

Waldegrave, Major and Thatcher criticised by Scott

CAPITALISM, LIES AND ARMS

LYING is a necessary part of capitalist rule, insisted Lord Howe and other Tories in the aftermath of the leaks from the Scott Inquiry draft on arms sales to Iraq. Labour is temporarily forgetting this — for the moment. But once in office, Labour ministers will follow the dishonest precedents, and, indeed have done so in the past — as Tories on the defensive were quick to point out.

In that cosy Westminster club, the House of Commons, it is considered impolite to say the truth and use the word 'lie' when someone has in fact lied! So all sorts of euphemisms have grown up, the most common being 'mislead the House'. The parliamentary Labour Party is part of that club — and it plays by its rules. And those rules are designed so that capitalism can maintain its firm grip over everybody's life — and, preferably, so that everybody doesn't know it.

The Houses of Parliament are the democracy of big business and, in particular, the big arms manufacturers. Big business made millions out of the first Gulf war, that between Iran and Iraq, largely supporting Iraq led by Saddam Hussein. Then in the Gulf War for unfreedom and undemocracy in Kuwait, the big battalions of imperialism crushed that same Iraq — but not Saddam, who still sits perched on top of the ruins of Iraqi and Kurdish people's lives.

Tory government policy in these strategic areas were fully supported by the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party. If the Labour Party had been office they would have done almost exactly the same.

The British arms industry sends material used by governments (Nigeria, Indonesia, ...) to carry out war, death and destruction against other countries and their 'own' people, including those fighting for independence, like in East Timor — against workers and toilers throughout the world.

Attack

Using the advice, 'the best form of defence is attack', Prime Minister John Major and the rest of his rotten government are concentrating on the morality of publishing and discussing a draft report. Labour is concentrating the issue on the morality of ministers lying — sorry — 'misleading the House'!

The inquiry into the Arms to Iraq scandal was set up under Sir Richard Scott because the government was forced to release papers which showed the Matrix Church-

ill executives to be innocent of charges of exporting to Iraq illegally. If found guilty the executives would have gone to jail. Accused of 'breaking the rules', the papers showed that the state had secretly relaxed the rules — not telling parliament — and that the arms had been exported with the full knowledge of the intelligence services.

The government insists that the rules concerning sales of arms and equipment with military uses to Iraq were not changed, but Scott says in the draft report: 'It is clear, in my opinion, that policy [on arms sales to Iraq] did not remain unchanged.'

Innocent

The Scott inquiry was set up after the executives were found innocent, to find out who knew what, who should have known better, etc. In the leaked draft report, circulated for comment but not intended for publication, Scott is critical of, among others, William Waldegrave, minister of state at the Foreign Office, Prime Minister John Major, Foreign Secretary at the time of the events being investigated, and Baroness Thatcher, former prime minister.

Scott regarded as 'sophistry', Waldegrave's contention that the change in what was allowed to be exported to Iraq had not become government policy, but, rather, 'represented merely an interpretation, relaxed and flexible, of the original guidelines, necessary in order to take account of the circumstances prevailing after the [Iran-Iraq] ceasefire.'

Scott makes clear that in his opinion the guidelines were relaxed to allow the export of machine tools — as in the Matrix Churchill case — to Iraq.

Capitalism needed to change the rules at that point — and it did, quietly. The Tory government had to follow, just as a Labour government would have done. In fact, those are the rules of capitalism. The working class needs to build political organisations towards breaking those rules in its own interests and for the interests of the vast majority of humanity.

BY MIKE COOKE

African Liberation — NOT CHARITY!



African Liberation Rally, Trafalgar Square, 27 May — see pages 4 and 5 Photo: Bronwen Handyside

Other news . . .

Library strike against Labour pay cuts

BY COLIN PENDLETON

LIBRARIES and a new city council information line were closed in Sheffield last week as 350 members of the public service union UNISON angrily rejected pay cuts.

Sheffield's Labour city council wants to abolish enhanced pay and make people work weekends at normal rates. Shop stewards say the council's move, which breaches national agreements, could mean a pay cut of up to 7 per cent for some of the lowest paid.

'It is a scandalous situation for a Labour council to attack the terms and conditions of some of its lowest paid workers,' said UNISON branch secretary Sandor Finta.

The union said it had received massive public support, with hundreds of local people signing a petition in support of library staff. The council wants to save £361,000 from its Leisure Services budget,

but has ignored suggestions from staff on savings.

Staff levels and the book fund have also been reduced, but it is the third time in three years that library staff wages have been hit.

The workers voted for action last month. They walked out last Monday, at 12.30pm, after an ultimatum, asking management to promise not to touch pay.

Skills

As well as normal library services, the strike has hit a new Information Line set up by the city council. Shop steward Ken Pickering said: 'This line was staffed at short notice by our members. They have the skills and experience that has made this line a success.'

'We are asking staff in other departments not to cover this work while we are on strike. Clearly if the council was prepared to negotiate, without threatening our members' pay, this strike could have been avoided.'

Recession? What recession?

ARE you ready for the summer season? It starts with this weekend's Epsom Derby, and proceeds on its champagne-guzzling way through Royal Ascot, the Lord's Test, Wimbledon, and the Henley regatta.

If demand for top tickets for these events is anything to go by then economic recovery is well under way.

The bubbly is flowing at its fastest in glorious June but the party goes on through to August, with the British Grand Prix at Goodwood and Cowes Week. Those with any energy left slip across the Channel to Deauville for the racing.

In the three-day Epsom meet-

ing, company directors and other members of the top-hatted fraternity, will swill down an estimated 7,000 bottles of champagne, eat 2,000lb of salmon, 4,000lb of Dover sole, 2,500lb of strawberries, 200 dozen oysters and some 600 lobsters as they relax in their corporate hospitality boxes.

But the season requires not simply a large chequebook but plenty of stamina. One day will prove more than stressful. On 22 June, having taken in the Gold Cup, there will be just time to dash over to Lords where England are playing the West Indies and take in the last few overs of the afternoon session.

RMT NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

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The new corruption

NEARLY 5,000 small shareholders attended the six-hour annual general meeting of British Gas. There was almost unanimous and angry opposition to the behaviour of the company's directors, in particular to the astronomical salaries they pay themselves.

The calls for the resignation of British Gas chief executive Cedric Brown (salary £475,000 a year) and chairman Richard Giordano (£450,000 a year) were carried overwhelmingly at the company's annual general meeting held last week, only to be later overturned by the votes of the big institutions — the banks and the pension fund managers.

As one angry representative of the small shareholders asked: 'So what about shareholder democracy?' What indeed!

For years this slogan, together with calls for a 'property-owning democracy,' was the watchword of the Tory party leaders. It has been increasingly embraced by Tony Blair and the Labour Party hierarchy.

Both can now be openly seen as the lies and fraud they always were. Over a million mortgage holders are now caught with property worth less than they paid for it — suffering from what building-society chiefs call euphemistically the 'negative equity trap'.

The continuing fall in property prices, reported last week by the biggest building society, the Halifax, shows that the plight of such people gets worse with every passing month.

The British Gas experience brutally exposes that when it comes to decisive questions small shareholders count for absolutely nothing. They have no control over the companies in which they have in many cases placed their life savings.

THE 18th century was known as the century of Old Corruption. A tiny handful of court officials, government employees, bishops of the Church and suchlike made fortunes out of government sinecures. 'The thing' — as it was popularly known — was universally hated among ordinary people.

But today's corruption puts that of 200 years or so ago into the shade. The directors of the newly privatised industries — built up by the labour of generations of workers — milk them on a scale that would have taken the breath away of their 18th-century predecessors.

With fancy wheezes like share option schemes, vast salaries, all manner of open and hidden perks, they are plundering the national wealth on a scale never previously envisaged.

Many of these practices are within the law. But last week it was reported in a Mori survey that open fraud is on the increase among top and middle management in British industry — putting into perspective the long denigration of workers supposedly on 'the fiddle'.

Not unexpectedly Blair and Co. 'tut tut' at such findings. They will curb the activities of directors, 'democratise' pension funds, make companies more accountable to small shareholders, and so on.

These declarations are worthless. Many of the pension funds that last week sanctioned the obscene salaries paid to British Gas chiefs were guilty of abusing the interests of the thousands of workers whose money has been sunk into such funds in the expectation of a half-decent retirement. It is clear that Robert Maxwell — who systematically thieved from his workers' pension funds — was no isolated 'bad apple'.

What Blair and Co. never say is that crime, corruption and capitalism go hand-in-hand. We live in the epoch of decaying capitalism. Big business is less and less interested in producing things that satisfy human need.

If such needs are met, this is quite incidental to the purpose for which big business exists: the making of profit.

If profit is to be had by breaking up the nationalised industries, letting prices soar and allowing a tiny handful of big shareholders to rake in millions, then this is the name of the game.

Whatever the Labour leaders say, under these conditions, nationalisation remains a burning, living issue.

Double standards

I WAS amazed to see Ken Livingstone MP featured as an advocate of natural justice on the 'Taking Liberties' programme about corruption on Hackney council (BBC2, 30 May).

Livingstone was shown on the programme as saying that nobody should be accused of racism without evidence.

What a contrast with his approach to the allegation that the security services were behind the ousting of Gerry Healy from the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party in 1985.

Just as the exposure of corruption raised unfounded allegations of racism against the people fighting corruption, so the MI5 canard is trotted out by Healy's supporters, including Livingstone, to try and limit the damage resulting from the exposure of Healy's corruption.

Livingstone told that well-known proletarian monthly 'Esquire', in November 1993: 'My view, for which I haven't got any evidence, is that ... MI5 just panicked and activated their agents inside the party.'

If Livingstone thinks nobody should be accused of racism without evidence, how come he himself is not barred by lack of evidence from accusing the majority of WRP members of being either agents or dupes of the security services? Furiously,

John Spencer
London SW18

T&G members answer Dromey

WE THE undersigned would like to reply to Jack Dromey's speech made at Chester to Transport and General Workers' Union members, attacking the general secretary, Bill Morris.

By saying that the T&G used to be a great union, is Jack Dromey suggesting that the lay members' union is no longer great? Not true.

He implies that the T&G is always fighting the Labour Party. Again Jack's way off the track.

The T&G is not fighting the Labour Party, just exercising its democratic right to disagree with Tony Blair's spin doctors in moving the party to the right in an attempt to get elected at any cost.

If only the Labour Party would support the working class as the Tories support their City friends!

Jack Dromey claims the union is in crisis because its membership has been reduced over the last 16 years. In 1975-76 the union membership reached a pinnacle of 2 million.

