

BY THE EDITOR

END OF AN ERA

NORMAN WILLIS, TUC general secretary, must think he had a good week at Blackpool. After all, didn't he successfully manoeuvre the issue of no-strike agreements off the agenda? The EETPU's scab-herding at Wapping was condemned, of course. But everybody knows this is only a way to allow some of Willis's critics to let off steam, while Hammond gets on with the job.

But Willis would be wrong to be so complacent. For the days when union bureaucrats could control their members and pursue their careers in peace are over. Whatever Thatcher and her servants in the union leadership may think, the crisis of British imperialism is desperate. And that includes the crisis in the TUC bureaucracy on which the British capitalist state has rested for 150 years.

The ability of union leaders to control the working class in the old days depended on the fact that a certain number of concessions for many sections of the class could be granted. But those days are gone for good.

The jobs, rights and conditions of trade unionists can no longer be defended by the old class-collaborationist methods. The union leaders will not sell out in the old way because they no longer have anything to sell. Hammond's complete subservience to capital does indeed show the future for the bureaucracy.

It would be a serious mistake for socialists and rank-and-file trade unionists merely to shrug their shoulders at the treachery of their leaders. No — this is not a 'typical TUC fudge.' Instead we have to grasp the urgency of the fight to build an alternative revolutionary leadership in the unions.

That is the real meaning of the struggle of the miners, printers, teachers and others over the past three years.

FROM DAVE TEMPLE AT THE TUC

'THE device of the General Council to produce a typical TUC fudge.'

This is how Arthur Scargill described the procedure devised by the General Council to avoid an immediate decision on single-union, no-strike agreements.

In the event the TUC fudge won the day and no one was surprised.

The manoeuvres of the General Council to prevent the united strength of the British trade union movement being brought to bear on the enemy is not a new phenomenon.

In its history, which predates the formation of the Labour Party by some 25 years, the TUC has continuously harboured the same inherent contradiction — an enormous potential strength emasculated by a reformist bureaucracy.

No one believed that in 1987 the TUC would change. However, the bitterness of the struggles over the past four years could not be excluded from the agenda so easily.

Bitter

'It's all right so long as your job hasn't been stolen by Eric Hammond and a bunch of scabs in his union,' is how one SOGAT delegate injected the bitter feelings from Wapping into the debate.

As he berated the General Council for its lack of support for workers in struggle — 'the real cause of our present dilemma' — the general secretary's rotund form wobbled in anger.

Eric Hammond, the most

hated leader in the trade union movement, rose to condemn his opponents as revolutionaries. Ploughing through a well-rehearsed speech of double-talk, seemingly oblivious to the barrage of protests, he ended on the prophetic note: 'We are the future, we will not go away.'

Scargill's speech posed the simple question of 'class collaboration' against class solidarity. But it would be naive to believe that the division within the TUC represented a conscious split between the two extremes.

Advance

It would be an advance for the working class if all those who opposed Hammond were for uniting the movement for a class action against capitalism.

The truth is that the real question at stake is how to regulate relationships between the bureaucracies in a declining market.

The Bridlington agreement preventing one union from taking members from another has for decades been the cornerstone of the TUC. Now millions have lapsed their union membership. The EETPU itself has lost some 80,000 members in recent times.

In these changed conditions the interests of the bureaucracies in the individual unions transcend the old agreements made to serve in times of expansion.

The purpose of the General Council's review of the trade union structure is all about how, at a time of heightened class struggle, they can maintain a united bureaucracy to practise their age-old craft of preventing the working class concentrating its force in a single blow at the enemy.



Council workers defend jobs and services — see p.2

**Workers
Press**

The Tories and 'terrorism'

THREE young Irish people, arrested near the home of Tom King, Tory minister responsible for the occupation of the north of Ireland, were 'convicted by media' last week.

On Tuesday, four days before they were charged, the headlines screamed about 'IRA assassins'. Even the liberal 'Guardian' joined in the chorus. What 'justice' can they expect when they go on trial for conspiracy to murder — a charge which can be 'proved' with 'evidence' of 'a nod and a wink', and carries an unlimited sentence.

When the police started a 'hot line' to which information on 'terrorists' can be telephoned, the Labour leaders' paper, the 'Daily Mirror', told its readers: 'We want you to find these people.'

This is a new and concerted attempt to whip up hysteria against the Irish community. Every Irish family holidaying in English coastal resorts, every Irish teenager whose search for work lands him or her in a London slum, becomes a 'suspected terrorist'.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act has already led to thousands of raids, arrests, strip-searches, overnight deportation of immigrants settled in Britain, and to the framing of the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six. The new witch-hunt will lead to renewed and increased intimidation.

This is not limited to the Irish community, of course. Last week the media's moronic fire was turned on Jeremy Corbyn MP, because he employs former anarchist Ronan Bennett. Other political and trade union activists may soon face the same treatment.

In the light of the press barrage, here are some straightforward statements by 'Workers Press' about 'terrorism' in Britain and Ireland:

- The overwhelming mass of violence and intimidation (i.e. 'terrorism') in the six northern Irish counties — and in Britain! — is carried out by the British state forces. Every month, the army carries out dozens of break-ins, beatings, shootings, unprovoked arrests and detention. The standard 'punishment' for IRA 'suspects' is a bullet in the back of the head, as recent cases in Armagh, Strabane and west Belfast testify.
- The British forces have under their effective protection numerous loyalist para-military groups, in whose hands there are a virtually unlimited quantity of arms and ammunition.
- The military policy of the IRA has, throughout the lifetime of the Thatcher government and before, been directed primarily against the occupation forces in the six counties (over the last year, attacks have been concentrated on army forts and police stations); the IRA also aims at leading individuals in the Tory government like Tom King and premier Thatcher, not as 'revenge' for the deaths of IRA Volunteers killed at Loughgall, but as a long-standing policy.
- The IRA is opposed by an unholy alliance: the British state, the leaders of the capitalist 26-county state who are now preparing an Extradition Bill to help hunt down Republican fighters, and the Church. The pro-imperialist Labour Party leaders always side with the British state and the six-county occupation to which the IRA is opposed. So do all the main Stalinist parties, including the Communist Party of 'Great' Britain, and the partitionist Workers' Party in Ireland, whose leader Cathal Goulding recently attacked the IRA as 'Ireland's Contras' and 'fascists'.
- These miserable cowards' favourite trick is to quote Lenin, who opposed the 'terrorist' strategy of the Russian Narodniks, which was based on blowing up individual members of the Tsarist autocracy (Lenin's own brother was executed after blowing off the Tsar's legs). They condemn, together with the British imperialist establishment, the 'terrorism' of the IRA; in the next breath they quote Lenin against 'terrorism', in order to bolster their pro-imperialist arguments. Lenin would turn in his grave.
- As Trotskyists, the Workers Revolutionary Party and 'Workers Press' declare our total solidarity with the nationalist communities of the six counties, the Republican movement, and its armed struggle, against British imperialism. The strategy of Trotskyism is the mobilisation of the working-class in revolutionary struggle against capitalism — as opposed to a perspective of individual executions of ruling-class leaders and other guerrilla actions. But in the struggle against British imperialism and the occupation of the six counties, we clearly side with those heroic fighters in the IRA who do carry out such executions, and proudly declare that to the whole working class.
- The British working-class movement has an absolute duty to defend the Irish community from the present witch-hunt. This means campaigning against the Prevention of Terrorism Act and for the release of the framed prisoners. The arrogant hypocrisy of the Tory press should, of course, be treated with the utter contempt it deserves.

COUNCILS UNDER THREAT

Checklist of the Tory onslaught

CAMDEN Council branch of the local government union has produced a summary of the known legal, financial, political and legislative threats to the local authority and its work following the re-election of the Tory government.

Some items refer specifically to Camden but others are common to every council. All reflect the extent of the attack about to be launched and the consequent battles to be fought for jobs and services, rights and principles in the coming period.

This itemised timetable produced by Camden NALGO is a valuable outline for all council workers and service users, detailing what to expect and when to expect it.

Budget for 1987-1988

THE current gap forecast between income and spending for Camden is £10-12 million. The likelihood is that there will be a legal challenge or action taken by the district auditor if the situation is not resolved, probably to apply spending cuts.

● Action is likely in October 1987.

Budget for 1988-1989

THE gap forecast for Camden in this regard is £60 million. Measures to fill the gap must be taken in the current financial year. Again, there is the likelihood of legal challenge or action by the district auditor if the situation is not resolved.

● Rate capping limits have already been set. These can be challenged but the final rate must be set by 9 March 1988.

Capital Programme for 1987-1988

THE programme is already facing difficulties in Camden, especially if the previously arranged 'deferred purchase agreement' does not go through.

● The final position will not be clear until October 1987.

Capital Programme for 1988-1989

THIS will be affected by the

viability of further deferred purchase agreements and a likely reduction in the legal sources of finance (housing investment programme allocation etc.).

● The 1988-1989 allocation should be announced in November 1987.

Surcharge action against councillors

DISTRICT auditor inquiries have now begun in Camden which may result in the surcharge and disqualification of approximately 20 Labour councillors for delays in the 1985-1986 rate-making programme.

● Action would be initiated over the next four months but the legal process could take a year or two.

District auditor inquiry into the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO)

AN announcement of the closure of the entire DLO or its loss-making sections, was made in the House of Commons in March 1987.

● No time scale has yet been set.

Housing: new 'rights' for tenants

COUNCIL tenants will have the right to 'opt out' to private landlords as well as to housing associations and tenants co-operatives, further undermining the public housing sector and threatening public service jobs.

● Legislation to make this

possible is planned for November this year, setting an introduction date for before the end of 1988.

Housing: threat to subsidies

A RESTRICTION in the council's ability to subsidise rents from the rates fund is likely. If endorsed, it would threaten massive rent rises or job cuts, or both. New powers to force councils to cut rent arrears are also likely.

● The proposed date for the introduction of a Bill on these measures is November 1988.

Housing: right to buy

CENTRAL government may intervene directly because of alleged delays in the processing of council house sales.

● When this will be done is not yet known but no new legislation is needed to enable the government to act.

Local authorities: limits to political activities

A COUNCIL'S right to issue publicity material and information about the effects of government policies is to be severely restricted by law.

● Legislation is likely to make this operative from November 1987.

Compulsory tendering extension

SIX major services supplied by local councils are to be opened up for privatisation with the possibility that the Secretary of State for the Environment will use his discretionary powers to name others. The six areas name in the Tory manifesto were: refuse collecting, street and building cleaning, vehicle maintenance, catering and ground maintenance.

● Legislation is likely to make councils invite tenders for the work from 1 April 1988.

Limits on contract compliance procedures

THESE are the main safeguards against unscrupulous or incompetent contractors taking over services. A list of criteria on health and safety standards, equal opportunities etc are set out to which they must adhere before being given a tender.

The government plans to severely restrict this right or ban it completely so that the lowness of the tender will be the sole consideration.

● Legislation will likely make this operable from November 1987 or April 1988.

New restrictions on trade unions

THESE are to include the outlawing of the closed shop, immunity from trade union disciplinary action for strike-breakers and imposition of postal as against work-place ballots.

● Legislation is likely by mid 1988.

Attack on political rights

ACTING on Lord Widdicombe's report of some eighteen months ago the government wants to restrict the political rights of council staffs i.e. to prevent 'political' appointments being made by councils.

● Legislation is likely on this in 1988.

Government takeover of planning powers

LEGISLATION is being readied to grant government the power to directly intervene in urban areas on planning and employment issues. Mini Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) would be set up to usurp local authority powers, substantially undermining council jobs and provision.

● Timing is unclear but the aim is probably to set up the mini UDCs in 1988.

WESTMINSTER

Massive housing sale planned

A ONE-DAY strike by members of the local government union NALGO is planned for the next Housing Committee meeting of the City of Westminster council.

Council workers are furious at the Tory council's proposal to sell off 11,000 of its 23,000 properties.

Housing Department workers say they spend more time boarding up homes than re-housing people.

Many of the 11,000 properties are designated for the elderly and disabled. It seems that the council is planning to offer £15,000 grants to encourage them to move out and buy non-council property.

Apart from the personal problems involved in uprooting whole families from their accustomed home areas and the principle of council housing as a right, tenants say £15,000 is laughable.

Even a small cottage-type house is anything from £50,000 to £100,000 according to its proximity to the centre of London.

The council was forced to abandon its plans when angry tenants broke up a meeting called to rubber-stamp the decision. But the council has arrogantly continued with seminars of estate agents and councillors to discuss the best way to sell the properties at the highest prices.

The Council has also commissioned a private company to seal the doors and windows of the 250 properties already empty with heavy steel covers to keep out squatters. They are recruiting 200 special officials in a £2.5 million sales operation, paying commission to the officials on the homes they sell.

NALGO members say that there are over 10,000 families on the waiting list for homes, and they expect 800 homeless families to be in temporary accommodation by the end of the year. But the council has plans for them too!

More staff will be taken on to strengthen the Homeless Persons Unit to investigate people in temporary accommodation. It seems that considerable savings can be made there.

LAMBETH

Services in crisis

MANY OF Lambeth Council's services are at breaking point due to high vacancy levels and lack of government finance.

Council workers in housing, social services and other areas feel all they have to offer service users is a shoulder to cry on, and in some areas the council is failing to meet its statutory obligations.

There are not enough social workers to cover all the children deemed to be 'at risk'. With memories of the Jasmine Beckford and Tyra Henry cases still present, this is frightening.

Staff vacancies of 40 per cent in the Town Hall's Chief Executive's office brought workers out on a one-day strike last Wednesday. Only two workers from the section crossed the large picket line to go to work. Everybody else was on the steps of the Town Hall.

The Chief Executive's office consists of the Community Grants office (which provides grants for voluntary organisations like the law centres), the women's, race, welfare rights, inner-city and police units. All workers are members of the local government union NALGO.

Staff shortages mean services cannot be properly provided. It is a method used by the council of old to save money on wages from tight budgets. Many of the posts have been vacant for 12 months.

Feeling runs high amongst staff over the vacancy level, as it does in other directorates like Social Services, Housing and the libraries section.

As the Tory cuts and punitive legislation bite deeper, the leadership of the council are planning to cover a £60 million deficit by recruiting to only 25 per cent of vacancies.

This can only ensure that services deteriorate further and will force workers to take more and more industrial action. Councillors are also proposing to save money by raising rents and other council charges for meals-on-wheels and amenities.

The plans in Lambeth reflect the plans of Labour councillors all over the country to make their workers and the community pay for government cuts.

Action day on deportations

Housing Action Trusts

THE government is planning to set up these organisations for specific housing estates, complete with powers to renovate premises and transfer tenure of the occupants.

In addition to the threat to tenants, the operation of this plan, along with the other previously outlined action on housing matters, poses a direct threat to around 1,000 local authority jobs in Camden alone.

● Legislation on Housing Action Trusts is planned for this November, leading to its activation by the end of next year.

Education

ALL schools will be given the right to transfer from local to central state control.

Inner London boroughs will be able to leave the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). This could result in ILEA disintegrating — which is the object of the exercise.

