, 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, Braside, Durham
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, Life sentence, 119085
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, Leicestershire, 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 Elvert 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)
G. (DANNY) McNAMEE, L48616
LIAM McCOTTER, LB83693
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, LB83694

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.

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for supplying and updating this information.

The shadowy past of Shamir

Part 1: THE NAZI LINK

The first of two articles by CHARLIE POTTINS on the background of the Israeli prime minister:

HOW much did Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir know about his Zionist terror group's attempt to ally itself with Nazi Germany during World War II?

If Shamir was not involved, why have some Zionists been trying to pretend this bizarre but documented episode never happened?

Soon after Shamir began his first term as prime minister in 1983, American author Lenni Brenner, author of 'Zionism in the Age of the Dictators', visited Britain and was interviewed by the then paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party, News Line.

Not given to over-cautious statements, Brenner referred to Shamir as 'Israel's first Nazi prime minister'.

This eye-catching phrase was duly used as the headline on News Line's interview and, as a result of complaints, the paper was taken to the Press Council.

Although editor Paul Jennings pointed out that the headline was a direct quote from Brenner, and was printed in quotation marks, the Press Council still found against our paper. It was suggested that the allegation against Shamir was not only offensive but unfounded.

What was the basis of the 'Nazi-link' claim?

The 'Stern Gang'

AS a student in Poland in the 1930s, Yitzhak Yitzernitsky, as he was then known, was active in Betar, a militarist right-wing Zionist youth movement owing allegiance to the ideas of Vladimir Jabotinsky.

Advocating a Jewish state on both sides of the river Jordan (at a time when Jews were a majority on neither), Jabotinsky was contemptuous of Zionists who tried to reconcile their aims with humanitarian or socialist beliefs.

'Zionism is a colonising adventure', he proclaimed, 'and therefore it stands or falls by the question of armed force.'

Hoping that British imperialism would be persuaded to back his plans, Jabotinsky was not averse to turning elsewhere.

He had pursued links with the Ukrainian anti-semitic Petlura to assist his activity in eastern Europe. In 1934 Mussolini set up a Betar maritime training school, and Jabotinsky became an apologist for Il Duce.

In Poland the Zionist-Revisionists, as Jabotinsky's followers were known, allied themselves with the right-wing, anti-semitic colonels. In return for backing, they suggested a Polish empire could begin with the mandate in Palestine, and promised to help rid Poland of Jews.

In 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland and began implementing their own plans for that. By then Yitzhak Yitzernitsky had arrived in Palestine and joined the right-wing Zionist underground Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organisation).

Britain's 1939 White Paper restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine meant that the 'National Home' promised by Balfour was to be closed just when Jewish refugees were desperately fleeing Europe.

In 1940 the Irgun split over whether to support the British war effort against Nazi Germany. Abraham Stern declared that while Hitler was a persecutor, the real enemy was 'the foreigner, the ruler of our land who blocks the return of the people to it. The enemy are the British'.

Stern called for a Jewish state to stretch from the Euphrates to the Nile. Yitzernitsky, according to one account, urged wavering Irgun youth: 'Men! If you want to smell fire and powder, come with us!'

At first the breakaway kept the name Irgun Zvai Leumi. Later, they were to call themselves Freedom Fighters of Israel or, from the Hebrew initials, Lehi. To the British press they became known as 'the Stern gang'.

Rapidly isolated from the Jewish public, Stern's fanatics turned to bank robberies and extortion, which brought the official Zionist Haganah and the Irgun down on them, as well as the British CID. Yitzernitsky-Shamir was among Stern gang members rounded up in 1941.

In January 1942 the CID captured Stern in a friend's apartment and murdered him. Later that year Shamir escaped from detention and set about reorganising the group, becoming operational commander in 1943.

From 1944 to 1948 Lehi carried out bombings, assassinations, and sabotage. They killed the British resident minister in Cairo, Lord Moyne.

Together with Irgun Zvai Leumi, Lehi took part in the massacre of Palestinian villagers at Deir Yassin in 1948, and other atrocities.

Although officially incorporated into the new Israeli Army, the Sternists retained a shadowy organisation, carrying out the murder of UN mediator Folke Bernadotte later that year.

From Mussolini to Hitler

ABRAHAM Stern was tempted when an Irgun supporter claiming to be an agent for fascist Italy contacted him in 1940, promising backing for a Jewish state if he fought the British.

Although suspecting a provocation (the man was in fact an informer, and British Intelligence was soon broadcasting that Stern was in alliance with Mussolini), the Stern group took a chance.

They sent Naftali Lubinczik to Vichy-controlled Beirut to make contact with the Axis. In January 1941 he met Rudolf Rosen and Otto

von Hentig of the German Foreign Office.

On 11 January 1941 the German Naval attaché in Istanbul, von der Marwitz, sent Ambassador von Papen in Ankara a curious document: 'A proposal of the National Military Organisation [the Sternists still considered themselves the 'real' Irgun] on solving the Jewish question in Europe and the active participation of the NMO in the war on the side of Germany.'

The document begins by referring to the Nazis' aim of making Europe 'Judenrein', and says that this can best be done by settling the Jews in Palestine, establishing 'a Jewish state in its historical borders'.

Declaring that 'the NMO is well acquainted with the goodwill of the German Reich government and its authorities towards Zionist activity inside Germany and Zionist emigration plans', it goes on:

'Common interests could exist between the establishment of a New Order in Europe, in conformity with the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO.'

'Co-operation between the new Germany and a renewed volkish-national Hebrum would be possible...'

'The establishment of the historical Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, and allied by treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interests of a maintained and strengthened future German position of power in the Near East.'

From these considerations, and on condition that Germany was prepared to help the Sternists raise military units to conquer Palestine, they offered 'to actively take part in the war on Germany's side'.

As it happened, the Nazis probably considered the Mufti of Jerusalem a more useful ally. And had German forces broken through to Palestine, the Jews there would doubtless have suffered the same fate as their people in Europe.

Did Shamir Know?

WHEN Shamir was nominated to succeed Menachem Begin, the Israeli Association of Anti-Fascist Fighters and Victims of Nazism pleaded with President Herzog not to allow 'one who made efforts to reach an alliance with the official representatives of Nazi Germany' to take office.

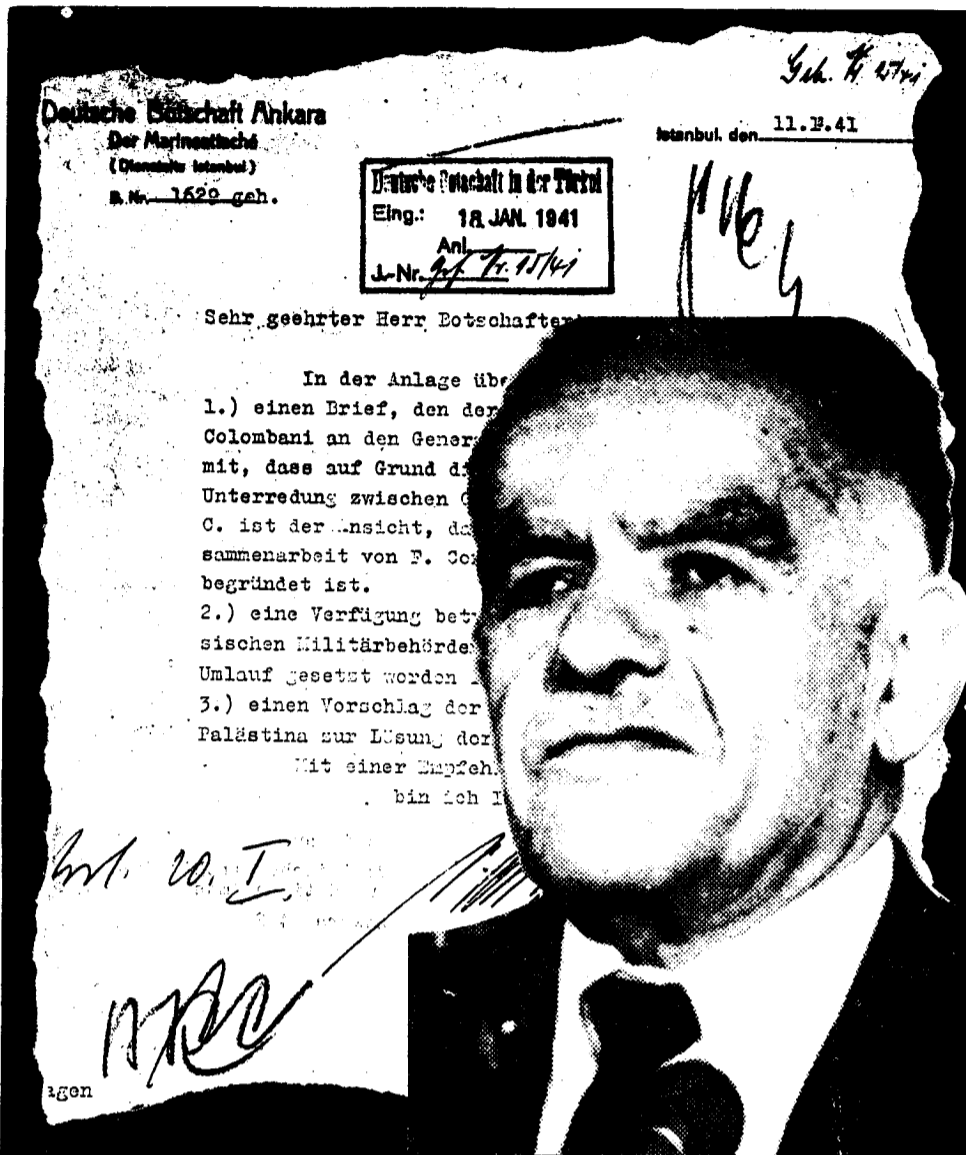
Interviewed by the Israeli daily 'Yediot Ahronot', Shamir said:

'There was a plan to turn to Italy for help and to make contact with Germany on the assumption that these could bring about a massive Jewish immigration. I opposed this, but I did join Lehi after the idea of contacts with the Axis countries was dropped.'

This does not square with other accounts that he was with the Stern group from the start. Shamir has defended the dealings with the anti-semitic Polish colonels, and admits that the attempt to treat with the Axis followed the same dubious logic.

Besides, Stern made a second attempt to contact the Nazis, sending Nathan Yelin-Mor to Istanbul in December 1941. By then Shamir was a leading member of the group.

Baruch Nadel, who joined Lehi as a youth after World War II (when it had adopted an anti-imperialist rhetoric) researched the movement's history later. Asked by Lenni Brenner whether Shamir would have known about the contacts, he replied: 'They all knew.'



The letter whose existence was denied. (Inset) Shamir

The cover-up attempt — and how it nearly succeeded

ON 15 August 1984 News Line printed a letter from J. Garnel of Hove, Sussex, protesting at the suggestion that his Press Council move had been some kind of Zionist-motivated attempt to shield Shamir or suppress the truth.

Rather than merely dispute Lenni Brenner's interpretation of history, Mr Garnel challenged the evidence itself. Brenner had said the Stern group's proposals to the Nazis could be found in documents held at the West German Bundesarchiv (Federal Archive) in Koblenz, and cited a number.

Mr Garnel said he was quoting a document 'of which neither the original or a photocopy has been produced as proof.'

In fact, Garnel said, a friend of his, Daniel Gruenberg, had written to the office in Koblenz and had been told they possessed no such document as that quoted by Lenni Brenner.

The implication was obvious. If Brenner was quoting a document that did not exist, not only his allegations against Shamir stood to fall but his whole credibility as a writer.

One might have expected Brenner to repudiate this, if he could. One might have expected News Line to be concerned, too, since it had given credence to Brenner's account and been hauled before the Press Council as a result.

In 'Zionism in the Age of the Dictators', Brenner had given as source for the Stern group proposal a thesis by David Yisraeli, of Bar Ilan University. 'The Palestine

Problem in German Politics'. If the document's existence was being denied, then that too might be checked.

In May 1985, Lenni Brenner did write to News Line, saying someone had just sent him a copy of the issue with Garnel's letter:

'This is the first time I've seen the letter or I would have replied to it when it came out.'

