

'YET the slightest attention and thought will suffice to satisfy anyone that the ways of combating catastrophe and famine are available, that the measures required to combat them are quite clear, simple, perfectly feasible, and fully within reach of the people's forces, and that these measures are not being adopted only because, exclusively because, their realisation would affect the fabulous profits of a handful of landowners and capitalists.

(The Impending Catastrophe And How To Combat It, V I Lenin, September 10, 1917)



Botha whistles in the dark:

STRIKE — WHILE THE IRON IS HOT

SIR GEOFFREY Howe, the Tory Foreign Minister, returned from his tour of South Africa with nothing.

Botha brutally snubbed him, knowing in any case the hypocrisy of Howe's verbal concern with freedom for Africans.

The Tory government, President Reagan and the American government, the Commonwealth premiers, the Eminent Persons: all this motley group are concerned with one thing — the preservation of capitalism in South Africa.

They have a stake there. What that stake is can be seen from the new pamphlet from Labour Research (reviewed on page 15).

British-linked companies employ 370,000 people in South Africa.

Fifty-eight of the 281 UK companies pay below the wages which the EEC declares give a minimum standard of living in South Africa. Only 41 of these companies recognise non-racial trade unions.

The suppression of the Africans has enormously benefited foreign investors.

The South African government has given them their privileges: a labour force

with its organisations curtailed and suppressed, a state machine ready to help them defeat strikes — and a special exchange rate to encourage investment.

Africans are rising, and all this crew now know that the bonanza is ending.

But they are determined to salvage their exploitation, even at a lower level.

The awful spectre before them is that they may not stop the rise of Africa.

They are frustrated and angry at Botha and his government because they fear the consequences of his brutal repression.

To a television interview-

er, a member of the Eminent Persons Group described the abyss they are peering into.

He declared there had to be some agreement, otherwise the prospect was years of civil war with the Africans driven more and more extreme, and eventually nationalising everything!

This prospect is the source of the panic now running through western capitalist business circles and politicians.

This lies behind the pleas to the apartheid government and is the cause of the reluctant moves towards sanctions in the face of the regime's intransigence.

Every trade unionist, ev-

ery socialist in Britain must be clear on this.

Sanctions by the Tory government are reluctant sanctions in the interests of capitalism.

Likewise when the American ambassador to South Africa flies to Zambia this week to meet ANC leaders, the aim is to maintain imperialist exploitation despite any political changes in South Africa.

Blood is not just on the hands of the brutal torturers and murderers of the apartheid state.

It is on the hands of those who have profited from the activities of that state.

South African trade union leaders have appealed for British trade union sanctions.

Kinnock, leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions renege on their responsibilities with their demands on Thatcher for sanctions.

After the return of Howe empty-handed, Kinnock declared that he hoped Mrs Thatcher would now come to her senses and move with the Commonwealth.

While African workers are tortured and murdered, they offer only words.

What is happening in Africa is a class question.

African workers and children are living under a brutal terror. Thousands are detained and missing, among them leading trade unionists. Security forces patrol the schools.

As against Tory policies which help capitalism in South Africa, trade unionists must have workers policies to assist trade unionism and the struggle for socialist liberation in South Africa.

It is time for British trade unions to take the initiative. African workers know that sanctions mean suffering — nevertheless they call upon us to organise sanctions.

We have no right to refuse.

The future of British workers is bound up with the joint struggle of British and African workers against the profit-making of big business and the state repression and legislation which upholds that.

Workers' organisations have the power to strike decisive blows to aid our brothers and sisters under the terror.

Cowardly pleading with Thatcher and Commonwealth ministers by our leaders is not the answer.

The Commonwealth and South African trade unions, representing 30 million workers, meet in emergency session this weekend.

It will be a betrayal of monumental proportions if British trade union leaders offer nothing more than pressure on the British and Commonwealth governments.

Every Trotskyist, every principled internationalist, every trade unionist who really supports the struggle of African workers must intensify their efforts.

The trade union organisations must be compelled to act on workers sanctions.

The TUC should work in conjunction with European unions to organise strikes and demonstrations throughout Europe.

Taking inspiration from the Dunes strikers in Dublin, district committees, shop stewards committees and groups of workers must organise their own action against the South African terror.

Trade union and socialist principles demand it.

GREET DEAN HANNOCK AND RUSSELL SHANKLAND

WE VISITED last week, along with their families and friends, Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland in Gartree, the maximum security prison in Leicester.

We would like to inform our readers and the rest of the labour movement that the 'Rhymney Two' are coping well with the price they are having to pay for their part in the defence of jobs and communities waged in the 1984-5 miners' strike and are in good spirits.

They remain concerned with the developments in the South Wales coalfield. They asked us about them and they keep in touch with Des Duffield and the South Wales NUM.

The one thing that lifts them above all is the tremendous amount of letters of support they receive, especially the international

response.

One thing that hit home with us, considering the 8-year sentence they received, was Dean explaining that his dreams are no longer about anything outside prison — they are to do with prison life.

'It may be a good thing', he said, 'otherwise you'd go mad.'

These two miners are clearly not murderers or criminals — they are guilty of fighting for their jobs and their class.

We believe they are class war prisoners, and as with every other class war prisoner, every socialist worth his salt should fight for their release.

Dean's birthday is coming up on August 11. Send him a card, or write a letter: The address to send to is No. A99410 Dean Hancock, or No A87352 Russell Shankland, HM Prison Gartree, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 7RP.

Travis Gould and Titch Jones

Howe snub sends Reagan Thatcher, spinning

COSATU'S call Trade unions must take the initiative

INSIDE WORKERS PRESS:

Two years out for Silentnight page 6

Anti-racist fight builds up page 2

Fleet Street's 'Great Train Drugs Blitz'

ALL PUFF BUT NO PULL

IT WAS called the 'Great Train Drugs Blitz' by Fleet Street. But when cannabis seized in Operation Condor was put together, it hardly caused a buzz amongst the 3,000 police taking part.