He fails to say that membership fell during this period because of the Tory government's policies against the whole trade union movement. He lays the blame at the door of past and present general secretaries: Moss Evans, Ron Todd, and now Bill Morris.

Jack Dromey says Bill Morris was against One Man One Vote and fought Tony Blair over Clause Four and will fight him over his economic policies.

Perhaps Jack Dromey is suffering from amnesia. Our recollection is that these items were the policy of the General Executive Council and Biennial Delegate Conference.

Perhaps if we go down Jack Dromey's road we will no longer be a lay delegate trade union and will then be tied into the Labour Party, doing only as Jack and Tony say. No thank you, Jack and Tony!

Our members expect the T&G, being a lay delegates' trade union, to follow the policies laid down by the Biennial Delegate Conference and not the dictatorial tactics of any general secretary.

Our members do want a Labour government — but not one that is a Conservative government Mark 2, indistinguishable from the Conservative government Mark 1.

This election is about Jack Dromey seeking another chance to enhance his position within our union.

His concluding paragraph states what Jack Dromey wants and nothing of what we the lay members of the union want. Jack, what we would want is that when you are defeated in the election for T&G general secretary, you do the honourable thing and resign your position within our union.

F. Shilling, J. Carpenter,
V. Turner, B. Cook
Members of the TGWU

Appeal from Tuzla teachers

THE GRIEF and despair over another massacre which took 71 murdered and more than 150 injured students of Tuzla schools on 25 May is forcing us to address you again.

We hope that the dreadful scenes of this tragedy have already been seen throughout the world.

Dumbfounded and speechless, we expect our colleagues in other countries to raise their voice against this unseen terrorism and make their governments help us by changing their policies towards the victims and, thus, stop the further spread of fascism.

Mevlida Altumbabic
President Tuzla High School
Teachers' Union

Bosnia call from lecturers

THE Association of University Teachers' council meeting at Weston last month passed a motion deploring the conflict in Bosnia Herzegovina and its impact on universities.

It continued: 'Council also notes that the Scottish TUC congress has expressed enthusiasm for the trade union humanitarian aid convoy to Bosnia being organised in July this year and called upon the STUC general council to:

(i) publicise this convoy widely in the trade union and the labour movement;

(ii) renew and redouble its fundraising efforts, particularly to support this convoy;

(iii) urge affiliated bodies, wherever possible, to supply and equip a lorry to join the convoy;

(iv) collaborate wherever possible with requests for assistance from the organisers — the Tuzla Trade Union District and the British trade unionists supporting the operation.

Council shares the enthusiasm of STUC and therefore instructs the executive committee to publicise this convoy and its requirements amongst AUT members and to support the convoy appropriately through the Academic Lifeline for Bosnia.'

Academic Lifeline for Bosnia has been launched by AUT in conjunction with the World Univer-

sity Service. The Tuzla convoy provides the first opportunity to ship materials to Bosnia which in itself is a difficult and hazardous process.

AUT Leicester Area secretary Paul Henderson will be taking part in the convoy.

Our intention is that he can deliver substantial contributions from the Academic Lifeline appeal to Tuzla university. We wish him well in this most significant part of the project.

Our council raised by way of a collection £544.36 for the Academic Lifeline and to support the convoy. Executive also agreed to match the amount raised.

All of which represents a tremendous start of what must be a patient and sustained effort designed initially to enable the Academic Lifeline for Bosnian universities to survive and, one hopes, before too long to contribute to their re-establishment in the world academic community.

The Tuzla convoy is in response to an initiative by the Tuzla District Trade Union Committee and is being supported by British trade unionists including the Scottish TUC and a number of trades councils.

The Tuzla committee is proud of its tradition of international solidarity. The Tuzla miners gave generously in 1984 to support the British miners' strike.

This convoy therefore provides a double opportunity to reciprocate the trade union solidarity of the Tuzla Trade Union Committee and in doing so to enable staff and students of Tuzla university to maintain the life of their community.

We were also informed at council that following an approach from the AUT, the principal of Kings College, London, has agreed that the college will meet the costs of the work of Dr Pajic on behalf of the Academic Lifeline.

There is an Academic Lifeline leaflet available which lists the type of aid most required.

Aberdeen Association of University Teachers also supports Workers Aid for Bosnia which will be participating in the convoy, taking supplies such as rice, cooking oil, sugar and flour, which are also urgently required. As are cash donations and other offers of help.

Terry Brotherstone
Aberdeen AUT

Yorkshire Miners Gala, Wakefield Saturday 17 June 1995

March from Wakefield town hall to Thornes park (assemble at Margaret Street, moving off to the town hall at 10.20 am; march sets off from town hall at 10.30). Rally starts in Thornes park at 12 noon, chaired by NUM Vice President Frank Cave. Speakers will be: Wakefield's mayor — and NUM member — councillor Norman Hartshorne, who will give civic welcome, Halifax MP Alice Mahon, and NUM President Arthur Scargill. Rally followed by afternoon of traditional gala activities, with events and entertainment for all.

WORKERS AID FOR BOSNIA COLLECTION — JULY CONVOY

Collections are to be held at Walthamstow Sainsbury supermarket from Sunday 25 June to Friday 30 June. We are calling for anybody who could be free on those days to help to collect food and money. Contact: 0181-555 1566.

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Secretary elections get rough

THE SPEECHES of Jack Dromey, Tony Blair's candidate for the leadership of the Transport and General Workers Union, have caused anger among union activists (see Letters, p2).

Despite support from a 'Guardian' editorial (30 May) — which was rather coy about his relations with Labour and one of its MPs, his wife Harriet Harman — Dromey's campaign took a knocking this week when the figures for 1994 showed that the TGWU accounts were well in the black, and that the fall in membership seemed to have been halted in the first three months of 1995.

To make matters worse, it has now emerged that Dromey's cheque for his union subscriptions in 1991 bounced and had to be re-presented. So much for the man who boasts he will put the union's finances on a firm footing.

Those who were not sure which way to vote are now getting a clearer picture.

There is just over a week to get the ballot paper in the post for Bill Morris for general secretary of the TGWU.

The school for share scandal

Or: It's impossible to lose!

SOME £17 million a year is being netted by Britain's top 65 directors in their latest perk — share option schemes. These schemes give directors the right to buy in, say, three to five years' time shares in their company at a discount on their current price.

Directors of the de-nationalised companies have got their snouts deep into this rich trough.

When the option becomes available company bosses have three choices:

IF the share price has fallen the directors can let the option

lapse and thus lose nothing.

OR they can take up the shares and draw the dividends while holding onto often huge unrealised profits.

OR they can simply sell the shares and pocket the loot.

'Labour Research' has found out that over the past year:

- Sixty-five directors in 42 companies made at least £100,000 each on share options.

- Their total profit came to a staggering £17,148,748 — an average per director of £263,827.

- Fifteen directors of seven

privatised companies have made £100,000 or more over the past year, including two who made more than £500,000.

Raked

John Baker is the chief executive of electricity generator National Power, which was privatised in February 1991. Last year he raked in £675,000 on share option schemes.

Gordon Edington is group property director of BAA, the airports group privatised in 1987. Share option schemes have

brought him £500,640 profit.

Other National Power directors in on the act include finance director Brian Birkenhead (£352,990 profit) and Graham Hadley, managing director of international business development (a modest £213,404).

Privatised companies where bosses have coined it in hand-somely include health care instrument maker Amersham International and Norweb, one of the 12 regional electricity companies sold off by the Tory government in 1990.

Ian Preston, chief executive of Scottish Power, privatised in 1991, received £281,232 profit from share option deals last November. No doubt he was in dire need of such money given his paltry salary of £255,218.

According to a survey in the March issue of 'Investors Chronicle' the chief executives of the privatised water and electricity companies are currently sitting on a total unrealised profit of £6.7 million.

And some people pretend that Clause 4 is out of date!

Union response to Tuzla call grows

SUPPORT for a July convoy to Tuzla in north-east Bosnia from trade unions is growing rapidly in many unions and regions.

Delegates from Tuzla TUC attended May Day events in Britain, invited by Lancaster, Leeds, Leicester, Coventry, and Norwich trades councils. During the trade unionists' tour, including time in France, Tuzla TUC decided to organise a convoy from trade unions in Europe.

The Scottish TUC conference gave unanimous support to the July convoy, agreed to circulate the appeal from Tuzla, asking for financial/material support and collaboration with others.

Trade unionists in Fife, Dundee, and Edinburgh intend to join the convoy, and individual National Union of Mineworkers' members in Scotland plan to help.

North West TUC has agreed to support the convoy and circulate information.

Workers Union North West branch reps meet forthrightly to organise obtaining and filling a lorry. A 10p levy is being collected from the branches 25,000 members. Telecommunication equipment is being sought for Tuzla Telecom. Midlands CWU is also trying to organise lorries. The CWU is circulating information nationally.

Brighton and Hove TGWU buses have arranged maintenance and filling of a lorry. The engineers' AEEU and TGWU are jointly sponsoring this work. The local AEEU secretary plans to go on the convoy along with a TGWU bus shop steward who is also a Brighton and Hove TUC member.

There will be a fringe meeting at the printers' GPMU conference this year, organised by the union's Southern region with Workers Aid for Bosnia, aiming to raise funds. An emergency resolution is being put by Greater London branch.

Camden UNISON local government and TGWU Direct Labour branches are jointly sponsoring a lorry. The TGWU branch are sending a delegate on the convoy, which a UNISON shop steward will also join.

The 'Colin Roach Centre', run by the Hackney Community Defence Association and Hackney Trade Union Resource Centre, is sending a delegate on the convoy.

East London Teachers Association (NUT) will discuss a resolution seeking NUT national sponsorship of a lorry. The NUT is attempting nationally to raise funds for Tuzla teachers, to be sent via the convoy which NUT members intend to join.

People from mining and examining communities are trying to organise to take food and mining safety equipment to the Tuzla miners. The Coalfield Communities Campaign is supporting the convoy. Bolsover council is trying to organise several lorries, and Derwent Valley council intends to send a lorry.

Union activists from Wallsend Peoples' Centre and Bosnian refugees on Tyneside have bought their own lorry for the convoy.

Greater London Association of Trades Councils voted to affiliate to Workers' Aid for Bosnia and to put a truck on the convoy (see Workers Press, 3 June).

Loach angers Stalinists

BY PAUL DAY and MARTIN RALPH

KEN LOACH's new film, 'Land and Freedom', has prompted much discussion in Spain of the critical lessons of the Spanish Civil War.

