

Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International Advance notice Memorial Meeting

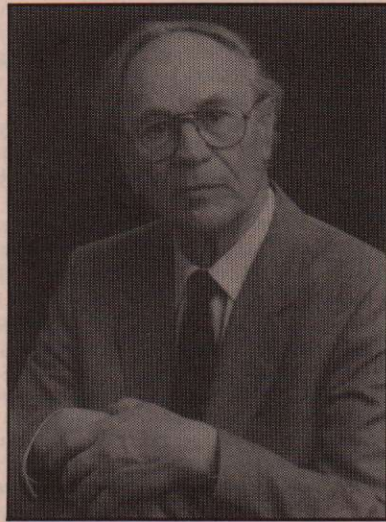
Tom Kemp 1921-1993

Conway Hall
Red Lion Square
London WC1

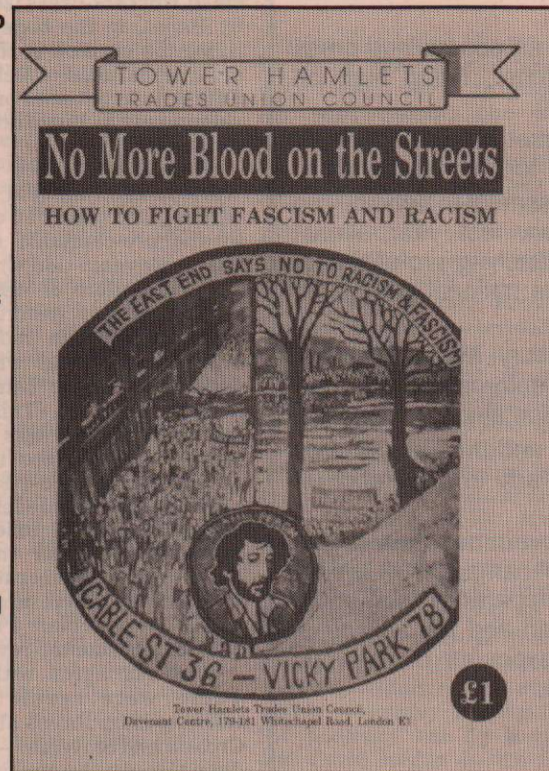
Friday 3 June
7.30pm

WE invite all Tom Kemp's comrades, family and colleagues to join in commemorating the life of an outstanding Marxist, a dedicated teacher and a fearless fighter for the working class and the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

Speakers to be announced.



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 Union Council, Davenant Centre, 179-181 Whitechapel Road, London E1. Price £1 plus 25p postage.



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WORKERS AID BREAKS THROUGH

THE WORKERS AID all-European convoy of some 40 trucks from Britain, France, Germany, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, loaded with food, medical supplies and other urgently needed aid, arrived in Tuzla on Saturday 2 April.

A message from the Tuzla Logistic Centre in Split, Croatia, to Workers Aid, confirmed their arrival on the date planned.

But, so far, no other details have been received apart from the fact that the 38-tonne lorry from France was forced to unload onto smaller trucks at Zenice and return because of the difficulty of the mountainous route from the south of Bosnia.

There is no news of the Workers Aid rally in Tuzla, planned for Saturday 2 April, where working-class banners were to have been unfurled and messages of support read out to the community in Tuzla.

The last communication from convoy leader Dot Gibson, in Split, on Tuesday 29 March, warned: 'Once we leave Split there is very little chance of sending reports. The communication system is almost non-existent.'

This underlines the isolation of the Tuzla region, a working-class enclave in the north-east of Bosnia, and the difference that opening the route from the north from Orasje to Tuzla would make. The French lorry would have had no trouble down this far flatter route.

The Tuzla industrial region is being strangled by the blockade of its trade with the outside world.

Croat, Serb and Muslim workers have held together in Tuzla to defend their lives and those of their families.

Arrival

The arrival of the convoy is a major achievement of working-class internationalism.

The convoy defied the nationalists who have turned Bosnia into a bloodbath.

It has effectively broken through the siege of this working-class area at a very difficult time for those in the region who have stood against nationalism.

BY THE EDITOR

In the wake of the Bosnian-Croat federation agreement, the United Nations is moving to secure a tighter grip on the remnants of what was the deformed workers' state of Yugoslavia.

The UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) commander, Lieutenant General Sir Michael Rose, has called for more troops to be sent, on the same scale as envisaged for the now superseded Vance-Owen-Stoltenberg plans to ensure 'peace'.

Forces

This is to remove the capability of the Bosnian forces to defend themselves and regain control of territory seized by Serbian nationalists amounting to 70 per cent of the country.

Like the presence of British troops in the north of Ireland, the division of the 'ethnic' sections of the Bosnian people is to be the justification for continued occupation by the United Nations.

An 800-strong force of Ukrainian troops is to be sent into Gorazde, currently under siege by 150 Serb tanks and 10,000 infantry. Previous Ukrainian units in Bosnia were distinguished in their contribution to 'peacekeeping' by being notorious blackmarketeers.

At Prijedor, ethnic cleansing is being actively assisted by the International Committee of the Red Cross against the wishes of the Bosnian government. After 20 people were killed by marauding Bosnian Serb fascists, the Red Cross met their leader Karadzic and agreed to transport 6,000 Bosnian Muslims out of the area. Karadzic guaranteed 'safe conduct' by a police escort!

The deal fell through when Karadzic further demanded an

equal number of Bosnian Serbs in exchange.

The very nature of the federation agreement accepted by the Bosnian leadership is guaranteed to perpetuate ethnic division. Muslims, Serbs and Croats joined the fight for a united multi-ethnic Bosnia, but concessions were made to Bosnian Croat separatists with the presidency and some ministries alternating on an 'ethnic' basis.

This is no solution. Such arrangements have been used before — in Lebanon and Cyprus — with tragic results. In the 1970s, Lebanon exploded and Turkish troops invaded Cyprus. In both these countries, the various communities continue to be at war.

Cantons

In Bosnia, despite earlier assurances that the proposed cantons would not be ethnically based, UNPROFOR is enforcing an economic stranglehold with strict UN and European Union control of 'reconstruction'. All profitable contracts will go to their own countries' businesses.

Behind the UN 'peace' comes economic exploitation and imperialism's 'solution' of divide and rule.

The Workers Aid convoy is striking blows against this plan to divide up the working class. Its message is international working-class solidarity and the working-class solution to the war in Bosnia.



Five so-called 'ringleaders' of the Campsfield detention centre hunger strikers have been moved to Winson Green jail in Birmingham and three have been sent to Blakenhurst near Redditch. The hunger strike started in protest at their detention after they sought political asylum in Britain from governments that threaten their lives. On Friday 25 March, a demonstration (above) was organised by the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign to protest the continued incarceration of these political prisoners. Photo: Mark Salmon

The Tories and the elections

THE longest-running drama in recent history is the crisis of the British Tory Party.

Long gone are the days when an obsequious press doted on the unspeakable Thatcher, riding high on rhetoric and a stock market boom.

The 'Black Monday' stock market collapse of 1987 marked the beginning of the end for that relationship.

The Tory cabinet is an embarrassment to behold. The education secretary, John Patten, last year almost singlehandedly united the entire teaching profession in opposition to his proposals for the national curriculum and testing.

The chief secretary to the Treasury, Michael Portillo, is currently undergoing a period of enforced silence after an amazing outburst about corruption among foreigners.

The Scott arms-to-Iraq inquiry and the Pergau dam scandal have covered the Tory Party in the stench of corruption.

The only issue on which the government has seized the initiative — the 'back to basics' campaign — seems to have been dropped since the apparently auto-erotic death of Tory MP Stephen Milligan and the suicide of Lord Caithness's wife after the exposure of her husband's affair with another woman.

* * * * *

THE Tories look set to take a real hiding in the coming local government elections and by-elections.

And yet millions of people, who are suffering from unemployment, loss of trade union rights, increased exploitation at work, homelessness, higher taxes, the loss of local hospitals and the sight of unearned wealth flaunted arrogantly by the worthless, cannot draw any comfort at all from the plight of the government.

In many areas of east London, for example, the strongest reason for voting Labour is that it will keep a fascist from the propaganda success of winning an election, and thus gaining a foothold in a working-class area. In many of the working-class estates there is a real problem finding people who will canvas and campaign for Labour.

Labour's spokespeople have made it very clear they differ from the Tories only technically. They have no intention of restoring the legal immunities of trades unions, giving local councils money to build houses, re-nationalising gas, electricity, British Telecom or the railways, pushing back the creeping commercialisation of education, or taking a lot of money off very rich bankers to keep some hospitals going.

There is every indication that Labour councils elected in May will not defy the law in order to raise money and spend it where it is most needed — on housing, social services and new school buildings.

* * * * *

LET US pose a question. How can Michael Heseltine possibly come back from the ranks of the politically dead to even consider a bid for leadership of the Tory Party?

This is the man who timed the announcement of the pit closure programme so well that almost half a million people demonstrated against it. Massive expressions of opposition were evoked right across the social spectrum.

And yet the leaders of the Labour Party and the trades unions managed to contain and disperse this movement. This means that the main problem raised by the Tories' difficulties is the crisis of political leadership in the working class.

And this is not just a British question. The Stalinist movement has collapsed as a powerful international entity. At the same time, reformist socialist parties have been sidelined in their natural habitat of northern Europe or completely wrecked by corruption charges, as in Italy. The apparent exceptions in Spain and Greece only prove the point. In Spain, Gonzales's ruling Socialist Party has carried out a series of attacks on the working class, and in Greece the ruling social-chauvinist PASOK party is warmongering against Macedonia.

The working class needs a new party, and it is a party that must be built on the basis of internationalism.

Many independent candidates from a variety of organisations are already putting themselves forward in the forthcoming elections to respond to the crisis. Some candidates will stand on the Labour ticket for the same reason.

The Workers Revolutionary Party will support those candidates of whatever working-class organisation or group who address the real problems of the working class in the elections.

Letters

Revolutionary forces

I WISH to comment on the article in Workers Press (26 March) by Panos, in the hope of clarifying the position of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International on the developments in Yugoslavia prior to the war.