Scotland Yard then boasted of an horrendous weapons haul, including flick-knives. At a display of weaponry later, however, no flick-knives were seen — though pen-knives were.

Of the 80 arrested in the daylight raid nine days ago on Brixton's 'Front Line' — police used a special train and furniture vans to get there — most face charges over small amounts of cannabis or possession of offensive weapons.

Michael Shrimpton, of Brixton Community Law Centre, told Workers Press this Thursday:

'At this stage it looks the operation was a complete failure. I would guess the cannabis from the raid would work out at around an ounce for every few hundred police taking part.

BY CHRIS CORRIGAN

'There has been very, very little activity from the police relating to serious drug charges.

'As for the offensive weapons charges, a lot of these are fairly thin and I don't think all will be substantiated.

'Obviously, I can't comment on individual charges but pen-knives have been included and, well, it is stretching the point. A pen-knife is not inherently offensive.

'As for the flick-knives, the police announced having found them but they didn't seem to be on display.'

At a press conference in Lambeth Town Hall the day after the raid, Shrimpton had also spoken out over the treatment of those arrested. 'They were held incommunicado — refused access to solicitors.

'Many of them have been detained overnight in police cells through the use of new legislation. The raid is completely out of all proportion.'

Referring to incidents during the raid, Shrimpton said, 'We have had reports of injuries, and of difficulty in getting doctors to injured people.

'We have reports of searches that appear to be unlawful and of searches that caused damage to property. Council property was searched without permission.

'Many of the people arrested appear to have had no involvement at all except they were present on the street at the time and that they are black.'

Linda Bellos, leader of Lambeth council, faced hos-

tile Press questions at the news conference.

She was repeatedly pressed, for example, whether she opposed drugs raids by police and whether she knew drugs were peddled at the Railton Road club that was said to be the main target of the raid.

A number of reporters were clearly alert to the fact that their news desks would not be interested in Bellos's forceful opening statements, which included the words:

'What we are saying is that the use of 1,000 police, some of whom were armed, was designed to cause a riot situation.

'A further 2,000 officers were on stand-by up to 11 o'clock last night. I don't exaggerate when I say the action in raiding the Front Line was itself meant to be not about drugs, but about confrontation and causing a situation in which they could teach somebody a lesson.'



LINDA BELLOS

Bellos gave precise details of how herself and other Lambeth representatives had persistently failed in attempts to liaise with senior police to prevent strife being provoked in the area. A joint meeting originally planned for July 24 had been cancelled by Commander Gordon

Lloyd on the grounds of a police 'domestic crisis.' The raid took place on that date. ● BELLOS refuted police claims that simultaneous raids in Handsworth and Peckham were separate. 'The link is a concerted attack on the black community in Britain,' she said.

A growing movement against racists

NORTH LONDON



A LIVELY AND MILITANT demonstration against racism drew support from members of ethnic communities as it marched through Islington last Sunday.

The march was organised as part of a campaign to stop racist attacks on children attending Highbury Quadrant Junior School and the existence of a group of fascists at 35 Avenell Road, Arsenal.

It was led by the Islington Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) banner and was supported by the WRP, the SWP and Labour Party Branches.

Links were made by the march with the fight against Apartheid in South Africa showing that racism is not just a South African issue but is being used against ethnic groups and immigrants the world over.

Much anger was directed at the dozen fascists who watched in shock as the march passed their hangout near the Arsenal football ground chanting 'You are

now a dying breed.'

This house is a headquarters for hard-core fascists from all over Europe, including Nicky Crane, a notorious Nazi with a horrific record of violence against black people for which he has been imprisoned in the past.

A line of police defended the fascists, acting as if any provocation would come from the march.

At Finsbury Park the demonstration was addressed by Hackney Deputy Mayor Nasrullah Syed who said that the issue raised by the

BY GERRY BEATON

march had wide implications.

It is a matter of 'whether human beings can live anywhere in the world without harassment,' he said.

Jeremy Corbyn the local Labour MP congratulated the organisers of the march and all those who attended. He referred to the campaigns against the National Front in the late 1970s which 'turned the tide against the racists.'

'What we are saying here is that in Islington we will not allow racists to live in our community,' he said.

He urged people to continue the campaign which he said will 'strengthen the community against racists and inspire other communities to fight racists.'

He referred to the reluctance of people to report racist attacks to the police because

of police reluctance to prosecute.

Jeremy Corbyn together with Labour Councillors from Gillespie and Brownswood Wards are holding two special confidential surgeries to give advice to people who have experienced racial attack or harassment, on Sunday August 3 and Sunday August 10 at the Red Rose Centre, 129a Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

The strength that the march gave to Islington residents was apparent. Fascists and racists have no right to openly flaunt their anti-working class filth in Islington or anywhere else.

Further activities are planned by the Islington AFA, and we urge our readers in Islington to support the AFA's campaign. For more information, you can contact Islington Anti-Fascist Action, c/o Red Rose Labour Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, Islington, N7.

MANCHESTER

SOS-RACISM WAS LAUNCHED in Britain on Tuesday July 17. The first platform of speakers brought together two veterans from the International Brigade, Harlem Desir (President of SOS-Racisme in France) and others involved in the fight against racism in this country.

Despite its liberal name the meeting attracted many individuals and organisations involved in anti-racist and anti-fascist activity.

BY MARTIN RALPH

Glynn Ford (Euro-MP for Manchester South East) said SOS-Racism was not intended to replace other groups but was a broad platform for all involved in the fight.

Harlem Desir told the meeting that since 'le Pen', the Front Nationale leader, won 10 per cent of the vote in 1984 the number of racist incidents has risen — such as the night when a gunman went into a Turkish bar in Paris and killed 2 people in cold blood.