The film tells the story of David, a Communist Party member from Liverpool, who decides to fight in Spain. On his way to the Aragon front he meets fighters from the POUM, (Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista), and goes to the front with POUM sympathisers.

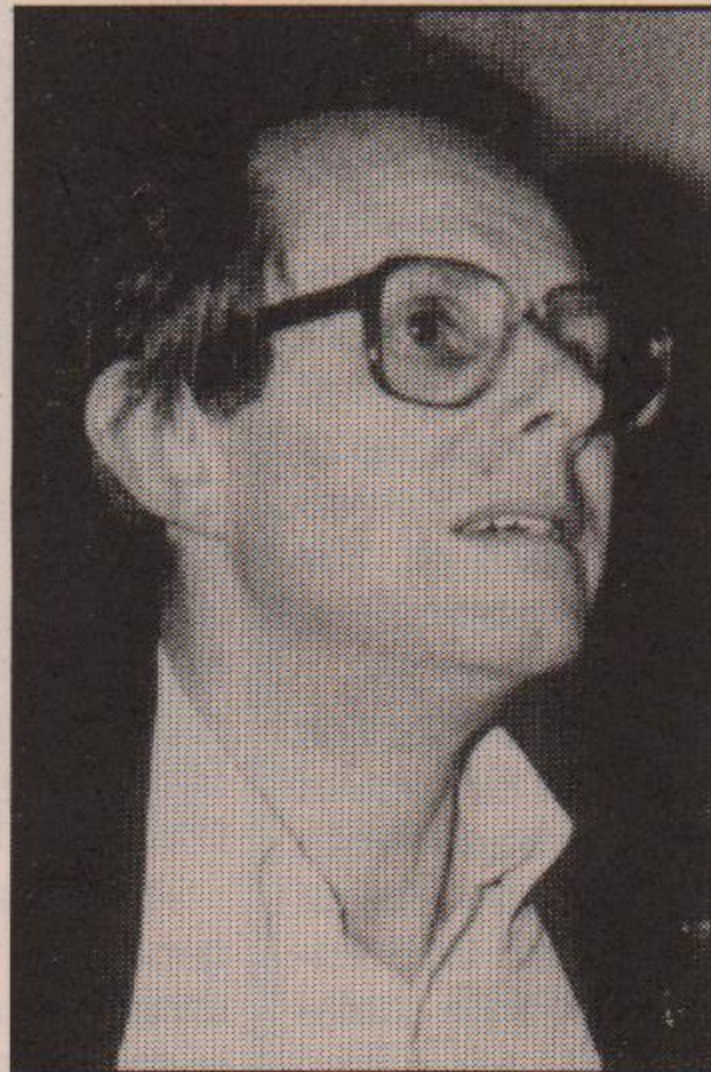
The film shows the international militants lagging behind the peasants: peasant women demand the execution of a fascist-collaborating priest. The unit hesitates, but the women are insistent.

Wounded at the front, David goes to Barcelona where he becomes part of the Communist Party militia hunting down anarchists. During an exchange of fire he finds he is firing on a fellow Liverpoolian. He tears up his party card, and returns to the front to join the POUM militia.

Pinned down by fascist artillery they are abandoned by the Republican command. After their escape they are disarmed by forces from the Republican Government, which has declared them illegal.

Bitter

Loach has said that David 'experiences... bitter disillusionment when Stalinists conspire to eliminate Anarchists, Trotskyists and Democratic Socialists in the interests of the USSR and political expediency. He remains a committed socialist but tears up his Commu-



Ken Loach
nist Party card in disgust.

The film shows clearly the role of the Communist Party and the Republican forces. It has been effective enough to have attracted abuse from various Stalinists.

Santiago Carrillo, leader of the Spanish CP, attacked the film. Jim Allen, Loach's script writer, issued the terse reply: 'What takes place throughout the film shows the role of the Communist Party in the Spanish revolution.'

In Britain a minuscule Stalinist sect, the International Leninist Workers Party, has denounced Loach's view of the Stalinist strangling of the Spanish revolution as 'a Goebbelsian lie'.

In Spain itself the film is generating widespread discussion about the period. In a bar in Sevilla, before a showing of the film, the comment was made that many young people in Spain today do not know the history of the civil war.

A scene where peasant women throw religious icons into a fire evoked sharp reactions from the audience — support and protest. One girl said after the film that her parents had mentioned that kind of incident but, they said, the civil war was a 'crazy thing when peasants did things like that!'

Exposure

Stalinists are not just objecting to the exposure of the CP's role in 1936. Loach is quite clear on the film's contemporary significance: 'It is time we remembered our European history. After all, there is now a similar war going on in former Yugoslavia to defend what remains of a multi-ethnic society in Bosnia.'

This has caused the ILWP to howl dementedly: 'fascism', they say, is no different from aggressive imperialist warmongering as a whole. (This is convenient as it allows them, in their 1992 perspectives document, to describe the Hitler-Stalin pact simply as 'some neat last-minute footwork'.)

So, they say, those threatened by fascism in Bosnia are 'stooge elements' which have 'always been used by encroaching imperialism to try to undermine the natural Serbian slav-orthodox majority'. They also refer to the 'Serbian traditional nationalist resistance', without acknowledging that this is now being used to oppress multi-ethnic communities in Bosnia.

At the end of the Loach's film David's granddaughter has discovered not only his personal history, but also the cause and struggle in Spain. As the old man is buried two of his old comrades raise their clenched fists in salute. His granddaughter also raises hers.

Such a film cannot fail to move people in Spain — and elsewhere!

To tell the truth about the Spanish revolution will not only increase discussion on the lessons of Spain, but will also allow us to draw further conclusions about our responsibilities in Bosnia.

Campaign against driving hours launched

'IT TAKES only a second to fall asleep behind the wheel,' says the Transport and General Workers' Union in its new campaign to cut the legal working limit for bus, coach and lorry drivers to eight hours over a 10-hour working day.

The TGWU says that a quarter of all accidents on motorways are caused by driver fatigue — and the situation is getting worse.

The Department of Transport advises private motorists to take a break every two hours, but professional drivers are allowed by law to drive for up to five-and-a-half hours without a break, and can drive for 10 hours.

For lorry and coach drivers this can be spread over 13 hours, whilst for bus drivers it is legal to spread the 10 hours over a 16-hour working day.

The union says that, under pressure from employers, drivers often exceed these limits.

But even a law stipulating eight hours driving over a 10-hour day will not be worth the paper it's written on if employers are still able to force drivers to break it.

The summons which followed the M2 crash, in which nine American tourists were killed, may set the scene for the future. In that case the managers of the coach company were summonsed for conspiring to force drivers to break the driving hours regulations.

This new campaign by the TGWU seems to be a step in the right direction.

Support Brazil's oil strikers

BRAZIL's government has used the army and the police to try and break an oilworkers' strike against the privatisation of their industry. The strikers are also demanding the government complies with existing agreements with the trade unions.

The strike, which began on 3 May, promises to be a very bitter struggle. Reports indicate that there is widespread feeling against the privatisation. After 12 days of strike action, 59 workers had been sacked but 90 per cent of production had been paralysed. The government had to modify

the constitution to carry out the privatisation.

Brazil's constitution made it difficult to privatise those resources that were of strategic value for the country. In the last few weeks the government pushed the necessary changes through which allowed a vote to be taken to legalise the privatisation.

Illegal

On the other hand, the strike has been declared illegal since it is not over an industrial issue but was political. But the strike is also over wages.

The United Socialist Workers Party of Brazil (PSTU) have sent an appeal to Britain particularly because they knew that many people here know what life is like for workers when privatisation is carried out.

They are asking workers to:
■ Comdemn the refusal by the Brazilian government to comply with existing agreements and to demand that it immediately opens negotiations, to demand the reinstatement of the sacked workers and trade union leaders.
■ To fax President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, +55-61-2267566.

- To fax the oilcompany PETROBRAS president, Joel Reno, +55-21-2409394.

- To fax the United Oil Workers Federation, +55-61-323647.

- To fax the PSTU, +55-11-5756093.

- To inform other workers' organisations of this struggle and encourage them to do the same.
- To organise, if possible, protests outside Brazilian embassies, etc.

- To organise collections to support the oil workers. Send contributions to Banco Do Brasil S/A, Branch: 1800-7, Account: 1252-1.

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Inside left

Clear the road!

WORKING people in Britain want to help the Bosnian workers fight fascism. There's growing support for the July trade union convoy to Tuzla. But a Sussex comrade reports that certain political elements are still trying to obstruct international solidarity.

Brighton and Hove trades council organised a very successful meeting in March with the visiting trade union delegation from Tuzla. Crawley trade unionists brought a message of support from their trades council.

A few days later, at a meeting of the County Association of Trades Councils, Jeff Enefer, leading member of the New Communist Party and treasurer of Crawley Trades Council, told the delegates from Brighton that no vote had been passed in support of the Bosnian delegation, implying that the letter of support was a fake.

Brighton and Hove Trades Council made enquiries. Crawley Trades Council's secretary confirmed it had voted support for the Bosnian meeting.

Brighton and Hove Trades Council decided unanimously to send a motion, backing union aid convoys to Bosnia, to the national conference of trades councils on 12-13 May. But a similar resolution at Crawley trades council was defeated 6-3, with 5 abstentions, after opposition from New Communist Party members, the comrade writes.

Their pro-Serbian, Stalinist position was further exposed at the County Association of Trades Councils on 6 May, when they stopped the emergency resolution from being supported.

The national conference of trades councils agreed to back the union convoy to Tuzla. Some Sussex trade unionists have been to Tuzla with Workers Aid. More will follow. Our comrade writes that TGWU members Brighton's Conway Street bus garage are servicing a truck, and their top steward is going on the July convoy.

Let those defending the scum who belted Tuzla lie down in front of the trucks! But don't let them claim to represent workers.

Fallen Idols

WE belatedly read an article, 'Kim Il Sung will always be with us' in the New Communist Party's paper 'New Worker' (21 April). Did you know the North Korean dictator not only received the Order of Lenin, the Order of the Great September 1 Revolution (from Libya), the Order of the Palestinian Star and the Gold Medal of the World Federation of Trade Unions, but had an orchid named after him in Indonesia?

Pioneer of 'the Juche idea' — 'making everything serve the people' — Kim was showered with gifts by world figures, from Stalin to Fidel Castro, receiving 1,390 gifts on his 80th birthday alone, 'New Worker' says. I trust he passed these on to the Korean people, when he left North Korea to his son.

There's a shocking heresy in the Kim Il Sung tribute, though. It says progressive people around the world have described him as "a senior world statesman", "the most outstanding leader of the 20th century", and "a model leader who devoted his whole life to mankind".

