

U.N. HALTS CONVOY

FROM DOT GIBSON
IN ZAGREB

THE Workers Aid convoy from Timex to Tuzla has been halted some 50 miles short of its destination by a conspiracy orchestrated by the United Nations, which deliberately refused all assistance to the convoy.

A meeting of the convoy team on 17 October carried the motion below on a majority vote of 10 to 7.

THE international Workers Aid convoy cannot reach the workers of Tuzla on this occasion. It has been forced to turn back only 75km from the town by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and those who speak and act for the United Nations in the region.

Our appeal for finance, food and medical supplies received an overwhelming response from workers and their trades unions on the journey through Europe, but the UNPROFOR has done everything to prevent that aid, collected in the international working class, from reaching the besieged and starving workers of Tuzla.

Solidarity

The mandate of this convoy — international working-class solidarity — made it different from other humanitarian aid convoys. This convoy openly opposed and challenged the imperialist Vance-Owen plan to strangle Bosnia, which gives the main power to the Stalinist-fascist, nationalist alliance of [Serbian president Slobodan] Milosevic and [fascist Radical Party leader Vojislav] Siselj, who aim for a Greater Serbia.

The international Workers Aid convoy upheld the demand

of the Tuzla region that the 75km highway between the Croatian border (near Zupanja) and Tuzla should be a free passage for aid.

The UN forces, having refused protection to the convoy, then worked to prevent it from contacting the Bosnian Serb front-line forces on the road (at Loncari) to negotiate a passage. It was not therefore the Serbian forces that stopped the convoy.

UNPROFOR did everything to turn the convoy, with no protection, into hostile Serbia (at Lipovice), or areas like the Split route, which, without protection, is a very hazardous road where the starving and displaced local people form themselves into small bands, fighting each other and robbing the aid.

Under these circumstances the convoy decided to distribute some aid to refugees and place some in warehouses for later distribution to Tuzla.

Geoff Pilling adds:

THIS is not the end of the story. The enormous support that the convoy has won in the European working class must now be mobilised for an almighty European-wide convoy that neither the United Nations nor its accomplices will be able to stop.

Please drop everything to come to Manchester next weekend where there will be a full report from the convoy and the tremendous battle it fought to try to reach Tuzla.

Transport is being arranged from all areas (for details see this page).

See editorial page 2, and 'Lift the blockade' back page.



Part of last Saturday's huge anti-fascist demonstration — tens of thousands strong — which set off from Plumstead, south-east London, only to face a police provocation. See page 3.

Photo: Alan Clark

Manchester prepares for report back meeting

THE Manchester Workers Aid group is working hard to prepare the convoy's report back meeting on 30 October, and to ensure maximum attendance from the city.

Large numbers of people joined the group's work for the convoy itself and came down to the 5 September Trafalgar Square demonstration that saw the convoy off.

Numbers at the group's meetings, which had been more than 100, fell after this. Many had supported the convoy to get aid to Tuzla but didn't share the vision of organising Europe's working class to stop the division of Bosnia, and so didn't see the point of continuing to plan activities once the convoy had left the country.

But new supporters have been found over the last few weeks. Visits have con-

tinued to shop stewards' committees, union offices and so on. The group has received full backing for its work and for the next convoy from the Manchester area of the National Union of Students — representing some 40,000 students; and from Manchester city Labour Party. They are now mailing out the group's letters to all Labour wards and members in the area.

Last week the Manchester group held a public meeting which, though smaller than previous meetings, saw several new people attend and volunteer to help organise the 30 October meeting. Money collections have continued at street stalls, and the psychology department at Manchester university held a second-hand book sale, which raised £110 for Workers Aid.

Travel arrangements for the Manchester 30 October Workers Aid for Bosnia report back meeting

London

West London, Camden and Islington, leaves Swiss Cottage library 7am, Kilburn Sq., 7.20am. Cost £10. A 53-seater coach has been booked. Phone 071-625 4342 or 081-445 4087 to ensure a place.

East London, Whitechapel and Stratford Broadway, about 6am. Cost £10. A 35-seater coach has been booked. Phone 081-555 7045 to ensure a place.

Haringey, Asian Action Centre, Willoughby Road, near Turnpike Lane tube. A 15-seat minibus. Phone 071-388 9612 to book a place and for time.

Bradford

Norfolk Gardens, 9am. A minibus has been booked. Phone 0274 754156 x4130.

Travel arrangements are being made in the following localities:

South-east London, phone 081-310 6005 or 081-310 5451. South-west London, phone 071-582 5462. Midlands, phone

0533 707730. South Wales, 0639 894240. Exeter, 0392 433365. Brighton, 0273 673056. Crawley, 0293 546237. Liverpool, 061-707 1584. Leeds, 0532 754084. Scotland, 031-556 3111.

There may be arrangements being made in your area that we don't know about yet, or you may be making arrangements yourself that we need to know about — phone the convoy hotline to find out: 081-582 5462.

Workers Aid for Bosnia NATIONAL CONVOY 'REPORT BACK' MEETING

SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER
10am, Town Hall, Albert Square,
Manchester

Information from Workers Aid Hotline 071-582 5462, or Manchester Workers Aid, Dept 55, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1 — phone Sid Low 061-643 0454

CONVOY HOTLINE: 071-582 5462

What the convoy has achieved

IN THE final event it proved impossible for the Workers Aid convoy to reach its destination, Tuzla in Bosnia, as we report on the front page.

The main barrier that prevented the convoy from realising its aim was the United Nations. This representative of what the capitalist media likes to call 'the international community', but in fact the tool of imperialism in the Balkans, did everything possible to destroy the convoy.

As we reported last week, the UN put out a general instruction that none of its forces were to give any assistance to the Workers Aid convoy. In these circumstances and faced with an unacceptably high level of risk, we fully support the decision of those comrades who concluded that it was not possible to continue with the original plan.

The determined struggle of the convoy leaders to expose the UN's sinister activities represents a big gain for the working-class movement. For it has highlighted the principal force that is working for the dismemberment of Bosnia along ethnic lines.

* * * * *

ON THIS occasion the convoy was not able to reach Tuzla, but this is far from the end of the story.

Starting with no resources and modest forces, the convoy won enormous support from the European working class. The fight to take aid to the working class of Tuzla, the proletarian capital of Bosnia, struck a real chord in the working class.

And when the convoy appealed for support in exposing the UN's role, messages came flooding in from the trade union and labour movement of Europe and beyond.

This work represents significant political capital for the future, and a solid base on which to build for the next stage of the Workers Aid campaign.

Naturally there will be those who take no small pleasure in the fact that the convoy was not, this time, able to make it to Tuzla. Let them take whatever pleasure they want. They speak not for the working class but for demoralised sections of the middle class.

Most of these people opposed the very launch of the convoy. Some said openly that they doubted whether a single lorry would be put on the road.

We in the Workers International at every stage led the fight to overcome the problems faced by the convoy, many of which at first sight seemed insurmountable. We tackled them by turning to the working class, without whose support the convoy would have been impossible.

* * * * *

ONLY by fighting to get to Tuzla was it possible to take important steps along the road to the re-uniting of the workers of western and eastern Europe.

Here lies the significance of the support given to the convoy by workers in Hungary and Slovakia. Once more, this is a vital gain on which we can and must build.

How do we build?

■ We must now mobilise workers throughout Europe, east and west, against the main enemy of the convoy, the UN — the instrument of imperialism. We must now prepare a convoy that will be so powerful, and able to win such support from the labour movement of Europe, that its progress to Tuzla will be unstoppable.

■ An appeal must now be launched among every single working-class body that supported this convoy to sponsor a lorry or lorries on the next convoy. We must aim not for tens of lorries but for a convoy of hundreds.

■ Ways must be found of bringing trades unionists throughout Europe together to organise such a convoy.

A discussion of these matters must be a central task of the Manchester report back meeting from the convoy, which will be held on 30 October (see article this page).

Letters

WE WELCOME LETTERS
SEND THEM TO: WORKERS PRESS,
PO BOX 735, LONDON SW8 1YB
— OR PHONE 071-582 8882

Display of unity

ON WEDNESDAY 13 October a large number of omnibuses from all over Scotland descended on St Andrew's House, the Scottish Office in Edinburgh.

They were filled with elderly people who were venting their anger at the proposal to tax fuel.

A petition with around 140,000 signatures was presented to the office, and the protesters cheered the short speeches made by the leaders of various organisations.

Prominent amongst them were the Scottish Old Age Pensioners Forum and the Scottish Elderly Forum.

The latter is a non-party (but not politically neutral) organisation that is fast becoming a force to be reckoned with, and not just amongst the elderly.

Of course the opposition leaders had to show their presence and have their say, but all organisations were given equal enthusiastic support.

It was a fine display of unity around a single issue that is the

biggest political hot potato since the poll tax.

If other sections of the working class, such as the unemployed, the unions and the mass political parties, showed the same initiative as the elderly we could begin to think that change is on the way, perhaps even revolution.

I noted the absence of papersellers from the SWP and Militant. Only one old man was parading with armfuls of the 'Morning Star' but he seemed to be selling none.

Our busload returned to Glenrothes and had lunch together all pleased that a good job had been done well, and we are all ready to have another go.

John P. Mathieson
Glenrothes
Fife

Union sell-out

ON 14 OCTOBER, at a mass-meeting of Timex strikers, Jimmy Airlie of the AEEU

blackmailed the strikers (through political manoeuvrings) into accepting a deal that would effectively end the action begun in January of this year.

Workers voted 132-108 to accept statutory redundancy payments of only £200 per year of service.

Airlie also proposed for the support group to be disbanded and the boycott campaign to be wound up.

Money set aside for the taking up of cases at industrial tribunals would also be dropped under the union sell-out.

John Kydd Jr, convenor of the strike committee, spoke at the support group meeting.

He said that this was the biggest sell-out since the 1920s, and that no money from the strike fund would be doled out among the strikers (this was another of Airlie's conditions).

After the support group meeting a press release was prepared, which appeared on the local Scottish news.

It said that the boycott campaign would continue and that there would be a national meeting of support groups to co-ordinate further action.

Ken Singer
Dundee

A history of cultural unity?

SINCE you seem to have shifted your position on the Bosnian crisis in recent weeks, I have two questions which I would like to see answered in the Workers Press, with a minimum of mud-slinging and jargon if possible:

1) Do you or do you not support the Bosnian government and army — and if you do, why?

2) Can we speak of 'national self-determination for Bosnia' in the same way as for, let us say, Slovakia? Does Bosnia really have a history of cultural, linguistic and political unity?

If you cannot answer both of these questions strongly 'yes', then I don't see the sense in much of what appears in the Workers Press these days, or in The International.

If the issue is really armed defence of multi-ethnic communities against 'ethnic cleansing', you should say so. You should not confuse your readers with rhetoric about defending 'Bosnia'.