● Legislation on the subject is expected to be fully operational by the end of 1988.

Introduction of Poll Tax

LOCALLY determined non-domestic rates are to be replaced with a unified business rate, fixed at a single national level by central government.

Further plans for Housing

A WHITE paper is in preparation which will summarise most of the Tory plans for the housing sector including the deregulation of the private-rented sector.

LAST Sunday was the national day of action against detention and deportations.

Despite heavy rain over 50 people took part in a demonstration at Leicester prison called by Hackney and Leicester Anti-deportation Campaigns (right).

At present N.J. Vadhwa is detained in Welford Road Prison and is likely to be deported simply because he is having problems with his marriage.

This is his second spell inside. The first ended after he made up with his wife over previous marital problems.

The presence of the Leicester Troops Out Movement banner at the protest highlighted the links between the immigration laws, the racist treatment of Irish people under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the incarceration of Prisoners-of-War in British jails.

Republican PoWs Paul Kavanagh, Brian Keenan and Patrick McGee are also imprisoned in Leicester.

After the demonstration there was a public meeting with speakers from Leicester Anti-deportation Campaign, the Racial Attacks Monitoring Project and the Renukaben Lakhani Campaign (see last week's Workers Press).

● Leicester Anti-Deportation Campaign meets fortnightly on Fridays at 10.30a.m. at the Highfields Advice Centre, 6 Seymour Street. The campaign welcomes victims who require support and individuals/groups who want to fight against the racist laws.



EDUCATION IN CRISIS

Schools return amid chaos

THE return to work after the summer holidays by teachers in England and Wales is not the beginning of 'just another school year'.

Things have changed in education and no amount of wishful thinking by Thatcher, Baker and the Tory press will get the genie back into the bottle.

There have been more than two years of industrial action in defence of living standards, trade union rights and the principle of free comprehensive state education.

If the Tory government thinks that teachers have been defeated and that its ever-growing list of reactionary proposals will meet no resistance, they mistake the cowardice and betrayals of the union leaderships for the mood of the membership.

Teachers are angry and bitter at the erosion of their conditions of work. Baker's imposed contract ('contract') has been revealed as a vicious attack upon the education service.

Up and down the country teachers have found that they are now expected to work to the whim of headteachers.

The increase in the power of heads is designed to remove the control over the intensity of work which teachers gained in the course of their actions; it is also designed to free heads from the control of Local Education Authorities where

BY MICK KING

these authorities decide to pursue a policy at odds with Tory plans.

Hoping that headteachers' studies will open up to reveal a rash of Honeyfords and Boysons eager to combat 'teacher power', the government has given headteachers powers to 'direct' their staff to work whatever hours and in whatever conditions they choose — conditions of employment familiar to 19th century mill workers.

The Tory press has been eager to speculate on the shape of the restyled education system: vouchers to be spent in schools of parents' 'choice', schools opting out of local authority control, city technology colleges, the national curriculum, the role of education management and now the Government Education Initiative.

What is clearly shown is that the present leaderships of both the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers are not only incapable of fighting back — they are determined to see resistance crushed.

The NUT national executive has recently decided to have bi-annual conferences and to proscribe the rank-and-file campaigning organisation LAPACC. These measures are undertaken to stifle the growing support for the left in the union.

The last NUT conference showed a widening gulf between the leadership and the membership, with the leadership losing votes and only narrowly winning others. An executive motion to proscribe LAPACC did not even get debated for fear of being lost.

Workers Press has been proved correct in stressing the decisive character of the struggle for union democracy.

Teachers should note the suspension and expulsion of the local NUT leadership in inner London. The national leadership of the NUT will stop at nothing to retain control. They are driven on an ever more reactionary course. They must be thrown out!

The elections for national officers and national executive members in the NUT will take place this term. It is essential to fight for active campaigns in all associations for the largest possible vote.

Previous elections have seen a low poll and, combined with an electoral system that most members don't understand, this has seen the present 'Broad Left' leadership home and dry.

These elections can be an important factor in the struggle to have a strong democratic union which will defend teachers and will oppose Tory education policy.

Severe teaching staff shortages

A SEVERE shortage of teachers in particular subjects is one of the principle messages of a report by HM Inspectors of Schools for England. Unfilled vacancies have meant in some instances a reduction in curriculum. The position deteriorated last year and the report details over 1,100 unfilled vacancies.

The vacancies noted are for senior posts in all 'shortage' subjects in secondary schools. In primary schools there are still classes with more than 35 pupils and some local education authorities are experiencing difficulty in recruiting teachers of the youngest children.

An additional problem, especially in the south east, is the effect of rapidly increasing housing costs compared to the rest of the country.

PLANNED CUTS in school meals threaten to doom many children to early deaths in adulthood from heart disease.

The Health Visitors' Association warned the TUC of the risks to 500,000 children in low-income families who will lose their free lunches next April.

Children will be more exposed to unhealthy food when the government replaces family income supplement (FIS) with family credit, says the HVA.

Based on school meal prices last year, the credit would provide 61 pence a day to substitute their right to free meals under FIS.

Children in poorer families dependent on the credit and housing benefit would receive 45 pence a day.

But a national survey last month showed 45 pence would buy primary school meals this autumn only in Derbyshire, Haringey, Man-

chester, Sandwell and inner London.

Barely a third of authorities will serve meals soon for 61 pence, according to the survey conducted by Labour campaign coordinator Frank Dobson MP.

And if the higher credit cash is linked to the new average price in England and Wales — 64 pence — this sum will not pay for lunches in many areas.

The change will limit free school meals to children from homes living on the state poverty line — supplementary benefit, which becomes income support in April.

Authorities will be forced to end schemes which give discretionary meals to children whose parents are not receiving income support or family credit.

With mounting poverty, the number of children taking free school meals rose from 898,769 in 1979 to 1,143,817 in 1986 — despite a million fewer children and tighter qualification requirements.

Yet the government slashed its school meals budget by over a third from £415 million in 1984/1985 to £280 million in 1986/1987.

School lunches — sandwiches — are limited to children who qualify for free provision in Buckinghamshire, Dorset, Hereford and Worcester and Lincolnshire.

Last year the Department of Health reported:

- Nearly all children ate many chips, crisps, cakes and biscuits.
- One in three consumed too much fat.
- Older children who ate outside school — especially girls — chose inadequate meals.

THE United Kingdom has

the world's worst record for deaths through heart disease — more than 180,000 in 1985 and over 32,000 before the age of 65 in England and Wales — with the highest rates among the poor.

The HVA fears school meals economies will put children in danger as deprived families juggle little money for food and other household items.

In its motion the association called for the TUC to press the government to restore a full school meals service, free to children from low-income families.

It wants nutritional standards for the meals — scrapped in 1980 — to meet levels recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education (NACNE) and the DHSS Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA).

Jackie Strange congress delegate from Dursley, Gloucestershire, said: 'Free school meals are vital to children of low-paid parents — for their welfare and energy to concentrate and learn.'

'Good nutritional standards are crucial together with health education in schools to teach pupils to eat well.'

● In another motion the HVA asked the TUC to urge the government to ensure councils have enough money to improve homes in the public sectors. Latest figures published in 1981 revealed 1.2 million homes in England and Wales were unfit.

One million lacked one or more basic amenities and many needed major repairs. Four million properties overall were classified as substandard.

A socialist programme for Scotland!

Scottish TUC must back workers' struggles

WHEN workers at Howden's Engineering, Glasgow, heard they were to be visited by 'Queen Boadicea' Thatcher last week, they voted overwhelmingly to strike.

In stepped Gavin Laird, leader of the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), and Scottish Trades Union Congress secretary Campbell Christie, to sort something out.

Her Ladyship would do a shop-floor walk-about. In return the shop stewards' committee would be granted an audience. Thatcher's disgusting Scottish publicity stunt was saved.

That evening, Christie addressed the Glasgow Trades Council about the campaign for a Scottish Assembly. He 'sympathised' with a questioner who said that 'time-wasting' delegations to the Scottish Office should be stopped: but they were 'important for our credibility as a movement,' he explained.

This is the central problem for the Scottish trade union and Labour movement: you can not crawl on your belly to the Tories and fight them at the same time!

● When young workers at the Morris furniture factory in Glasgow staged a two-year union recognition strike, financial support was raised — but never once did trade union leaders attempt to mobilise the industrial strength of the 'Red Clyde' behind these heroic fighters for trade union rights.

● When the Caterpillar factory was occupied in a bid to defend jobs in recession-ravaged Lanarkshire, trade union officialdom brought enormous pressure to bear on the workforce to end the sit-in and comply with Thatcher's anti-union laws.

● When the latest round of job cuts in the Lower Clyde shipyards was announced, another shop stewards' conference was called and another wordy protest addressed to the Tory axewoman.

Scottish workers must demand: no more delegations to the Scottish Office! No more audiences with Thatcher! No more disgraceful betrayals, like that of Caterpillar, 'in the name of the law'! No more collaboration with the anti-union laws or the MSC slave-labour agency!

THE SCOTTISH TUC and Labour leaders must be committed, in advance, to supporting workers who initiate sit-ins, strikes and other forms of trade union action in defence of jobs and democratic rights.

Two very concrete cases are coming up:

1. Scottish civil servants and white-collar council workers are discussing how to resist co-operation with the poll tax;
2. Scottish teachers are working out a campaign against the draconian plans of extreme right-wing Scottish education minister Michael Forsyth, to take schools out of local authority control.

These actions must receive the full backing of the whole working-class movement.

And the question must be asked: why are the trade

minster, expressing verbal support for workers' struggles on such issues — while the trade union and Labour leaders continue their betrayals.

The Scottish working class could no more trust such an assembly as a means of achieving socialism than it can trust Westminster. Only a working-class assembly, made up of delegates from workers' organisations, could take forward the struggle on jobs, basic rights and democracy.

THE SCOTTISH TUC has already told us its proposals to solve the crisis of unemployment and poverty.

Its booklet 'Scotland: A Land Fit For People' argues for not only a Scottish Assembly but also a Scottish Economic Planning Office which will work with the MSC, a Scottish Economic Development Council, a Scottish Takeovers Watchdog Body, a 'strategy framework for the handling of mergers and takeovers', a 'sustained campaign to bring corporate headquarters to Scotland', changes to the Scottish Development Association, 'a new strategy on inward investment', a Scottish Research and Development coordinating body, and a Scottish International Trading Agency.

There are a few vague references in this glossy booklet to increased public ownership. But, essentially, it argues for more capitalist investment in Scotland — in other words, the continuation of multi-national plunder, of private ownership, of the Common Market.

Just one example: the booklet calls for 'the continued existence of a recognisably separate finance industry in Scotland which

BY SIMON PIRANI
union and Labour leaders — who are doing nothing to defend jobs or local councils from the Tory onslaught — so keen on a Scottish Assembly anyway?

The kind of assembly they are proposing — made up of MPs, councillors, bureaucrats and church representatives, and subordinate to Westminster — can only be all echo-chamber for more empty speeches which betray real struggles.

The fight to defend jobs, local democracy and working-class rights could only be taken forward by a workers' assembly, where delegates from trade unions, shop-stewards' committees, tenants' groups, and other working-class bodies, can meet and organise.

'IT IS PRECISELY because devolution poses such a far-reaching challenge to the centralised state that it will be stoutly resisted by Mrs Thatcher's government,' writes Labour MP Robin Cook ('Glasgow Herald', Thursday September 3).

He calls for the Devolution Bill, being presented in parliament, to be 'buttressed by campaigning initiatives to demonstrate the degree of popular support for it'.

If the 'legitimate demand' for an Assembly is voted down, Cook says

No more Caterpillar-type betrayals!

'that Labour MPs should consider inviting the other Scots MPs to meet with them in Scotland in a prototype assembly'.

Well let's talk like grown-ups. Everyone knows the Tories will vote down the Devolution Bill and reject its legitimate demands; everyone also knows the Scottish Labour MPs will then head for Edinburgh and establish their 'prototype'.

Then what will it do? According to Cook, it will 'show the Scottish people the more open and more fertile policies they might expect from their own Assembly'.

But what about the closures? What about the massacre of local council powers? What about the poll tax? At most, speeches will be made in the 'prototype assembly', just as they are at West-

addresses the real, long-term needs of the Scottish economy'. The banking system, the heart and brain of monopoly capitalism, is thus to remain not only untouched, but encouraged!

The Labour bureaucrats and reactionary Communist Party leaders who voted for this programme of capitalist expansion no longer even refer to 'socialism' in their holiday speeches.

The struggle for a socialist programme — starting with the nationalisation, under workers' control, of the banks, major industries and financial institutions — must again be undertaken in the labour movement not only in Scotland but throughout Britain. At the forefront of this campaign will be the Workers Revolutionary Party.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

PUBLIC MEETING

How to fight the Tories
Monday 14 September 7.30p.m.
Craigneuk Community Centre
Shieldmuir Street
Craigneuk, Motherwell



How Maclean saw it

'ALL Hail, the Scottish Workers' Republic', declared the great Scottish revolutionary, John Maclean, in August 1920.

'For some time past the feeling has been growing that Scotland should strike out for national independence, as well as Ireland and other lands.

This has recently been strengthened by the English government's intention to rely mainly on Scottish troops to murder the Irish race.'

Maclean, anxious to seize hold of the instability that gripped the British empire after World War I, had his own vision of a Scottish parliament:

'The control must be in the hands of the workers only, male and female alike, each workshop and industry sending delegates to district councils and the National Council.

'The National Council must be established in or near Glasgow, as half the population lives within a radius of 20 miles from Glasgow.

'In the period of transition a wage-earners' dictatorship must guide production, and the adoption of the machinery and methods of production, to communist methods.'

In November of the same year, Maclean wrote: 'I hold that the British empire is the greatest menace to the human race. Lloyd George's



JOHN MACLEAN

Caernarvon speech proves it. 'The best interests of humanity can therefore be served by the break-up of the British empire. The Irish, the Indians and others are playing their part. Why ought not the Scottish?'

Revolutionaries of today may well differ with Maclean's view of the Scottish national question; equally they may oppose, from the viewpoint of scientific Marxism, his belief in 'celtic communism'.

But who can mistake his faith in the revolutionary capacity of the working class, and his utter disdain for reformism and patriotism, expressed in his vision of a Scottish workers' republic?

What a gulf separates this great communist from the miserable creatures of the STUC leadership who want a Scottish Assembly not to take the side of workers in struggle against Thatcher but to make empty speeches!

ACCUSER of CAPITALISM

John Maclean's

Speech from the dock, May 9th 1918

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BEHIND THE GULF WAR

BY PETER RICKARD

IT HAS widely been expected that the American build-up of military forces in the Gulf was the prelude to an invasion of Iran.

This, however, is not the main reason for the increasing presence of US, British and French naval forces.

Since the start of the Iran-Iraq war, which began on 21 September 1979, eight years of fighting have seen not only many thousands killed and injured, but widespread destruction of industry and housing in both countries.