Panos criticises us, the Workers International, for 'describing the takeover of power by the pro-capitalist nationalists in Slovenia and Croatia as "the revolutions of 1989-91"'. In fact this description of events in Slovenia and Croatia is not ours. It was written by Attila Hoare in the 'International' no. 13, p. 9. [This is the journal of the Workers International.] Attila wrote that 'the revolution of 1989-1991 would have created a confederation or commonwealth of independent nation-states under modernising bourgeois democracies, had its gains not been largely destroyed by [Serbian President] Milosevic's counter-revolution'.

I do not agree with Attila. There were revolutionary, working-class forces at work in Croatia and Slovenia — but that did not make the changes there into revolutions. On the contrary — and due mainly to the completely unconscious nature of the workers' participation — these events led to the installation of pro-bourgeois regimes. (The same could be said for much of eastern Europe.)

What's more: it wasn't only 'Milosevic's counter-revolution' that prevented the development of 'modernising bourgeois democracies' in the former Yugoslav republics. It was the whole direction being taken by imperialism in its crisis. It was the underlying necessity for capitalism to lay waste to

eastern Europe, or to colonise it — but under no circumstances to develop it.

For all the hypocritical ranting of 'the West' against the Serbian regime, it is doing what — in the objective sense — capitalism needs to be done. Milosevic is compelled to wage war not only because it perpetuates his bureaucratic-military clique; he is allowed to wage war because it is laying waste to Yugoslavia and its workers... which suits 'the West' fine.

Comrade Panos will see in the statements of the Workers International a quite different understanding of developments from Attila Hoare's.

The draft resolution of our congress in November 1993 said: 'It is already clear that capitalist penetration of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union implies the most naked plunder: a penetration designed to strip these countries of their natural resources, not to raise them to the level of western Europe but to reduce them to the level of the colonial and semi-colonial countries...'

'Without crushing the working class in the struggles arising from these contradictions, there will be no restoration of capitalism. That has already become reality in the carnage in Yugoslavia' (The 'International' no. 13, p. 16).

'Today the counter-revolutionary nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy is expressed in the sharpest way by the alliance of its remnants with reactionary bourgeois-nationalist and monarchist forces to divide and attack the working class (Yugoslavia). The primary question here as in all the struggles is the political independence of the working class.' (p. 24).

Finally, Panos says he 'expects that the Workers International agrees' that in 1991 Yugoslavia and the Soviet

Union were workers' states and that 'therefore the right of self-determination of Slovenes, Croats, peoples of the Baltic states, etc., conflicted with the survival of the workers' states'.

No, we don't agree. For a start, it is meaningless to simply describe these states with the two words 'workers' states'. The Soviet Union was really a workers' state, and even in its decades of degeneration many gains made by that state persisted. But by 1991 it had been degenerating for a very long time. By 1991 the bureaucracy, which ruled that state, had gone over from defending some workers' gains (state property, monopoly of foreign trade, outlawing of capitalist exploitation) 'in its own interests' as we used to say.

By 1991 it was attacking those gains. Even under Gorbachev, the bureaucracy's central policy was to take down the barriers to the 'free' exploitation of workers in the Soviet Union by capitalism.

Given the extent of the degeneration, the completely pro-capitalist policy of the bureaucracy by 1991, it is no good comparing this state with the 1921 Soviet state and saying that 'suppressing the national minority' is therefore 'the lesser evil'.

For a start, what Lenin and Trotsky were out to suppress in Georgia in 1921 was a Menshevik regime supported by world social-democracy and world imperialism — not 'the national minority'.

Secondly, the Gorbachev regime did its fair share of 'suppressing national minorities', not in the interests of the workers or their state but in the interests of the bureaucracy and, ultimately, imperialism. The same applies to Milosevic (whatever differences there may be between him and Gorbachev).

Simon Pirani, WRP

Versailles explained

I AM surprised that my reference to 'Greece's Versailles frontiers' should 'mystify' Brian Pearce ('Letters', 19 March).

The 'Versailles settlement' is the term that is used by historians to denote the peace settlement imposed by the Allies on Europe in 1919-20 and includes not only the Treaty of Versailles, but also the Treaties of St Germain, Neuilly, Trianon and Sevres.

Thus, for example, 'The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919', by Alan Sharp (Macmillan, 1991), covers the Treaty of Neuilly, at which Greece's frontiers were expanded at Bulgaria's expense (an expansion which even caused US President Woodrow Wilson to view as unjust, but which British Prime Minister Lloyd-George supported as part of his imperialist designs in the Near East).

Likewise, because Allied diplomacy had been largely responsible for the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918, the Yugoslav Communists described the new country as 'Versailles Yugoslavia', though Yugoslavia's frontiers had been, in fact, determined by the treaties of St Germain, Trianon and Neuilly, not by the Treaty of Versailles.

I think that Brian Pearce should explain why he uses Greek- and Serb-chauvinist arguments to deny Macedonia and Bosnia the right of self-determination, instead of hiding behind historical arguments which are both inaccurate and irrelevant.

Attila Hoare
Cambridge

How do workers take control?

COMMENT by Roy Thomas

in the prime minister's shoes? And what if, after a general election, Labour leader John Smith got the job?

Why, with the problems the Tories are in, has the Labour frontbench not called for a general election? Could it be that Smith has no more idea about how to solve the problems of capitalism than does Major — or the other Tory leaders.

The Labour Party and its leadership are working to separate themselves from the working class. They're keeping quiet about a 'solution' to the crisis this side of a general election.

Even the liberal press constantly expresses its disquiet at the extent to which real control of public services, education, health and welfare, are now in the hands of quangos and 'au-

thorities', composed of Tory party appointees.

An example is the new Funding Agency for schools, which has the job of furthering government policy in education. It's made up of Sun Alliance chief Sir Chris Benson, South-East Tory party chairman Sir Robert Balchin, Wandsworth council Tory leader Edward Lister, and Dixons' boss, Stanley Kalms.

And it's the same story in hospitals and health organisations, colleges and urban development programmes.

The ability of voters to control what happens has been diminished at almost every level over the last ten years. People have no confidence in the political parties since control of public assets and organisations is in the hands of Tory appointees.

Elected authorities — in Greater London, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne & Wear, Manchester — were shut down because they could not be sure who would win the elections.

For the same reason local councils' and parliament's ability to take decisions has been reduced. Power and vast amounts of money have been handed over to quangos.

The problem is not to defend the councils and parliament but to expose their lack of control over the money that they hand over to the quangos, and the way the members of their controlling bodies are appointed. The real question is: how does the working class take control of its own destiny and lives?

While we must not ignore the Tory leadership crisis, or the state of the capitalist economy that causes it, our main aim must be to determine and set up the new organisation that working women and men need to use to control the economy, and through it their own destiny.

Workers Press £3,000 Monthly Fighting Fund

March fund closes at £1,715

AS I write this, last Monday, we are awaiting news from our comrades on the all-European Workers Aid for Bosnia convoy that set off for the mining town of Tuzla last week. We have heard from sources in Croatia that the team arrived in Tuzla on Saturday.

The last direct communication received, as the convoy was gathering near Split, said that while it would be very difficult to get news out to us they would try their best. We also hope that news may come to us through Bosnian people living in Britain when they contact their loved ones in Tuzla.

Real efforts have been made to make collections for Workers Aid for Bosnia in London over the weekend; these grossed more than £1,000. This is vital for the continued work for

Workers Aid's convoys and the campaign to open the crucial northern aid route into Tuzla. When the current convoy returns to Croatia from Bosnia it will immediately need money to return home to Britain, France, Germany, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

Over the last months Workers Press is the paper that has been at the heart of the campaign to free Bosnia from the war of aggression inflicted on it by national chauvinism. Please help us continue this. We need to struggle to get in the fund for April. As the labels on collecting tins often say: 'Please give generously!'

Mike Cooke

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NUT leadership is defeated — but only in words

PHIL EDWARDS, a teacher in east London and editorial board member of teachers' magazine 'Chalkface', reports on last week's National Union of Teachers annual conference

NUT's leadership suffered a series of early defeats at the hands of the left in Scarborough, as general secretary Doug McAvoy came under increasing pressure.

Conference resolved to campaign for the repeal of the anti-union laws, in the wake of unofficial action by lecturers' union NATFHE members following an 'illegal' ballot. This call faced squeals that the union must not be isolated from the TUC by the Broad Left-dominated executive, made up of remnants from the Communist Party and right-wing Labourites.

Despite action against the SATs (Standard Assessment Tasks) tests being called off by the other teachers' unions — the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers and the Association of Teachers and Lecturers — the NUT voted to continue the boycott.

Doug McAvoy, faced with pressure from the union's membership and parents last year, is seeking to maintain his credibility in the face of a leadership challenge from Mary Hufford of the Campaign for a Democratic Fighting Union (CDFU), a left

grouping in the union.

Hufford, currently deputy general secretary, attacked McAvoy's refusal to launch a campaign on SATs for over two years and the way in which he had overruled a conference decision to ballot for a boycott of appraisal schemes last year.

Expenses

Hufford also questioned McAvoy's salary — which tops £60,000 plus expenses — and the lack of representation and involvement of ethnic minorities. She was particularly keen to raise the question of women's repre-

sentation in a union with 70 per cent women members, but which has never had a woman general secretary.

Last year's conference resolution calling for a boycott of appraisal schemes — inevitably linked to performance related pay — was carried in the face of executive hostility.

Waltham Forest NUT secretary Ron Haycock attacked the leadership for failing to carry out this decision of the 'highest body of the union' — the annual conference.

The arrogance of the leadership — who argued that they knew best and that they knew in advance of the ballot that members would not support such action — was enough to ensure their defeat.

Ian Murch, outgoing treasurer, defeated in this year's election by Ann Moran of the Broad Left, detailed the crisis of the union's finances and the depletion of the sustenance fund used to finance strike action. For example, £73,568 of this was spent on a full-page advert in the 'Guardian' commemorating 125 years of the TUC.

McAvoy's 'international' ex-

penses exceeded Mary Hufford's by thousands of pounds, even though she is responsible for representing the union internationally.

A resolution calling for strike action on public sector pay cuts — teachers were 'awarded' 2.9 per cent by the government's review body — was narrowly defeated in a card vote.