Doug Buchholz
Philadelphia

Come to the Workers Aid report back conference!

WORKERS AID CONVOY TO BOSNIA REPORT BACK MEETING — MANCHESTER TOWN HALL 30 OCTOBER, 11am-4.30pm.

■ To all those organisations and individuals who have supported the Workers Aid convoy to Bosnia (from Timex to Tuzla);

■ To all those who want to build on this work of workers' international solidarity; and

■ To all those who realise that the fight to turn the tide in the former Yugoslavia has now begun (but only begun) and that renewed aid, organisation and struggle are necessary;

You are urged to come to Manchester to hear the Workers Aid convoy to Bosnia report back on its work. The reports will be followed by a full and open discussion.

THOUSANDS of people made sacrifices to ensure the success of this convoy. It was given its inspiring send-off by the workers on strike at the Timex factory in Dundee.

The convoy started with no resources, only the precious determination of a handful of workers to bring the international solidarity of the working class once more to life in an action to support the beleaguered working people of Bosnia.

Against all the foul 'ethnic

cleansing' and mounting genocide, the 'official' Labour and trade union leaders, in charge of massive resources, did nothing.

The convoy was proposed and fought for in the conviction that the working class can and must rebuild its traditions of solidarity and internationalism, that something must be done about Bosnia, that we must refuse to allow the official 'leadership' of the working class to stop this reconstruction.

All along the way, in Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia, the convoy did bring this response from the working class. The official leaderships were not only unable to prevent this; they were compelled to give support.

The convoy has in this way been able to begin to change the situation in the struggle for an undivided Bosnia within the international working class so that the working class can act with its real strength to support those of its sections which are the sharpest points of the struggle.

Especially vital was the re-creation of solidarity links, through the convoy, between workers in the West and the working class of eastern Europe, so long separated, when the Hungarian and Slovak miners gave their support and joined the convoy.

What next? Bosnia is still being subjected to dismemberment, under the surveillance of the United Nations. Thousands are still in concentration camps. Thousands are scarred for life by rape, torture and horrific injuries. One quarter of a million are dead, 2 million homeless.

The winter threatens starvation.

Can we stop now, after the first convoy? Obviously not. We need to put our heads together and organise together, draw out the lessons of the fight so far, and prepare immediately the next battle for aid, the next convoy of workers' international solidarity.

We urge you to come to the report back meeting and to work for busloads and carloads to bring the maximum number to attend and start to organise this work. The convoy members have a vital story to tell. They must be given a terrific welcome and, most important, they must be assured that the great beginning which they have made leads to powerful blows being struck for the workers of Bosnia before it is too late.

Please don't put this letter aside. Return the invitation below. Come yourself. Make sure your organisation and your friends and colleagues discuss it and organise to come and be prepared to work on the steering committee which the meeting will decide on. And please make a special effort to send us every penny that can be collected to ensure a successful meeting and another convoy.

For further information about the meeting or about Workers Aid for Bosnia telephone:

Bob Myers in Manchester 061-226 0404, or Convoy Hotline in London 071-582 5462;

or write to: **Workers Aid for Bosnia, Dept 55, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1.**

Convoy supporters will provide overnight accommodation for people wanting to arrive in Manchester on Friday 29 October. Please contact the organisers for details.

The meeting will run from 11am to 4.30pm with a break for lunch. There will be refreshments available in the town hall (but very expensive so bring your own if possible). There will be a creche for children in the town hall. Admission to the meeting will be £1, but everyone who can afford to pay more is urged to do so to help continue the work.

Please fill in the form below whether or not you can come to Manchester and return it straight away.

(Delete as applicable)
Please send me . . . tickets for the 30 Oct meeting. I enclose £1 for each ticket.
I am unable to come to Manchester but I would like to be kept informed of future activities.
I enclose a donation of £ . . . to prepare for the next Workers Aid Convoy to Bosnia.
Name
Address
Post Code
Please return to: **Workers Aid for Bosnia, Dept 55, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1.**

COMING SOON

SATURDAY 23 OCTOBER: 'Revolutionary History' AGM at 3.15pm. Followed by Mario Kessler speaking on 'Trotsky, Zionism and the Jewish Question'. Lecture theatre 1, University of Westminster, Marylebone Road, London NW1 (Baker St tube). Admission £1 to non-subscribers.
MONDAY 25 OCTOBER: Coroner's inquest into the death of Gladstone Facey (56), killed after falling down a lift shaft at Gt Ormond St hospital on 4 August. St Pancras coroner's court, Camley St, London

NW1 (tel. 071-387 4884).
WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER: Hands Off Greenwich NHS meeting on Brook, Memorial and Greenwich District hospitals. 7pm, Christ Church, Trafalgar Road, London SE10.
THURSDAY 28 OCTOBER: Second of two meetings on HSC deregulation, CSC to attend. CITB office, 4 Edison St, Glasgow G52.
FRIDAY 12 NOVEMBER: Irish night for Workers Aid. 8pm till 1am in Kennedy Rooms, Camden Irish Centre, Murray St, London NW1.

WORKERS PRESS £3,000 MONTHLY FIGHTING FUND

In so far: £1,616.14

THE United Nations has made sure that the Workers Aid convoy has not been able to reach its destination of the mining town of Tuzla in Bosnia — yet! We are proposing a much bigger convoy — numbering hundreds of vehicles — to come out of the working-class and trade union movement across Europe and beyond, that the United Nations won't be able to block. We also hope that in the next week or so a few people will be able to find a way through to Tuzla to have discussions with the miners and the rest of the community there. Workers Press will be with them all the way.

We've managed to get in just under £900 for Workers Press in the last week, which means that we made 28 per cent better progress on the fund. But there's no room for complacency, as we were behind last week and many bills remain to be paid and some expenses have had to come out of the pockets of those working in the office — who don't have a lot of money anyway. So come on give us a hand.
Mike Cooke
Send money to Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

Don't buy Timex!

THE Timex dispute is NOT over, despite blackmail tactics by the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, and in particular by its Scottish executive council member Jim Airlie.

The Dundee Timex support group has decided to carry on the international boycott campaign. It also is determined to continue with plans to put their message across with a billboard advert throughout Britain and a major event on Guy Fawkes night.

Their message is: 'Don't buy Timex!' The brand names to avoid are Indiglo, Carriage, Guess and Nautica.

A significant number of the strikers are determined to continue to fight for union recognition at Timex plants in Britain and internationally.

At the 14 October meeting of Timex workers — which has been billed as ending the dispute — Airlie lost twice on the deal he was trying to impose. He kept re-opening the meeting until he got his way on the third vote.

The third vote was taken under extremely emotional circumstances, as described by a leaflet issued by the Timex Support Group Boycott Campaign: 'On the first vote the majority of the strikers voted against the deal. Realising he had lost, Jim Airlie then re-opened the meeting.'

'Following another vote he then decided to physically separate workers into those for and those against the offer. The result was utter chaos with strikers divided for the first time since the beginning of the dispute.'

Trembling

'People stood at opposite sides of the hall, trembling with emotion and watching the blatant disregard for democracy.'

'In a few minutes Jim Airlie divided a previously united workforce. Timex failed to do

this in nine months of struggle. The final vote was 108 against and 132 for.'

Timex striker Mary Dolan said of these tactics: 'For nine months we have held a gun at the head of the Timex corporation. Jim Airlie has taken that gun and pointed it at his own members.'

'WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON JIMMY?', asks the support group leaflet.

They describe Airlie as 'this messenger from hell'.

Present at the meeting, and included in the vote, were people who had left the strike and got other jobs.

The Airlie/Timex deal is:

- The statutory minimum redundancy — one week's wages for each year of service and a minimum payment of £500.

- All support groups to be wound up.

- The national and international boycott campaigns to be wound up.

- The Timex strike fund to be fairly and equitably distributed between all those who had been dismissed.

Apart from committing Timex to nothing beyond its legal duty, this shameful deal is calling on workers to finance their own redundancy from the strike fund.

If a dispute ends its fighting fund should be sent to help other

working-class disputes.

The **LAST THING** the fighting fund should be used for is to take over the responsibility of the capitalist company that has taken away the livelihoods of the women and men workers of Timex.

The ending of the boycott campaign is worth much more than the current statutory redundancy proposal — a measly £900,000. A 2 per cent drop in Timex watch sales alone is worth £6 million.

The boycott campaign responded to the suggestion that they be wound up with the following statement:

'The national Timex boycott

campaign will continue and will in fact be intensified in the run up to the Christmas period. That is the official position of the Dundee support group.

'We congratulate the sacked workers for their courageous campaign to defend their basic rights and dignity.'

'We accept that a decision was taken to end the campaign, but our information is that the decision was bulldozed through and that workers were blackmailed.'

'We utterly condemn the action of the AEEU executive in forcing workers into this no win situation.'

'The support group is an in-

dependent organisation and because of Timex corporation's shameful treatment of its workforce we will continue the boycott campaign.'

For Jim Airlie they had the following message: 'We will decide when to wind up our organisation — not you, not Timex.' And for Timex itself: 'The boycott campaign continues.'

The boycott campaign wants people to become involved in pickets of shops selling Timex watches and the distribution of literature.

Strikers will be contacting general secretaries of other unions to fight Airlie's shameful proposal for the strike fund.

At the 14 October meeting Airlie made the union position clear: 'We will withdraw strike benefit, all legal aid and all official support from the AEEU unless you accept this deal.'

The opinion of strikers opposed to the deal is that they could live without strike benefit since the fighting fund is still collecting money. The main problem would be the withdrawal of legal backing.

Many of the strikers, particularly the older women, would not be able to find new jobs.

One striker said: 'The AEEU wanted to get away from the dispute as soon as possible.'

Police provocation

BY BOB ARCHER AND BRIDGET LEACH

A CONTINGENT headed by a survivor of one of Hitler's concentration camps asked police to be allowed to protest outside the headquarters of the British National Party. They answered this request with truncheons.

Tens of thousands of anti-fascist demonstrators had been arriving in south-east London all last Saturday morning and a greater part of the afternoon. There were 17 coaches from Liverpool alone.

On the coaches and on the common before the march set off there was speculation about the split that would take place when the police blocked the route to the BNP bunker in favour of a much-publicised route dictated by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Paul Condon.

But when the head of the march reached the crucial road junction, there was no split. Both roads were barred by lines of riot police, shielded police vehicles and police horses.

With crash barriers on both sides of the entire route and police deliberately blocking the rear of the march, the demonstrators had nowhere to go but through the police lines.

The bravest of the young demonstrators broke through, some hurling missiles, some red flares — and some bleeding badly from head wounds inflicted by the flailing trun-



Riot police ready to strike against last Saturday's anti-fascist march in south-east London

cheons. The police were enraged by being driven back and charged more ferociously.

