

Socialist Voice

**Journal of The International Socialist League
British Section of The IWL (FI)**

Hands Off Namibia!



In This Issue

Liverpool and Hillsborough

The struggle to defend education

General Election in Argentina

International Socialist League

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Socialist Voice

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May 1989

Workers on

The International Socialist League sends solidarity greetings to the workers and oppressed of the world.

We join with the world workers' movement in saluting the tenacious struggle of the black working class in South Africa.

The acquittal and unconditional release of Moses Mayekiso, leader of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), was achieved through the resistance and fighting spirit of the working class and youth in the townships supported by all working class internationalists around the world.

The upsurge of the Namibian workers movement has opened up another front against the racist apartheid system in South Africa. In their struggle to achieve national liberation they demand the same support as Moses Mayekiso.

We salute the Irish people who, for twenty years, have waged an armed struggle for national liberation from Britain. We support their demand for Troops Out Now and for a United Ireland free from British State intervention

British Imperialism has, despite its superior military strength, been unable to destroy the IRA because of one factor, **it rests on the support of workers in the north and south.** This is why they have banned Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, from standing in elections and speaking out in the media.

Stalinism

From its first issue, Socialist Voice stressed the international context of the struggle of the working class. In dealing with the Soviet Union and other stalinist states, we have brought out the fundamental nature of the contradictions that the doomed bureaucracy cannot resolve. **We have posed insistently the question that Lenin put: Which will prevail in the Soviet Union: Capitalism or Socialism ?**

We have called on readers to study the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition against the degeneration of the Soviet Union as the only road to any understanding of the developments today.

It is the key to understanding the enormous developments taking place in China. The Chinese revolution of 1949 established national independence, agrarian reform and gave hope to the minority nationalities. Because of these achievements the Chinese Communist Party obtained huge support from peasants and workers. Over 200 million poor

peasants had taken part in the break up of the landlord class but each development was hampered by the opportunist policy of the stalinist leaders. Above all it was hampered by trying to keep the revolution a national one.

Students were also involved in the struggles for peace and national independence and against the Chiang Kai-shek dictatorship in the build up to the revolution. The students today are demanding to know how there can be such widespread poverty with such wide spread corruption in the bureaucracy.

They are facing leaders in the bureaucracy that are shallow and have more interest in their own pockets than in maintaining an economy. To a certain extent they are like the old feudal and war lord leaders whose rule crumbled to dust.

Great Stirrings

As we enter May 1989, it becomes very clear that we are at the beginning of enormous changes in the class struggle in Britain. Great stirrings took place during the month of April among sections of society who have little reputation for militancy.

University lecturers took action on their salary demand. Teachers in higher education lobbied their Executive. At one Polytechnic, lecturers took strike action against the destruction of negotiating rights. All those employed at these colleges and their students will suffer under the Tories privatisation plans.

The ferment among school teachers and students continues and real possibilities arise **of a united education alliance for the defence of free education and the conditions of people who work in education.**

"NHS a shot in the arm for business" declared a headline in the Guardian of 15th April. It revealed the corporate plans of builders and private health groups preparing for a bonanza in exploiting patients and surplus land.

Doctors, consultants and surgeons have come out strongly in opposition to the **destruction of the Health Service.** The movement in defence of the NHS could signal defeat for the Tories in their old stronghold of the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Tories have been forced to concede both to the GP's and the university lecturers as the mood of militancy stirs long slumbering sectors of society. He fears the **united actions of these sectors of society.**

Underground workers in London voted

the Offensive

overwhelmingly for strike action. An unofficial committee of young workers organised quietly and efficiently a successful stoppage for a day.

The national committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, at its policy making meeting, rejected completely the plans of its right wing leadership for a merger with the Electricians' Union, and called for a preservation of the union's democratic traditions. It was a severe blow to the trade union bureaucracy. They had not expected defeat.

Further, the engineering union now faces a struggle over wages and a shortening of the working week. The electricians' union itself is now facing a conference where the resolutions demanding a return to the TUC show the beginnings of a rally among the rank and file.

The dockers are balloting for a strike to defend security of employment, with their leaders and 'left wing' executive ducking and weaving, desperately attempting to retreat before the Government.

This left concentrates on individual and propaganda action against government youth training schemes and the Poll Tax - which are one aspect of the wide attack by the Tories upon living conditions.

The "Socialist Voice", while supporting all propaganda protests, has brought out that the essential task is to organise the youth and all sections of the working class together in traditional collective action. We support the call for strike action against the YTS and ET on 15th June, it should be supported by all sections of the labour movement.

The docker's comments show that, despite the decimation of the dock labour force in the last decade, the old magnificent traditions are pushing through.

Movement to Socialism

The movement to socialism does not just take place out of the poverty in society but arises from its contradictions and the shaking up of old established relations. The growing homelessness, the plight of

youth, the growing division between rich and poor, the break up of the post war unstable equilibrium established on the domination of American Imperialism, the upsurge of masses throughout the world,

the crisis of stalinism, the grave problems of nuclear energy and ecology - all these affect thinking.

The task which stands out on this May Day is to bring about the unity of all the move-

ments of struggle in the workplaces and the communities and to join with the world wide movement for workers and poor peoples' government and for workers' democracy against the bureaucracies which have fastened on the working class.

We have to fight for a new type of leadership in the workers' movement. One which starts with confidence in the working class and is imbued with the aim of developing workers' democracy and with the conviction that the great advances demand linking together workers struggle beyond all frontiers.

We can say on Mayday 1989 that new forces are rapidly emerging which will be forced to fight both the bureaucracy and imperialism and establish workers' democracy and a workers' world.



We express our deepest sympathies to the relatives of the 96 victims of the Hillsborough disaster- but urge the labour and trade union movement to take up the fight to bring those responsible to book. No amount of crocodile tears from the top layers in society including the Royalty, should deceive people into thinking that their courts, their judiciary and their police, are going to find a culprit - because the real culprit is capitalism and the club owners who drive for profit at the expense of the health, safety and well-being of the fans.

Hands off Winston Silcott !

Winston Silcott is currently serving life imprisonment for the killing of PC Blakelock during the Tottenham Rebellion in 1985, which followed the brutal murder of Cynthia Jarrett by police.

There has never been a shred of evidence against him !

Now, having been crucified in the media and scapegoated by the courts, Winston is facing victimisation and brutality in prison. He has been forced to go on hunger strike and is being kept in solitary.

The racist prison authorities have moved Winston to Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight thinking we cannot act to defend him so far away.

We will prove them wrong

Picket Albany Prison

Saturday, 20th May

coaches leave Tottenham early morning

Tickets £10/£5 Details 01-885-3752

Lecturer's Strike

Vice-Chair Coventry Polytechnic NATFHE

Dave Hookes

The successful half day strike of lecturers at Coventry Polytechnic concerns the most basic of all questions, the right to union recognition and the defence of existing conditions.

The management laid down four preconditions for recognition of all unions representing academic and non academic staff. The lecturer's union NATFHE rejected these preconditions as a matter of principle. We said the matters raised in the preconditions were the proper subject of negotiation AFTER recognition of our union.

Polytechnics have recently been separated from local government control and put under a Statutory Corporation through the provisions of the Education Reform Act. Although considerable powers for the day to day running of the Polytechnics are in the hands of the managers the actual funding is tightly controlled by a state body - the Polytechnic and Colleges Funding Council. This is the context of the struggles that are taking place at Coventry.

In effect the management were rejecting the principle of independent unions freely entering into collective bargaining. We came under considerable pressure to accept these preconditions, especially when other unions representing the manual and support staff said they were prepared to accept them. In fact this was a decision taken by local branch and full time officials without any reference to their membership. In addition a minority lecturers 'union', APT, with close links to TORY CENTRAL OFFICE, also agreed to the pre-conditions, again with no reference to membership.