As the destruction continues the bill for rebuilding these areas mounts. The imperialist powers are not slow in realising that there will be a great deal of money to be made once the war is finished. A rough estimate for Iran is \$20 billion. The longer it goes on, the greater the cost of rebuilding.

It is necessary to examine what has been happening in Iran since 1979, when the revolution — in which the Iranian working class played a major role — overthrew the Shah, and Khomeiny came to power.

Clearly, imperialism has made no attempt to bring down the Khomeiny government. This regime has done nothing to break up the bourgeois state but has, on the contrary, protected it. This achievement has been more important than any differences the imperialist powers may otherwise have with Khomeiny.

It was necessary for the new regime to build an organisation similar to the Shah's hated Savak secret police, although it could not openly utilise the services of the old agents.

Recruitment to this new state apparatus came from the most backward elements amongst the peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie. To be working directly for the regime offered them a step up the ladder.

It is estimated that nearly 1 million people now work for the regime. As long as the war continues this repressive organisation will be able to exist.

The tanker war, and the

re-flagging of Kuwaiti ships under the protection of the US navy, came about only after the Stalinists in Moscow offered the Kuwaitis the protection of their flag.

The refusal by the Kuwaitis led Moscow into further twists and the offer to the Iranians to open the oil pipelines, which had been closed since the overthrow of the Shah.

This would allow the oil revenue to continue and the Iranian war machine to be financed.

In the last two weeks imperialism and Stalinism have been frantically putting together a so-called 'peace plan'. This will be very hard to implement. In Iran the regime of Khomeiny, which is tied up with the war and the suppression of all opposition, will become extremely vulnerable.

Since the first days of the revolution, the Khomeiny regime has made one of its main aims the break-up of all independent organisations of the working class.

Peace in Iran would open the way for these organisations to surge forward again. Imperialism would then have to replace Khomeiny and the mullahs with another section of the indigenous bourgeoisie.

This would create conditions for another revolution. All revolutionaries inside and outside Iran must miss this chance of striking a crushing blow against imperialism and Stalinism.

● Turn the end of war into revolution!

● Re-build the factory and peasants' committees (Shoras)!

● Build the Iranian section of Fourth International!

● Forward with the reorganising of the Fourth International!

IRAQ SEEKS FRESH LOANS

IRAQI officials are coming to London this month to negotiate new lines of credit, as £275 million from City bankers Morgan Grenfell and £300 million from Midland Bank run out at the end of the year.

From being one of the richest 'Third World' countries, Saddam Hussein's Iraq has run deep into debt, with falling oil prices and the cost of the Gulf war. The regime owes around \$60 billion abroad. Saudi and Kuwaiti loans have bankrolled the Iraqi regime for much of the war. These creditors have had to be patient for repayments. Japanese companies have been offered oil in part payment of debts.

The new Gulf crisis has boosted oil prices and possibly US willingness to help. Iraqi officials are going to Washington to negotiate debt restructuring.

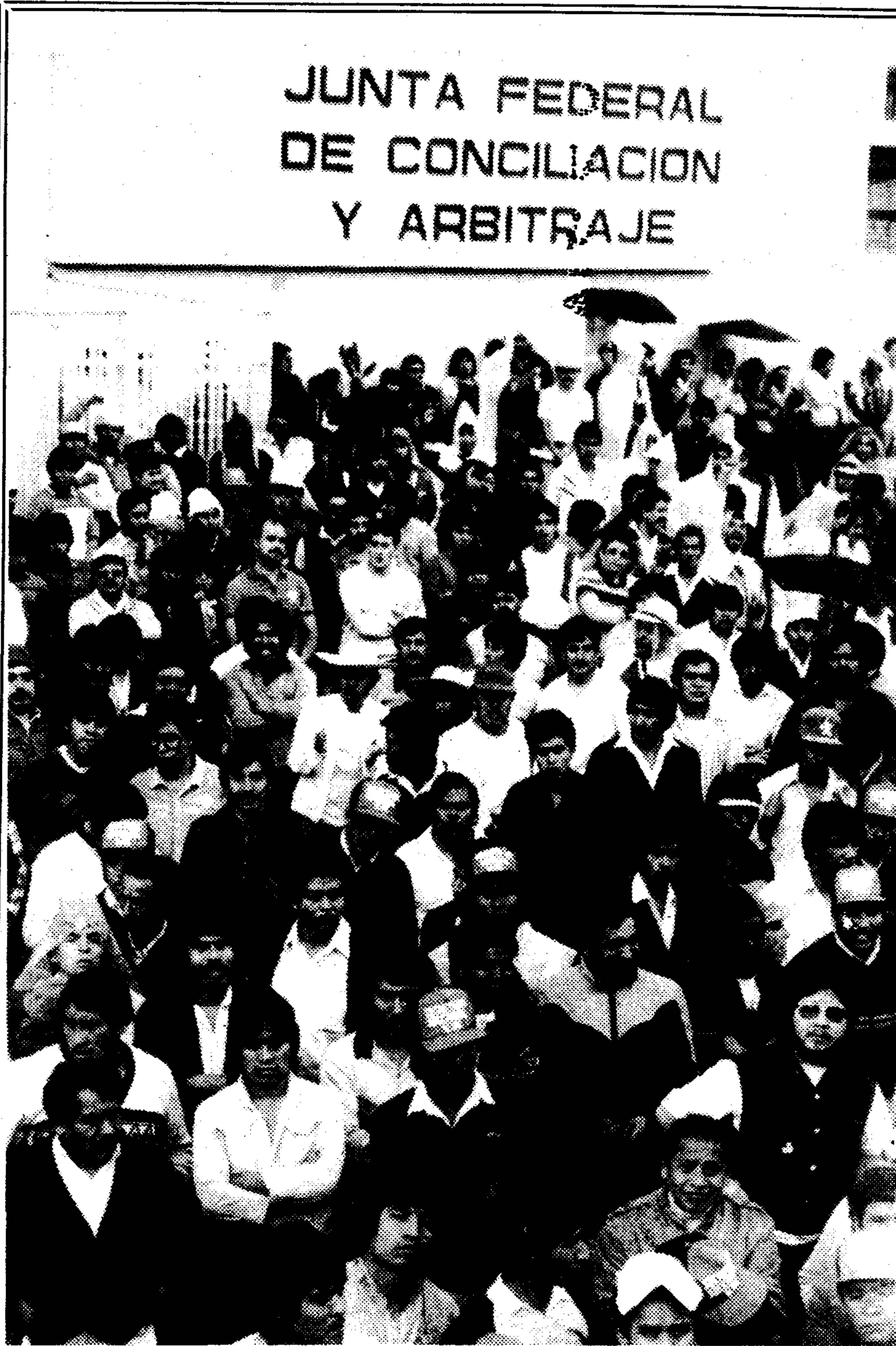
Bank must repay Libya

LIBYA has won a High Court action to recover £177 million of deposits placed with the London Branch of Bankers Trust. The US bank had refused to pay out the money, claiming it was covered by the freeze that President Reagan imposed on Libyan assets in 1986 as part of the so-called anti terrorism campaign.

The Libyans invoked the long-standing practice that money deposited in London is repayable there. Bankers Trust had refused to pay,

claiming that it would be in breach of US law, and stated that the money would have to pass through the US bank clearing system, on US territory.

The outcome of this court action is contradictory. According to the 'Financial Times', the banking world is relieved that the judgement has clarified the legal position of deposits in London, and weakened the possibility of an assets freeze as an instrument of international politics.



Mexican VW strike success

AFTER 58 days, the strike of the Mexican Volkswagen workers has come to a successful end. A 78-per-cent increase in wages was negotiated and all threats of redundancies withdrawn. The independent VW trade union is sending messages of thanks to the workers in solidarity abroad.

ABOVE: Workers wait for the outcome of negotiations

ISRAELI RAID KILLS FORTY

AT least 40 people, including children, were killed and more injured when Israeli planes bombed the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp in southern Lebanon last week.

Dropping bombs and firing rockets, 12 Israeli planes attacked in three waves. The raid lasted 20 minutes. The dead included workers in nearby orange groves, as well as women and children in the camp.

Reporters on the spot saw a woman cradling the bloody remains of her ten-year-old daughter. 'All of them have died', she cried, 'I don't have a family any more.' Several homes were reduced to rubble.

In Jerusalem, Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin — of the Israeli Labour Party — told a satisfied cabinet meeting that Saturday's raid, during the Jewish Sabbath, had been a success because it had caught the Palestinians by surprise.

The Israeli forces claimed

their target had been guerrilla bases preparing attacks against Israel.

Over 100 people have been killed and more than 200 wounded in Israeli air raids on Lebanon this year. The 5 September attack was the 21st raid this year.

Elsewhere in southern Lebanon, Israeli troops clashed with Palestinian fighters north of the Israelis' so-called 'security zone' of occupied territory. The Israeli army denied plans to expand the zone.

● ABOUT 10,000 Israeli aircraft workers, some of them blowing trumpets and traditional rams-horns, emulated Joshua's siege of Jericho, marching round the cabinet office on Sunday, protesting the loss of 3,000 jobs owing to cancellation of the Lavi fighter-bomber.

Riot police with teargas and assault rifles ringed the building, water cannon were standing by, and a police helicopter circled overhead. There were some minor scuffles.

Nobel war prize CARTEL

SWEDISH officials probing large-scale arms and explosives smuggling by Nobel Industries and the Bofors arms company have sent reports to London and Brussels on a secret European cartel they have uncovered.

British and other companies joined to fix prices and carve up markets in military explosives.

Customs investigations, spurred by Scandinavian seamen's reports of arms shipments to the Gulf, found arms and explosives had been sent by complex routes and with altered end-user certificates to evade Swedish laws against shipments to war zones.

In India, an investigation has begun into bribery by the Bofors company to secure arms deals.

Now the Swedish Office of Competition Ombudsman says documents seized during raids on Bofors office show Nobelkrut, a division of Nobel Industries, operated 'as a member of three different international explosives cartels'.

The Office's report says the Nobel Explosives subsidiary of ICI in Britain was

Peronists comeback

ARGENTINA's opposition Peronists claimed victory in last week's elections, winning a majority of seats in the House of Deputies and of provincial governorships.

'We are now the majority,' said incoming Buenos Aires province governor Antonio Cafiero, 'We are the principal political force in the country.'

President Alfonsín's six year term runs until 1989, but his Radical Party has admitted defeat, and says it will 'share administration' with the Peronists.

Defeated Radical Party candidate for Buenos Aires Juan Casella acknowledged economic issues had hit the government. The cost of living rose 13 per cent in August, and there has been 120 per cent inflation this year.

Argentina has serious trouble with its £33 billion foreign debt, and during the election Peronists called for a moratorium on payments.

Peronist participation in Alfonsín's government could strain their relationship with the unions, unless they can deliver the increased social welfare spending they promised during the elections. Trade union strength was shown in a big strike wave over pay in recent weeks, even effecting the police.

Embarrassing Alfonsín

ARGENTINE civil servants working for the National Statistics and Census Institute joined train drivers and other workers taking action for higher pay at the end of August, but with an unusual tactic. Instead of striking, they worked unpaid overtime!

Their tactic was aimed at embarrassing the Alfonsín government by getting out the latest inflation figures before Sunday's election.

Normally, monthly figures are not produced until two weeks into the following month.

The government clearly hoped the August figures — the worst since the 1985 pay freeze was introduced — would be held up till after the election.

a cartel member. Others included SNPE of France, Dinamite of Italy, SSE of Switzerland, Dyno Industries of Norway, and PRB of Belgium.

The report, covering the period 1981-1985, deals with alleged cartel operations in propellant powders, PETN explosive and RDX, a plastic explosive. It says the documents showed companies set out to fix prices, share orders, and divide markets.

Office of Competition section head Eva Tetzell said on 1 September that copies of the report had been sent to the Common Market competition directorate in Brussels, and to Britain's Office of Fair Trading.

Ms Tetzell said her office intended questioning Nobel Industries officials further, because the company's response so far to requests for information had been inadequate.

POLICE RAIDS ON KOREAN STRIKERS

MILITARY-style tactics and massive police strength have been used by the South Korean government in an attempt to break the continuing strike movement there.

Some 200 workers are to face trial for alleged 'violence' during shipyard and factory strikes.

Reversing its promises — exacted by the big demonstrations in June — to release political prisoners, the regime has ordered a big round-up of 'leftist agitators'.

In a pre-dawn raid on the Daiwoo car plant at Pupyong outside Seoul on 4 September, 3,000 riot police went in and arrested 135 workers who were occupying the plant.

At the Hyundai shipyard, whose 8,000 workers had staged an angry demonstration following the breakdown of pay talks two days previously, police attacked workers' dormitories at dawn, arresting 90 strikers.

The right-wing military-based government whose anti-union policies made South Korea a sweatshop-paradise for capitalism, has abandoned its pretence of 'non-intervention' in the face of the massive two-month strike wave sweeping the country.

The government has warned that if the strikes continue, South Korea's exports will fall \$2,500 million short of target this year.

It is also worried that the workers' struggle for independent trade unions and decent wages is inevitably becoming linked with the students' fight for democratic rights.

Chong Unh Wan, a 24-year-old miner who organised a militant union in his pit has been arrested and singled out for prosecution for his part in the strike last month when miners blocked railway lines and resisted riot police.

According to pro-government newspapers, Chong was a former university student who had failed

sified his school records and claimed to have left school at 15 so as to get work in the pits. The papers said 70 such activists had been arrested this year.

Nearly 2,000 people have either been arrested already or are on the police 'wanted list' in the big state crackdown against the left. 'The government is firmly determined to root out impure leftist forces from our society with all the law-enforcing power we can mobilise from now on to maintain law and order,' prime minister Kim Chung Yul said in a televised

speech on 28 August.

The previous day, Woo Sang Ho, chair of Yonsei University student council had been charged with violating the law on meetings and demonstrations, and with making 'undesirable statements' to newspapers.

Five other students were charged with inciting labour unrest at a Gold Star electronics factory in Pyongtaek, south of Seoul.

At Seoul National University, the new term opened on 2 September with a rally by 4,000 students demanding the release of student leaders.

Meanwhile, the subject of political prisoners was being discussed at a meeting of government and liberal opposition leaders, which agreed on presidential elec-

tions being held in December.

On 29 June, after three weeks of violent street clashes with the riot police, the government promised liberal reforms, and began releasing political prisoners. The bourgeois liberal leaders Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung were freed from house arrests to make a deal.

But civil rights groups have listed 350 prisoners who were not released. They believe there are more. Ruling Justice Party leader Roh Tae Woo has said those kept in jail are all subversives and communists, and cannot be released.

As the police make fresh round-ups, and as workers' strikes and demonstrations escalate, often bringing pitched battles with police, Roh has also threatened to call in the military if necessary to crush the movement.

America is the obstacle — Arafat

UNITED STATES military aid to Israel is the 'only and fundamental obstacle' to Middle East peace, Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman Yasser Arafat told a UN-sponsored conference in Geneva last week. Referring to the recently tested Jericho missile, and the Israeli nuclear weapon stockpile, Arafat warned that Israel and the United States were 'pushing an area of extreme strategic significance to the brink of a nuclear abyss'.