Brenner enclosed a photocopied extract from Yehuda Bauer's 'From Diplomacy to Resistance', dealing with the Stern group's proposals to the Nazis.

Bauer, head of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University, cites 'German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Auswartiges Amt, E234158', as the document source. So evidently yet another scholar had been taken in by this document that 'doesn't exist'!

Still, News Line — guided no doubt by the illustrious hands of globe-trotting 'security' expert Alex Mitchell, who was guided by Gerry Healy himself — did nothing.

But then, they'd apparently not even had the courtesy, never mind the sense, to contact Brenner in August 1984, when the Zionist Garnel's letter appeared. The American writer was left to receive a copy from someone months later.

Nor was that all. It so happened that one of News Line's readers at the time, having an inquiring mind and some acquaintance with Zionist methods, had decided, after seeing J. Garnel's letter, to write to the Federal Archive in Koblenz himself.

They told him they did not have the Stern group letter, because such documents

would be held in the Foreign Office (Auswartiges Amt) archives at Bonn.

The reader then wrote to Bonn and was able to receive photocopies of the 1941 Stern gang proposals (pages numbered E234155-E234158) and covering letter from the German naval attaché (E234152).

On 14 January 1985 our reader wrote to Judith White, to tell News Line that the document did exist, and that 'it corresponds exactly' to the text given in David Yisraeli's thesis and quoted by Lenni Brenner. The only mistakes had been in the number and the locations.

The reader enclosed photocopies of the documents, and the letter from the West German Foreign Office archivist.

He thought News Line would publish something. Late in August 1985, having not even had a reply to his letter, he asked me whether I could find out what had happened to the documents he had sent.

After the overthrow of the Healy-Torrance régime, comrades liberating Alex Mitchell's desk found the letter, and that from Lenni Brenner, plus the photocopies from Bonn of the documents.

So besides the question why some Zionists made a futile attempt to cover-up, there's another question: why did News Line do nothing with the material which a supporter had gone to such trouble to get, even to defend its own reputation?

To our north London reader, to Lenni Brenner, and to all our readers, apologies for the delay. As you may appreciate, we've had a few things to deal with since 1985 — but at least we can put the record straight.

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

SAO PAULO—GLASGOW LINK

Caterpillar support from Brazil

THE Caterpillar factory committee of Sao Paulo, Brazil, is giving full support to workers fighting for jobs at the company's plant in Scotland.

The committee decided last week to telex a message of support to the Tannochside workers, to leaflet their own plant and the assembly shop at Piracicaba, and to publicise the Scottish workers' fight in the metalworkers' union journal.

The Brazilian factory, sited on the vast Santo Amara industrial estate on Sao Paulo's south side, is itself feeling the effects of Caterpillar's worldwide cutbacks. Assembly lines have been moved to Paracicaba, where union organisation is weaker.

The Scottish Caterpillar workers can take great pride at winning solidarity from the Sao Paulo factory where pay is one-quarter their own, conditions appalling, and the factory guards armed.

Top wages at the Sao Paulo factory are 10,000 cruzados (about £200) a month; an average skilled wage is 5600 cruzados.

BY SIMON PIRANI

The lowest paid cleaners earn 1800 cruzados (£36) a month.

A strike campaign last year reduced hours from 48 a week to 45, and reduced the number of pay grades from seven to five (union policy is to fight for a single grade).

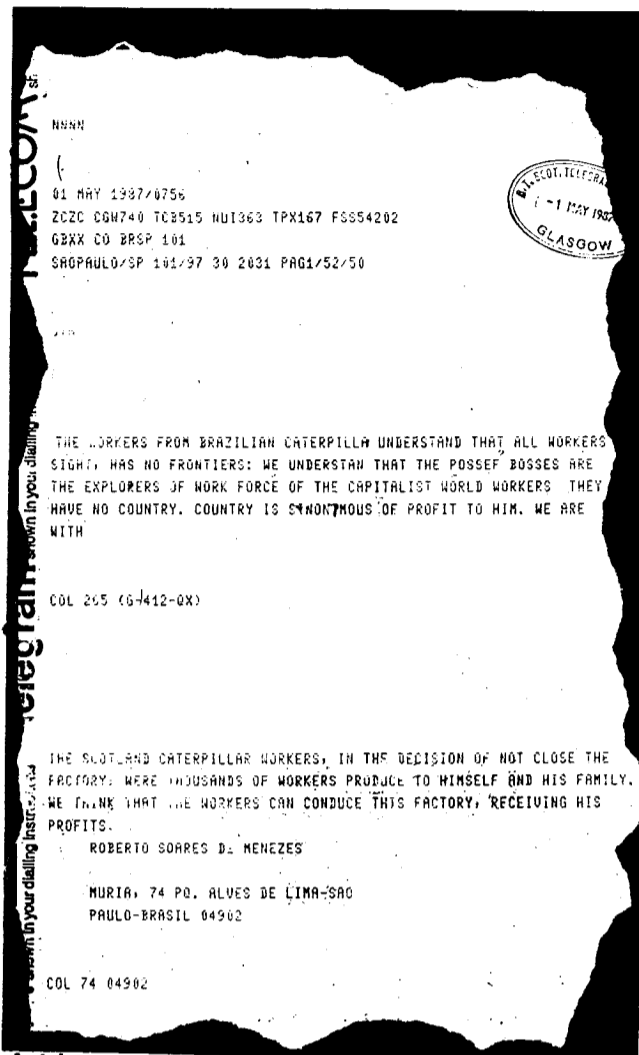
The campaign also won an agreement that Caterpillar would specify workers' level of training on their identity cards, which are vital if they move to another job.

These concessions were forced out of Caterpillar with a five-day strike in July and an 11-day stoppage last November — but at a price.

Sacked

Of the ten-man factory committee, four were sacked, two took redundancy, and one quit the committee — leaving only three who were granted 'estabilimento', the right to carry out union organisation without being sacked.

Caterpillar's Sao Paulo workers are still demanding extra payments for health risks, improved health and safety, and better food.



A telex message sent to the Scottish Caterpillar workers from Brazilian Caterpillar workers

People are driven deaf by noise in the factory. According to the factory committee there are accidents daily — many from improperly serviced fork-lifts, which only last week resulted in a falling load severing a worker's four toes.

While food has improved and includes enough rice and beans, the meat is badly cooked and sometimes virtually raw.

The struggle to organise Caterpillar and the Santo Amara area, where the metalworkers union now leads 100,000 workers, began in the early 1970s under Brazil's military regime.

Conflict

As the underground factory committees were built, they found themselves in a life-and-death conflict, not only with the police but also with the right-wing union leaders who did the dictatorship's dirty work.

'To get arrested you didn't have to go as far as organising a strike', Anisio Batista, a metalworkers' union organiser (sacked from Caterpillar in 1979) told Workers Press. 'You just had to have your name given to the police by the "pellegos" (right wing bureaucrats), who worked together with the police to stamp out the independent organisation being built by the left-wing opposition.' The Sao Paulo factory's first strike was in

1974, when workers tried to use tractors to smash machinery and protect themselves from police attack.

After changes in the dictatorship in 1978, the illegal unions went on the offensive and 400,000 Sao Paulo metalworkers staged a general stoppage in 1979. Police attacked picket lines and a worker was shot dead in Santo Amara.

Only when the dictatorship was toppled in 1984 did the factory committee win management recognition. Together with Villares, Caterpillar is the best-organised factory in the area, with 1,800 paid-up union members out of a workforce of 2,500.

Funds from these two factories enabled the left-wing metalworkers to get local premises. Left-wingers, including the Caterpillar committee, are fighting a union election campaign with the hope of snatching control of the metalworkers' union from the hated 'pellegos'.

To keep a grip on their positions, these bureaucrats rely on the votes of retired members and the fact that workers on the poverty line find it hard to keep up with subscriptions.

Whatever the outcome of the struggle in Scotland, Caterpillar workers there are a head taller for winning support from such courageous pioneers of trade unionism as their Brazilian colleagues.

Appeal for framed Bolivian miner

BOLIVIAN Trotskyist Mario Delgado, from the mining town of Oruro, appealed to a London audience last week on behalf of victimised fellow-miner Eleuterio Gutierrez.

BY TOM SCOTT ROBSON

Gutierrez is a class-war prisoner who has so far served 18 months in jail for a crime he did not commit.

He helped to lead several marches on La Paz supported by thousands of miners, peasants, and students. He is a member of the Revolutionary Workers Party (POR), and stood in Oruro council elections before his detention.

The only prosecution witness in the case against Gutierrez has since stated in open court that 'the state mining police made me say it... They offered me steady work, so I said it...'

The frame-up of Gutierrez coincided with massive attacks waged on the Bolivian workers and peasants by the right-wing government of Victor Paz Estenssoro at the behest of the International Monetary Fund.

After only 18 months in office, Estenssoro has cut Bolivia's inflation rate from 8,171 per cent in 1985 (the highest in the world at the time) to 66 per cent in 1986.

He has achieved this economic 'miracle' by drastically cutting state spending, freezing wages, abolishing all food subsidies and price controls, and lifting tariff barriers designed to protect local industries.

To these wide-ranging

attacks on the oppressed peoples of Bolivia are now added the frame-up and imprisonment of trade union militants.

Unemployment is running at approximately 30 per cent, according to labour leaders, and wages have been slashed by 40 per cent in little more than a year.

Little wonder that the 'Economist' describes Estenssoro's achievements as 'the most remarkable in modern times', and thinks the Bolivian economic package is eminently exportable: 'What Brazil can Learn From Bolivia', ran a recent headline.

Similar 'austerity programmes' have in fact been introduced by civilian governments in neighbouring countries. Peru and Argentina have their own economic programme dictated by the IMF, and it is seriously off target.

In Brazil, where the working class has mobilised wave after wave of strikes against wage controls, production has all but collapsed.

In Bolivia the only thing that prospers is the cocaine trade. Volvo dealers claim to have sold almost as many lorries in the first quarter of

1987 as in the whole of 1986. Most of the buyers are 'trad-

ers' and they pay a minimum of £43,478 per vehicle — half of it in cash.

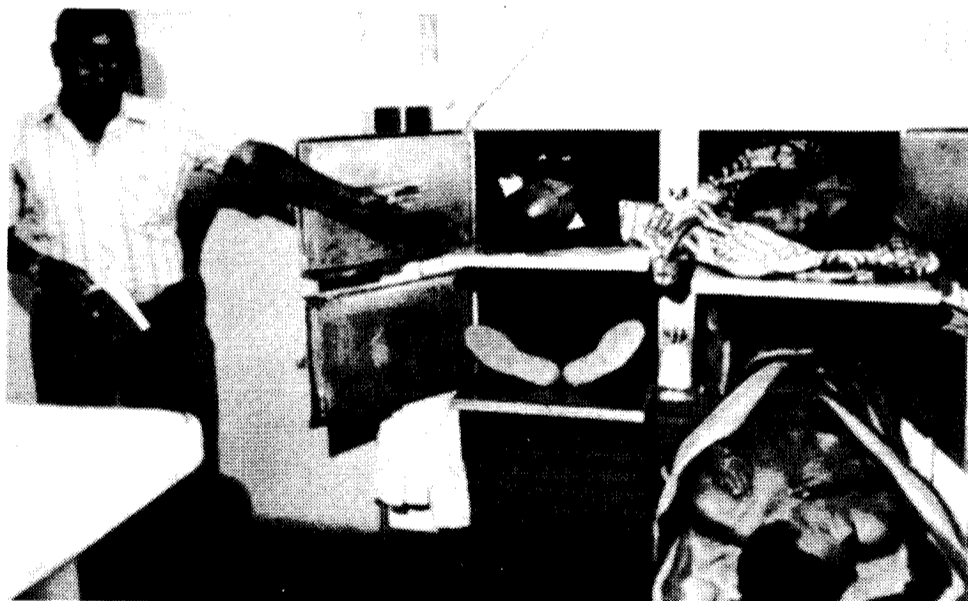
For years Bolivia's main currency earner has been tin, but a long process of decline finally hit rock bottom in 1985 when the world price of tin plummeted from £8,000 per tonne to £4,000 in one month (October).

