



LABOUR'S NHS POPULAR FRONT

THE Labour Party leadership is attempting to gather in some cheap electoral support by mounting a Popular Front-style campaign to 'defend' the National Health Service. This is a campaign full of press briefings, photo-opportunities and gimmicks — but entirely absent is any call to the working class to fight to defend health services.

The real nature of this

'campaign' was revealed when Labour MP John Hughes had the 'bad taste' to interrupt House of Commons prayers on January 10, to protest against the delay of childrens' operations. He was promptly expelled from the chamber for a week, with the full support of Kinnock and a majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Labour health spokesperson, Harriet Harman, has been repeatedly wheeled out

By Ian Harrison

to plead with the Tories for increased NHS funding. Her husband, Jack Dromey, meanwhile, vehemently condemns protests outside Labour councils making cuts as an infringement of their 'rights'. Labour-nominated representatives on Health Authorities up and down the country are voting for health cuts. Chief accomplices of the Labour leaders in this betrayal of NHS workers are the TUC

leaders. In 1982, when health workers mobilised in a seven-month campaign to defend their wages and living standards, the Labour Party and TUC leaders destroyed the campaign at the point where it was winning support throughout the trade union movement and threatening to escalate into an assault on the Tory government. Since 1982 every reflex initiative taken by

health workers to defend jobs and services has been isolated and crushed by the TUC. While the Tories have closed hospitals and casualty departments and imposed redundancies on the NHS, the Labour and TUC leaders have refused every demand from their members for national demonstrations and co-ordinated action. Hundreds of health service trade unionists who fought sincerely to implement TUC and Labour Party policy to defend the NHS have been sacked and betrayed by their

leaders through Industrial Tribunal proceedings.

Women ancillary workers at Barking, Hammersmith and Addenbrookes hospitals sustained long strikes in the struggle against privatisation — in the case of Barking lasting for 22 months. They were first isolated and then betrayed by health union leaders. At the centre of the treachery is the 'left' Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of NUPE, leading member of the TUC and Labour Party. While NUPE members fought and sacrificed, Bickerstaffe opposed every attempt to implement policy for co-ordinated action, pursuing instead bankrupt campaigns for 'democracy in the NHS'.

Ironically, the calls from elite professional bodies, such as the Royal College of Surgeons and the British Medical Association (BMA), for greater NHS spending, and for Health Authorities to defy government spending cuts, go well beyond the official policy of the Labour Party. Neil Kinnock, when questioned as to whether he supported the strike by Manchester nurses tried desperately to avoid a straight answer. Norman Willis, meanwhile, crawled to Downing Street, begging for £7 billion to be injected into the 'inner cities', benefits and pensions.

An essential part of the Kinnock-Willis-Bickerstaffe Popular Front is to take advantage of the legitimate concerns of the middle class, which are reflected in the turmoil inside such 'respectable' professional bodies as the BMA and the Royal College of Nursing while containing the wave of spontaneous anger spreading among health service workers, and squashing any independent working class action.

The nurses' strike in Manchester, and the overtime ban by blood transfusion technicians, were cynically pumped for every ounce of publicity, while, behind the scenes, NUPE officials agreed full strike 'cover' with management. But in spite of this bureaucratic manoeuvring, the upsurge amongst health workers has

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Down with Zionist imperialism!

EDITORIAL BOARD STATEMENT

WORKERS must demand that the Labour and TUC leaders act to end the violent repression by Zionism of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and West Bank occupied territories.

The killing of at least 76 unarmed Palestinians since December 9 has vividly spotlighted the nature of the Israeli regime and its illegal occupation of Arab lands.

Behind the heroic uprising of Palestinian youth are the effects of the deepening world crisis. The Zionist regime has turned the West Bank and, more acutely, the Gaza Strip into a refuse tip, starved of employment, facilities and habitable dwellings. These intolerable conditions are maintained by an armed occupation which denies Palestinian farmers even the right to sell their own goods directly to foreign markets.

Within the Palestinian movement itself, a sea-change is taking place. Yasser Arafat and the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have couched all their recent statements in terms of appeals to 'world opinion' and the United Nations, and have offered to bargain away Palestinian self-determination in return for a peace conference, at which they would recognise the legitimacy of the state of Israel. The youth of the Gaza Strip gave their answer to this diplomatic horse-trading by stoning UN representatives who came to survey the wreckage of the camps. Large sections of Palestinian youth in the Gaza Strip have turned increasingly to the Islamic fundamentalists. The fundamentalist groups have been credited with calling the general strike of January 10-11 which drew complete support throughout the Gaza Strip. It is the complete inability on

the part of the PLO leadership to develop a programme to unite the Palestinian working class and poor peasantry with the Jewish working class in order to smash Zionism which has strengthened the fundamentalists. Whilst defending the Palestinian national revolutionaries against Zionist imperialism, the Workers International League advances its own independent programme for the working class.

The Zionist repression has been assisted by the criminal silence of Stalinism, both in the Middle East and in Moscow.

The Palestinian people must place no confidence in the crocodile tears of Thatcher's envoy David Mellor, who made a well-publicised criticism of Israeli army tactics in Gaza.

Like the Reagan government, which voted at the UN against moves to deport nine Palestinian leaders, the Tories are alarmed at the extent of Palestinian resistance, which threatens to disrupt moves by imperialism, with the assistance of the Kremlin, to impose a 'regional' Middle Eastern settlement.

Zionism has proved unable to extinguish the national aspirations of the Palestinian people. The Israeli economy is in permanent crisis and there is now net Jewish emigration from Israel. The Shamir-Peres coalition is increasingly diverging down separate paths. The Likud bloc headed by Shamir is opposed to any concessions to the Palestinians, and supports unleashing the full brunt of Zionist terror in the occupied territories.



The demonstration through central London on January 23 calling for an end to Zionist repression of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank

Peres' Labour Party supports a 'peace' conference with non-PLO stooge Palestinians under the wing of King Hussein of Jordan aimed at creating a Palestinian statelet on the West Bank, jointly policed by Hussein and the Zionists.

Reagan and Thatcher are attempting to exert influence in the direction of the Peres wing of the Israeli bourgeoisie because its plans are in line with much broader aims in the region. These include:

- A settlement in Afghanistan.
- Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has indicated Moscow's willingness to withdraw troops and recognise an 'interim' government in return for an end to Western

support for Mojahedin guerrillas. The ex-King of Afghanistan is reported to be waiting in the wings.

- An end to the Gulf War, now in its eighth year, aimed at securing imperialist oil routes and strategic ports.

British Labour and TUC leaders have a despicable record of treachery in relation to the rights of the Palestinian people, and have supported Zionism throughout its bloody colonialist history.

The Workers International League demands:

- End the repression of the Palestinian people;
- Full support for Palestinian self-determination;
- Labour and TUC leaders

must break with Zionism and mobilise the British working class in defence of the Palestinian people;

- Halt all air and sea transport to and from Israel;
- No confidence in the thieves' kitchen of the United Nations;
- Unite Palestinian and Jewish workers on a socialist programme to overthrow the Zionist state;
- Down with the reactionary imperialist-Zionist-Stalinist 'peace' conference;
- Build a Palestinian Trotskyist party;
- Forward to the United Socialist States of the Middle East!

January 20, 1988

Defend right to abortion

LIBERAL MP David Alton's Abortion Bill passed its second reading by a majority of 45 on January 22. Voting for the bill, and ensuring it stands a good chance of becoming law, were 35 Labour MPs (including one member of the Campaign Group) defying Labour Party policy.

Alton's deeply reactionary bill seeks to reduce the time limit (set for the 1967 Abortion Act) from 28 weeks to 18 weeks.

History has turned full circle. In 1967, future Liberal leader David Steel successfully introduced the Abortion

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spread throughout the country.

The Workers International League warns workers that the Labour Party and TUC leaders have no intention of fighting for the defence of the NHS. Last November, the TUC Health Services Committee agreed *not* to call any demonstrations against cuts on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the NHS, claiming in advance that workers would not turn out. Instead, it called for local activities which would stress the 'positive challenge' the NHS faces!

The central question facing health workers fighting Tory cuts is to deal with the Kinnock-Willis bureaucracy, and its 'left' accomplices like Bickerstaffe, who are attempting to strangle their struggles and divert them into 'harmless' protests.

The WIL demands that the TUC and Labour Party leaders mount a serious campaign to defend the NHS and the right of workers to organise and strike. At the centre of this fight is the necessity to build a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions.

The WIL calls on health workers to fight for:

- Mass recruitment into the trade unions;
- Occupation of hospitals threatened with closure — organise Joint Shop Stewards' Committees;
- Nationally co-ordinated action by health service unions to fight privatisation and cuts;
- TUC to mobilise non-NHS unions to support this fight;
- Build Councils of Action;
- Nationalisation of the NHS and the drug monopolies under workers' control;
- Build revolutionary leadership in NUPE, COHSE, NALGO and other health service unions — join the Workers International League.

By Susan Keepence

Act, which abolished the worst aspects of illegal back-street abortions.

Although it introduced legal abortions for the first time, Steel's Act fell well short of abortion on demand. Under the terms of the Act, abortion is theoretically only available to women who, in the opinion of two doctors, would suffer physical, psychological or emotional damage by proceeding with the pregnancy.

Even under the present Act, delays resulting from this procedure, as well as shortages of NHS facilities, mean that half of all abortions performed end up being paid for at private clinics.

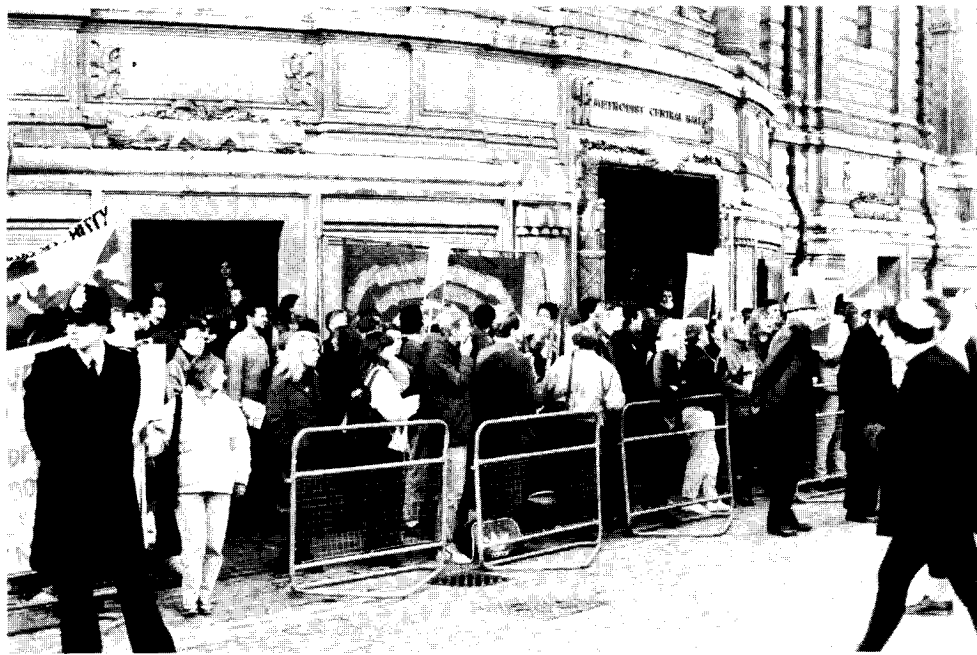
Alton's bill is much more than an attack on 'a woman's right to choose'; it is a vindictive piece of anti-working class legislation, aimed at forcing the most oppressed sections of working class

women back into the arms of the back-street abortionists. For those women forced to go through with unwanted pregnancies, a vicious cycle of deprivation opens up. Many will be forced out of work and into bed-and-breakfast accommodation (itself under attack from council cuts).

All statistics show that the majority of late abortions are performed on young working class women, and that the delays are the result of their inexperience and the complicated hurdles which exist under the present Act.

Most late abortions are the result of unwanted teenage pregnancies — or severe foetal handicap, which is only detected at an advanced stage.

Alton is attempting to whip up sections of the middle class with a 'moral majority' crusade against the 'evils' of late abortions. In fact, only 29 abortions were performed after 24 weeks in the whole of Britain in 1986.



Demonstrators against the Alton Abortion Bill at Central Hall, Westminster, on January 21

The British Medical Association supports a reduction of the time limit to 24 weeks for all cases, except where the woman's life is in jeopardy.

Alton has reluctantly accepted an amendment which extends the time limit in the case of foetal handicap. Even this goes against Alton's original medieval intentions, which would have forced women to bear handicapped children.

In the Transitional Programme, Trotsky writes: 'The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage-earner and as a housewife.'

The world capitalist crisis today poses the destruction of all progressive reform affecting the rights of women.