Addressing the UN conference of Non-governmental organisations on Palestine, Arafat said the United States was the only member of the Security Council which had failed to respond positively to calls for a Middle East peace conference. And the Palestinian leader announced that he would be meeting a delegation of Israeli knesset (parliament) members while in Geneva.

Remember Sabra and Shatilla

ON 16 September, 1982, fascist Christian militias armed by Israel entered Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon. They left two days later, having slaughtered about 2,000 unarmed Palestinian civilians, unarmed men, women, and children.

On the fifth anniversary of the horrific massacre, a Yorkshire miner and some other members of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign are holding a sponsored fast from midnight on 15 September to noon on 18 September.

Money received will go to Medical Aid for Palestinians, which is doing vital work providing equipment and volunteers for hospitals and clinics. You can send donations to John Gee, c/o Palestine Solidarity Campaign, BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX.

On Thursday, 17 September, at 7p.m., Dr. Swee Chai Ang, of Medical Aid for Palestinians, a witness of the massacre, will be speaking at a commemorative rally in Holborn Library, Theobalds Rd. London WC1. Also speaking will be Faisal Aweida, representative in Britain of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.



Solidarity with Turkish hunger strike

TURKISH workers and students in London and Paris are staging pickets and fasts in solidarity with political prisoners on hunger strike in Turkish jails.

Hundreds of Turkish prisoners are on hunger strike, against ill-treatment and torture, against being chained up, for decent conditions and food, more visits, and a remission system.

In Istanbul's Bayram Pasa prison, 38 prisoners have been on hunger strike for nearly two months. In the women's section of the Bayram Pasa, prisoners defiantly smashed windows and shouted their slogans to people outside.

A spokeswoman said their living conditions were filthy and overcrowded, and a contagious disease, mantar, was rife. There are two toilets for 134 women prisoners.

In Izmir, a sit-down by relatives of prisoners was brutally broken-up by police. Three were arrested, and are being tried before the State Security Court on charges of belonging to a banned organisation, Iscinin Sesi (Workers' Voice).

In Paris, Turkish groups have organised a sympathy hunger strike. Here in London, there is a picket and hunger strike taking place outside the Turkish embassy in Belgrave Square, SW1. Today's demonstration (Saturday 12 September) is at 2p.m. Meet at the traffic island at Marble Arch.

Workers Press urges readers to find time to join it. Union and other banners welcome.

Italian arms boss arrested

ITALIAN police have arrested the president of the Valsella Meccanotecnica arms factory, Ferdinando Borletti, 65, his son Giovanni who manages the factory, and others, charging them with conspiracy and illegal arms sales.

The Fiat company, which has 50 per cent ownership of Valsella, has denied knowing anything about a shipment of 30,000 mines from the port of La Spezia, to Iran last year.

Documents

Investigators say the official documents said the mines were for the Nigerian army, whereas in fact they were shipped to Syria, and wound up in Iran. A further order was placed with Valsella for two million mines, for which payment was to be made through Swiss banks.

Two shipping agencies in La Spezia have been impli-

cated in gun-running operations after customs police raided a Greek-owned ship off Bari, and found a US-made anti-helicopter missile and other weapons.

Italian police say an arms supply organisation run by the Syrian secret service had used the ship, the Boustany One, and that weapons were going to the dissident Palestinian Abu Nidal group.

POLISH POLICE TEARGAS MARCH

POLICE using teargas broke up an anti-nuclear waste march of 3,000 people in Miedzyrzecz, western Poland, on Sunday 6 September. A young boy wearing a gas mask and carrying a banner with the words 'I don't want to be a mutant' had led several dozen children and mothers at the head of the march.

The Polish government is soon to announce its final decision on plans to dump waste from Comecon nuclear plants in former World War II bunkers in the Miedzyrzecz lakes region.

TORTURE 'ROUTINE'

TORTURE is almost routine in Turkish prisons and police stations, despite official denials, according to the September newsletter of Amnesty International.

There is 'systematic and widespread' use of methods including humiliation, beatings and electric shocks against political prisoners and common criminal sus-

pects, the London-based rights group says.

'The method of torture most frequently applied is bastinado (beatings on the soles of the feet) ... electric shock torture is applied using a hand generator, and often combined with various forms of hanging.'

'Although people have been tortured in police stations and prisons throughout Turkey, there are also buildings specially equipped for torture,' Amnesty reports.

The report includes a sketch of a torture centre in Ankara police headquarters, drawn by students held there between November 1986 and March 1987.

The Turkish embassy in London has denied torture is widespread, but says it will have to study detailed evidence before it can respond fully. The Turkish government is worried the exposure of repression and torture will be raised as an obstacle to its EEC entry.

Yesterday's man

SOVIET magazine 'Ogonyok' says residents of Brezhnev have asked for their city's name to be changed to remove its association with late party leader Leonid Brezhnev and his 'epoch of stagnation.'

Yugoslav Sackings

AT least 5,000 Yugoslav workers are jobless as a result of new bankruptcy laws, according to the official Tanjug news agency. The laws have caused the closure of four big firms in Montenegro, the country's poorest republic.

Stop the Parade

BULGARIA'S ruling Stalinist politbureau says there should be no more lavish state-organised May Day parades, because besides wasting time and money they have been 'marked by hypocrisy, vanity and formalism', and working people had become alienated from the party.

Grapes of wrath

LORRY loads of freshly-picked grapes were tipped out on the road outside a big sherry house at Jerez de la Frontera, southern Spain, last week as pickets blocked the way.

About 4,000 workers in the sherry companies have come out on strike just as the harvest, which had been expected to be worth £40 million, was due in. They are demanding an 8-per-cent pay increase. The strike was called after nine months of negotiations on pay and conditions.

The miners' Support

Demands not met!

THE historic struggle of over 350,000 miners, which challenged the system of capitalism-imperialism right at its centre, has not ended. The strike may have been called off, but the mine-workers go back to the barbaric and brutal conditions in the mines and pits with the full knowledge that the mining bosses have refused to relent on any of their main demands.

Disaster at Gencor

AS if almost to reinforce the inhuman and slave conditions under which the miners are forced to produce the wealth for a predatory and decaying economic system, the calling-off of the strike coincided with yet another mining disaster at Gencor's St Helena mine in the Orange Free State, which claimed the lives of over 50 miners.

Could there be a more graphic demonstration of capitalism's cynical disregard for the lives of the miners in its unbridled pursuit of profits? The dangerous conditions in the mines and proper death benefits were central to the demands of the striking miners.

Because of the mining bosses' concern for profits above that of the lives of the workers, they refused to concede these demands. The Gencor disaster will surely fuel the class hatred of these miners, and could act as a spur for them to resume their battle against the murderous mining magnates.

The miners were left isolated!

THE miners' strike most certainly caught many people off guard. Here was a mass workers' strike right at the nerve centre of the world system of capitalism — the international monetary system without which capitalism cannot function.

It had had been threatening to erupt for many weeks yet we in the proletarian movement were most ill-prepared for it. The trade union federation COSATU did not call out the rest of the working class in solidarity action, leaving the miners to fight on their own.

Isolated from the rest of the working class, it was possible for the mining bosses, organised in the powerful Chamber of Mines and fully supported by the racist state, to put pressure on the NUM leadership to undemocratically end the strike.

International support for the miners, while it grew during the strike, hardly went beyond financial assistance. Finance was essential, but certainly not sufficient if the mine workers were going to be victorious in their battle against a very powerful and particularly important section of the international bourgeoisie.

The question of international solidarity action in the form of trade union sanctions and blacking was raised, but like COSATU's pledges to support the miners, this also did not go beyond verbal commitments and lame resolutions.

The miners' strike was international

THE miners' strike without a doubt has been the most

Learn the



Nottinghamshire miners' gala Workers' sanctions now!

THE South African miners' strike had a powerful impact on the Nottinghamshire Miners Gala at Mansfield last Saturday.

It joined the rising tide of united voices of miners and their wives in the fight against British Coal.

The Sarmcol workers' play 'The Long March', currently touring, was the most visible means of the revolutionary struggle against apartheid (see review below).

Sarmcol is a subsidiary of the British company BTR. The play was introduced by Khayo Matlala, central executive committee member of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa.

'We are still awaiting the result of our court case in apartheid South Africa. We are here to publicise and raise funds for our strike. On Monday 14 September we will be lobbying Sir Owen Green, chairman of BTR. I invite all of those here and who live in London to join us.'

Ray Chadburn, Notts NUM president, called for imports of South African coal into Nottinghamshire to be stopped. 'Immingham, which was an export terminal for the Coal Board, is now an import terminal for South African coal,' he said. He called for support for today's rally called by the NUM Notts, Anti-Apartheid and Worksop Trades Council.

Billy Etherington, secretary of the Durham Mechanics, talked about the

BY MARTIN RALPH

developing struggle in the British coalfield and went on to say:

'We have just had an epic struggle in South Africa. We are beginning to see much more clearly the polarisation in various political activists in this country concerning that issue.'

He also spoke of the long-standing problem of the sacked miners and of British Coal's dismissal procedure.

Tony Benn gave the usual popular speech and had a word to say about Gorbachev and Mussolini. 'We must understand that the Gorbachev reforms represent the best hope for our generation since 1945,' he said.

'If Thatcher is strong then why do they use plastic bullets, CS gas and the water cannon? They are frightened of us. That is why the BBC is also trying to rehabilitate Mussolini.'

Betty Heathfield brought greetings from Derbyshire women and Women Against Pit Closures. 'I want to say to all the women and the men: do not underestimate the strength of the women in struggle. We found out in the strike that our struggle was international.'

'Since then our women have been to many countries. The NUM and Anti-Apartheid are also organising a conference in Sheffield on 19 September. Be there.'

Sammy Thompson, vice president of the NUM, told how the disciplinary code has already been used against Ted

Scott, a union official from Yorkshire. He warned that plans for six-day working were a preparation for total flexible working and privatisation.

A speaker from the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) said 'The Chamber of Mines stated before the (South African miners') strike that the miners would not be able to organise a strike even for eight hours. They tried all methods to break the strike and failed. During the strike 1,200 people were hospitalised.'

'We are saying we have not been defeated. We have made a lot of gains through the strike. Workers outside the strike have been organised. This unity will inspire workers throughout the country. The mine owners lost £150 million in profit.'

He called for action in this country but repeated the line of Stalinism in Britain: 'Show in action that you support us. Mobilise in your factory, mobilise all the people not to buy products from South Africa.'

'Stop coal from coming into this country from South Africa. Break the links between Britain and the South African regime. Pressurise your government and isolate the regime.'

The lasting image of the gala — which is fitting for the call for workers' sanctions — is that of the Sarmcol workers. As blacks who have been oppressed with all the naked greed and violence of international capitalism, their play deserves and needs to be seen everywhere.

REVIEW

'The Long March'

The Long March. Hackney Empire, 15-19 September (for one week only).

HACKNEY Empire is staging a unique and totally original play. This is a play, telling the story of a strike produced, directed and performed by workers involved in that struggle. From Howick, Natal, South Africa, the Sarmcol Workers Co-Operative (SAWCO) are staging a production of their play, 'The Long March'.

The play, which has become legendary throughout South Africa is being performed to raise funds to continue the dispute.

BY ROGER MCGUINN

In addition, the play provides an opportunity for the audience to become acquainted with the issue behind the strike.

Two years ago the 1,000 workers at the British Tyre and Rubber Company (BTR) subsidiary Sarmcol went on strike. Their demand was basic — recognition of their union, the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU). Management's response was brutal and callous: they sacked the strikers.

The workers involved in this dispute faced hardship and malnutrition. Their re-

sponse to this was to form a workers co-operative — SAWCO.

They planted crops and produced T-shirts, managing to employ most of the strikers.

In their fight, against British Tyre and Rubber, they received widespread support throughout the South African trade union movement. Workers at Dunlop, who are also part of the BTR group, struck in sympathy.

Their strike was now winning widespread coverage sympathy. It was during this period that a unique theatrical talent emerged in the co-op. His name was Simon Ngubane;

he was a shop steward at the company.

He decided one way to tell the story of the strike and raise money to continue it would be to produce a play about it. The play has now arrived at Hackney Empire.

The production is in English and Zulu and uses mime, dance and song to tell the story of the strike.

Such is the skill of the actors that all language barriers are overcome. As the COSATU member who introduced the play stated: 'The performers' actions speak louder than words.'

The play shows how the Sarmcol workers have been subject to brutal

attacks. On 5 December 1986, armed thugs abducted two MAWU shop stewards and the daughter of a striker.

They were tortured, murdered and then burned. The next day the township of Mpophomeni which had been the support base of the strike, was attacked. During this attack 20 or more people were injured.

The three comrades murdered that night were Phineas Sibyya, chair of the Sarmcol shop stewards and of SAWCO, Simon Ngubane, a Sarmcol shop steward and leading performer in the strike's play and Flomenah Mnikathi activist in SAWCO Health Committee.

The play shows that despite these vicious attacks the strikers' spirit is still high. After two years on

strike they are still willing and able to continue this dispute. As the Sarmcol workers themselves say in dedicating the play:

'We dedicate our play to the struggle they fought and died for — the struggle to end the poverty and exploitation of South Africa's apartheid system. A struggle that will continue until its won.'

One of the great strengths of this play is that it shows in dramatic form the willingness to fight of the force that will do that job — the black South African working class.

'The Long March' is at the Hackney Empire from 15-19 September. The play is sponsored by Hackney Council, CAST and the TUC. All proceeds to the strike fund.



AFRICA

Miners' struggle has not ended! For the miners must continue!

STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARIES

significant international working class event this year (perhaps even of the past few years). Not only was it a mass workers' strike that challenged the system of capitalism-imperialism right at its centre, but it also took place in a country which has shown itself to be imperialism's weakest link.

Counter-revolutionary leadership

EVEN the huge and worldwide significance of the strike, it did not but be a supreme test for all those who proclaim themselves to be 'revolutionaries'. The counter-revolutionary role of the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) was quickly revealed, for in the strike the miners confronted directly the class enemy that they attempted to portray as 'champions of democracy' during the Lusaka talks in 1985 between the ANC and South African business leaders.

The pacifist and class-collaborationist role of social democracy and the Labour bureaucracy in Britain was equally exposed. For years these people have condemned apartheid as 'morally reprehensible' and as something which has to be fought against, yet they stood idly by while an important section of the South African working class was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the enemy.

When the South African working class most desperately and urgently required trade union sanctions and blacking of goods to and from South Africa, social democracy and the Labour bureaucracy refused to go beyond mere 'token' support for the miners.

Limitations of trade unionism!

USUALLY, the strike revealed that the trade union movement, however big or radical, cannot be expected to lead the struggle against apartheid-capitalism. This struggle is a strictly political one in which the question of power will be correctly posed. The trade union movement can only serve as a means to this end and not as the end itself. Any attempt to substitute the trade unions for the political party which has to be built will be a certain recipe for the defeat of the class struggle in South Africa.

Prepare for the next round of battle!