He also explained the rapid growth of SOS-Racism. He said that less than two years ago 15 people came together to organise against racist attacks, now there are 300 committees. Five weeks ago in the 'Place de la Concorde' 400,000 young people attended an anti-racist concert and two million badges saying 'Touche pas a mon pote' — 'hands off my pal' — have been sold.

During the discussion that followed, the meeting voted to support the campaign against the deportation of Viraj Mendis.

A heated debate followed on how the growth of the French organisation could be emulated in Britain.

SOS-Racism is a growing organisation in Belgium, Holland, West Germany, Norway, Denmark and Sweden.

The FN of Le Pen has outstripped the Communist Party in certain areas in France. The Communist Party has itself supported racist attacks.

Will SOS-Racism follow the Bob Geldof type politics and appeal to the liberal consciousness or will it support all those groups and individuals involved in fighting racism with whatever means are necessary and take this issue also to the Labour and Trade Union movement?

RELEASE THE JAILED MINERS

SOUTH WALES	YORKSHIRE
DEAN HANCOCK: Oskdale — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicesters.	MARTIN HODGSON: Wakefield — Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.
RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr — Eight year sentence Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicesters.	NIGEL HODGSON: Wakefield — Three year sentence from November 1985. Armley Jail, Leeds.
KENT	PAUL WRIGHT: Saville — 18 month sentence. G76424. Kirkham Jail, Freckleton road, Preston, Lancs.
TERRY FRENCH: Betteshanger — Four year sentence from January 1985. B73383, Weald Wing, Maidstone jail, Kent.	CLIVE THOMPSON: Frickley — Three year sentence from April 1985. G79348. Ackington Jail, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE66 9XF.
DURHAM	N. DERBYSHIRE
JOHN MATTERSON: Murton — Two years and three months youth custody from December 1985.	DAVID GAUNT: Shirebrook — 2½-year sentence from December 1984. E71037. A Wing, Millers Park Youth Custody Centre, Dodington Road, Wellingborough.
GARY BLACKMORE: 19 — Affray, attempted not guilty, 2 years Youth Custody. (not a miner, but arrested during the course of the strike)	

OLDHAM

Campaign fights the Fascists

OLDHAM'S ASIAN COMMUNITY and anti-fascist groups successfully organised to stop the National Front's recent attempt to hold a national march in the town.

The Oldham Campaign against Racism and Fascism was set up and organised a public meeting and a network of patrols to defend the local Asians.

Patrols reported any fascist activity over the weekend to a central telephone number from which operations were organised.

During the week before the

planned march, the police banned both it and the proposed counter-demonstration.

However, the National Front said they would organise some kind of activity.

On the Saturday a group of about 30 NF roamed around Oldham, looking for trouble.

They waited at the railway station for the arrival of anti-fascists.

BY STUART CARTER

Meanwhile OCARF were holding a public rally at the Bangladeshi Cultural Centre.

A vanload of youth, mostly from Bradford, went down to the station and drove the fascists off, but in the process some anti-fascists were arrested.

The OCARF rally was attended by over 200 people.

mainly local Asian workers.

There were speakers from the local community, Glyn Ford MEP, Labour Party YS and Anwar Ditta, who called for support for the Viraj Mendis campaign against deportation.

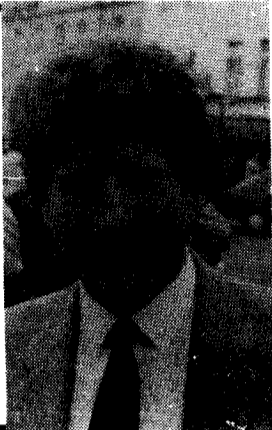
Instead of marching in Oldham, 50 NF members marched secretly from Victoria Station in Manchester, protected by police and well-away from the anti-fascist mobilisation.

THE PRINTERS BATTLE:

Interview by Alan Clark

The consequences of this dispute affect all Printworkers

George Hall,
F.O.C.,
News International
Group
Newspapers
Clerical
SUN/N.O.W.
F.O.C./M.O.C.'s
Strike
Committee



How do you think the dispute has done so far?

When you consider the leadership we have been given, it is amazing that the strike is still running.

The wrong approach has been adopted from day one.

The only way to win is to escalate.

Do you think the rest of Fleet Street should have been brought out in support of the sacked printers?

Yes, without question Fleet Street should have been brought into the strike.

The consequences of this dispute will affect all printworkers.

The argument that if Fleet Street was closed down there would only be Murdoch's product on the news stands gives the likes of Maxwell, Stevens, Black and Co the chance to demand more and more concessions.

The reason — if they reacted to job losses, inferior terms and conditions, the only paper would be Murdoch's — is total nonsense and without doubt a total shut-down of Fleet Street would have given the trade union movement the show of solidarity it was waiting for and given the strike the impetus it really needed.

Could you say something about the role of Brenda Dean and the way she has handled the dispute?

The role of the leadership is nothing short of a disgrace.

No fight, willing to sell the jobs of thousands of workers before the dispute even started.

The idea of Dean and Co is that the new realism is the only way, banking on a return of Kinnock.

This is no way to lead the most crucial print dispute since the General Strike.

In fact to totally mislead the News International workers that she (Brenda Dean) was ready to fight for existing trade union rights, to tell the members to get off their knees and fight and all the time attempting to sell out the dispute.

We fought, she wilted. You have been involved with setting up the Fleet Street Support Unit of rank and file printworkers.

What useful role has it played so far and what are its future aims?

FSSU is a body of rank and file printworkers attempting to give the strike fresh input and direction.

The reason it was set up was to try to stop the erosion of jobs, conditions, to make members aware that what was occurring was not the normal type of dispute, negotiations.

