

Labour leaders betray fight **WORKERS' UNITY TO SMASH FASCISTS**

TODAY'S march against racism and fascism in east London, organised by the TUC, takes place amidst growing dangers for the working class.

- Racist attacks are on the increase throughout Britain and the rest of Europe.
- In a working-class area such as the Isle of Dogs the fascist Derek Beackon wins a seat on the local council.

The fascists could now win three wards in this area of London. They would then control a £23 million 'neighbourhood' budget.

What does the working class do now?

When today's demonstration is finished we'll still be faced with the danger of further fascist election victories. We'll

BY PHIL EDWARDS

still face more racist intimidation and violence leading up to the election.

In recent months every student and interested 'observer' has descended on the Isle of Dogs to find out why a working-class community voted for the

British National Party.

There is anger in the area because of the following:

- Sections of the white working class resent the fact that their demands for decent housing and other services have been ignored.

Resented

■ There is deep resentment in the Bengali community that it has been viciously attacked by organised gangs of racist thugs, by the local Liberals and by the Tories nationally.

- There is bitter hostility to the Labour Party and trade union leaders, who have provided no answers.

The East London People's Alliance, set up as an alternative to the bankrupt local Labour Party, was never credible and has now collapsed.

Both James Hunt, defeated in Millwall by the BNP, and Ted Johns, another local Labour councillor, have thrown in the towel and resigned from this 'alternative' organisation.

The Liberals continue to peddle their racist and backward propaganda in Tower Hamlets, hoping to maintain their majority in the area through a populist appeal to some idyllic 'East Enders' mythology.

John Snooks, Liberal mayor and recent addition to the 'East London Advertiser's' editorial

South Africa election fund

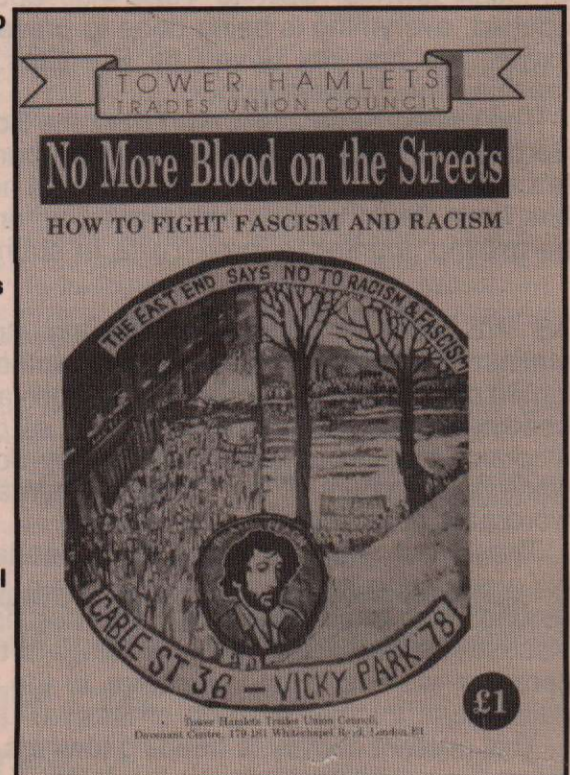
WE'VE had some good donations for our South Africa election fund from the United States and from Britain in the last couple of weeks. We've also received news of a meeting that occurred in South Africa and this is reported on page 3.

We thank our US comrades for their \$175 and SB for his £100.

Our party has no big backers to provide resources. We must turn for funds to our own movement — the working class — and to all who genuinely want to fight capitalism, imperialism and oppression.

Please rush donations for the working-class alternative in South Africa to: Workers International, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. Make cheques payable to 'Workers International'. Please fax us on 071-582 8834 and tell us what to expect.

Just out! 'No More Blood on the Streets' is a booklet on racism by Tower Hamlets Trades Union Council. It is available from Martin Westwood, Tower Hamlets Trades Council, Davenant Centre, 179-181 Whitechapel Road, London E1. Price £1 plus 25p postage. See review, pages 4 & 5



board, sits in his office with a Union Jack on his desk and another flying from the neighbourhood office in Bethnal Green.

The 'Advertiser' allows fascists free access to its columns.

The greatest danger of all comes from the refusal of the trade union and Labour leaders to organise and mobilise the working class to fight both the Tory government and the fascists and racists.

■ The working class has taken blow after blow from the Tory government and the employers, with hardly a whimper of protest from the leadership.

■ The Labour leaders turn to Liberals, Tories, the employers — anyone but the working class. They invite Tory ministers to their meetings — the very same ministers who have set out to crush the unions. The very same ministers who have plunged millions into poverty and forced tens of thousands to live on the streets.

■ The TUC fears that the working class will take its future into its own hands. That is why the TUC resisted calls for the march to go to the Isle of Dogs — not because of any 'logistical' problems or because the local people would regard it as a siege.

Protests

■ Only fierce protests stopped the TUC from making today's march 'cross party'. This is one part of their consistent crawling before the employers and the Tory government.

■ When the secretary of Tower Hamlets trades council, representing this local body of the TUC, asked the organisers for a place on the platform, this was referred to the Race Relations Commission for consideration.

It was the local trades council which called for a march immediately after Beackon's victory last September. Since then it has led a campaign of leafletting and public meetings on the Isle of Dogs. It should have been

on the platform as of right.

■ It is a disgrace that when the march organisers were asked for a place for the Workers Aid for Bosnia lorry on the march they were fobbed off with the excuse that the police would not allow it.

The inclusion of a Bosnian contingent with a lorry should also have been automatic.

Fight

The people in Bosnia are in the very forefront of the fight against fascist ethnic cleansing. Their representatives should have been invited to lead the march.

But the sort of internationalism the working class needs is miles from the minds of the TUC and Labour leaders. In practice they split up the working class and prevent it from uniting against the main enemy — the ruling class.

It is now crystal clear that the working class needs a programme to fight on around which it can be strengthened and united.

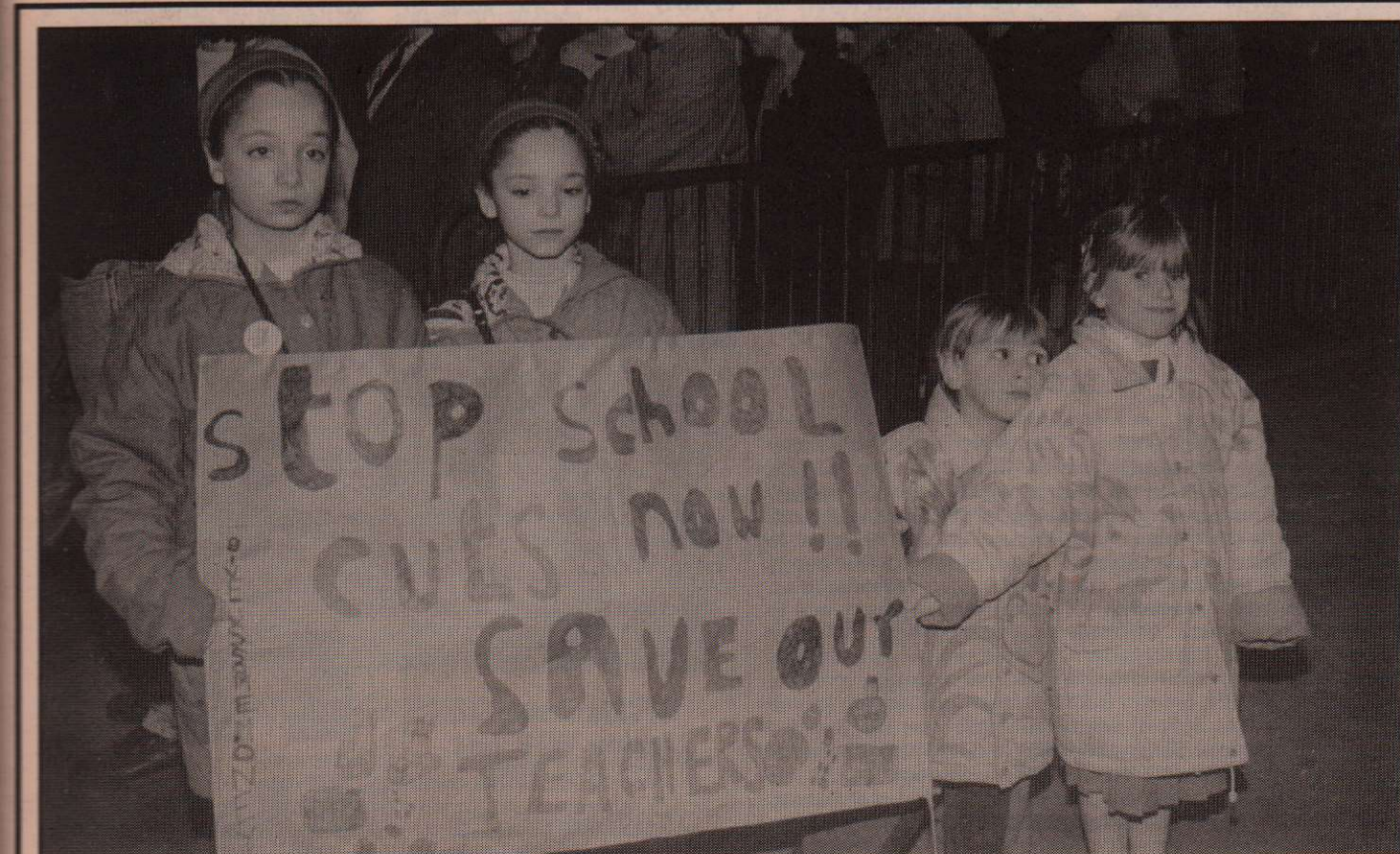
■ Racism and fascism arise from the capitalist system that is decaying before our eyes.

■ Only a socialist programme that tackles this crisis root and branch, that really deals with the problems of housing and poverty, can put an end to fascism and racism once and for all.

That programme will involve a fight against the trade union leaders, who are opening up the working class to the greatest dangers.

This is the main issue following today's march. It is a matter being actively discussed throughout the working-class movement, even though it will find no echo from today's platform speakers.