Alton is the product of a Catholic teachers' training college in the working class stronghold of Liverpool. His

anti-abortion crusade is tied closely to his rabid witch-hunting of the Labour Party in Liverpool.

He has made no secret of the fact that his bill is intended as a stage towards the complete abolition of abortion rights.

The call for free abortion on demand must be carried forward by mobilising the working class, including working women everywhere, to smash the Alton bill.

MEDIA ROUND-UP

'Mirror' sackings

THIRTY SOGAT printworkers have been on strike at the 'Daily Mirror' since November 27, 1987. They were sacked on the spot after refusing to accept redundancy terms offered by Robert Maxwell's Mirror Group. The men have been replaced by scabs, but have refused to accept Personnel Manager Tony Brittain's offer to restore ten jobs. Other Mirror employees have been threatened with instant dismissal if they talk to the strikers during working hours. So far there has been minimal support from the national leadership of SOGAT.



Sacked 'Mirror' printworkers on the picket line

Ford strike action

UNION leaders representing 32,500 Ford took an overwhelming mandate for strike action with them when they met company representatives on January 28. Ford management has attempted to railroad through major changes in working practices in a trade-off for a 6.5 per cent pay offer this year, tied to a further two-year period of wage increases linked to inflation.

The result of the ballot of Ford workers on January 21 showed a massive 90 per cent in favour of industrial action.

Changes demanded by Fords include the employ-

ment of part-time workers to adjust to the ups and downs of seasonal demand, introduction of team work and flexibility of skilled workers.

Leading negotiators, Mick Murphy of the TGWU and Jimmy Airlie of the AEU, admitted that they had 'made every attempt to avoid confrontation'. Airlie, a leading Stalinist, notorious for his role in the single-union deal struck at Fords' new Dundee plant, added an apologetic note saying that Ford workers had contributed to the company's 'unprecedented efficiency and profitability', and that the offer did not reflect their 'input'.

Union-busting at TV-am

TWO hundred and twenty-nine members of the technicians' union ACTT have been locked-out by TV-am since November 24, 1987. The lock-out took place after a 24-hour strike against management attempts to tear up existing agreements.

On December 11, management issued a ten-point document as the sole basis for ending the lock-out which amounts to a scabs' charter.

It demands that the ACTT gives up existing negotiating rights, renounces further industrial action against the conditions, and agrees to cuts in manning levels, reductions in holidays and the use of non-union labour overseas.

TV-am director, David Davidovitz, is on record as saying that the company will not reinstate the technicians

unless they agree to all the new working practices.

Members of the NUJ and EETPU have consistently crossed picket lines. However, faced with this union-busting operation, the ACTT, led by the 'left' Alan Sapper, has made no call for mass picketing and has requested that other unions do not support picket lines.

THE pro-Moscow Communist Campaign Group, which controls the 'Morning Star', formalised its split with the Communist Party of Great Britain on January 8. It claims 1,500 members and has announced its intention to hold its own congress. The move takes place in the wake of the rule change at the

Machine branch suspended

SOGAT's National Executive has suspended from office the branch committee of the London Machine Branch for two years, in retaliation for its suspension of its branch secretary, Charlie Cherril.

The branch has alleged that irregularities existed in the awarding of jobs on 'The Guardian', and that Cherril overrode traditional seniority rights in drawing up rosters.

The move by the National Executive is widely interpreted by rank-and-file printers as an attempt by the Brenda Dean leadership to get its own back on the union's most powerful branch, which was at the centre of the year-long struggle at Wapping.

Dean, whose support comes mainly from the provinces, regards the Fleet Street-based branch as an obstacle to an across-the-board deal with print employers on new technology and 'modern' working practices.

Stalinist party's 40th National Congress, in November 1987, which removed the obligation on members to buy the 'Morning Star'.

• Analysis of developments in the British Stalinist movement will be carried in the next edition of Workers News.

Dromey demands speed-up

JACK DROMEY, a senior official of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), has called upon local government workers to organise their own speed-up.

According to Dromey, TGWU public services national secretary, more 'efficient' working practices will prevent councils privatising services under the terms of the Local Government Bill, now going through parliament. Dromey admits that speed-up will result in council employees working themselves out of jobs: 'There will still be casualties, but the path of co-operation offers a better chance of defending services, keeping work in-house and saving jobs.'

But while Dromey urges co-operation with cuts, he virulently attacks workers and Labour Party members

who have lobbied Labour councils making cuts: 'The scenes of recent weeks have been a disgrace to the Labour movement. The Labour Party must make it clear that it will not tolerate intimidation of Labour councillors by other party members or the defiance of constitutional procedures.'

A decade ago, Dromey, who was secretary of the Grunwick Strike Committee, ensured the defeat of the two-year struggle by steering it into safe, official channels, and by accepting the intervention of ACAS. Dromey carved a career for himself in the trade union bureaucracy out of the Grunwick dispute, while the Asian women strikers were left outside the gates.

Dromey is the husband of Labour MP, Harriet Harman, who fronts Labour's 'Defend the NHS' campaign (see page one).

Adult cheap-labour schemes extended

By Graham Fenwick

FROM September this year the Employment Secretary, Norman Fowler, will take full control of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) schemes and the high street job centres. The existing Commission made up of appointees from the government, trade unions and industry will be stripped of control and reduced to an advisory body.

At the centre of the new move is a plan to merge the Community Programme with the failed Job Training Scheme. The new scheme will compel the unemployed to work for their dole money and extend the attack on trade union rates of pay.

The Secretary of State will have powers to decide the status of participants on the schemes, designating them as 'employed' or 'non-employed'. This move will end all protection under existing legislation for the unemployed.

Under a separate provision, the Tories are seeking to overcome local government resistance to cheap-labour schemes by scrapping the Regional Aid Programme and replacing it with selective grants, acceptance of which will force councils to become managing agents for government schemes.

The MSC, which began in 1974 under the Wilson Labour government, was enthusiastically supported by the leaders of the Labour Party and TUC who saw in it a vehicle to cover up the growth of unemployment. They bear the central responsibility for providing the Tories with an instrument to attack the organised working class.

The scale of the TUC leaders' treachery can be revealed by comparing the existing Community Programme with the proposed new scheme; the CP pays £67

for 20 hours work on a 'rate-for-the-job' basis, but the new scheme pays only benefit plus an allowance which could be between £4 and £10 for a 38-hour week.

The TUC must end its collaboration with the MSC and fight for a programme of real jobs and apprenticeships under trade union conditions and rates of pay. It must open its doors to the unemployed and participants on government schemes.

Battle-lines drawn at AUT conference

THE Association of University Teachers (AUT) has taken a significant step forward by deciding to introduce measures to discipline members who name staff for compulsory redundancy.

At its Winter Council in Hull, just before Christmas, members of the 'Broad Left' dominated Executive pulled out all the stops in attempting to block the motion from Hull and Cardiff Universities. While the general secretary, Diana Warwick, argued for the retention of senior administrators within the AUT, and appealed to the outdated concept of the AUT as a professional body, the majority at Council agreed with Alan Mount from Hull that 'where battle-lines have been drawn... people have to take sides'.

This fighting spirit carried over into the debate on last year's pay deal, and this year's claim. The settlement last year included a 'restructuring' package which sharply hit younger lecturers, and academic-related staff such

as librarians, administrators and researchers. The carrot that had been held out by the employers of 1,000 extra promotions to senior lecturers had turned out to be mainly illusory. This was the latest in a series of violations of the 1987 agreement by the employers, taking advantage of what they see as the weakness of the AUT leadership.

The Executive wheeled out a leading Stalinist to argue against taking industrial action in support of the 1988 claim on the grounds that it would undermine joint action with other unions against the Education Reform Bill.

If rhetoric and hyperbole could carry the day, then the bill would have been destroyed by the AUT at Hull. The president, in his opening address, called for 'a united campaign to defeat the centralising, dictatorial intentions of this bill'. The general secretary praised a headline in the journal 'Nature' calling on dons to strike. But she also said that it would be 'foolish to pretend that the AUT can defeat the Education Reform Bill'. This indeed

is true with the kind of leadership provided by the Executive of the AUT, and if the 'action' planned is confined to demonstrations and attempts to influence 'important' people such as Tory MPs! Council did agree to support the demonstration called by the National Union of Students against the Baker bill on February 27.

The unwillingness of the Executive to lead a serious struggle to defend the universities against the Tories is epitomised by the situation at Cardiff University. In the past year, 180 jobs have been lost through 'voluntary' redundancy. This was characterised by the deputy general secretary as a 'victory', and by the immediate past president as an indication that the AUT is 'extremely powerful' and 'extremely effective'. However, as the experiences of members at Hull and Cardiff show, the necessity of, and the replacement of treacherous and opportunist trade union leaders emerge simultaneously.

FOR the second time since the 1984-85 strike, South Yorkshire miners have been in the forefront of the struggle against pit closures and British Coal's new disciplinary code. Last July it was Frickley colliery that gave the lead against the code. This time it was the turn of the miners at Bentley colliery.

On January 4, 650 men at Bentley began an official strike over the manager's decision to transfer three men from a new coal seam. The men had spent two years working on the face, and had just reached the coal and the prospect of higher earnings, when the manager decided to exert his 'right to manage'.

This was clearly yet another attempt by British Coal management to whip miners into line. Quite rightly it is being fought tooth and nail by the rank-and-file

miners, and they have made every effort to widen the struggle.

By January 8, 17 Yorkshire pits had been picketed out. Together with the Manton colliery in Nottinghamshire, 15,000 miners were on strike. That evening, the men at Maltby, Shireoaks, Silverwood and Treeton voted to return to work on the following Monday. At that point, miners' leaders pulled the



SCARGILL

plug on their members — also for the second time since 1985. At the weekend, the South Yorkshire panel of the NUM recommended a return to work on the basis that negotiations should be at-



Yorkshire miners picketing during the 1984-5 strike

'Militant' witch-hunt under way

A CONFIDENTIAL report alleging 'Militant' infiltration of the Southwark and Bermondsey Constituency Labour Party came before the Labour Party's National Executive Committee on January 27.

The report, compiled by officials in the London area, is the first major attempt to witch-hunt 'Militant' supporters in London. It alleges that Labour Party members have been 'abused' and 'harassed' by 'Militant' supporters attempting to take control of the constituency. It also recommends that Southwark and Bermondsey CLP should be suspended pending an inquiry.

The NEC also considered another document aimed at tightening the bureaucracy's hold over Annual Conference. It advocates the use of speakers' cards to weed out opponents of the Kinnock-Hattersley leadership.

tempted. This move paralleled that of the Yorkshire Area Executive last year, and underlines the determination of NUM bureaucrats, both 'left' and right, to avoid a decisive fight against pit closures and the disciplinary code. It is in line with the Yorkshire leadership's passive acceptance of a number of pit closures in their area during the past year.

Once again, Arthur Scargill was silent, pleading his two-day hospitalisation as a reason for being insufficiently informed to comment. His close supporter, Peter Heathfield, while he attacked John Walsh — Scargill's opponent for the Presidency — for his 'unhelpful and incorrect' comments on the South Yorkshire strike, was also quick to reaffirm the commitment of the NUM nationally to arbitration for the resolution of disputes.

The treachery of the South Yorkshire panel encouraged British Coal's action on January 21, when 12 men received final warning letters accusing them of acting unconstitutionally and unlawfully in picketing other pits. The Bentley day shift responded by walking out.

Scargill's electoral promise that he will 'never betray' will remain empty rhetoric so long as it is a personal statement and not a declaration of war on all those both inside and outside the NUM whose activities are dedicated precisely to betrayal. For example, Scottish Area NUM President and leading Euro-Stalinist, George Bolton, commenting on the recently announced closure of Seafield colliery, referred to British Coal's proposal to reopen Frances colliery as a 'pill-sweetener' and 'very exciting'. What Bolton didn't mention was that British Coal have stated that the reopening of Frances is dependent upon an 'absolute commitment' to six-day working.

Without a fight to the finish against the likes of Bolton and the Kinnock-Willis bureaucracy, all the pledges in the world 'not to betray' amount to nothing. The re-election of Scargill against the right-winger Walsh, but with his share of the vote reduced from 70 per cent to just under 54 per cent, shows the danger of militant phrases which are not backed up by a drawing of the sword on right-wingers and Stalinists inside the NUM and the wider labour movement. Miners have shown their determination to fight in spite of the betrayals of both local and national leaders, and in the face of a vicious campaign by British Coal management. But the only way forward is to rally miners around a revolutionary programme, which involves a struggle not only against the UDM and the NUM right wing, but also against the vacillating centrist element in the NUM leadership led by Scargill.