The national leadership of NATFHE are giving no lead whatsoever on how to fight the new employers, leaving the branches to be picked off individually. It appeared that Coventry Polytechnic was singled out by the National Employers Forum to achieve a break-through on the recognition question. We decided to demand the National Executive recall the National Sectoral Body for Higher Education to discuss national and industrial action to resist the employers on this principled question of trade union rights.

We also decided to ballot our own members on industrial action which would include a half day strike and an indefinite work-to-contract. We obtained a 76% turn out for the ballot of which 65% voted for the strike and 80% for the work to rule in addition.

This majority meant that the national officials had to issue an instruction for the strike.



Teachers demonstrate in 1987

The strike took place on 6th April and was very effective - pickets were established on almost all entrances and a number of NALGO (the office worker's) union members and many students refused to cross picket lines. Very little teaching was done and only a handful of our members went to work.

A well attended rally was addressed by national officials, AUT (university lecturer's union) and the local Labour MP, Dave Nelligan, who raised the political questions behind the attack on education as a whole. Despite the militant solidarity rhetoric from national officials, we discovered just before our strike took place that they had drawn up a National Recognition and Procedure Agreement with the employers which was due for ratification by the National Executive Committee on 15th April.

This national agreement contained at least three of the preconditions we had rejected. In addition, any agreement negotiated nationally would only be recommended to local employers. We voted at our branch committee to lobby the National Executive Council against these proposals.

The lobby was small but lively and eventually the chair of the Coventry branch was allowed to address the national executive.

They signed the 'agreement' in the full knowledge that some managements were attempting to impose new contracts on new staff and to buy out the contracts of existing staff.

Our national officials have also met with Coventry Polytechnic management to solve our dispute and refused us access to the meeting.

The rapid rightward movement of the bureaucracy of NATFHE, into corporatist deals, is part of a general movement within the Trade Unions as a whole. It reveals their role as the 'sergeant majors' of the ruling class. They can no longer tolerate a liberal education system. What they require is training to replace education - training devoted to one future for humanity, that demanded by the market dynamics of transnational corporations.

* For a recall of the National Sectoral Body

Forge an

Far reaching and major changes are taking place throughout education which are confronting the membership of NATFHE in a way that is unique. The employers and the Government are moving rapidly to squeeze the polytechnics and the colleges into a shape that can be readily used for the interests of businesses.

In this change every right that has been won, both by those that work in and use education, is threatened, either directly today or in the near future.

For those who are seeking a future in polytechnics they will have to work an extra seven hours a week and an extra fifteen weeks a year. Any conditions introduced by the management will be applied for two years and then re-thought.

If anyone has any doubt just look at what is

Education Cut to the Bone

by Lesley Gwyer - student at the Liverpool Institute of Higher Education

In the shadow of a multitude of education cuts a series of penny pinching schemes are being developed by institutes of further and higher education in a desperate attempt to stretch limited funds into the realms of adequate provision.

Within the computer studies department of the Liverpool Institute of Higher Education a student employment scheme currently operates.

Using a rota system, participating students agree to be in the department outside of normal opening hours. During these early evening and weekend shifts employees are expected to keep an eye on thousands of pounds worth of computer equipment spread throughout a number of rooms.

Access to the building goes unchecked, leaving the employee, who is often alone, at the mercy of any thief or vandal who wishes to enter.

Lecturers claim that without the services of the students the department would remain closed, depriving users of desperately needed computer access. As can only be expected, the financially stressed students jump at the chance to generate a little extra cash.

The current rate of pay is £1.50 per hour,

making a possible maximum weekly wage of £30. The cost of a security guard would range from approximately £100 to £160 for the same period. Undoubtedly the department are making a considerable saving.

More important are the conditions under which students are employed.

Contracts or terms of employment are signed by neither student or college. Even more alarming is the apparent lack of insurance cover. Participating students are seemingly unaware of any insurance that may exist to protect them in the event of an accident or in the event of theft and damage.

The colleges, whether deliberately or through the pressures of financial cutbacks, are implementing the Thatcher Governments' business policies, resulting in students being used as casual labour.

If the Thatcher Government continues to claw at the education system with such an unprecedented destructionist attitude, what are we to expect for the future of our schools and colleges?

Students as domestic staff perhaps? Or maybe the replacement of lecturers by Employment Training scheme workers! Nothing seems beyond their consideration.

Education Alliance

Martin Ralph

happening in the schools. The Government now proposes to force teachers in primary and secondary education to teach more hours. It is linked to the introduction of the core curriculum, which means central government control over what is taught.

The new conditions in polytechnics do not yet apply to those who are employed, except for the management, but a number of polytechnics, such as Manchester, are offering £4000 pounds as a lump sum to any lecturer willing to sell their conditions forever.

These are crucial weeks and months. Every polytechnic management is studying closely

what is happening. It has to be said, that with the present leadership the management has no real worry.

NATFHE is seeking collaboration with the employers. The National Executive is acting more openly with the management than with their members.

They have already signed an agreement with the national organisation of polytechnic managers. What is clear is that within a short time all lecturers will be working the new conditions unless a national campaign is developed that seeks to mobilise all those that work in and use the colleges.

Colleges of further education will be going through similar attacks very shortly. These attacks raise the need for one union and a united struggle of teachers, workers and students.

Poll Tax Letter

There is an anti-Poll Tax campaign in the Dingle, Liverpool and the response has been very good. People are angry over benefit cuts, water, gas and electricity rises and the threat of cut-offs when they are unable to pay.

They all see the Poll Tax as part of a wider deterioration of life on all fronts. We've had four meetings, with attendance growing at each meeting.

One Old Age Pensioner told us of 36 OAP's on Merseyside being taken to court and threatened with disconnection over non-payment of water rates. Six live in our area and she was very angry.

When we went out with our leaflets it was surprising how we had several people refer to the uprising of six hundred years ago! "There was a peasant's revolt over a tax like this", they said. One man remarked: "They would hang them from a lamp-post in Latin America."

What can we do about it. We feel a campaign of "Can't pay - Won't pay" is inadequate. People may be forced to pay by deductions from their Social Security and from wages. The employed can act against this collectively. The unemployed, OAP's and the sick have no way of fighting individually. The communities must act as organisations with unions backing them.

We must now be seeking ways of developing this relationship - a relationship that will mean a defence of communities so that the old, the sick and unemployed do not live in fear of having their belongings seized because they are too poor to pay for living. We are informing people about the Poll Tax through stalls in public places and pub collections. We have a meeting with other groups to decide how best to deal with registration forms. We feel we must talk to as many people as possible to develop a campaign where no person is victimised because of non-payment.

It is all very well to talk of the horrors of the Poll Tax but people want to know how to fight. I would like to take this opportunity to ask readers of the Socialist Voice to write about their ideas and share experiences so that we can develop a fighting campaign.

Celia Jones

Marion Gaima Victory - What Next?

Monika Dixon

On the 31st March, an unbelieving Marion Gaima was informed by Tony Banks MP that the deportation order which had been hanging over her head for the last five years had been lifted.

To say that she was delighted would be an understatement!

It was not an easy decision for Marion Gaima to take her struggle into the trade union movement. For individuals in similar positions, deciding to make their case public is viewed as the last resort. When the case starts to look bad on paper, serious consideration is then given as to where else they might look for support. Marion was lucky, she was already part of a caring church community, and it was they who advised her to look towards her trade union NALGO for wider support.