On other pages: Submit or starve, p.2; Poll-tax stand, p.3; Bosnia, p.4&5, p.7 and back page



School students lobbying Walsall city council which has cut its education budget by over £4.2 million. Seventy teaching posts will be axed, hitting mainly children from ethnic minorities. Photo by Mark Salmon

Workers Press

Submit or starve

CAPITULATE or starve: these are the brutal alternatives being put before the people of Tuzla, the working class capital of Bosnia.

Last week the Bosnian and Croatian governments came to an agreement over the future of Bosnia. The US-inspired 52-page plan would lead to the cantonisation of Bosnia and leave intact the territory seized by the Serbian forces in their bloody war of conquest. The country's capital would remain firmly under United Nations control, that is under the control of the big powers.

The most powerful area of resistance to these plans is the mining town of Tuzla, which has led the fight against ethnic cleansing and the dismemberment of Bosnia. As our report (page 8) underlines, despite the fact that the road from the Croatian town of Split to Tuzla has been reopened, everything is being done to prevent aid lorries, the majority driven by Bosnians, from reaching the Tuzla region.

The United Nations and Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader reached agreement to re-open Tuzla's airport. It is now under UN control but nothing has been flown in. It is being used as another bargaining counter to force Tuzla to submit.

* * * * *

AS WE went to press, after a long struggle against the obstruction of various authorities, lorries organised by Workers Aid to Bosnia were heading for the mining town of Tuzla as part of a convoy that includes trucks driven by Bosnian workers. Members of the Workers International were part of the Workers Aid convoy.

They were not only taking much-needed aid but were travelling in response to an urgent request from the workers in Tuzla for political discussions about the growing dangers to this centre of working-class resistance to the imperialist plans for the carve-up of Bosnia.

This present convoy is heading towards Tuzla along the southern route via the town of Split.

Readers will know that Workers Press has campaigned consistently for the opening of the so-called 'northern route' along the road from Orasje. This is by far the shortest and fastest route into northern Bosnia and if opened would provide the easiest access to the European and world market for Bosnia.

As the people of Tuzla have repeatedly made clear to us, they do not simply want aid; they want to be able to trade with the rest of the world as an essential step in the regeneration of their economy. For this reason the opening of the northern route remains the key issue.

It is for this very reason that the forces of the United Nations have consistently refused to open this road.

* * * * *

THE fact that on this particular occasion we are aiming to get to Tuzla via Split does not mean that we have abandoned our campaign for the northern route.

Quite the opposite: we are anxious to reach Tuzla so we can discuss with representatives of the miners and other workers in the town about the best way to proceed with this fight.

In particular we intend to discuss with them the possibility of a contingent from the next all-European workers' aid convoy, due to leave for Tuzla towards the end of the month, trying to go down the northern route.

Naturally, whether this is possible depends in part upon the military situation in Bosnia. The UN siege of Sarejevo has meant that Serbian forces have been released to move their operation to the centre of Bosnia, with Tuzla as their prime target. This makes the northern route potentially more dangerous.

The fight against ethnic cleansing is far from over. The working class of Bosnia and of the ex-Yugoslavia as a whole have not yet said their final word. But one thing is clear: the organisation of a powerful all-European Workers' Aid convoy due to leave for Tuzla at the end of this month is now more urgent than ever.

The very fate of Tuzla could depend on the outcome of this action.

Letters

Recession and racism

IS RACISM caused by unemployment? New research by Bradford university unsurprisingly finds a link between unemployment and racist attacks.

Analysing reported racist attacks between 1988 and 1992, Brian Burkitt, Marie Macey and Mark Baimbridge found that for every 1 per cent rise in unemployment there was a 2.7 per cent rise in racist attacks.

They also studied geographical incidence based on police force area, population size and ethnic population. 'Only unemployment appears to be statistically significant in offering any explanation for the number of racially motivated attacks,' says the study.

It claims to 'clearly' demonstrate 'that higher unemployment, although not its sole cause, does exacerbate racism as expressed in physical violence'.

So the 'Morning Star' can have as its headline 'Slump breeds racist attacks'. Leaving aside the fact that unemployment is not the defining feature of a slump — it is determined in terms of 'economic growth' — the 'Morning Star' reflects a reformist view of racism: if only the government would deal with unemployment, everything would be OK.

But surely the link between unemployment and racism is not the direct one of cause, it is the decay of the capitalist mode of production that 'breeds' both.

In Tower Hamlets in east London, the growth of support for the fascist British National Party on the Isle of Dogs is associated with the failure of the Labour Party and the Liberal-controlled council to deal with the housing shortage. Both capitulated to the attack on socially-provided housing by the Tory government's legislation. There is a dangerous vacuum in the leadership of the working class in the East End.

Transport and General Workers' Union leader Bill Morris said: 'This report highlights the importance for trades unions of linking the fight against racism and fascism with the needs for alternative economic and social policies to tackle the problems on which racism feeds — poverty, poor housing and unemployment.'

But to fight these 'problems' is to fight the whole capitalist system which breeds them. This is exactly what the trade union and Labour leaders refuse to do. It requires building of working-class consciousness of its responsibility to overthrow capitalism, not just in Britain but internationally, an international party of the working class.

Christine Mitchley
London SW11



Funeral of Stephen Lawrence, victim of a gang of racist thugs

Pay claim rejected

IN HIS article last week on the 1871 Paris Commune Geoff Pilling repeats the assertion, so often made, that the Commune decreed 'the equalisation of their [its officials'] wages with those of the workers'.

In fact, the maximum figure laid down by the Commune was equivalent to the salary of a lieutenant-colonel in the infantry or a civil engineer in the Depart-

ment of Bridges and Highways — about five times as much as the average worker's wage.

Attila Hoare's reference [in his letter last week] to 'Greece's Versailles frontier' mystifies me. The frontier between Greece and Serbia (later Yugoslavia) was fixed by the Treaty of Bucharest, in 1913. Perhaps he was thinking of Western Thrace, which was transferred from Bulgaria to Greece after World War I — but by the Treaty of Neuilly.

Brian Pearce
Barnet

Sheffield strikers defy law

BY TOM OWEN

MORE than 2,000 Sheffield workers have walked out in defiance of the anti-union laws. The 10 March protest was against a projected £26 million budget cut by the city's Labour council.

Libraries were closed and other services badly disrupted as workers walked out of schools, offices, day centres, workshops and garages after a show of hands.

This 'illegal' action was followed by strikers' marches

and rallies throughout the day.

The action ended with a mass lobby of the council, whose proceedings had to be halted for a period after angry workers howled down speakers from the leading Labour group.

Illegal

Union officials had worked overtime to stop the action. The council's chief executive, Pamela Gordon, had written to all council workers telling them that the strike was illegal and urging them to turn up to work.

Union officials nationally refused to back the action, simply referring inquiries to the people on the ground.

Dropped

The council's labour force has dropped from 35,000 in 1987 to today's 23,000, with a further 1,000 jobs about to be axed. The Labour council is setting a budget £5 million higher than the Tory government's guidelines, hoping to negotiate a reappraisal of spending needs.

But this is another gamble because the government could recommend even more drastic

cuts, as they have done with some of the 41 councils which have appealed over the last two years.

Earlier a mass meeting of members of the local government union UNISON had overwhelmingly rejected a proposal for a 3.25 per cent pay cut. Only about 100 at a 2,500-strong meeting voted against the proposal for a one-day strike action.

The crucial issue in these events is that a section of public-sector workers have refused to be intimidated, in the fight for jobs and services, by the anti-union laws and their own officials.

Hodge is Barking mad over sacking

FORMER 'left' Labour council leader Margaret Hodge could be handicapped in her plan to become an MP, after being sacked as a local councillor in Barking, east London.

Hoping to be selected to fight Barking for Labour, in the by-election caused by the death of Labour MP Jo Richardson, Hodge led north London's Islington council from the heady days of hoisting the red flag and

proclaiming itself a 'socialist republic', through the 'new realism' of implementing Tory cuts and sackings.

She quit as council leader in the autumn of 1982, to take a top job with City accountants Price Waterhouse, the same firm used by the Tories to sequester the National Union of Mineworkers' funds.

Now Hodge and two other Labour councillors have been

struck off after council officials checked their poor attendance record for the past six months. The would-be MP was furious. 'Everybody knew I was going to retire from the council,' she said.

Warning

She had kept up her ward work, she insisted, and was angry at receiving no written warning over attendance.

'All power to Labour councils,' Hodge urged in her column in 'Tribune' on 11 March. 'Labour councils are still too often regarded with disdain by MPs in Westminster.'

Urging decentralisation, the ex-council leader turned Price Waterhouse senior consultant said: 'For me, modern socialism is about policies which empower individuals in the community.'

Workers Press £3,000 Monthly Fighting Fund

In so far: £728.25

WE ARE anxiously awaiting news daily from the small Workers Aid convoy, led by our comrade Dot Gibson, that is battling to reach Tuzla, the mining town in the north east of Bosnia. The person who has sold you this paper may be able to tell you more recent developments.

The supply lines for this working-class capital of Bosnia, which still fights to maintain its multi-ethnic, multi-cultural life, are stretched to the limit. People there are on extremely short rations that barely keep body and soul together. This could lead to demoralisation if we don't get there to bring international working-class solidarity and to help plan further Workers Aid convoys, starting with the large all-European convoy setting off in the next week to meet up in Zagreb.

Workers Press's financial difficulties do not compare with the privations of the Bosnian people. But this paper has become known for its advocacy of the right of self-determination for the Bosnian people against the Greater Serb nationalists and the machinations of the Croatian government and the Great Powers through the UN. We are part of the struggle against the partition and carve-up of Bosnia.

A number of bills fall due next week. The £728.25 collected for the fund last week isn't enough and I appeal to WRP branches and sympathisers to get their contributions in and to consider getting more through sales, contacting and approaching new people.

Mike Cooke

Please send money to: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

COMING SOON

WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH: March on the Isle of Dogs council meeting against BNP councillor Beackon. 6pm from Jack Dash House, Marsh Wall, (South Quay station, Docklands Light Railway).

TUESDAY 29 MARCH: Picket of Thames Magistrates Court for Tower Hamlets 6. Bow Road, 9.30am.

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Asylum-seekers go on hunger strike protest

TWO HUNDRED asylum-seekers are on hunger strike at Britain's largest immigration detention centre, amidst accusations of force feeding, which has been illegal since 1974. Demands for an inquiry into the allegations were made last Monday.