The effect on miners and their families has been devastating. Of 28,000 miners working for the state enterprise COMIBOL, 19,000 have been sacked and forced to abandon their traditional homeland on the Altiplano to seek work — if they can get it — in the coca fields.

But the remaining miners adamantly refuse to bow down to the government dictates. Last month they staged a two-week mass hunger strike protesting against the New Economic Plan.

Release of class-war prisoner Eleuterio Gutierrez is an integral part of the struggle for the emancipation of the Bolivian working class. In his own words: 'I think with proletarian world unity we will go forward to victory and a better future for the workers.'

● Letters demanding action to the Ambassador, The Bolivian Embassy, 105 Eaton Square, London SW1., and to Trade Union Federation of Bolivian Mine Workers, Ayacho 288, 4th Floor, La Paz, Bolivia. Messages of support/copies of protest letters to FECC, c/o Steve Master-son, 88 Argwyne Street, London SW9 9RU.



A Zambian policeman shows the bodies of the four people killed in the South African raid into Zambia

Pretoria murders four in Lusaka

A FEW days before the recent election in South Africa, Pretoria boasted that it had killed five members of the African National Congress in Lusaka.

Zambia issued a correction, stating that there had only been four victims of the South African Defence Force raid, and that all four of them had been unarmed civilians.

The SADF commandos approached their destination by helicopter, then rode on motorbikes into town, where they were spotted by a number of witnesses.

They entered the seven-storey office block that houses the offices of Zambia's ruling United National Independence Party and the Zambia National Provident Fund. There they assassin-

ated Zambian nationals Mutemwa Muyeya and Isaac Chisamu, two security guards armed with batons, whistles and plastic handcuffs, who died of multiple gunshot wounds.

A kilometre away, in Mango House, the brothers Sidney and David Mulobela were killed by a hail of bullets an hour later.

The office adjacent to Mango House was destroyed, and ANC pamphlets in pristine condition were found lying on the rubble, as was a perfectly clean green, black and gold sticker.

Foreign journalists who in-

spected the site after the debris had settled assumed it was a miracle.

An ANC representative at the scene of the crime explained that they often exchanged pamphlets and publicity material with the Unip offices. But he was at a loss to explain how a package addressed to the ANC in Stockholm could have ended up on top of the rubble.

South African Defence Minister General Magnus Malan backed the raid to the hilt and arrogantly challenged President Kenneth Kaunda to 'come and discuss the matter'.

It's safe to assume that Kaunda won't come — but others will, and it won't be to discuss.

MAS

MAY DAY

SPECIAL REPORT ON T

THE Argentine government's 'democratic compromise' with the military was condemned at a 12,000-strong Trotskyist rally in Buenos Aires on May Day.

The crowd at Ferro football stadium chanted, banged drums and threw firecrackers as Luis Zamora, leader of the Movement To Socialism (Movimiento Al Socialismo — MAS) denounced Argentine president Raul Alfonsin's 'capitulation to the military torturers'.

Zamora accused Alfonsin — who went to the Campo de Mayo military camp at Easter and struck a deal with right-wing rebel army officers — of wanting to concede a complete amnesty to the murderous military who ruled Argentina up to 1982, leaving hundreds of trades unionists and political opponents dead and listed as 'disappeared'.

Antonio Cefiero, leader of the main bourgeois opposition party, the Radicals, the Peronists, the union bureaucracy and the Communist Party all 'saved the rebels — to defend their own interests,' said Zamora. 'They are all for one and one for all'.

Zamora's harshest criticism was of the Communist Party, which

until the Easter capitulation to the military, had been allied with MAS in an electoral front, the 'Front of the People' (FP).

'I am sure that many Communist comrades, with illusions in the left turn their party made which permitted us to build the FP, felt a hammer-blow come down on their heads when their leadership signed the act of capitulation,' said Zamora.

He explained why the MAS had called a rally in opposition to that organised by the CP at the Atlanta stadium, breaking the FP.

'It is a lie, Communist comrades, that the left is divided because we couldn't get an agreement on candidates for the September elections,' said Zamora to many rank-and-file CP-ers and Left Peronists who attended the MAS rally.

It was also a lie that 'political differences before Easter' or 'the fact that in some street rally you stayed and we didn't,' or even the fact that two separate May Day rallies had been held, had split the left.

'The left and the FP is breaking

up, Communist comrades, for the same reason it did in 1945, when it was a question of 'for or against Braden's Democratic Front' (that was a popular-front type agreement, supported and financed by US ambassador Braden); the same reason it did in 1955 when it was 'for or against the guerilla coup' (that was the coup ousting Peron which the CP supported); and in 1976 when it was 'for or against Videla' (who was also supported by the CP).

The left and the FP is breaking up because on April 19, 1987, the CP signed the act of capitulation to the genocidist military.'

Zamora poured scorn on the CP's claim that it had 'reservations' about Alfonsin's 'democratic compromise', which specifically states that the 'final point' for prosecuting military murderers has been reached, and that those who claim 'obedience to their superiors' (the modern-day Argentine version of 'I was only following orders') will be spared.

'You are breaking up the left', Zamora said of the CP, as the stadium erupted with anti-militarist slogan-shouting. 'And don't come back and tell us you're still fighting the *golpistas* (coup-mongers).

'What's the use of painting slogans on the walls against the 'final point' and against the 'obedience' clause, when you have signed an official and public document that the whole country and the whole world knows states that the Argentine CP accepts the 'final point' and the 'obedience' clause.'

Zamora appealed to the rank-and-file CP members to 'retrace their steps' to the united FP, which the MAS wanted now as much as it had when it proposed it in February 1985.

'There is only one condition: you must send a telegram to the president with ten words: "the Communist Party takes its signature off the Democratic Compromise".'

Everybody in Argentina understands that the FP electoral front has broken down because the MAS, the Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo (who are relatives of those killed by the military) and the small Trotskyist group *Politica Obrera* ('Workers Fight') have stood alone against the capitulation of the CP, the Peronist union leaders and Alfonsin to the military.

'If between the two main forces of the FP there were various issues in dispute, now there is one more — the MAS attacks the CP for having signed, even with certain reservations, the Democratic Compromise,' said *La Nacion*, Argentina's main bourgeois newspaper.

* * *

The CP's capitulation was part of 'a turn' in which they were 'trying to leave behind the image of an extreme left-wing party.'

The fact that the CP's rally — staged together with 11 other left-wing organisations including the Left Peronists and the Intransigent Left — only attracted a couple of thousand people more than the MAS rally, is regarded as a major political black eye for the Stalinists.

The crowd at Ferro made this quite clear, shouting 'The Trotskyists are here', 'We are Trotskyists — We are Morenists' and 'We will see socialism in Argentina', and displaying banners the size of shop fronts.

The Ferro rally began with a minute's silent tribute to Argentine Trotskyist leader Nahuel Moreno, who died earlier this year.

'Moreno is not here physically, but he lives on in our struggle,' said MAS leader Ernesto Gonzales; 'Moreno lives' replied the entire stadium.

International delegations, from sections of the International Workers League-Fourth International, and from the Workers Revolutionary Party, were given pride of place on the rally platform.

A speech by Nicaraguan Trotskyist Bonifacio Miranda of the Revolutionary Workers' Party (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores-PRT) set off a deafening chant of 'If the Yankees don't get out — it will be another Vietnam'.

'At this moment the Yankees are mobilising 50,000 marines, helicopters and modern combat planes a few kilometres from the Nicaraguan frontier,' he said, 'but when I see you all here I am fully confident that despite the presence of this powerful military apparatus, Nicaragua can and will defeat imperialist aggression, with support from you and from the workers of the world.'

Miranda said that while the PRT was fighting 'side by side' with the Sandinistas, against imperialist aggression, there was 'no disguising the fact that we want to go further than they do, to take the revolution forward to socialism.'

'The hard situation imposed by the war makes necessary the immediate expropriation of the imperialists and the placing of the factories under workers' control and the land in the hands of the



peasants; imperative also is the non-payment of the foreign debt because Reagan is using that money, that costs us so much sacrifice and effort, to finance and arm the Somocist mercenaries.'

Miranda called for the unity of the central American peoples against imperialism.

The Ferro crowd also responded enthusiastically to a speech by Bill Hunter of the Workers Revolutionary Party, who said: 'As internationalists, we support every struggle of the workers, the downtrodden masses and the oppressed nations against imperialism.'

'We support unequivocally Argentina's claim to the Malvinas', he stated, and explained that the WRP delegates to the rally were 'part of a minority in Britain which in 1982 told the truth to British workers — that they must stand on the side of Argentina against British imperialism.'

Hunter recalled that in the face of 'a poisonous cloud of chauvinist propaganda' from the Tory government and the Labour leaders, workers in Britain had responded where an internationalist lead was given. The Liverpool Trades Council had passed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of British troops and the handing over of the Malvinas to Argentina.

The WRP was forming links with the MAS both in the fight against British imperialism and 'we are also together in striving to reorganise the Fourth International,' said Hunter.

IN ARGENTINA

THE MAS MAY DAY RALLY FROM SIMON PIRANI IN BUENOS AIRES



Pictures from the May Day rally held by the MAS (Movement to Socialism) in Ferro football stadium in Buenos Aires.

Bottom Left: Bonifacio Miranda of the Nicaraguan PRT; Above Right: Luis Zamora of the MAS; and below: Simon Pirani, Bill Hunter and Rae Hunter of the Workers Revolutionary Party



TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A Magazine of Marxist Theory
Volume 1 Number 1 March 1987

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THE NORTH OF IRELAND

Class struggle and civil rights — the political background

THE Workers Revolutionary Party was almost destroyed by the anti-communist methods of G. Healy and the small clique who were expelled with him in October 1985.

Over a period of many years, these methods cut off the WRP members from the living struggle for Marxist theory and from the living struggles of the working class internationally and in Britain.

Outside of these struggles, theory, politics, programme and principles cannot develop, and they must degenerate.

That is what happened.

On a number of vital political questions the WRP under Healy's more and more one-man leadership, took up positions which were wrong and which intrinsically were the opposite of what Marxists, Trotskyists, should have been doing. These actions in some cases helped the class enemy.

An outstanding case was policy towards the struggle for the national independence of Ireland, which is a struggle to end British rule in the north of Ireland and abolish the border.

The responsibility of Marxists is to support that national struggle through work in the British working class movement. Especially in the 1970s and 1980s the WRP's organ, News Line, took the line of denouncing the IRA for bombings and other actions. There is little doubt that Healy's principal motive in taking this line was to protect his own apparatus from the British state machine.

This fitted in with the false conception which dominated the national and international work of the WRP: that the building of the Party in Britain took precedence, that the taking of power could come first in Britain and then the International could be built in other countries.

Whatever was said to the contrary by the International Committee representatives (like the present writer) in Congresses of other sections of the IC or in resolutions and discussions, was of little account and indeed served to cover up the real path taken by the WRP.

Only the expulsion of Healy and his clique could open the way to a renewal of truly international work.

The article here reprinted appeared in Workers Press in 1969. It has incorrect things in it. It must be read against the

background of the movement in Ireland at the time. It could be contrasted with other articles and reports which took wrong positions, but it is reprinted to correct that point of view, in recent discussions, which writes off the whole work of the Workers Revolutionary Party (and its predecessor, the Socialist Labour League) on Ireland as always having amounted to a pro-imperialist stance.

That is untrue.

In some articles in Newsletter (the SLL's paper) and Keep Left (the Young Socialists' paper) in 1968-69 appears the demand (among others) for 'A workers' and farmers' government in N. Ireland, breaking from constitution, posing unity of action immediately with the workers of the South and Britain.

'In the present situation such a fight would have the support of workers throughout Britain, who would make impossible intervention by the hated Wilson.' (Newsletter 14 December and 26 April 1969)

There is no doubt that to pose a 'workers' and farmers' government' in the north of Ireland in this way is not correct. It is necessary to put right at the front the rejection and abolition of the border imposed by partition which perpetuates imperialist rule in the North and strengthens imperialism's ally, the Irish national bourgeoisie centred in Dublin, against the workers of Ireland.