A debate on Jane Brown — the headteacher suspended following a witch-hunt by Hackney's Labour council, after her campaign for implementation of the council's supposed 'equal opportunities' policy — was averted by an executive intervention claiming it would create 'unnecessary publicity'. It's not clear for whom!

Hufford made a public statement in Jane Brown's defence. McAvoy has refused to do so.

Calls for unity of the left groupings — the Socialist Teachers Alliance (STA) and the CDFU — mainly coming from the tendency led by Bernard and Carol Regan in the STA, which is threatened by a Socialist Workers Party takeover, were 'debated' without raising any fundamental political differences. But it was these differences that led to the creation of these two left caucuses.

Unity for its own sake will never achieve anything, except perhaps a few more votes at conference for the opportunists in the various left tendencies sparring for support. Unity must be forged on the basis of a common understanding of tasks, and must seek to create the conditions for the rebuilding of the union and the involvement of the mass of members in such a struggle.

But the STA has more in common with the Broad Left than it cares to admit.

Ovation

A major speech to the conference was by an African National Congress representative. It was delivered as representatives of the British police winged their way to South Africa to advise the ANC on how to police the working class, and as Mandela demanded support for the state of emergency in Natal called by De Klerk. It met with a prolonged standing ovation.

STA members jumped to their feet before anyone else and were joined by their long-time supporters in the SWP. Such unprincipled politics will never lead a fight for a truly independent union.

Labour council leader attacks Diane Abbott

HACKNEY council's Labour leader, John McCafferty, has reportedly accused Diane Abbott MP of 'playing into the hands of the Tories'.

At the 19 March anti-racist demonstration in east London, the MP was one of the few platform speakers to call for forthright action to stamp out racism and stop racist attacks 'by any means necessary'.

A local paper reports that McCafferty criticised Abbott at a regular meeting with her and the other Hackney MP, Brian Sedgemore.

At a full council meeting, McCafferty pro-

trated himself in front of Tory councillors, saying he had 'made it clear' to Diane Abbott that the local council 'would not endorse violence in any form'.

He also told them Abbott had explained at the private meeting that she had meant 'by any means within the law'.

None of this can be particularly encouraging to the very many young people who attended the demonstration in order to fight fascism, and who find that racists often seem to break the law when carrying out their attacks.



Eight miners from Tower colliery, South Wales, outside the Department of Trade and Industry headquarters in Westminster last week with miners' MP Dennis Skinner. The miners had marched the 280 miles from Mid Glamorgan to protest against the threatened closure of their pit, the last in South Wales. Photo: Marg Nicol

Britain's housing blight

A LANDLORD who ignored a council request to carry out urgent repairs and refused to give details of his home address has finally been fined £8,000.

His squalid four-storey Victorian pile in Blackstock Road in Finsbury Park, north London, had tenants of seven beds sharing one kitchen and one bathroom. The hot water supply to the bath, washbasin and kitchen sink didn't work.

Complaint

When Hackney council's environmental health officer was called in following a complaint from a resident, the electricity was about to be cut off because the landlord hadn't paid the bills.

'The standard of manage-

ment was very poor to put it politely,' said environmental health officer Dave Beach.

Highbury magistrates fined the landlord £6,750 with £420 costs for 11 management regulation offences. For not revealing his address the landlord was fined £1,500 with £240 costs.

Beach said confidently: 'These are probably among the biggest fines ever levied in the country and should serve as a warning to other private landlords that they must take their responsibilities seriously.'

In reality the need for cheap accommodation created by the decimation of public housing will increasingly drive the poor into the greedy hands of unscrupulous, callous landlords.

Phone taps double

THE number of signed warrants by the home secretary to allow phone tapping and letter opening are at a record level.

Phone-tap warrants increased from 492 in 1987 to 893 in 1992 and 1,005 in 1993. But this is not the whole story: the 893 warrants in 1992 covered 35,000 phone lines! Not once during that year did the home secretary refuse to sign a warrant demanded of him by the police or security services.

These disturbing findings have been revealed in Lord Bingham's official report as monitor of covert activities.

Some warrants were for wrong numbers and these mistakes were not discovered until the tap was in place, presumably when 'operatives' found they were listening to dreary

conversations about the weather, which extensive cryptological analysis revealed were really about climatic conditions.

'Human error', says Lord Bingham, was responsible for this, along with wrong dates being put on warrants.

Clear

In point of fact this report makes clear that in spite of all the gloss, MI5, the police, and customs have a free hand when it comes to tapping your phone, or reading your letters.

Despite the end of the so-called 'cold war', spying activities in Britain have doubled in the last six years.

So watch what you say on the phone or who you send a birthday card to!

INTERNATIONAL

Where have the rockets gone?

Salam refuses to return the two engineers unless Pakistan returns the two Stingers and gives him \$20,000 (£13,000).

Before the raid by Pakistan forces, the CIA had negotiated with Salam to buy the Stingers for \$20,000, but Pakistani paramilitary forces got wind of the deal and seized the missiles just before the hand-over was to take place.

The CIA used to allow the middleman to obtain a Stinger, cut it into little pieces and then send photos of the bits back as evidence that the missile had been destroyed.

This practice had to be given up when it emerged that payments had been made for many different sets of photographs of the same mutilated Stinger.

Salam is known as 'Roketi' by the CIA because of his vast arsenal of missiles and rockets accumulated from Pakistan and the CIA during the Afghan war.

'Peacekeeper' killed Somali

CANADIAN airborne regiment private Elvin Kyle Brown has been convicted of torture and manslaughter of a 16-year-old Somali.

Shidane Arone died when Brown was on 'peacekeeping' duties in Belet Uen, Somalia.

Brown admitted punching and kicking Arone in the Canadian United Nations compound.

Arone was heard to cry out 'Canada, Canada' as he was tied hand and foot, blindfolded and beaten with a wooden baton, a metal pipe, fists and boots. The soles of Arone's feet were burned with cigarettes.

A government inquiry is now taking place into what the Canadian press now calls a 'renegade' unit but previously was called an 'elite' airborne regiment.

Part of the inquiry will be to

find out how soldiers with known white supremacist views — one was a member of a neo-Nazi group — came to be sent to Somalia as 'peacekeepers'.

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Inside left

Historical accuracy

PROBABLY the world's longest-running obituary has, at long last, reached its Rubicon — or should it be Styx? — on the split in the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of October 1985.

'The rise and fall of Gerry Healy', an extended look at the life of the former WRP leader, commenced just over four years ago in issue no. 22 of 'Workers News', the monthly/occasional paper of the Workers International League (WIL), led by Richard Price.

Penned by Bob Pitt, who has recently left the WIL, the earlier episodes relied heavily on quotations from 'Against the Stream', the work by Al Richardson and Sam Bornstein, interviews with old Trotskyists who knew Healy, and WRP internal documents.

The aim was to establish Price's group as the group with a serious concern for historical accuracy in reporting the manoeuvrings of Healy [who was expelled in 1985 for sexual and physical abuse and slander of party members].

In fact this concern with history was and is purely and simply a smokescreen. This was made abundantly clear in the issue of 'Workers News' immediately preceding the first instalment of the obituary. There 'Workers News' editor Philip Marchant lectured Mike Head of the Australian Socialist Labour League (SLL): 'As you know, I am sure, the WIL does not lay claim to any part of the "heritage" of the SLL/WRP' ('Workers News', no. 21, December 1989, p. 5). This from one of Healy's most vehement defenders in the post-split period.

The 'hidden agenda' is just too obvious. The WIL and its leaders are at pains to establish that they have been 'born again' and are now miraculously without any taint of the 'original sin' of Healyism.

The aim of 'The rise and fall of Gerry Healy' is to establish this lie in the mind of anyone who drifts into their milieu. Pitt was obviously much happier dealing with the more distant past of Healy, where his researches did not impinge on the activities of the WIL leaders.

BUT in the current issue — and at part 24 — he has had to bite the bullet and the self-serving apologies are there for all to see ('Workers News', March/April 1994).

Here 'historical research' is confined almost exclusively to two recent interviews with the two leaders of the WIL most implicated in the defence of Healy in 1985. In academic circles this device is known as self-citation.

The interviews are with Richard Price on 22 November 1993 and Ian Harrison on 13 January 1994. In them any pretence of impartiality, objectivity, or even half-way-thorough research, disappears.

Harrison's is another vitriolic taunting of former WRP member Phil Penn, while Price voices half-hearted apologies for the 'psychology of the ordinary Torranceites — those without a stake in covering things up'. [Sheila Torrance was a former WRP leader who went with Healy at the time of the split.]

But they all *did* have a stake — a very real one for some in terms of preserving the old apparatus, and a psychological one of dependency on the guru Healy for others. A bit of psychological self-criticism wouldn't be amiss, as well as a political assessment of your own role and motivation, Price.

An apology wouldn't be out of place either, but I'm sure the WIL leaders are set to bluff and bluster it out to the bitter end.

I, for one, look forward with interest to the further convolutions from the hagiographic pen of Pitt.

Mike Howgate
Charlie Pottins is away.

NICK LEE looks at the recent victory for the right in Italy's elections, and the failures of the left

THE 27 March parliamentary elections in Italy are being hailed in the bourgeois press as a decisive break with the past and the first step in the 'modernisation' of the corruption-ridden state.

The 'Financial Times' (30 March) described the result as a 'clear break with Italy's post-war political system' and one which had produced a government 'pledged to radical free-market principles'. The message is that Italy is on the way to becoming a proper modern bourgeois democracy.

Superficially this bears some resemblance to what happened. The old parties that had ruled Italy since World War II were wiped out. The last remnants of the Christian Democracy of Andreotti and his mafia friends and the Socialist Party of Bettino Craxi (currently on trial for corruption), in the 'Pact for Italy' grouping, polled just 16 per cent of the vote — post-war they generally scored 55 per cent. Now there is a completely new set of faces in politics.

Chief new face is the media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi, whose 'Alliance for Freedom' is made up of an unstable cocktail of populist northern separatists, southern fascists and his own Forza Italia party, whose name comes from a chant on the football terraces.