WE WILL certainly not take much for the miners to come out against the mining bosses again. The fact that the strike was called off against their majority decision to continue with it

Lessons of the strike — prepare for the next round of battle

until all their demands were met, means that their determination to end generations of inhuman and exploitative conditions has not been satisfied.

And the fact that the mining bosses were not able to inflict a defeat on them means that their fighting strength is still intact. But as we stated in our last article (Workers Press, 5 September 1987) management will use the disorganisation caused by the undemocratic calling off of the strike to attempt to force the miners into total submission.

We must not be lulled into a false sense of passivity that the calling-off of the strike means the end of the miners' struggle. The main lesson we must learn is the great amount of preparation and organisation necessary if the struggle against apartheid-capitalism is to be victorious. The principal conclusion we must draw from the miners' strike is the imperative need for revolutionary leadership both in South Africa and internationally.

The miners came into headlong collision with the counter-revolutionary leadership of the ANC-SACP, its entire policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and its preference for a negotiated settlement as opposed to revolutionary struggle. This, more than any other factor, explains the strike's eventual outcome.

Full support must be given to the struggle to build a revolutionary Bolshevik party in South Africa which alone will be able to guarantee that it is the exploited and oppressed masses and not the racist ruling class that emerges victorious from the struggle taking place in our country. We must equally redouble our efforts to re-organise the Fourth International as the Party of World Socialist Revolution as it is only the international mobilisation of the working class which can ensure that the South African revolution is triumphant.

The labour movement in Britain must fulfil its responsibilities!

THE miners' strike showed that workers' sanctions are imperative in the struggle against apartheid-capitalism. It clearly revealed how futile and illusory it is to put 'pressure' on bourgeois governments and monopoly capital to apply sanctions against South Africa, when the very foundation of world imperialism depends on the survival of apartheid-capitalism.

Only the international working class can be the true allies of the South African proletariat. The trade union movement, principally the TUC, must be forced to take up its responsibilities towards the class struggle in South Africa. By waging a consistent struggle against the Botha regime, the TUC will simultaneously be striking a blow against the Thatcher government, one of the principal backers of apartheid-capitalism.

The TUC must be made to commit itself to workers' sanctions against the apartheid state, so that the working class and oppressed masses in South Africa know that they can rely on international working-class support when next they take on the might of the South African ruling class. The

labour movement must also commit itself to continuing with its financial support for the miners. Many lives were lost during the strike, many miners were seriously injured, some maimed, and many will also not get their jobs back.

The mining bosses have refused to pay the miners for the period that they were on strike. It is imperative that the miners know that support for them is still continuing even though the strike may have ended. Such financial support is not only necessary for the material assistance of the miners, but crucial in strengthening the morale of the miners and steeling their confidence for the next round of battle which will inevitably come.

Support must continue! Support committees must be strengthened!

THE support groups and committees which were formed in Britain during the South African miners' strike must not now be disbanded. The support committees that were formed during the British miners' strike have remained intact and were able at a moment's notice to come out in support of the Frickley miners (and they are certainly going to be needed in the fight that is presently building up over the draconian disciplinary code that British Coal wants to impose on the miners). So too must we be ready for the imminent class battles in South Africa.

The period in South Africa is a profoundly revolutionary one. It is not only the miners who may come out on strike again. Thousands of other workers have been brought to the brink of open conflict with the bosses and their racist state. The National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa — after the NUM, the second largest union in COSATU with a membership of over 100,000 workers — is locked in a wage dispute with the metal bosses which threatens to erupt into a full-scale strike. We dare not be in the same state of unpreparedness and disorganisation if this class battle takes place.

Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of the South African NUM, best expressed the balance of class forces between the mining bosses and the miners during the strike when he declared: 'We did not realise that the mining bosses could be that tough.' Revolutionary Marxists, however know that we should not expect anything else but a struggle to the finish from a bourgeois class fighting to protect the very basis of its exploitative economic system.

As revolutionaries it is our duty to ensure that when the next round of battle commences it is the bosses who declare at the end of the day: 'We did not realise that the workers were invincible.' Our watchword during the coming period must be: 'Preparation, more preparation and still more preparation!'

- Full support for the miners and the rest of the South African working class!
- The labour movement must commit itself to workers' sanctions against apartheid-capitalism!
- Build the Bolshevik party in South Africa!
- Reorganise the Fourth International as the party of world socialist revolution!



Aliber, leader of the US auto workers' union UAW, joins a picket demanding the release Moses Mayekiso



City Group Anti-Apartheid have mounted a week long lobby of the Blackpool TUC for the campaign to free Moses Mayekiso.

Workplace carnage —

WHILE high-profile, emotive, mass-killing stories are guaranteed banner headlines in the capitalist press, the daily running carnage of workplace death and maiming rarely rates a mass-media mention — let alone condemnation of those responsible.

In most cases only a single victim is involved.

This, too, is no sort of news for tabloids seeking a high body count and a 'disaster' or 'massacre' rating. Yet these isolated tragedies add up to an average of five people killed and 200 seriously injured a week in the course of their work.

As a warning of dangerous conditions and practices just some of the horrific details are given in the monthly bulletin of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and the Health and Safety Commission Journal. Both are specialist and limited circulation publications.

Starkly contrasting in these reports is the appalling damage to workers on the one hand and the pathetic impositions on employers — purely financial and not even reflecting inflation — on the other.

Clearly murder by a limited company out to maximize profits or a public service cutting costs is not criminal activity.

Here are just a few of the cases reported recently in these journals, although for some reason the employers concerned are never named.

● An industrial painter died of burns while painting the inside of a four-and-a-half foot diameter pipe.

A liquified petroleum gas (lpg) lamp used to provide illumination was knocked over and rolled down the pipe setting fire to the tray of bitumen paint.

The painter attempted to get past the flames to the exit but his paint-soaked overall ignited.

His employer was prosecuted and fined £1,250.

● In a similar case to the above a painter who had been spraying the inside of a pontoon used by roll-on, roll-off ferries was killed when he accidentally broke the bulb of his electric lamp and ignited the paint vapour.

He was blown out through the manhole and fatally burnt.

A fine of £2,000 was imposed.

● A welder was killed when he applied an oxy-propane torch to an empty 45 gallon drum which had previously contained inflammable material.

It was normal practice at the factory to use braziers made out of disused drums.

In this case the seamed lid blew off into the welder's face.

The company was fined £800.

● A security guard on a motorway construction site was killed on the night shift by carbon monoxide. He and his Alsatian dog were found dead in an office. A propane-filled radiant heater, provided by his employer, was also in the office although it was designed for use outdoors or in a very large well-ventilated building.

Mud encrusting the gas nozzle ensured an incomplete combustion of the propane and a build-up of gas with fatal results.

The man's employer was fined £1,500 plus costs.

● A workman lost part of his hand in a press that had been inspected shortly before. He was left without any fingers on his right hand.

His employers admitted that the machine had not been securely fenced and they were fined £1,750 with £19 costs.

● After wading through wet concrete without protective clothing a construction worker was so badly burned that he needed skin grafts.

Two other men were treated for burns.

They had been working from early morning to late at night often up to their knees in the mix. Wet concrete is abrasive and this leads to grazing of the skin and greater liability to burns from the lime content. This may not be noticed as long as the skin is wet.

The firm of subcontractors, which had recently filed a petition for bankruptcy, pleaded guilty to four offences under the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £500 with £200 costs.

● In some cases there is a finding that no one was to blame or that it was the fault of the worker concerned.

A ride on the footplate of a refuse lorry led to the death of a bin man.

One of his fellow workers saw the 32 year old man fall under the wheels of the vehicle on which he was travelling as a usual practice.

A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

● Whilst working for a glass company, a labourer died after falling through a Perspex section of a roof that he was repairing.

The pathologist's report said that the labourer had fractured his skull and had died of brain injuries.

● A school caretaker was overcome by poisonous fumes after a mixture of bleach and cleaning fluid put down a sink reacted to give off chlorine gas. He began vomiting after inhaling the gas and was rushed to hospital for treatment.



This picture from a Health and Safety Commission Newsletter shows the horror of an accident with flammable paint.

— news that doesn't make the headlines

A cleaner who went to help him when she saw him having difficulty breathing was herself affected by the fumes.

● A potentially dangerous press operated by a trade union safety representative was discovered by a factory inspector on a routine visit.

The machine, which was capable of exerting 240 tons pressure, had a 3 inch gap below its guard — wide enough for a worker to get a hand or arm underneath.

The firm was prosecuted and fined £1,000 with £40 costs.

● A dock firm's 'cavalier attitude' to safety was attacked in a magistrate's court after an accident in which an employee fell from the raised forks of a fork lift truck.

The driver had been asked to lift a fellow worker up on a pallet as part of his job.

However, his colleague fell from a height of nine feet, breaking his pelvis.

● A young man was badly crushed and killed under a roll of paper weighing more than a tonne.

The man was operating a machine which laminated paper with adhesive. He went under the roll to help a fellow operator — although he should not have done so according to company safety policy — and the roll weighing 1.3 tonnes came

down on top of him.

Since the accident the firm has made some modifications to the machine.

● The discovery of two men pouring molten aluminium without protective visors led to their employers being fined £800.

There were many visors in the factory but since there were no holders for them they could not be used.

● Demolition men sent a cloud of asbestos dust across a public car park when they smashed their way through the roof of a garage.

They caused a dust cloud that would have been about 1,000 times the control limit at the building and about 100 times the limit over the nearby parking area.

The firm was fined £2,500 with £60 costs.

● Residents near a transport company warehouse found their lives had been found daily at risk when a court revealed the building was storing 100 tons of potentially explosive chemical. Their houses were less than 30 yards from the stocks of ammonium nitrate used for quarry blasting.

The firm admitted putting employees and the public at risk. It was fined £2,000.

● Working on a factory lighting extension a young handyman received a 240 volt mains shock which

threw him off a step-ladder fracturing his skull.

His breathing stopped and he was only saved by two colleagues who managed to bring him round with cardiac massage and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Charged under the Factories Act, the company admitted that it had allowed him to perform work which needed technical knowledge to avoid danger. It was fined £350.

● Following an accident in which a 16-year-old caught his hand in an unguarded beefburger-making machine, his employers were fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £70 towards the costs.

He had been clearing an obstruction when his hand was damaged between two steel rollers fitted with teeth to score the beefburgers.

He later said that he had received no instruction from management on use of a guard and had never seen the machine fitted with one.

● A company was advised to seal off a patch of land after an employee died when his tipper truck touched 11,000 volt overhead power lines at its depot. The cable was at the standard height of 22 feet, but when raised the tipper truck was over 27 feet high.

The driver died a week later from electrocution and bronchial pneumonia. The

inquest verdict was accidental death.

SUCH examples read like the worst horrors of the earliest days of the factory system but with the added refinement of modern technology.

They indicate that no fundamental eradication of workplace death and mutilation is possible while safety at work is subordinated to financial considerations of profit-making and cost-cutting.

Employers are let off the hook for fines and compensation where workers are held responsible for their accidents. Yet these are often a result of management pressure for results while turning a blind eye to improper practices.

Certainly where fail-safe methods and protective systems exist but have not been introduced or enforced by a company, its action are criminal whatever the action by an employee.

True, trade unions have won advances in terms of health-and-safety-at-work legislation but this is constantly under threat in terms of government underfunding of precisely those agencies which are supposed to enforce the rules, and by ludicrous penalties which enable employees to kill with impunity.

SPECIAL PICKET

outside South Africa House
Monday 14 September 6p.m.

Start of trial of jailed South African trade unionist
Moses Mayekiso

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THE INDEPENDENT

No 281

WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 1987

*** Publish

An MI5 smear

MARGARET Thatcher chairs the Ministerial Steering Committee on Intelligence (MIS) which supervises the intelligence community and fixes its budget priorities.

Her rise to power in the Tory Party was masterminded by ex-MI6 man Airey Neave.

She has gone to extraordinary lengths to prevent the publication in Britain of ex-MI5 man Peter Wright's book 'Spy-catcher'.

The fact that the book can be sold almost anywhere in the world but Britain, proves that her actions have nothing to do with 'national security'.

Although the controversy over the banning of the book was neatly diverted to the question of the freedom of the press and justice, the major question raised by Wright's book is: how deeply was Thatcher involved in the MI5 destabilisation of the Wilson government?

Wright revealed that MI5 saw the 1975 Labour government as a 'bloody menace' and in the summer of 1975 half of his staff were 'up to their necks in a plot to get rid of the prime minister' (Harold Wilson).

MI5 were not happy with the then Tory leader Edward Heath either, and were looking for someone a bit more resolute.

BY PHIL PENN

A front page headline in 'The Independent' of 2 September said an 'investigation' into their exposures had raised 'doubts over Ulster murder claims'. The whole of page four of that issue, with big pictures, was also given over to the 'investigation' (see right).

In an interview with Workers Press on 1 August Collin Wallace told of the battle for supremacy between MI5 and MI6.

Rather than spying on other nations, priority was given to internal surveillance of trade unions and political groups. This was the domain of MI5.

MI5 won the day when they blew the cover of MI6 agents and informers who were then wiped out by the 'sectarian groups' in Ireland. Holroyd says that SAS captain Robert Nirac was connected with the murder squad responsible for the death of

Doubts over Ulster murder claims

ALLEGATIONS made by two former intelligence personnel that the security forces carried out undercover assassinations in Northern Ireland have not been borne out by an investigation by *The Independent*. The claims by Colin Wallace and Fred Holroyd have received widespread publicity in

By David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

Part of the importance of the two men's claims lies in the fact that they appear to confirm, and indeed extend, some of the allegations made by Peter Wright, the

made by Ken Livingstone, the Labour MP, in his maiden speech in the House of Commons on 7 July. Mr Livingstone, guided by the Wallace-Holroyd version of events, linked Mr Neave with dirty tricks and suggested that the Prime Minister might have known of that.

quite nicely. If a lot of it was fabrication or invention, by now there would have been things that were mutually exclusive or contradictory, and there's none of that here." Some of Mr Wallace's statements are clearly untrue. A profile of him in a south of England

have leaked a classified document to a journalist. In 1981 he received a ten-year jail sentence for the manslaughter of his girlfriend's husband in the south of England. Mr Holroyd, in turn, has waged a campaign against the authorities ever since he spent a month in a mental hos-

The page one headline from 'The Independent' of 2 September 1987

mand of northern Ireland's Psychological Warfare unit. He showed Workers Press the 1974 MI5 disinformation file, on which he was to base stories designed to show that Labour premier Harold Wilson was a KGB man.

A 'Russian Plot' story was given prominence by the 'News of the World' and Airey Neave used Wallace's material in a speech to the House of Commons claiming to show links between Labour MPs and the IRA. (Neave met his end in an INLA bombing just before he was about to take charge of overseeing the intelligence agencies).

Wallace's material has been confirmed as genuine by forensic scientist Dr Julius Grant, the man who exposed the 'Hitler Diaries'. The results of his findings were published in the 'Observer' of 5 July 1987.

Ignoring Dr Grant's evidence completely, the 'Independent's' 'investigation' team, David McKittrick and John Ware, says: 'Our inquiries have revealed major discrepancies, inaccuracies and inconsistencies in their stories.'