But it is not true to say that this was a capitulation to imperialism by the Socialist Labour League. For example the same Political Committee statement of 26 April is entitled 'Withdraw troops from Ulster at once!' and it says:

'Every working class organisation throughout the length and breadth of Britain must act now to force the immediate withdrawal of all troops and all support for O'Neill's government.'

Again

'What the Ulster workers face today, the British workers face tomorrow. We must organise immediate support and above all demand withdrawal of all troops.

'All transport of troops and military supplies to the Ulster government from ports and airports must be blacked by the workers and unions concerned.'

Also, it was surely correct to say, in the same statement:

'The real threat to the Unionist government is, of course, not the sporadic bomb attacks, which they want to use as a pretext for armed interventions but the mighty upsurge of the workers' movement.'

When 'Keep Left' carried the same demand, it included in the same article (February 1969) the call for the building of a revolutionary leadership, adding:

'Only such a leadership can cut right across the confusion of the religious bigots and unite the working class behind a programme for a socialist Ireland.'

Another Keep Left article (July/August 1969) included the 'workers and farmers' government' slogan. The article ended with the demands:

'Unity of the working class North and South in a revolutionary movement to smash British imperialism and Irish capitalism.'

'Forward to a United Socialist Republic of Ireland within the United Socialist States of Europe.'

Capitulation to British imperialism? No. In these statements and articles, as in the one reproduced below, there are wrong formulations, confusions which no doubt helped to prepare for later profound errors, but not service to imperialism.

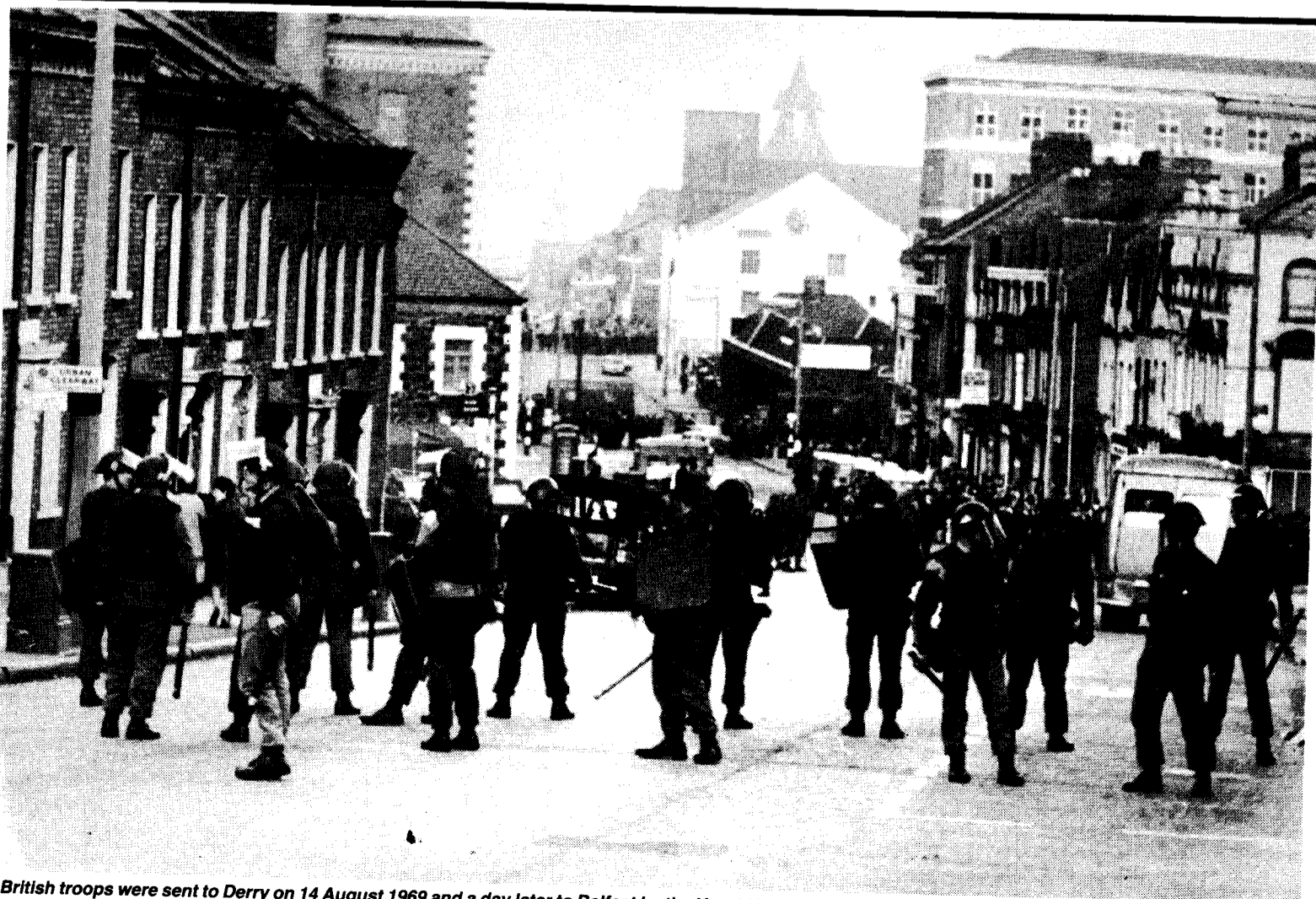
In a later issue we should reprint the statement of the International Committee of December 1971 entitled 'Withdraw Troops! No Compromise! Build the Revolutionary Marxist Party!'

This statement concentrated on the building of a Trotskyist party, and attacks the revisionists who set about liquidating into the civil rights and Republican movement. It says at one point:

'Only the working class united behind revolutionary Marxist leadership will abolish the border in Ireland, establish a united Irish Republic, and settle the problem of the democratic rights of religious minorities.'

Right or wrong?

Cliff Slaughter



British troops were sent to Derry on 14 August 1969 and a day later to Belfast by the Harold Wilson government

Reprinted
from
Workers
Press,
October
1969

BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

IRELAND, after hundreds of years of imperialist oppression, was partitioned following the workers' uprising of Easter 1916 in Dublin and the 1918 Civil War.

The present state of Northern Ireland consists of six counties in the north-east of Ireland, the remaining 26 constituting Eire, the Republic.

From 1912 onwards the landlords and capitalists of what is now Northern Ireland, particularly in Belfast, organised open military resistance against the proposed 'Home Rule', in which the Liberal government of the day at Westminster proposed to grant limited independence to Ireland.

Led by Sir Edward Carson, this reactionary group, supported by the Tories and by elements of the military General Staff in Britain forced a situation where 'Ulster', or the six counties of the North-East, remained attached directly to the Westminster government.

These 'Unionists' have had to base their politics ever since on the supposed advantages of this union to the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland.

Majority

Whereas the Catholic religion predominates in Ireland as a whole, the six counties contain a majority of those professing Protestantism.

This arises from historical processes beginning in the 16th and 17th centuries, in which the English ruling class settled Protestant farmers, mostly Scots, in these counties, giving them the best land, in order to consolidate their rule.

Now, of course, the vast majority of their descendants who remain in Ireland are propertyless wage-workers in Belfast and the smaller towns.

In order to keep the working class of the North disunited, to keep the Protestant workers in the political grip of the Unionist (Conservative) Party, it has been necessary above all to convince them that the connection with Britain and the continuance of Unionist rule is an advantage to them as workers.

Thus the Catholic worker is discriminated against by the capitalists and the state: his votes are worthless through 'gerrymandering' or the arrangement of constituencies; he has less chance of a house; he is excluded from many jobs; his children will be worse educated in inferior schools.

In addition, welfare services of the type won through struggle in Britain apply to the North, and contrast with the Republic.

It is now a desperate matter for the capitalists of Ireland and Britain that this division be preserved. The international crisis of capitalism has reached the stage where a conflict with the working class in every capitalist country cannot be avoided.

This is the lesson of France, Italy and Germany, as well as Northern Ireland, Eire and Britain.

It will be fatal for the capitalists once the workers who are crowded into Belfast slums are drawn, united, into this struggle against their real enemies, the employer, the landlord, and the government, instead of being led, as the agents of the capitalist class are deliberately leading them, into clashes on a religious basis.

Rich

There have been no barricades in the upper-class and middle-class areas of Belfast, no clashes between rich Catholics fighting for civil rights and rich Protestants fighting as 'Loyalists'!

The attention of the ruling class is turned instead to perpetuating these divisions in the working class.

But the game is up! Because capitalism can provide no future for either the Protestant or the Catholic worker; and because these workers sense the strength and offensive power of their class throughout the world, their need to fight will not and cannot be contained within the old religious 'sectarian' framework.

Within only a week or two of the clashes between the forces of the state and groups of Catholic workers in August this year, a remarkable change took place in the situation.

Protestant workers, for half a century used as a pillar of support for the 'British connection', found themselves in street battles against the occupying British Army!

For a few extreme right-wing

Unionists to raise the idea of breaking from Westminster was one thing: it was only a warning of the tensions which were coming to the surface as the old equilibrium became uneasy.

But for the poor Protestant workers of Belfast, deluded for generations into voting Unionist (i.e. for all that went with union with Britain) to fight British troops was quite another thing!

Clashed

Simon-pure reformers and so-called socialists of course will object that those Protestant workers clashed with the troops only because the troops prevented them from fighting the Catholic workers.

That is, of course, what happened.

But the objective logic of events is here of decisive importance. These workers have been led to express their bitterness and frustration as victims of exploitation, unemployment and bad housing by

against capitalism and the Wilson government.

Because of the reformist and reactionary control of his unions and political parties, from the Republicans and the Stalinists, he has been led by the middle-class 'civil rights' advocates to believe that pressure on Wilson will bring positive reforms on jobs, housing education, votes and protection against arbitrary arrest.

Many Catholic workers saw the Civil Rights movement as a way of expressing that willingness to struggle which has been steadily building up against capitalism in every country.

They thought that by giving their support to 'civil rights' they could bring pressure to bear on the Unionists for substantial reforms.

Their middle-class leaders peddled the argument that support for this could be got from the Labour government in Britain.

The whole perspective of the leadership of the civil rights movement — a middle-class leadership supported by the middle-class 'socialists' of the 'state capitalist'



Protestants demonstrating in a Belfast Street in 1968. 'To keep the working class disunited in Ireland . . . it has been necessary to convince them that the connection with Britain and the continuance of Unionist rule is an advantage to them as workers'

taking it out on their class brothers, the Catholics.

The clash with the troops signifies precisely that maintenance of capitalist rule in Northern Ireland can no longer depend on this device, together with the Special Powers Act that goes with it.

These same workers will find the troops, forces of the state, supported by the 'Protestant' Constabulary and B-Specials (now policing the 'protestant' slums), attempting to batter them down in strike struggles.

Also they have [Prime Minister Harold] Wilson attempting to introduce anti-union legislation and face increased unemployment, wage-cuts and 'productivity' speed-up.

The Catholic worker is coming into the same overall struggle

and Stalinist varieties — was that British capitalism had within it the possibility of granting democratic reforms and allowing a further peaceful development of capitalism in Northern Ireland.

Challenge

But for the Catholic worker who marched behind their banners in Belfast or Derry, it was a step towards something quite different: it was the only way he could see, at that stage, of using his growing strength to challenge the employers and the government.

Above all it is necessary to understand not only that the middle-class leaders inevitably betray this movement from below, but something else.

The political crisis which opened up with [Unionist Party leader and Prime Minister] O'Neill's resignation and the split in the Unionist Party brought in its train a series of objective struggles in which the class issues will inevitably come to the fore and in which the great opportunities arise for the development of united working-class actions and the development of a Marxist leadership in Britain as well as in Ireland.

Question

If we approach the question from another angle, this becomes clear. What is the real content of the slogan 'one man, one job' or 'one vote' or 'one house'? What is the content of the demand for ending discrimination in education?