To get the flavour of all this imagine the Tories being brought down after the revelations of the report of the Scott inquiry into the arms-to-Iraq scandal, Labour being utterly discredited in a spate of local government corruption scandals, and Rupert Murdoch forming a new party called 'Up the Brits' and less than four months later getting a parliamentary majority in alliance with a new right-wing Scottish nationalist party and BNP fascists.

Continuation of the past

BONAPARTISM precedes fascism: Berlusconi as a maverick press baron 'above politics' is simply a continuation of the interim government of 'honest technocrats' under the former governor of the Bank of Italy, Carlo Ciampi, that has been ruling since the Amato government fell apart last year under pressure from a wave of corruption scandals, in which a large number of Christian-Democrat and Socialist MPs were involved.

In reality Berlusconi is as much part of the 'old regime' as anyone

else. One of his companies, Fininvest, is under investigation for bribery, and he was a member of the notorious P2 lodge, which had strong connections with right-wing terrorist groups in the 1970s.

Indeed, one consequence of the victory of the right in Sicily is that the anti-mafia Network party, which was seen as leading a new populist revolt against the power of organised crime in the south, has been completely obliterated. The Godfathers will be celebrating and waiting to establish cordial business relations with the new politicians if they have not done so already.

The real significance of Berlusconi's right-wing victory is not Forza Italia, which will be short-lived, but the massive gains made by the fascists under Gianfranco Fini. The old neo-fascist MSI, renamed the National Alliance, is now the third-largest party in parliament and accounted for nearly 14 per cent of the vote. For the previous two decades it had never risen to above 6 per cent.

Support for Berlusconi's other reluctant ally, Umberto Bossi and the Northern League, a new regional party which was making great

'In Italy, fascism is about to have a decisive influence on the composition of the government of a leading west European capitalist state. It is time to learn the lessons of the 1930s in a way that the PDS and the Communist Refoundation, thoroughly immersed in generations of Stalinist betrayals, cannot.'

headway around Milan, the former power-base of Socialist leader Bettino Craxi, has probably peaked. Bossi's social base is the same as the fascists — the petty bourgeoisie and small business. But its northern separatism is uncomfortable with the national corporatist tradition of the heirs of Mussolini.

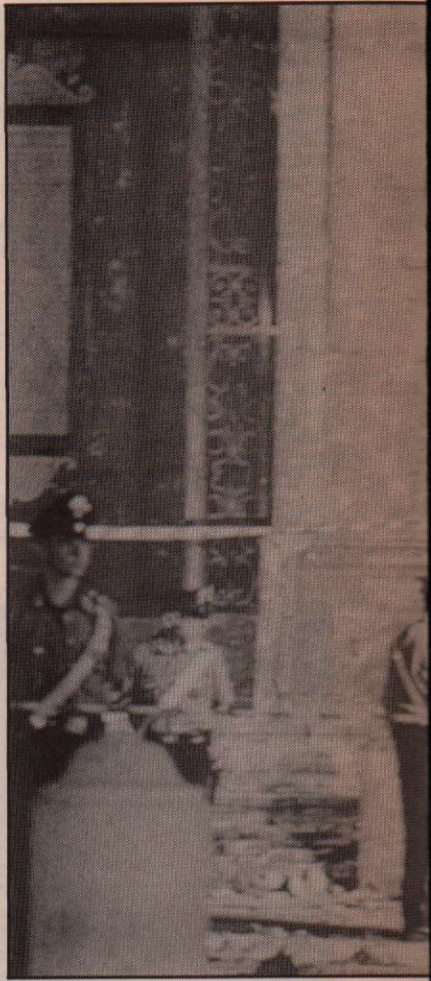
Arguments have already broken out. Bossi will give only lukewarm support to a government led by Berlusconi, who has 'too many business interests', while Fini is more open in support. Berlusconi will most likely opt for a continuation of the government of technocrats — plus a few colourful eccentrics like movie director Franco Zeffirelli — but the real power behind the throne will be Fini and the fascists.

Despite playing hard to get in

Fascists gains

the run-up to the elections, Bossi will most likely find himself supporting a Berlusconi government along with Fini and swallow his earlier resolve "never to do business with fascism".

Neither the Alliance for Freedom, nor any of its constituent parties, had anything approaching a programme. Berlusconi promises to cut taxes but this will collide rapidly with the massive level of state deficit, or as the 'Financial Times' (30 March) put it: 'Any deviation from the arduous course of fiscal adjustment charted by the outgoing Ciampi government will be instantly punished in the bond markets.'



A bomb in Rome last year: is Italy bre...

corruption scandals relatively unscathed.

But PDS leader Achille Occhetto moved to reassure the bosses: 'Our position is to safeguard the important gains of the government for restoring health to the economy, defence of the lira and, above all, demolishing the public debt.' In short, a continuation of the regime of austerity against the working class and its potential allies.

On this basis the PDS set about trying to build a 'radical' coalition of groups under the banner of a Progressive Alliance, which included Greens, the anti-mafia Net

Commenting on the choices facing the Italian bourgeoisie now, the 'FT' concludes soberly: 'On one side is the long, hard climb towards fiscal respectability and integration with Europe; on the other a slide towards Latin American financial collapse.'

It is precisely such a collapse which would be the hour of the blackshirts.

'Radical' coalition

THIS assumes that the ex-Stalinist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) continues its treachery. After the local elections last December it appeared for a time that the ruling class would throw its weight behind the PDS, which came out of the

A house of

music for the first time when we met, in the 1970s, Chilean refugees from the fascist military regime of general Pinochet.

This music can be unbearably poignant, not just because of its haunting quality but because, for a post-war generation, it was the first living encounter with the results of fascist counter-revolution.

Distortions

In Chile and Latin America, left-wing artists and musicians have long combined European modernist forms with a living folkloric tradition. In spite of the political confusion and distortions sown by Stalinism and the brutal suppressions by US-backed regimes, the vitality of this cultural tradition can be seen across a range of artistic genres and activities.

Tragically, musical figures like Victor Jarra were tortured and

then murdered. But his music and his inspiration lives on in the work of his collaborators, the magnificent Inti-illumani, and also hosts of talented street musicians and other independent tape and compact-disc producers who wander through our European cities like displaced medieval troubadours.

Displacement and exile, both voluntary and forced, is not just the fate of musicians. Poets and novelists have also had to seek refuge and, in a sense, the dominant literary genre, 'Magic Realism', is a literature of displacement.

A combination of Surrealist reverie, naturalism and folkloric exoticism, this literature contrasts sharply in its imaginative richness with the academicism of much of contemporary British and North American writing.

BY COINCIDENCE, it had been

with some excitement that I went to see the film of Isabel Allende's novel 'The House of the Spirits'. I wish I had heard the advice of Radio 4's 'Kaleidoscope' film critic and stayed at home. The film 'starred' Vanessa Redgrave, Jeremy Irons, and Meryl Streep.

All I can recommend the film for is some of the magnificent scenery of the setting. The actors were either miscast, as in the case of Irons, or just being themselves in the case of the female 'leads'. It was not just that the lame and wooden acting offended, but that the production had torn both the poetic and the political heart out of this fine novel.

'The House of the Spirits' is an elaborately crafted work of high imagination. Men and women, spirits, the forces of nature, and history work out their conflicts over four generations. Like other novelists of this genre, Allende's rich innova-

s make big s in Italy



king with the past political system?

work party and the 'unreformed' rump Communist Refoundation party (those who refused to follow Occhetto into dissolving the Communist Party into the new PDS). Leading members of the PDS even put forward the suggestion that a Progressive Alliance government would continue to support Ciampi as prime minister! Anything but develop the independence of the working class and its allies as the only social force that can solve the crisis gripping Italy. A united front of this type would have been a tremendous rallying point for a resurgence of the left throughout

Europe. Occhetto's musings about support for Ciampi as a potential prime minister in a Progressive Alliance-led government was greeted with horror by his alliance allies. They effectively cut short further discussion of the idea.

Leoluca Orlando, leader of the Network explained that such a proposal had to be rejected because 'it is necessary to give a strong signal that we have something new to offer'. Arnando Cossutta of Communist Refoundation rejected the proposal 'because it represents continuity, the absence of a real break with the past'.

No clear programme

DESPITE its dithering, the PDS successfully defended its core regions in Tuscany, Umbria, Bologna and the central industrial belt, even increasing its vote compared to the 1992 elections from 16 per cent to 24 per cent, while the Communist Refoundation vote increased marginally from 5.6 per cent to 6 per cent.

The Progressive Alliance as a whole secured 32 per cent of the vote as against 43 per cent for the Berlusconi circus. This shows the potential that the left had, if it had worked out a programme.

But it failed to break into new ground. Masses of undecided workers and the middle class could have been won to a radical socialist solution, but they saw nothing in the PDS line and fell for Berlusconi as at least representing something 'new'. Forza Italia even managed to capture some traditional Communist working-class suburbs in Milan and Venice.

Though Cossutta and Orlando understood the vital need for the left to present some indication of a radical solution to the crisis, nothing happened! It is only after the electoral defeat that, incredibly, the need for a clear programme has been discovered.

Massimo D'Alema, PDS deputy leader, after — correctly — summarising the election results as the old power bloc regrouping around the extreme right, went on to say 'Perhaps we were deluded in thinking that the old power bloc would fragment rather than a new right-wing force emerge'. They thought the ruling class would fade away!

But further 'left' Fausto Bertinotti and Arnando Cossutta of Communist Refoundation were similarly wise after the event.

Cossutta said: 'The left did not develop forcefully enough a project for change, above all on the economic and social level.' While according to Bertinotti: 'We should have given some substance to our common programme and sustained it through initiatives based on struggle. Now we have to roll up our sleeves and cast a critical eye on the past in order to construct the unity of the left in opposition.'

So why not before opposition! One could be forgiven for believing that what these gentlemen want is precisely to remain in opposition and that they have accepted the mythology of the bourgeois modernisers that the succession to the 'old corruption' is not class struggle but a more 'Anglo-Saxon' style of government, in which the role waiting for the 'left' is that of John Smith and Paddy Ashdown.

Whether the working class will be happy with this is another matter. The 'Anglo-Saxon' style of government is itself in crisis. The threat of fascism is now more than something for the occasional TV documentary on skinheads in the suburbs. It is a real political force.