But they go on to say that 'many of their claims appear incapable of being either proved or disproved because many of the figures accused of misbehaviour are now dead.'

McKittrick implies that Wallace only started concocting the stories after he was sacked when discovered leaking a classified document to the press.

Wallace told Workers Press that he was set up by MI5 after refusing to carry on with the anti-Labour government work, and had been hounded by them ever since.

In 1979, after again raising the Wilson story in the press, Wallace got a phone call

from an advertising agency called Kaymar Studios asking him to pose for some photographs in a 'GQ' parachute which they were marketing.

The photographs were next seen when Wallace was on trial for manslaughter. They were published in the 'Sun' and were used by the prosecution to show his obvious belligerence.

He was found guilty and served six years of a ten-year sentence.

When he checked on Kaymar Studios, Wallace found that it did not exist. This story was exposed in the 'Daily Mirror' on 9 July 1987 (see left).

Although he will not use the word 'framed', Wallace said that his imprisonment was due to the 'manipulation of the police and judiciary', a task he said the intelligence

service would find 'dead easy'.

Although the 'Independent's' investigative journalists came into possession of information and photographs from such sources as the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Ulster Defence Regiment (i.e. the British Army) and the loyalist paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force they were apparently unable to get hold of a back copy of the 'Daily Mirror'.

They published the photograph again, this time to show Wallace as a fantasist who liked dressing up or — as the page 4 headline put it — 'Parachutist who was all waffle and no action' ('Independent' 2 September 1987).

Wallace told Workers Press that the 'Independent' article was the result of 'panic' on the part of the security services and he will be doing a full reply to it.

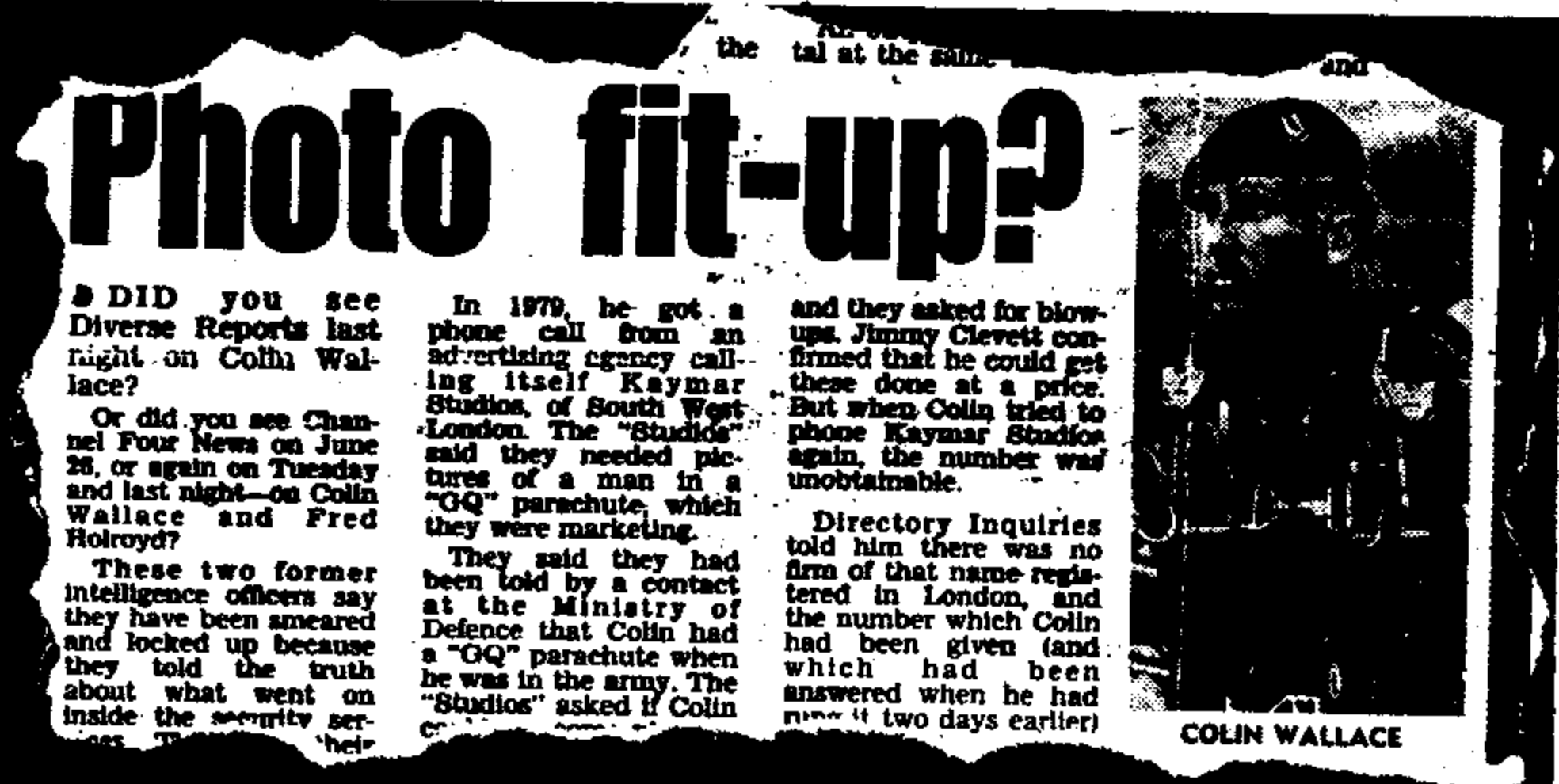
He said that he had been expecting something like this because the RUC had been hawking the stuff around Fleet Street for some time but no one would touch it.

The panic of the security services is a reflection of the explosive nature of Wallace and Holroyd's story. It could, with a bit of interest from Kinnock, lead to the bringing down of the Thatcher government.

When Ken Livingstone raised the issue in his maiden speech to the House of Commons on 6 July he was not only shouted down by the Tories but Neil Kinnock said that the allegations were 'probably unfair'!

Since then he has said nothing. What is equally puzzling is the silence of Lord (Harold) Wilson.

The question which now arises is: Why are the Labour leaders quiet?



'Daily Mirror' article which exposes the circumstances of the photographs of Wallace in parachute gear

After having dealt with Wright, the 'intelligence community' is now coming after Collin Wallace and Fred Holroyd, two ex-intelligence men who were working in the north of Ireland in 1974 and who first exposed the illegal activities of MI5 in 1975.

John Francis Green and the Miami Showband.

They were made to look like 'sectarian' killings in order to wreck a ceasefire negotiated by the Labour government. A question now being raised is did Nirac die in the same manner.

Wallace was No.2 in com-

For a labour movement inquiry into MI5

WORKERS PRESS is calling for a labour-movement inquiry into the anti-working class activities of MI5, and particularly their destabilisation campaign against the Labour government of 1974-1979.

We are asking trade union and Labour Party branches, trades councils and other working-class organisations to pass resolutions calling for such an inquiry. We are asking both organisations and individuals to agree to sponsor such an inquiry. Please take this matter up wherever you can. The following is a model resolution:

● This branch/trades council notes the revelations of the secret, illegal and anti-working class activities of MI5, particularly:

- The operation to destabilise the Labour government of 1974-1979;
- The large number of murders in the

north and south of Ireland alleged to be part of this operation;

● The subsequent infiltration and 'psychological warfare' operations against trade unions and labour-movement organisations, which continued during the miners' strike, the Wapping dispute, and continues today.

We note the refusal of Thatcher's Tory government to investigate these matters, in which it is alleged Tory politicians were themselves deeply implicated. Only the labour movement can be trusted to investigate the truth.

We call for a labour-movement inquiry into these questions; we call on Neil Kinnock and all Labour and trade union leaders to sponsor such an inquiry. If you are able to win support for this campaign, please let us know so that we can report on it in Workers Press.



Page 4 of 'The Independent' of 2 September

THE 41st EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Imagination and the working class in recent Scottish art

BY T. BROTHERSTONE

THE 'Vigorous Imagination' is a good title for the exhibition of new Scottish art which can be seen at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh until 25 October.

It is a striking, easily appreciated collection of recent work by 17 artists which may prove to have a significant place in the history of British painting.

It was the most important exhibition of pictorial art at last month's Edinburgh Festival, and confirmed an interesting tendency to assert the Scottish identity of this event which was launched in the late 1940s as part of an attempt by the capitalist Establishment in Britain to promote a civilised image after three decades of war and slump.

Even the oldest artist represented, Joseph Urie, was only born about the same time as the Festival itself. The youngest, Stephen Conroy, is 23. And — without underestimating the work of the others — the coherence of the exhibition revolves around the work of five or six painters trained at the Glasgow School of Art in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

What is it in their work that has led reputable (non-Scottish) art critics to see them as having some collective identity and as being perhaps the most dynamic group of artists at work in Britain today?

Part of the answer to this must lie in the history of painting itself, and in its role in establishing cultural identity. This 'Scottish' school (they would themselves deny being a school, and several are not strictly Scottish) have reacted against the extremes of abstraction of much painting of the period since World War II, during which the United States of America appeared to many to hold the key to some sort of international individualist cultural future.

Of course these artists are far from the only ones to react in this way; but the work of some of them at least does seem quite consciously concerned to relate not only to identifiable objects in the real world, but also to a tradition in European, British and even Scottish art which has tended to be pushed into the background by those who have seen the trend to greater and greater abstraction as the road forward.

Walking into the first room in the current exhibition, for example, you are confronted with the predominantly brown, beautifully crafted figures of Stephen Conroy, almost as though you are being taken back to the early rooms devoted to English, pre-World War I art at the recent exhibition of Modern British (mainly English) Art at the Royal Academy in London.

A great advantage of the setting for 'The Vigorous Imagination' is that you can go downstairs to the permanent collection at the gallery and see how Scottish artists have

developed their own tradition of figurative, lovingly painted pictures during the 20th century. Or, if you are in Edinburgh before 26 September, you can visit the splendid new 369 Gallery at 233 Cowgate to have a similar experience at a small, but carefully constructed exhibition of Scottish painting this century called 'Continuing the Tradition'.

(This latter exhibition will also be in London, at the Warwick Arts Trust, 33 Warwick Square, from 13 October until 8 November.)

A major source of interest in 'The Vigorous Imagination', however, lies not simply in its place in the development of modern British painting, but in its relationship to today's social crisis.

Insofar as a view of relationships between human beings emerges from this exhibition it is not so much unromantic as militantly anti-romantic.

There are uncompromisingly feminist images (Gwen Hardie's unsensuous nudes, June Redfern's female crucifixion, for example) and truthful depictions of social conditions making real relationships impossible (like Peter Howson's 'Bedsit Lovers').

And, apart from Keith McIntyre's beautifully drawn studies of the relationship between contemporary rural custom and ancient myth, one of the few memorable references to human relations is in Adrian Wiszniewski's 'Kingfisher', a wistfully evocative comment on the sexuality of adolescent males.

THE three painters who seem most central to the idea that this exhibition may have an important, and possibly even seminal, identity greater than the merits of the individual exhibits, are Stephen Campbell, Peter Howson and Ken Currie.

Campbell was born in Glasgow in 1953 and worked as a steel works maintenance engineer before going to the Glasgow School of Art in 1978.

His paintings seem to have nothing to do with industrial decline of his surroundings there, being symbol-laden stories of tweedy gents encountering strange happenings in rural landscapes.

Yet it is possible to see these self-confident satires on the myth of English gentility as a link between a 'continuing tradition' of figurative painting and the images of poverty and the working class which do pervade the work of Howson and Currie.

Howson was born in London in 1958, but brought up in

Scotland, attending the Glasgow School of Art between 1975 and 1977 and again from 1979 to 1981.

His pictures of Glasgow down-and-outs seem at first sight ruthlessly unromantic in a tradition owing much to those artists who have sought critically to portray the realities of bourgeois society, such as Daumier in 19th Century France and Dix and Grosz in the Germany of the 1920s.

Yet in some works like 'The Heroic Dossier' he produces a more ambiguous impact, confronting the viewer with social crisis by finding heroic, hardened individuality in the homeless on the one hand; but, on the other, sealing him or her off from necessary anger by seeking too perfect a completeness within the picture itself.

And Currie, a much more clearly political artist, who pronounces his aim of producing an art which will aid

the struggle for social equality and justice, also manifests this striving for an internal artistic wholeness, which arguably produces a different impact from that intended.

Born in North Shields in 1960 he studied social science at a Paisley college before attending the School of Art in Glasgow from 1978-1983.

His first one-man show was called 'Art and Social Commitment' and his most convincing pictures are portraits like 'Union Organiser', 'Shipyard Poet', and 'The Self-Taught Man'.

But he seeks to go much further and carry forward the tradition of socialist, mural painting associated with the Mexican Diego Rivera (1886-1957) — of whom Trotsky once remarked that he was a 'genius whose political blunderings could cast no shadow either on his art or his personal integrity'.

Soon afterwards Rivera made his peace with Stalinism, something one cannot help recalling when looking at Currie's large, carefully composed and finely painted works such as 'Template of the Future', which demonstrate a splendid ambition but seem to come perilously close to reviving a depressingly idealist conception of the relation between art and socialism, such as that which prevailed under Stalin in the Soviet Union.

Maybe, however, that is only my reaction. The least this exhibition might do — and it would be a very considerable tribute to the achievement of the artists — is to promote a discussion on the role of art in the historic struggles over the future of society which lie in front, a discussion to which Workers Press readers must have much to contribute.

OTHER exhibitions left

over, as it were, from the Festival, are two on Mary, Queen of Scots at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street (until 4 October).

'The Queen's Image', in particular, gives some far better clues to the fascination for posterity Mary Stuart created than much of what has been written about her. (It can also be seen at the Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield from 24 October until 29 November.)

There is also an excellent collection of French drawings from the 15th to the early 20th Century at the National Gallery of Scotland, The Mound (until 11 October).

On loan from the Swedish National Museum in Stockholm, it helps keep one's feet on the ground when reflecting on what pictorial art is all about.



Steven Campbell's 'Two Men with a Carriage Royale to Catch a Queen Bee', painted in 1985, hangs at the entrance to 'The Vigorous Imagination: New Scottish Art' at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Peter Fryer

'Not by politics alone...'

THE recent announcement in Workers Press that the paper will in future 'aim at the widest possible coverage of artistic and cultural events and scientific questions' was very welcome.

I have long shared Gramsci's view that a revolutionary paper, besides its obvious tasks of reporting working-class struggles and serving as agitator, organiser, and political educator, should also strive to educate its readers in a broader sense — and that this is in fact a political task, in the fullest meaning of that phrase.

(I'm speaking here, by the way, of the real Gramsci, not the emasculated proto-Eurocommunist cult figure that is dangled before the gullible readers of 'Marxism Today'.

(The real Gramsci, while a prisoner of Mussolini, came out against Stalin, but the letter in which he did so was suppressed by Togliatti, the Italian Communist Party's representative at Comintern headquarters in Moscow; Gramsci's followers on the Italian Politbureau later joined the Trotskyist Opposition.)