The writer must have got carried away (in the old days he would have been).

Surely those "progressive people" whose cherished beliefs the New Communist Party has enshrined from the old Communist Party regard Stalin as 'the most outstanding leader of the 20th century'? Not that I want to cause mischief...

Charlie Pottins

'Africans and oppressed

We print here the memorandum from the African Liberation Support Campaign (ALISC) to British Prime Minister John Major which was read out at the African Liberation Rally in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 27 May.

ALISC aims, among other things, 'to galvanise in Europe a powerful force of mass resistance to the colonialist revanchism and the neocolonialist manoeuvres of imperialism in Africa, enlighten the public about the popular democratic struggles being waged by the exploited masses of the African people on the continent and in the diaspora for their own complete emancipation, and exert pressure everywhere in furtherance of the just cause of the African emancipation'

ALISC can be contacted on 0181-202 6292 or at PO Box 256, London SE11 5TH.

ACTING upon the resolution first adopted on 9 October 1994 at a public meeting organised by the Uganda Joint Working Platform for Democracy in London to review the 32 years since the proclamation of the independence of Uganda;

The said resolution which was again adopted on 17 November 1994 at another public meeting on the deaths of people, mainly Black and including Africans from the continent and the diaspora, at the terroristic hands of immigration and police brutes, zealously implementing racist laws and orders emanating from your government;

WE of the African Liberation Support Campaign (ALISC) are organising this African Liberation Day March in this year of the 50th anniversary of the landmark Fifth Pan-African congress held in Manchester in 1945, on this Saturday 27 May 1995, part of which is this call upon you at No.10 Downing Street in London, in order to protest against the conspiracy and the connivance of the British government in perpetrating tyranny in Africa.

We remind you about the 6 March 1993 letter entitled 'Open Letter of Complaint about Connivance with the Rawlings Tyranny in Ghana' which the Kwame Nkrumah Convention People's Party (KN-CPP), a member organisation of ALISC, addressed to you, Mr John Major, as the prime minister of Britain, as well as to President Bill Clinton of the USA, Francois Mitterrand, the president of France, President Mario Soares of

Portugal, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany and Kichi Miyazawa, then prime minister of Japan.

The 'KUMEPREKO' movement of popular resistance now carrying out *positive action* in Ghana, which the obscurantist racist media in Britain is characteristically playing dumb and blind about, bears ample testimony to the whole *truth* contained in that open letter of the KN-CPP.

Likewise the events in Nigeria, where your government has continued its hypocritical policy of giving lip-service support to the struggle for democracy, while not only aiding and abetting but also arming the military dictatorship and its musical-chair henchmen, expose your connivance in the conspiracy to perpetuate blood-spilling despotism in Africa to serve the diabolical neocolonial interests of imperialism.

Glaringly

This is most glaringly exhibited in your condoning of the Thatchers' wheeling and dealing with tyrannical regimes over weapons procurement, and your encouragement of profiteering by companies such as British Aerospace from the *death trade in arms to Africa*.

You are shutting your eyes to the genocidal wreaking of havoc, destruction and death by multinational corporations originating from Britain: Shell, for example, in the land of the Ogonis and other people in Nigeria and throughout Africa. The Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, Lonrho and the Oppenheimer con-

glomerate refuse to hand over the mineral resources they seized by criminal violence from the African people in Azania and other parts of the African continent.

When freedom fighters against such violations of the sovereignty of their people and other abominations of European colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa are compelled to seek refuge and escape into Britain, many are refused entry or are imprisoned for no crime at all in Campsfield and similar concentration camps, or harassed, terrorised and brutalised to death as in the cases of Omasase Lumumba, Joy Gardner, Kwanele Siziba, Joseph Nnalue, and Shiji Lapite, among numerous others.

This situation is being aggravated not only by the erection of a new Iron Curtain around Fortress Europe but also by the introduction of even more ugly hydra-heads of the monster of Euro-fascism to worsen the pollution of society with the putrescence of institutionalised Euro-racism!

We of ALISC lend our unequivocal support to the efforts being made to counter this evil by the African Refugees and Migrants Monitoring Project (ARMMOP) as well as the Amnesty Campaign for Refugees and Unregistered Migrants (ACRUM). We welcome the assistance of the National Assembly Against Racism (NAAR) in this work.

We of ALISC, joined by our comrades, friends and sympathisers from all walks of life in Britain on this African Liberation Day March on this Saturday hereby declare our firm



The plinth of Trafalgar Square

resolve to organise massive resistance to these and other horrendous crimes that Her Majesty's Governments have been perpetrating against humanity in Africa since the intrusion of Europe into our continent and the violent imposition of the racist mechanisms of colonialism, apartheid and neocolonialism to enforce the domination of our people, the exploitation and the underdevelopment of our homelands by imperialism.

Violence

We hereby draw your attention to the first resolution of our African Liberation Solidarity Conference 1995 (ALSO '95), which ALISC held on 20 and 21 May under the theme: 'Strengthening Resistance to the Violence of Imperialism against African People at Home and Abroad', which expresses our resolve:

'To work in firm determination, and by any means necessary, to strengthen the resistance of African people, in league with the genuinely internationalist contingents of the working class and other progressive forces throughout the world, against the violence of imperialism, which is continuing the perpetration of the Black Holocaust and other abominable crimes against humanity in Africa and her diaspora up to this present day.'

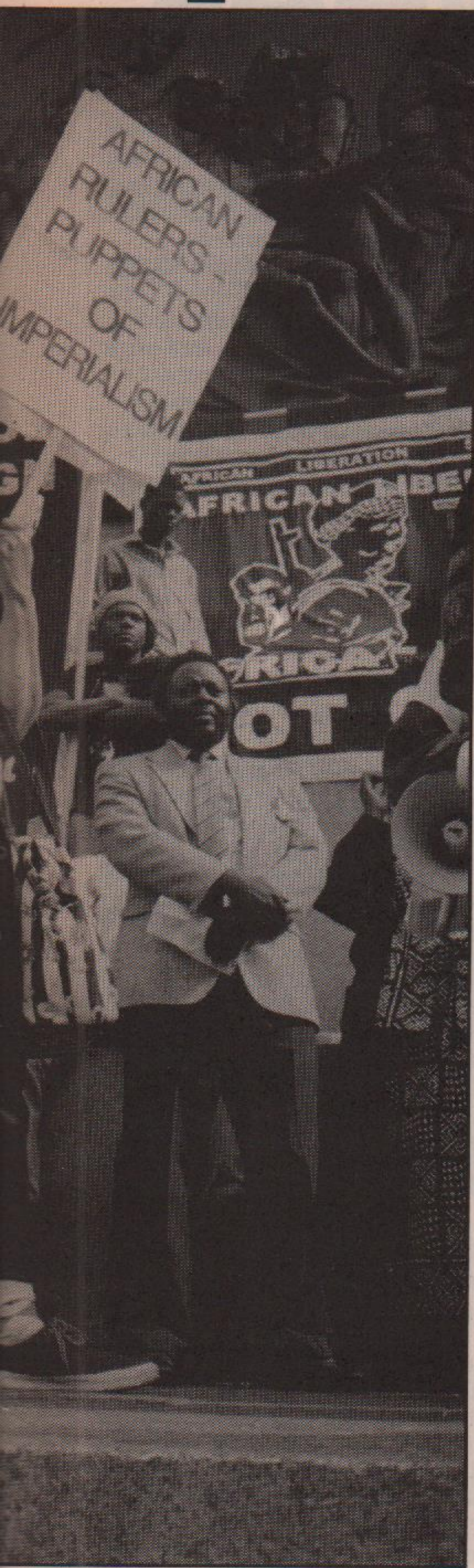
Hence our launching of the Black Holocaust Conscientisation Palm-Fruit Badge at our African Liberation Day Rally at Trafalgar Square in London today.

With even greater vigour than our predecessors fought against colonialism, our present generation of Pan-African freedom fighters shall combat neocolonialism, opening a front of our African liberation struggle right here in the British belly of the beast of imperialism, until the masses of our people at home and abroad, and all the wretched of the Earth, attain



ALISC's and ACRUM's banners on the African Liberation Day march on Saturday 27 May

ed peoples unite!



at the African Liberation day rally (left); and musicians warm up at the start of the march

the everlasting victory of their battles for total emancipation.

We take the opportunity of the African Liberation Day March today to remind you about our ALISC Minimum Demands for Positive Action for African Liberation, which we launched on 15 November 1992, coinciding with the 108th anniversary of the opening of the infamous Berlin Conference for the Partitioning of Africa by the imperialist powers of Europe and the United States of America. Reiterating our ALISC Minimum Platform, we demand:

(1) The smashing of debt bondage in which Africa is being held to ransom by international monopoly finance capital;

(2) Reparations for the enslavement of Africans and for the barbaric pillage, exploitation and underdevelopment of the Mother-continent by imperialism;

(3) Fair remuneration for African people's labour on their continent and in the diaspora as well as the good pricing of African commodities on the world market;

(4) The immediate scrapping of the harmful Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the International Monetary Fund and the so-called World Bank that is indeed a neocolonialist blueprint for perpetuating the robbery, underdevelopment and impoverishment of Africa by imperialism;

Support

Support for the UN-ECA's African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-APT) as the starting point for an alternative programme of people's democratic self-empowerment for improving the quality of African life;

(5) The establishment of an equitable new democratic international or-

der safeguarding the environment and promoting sustainable development based upon political, economic, social, cultural and moral principles of eco-harmony, the equality of humanity, respect for the genuine self-determination of nations, and the inviolability of the fundamental human rights, freedom and justice of all the peoples of Africa and the world.

To conclude, we must let you know our understanding of the fact that in order to successfully fight against tyrannical African misrulers propped up by Britain, the European Union and other foreign powers, and thereby stop the suppression of the fighting masses of our people, and halt the plunder and impoverishment of our nation, we must take our freedom-fighting campaign through your doors inside No. 10 Downing Street and similar bastions of the crimes against humanity in Africa throughout the citadels of imperialism!

We are determined to remove the blindfolds upon your eyes and the wax in your ears in order to bring the attention of Her Majesty's Government as well as the peoples of Europe to the colossal heroism being exhibited by the masses of our African people at home and abroad in their just fight against the vestiges of colonialism and the present-day ravages of neocolonialism and imperialism.

ALISC is taking upon itself the honourable task of echoing the grassroots resistance of the masses of our African people throughout the world right here in Fortress Europe.

We know the adage: 'If you want to stop a river flood, dam it at the source!' The source of the river flood that is sweeping Africans en masse to impoverishment, misery and death is Whitehall, among other citadels of imperialism.