We must think about the countless individuals who do not have anyone to turn to for support. What can be done to help them? It is time to move beyond the individual campaign and to organise within existing community based networks so that there is a consistent lobby, making clear demands on the labour movement.

If this issue is not addressed now, we will continue in the never-ending cycle of campaigns being won or lost on the basis of an individual's personality and ability to win public sympathy.

This does very little to further the campaign against the harsh and repressive immigration laws and internal controls which urgently needs to be consolidated. Organisations at grass-roots level are campaigning towards this goal but there is not a unified perspective. Many are restricted from having a national profile because of limited sources of funding. Local Authorities do not have immigration on their agendas as a priority, probably because it only affects a small portion of the community, not noted for their electoral voting ability.

Individual campaigns have shown that members of the black and immigrant communities can mobilise successfully when they are under attack. It is this strength that must

Anti-deportation and immigration must be consciously placed at the top of all agendas within the labour and trade union movement and it is time that the TUC accounted to their membership the reasons for having done so little about this issue.

be used to produce an effective lobby within the trade union and wider labour movement.

More resolutions on immigration must be pushed through all trade unions calling for the repeal of present legislation which has proven unfair and discriminatory.

Calls for amnesty for illegal workers have been made, but the Government have ignored these requests recognising the fact that there is no real pressure behind these demands.

A clear national perspective needs to be drafted so that a unified approach can be made in all the arenas which will allow individuals faced with deportation to step straight into a high profile struggle and give them the recognition that they need.

Anti-deportation and immigration must be consciously placed at the top of all agendas within the labour and trade union movement and it is time that the TUC accounted to their membership the reasons for having done so little about this issue.

Marion's victory is welcome but we must move towards an end to all deportations. We can only do this if a concerted effort is made by all activists.

There is no excuse for inaction and individuals like Marion remind us of this, because they are prepared to fight back despite the odds against them. Marion summed up their position when she said "It is better to die on our feet than to die on our knees". We should salute her courage and fight with all those still facing deportation or suffering at the hands of Britain's racist laws.

Build Union to

A national union conference on immigration and nationality took place in Manchester in April. It attracted over 100 labour movement delegates committed to fighting the inherently racist British immigration laws.

The conference, organised by Manchester NALGO (local government officers' union) and the Frances Okanlami Defence Campaign, focussed on the development of a trade union response to immigration and nationality and was seen as the first important step in mobilising opposition to, and action on, the question of deportation within the trade unions.

The conference clearly declared immigration, nationality the recent huge increase in deportations a class issue and therefore an issue for all trades unionists.

Steve Cohen, a prominent anti-deportation lawyer, representing Frances Okanlami, outlined the historic and international perspective to immigration and nationality. He detailed the disgraceful record of the labour and trade union movement on the immigration laws and pointed to the dangers looming in 1992. He emphasised the need for an international response and campaign against deportation.

Alastair Darling MP, front bench spokesman for the Labour Party on immigration and nationality, gave no commitment to repeal the Tories latest immigration controls and obviously favoured, as Kinnock, "firm but fair immigration controls". He was given an easy time by a conference that should have pinned him to the wall but left immediately after delivering his speech lest anyone put him on the spot.

There were calls from the conference for a national united response to the deportations and appeals for a mass mobilisation for Frances Okanlami's forthcoming appeal.

The conference was addressed by Mohammad Idrish, a veteran NALGO anti-deportation campaigner who has continued to fight the immigration laws since his victory over deportation and by Marion Gaima, also a NALGO member, who recently won her right to stay in Britain after five years of fighting (see article on this page).

The conference must be seen as just the small beginnings of a trade union organised response to the question of deportation and immigration as a whole.

The fight must be broadened across all trade union and labour movement organisations. Each new campaign should be able to

Opposition Deportations

build on the experiences and resources of those that came before. No-one should have to start from scratch.

The building of a national network would ensure some support to those individuals without a trade union or devoid of community support. The resources built up in the fight against deportation and the immigration laws thus far are the property of all those who take up the fight against these racist laws and our racist government. If they were made accessible to the whole immigrant community more people would have the confidence and strength to stand up and fight.

The question of the repeal of all immigration laws should be put at the top of the agenda of all trade union and labour movement organisations.

The International Socialist League supports all those fighting deportations and offers the pages of our paper, Socialist Voice, for those involved in these struggles to address their voices to the workers' movement.

Picket

Francis Okanlami's Appeal
9 am Monday 15th May
Aldine House,
New Bailey Street,
Salford.

Free the Framed Prisoners

Two marches, both three hundred-strong, organised by the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign (BFDC) and the Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG), converged on Duckett's Common in London to demand freedom for the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and Tottenham Youth and civil rights and justice for Britain's Irish and Black communities.

A rally was addressed by the families of the framed prisoners. Marchers heard speakers from the BFDC and the IBRG denounce racist and authoritarian policing, call for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and pour scorn on the idea that the Labour Party would ever be able to act in the interests of the oppressed.

The marches were overwhelmingly community affairs.

A number of committed trade unionists were present, including a delegation from Oxford Trades Council. The rally was addressed by a representative of the sacked Dover strikers who continue to picket their port.

The march was held on the eve of the second anniversary of the conviction of the Tottenham Three - Winston Silcott, Mark Braithwaite and Engin Raghip - for the killing of PC Blakelock during the 1985 Uprising on Broadwater Farm. There has never been any evidence against them and the whole

community on the estate is well aware that they are simply scape goats, targeted because of their vulnerability or their history of militancy. Just as the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six are political hostages for the 'good behaviour' of the Irish community in Britain, the Tottenham Three were framed up and 'crucified' in order to teach the 'rioters' - British youth, black and white - a lesson.

The policing of the occupied Six Counties of Ireland has always been a laboratory where the State practices new methods of repression and control which are subsequently deployed in Britain. The inner cities have like-wise represented the cutting edge of the attack which the Thatcher regime has launched on the democratic rights of working people. Changes in the law, such as the ending of the right to silence, provide a clear example. The change was introduced first in the occupied Six Counties, but Winston Silcott was convicted because of his refusal to answer police questions long before it was even suggested in Britain.

The imprisonment of the Tottenham Three is perhaps the clearest example to date of the State's current contempt for the human rights of its citizens. **Building a mass movement which will demand and obtain their release must be a priority for all socialists.**

In February of this year, Winston was moved from London to Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight. Since then he has been harassed and victimised by the authorities. At one stage he was forced to go on hunger strike simply to obtain the same rights to a choice of work that every other prisoner was offered. He is still in solitary now. The BFDC is under no illusions as to the reasons for moving Winston. The authorities do not want a repetition of our successful pickets of Wormwood Scrubs. To let them know that they cannot escape our scrutiny or our anger and to 'convince' them that they cannot get away with abusing Winston, just because they have moved him out of London, the Campaign is organising transport to a picket of Albany Prison on 20th May.

Further details on 01-885-3752

*** Hands off Winston Silcott!**

*** Free the framed prisoners!**



Economic Crisis Intensifies as Election Dawns

Miguel Banos
reports from Argentina

The Argentine population has reached such a level of scepticism over possible solutions to the deep economic and social crisis that the most repeated sentence on the streets of the country is: "Esto no lo arregla nadie" (This cannot be solved by anyone).

The main bourgeois candidates (the "Peronist" Carlos Menem and the "Radical" Eduardo Angeloz) make absurd promises of economic revival if they win the elections. Opinion polls show, however, an unprecedented level of undecided voters for this final stage of the campaign and a simple survey of one's conversations with people in the streets confirm these statistics.

Virtually nobody in the country is voting because of a true faith in the political or personal qualities of the main candidates, rather votes are being decided tactically to stop the election of the individual or party judged to be more incompetent or corrupt. This should come as no surprise. The candidate of the ruling party has and deserves all the discredit of the Alfonsin Government. After six years in power the country's economic situation is even worse than that left by the military in 1983.