Gramsci had edited a communist paper in Italy in the turbulent period between the end of World War I and Mussolini's seizure of power, a period during which there was a powerful upsurge of working-class militancy, with factory occupations and the rise of a strong shop stewards' movement.

As a communist editor Gramsci was deeply conscious of the contradiction between the unprecedented fighting spirit and ardour of Italy's factory workers — many of whom had only recently come to the towns from the countryside — and the pitifully low level of their general education.

In Gramsci's eyes the Italian working class had been shamefully cut off from their rightful heritage of Italian literature and art and music.

One of the jobs of a revolutionary paper, he argued passionately, was to bridge that chasm — to help the



GRAMSCI

workers take possession, not only of state power and the means of production, but of the whole birth-right the bourgeoisie had robbed them of.

In this, we may have no doubt, his vision was fully in accord with that of Trotsky, whose informed interest in every cultural and scientific development contrasted vividly with the narrowness and Philistinism of some who later claimed to be his followers.

'Not by politics alone doth man live...' was the title of one of Trotsky's essays, published in 'Pravda' in 1923.

'Least of all could he himself live by politics alone', writes Isaac Deutscher in the second volume of his masterly biography of Trotsky:

'Even at the most vital moments of the struggle for power his literary and cultural activities took up a great part of his energy...'

'Not that he sought to escape from politics. His interest in literature, art, and education remained political in a wider sense. But he refused to dwell on the surface of public affairs. He turned the struggle for power into a struggle for the "soul" of the revolution; and he thereby gave new dimensions and new depth to the conflict in which he was involved.'

If its excellent coverage of the Edinburgh Festival is anything to go by, the Workers Press 'turn to culture' will indeed give new dimensions and new depth to the struggles its readers are involved in.

More about the Bomb Shop

WHEN I made a passing reference in this column recently to the 'Bomb Shop' in London's Charing Cross Road I'd clean forgotten that, long before it was taken over by Collets, this bookshop had an interesting connection with the early days of British Trotskyism.

Bill Hunter has kindly drawn my attention to a reference to the shop in Reg Groves's fascinating little book 'The Balham Group: How British Trotskyism Began' (Pluto Press, 1974).

Groves tells how 'one bright cold spring morning in 1931' he called at the 'Bomb Shop' to buy some pamphlets and say hello to 'old Henderson', who ran it.

He describes Henderson, proprietor of 'the only socialist bookshop in the West End', as 'short, rotund, brusque in manner, with bristling white hair, pointed beard and scarlet tie'.

The shop had been designed and decorated in red and gold, and 'emblazoned with the names of

past rebels', by the socialist painter Walter Crane (who was a distinguished illustrator of books, was heavily influenced by William Morris, and died in 1915).

'Its defiant name, red doors and window frames, and display of socialist and anarchist publications', Groves writes, 'incited upper-class louts and their toadies to heave an occasional brick through the full-length plate glass door and windows, to daub blue and white paint on to the red, and sometimes to break in at night and wreck the interior.'

On sale there in 1931 was the 'Militant', containing articles by Leon Trotsky and published by what was then the Left Opposition in the US.

Groves bought three or four copies, which were passed round among six or seven members of the Communist Party of Great Britain — 'and our little world was enlarged'.

Alas, Henderson's supplies were cut off when he couldn't pay for them. Groves and his friends wrote to the US asking for leniency, but



TROTSKY

'the Americans were adamant', and in the end the little group had to order their own copies by post.

They were 'deeply shaken' by Trotsky's indictment of Comintern policy in Germany, his warnings of the disaster that would follow if that policy was persisted in, and his call for a principled united front of the German Social Democratic Party and CP to defeat the Nazis: 'All these things we would raise in the party, and fight for.'

But for the time being they would fight as CP members, not outsiders. It was several months before the Balham group helped to set up the British Section of the International Left Opposition, on 19 December 1931.

When I came to live in London 16 years later, Henderson's shop had already passed into the hands of Collets, a circumstance which at that time meant total CP control over the stock. Needless to say, neither the American 'Militant' nor any other Trotskyist publication was to be found there.

But the time-honoured hypocorism 'Bomb Shop', though now sadly inappropriate, could still be seen above the door. It was to stay there for several years to come.

representative in Britain). **Thursday, 17 September**, 7p.m. Holborn Library, Theobalds Road, London WC1.

SUPPORT MORDECHAI VANUNU! CND Vigil at Israeli Embassy. Monday 21 September, 12.30.- 2p.m. Palace Green, Kensington High Street.

TRADE UNIONS AGAINST MSC Conference to co-ordinate opposition to MSC schemes and government policies on unemployment through the trade unions. **Saturday 7 November**, 9.30a.m.- 5p.m. Dr Jonson House, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4. Registration £5. Contact: M.Arkwright 01-521 4130.

FREE MOSES MAYEKISO Free All South African Prisoners; Hands Off COSATU; End British Collaboration With Apartheid. March to South Africa House, Trafalgar Square. **Saturday 10 October**. Assemble midday, Clerkenwell Green, London

EC2 (nearest tube: Farringdon) **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.

THE LONG MARCH Sarmcol Workers Co-Operative Presentation. In dispute with British Tyre and Rubber Company since May 1985 — See Their Play, Hear Their Story. Hackney Empire, Mare Street, E8. 15-19 September 8p.m.

MARCH FOR MAYEKISO COMMITTEE Open meetings every Wednesday 8p.m. Preceding 10 October, to organise national demonstration in support of South African trade unionist Moses Mayekiso. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Please send me information about the Workers Revolutionary Party.

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LISTINGS

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.

AGAINST BP INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA Demonstration outside Shell, Garage, Burnett and Hallamshire Factory, Workop. **Saturday 12 September**, 9.30a.m. Organised by Nottingham Area NUM, Workop Trades Council and Yorkshire NUM. Followed by Rally, 11a.m. at Workop Town Hall. Speakers: Peter Heathfield (NUM), SACTU, SWAPO, ANC, Anti-Apartheid.

HANGERS ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT Proceeds to Sarmcol Workers in South Africa. **Saturday 19 September**. 8p.m. Emerald Centre, 263 Hammers-

mith Road, Hammersmith Broadway. Live music with: German Girl; Mimanics. Disco and Late Bar. Waged £4 Unwaged £2. Free to victimised workers. Organised by Hammersmith and Fulham Trades Union Council.

ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA Meeting with June Jordan, Moshe Machover and others. **Tuesday 15 September**, 8p.m. Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11.

SABRA AND SHATILLA Fifth Anniversary of Massacre. Palestine Post Rally. Dr Swee Ang (Medical Aid for Palestinians) and Faisal Aweida (PLO repre-

days of every month. 7.30p.m.. UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, W3.

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.

VIRAJ MENDIS LONDON SUPPORT GROUP Downing Street Protest every Monday. 6p.m.-7p.m. (Westminster/Charing Cross tubes.) Weekly organisational meetings take place after the picket.

NATIONALISATION

The dream or the nightmare?

PART IV

THIS year is the 40th anniversary of nationalisation of the coal industry. To mark the event, Durham Miners' Association produced a commemorative souvenir brochure for their Gala, giving an incisive account of what nationalisation has meant to the Durham coalfield. As a union they feel it is important to raise questions as to why a whole coalfield has been virtually destroyed under public ownership while millions of tonnes of coal have been sterilised. To battle against privatisation, they say, they must understand how they have fared under state control.

In 1947 nationalisation seemed like a dream, but in the 1980s that vision seems tarnished. The Durham Miners Association hope their analysis is of benefit to those who may, once again, have the chance to bring their industries under public ownership. WORKERS PRESS is pleased that the Association has given us permission to reprint their account. Copies of the souvenir brochure are available from them — see advert right.



By the early 1980s the mood was high for battling against pit closure

The blues prepare for the reds. . .

THE threat which the miners posed was still enormous. Some way had to be found of breaking up the miners' strength.

An incentive scheme would have the twin advantages of diffusing the miners annual threat to the wage restrictions of the Labour government (by allowing larger increases based on productivity deals), and breaking the unity of the NUM, based on a national wages structure.

The miners were balloted on an incentive scheme in 1974, and rejected it decisively by 61.5 per cent. A national conference in 1977 also rejected it. Still not satisfied, the right wing of the union insisted on another ballot.

However, the miners again voted to reject the scheme, this time by 55.75 per cent. Gormley, and other right wingers, led by South Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, simply decided to ignore the ballot and accept the Area Incentive Scheme. When the left wing went to the courts to contest the NEC's decision, the judge ruled that a national ballot was not binding on the NEC.

Preparing

Meanwhile the state was preparing for a confrontation with the working class. The miners' victories of 1972 and 1974 sent shock waves through the establishment. The 'Civil Contingencies Unit' (CCU) was established as a standing Cabinet committee to deal with strikes. The police began to train a 'third force' of 'riot police' to deal with picketing. The nuclear power programme continued unabated, and the conversion of coal fired power stations to dual oil/coal burning stepped up.

And the Conservatives planned for a return to power in which they foresaw the need to break the power of the NUM for good. The 'Ridley Report' of 1978 prepared the ground for the confrontation. Anticipating that a Tory government would face a challenge to its policies on the nationalised industries, it predicted the biggest threat would be from the miners. Accordingly, it drew up a strategy for dealing with the threat. This included:

- Building up coal stocks.

- Making contingency plans for the import of coal.
- Encouraging non-union lorry drivers who would carry coal across picket lines.
- Introducing dual coal/oil firing power stations as quickly as possible.
- Cutting off welfare payments to strikers.
- Creating a large, mobile squad of police to deal with pickets.

Secure

However, the period from 1974 to 1979 was relatively secure for miners. The Plan for Coal guaranteed grants to finance stocks which might be caused by short term fluctuations in demand. And it increased investment in the industry to cope with the expansion that was expected.

But the investment implications of the plan were seriously underestimated, and the predictions of future demand were hopelessly optimistic. Few pits shut from 1974 to 1979, but the preparations for more closures had been made, and the Plan for Coal was soon to be revealed as yet another government agreement to be torn up, leaving the miners the victims yet again of the 'national interest'.

At the edge of battle. . .

IN 1980 a world slump was seriously undermining the strength of the NUM.

Large quantities of cheap coal were flooding the world market. At home, the run-down in steel and heavy engineering caused a further collapse in the British market.

Coal prices were falling rapidly and stocks were building up to dramatic levels. It was estimated that 40 million tonnes of British coal was stockpiled, mainly at power stations in the UK.

The newly-elected Thatcher government had declared war on nationalised industries and the trade unions who tried to protect them. With its free-market philosophy the Tory government set about trying to bring the NCB into line with their thinking. Cash restraints were placed on the board and management were told it must break even by 1983/1984.

In February 1981, Derek Ezra, then chairman of the NCB, announced that 23 pits were to be closed. In Durham, Sacriston, Bearpark, Houghton and Boldon were to go immediately.

Durham Miners' Gala Souvenir Brochure

'40 years of nationalisation'

Available from:

Durham Miners' Association
'Redhills', Durham

Price: 50p + 20p p&p

Proceeds to Justice for Mineworkers

A spontaneous strike wave broke out and spread from South Wales to Kent. The Midlands, Yorkshire and Scotland were also involved. In the Durham village of Sacriston miners declared: 'We can't stand by and allow others to fight for our pits.' Bearpark, Boldon and Houghton followed suit.

An enormous mood of rebellion spread through the coalfields. By the Thursday of the first week of total stoppage Thatcher's government retreated and the NCB withdrew the pit closure programme. The government pledged more investment in the industry.

Many miners claimed a great victory. Others thought back to 'Red Friday', the day in 1925 when a threatened national stoppage by the MFGB forced the government to restore subsidies to the mining industry. Many considered Thatcher was playing the same game.

Opposition

In 1982 Arthur Scargill was elected President of the NUM on a platform of fervent opposition to pit closures. He was given the job of fighting for the union by an unprecedented 70 per cent majority.

In September of the following year a 71-year-old 'union buster' was appointed to the chairmanship of the NCB. He was Ian MacGregor. His record at British Leyland and the British Steel Company led the NUM newspaper, 'The Miner', to carry the headline: 'The Butcher Cometh'.

He was, as every miner now knows, to be the hit man for the Tory strategy of taking on the NUM. He inherited an industry in which the miners were prepared to fight. In 1982, Scottish miners struck against the proposed closure of Kinneil colliery, although attempts to expand the strike collapsed.

By February 1983, the Lewis Merthyr colliery in Glamorgan staged a 'stay down' strike against closures. The whole South Wales coalfield followed their lead and came out in support. But a national ballot for strike action failed.

Closures

In Durham, the list of closures was growing by the month. Blackhall, Houghton, Hylton and Boldon had been closed. East Hetton was rapidly shut on grounds of 'safety'. Men at the pit were told that there would be jobs waiting for them at the coastal collieries if they did not protest. Men in the tub loading shift said: 'We were in bed when they closed our pit.'

The mood was rising all over the British coalfield. Pits were closing piece-meal. Unlike the 1960s, with unemployment at over 2 million and rising fast, there were no other jobs to go to. Men were also being blackmailed under the threat of compulsory redundancy.

In Scotland, the aggressive NCB area director Albert Wheeler was busy provoking the miners. Cardowan, the last pit in Lanarkshire, was closed despite a strike to keep it open. But Polmaise was to prove the flashpoint for the coalfield.

Wheeler personally went to the pit to lock out miners when they struck against being transferred in July of 1983. By January 1984 they were out again, this time striking against the closure of Polmaise. Their strike was to last one year and six weeks.

It took another provocation, this time in Yorkshire, at Cortonwood Colliery, to spark the longest and most bitter struggle in the British coal industry.

TO BE CONTINUED

ROBSON'S CHOICE

Mussolini fraud

CHECKING through the television schedules since this column last appeared three weeks ago proved, to me at any rate, that going on holiday was one of the wisest decisions one could have made in the circumstances.

If you discount repeats, which have been running at something like 35 per cent of output throughout the month of August, and news and current affairs, few programmes interrupted the flow of moving wallpaper with something interesting to say.

A noteworthy exception to the general rule was the BBC's lavish four-part series *Mussolini*, a US import for which, I am certain, many hard-earned dollars were paid.

It dealt with history, 'the truth of history', rather like TG Healy had done two weeks previously when he launched his new fringe production 'The Marxist Party'.

The author, Stirling Silliphant (another welcome guest at this year's Moscow Film Festival), went to enormous lengths to 'get it right' — and I mean right. He even invited his subject's eldest surviving son, Vittorio Mussolini, to check his screenplay for accuracy when it was completed. He found Mussolini Jr. 'delightful, charming, very sophisticated — and still a spokesman for his father'. It must have come as no surprise to Silliphant when good old Vittorio gave the screenplay his blessing.

The result of this labour of love? A cynical, sickening snow job! Only a few weeks after the funeral of Rudolf Hess which triggered fascist demonstrations in

West Germany, and gave the world clear notice of a fascist revival — especially among the youth — the BBC takes up its educational responsibilities with a vengeance and treats British youth to five hours of 'history' in prime-time.