We have no more time to waste. We are therefore marching through Whitehall as part of the African Lib-

eration Awareness Month 1995 (ALAM '95) celebrations, during this African Liberation Day event, in order to show our deep sentiments in anger against Britain's part in the genocidal tragedies in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, Mozambique, Sudan, Chad, South Africa, Saharawi Republic, Comoros Islands, etc.

Return

We shall return on Saturday 25 May 1996 and march on No.10 Downing Street again, and thereafter again and again, until the neocolonial tentacles of Whitehall responsible for the still ongoing Black Holocaust, as well as the propping up of bogus African leaders, are cut off from setting up and manipulating situations in which occur the tragedies that are impoverishing, dehumanising and humiliating African people throughout the world.

We shall keep marching in quest of Mother Africa's Freedom's Way, in unity with the working class and other oppressed peoples that constitute the wretched of the earth, until the total victory of the African liberation struggle brings emancipation to the whole of humanity.

And so, paraphrasing the call of the Fifth Pan-African Congress that was held in Manchester in 1945, we of ALISC and other participants in this African Liberation Day March of Saturday 27 March 1995, exhort:

Africans and other oppressed peoples of the world unite in determined struggle, ever onward to global victory!

The struggle continues!

Our victory is certain!

Signed

Alfred Banya

ALISC general secretary

Kofi Mawuli Klu

ALISC executive co-ordinator

City Lights

What's in a name?

THE MOVEMENT towards a single European currency could lead to the loss of a further 10 million jobs over the next four years, the European parliament was warned last week.

A report from the parliament's employment committee says that soaring unemployment will result from the need of governments to slash still further their spending programmes if the conditions for economic 'convergence' are to be met.

Countries will only be eligible to join a single currency if the ratio of total debt to national income reaches the agreed figure of 60 per cent. At the moment virtually no government in Europe is on target.

This prediction makes all the talk of a European jobs creation scheme look somewhat sick. Former EU Commissioner Jacques Delors promised an extra 15 million jobs by the end of the century. The grandly-titled European Investment Fund has so far made only a paltry \$5.5 billions available for investment projects designed to generate jobs.

The fact is that a common currency for a capitalist Europe is a reactionary day-dream. Despite the need for such a currency to overcome the barriers formed by the nation state, the increasing unevenness of development makes the realisation of this aim in practice a sheer impossibility.

Not only will a capitalist Europe not achieve a single currency, it is having great difficulties choosing a name for such a currency. The present name, ecu, derives from a medieval French coin which was revived as the acronym for 'European currency unit' when France and Germany launched the European Monetary System in 1978.

But the Germans want to change the name, partly because they say that the ecu is seen as being inherently weak, having lost 40 per cent of its value against the D-Mark since 1978. The German preferred name is 'franken' on the grounds that this is associated with the strong Swiss frank.

The British Foreign Office is strongly resisting the proposal because, it says, franken harks back to a Germanic tribe of barbaric invaders.

Gas mask economy

IT'S a sign of the times for the Japanese economy when its only boom sector is the production of gas masks. The economy is being stretched to breaking point by the soaring yen. It is also facing stiffer competition from its rivals in east Asia, including Korea, Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as a hangover from the debt explosion of the late 1980s.

The record of the Japanese economy has been miserable indeed over the last few years, with growth in 1992 a mere 1.3 per cent, minus 0.2 per cent the following year, and 0.5 per cent last year. This contrasts with a growth rate in the 1980s which never fell below 2.7 per cent and at its peak reached over 6 per cent.

The Tokyo stock exchange, measured by the Nikkei index, has plunged from its 1990 peak of 30,000 plus to its present crash to below 16,000.

As Robin Griffiths of James Capel

put it last week: 'The Japanese stock market is drifting helplessly on a storm-tossed sea and is not in good condition. The crew have lost their courage and feel doomed.'

Many of the leading Japanese banks are seriously compromised by this plunge. This is because banks are allowed to count shareholdings in their asset portfolio and to advance loans of their strength.

The yen meanwhile has soared from around 170 to the dollar to its present level of only half that. Elements in Japanese big business claim that Washington has deliberately allowed the dollar to slump in order to make American exports more competitive.

At the same time the demand for yen continues to rise, partly because the US runs up a \$50 billion dollar deficit every year with Japan, while Far Eastern central banks are building up their yen holding at the expense of the dollar to reflect their changing trading patterns.

US slow down

UNTIL recently all the leading US analysts suggested that the greatest risk to US expansion came from overheating and inflation. They are now singing a different tune, suddenly warning that the economy is slowing down rapidly, threatening even greater instability for the world economy.

Indeed the R-word, recession, is increasingly on the lips of such experts. Last month unemployment rose by over 100,000 and most indicators are now pointing downwards. Factory orders are down and the purchasing managers' index has fallen over the last month. Last year the economy expanded by 4.1 per cent; it is expected to grow at most by 1.5 per cent in the coming year.

The power of the US economy has declined significantly over the last two decades and more in comparison with those of Japan and Germany. But in absolute terms it remains the biggest economy and it is still true that when the US sneezes Europe (and Japan) is likely to catch a cold.

Binmen

TALKING of economic 'experts', a piece in last week's 'Economist' puts into perspective the long-made claim by economists that they are practitioners of a precise science. For the business magazine has discovered that binmen are far better at predicting the economy than government ministers, surrounded though they are by hordes of economic whiz kids.

Dustmen (average rate £4.70 an hour) came out equal first as long-term forecasters with multinational company directors (average salary £80,000). They were comfortably ahead of Oxford students. Finance ministers drawn from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development came bottom of the list. The 'Economist' refused to name the ministers concerned.

At Christmas 1984 the magazine asked four members from each of these groups to predict trends in the British and world economy over the following decade. The dustmen turned out streets ahead when it came to predicting the value of sterling against the dollar and they came nearest to predicting the world oil price.

One of George Bernard Shaw's best-known characters is the astute dustman Alfred Doolittle, who ends up being cultivated by the establishment. It was the same Shaw who opined that should you place every economist in London end to end they would still fail to reach a conclusion.

Threadneedle

Lollipop chauvinism

AS A grandfather I'm naturally concerned about children's safety when they're crossing busy roads. So I have quite a soft spot for lollipop ladies — and lollipop gentlemen, for that matter.

But their comforting image as helpful, wise, and impartial guardians of the young has been dealt a sharp blow down in Devon.

In the town of Barnstaple, lollipop lady Mrs Jean Turner is reported to have refused to help a 10-year-old Hungarian boy, Jozsef, across the road.

She redirected him to another crossing further along the street, saying:

'I don't help the foreigners to cross. You'll have to go further up. I only help the English kids.'

The local girl whose mother is putting Jozsef up — he's studying at a nearby institute for east European children — said she was nearly in tears when she heard this.

'I was just so embarrassed to be English,' she added.

Mrs Turner insists that she is responsible only for pupils at the primary school outside which she stands. She accuses the Hungarians of being ignorant: 'They just stand on pavements getting in the way of the English kids.'

The Hungarian Embassy's press officer has invited her to visit Budapest and see for herself that in fact 'our road manners as pedestrians are excellent'.

IT WOULD be easy to dismiss this incident as a storm in a Devon cream teacup. And at one level it does seem at first sight to have a comic aspect. But in fact it's far from trivial.

For one thing, imagine yourself as a 10-year-old child far away from home and parents, a guest in another country, with an imperfect grasp of its language, being snubbed so caustically by an adult who is acting in a semi-official capacity and from whom you have every right to expect elementary kindness and help.

It's not a pretty picture.

But that's only the half of it. Here, in Mrs Turner's coarse dereliction and still coarser turn of phrase, we have summed up for us in a single ugly cameo the nastiest side of English insularity and chauvinism.

'Who's that, Bill? A b——y foreigner? Heave half a brick at him!' That, shorn of its aspirates, was a celebrated 'Punch' caption of the 19th century: a 'joke' that made its middle- and upper-class readers laugh till their paunches shook, for they didn't care much for 'foreigners' either.

A few years ago a south London publican, hearing two Asians engaged in a private conversation in their own language, sharply ordered them to speak English or get out of his pub. There have been other, similar, incidents.

This petty chauvinism is one of the tributaries of the broad foul stream of English racism. We who are internationalists have to combat this chauvinism in every possible way, but primarily by educating the ignoramuses afflicted with it.

In Barnstaple however it may be necessary to supplement educational with administrative measures. A lollipop lady who discriminates against a 10-year-old on account of his nationality does raise serious doubts about her competence.

It's 400-odd years since that best-known of Devon patriots, Sir Francis Drake, 'singed the Spanish king's beard'. But even he, given the job of helping children cross the road, would surely have drawn the line at refusing help to a 10-year-old 'foreigner'.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Carry on cooking

A FRIEND has questioned my criticism ('Hobsbawm wonders why', 20 May) of Eric Hobsbawm's remarks about the allegedly different courses followed by English-speaking and French-speaking black intellectuals from the Caribbean.

He asks whether Hobsbawm has, perhaps, a point worth making: did the English-speakers, in the 1930s, show a greater resistance to the lures of Stalinism than the French-speakers did? If so, does this not call for explanation?

But Hobsbawm's contrast is a pseudo-contrast, for he mixes up two entirely different periods.

He writes, in his 'afterword' to 'Opening the Books', that George Padmore and the other English-speaking Caribbean Marxists, in their 'turning away from Soviet Communism ... differed, at least at the time, from the French-speaking Caribbean leftists' (emphasis added).

Padmore broke with the Soviet bureaucracy in the 1930s, for the well-known reasons that I cited in my piece.

Padmore was extremely influential. He corresponded regularly with hundreds of black contacts throughout the world, and ran a network of black seafarers distributing anti-imperialist literature.

His accounts to his boyhood friend C.L.R. James of his Moscow experiences undoubtedly strengthened the latter's 'resistance to the lures of Stalinism'.

Now, the only 'French-speaking Caribbean leftist' whom Hobsbawm mentions by name is the Martinique poet and playwright Aimé Césaire, author of the classic 'Cahiers d'un retour au pays natal' (1939) — who in fact didn't join the Communist Party until 1946.

Césaire in turn broke with the CP in 1956, uttering those famous words 'We cannot delegate anyone to do our thinking for us', and explained why in his 'Lettre à Maurice Thorez' (1957).

Hobsbawm's reputation as a historian should not lead anyone to take on trust anything he writes about modern politics.

Long-term readers may recall Brian Pearce's exposure, in Workers Press of 2 August 1986 ('Hobsbawm Cooks the Books'), of his attempt to show that the Comintern had advocated a Popular Front policy as early as 1922.