Refusing

The protest is at conditions in the centre, Campfield House near Kidlington, Oxfordshire, which is run by the private security firm Group 4. By last Monday they had been refusing food for five days.

The strikers — from Asia, Africa and Latin America — are

complaining of inhumane treatment and mental torture. They have been held for over a year. Many have relatives in Britain.

They are demanding that they be freed whilst the cases are heard. The protesters — who include many fleeing repression — say they are tired of being treated like criminals.

Campfield House also faced complaints over its treatment of a plane-load of detained Jamaican holidaymakers held there over Christmas.

The Home Office issued a clear warning that their maltreatment will continue. A spokesman said that 'Their condition will be monitored and action taken as necessary'.

Councillor victimised after poll-tax stand

A LONDON Labour councillor has been suspended from representing the party for non-payment of the poll tax.

Hillingdon council's housing chair, Wally Kennedy, has been told by party officials that his action is deemed 'prejudicial to the detriment of the party [sic]'.

Lose

If Kennedy is not chosen to represent Labour in the coming council elections, this could lose the party control of the borough,

won as a result of a by-election last August.

The Labour bureaucracy must evidently consider this but a small price to pay in the attack on somebody who took a principled stand against the poll tax.

Kennedy has written to Labour leader John Smith to protest against the action. He says that even if he had been willing to pay the poll tax it would have been impossible after the Tory council raised his rent to £36 a week.

He claims that had he attempted to pay the poll tax at the expense of not paying rent, he would have been prevented from voting on finance matters in the council and would undoubtedly have been accused of bringing the party into disrepute.

Proud

Kennedy, who is married with six children and lives in a two-bedroomed council flat, says:

'I am proud to have played a role in defeating such an attack on the poor.'

'If such actions are deemed to bring the party into disrepute, then I say that my accusers are the ones who should stand accused.'

'They are the ones who should have stood up and been counted, instead of talking about poverty in the environs of their churches on a Sunday morning, or in their comfortable homes with well-stocked larders.'

Police to be routinely armed

POLICE patrols are on the brink of being routinely armed, as the Tory press whips up yet another 'law and order' campaign.

Last week the first of 30 new recruits was being briefed by Scotland Yard's specialist firearms unit, and an extra, round-the-clock armed response unit was on London's streets.

The strength of SO19, the Metropolitan Police's firearms unit, is being increased by over a third.

The Met is dramatically upgrading its armed presence in the capital, and Yard chiefs made plain that their latest move will be followed by the routine arming of patrolling police in London.

Cars have been commandeered from traffic departments across London and emergency calls went out last week to manufacturers of bullet-proof vests for overnight delivery of extra sets to the firearms unit's HQ at Old Street.

Response

A police spokesman said: 'Every course at our training centre in Lippitt's Hill has been cancelled to concentrate on training up new armed-response vehicle crews.'

'The atmosphere at Old Street is frantic. There are so many new officers being drafted in that we've problems finding enough kit and weapons for them.'

State secrets and skulduggery

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

NEW Zealander Paul Bennett walked free from the High Court on 10 March after judges agreed that he had been illegally arrested and flown from Johannesburg to Britain. Bennett spent over two years in prison on remand.

The court quashed a prosecution for deception, and ordered the £3 million costs to be paid from central funds. Defence lawyers accused Chancellor Kenneth Clarke, who was home secretary at the time, of trying to suppress evidence, because he had signed a public interest

immunity certificate covering Metropolitan Police telexes to the South African police.

Bennett, a helicopter pilot who claims to have worked for the CIA, rejects accusations that he is a 'fantasist'. In court he claimed to have seen British agents in South Africa distributing guns, which he believes were used by right-wing gangs terrorising townships.

Arms

Bennett's other allegations concern a car salesman involved in arms deals to Iraq, Chile and South Africa; and the murder of British journalist Jonathan Moyle in Chile. British

embassy officials in Chile initially suggested Moyle had taken his own life accidentally while engaged in bizarre sexual activity.

Former Foreign Office official Andrew Balfour, who has decided to take his appeal over wrongful dismissal to the House of Lords, cannot be dismissed as a 'fantasist'. He had been working for the government for 20 years when he was flown back from Dubai for interrogation in 1989.

Held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, Balfour was questioned at Paddington Green police station about his connections with 'a known terrorist', Merdad Ansari Shirazi, an Ira-

nian businessman. Special Branch officers turned over his house in Surrey, telling his eight-year-old daughter: 'Your daddy will be going to jail for a long time.'

He was not charged, but was dismissed from the Foreign Office, accused of using his position to secure printing work for a relative. Balfour says he was told to befriend Ansari by MI6.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd signed public immunity certificates preventing disclosure of MI6's instructions. Balfour, still unemployed after being sacked three years ago, feels he was a pawn in the rivalry between MI5 and MI6.

Launch for South African election manifesto

SOUTH African members of the Workers International have launched the party's manifesto for the country's April elections, which calls for the destruction of the capitalist state and denounces the pro-capitalist nature of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party.

Widely

Some 65 people, mostly workers, were at the 5 March Western Cape meeting, widely reported on television and radio news programmes.

Leon Caesar, a member of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (South Africa), explained to the meeting that the manifesto is divided into two main areas;

the opening section deals with six major political questions, and is followed by a platform of demands.

The most important demands in the manifesto — published in the Workers Press on 26 February — he said are:

■ The destruction of the capitalist state and the building of a workers' state;

■ The nationalisation of factories, mines, banks and other big companies under workers' control and without compensation;

■ The nationalisation of capitalist farms, under the control of those who work them and without compensation;

■ A guaranteed living wage linked to inflation.

Comrade Caesar then set out in detail the political questions

raised in the introduction to the manifesto. They are:

■ The exploitative nature and contradictions of capitalism;

■ That only revolution can end this rotten system;

■ The necessity of socialism as the only means by which the needs of the majority of society can be satisfied;

■ It was not socialism that collapsed in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe but counter-revolutionary Stalinism;

■ The historical role of Stalinism as the grave-digger of the socialist revolution;

■ The pro-capitalist nature of the African National Congress/South African Communist Party/Congress of South African Trade Unions alliance, and the necessity to break it.

The second speaker dealt with the concessions made to the right wing by the Stalinist SACP and the ANC. He condemned those concessions as being aimed at strengthening the forces of reaction against the working class. He particularly denounced concessions made to Inkatha.

Desire

The meeting was followed by a lively discussion, with many questions being answered on the views of the Workers International.

Many members of the audience expressed a desire to continue discussing with the Workers International, and to volunteer their assistance with the election campaign.

International shorts

Wage cut sparks spectre of 1968

FRANCE is lurching towards big class battles in opposition to Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's plans to cut the minimum wage for young workers.

Last Saturday, 200,000 young people and trades unionists marched against the cut. Previously a demonstration in Paris had turned into what 'The Times' called a 'riot', expressing anger at the measure. Further marches are planned.

An opinion poll showed that 70 per cent of the population believes that 'a serious social crisis' is on the cards, bringing the spectre of 1968 into the mind of the ruling class.

The French government is under pressure to make the wage cut from economists, reflecting the demands of the banks.

on how to suppress Kashmir, using the example of Ireland.

Echoing his strategy on Ireland, Major advised the Indian prime minister, Narasimha Rao, to open 'dialogue' with Pakistan to jointly suppress the call for an independent Kashmir.

This was dressed up by calling on India to respect 'human rights', something distinctly lacking in the behaviour of the British state in Ireland.

Nuke sub time-bomb

A NUCLEAR submarine lost in 1989 could be the source of future radioactive pollution of an area of several thousand square kilometres.

Originally scientists thought that the two nuclear warheads on the Russian sub would leak in tiny amounts over hundreds of years. But Russian military scientists now say that reactions between sea water, the torpedos, and the titanium hull are speeding up the corrosion of the warheads.

A British nuclear engineer thinks the leak could happen at any time.

The Russians fear widespread fish contamination within three years. The nuclear engine of the sub is also dangerous. It is believed to have been damaged in an explosion after a fire. It's awash with sea water and may 'go critical' soon.

German Social Democrats throw out war refugees

SOCIAL democrats in one German industrial region are behind a plan to deport thousands of Yugoslav war refugees and victims of racism.

An airlift organised by the interior ministry of the state of North-Rhine Westphalia has been postponed after objections from the Romanian government. The refugees were to have been flown to the Romanian city of Timisoara and bused over the border into Serbia.

Pleas

Rejecting pleas from Churches and human-rights organisations on behalf of Kosovan Albanians who fled Serb repression, the state's Social-Democrat interior minister, Herbert Schnoor, said he had assurances they would be safe.

Under Germany's tough new immigration laws, all Serbs, Montenegrins and Kosovans

fleeing the former Yugoslavia to get away from the war and repression risk being declared illegal aliens. Federal Interior Minister Manfred Kanther, whose officials estimate more than 200,000 refugees may be affected, has given states the go-ahead for mass expulsions.

Green Party MPs have protested against the moves. But in North-Rhine Westphalia so far 600 out of over 50,000 Yugoslav war refugees have been certified as 'illegal'. Social-Democrat Schnoor blames 'foreigners' for rising crime, and claims that 'there is no war going on and we must send them all back', according to the 'Rheinische Post'.

■ Labour Euro-MP Glyn Ford and others are urging expulsion of the Italian Social Democrats from the Socialist International and European Socialist Party after they joined an election coalition with the fascist MSI.

Major gives advice to India on Kashmir

PRIME Minister John Major is advising the Indian government



Poverty on wheels in Aachen

THERE is a move in some German cities to force car-owning social security claimants to sell their vehicles and use the money to support themselves. In Aachen, for example, the authorities aim to save DM800,000 (£320,000) annually by this action of 'turning cars into bread', according to 'Neue Ruhr Zeitung'. This has been made possible by applying a new law allowing computer data of car-owners to be combined with social security files.

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TUC 'relaunch'

AFTER Tory Treasury minister Stephen Dorrell lectures trades unionists on keeping pay down, the TUC extends an invitation to the employment secretary, David Hunt, who wants Europe to remove laws restricting the exploitation of young people.