This was the final battle for the Fleet Street Chapel/Branches and to realise what was at stake was our heritage.

The FSSU will continue to press home its case that only workers themselves can stop the rot: to try and build a genuine rank and file printworkers section.

There are now regular meetings of strikers where resolutions are put by striking chapels.

What useful role has this played in the dispute?

Unless we can form a proper strike committee to act upon the resolutions, to take the decision to the chapels they concern then nothing will happen.

Again quite simply they will be noted.

Strikers must realise only by involving themselves in everyday affairs of the union will things happen.

To wait for the national leadership you will be in the grave.

Has the morale of the pickets gone down at all or do you think that they are as strong as ever and even more determined to beat Murdoch?

Of course some disillusionment has taken place.

It would be surprising if it hadn't.

However, all matters considered, the morale is still high — proof that even now the strike can be won, given the right direction.

To be honest, depending on who you are, the determination is still there.

It's the lead that is wanted: give it and the fight will be there.

The rest of the movement should grasp that this strike is so important.

The right to organise was won a century ago.

This is what the Tory government designed the 1980-82 Employment Act and the 1984 Trade Union Act for — to render the unions toothless.

Murdoch has seized the opportunity given by this act, ably assisted by the state.

Whatever happens, we must keep expressing the need for class solidarity for only through this objective will we finally succeed.

SPIRITS WERE HIGH as about 1,500 sacked News International printworkers and their supporters marched from Clerkenwell Green to Wapping last Wednesday (July 30).

The Dixieland All Stars Jazz band led the march, which was organised by the London Central Branch

Casuals of SOGAT.

As the march reached the Times building in Gray's Inn Road, the printers refused to move until provocative copies of the Sun and Times, placed in the windows by scabs working inside, were taken down.

A policeman finally went inside and removed them.

Though the dispute with Murdoch has been going on now for six months, there was an air of confidence from the printworkers as they marched the long route to Wapping.

The dispute, now in its sixth month, cannot be solved with long exhausting marches but must be ex-

tended to the rest of Fleet Street.

Only by raising the issues in the other Fleet Street chapels and getting them in favour of coming out, if only for one night initially, this must be the way forward for the printworkers who know they are fighting for the rest of the trade union movement.

Tyneside and Tebbits lies

SOUTH TYNESIDE has the highest unemployment in Britain, according to figures from an independent research body the Unemployment Unit.

Unit director Professor Adrian Sunfield was critical of the 16 changes that the Tory government have made in methods to calculate the unemployed.

'June sees one more record monthly figure in the relentless underlying rise of people out of work.

This government seems only interested in further changes to the statistics.'

The figures from the unit show that unemployment in the north generally is running at over 30,000 more than the official government statistics — 263,900 compared with the Department of Employment's own figure of 231,900.

South Tyneside has 26 per cent unemployed with 84 people chasing every job.

Sunderland has 21 per cent.

None of these figures include youth on YTS or those on community programme

BY HUGHIE NICOL
or restart courses.

2,000 school leavers on South Tyneside alone are not allowed to sign the register until September of this year.

The Tories' attitude to the unemployed is clearly spelt out by their chairman Norman Tebbit in his recent outburst:

'Some people find life in the safety net a little bit too comfortable.

They don't attempt to climb the ladder.

These days it is not unusual for people to take jobs and leave themselves worse off than they would have been on benefit.'

Labour's employment spokesman Mr John Pre-

scott lashed out at these remarks.

'If he is serious then he has gone off his rocker but I have to recognise he is a major influence on this government and what he is proposing is the next assault on the unemployed of this country.'

He added that ministers want to introduce 'the conscription of labour' into Britain as a way of driving people off the unemployment register and cutting the dole queue.

Under the Social Security Act which received the Royal Assent this month, long term unemployed can be suspended without benefit for 13 weeks if they refuse to take a place on a community programme scheme.

Mr Prescott added that Mr Tebbit's proposal was a further extension of this approach based on coercion.

Norman Tebbit also suggests that people in work should prepare themselves for hard times by having no holidays and putting the

money saved into pension funds.

Meanwhile Kenneth Clark, Tory Paymaster General and the Employment Minister in charge of the government's inner cities initiatives, has announced two major new developments to promote employment opportunities in the inner city areas.

In a speech to business leaders in Middlesbrough, one of the eight inner city task force areas, Mr Clark has unveiled a new enterprise training scheme 'Headstart' to provide more than 3,000 inner city youngsters with the advice and business training they need to start their own businesses.

The programme, aimed at 18-25 year olds, will run in collaboration with the Industrial Society in most of the designated areas.

Private sector sponsors can now offer projects involving some gain for themselves provided there is a greater benefit to the local community.

Evictions

BY HUGHIE NICOL

UNEMPLOYMENT and marital breakdowns have been blamed by the housing advice charity SHAC for a staggering 54 per cent increase in the number of house repossessions by building societies last year.

A SHAC adviser said that in the vast majority of cases problems arose when home owners faced a crisis in their personal circumstances.

The Building Societies Association 1986 Factbook, out this week, showed that bad debts forced its members to take possession of an estimated 16,779 properties last year — up from 10,870 the previous year and more than six times higher than when the Tory government first came to power in 1979.



THE EFFECTIVENESS of a picket of Sainsbury's supermarket in Cromwell Road, London last week created such concern that police were drafted in to harass it.

Pickets were moved off as they gave out leaflets opposing the sale of South African goods.

Women were searched by police who claimed they were looking for paint spray cans which had been used to damage a car in Sainsbury's car park.

However, while Inspector Clouseau was giving the pickets the run-around, someone walked off with trolley loads of shopping... (And that's the truth.)

The Anglo-Irish Agreement

COMMENT
BY CHARLIE WALSH

A MEETING between Tom King, Britain's direct ruler in the north of Ireland and Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Barry has resulted in more collaboration between the Dublin government and British imperialism.