Over the next few hours the front line encompassed the whole march as police charged even into those dispersing and heading for the coaches or train stations some distance away.

A photographer in riot gear, surrounded by riot shields, took mug shots of the crowd.

The massive demonstration was a measure of the indignation at the recent election of a BNP member to Tower Hamlets council in east London, the increasing numbers of racist murders and attacks, and the state killing of

Joy Gardner in north London.

But the demonstration also built on the successful street battles in Brick Lane every Sunday morning that are keeping the fascist paper sellers from their former pitch.

Saturday's events revealed a powerful force of young demonstrators, many black and Asian, who have the courage to acquaint fascist heads with the pavement, and to take on the state forces who protect them.

But they need to be brought together with the working class.

This is made more difficult by the criminally diversionary tactics of the Anti-Racist Alliance.

They provided an excuse for Labour Party and trade union leaders to avoid the issues at Welling — and a justification for the TUC leaders who refuse to organise a national anti-fascist march through Tower Hamlets — by calling a central London demonstration on the same day.

Marc Wadsworth and MP Ken Livingstone, their leaders, denounced the participants in the much larger south-east London demonstration as violent.

In other words they supported the police, whose outpourings to the media had prepared the ground for the bloody battles that their road block would produce.

Construction safety victory

AN IMPORTANT step forward has been made for construction safety campaigners with the return of an 'unlawful killing' inquest verdict for the St John's Bridge disaster in June 1992, which killed two men and injured four others.

After an unusual seven days of deliberations at Southwark Coroner's Court in south London, the verdict was returned which means the case can now be handed on to the Crown Prosecution Service to consider manslaughter charges.

The Construction Safety Campaign is demanding that

manslaughter charges be taken out against British Rail, the contractor Tilbury Douglas and their directors.

Usually inquests give such cases a short hearing at which the coroner does not allow the jury to even consider 'unlawful killing' as a verdict. This blocks employers being criminally prosecuted for manslaughter.

But even now, with an 'unlawful killing' verdict it is not automatic that such a prosecution will take place. The CPS have only brought a manslaughter charge against one employer in recent years.

The battle for Parkside pit

BY BOB MYERS

FOR the last three weeks sacked miners and supporters of Parkside women's pit camp have prevented British Coal from filling in the shaft and destroying the mine.

This is taking place just as the government are making it clear that all of the so-called 'saved' pits are in fact to close.

The Labour and trade union leaders who helped the Tories defuse opposition to pit closures with these 'savings' have been exposed as accomplices in the destruction of the mining industry.

Every day women at Parkside have chained themselves to cables across the mine entrance road and prevented lorries from taking in materials necessary for the shaft filling.

Management tried to use a back entrance to the colliery but this was blocked with concrete. The battle between those

fighting to keep the pit open and British Coal escalated after women occupied the main pump house.

In a move which had clearly been preplanned, British Coal used this occupation to justify switching off all power to the entire complex and laying off all the miners who had been kept on for care and maintenance work.

These men had already quarrelled with management and had refused to cover over the windows of the occupied pump house.

The power cut took place in the middle of the night. Shortly afterwards four cars drove out of the pit to where the women were blocking the road.

Stopped

Despite the fact that only lorries had ever been stopped and cars were allowed through, these four cars immediately drove back into the pit yard.

Shortly after five van loads of riot police arrived, surround-

ing the pit camp cabin, cut the cables across the road, threw one of the women into a police wagon and attacked other camp personnel.

The police claimed that the people in the four cars had been 'unlawfully imprisoned'. When it was pointed out that they had not been stopped this was changed to breach of the peace and intimidation — people were wearing balaclavas.

The following Sunday several hundred people went into the pit yard to take supplies to the occupation and to demonstrate that they would not be intimidated by the police.

Sacked Parkside miner Billy Pye (speaking in a personal capacity) urged people to take notice of the fight put up by Parkside.

'This is not just about closures anymore', he said. 'We'd be justified in demanding — not just asking — people to come and support us. This is not a dispute between a group of people and an employer — not sim-

ply about pit closures.

'It's about people resisting the state. Over the last two weeks we've broken most civil laws of trespass and the anti-union laws in respect of secondary picketing.'

Entire

'We've been attended to by the entire St Helens riot squad and not one arrest or prosecution has been made.'

'The state understands the relevance of the resistance taking place here and will do anything to avoid a damaging confrontation. If the state can understand what is taking place then the rest of the trade union and labour movement ought to understand as well.'

'We need people to organise, to get down here, anytime, night or day, for however long they can. We also need finances to continue this battle.'

■ For further information contact Parkside women's pit camp — 0925 291799.

BRISTOL TRADES UNION COUNCIL MARCH AND RALLY

in support of

SACKED Arrowsmith print workers and two SACKED CPSA members

**Saturday 23 October
Castle Park, Bristol, 12 noon**

**WORKERS PRESS IS THE PAPER OF THE
WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**

Please send me information about the WRP

Name date

Address

Trade union (if any) Age (if under 21)

Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

Inside left Blue line

WE DIDN'T succeed in closing down the British National Party (BNP), but last Saturday's huge turnout in Plumstead, south-east London, was a big blow to the Nazis — and to some opportunists in the labour movement.

When the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), led by the Socialist Workers Party, and Militant's Youth Against Racism in Europe (YRE) invited others to join a 'Unity' campaign, they won a terrific response. People want to fight fascism, and are fed up with sectarian manoeuvres.

Tens of thousands went to Plumstead on 16 October: trades unionists and students, black and white, aged Jewish holocaust survivors, and Asian teenagers from Brick Lane, east London. The BNP's lumben thugs who'd harassed smaller demonstrations kept well away.

So did Labour and trade union leaders, spared from having to confront the Metropolitan Police thanks to the Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA), which rejected the 'Unity' campaign, calling its own demonstration for the same day in central London.

ARA claimed 'Unity' organisers had ignored families of race-attack victims. When the family of murdered student Stephen Lawrence joined others supporting the 'Unity' rally, that charge was dropped.

An ARA leaflet, citing the killing of Joy Gardner by police, spoke of marching on 'the state bunker'. But in the 'Morning Star', 16 October 'Why we're marching on Downing St', ARA's Marc Wadsworth didn't mention police victims.

Calling on the Tory government to 'bring in tougher anti-discrimination laws' and 'ban political groups which incite racial hatred' (does he expect them to ban themselves?!), Wadsworth lined up with Metropolitan Police commissioner Paul Condon, warning: 'According to the war-like noises from the SWP-run Anti-Nazi League, what is in prospect is not a showdown with nazis, but a punch-up with the police.'

He claimed ARA had been 'inundated with calls from people who have switched from the breakaway (!) march in south-east London and come over to ours because they do not want to be caught up in violence and mayhem'. (The 'breakaway' attracted more than ten times as many people as ARA's spoiler operation!) On GLR radio Wadsworth said the south-east London-mareh should be stopped.

Whatever our differences with the ANL, 'Socialist Worker' or 'Militant', a self-styled 'black leader' who lines up with police to blame black and white anti-racist youth for 'violence and mayhem' is something else! Will the Establishment reward Marc Wadsworth and thumbs? They should get what they deserve.

Yesterdays

ANOTHER 'punch-up with the police', the 1936 'Battle of Cable Street', when East-Enders stopped Mosley's fascist marching, was recalled by delegate Lou Kenton at the recent Labour Party conference. As a Communist Party activist Kenton also helped homeless families take over Abbey Lodge, north-west London, in 1946 (see 'Empty Towers', this column, 25 September).

Besides sending in police against the squatters, Labour minister Aneurin Bevan pressed Communist Party leader Harry Pollitt to halt the movement. Nowadays they don't need pressing.
Charlie Pottins

The Fourth International: 40 years

Forty years ago next month, the American Socialist Workers Party, under the leadership of James P. Cannon, issued an open letter to the world Trotskyist movement that called for an immediate and definitive break with a group inside the Fourth International led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel.

The open letter charged Pablo and his supporters with having capitulated to Stalinism, which was the mortal counter-revolutionary opponent of the Fourth International — the world party of socialist revolution founded by Trotsky in 1938 — and of the working class.

This led to a sharp split inside the International, with a group forming the Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International (later the United Secretariat, USec) under the leadership of Pablo and Mandel — who remains to this day the leading theoretician of this revisionist trend.

Cannon — together with leading members of the movement in Britain, France and elsewhere — formed the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Some ten years after this split, Pablo was himself expelled from the Unified Secretariat.

He has recently been readmitted to Mandel's organisation although he holds openly reformist (i.e. social-democratic) positions.

In Britain BILL HUNTER was a leading participant in the fight against Pablo. In this interview Hunter, now a member of the International Workers League (Fourth International), recalls the events of four decades ago and comments on their importance for the present struggle to rebuild the Fourth International.

His interview refutes the idea that the split with Pablo is something of only historic interest, even more that 'Pabloism' was a term invented by a few sectarians for their own factional purposes.

The theoretical positions of Mandel and Pablo on the 'progressive' character of the Stalinist bureaucracy — on the fact that the Soviet Union and the states of eastern Europe would exist for centuries as degenerated and deformed workers' states — lie in tatters, disproved by history itself. Yet neither Mandel nor Pablo have made any balance sheet of the events of 1953 in light of this fact.

Workers Press welcomes a discussion on the issues raised in this interview.

WP: Can you say something about the problems of the Fourth International after the end of World War II, which were obviously important in understanding the events of 1953?

BH: The leadership of the Fourth International that emerged from the first congress after the war had no experience of building a revolutionary international, leading sections of workers, or even building workers' organisations.

The Fourth International had been decimated in many countries by Stalinist repression and Nazi occupation and, in the main, it was a new, young generation of supporters of the Fourth International who came to the fore in Europe.

The groups came out of the war still isolated from the mass movements of the working class. The big question was of breaking out of propaganda activity, turning to the questions facing the mass movement. The source of revisionism lay in a lack of confidence in the building of parties with Trotskyist principles.

Archeo-Marxists in Greece, and was in Paris during World War II. Together with him in the leadership in Paris was Ernest Mandel, at that time a student. The leadership of the US Socialist Workers Party could have played a bigger role. It made a mistake in not concentrating more on the task of assembling a leadership of the Fourth International immediately after the war.

tional immediately after the war.

James P. Cannon says in one of his letters written in 1953 that they wanted to allow the leadership in Europe to make its own experiences. That of course does not answer the question of whether or not more assistance should have been given, but only deals with how that assistance should have been given. I believe that the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party concentrated too much on US problems and difficulties.

These leaders certainly had experience of winning workers and building movements. They had a number of leaders and cadres who carried over invaluable experience of work in the US labour movement and from the struggle in the Communist International and the building of Communist parties.

Trotsky, writing about the 1938 founding congress of the Fourth International, said he felt there were two big achievements registered at that congress. One was the elaboration of the Transitional Programme [the founding document of the Fourth International]; the other was the development of the Socialist Workers Party.