Meanwhile industry minister Richard Needham has thanked TUC general secretary John Monks for his support 'for government efforts to mend trading relations with Malaysia'. Sweated labour and arms deals — what an inspiring vision the Tories and their friends in the TUC offer us.

Parliament survives

ON WEDNESDAY 23 February, after signing on, I set off in the rain, and in some trepidation, for parliament. Workers Aid for Bosnia was meeting some Labour MPs. A nationwide student protest against Tory grant cuts was planned the same afternoon.

'Socialist Worker' posters were proclaiming a 'March on Parliament'. But police do not allow marches near parliament when it's sitting. What if I found myself caught in a mêlée, or, more embarrassingly, behind police lines protecting the bourgeois institution?!

A national wave of occupations and a march on parliament would stop the Tories and bring the government down,' claimed 'Socialist Worker' leaflets. On the day, 20,000 students marched through London to a rally.

According to 'Socialist Organiser' (25 February and 3 March), Socialist Workers Party (SWP) members occupied a traffic island in Kingsway, bawling through megaphones at people to join them marching on parliament. Later they crossed Waterloo bridge to confront police lines, then had to run to catch up with the rest of the demonstration.

Asked why they didn't march on parliament, an SWP steward said 'We're not adventurists', 'Socialist Organiser' alleges. 'Plan B', a sit-down in the road, had been abandoned. It was too cold and wet.

'Socialist Worker' (5 March) made it sound more heroic: 'Four times demonstrators braved police batons to try to march on parliament.' Nothing was said on its own supporters. Quoting student grievances, it added: 'Many were angry they were not allowed to march on parliament. "We came to make our point to MPs, but the police wouldn't let us," said a Newcastle student. "Is this democracy?"'

Had talk of marching on parliament concealed the modest goal of lobbying MPs? The SWP lives by ambiguity. Some students took their militancy more seriously, and three were arrested after scuffles. 'Socialist Worker' has appealed to 'anyone with photos of police brutality/arrests'.

Surprising they didn't have cameras handy, if they hoped to 'bring down the government' that afternoon. They did have membership forms to hand — 'Socialist Worker' claims many new members were signed up. 'Socialist Organiser' alleges the SWP's whole object was to assert itself against rivals in the student movement. Some things don't change.

Back at the palace of Westminster, after our useful meeting with Labour MP Colin Pickthall, as we crossed the draughty great hall to go out, a policeman asked sternly if I'd mind removing my cap in the House. Did Keir Hardie have this trouble? I did mind but, much to my comrades' amusement, complied. There goes the image. Guess I'm not an adventurist either.

Charlie Pottins

The cynicism behind the international 'peace' efforts in Bosnia has been revealed by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, in an interview with 'Le Monde' newspaper (24 February). BOB ARCHER explains

JUPPÉ is very frank about the aims of international diplomacy in the former Yugoslavia. First he makes it absolutely clear that the 'great powers' treat the former Yugoslavia as a pawn in their plans.

Asked why it had taken so long to issue an ultimatum to the Serbs about their activities around Sarajevo, Juppé replied:

'The will to do so has already existed for a long time in us and some of our partners, but not in all of them. Some of the European countries . . . and some of the countries outside of the European Union were very hesitant about using force.'

So the Bosnian people are supposed simply to wait until the imperialists can decide what is best for them.

Ultimatum

But just in case anybody thought the recent ultimatum actually means that the powerful nations have finally made up their minds to guarantee the existence of a free independent Bosnia, Juppé explained the real state of affairs simply and directly.

The Sarajevo area is to be placed under 'a United Nations authority which will exercise administrative power over the whole zone, whereas at the moment there is a multitude of civil and military people putting their oar in'. Juppé here slurs over the fact that many of these people are Bosnians trying to govern their own country.

The 'Le Monde' journalist — clearly a bit put out by this brutal admission — suggested that it 'sounded a colonial-style mandate

. . . a deprivation of sovereignty'. But don't you see, stammered Juppé, that as far as the Sarajevo area is concerned 'we still haven't been able to agree on how to share the land out between Serbs and Muslims'.

In other words his aim is precisely to deprive Bosnia of sovereignty. The journalist immediately caught his drift and asked: 'You mean partition?'

'In the absence of an agreement,' replied Juppé, 'for a transitional period of two years, we have decided that power in

'If by misfortune a powerful neighbour invades a peaceful little country, the UN will . . . occupy the victim's capital and unseat the legitimate government until it comes to its senses and caves in to the aggressor.'

Sarajevo will be exercised by the UN in such a way that in the meantime the parties can agree on a definitive settlement.'

In plain words: yes, the United Nations will run the region in such a way as to force the multi-religious, multi-ethnic Bosnian government to concede territory to

What powers 'peace'

the ultra-nationalist Serb party.

It is worth reproducing whole sections of the interview.

Interviewer: 'Exactly what will the UN exercise power over?'

Juppé: 'The town [Sarajevo] will be governed by the UN. It must therefore be demilitarised, which implies control over heavy weapons and the infantry.'

Difficult

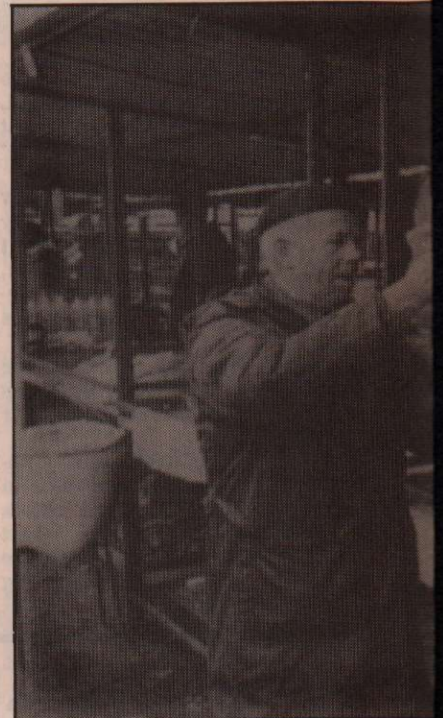
Interviewer: 'It looks as if it will be fairly difficult to make the Bosnians accept that.'

Juppé: 'That is so of the Serbs too. They are present in Sarajevo. There are Serb areas and Serb troops. It goes for everybody.'

Interviewer: 'But it's the capital of the Bosnian state.'

Juppé: 'It is the capital of a state which does not at present exercise its authority over the whole of Bosnia. We are therefore fully justified in obtaining this transitional mandate.'

It is characteristic of the 'new



The UN treatment: an empty market in

No more blood

Tower Hamlets is currently the focus of the fight against fascism and racism in Britain. MIKE COOKE reviews an important pamphlet that the trades council in this London borough has just brought out. It gives the fight not just a local, but a much wider, international perspective and proposes some practical first steps

THERE are no simple answers in the fight against racism and fascism. 'No More Blood on the Streets' is an important contribution to the fight for a serious programme to address the problems that lead people to consider racism and fascism as solutions to their problems.

This 24-page pamphlet, published by Tower Hamlets trades council (THTC), tackles the problem of rebuilding working-class consciousness as the only means to definitively beat the fascists, and their roots in capitalist decay.

It's written during a serious situation in London's East End, with the borough of Tower Hamlets at its centre. Racist attacks there have resulted in life-threatening injuries for young men such as Qudus Ali and Mukhtar Ahmed; and the fascist Derek Beackon has been elected as a councillor in the Mill-wall ward.

The pamphlet goes beyond the local issues, and beyond denouncing the fascists, to put capitalism, in Britain and internationally, in the dock. Also squarely in the frame are those misleaders of the working class — the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy — who fight against independent class-consciousness in the workers' movement, doing an invaluable job for the ruling class.

A look at the contents page shows

it is not produced by an anti-racist or anti-fascist group, but is part of the struggle to rebuild working-class consciousness. The headings are: Economics of the madhouse; The attack on the trade unions; Privatisation and the welfare state; Racism in the working class and trade union movement; Internationalism versus nationalism; The rise of fascism in Europe; The Labour Party; Housing and the Labour Party; The London Docklands Development Corporation; The Liberals; Rebuilding the working class movement in Tower Hamlets.

The last section draws the analysis together into a programme, 'How to fight racism and fascism': Bring the community together in one struggle; Fight the fascists and those influenced by them; Force the TUC to mobilise; Prepare for a long campaign; and, Build stronger trade unions.

In the section 'Prepare for a long campaign', Tower Hamlets trades council sets out a 14-point programme that looks beyond today's (19 March) TUC demonstration in the East End against racism to how to sort out the real problems that lead to racism in Tower Hamlets. Many of these points deal with the housing crisis in this London borough, which was central to the dissatisfaction that led to the election of a fascist councillor.



Anti-BNP protest in Welling, south-east London, last year Photo: Alan Clark

the 'great powers' mean by in Bosnia



UN secretary-general Boutros-Ghali in Sarajevo last year



Tuzla last year

world order' that a leading diplomat should explain things in terms of *realpolitik*. Woe to the weak!

Aggressor

If by misfortune a powerful neighbour invades a peaceful little country, the UN will . . . occupy the victim's capital and unseat the legitimate government until it comes to its senses and caves in to the aggressor.

After all, 'the same goes for all of them', aggressor and victim alike.

'So actually nobody is defending the unity of Bosnia-Herzegovina?' asked the interviewer.

'In the current situation that is a fiction,' Juppé replied.

And asked why Tuzla's airport is still closed, Juppé said: 'What UNPROFOR [the United Nations Protection Force] has tried to do at Srebrenica and at Tuzla is to apply UN decisions by mutual consent, that is to say by winning

the agreement of the Serbs.'

Asked whether Bosnia's President Alija Izetbegovic has agreed to the proposed UN administration, Juppé said he had agreed to it in principle last November. Later in the interview, he added:

'The Americans have already told the Bosnians: no provocations, respect the ceasefire, put your weapons under UN control. They got it.'

So all the breast-beating over the Sarajevo ultimatum was done in the full knowledge that Izetbegovic was prepared to concede Bosnian sovereignty anyway.

Tuzla gets different treatment because there and in the surrounding area those in authority have a quite different approach from Izetbegovic.

Juppé calmly proposed a 'Muslim'-Croat confederation on 51 per cent of Bosnian territory and the rest in the hands of the Serb nationalists.