Bishops in check

SHAME on me! Instead of looking it up, as I ought to have done, I lazily put an excitable [sic!] after the word 'striker' in one of my biblical quotations the other week ('A bishop abashed', 27 May).

Several puzzled readers have asked me what St Paul meant exactly, in his First Epistle to Timothy, by saying that a bishop must be 'no striker'?

Clearly he didn't mean that bishops must never, in support of a pay claim, down crosiers and refuse to dish out the holy wafers and the Communion plonk.

'Striker', it turns out, is an old word for fornicator. It was often regarded as indecent, and went out of general use in this sense in the second half of the 17th century.

Peter Fryer

Bangladesh workers demand day a week

FROM BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH garment workers are planning to launch a campaign for a day a week off work.

According to Bangladesh's labour laws the working day is eight hours and there are six working days a week. But garment workers normally work 14 to 16 hours a day — and sometimes they work through the night!

They work seven days a week. In most cases there are no special overtime payments — indeed sometimes workers get even less

for overtime. Overtime is not voluntary.

Anybody who doesn't put in the overtime is victimised and can even lose their job. Anybody who doesn't turn up on the statutory weekend break has three days' wages cut. Most workers toil for month after month without a break.

One million workers, including 800,000 women, work in 2,000 garment factories across Bangladesh. The industry is the highest foreign money earner and forms the biggest industrial workforce in the country.

Garment workers' lives have

become a modern form of slavery owing to the forceful, compulsory, unlimited and unscheduled nature of their work.

They get no time for their personal, family or social life. They are unable to carry out their family and social responsibilities. They are unable to have normal relations with their parents, families and children.

The condition for women is most serious, owing to the pressures from the traditional culture of Bangladesh and the expectations placed on them by the family.

In addition, garment workers get no time to take part in trade union activities or for organising activities that are a basic right and a necessity for workers.

In these circumstances the independent militant National Garment Workers Federation are to start a campaign for a day off a week.

The main slogan will be: *Garment workers need at least one day a week for their own!*

The National Garment Workers Federation can be contacted at 22/A, Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. Fax: Attn. Amin +880-2-867485.

German Stalinists face new crisis

BY BOB ARCHER

THE 'Party of Democratic Socialism' (PDS), the main successor to the Stalinist 'Socialist Unity Party' (SED) in east Germany, faces a new internal crisis after a poor showing in some west German local elections.

At a Congress in January the party decided to start an electoral 'offensive' in the west. But, despite a hard-fought campaign, council elections in the northern industrial city of Bremen only brought the party 2.37 per cent of the vote.

Ironically, a survey by the news magazine 'Spiegel' showed 5 per cent of voters nationally prepared to back the PDS.

Potentially this result is very important for the PDS because for the first time it gives them a lead over the shrinking liberal Free Democrats (FDP).

However, the intentions are unlikely to be turned into votes in western areas, where voters seem more likely to back an alliance between the Social Democratic Party and the Greens.

Thirty-eight PDS members signed a statement placed as an advert in the party newspaper, 'Neues Deutschland', which accused the party leadership — Gregor Gysi and Lothar Bisky — of

'softening the party's oppositional stance' and 'turning its back on the class struggle'.

They said it was 'irresponsible and dangerous' to turn the pure doctrine of socialism into 'an optional vision' and accused the party leadership of being seduced by the pelf and privileges of the parliamentary system.

Most of the signatories of the advert are former bureaucrats in the artistic and academic sphere. Willi Sitte, for example, was president of the artists' association, while Manfred Wekwerth headed a section of the old academy of arts. Historian Ernst Engelberg, famous as a biographer of the 'iron chancellor' Bismarck, also signed the statement.

Secret

At the same time, a government commission has released information drawn from DDR (the former East German state) secret police files which is claimed to show that Gregor Gysi was an informer for the Stalinist-controlled regime.

Gysi, a lawyer, often acted for prominent dissidents like Rudolf Bahro and Robert Havemann. Now the Gausk Authority, which has taken over the files of the Ministry of State Security of the former DDR, claims that only he



Part of the Stasi archive kept by the German state

could have provided intimate details about these dissidents which have turned up in the files.

Notes by a Major Lohr, a DDR secret police handler, identify Gysi as an informer code-named 'Notar'. Gysi is alleged also to have worked under the cover names of 'Gregor' and 'Sputnik'.

Gysi has regularly and vehemently denied any connection with the 'Stasi' secret police.

The suspicion that the authorities are manipulating the Stasi files to blacken potential opponents is strengthened by the iron grip with which the Gausk Authority keeps the huge Stasi archive from public view.

During the collapse of the DDR, citizens' committees broke

into Stasi premises and published details of state-sponsored espionage against people.

The West German government quickly moved in and handed the files to the Gausk Authority to prevent summary justice by victims and the possibility that information could be used to blackmail people who worked for the Stasi. The implication was that quite a few prominent figures in the west did not have entirely clean hands.

Under Gysi and Bisky the PDS treads a narrow path, trying to establish respectable 'democratic' credentials while containing the discontent of people in the east who have suffered badly from the introduction of the market economy following unification.

'Welfare Mom' exposes big business spongers!

BY VIC CHARLES

US politicians compete to cut welfare spending, British Tories continue gunning for the poor, and Labour's Gordon Brown promises he'll be an 'iron chancellor'. But an American welfare rights campaigner has pointed out an alternative target for cuts, by revealing how so-called 'independent' business corporations are dependent on the state.

'If we as a nation have given up the possibility of business paying living wages to non-professional workers, logically we need to create a government aid program for the working poor,' writes Pat Gowens, editor of 'Welfare Mother's Voice'. 'However, it makes no sense to fund it by eliminating the nation's ONLY public child support program (AFDC) for very poor dependent minors and their caregivers.'

'Aid for Families with Dependent Children costs \$15 billion a year and provides an average of \$370 a month child support for four million families (90 per cent have only one parent). Only \$5 billion gets to the families. Ten billion goes to bureaucrats to police, punish and FORCE poor moms to:

1) report every dollar they earn or receive and every person who helps them; and

2) go through mandatory dead-end job search/training programs.

Why take funds from an insignificant, punitive child support program (in a country where 75 per cent of all fathers fail to support children after leaving them) to fund welfare for the "working poor"? We would be taking from poor children to fund their poor, working moms!

'Neither dependent minors nor their caregivers can afford to subsidise the workplace. They desperately need their support, whether mom works at home or is employed.'

The obvious source of funding for the working poor is the Aid for Dependent Corporations programs.

Dependent corporations receive \$104 Billion in federal welfare each year from us generous taxpayers — \$51 billion in direct subsidies and \$53.3 billion in tax breaks. And dependent corporations do not need the government handouts they receive.

'Many corporate welfare recipients are on the Forbes 400 list of richest Americans!'

Corporations

'Aid for Dependent Corporations provides:

■ \$100 million to Sunkist, Gallo, M&M's, Campbells Soup, McDonald's, etc to advertise their

products abroad;

■ \$1 billion for Continental Grain, Cargill Inc, Louis Dreyfus Corp to receive free shipments of wheat, corn and other commodities from US reserves (some commodity program!);

■ \$55 million to pay the grazing fees for livestock of wealthy ranchers. (We pay \$7 out of every \$9 per animal grazing fee, even for multi-millionaires like J. R. Simplot.);

■ \$135.6 million to private forestry companies who owe taxpayers for timber purchased, but are allowed to default with no consequences!

■ \$48 million for land titles to mining companies who pay less than \$4,500 for each title instead of the millions that the land is worth.

'We can easily shave \$50 to \$75 billion off the Aid for Dependent Corporations program to subsidise the working poor. Then we need to clean up the Aid for Dependent Children program to rid it of its punitive, destructive nature.'

'With the \$10 billion spent to police moms, we can guarantee all dependent minors support to the age of 18 with no strings attached. This will give moms the RIGHT to work without losing any of their children's support. 'Like Social Security Survivor's

benefits, we should also guarantee mom support, as the primary caregiver, until she earns \$7,000 a year.'

Exorbitant

'After using the exorbitant Aid for Dependent Corporations dole to fund enslaved employees, and guaranteeing all dependent minors a secure income, we will recognise the value in guaranteeing ALL Americans a secure income: the unemployed, underemployed, injured workers, people with disabilities, elderly, and all unpaid caregivers.'

'To do this, we will drastically reduce war expenditures, collapse all public benefits programs (including the remaining Aid for Dependent Corporations), eliminate the policing bureaucracies, and create one Guaranteed Annual Income.'

'Then ALL Americans will share in the wealth of this nation and we will find peace and harmony in this country.'

A utopian vision, maybe. But how embarrassing for those kept politicians who are in the pocket of big business, yet spend their time attacking the poor! And what an eye-opener after listening to them praising capitalists as 'wealth-creators', or claiming public ownership is inefficient compared with 'independent' private enterprise!

TV review

Science focus
A new monthly column by Daniel Robertson, principal scientist at a leading bio-technology company

Enlightenment lost?

Research pressure

'Strange Landscapes, The Illumination of the Middle Ages'. BBC2, Saturdays from 27 May. Presented by Christopher Frayling.

Medieval renaissance

WHEN I was an English literature student in the 1960s, many of my contemporaries objected to the medieval sections of the syllabus. Struggling with Old English or Anglo-Saxon grammar on a Saturday morning was not their idea of fun.

Instead of being forced into the 'Dark Ages', most would have preferred the option of American literature, or what was then coyly termed Commonwealth literature.

Only a handful of students would opt for the 'language option', which in fact would now be described as 'medieval' studies with some options for the study of historic forms of English, French and Icelandic.

The then prevailing attitude among people who saw themselves as victims of an archaic curriculum is hilariously elaborated by the Monty Python version of 'The Holy Grail'.

But the Terry Jones television series on the Crusades, however idiosyncratically presented, represents a shift among the once unregenerate class of the 1960s which is symptomatic of a new medievalist industry.

Enrolment on medieval studies courses in US universities has mushroomed since the 1980s according to Blake Morris in the 'Independent on Sunday' (28 May).

This seems at first sight paradoxical in so far as the most vociferous commonplace of US campuses was the rejection of the literary canon of 'dead European male writers'.

Intellectual currents

THERE is also an intellectual current in Europe that looks to the middle ages as a model for late-capitalist development.

If Francis Fukuyama can coin his famous cliché of 'the end of history' just before what were to be the most significant historical events of the postwar period, then it should not come as any surprise that the bourgeois intelligentsia evolves more exotic metaphors to describe the period following the collapse of Stalinism.