He concluded that Trotskyism could now enter a new stage of its development — a beginning of a turn to the tasks of the mass movement. We were, and still are, at that beginning.



Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev with US president Jimmy Carter — Pablo said that Moscow would not be able to make any real concessions to imperialism

The International Secretariat [the leadership of the Fourth International after World War II] became world strategists and commentators on the 'inevitable' and 'irresistible' processes, far removed from the necessary patient task of beginning to turn to the problems of the mass movement and building sections in struggle.

WP: Can you say something about the role played by the so-called cold war in Pablo's thinking and practice?

BH: The particular context in which Pabloism emerged was in the development of the cold war from 1947 onwards. In the following few years a World War III was for Pablo the 'inevitable evolution of the situation'.

Pablo described world relations with a few abstract historical generalisations. He and his followers would insistently demand that it had to be understood that, on a world scale, the relationship of forces was advancing steadily and inevitably in favour of the working class.

Wide generalisations about the relationship of forces have, I believe, played a disastrous role in the working-class movement in the post-war period. A certain relationship of forces is by its very nature something in continual change and development.

Further, any relationship of forces cannot be fully tested except in struggle. This generalisation, like others of Pablo, played the role of undermining the conviction of the need to build Trotskyist leadership in the working class.

Pabloism was a capitulation before the Stalinist and reformist bureaucratic apparatuses, and at its centre was a repudiation of the axis of the Transitional Programme — the existence of a crisis of revolutionary leadership in the working-class movement.

Pablo's revisionism developed from the pressures on the revolutionary leadership in the face of the necessity of breaking into the working class to establish an alternative to the seemingly enormous power held by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The overriding relationship in the post-war world was the conflict between the world working class, on the one hand, and imperialism, on the other. Pablo, with a lack of confidence in the working class, revised this fundamental concept of the world-wide class struggle, and made the conflict between the



Bill Hunter addresses a Workers Aid meeting

Stalinist bureaucracy and imperialism the essential framework in which things must be understood.

In their statement 'In Defence of the Fourth International' — answering the open letter from Cannon — the Pabloites dealt with those who, they asserted, engaged in 'confused chatter' about the

'Pablo described world relations with a few abstract historical generalisations. He and his followers would insistently demand that it had to be understood that, on a world scale, the relationship of forces was advancing steadily and inevitably in favour of the working class.'

weaknesses of the Fourth International. Pablo said such people failed to grasp that 'the spontaneous movement of the masses has its own logic, fundamentally determined in its "initial phase" not by the existence of the revolutionary party but by the sickness of decadent capitalism'.
The qualification 'initial phase'

Ar f N

s since the split with Pabloite revisionism

Historic fight for Marxism



ing in Dundee on 8 August, the night before its convoy set off for Bosnia

Photo: Rex Dunn

... meant nothing, as the whole feverish concentration of Pabloism was in the spontaneous movement and objective processes which pre-ordained the future. The approaching war would be a 'war-revolution', in the course of which the victory of the working class could be won.

... ons with a few abstract and his followers would be understood that, on a of forces was advancing of the working class.'

Further, claimed Pablo, there is no possibility of any real concessions to imperialism by Moscow. The Stalinist parties would be pushed more and more to the left. ... to the right might take place, ... they would be temporary and ... result only of the fact that ... mass pressure had not reached the ...minating point'.

In their document 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' the Pabloites emphasised that in the Soviet Union there was 'the beginning of the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship'.

This theory of the withering away of the bureaucracy is something that has characterised the Pablo-Mandel movement ever since. Mandel and Pablo both spoke about the Stalinist bureaucracy being trapped between the drive of imperialism to immediate war and the ever-increasing mass pressure arising from the post-war revolutionary wave. Because its objective basis in the Soviet Union was disappearing, this bureaucracy 'could no longer act in the same way as before'.

WP: In the past Pabloism has often been described as a trend that capitulated to 'objectivism', to a passive acceptance of 'the facts' of the post-war situation. Can you comment on this?

BH: What can be justly described as the Messianic beliefs of Pablo-Mandel were expressed in their use of the words 'inevitable' and 'irresistible'.

It was a mode of thought built on the belief of progressive, ever-advancing forces in the world — objective processes that were conditioning the Stalinist and social-democratic leaderships. If the working class was going onward and upward with the leadership being pushed before them, then there was no crisis of leadership.

The leadership, claimed Michel Pablo, was a brake, a blemish, but it was not an obstacle and certainly not a counter-revolutionary opposite to the interests of the working class.

Like all revisers of Marxism, Mandel and Pablo continued to use the old phraseology, but their policies and commentaries on the present were based on the 'new reality'.

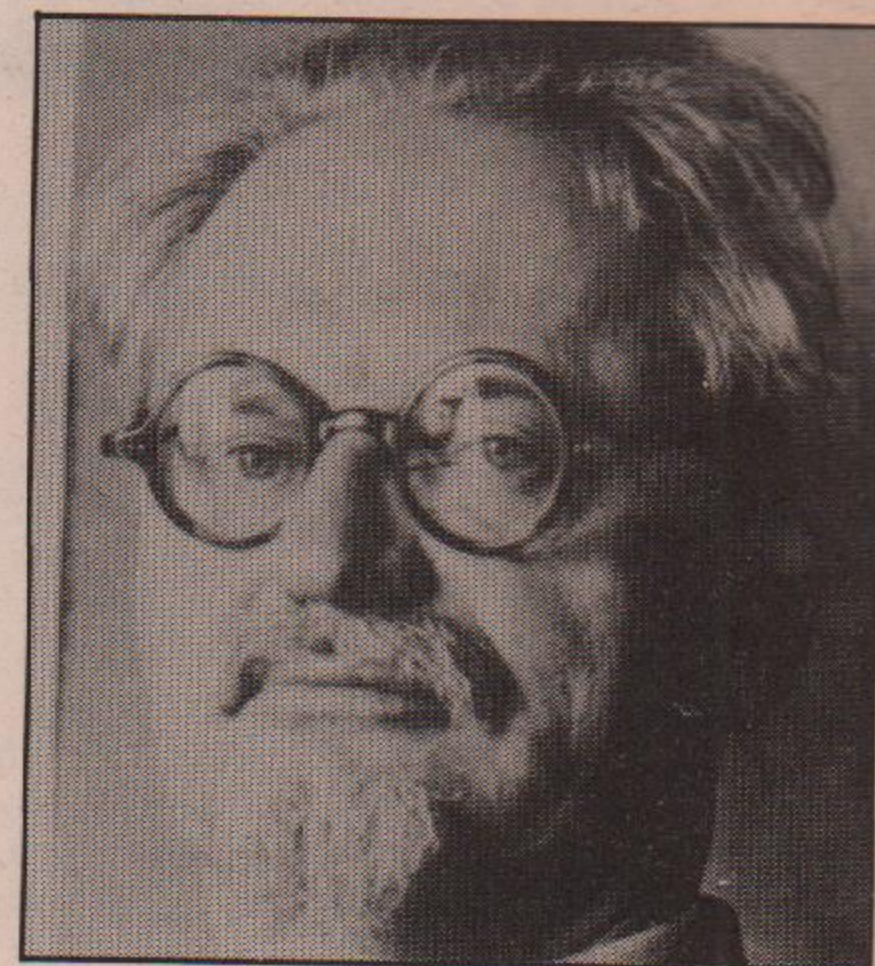
The leader of the British Pabloite group in 1953, John Lawrence, described the result of the objective processes for Stalinism in an unforgettable phrase that summed up the Pabloite doctrine. The Stalinists continued to be counter-revolutionary, he said, but 'they had the will but not the capacity' for such a counter-revolutionary role.

'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' — the document Mandel boasted as having drafted — declared: 'This new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary measures of the bureaucracy.' Lawrence said about Stalinism that all the old things 'were in a new unprecedented situation'. As always with revisionism, the emphasis was on the 'new reality' that put the principles in a different light.

WP: To what extent is it true to say that at first the implications of Pablo-Mandel's line were not fully understood? I ask this in the light of those who always look for a 'pure' history purged of all contradiction.

BH: At the time of the crisis in the French section and Pablo's attempted dissolution of the French majority, other sections of the International, including ourselves in the British section, were not clear about the dangers of revisionism.

Certainly such revisionism was beginning to appear in the docu-



Trotsky: Transitional Programme a big achievement of the Fourth International's 1938 founding congress

its positions on Stalinism as deriving not from Trotsky but from Isaac Deutscher, later to write a full-scale biography of Trotsky.

At that time I was writing a review of Deutscher's book 'After Stalin' and concluded that, while Deutscher was influenced by Trotsky's style, his historical generalisations had nothing in common with the founder of the Fourth International because they eschewed the essential contradictions in the processes he was writing about.

This was the case, for instance, with Deutscher's prognoses for the historical development of the Soviet Union, which were based upon the generalisation that indust-

'What can be justly described as the Messianic beliefs of Pablo-Mandel were expressed in their use of the words "inevitable" and "irresistible".

'It was a mode of thought built on the belief of progressive, ever-advancing forces in the world — objective processes that were conditioning the Stalinist and social-democratic leaderships. If the working class was going onward and upward with the leadership being pushed before them, then there was no crisis of leadership.'

ments of the Fourth International's third congress in 1951. Later the supporters of Pablo in the United States said that they were basing themselves on these documents when their statements on Stalinism were challenged. This itself was an indication of a certain lack of clarity.

Early in 1953 the disputes sharpened in the US. The differences centred on work in the trades unions and criticism of an article by George Clarke [a leader of the Pabloite tendency in the United States], who posed the possibility of a 'sharing of power' by the Stalinist bureaucracy with the workers.

We received some bulletins outlining the differences but it was not very clear to me at the time just how deep these were. In the United States the comrades appeared to reach a truce in May, but then the discussion broke out more sharply.

I was on the executive committee of the British section, along with Gerry Healy, Mike and Tony Banda, Dave Finch, John Lawrence, and Hilda Lane. Healy and Lawrence were members of the international executive committee of the Fourth International.

Our differences began to break out as the documents for the fourth world congress were being prepared.

WP: What role did the ideas of the historian Isaac Deutscher play in this struggle?

BH: I became convinced that we were dealing with a fundamental revision of Marxism when I read 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' — the document drafted by Mandel for the fourth world congress. I saw

rialisation demands democracy.

He advanced the conclusion that, following Stalin's death and the rise of Khrushchev, the Soviet Union could develop to democracy through the 'spool of history unwinding'. First there would be democracy in the Soviet Communist Party's politburo, then in the central committee, then in the party, and so on.

WP: Can you say something about the course the struggle took in the British section of the movement?