Furthermore, this Government has not satisfied the peoples expectations that the abusers of human rights, under the previous dictatorship, would be punished. Angeloz, himself the current governor of the province of Cordoba, is a well known right-winger with extensive friendships amongst the military and with a free market, pro-IMF, economic programme.

On the peronist side things are no better. The candidate for the presidency, Carlos Menem, currently a governor in the province of La Rioja, appeals to the old populist mystique exploited for decades by Peron, while presenting a blurred economic and political programme in which virtually nobody believes such as claiming that the country can pay the external debt and stimulate its economy and control inflation.

In spite of this general picture of disillusion

and scepticism, it is certain that one of these candidates will win the presidency, most likely the peronist Menem, with the support of the majority of the workers. But the outcome of the presidential election is not, of course, all that matters.

Amidst the empty promises, the voice of Izquierda Unida (the united left), an electoral front formed by the MAS, the CP and some minor left wing forces is being heard louder than ever before. The message of IU is



Teachers demonstrate in Argentina

clear: there is no solution to Argentina's problems that can ignore the conflicting interests of various social classes. The candidates of IU appear daily on TV, radio and at political meetings throughout the country explaining that certain sections of society escape the suffering imposed by the crisis. The socialist analysis emphasises that while misery has increased dramatically with every new economic package, many rich have

become richer and richer, and that with the enormous transfer of wealth by the payment of the external debt, misery can only increase in the future.

The programme of IU includes the following proposals:

1) An immediate increase in wages and pensions and the establishment of a minimum sliding scale of wages to cover essential family needs.

2) Establishment of unemployment benefits (Argentina has no unemployment scheme at the moment).

3) These extra costs to be financed by:

a) Suspension of the payment of capital and interest on the fraudulent external debt and ending of the pacts with the IMF and the World Bank.

b) Seizure of properties belonging to those capitalists that "exported" 30 billion dollars and those firms that transferred their external debts to the State. If, after 60 days, they do not return these funds to the country, their property would be permanently confiscated.

c) Establishment of a progressive tax scale to increase the tax payments of those with higher incomes, as well as imposing heavy and progressive taxes on inheritance.

4) Suspension of all privatisations of state-owned enterprises and nationalisation of the banks, insurance and large exporting monopolies.

Elections, of course, have not stopped the social struggles in crisis-ridden Argentina. Strikes and conflicts proliferate, as the recent struggles among health workers and teachers exemplify, and wherever industrial

disputes take place, the candidates of IU make their presence felt. When the election is over, and the new president (Peronist or Radical) takes office, no matter what they promise in their election manifesto's and public addresses, the gravity of the Argentine economy will force him to increase even further the exploitation of the workers. The struggle towards a Socialist Argentina will continue.

Workers Find Fighting Spirit

The "Guardian" of 22nd April reported how Turkish police had beaten up two lawyers outside a court in Ankara. The lawyers were defending two Communist Party leaders in a trial that has attracted international attention. Ten busloads of people, coming to observe the trial, were blocked by police.

The two leaders had returned to Turkey in 1987 after escaping from the dictatorship set up by the military coup in 1982.

The brutal suppression of the Kurds is revealed in the same report; a Kurdish schoolgirl was arrested on the 24th of last month for "*separatist propaganda*". The seventeen year old had been denounced to the police by her literature teacher. The girl had protested when her teacher told her class that all Kurds were dirty and immoral. The charge carries a maximum of fifteen years in jail.

Ali Aslan, a Turkish trotskyst gave "Socialist Voice" a picture of conditions in Turkey today.

In Turkey, before the military coup of 1980, the DISK, the Workers Revolutionary Confederation was the Central Body of the trade unions. It functioned as a workers' mass party.

The Turkish Military Government smashed the powerful workers' movement.

There was no organised struggle because, on the one hand, there was a weakness of reformist leadership. On the other hand there was a weakness of the guerrillerist policy of the left, whose workers went into the countryside away from the factories. In two years of the Military Government 200,000 people were imprisoned.

In 1984, a wave of workers' strikes began. The Military Government then allowed the development of the Turkish Workers Confederation, but under the control of the military. DISK remained banned. The former rank and file of DISK had to join the Turkish Confederation and organise there. Martial Law continues today.

Like most undeveloped countries, Turkey has experienced, in the past decades, a big immigration from the countryside into the cities. Turkish capitalism has not been able to expand to give employment to this influx and unemployment in Turkey has remained at 20%.

For years Turkey has been one of the chief sources of cheap labour for international capitalist combines in other European countries. A significant tendency in the past few years is that those multinationals now seek to employ this cheap labour in Turkey itself.

The great increase in the population of the cities has brought an acute housing shortage. Periodically the Turkish press carries reports of the destruction of illegal houses in workers' areas. Groups of workers will occupy an area and build a house for one of their number overnight. The military coup abolished the

right, that had been won, that if they were not caught in the building of a house it would be left intact.

Inflation has been rampant since the years of the Military Government. According to official figures, it is 85% at the present time. Workers' wages remain at starvation level.

In the last year there have been demonstrations and strikes in all the big cities. Workers have demanded the resignation of the Government, political rights for trade unions, re-formation of DISK, a sliding scale of wages and democracy in the unions with all workers' representatives directly elected. The latter demand arises because of state controls which prevent workers from making policy or electing leaders.

In Kurdistan, during the last five years, there has been continuous war between the nationalist guerilla movements and the Government. Both Government and opposition bourgeois parties declare that the Kurds do not exist as a nation. But, for the first time, the struggle of the Kurds has forced a public discussion among the Turkish ruling class on how to deal with the Kurdish question, in which there have been propositions of limited measures of autonomy.

The student movement first began as an assistance to workers who were striking after 1984. The military coup established new educational structures which destroyed the autonomy of universities. Thousands of lecturers and teachers were expelled from universities and schools, under the military programme of "purifying" education.

A wide student movement has now developed demanding free education, autonomy of universities and abolition of the student tax. Last year there were occupations of universities and hunger strikes by students. One movement was in support of a national hunger strike of political prisoners.

Women's and children's wages in the factories are generally 30% lower than those of men. With the increase in oppression and poverty, prostitution in the big cities has grown ten times since the military coup.

A new important element in the Turkish left is the growth of an independent women's organisation led by the Democratic Women's movement and the Socialist Women's movement. Women are seeking to break the Islamic feudal culture and traditions which cement their oppression. The demands they raise are: "*Support for political prisoners*", "*Stop the beating of women*", "*Return democratic rights*", "*Equal pay for equal work*", "*Against the male dominated capitalist system*."

The Social Democratic Party was originally set up by Kemal Attaturk and in 1923 formed the Government and banned all other parties. It remained the Government until 1950. It represents a section of Turkish capitalism which has links with European imperialism.

However, in the recent municipal elections, the discontent at the Military Government was expressed in a vote which made the Social Democratic Party the majority Party.

A few days after these municipal elections, tens of thousands of metal workers were in spontaneous demonstrations demanding that the Government resign and threatening a General Strike.

There are a great number of stalinist parties in Turkey, including Gorbachevist's, two important Albanian stalinist parties and a mass movement of Revolutionary Guevarist Youth.

The Socialist Platform is made up of eight organisations including two trotskyst groups. They call for the establishment of a legal workers' mass party and a break with the bourgeois Social Democratic Party.

Master Bureaucrat Rolls Heads

Bill Hunter

Gorbachev's recent move, in calling a meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and removing a fifth of its members, underlines once again that the Soviet Union continues to be ruled by bureaucratic methods. Power is in the hands of Gorbachev and his clique.