NKOMO JOINS MUGABE TO FIGHT SQUATTERS

ROBERT MUGABE's inauguration as president of Zimbabwe at the end of December, whilst apparently giving him more personal power than ever, signals the deepening of class conflict within the country and the growing instability of his regime as it lurches to the right.

On December 22, 1987, the formal merger of the main opposition party ZAPU, led by Joshua Nkomo, with Mugabe's ZANU was announced in a statement which committed the fused party to the establishment of a one party 'Marxist-Leninist' state. Two weeks later Mugabe found no contradiction in including three representatives of the powerful white minority landowners and industrialists in his new cabinet, one minister, and two deputy ministers.

Mugabe and Nkomo's preposterous claims to Marxism are a fig leaf to cover up the real state of affairs in Zimbabwe. After two years of protracted negotiations to merge the two parties, Nkomo has been restored to the cabinet to act as the policeman over his traditional base in the Ndebele peoples of Matabeleland in the west of Zimbabwe.

In 1980 at the Lancaster House conference, Mugabe and Nkomo carried out the historic betrayal of the Zimbabwean revolution. In return for a 'democratic' constitution which safeguarded the white-owned estates against land seizures and guaranteed 20 whites-only seats in parliament, ZANU and ZAPU called off the guerrilla war. The racist Rhodesian army and even the intelligence services who had killed thousands of ZANU-led workers and peasants, were merged with the guerrilla forces into a new Zimbabwean army. Far from smashing the capitalist

By Daniel Evans

state, Mugabe took it over and administered it against the interests of the masses who had made great sacrifices in the struggle against Ian Smith's racist regime.

The upshot of the independence settlement and the refusal of the ZANU regime to resolve the land question has been to leave one-third of the land in the hands of a few thousand white settlers from the days of Ian Smith and create a vast pool of landless, dispossessed peasants.

Matabeleland has suffered the sharpest effects of this policy. Alienated by Mugabe's conscious playing up of tribal differences, the minority Ndebele peasantry has reacted by launching a sporadic land war. In the past five years 50 white farmers have been shot, whilst squatters have attempted to occupy land only to be repeatedly evicted by the Zimbabwean forces. In 1983, the Zimbabwean Fifth Brigade, composed largely of members of Mugabe's Shona tribe, carried out a series of atrocities in Matabeleland.

Joshua Nkomo has earned his seat in the cabinet through his virulent denunciation of his traditional supporters among the Ndebele peasantry. He described the killing of 16 white missionaries in November as 'an atrocious, evil, savage act carried out by blood-hungry murderers'. He went on to attack the squatter movement as opponents of 'the unity of the people of Zimbabwe'. A note left behind by the assailants said that 'the land must be given to the workers and peasants to till it'.

The deal with Nkomo enables Mugabe to release much needed forces to fight the South African-backed

Mozambique National Resistance Movement (Renamo) in the south, which has recently made numerous incursions into Zimbabwe. A key role in setting up Renamo during the 1970s was played by Ian Smith's intelligence chief Ken Flower, who used it to keep tabs on ZANU guerrillas based in Mozambique at the time. Following independence, backing for Renamo was taken over by South Africa, while Flower found a comfortable niche — as the head of Mugabe's Central Intelligence Organisation! Zimbabwe is also maintaining an army of between eight and ten thousand within Mozambique to defend its interests and support the Frelimo government in its own war against Renamo. This is said to cost £300,000 per day, and is a major drain on Zimbabwe's economy.

Zimbabwe's white minority have become more powerful and richer during Mugabe's reign whilst the peasantry and working class have suffered increasing poverty. This is the logic of the Lancaster House sell-out and demonstrates the complete inability of the national bourgeoisie to fulfil even the most basic demands of a democratic revolution. Only the working class, by



Young Patriotic Front fighter during the guerrilla war

seizing power and establishing its own dictatorship, can solve the land question, end Mugabe's divisive policy of inter-tribal rivalry, and de-

fend Zimbabwe against Renamo's counter-revolutionary war. This struggle requires the building of a Trotskyist party.

Ruhr steel workers fight mill closure

PLANS to close steel giants Krupp's Rheinhausen plant at Duisburg in the Ruhr have provoked the largest working class action in West Germany since the metalworkers' strike.

A massive 250,000-strong demonstration on December 10 saw steelworkers joined by miners, teachers, postal

workers and civil servants. Bridges across the Rhine were blockaded and demands raised for the occupation of the plant, which management claim is losing £1 million per week.

The Rheinhausen plant, which currently employs 5,300, was built in 1897 at the height of Krupp's expansion

which saw the Ruhr region become the most powerful industrial region in the world. Krupp became the largest arms supplier to Imperial Germany as well as the Nazis.

The metalworkers' union, IG Metall, signed an agreement last September which, rather than organise mass resistance to redundancies, accepted the loss of over 1,000 jobs at Rheinhausen in return for a 'commitment' to continued production.

On December 7, angry steelworkers occupied the Krupp's boardroom at Bochum and two days later stormed Krupp's inner sanctum — its Villa Hugel mansion headquarters. A week before Christmas another demonstration through Duisburg drew 22,000.

The Rheinhausen closure is part of a massive programme to 'rationalise' the steel industry. Since 1980, 18,000 jobs in Duisburg have gone and unemployment currently stands at 17 per cent. A further 10,000 redundancies are set to follow in dependent industries.

The fight to defend steelworkers' jobs means first and foremost a political struggle against the IG Metall bureaucracy and its social-democratic allies.

• The latest figures for West German unemployment show a steep rise of 175,000 to a new post-war record of 2.31 million (9.2 per cent) by the end of December 1987.

Revolt undermines Romanian leadership

REPORTS in the wake of the clashes in Brasov, central Romania, on November 15 (see Workers News, December) show the extent of the workers' movement against the Ceausescu bureaucracy. Initial reports had spoken of between two and six thousand workers involved. It emerges that probably as many as 10,000 workers took control of sections of the city for six hours until they were dispersed by soldiers and riot police.

Workers' grievances, which included anger at chronic food and fuel shortages, exploded at attempts by the bureaucracy to impose forcible transfers to mines and shipyards on the Danube and wage-cuts of up to 50 per cent. The unrest quickly spread to at least eight other

cities, including the Danube port of Braile and Sibiu in Moldavia.

Troops and security police maintained a heavy presence on the streets throughout Romania. There are indications, however, of a major crisis erupting within the bureaucracy. Finance Minister Alexandru Babe was sacked in early December. Former Romanian ambassador to the UN Silviu Brucan attacked Ceausescu, saying that 'the cup of privations is now full'. Another former senior government figure, Karoly Kiraly, accused the president of surrounding himself with 'careerists and adventurers'.

The Stalinist party's na-

tional conference — normally a purely routine affair between party congresses held every five years — opened on December 14 amid the growing economic and social crisis. Ceausescu, whose health is rumoured to be poor, was forced to pledge improved food supplies. There are other signs that he has been forced to back down from the policy of breakneck repayment of the foreign debt, which has been reduced at the expense of endemic shortages and rationing of such staple items as bread.

While Romania's workers queue for meagre rations, large amounts of foodstuffs have been bartered to the Soviet Union in return for oil

in an attempt to deal with permanent energy shortages that have resulted in frequent power cuts. Ceausescu's policy of mortgaging the country to Western banks in order to pay for 'prestige' projects has now been compounded by an intense 'squeeze' on consumption.

The Stalinist bureaucracy has become a byword in the working class for nepotism. Ceausescu's son Nicu is lined up to take over as party boss on his father's death. His wife holds the position of vice-premier and, in all, 28 other close relatives are in important state and party posts. Such is the corruption of what Stalinist party toadies call 'the Ceausescu epoch'.

Haiti election fraud

THE Caribbean island of Haiti is poised on the brink of civil war following the fraudulent presidential election held on January 17.

The military government of General Henri Namphy, which took power after the overthrow in 1986 of the Duvalier family dictatorship, declared Leslie Manigat the first 'democratically' elected president in 30 years on January 24.

Opposition leaders called for a general strike on January 16, and a boycott of the election. An estimated five per cent of the island's three million voters went to the polling booths while the military manned road blocks in the cities and towns. Thousands of residents fled the capital city Port-au-Prince, fearing a repetition of events last November when the Tonton Macoutes terror squads murdered 40 voters outside polling stations, in a bid to forestall a return to civilian rule.

The military were forced to cancel the November election or run the risk of being toppled themselves in the groundswell of revolt against the Macoutes massacres.

In order to distance themselves from the activities of Duvalier's supporters and assure the continued support of the US administration's \$54 million aid package, they barred a number of Duvalier's closest associates from the election.

A group of opposition candidates have called for the election to be annulled. A member of the group, Louis Dejoie Jnr, was arrested on January 21 and charged with inciting civil disorder. He faces the death penalty. Dejoie had just returned from a tour of the United States and Canada where he warned that Haiti would be plunged into civil war if the election was not annulled.

Press correspondents reported widespread abuse of polling procedures, including children casting votes and unsealed voting boxes.

Manigat is the army's choice and though he claims to be a 'progressive democrat' who will carry out a programme of reforms, his hands will be tied by the military. He refused to join the election boycott, claiming that there could be 'no political solution which ignored the army's wishes'. He will continue the vicious oppression of the working class and peasantry, an estimated 55 per cent of whom are permanently unemployed.

Plea to banks

ACCORDING to vice-premier Janez Zemljarič, a 'total economic collapse in the immediate future' faces Yugoslavia. He told the Central Committee of the Stalinist party in December that the only hope was that foreign banks and the IMF would grant an extended moratorium on the country's \$20 billion foreign debt.

KUOMINTANG IN CRISIS

By Martin Sullivan

THE death of President Chiang Ching-kuo of Taiwan has added to the problems facing the ruling Kuomintang Party. Chiang, son of the late Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, died of a heart attack on January 13.

The nationalist Kuomintang Party (KMT) was already caught up in a major crisis. The 77-year-old Chiang had introduced a series of limited 'democratic' reforms, opposed by senior members of his party, in an attempt to prop up the KMT government.

Under the impact of deepening trade war and competition with neighbouring South Korea and Hong Kong, a section of the bourgeoisie broke with the Kuomintang Party and formed an official opposition movement — the Democratic Progressive Party — in 1986. The DPP has now split, with a 'left' breakaway group founding Taiwan's first Labour Party at a congress in December last year.

Behind the break up of the Kuomintang regime lies the need of a section of Taiwan's bourgeoisie, based on the manufacturing industries, to compete with their South Korean, Hong Kong and Japanese counterparts for trade with mainland China. Their efforts to develop trading relations are constantly frustrated by Taiwan's outdated constitution — and until recently Martial Law — which prevents the legalisation of opposition parties and suppresses the working class.

In 1949, the reactionary Kuomintang warlords, led by Chiang Kai-shek, were defeated by the Chinese Communist Party and forced to retreat from the mainland, setting up a government in exile on the offshore island of Taiwan. Taiwan's constitution is based on the legal fiction that mainland China is temporarily under the control of Communist bandits. The Kuomintang leaders have never recognised their own defeat or mainland China's independence. Taiwan has never declared independence and remains without official recognition. Under Taiwan's constitution, agitation for independence is punishable by long terms of imprisonment. The Taiwan-

ese capitalist class have paid the price since 1949, hampered in their attempt to establish exports and normal trading relations with other nations.

The majority of the Kuomintang's deputies in the island's legislative assembly, the Yuan, were elected on mainland China before the 1949 revolution. They hold 80 per cent of the 300 seats and their average age is 77. The breakaway opposition party is led by a younger generation of Taiwanese capitalists elected from constituencies on the island. They have set themselves at the head of growing agitation and illegal public demonstrations calling for a programme of major constitutional reforms. The focus of their demands has been the legalisation of opposition parties under a civilian constitution with popular elections at all levels of government up to and including that of president. Such a constitution would smash the stranglehold of the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang Party.

Two members of the DPP were arrested in October last



CHIANG CHING-KUO

year and charged with sedition — agitating for Taiwanese independence. Within hours of President Chiang's death they were brought to trial and sentenced to ten and 12 years imprisonment.

The Kuomintang government has indicated that it is not prepared to concede major constitutional reforms which would destroy the legitimacy of their claims to mainland China. In a bid to dampen growing opposition, the Kuomintang offered a bounty to pilots in China's airforce. The pilots would be paid their own weight in gold if they defected to Taiwan in their planes.

The refusal of the Kuomin-

tang to grant a civil constitution in spite of growing public demands created such tensions in the Democratic Progressive Party that a split took place with a 'left' wing breakaway group vowing to fight for the legalisation of trade unions and the right of workers to strike. Lawyer Wang Yi-hsiung was elected chairman of the Labour Party at the founding congress and is the party's representative in the Yuan.