The essence of the lesson was this: that although it could be said that Benito Mussolini was a ruthless, dictatorial man in public life (or non-U, as the Mitford sisters might have dubbed him), he was passionately devoted to his people, unbending in matters of principle, courageous to a fault and, if somewhat prone to promiscuity, was, deep down, a loving, tender and devoted family man who, unfortunately, committed a few rather stupid errors which eventually cost him his life and that of his mistress. In the immortal words of Stirling Silliphant: 'He wanted the Roman Empire back and so he made a deal with Hitler. That's where the tragedy came in — that stupid choice'.

It is almost unnecessary to add that the partisans who winked the benign tyrant out of the German convoy in which he hoped to make his escape, and who dealt summarily with their class enemy, wore battle-green caps with prominent red stars on the front — just like the Vietcong had done in the children's comic books of the early 1960's.

The question that must be answered is this: Why did the BBC — a vital arm of the British capitalist state machine — buy and show this programme now? Can we expect similarly 'human and therefore fallible' portraits of Franco and Salazar, Stroessner, Marcos and Somoza, or even historical small-fry like Pierre Gemayal, to name seven? Would it not be perfectly consistent with Kenneth Baker's avowed aim to 'raise the standard of education' in British schools and Thatch-

er's drive to smash trades unions?

On 7 September, Channel Four presented a documentary on the South African Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko, who died in police custody ten years ago today.

Breaking the Silence, directed by Edwina Spicer, made frustrating viewing much of the time because it was unclear whether it was an historical account of the Black Consciousness movement or free publicity for Richard Attenborough's forthcoming film on Steve Biko *Cry Freedom*.

I say this without malice. There is a long and, one would have hoped, by now, thoroughly discredited tradition in television documentary making that always seeks to find 'a hook to hang' a subject from or a 'frame' to put around it, the implication being that the chosen subject is too weak to stand firmly in its own right.

Anniversaries are the most common 'hooks', and they are often quite unobtrusive. In this case the programme makers and the programme presenters had an anniversary to provide them with the sense of 'security' they hunger for. But why rope in the Attenborough circus? Will a few location dolly shots from Zimbabwe and a handful of clips from Sir Richard's feature film get us closer to the real Steve Biko, or to a deeper understanding of the ideology of Black Consciousness in contemporary South Africa by 'framing' the subject in such a way that it is more accessible to audiences?

I believe the answer is no, it does not. It has the opposite effect. It cheapens the subject and leads to superficial work, and *Breaking the Silence* was just that: superficial work.

'Hooks' and 'frames' are part of the baggage of filmmakers who lack confidence in both their subject and

their audience, and feel obliged to 'package' their subject in such a way that it 'sells' more easily. This is sheer nonsense — the warped logic of the market place. Attenborough will not draw viewers to watch a documentary on Steve Biko — it takes a miners strike to do that!

* * *

HAVING survived a particularly arid summer, we are now threatened by drowning in a flood of new autumn releases. We will have to judge them on their merit. Meanwhile, here are a few programmes to look out for.

On **Saturday**, at 2.15p.m. (Radio 3), Maria Callas in Bizet's *Carmen*. At 5.25p.m. (BBC2), Orson Wells' *The Magnificent Ambersons*.

On **Sunday**, at 2.30p.m. (Radio 4), The Globe Theatre presents *Travelling North*. At 7.30p.m. (Radio 3), Wagner's opera *The Ring*. At 7.50p.m. (BBC2), *The Great Philosophers* focuses on Aristotle. At 8.15p.m. (C4), Igor Stravinsky's only opera for television: *The Flood*. At 9.05p.m. (BBC1), *Sunday Premier* presents *Blat*. At 10.35p.m. (C4), Francois Truffaut's *The Bride Wore Black*.

On **Monday**, at 12 noon (C4), Victor Sjöström's superb silent classic *The Wind*, made in 1928. At 3p.m. (BBC2), *The World About Us* follows a harvesting crew across the US to the Canadian prairies in *Yellow Trail from Texas*. At 5.05p.m. (BBC1), *Blue Peter* takes our youngsters to the USSR, courtesy of Glasnost, in the first of a new series. At 8p.m. (Radio 4), a play by Howard Barker, *No End of Blame*. At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), *State of Secrecy* looks at the British Secret Service, or that part of it that isn't secret any more. At 10p.m. (C4), *Japan Project*, looks at the rise of unemployment in Japan.



Lillian Gish starting a new life in Texas in *'The Wind'* (1928). Monday 14 September at 12 noon, Channel 4.

On **Tuesday**, at 12 noon (C4), *King Vidor's* silent classic *Show People*. At 7.30p.m. (BBC2), *Wildlife on Two* introduces the Nautilus — said to be 500 million years old. At 8p.m. (Radio 4), *Medicine Now*. At 8.30p.m. (BBC2), *Brass Tacks* looks at the investment potential of private health care in Britain today — a must for anyone on an NHS hospital waiting list! At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), *Truckers*, part-two of an eight part series which might be worth keeping an eye on. In the first episode the lads were strike breaking and making a fortune in the process. Also at 9.30p.m. (BBC2), novelist Thomas Keneally introduces a new series of documentaries on Australia.

On **Wednesday**, at 6p.m. (BBC2), Elvis Presley in *Jailhouse Rock*. At 8.15p.m. (Radio 4), a new series, *Analysis*, focuses on the crisis in the Labour Party. At 9p.m. (C4), a record of

singer Maria Callas' last performance in 1974, *Callas in Japan*. At 9.35p.m. (Radio 3), Arthur Miller's *Elegy for a Lady*. At 10p.m. (C4), Tony Palmer's new film about pianist Mitsuko Uchida is called *Mozart in Japan*.

On **Thursday**, at 5.05p.m. (BBC1), *Blue Peter* in back in the USSR. At 8p.m. (C4), Equinox presents *Prisoner of Consciousness*, a repeat of Jonathan Miller's extraordinary interview with an ex-BBC radio producer who after suffering severe brain damage has virtually no memory. At 10.30p.m. (ITV), *The City Programme* hits the airwaves, designed to serve Thatcher's new generation of small investors.

On **Friday**, at 10.25p.m. (BBC1), *Omnibus* presents a programme on folk singer Bob Dylan which includes a rare interview. At 11.15p.m. (BBC2), one of John Huston's best films, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

Justice for the Delaney's

DEMONSTRATION

ON THE 10 January 1987 Michael Delaney was unlawfully killed by a TNT lorry driven by Robert Higgins.

Michael was a young working class man. Higgins is a scab driver for Rupert Murdoch's print and media empire. A coroners jury delivered the verdict of unlawful killing — Michael's death became national news. Since that day the judiciary, police, TNT, Attorney General and Higgins have been determined to draw a veil over the facts of Micheal's death.

● Higgins is now trying to get the jury verdict overturned.

● Micheal's family and supporters are campaigning for all jury verdicts of this kind to result in automatic prosecution.

Behind Higgins: the power of the state.

With the Delaney's: the support of the working people.

Support the campaign by stopping the traffic at the point where Michael was run down.

Assemble:

Butcher Row/Commercial Road

5pm

Friday 25 September

No more deaths on the roads!
Prosecute Robert Higgins!

Can Superman save Cannon?

IT'S A bird! It's a plane! It's — Superman! But whether or not Superman IV can still save Lois Lane, the big question is whether this movie can save Cannon Films.

The group has reported net losses of \$12 million (£7 million) in a quarter, after \$60.4 million loss in the year ended 3 January.

For a time, the company set up by cousins Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus was the movie industry's biggest success story in years. The two cousins always cut a dash at film festivals, and threw lavish parties.

They bought up the Classic cinema chain and Thorn EMI's screen entertainment division. The Cannon name has spread on high street cinemas throughout Britain and in Holland, West Germany and Italy.

Cannon was billed as a minor economic miracle — like Brazil. The comparison is now made with different connotations.

'In a sense Cannon's present plight is analogous to that of a nation like Brazil, so debt-laden banks can't afford not to keep it afloat.' (*'Newsweek'*, 25 May.)

At this year's Cannes film festival two of the three US entries were Cannon's. The films were rated quite well. But on the eve of the festi-

al, Cannon decided to sack 110 employees, after hearing its shares had fallen from \$45 to \$5 since the previous year.

The company had suffered a number of setbacks. 'Over the Top', for which Cannon paid Sylvester Stallone \$12 million was one. The pre-publicity hype for the film may have been over the top, but its takings weren't. The film did badly in the United States, and lost money.

Decision

Roman Polanski's 'Pirates' failed to come up with any treasure. Cannon's decision to distribute that \$30 billion washbuckler in the United States lost them millions of dollars.

Then the US Securities and Exchange Commission decided to investigate the company after shareholders complained its stock was over-valued on the basis of misleading figures. The in-

vestigation is still proceeding.

Acquiring Thorn EMI entertainments last year left Cannon with huge debts, after US finance house Drexel Burnham Lambert backed off from a promise to help the deal. Cannon needed to find \$200 million, \$75 million of it in cash.

Since then, the group has sold off Thorn EMI's film library to a Los Angeles company for \$100 million, and tried to sell Elstree film studios. In June, Cannon said Elstree was no longer on the market, but some suggest that's just an attempt to up the price.

Menahem Golan has said he has plans to expand the studio and shoot two films there. We'll have to see. Meanwhile, the company has been spared worse losses, and possible collapse, by a complex deal giving Warner Brothers a large chunk of its European distribution and cinemas.

Cannon is trying to persuade shareholders to approve sale of a million shares into a special holding company, for which he has £11.6 million; it had hoped the deal would be completed in time to make this quarter's figures look better.

Only a year ago, Golan and Globus were confidently predicting their company would take its place alongside the big Hollywood six dominating the world movie business. Now despite all the hype and big star movies — some of them good — the speculation is on how long Cannon will survive.

Kodak barred student

'FREE ENTERPRISE' is the watchword of the University of Rochester's Simon Business School in upstate New York. But when the Kodak company heard an employee of rivals Fuji was coming to school, they got that stopped.

Discussions

Eastman-Kodak said their own managers attending courses at the college would 'feel inhibited in discussions' if Japanese post-grad student Tsuneo Sakai was in their class. Kodak is big in Rochester, and the Business School had to take notice.

They helped Mr Sakai find a place at MIT's Sloan School of Management instead. But there is growing pressure from US companies to stop Japanese and other potential competitors coming to college in the United States at all.

Saturday September 12 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

'MSC scabbed' — says young striker

YOUTH FOR SOCIALISM members and supporters from many parts of the country attended a highly successful lobby of the Trade Union Congress in Blackpool last Monday.

Calling for no trade union collaboration with the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), the Youth for Socialism contingent made it abundantly clear to the union delegates entering the conference exactly what they felt about cheap labour schemes and the betrayals of the likes of Norman Willis and the bureaucracy in participating in these Tory government impositions.

If they are allowed to get away with their plans generations of youth will be tied to the state in slave labour camps with no trade union rights. This is of course precisely what Thatcher has in mind for the entire working class.

Leaflets demanding the TUC must break from the MSC were handed out to nearly 1,000 delegates and visitors.

The lobby was the first action by Youth for Socialism as part of an overall plan to unite working-class youth around the questions of the fight against cheap labour in Britain and South Africa. It is a question which affects youth internationally.

Following the lobby, a packed Youth for Socialism public meeting listened to Andy Lillcock, a young striker in the Moat House dispute in Liverpool explain how MSC workers were recruited to scab on the strikers who were demanding trade union recognition.

These youth are operating dangerous kitchen equip-

BY SUE GWYER

ment without training, instruction or supervision.

Senior Colman sacked workers still fighting after eight months were present, and Graham Whyatt spoke of the need for all those in dispute to step up the pressure on the managements.

Lawrence Jenkins spoke for the Fleet Street Support Unit, a group of printworkers who fought to spread the Wapping struggle to the rest of Fleet Street. He condemned the role of the TUC in the betrayal of the year long struggle.

Chris McBride of Youth for Socialism, the youth comrades of the WRP, spoke about the attacks on youth here and abroad and about building a youth movement in this country by taking up a fight for international issues.

Enslavement of youth in Britain through the institution of compulsory work for benefits schemes is not an expression of the strength of the Tory government but of a government in crisis, of imperialism in crisis, stated Chris.

'Youth for Socialism believes that the MSC's main function is to smash the trade unions in this country through using scheme workers as a scab cheap labour force, to drive down wages and conditions.

'But it is clear,' he went on, 'that the implementation of JTS is not going according to plan. Evidence from pilot JTS areas reveals a drop-out rate of 25 per cent.

The posturing of the TUC on a boycott of JTS has been exposed this week for what it is. The representation of trade unions on area Manpower boards is being reduced, with employers getting a much greater say. The trade unions are not being asked whether they want a JTS anyway — the agencies are approaching the employers direct, there are no negotiations.

'If the TUC resolution goes through then the grossest betrayal of the youth will have been perpetrated. Youth condemned to compulsory work for benefit schemes at the hands of the TUC.'

Chris concluded by saying: 'Full support must be given to the conference called by the "Trade Unions Against the MSC" campaign initiated by NALGO and to be held on Saturday 7 November at Dr Jonson House, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4.'

Simon Pirani of the Workers Revolutionary Party said the meeting's purpose was not only to put forward our demands on the TUC and to express solidarity with the South African working class, but to 'bring to the centre of all these struggles the question of revolutionary leadership.' The revolutionary youth movement that the comrades of 'Youth For Socialism' hoped to build would play a big part in this.

As the working class came forward in South Africa, the Stalinist-dominated leadership of the ANC sought to confine it to a fight against apartheid, but not against capitalism in general.

'The struggle against apartheid can only be successful by going forward to a

struggle for working-class power and socialism; just as the struggle here in Britain to defend trades unions and basic rights must become a struggle for working class power,' he said.

Kathy Fernand of the March for Mayekiso Committee and City of London Anti-Apartheid told the meeting: 'Our black brothers and sisters are dying daily because of apartheid.'

Calling for a big turn-out on the 'Free Moses Mayekiso' march on Saturday 10 October, she said: 'Our solidarity must be more open and constructive. Britain is one of racist South Africa's biggest backers and we have a duty to support the black working class in its struggle for freedom.'

Campaigners in Britain were highlighting Mayekiso's case because his political activity — in COSATU, and in the working class communities — typified that new force of which the racist Botha regime were most afraid.

A migrant mineworker who had long experienced the misery of working thousands of miles from home and being confined to the miners' single-sex hostels, Moses 'has dedicated his life, through his trade union and community activities, to the struggles of the workers and peoples of South Africa,' — despite many detentions, beatings and 'interrogations', said Kathy.

Not only had he been instrumental in the formation of COSATU, but in the Alexandra township he had been active in the setting-up of people's courts, the alternative education system, rent boycotts and other actions.

After the Alexandra uprising of 1986, in which 80 people died, Moses Mayekiso was detained and tortured for five days; the British authorities too, mistreated and strip-searched him when he came to visit trades unionists here.

Now he faces trial for treason and execution by hanging if found guilty.



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