Commentators attempted to equate Gorbachev's purge of the "dead souls" with the movement against party candidates in the recent elections. In fact, they are opposites. The vote in the elections was a blow at bureaucracy. Gorbachev continues striving to maintain it in place, fruitlessly seeking for it, a stable base.

He fears workers' democracy like the devil fears holy water. "A milestone for his reforms" said the "Independent" Moscow correspondent about Gorbachev's purge. He has been proved a "master politician" said one of the BBC's 'experts'.

Gorbachev had pulled off a bureaucratic manoeuvre in regard to his opponents in the manner of one Joseph Stalin.

At the All-Union Party Conference last June, Gorbachev declared for the principle of "democratic centralism" as against "bureaucratic centralism" and for 'openness, discussion, criticism and self criticism' in the party.

According to the Bolshevik principle of democratic centralism as advocated by Lenin, the conference was the highest body in the party. The party leadership was elected at the party conference and from the party conference it derived its authority.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union as a Bolshevik, Leninist, real Communist Party died a long time ago. It became an instrument of the bureaucracy, something to be "managed" in order to bring about the aims of the leading bureaucratic clique. Gorbachev could not allow the election of a new Central Committee of the Party at the Congress in June. He was not sure that he could sweep away his opponents.

He worked through the bureaucratic machine to force their retirement at this Central Committee meeting. "Openness", "discussion", "criticism and self criticism" - used by Gorbachev, these words have the same

meaning as they did for Stalin. The difference is that Gorbachev cannot use the same brutal repressive measures against his opponents as did Stalin.

However, he still uses brutal methods, if not against fellow bureaucrats, then certainly against the working people. He does it through the same machinery of dictatorship as in the past - by edicts from the top and inevitably, without any "openness" or "discussion". In the past year there were edicts enlarging the power of security troops to enter private and public buildings. Among other things there were provisions for them to use "special means" to counter "threats of massive violations of public order". From the recent assault of security troops on a Georgian crowd it can be concluded that these "special means" included toxic gas.

Two days before the "master politician" performed at the Central Committee, security forces broke up a rally of thousands in Moscow protesting at the violence in Georgia. Like Stalin, Gorbachev calls for "criticism and self criticism" and like Stalin, issues decrees suppressing it. One of the recent decrees from the Kremlin makes it illegal to "insult or discredit" the Government.



Demonstrations are occurring all over the Soviet Union

Genocide in Georgia

Peter Windeler

Horror has greeted the repression meted out to Georgian nationalists demonstrating in Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, on 9th April.

Local reports state that up to 200 demonstrators were killed by troops from special army units. The authorities have tried to suppress the details of what exactly did occur although it is widely known that troops used poison and CS gas against nationalists and also attacked them with sharpened spades.

The foreign press in Moscow were shown a video of what happened. According to the Financial Times reporter, who saw the video, crowds were massed in front of the Government building in Lenin Square and were asked to leave by Catholicos Ilya LI, head of the Georgian church, because of an unspecified "great danger". The crowd refused to go and started singing and praying. Then tanks and troops moved in, gas canisters were fired and troops started chasing demonstrators. One young woman was shown close to death with blood bubbling from her mouth. There were also several shooting incidents, one boy of 12 was shown with a bullet wound in the buttocks and a man had lost both eyes.

Members of the local militia were also amongst those attacked by the troops when they went to the assistance of the crowd. Soldiers repeatedly clubbed victims with sharpened spades and in one instance troops chased a woman into a hotel and hacked her to death.

What is clear is that so called "perestroika" does not extend to meeting the demands for nationhood by non-Russian republics. First we had Armenia and now Moscow moves against Georgia. To deflect criticism, Moscow issued allegations that the suppression of the demonstrators was a local affair to undermine Gorbachev, but under the Soviet constitution the central authorities would have to sanction the use of special army units.

The 70th anniversary of Georgian independence was held on 26th May last year followed by numerous demonstrations calling for autonomy culminating in mid-November in a 100,000 strong demonstration in Tbilisi where banners were displayed which read "Long Live Independent Georgia" and "End the Russification".

1992 : Charter for Racism

Wayne Farah

The Single European Market will harmonise racist immigration and nationality laws. This will create an underclass of illegal workers. An underclass made up of migrants and refugees forced to flee their homes by neo-colonialism in the over-exploited world.

Internal controls and discriminatory practices will deny this underclass the rights and benefits of the society for which it labours.

The laws and practices to be harmonised are already in place and being tested out across Europe, directed and co-ordinated by senior government ministers of all western European countries.

In Britain, racist immigration laws have long been used to criminalise and deport black people. Now, individual police and immigration officers are being given ever-increasing powers to detain and deport "suspected illegal immigrants" as the recent 'illegal' raids on Turkish workers in Hackney demonstrate. Police officers who find it necessary to impose the 'final solution' expect to have their murders legalised. The judiciary has already demonstrated its willingness to legalise the murders of black people as seen with Cynthia Jarett and Clinton McCurbin. Internal controls deny access to the welfare state, which is why a five year old black girl was recently denied a life saving operation on the NHS.

In West Germany compulsory HIV testing is being used to deny black people access to the country. Recently a black woman was deported when her German husband died of AIDS. She was denied medical treatment, even though it was her husband who had passed the virus onto her.

In France, fascists, led by the Front National, have carried out pogroms that have

Support Pinior

While the Polish Government makes an agreement with Lech Walesa for the legalisation of Solidarity, it continues to attack Solidarity militants.

Jozef Pinior, one of the most courageous leaders of the radical wing of Solidarity has been refused a passport. He was to visit Britain, address meetings of trade unionists, was invited to the coming conference in Oxford on "Gorbachev and the Left" and was to attend the Chesterfield Conference of the Campaign for Socialism.

Jozef Pinior was a member of the national underground leadership of Solidarity during martial law and spent three years in prison from 1983-86 for his union activities.

He is famous, among militants in Poland, as the only treasurer of Solidarity to have anticipated martial law and successfully hide eighty million zloties of union funds in Lower Silesia from sequestration by the authorities.

He is one of the leaders of the Polish Socialist Party (Democratic Revolution) and is one of the main leaders of the radical wing of Solidarity.

The Polish Government is making its agreements with Walesa on the basis that he and his supporters in the leadership of Solidarity continue the policies of holding back the workers' struggles. Walesa confessed, during the recent strikes, that this policy had led to him being called a "rabbit" by young workers.

The International Office of the Polish Socialist Party (Democratic Revolution) reports that "the ostensible reason for the refusal of the passport is the imposition of a suspended sentence of one year's imprisonment on Pinior last October." This was imposed for his activity in connection with the mass strike last May in Poland.

The PPS-DR calls for the biggest possible protest at the denial of Pinior's passport.

Resolutions from trade unions, Labour Parties and other working class organisations should be sent to the Polish Ambassador, 47 Portland Place, London. W1. and to the Polish Minister of the Interior.

The PPS-DR is also asking for messages of solidarity to be sent to Jozef Pinior, Wroclaw, ul. Piastowska 37 m 8, Poland.

Copies of resolutions should be sent to PPS-DR International Office, The Basement, 92 Ladbroke Grove, London. W11.

claimed the lives of at least seventy black people in the last year.

This process is not confined to countries in the European Community. In Denmark, 'young Muslim immigrants' who have defended themselves from racist attacks have been targeted by the police for "special attention". In Sweden, local referendums have been held to decide in which areas black people will be allowed to live. Across Europe, immigrants and refugees are held in camps, isolated from local communities, while their fates are decided.