Some medievalist 'theories' arise from a genuine reappraisal of the blanket term 'the dark ages': what in conventional academic study is called 'periodisation'.

For Marxists, studies of the uneven and complex transition from feudalism to capitalism, and recent work by Ellen Meiksins Wood in particular, show that it is necessary to break from the historical orthodoxy of Stalinists like Christopher Hill and Eric Hobsbawm, as well as later writers of the 'New Left' like Tom Nairn and Perry Anderson.

These are not simply 'academic' matters because they can bear directly on the characterisation of, for example, modern European nation states and economies.

The substance of this 'obscure' concern is woven into the arguments both of the proponents of the 'Anglo-Saxon model' of the Tory right and the 'interventionism' of the 'Delor model' of the Brussels Eurocracy, from which the Blairites are rapidly distancing themselves.

As none of these economic and political strategies can come to grips with the realities of global capital, the new medievalism of the West reflects a deepening of the pessimism of a section of intellectuals, a new millenarianism.

French historian Alain Minc has written a book that argues that we have regressed into 'Le Nouveau Moyen Age' ('The New Middle Ages') of its title.



Salisbury cathedral: Gothic architecture built by the generation after 1220

Nation states are collapsing, cities are disintegrating where an underclass has emerged, and so on. Minc argues that the rationalist and scientific optimism of the Enlightenment has been abandoned.

With such a vision we can only expect what has happened before in this century when aspects of medieval primitivism are adopted by political ideologies in a period of the crisis of advanced capitalism — fascist barbarism.

The first millennium

MANY of these issues are dealt with directly or indirectly in Christopher Frayling's 'Strange Landscape'. Frayling has also written 'How they celebrated the first millennium' in the 'Independent on Sunday' (28 May).

Happily both the article and the first television programme in the series have avoided exotic and fanciful comparisons and have presented us with a fascinating insight into medieval cultural, social and economic life. Frayling also demonstrates how far the modern world is removed from the actualities of medieval life.

'The year 1000 was met with huge relief,' Frayling writes, because the world had not ended as predicted by the then intelligentia, largely drawn from the clerical and monastic orders.

In the words of one cleric, there was a sense that a new spiritual order had begun.

Economic expansion

THIS new 'spiritual' order took the form of confident economic expansion across Europe, which found its most spectacular expression in the 'white robe' of churches built throughout the continent,

between the 11th and the 14th centuries.

It is estimated that by the end of the middle ages there was a church for every 200 people in Western Europe. The great flowering of the cathedral building found its expression in the 'French style', which later became known as 'Gothic'.

Several million tons of stone were excavated in French quarries to build 80 cathedrals, 500 large churches and thousands of smaller buildings. French stone was also used in English cathedral building.

Finance

WHAT financed this enormous enterprise?

First of all it is the rise of 'money economy' from church investments, mercantile trade, agricultural surplus, mining and the great trade fairs that coincided with religious festivals. If money ran out, then fund-raising campaigns would be organised by the carrying of holy relics on journeys of hundreds of miles.

Frayling's programme looked at the construction of the great cathedral at Chartres, south of Paris, built in commemoration of the French national saint, St Denis. Frayling showed how religion and the economy were intimately linked.

The cathedral was a centre for the many crafts as well as the social focus for local settlements. But it represented much more.

In terms of sheer physical scale, the cathedrals were the equivalents of skyscrapers, towering above the labyrinths of wood and straw dwellings, workshops, inns and courtyards. They were representations of the 'Holy City', the source of 'divine light' and transcendence.

The great engineering projects of the 'Gothic' movement involved more than the assembly of stone

— the revelation of the divine through geometry and light, through glass and the space created by forms of stone.

Geometry

IRONICALLY, it is these advances of geometry and the 'manipulation' of light that were eventually to contribute significantly to discoveries elsewhere which began the long process of the secularisation of art.

Italian painters, working on the single surface of 'canvas', experimented in a parallel fashion with light and shade (*chiaroscuro*) and geometry to discover perspective.

Originally these discoveries would allow the divine light to illuminate the divine child of the nativity, but later became the necessary painterly fictions or devices to explore the human form with a depth and solidity never before achieved.

This was the beginning of humanist art, where the gods receded and humanity was placed in the centre of the light.

Victorian Gothic

AS A SHORT postscript on our neo-medievalists, it is worth reminding them that at the height of capitalist development in the 19th century there was an unparalleled revival of things 'gothic' and medieval.

Some, like Ruskin, thought neo-Gothicism to be the most appropriate form for the flourishing of modern art, while others, like Morris, saw it as a means of overcoming alienated labour.

Our medievalists see the return of the middle ages as a regression into darkness or as the pass-key into another cult.

Tom Owen

tential outbreaks is lunacy. Presumably the threat will have to become such that the multinational drug companies can make some serious profits before it will be taken seriously.

The only people making any cash out of the current outbreak in Zaire are corrupt government soldiers taking bribes from desperate people attempting to flee the infected town of Kikwit.

A small international contribution to improve hygiene standards in Zairean hospitals where the disease appeared — including the simple measure of providing enough disposable syringes to avoid re-use — would probably have prevented the outbreak of this virulent but only moderately infective strain.

The virus can only be spread by contamination by body fluids — something that shouldn't happen in a modern hospital. It is a tragedy that it was a hospital — dedicated to controlling disease — that was probably the main cause of this outbreak.

The Zaire epidemic seems to have receded — next time we might not be so lucky!

Something rotten

ONCE upon a time, visits to the seaside were said to be enlivened by the smell of ozone. In reality this was a myth — the smell was actually rotting seaweed.

These days, ozone has more unhappy associations. Recent smogs, the product of pollution, have been heavily loaded with ozone that causes great suffering to asthma sufferers.

The government has persistently refused to issue warnings on this health threat — even when World Health Organisation danger levels have been exceeded.

The increase in asthma sufferers is probably caused by exposure to a range of materials in the home and at work. A recent TUC publication claims that one in five adult asthma sufferers are the victims of work-place substances inducing the condition.

One in seven children are now victims — the cause here being unclear. Ozone aggravates symptoms that have already developed.

The one place where ozone is beneficial is in the upper atmosphere, where it shields out damaging ultraviolet radiation. The well-established depletion of the ozone layer, again the product of pollution, is causing an increase of skin cancers and damage to plant life.

Ozone depletion is also being blamed for a sharp decrease in ultraviolet sensitive ocean plankton in some areas, with dangerous implications for the food chain. This will affect fish levels and the survival potential of ocean mammals such as whales, already the victims of capital's greed for easy profit.

Eventually depletion could also pose a threat to agricultural crops.

A healthy tippie

Now for some more cheerful news on the health front. Evidence that red wine consumption is healthy continues to grow. This beneficial effect is not characteristic of all alcoholic drinks, unfortunately.

It appears to be a property of several classes of compounds generously present just in red wine. These are probably 'anti-oxidants': compounds that combat heart disease, strokes and cancers. They may even slow the ageing process!

The optimum is three to five glasses a day. Recent research in Denmark shows that this will reduce your risk of early death by an amazing 49 per cent.

It is not surprising that a traditional, natural product like red wine is so healthy. What a contrast with so many modern prepared foods loaded up with preservatives, stabilisers, colourings and pesticide traces! And that's when you can get through the layers of expensive and profitable packaging that cover them.

Over-packaging is described as 'adding value'. Exchange value for increased profits, perhaps, but definitely not use value.

Meanwhile, drink up!

Plague threat

THE threat posed by cuts at the Atlanta lab in the forefront of work on the Ebola virus, and by a deterioration of safety standards in Britain, caused by increasing work pressures and staff cuts, pose the possibility of a horrific accident.

Ebola is one of a group of newly discovered viruses that cause some very unpleasant symptoms, including massive bleeding from all the body's orifices.

To date the most virulent strains are only moderately infective, or if strongly infective have mild symptoms. A new strain combining infectivity with high mortality poses the very real danger of a new plague.

The failure to provide adequate funds for research and a containment response to actual and po-

Germany in brief

Eastern rent hike

RENTS are to rise by 15 per cent in the former DDR under a measure which received all-party support in the German federal upper chamber (Bundesrat).

After months of political infighting over this measure, which is understandably unpopular with tenants, the parliamentary leaders of the two main parties, the Social Democrats and the conservative 'Union' coalition, hammered out an agreement over coffee.

Retail stays slow

MANUFACTURERS of well-known German brands find their goods hard to sell at home, where consumers still feel insecure and unwilling to buy.

Exports of well-known brands of consumer goods rose by 6 per cent in 1994, but sales in Germany were sluggish. There are fears that the retail slow-down will start to affect industry.

Textile wages up

TEXTILE and clothing workers' union GTB has agreed to a 3.4 per cent wage increase in the northern Rhineland.

The new contract is expected to act as a benchmark for other parts of Germany and follows similar agreements in the engineering and chemical industries.

Taxperson gets tough

FINANCIAL institutions like the Hypo-Investment Gesellschaft have started to attract a lot of attention from the German tax authorities.

Previously many canny German investors syphoned off profits to invest them either abroad, or in a separate account out of sight of the tax inspectors.

The taxation authorities used to turn a blind eye, but they are now using powers of criminal investigation to have a close look at accounts. Just another effect of the huge cost of unification.

Bosnia

British UN policy helped Serb war ARM BOSNIAN PEOPLE!

THE war in Bosnia is at a crucial turning point. Despite the UN arms embargo, Bosnian forces have begun regaining their country.

Sensing defeat, Radovan Karadzic's Serb-nationalist Chetniks use their superior equipment to slaughter civilians in Tuzla. They stage a 'hostage crisis', so their allies in Belgrade, Moscow, Paris and London will negotiate, and keep them in the field.

The imperialists, whose partition plans and arming of ex-Yugoslavia brought the war, are in disarray. 'Allies suspect US hawks of increasing risk of war' (Daily Telegraph, 2 June). 'US politicians fear military quagmire' (Guardian, same day).

'There are things worth fighting for and dying for, but once our hostages are out I don't think British soldiers will feel there is a cause worth dying for in Bosnia,' says Andrew Robathan, chair of the backbench Tory defence committee. ('Pull out when they're back, say Tory MPs' — Sunday Telegraph, 4 June).

Temporary Tory 'pacifism' goes with vicious anti-Bosnian racism. 'Let these savages kill each other,' a Tory MP shouted.

The BBC has persistently misrepresented this war, talking about 'warring factions', and calling the elected Bosnian government and its army 'the Muslims'.

After 71 young people in Tuzla were slaughtered by Chetnik shelling, Radio 4 gave a Serb nationalist the air to justify it.