At last Tuesday's meeting, Barry agreed to step up repression against the Republican movement.

This will mean the Dublin government increasing the millions it already spends on border security to pay for even more army and police personnel along the border with the six counties.

The British government's failure over the past 18 years to defeat the IRA or to crush the resistance of the Catholic working class has forced it to resort to 'blaming' the Irish government for not being tough enough with border security.

In fact, what Britain really

wants is for Dublin to launch an all-out war against the Republican movement, and for the British army to be allowed to cross the border in pursuit of IRA members.

Recent revelations about MI5 penetration south of the border, contrary to denials by Dublin, go to show that this has been going on for many years. All it needs at the moment is for Garret Fitzgerald to come out openly and admit it.

Fitzgerald and Barry, like

all the pro-imperialist stooge politicians that Ireland has produced aplenty in its long and painful history, are more than willing to collaborate with King. Making sure that any Republicans who do escape to the south face being hunted, arrested and charged under the Offences Against the State Act or being handed back to the RUC police for interrogation at torture centres such as Castlereagh.

Dublin is stepping up its anti-Republican stance and assuring King that the South is not and will not become a haven for Republicanism.

However, when it comes to sectarian attacks on and murder of Catholics, both Fitzgerald and Barry are silent; no demands are made on King to ensure the safety of Catholics and to provide

effective protection for them.

The RUC backed up by the British army have no intention of protecting the Catholic community.

The pretext for the latest talks under the Anglo-Irish agreement is in response to last Saturday night's shooting in Newry, Co Down, when the IRA shot dead three RUC men who were sitting in a police patrol car in the centre of the town.

The main question remains unresolved — for as long as British Imperialism occupies and oppresses Ireland so long will the struggle of the IRA to free Ireland continue.

And likewise of course, a quisling government in Dublin will again and again prostrate itself in front of British

imperialism giving carte blanche to the occupation of Ireland.

These latest talks have shown again exactly what was in store for the Catholic minority in the six counties when Fitzgerald and Barry signed the agreement at Hillsborough.

Socialists and revolutionaries have a prime responsibility to fight in the Labour and trade union movement for British withdrawal from Ireland, for the right of Ireland to self-determination free from imperialist oppression and violence.

We must take the question of Ireland into the centre stage of British politics. It is in this context that the Workers Revolutionary Party's

involvement in the campaigns of the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, and the repatriation of prisoners of war, etc, has to be seen.

We must use every avenue open to us in the Labour and trade union movement to raise the question of Ireland, and show in practice that only by supporting the struggle for freedom in Ireland will we be able to fight for the overthrow of capitalism here in Britain itself.

We would therefore encourage as many people as possible to participate in this year's anti-internment march and rally in Belfast on August 9 alongside the Republican movement in their steadfast struggle against imperialism and imperialist tyranny.

WRP DISCUSSES TRADE UNION WORK

RE-ESTIMATION and reorganisation of the Workers Revolutionary Party work in trade unions took a big step forward last weekend at the Party's College in Parwich, Derbyshire.

A general discussion about work in trade unions took place on the first day.

There was a lot of analysis and criticism of the past work of the WRP under the old regime: it was felt that this had been divorced from the actual struggles of the working class.

There was also discussion about the very decisive changes which had taken place since October last year and the progress that had already been made.

Questions which need to be

taken up in the trade union movement were grappled with.

These included the special problems faced by women in the workforce.

It was pointed out that women often work in isolated non-unionised occupations, that their rates of pay were much less than those of men and that they face problems attending union meetings which come out of their domestic responsibilities such as child-care arrangements.

The second day was devoted to a discussion of the miners' strike which clearly had a great impact on the WRP and provided the conditions in which the changes in the WRP were possible.

The importance of the strike to the British working

class and the lessons which could be learned from it were discussed as well as the role of the Healy-led WRP.

It became clear that the party cadre had seen the importance of the strike and the Womens Support Groups but that the old leadership had prevented consistent or planned support for the strike.

Comrades from 'Socialist Viewpoint', including Alan Thornett, contributed to the discussion on methods of organising in trade unions, the lessons of the miners' strike and the development of the work of rebuilding the

LISTINGS

TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT DELEGATION TO THE NORTH OF IRELAND. Belfast, 8-11 August. Delegates invited from individuals and groups, to stay as guests of local people and discuss the Irish labour movement, Irish culture, plastic bullets, strip-searching and show-trials with political and community activ-

ists. Join the Belfast Internment Commemoration march and rally, Sunday August 10. Details from: Delegation Organising Committee, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

ALTERNATIVE BOOKFAIR. New and secondhand books and pamphlets. Saturday September 20, 11 am — 5.30 pm. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

strength of the miners.

Chris Bailey, convenor of the WRP's Trade Union Commission, called on members not to wait to be told

what to do, but for all comrades to take responsibility to become involved in the mass movement in their workplace and unions.

South Londoners prepare boycott fight

A MEETING of labour movement activists discussed ways for British trade unionists to fight against apartheid last Monday in Brixton.

It opened with a video on the Dunnes Store Strike in Dublin where shopworkers have been on strike for just over two years to stop the store handling South African goods.

Cathryn O'Reilly, one of the strikers, discussed the best ways to organise anti-apartheid boycotts from her experience.

Leaflets had been distributed to shopworkers around Brixton which had, it seemed, worried the police, who informed the adminis-

trators of the meeting room to 'expect trouble'.

Dot Gibson, secretary of the South-west London USDAW, drew attention to the difficulties of shopworkers trying to organise.

Many are women and youth on short-term contracts and flexi-hours, organised by management based

BY LYNN BEATON

on profit levels recorded in the computerised tills.