Asked whether it is time for a new peace conference with all the parties around a table, Juppé replied:

'Before we get involved in that sort of exercise there has to be agreement between the Americans, the Russians and us about the bases of an overall settlement.'

Future

'Does this exercise between great powers have a bearing on Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia?' the interviewer asked.

'It will have to,' said Juppé, who spoke about a 'great conference' on the Balkans at some time in the future.

Obviously we are only at the beginning of the 'great game' in former Yugoslavia.

Is it not essential to oppose such 'great-power' cynicism with the international solidarity of the working class?

No blood on the streets!

The pamphlet highlights the money squandered by the London Docklands Development Corporation on building now-empty offices while people in the area struggle to find a roof over their head.

The section 'Fight the fascists and those influenced by them' calls for the mobilisation of trades unionists willing to see the fascists off wherever they seek to organise.

It also seeks the way for local people to be under the leadership of the working class, their own class, not the fascists: 'We must drive a wedge between the known fascists and the erstwhile supporters by proposing, in particular, to white working-class youth a programme of action. These young people ought to belong to us, not to the fascists.'

'Having said this we are not naive liberals and where debate is not possible the Bengali families must be physically protected.'

International context

THE pamphlet puts the fight against racism and fascism in the context of the decay of capitalism internationally and in particular in the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe, where Stalinism collapsed in 1989, exposing the myth of 'socialism in one country':

'These countries were never socialist or communist, and capitalism does not have the strength to absorb them peacefully into its system. . . .

'Unemployment has now ripped through the guts of Europe and brought with it the only solution that capitalism has — the final solution — the destruction of the organised

working class. The rise of fascism in Europe and now the former Soviet Union puts the election of Derek Beackon in its international context.

'So much for the victory of "democracy" over fascism trumpeted after the second world war. The question is what is the working class going to do about it?

'One thing is clear: the barbarism unleashed in the former Yugoslavia is only the beginning of what is in store for the rest of Europe unless the working class can unite internationally. It is for this reason that the THTC has supported the "Workers Aid for Bosnia" convoys and urges everyone to become involved in this campaign.'

But the pamphlet doesn't treat the sources of fascism in an ab-

'How many Bengali militants have been won to lead, not only their own community, but the whole of the working class in our area — or any area? This is the acid test and when we can answer it positively only then can we say that progress is being made.'

stract way. It deals with its expression in the borough of Tower Hamlets and the way that when Labour controlled the council it sold off social housing, which led to the crisis on the Isle of Dogs. Nowhere has the leadership of the Labour Party put up any real opposition to the cuts in social provision.

'Labour Party-run local authorities enthusiastically carry out

Tory cuts and bleat about the "law". Those in the Labour Party who put up a real opposition to the Tories are thrown out.

'What does the Labour Party offer those who support its position? The prospect of a Labour government. Having lost four elections in a row this promise is threadbare. But even if it was not, what kind of Labour government would it be? No different, in essence, from the Tories.'

Fighting racism

A SECTION, 'Racism in the working class and trade union movement: Internationalism versus nationalism', gives a short history of the fight against racism in the workers' movement, from the use of racism to justify the slave trade.

'Ever since the heyday of the British Empire, British workers have been fed a diet of national superiority over others although thousands of them worked in appalling conditions in factories, mines and mills, and lived in the dreadful squalor of the slums.

'This diet was paid for out of the sweat and sacrifice of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples ensured by the brutal suppression of national liberation movements, the requirement to supply cheap produce to Britain, and the destruction of local industries such as those of the Indian sub-continent to guarantee markets for English cotton goods.'

Rather than divorcing fascism and racism from the working-class movement this history deals with the struggles' highs and lows.

'These racist myths of superiority have sunk deep into the con-

sciousness of the white working class. They have been preserved and cultivated in each succeeding generation — even among trades unionists. We need only recall the infamous dockers' and meat porters' march of April 1968 in support of Enoch Powell to show how persistent these ideas are.

'But nationalist and racist ideas were fought at every stage, with the early working-class opposition to slavery and the Chartists who rallied to the support of their fellow workers in Ireland, France and Hungary in the 1840s and 1850s.

'The British working class experienced a brief historical period when international solidarity was not just words. The action of British dock workers in refusing to load ships being used to arm the imperialist intervention against the infant USSR was a landmark in international solidarity.

'But there was another side to working-class life in Britain in 1919. The racism which had been inculcated in the British working class for centuries was now needed by the ruling class to head off the threatening revolution as the post-war slump led to a massive increase in unemployment.

'Anti-black riots broke out in Liverpool, Bristol and Cardiff and anti-black and anti-Chinese riots exploded in London. The social crisis again demanded that scapegoats be found. We often commemorate the Battle of Cable Street of 1936 and are right to do so but we hardly ever mention the racist attacks perpetrated upon black seamen in the same Cable Street and in the East End generally only 17 years previously.

'There was a possibility of building upon the gains of the Russian Revolution in the 1920s and substantially eradicating the backward ideas of racism in the movement. Take the example of Shapurji Saklatvala who stood as a Labour candidate in North Battersea in 1922 and won, and then,

after losing the seat in 1923, stood as a Communist in 1924 and won again, holding the seat until 1929.

'What a prospect for the ruling class. One can still hear the collective gulp — an Indian Communist winning a white working-class constituency in the heart of the capital! People like Saklatvala were won to internationalism because they saw this as the future of humanity.'

Leading the class

BUT what about today? The pamphlet asks: 'how many Bengali militants have been won to lead, not only their own community, but the whole of the working class in our area — or any area? This is the acid test and when we can answer it positively only then can we say that progress is being made.'

'Youth Connection' and 'Women Unite Against Racism' are two examples cited of people coming forward to lead the fight against racism.

'We have a particular responsibility to renew our commitment to internationalism in our area.

'For over 150 years the East End has been the place where refugees and the persecuted have sought protection. The French Huguenots, the Jews fleeing the pogroms of Eastern Europe, the Bengalis, the Somalis, the African Caribbeans and recently the Bosnians have all settled in Tower Hamlets. Our predecessors fought to unite all these peoples.

'We must rebuild our internationalism by first and foremost coming to their aid, not only in the fight against racism, but in all aspects of their lives. We will learn a great deal about real struggle if this work is taken seriously.'

■ **'No More Blood on the Streets: How to Fight Fascism and Racism'**, is available from M. Westwood, Tower Hamlets Trades Union Council, Davenant Centre, 179-181 Whitechapel Road, London E1. The price is £1 plus 25p postage. Bulk orders are welcome.

John Fordun

Oscar, Gerry and Oskar

IT'S Oscar time again — Hollywood's annual orgy when the Muse of Cinema renews her pact with the Devil of Commercialism, and when artists demean themselves by behaving like stars. I don't know who will win the coveted statuettes, but two much-nominated movies certainly raise interesting questions.

One is Jim Sheridan's 'In the Name of the Father' — about the wrongful imprisonment of 11 innocent Irish people for the pub-bombings in Guildford in 1974. The other is Steven Spielberg's 'Schindler's List' — about a Nazi businessman, Oskar Schindler, who arranged for over a thousand Polish Jews to escape the Holocaust.

Both deal with historical events which matter politically. How we understand them will be affected by, and may affect, our political attitudes and actions. What sort of obligation does this put on film-makers to be as true as possible to the known historical record?

Sheridan's cavalier attitude to the facts about the Guildford Four and the Maguire Seven has been well publicised. In the film the two cases are implausibly lumped together, though the courts dealt with them separately.

The central drama of the film lies in the relationship between Gerry Conlon (Daniel Day-Lewis) and his father Giuseppe (Pete Postlethwaite). It evolves from conflict to reconciliation in a shared prison cell. In reality Gerry and his father never lived together in jail.

There is an unrealistic courtroom climax in which lawyer Gareth Pierce (Emma Thompson) confronts, and confounds, a fictional cop called Dixon — a character created to embody police corruption, played, strange to say, by Corin Redgrave.

These are only Sheridan's major inventions, made, you might think, in the name of the box-office.

* * * * *

WITH 'Schindler's List', Hollywood's supreme manipulator turns his attention to a theme calculated to make even him feel small. Spielberg acknowledges this by studiously avoiding making a typical Spielberg movie.

The film is mostly in black-and-white and has a documentary feel. It eschews obviously expensive grand effects. Hand-held cameras give a sense of the identity of individuals within mass events. It reminds you a little of Eisenstein.

There is much to be said for 'Schindler's List'. The film places the Holocaust squarely on Hollywood's agenda, and confutes the neo-Nazi lie that it never happened, or that, if it did, it was no different from other slaughters. It gives some sense of what concentration camps were for — the organisation of slave-labour first, the extermination of Jews only later.

On the other hand, interpretation does not go much beyond the conventional throwing up of hands in horror at the obscenity of anti-Semitism. This is not the story to take popular thinking into the realm of why the victims of the Nazis were communists, socialists, trades unionists, gays, and Gypsies as well as Jews. And Schindler's motivation is scarcely explored, which makes Liam Neeson's task in playing him very difficult.

* * * * *

'SCHINDLER'S LIST', as a recently reshown TV documentary brought out, does not attempt to tell everything as it happened. But no movie could do that, and the film has a sense

of loyalty to historical truth which contrasts with 'In the Name of the Father'. There is, however, a different problem with the Spielberg approach.

By determinedly not mounting a Hollywood operation to manipulate our emotions, the director creates a distance which makes the horror tolerable at the expense of leaving the audience, for a good deal of the time, curiously uninvolved. This, in itself, is a legitimate strategy; except that, just when we need to be allowed to think for ourselves about what we have seen, Spielberg pulls out the old bag of tricks.

Churchill's voice, on the radio, announces the German surrender. Schindler challenges the soldiers guarding his Jewish workers to seize the moment to massacre them, or leave with a chance of a clear conscience. The guards file out of the factory.

Schindler makes his confession: he might have saved more Jews, had he been less prodigal with the fortune he made from their unpaid labour. But his Jewish accountant (Ben Kingsley) assures him that he did his best.

We cut to present-day Israel, and into Mediterranean colour. The reconciliation theme moves from barely tolerable artistic licence to crass political evasion. We are told how the Israeli state signalled its gratitude to Schindler.