BH: The internal dispute in the British section was short, sharp and bitter. Lawrence won a third of the membership. In the United States the group led by Clarke and Bert Cochran took just under a fifth of the membership. In November 1953 came the open letter from the US Socialist Workers Party — published in its paper, the 'Militant' — which declared the necessity of an irreversible break with Pabloite revisionism.

There was not a full exchange of views between ourselves and the leadership of the SWP on the publication of the open letter. Some of it was very good but it failed to address Pabloism thoroughly and still reflected the 'conspiracy theory', which Sam Gordon [member of the Socialist Workers Party leadership then working in Britain] criticised in a letter to Cannon on 22 June 1953.

However, the majority of the leadership of the British group took a firm position with the SWP leadership against Pabloism.

The national committee meeting that took place in November 1953

● TURN TO PAGE 7

Fighting fascism

READING the article by John Peters in last week's Workers Press, about the disunity and squabbling among London's leading anti-fascists, I felt a strong impulse to go and knock some of those 'leading' heads together.

That impulse was redoubled after police attacked demonstrators in south-east London last Saturday afternoon.

First of all, there were two anti-fascist demonstrations where there should have been one. This makes you wonder whether Marc Wadsworth and the other leaders of the Anti-Racist Alliance have any very clear idea of what lies in store for them if the fascists aren't crushed.

I wonder whether they saw the Channel 4 film last Sunday evening, 'Another Journey by Train', which took four self-styled neo-Nazis, one Scot, one Frenchman, and two Germans, to the site of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Here, still blandly denying that the Holocaust ever happened, they met 70-year-old Kitty Hart, who spent almost two years in Auschwitz and watched the daily procession of victims into the gas chambers.

As these young men so puffed up with pride in their 'race' turned their backs on the history lesson this Jewish survivor was offering them, and walked away from her, she was telling how angry the camp guards had become when some doomed children dared to pick flowers.

So angry that they picked those children up by the feet and dashed their brains out against a wall: 'Now why did they do that? The children were going to be killed soon anyway.'

Her matter-of-fact question did nothing to assuage the pity and horror aroused by her recollection.

A caption quoted a description of how the huddled corpses that emerged from the gas chambers, soiled with excrement and menstrual blood, were carefully searched for gold and other valuables that might have escaped notice beforehand. The Nazis were nothing if not thorough and methodical.

Have Marc Wadsworth and his colleagues drawn any conclusions whatever from the recent election of a British National Party candidate to the Tower Hamlets council?

BUT Wadsworth and company are not the only ones who merit criticism.

While I am all for putting the BNP's Welling 'bookshop' out of business — surely something that should have been done long ago — I am far from certain that head-on confrontation with a huge, well-prepared, and well-organised body of riot police is the right way to accomplish that aim.

And what kind of 'anti-fascists' prepare a stack of petrol bombs and then carelessly leave them lying about in a holdall?

And what kind of 'anti-fascist' steward, on finding that holdall, rushes to hand it to the police?

Or was this inexplicable episode a provocation (of which we can expect a great many in the months to come and against which we must all be on our guard)?

The whole strategy of the anti-fascist struggle, following the BNP victory in Tower Hamlets, needs serious discussion and re-examination throughout the labour movement.

Young people are increasingly prepared to defend their communities by hitting back at the fascists. Their courage and élan cry out for wise, thoughtful, and far-sighted leadership.

The urgent task now, following last Saturday's impressive mobilisation, is to build on that mobilisation by creating workers' defence committees and defence squads in every locality where the fascists are active, to make it impossible for them to

PERSONAL COLUMN

crawl from under their stones.

Faiers on the fiddle

THE nostalgia-and-venom quarterly 'This England', which hails Enoch Powell as the 'Lion of Britain' and complains about the 'alien faces' to be seen on our streets, was the subject of a note in this column three months ago ('Patience and the "aliens"', 3 July).

Now I learn from a friend in Devon that for the editor and joint publisher of that publication, Roy Charles Fox Faiers, this England is, as my friend puts it, 'not quite so attractive when it comes to paying taxes'.

Faiers appeared before magistrates in Cheltenham recently, accused of evading income tax to the tune of £1 million since 1975.

It is alleged that he falsely claimed that his magazine is based in the Channel Islands and not in Cheltenham, where it has an office.

Described in the local press as a 'multi-millionaire', he was remanded on bail totalling £700,000, of which £500,000 had to be paid into court.

'I wonder', adds my friend, 'how much money Faiers has donated to various far-right causes — e.g. Anti-Federal Europe (which is based in Cheltenham and stood a candidate against the black Tory candidate John Taylor) and the Revolutionary Conservative Caucus (also centred on Cheltenham and organised by Stuart Millson, assistant editor of "This England").'

A national disaster

HOW it treats children, old people, and sick people is a pretty reliable index of whether a society is civilised or not. Another is how it treats those, young and old, who are seeking knowledge. Another is how it treats its national library.

By all of these criteria, Britain has abandoned any claim to be considered civilised.

'Children go part-time as schools fall apart', said a headline in last Sunday's 'Observer'. Thousands of children, said the article underneath, are receiving only part-time education, thanks to leaking roofs, rising damp, and rot.

One head of an Essex infants' school was quoted as saying: 'After heavy rain, we get up to 18in. of raw sewage in the classrooms.'

Turning from that dismal report to 'The Great British Library Disaster', a pamphlet just published by the British Library Regular Readers' Group (of which I am not a member), I found nothing to cheer me up.

Not long ago, the £500 million new library at St Pancras — still without a projected opening date — was also flooded after heavy rain: water got into the basements and entered map cabinets and book-handling machinery. Flooring had to be replaced. A confidential memo was circulated to staff telling them not to speak to the press.

There are still those who do not accept that the closing of the Round Reading Room in Bloomsbury, when it happens, will be a major and totally unnecessary act of vandalism.

But no honest reader of this blistering pamphlet could fail to conclude that the mess it describes — a shamefully shoddy and inadequate new building for the national library, and a BL staff whose morale is currently at rock-bottom thanks to market-testing and downgrading — is indeed a national disaster.

Peter Fryer

Television

Culture? No, torture

TV review by Hilary Horrocks

NOT the reaction of a reluctant TV critic, but a vehement denunciation by black American writer Alice Walker of the practice of female circumcision in 'Warrior Marks' (CRITICAL EYE, Channel 4, 14 October).

Walker — best known for her novel 'The Color Purple' — wanted to make this programme because she felt she understood the particular hurt and isolation of the young girls in some African communities who had to undergo the ritual of genital mutilation.

She strongly identifies with the girls, who are taken to the hut where the operation is performed by female relatives, held down by women and actually incised by women.

The mutilation — sometimes performed on a child as young as four — is still widely practised, performed in a ceremonial context with wild local celebrations the preceding night. Walker interviewed a woman from Mali who had fled to France rather than undergo the operation. Her fiancé abandoned her, claiming that unless she was circumcised she would be 'dirty, like a whore'.

In general mothers who spoke to Walker said they felt powerless to challenge such a long tradition. 'There is a distinction between culture and torture,' Walker responded, firmly rejecting the dignification of barbarism under the name of culture.

Religion and hygiene are other justifications given for the practice of female excision, which involves the severing of the clitoris. But Walker pointed out that its aim was actually to keep the woman in a child-like state and deny her sexuality.

Health is indeed no consideration of the ritual — Walker found ample evidence that one blade was frequently used on several children.

Many of the women interviewed by Walker are now active in campaigns to expose its barbarity, sometimes in the face of death-threats. 'But we are survivors, not victims', said one Somali woman, and Walker

commented: 'Even after being wounded you can fight back — your wound becomes your "warrior mark".'

'Hunger Strike: A Hidden History' (TIMEWATCH, BBC2 13 September) confirmed yet again that the British government has frequently held direct talks with the IRA despite its public posture.

In 1981 ten Republican prisoners died on hunger strike in Long Kesh prison (The Maze); they were demanding political prisoner status with the right to wear their own clothes, not to do prison work, and to associate with each other.

Pat McGeown, one of the survivors of the strike, said that suicide had not been their aim — they saw the hunger strike as a weapon to raise the political stakes.

Political prisoner status had actually been granted in 1972 after a hunger strike in the Crumlin Road jail in Belfast, but was rescinded in 1976 by the Labour government. It was against the reimposition of criminal status conditions that the 1981 hunger strikers were reacting.

An initial strike was called off in the mistaken belief that the British government was about to grant concessions. Bobby Sands, who had led the negotiations on behalf of the prisoners, insisted on leading the second strike.

During the course of his strike Sands, 27, was elected MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone. He died eight days later. 100,000 people attended his funeral, followed in quick succession by those of the other strikers.

International reaction was such that British ships in US ports were boycotted. There was even the threat of trade sanctions against Britain. TIMEWATCH discovered that Thatcher had actually wavered on the eve of Sands' death. It was only the intransigence of top Northern Ireland civil servants that had prevented any public concessions to the prisoners.

Programme guide



The appalling conditions of fruit pickers are investigated in 'Rich Pickings' on Channel 4 on Monday

Monday 25 October CUTTING EDGE: 'Rich Pickings'. Documentary about the corruption existing in British fruit-and-vegetable-picking business. Not only are the casual workers involved in this multi-million-pound industry exploited by their 'gangmasters' — enduring appalling conditions and low pay — they are also subject to scrutiny by Department of Employment inspectors hunting down 'dole-fiddlers' (9pm, Channel 4).

Tuesday 26 October ASSIGNMENT: 'My Homeland, Your Homeland'. Assesses the long-term prospects of recent Israeli-PLO deal (7.25pm, BBC2).

Thursday 28 October CRITICAL EYE: 'The Dirty War'. Investigates likely causes behind mysterious illnesses which have afflicted large numbers of US and British

military personnel involved in the Gulf war (9pm, Channel 4). **Friday 29 October PUBLIC EYE: 'The Cost of Coal'.** Following the Bilsthorpe pit disaster, new evidence showing that safety rules in other pits are being flouted (8pm, BBC2).

Selected films

FACES (1968). US middle-class morals under the microscope of John Cassavetes. (Saturday, 10.45pm, Channel 4). **CLOSE MY EYES (1991).** Writer/Director Stephen Poliakoff's provocative study of an incestuous sibling relationship (Thursday, 10pm, Channel 4). **JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE IRT (1992).** First major commercial film by an African-American woman director — Leslie Harris (Friday, 11.45pm, Channel 4). JJ

A member of the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace, who had negotiated on behalf of the prisoners, explained how shocked he had been to discover that direct negotiations had taken place between Gerry Adams and someone in the British government.

This 'someone' was a Catholic businessman in England whose emissary to the IRA was a clergyman code-named 'The Angel'.

An ex-prison officer at Long Kesh confirmed that Republican prisoners were often taken downstairs in the middle of the night for discussions with government officials.

The hunger strikes were finally called off because of pressure from the prisoners families

and with the agreement of the IRA leadership, although the strikers themselves were prepared to carry on.