Chinese government officials have further fuelled the crisis within the Taiwanese bourgeoisie with private moves aimed at establishing trading relations with South Korea. Following the Olympic Games in Seoul in September the Chinese government will officially announce the opening of a trade delegation in South Korea.

Chiang Ching-kuo has been succeeded by Lee Teng-huei, the former vice-president. Leading members of the Kuomintang and the military have sworn allegiance to him and pledged to continue the nationalist party's programme of strictly limited reforms.

Peking protest

OVER a thousand students at Peking University clashed with the security forces during a demonstration in December. They marched on the offices of China's Ministry of Foreign Trade protesting at the lack of official response to the killing of a student on the campus. It was the first major demonstration since the students took to the streets early last year in protests which led to the removal of Hu Yaobang as Party general secretary.

● THE Faculty of Law at Peking University has been privately negotiating with South Korean capitalists to raise a loan of \$1 million to fund a new building, according to a report in the 'Far East Economic Review'.



Chinese students demonstrate

VIETNAM's Stalinist leaders have passed a new law relaxing controls on foreign capitalist investment. Under its terms, wholly-owned foreign companies will be allowed to establish operations in Vietnam for the first time. Profits will be able to be exported, and previous restrictions safeguarding a Vietnamese share of participation in top manage-

ment scrapped.

The new law is being implemented against a background of falling agricultural output and inflation running at over 100 per cent. Nguyen Xuan Oanh, an economics advisor to the Hanoi government, is currently visiting Australia, Singapore, Japan, Taiwan and the US, in an effort to attract investment.

Italian workers strike against budget cuts

THROUGHOUT November and December, Italy was rocked by the largest strike-wave seen in recent years.

The strikes were in response to the budget proposals of Christian Democrat premier Gorla, who heads the five-party coalition government. The deflationary measures are aimed at reducing the budget deficit currently running at £50 billion per annum (over-

shooting official projections by 10 per cent).

Transport workers, frequently led by the mushrooming unofficial rank-and-file committees known as the Comitati Di Baso or COBAS, were in the forefront of the action. Airport workers held a running series of wildcat strikes before Christmas and resuming on January 11, interspersed with impromptu

on-site mass meetings, in support of a 30 per cent wage increase.

On November 25, the three main trade union confederations — Stalinist, Social-Democratic and Catholic — alarmed by the response to the rank-and-file committees, called a one-day general strike. Organisers claimed the support of 70-80 per cent of industrial workers. Air, sea

and rail transport, banks, the media, civil service, postal and telecommunications services and education were all heavily affected, with support also in some car plants.

Another indication of growing workers' distrust of the official union bureaucracies was the train drivers' strike on December 13 which paralysed rail networks in protest at agreements reached between the trade unions and the State Railways.

US ROUND-UP

Anger at racist verdict

HUNDREDS of black workers and civil rights organisations demonstrated in New York blockading traffic on December 22 following a manslaughter verdict on three white youths found guilty of a racist killing. They were angered by the decision of a jury, with only one black member, to dismiss the more serious charge of murder.

Michael Griffith, 23, was one of a group of three black youths attacked with a baseball bat by a white gang in Howard Beach, New York, on December 20, 1986. One of the youths got away, one was seriously beaten and Michael Griffith was chased onto a highway where he was run over.

The Howard Beach case took place against a background of a rising number of racist attacks. In October, self-styled subway 'vigilante' Bernhard Goetz, who shot four black teenagers in New York in 1984, was finally sentenced. Although one of the youths has been left permanently paralysed, Goetz got away with six months jail and five years probation.

Bank workers sacked

IN the wake of 'Black Monday', October 19, 1987, up to 40,000 jobs have been cut in the US banking and securities market. The giant Manufacturers Han-

over has cut 2,500 jobs, while Continental Illinois has axed 600. In 1984, Continental Illinois, the eighth largest American bank, came to the brink of bankruptcy, and was bailed out in the largest bank rescue operation in history.

Jail deal for 'insider'

THE king of fraudulent insider trading on the US and British stock markets, Ivan Boesky, was sentenced to three years imprisonment on December 18. He is expected to serve less than two years. Boesky played a major role in the struggle for control of Distillers, inflating Guinness's takeover bid by buying up its shares and selling short shares of the rival bidder Argyll.

Boesky's lenient sentence followed fourteen months of what the US government described as 'exemplary cooperation' with investigators, and his repayment of \$100 million of crooked profits. True to the morality of Wall Street, Boesky fingered fourteen other in-



IVAN BOESKY

sider dealers to federal authorities. A government memorandum submitted to the trial judge confirmed that the Boesky case is only the tip of the iceberg. It spoke of 'rampant criminal conduct' at the 'heart of a substantial amount of market activity'.

Kanak leaders charged

FRENCH government authorities in the Pacific territory of New Caledonia have made fresh moves to crack down on growing resistance among the Melanesian people. They have arrested two leading members of the Kanak Socialist Liberation Front (FLNKS) who called on the Melanesians to arm themselves in self-defence.

The president of the FLNKS, Jean Marie Tjibaou, and his deputy, Yeiwene Yeiwene, were charged with inciting violence and remanded in custody. The move by the authorities follows increasing unrest among the Melanesian peoples in Tahiti, Easter Island (ruled by Chile), East Timor and Fiji.

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EDITORIAL

Decline of the dollar

THE crisis of the world capitalist economy finds its sharpest expression in the fall of the dollar. Contained in its slide are all the contradictions of capitalism, aggravated by its advanced stage of historical decline.

Since the Second World War, the United States has attempted to 'organise' the world. Its object initially was to re-establish the world market in order to be able to dominate it. The US had ended the war with its industrial capacity considerably enlarged and its financial position unchallengable.

At the Bretton Woods conference in July 1944, the US Treasury Secretary was able to insist on a basis for a post-war economic recovery under American control, with the dollar as the major reserve currency.

The imperialist powers set out to avoid the series of ruinous policies that had led to the war. In the 1930s, competitive currency devaluation to rectify trade imbalances and tariff barriers had only intensified the crisis, especially for Germany and Japan. War became inevitable as those two powerful imperialist nations, constricted in their growth, sought a redivision of the world market in their own favour.

The Bretton Woods agreement led to the setting up of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Their function was to prevent crises by providing loans to correct trade deficits. The smooth working of the Bretton Woods system was to be assured by making the dollar convertible into gold and fixing its exchange rate against all other major currencies. The US then owned 70 per cent of the world's gold reserves.

But the revolutionary upsurge of the working class in Europe and Japan in 1946-47 forced the US to take emergency action to rebuild their economies. In the three years to 1950, \$17 billion was poured into Europe and Japan. Thus, economic recovery was founded on the creation of vast sums of 'fictitious' capital. This began the massive outflow of paper dollars and the extended dollar-credit arrangements that have characterised the finances of world imperialism ever since. By 1971, US gold reserves could no longer support the ever-growing foreign dollar holdings, of which, by then, only one-third was backed by gold. Mounting speculation against the dollar forced President Nixon, on August 15, 1971, to sever its link with gold. Since then, the world's major trading currency has continued to expand without being tied to real value.

The enormous debts of the semi-colonial countries and the US trade and budget deficits are all expressions of the domination of fictitious capital, upon which continued growth has depended. But this 'solution' laid the basis for an even greater crisis.

The post-war boom and its break-up confirm Marx's analysis of the role of credit. It provides the basis for expansion; at the same time it ensures disruption. It is this disruptive aspect of credit which now predominates.

The huge trading deficit of the USA expresses its relative decline within the world capitalist economy. The international stock market crash, which began so dramatically on October 19, 1987, is ultimately a recognition of this fact. It accelerates the move to world recession.

The dollar's fall is the most powerful weapon the US has in its trade war arsenal — aimed at restoring the balance of trade in its favour. Every point the dollar falls assists US exports in their penetration of the markets of their imperialist competitors. They must respond with equally aggressive economic policies or face ruin.

But the decline of the dollar and the share crash have a more urgent task: to liquidate billions of dollars' worth of fictitious capital in an attempt to make nominal paper values correspond with real value. In this way, the law of value, according to which a commodity's value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour time required to produce it, asserts itself.

In its struggle against feudalism, capitalism created the nation state. But the needs of capitalist production have long since outgrown national boundaries, which now act as a brake on their development. It is precisely this antagonism which makes the imperialist epoch, as Lenin explained, the epoch of wars and revolutions.

The imperialist leaders of today try to safeguard their interests by combining increased exploitation of the working class with trade war — the recruiting sergeant for all-out war.

As the dollar falls, every capitalist class is driven to cut production costs by an assault on living standards. They will step up their attacks on organised workers in their trade unions — long-postponed in the United States out of fear of waking the 'sleeping giant'. A mighty impulse has been given both to the rivalries between the imperialist nations and the class struggle internationally. This will lead to revolutionary struggles whose success will depend on the construction of Trotskyist parties. In Britain, this means building the Workers International League.

LEON SEDOV

THIS month marks the fiftieth anniversary of the murder by agents of Stalin of Leon Sedov, son of Leon Trotsky and outstanding leader of the Left Opposition and the movement for the Fourth International.

Sedov's short life encompassed the vast sweep of events from the upward swing of revolution in Russia, through its betrayal by Stalinism, the victories of fascism, the tenacious and bitter struggle for the building of the Trotskyist movement, to the eve of the Second World War. From his early youth, his life was indissolubly bound up with the fate of the socialist revolution.

Leon Sedov was born in 1906 — shortly after his mother, Natalia Sedova, was released from prison — in the immediate aftermath of the 1905 revolution. Sharing the hardships of exile with his parents, he grew up with revolution in his veins. At the age of eleven he joined the *Komsomol* (the Communist youth organisation) and took part in the October revolution. At seventeen he became an active participant in the Left Opposition against the rising Stalinist bureaucracy. When Trotsky was expelled from the Communist International in 1927, and exiled to Alma Ata in Central Asia, Sedov unhesitatingly joined him, and became his chief lieutenant and organiser of the Left Opposition, now scattered into Siberian exile, as well as maintaining contact with the outside world under the watchful eyes of the GPU. He also performed indispensable literary work, ploughing through vast quantities of reports from the Soviet Union, official publications, newspaper reports, letters and other material, in order to concretise and sharpen the Left Opposition's analysis of the Stalinist regime and Soviet economy. To this Herculean labour he brought, as his mother wrote, 'a highly developed moral sense and the precise mind of a research scientist'. Indeed, such was Sedov's contribution, that Trotsky wrote: 'My son's name should rightfully be placed next to mine on

By Richard Price

almost all my books written since 1928.'

With Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet Union, and his enforced exile on the Turkish island of Prinkipo, Sedov, aged only 23, undertook the duties of editor of the 'Bulletin of the Russian Opposition', a task he maintained until his death. Whilst on Prinkipo, he wrote, under the pseudonym N. Markin, the article 'Stalin and the Red Army', unmasking Stalin's systematic disloyalty during the Civil War.

In 1931, Sedov moved to Berlin, in an attempt to pursue his scientific studies. In addition to directing the work of the International Left Opposition he established publication of the 'Bulletin of the Russian Opposition' in Berlin as well as maintaining dwindling contact with surviving Oppositionists within the Soviet Union.

For several weeks after the Nazis came to power, Sedov remained in Germany clandestinely, attempting to carry on the work of the Left Opposition, until Trotsky intervened to demand he leave. He re-established the 'Bulletin' and the International Secretariat in Paris, where its chief task now became the struggle for a new — Fourth — revolutionary International.

In France, Sedov took a leading role in the internal struggles of the Communist League, the French Trotskyist movement, as well as producing a steady stream of meticulously researched articles on the Soviet Union. The importance of Sedov's role can be gauged by Trotsky's comment in his diary after the capitulation of the last of his main collaborators in the Soviet Union, Christian Rakovsky:

'Rakovsky was virtually my last contact with the old revolutionary generation. After his capitulation there



Funeral of Leon Sedov at Père Lachaise cemetery, Paris, 1938

is nobody left. Even though my correspondence with Rakovsky stopped, for reasons of censorship, at the time of my deportation, nevertheless the image of Rakovsky has remained a symbolic link with my comrade-in-arms. Now nobody remains. For a long time now I have not been able to satisfy my need to exchange ideas and discuss problems with someone else . . . And still I think that the work in which I am engaged now, despite its extremely insufficient and fragmentary nature, is the most important work of my life — more important than 1917, more important than the period of the Civil War or any other.'