We see surviving *Schindlerjuden*, filing in homage past the Nazi's grave, each accompanied by the appropriate actor. 'Well, that's all right then!' muttered someone sitting near me in audible disgust. You could see what she meant.

* * * * *

IN THIS case, facts have not been invented. But they have been used to seal off what should have been left open-ended; to tell us what to think and feel, in the tradition of the Hollywood schmaltz-factory. Many will no doubt resist, and go home to their own reflections. But that will be despite Spielberg, not because of him.

Beside this, Sheridan's 'faction' seems the lesser offence. It is at least transparent. His only real sleight-of-hand is his use of a stereotype IRA hard-man (Don Baker), not to deepen understanding of the character, but as a narrative device to provide his Gerry Conlon with a path to redemption.

Some subversions of fact, such as fictionalising the police, may be excused on the grounds that a court has somehow concluded that the real-life ones have no case to answer for perverting the course of justice. It would probably be libellous to imply otherwise.

Much publicity was inevitably going to accompany the film: Sheridan may reasonably say that almost everyone who sees it will know that he has remade history; and that audiences will surely be moved to find out what *actually* happened, and draw their own conclusions.

Perhaps that is true of 'Schindler's List' also. Some young people, interviewed by 'The Times', said that the film had made them think about the Holocaust for the first time. But I hope that Spielberg has not woven his spell over them to the extent that their thinking remains confined within the boundaries of his own sentimentality, where everything is explained in terms of human inhumanity being overcome by human forgiveness.

For practical purposes, understanding how Nazism made huge profits for the capitalist Schindler matters more than knowing how he saved a smallish cohort from the chimney at Auschwitz. A successful Hollywood producer-director, however, is not likely to be the sort of person who will tell you that.

TB

Television

The serious side of laughter

Review by Anton Moctonian

WALKING along a street in contemporary Munich, wearing the striped uniform of a concentration camp inmate, actor Anthony Sher smiles maniacally at the camera and asks a serious question.

'Of course it could never happen again, could it?' Observed by uncomfortable and perplexed onlookers, Sher's lines formed the climax to an outstanding SCREEN TWO production, 'Genghis Cohn' (BBC2, 2 March), that explored the complex relationship between oppression, comedy and revenge.

The hero of the piece, Cohn, is a ventriloquist in pre-war Germany whose dummy looks like the Fuehrer. Not that funny, he has, in his own words, 'died in some of the classiest places in Europe'.

Hounded by the Nazis for his chutzpah, we see him beaten up by them in Vienna, Munich and Warsaw. When the Nazis come to power he is sent to Dachau, for this is a society in which satire cannot be tolerated.

Execution

Cohn is later taken to a freshly dug trench at the edge of a wood. Facing death, he is defiant to the end. Realising his fate, Cohn turns to the officer supervising his execution and yells 'Kish mir in tochus!' (Yiddish for 'kiss my arse!').

From this scene of Cohn's death in a quicklime ditch, the camera cuts to a sanitised Bavaria in 1958 where a synchronised swimming display is being performed in front of local dignitaries. Elijah Moshinsky, the play's director, juxtaposes these two images to great

effect: from the ditch to the chlorine-filled pool. A society changed beyond recognition. Or has it?

It is to this small Bavarian community that Cohn's ghost returns to haunt the SS officer who, his murderous past now

appearing in his vocabulary.

Soon he is eating chopped-liver sandwiches and saying the Jewish prayer for the dead in a derelict synagogue. By the end of the film Schatz is running his own kosher snack-bar.

Indeed, Schatz's transforma-



Anthony Sher (left) and Robert Lindsay in 'Genghis Cohn'

buried, has become Inspector Schatz, respected chief of police.

Schatz, played by Robert Lindsay, is investigating a series of bizarre sex murders when Cohn begins to work his magic spell. Schatz's personality slowly begins to change as he develops a rapport with Cohn. The occasional Yiddish word

is a comic device that runs through the film. From SS officer and respected chief of police to born-again Jew. Running parallel to this is his journey into insanity; from occasional nervous twitch to full-blown madness.

The film, though a comedy, has a serious edge. When asked

by a superior officer if he had been involved in murders before, Schatz answers forgetfully, 'Yes, but not like this; not cold-blooded'. And we are reminded that the serial killer the inspector is looking for is a small-fry compared to the Schatzs of the past.

'The Underworld' (Wednesdays, BBC1) has been looking at one of British capitalism's feather growth industries: crime. A verbal history told by the participants themselves is not the most reliable method of recording the past, especially where the police provide part of the testimony.

Yet the programme scores quite high on entertainment value. With ripping yarns told about murky gangland characters such as the Krays, the Richardsons, and Jack 'the Hat' McVitie.

Self-parody

But the series comes very close to self-parody with its cliché-ridden script. Read by gruff-voiced Bob Hoskins, it contains such old favourites as 'If you can't do the time, don't do the crime', etc.

If it's an interesting story you're after, you might do worse, but as for the truth you'd be better off watching 'Jack-anory'.

As it becomes more and more difficult to tell the difference between Tory and Labour leaders these days, there seems little point in continuing with 'Question Time' (Thursday, BBC1) in its present format. With the BBC seeking ways to economise, how about a panel of one and a 15-minute transmission time?

Programme guide

Saturday 19 March 'The Giant Awakes: A Very Chinese Solution'. Second of three programmes examining the dynamic changes in the country's economy (7.50pm, BBC2).

Sunday 20 March 'Kafka'. Zbigniew Rybczynski's inventive biographical study interweaves the author's life and work through a multi-layered video technique (11.20pm, Channel 4).

Monday 21 March BEYOND THE CLOUDS: 'To Be Remembered'. Final part of Phil Agland's amazing series (9pm, Channel 4). **CHINA IN REVOLUTION: 'The Mao Years'.** Eyewitnesses on torture, death and chaos of the Cultural Revolution (11.10pm, Channel 4).

Tuesday 22 March ASSIGNMENT: 'Quo Vadis Italy?'

Considers the country's prospects as it goes to the polls for the first time since the political status quo was shattered by allegations of wholesale corruption (7.45pm, BBC2).

Wednesday 23 March TIME-WATCH: 'Birthplace'. Henryk Grynberg returns to his Polish birthplace to discover the secret fate of his relatives 50 years after the Nazis forced the exodus of his and other Jewish families (8pm, BBC2).

Thursday 24 March CUTTING EDGE SPECIAL: 'Dead Reckoning'. Every year, 800 people die in accidents at work. Exposing the cosy relationship between company bosses and those charged with regulating industry, the programme also shows how the Health and Safe-

ty Executive fails to discover crucial information about firms' safety records (9pm, Channel 4).

Selected films

ELVIRA MADIGAN (1967). Bo Widerberg's sumptuous romance about an army officer and a tightrope artist (Sunday, 3pm, BBC2). **THE LAST TYCOON (1976).** Harold Pinter wrote the screenplay for this version of Scott Fitzgerald's unfinished novel. Directed by Elia Kazan, with Robert De Niro (Sunday, 9pm, Channel 4). **THE SEARCHERS (1956).** John Wayne gives one of his finest performances in this classic John Ford western (Sunday, 10.15pm, BBC2). JJ



Carpenter Mr Zhao is featured in the final part of 'Beyond the Clouds' (Channel 4, Monday)

Scottish literary renaissance

GEORGE ANGUS reviews the collection of short stories by Irvine Welsh, 'The Acid House', published by Jonathan Cape (£9.99)

IRVINE WELSH is set to be one of the leading lights of the Scottish literary renaissance, following in the wake of James Kelman, Liz Lochhead, Alasdair Gray and others. The feature that distinguishes this renaissance in Scotland and lifts it out of any nationalistic and parochial context is paradoxically the language used by these 'new' writers.

Welsh has been called 'the heavyweight champ of the vernacular' by Jeff Torrington (an ex-Linwood carworker and author of the Whitbread prize winning 'Swing Hammer Swing'). That some of Irvine's dialogue is written in Scots is to some extent a red herring, as that is how people actually speak; the real issue is what constitutes literature and more importantly who decides what is literature.

Writers are invariably told in classes up and down the country to write from their own experiences. But if this experience and the very language employed lies outside the constraints set for 'literature' then more often than not it is deemed to have no value.

This is of course understandable and unsurprising, as by questioning the constraints set by society for literature we confront the endemic elitism and class bias at the English end of the Anglo-American literary tradition. Irvine Welsh has transcended these constraints and in so doing has helped, hopefully, to make them redundant.

Welsh is undoubtedly a writer of major talent, he effortlessly inverts stereotypes, he handles both gritty realism and demented fantasy with equal aplomb. His characters are un-

compromisingly working class and refreshingly unromanticised.

His stories are often shocking and he has been called 'the voice of punk grown up', although in a sense this is to undervalue what he's doing. He is a master of ironic humour: in one story, 'The Two Philosophers', Professor Lou Ornstein (convinced rationalist and Marxist) and Professor Gus McGlone (classical liberal) embark on an ill-fated experiment to find who has the most 'user-friendly' philosophy.

Boot

This ends up with a 'square go' outside a pub in Govan where the 'The Chicago materialist, urged on by the crowd, put the boot into the prostrate classical liberal'.

The story featuring Madonna, Kim Basinger, Kylie Minogue and Victoria Principal lusting after Leith removal men

is equally arresting: 'Madonna flicked idly through the magazine called *Rodge*, coming to an abrupt halt as her eyes feasted on the pallid figure of Deek Prentice, resplendent in a purple, aqua and black shell-suit. "Phoah! Ah'd shag the erse oaf that anyway."'

However some of Welsh's more serious work is extremely dark, with its roots in Dostoevsky, Burroughs and Bukowski. Tales of contemporary drug addiction, violence and theft vie with the bizarre and tragic account of Boab Coyle being turned into a house fly by God.

Welsh's exhilarating imagination and innovation are a constant wonder, his gift for rendering working-class language is almost unequalled, his observations unnervefully accurate. This outstandingly original book is by turns funny, scary and revolting. But then if you don't like that sort of thing there's always Edwina Currie or Lord Archer.

Labour MPs support Workers Aid convoy

BY MIKE COOKE

THIRTEEN Labour MPs have supported Workers Aid for Bosnia by tabling an 'early day' motion supporting the all-European Workers Aid convoy.