Three days after the protest ended the Tory government conceded most of the prisoners demands — an agreement which the programme revealed had already been settled with the IRA. So why could this not have been done before the ten men died?

Lord Gowrie, Thatcher's minister for Northern Ireland at the time who was interviewed on the programme, said how damaging it would have been for the government to concede under pressure: Thatcher thought, he said, 'it would be of major consequence to the British state'.

No economic recovery in sight

BY PETER JEFFRIES

A SHARP rise in government spending last month has plunged Britain's state finances into even greater crisis.

The gap between government spending and tax revenues reached £24.2 billion for the first six months of the financial year, compared with £18.4 billion in the corresponding period last year.

The deficit for September alone came to £5.88 billion which, if the trend continued, would mean an annual deficit of more than £70 billion.

In the second quarter of this year borrowing rose by 40 per cent as against the second quarter of the previous year.

The government blames increased social security payments and shrinking tax receipts because of the severity of the slump.

This is the background against which Chancellor Kenneth Clarke is preparing next month's budget.

Last week the Cabinet was locked in battle about where the axe would fall in the next round of spending cuts. The military top brass are determined that their budgets would be the last to suffer and other leading

Tories have warned Clarke that further tax increases would be disastrous for the economy.

But Clarke has repeatedly warned Tory chiefs that the borrowing plans set out by his predecessor Norman Lamont will come nowhere near to re-establishing equilibrium in the government's finances.

In other words, sharp reductions in borrowing are required, together with substantial tax increases.

News of the worsening position of the government's finances comes as evidence piles up that the long-promised economic upturn is as far away as ever.

The Confederation of British Industry's latest survey of retail trade shows that the awaited upturn has yet to materialise.

The CBI reports that while high street sales went up last month they did so at a much slower rate than in the preceding three months.

Fragile

'The upturn in high street demand remains fragile,' said chairman of the CBI's distributive trade panel, Nigel Whitaker.

Tax changes introduced by the government and due to operate from next April will slash

car purchases by 80,000, the Chaterhouse banking group has forecast. This will more than offset any hoped-for increase among private motorists, says the bank.

A Gallup survey reported 'a severe decline' in the public's assessment of the health of the British economy. Fewer people now think an upturn in the economy is about to take place than at any time since last March.

The main factors depressing confidence are worries about unemployment, fears of possible tax increases and increasing signs of inflation. One in six people thought that the financial position of their households would get worse next year.

Gallup says there is little to believe that consumers would be a 'driving force' behind any recovery.

These reports come immediately after earlier surveys showing falling manufacturing output and renewed inflationary pressures. To add to the government's crisis, exports of manufactured goods to the key European Community market are stagnant or falling. The hoped-for boost to exports following last September's sterling devaluation has not occurred.

The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, the country's biggest and standing at the centre

of what is left of British manufacturing industry, has made a desperate plea to the government for more assistance to prevent the further destruction of industrial capacity.

More than 30 per cent of manufacturing companies in the Midlands have shed jobs and a further 30 per cent are expected to sack workers in the coming year. The report stresses that there can be no lasting recovery while Europe remains in the grip of recession.

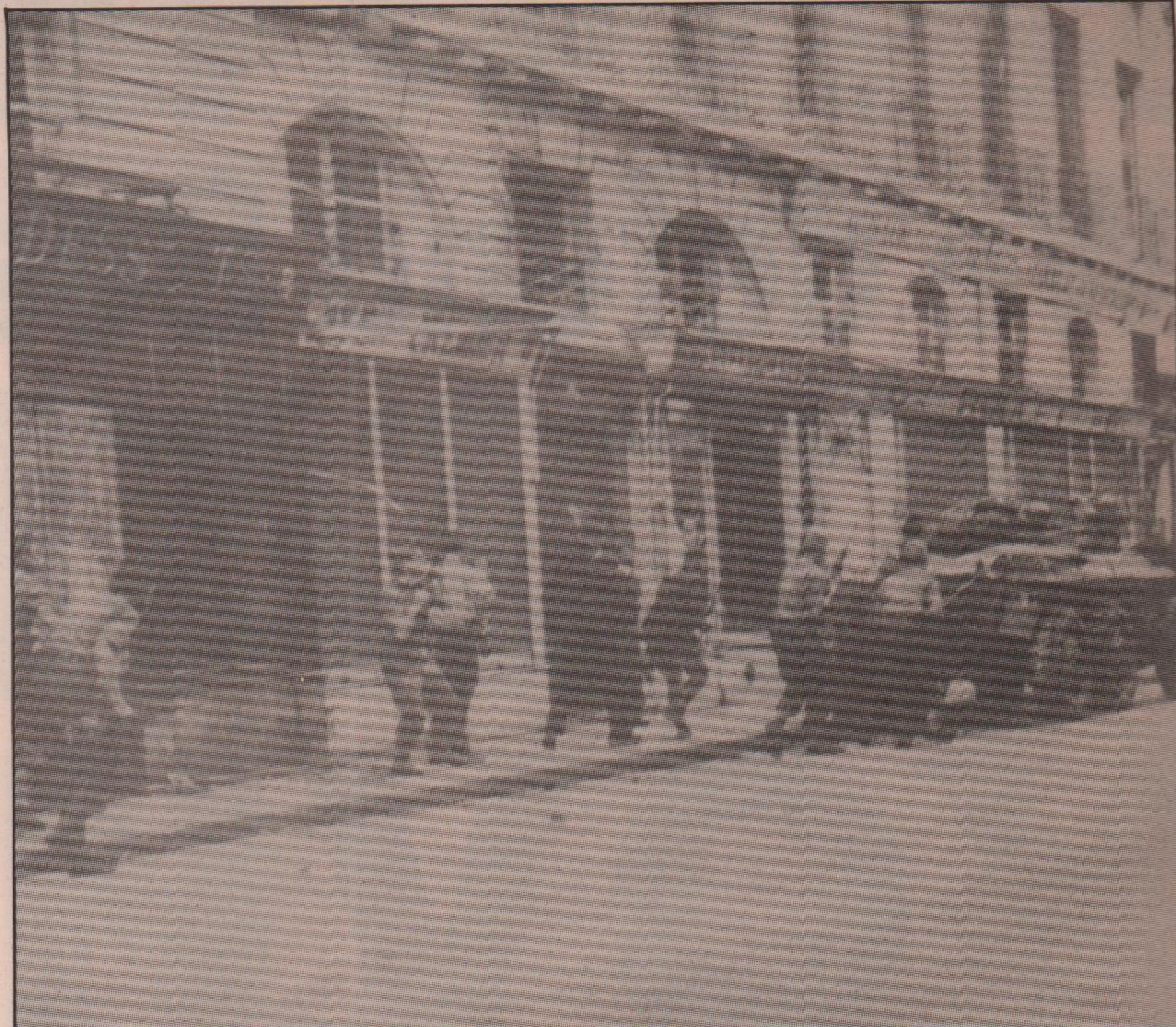
Revenue

It calls on the government for tax breaks, low-cost loans to investors and enhanced credit guarantees for exporters. Of course all these would mean increased government spending and reduced tax revenue just when the state finances are worsening.

Engineering companies in south Yorkshire and the north Midlands are experiencing weakening prices and reduced profit margins, the Sheffield association of the Engineering Employers' Federation claimed last week.

A survey of more than 100 companies showed that over 30 per cent have experienced falling profits in the past three months.

An historic fight for Marxism



Liberation of Paris: Nazi occupation had decimated the Fourth International in many countries

● FROM PAGE 5

was the last we held with Lawrence and his supporters. Healy and I were expelled from the Fourth International. We then entered a fight around the paper 'Socialist Outlook', the paper of the British section.

I think we had about 100 members at first, but over the next five years we were to grow steadily, first among the dockers and then more rapidly as we recruited from the Young Communist League and the Communist Party.

And, you know, we wouldn't have been able to do this without the stimulus we gained in the struggle against Pabloism.

We were, of course, at this time inside the Labour Party, with the weekly 'Socialist Outlook'. The paper had begun as a monthly in December 1948. Its editorial board consisted of Tom Braddock, ex-Labour MP for Wimbledon, Jack Stanley, general secretary of the Constructional Workers' Union, Gerry Healy and John Lawrence, who was editor of the paper. On the editorial board, Stanley supported Healy and

'Pabloism makes no real balance sheet about the fate of its prognoses — even though, in the 1950s, both Pablo and Mandel boasted of their perspicacity in being the first, and only, ones to tell the world that World War III was imminent and inevitable, and to reveal the future of Stalinism.'

Braddock supported Lawrence.

After the disputes began to come up in the Trotskyist group in the middle of 1953, the political differences in the editorial board inevitably began to be reflected in the columns of the paper.

The full-time staff on the paper were John Lawrence, Fred Emmet and Audrey Wise. They were all supporters of Pablo. In August, we were able to get Emmet replaced by myself in order to ensure that a principled line against Stalinism continued in the paper.

Lawrence, I remember, shouted about my being a commissar with a foot on his neck, and for a little while after I left the factory where I worked and went into the 'Socialist Out-

look' office; life was hardly smooth.

Mainly I ensured that our articles appeared and that we were prepared for what Lawrence put into the paper. In it the discussion took place around Lawrence's suggestion for a petition to get the Tories out; on his articles advocating support for [Soviet foreign minister] Molotov's proposal for an agreement with the capitalist powers on a European Security Pact; and on German rearmament, where we put forward unity with the German working class and for the withdrawal of all troops.

'Socialist Outlook' was owned by the Labour Publishing Society, with 1,200 one-pound shares in the hands of 500 or 600 shareholders — members of the Labour Party. A good number of them were not Trotskyists but were sympathetic to the general fighting

My editorial career with 'Socialist Outlook' was brief, however. In July or August 1954, the Labour Party national executive decided 'that persons associated with or supporting "Socialist Outlook" are declared to be ineligible for membership of the Labour Party'. The paper folded in October, after 1,700,000 votes had been cast against its proscription at a Labour Party conference.

At the time of the struggle around 'Socialist Outlook', in April and May, members of the Lawrence group had discussions with the Communist Party about co-operation. There was a report, which was circulated among Communist Party leaders, of a discussion with Norman Dinning, who had joined the Trotskyist group in the Nottingham Royal Ordnance factory during the war and was a leading member of

Memorandum of the SWP National Committee on The Rise and Decline of Stalinism, October 5, 1953

The resolution on 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' sets out bringing up-to-date the Trotskyist appraisal of the Soviet Union, the Kremlin bureaucracy and the Stalinist world movement especially in the light of the events following Stalin's death. However, its method of analysis misrepresents the real situation.

'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' elaborated the Pabloite theory of the withering away of the Soviet bureaucracy (from 'Trotskyism versus Revisionism, Vol. I', New Park 1974)

policies of the paper and its struggle against the Labour right wing.