By harmonising European racism, the Single European Market will create the legal

framework which will define immigrants, migrants and refugees as lesser human beings. They will be denied protection under the law, the vote and other civil liberties. They will be denied education, medical and welfare services. Forced to live in camps or ghettos they will be easy targets for the police and fascists. But, above all, they will be paid poverty wages for doing the dirtiest jobs in the most dangerous conditions and when their labour is no longer required, they will be deported back to their homelands.

The racist Europe of 1992 will employ many of the techniques developed under apartheid to super-exploit black people.

Britain Trains Death Squads

As we have stressed before in "Socialist Voice" there is an international front of state trained terrorists which operates officially and unofficially throughout the world. It operates to counter trade unions, socialist movements and movements for national freedom. It covers its operations by waving the banner of "Defending Freedom and Democracy".

In the early part of last month an intelligence report was leaked from Colombia, a country where mass murders of workers and peasants, assassinations of trade union and political leaders by right wing murder squads, occur regularly.

The report reveals that the instructors of the death squads were British mercenaries operating under a retired British colonel. The killer trainers were putting to use what they were taught by the British state terrorists.

Their courses covered "explosives, terrorism, combat shooting and body guarding". The "Independent" of 13th April reported that they included techniques "using natural vegetable colourings for camouflage paint and bomb making.

"One intriguing English murder trick described is the 'ice bomb'. A hand grenade is frozen into a block of ice, the pin is pulled out and is left in position until the ice melts, freeing the safety lever, and the victim is riddled with shrapnel."

That these mercenaries will have their links with their old training organisations is absolutely certain. Their experiences will be transmitted back and they form part of the pool of killers, spies, 'security experts', which the state draws on from time to time.

Mayekiso Freed

The acquittal of Moses Mayekiso, General Secretary of NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa), and his four comrades, at the end of last month, was a victory for the working class, even though they had been in jail for two years before and during the trial.

They were charged first with treason, subversion and usurping the authority of the State. The treason charge was dropped and they were found not guilty on the other charges.

The Alexandra Five, as they were known, were held for months in solitary confinement after they were arrested. They had been members of the Alexandra Action Committee which was set up for the defence of the residents of the black township. Moses was accused of promoting the view that the working class, as the vanguard of liberation, should be in the centre of and in control of the struggle and that "South Africa was ripe for social, economic and political revolution."

Moses Mayekiso joined a trade union in 1976 and was a shop steward for nine years. In 1987, two unions merged to form NUMSA and Moses Mayekiso became General Secretary. NUMSA is the second largest trade



union in South Africa and helped develop the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

In "COSATU News" of May 1988 a NUMSA spokesman declared that the outcome of the Alexandra Five case would have an important bearing on other trials involving trade unionists and community activists.

The national and international campaign which developed in this case can therefore be extended to all political prisoners and the international links strengthened further to bring the rank and file of the workers of the world closer together.

Defend Mpophomeni

"Police are sjambokking (truncheoning) and teargassing Mpophomeni youth without provocation according to women in the township" the "Natal Witness" stated on the 13th April, carrying a story of recent brutal attacks by reactionary Inkatha members and the police.

An armed gang had attacked youth resulting in one death. To protect themselves they formed barricades across the roads. It was then that the police attacked with teargas and birdshot.

Mpophomeni is a township in Natal. It is the well known home of many of the SARMCOL strikers. The residents have a reputation of being pro-COSATU and UDF. There is a long history of attacks on the community but there is a

growing fear that the attacks could lead to a major bloodbath. During March and April five people were killed and thirty nine injured.

The SARMCOL strikers have maintained their struggle for over five years. They are clearly something the employers and the Apartheid State would like to see repressed, since their strike has won support not only in South Africa but also internationally.

Mpophomeni is near Pietermaritzburg. The townships in this area have had to suffer a war of attrition by Inkatha forces. In 1988, 680 people were killed in the area, 3,000 homes were destroyed and 30,000 people were displaced, becoming refugees. The youth have been a particular target.

T&G Axes ACTSS

Sue Gwyer - Branch Committee,
Greater Manchester ACTSS 6/389 (in a personal capacity)

The National Committee of the Association of Clerical Technical and Supervisory Staffs (ACTSS), a traditionally militant section of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU), recently published a draft 'consultative' report (through a Working Party) proposing the union shift its emphasis to individual financial packages and away from collective bargaining, representation and servicing.

The report suggests and encourages amalgamations with staff associations as a measure to reversing the decline in membership.

Its concentration on individual services such as cheap holidays, cheap car insurance and cheap filofaxes are measures designed to encourage workers from the finance, insurance and banking sectors to join the T&GWU.

The ACTSS Working Party Interim Report, as the so-called 'consultative' document is known, was circulated to all ACTSS branches for amendment.

However, with the appointment of a new National Officer for ACTSS, Todd Sullivan, the agreed consultative process was cut short, ACTSS was suddenly promoted as the new 'Industry and Services Staff Association' and the Working Party's 'Interim Report' recommendations were implemented in full.

Recruitment, publicity and educational materials were circulated promoting the new image. Calls for Sullivan's resignation fell on deaf ears as the National Committee ac-

cepted the 'fait accompli' with the weak excuse that a lot of money had been spent and the actions were now irreversible as a consequence.

So, ACTSS' traditional militant membership has had a new corporatist trade union ideology forced upon it.

But the story doesn't end there.

Greater Manchester ACTSS voluntary sector branch has passed a resolution condemning the actions of the National Officer(s) concerned and passed a vote of no confidence in their ability or political integrity as National Officer(s), effectively calling for resignation or removal.

The resolution attacks the decision to implement the Interim Report which pre-empted consultation and involvement of membership and branches in the future structure, nature and direction of their trade group.

The resolution reaffirms that the "*members interests are best served through collective organisation and representation in a Trade Union not through some spurious staff association.*"

The resolution will be forwarded through District and Regional Committee's to the National Committee and ACTSS delegates will raise the issue at the T&G's Biennial Delegate Conference in June as an amendment to a motion on union policy and structure.

*** No to Corporatist Unionism**

Harry Wicks

After our last issue had gone to press, we learned that Harry Wicks had died.

Harry Wicks was among the small number of Communists in Britain who first took up the struggle of the Left Opposition supporting Trotsky.

He was born in 1905, and began work as a signal lad on the railway in Battersea in 1919. He was a founder member of the Communist Party and was elected to the Executive Committee of the Young Communist League in 1926.

He was sent by the YCL to the International Lenin School in Moscow from 1927 to 1930. He declared later that, although he was at variance with Party history, at this time he was not a trotskyist.

In 1931 he was employed by Russian Oil Products and it was there he met Reg Groves and joined with him, at the end of 1931, to form the first organised group of the Left Opposition in Britain.

He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1932, together with the thirteen members of the Balham Group of the Communist Party who fought for Trotsky's policy of a united front against fascism. The story of the Balham Group can be read in, Reg Groves' "The Balham Group - How British Trotskyism Began".

On behalf of the British section of the International Left Opposition, Harry Wicks attended the Copenhagen meeting with Trotsky in 1932.

In 1936 he became secretary of the "British Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky" set up to defend Trotsky against the monstrous lies which came out of the Moscow Trials.

It was a small group that fought for truth and faced the edifice of slander which was erected by Stalin and the GPU and which appeared overwhelming in 1936. However, like Reg Groves, who died last year, Harry Wicks lived long enough to see that edifice crumble.

Turkish Community Fights Back

On Sunday 5th March, 2,000 people marched in protest at police raids within the Hackney Turkish community which had resulted in a number of Turkish workers being seized, imprisoned and some deported.