While early day motions generally do not have much chance of being debated or voted on, it does show support for the convoy among backbench Labour MPs.

The motion states: 'That this house commends Workers Aid for Bosnia for its campaign to open the northern route to Tuzla and Central Bosnia for aid convoys; urges the government to use all its influence to help in that campaign and to support the international convoy of Workers Aid assembling at Zupanja on 26 March with the British contingent assembling at Dover on 19 March; and expresses its deep

alarm that the obvious short route into northern Bosnia has not been utilised by the United Nations authorities.'

The motion was originally signed by: Colin Pickthall, Harry Barnes, Ken Livingstone, Jeremy Corbyn, Lynne Jones, Max Madden, Michael Connarty, Terry Davis, Lawrence Culliffe, Eddie Loyden, John Evans, Thomas Graham and Norman A. Godman. More Labour MPs have since come forward in support.

A motion was also passed in the European parliament, moved by the Green block of parties, which called on it to support convoys like those of Workers Aid and Citizens for Citizens.

A delegation of British Labour MPs to the Croatian embassy is planned for next Monday to help ease the convoy's passage through that country.



In the run-up to the Workers Aid convoy's departure, trucks have travelled up and down the country, collecting aid and money. Here, in Edinburgh's Parliament Square, trucks and campaigners were met by a group of Labour councillors and workers in the Labour group office. Photo by John McLauchlan

Mr Benn and Bosnia

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

LABOUR MP Tony Benn has espied a new danger on the horizon for Bosnia. Not partition, nor more 'ethnic cleansing', nor worsening conditions of siege and suffering.

Benn asked a question in parliament on 10 March about the big danger in the news that the Turkish government had offered to send troops to Bosnia as part of the United Nations force.

We have warned already that the British government wants Turkish collaboration with its Balkan policy, though not necessarily Turkish troops. NATO will continue backing the Turkish regime's repression of the Kurds, including cross-border attacks into Iraq-Kurdistan, so long as the Turkish government exercises 'restraint' on Bosnia and any Muslim states thinking of supporting it.

On 11 March, Labour MP John Cunningham asked for a statement about the visit to Britain of General Iltar, commander of the Turkish gendarmerie. In reply, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said the general had discussed 'topics of common interest with Home Office, Customs and Excise and the Ministry of Defence. In Northern Ireland he was briefed on the principles underlying our security policy there.'

Angry

In Turkey people distressed and angry at the atrocities against Muslims in Bosnia ask why their troops can be used for UN intervention in Korea or Somalia, but aren't acceptable to defend people in Bosnia. If Turkish troops are sent to Bosnia, their chief job will be to police the Bosnian people, particularly the Muslims. But this isn't Tony Benn's worry.

He asked in parliament: 'Apart from the uneasiness felt by many people of different opinions at Britain getting deeper and deeper into what the Foreign Secretary described on 10 February as a civil war, is the Secretary of State aware that to send Turkish troops would be historically illiterate and intensely dangerous, not only because Turkey ruled that part of the world for six centuries, but because Turkish troops occupy northern Cyprus, against United Nations instructions, and are themselves violators of international law?'

'Will he make it absolutely clear that there would be no British government support of Turkish troops being sent into the former Yugoslavia.'

Benn remains a wholehearted supporter of the imperialist United Nations, notwithstanding its rotten record on Palestine, Korea, Congo-Zaire, and elsewhere.

He does not raise the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus to expose the hypocrisy of UN resolutions, which are never implemented unless they suit imperialist strategy. He does not question the basis of British and UN intervention in former Yugoslavia.

Hence this fading star of the Labour 'left', Stalinist, 'Socialist Outlook', etc., grasps the Tory foreign secretary's line that what is happening to the Bosnian people is just 'a civil war'.

He alludes not to anti-imperialist sentiment but to 'people of different opinions', meaning those Tories who are concerned at the strain on the British military, or blame the Balkan wars entirely on German influence, and support Milosevic's Serbia.

'The Times' and the 'Morning Star' have a not dissimilar viewpoint on this, and speak the same great-power, chauvinist language.

A 'Times' editorial on 23 February said: 'With the Russians now drawn in as protectors and enforcers of Serbian co-operation and the Americans as defenders of Muslim interests, the need for Germany to exploit its relations with the Croats has never been greater.'

'The German relationship with Croatia is old, and in the eyes of some, not very honourable. The wartime alliance is something the Germans would rather forget — though apparently not the Croats.'

Important

'More important and relevant to today's war is Germany's crucial decision in 1991 to force upon its European Union partners recognition of Croatia and Slovenia.'

'Whether in hindsight this lit the fuse for the Bosnian war is a matter of contentious dispute. What matters is that [Croatian] President Tudjman's government was deeply grateful...'

While making some factually correct points about Croat forces fighting in Bosnia, documented atrocities, and blockading

ing aid convoys, the conclusion reached by 'The Times' betrayed no sympathy for Bosnian aspirations, or the right to self-determination, squarely placing aggressors and victims on an equal footing:

'The Serbs are ready to halt their offensive; the Croats and Muslims are intent still on fighting. America may yet warn the Muslims of the futility of further conflict; Germany must spell out the same to the Croats' ('Kohl's Croats', 'The Times' 23 February).

Here's the 'Morning Star' the following day: 'The anti-Serb nature of the European Union's involvement fitted in with Germany's longstanding policy in the region, going back to before the First World War.'

'At that time, Germany backed Croatia to counter Serbia, where Russia had influence. On the other hand, Britain cultivated relations with Serbia as a counter to German influence in the region.'

'These relations and conflicting interests can be seen even today in the present crisis. It was Germany which pushed for the European Union to recognise first Slovenia and then Croatia, painting Serbia as the villain of the piece.' ('New factor gives hope', 'Morning Star' 24 February).

The 'Morning Star's' history is faulty: Croatia didn't exist as a state in World War I, but was ruled by Austria-Hungary, Germany's ally; a Croat fascist puppet state was set up during World War II.

Perhaps the 'Morning Star' gets its wars confused? It is already promising a D-Day commemorative issue. With Tony Benn in pursuit of 'Johnny Turk' how about a Gallipoli special?

If German imperialism was the sole culprit for World War I, were the Serb Socialists and the Bolsheviks wrong to oppose their own rulers in that war? Was the October Revolution a mistake?

For some of the forces dictating Russian policy now, the revolution was a crime against holy Russia and its pan-Slav mission. But for the 'Morning Star' the new hope in the Balkans is Russia's involvement.

'Now that the US, Russia and the other major European powers are involved, it is urgent that they meet.'

The offer of Turkish troops came as the British government was making a big show of claiming a shortage of troops as the

reason why the UN forces couldn't carry out their supposed humanitarian mission in Bosnia. It threatened to embarrass them into a change of tune.

That's what Benn was countering, albeit by referring to the Serb nationalist theme, which paints Bosnian Muslims as representing Turkish imperialism.

Benn's one-sided concern about Turkish involvement, and accusation of 'historical illiteracy' was thrown back at him easily enough by Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, who said whether or not the Turkish government's offer was accepted was a matter for the UN secretary general, adding:

'Although those are delicate and sensitive issues, there are already forces from Russia, for example in Bosnia. Russia is well known to have close links in the historical relationship with the Serbian community.'

Armed

'I do not believe that, automatically, it must follow that the historical background of various countries in the Balkans should preclude their being able to make a current contribution.'

At that rate Italian, if not yet German troops, may be despatched to Croatia, and one by one, in the name of peacekeeping, the armed camps take shape on ex-Yugoslav soil.

The Croat-Bosnian federation backed by the Clinton administration, if not a temporary agreement dictated by war, would leave Bosnia and ex-Yugoslavia divided much as they were between German and Italian zones in World War II.

The 'non-intervention' policy upheld by Tories and many so-called 'lefts' is as phoney as the Chamberlain government's 'non-intervention' in the Spanish civil war.

We do not want imperialist troops in Bosnia, under whatever flag. We demand the arms embargo is lifted to let the Bosnian people defend themselves against fascist aggression!

The one force which can challenge imperialist plans finds no recognition, let alone expression, in the speeches of leaders like Tony Benn, or the 'Morning Star's' editorials.

It is the working class internationally which must come to the Bosnian people's aid, champion self-determination and equality, and assist the workers of former Yugoslavia to establish class unity. That is Workers Aid for Bosnia's mission.

City Lights

Jobs famine

ONE oft-repeated Tory boast is that they have 'created' millions of jobs over the last ten years and more. As many of the recipients of these 'jobs' will testify, the majority of them are low-paid, often part-time ones to which no welfare benefits attach.

The reality in Britain, as well as in much of Europe and the United States, is that there are fewer hours worked but at the same time they are shared between more casualised and part-time workers.

Despite this chancellor Kenneth Clarke will no doubt trumpet his government's 'achievement' at the 'Jobs Summit' being held in Detroit this week. All the leading capitalist countries — the so-called G7 — were represented at the conference, called originally by US President Bill Clinton as yet another cheap electioneering stunt.

That Clinton called the conference in Detroit, where much of the motor trade has collapsed and where one-in-two young black people are out of work, is symbolic.

Clinton's commerce secretary, Ron Brown, talks of the 'tragedy' of unemployment. But the administration's recently unveiled 're-employment package' — which among other things slashed \$14 billion of spending by no longer extending unemployment benefit beyond the usual period, and by cutting welfare benefits to young people after two years to force them back to work — showed the real policy of the US government towards the unemployed.

Clinton probably retorted that the US economy has 'created' even more jobs over the period. And at first glance Clinton will have figures to support his claim: the number of jobs in the US has risen 50 per cent since 1970, the equivalent of 40 million 'new jobs.'

But what sort of jobs? US average wages in terms of what they can buy fell 10 per cent in the 20 years after 1972. In other words the expansion of jobs has been in the low-paid sector, with many of the 'jobs' paying wages hardly above the poverty line.

Considering the growth of the 'working poor', the 'economically inactive' and the high degree of insecurity attached to many of the 'new jobs', the US record is a sham.

Thus surveys of US workers show that a fifth expect to lose their jobs within the next year and another fifth to be temporarily laid off.

'To many Americans the costs are devastating in terms of poverty, inner-city slums and homelessness,' says Professor Richard Freeman of Harvard.