The annual general meeting of the shareholders elected a management committee, which in turn elected the editorial board and editor. I have to relate this because our struggle with Pabloism in Britain continued — after the SWP's open letter, the split, and the formation of the International Committee — in a struggle for control of 'Socialist Outlook'.

The annual general meeting was held in May 1954, so that in the preceding three months there was a campaign to win support among shareholders. I think we visited every one and at a stormy shareholders' meeting gained a majority by about 300 to 250. Following this, the new management committee elected me as editor.

the Lawrence minority.

It was decided that the discussion should continue, but the Communist Party group which met Dinning — who represented the Pabloites at this meeting — declared his position unacceptable and quoted a US Pabloite document:

'There is no doubt that we will go through the revolution in most countries of Europe, Asia, America, and even the political revolution in the USSR, without the prior existence of mass Trotskyist parties. . . . The world revolution is on its way and it will most likely achieve a certain victory without the banner of the Fourth International flying over the capital buildings of the new workers' states.'

Like the devil to holy water, the Stalinists reacted to any mention of world revolution.

The British Stalinists thought it a good time to strike a blow at Trotskyism in the Labour Party and do a finger job. In April 1954, the 'World New and Views', the Communist Party weekly, ran two articles on 'Trotskyism in the Labour Party'. These articles had the main purpose of giving the names of contributors to 'Socialist Outlook' and supporters of it, who, they declared, were former members of the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Party.

The Pabloite minorities in the Socialist Workers Party, the French party, and the British group had a brief history in the Fourth International. In a very short while after the split they disappeared.

On 2 October 1954, Lawrence held a meeting of about 50. Lawrence said that Trotskyism was as dead as a doornail, and in the past Trotskyists had often found themselves on the wrong side, side by side with the most rabid anti-Soviet forces.

The proposals agreed by the meeting were: to break with the Fourth International forthwith; to remain in the Labour Party — although it was left open to individuals to decide whether they joined the Communist Party or not; they would co-operate with the Communist Party and fight for the peace movement; finally, they dissolved their organisation.

A leader of the American Pabloite minority reported that the American Socialist Union, which they had formed, had split from the Fourth International to form an independent Marxist party.

It was also reported to this meeting that the experience of the infiltration of Pablo's supporters into the Italian and French CPs was that they had been converted into loyal

Communist Party members.

WP: It is clear that the entire prognoses of Pabloism were thoroughly refuted by the subsequent development of the class struggle.

BH: Naturally enough, Pabloism makes no real balance sheet about the fate of its prognoses — even though, in the 1950s, both Pablo and Mandel

'From the 1950s up to the present, the evasion of the struggle for a Trotskyist world party, and of its principles of internationalism and an independent working-class programme, has been the central feature of Pabloism.'

boasted of their perspicacity in being the first, and only, ones to tell the world that World War III was imminent and inevitable, and to reveal the future of Stalinism.

In this period they and the majority of the Fourth International advocated entrism of a special kind — 'entrism *sui generis*'. It was a policy of deep entry into the Communist Parties where they were mass parties and into the social-democratic parties.

It was an entrism to help the historical movements within these parties, which could, willy-nilly, push them into the 'antechamber' of the revolution. There has been no balance sheet made of this débacle.

There are those in the United Secretariat who will tell us that the arguments in the early 1950s were exaggerated above their importance. These conclusions are quite in line with the cloudy thinking of some members of the International

led by Mandel, who generally do not take serious questions seriously.

The objectivist method continued with eclectic statements, and a sophisticated division between theory and practice.

From the 1950s up to the present, the evasion of the struggle for a Trotskyist world party, and of its principles of internationalism and an independent working-class programme, has been the central feature of Pabloism. In practice, it has continuously attacked Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and the Transitional Programme, which are the strategic and theoretical expression of these two principles of Marxism.

There can be no doubt that in 1953, the assault was absolutely necessary on the political and philosophical — that is to say the methodological — course of Pabloism and his supporters in the leadership of the Fourth International.

In 1953, Pabloism was telling us that the irresistible forces were bringing victory for the socialist revolution, despite inadequate leaderships, and that Stalinism, despite itself, was forced to project a revolutionary orientation.

Now, in the USec journal 'International Viewpoint' (September 1993), a leader of the Mexican Mandelite organisation tells us that in Latin America today the construction of socialism is not on the order of the day. From the seventh heaven to the sofa!

The 40 years since the end of the war were a historical testing period for Stalinism. It lies shattered and so does reformist socialism — and with them the lie of the Pabloite theory and method of undermining the Trotskyist heritage.

THE re-admission of former leader Michel Pablo into the fake Trotskyist United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec) has created much acrimony among its members, who are familiar with Pablo's long record of capitulation to the Stalinist and reformist (i.e. social-democratic) bureaucracies in the labour movement. (See pages 4&5.)

Even for 'loyal oppositionists' to the USec leadership, the return of Pablo — in a move engineered by the leader of USec, Ernest Mandel — is too much to stomach. Whether such people will lead a real fight against the re-admission of Pablo and his group is another matter.

Pablo was effectively expelled by Mandel from the organisation in 1964, an event which

When Pablo was excluded

BY GEOFF PILLING

was likewise the occasion of considerable tension.

In that year, following a meeting of the USec in Paris, Pablo — together with a number of his supporters including the Australian Anderson and three French supporters Lenoir, Maurel and Simone — were excluded from all leading bodies of that organisation.

Pablo's exclusion came only a year after the formation of USec, following the reunification of Mandel's forces with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP)

in the US — where reactionary laws meant the SWP could only be a sympathiser of the USec.)

Pablo's banishment came soon after the majority of the section in Ceylon — at the time by far the largest USec group — had been expelled for supporting the capitalist coalition government of Mrs Bandaranaike.

Charge

The charge Mandel brought against Pablo and his followers was that they had published a magazine, 'Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme', which had expounded a public line contrary to the one then held by Mandel

and his United Secretariat.

Pablo it seems was at that time a supporter of the Krushchev wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy, as against the position of the majority of the United Secretariat, which was then busy extolling the virtues of the Stalinist bureaucracy in China.

Such splits in the ranks of the Pabloites were typical, being based on support ('critical' or otherwise) for one or other element in the bureaucracy.

Pablo and his other suspended followers issued a communiqué from Paris:

'The United Secretariat majority has obtained the suspension of the undersigned com-

rades from their positions as members of the International Executive Committee [IEC] and the United Secretariat.

'At the same time it has in reality not only officialised through the IEC Plenum its sanctions taken against "Sous le Drapeau du Socialisme", but has aggravated them by deciding the dissolution in fact of the African Commission.

'Thus it has unleashed the fatal mechanism of a process which could lead to the factual split of the whole of the International. During two days the United Secretariat and the IEC minority was subjected to the furious pressures and attempts

of the US majority and its partisans in the IEC to push it outside of the International.

'During two days a majority of the Europeans (3 Belgians, 3 Italians, 2 Germans, 4 New Zealanders, Peng, Frank, 1 Canadian, 1 Austrian presently in the minority in his section) have coalesced to obtain our suspension at any cost.

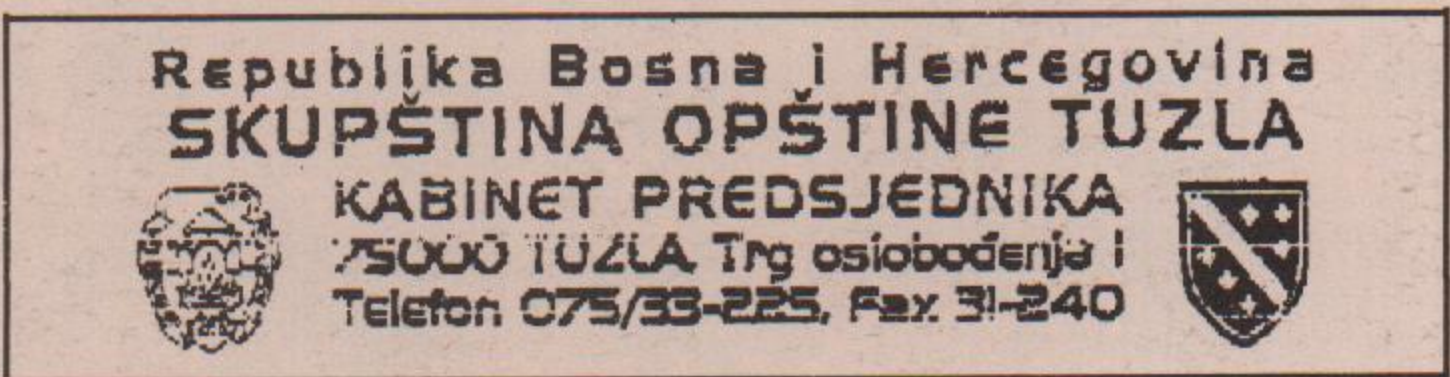
'The IEC was transformed from the very beginning into an Inquisition, refusing the most elementary rights to the minority and in particular refusing to submit without preliminary any of its proposals to the vote of the IEC.'

One thing is for sure. Mandel, despite the fact that he was instrumental in bringing back Pablo, following all his past practice, will have nothing to say about these events.

'We defend Bosnia!'

— say the people of Tuzla

The Bosnian town of Tuzla is fighting for its survival against the UN-sponsored carve-up of the country. This press statement was issued on 19 October by the mayor of the Bosnian town of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic, in response to disinformation in the media



broadcast by some other news-agencies that have been supporting the oppressor since the beginning of the war.

This information is in accordance with the oppressor's campaign against Tuzla, saying that Tuzla will secede from Bosnia-Herzegovina in the same way that Fillet Abdic seceded from Cazin.

Unfortunately this kind of propaganda influenced some officials, who accept the criminal Radovan Karadzic [the leader of the Bosnian Serbs] as a reliable source of information.