For the working class, the 'jobs' question is a matter of more jobs. But capitalism has entered a phase internationally — and even more certainly within declining British capitalism — where jobs must get scarcer and not more plentiful.

Bitter struggles, in which the workers of Belfast and Derry are unable to resolve even the smallest day-to-day questions without armed clashes with the forces of the state, will force this lesson upon these workers in a very short time.

To fight for these policies against all diversions is the task of Marxists in this situation.

It was because of the middle-class orientation of the initial leadership of the civil rights movement that the Catholic workers found themselves apparently facing the prospect of wholesale death and destruction by August of this year.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary and the B-Specials (consisting largely of extremist right-wing elements, some of them followers of the Protestant Reverend Ian Paisley) used their government status and their arms to carry out brutal attacks on the Catholic workers' quarters. Whole streets were burned down and several deaths occurred.

Against these odds the unprepared workers fought bravely, but the independent fighting capacity of the working class had never been organised, of course, by the civil rights leaders, even of the so-called 'left wing'.

Killings

The 'state capitalists' of the 'International Socialism' group, and others like McCann, who constitute this 'left wing', then found themselves unable to oppose the intervention of British troops.

Their supporters say: 'Without the troops there would have been a pogrom (i.e. a violent attack and the killing of Catholics)'.

They forget, first, that this 'pogrom' is now about to be organised by the troops and the Royal Ulster Constabulary and B-Specials who are part of the same state machine; and, second, that their own politics of liquidation into civil rights, instead of independent mobilization of the strength of the working class, created the conditions for Wilson's troops to intervene.

Now the Cameron Report on the events between October 1968 and April 1969, together with the witch-hunt of the capitalist press, led by the 'Daily Mail', is turned on McCann, Toman, Devlin and Farrell, of the student 'People's Democracy' section of the Civil Rights movement.

No effort must be spared in the labour movement of Britain and Ireland to defend them and all the Irish militants against whom the attack is directed.

Labour

The Labour government must be told to keep its hands off any civil rights members whom the Unionists want to make scapegoats for their own historical bankruptcy.

But the lessons must be learned.

These 'left wingers', among them revisionist supporters of groups like the 'state capitalists', considered that the further development of capitalism in Ireland gave the opportunity for a reform movement (civil rights).

In this way the Catholic section of the working class would begin to develop consciousness, so it was thought.

Instead, the revolutionary nature of the problems facing the Irish workers, Catholic and Protestant, was the essence of the question, and required a socialist revolution, not a reformist programme and preparation; a working organisation not a liquidation into the middle-class organisation (civil rights) with a reformist programme.

The situation was and is building up to a revolutionary one.

Therefore, as soon as the workers show even a small example of their strength and combativity, counter-revolutionary reprisals are prepared by the Unionists.

Unable to prepare for revolution, the 'lefts' because of their revolutionary words, and because they are useful as a scapegoat, fall victim in the witch-hunt to these reprisals.

The working-class movement will defend them, because the attack on them is essentially the ruling class's first preparatory blow in tightening the grip of repression in Ireland.

Thus, if the Northern Ireland and British government 'promise' to implement the reforms demanded by the civil rights movement, what can this mean?

Unemployment in Northern Ireland is at this time 7.5 per cent, or three times the rate in Britain.

The ruling class is patently incapable of controlling the social contradictions and establishing 'law and order'.

Hence the 'normal' problems of reducing the labour force in capitalism as a whole are much worse in Northern Ireland. These promises, like all the promises of Tories and all the promises of Wilson and the reformists, are a lie and a fraud.

Northern Ireland's problems, even more obviously than those of Britain, require socialist solutions.

Brent council and 'Leninist' — a Stalinist cover-up

COMMENT BY GERRY DOWNING

'THE Leninist', newspaper of a left faction of the Communist Party of Great Britain, in issue number 49, dated 3 April, attacked Workers Press over the 'McGoldrick affair' in Brent.

Their attack seeks to cover up for their own defence of the appalling right-wing positions of the CPGB Euro-Communists in the Brent Teachers' Association (BTA) and the role of Stalinism.

The article set out to prove that:

- 1) We supported a wing of the state (Brent Council) against a workers' organisation engaged in a legitimate industrial dispute in defence of a victimised member;
- 2) Gerry Downing, a member of the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee, encouraged workers to cross the picket lines of this legitimate industrial dispute, thereby violating a fundamental socialist principle — workers' picket lines cannot be crossed in any circumstances;
- 3) Brent Council is the real cause of racism because it has not fought the Tory cuts and so discredited the labour movement in the eyes of the working class;
- 4) The positions put by Gerry Downing and Charlie Pottins are no different from those of the 'News Line' and 'Socialist Action';
- 5) That 'The Leninist' (read 'Stalinist') stands for the independent mobilisation of the working class and the Trotskyists of Workers Press are sowing 'dumb illusions in the bourgeois state and the Labour Party';
- 6) The only way forward for the working class is under the leadership of the 're-forged' CPGB, i.e. minus its 'Euros' but guided by 'The Leninist' who are the true continuators of Bolshevism,

of which Stalin was but an unfortunate hiccup or distortion, now rectified.

In answering points one and two, there is no absolute law that workers' picket lines cannot be crossed by socialists.

The question is: what is the purpose of the picket? If the picket is against other workers' rights, and particularly if it is of a racist character, it should be ignored.

That 'The Leninist' ignores so elementary a principle proves the dishonesty of their whole polemic.

There are shop stewards in the north of Ireland who boast of leading their Protestant workforce across picket lines in the Loyalist Workers' Council strike of 1974. Were they right?

Should workers have supported the dockers' march in 1968 in solidarity with Enoch Powell?

Should not workers have crossed the Haringey Council picket lines against Bernie Grant after the Broadwater Farm uprising when he was reported to have said that 'the police got a good hiding'?

The crude workerism of 'The Leninist' betrays a petty bourgeois patronising attitude to workers.

Charlie Pottins was correct when he showed the main issue was the crossing of class lines by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) — not picket lines.

Once the capitalist courts, the Tory government and all the forces of reaction (including the fascists), were mobilised behind McGoldrick and the NUT, whatever the rights and wrongs of the initial dispute, socialists had no option but to support

Brent critically, in order to defend black workers and the unity of the working class.

This was the attitude taken by the Black Teachers' Caucus, the Socialist Teachers' Alliance and leading manual workers' representatives such as the convenor of the Transport and General Workers Union, the convenor of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the secretary of the UCATT builders' union branch.

The reference to 1917 is intended to mislead. Lenin did not only 'plan and then carry out a proletarian insurrection', but he also made a tactical united front with the 'petty bourgeois Mensheviks and Socialist (sic) Revolutionaries' against the immediate threat of counter-revolution from the Tsarist General Kornilov.

This was a necessary compromise although it did temporarily strengthen Kerensky and weaken the Bolsheviks in July. Without it there would have been no October Revolution.

Presumably our latter day 'Leninists' would have acted true to form and called for a 'Red Referendum' as their political fathers did in Bavaria — the criminal folly directly responsible for Hitler's victory.

Alliances with the Nazis against the Social Democrats were the product of the 'left' phase of Stalinism. Do not repeat the betrayal of the German working class!

On point three, I have had long experience of Labourite politics in Brent, of their continued refusal to fight the cuts, of their useless bureaucratism which does contribute to the rise of racism as part of the betrayals of Labour nationally.

However, both wings of Stalinism collaborate fully in this treachery: Tom Durkin's Communist Campaign Group (Kinnock at any cost) and John Poole's 'Euros'

(tactical voting across class lines).

On point four, when we expelled Healy we rejected his rotten politics and the whole party will never allow them back. We rejected support for reactionary fakers like Ken Livingstone and Ted Knight and opportunist, uncritical support for Arthur Scargill.

Our position under Healy gave the impression that these forces and not the revolutionary party would lead the overthrow of capitalism.

Likewise we reject the politics of 'Socialist Action' who vie with the Stalinists in supporting Kinnock.

On point five, I have never heard of or seen Stalinists seeking the independent mobilisation of the working class for any reason other than self-preservation.

Stalinists have never tolerated, for a minute longer than they had to, independent Soviets or any organ of workers' power.

Where property relations have been overturned and the capitalist class expropriated by Stalinists it has always been at the head of a peasants' army often either ruthlessly crushing workers' Soviets themselves or in collaboration with the imperialists as in Vietnam in 1945.

The fact that these democratic organs of workers' struggle were Trotskyist-led is sufficient proof of which tradition — peaceful co-existence or revolution — is represented by Trotskyism.

Point six needs no comment after the above, but let me pose some questions to 'The Leninist':

● How do you continue to exist in a party of subjective and objective anti-communists like the Euros?

Although they (falsely) accuse you of 'Trotskyism', you present a mystical image of 'the Communist Party and its tradition'.

● If the 'Tankies' (supporters of Chater and the 'Morn-

ing Star') got the Moscow franchise tomorrow, would you join them?

You perform a most amazing act as the 'left wing' defenders of right-wing supporters of a 'popular front' government of Kinnock, Steel, Owen and Ted Heath.

This would be a government of counter-revolution, so all you are seeking to 're-forged' is a gallows for the working class.

In South Africa too, 'The Leninist' seeks to give cover to the Communist Party of South Africa. In the last analysis their line there is popular frontism — subordinating the struggle for socialist revolution to the 'democratic revolution'.

They say Lenin's 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry' under the hegemony of the working class is the correct slogan, not the Menshevik 'democratic revolution' under the national bourgeoisie.

Still less the Trotskyist 'permanent revolution' which, while agreeing with Lenin's pre-1917 insistence on the hegemony of the working class, asserts that on conquest of power the working class must reconstitute society on socialist foundations.

Why the cunning black bourgeoisie should enter the stageist parlour prepared for it by 'The Leninist' spider, we are not told. Why Lenin's 'April Theses', where he specifically repudiated his previous slogan and consigned those who still advocated it to 'the museum of old Bolsheviks', is to be ignored, we're not told.

The enormous growth of black trade unions is the clearest indication that there can be no postponement of the socialist tasks or no perspectives of a 'democratic government' other than a counter-revolutionary one of the Mugabe type.

'The Leninist' provide

Oliver Tambo of the African National Congress (ANC) with protection on his left flank, thereby preparing a colossal defeat.

Revolutionary Trotskyism will thwart these planned betrayals by re-forging the Fourth International.

Confusion on the nature of the coming revolution must lead to confusion on who is to lead it and to what perspective we should seek to orientate workers.

A temporary stage of bourgeois democracy may emerge but it is the perspectives for the tasks of the revolution that are vital if the working class is to take power.

Does the revolutionary party orientate the workers (limit them) to bourgeois tasks or does it fight now for the expropriation of the entire capitalist class by mobilising the masses in workers' organs of workers' struggle (Soviets), i.e. for a socialist revolution?

Stalinist references to Lenin's pre-1917 formulation have always signalled their efforts to subordinate the class independence of the working class to the bourgeoisie. This began in China and in 1927 resulted in the massacre of the Shanghai Soviet because of a mistaken policy of subordination to the Kuomintang. In Spain in the Civil War the Stalinists themselves massacred the Barcelona workers and their P.O.U.M. and Anarchist leaders in the 'May Days' of 1937 and after for rising up against Stalinist restoration of capitalist private property of the factories and estates. All the subsequent betrayals, most notably Chile in 1973 were not mistakes but conscious counter-revolution.

Many politically naive people defend these actions as the only road but some provide a 'left cover', misguided by corrupt leaders.

LETTERS

Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editorial Board. Letters over 500 words will normally be cut. Letters should arrive by first post Monday at: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS, and should include sender's address.

Was Wapping a defeat?

AN ARTICLE in Workers Press on 2 May was titled, in repetition of its concluding sentence: 'Wapping: not a defeat but a lesson for the whole working class.'

I feel it is a serious mistake to say that Wapping was not a defeat.

Over 5,500 workers were thrown out of their jobs and, despite a long and heroic struggle, the scabs are still in situ and not a single print-worker has been able to return to his or her rightful employment.

That is a defeat — down to the treachery of the print union and TUC leaderships, as the comrade says.