In any case the figures for Britain are hardly impressive. A recent study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the employment level in Britain last year was only 1 per cent above the 1970 level and 1.5 per cent below that of 1979 figures.

And this is part of a worldwide problem where the worst-paid third of the working class is facing an explosive growth, not merely of unemployment, but of jobs that neither pay a living wage nor last for very long. Even now there are 35 million unemployed in the OECD countries.

Unemployment in the European Community averaged 2 per cent in the 1960s but now stands at 11 per cent. Now the European Union, it has only 9 million more jobs than it had in 1970, allowing for changes in EU membership. This represents a

growth of barely 7 per cent over the whole 20 years.

In the light of these sort of facts, it is little wonder that the Chicago conference, which will last just a day and a half, has been widely denounced as a cynical gimmick.

Pension funding

IT IS the young who carry the main brunt of unemployment. But the prospects for the elderly are equally bleak. For on present trends one-third of people retiring face dire poverty.

Only two in three are covered by occupational pensions, meaning that millions have to rely exclusively on the state for their pensions. Since the link between changes in the state retirement pensions and the average level of earnings was broken in 1980, the relative value of pensions has been steadily eroded.

At the moment the state pension is worth around a sixth of average earnings but will be worth less than half that by the year 2040. In any case, the retirement pension is worth a smaller proportion of after-tax average earnings than at any time since 1948.

Trade crisis looms

SURGING imports and a collapse of exports to key European markets in December of last year pushed Britain's trade deficit to £13 billion for 1993 as a whole — some £2 billion higher than the Treasury anticipated in November.

Even the recorded rise in exports — a tiny £127 million in the month — was flattering, reflecting the use by employers of the bonus of devaluation to push prices up.

On the import side, City analysts said that these might have been underestimated to the tune of £1 billion. This is because of the inadequacies in the collection of data in the European Union. Based on VAT returns, the Central Statistical Office admits that the volume of imports is being seriously underestimated.

The City warned the government that the figures served to underline the chronic weakness of Britain's trading position, which has remained deep in deficit despite a prolonged recession.

'There is no doubt that the balance of payments constraint — a perennial problem for chancellors in years gone by — is back to haunt us,' said Neil MacKinnon, chief economist at US firm Citibank.

In a period of recession, in the past at any rate, exports rose and imports were severely cut back. This time no such thing has happened.

What now threatens to haunt the government is that it will be forced to push up interest rates to try and correct the deteriorating trade position. If the government is forced to such a move it would coincide with sharply increased tax rates due to operate from April.

These measures in combination would more than knock the wind out of the 'recovery' that Tory ministers have spent so much time hyping up in recent months.

Threadneedle

Workers Aid is Tuzla bound

FOUR Workers Aid for Bosnia trucks are on their way to Tuzla. They are carrying a delegation to plan the all-European Workers Aid convoy due to leave for Tuzla on 28 March, and to discuss the campaign to open the northern route.

But the start of the journey was not without problems. The organisers of the convoy — of which the four Workers Aid trucks are part — deliberately victimised them. Neither the four trucks nor their drivers were included on the approved list of those permitted to cross the border from Croatia into Herzegovina, the Croatian-held part of Bosnia.

When 21 trucks arrived at Kamensko, the four from Workers Aid were stopped. Finally the team got their permission after a delay of 18 hours. They were forced to travel alone, without the protection of the convoy.

Ceasefire

Members of Workers Aid had joined with others, particularly Bosnian truck drivers, in what was called a 'co-operative effort' to deliver aid as quickly as possible following the ceasefire agreement between the Bosnia-Herzegovina army and the Croatian HVO forces in central Bosnia.

But a much larger contingent of the effort has been kept in Stobrec truck park, near Split, on the Adriatic coast. It has been banned by the Joint Committee for Convoys.

The director of the Tuzla Logistic Centre in Zagreb, Edo Asceric, is responsible for the

From DOT GIBSON
in Croatia

trucks taking aid on behalf of the Tuzla-based humanitarian aid organisation 'Road of Salt and Grain'. He will remain in Split until his trucks are on the road. He thought he had at least helped to ensure that Workers Aid's trucks were accepted on the part of the convoy that was allowed to leave. He was mistaken.

Controls

Drivers with trucks full of aid have been standing by in Split waiting to go to Tuzla 'tomorrow'. But tomorrow never comes! With the 'ceasefire' and the 'accord' between the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatian governments has come the Joint Committee for Convoys under the title 'Road of Peace and Love'.

Behind this name, the joint committee controls things in the true spirit of the bureaucracy which the people of ex-Yugoslavia so desperately want to leave behind. This body, we are told, 'isn't UNPROFOR' (the UN Protection Force), 'it isn't the governments', and 'it isn't the armies'.

The joint committee is above reproach, apparently. It comprises 'high officials' and upstanding pillars of society from the two great humanitarian aid



Selling wood in Sarajevo. Now, the Bosnian Serb forces have turned their sights on Tuzla, destination of Workers Aid's convoy

organisations Merhamet (Muslim) and Caritas (Catholic).

The drivers search in vain for this joint committee. Not one of its members ventures into the truck park.

'It is nowhere and everywhere', said Edo Asceric, as angry truck drivers surrounded him demanding to know why they could not leave on their humanitarian mission to Tuzla. Some drivers have been in Stobrec for two weeks — all have been parked there for five days or more. At an angry meeting drivers expressed their feelings: 'Who is organising this outfit?' shouted one. 'We have been risking our lives all this time and now that we are told there is a ceasefire they won't let us go!'

'When is a ceasefire not a ceasefire?' asked another. He answered himself: 'When they stop aid trucks.' Drivers asked how they were supposed to survive without money for food.

The Workers Aid for Bosnia team at Stobrec were prepared to do everything to ensure a strong and united convoy. If necessary it would have blocked the entrance to the truck park to force the joint committee to report to drivers and get the convoy under way.

The Workers Aid blockade of the UNPROFOR headquarters in Zagreb in October 1993, in an effort to gain passage to Tuzla, is well-known amongst the drivers, who agree with Workers Aid's stand.

Haphazard

Cheek by jowl the trucks are parked in haphazard rows destined for various towns in central and northern Bosnia. Only the drivers themselves, and the faceless 'committee' with 'the papers' and 'the lists', know their destinations.

Guarding a gigantic empty warehouse in this large complex are four UNPROFOR soldiers who 'know nothing'. 'All activity has moved to the north', says a young member of BritBat, the British battalion, standing outside with an automatic weapon.

Groups of drivers are being joined by people wanting to accompany the convoy so they can get back home to Tuzla. The joint committee will not allow

Please, let us leave

Convoy drivers in the Stobrec truck park near Split sent this message to the Joint Committee for Convoys, which is keeping them from departing. Underneath a statement from the Workers Aid for Bosnia team to the joint committee.

Workers Aid's statement

WE UNDERSTAND that there is some doubt about the possibility of people being included in this convoy who do not intend to return to Split.

These people have been forced to live away from their homes because of the war. Many were wounded and, after being operated on in Germany, were kept in Croatia and refused re-entry to their homeland.

We, in Workers Aid for Bosnia, have witnessed the gradual healing of these people's wounds, but we have also seen the onset of deep depression as they have waited many months for their return.

Their only way home is through Croatia and from the south to northern Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is our understanding that the ceasefire now makes their return possible.

We appeal to the joint committee to enable this most humanitarian of acts to be carried out.

WE, the drivers of humanitarian aid trucks bound for Tuzla, are angry and dismayed to hear that the joint committee has decided to delay the convoy. Nobody reports to us, we are just left standing.

Some drivers have been in this truck park for ten days, others have been waiting in Zagreb. Now we hear that we can expect to wait even longer. Why?

The ceasefire is welcomed by all the common people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and every one of us wants to do all we can to deliver the much-needed food and medical aid. We thought the new accord would enable us to do this.

Unofficial reports we have received about the joint committee's considerations tell us that our trucks will be un-

loaded and re-loaded with other goods. The aid on our trucks is of good quality and consists of the supplies badly needed in Tuzla.

We have heard that the few parcels we have included for particular families will be removed.

In the name of humanity we suggest that the joint committee's attitude towards people who have been parted from their loved ones for a long time is against the spirit of the ceasefire.

We now call upon the joint committee to do everything possible to despatch the convoy to Tuzla immediately.

In addition to the foregoing it is also a problem that we have no money to pay for our subsistence if we are forced into a long wait.

anybody to join the convoy unless they will return to Croatia. Every Bosnian between 18 and 60 years of age must sign an undertaking not to return home!

Workers Aid members delivered a statement to the joint committee and a message drawn up with the other drivers. (These statements are printed on this page.)

Among those returning are wounded people operated on in Germany in May or June of last year. One young man has only one eye, another has one arm, another has lost a leg. As they took their shirts off in the sunny weather to work on the trucks, we saw on one young back four bullet wounds and a 12-inch scar, and on another a shattered shoulder.

Their doctor, Professor Osman Sinanovic, a miner's son from Tuzla, says that although the wounds are healing, the best medicine for their recovery

would be a return to their loved ones. But along the joint committee's 'Road of Peace and Love' Tuzla is being victimised.

Every driver knows that first in line for aid are the towns controlled by the ruling party, President Izetbegovic's Democratic Action (SDA). Tuzla, where the Reformist Party is in the majority, is not in favour.

Unloaded

A large convoy from Germany arrived in the middle of the night, and by morning was on its way to Kladanj in Bosnia. But the Tuzla trucks must be unloaded and reloaded with goods of the joint committee's choosing.

Even this is not done. The trucks are left standing. Among those waiting to leave is Ivan, of an organisation called Spiritual Reality, who says: 'The problem is that members of the joint

committee are more concerned with being seen as the ones to deliver the aid — so that they can win votes in the future — than they are with the well-being of the people.'

His words were confirmed when we heard that it is the Muslim members of the joint committee who are victimising Tuzla — the multi-ethnic working-class 'capital' of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Those who think they can get justice from the UN are deceived. At the UNPROFOR base they are met with bland faces and bland smiles, and comments such as 'The joint committee will decide', and 'The commander is in the field'.

The all-European Workers Aid convoy must maintain its independence. We are not on the vote-catching road of so-called 'peace and love'. We are on a mission of international workers' solidarity.



The UN works with Serb forces to completely control Sarajevo

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