In Italy, fascism is about to have a decisive influence on the composition of the government of a leading west European capitalist state. It is time to learn the lessons of the 1930s in a way that the PDS and the Communist Refoundation, thoroughly immersed in generations of Stalinist betrayals, cannot.

brutal removal of the Allende government by Pinochet's junta. The novel portrays the sense of disbelief of the intelligentsia, and even sections of the old conservative ruling class, at the barbarism unleashed.

This is symbolised by the personal reconciliation of Trueba with his granddaughter's lover, whom he rescues from the secret police. More ironic for us is the portrait of the dying Pablo Neruda, the Stalinist national poet, surrounded by a selection of snails, shells, butterflies and unfinished poems. This collection of exotica was ransacked by the soldiery searching for evidence of Communist subversion.

My Chilean friends have always insisted that Thatcher and her associates were deeply connected to the Pinochet regime and actively worked for its interests.

How gratifying it was to see her recently wind down like a clockwork android in Santiago as she was proselytising for her cespit, the Thatcher Institute. It brought to my mind that song of Inti-illumani, *Como Matar una Culebra* ('How to Kill a Snake').

Tom Owen

City Lights

The sick and the dead sick

THERE was an air of desperation about the recent decision of the International Monetary Fund to pour a further \$1.5 billion into Russia's ailing economy. Agreement was finally reached after five days of negotiations in Moscow between IMF director Michael Camdessus and Russia's prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin.

The IMF decision was taken in an atmosphere of continual rumours of a planned coup by Yeltsin's opponents whilst the Russian president was out of Moscow — apparently recovering from flu at his Black Sea dacha.

If Yeltsin is sick, the Russian economy is worse. In the past 12 months, overall production has fallen a further 24 per cent. With tax revenue shrinking, the Russian government faces growing pressure from groups of Russian workers demanding that their wages be paid and enterprises be kept open.

As a result, the state budget deficit is projected to exceed 10 per cent of gross national product this year. The budget for 1994, not yet debated by parliament, was recently described by the 'Financial Times' as 'less of a financial document, more of a field of struggle'.

Chernomyrdin persuaded the IMF in return for the loan he would act tough, raising extra taxes, bankrupting loss-making factories and bringing inflation down from 950 per cent last year to 7 per cent a month by December.

The IMF has heard it all before and has little faith that the present regime can deliver on its promises. In a hard-headed summary of the situation the 'Financial Times' commented:

'As disheartening as any other fact for Russian ministers is the obvious truth that, after more than two years of official reformism, there is little to show in the way of domestic success or foreign confidence.'

'No western companies of size have made very large commitments to Russia. Trade has shrunk to levels where most countries can discount it as negligible; foreign bankers do not believe that Russia will pay back any real debt in the next five years; and the rouble is steadily driving down to the two thousand to the dollar level.'

Waste-disposal growing

THERE is one sector where East-West trade is booming and that's toxic waste. Capitalist firms in western Europe are avoiding the costs of meeting environmental standards at home by exporting the stuff to the eastern countries.

Hazardous smelting dust, used hospital syringes, expired chemicals, and scrap tyres for burning are all dumped on their doorstep. The biggest culprit is Germany, which has the strictest domestic 'recycling' laws in Europe. Toxic and hazardous wastes from Germany are turning up all over eastern Europe, from Albania to the Baltic States.

Poland, for example, intercepted 1,332 improper waste shipments from western Europe in 1992, and such cases soared by 35 per cent in the first half of 1993.

A similar trend is emerging worldwide, with the wealthy imperialist nations treating the poorer countries of the world as a kind of cheap waste-disposal unit. In the US, Washington state, for example, sends two-thirds of the plastic it

collects from consumers in recycling programmes to Asia for disposal.

'Most prosecutors feel that there are lots of crimes going on in the field and we just don't catch them,' commented Robertson H. Wendt, a South Carolina lawyer who helped secure convictions against two US metals companies that illegally mixed 1,000 tons of poisonous smelter dust into fertilisers shipped to Bangladesh.

'There's a lot of pressure on businesses to maybe take the short-cut to deal with this material,' says Wendt.

Seeing large-scale opportunities, waste traders also propose to construct huge incinerators in poorer countries, to which the traders would then ship and burn large amounts of Western industrial wastes.

The trader earns a profit from fees collected at Western factories looking to get rid of their wastes. Even Croatia is currently inundated by such incinerator proposals, now worth \$400 million according to officials in its environment ministry. Similar offers have been received recently by Albania, the Philippines and countries in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the pressure group Greenpeace.

The global waste-management market in 1991 was worth more than \$90 billion, about half the value of world trade in metals and ores, and is forecast to reach \$500 billion by the year 2000.

As far as the capitalists are concerned these deadly substances can be traded like any other commodity. Already, plans are underway to establish formal commodity and futures markets similar to those that exist for oil and wheat.

At a meeting later this month in Marrakech in Morocco, called to finalise the terms of the recent General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade round on world trade, the imperialist nations are expected to accuse the world's poorer countries of 'eco-dumping' — selling their manufactured goods cheaper by avoiding the 'high environmental standards' of the richer nations! The hypocrisy is breathtaking.

Debunking Tory myths

TWO recent reports highlight the continuing onslaught on workers' living standards in Britain.

The first, a survey of 6,000 individuals in six towns, published by the Economic and Social Research Council, shows that unemployed workers are 75 per cent more likely to experience a marriage break-up than those in work. At the same time the study debunks the Tory myth that unemployed workers are forming a distinct 'underclass', unwilling to seek work.

Almost all unemployed individuals are considerably worse off on benefits than in work, whilst 88 per cent are flexible in the work they are prepared to undertake and have only modest pay expectations.

The second report, by the Low Pay Unit, shows that, for those in work, average industrial wages in the UK are now below those in southern Italy, one of the poorest regions of Europe. Some achievement.

Families attempting to survive on these income levels will no doubt be heartened to know that their interests may soon be defended by ex-Labour leader Neil Kinnock, who is once again putting himself forward to become one of Britain's two European Commissioners in Brussels, on a salary of £139,550 a year.

Throgmorton

spirits

tory style and vision is still framed within the conservative format of the dynastic novel of the 19th century, the family saga.

In Latin American novels, this relies on the historic continuity of the settler and comprador classes and their struggle to maintain their hegemony over indigenous and immigrant peoples and the vast natural and mineral resources that could be exploited.

Penetration

This struggle in the 20th century takes place against a background of the penetration of imperialist capital, of political and military intervention. What the film does is to abstract from the novel merely the dynastic thread so that the living historical forces, so brilliantly realised in the literary work, lose their depth of individualisation, become only pale shadows of their

original creations.

The novel explores the tensions between the ruthless settler patriarchy and the urban liberal elite, whose women, sealed for three generations in their domesticity, become literally the media for a spirituality divorced from the materialised culture of social production, art and politics.

Only in the last generation is this circle broken when Alba, the granddaughter of the patriarch, Esteban Trueba, becomes the lover of the revolutionary peon Pedro Tercero and associates herself with the working class. For this she is tortured, sexually violated, and humiliated by the military secret police.

Her destiny at the close of the novel is exile and a retreat into her personal life as the guardian of her mother's memoirs.

Although not stated, the historical events in the novel follow the

John Fordun

Satirists and deep philosophers

GOYA's first name was Francisco, Picasso's was Pablo, and Modigliani's was Amedeo; but I have forgotten Campen's. As it is not yet in any art dictionary, I can only apologise for the memory-lapse. It is the more culpable since, after a recent visit to London during which I saw exhibitions of all three aforementioned 'greats', it was Campen that provided me with my most enduring image.

London tube-users will know what I'm talking about. But before I enlighten fellow-provincials, permit me a diversion. It was April Fool's Day last week, which reminded me that Norman Vincent Peale died at the end of last year. The link in this piece of lateral thinking is Tom Lehrer.

It is a reflection of changed times that Lehrer is little remembered today. He was a Harvard math (*sic*) professor who abandoned calculus to keep America's young intelligentsia happy during the bleak Eisenhower years in the 1950s. His cheery satirical ditties, sung as he tapped away at a piano, were transferred to long-play records for wider distribution.

These LPs were products of the latest technology. If you had a record-player (as opposed to a wind-up gramophone) you could tune in to the beginnings of the international 'yoof culture' which sociologists were so starry-eyed about in the 1960s. I'm talking here, like, pre-Beatles, though Elvis Presley was already hound-dogging into view, wearing his blue suede shoes and jerking his pelvis in a shockingly erotic manner.

Lehrer, with 'We'll all go together when we go / All suffused with an incandescent glow', made you see the funny side of superannuated politicians taking unto themselves the power to blow up the world, long before Stanley Kubrick's film 'Dr Strangelove' (1963) advertised itself with the subtitle, 'How I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb'.

'Every time that you attend a funeral,' trilled Lehrer, 'It's sad to think that sooner'r'l / Later your friends will do the same for you. / But don't you worry. No more ashes, no more sackcloth / And an armband mode of black-cloth / Will some day never more adorn a sleeve.'

'For when the bomb that drops on you / Gets your friends and neighbours too / There'll be nobody left behind to grieve!' Then the chorus: 'We'll all go together when we go, etc.!' Quite merry, really. And what a lesson in lyric writing! That rhyme of 'funeral' and 'sooner'r'l', though difficult to spell, is an absolute winner.

Which brings me to the Revd Norman Vincent Peale. The old codger finally handed in his dinner-pail just before Christmas, aged 93 and a half. He was, reported the 'Daily Telegraph', 'spiritual adviser to President Nixon'. His only comment on his continuance in that role during and after the Watergate affair was 'Christ didn't shy away from people in trouble'.

This prejudiced Protestant intervened in the 1960 US presidential campaign to announce that the election of a Catholic (JFK) would 'place extreme pressure on the Church hierarchy'. He made a film called 'How to Raise Your Batting Average in Selling' in which commercial travellers were urged to pray: 'Lord, fill me with enthusiasm for my product'.