The spontaneous march clearly demonstrated the Turkish community's ability to mobilise when facing attack. The majority of people in the demonstration were Turkish men and women with their families, all outraged and determined to fight back.

Speakers at the rally included Hackney MP Diane Abbot and Islington MP Jeremy Corbyn, who both spoke scathingly about the police raids and subsequent deportations - a result of the racist, discriminatory immigration controls. Jeremy Corbyn called for an amnesty for all immigrant workers resident in Britain.

The Trade Union guest speakers were not so forthcoming about how workers could fight back. They urged workers to join the unions, using the usual rhetoric but not proposing any clear strategy for how they would go into the community to achieve this mass recruitment and, furthermore, how they would mobilise within the trade union movement for an end to all immigration controls.

It must be noted that the Turkish community organised themselves without addressing the need to involve other immigrant communities, also under attack at the present time. Very few black people were present on the march, although members of the Marion Gaima Anti-deportation campaign were there in solidarity. Marion, an asylum seeker from Sierra Leone, has been arrested and imprisoned twice and is all too familiar with the constant fear that hangs over workers who have no recognised status in this society.

However strong a particular community may be, in order to be effective on this issue, links within the wider trade union and labour movement and with ordinary working people have to be made.

Immigration laws do not affect a single group of people, but mainly attack those people from the so-called third world countries or those of non-white origin. A unified fight back is the only way to stop these attacks in our communities.

Fanzines Fight Back

Football supporters, angry at being portrayed as morons in the media and tired of being ignored by the games administrators have, in recent years, been organising themselves into successful pressure groups.

It was the formation of the Football Supporters Association (FSA) and the printing of the first independent fanzine magazine "Off The Ball" in 1986 which heralded this new development. Few football supporters are unaware of the FSA and in 1989 sales of fanzines are expected to exceed one million.

Clubs forced to recognise 'their' fans

The FSA has, in fact, achieved a great deal in such a short space of time. In London it was at its most impressive when it co-ordinated campaigns at Fulham, QPR and Wimbledon and defeated merger and groundshare plans.

The FSA has also organised the most concerted opposition to the Tory Governments'

After the disaster at Hillsborough, the issues raised by this article, in particular the question of ID cards and the way in which the football authorities treat spectators has produced a reaction amongst the football supporting world and especially amongst the youth. The development of "fanzines" point to an excellent way of organising opposition from fans to the negligence of clubs and Government attacks - article by Mark Metcalf.

national Identity Cards (ID) scheme. Thousands of fans have signed the national petition and the FSA has been busy in advising the Labour Party, lobbying MP's and holding a number of public meetings.

Indeed without the FSA the scheme would have faced a very token challenge despite its obvious threat to civil liberties as a whole. Whilst it has been pleasing to see articles about ID Cards in socialist newspapers it has also been rather ironic because, in practice, very few groups have shown a willingness to work with FSA members in defeating it. Some, like the Militant, have, in fact, attempted to set up "alternative" Football Fans against ID cards campaigns and have alienated potential supporters by such sectarian moves.

The rise of the FSA has, of course, only been made possible by the emergence of the fanzines. In combining cartoons, jokes and trivia with serious articles about football supporters and the sports' problems there is now a massive alternative source of information for football supporters. In virtually every club followers now produce at least a fanzine

and most are well worth a read.

What is great about most of the fanzines is that at many clubs they have become the supporters' mouthpiece and this role can be vital, as has been recently demonstrated at Charlton. Fans who had become resigned to home matches at Selhurst Park were re-awakened by "Voice of the Valley" and the subsequent growth of the "Back to the Valley" campaign has created the situation where the club will be moving back to Greenwich in the middle of next season.

Tackling racism and fascism

Some fanzines have also been willing enough to try and tackle the ugly problem of racism on the terraces as well as the influence that fascist groups, such as the National Front, have on some football supporters. Around 25 to 30 fanzines have 'carried' articles from Anti-Fascist Action and recently members of Leyton Orientear combined with AFA to leaflet Orient fans. Similar was undertaken at Bournemouth on 29th April and Arsenal on 1st May.

Fans Give ID Red Card

John Owen

For years football fans, in particular working class youth, have been treated just as the "providers of income", as one sports writer aptly described the diffidence the so-called guardians of the game show towards spectators.

Now, more than ever, it is time to return the game to the spectators which means the improvement of spectator facilities at the expense of the more and more frequent development of expensive "executive boxes" and hugely inflated prices paid for players.

Another sports writer, this time from the United States, commented on the near dilapidation of our football stadiums, stating that they reminded him of stadiums in the US 40 or 50 years ago. He is absolutely right. For years football spectators have suffered the frustration of being crushed in over crowded stadiums, soaked in roofless ter-

aces, herded like cattle by part-time and untrained police and stewards. Toilet facilities in most grounds are quite often nothing more than a wall.

The Government, police, football league and money grabbing big business clubs, must shoulder the blame for Hillsborough, through their accumulated prejudices and negligence towards fans.

The cages should come down immediately and the notion of the Government that you eradicate hooliganism by pricing the unemployed and working class out of the market must be rejected.

If all seater stadiums are to be built then we must demand a massive reduction in the price of seats.

Thatcher is deliberately blind to the needs of football supporters. She and her Government are only interested in football when they want to whip up law and order hysteria.

The National Newsletter of the Football

Supporters Association, "Reclaim the Game", ran a lead article showing the real opinion of fans to the Government's proposed Football Spectators Bill.

At the Aston Villa v Manchester United match on 12th March, being played at Villa Park, a voice boomed over the tannoy: "If you disagree with the Government's proposed identity card legislation please raise your red card now"

Almost all of the 28,334 fans in attendance stuck their hands up - showing a red card of opposition to the Tory proposals.

The real force to beat the Government proposals lies in the fans themselves. Links must be made with others fighting for basic democratic rights, whether it be trade unionists fighting closures, youth fighting against slave wages on government YTS schemes, or communities fighting against the Poll Tax, which also, incidentally, introduces a national identity card system.

Eclipse the "Sun"

Kevin Bulman

The police have now set up an 'inquiry' into the events at Hillsborough. An inquiry by the police into the police. But before anything has been "found out", the "Sun" newspaper has 'convicted' the Liverpool fans. In what must be one of the vilest pieces of journalism in recent times, the tabloid rags that masquerade as 'newspapers' claimed that fans looted the bodies of the dead and urinated on the police and victims.

Sheffield Tory MP Irvine Patnick, backed up police officers claims:

"I have kept quiet about this because I did not want to inflame a delicate situation. But it is a fact that these are the stories they told

Hillsborough : The Real Truth

This article has been written by Mark Metcalf, a keen football supporter who attends 100 plus matches every season and who is sickened by the events at Hillsborough.

The deaths of 96 football supporters at Hillsborough should have come as no surprise. Despite being one of the most modern grounds in Britain the design of the Leppings Lane end means that the thousands that pour through the turnstiles at big capacity crowd matches are then expected to merge and

cation for giving them less tickets than Nottingham Forest, with an average gate of 18,000.

The police claimed that the different ends were chosen because of different directions fans travelled from; Forest from the Midlands and Liverpool from the North West. Yet I travelled, by train, on the morning of the match, from Mansfield to Sheffield and there were both sets of supporters on the train.

Claims that the police arrangements stop fans intermingling is clearly nonsense. Many want to eat and have a beer. On 15th April thousands of Liverpool and Forest fans drank in the same pubs together. We have not heard of any trouble!

The decision not to put back the kick-off should be blamed on those operating the closed circuit television (CCTV) and they must also shoulder the blame for not being alert to the obvious problems in the ground until it was too late.