The meeting was the beginning of a campaign in the labour movement to give confidence to shop workers to carry out union policy to boycott South African goods in the stores.

The video, which is very inspiring and would make a good start for anyone else wishing to organise, is available from Brendon Archbold, 9 Cavendish Row, O'Lehane Hall, DUBLIN 1. Telephone 0001 74321.

The history of the Dunnes Store strike is quite unique. The strikers are introduced as

'These extraordinary young people... and that's exactly what they are.'

Their principled solidarity puts many an old time 'activist' to shame.

Cathryn O'Reilly explained to the meeting, 'When we first decided to refuse to handle South African goods we were just following our unions instruction about something we knew was right, we didn't even know very much about South Africa, but we soon learned, we learned a lot more as well.'

● NEXT week, Workers Press will print an interview with Cathryn about the strike and the lessons it has taught her.

SILK CUTS OUT

Robert Kilroy-Silk MP for Knowsley North, declared last Thursday that he would resign his seat in he autumn, to begin a new 'career' with BBC television.

The 44-year-old former golden boy of Kinnock and the Labour Party rightwing, declared that 'Militant have driven me out of politics.'

He said he had been the victim of three years of 'misery and vilification', and that his 'enthusiasm for politics had been destroyed.'

A large part of his constituency is formed by Kirkby, which knows the type of misery and poverty Kilroy-Silk himself has never experienced.

He lives in Buckinghamshire in a mansion with two acres of ground and is rarely seen in Kirkby.

He has not made an appearance at the constituency Labour Party for ten months.

Kilroy-Silk has been an MP since 1974, and declared in the past that he meant to be prime minister.

He was to be a future Labour Minister and resigned as shadow minister of Law and Order two years ago to devote time to fighting

his constituency party for his seat.

This arrogant middle-class careerist, who accuses others of vilification, has been in the vanguard of the witchhunt, denouncing all his opponents as 'Militants.'

The Constituency Labour Party is leftwing and supported Liverpool council, but local CLP members say that out of 140 delegates, only four are Militant supporters.

Even Knowsley council's leader, Jim Lloyd, who is a rightwinger, was denounced 'as a Militant' because he stood against Kilroy-Silk.

The constituency forced Kilroy-Silk to stand for reselection, but the Labour leaders came to his aid by postponing the reselection conference.

No wonder Kinnock burst out in chagrin and anger at Kilroy-Silk's resignation.

It broke up the rightwing tactics which were meant to prevent the reselection taking place before the next election.

Close Britain's concentration camps

March to demand Troops out of Ireland! Prisoners out of jail!

● Saturday 9 August 1986 ●
1pm Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1
Republican marching band ● Phone 01-729 0414

Irish Freedom Movement

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, S Littleton, Evesham Worcs, WR11 5TZ
LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.
RICHARD GLENHOLMES: 10-year sentence, B32955.
JOHN MCCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.
ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.
PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.
HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.
HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.
PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.
STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence 758663.
NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence 879225.
TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG
ANTHONY CLARKE: 14-year sentence, 726381.
SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.
CON MCFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.
PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.
NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.
SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicestershire, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, B32954.
JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

RONNIE McCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham
PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.
EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.
BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.
PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.

HULL
HM Prison Hedon Rd, Hull, Humberside
MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.
ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

RECENTLY SENTENCED
MARTINA ANDERSON: D25134. Brixton Prison.
ELLA O'DWYER: D25135. Brixton Prison.
GERRY McDONNELL: B75880. Parkhurst Prison.
PETER SHERRY: B75881. Parkhurst Prison.
PATRICK McGEE: B75882. Leicester Prison.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:
CAROLE RICHARDSON: HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree, Market Harborough, Leics., LE16 2RP
PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Hull, Hedon Road, North Humberside
GERARD CONLON: HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs.
JUDITH WARD, HUGH CALLAGHAN, JOHN WALKER, BILLY POWER, GERARD HUNTER, RICHARD McILKENNY, PADDY HILL.
They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

The information on this list is supplied and updated by An Cumann Cabhrach British section, for which we thank them.

Hobsbawm cooks the books

COMMENT
by a correspondent

THE SO-CALLED 'Euro' faction of the British Communist Party favours, as is well-known, a policy of 'broad alliances' extending even so far to the Right as 'progressive Tories'.

In this connection they are using the fiftieth anniversary of the People's Front election victories of 1936 in France and Spain to re-tell the tale of Communist policy in the later 1930s as though it were a success story.

That is brazen enough. But Eric Hobsbawm, guru of the Euros, has now gone further.

Until now, everyone has agreed that, whether or not the Communist International's turn to the People's Front policy was correct it was certainly something radically new.

As Fernando Claudin puts it in his 'The Communist Movement from Comintern to Cominform' (p182) this policy 'had no precedent in the history of the Comintern'.

No, says Hobsbawm, that is not true. The Fourth Congress of the Communist International had already approved the idea in principle; and he tries to prove this, with references to the resolution on tactics passed by that congress.

This he does in a recently published collection of essays in honour of A J P Taylor, entitled 'Warfare, Diplomacy and Politics', edited by Chris Wrigley (pp172-174).

Let us first see what the resolution in question actually said. (The text is included in the first volume of 'The Communist International: Documents', edited by Jane Degras, the relevant section being on pp425-427).

In 1921 the Communist movement had adopted the policy of working for a united front of struggle by all workers' parties.

This turn gave rise to the problem of what Communists' attitude should be to the question of a workers' (or workers' and peasants') government, and the Fourth World Congress, meeting in 1922, addressed itself to this problem.

in the section of the resolution on

tactics dealing with 'the workers' government', it was, first of all, explained that there could be no question of supporting coalitions with bourgeois parties.

'The parties of the Second International are trying to 'save' the situation . . . by advocating and forming a coalition government of bourgeois and social-democrat parties . . .