When Nixon, in 1969, sent his all-American buffoon to Vietnam as his special envoy, Lehrer might well have made

the quip he was later to make about Henry Kissinger. In the early 1970s, Kissinger, as Nixon's secretary of state, jettied around the world making war for capitalism and calling it peace. When he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, Lehrer commented: 'the age of satire is now dead'. How could you make fun of a world in which reality could achieve such heights of absurdity.

Had this been said of Peale's Vietnam visit it would have had added force. Lehrer, many years earlier, had introduced the pastor of the Dutch Reformed Marble Collegiate Church of New York to an international audience beyond that familiar with his commercial gospel as it was regularly preached in dentists' waiting rooms through 'Readers' Digest'.

In a catchy little number on army life Lehrer sang of Fred the 'intellectual', who 'took a book to every meal' and 'liked the deep philosophers / Like Norman Vincent Peale'. It took a bit of research this side of the Atlantic, for one largely innocent of 'Readers' Digest', to find out who Peale was. But like much else of Lehrer's work, once learned, the lyric stuck in the mind.

It used to sustain me through some of the more strenuous classes in Marxist philosophy conducted by the late Gerard Healy. When someone seemed to be getting everything right in a way that I only once managed to do, I used to console myself in the back of the room with silent variations on the Lehrer theme. 'Now Fred's an intellectual / For him the Party's great / He thinks the world's most super book's / Lenin's volume thirty-eight!' For 'Fred' you could substitute any comrade who happened to be teacher's pet at the time.

* * * * *

ARGUABLY, of course, Lehrer was wrong about the death of satire. 'Satirical' material can certainly make a comic a good living. In scatological humour and political ridicule much of it goes far further than Lehrer's mockery. But whether it provides a life-sustaining verse for one's darker hours is dubious.

And, looking at the overground variety of 'satire' in the attempts of the national press to run April Fool stories, I can only say that Lehrer's point about reality outstripping parody holds good. Most of the spoof stories were indistinguishable from reports of the Italian elections or of Major's latest position on Europe.

And so to Campen. He is an eight-year-old child who is to be congratulated on winning a competition to design a poster to advertise the new display of the crown jewels at the Tower of London.

Since the full array of these priceless baubles is trotted out only at coronations, young Campen and his fellow-competitors faced a knotty political problem.

To display the Imperial Crown on the head of the heir to the throne might have offended His Incumbent Mum, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the people of Wales, the Spencer family, and assorted republicans. It would draw attention to the fact that, at board level at least, the British state is not an equal opportunities employer.

No problem for the sharp-witted young artist. His deft brush has placed crown, sceptre and orb about the person of one of the Tower's ravens — a black, genderless creature of more serious mien than any of the Buck House brats. That way everyone can be happy, including those of us who like to hope that, when Campen emerges from art school in about 2008, the age of satire will be reborn.

TB

Television

Watching the detectives

Review by Roger Horrocks

TV detectives and police series make left-wing people uneasy: they may be fun, but are they right-wing propaganda?

'NYPD Blue' (Channel 4, Saturdays) is a case in point. This is very well made, with an excellent cast, especially the two main detectives, Kelly and Sipowicz, and with an arresting visual style — the camera hurtles around like an express train.

Problems arise with the standard plots — drugs, homicide, the Mafia. Are we being fed some reactionary message here — the working class is basically criminal, and has to be disciplined? Certainly in 'NYPD Blue' the police treat their suspects with brutality and contempt.

Macho

'NYPD Blue' is also amazingly macho: not violent, but full of male bonding, men hugging each other, rescuing each other and so on. This is a central theme in US culture, found for example in the Western and the 'buddy' movie, but with long antecedents, probably going back to novels such as 'Huckleberry Finn' and 'The Last of the Mohicans'.

The US literary critic Leslie Fiedler called it 'the holy marriage of males', and it remains one of the great unsolved mysteries of American culture. Some critics have therefore argued that 'Starsky and Hutch' and 'Miami Vice' were disguised male love stories.

Back to more humble British fare, 'The Bill' (ITV, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays) is much less glamorous than 'NYPD Blue', but pumps out a similar message about the working class.

Much of the action takes place on housing estates, shown as full of drug-pushers, nasty young villains and desperate single mothers. The police struggle valiantly to cope — after all, someone has to keep these angry young men down. It's very soap-like, with a large cast of characters, who bicker amongst themselves.

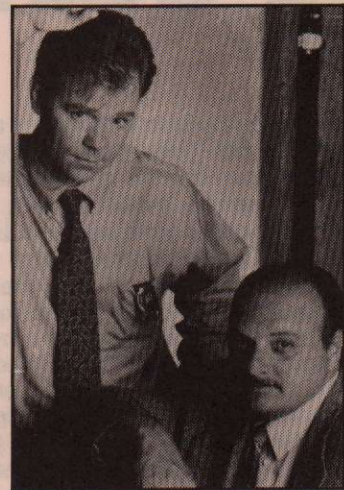
It also has a super-fast style, the plots move at 1,000 miles an hour, the editing is frenetic, hand-held cameras are used a lot. Interestingly 'The Bill' is very popular with children. Why is this? I think partly because it shows working-class life, even if in a distorted way — life on housing estates, kids playing in the streets, and so on. But do viewers take on board the pro-police propaganda? I doubt it.

'Inspector Morse', which has just been repeated on ITV, is quite different. It reeks of money — each episode cost £600,000 an hour to make, and it shows, with its lavish settings, slow convoluted plots, and appearances by actors such as John Gielgud.

But surely the secret of its success is again the two-man relationship: the bad-tempered nagging Morse and his ever-

willing side-kick, Lewis. In fact, another male marriage!

The most bizarre TV detective at the moment is Jeremy Brett's portrayal of Sherlock Holmes in 'The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes' (ITV, Mondays). Critics keep saying this is



Males bonded: detective partners in 'NYPD Blue'

the 'definitive' Holmes — it's certainly the maddest.

Brett twitches, his mouth puckers into a ghastly smile, he waves his arms like a ballerina — then glides across the room as if he's strayed into 'Come Dancing'.

This is so camp it approaches Kenneth Williams territory. The danger is that he

is approaching self-parody — but then why not?

What does the TV detective symbolise? Originally detective fiction — invented in the 19th century by Wilkie Collins and Edgar Allan Poe — involved the application of scientific deduction to a mysterious crime.

This should be placed within the context of the Victorian worship of science, and the loss of religious faith. Thus the detective is an arbiter in the confusing and anarchic bourgeois world. He stands for reason amidst unreason; order amidst chaos; law amidst the breakdown of law.

Murder

But the detective has acquired many different resonances. For example, 'Morse' is set in Oxford, one of the great cultural centres for the English bourgeoisie, where it trained its youth for empire, the Church and the army.

But in 'Morse' murder after murder happens, often in the colleges themselves. The detective therefore could be said to regulate the crises which breaks out in the bourgeoisie itself.

On the other hand, 'The Bill' poses the question: how to control the disaffected working class? Thus in Britain the fictional detective has tended to polarise along class lines: the aristocratic (Lord Peter Wimsey); the middle class (Morse, Miss Marple); and the plebian ('The Bill').

Programme guide

Saturday 9 April ARENA: 'Philip K Dick — A Day in the Afterlife'. Profile of the science-fiction novelist and short-story writer (7.35pm, BBC2).

Sunday 10 April ENCOUNTERS: 'Transylvania'. As spectacular in fact as in myth, the western Romanian region contains some of the richest folk traditions in Europe. But forced industrialisation, ethnic tensions and an economy in crisis have made the region a potential flashpoint (7pm, Channel 4).

Monday 11 April 'Soweto — A History'. The first of a three-part ground-breaking documentary about the untold story of the largest conurbation in South Africa, from the turn of the century up to the present



Soweto story, on Channel 4, Monday 11 April

day (10.55pm, Channel 4).
Tuesday 12 April WITHOUT WALLS: 'Winds of Change'.

Black life in South Africa under apartheid as seen through previously unseen photographs taken during the 1950s from the archives of 'Drum' magazine (9pm, Channel 4).
OMNIBUS: 'Gielgud — Scenes from Nine Decades'. Celebrating his 90th birthday, the actor visits the Old Vic to relive some of his greatest performances (10pm, BBC1).

Wednesday 13 April DISPATCHES. Startling new evidence of how Russian scientists have designed a new miniature neutron bomb — technology which is being sold to non-nuclear states (9pm, Channel 4).

Thursday 14 April BLACK BAG SPECIAL: 'Stars, Tsars and Swastikas'. First of two programmes examining the rise of

fascism in the US and Russia (9pm, Channel 4).

Selected films

GOODFELLAS (1990). Martin Scorsese's brutal portrayal of day-to-day Mafia life. With Joe Pesci, Ray Liotta and Robert De Niro (Sunday, 10pm, Channel 4).
THE PHANTOM OF LIBERTY (1974). In a series of casually linked historical episodes Luis Bunuel hilariously explores the proposition that most people are really afraid of freedom (Sunday, 12.10am, BBC2).
NORMA RAE (1979). Sally Field as the union organiser in a Southern textile factory. Directed by Martin Ritt (Friday, 11.50pm, BBC2).

JJ

British state brokers S. African reactionary alliance

BY BOB ARCHER

SENIOR officers of the apartheid police force and members of the African National Congress (ANC) security force have been brought together in a South African police training programme at the Civil Service College in Sunningdale, Berkshire.

Journalist Carmel Fitzsimons ('Guardian', 2 April) was clearly given official facilities to meet the various trainees at the end of the course.

She writes in naive astonishment about 'trained counter-intelligence operatives who learned their trade in Cuba, Angola, Mozambique and Russia' working 'side by side' with senior South African cops.

The apartheid police force is steeped in the blood of the black people of South Africa. It has also systematically tortured, imprisoned, murdered and terrorised anyone who opposed apartheid.

There is a long catalogue, not only of open mass brutality like the 1960s Sharpeville massacre, but also secret dirty work like the murder of Ruth First and

many other left and liberal opponents of the regime. All this is well known and well publicised in the media. Yet, 'Despite the pressure of all that history, the mood remained mutually conciliatory', Fitzsimons reports.