The police have made enormous publicity about the use of CCTV. Nearly all match programmes mention how wonderful it is in the fight against hooliganism. However, with an average arrest rate of 0.003% (ie three in every 100,000 and the prosecution rate is even lower!), money, which could be used to improve facilities for ordinary supporters, is being squandered on giving police forces expensive toys to play with.

The announcement that Thatcher still intends to push through the Football Identity membership card scheme shows that she does not care who is responsible for Hillsborough. She has identified a problem; working class people collectively enjoying themselves at matches - called it hooliganism - and wants to stop it.

Thatcher is not interested in football, she is not prepared to tackle the real hooligans; the police, who every week harass decent supporters and she is not prepared to "root out" those fascists and racists who do, sadly, infest a number of grounds.

Socialists have a duty to fight alongside ordinary workers wherever they fight or are attacked.

I would suggest that anyone concerned about Hillsborough should join the Football Supporters Association, 59 Oakwood Road, Liverpool L26 1XD. There are local branches around the country.

For those who want to get more involved in tackling racism and fascism at matches then contact Anti-Fascist Action (Football section) c/o Box 273, London E7.



Anfield - the 'Kop'

me and they had no reason to lie"

In Kirkby, on Merseyside, in response to the allegations, a demonstration was called against the "Sun". Over a 1000 people marched to the town centre to burn copies of Murdoch's rag. A total boycott has been called and shops and factories are refusing to stock the paper.

The working class response to Hillsborough has been the complete opposite to that of the Government, the press and the Police. Solidarity has been expressed from fans all over the country and also internationally.

Over a million people have visited the 'Kop' at Anfield to pay their respects and lay flowers on the pitch and the support is still continuing. The cities of Liverpool, Nottingham and Sheffield stood silent at 3.06pm, exactly a week after the tragedy, to commemorate the victims.

International solidarity has been expressed in Dublin, where a one minute silence was observed at the All Ireland Hurley semi-final, and in Italy, just before the European semi-final match, the Italian fans expressed their feelings by singing "You'll Never Walk Alone."

scramble through a narrow darkened tunnel.

The almost complete absence of decently paid, properly organised and trained stewards at all grounds often means that supporters are forced to fight their way past other fans. At Hillsborough there appears to have been no stewards at the entrance to the terraces.

The police who patrol in front of the fences are often hostile and at Hillsborough many Liverpool fans complained about youngsters being pushed back into the crowd as they tried to scramble over the fences and away from the crush.

The Hillsborough "safety fences" led to 96 deaths. However, other questions need to be asked, in particular about the police, their inefficiency and their attitudes towards working class football supporters. It is the latter which, in my opinion, contributed enormously to the deaths.

I have already mentioned the pushing back of supporters scrambling over the fences. But other issues include the decision to give Liverpool fans the Leppings Lane end. With an average crowd of 37,000 and millions of supporters world-wide, there was no justifi-

Stop the killings

"We call on organised workers all over the world to stand together with us against the formidable forces of international capitalism, the conservative governments and the killer regime South Africa. We call on comrades brothers and sisters to demonstrate international solidarity with Namibians."

This was the call issued on 28th April by John Pandani, General Secretary of the Namibian Food and Allied Union, on behalf of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), three days before rallies in every centre of Namibia were to be held on May day as workers prepare a stay away.

This call must be answered immediately by all those opposed to apartheid and the Tories support for South Africa.

April 1989 was to mark the beginning of the implementation of the United Nations peace plan for Namibia. Namibians expected the harsh rule of South Africa to be checked and limited from that day onwards. But, in the words of John Pandani: "...our expectations were rudely shattered".

On 1st April 20,000 workers, marching against the privatisation of Namibian public services, found that they were stopped by armed police and refused entry to the "white city" of Windhoek. The United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) forces were nowhere to be seen, although they had been informed of the march. The marchers were demanding that South Africa stop selling off the basic public services of Namibia: hospitals, water, post, telecommunications and transport to interested buyers like US, British and Italian transnationals.

They see that behind these privatisations is an attempt to lay down the "economic conditions for dependency and neo-colonialism after independence." The NUNW statement says: "...if privatisation goes ahead then the future government will not be able to bring the expected improvements to the living conditions of the oppressed majority. Privatisation is effectively a strategy to displace political power of a future government into the hands of the transnational corporations who are already dominating the economies of the entire southern African subcontinent. Botha and Thatcher are claiming to be guardians and midwives of Namibia's independence process while at the same time making sure that this independence will be firmly controlled by them."

Peter Money

Ever since the UN 'peace' process started it has been accompanied by a consistent campaign of intimidation, harassment and genocidal attacks against SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organisation) freedom fighters. From the day of the cease-fire onwards, numerous incidents of intimidation of SWAPO supporters occurred, particularly in the north of the country. On 1st April PLAN (Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia) combatants, who have been operating in the country since 1966, assembled to give themselves up to UNTAG. They were attacked and killed by pro-South African forces. This was no chance brush with guerrilla forces. The attacks took place over a front of 250 miles and at five or six different places. No prisoners were taken and in one incident PLAN combatants were killed whilst they were eating.

There was no intervention by UN forces to stop the genocide, and as the NUNW statement puts it: "...until very recently the UN forces were nowhere to be seen except in shops, bars and restaurants."

Margaret Thatcher was also in Namibia that day. She held meetings with the South African Foreign Minister Botha and the South African Administrator General in Namibia, Pienaar. It was she who consented to the UN Special Representative giving South Africa the go-ahead to re-deploy the notorious Koevoet killer squad military units to hunt down all freedom fighters. It was to defend those under attack that SWAPO sent reinforcements into Namibia.

The Mount Etjo meeting, later in April, between South Africa, Angola and Cuba, with the presence of Soviet and US observers (but not SWAPO or any other representative of the Namibian people), produced the amazing declaration that the solution to SWAPO's armed presence in Namibia was for PLAN combatants to surrender to South Africa, give up their arms and be transported to Angola. The NUNW condemn the declaration saying: "...is it conceivable for an undefeated army to surrender to its enemy? ...it would be like the USA dictating that the English have no right to be in England."

The National Union of Namibian Workers, together with the organised community is calling for:

1. The active and effective deployment of

UNTAG and the increase of UNTAG forces to the original 7,500.

2. An end to privatisation.

3. Restriction of SA army and demobilisation of SA proxy troops to their bases.

4. Confinement of PLAN fighters to bases inside Namibia.

5. An end to all forms of intimidation of SWAPO supporters and random anti-SWAPO violence perpetrated by members of army and police units.

6. Freedom of association, movement and expression for all Namibians.

7. Immediate repeal of all discriminatory laws which institutionalise the South African propaganda machines in the form of the state controlled electronic media.

The NUNW are about to consolidate the five industrial unions and the teachers union into a single federation of trade unions and to increase their efforts to organise previously unorganised sectors of workers to: "...enable us to play the needed role in confronting all direct or veiled anti-independent strategies with the utmost militancy."

They are calling on all workers to: "...exert every possible form of pressure on your government to side clearly with Namibians and to halt their conscious or unwitting collusion with South Africa...we are not only facing South Africa...but also its allies in the Western world."

These demands and requests for assistance must be taken up immediately by the whole labour and trade union movement in Britain and internationally.

As John Pandani says: "...your contribution will have a direct influence on the attainment of freedom and justice in Namibia." By active support of real international solidarity we can help prevent the multinationals from realising their ambitions. Such support would help realise the aspirations of the Namibian people. At this precise moment there is considerable discussion amongst Namibian workers and throughout southern Africa on what type of state can guarantee their basic demands.

Clearly what the masses are striving for is workers' democracy, not democracy in words, but something that lives in all aspects of workers' lives and which would guarantee national independence and the authority of the constituent assembly.