It is perfectly true that many enormously important lessons have flowed from this struggle. It is also true that a defeat does not constitute the defeat of the working class or even of the workers of the particular industry concerned.

If that is what the comrade wishes to say then he should make that point clear.

Many battles are lost on the road to winning a war, and defeats and setbacks, if fully analysed and understood, can contribute to the

future victory. But only if they are recognised for what they are.

To say that Wapping was a 'betrayal' — 'lost' but 'not a defeat' — can only lead to confusion.

For if Wapping is not a defeat where does that, after all, leave Dubbins, Dean, Hammond and Co.?

Cannot the print union leaders then claim to have led their members to victory? Can the TUC congratulate itself on having successfully defended the printers' jobs? Has Hammond had his policies confounded?

I do not think we should say anything which gives an opening for such claims.

The fact is, two powerful sections of workers who have spearheaded the labour movement in past struggles — the miners and the print-workers — have received severe setbacks primarily at the hands of the state.

All the signs are that the lessons are being learned by many militants, that a renewal and restrengthening of positions is occurring, and that other sections of workers — teachers, busworkers, civil servants — have not

been deterred from taking up the struggle but, on the contrary, have learned something too.

Surely we should say that a negative block to advance is itself being negated, that defeat can contain the seeds of victory?

To say that a defeat is not a defeat because it has imparted knowledge has much in common with the philosophy of Leibniz (see Voltaire's devastating send-up, in 'Candide, of the view that 'all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds'), but not much in common with Marxism.

The great danger is that we shall end up declaring all defeats victories. Then the lessons will most certainly be lost.

The danger is also that working people will say we are not of this world — or worse — if we go around implying that the wholesale destruction of jobs, the devastation of their communities, the successful implant of scab operations and the crackdown that usually follows a lost dispute are each some sort of victory.

Bernard Franks

More on internationalism

IN MY previous reply to Martin Ralph in 'Fight Racism Fight Imperialism' in February 1987, I pointed out that his critique of my November 1986 FRFI article 'The Defence of Socialism' was '... unsupported by concrete facts and that the issues involved can only be understood by analysing their political significance concretely.'

In his second reply, 'The Working Class and Internationalism' (Workers Press, 28 March 1987), Martin Ralph still refuses to do this.

In the only concrete example which has a bearing on the real issue, that is, Hungary 1956, Martin Ralph does not dispute the fact that today '... the standard of living of the Hungarian people is incomparably higher.'

He avoids the issue by commenting: 'Here is Stalinism crudely justified by alleged results.'

An incomparably higher standard of living may be 'crude' to such an exacting critic, but to workers in socialist countries, who formerly only knew harsh grinding poverty, it is a tremendous step forward.

Martin Ralph ranges speculatively over a series of issues upon which either the Revolutionary Communist Group has taken quite a different position from that suggested or has never taken

a public position, because the concrete needs of today's struggle have not required it to do so.

Thus Martin Ralph invents two RCG positions.

It is not because we 'dare not go so far today' that we do not characterise 'any criticism of the Soviet Union as "counter-revolutionary" and "fascist".' 'Daring' has nothing to do with it; it simply is not the RCG's viewpoint.

Secondly, far from 'some leaders' of the RCG knowing about the history of the workers' movement in pre-fascist Germany but 'preferring to remain silent', in 'Revolutionary Communist' numbers 6 and 7 we analysed the crude national chauvinism and acute sectarianism of the German Communist Party (KPD) leadership between 1928 and 1933.

We have not changed our

position, a position I am sure Martin Ralph would agree with.

Finally, while always ready to repeat empty phrases about 'Stalinism', Martin Ralph refuses to answer my simple direct criticism: Trotsky wrote in 1936 that if imperialism was not paralysed by revolution in the West, it would '... sweep away the regime which issued from the October Revolution.' ('Revolution Betrayed', 1936; New Park 1973 edition p 227).

The Workers Revolutionary Party should look critically at Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union rather than simply repeat his phrases about 'Stalinism', if it is to make a realistic evaluation of its inheritance from the old WRP.

Patrick Newman
Fight Racism Fight Imperialism

PUBLIC LECTURES

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4. Theory and revolutionary practice (22 May)

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PERSONAL COLUMN

The Indian Mutinies

VOLUME 14 of the 'Collected Works' of Marx and Engels was late appearing — there was a gap between 13 and 15 for a long time — no doubt because it contains Marx's 'Revelations of the Diplomatic History of the 18th Century' (1856-1857).

Omitted from previous editions of the 'Collected Works', this minor pamphlet seems to have caused embarrassment to Soviet scholars, since Marx had some very hard things to say in it about the Russians.

Much more interesting, in the long-awaited Vol. 14, are Marx's comments on the Indian people's war against British rule that started 130 years ago this month: on 10 May 1857.

Partly because it started as a revolt by Indian troops ('sepoys') in the British army, partly because it suited the British to present it that way, the war of 1857-1858 has generally been known in Britain as the 'Indian Mutiny'.

Many Indian historians, reacting against this narrow and propagandist view, have presented it as India's first national war for independence.

The truth lies somewhere between these two opposing views. What happened was much more than a soldiers' mutiny but rather less than a preconcerted war for independence.

As soon as word spread that the sepoys had mutinied, there was a series of peasant rebellions, expressing their resentment at their loss of control over their land and their grievances against excessive taxation.

These local rebellions coalesced into a general popular uprising over a huge area: a full-scale Anglo-Indian war. The areas in revolt equalled in size France, Austria, and Prussia together and had a larger population.

But, though Hindus and Moslems displayed remarkable unity — an aspect largely ignored or denied by European historians, including Marx and Engels — the struggle threw up no nationalist leadership in the modern sense.

Such leadership as did emerge was feudal in character, in the shape of local landowning monarchs unable for the most part to put the interests of the Indian people as a whole above their narrow personal ambitions.

Thus the national rising of 1857-1858 faced both ways. It looked back to India's past as well as forward to its future.

That the British, despite the lack of adequate leadership on the rebels' side,

came within a hairbreadth of losing India cannot seriously be doubted.

A British eyewitness wrote later that Britain's Indian empire 'all but disappeared'. In many areas no visible symbol of the British raj was left. Of Britain's Indian army, every regiment of regular cavalry, 10 out of 18 regiments of irregular cavalry, and 63 out of 74 infantry regiments disappeared for good from the roster.

Throughout the heartland of north India government treasuries were plundered, magazines sacked, barracks, courthouses, and other government buildings burnt down, prison gates flung open, prisoners set free. It was 14 months before the uprising was finally crushed.

Among the humble and aristocratic participants, one name stands out: Laxmi Bai, Rani of Jhansi, India's Joan of Arc. The only rebel leader to die on the battlefield, this 23-year-old woman was cut down by a hussar while fighting, sword in hand, at the head of 1,500 men.

The rising was marred by the massacre at Cawnpore of 400 British men, women, and children who had been promised safe conduct down the river to Allahabad. This atrocity was not committed by rebel troops, who had in fact disobeyed an order to fire on the unarmed garrison, but by a few personal followers of the disinherited prince Nana Sahib.

The British took a ferocious and horrible revenge. Many thousands of unarmed Indians, including faithful domestic servants, were indiscriminately butchered, regardless of sex or age.

Many were shot as they clasped their hands for mercy, and many of those shot had all along been on the British side.

Captured rebel soldiers were strapped to cannon and blown away; some were burnt alive.

At Cawnpore, Brigadier-General James Neill forced Brahmans to sweep up the blood of the murdered Europeans, then strung them up in a row without giving them the necessary time for the rites of purification.

He made one man lick part of the blood with his tongue, commenting: 'No doubt this is strange law, but it suits the occasion well, and I hope I shall not be interfered with until the room is thoroughly cleansed in this way.'

John William Kaye, in his 'History of the Sepoy War' (1864-1876), relates how 'volunteer hanging parties went into the districts, and amateur executioners were not wanting to the occasion. One gentleman boasted of the number he had finished off quite "in an artistic manner", with mango-trees for gibbets and elephants for drops, the victims of this wild justice being strung up as though for pastime, in "the form of a figure of eight".'

Why did the Indian national rising fail?

Because it was neither well organised nor well led. There was no overall plan of campaign.

The leaders made two fatal mistakes: they failed to march swiftly east to take Calcutta; and they failed to prevent the movement of British troops from the Punjab, which was allowed to serve as a base from which the rising elsewhere was crushed.

Moreover the British forces had a superior method of communication (the telegraph) and superior weapons (the newly invented Enfield rifle).

* * *

Yet, though the rising was put down, Indian resistance continued long after the British presence had been re-established. Indeed, a second 'mutiny' broke out within earshot of Calcutta soon after the suppression of the first — and, unlike the first, it lasted for several years.

This was the so-called 'Blue Mutiny' of the people of lower Bengal's deltaic area against the brutal and hated indigo planters, some of whom had learnt their trade as sugar planters in the Caribbean before the abolition of slavery in 1833.

The plantation system in Bengal was slavery under another name. Peasants who objected to sowing indigo were murdered; their houses were pulled down; they were kidnapped and locked up; their cattle were seized; their very gardens were rooted up to make room for what the British planters found a highly profitable crop.

The 'Blue Mutiny' was in effect the first strike by Indians against British management.

The movement was remarkable for the insurgent villagers' election of delegates to regional conferences and their self organisation into 'companies', each specialising in the weapon it found most suitable: spears, bows and arrows, slings, bricks, lathis (metal-tipped staves), and brass plates thrown horizontally. The women specialised in throwing earthen pots.

Supporting this popular uprising against economic injustice, there was launched what has been called 'the precursor of all modern Indian political campaigns'.

Indeed, the 'Blue Mutiny' heightened the Bengalis' political awareness and prepared the grounds for the nationalist movement that began to gather force in the 1870's.

Marx and Engels followed the 1857-58 Anglo-Indian war very closely, wrote about it for American newspapers, and saw the Indian insurgents as the 'best ally' of the British working class.

Peter Fryer

LISTINGS are published free by WORKERS PRESS each week for organisations in the labour movement. Please send details to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Thursday.

FREE THE FRAMED IRISH PRISONERS Picket of Downing Street: For a Public Inquiry into the beating and framing of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four. Wednesday 27 May, 6p.m.-7p.m.

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.

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.

20 YEARS OF THE OCCUPATION OF WEST BANK AND GAZA Conference, Saturday 6 June, 10 a.m.-5p.m. Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (nearest tube Charing Cross). Followed by Social in the evening.

HOW DO WE TAKE ON THE TORIES? Revolutionary Communist Party Public Meeting. Thursday 21 May, 7.30p.m. St Mathews Meeting Place, Brixton Hill, Brixton. Speaker: Frank Richards.

BENEFIT Southwark Printworkers Support Committee. Friday 15 May 7.30p.m.-late. London College of Printing, Student Union Bar, Oswin Street, Elephant and Castle, SE1. Tickets £2.50/£1.50.

PICKET THE MSC Campaign against Community Projects calls a picket of MSC HQ, Catford Job Centre, Rushley Green Catford SE6. Friday 29 May 12-2p.m.

COMMEMORATION DAY Bobby Sands (1981) — James Connolly (1916). Saturday 16 May 1p.m.-5p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Bookstalls, Exhibitions, Music, Drama, Videos, Food, Creche. Rally with prominent speakers. Evening Benefit Social at Sir George Robey, Seven Sisters Road, 8p.m.-late. Organised by Wolfe Tone Society.

LEFT OUT Public Meeting. Support Viraj Mendis. Video, VMDC speaker followed by discussion. Thursday 14 May, 7.30p.m. Copyart, 41 Culross Buildings, Battle Bridge Road, Kings Cross.

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

The great rail strike of 1877

-miners' fightback

TOM Scott, head of the Pennsylvanian railroad, boasted that in one year of the depression he netted a total of twenty-two million dollars.

A powerful man, who was in a position to influence the election of a president of the US, which Scott did in 1876.

The fight between Samuel J Tilden (Democrat) and Rutherford B Hayes (Republican) was a close run thing until Scott stepped in and backed Hayes.