But papers like the 'Guardian' have actually deliberately concealed information about the repression of militant opponents of apartheid by the security forces of the ANC and its Namibian ally, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

Gruesome

The 'counter-intelligence experts who learned their trade in Cuba, Angola, Mozambique and Russia' practised their gruesome skills on revolutionaries who joined the military sections of ANC and SWAPO in order to fight apartheid.

'Solidarity with Ex-SWAPO Detainees' was a London-based group which went to great lengths to publicise the plight of Namibian freedom fighters who were murdered, tortured and imprisoned in holes in the ground by the SWAPO security

forces. The 'Guardian' systematically ignored all the group's press releases and public meetings.

The journal 'Searchlight South Africa' later documented very fully the repression of ANC members at the hands of Joe Modise, Chris Hani, Joe Slovo and other ANC leaders.

'Justice for Southern Africa' took up the campaign following widespread revelations about ANC atrocities against its own members in the 'Sunday Correspondent', 'The Times' and the 'Independent'.

The 'Guardian' maintained a tight-lipped silence on the matter as long as it could.

Behind the media black-out, Stalinists and their hangers-on conducted a vicious whispering campaign against the revelations.

They said that only agents of the apartheid government would say such shocking things about the ANC. They said that even to report such things was 'objectively' helping the apartheid regime.

But now it is the ANC which is sitting down with the 'reformed' agents of apartheid.

In May 1991, Amos Maxongo,

a former ANC detainee, faced Nelson Mandela at a London press conference and demanded justice for himself and his comrades.

After the press conference, an obviously shaken Mandela took Maxongo aside and asked: 'What are you doing in London? You should be ashamed of washing the ANC's dirty linen in public.'

Stitching

We now know what Mandela himself was doing in London at the time. The 'Guardian' article reveals that he was meeting John Major and stitching up British involvement in training ANC leaders to reconstruct a South African civil service.

This resulted in the Community Peace Foundation, based in the University of the Western Cape, involving an ANC elite and funded by the (British) Overseas Development Agency.

The trainees at Sunningdale are united by hatred and contempt for the working class and a determination to preserve profit and privilege based on capitalist exploitation.

Review

The magic of Picasso

IF ANYONE doubts that Picasso is one of the greatest artists of the century, perhaps this exhibition can reassure them. The actual purpose of the Tate Gallery's third Picasso exhibition is to establish Picasso as a major sculptor (as well as a painter), and to show that there is a relationship between the two. As the excellent brief guide to the show says, 'Picasso's sculpture was nourished by his work in two dimensions', but also 'his sculpture often fed back into his painting, altering and enriching it'.

As a modernist, Picasso demonstrated a new way of depicting the real world. Covering a huge span — six decades — this exhibition also reveals Picasso's extraordinary powers of inventiveness and imagination.

At the same time it does show less inspired, hastily produced works, as well as his declining powers. But always there is a pervading humanism in his work, at times angry and savage, at others mellow and playful.

Picasso revolutionised sculpture by proving that it could be constructed as well as carved and modelled. (He also combined these techniques.) He was one of the first sculptors to use found objects (rejected materials from the new age of mass production).

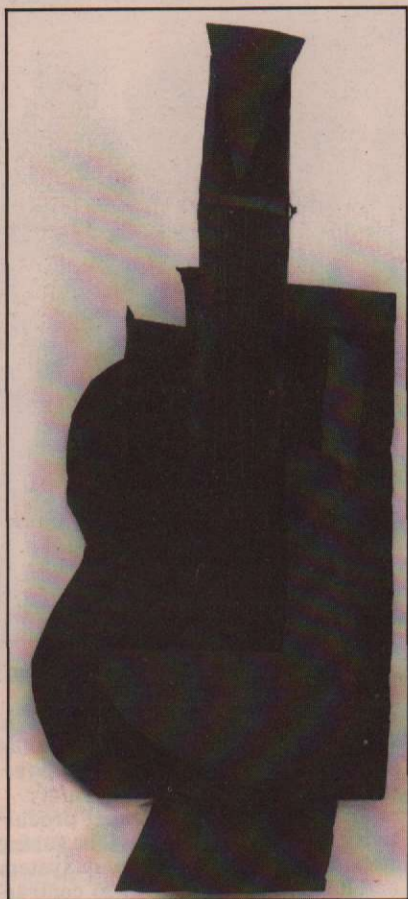
In this respect Picasso set a benchmark of artistic quality for all that was to follow. What distinguishes his work from much contemporary 'minimalist' and 'conceptual' sculpture is his ability to meditate and re-work these materials. Moreover, the moves that he makes are always evocative of the object depicted. The section on animals is a superb example of this ability.

In the first section we see Picasso's early 'analytical' phase (1906-9). We discover that cubism is a kind of 'sculptural painting' because 'it presented simultaneously more than one view of the subject'. At around about the same time, on the sculptural front, he moves from a traditional head of his first lover, Fernande, to a faceting of the head, as if he has taken it apart and restructured it.

The driving forces behind this transition were both internal and external, erotic desire on the one hand, and tribal art on the other.

Next comes 'construction and synthesis' (1912-16). Understandably, this is far more complex. Both Picasso and Braque subverted the traditional still-life genre by creating cubist collages. These would soon combine a mixed media of materials; for example 'Glass, Guitar, and Bottle' (1913) uses a mixture of oil, paper and pencil; later Picasso uses sand and newsprint.

Art is now based on the actual objects of the human-made world. It seems to be a natural progression from these collages to his first



Guitar

assembled sculptures, such as the famous 'Guitar' (1912-13), made of sheet metal, bent into shape, and wire. (Later he would paint such constructions as well.) Adjacent to the guitar and similar instruments, we see several versions of these in two dimensions (oil on canvas). As the guide book says, 'Picasso's sculpture and painting are so fluid that it is impossible to guess which comes first'. (To argue about this is also pointless.)

In fact, despite the exhibition's emphasis on sculpture, some of my favourite works shown here are in 'simple' two dimensions, such as the classically influenced 'Three Nudes by the Sea' (1921), (pastel on paper). The vivid blue colour (Picasso is not a great colourist) and the shading gives the content a gorgeous, sensuous form; also the studio drawings in pencil, for example 'The Vollard Suite: Sculptor at rest with a Sculpture of a Centaur and a Woman'. Here we are reminded of Picasso's mastery of line.

The 'Metamorphosis' sculptures (1927-33) are wonderfully varied in style, form, and content. They in-



Three Nudes by the Sea, 1921

Picasso: Sculptor/Painter

An exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, until 8 May

clude the famous 'Woman in a Garden', in which Picasso manages to depict (abstractedly) the shapes of leaves and hair — in forged scrap iron! There is also a bronze woman's head (his new lover, Marie Therese Walter, this time!), which seems to be a synthesis of male and female parts!

There is an impressive bronze cock, with absurdly large feet. As he struts along, he is pecking his tail feathers, constituting a flowing, arching shape. Apart from the obvious symbolism here, this is such a convincing image of the creature itself.

Other sculptures and paintings included here border on the surreal, such as the orgasmic 'Reclining Nude' (1932).

Arguably the two most powerful images in the show are the modelled bronzed forms, respectively 'Woman with a Vase' (1933) and 'Man with a Sheep' (1943). They derive their power not from their size (for each stands about two metres high), but because they are profoundly humanistic.

The first was inspired by a neolithic fetish. It has a large oval head and stands on spindly legs, arm outstretched in supplicatory fashion. The fetish is transformed into a poignant, vulnerable humanised form.

The other evokes an image of a humble shepherd, who has rescued a helpless creature. In the midst of the carnage of the Holocaust, here is a figure of compassion, a symbol of hope for the future. This contrasts strongly with the 'Death's Head' (1942), a larger than life putrefying human head — cast in bronze.

Again it contrasts with Picasso's fecund post-war phase. This was largely inspired by yet a new relationship, with Françoise Gilot, with whom he had two children. On the one hand we have the simple but beautiful painting, 'Woman-flower' (1946); on the other, the more figurative sculpture of 'Pregnant Woman' (1950), which commemorates the birth of Picasso's daughter, Paloma. The original figure was built up in plaster over a large pot for the belly, and two small pottery jars for the breasts!

'Searching in the Animal Kingdom' is a sheer delight for two reasons. Picasso seems to be at the height of his creative powers in the medium of sculpture based on found objects; he also reveals a great love of animals themselves. We find the famous 'Little Owl' (1951), made of nails and a tin bowl; a crane, with a tap for a head, and a feet made from forks; a baboon whose head is made from a toy car; a goat whose belly is made from a wicker basket; a bull's head made from handle bars and a bicycle seat.