Serb lobbyists dominated a Radio 5 phone-in. Bosnians hardly get a look-in.

BBC Director-General John Birt has been briefed by MI5 boss Stella Rimington.

In 1991, US Secretary of State James Baker promised Yugoslav (now Serb) President Milosevic backing Britain supplied cluster-bombs and other weapons.

The Owen-Vance partition plan encouraged land-grabbing and 'ethnic cleansing'. British agents have advised the Chetniks.

Supplies

Claiming credit for monitoring Serbia's 'embargo on supplies to the Bosnian Serbs', and providing Serbs in Croatia with 'enough oil for their own use', Lord Owen says: 'The complexity of these arrangements was not fully understood by all members of the UN Security Council, but it was very well understood by Milosevic.' ('An exit with one regret,' Financial Times, 2 June).

It was well understood by people in Bosnia, too, when Serb tanks and planes from Krajina, in Croatia, attacked the Bihac region.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

As Bosnian President Alia Izetbegovic said:

'In the six months prior to the attack on the Bihac region, the population therein was being deliberately starved, humanitarian convoys had ceased going through (of 143 convoys, only 12 succeeded in getting through, whilst 131 convoys were returned).

Attack

'Prior to the attack the French battalion was withdrawn from the Bihac region. It was replaced by a Bangladeshi unit which is both small in size and inadequately armed.

'A media blockade was created for the whole of the region which was left without a single foreign journalist, whilst UNPROFOR had continually in its reports considerably reduced the significance as well as the substance of attacks. Could this entire series of events have been a co-incidence?'

French soldiers withdrawn from the corridor through which the Chetniks attacked say their commanders knew what was coming. Now Owen confirms that the Chetniks had fuel from the UN.

Owen says if Bosnian troops were permitted to fire out of the 'safe areas' (their own besieged cities!) it was hard to expect the Serbs not to fire back! Thus Dr Goebbels might have explained the destruction of Warsaw!

As it was, French UN troops smashed Bosnian positions on Mount Igman, guarding Sarajevo.

Far from removing the Serb nationalists' heavy weaponry, UNPROFOR has become a major

source of supply! The Chetniks have taken more than 120 UN vehicles in the last five months. Some 30 armoured vehicles taken recently included six French Saiga armoured cars, with 90mm cannon, and four Saxon infantry carriers taken from British troops in Gorazde.

Balkan expert Noel Malcolm (author of 'Bosnia: A short history', 1994), says the Serb nationalists have become highly skilled at using the UN to serve their own purposes.

'They have used it as a source of fuel for their own military campaigns, and as a transportation service to speed up "ethnic cleansing". They have used it to freeze front lines, to disarm Bosnian government fighters, and even to act as a kind of sub-contracted police service around Sarajevo, enforcing the arbitrary rules for those entering and leaving the city which the Serbs have invented (foreign journalists, for example, are forbidden to take out more

than six letters from Bosnian civilians)' (How the UN helps the Serbs to win the war, Sunday Telegraph, 4 June).

Contrary to claims made by Tory ministers, and by Field Marshal Lord Carver in the House of Lords, Malcolm says, UNPROFOR had a clear mandate from the UN Security Council to use force, among other things, to ensure delivery of aid. Yet 131 convoys were turned back from Bihac.

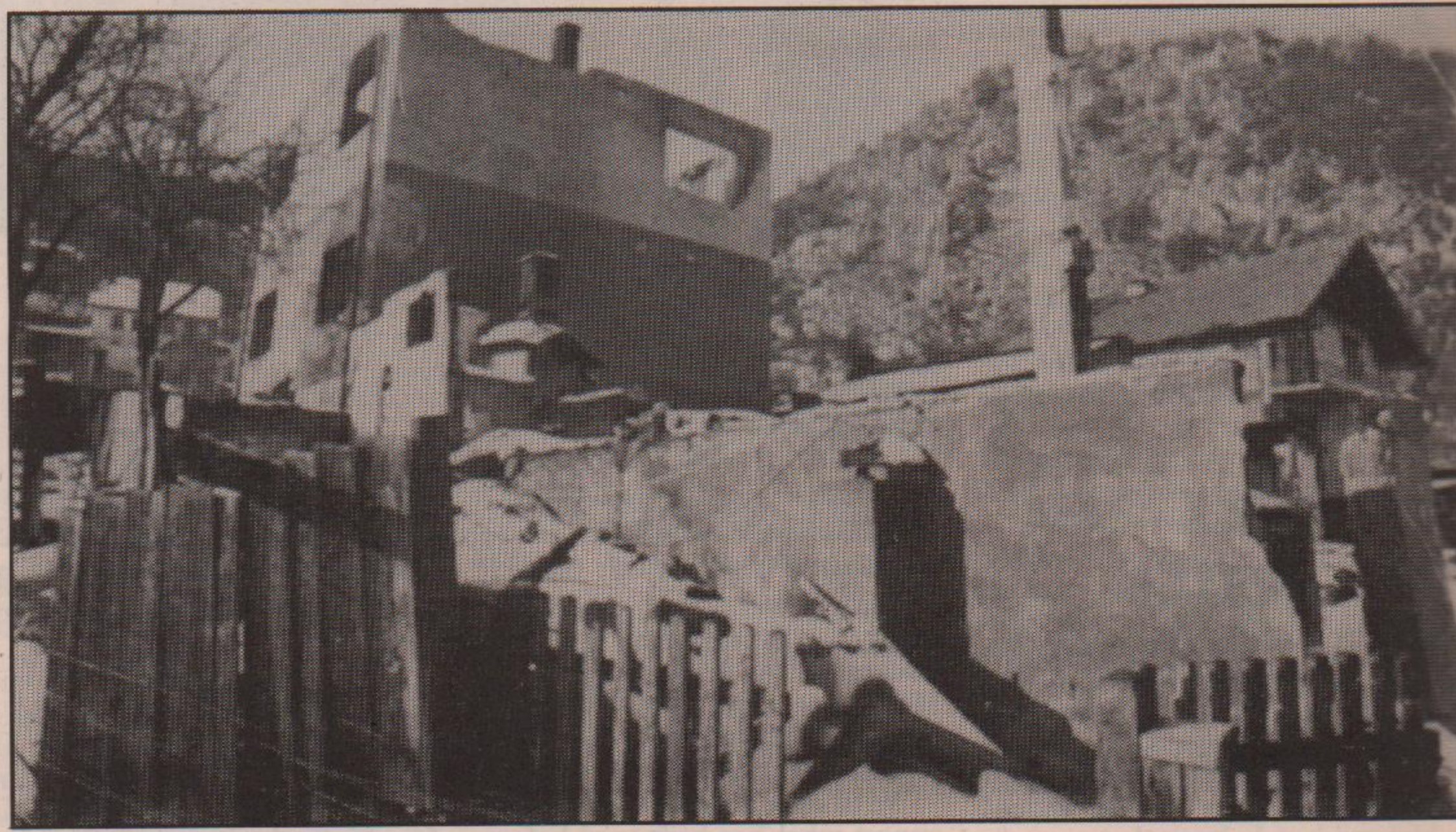
Required

The UN force is required in protecting 'safe areas' to 'promote the withdrawal of military or paramilitary units other than those of the government of Bosnia'. Instead it has 'impartially' threatened the Bosnian army and the Chetniks, and used force against Bosnians trying to ease the siege of Sarajevo.

Malcolm blames the 'faulty political judgement of the UN bosses', and attempts to falsely equate the Chetniks with the legitimate

Bosnian government. 'Hence the desperate attempts by the UN publicity machine in Bosnia to circulate unfounded allegations that "the Muslims" were shelling their own civilians. This is another service that the UN now performs for the Serbs: it distributes their propaganda.'

Without directly blaming the British and French governments, he is driven to conclude that: 'Step by step, concession by concession, the UN presence in Bosnia has ceased to be part of the solution (if it ever was one) and become part of the problem. It serves a policy — delegitimising the Bosnian government and preventing it from receiving arms to defend its own people — which has simply prolonged the war. When the Bosnian government is at last permitted to obtain heavy weapons, it will be able to win the war. And when the UN force has been withdrawn from Bosnia, the Serbs will have lost the best of all the weapons they possess.'



Bosnians need the arms embargo lifted to defend themselves from destruction

Lift the arms embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina! Imperialist troops out of former Yugoslavia!

Statement by the Workers International League — Fourth International (LIT-Cl) and the Workers International (To Rebuild the Fourth International) Paris, 4 June 1995

THOUSANDS of troops and heavy armaments are now being sent into Bosnia-Herzegovina by the capitalist powers, with Britain and France in the vanguard.

The real purpose of this intervention is to prevent the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina from defending themselves against the fascist forces of Karadzic — in effect to disarm the Bosnian forces.

The aim is not 'peacekeeping' but to ensure the imposition of 'order' in the interests of the imperialist powers.

This was already the objective of the UN and NATO forces from the very beginning — to impose their partition plans. The 'peace' they are imposing is the peace of the graveyard, as we have seen throughout this three-year war.

These same forces who claim to be for 'peace and order' in the former Yugoslavia give full backing to Yeltsin's bloody oppression of the people of Chechnya.

As Gorazde and the current killing of civilians in Tuzla and other towns show, the 'safe havens' are not safe in the hands of imperialism. The imperialist powers are preparing a trap for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

This new stage of direct military intervention is prepared and justified at the same time by a reactionary nationalist propaganda campaign against 'the Serbs'.

In reality it is against the Ser-

bian people, while at the same time Milosevic is cultivated and presented as a peacemaker.

The effect is to strengthen the oppressive rule of Milosevic and Karadzic over the Serbian people.

The working-class movement in every country, and especially in Britain and France, has the responsibility to mobilise against the governments and their military intervention for the withdrawal of all imperialist military forces from the former Yugoslavia.

And it has the responsibility to be unconditionally for the right and for every practical means for the people of Bosnia to defend themselves and fight for their independent, multi-cultural and united country — end the arms embargo on Bosnia!

The only solution to the problems of the former Yugoslavia is

for all its peoples — Bosnians, Serbs, Croats, Albanians and others — to come together in a common struggle against the common enemies: fascism, imperialist intervention and Greater Serbian nationalism.

International working-class solidarity actions, demonstrations and strikes against the imperialist governments and their military intervention, material aid to the people of Bosnia — these are the ways to contribute to the solution of the problem by the peoples of the former Yugoslavia themselves, led by the working class.

We propose that all organisations, trade unions and individuals who support the fight of the Bosnian people come together in international solidarity action with material and political support.

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