'To this open or concealed bourgeois-social-democratic coalition the Communists oppose the united front of all workers and a coalition of all workers' parties in the economic and the political field for the fight against the bourgeois power and its eventual overthrow'. (Clear, I think: as Stalin used to say).

The resolution goes on to explain that 'in certain circumstances Communists must declare themselves ready to form a workers' government with non-Communist workers' parties and workers' organisations'. (Workers' parties and workers' organisations, be it noted.)

And the resolution lists five types of 'workers' government' which are seen as 'possibilities'. These are:

'1. Liberal workers' governments, such as there was in Australia; this is also possible in England in the near future.

'2. Social Democratic workers' governments (Germany).

'3. A government of workers and the poorer peasants. This is possible in the Balkans, Czechoslovakia, Poland etc.

'4. Workers' governments in which Communists participate.

'5. Genuine proletarian workers' governments, which in their pure form can be created only by the Communist Party.'

This section of the resolution concludes by discussing the attitudes that Communists should take up, in various circumstances, towards these 'workers' governments' of different types.

It will be seen that what is talked about in this resolution is a workers' government — or, in the special circumstances of Eastern Europe, a 'government of the workers and the poorer peasants.'

A distinction is made between workers' parties which were then nominally Marxist, in particular, the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, and those which were dominated by a 'Liberal' ideology, such as the Australian Labour Party and the British Labour Party (the former had already been in office and the latter was to take office in 1924).

How does Hobsbawm manage to get this resolution to serve his purpose?

First, in paraphrasing it (he does not actually quote), he makes it talk not of 'workers' governments but of 'broad' governments.

Then, in giving his version of the list of five types, he writes 'a Liberal government', instead of 'a Liberal workers' government'.

(The mind boggles at the thought of the Communists supporting 'a Liberal government' in the Britain of 1922!)

To make matters worse, Hobsbawm calls in for support Dimitroff's speech at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935, claiming that he had referred to the alleged precedent of 1922 as justifying the 'People's Front' policy of alliance with bourgeois parties like the radicals in France.

Actually, Dimitroff spoke only of the authorisation by the Fourth Congress of a 'united front government', in which Communists and



ERIC HOBSBAWM

Social Democrats would work together — i.e., a 'workers' government' from which bourgeois parties would be excluded.

(It has, of course, long been a trick of the Stalinists to try and confuse united front and 'People's Front' — 'Oh, so you're against the People's Front line, are you: stuck in the Third Period, eh, treating non-Communist socialists as social-fascists, and all that, I suppose!')

Hobsbawm's views on present-day politics are treated with respect largely because of his well-deserved reputation as an historian.

When an historian enters the political arena he is constantly tempted to depart from the standards he would normally adhere to in his work.

The phenomenon was described by Julien Benda nearly 60 years ago in his book 'The Treason of the Clerks'.

Benda was concerned mainly

with writers who, as he saw it, betrayed their integrity as intellectuals in order to serve right-wing causes.

But the same thing can happen on the left, too.

There is an old story, possibly apocryphal, about Varga, who was for some years economist in-ordinary to the Comintern.

One day, while in Berlin, he received a telegram from Moscow, informing him that a World Congress would soon be held and he was to prepare his usual report on 'the perspectives before capitalism'.

Varga is alleged to have replied with a telegram that inquired: 'What must facts show? Continued stabilisation or impending crisis?'

Historians may be tempted, similarly, to assure their readers that the documents of the movement's past tell whatever story suits the needs of their faction in the present situation.

'Milord' fails to gag MI5 scandal

BY MARTIN WESTWOOD

IN SEPTEMBER 1975 the Workers Revolutionary Party College of Marxist Education in Derbyshire was raided by over 200 police, apparently searching for 'buried arms'.

The raid was justified by an article which appeared in the Observer and was going to press just as the raid took place.

Subsequently it transpired, from libel proceedings commenced by the WRP against the Observer, that the whole affair had been set up and synchronised by MI5 in collusion with the Observer.

It would be a simple matter to dwell on the irony of the Observer's position over the past month as it faced a barrage of injunctions from the grey men at MI5.

But that would be doing a disservice to the working class and its allies.

On June 22, the Observer reported court proceedings under way in Australia where an ex-spy from MI5 is blowing the whistle on his previous benefactors.

Peter Wright is proposing to publish memoirs of his activities with MI5.

The British government are seeking to stop the publication and the proceedings will be determined in November.

In the meantime the Observer obtained a manuscript of Wright's book and revealed what revolutionaries and socialists had known for years — that MI5 is nothing more than a sophisticated bunch of thugs up to its neck in criminality.

It revealed that MI5:

- Bugged diplomats from France, Germany, Greece and Indonesia, and used microphones planted behind cipher machines.

- Bugged all diplomatic conferences at Lancaster House in London throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and the Zimbabwe negotiations in 1979.

- Carried out routine burglary and bugging.

- Attempted to assassinate President Nasser by poison

prepared and tested on sheep.

- Was involved in a so-far unknown 'plot' against Harold Wilson in 1974.

- Habitually switched car number-plates.

The reaction of the state to these revelations was to seek immediate injunctions against the Observer and the Guardian newspapers, to prevent further revelations and to restrain them and other publications from repeating them.

The Guardian's journalist, Richard Norton-Taylor, was actually excluded from the hearing on June 27 even though he was to be the subject of one of the injunctions.

After Mr Justice Millet upheld the injunctions, the Observer and Guardian went to the Court of Appeal.

At the appeal hearing, the aptly-named Mr John Laws QC on behalf of the Attorney General told it as it really is when he said:

'There is no magic nostrum in freedom of the press. There is no *a priori* reason why freedom of the press is in the public interest and should override other concerns.'

Needless to say the Appeal Court found favour with these arguments and ordered the injunction to continue on July 25.