Truth

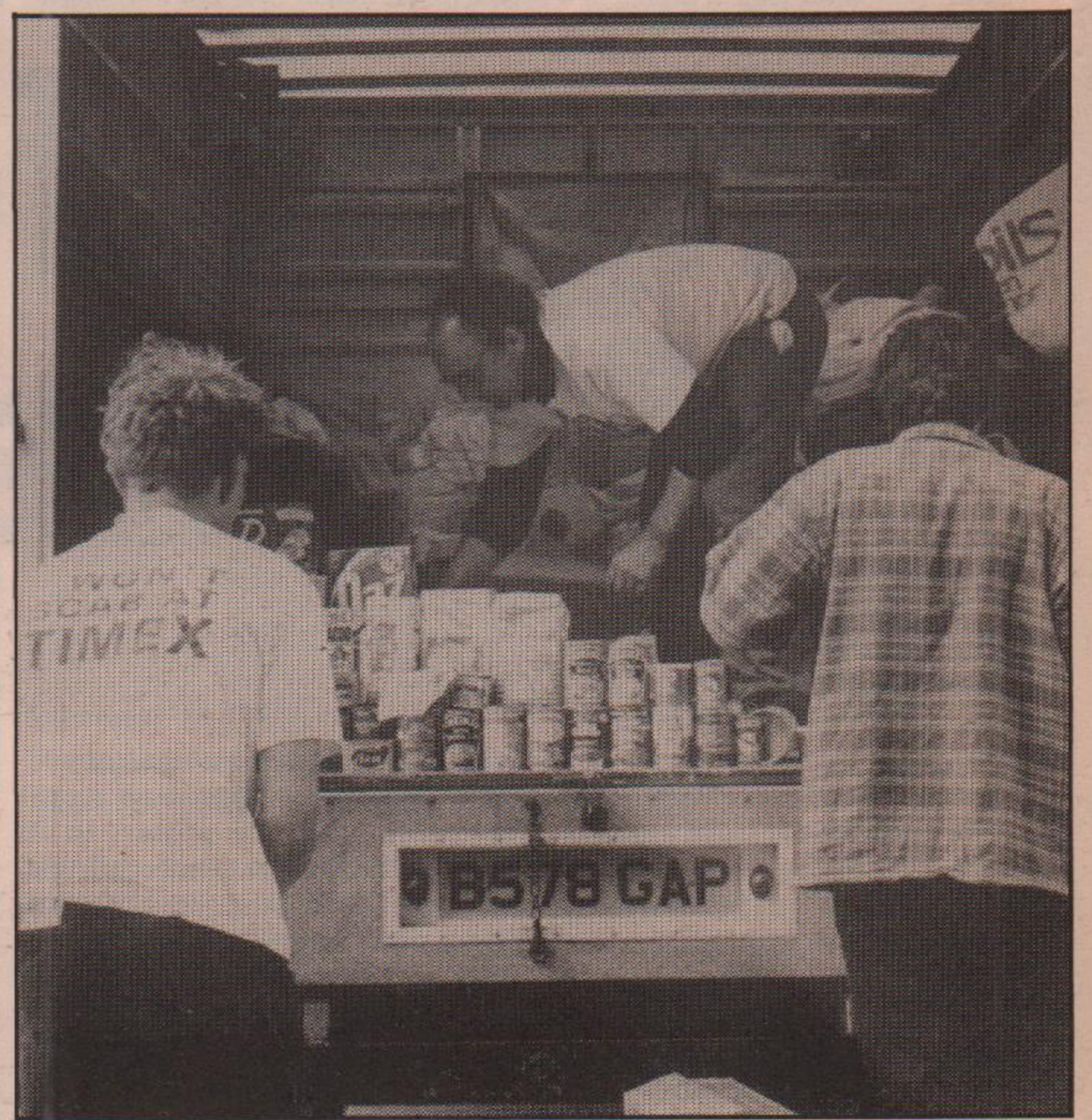
In fact, there is only one truth about the Tuzla author-

ities and citizens: autonomy is out of the question and this town will keep on defending the sovereign and internationally recognised republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Aim

The authorities and people of Tuzla can see the aim of such propaganda and are determined to oppose it by all possible means.

It is for that reason that we would ask you to do your best to inform the public on the position of Tuzla's authorities and its people.



On every step of its route the Workers Aid convoy met with great support from workers and their unions Photo: Rex Dunn

Lift the blockade of Tuzla!

Greetings were sent to the people of Tuzla, Bosnia, by the Workers Aid convoy in a new paper called 'Tuzla News', after the decision was made that it was not possible to reach the town. The message was written by convoy member DOT GIBSON. 'Tuzla News' (No. 1, 19 October 1993) is published by the Tuzla Logistic Centre in Zagreb, the Croatian capital.

Lift the blockade!
Open the Posavina corridor!
Forward with the international Workers Aid convoy!

WITH the people of Tuzla we share great disappointment that our international Workers Aid convoy cannot reach your town on this occasion.

But we are withdrawing only to build a campaign in the international workers' movement to: Lift the blockade! Open the Posavina corridor!

What made this convoy different from other humanitarian aid convoys?

International Workers Aid made clear from the beginning that:

- We oppose the Vance-Owen plan to strangle Bosnia;
- We are against the 'big powers' presiding over the war and perpetuating a situation where the people are made refugees and murdered/raped and crippled under Greater Serbian 'ethnic cleansing' barbarism;
- We demand that the Bosnian people have the right to self-defence — to arms;
- We expose the collaboration of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) with the Chetniks for Greater Serbian nationalism;
- We uphold the right of Bosnia to self-determination

and we especially salute Tuzla's stand for a multi-ethnic country;

■ We insist on the right of all European workers to reach their brothers and sisters in besieged and starving Tuzla with aid collected in the name of workers' international solidarity.

That is why UNPROFOR did everything it could to stop our convoy.

On every step of our route through Europe, we met with overwhelming support from workers and their trades unions.

When UNPROFOR refused us protection, hundreds of protest letters were faxed to General Jean Cot.

When Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic refused to give us the right to make our way through the country, more faxes were sent from workers' organisations.

The convoy fought for the independence of its aims every inch of the way:

■ We met officials of the governments of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in charge of aid and refugees, officials of the United Nations High Com-



mission for Refugees, UNPROFOR officers in Zagreb and Osijek, the mayor of Zupanja, Orasje town councillors, and the commander of 131st division of the Croatian army (HVO).

■ We used our trucks to blockade the UNPROFOR headquarters in Zagreb, and we found great support from the Croatian people demonstrating there for the return home of refugees and who were building a wall of remembrance for their dead loved ones.

■ We drove our trucks out of Bjelovar police station (protesting by sounding our horns to

alert local residents) after being held for two days.

■ We spent two days and nights in our trucks on the road to the Zupanja border post, when the local police would not let us cross the river Sava to Orasje.

We received no written reply from the authorities to our requests.

We saw a document in the hands of the Zupanja police chief, signed by M. Granic, which gave Lipovice as our point of departure from Croatia — a town in an area which had not been in Croatian hands for

nearly two years! It is controlled by UNPROFOR.

Croatian soldiers at a checkpoint on the road to Lipovice told us that the UNPROFOR forces there are Russians — working with the Chetniks!

Our appeal for cash to enable us to stay longer in an effort to reach our goal met with a great response. However, a general message circulated by UNPROFOR warned everybody in the region to give no assistance to the international Workers Aid convoy.

It was understandable therefore that the arrangements

made with the mayor of Orasje by the Tuzla Logistic Centre in Zagreb were cancelled. This meant that when the Croatian authorities finally granted permission for us to cross the river Sava, the Orasje police would not let us enter the town. We could not therefore reach the Bosnian Serb frontline to negotiate a passage.

Having arrived in Croatia on 1 October we finally had to decide on 17 October that we could not get to Tuzla on this occasion. Our book of messages from the workers en route was taken to the mayor of Tuzla by a passenger of a helicopter. Some of our aid was distributed to refugees with the help of the Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia. The rest is held in store for later distribution to Tuzla.

We send our solidarity and greetings to the people of Tuzla. We know that you face another hard winter, and we pledge to put every effort into the campaign to open the aid route. We salute your fight. WE WILL BE BACK!

■ LC Tuzla in Zagreb, Kaziceva poljana 3, 41000 ZAGREB. Tel/fax +385 41 31 79 38.

'Financial disaster' faced by Germany's cities

BY OUR ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENCE

MORE than 1,000 leaders of Germany's principal cities descended on Bonn last week to protest at government cuts in public spending, which are threatening financial disaster.

Mayors, lord mayors and councillors, representing more than 7,000 towns and cities with a combined population of over 50 million, urged the government to rethink its plans for cuts in social spending, which will mean a massive transfer of costs to local authorities.

Norbert Burger, lord mayor of Cologne, charged the government with precipitating the 'financial collapse' of many towns and cities.

Basic

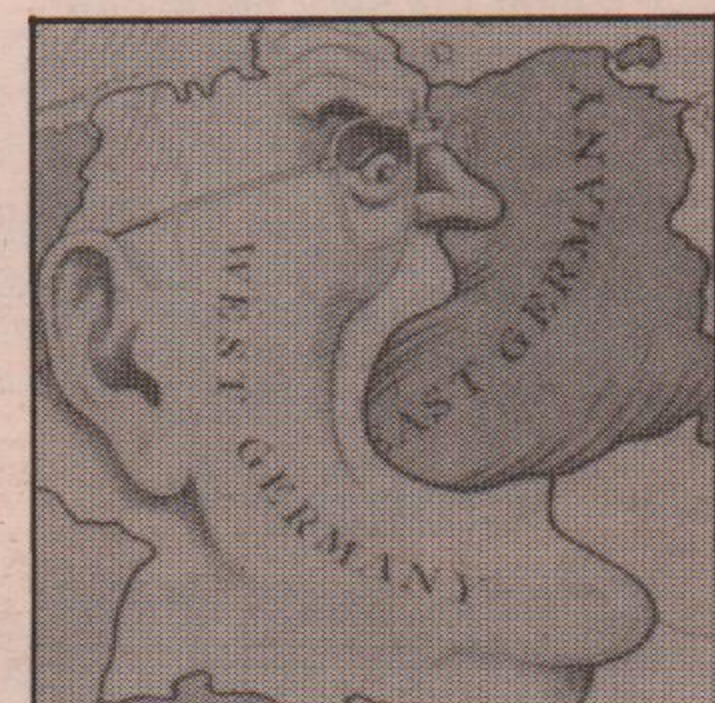
Plans to cut unemployment pay and reduce the length of benefit entitlement would, said Burger, inevitably force more people onto the basic provision of social assistance, paid for by local councils.

Government was urging

councils to provide programmes to stop the growth of racism and urban violence while forcing them to cut spending on youth clubs and cultural provision, he charged.

The cuts are being made by Bonn partly in response to the need for a massive transfer of funds to eastern Germany to stave off its complete collapse.

The government remained adamant. State secretary in the interior ministry, Horst Wafenschmidt, said that everybody must cut back in the current spending squeeze.



How the 'Spectator' saw it in 1990: now a massive transfer of funds is needed to stave off complete collapse in the east

Yeltsin's dictatorship

What Russian workers have to say about it

Monday 15 November, 7pm
Friends Meeting House,
173-177 Euston Road, London NW1
(opposite Euston station — use the garden entrance)

The military attack on the Russian parliament has been followed by police repression and media censorship. All this comes on top of soaring prices, economic chaos and the outbreak of national conflicts throughout the former USSR.

Workers bear the brunt of these changes. In Ukraine they have already voiced their opposition in a gigantic strike movement.

Our meeting will be addressed by a Russian worker recently victimised for trade union activity, and a Moscow university student — both members of the Socialist Workers Union, Russian section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International.

Questions and discussion welcome.

Organised by the Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press), PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. Enquiries: 071-582 8882.

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