On August 19, 1936, the first Moscow Trial opened with Zinoviev, Kamenev and Smirnov the chief defendants; Trotsky and Sedov were tried in absentia. Among the torrent of filthy allegations was a fabricated account of a non-existent 'meeting' between Trotsky, Sedov and the defendant Golzman in Copenhagen in 1932 at which 'instructions' were given to carry out the assassination of Kirov. The GPU had already noted Sedov's independent significance as a leader of the Trotskyist movement. All thirteen defendants at the trial were shot, while Trotsky and Sedov were con-

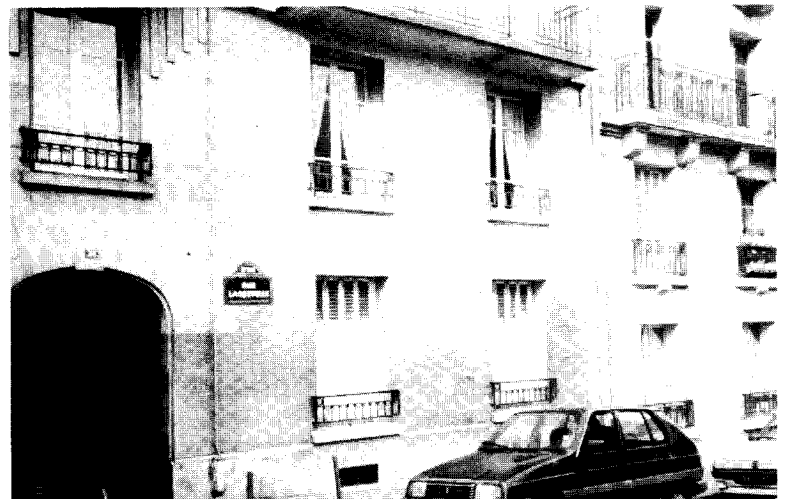


Leon Sedov

demned to death in absentia. With Trotsky held under virtual house arrest in Norwegian exile, the task of rebutting every Stalinist lie fell to Sedov. Working to Trotsky's exacting standards, he collected depositions, documentary evidence and every available form of testimony, and produced 'The Red Book on the Moscow Trial'. 'What a priceless gift to us, under these conditions.'



Nicolaievsky's Institute of Social History, 7, Rue Michelet, Paris 6e



Sedov's apartment at 28, Rue Lacretelle, Paris 15e — the GPU moved in next door

(1906-1938)



wrote Trotsky, 'was Leon's book, the first crushing reply to the Kremlin falsifiers.'

The Moscow Trials signalled a major escalation by the GPU of attempts to infiltrate the Trotskyist movement and exterminate its leading cadre in Europe. The Stalinist agent Mark Zborowski joined the Communist League in 1934. By 1936 he had wormed his way into Sedov's confidence, working

in the International Secretariat's Paris office, and making available his knowledge of Russian for work on the 'Bulletin of the Opposition'. He also gained access to confidential correspondence, holding the key to Sedov's letter box. It was subsequently revealed that Zborowski, throughout this period, was meeting his GPU controller two or three times per week in a park opposite the Gare D'Austerlitz (presumably the Jardin des Plantes).

Another aim of GPU activities was to effect the theft of Trotsky's archives, left in France after his expulsion to Norway, and which assumed even greater importance with their wealth of documentary material with which to refute the lies of the Moscow Trials. On October 10, 1936, Trotsky wrote to Sedov warning: 'The GPU is going to do everything in its power to get its hands on my archives.' The archives were deposited at the International Institute of Social History run by Menshevik exile Boris Nicolaievsky at 7, Rue Michelet, Paris 6e. Only five people knew of the location — Sedov, Zborowski, Nicolaievsky and his dubious secretary, Mrs Lola Dallin.

On the night of November 6-7, 1936, a GPU team led by Smirensky, a white emigré, armed with blowtorches, burgled the Institute and removed the archives. Zborowski created an alibi for himself by leaving untouched a section of the archives which were in his hands for safekeeping. For more than a year, Sedov was shadowed by a GPU team. 'Smirensky and Renata Steiner rented an apartment next door to that of Sedov (28, Rue Lacreteille) where the respective balconies were only three feet apart from each other.'

Already in August, 1936, when Sedov had fallen ill and taken a holiday at the Cap d'Antibes in the South of France, Steiner moved into the same hotel, while Smirensky stayed in the adjoining one. In January, 1937, the GPU team was tipped off in relation to a trip Sedov planned to make to Mulhouse on the Swiss border. On this occasion Zborowski, according to testimony he later gave, deliberately bungled the assignment, frightened that he too would be shipped back

to the Soviet Union along with Sedov.

As the net around Sedov tightened, Zborowski organised the murder of Trotsky's secretary, Erwin Wolf, in Barcelona in August 1937 and, a month later, that of GPU defector Ignace Reiss, who had broken with Stalin in July and announced his support for the Fourth International.

In January, 1938, Sedov began complaining of abdominal pains. The possibility exists that he was already being poisoned. Natalia Sedova gives the following account of her son's death:

'Hard-working and overstretched, constantly short of money, suffering as intensely from the nightmare (of the Moscow Trials) as we did and fighting against it as vigorously, he had for some time been running slight temperatures in the evenings. Then acute appendicitis was diagnosed and he was taken to a clinic run by a Russian emigré, Dr Simkov, for an emergency operation. Lyova was registered as a French engineer by the name of Martin. The operation, simple enough in itself, was successful and there were no complications. Yet a few days later, after this routine and common-place operation, Lyova became delirious and died. Some strange facts came to light. The patient had taken food at a time when eating should not have been allowed under any circumstances. Was this negligence or something worse? A doctor had spoken to him in Russian . . . Had he been identified? A White Russian nurse, who worked at the clinic, was known to move in pro-Stalinist circles . . . The public prosecutor ordered a post-mortem but our own friends, Leon Sedov's girlfriend, Jeanne, and even our lawyer disagreed with the findings . . . Under her Popular Front government, which was honeycombed with Communist cells and allied with the USSR, France feared a scandal that might implicate certain secret service organisations. Crimes as notorious as the assassination of the Russian economist Navashin, in the Bois de Boulogne, and the seizure of General Miller by the GPU in the middle of Paris, had never been cleared up. Similarly, the discreet inquest never discovered the true causes of our son's death. Had it been a tragic coincidence, or something more? Dr Simkov, the director of the clinic, lost his two adolescent sons in a macabre accident a little later; they were buried alive while playing in a sandpit. The papers reported that a car had been seen parked nearby.'

Not only Simkov, the director of the Clinic Mirabeau in the Rue Narcisse-Diaz, Paris 16e, was suspect; its owner Dr Girmounski was known by French police to be a Stalinist sympathiser. Its staff were composed of White Russians, several of them un-



Trotsky and Leon Sedov at Barbizon, November 1933

doubtedly in the pay of the Stalinists. As Trotsky wrote: 'The figure of the Russian nurse remains fairly sinister in this context. The report signed by Jeanne says that this nurse not only interested herself in what the delirious patient was saying in Russian, but that she tried to obtain some confidential information by questioning him''.

Leon Sedov was admitted to the emigré clinic on February 9, 1938, with sharp abdominal pains, diagnosed as appendicitis by the sister-in-law of Lola Dallin, the Menshevik sympathiser who had 'befriended' Sedov, and who was a close friend of Zborowski. Mrs Dallin's choice of clinic was known only to Jeanne Martin, her sister-in-law and Zborowski, who arranged for the ambulance.

An exploratory operation shortly after admission revealed only an intestinal disorder, which resolved over the next four days. During the night of February 13-14, Sedov developed a raging temperature and was left to wander the clinic's corridors delirious. Early on February 16, he went into a coma and died at 11am. All indications are that Zborowski or one of his gang administered an overdose during February 13-14.

Despite Trotsky's strenuous attempts to uncover the circumstances of Sedov's murder, the official inquest had no intention of uncovering the elaborate GPU network, and disrupting Franco-Soviet relations. Zborowski, for instance, continued living in Paris on false papers. Certainly the French security services must have turned a blind eye since they had Sedov under continuous surveillance.

Sedov's nephew, Esteban Volkov has recalled: 'Shortly after, thanks to some friends in Paris who sent me some police reports from the 15th District where we were living I learned that the French police were watching our every move. The report even

mentioned when I go out to school, or out to play, or to get icecream, and with whom''.

Despite the deep suspicions of French Trotskyist Pierre Naville, and the leader of the Dutch Revolutionary Socialist Party, Henk Sneevliet, Zborowski remained in the Trotskyist movement to carry out his murderous activities. On July 13, 1938, Rudolf Klement became the seventh of Trotsky's secretaries to be murdered, his headless and armless body being found in the Seine. In September 1938, Zborowski represented the Russian section at the founding conference of the Fourth International.

When, in December that year, General Alexander Orlov, who had broken from the GPU, sent an anonymous warning to Trotsky, providing a detailed description of Zborowski, the agent survived again, once again courtesy of Mrs Dallin, who was visiting Trotsky in Mexico. Not only did she dismiss the allegations against Zborowski, but immediately warned him of the denunciation.

In 1941, Zborowski, having helped set up the murder squad which finally assassinated Trotsky, escaped Europe and entered the United States with the assistance of Mrs Dallin and two leaders of the American Trotskyist movement, Joseph Hansen and George Novack. There he continued his spying activities in the Socialist Workers Party. In the United States he feigned friendship towards Elizabeth Poretzky, widow of Ignace Reiss, whose murder he planned. When she finally became aware of his role, he told her that the day of Sedov's death was 'the happiest day of my life'. Not until 1956, when he was arrested by the FBI and testified in court, was Zborowski finally unmasked. He served a short prison sentence for espionage. Today he lives in comfort in California as a retired anthropology pro-

fessor.

In the final words of his obituary of his son, Trotsky wrote: 'Accept from us the memory of our Leon, adopt him as your son — he is worthy of it — and let him henceforth participate indivisibly in your battles, since destiny has denied him the happiness of participating in your final victory!'. Trotsky's injunction cannot be accepted platonically. It means above all to fight for the exposure of all the attempts by imperialist and Stalinist agents to penetrate and destroy the Trotskyist movement. Between 1975 and 1983, the exhaustive investigation under the title 'Security and the Fourth International', conducted by the International Committee of the Fourth International, assembled a vast collection of documentary and verbal evidence not only of the circumstances of the GPU's murderous operations in the 1930s, but of imperialist penetration subsequently of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States.

In the same year as Sedov was murdered, Joseph Hansen began a series of clandestine meetings with a GPU agent — a fact he did not reveal for almost four decades. Two years later, after Trotsky's murder, he requested a secret liaison with the American embassy in Mexico. A mountain of circumstantial evidence points towards Hansen having played the role of provocateur for a further four decades until his death.

Were only a small portion of the material assembled by 'Security and the Fourth International' correct, it would warrant every sincere socialist and person who considers himself a revolutionary supporting a Commission of Inquiry. Not so the WRP 'Workers Press' group, who in the interests of their regroupment with every variety of revisionist scoundrel intent on shielding Hansen and co., have cynically dismissed 'Security and the Fourth International' without so much as subjecting it to serious criticism. Indeed, only those for whom the history of the Trotskyist movement is a burdensome obstacle to their opportunism today could oppose an inquiry. The Workers International League completely supports the long-overdue creation of a Commission of Inquiry or Workers' Tribunal to consider the evidence assembled by 'Security and the Fourth International'.

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- 10 V. Serge and N. Trotsky op cit, pp.228-9.
- 11 L. Trotsky: *Writings Supplement (1934-40)*. Pathfinder, 1979, p.760.
- 12 Interviewed in *L'Espresso* (Italy), November 1978.
- 13 E. Poretzky: *Our Own People*. Ann Arbor, 1969, p.273.
- 14 L. Trotsky: *Leon Sedov*, p.20.



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IN DEFENCE OF THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

PART FOUR

By Richard Price

TROTSKY and Parvus' pamphlet 'Before the Ninth of January' (the publication of which coincided with the first shots of the 1905 revolution), drew sharp criticism from both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

Although Lenin welcomed Parvus' stand against the pro-liberal position of the Mensheviks, he insisted that the nature of the coming Russian revolution would be bourgeois-democratic, and that within a future provisional government exercising the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', the proletariat could only form a minority. It was 'unthinkable that the revolution and the government in which we shall participate will be a socialist government with a socialist majority. This cannot happen in Russia, if we exclude ephemeral historic accidents, which leave no trace in history' ('Collected Works, Vol. 8').

In March 1905, writing in 'Vyperod', Lenin returned to the attack. A workers' government 'cannot be, since the discussion does not concern an accidental, transitory episode, but a revolutionary dictatorship of a certain duration, which could leave certain traces in history. This cannot be, since only a revolutionary dictatorship, which is supported by a huge majority of the nation, can be of a certain duration... The Russian proletariat, however, now forms only a minority of the nation'.

The inherent contradiction of Lenin's formula was its conception of a dictatorship in which two classes — the proletariat and the peasantry — simultaneously held power.