At the time, Scott was heavily into the Texas Pacific Railroad project. Chronically short of cash he promised to support Hayes' nomination in return for a handout of three-hundred and twelve million dollars in government bonds.

Using his influence on the southern congressmen who wanted the Texas Pacific Railroad as badly as Scott, he persuaded these refined gentlemen to double-cross their own candidate (Tilden) and throw their support behind Hayes.

Scott kept his part of the bargain but Hayes, the scoundrel, welched, and refused to hand over the bonds.

Corruption

This was only part of the complex web of intrigue and corruption that surrounded the Republican's abandonment of the negroes in the south, and the formation of the reactionary united front of northern industrialists and southern planters.

This, and no doubt similar deals led to a feeling of confidence amongst the ruling class.

The so-called radical government in the south had been brought into line, and the Pennsylvania miners leaders had been hanged on June 21 that same year, 1877.

Such was the feeling of confidence, that on July 16 the 'Commerce and Financial Chronicle' announced that 'labor was under control'. That very same day (no doubt too late for a change of front page story) the first national strike in American history began.

The railroad bosses had been trying to introduce yet another cut in wages, this time a cut of ten per cent.

The railroad workers had suffered many wage cuts in the past; the average weekly in 1877 was a mere seven and a half dollars, while dividends were high and still rising.

They worked for only three or four days. The rest of the week was spent, unpaid, waiting at the other end of the line where they were obliged to check in to railway hotels where they were charged one dollar per day. Often they would return home at the end of a working week with only fifty cents to show for it.

On July 16, forty firemen and breakmen walked out in Baltimore. One hour later another one-thousand two-hundred seized the depot at Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Miners and negro farm-workers marched into Martinsburg and 'persuaded' the mayor not to carry out his threatened arrest of the strike leaders. The strike

spread from station to station, city to city, and the state reacted.

General Phil Sheridan and his troops were withdrawn from fighting the Sioux, and were turned against the workers in Chicago. Troops were used in Pittsburg and bloody street battles took place in Baltimore. From day one the strike was declared a 'communist conspiracy to overthrow the government by force'.

Hunger

What was really happening was the result of years of humiliation, unemployment and hunger. It was the depression exploding in the faces of the exploiters.

Women were valiant in their support for the strike, often countering the bullets of the regular army with stones.

The ranks of the strikers were swollen by miners, mill-workers and unemployed, and by the thousands whose lives had been made a misery by the depression.

Anger mounted, as the New York Herald declared: 'The mob is a wild beast and

PART IV OF A
FEATURE SERIES
BY NORMAN HARDING

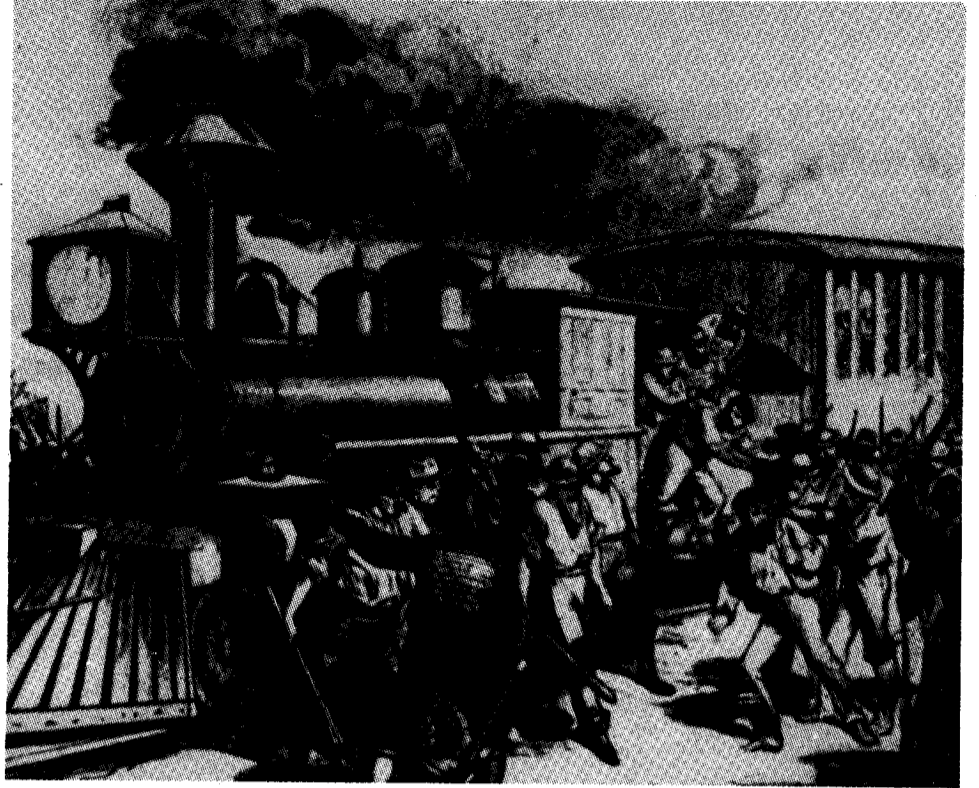
The 5th and 6th regiments were sent in and were met by thousands of strikers and their supporters. Shots were fired into the crowd, killing twelve and injuring many more. Troops were also sent to Maryland; shooting at anyone attempting to stop the trains from running.

By July 22, the Baltimore railwaymen's resistance had been broken. But the strike had spread to the railroads of Pennsylvania, New York Central, the Erie, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Texas and California. One-hundred thousand were now on strike.

In Pittsburg on July 21, the Riot Act was read to the thousands of strikers and supporters who had assembled along the tracks, but it was like King Canute trying to turn the tide.

Scott, the man who could make presidents was unable to get any trains to move. He called for a 'rifle-diet to be fed to the workers'. To his horror the local militia refused to fire on the strikers and, instead, joined them.

The Philadelphia militia was sent for and were met at the station by a crowd of workers and their families. They appealed to the troops



Strikers drag scabs from trains, Martinsburg, West Virginia

with oil, set on fire and, like fire-bombs on wheels, were rolled down the hill to the round-house.

The New York World announced on their front page: 'Pittsburg Sacked' explaining that the city was dominated by communists.

Three days later the strike hit Chicago and the New York Times took up the chorus, telling the world that the communist devils had taken over Chicago.

Strikers, communists and

but peaceful. He was to learn many a bitter lesson during the strike and soon became an active militant, playing a role that was to help build one of the strongest labour movements in the country.

Along with others, Parsons was framed for the Haymarket bomb incident, and was hanged.

The Missouri-Pacific and the St Louis railroads had now become involved in the strike under the leadership of the Working Mens Party.

hour day agreements were thrown into the waste paper basket.

Big business and the military were now so well organised that by August 2, the picture was the same everywhere. The strikers were 'shot' back to work, and escorted at bayonet-point back to the round-houses and to the freight and switch yards.

With few deserters and few scabs they went back to work with pride and dignity. The labour press warned that they would be back, but better organised next time: only the battle, not the war, had been lost.

The railroad strike had been born out of workers hatred for the huge fortunes being made by the few and the poverty of the masses, and the unrest continued after the strike.

Political parties were being formed all over the country. Two of these, the Workers Party and the Greenback Movement merged in 1878. Fifteen Greenback labour candidates were elected to Congress with the candidates in Pennsylvania receiving fourteen per cent of the vote, a large proportion coming from the so-called Molly Maguire counties.

The miners in Schuylkill County were once again organising, this time joining the Knights of Labour, founded in 1869 and now becoming a nation-wide force.

Gowan, the industrialist, whose anthracite monopoly and railroad interests were crumbling, now had to contend with his arch-enemy, the miners. They were fighting back as if the nineteen leaders he had framed and hanged in 1877 had never died.

The man who thought he was all-powerful, who once claimed that god was on his side, must now have thought that god had got himself another partner, as he saw himself being swallowed by a bigger fish: J P Morgan.

Trapped between Morgan and the working class, Gowan escaped the laws of history by putting a bullet through his skull on December 13, 1889. There is no record of anybody mourning his passing aside from his immediate family.

**Next Week:
The Promised Land
God's Gold
A&L Parsons**



Militia shoot strikers in Baltimore, Maryland

needs to be shot down.' The New York Sun advocated '...a diet of lead for the hungry strikers'.

Scott was using his railroad lobby to get the government to implement his call for the use of troops. Federal troops were sent into Baltimore under the command of General French. On July 19, he arrested the strike leaders and, thinking that this was sufficient, informed Washington that he had broken the strike. How wrong he was!

The workers stood firm.

not to fire on fellow Americans. But their appeals were ignored and they fired into the crowd, killing twenty men, women and children.

News of the massacre spread quickly. Miners and steelworkers headed for the centre of Pittsburg. Hopelessly outnumbered the soldiers were obliged to take refuge in a round house where, by midnight, they found themselves surrounded.

The workers were retaliating. Shots were fired at the soldiers, cars were filled

trade union militants were branded 'public enemy number one' long before Alfonso Capone had earned the title.

It was in Chicago that General Phil Sheridan, fresh from fighting the Sioux, where no doubt he had gained lots of experience, made a cowardly cavalry charge on a crowd of workers killing twelve and wounding forty.

Albert Parsons, a Texan, who was just beginning to become involved in trade union activity, was advising Chicago strikers to be firm

A general strike was called, all the factories stopped, and no trains moved.

Agreements on pay increases and the eight-hour day were extracted from the bosses.

To halt this offensive martial law was declared. Regular soldiers, state militia and armed vigilantes united to break the strike.

They arrested seventy-nine of the most militant leaders. The concerted attack that followed forced the rank and file back to work. The wage and eight-

REVIEWS

Not the way to counter racialist myths

Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilisation. Volume 1: The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785-1985. By Martin Bernal. Free Association Books, paperback £15.

GANDHI was once confronted with a journalist who asked him what he thought about western civilisation. 'I think it would be a very good idea', he replied.

Other societies have encountered this western culture in the form of the imperialism of the 19th and 20th centuries, and racial interpretations of the past have played an important part in

justifying its 'civilising mission'.

Martin Bernal seeks to demonstrate how racialist attitudes have conditioned the way we see the development of ancient civilisation, making a positive appraisal of Greek culture to the detriment of the oriental civilisations that went before it.

This is a worthy aim, but the author is well out of his depth when he comes to tackle it. For example, he concentrates on the official high scholarship of the universities in forging the European 'Aryan' myth of Ancient Greece, forgetting that classics had been a necessary component of grammar- and public-school education since the sixteenth century.

It was at this rather lower level that the English ruling

classes, for example, studied the elitist thought of Plato and Aristotle, the philosophy of the slave-owning class, and the governmental practices of Ancient Rome, to equip them for the administration of a great empire.

Nor is Bernal's grasp of Egyptian language and culture any more profound.

He tries to explain the Greek word for 'labyrinth' by a non-existent Egyptian phrase that was laughed out of court long ago, and he has no idea of the true derivation of 'Thebes' from t3-'Ipt(swt), its old name, but goes in for very fanciful ling-

uistic adventures of his own.

He does not appear to know that there were more kings in the second Intermediate Period called after Menthu than in the Xth dynasty, or that the cult of this god was under the form of a hawk during the third millennium, the bull burials at Armant only dating back to shortly before the conquest of Alexander the Great.

A foolish attempt is made to prove an Egyptian conquest of Greece by a title 'Mistress of the H3w nbw' applied on a stele to a queen, a monument in which her

husband is described as 'King of Kings in all Lands' — one of the by no means rare bombastic claims to universal dominion put forward by the Egyptian kings at this time.

Bernal's view that the text on the Shabaka Stone dates back to over 1,000 years earlier was discarded by all serious students of Egyptian religion some time ago.

But from the point of view of historical materialism, the book's main failure is to seek to demolish one racialist myth by erecting another.

There is no proof whatever that the population of Ancient Egypt had substantially different colour or facial features from today.

The colour conventions of Egyptian painting show men as red-brown and women as yellow, but Nubians to the south of them as black Africans.

The black colour given to King Amenhotep I and Queen Aahmose-Nefertari in tomb paintings (mostly centuries after their deaths) is in their capacity as dead gods — tutelary gods of the necropolis, as Brugsch proved over a century ago.