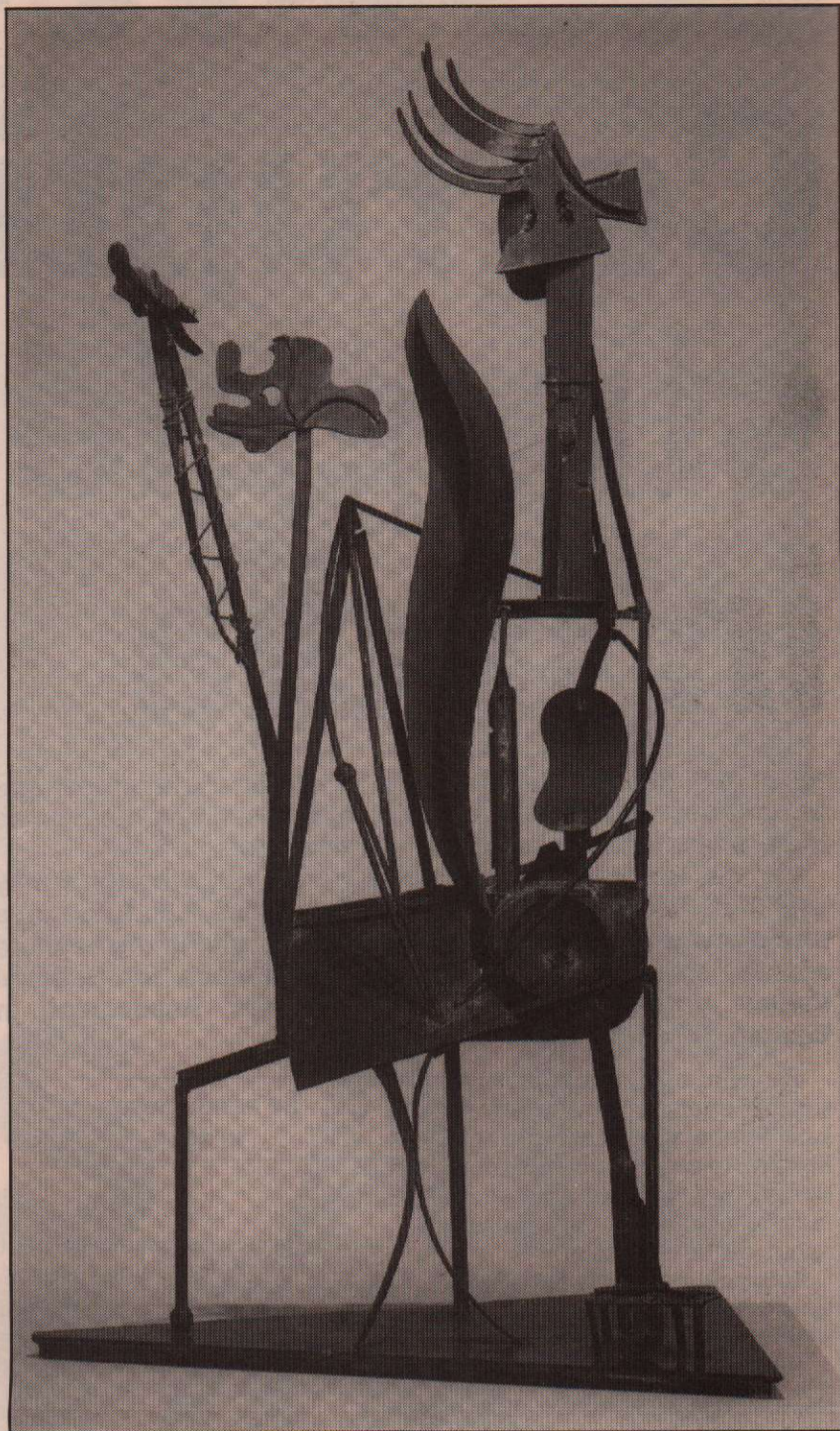
These works are remarkably evocative, and yet so audaciously executed. Two of my favourites (as a cat lover) are the cubist painting of a predatory cat, a gorgeous tawny colour, but all teeth and claws, tearing at its victim (1939-41).

The other is a bronze cast of a pregnant moggy, also with its tail up, but most definitely on the run!

The dove in ceramic (1953) is a fitting exhibit on which to end this review. The guide book explains how it came into being: It started out as a small vase thrown on the potter's wheel.

'My father grabbed it' (his son Claude recalls) 'wring its neck, pinched it around the belly, pressed it down on the table while bending the neck. A pigeon. The hands worked so fast . . . that I had not noticed that the head had also been shaped . . . It was', he concluded, 'Magic.'

Rex Dunn



Woman in a Garden, 1931-2



The Crane, 1951-2

Corruption and class struggle in India

'BLATANT charlatanism masked by chicanery, manifest amoral conduct, strut about as political acumen and have come to be accepted as part of our political life'.

No, this is not about the Major government, although it may well fit it. These are the words of Mr Justice H.R. Khanna, a former judge of the Indian supreme court, giving the keynote address to a recent seminar on 'The Search for National Values' organised by the United Writers' Association in Madras.

He went on to say that 'practically every member of the Lok Sabha and state assemblies has to commence his membership by making a false declaration about the amount spent on his election'.

Entering politics is now looked upon as the quickest way to amass wealth, the ex-judge said.

As he spoke, the 1994 Indian budget was being presented to parliament in New Delhi. This showed that the planned deficit of 4 per cent in 1993-94 had turned into 8.35 per cent.

Even if India's Gross National Product were to grow by 4 per cent — which seems unlikely — inflation would still run at least at 7 per cent.

The kind of politician that Khanna

BY PETER GIBSON
IN INDIA

described welcomed the budget. But writers in the national press warn of growing inflation and 'increasing divergence between the budgeted figures and the actual revenues and expenditures'. Was this ineptitude or deliberate fudging of figures, they ask.

The agriculture minister has said the budget will increase the costs to farmers. Unemployment in the west of India has led to calls for 'jobs for the sons of the soil'.

In Goa the opposition party has called for 'surplus technicians' to be



The heavy lifting squad waiting for the concrete to arrive for a bridge on the new railway

put to work on the land under the slogan: 'Grow more trees and earn your bread!'

A thousand railway workers staged a day-long strike and picket in Bombay early in March against the anti-worker and anti-commuter policy of the government towards the railways.

'Rail travel has become not only miserable but dangerous', they said. Locomotives which could be made in India were now imported from Switzerland at four times the price, even though many of the engines were not suitable for Indian railway traffic.

The rail union said vacancies in vital train operating grades were not being filled, forcing staff to work overtime thereby compromising safety.

In the name of increasing productivity, the administration is taking steps to privatise the railway system and hand vital areas over to contractors.

Women employed by contractors building the new western railway are paid between 30 and 40 rupees a day (between 80 and 90 pence) for doing unskilled heavy work. Men may earn as much as 100 rupees (£2.10) per day.

Big investors from Europe, Japan and the USA are guaranteed a return of 16 per cent on infrastructure projects. They can also import their own equipment, usually priced much higher than that available in India.

The pressure on jobs and living conditions for workers and farmers in India has already produced big demonstrations and strikes. These will grow during the summer.

It is the movement of workers and farmers which will punish the blatant charlatanism in public life of which Mr Justice Khanna complains.

Another 'Black Monday' crash on Wall Street

PRESIDENT Clinton went on television to calm investors on Easter Monday after fears of a Wall Street fall had sent share prices tumbling around the world.

The Dow Jones industrial index fell 84 points in the first few minutes of trading that day.

Stock exchanges all around the world had registered falls

BY BOB ARCHER

anticipating the crisis in New York.

■ The Tokyo stock exchange closed nearly 155 points down.

■ Malaysia's stock exchange closed down 31.6 points.

■ Bangkok stock exchange fell 3 per cent.

■ Sao Paulo stock exchange fell 9 per cent.

■ Share prices tumbled in Madrid and Athens.

In many areas fears of a Wall Street fall were reinforced by uncertainty about local political difficulties.

Despite Clinton's reassurances, the stock market rollercoaster underlines the difficulties of reviving the US economy in the face of a world recession.

Clinton claims 'the underlying fundamentals are sound. There's low inflation and we're creating jobs at a rapid rate.'

In fact the investors who deal in government bonds are deeply worried ('phobic' in the words of some journalists) that the fall in unemployment will push inflation up.

This has led to a big hike in long-term interest rates, which tends to slow down growth and hence employment.

The US government's reaction was for the US Federal Reserve to raise short-term interest rates slightly. This unleashed the panicky world-wide reaction which rebounded onto Wall Street on Monday.

Stimulate

For the last five years, the US Federal Reserve has held interest rates low in order to stimulate the economy.

Bankers and investors have been worried by a recent growth in employment and manufacturing output.

Attempts to deal with the problem have led to a fall of 8 per cent in share values on Wall

Street since the beginning of the year.

Clinton may not have been the best person to reassure the public about the future of their investments.

His own personal reputation for unreliability counts alongside anxiety about inflation, North Korean intransigence over nuclear arms, trade rivalry with Japan and the effect of the North American Free Trade Zone as one of the basic causes of stock exchange problems.

The fears are that Clinton will interfere in the work of financial regulatory bodies to save his own skin over the Whitewater financial scandal.

Agency

Clinton has still not appointed anyone to head the RTC, an agency set up to clear up the long-running crisis of the 'saving and loan' organisations, America's equivalent to building societies.

Fraudulent deals, including loans and investments to shady projects which were often milked by insiders, led to losses of \$250 billion (£165bn) by these institutions under the Bush administration.

\$70 million (£45m) went missing in the Whitewater-Madison affair.

The latest buzz-word in Washington is 'firewall'. This describes devices to protect the finance system from the fall-out of Clinton's money dealing.

Protests halt wage cuts

JANOS BOROVI comments on the wave of protests by young people hitting France to defend the minimum wage

THE movement against the new law which permits employers to pay only 80 per cent of the guaranteed minimum wage (SMIC) to young people started more than three weeks ago.

This was to apply even to graduates as long as they had 'no experience'.

The wave of demonstrations very quickly spread. One small country town of 20,000 inhabitants saw a demonstration of 2,000 bring together all layers of young people: university students, secondary school students, further education students and the unemployed.

As the protests have grown stronger, the government has made several changes to the law. This amounts to a series of setbacks for the government over the law, which has finally become an empty shell. Only the name remains the same.

Nevertheless, the young people have maintained the campaign. Last Thursday's demonstration, for example, was not cancelled even when Prime Minister Balladur announced the complete withdrawal of the law the previous day.

This mobilisation in fact has shown that young people hate the government and that hundreds of thousands of young people of all backgrounds have realised that their only future is unemployment — even for graduates.

A new phenomenon is the 'Los Angeles' type of riot. Thousands of demonstrators

burned hundreds of cars on last Thursday's demonstration. Most of the young people came from working-class suburbs where unemployment runs at 50 or 60 per cent. These young people really have no chance of a job, and they know it.

Although the government denounced the rioters as thieves and foreign criminals, the movement has remained in solidarity with these 'rioters'. The government deported two Algerian students under conditions which were so illegal that even the judiciary turned against interior minister Pasqua.

The very big limitation of the movement comes from the lack of leadership. These young people reject politics in general. They attacked the government but they have never questioned capitalism. This movement is a very forceful expression of today's contradictory situation. The explosion of Stalinism has set free great energy but has obstructed a socialist outlook.

The unions have 'supported' the movement, they have paid lip service, but they have not really mobilised. They never called for a general strike to support the young people, even though it would have been easy to unite the whole working class with them around the question of unemployment, which is more and more becoming the key issue in the fight.

Only a revolutionary organisation whose aim is to destroy the bourgeois state has any hope of getting a hearing among young people and winning them into political struggle, thus turning this enormous energy towards the fight for socialism.

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