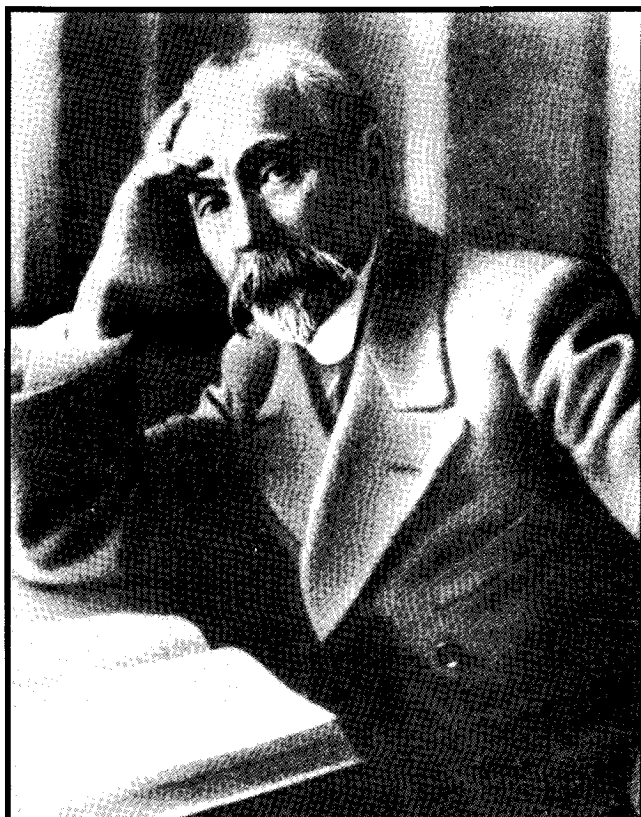
Trotsky realised early that this would mean restricting the demands of the working class to the limits set upon them by a property-holding peasantry, at the very point at which socialist measures were placed at the top of the agenda. The working class would thus be renouncing its own dictatorship.

Throughout his separation from Bolshevism, Trotsky frequently tended to argue that the views held by Lenin on the class character of the

Russian revolution were equally as erroneous as those of the Mensheviks. In this respect, as he later acknowledged, he was mistaken. Where Menshevism held that the working class could only play an auxiliary role in the struggle for constitutional reforms, Lenin, basing himself upon the agrarian revolution, proceeded from the conception that 'a victorious bourgeois revolution in our country is impossible as a victory of the bourgeoisie' ('Collected Works, Vol. 15').

For Trotsky, the general strike, which directly follow-

ed the events of Bloody Sunday, was unmistakable confirmation that the specific weight of the working class was far greater than its numerical strength. Where he had restricted himself in January to Parvus' outline of 'a government of workers' democracy', in the months that followed the theory of permanent revolution took on its developed form.



G.V. PLEKHANOV

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Trotsky's writings of 1905 begin for the first time to

argue that the completion of the bourgeois revolution could only take place through a proletarian dictatorship. This contained the seeds of divergence from Parvus, who held that 'the Social-Democratic provisional government cannot accomplish a socialist insurrection in Russia' (Trotsky: 'Stalin Vol. 2', Panther, p.272).

In his autobiography, Trotsky summarises the positions he advanced in the early summer of 1905: 'Russia... is facing a bourgeois-democratic revolution. The basis of the revolu-

tion is the land question. Power will be captured by the class or the party which will lead the peasantry against Tsarism and the landowners. Neither the liberals nor the democratic intelligentsia will be able to do so; their historical time has passed. The revolutionary foreground is already occupied by the proletariat. Only the Social Democracy, acting through workers, can make the peasantry follow its lead. This opens to the Russian Social Democracy the prospect of capturing the power before that can possibly take place in the countries of the West. The immediate task of the Social Democracy will be to bring the democratic revolution to completion. But once in control the proletariat party will not be able to confine itself merely to the democratic programme; it will be obliged to adopt Socialist measures. How far it will go on in that direction will depend not only on the correlation of forces in Russia itself, but on the entire international situation as

well. Hence the chief strategic line of action consequently demands that the Social Democracy, while fighting liberalism for the leadership of the peasantry, shall also set itself the task of seizing the power even during the progress of the bourgeois revolution' ('My Life', Penguin, p.177).

Elsewhere he wrote, as if in answer to Stalinist critics who would rake up twenty years later his alleged 'underestimation of the peasantry': 'The proletariat in power will come to the peasantry as the class liberator... The proletariat, leaning on the peasantry, will bring into motion all the forces for raising the cultural level of the village and for developing political consciousness in the peasantry... the peasantry is utterly incapable of an independent political role... From the aforesaid it is clear how I look upon the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry". The point is not whether I deem it admissible in principle, whether I "want" or "do not want" such a form of political co-operation. I deem it unrealizable — at least in the direct and immediate sense...' ('Stalin, Vol 2', Panther, p.273).

But the entire trend of Bolshevism's development — in particular its attitude to the liberal bourgeoisie — inevitably meant that its path, and that of Trotsky, tended to converge in 1905. In May, the Bolshevik Congress accepted in its entirety, an amendment to Lenin's motion concerning the provisional government and armed insurrection drafted by Trotsky and presented by Krassin. In September, Lenin writes: 'From the democratic revolution we shall at once, and precisely in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop half-way' ('Collected Works, Vol. 9').

When the St. Petersburg Soviet was founded on October 13, the Bolshevik leadership within Russia, under Bogdanov, adopted a sectarian attitude, refusing to enter it unless it accepted the Bolshevik programme in advance on the grounds that it was 'liable to hold back the proletariat at a primitive level of development'.

On his return to Russia, Lenin dissociated himself sharply from these views, insisting that the Soviet 'should be regarded as the embryo of a provisional revolutionary government' ('Collected Works, Vol. 8'). Two other sources confirm the view that in the course of 1905, Lenin embraced the essential positions outlined



V.I. LENIN

by Trotsky. Lunacharsky recounts how he heard someone say in Lenin's presence: 'Krustalev's star is waning and now the strong man in the Soviet is Trotsky.' Lenin's face darkened for a moment, then he said: 'Well, Trotsky has earned it by his brilliant and unflinching work...' ('Revolutionary Silhouettes', Allen Lane, p.60). When Trotsky's close friend A.A. Joffe committed suicide in protest against the Stalinist regime in 1927, he left Trotsky a letter in which he stated: 'Politically you were always right, beginning with 1905, and I told you repeatedly that with my own ears I had heard Lenin admit that even in 1905, you, and not he, were right. One does not lie before his death, and now I repeat this again to you...' ('My Life', Penguin, p.560).

The Bolshevik paper 'Novaya Zhizn', in its edition of November 27, approvingly quoted Trotsky's contention that 'the complete victory of the revolution signifies the victory of the proletariat. But this victory in turn signifies the further uninterruptedness of the revolution' (Trotsky: 'The Stalin School of Falsification', New Park, p.253).

Trotsky, together with Parvus, exercised considerable influence over the Petersburg Mensheviks, although neither were members of the group. The Menshevik leaders were reluctantly obliged to give Trotsky effective control over the daily paper, 'Nachalo', which championed permanent revolution and guided the Soviet.

In spite of every evidence to the contrary, Menshevism clung to its schema that the

liberal bourgeoisie was the natural leader of the bourgeois revolution and that, at all costs, the proletariat must not 'antagonise' or 'repel it by extending its own struggle. During the upward curve of the revolution, Menshevism was obliged to retain its ties with the revolutionary masses. But the defeat of the revolution marked a watershed in the development of Menshevism. From the first months of reaction in 1906, its leaders began to attack — in retrospect — the actions of the Soviet; its scepticism in relation to the revolutionary capacity of the working class solidified into a fossilized prejudice. Plekhanov, who had not even travelled to Russia to take part in the revolution, made his infamous reproach to the workers of Moscow, who, under Bolshevik leadership had launched the armed uprising of December 1905. 'They should not have taken up arms'.

The 1905 revolution was not only the 'dress rehearsal' for October 1917; it was the crucible in which the theory of permanent revolution was forged and tested. It was tested not only in a literary sense, but on the plane of mass struggle. 'Even in 1905 the workers of Petersburg called their Soviet a proletarian government' (Trotsky: '1905', Penguin, p.11). The leading role of the working class was concretised in the Petersburg Soviet, which in seven short weeks heroically held centre stage — the embryo of the workers' government projected by Trotsky at the beginning of the year.

- To be continued -

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THE disintegration of the Workers Revolutionary Party ('News Line') is proceeding apace. In early December a group including Central Committee members Simon Vevers, Ben Rudder, Penny Bloor and Jean Kerrigan, 'News Line' journalists Sue Laird and Kathy Hilton and photographer Sean Smith walked out.

A letter, dated December 17, issued by Vevers to 'News Line' readers announced that from December 8, 1987, NUJ members (sic) were no longer working for 'News Line'. His letter alleges 'serious irregularities' in the finances of the organisation, and that General Secretary Sheila Torrance has blocked attempts to establish the real position. As a result of demands for proper accounting, Torrance has had herself placed in sole charge of finances (shades of G. Healy). The letter goes on to object to Torrance's interference in the running and content of 'News Line'.

In so far as this group has any defined political platform, it is further to the right even than the Torrance group. Its objections to the leadership's current positions are that it has — privately — made some unspecified criticisms of Arthur Scargill and certain bourgeois nationalist movements, and withdrawn members from working with anti-cuts committees and the Broadwater Farm Defence Committee.

The Vevers-Rudder platform represents a further lurch to the right — on the international front, completely uncritical support for bourgeois nationalism; at home completely uncritical support for the trade union bureaucracy, supplemented by rank-and-filism. According to Vevers the sine qua non of 'Trotskyism' is cheer-leading for Arthur Scargill, close associate of the Stalinist 'Morning Star'.

Members of Vevers' group were responsible, in 1987, for

By Richard Price

spreading the malicious rumour that the Workers International League was about to enter the Labour Party. In fact, it is they themselves who are abandoning the sinking 'News Line' ship and swimming into the arms of the bureaucracy.

The split took place only three weeks after an attempt by the 'News Line' group to stage a political hoax in the form of the '11th World Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International'. The claims of the 'News Line' group to be the true continuators of the ICFI are correct in only one respect. It has nothing but contempt for the finest period of the ICFI's history, when it led the struggle against Pabloite revisionism and Stalinism in the 1950s and 1960s. The ideological heritage of the 'News Line' is the drawn-out process of degeneration of the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership of the WRP, and the later Congresses of the ICFI (particularly the 7th to the 10th) which abandoned the struggle against revisionism, embraced bourgeois nationalism and capitulated to the Labour and trade union bureaucracy.

In a pathetic and ragged attempt to duck the allegation that the WRP 'News Line' group has completely abandoned the theory of permanent revolution, the manifesto of Torrance's 'World Congress' advances the following weasel formula:

'News Line' splits again



SHEILA TORRANCE

'Our unconditional support for movements of national liberation and defence of regimes such as that (sic) in Libya, Iran and Nicaragua does not exclude a principled and critical attitude towards bourgeois-nationalist leaderships of these movements... the revolutionary national liberation movements require Trot-

skyist leadership.' This is mere window dressing. If any member of the WRP has the temerity to advance any principled criticism of bourgeois nationalism they will find themselves rapidly bundled out of the organisation, condemned as capitulating to imperialism. The treacherous formula of bourgeois nationalism plus

Trotskyist leadership for the semi-colonial countries echoes the demand of Stalin and Bukharin's in the 1920s for worker-peasant parties for the East.

Still more dishonest is the manifesto's statement that: 'The absence of a Trotskyist leadership to lead the struggle for workers' power opens up enormous dangers for the insurgent masses. This is seen most clearly in the Philippines...'

As recently as August 31, 1987, the 'News Line' has argued that the Stalinist New People's Army in the Philippines 'is fighting in the spirit of the theory of permanent revolution' and that it 'can form the basis of a workers' and farmers' government'. Trotsky writes of the slogan for a workers' and farmers' government: 'In the final instance it represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat' (Transitional Programme). In other words, the 'News Line' group argue that the Stalinists can carry through the struggle for power and establish a workers' dictatorship. Wherein, then, lie the 'dangers' from the absence of Trotskyist leadership? A conundrum the opportunist 'leaders' of the 'News Line' group cannot unravel.

Torrance's manifesto refers throughout to 'sections' of

her International Committee. What sections? Which movements have rallied to Torrance's side? In truth there are no sections to this 'international' movement — only phantom sections which exist in the minds of the WRP leaders. Indeed this 'International Committee' is so moribund that any individual who receives the 'News Line' abroad by post is enrolled, regardless of their politics, as... a 'section'. Could it just be that these 'sections' are clandestine, illegal movements which cannot be mentioned by name? If so they are likely to find one of the manifesto's instructions somewhat difficult: to establish daily papers 'as soon as possible' — a feat not even accomplished 'by the Bolsheviks under illegality'.