In one of these the queen is shown as blue — is Bernal going to suggest that she suffered from a rare blood disease as well? With the exception of Prince Maiherpra, not a single one of the royal mummies of this period in Cairo shows any marked 'African' features.

This is not the only racialist myth that Bernal seeks to counterpose to that of official scholarship.

He speaks with approval of the nonsensical theories of the pyramidologists — those who tried to prove that the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh prophesied the whole of world history or contained secret celestial measurements. (Not a few of the pyramidologists were British Israelites trying to prove that Britain's universal dominion of Britain was a

fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies.)

Bernal dismisses in one blithe phrase (p.401) all the work of native Egyptian scholars — the philological scholarship of some of whom (e.g. A.M. Bakir) is much more careful than his own.

The main reason for these bizarre errors is the attempt to erect a 'progressive' model of ancient civilisation in the total absence of any concept of class.

This should not surprise us at all, as the book is dedicated to the author's father, J.D. Bernal, whose fellow-travelling with Stalinism has left an obvious stamp on his son.

What are we to think, for example, of a professor of government studies who believes Lenin held the anti-Hegelian theory of 'non-antagonistic contradictions among the people' dreamed up by Mao Tse-Tung to justify the Chinese variant of the popular front (p.190)?

The fact is that, as Marx and Engels were well aware, Greek civilisation represented a qualitative advance on pre-Greek society because it was erected on the basis of a more advanced form of production — slave society as opposed to the Asiatic mode as practised in ancient Egypt.

If the author had not been quite so (racially?) dismissive of modern native Egyptian research he might have found the material for a class analysis in the work of Kanawati on the Old Kingdom nobility and in Bakir on 'Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt'.

But that would require the conscious rejection of all racial stereotyping and the application of the techniques of analysis of historical materialism.

Al Richardson

Explanatory note
t3-'Ipt(swt), H3w nbw.
This is the method by which scholars transliterate Egyptian hieroglyphics

ROBSON'S CHOICE

A STORY that might catch the children's interest without corrupting them, **The Wild Stallion**, is on Channel Four at 4.30p.m. on **Saturday**.

At 8p.m. on BBC1, **Live from the Brighton Festival**, a feast of classical music from Finland transmitted simultaneously by Radio 3 in stereo. It includes a concerto by Nielsen (James Galway on flute) and two majestic symphonies by Sibelius. At 12.50p.m. (Channel 4), insomniacs might care to tune into **The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith**.

On **Sunday**, at 5.30p.m. (ITV), **Survival Special** features a forest in Spain, Extremadura, one of the last strongholds of the wolf and the golden eagle.

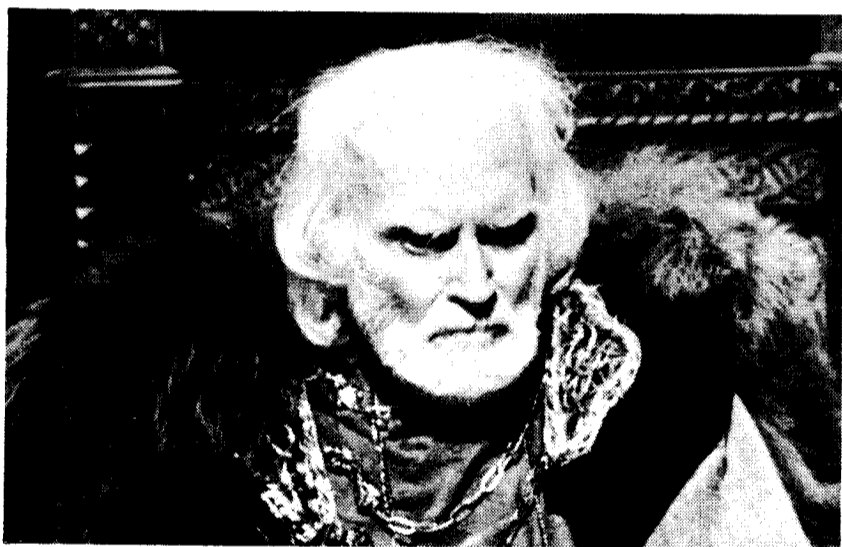
At 7.45p.m. (BBC2), a performance of George Bernard Shaw's **The Devil's Disciple** followed at 10.55p.m. by Nicholas Ray's 1950s classic, **Rebel Without a Cause**, the rebel being played by James Dean.

Monday evening as far as I am concerned begins with **The Cutting Edge**, (7p.m., ITV), a programme based on the scientific research community at Oxford University.

But pick of the day is likely to be **Open Space**, (7.40p.m., BBC2), which this week presents a programme called: **Who Killed Hebert Marin?**

Marin organised low-paid immigrant workers in London into the trade union movement. On a visit to his home in Cali, southern Colombia last October, Hebert Marin was shot twice in the head. His tortured body was dumped in the gutter.

His family is convinced he was assassinated either by the police or the army. But Marin is only one of thousands who have fallen victim to the right-wing death squads in recent years. Countless priests, trade unionists and civil rights workers have suffered the same fate. Marin's brothers and sister, now exiles in



Laurence Olivier is **King Lear** on Thursday (9p.m. on Channel Four)

Britain, take over **Open Space** and give their account of what is happening in their native Colombia.

Still on Monday, **Eleventh Hour Cinema** presents **Nineteen Nineteen**, (10p.m., C4), in which two ex-patients of Sigmund Freud meet in 1970s Vienna and discuss their past. The strong cast is led by Paul Scofield and Frank Finlay. Immediately afterwards, (11.50p.m., C4), **Letter from Nicaragua**, by Argentine director Fernando Birri.

Tuesday is for lovers of the bard (so is Friday, come to that). Radio 3 presents William Shakespeare's **Cymbeline**, starting at 7.30p.m. Strictly for thrills, there is **The Night Stalker**, (9p.m., BBC2).

ITV's **Viewpoint 87: United in Fury**, at 10.30p.m., highlights the plight of the disabled in Thatcher's Britain, underlining the fact that two-thirds of

them are currently living on or below the poverty line.

Wednesday belongs to BBC2 with **Only One Earth** at 7.50p.m. and **Painting with Light** at 8.20p.m.

On **Thursday**, for the jazz enthusiasts, **St. Louis Blues**, (5p.m., C4), starring Cole, Kitt, Bailey, Calloway, Fitzgerald, Jackson and Dee. At 7.40p.m. Radio 4 presents **Pillars of Society**, an investigation into Freemasonry in Britain by David Lomax.

At 9p.m. on Channel Four, 80 year-old Laurence Olivier appears in Shakespeare's **King Lear**.

On **Friday**, don't miss Budd Boetticher's little gem of a western, **Buchanan Rides Alone**, (6p.m., BBC2). To round off the week you have the Hollywood melodrama, **Possessed**, with Joan Crawford and Van Heflin (11.15p.m., BBC2).

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BOOKS

Workers Press

Saturday May 16 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

London picket opposes SAS/RUC murders

Members of the Workers Revolutionary Party took part in a picket of Downing Street on Tuesday, protesting at the murder of eight IRA fighters at Loughgall, Co. Armagh, on May 8. The Revolutionary Communist Group, the Irish Freedom Movement and the 'Free the Framed Irish Prisoners' Campaign also participated. (See picture right).

Pickets were undeterred by police attempts to move their banners away from the area.

● See next week's 'Workers Press' for on-the-spot reports on the aftermath of the Loughgall murders.



PHOTO: An Phoblacht/Republican News

IRA firing party salutes Volunteer Jim Lynagh, murdered by the British SAS. His coffin at the funeral in Emyvale, County Monaghan, was being carried by his brothers Colin (left) and Finbar.

Hunger strike commemoration

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

A 500-STRONG demonstration in Birmingham last Saturday commemorated the sixth anniversary of the hunger strikes.

Bobby Sands and his nine comrades died on hunger strike fighting for political prisoner status, taken away in 1976 when the Labour government tried to criminalise the liberation struggle.

The hunger strikers won worldwide support.

Bobby Sands was elected as an MP, while Kieran Doherty and blanketman Paddy Agnew were elected as TD's (members of the Dublin Dail).

Seven nationalists were shot dead and 100,000 people attended Bobby Sands' funeral.

The Thatcher government and, it must be added, the British labour movement, allowed them to starve to death.

Last Saturday's march was led by a pipe band and a colour party.

Prominent on the march were youth from the Pakistani Workers Association and the Kashmiri Workers Association.

At a rally afterwards the

Kashmiri Workers Association speaker pointed out that it was Lord Mountbatten who partitioned the Kashmiri nation in 1947 between India and Pakistan in order to crush their resistance.

He said: 'The PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) is now being used against us and we have prisoners in British jails alongside Republicans.'

Mahsoud Ahmed from the Pakistani Workers Association said: 'No foreign power can rule forever. Look how American imperialism was thrown out of Vietnam.'

'We have suffered from the same British rule. In England the Broadwater Farm youth have been given massive sentences. Their only crime was that they were fighting racism.'

'We support the Republican movement and its right to pursue the struggle in whatever way they see fit.'

Gerard McDonnell serving life in Parkhurst prison sent a message of tribute to Volunteer Finn McKenna who died recently on active service. He had spent nine years in the H-Blocks and had been one of the 1980 hunger strikers. He had died trying to bomb the British army in his own street.

Pan African Congress

speaker Zunzi Novodolo spoke of the common struggle to liberate Azania and Ireland. Republican prisoners in Maghaberry jail called for an organisation to fight for the repatriation of Republican prisoners in British jails.

Finula McCotter from the Repatriation Committee in Belfast spoke of the financial stress and harassment experienced by families trying to visit their jailed relatives in English prisons.

Breige Brownley from Stop the Strip Searches said that strip searching was designed to degrade and humiliate. Since it began in 1982 there had been over 4,000 strip searches on a prison population which never exceeded 30 women.

There had been no escape attempts and nothing had ever been found. She herself had served a six year sentence and had been strip searched on the day of her release.

She called on supporters to lobby their MPs and win support in their trade unions. A message was also read out from Ella O'Dwyer and Martina Anderson in Durham jail who were being strip-searched before and after all visits.

Eamonn Mullen of the Irish Republican Socialist Party expressed condolences to the families of the eight IRA volunteers killed the night before. He said:

'If the British think that will stop us they have another think coming. Our Vice President Kevin McQuillan should have been speaking here today but he was arrested along with Terry Harrigan as he arrived at Manchester Airport.'

'That is the PTA in operation for you. By their sacrifice the hunger strikers instilled fresh resistance in a war weary people.'

'They smashed attempts to criminalise their struggle.'

He said that within the IRSP there had been a struggle for several years to put the party on a revolutionary path.

'Our comrades in jail, particularly Thomas Power, conducted a major critical analysis of our policies — the politics of the working class had been ignored. However the paid perjurer system was used to imprison many of our most politicised members. We will carry out our duty to fight for a Marxist Irish Republic.'

He paid tribute to INLA hunger strikers Patsy O'Hara, Kevin Lynch and Michael Devine and made a blistering attack on those sections of the British left who did not see the necessity of armed struggle.

'You must support every rebellion against the main enemy provided it is not a rebellion of a reactionary class, this was Lenin's policy.'

A speaker from Sinn Fein got a standing ovation. She spoke of the RUC attacks on funerals, 17 murders by the UVF since the Anglo-Irish Agreement began and also

criticised those who refused to see the common links between the struggles in Ireland and South Africa.

Messages of support were also read out from: City Group AA/Non-Stop Picket, WRP/Workers Press, Free the Framed Irish Prisoners Campaign, Newcastle Women and Ireland, Republican Support Group in Australia, women Republican prisoners in Maghaberry jail, Viraj Mendis Support Campaign, Brent NALGO, Revolutionary Communist League of Britain and Manchester and Irish Solidarity Campaign.

FREE THE FRAMED IRISH PRISONERS!

Public Meeting

Wednesday 20 May

7.30p.m.

Holborn Library

Speakers: Gareth Pierce; Dr Maire O'Shea; Mike Mansfield