No matter to the Torrance clique, whose strutting British nationalism knows no bounds. It has nothing but contempt for revolutionary theory (arrogantly dismissed as 'correct formulae') which it crudely counter-poses to 'physical training' to carry out 'audacious practices' (!). Torrance loftily condemns 'minuscule propaganda sects'. The question is: what does Torrance now head, if not a minuscule propaganda sect of a few dozen engaged in work entirely outside the trade unions and conducting, it must be said, very little 'propaganda' either, being involved in an all-consuming hunt for funds and being more and more concerned with holding fund-raising events.

Of the 24 Central Committee members elected at the WRP 'News Line' group's 8th Congress in 1986 only eight remain — a tribute to Torrance's leadership. It is a measure of the political sickness of the organisation that it is disintegrating in a series of personal cliques.

HEALY: the lies continue

THE Workers International League rejects with contempt, and demands the retraction of, the series of slanders being circulated against political opponents by the Healy-Redgrave 'Marxist' Party in Britain and by Savas Michael's WRP of Greece.

According to material published in 'Workers Press', Healy and Michael have labelled WRP 'Workers Press' group leader Cliff Slaughter and David North, National Secretary of the

Workers League of the United States, as police agents. Healy's method of fighting out political differences is disgraceful. What is more, for an authority on 'agents', Healy is strangely short on documentation or even a shred of evidence.

The second number of Healy and Michael's magazine, 'The Marxist', dated August-September 1987 (but actually appearing in November) contains further subjective ravings, alleging that the split in the WRP in 1985 was the work of police agents: 'Starting with the CIA, not less than six agencies were involved in the events of October 1985.'

For 28 years, Cliff Slaughter was one of Healy's closest collaborators. Is Healy proposing at this late stage that he nurtured and trained an agent all these years? So much for Healy's 'practice of cognition'!

Healy first circulated allegations that David North was a CIA agent in the summer of 1985. This lie was explicitly repudiated by resolution of the WRP



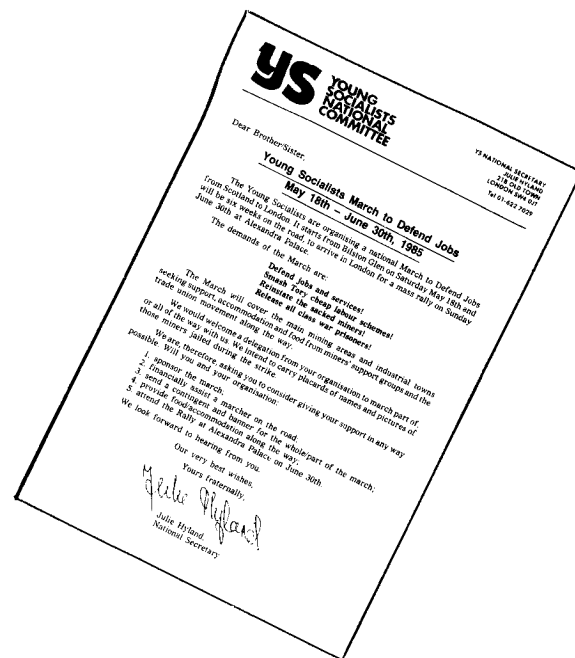
HEALY

Political Committee in mid-September 1985, several weeks before the split. Moreover, both Corin and Vanessa Redgrave voted for that resolution. The Redgraves have also 'forgotten' that they voted for Healy's compulsory retirement in 1985, when he was accused of sexual abuse. Healy not only lacks a shred of principle but, as befits a man who has embraced Stalinism, he also lacks a memory for unpalatable facts.

HEALY has returned, incautiously, to the scene of another of his provocations of

the summer of 1985. On this occasion, the target is the Workers International League. Following a May Day rally in 1985, Healy launched a wild attack on the WRP London District Committee, and the WRP Political Committee passed a unanimous vote of no confidence in the District Committee.

Having decided to hold a series of youth marches for jobs, including the demand for the release of jailed miners, Healy abruptly changed their title to 'The National March to Release the Jailed Miners'. Unhappily for Healy, he had already circulated leaflets announcing a Young Socialists 'March for Jobs', and had not informed WRP branches or the District Committee of the Political Committee's change of line prior to the May Day rally. Healy then used the May Day announcement of the 'Marches for Jobs' as the substance of a major provoca-



The original leaflet announcing the 'YS March for Jobs'

tion against the WRP London District Committee, threatening its members with expulsion.

Healy writes in 'The Marxist': 'The preparation of the marches and the marches themselves... were the venue for the most decisive (!) struggle within the party against eclecticism and all forms of bourgeois ideology. The then London District Secretary, R. Price, chairing our (!) May Day 1985 rally in

London and seated side-by-side with a leading victimised miner from Kent, announced the forthcoming march as a "March for Jobs", ignoring altogether the principal demands of the march.'

There is one small problem for this old lie. Fortunately Workers News has preserved one of Healy's original leaflets entitled 'YS March for Jobs' which we reproduce. Healy has shot himself in the foot once again.

FUNDS

Your support is vital to our paper. With donations received from our readers we have been able to give good coverage and analysis of workers' struggles internationally. But to improve and develop we need more, so carry on supporting our £300 Monthly Fund and our £10,000 Building Fund which currently stands at £702.38.

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SOUTH AFRICA

Workers fight Inkatha stooges

THE bloody clashes in the Pietermaritzburg area of Natal Province have become the cockpit of struggle between the black masses and the Botha regime in South Africa. During fighting in December an estimated 75 members and supporters of the rival United Democratic Front (UDF) and Inkatha movements were killed. Estimates for the number killed in similar struggles throughout 1987 vary between 260 and 300.

Fighting between the UDF and Inkatha has intensified since the wave of industrial strikes in the railways and mines in the summer of 1987. The strikes came hard on the heels of three years of rising struggle in the black townships, which signalled the growing resistance and confidence of the working class to smash the Botha regime.

In the absence of a revolutionary party to lead the working class, the UDF continues to draw its support from the most militant sections of workers and youth. Whilst leaning on their militancy, the UDF, together with the African National Congress (ANC) subordinates the working class to its Popular Front politics, and its reactionary utopia of a 'democratic' multi-racial capitalism. Through the UDF, the ANC tries to tailor the demands of the working class to what is acceptable to the discredited white liberals of the Progressive Federal Party. The outlook of the UDF leadership is the outlook of the aspiring black bourgeoisie. Its refusal to develop the struggles waged by black workers, students and youth has opened the door to the Inkatha, led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Buthelezi's Inkatha movement has worked in tandem with, and with the protection of, the apartheid regime. Buthelezi's demagogic appeals to Zulu tribalism are backed by gangs of armed thugs terrorising the black townships, the black trade unions, school youth and students. By attempting to smash the organisations of the working class, Buthelezi aims to make Inkatha indispensable to the apartheid regime in any future settlement.

Inkatha has exploited every retreat by the UDF/ANC leaders, with the aim of driving a wedge between the population in the townships and the landless peasantry.

By Ian Harrison

On May 1, 1986, the Botha regime, anticipating mass demonstrations in the townships to mark the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprising, banned demonstrations and rallies organised by the newly-formed Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the UDF. Buthelezi, however, was granted approval to hold a mass rally to 'celebrate' the uprising, by launching a scab trade union confederation, UWUSA. Buthelezi's 'turn' to company unionism is an attempt to win a base among the workers of the townships. Recruitment into UWUSA has the backing of white 'liberal' industrialists in Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Buthelezi was awarded the George Meany medal by the AFL-CIO trade union bureaucracy in the United States. Successive American governments have recognised him as the potential leader of a black capitalist South Africa, should the apartheid regime fall. The AFL-CIO, for their part, have been grooming Buthelezi since the 1960s, channeling finances to him, and arranging to 'train' shop stewards for his 'union'.

Seventy thousand workers and peasants were bussed to the May Day rally where T-shirts and leaflets calling on the Botha regime to release Nelson Mandela were distributed. Buthelezi's speech was greeted by a mass walkout from the workers.

Having failed to win support in the townships by demagoguery and Inkatha's cynical round of talks with the black trade unions, Buthelezi returns to open terrorism on the picket lines and school campuses, and sends his vigilante squads into the townships. During the long-running strike at BTR Sarmcol, organised by Moses Mayekiso's metalworkers' union, Inkatha provided strike-breakers. It was also active in attacking pickets during the recent miners' strike. Buthelezi has offered the mineowners a strike-free workforce, which he is recruiting through a network of tribal chiefs. This comes as a boost to the employers who, prior to the liberation of Mozambique in 1975, recruited 80 per cent of labour from outside South Africa. Through the Inkatha youth movement and UWUSA he pursues a ruthless struggle against the influence of the UDF and ANC, denouncing the ANC at every opportunity as

agents of 'communism'.

Buthelezi has exploited the crisis in the Progressive Federal Party and the divisions within the Botha government in order to win support from the Reagan, Thatcher and Kohl governments.

The UDF/ANC leaders steadfastly refuse to arm and organise the workers in the townships, and in spite of the savage brutality inflicted on their supporters by the Inkatha vigilantes, refuse to break from their reformist-pacifist outlook. Independently, the youth in Pietermaritzburg have been forced to break with the conservatism of their leaders in order to wage the struggle against Inkatha.

The treachery of the UDF/ANC leaders has given the Botha regime a free hand to smash up squatter camps and dump thousands in the dust bowls of the Bantustan hinterlands.

There are also signs of strong opposition to the programme of the UDF/ANC in the rapidly growing black trade unions. During the



Head of an Inkatha vigilante group, Mandla Shabalala, at the launch of the scab United Workers' Union of South Africa (UWUSA) in Durban on May 1, 1986
PHOTO: IDAF

miners' strike, workers carried banners demanding the nationalisation of industries under workers' control. Trade unionists have fought pitched battles alongside the youth 'comrades' to defend the black townships against Inkatha and Botha's security forces.

While the UDF leaders listened to the appeals of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce calling for a 'negotiated peace settlement' with Inkatha,

the youth 'comrades' and trade unionists defended their homes and picket lines. The township committees which have been established to support rent strikes and the boycott of white shops, while punishing government stooges in the townships' administrative offices, represent embryonic soviets.

The ANC, through its Stalinist-controlled leadership, has exerted every influence within the growing black trade unions, and

especially COSATU, to prevent the emergence of an independent programme for the working class, calling off strikes at the point where workers have demanded their escalation.

The clashes in Pietermaritzburg prove conclusively that all the conditions for the socialist revolution in South Africa are present with one exception — the building of a revolutionary Trotskyist party to lead the working class and oppressed masses.

Hackney report reveals police cover-up

By Christine McDermott

THE death of Colin Roach in 1983 marked the start of a major campaign led by the Roach Family Support Committee (RFSC) to investigate the role of the police in Hackney. The recently published report 'Policing in Hackney', commissioned by the RFSC, is the latest step in the campaign for a public enquiry into Colin Roach's death.

The police claim that Colin Roach committed suicide in Stoke Newington police station with a shotgun. His family has always been convinced that this isn't true and the report, by an independent committee of inquiry, points to the conclusion that his family was right. The shotgun couldn't be scientifically connected to Roach, nor fit unconcealed into his bag. The police pathologist's report had been altered and several officers claimed to be the one who found the unfired cartridges in Roach's pocket. The very position of his body was suspect and no bloodstains consistent with the position of his body were found. For these reasons, amongst others, the report recommends that a public inquiry into Colin Roach's death should be held.

The report is divided into two parts, with part two taking a general look into policing in Hackney from the clashes between fascists and anti-fascists in 1936 to the present day. Clips from contemporary newspaper reports are used to demonstrate police racism over this period with reference to 'stop and search', the 'sus' law and police raids. A connection is shown between the police, immigration enforcement and factory owners, suggesting that the racist nature of the police is used for economic purposes. This is, however, one of the only instances where the class nature of the police is even suggested.

As well as providing a comprehensive guide to police racism after the war, the report also tries to discuss other connected issues. The press is shown to be racist but the political role of the press is never really discussed. The report suggests that the press was biased against the RFSC because this line

had more 'news value'. It says the press couldn't be 'bothered to try' to explore the history of police brutality in Stoke Newington and it 'failed to get to grips with' the concerns of people in Hackney. This almost apologetic attitude of the report completely ignores the fact that the capitalist newspapers serve the state, and if they ignore or distort news it is not because they are lazy or haphazard but because it is their political intention to do so.

The report continues the misconception that the police are 'supposed to be a form of service to the public'. It aims to remove racism from the police force by instantly dismissing officers for 'sexist, racist or violent behaviour' with the help of a complaints committee. It briefly acknowledges the view that 'police behaviour will be based on the assumption that it is an essential part of the deliberately oppressive racist nature of a highly political police force' but favours the

view that it is all down to simple mismanagement. It still claims, however, that whatever you believe, the police are 'out of touch and totally out of control'. This is plainly not true. The police are 'in touch' with the needs of the state; it was never their intention to be 'in touch' with the needs of the people.

The report gives a very full account of the events leading up to, and after, the death of Colin Roach. It gives an interesting and thorough account of policing in Hackney from 1945. Its political weakness is its only fault. This is fatal, for to ignore the police role in the miners' strike and the printers' strike, and to abstract racism and sexism from the political struggle, can only lead to defeat. The police cannot be reformed; the report should include a call to disband the entire police force, not just the District Support Units and Territorial Support Groups.

'Policing in Hackney, 1945-1984', published by Karia Press, 41 Rheola Close, London N17 9TP.

Milking Latin America dry

By Eugene Ludlow

**The Thatcher Years
Britain and Latin America
Latin America Bureau £3.50**

THE five essays which make up 'The Thatcher Years' examine the relationship of the Tory government since 1979 to the semi-colonial countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Judith Hart, a former Labour Minister of Overseas Development, describes what she calls a 'special relationship' between British and US imperialism. It was shown, she suggests, in the support from Reagan for the Malvinas/Falklands War in 1982,

in return for Thatcher's tacit approval of the US invasion of part of the British Commonwealth, Grenada, in 1983.

A more specific analysis by John Tanner shows how British and US banks, under the guise of 'development', made millions from interest payments on loans poured into South and Central America in the 1970s. He explains how this exploitation gives rise to a net outflow of funds

from the area: 'The debt crisis meant that in 1986 alone, US\$22 billion more left Latin America and the Caribbean than went into the region.' He shows also how, at the expense of the South American working class, Thatcher was able to cut inflation in Britain as world commodity prices fell during 1980-84.

The Latin America Bureau's own writers contribute a good essay on Central America and the Caribbean which reveals how Britain supplies arms and finance for the military state death squads of Guatemala and El Salvador, while simultaneously condemning the Sandinistas in Nicaragua for their 'lack of a representative government'. They point out that in 1984, seven political parties contested the most observed election in recent history. Also discussed is the US military build-up in the eastern Caribbean prior to the invasion of Grenada, with an illuminating pre-invasion quote from the then



The 1982 Malvinas/Falklands war

Foreign Office Minister, Nicholas Ridley: 'Grenada is in the process of establishing the kind of society of which the British government disapproves, irrespective of whether the people of Grenada want it or not.'

Similar gems from the Thatcher government are displayed in Jon Barnes' contribution 'Birds of a feather - Britain and Chile'. Cecil Parkinson's comparison between Britain and Chile is quoted from the Chilean newspaper 'El Mercurio' of November 2, 1980, following his visit to Chile: 'The Chilean economic experience is very similar to what we are developing here.'

Expanding this theme, Barnes shows how the monetarist policies of Pinochet's Chile are

dissimilar from the Thatcher government's only in the degree of force used to apply them: increased state control of unions; increased police power and restriction of right of assembly; a permanent pool of unemployed, especially youth; widespread privatisation; short-term youth employment schemes; attacks on education to accommodate the economy. Barnes also covers the secret military arrangements between Chile and Britain during the Malvinas war. In return, Britain voted against a motion in the general assembly of the United Nations seeking to condemn Pinochet's charnel house tactics against left-wing opponents in Chile.

Whilst this book is a useful chronology of the role of British and US imperialism throughout South and Central America in recent years, it nevertheless conceals the fact that Labour governments are guilty of the same crimes.

Judith Hart's essay devotes only one paragraph to the period 1974-79, in which she presents the Labour govern-

ment fraudulently as a staunch opponent of the Pinochet regime in Chile. In fact, although the Labourites were compelled by the wave of working class opposition to the military junta to make some half-hearted protests, it was 'business as usual' for British industry and the banks. The Labour government was as impotent as Allende's reformist Popular Front government when it came to challenging the interests of imperialism.

Hart's omission demonstrates the general weakness of 'The Thatcher Years'. By choosing to concentrate on the period since 1979, Britain's oppressive role within the region is specifically identified with Thatcher. The assumption is that under a Labour government things would be different. It is enough to remember that Britain's war with Argentina in 1982 received the enthusiastic backing of almost the entire Parliamentary Labour Party.

Available from: Latin America Bureau, 1 Amwell Street, London EC1R 1UL.



Chilean youth demonstrate against the military

Rosmer: a welcome reprint

**Lenin's Moscow
Alfred Rosmer
Bookmarks £4.95**

By David Lewis

THIS is a reprint of the 1971 translation of Rosmer's classic description of his experiences in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s.

Rosmer was born in 1877 of French parents who were temporarily in New York. In 1884 they returned to France where Rosmer entered politics as an anarchist in 1896. By the outbreak of war in 1914 he was a revolutionary syndicalist and was one of the small band of internationalists who opposed the war. During the war, he worked with Trotsky in Paris. This began a friendship and political collaboration which was to last on and off until Trotsky was murdered.

'Lenin's Moscow' opens in 1920. In the spring of that year, Rosmer was sent to Moscow to represent the French Committee for the Third, Communist, International. He took part in the Second Congress and was elected to its Executive Committee (ECCI). After that, he helped to found the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU).

He returned to France briefly at the end of 1921, after the Third Congress of the Communist Interna-



Alfred Rosmer (second from left) in conference with Trotsky during the Civil War

tional. He found the leadership of the French party dominated by a mixture of hypocrisy and opportunism. Recalled to Moscow in February 1922 for an ECCI meeting to discuss the tactic of the united front, he participated in the Fourth Congress in October 1922.

The development of the Communist International from 1920 to 1922 is brought to life by Rosmer with a wealth of detail reflecting his position at the centre of the work of the ECCI and the RILU. He pays particular attention to the problems of the French section, from the world perspective of the International.

In the last chapters of the

book he describes the growing confusion of the ECCI in 1923, in the absence of Lenin who was then seriously ill, leading to the German debacle of October 1923. He describes the growing power of Stalin and the exclusion of Trotsky from key decisions. The main narrative ends with Lenin's death in January 1924. By the Fifth Congress in that year, the Communist International had begun to degenerate into an instrument of Stalin's foreign policy.

Rosmer's support for Trotsky upon his return to France earned him expulsion from the French party in 1924. Until 1930, he worked to build the Left Opposition

in France but broke with Trotsky over Molinier. Although he never returned to the Trotskyist movement, he re-established relations with Trotsky himself and helped to refute the Moscow Trials. He lived near Trotsky in Mexico until the latter's murder in 1940.

The book is marred only by an introduction from the translator, Ian Birchall, a 'long-standing member of the Socialist Workers Party', who is an opponent of the struggle to establish and build the Fourth International. In spite of this, everyone who is seriously concerned with the problems of building a revolutionary leadership should read it.

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STUDENTS — ALL OUT ON 27th!

THE Education Reform Bill threatens to change the whole nature of higher education. It is only the start of further policies which will put education in the hands of businessmen for the benefit only of those who can afford it.

Polytechnics and universities will be governed by funding councils. The Polytechnic and Colleges Funding Council, appointed by the Education Secretary, will take control away from local authorities and will have half of its members drawn from commerce and industry. The Universities Funding Council will replace the University Grants Commit-

tee and at least six of its members will come from business.

Institutions will be able to dismiss teaching staff on the grounds of redundancy, inefficiency and lack of funds, and universities and colleges will be obliged to provide educational 'goods' in return for public money.

Considering the influence of businessmen in the councils, this can only mean a drive towards a 'marketable education' and a decline in the arts and other courses which don't provide immediate economic profit.

The effects of this policy

can already be seen in Oxford where new management studies courses have been started. This is to satisfy a growing demand in this field but is being provided at the expense of other courses. The bill states that universities and polytechnics may increase their student intake and so increase their income. By the same token colleges that decrease their numbers can face closure and staff redundancies. Colleges will be forced to kill the arts to prevent their own strangulation.

The bill serves as a taster for the more extreme policies

of the Centre for Policy Studies, the think-tank set-up by Thatcher. Elie Kedourie, professor of politics at the London School of Economics, in a recent pamphlet, called for universities and colleges to be funded entirely by students' parents.

University authorities have repeatedly stabbed students in the back by either seizing Student Union funds or locking students out. The bill can end education as we know it and complete its transformation into a conveyor belt for producing robots for industrial use (as seen in the YTS).

The prospect of student loans caused 30,000 students

to demonstrate in London in February last year. The NUS leadership has called a demonstration against the Education Reform Bill for February 27. Students must give it full support but at the same time beware of their anger being channeled by the NUS leadership into a harmless protest against the Tories.

Students should place no confidence in the leadership of the NUS which has traditionally been a training ground for the trade union and Labour bureaucracy. The attack on education represented by the bill proves the need for a revolutionary student and trade union leadership. Reformist leaders can only betray.

The Workers International League says:

- All out on February 27!
- No state control of teaching and research;
- NUS must lead a fight against the Education Reform Bill to defend and extend higher education:
- Halt all cuts and closures — occupy all threatened facilities;
- Full grants to all students;
- Build a revolutionary socialist student leadership — join the Workers International League.



ANDY BEVAN

Voluntary redundancy for Bevan

By Graham Fenwick

NEIL KINNOCK's efforts to reorganise and behold the Labour Party's youth movement are meeting little or no resistance from its 'Militant'-dominated leadership.

The Labour Party's youth organiser and leading 'Militant' supporter Andy Bevan even applied for the job of running the reorganised youth movement. When turned down by the party's National Executive Committee and offered a post in the finance department he accepted voluntary redundancy.

Kinnock will be delighted that this self-styled 'Trotskyist' has decided to 'take the money and run'. Members of the Labour Party Young Socialists must draw the necessary conclusions from Bevan's defection, and campaign all the more vigorously for the right to maintain the independence of the LPYS from the policies of the right-wing Labour leaders.



A young woman is arrested in Stoke Newington High Street following the Roach Family Support Committee demonstration of January 22, 1983. See page 10 for review of 'Policing in Hackney', a report commissioned by the RFSC published last month.

YTS to conscript school-leavers

SCHOOL-LEAVERS face conscription onto the cheap-labour Youth Training Schemes (YTS) from September this year. The Tories are planning to abolish the right of 16 to 18-year-olds to claim benefit if they refuse a place on YTS.

According to statistics

published by the government, this will affect 116,000 young people who are currently unemployed. The Manpower Services Commission, responsible for controlling the schemes, estimates that 20-30,000 youth each year refuse a place on YTS.

This move will also increase the burden on their parents. At present, those who leave school without work and refuse a place on YTS can claim benefit. Under new rules the Tories will pay child benefit for school-leavers for four months, worth £7.25 per week. This will cut the family income by £11.50 until child benefit runs out.

The Tories are attempting to increase the exploitation of the working class, chiefly at the expense of the unorganised, in order to compete with their rival capitalists around the world who exploit child labour in sweat shops, agriculture and service industries. They are creating conditions to conscript a new generation of young workers, stripped of their rights won through the past struggles of the working class.

Selective report on youth arrests

AT least 300 children and youths were arrested by the security forces in northern Iraq in late 1985, according to Amnesty International's recent report 'Children — The Youngest Victims'. Of the 300, 29 were executed without trial after enduring torture while in detention.

The report gives details of young people under 18 being denied basic rights in seven different countries. Most of these involve children in semi-colonial countries being

detained because of their parents' political or religious affiliations.

More than 30 juveniles are on 'Death Row' in the United States of America for crimes they committed before they were 18. In Oklahoma, age is not even specified as a mitigating factor, even for crimes which carry the death penalty.

Amnesty International states that this is a direct violation of international rights and treaties' standards. In 1977, the USA signed two treaties forbidding the

sentencing to death of children under 18 but neither treaty has been ratified. This position may change after the Supreme Court ruling on the appeal of William Wayne Thompson has been heard in Spring this year. Thompson was 15 when he committed the crime.

Amnesty International has collected together some valuable facts but fails, as always, to offer any answers to the problem. Its policy is to appeal to the very authorities that are carrying

out the violations. In its efforts to rise above politics, the organisation has tied its own noose as all the cases are inextricably linked with politics. The problems won't change until the political set-up changes.

The report also fails to question the violations of basic rights in Britain. After the riots in Broadwater Farm, Tottenham, in 1985, police kept 13 and 14-year-olds detained for 72 hours without informing their parents. The children were refused the right to see their

parents or a solicitor. This has been happening in the north of Ireland for years.

Politically motivated assaults on children cannot be treated as occurring in a vacuum. They can only be ended through the fight for world socialism — by building a revolutionary leadership.

'Children — The Youngest Victims' is issued by Amnesty International, British Section, 5 Roberts Place, London EC1 OEJ.