In an effort to avoid the injunction, the Observer then proposed to report the remarks made by MP Dale Campbell-Savours in the House of Commons, which

essentially repeated the contents of the Observer's article of June 22, on the basis of allegations already made by former MI5-employee Cathy Massiter.

After all, was it not every journalist's right to publish what our MPs said in their famous talking shop?

Not according to the government and their Mr Laws, who got Mr Justice Nolan out of bed on Saturday morning to stop the Observer reporting what Hansard had already published!

Mr Stephen Nathan, counsel for the Observer, described the government's application as 'the most iniquitous, outrageous and dangerous I have ever heard in all my career at the Bar.'

We have news for Mr Nathan — he has seen nothing yet.

The government and Mr Laws finally realised that they could not obtain sufficient injunctions to stop everybody talking to everybody else, however much they might like to, and the Observer was able on Sunday to repeat what they had already reported on June 22.

The whole episode is instructive in showing how far the state will go to protect itself and the class it represents.

To those reformist dunderheads who imagine that the state can be controlled by a future Labour government, we suggest they put their faith in God and watch their backs.

Tamils' 'Black Friday' march



THE EELAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN demonstrated in London last Sunday to commemorate black Friday (July 23 1983) when thousands of Tamils were killed in government-organised pogroms.

Speaking at the rally before the march, Doctor Shraely Walson from the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front spoke of the struggle of Tamils for a homeland.

'In July 83 our people died at the hands of Sinhalese hoodlums. Today thousands are dying almost daily at the hands

of the government security forces.

'Government forces are killing Tamil civilians both on land and by attacks from the air.'

Viraj Mendis who had just arrived in London at the end of a march from Manchester against British immigration laws and his threatened deportation.

Viraj is Singhalese. He said that as a communist and he stands with the Tamils 'not just on humanitarian grounds but because I am certain that it is in the interest of the Singhalese work-

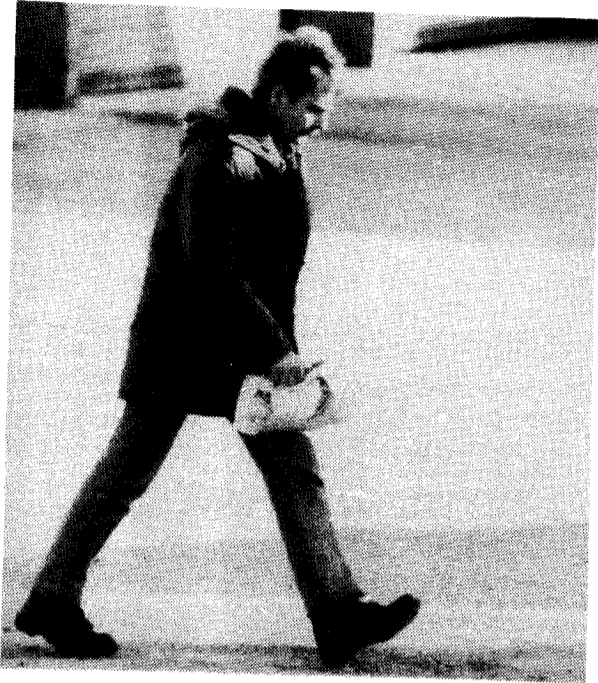
ers and poor to stand firmly with the Tamil people.

'I hope that progressives in this country support your struggle because it is part of the struggle against racism and imperialism all over the world.'

Other speakers included Hugh Stephens of the Korean Friendship Committee, as well as representatives of a number of Sri Lankan organisations who raised the question of the link between the national problem of the Tamil people and the struggle against the capitalist government of Sri Lanka.

DON'T BUY SILENTNIGHT BEDS!

Workers Press talks to the Silentnight Strike Committee



One of Tom Clarke's scabs makes his way to work



The Silentnight strikers kept up a picket throughout the long, cold winter at factories in Sutton and Barnoldswick

The Silentnight strikers have been out since June 10 1985.

Their determination to win against Tom Clarke, who owns Silentnight, is obvious to anyone who meets the strikers or their families.

The company was formed after the Second World War, but no union existed until 1984.

The central fight of these workers is the right to work.

Since 1984 this also involved the right to organise in a trade union and the right to a decent living wage.

The strikers have been deeply moved by the extent of help they have received from support groups, some trades councils, Labour party branches, trades councils and individuals.

They do not easily voice criticism of anyone but they stress that they want more support and not just moral or

paper support.

Silentnight turnover has dropped from £78 million to £71 million this year, and the company is clearly very worried about its outlets.

Thirty per cent of Silentnight output goes to the Co-op.

Only a minority of Co-op boards have terminated their contracts with the scab company.

All support groups should visit their local Co-op branches and demand through the Labour Party and USDAW that Co-op stores end their contracts with Silentnight.

The national board of the CWS decided, on the chairman's casting vote, to continue to trade with Silentnight; the strikers are determined to get this reversed.

The Silentnight strikers are putting further pressure on the CWS at this year's TUC conference.

Their union, the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union (FTAT), is asking conference to 'bring the maximum lawful pressure to bear within the entire co-operative movement' to stop the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) selling Silentnight

products.

This would deliver a major blow to Silentnight, as according to Frank Davies, assistant general secretary of FTAT: 'CWS is taking up to 30 per cent of Silentnight output.'

Silentnight has been saying that the strike has ended to certain companies, but on the other hand has been saying it is willing to negotiate to other companies.

In fact, Silentnight was generous enough to say that if the strike was ended, they

would consider taking the ex-strikers back on — when vacancies arose.

The strikers' reply is not printable here!

Last year the TUC conference passed a resolution of support. This year Silentnight strikers want to see action not words.

MARTIN RALPH interviewed strikers from the Barnoldswick factory.

They reveal the united strength of black and white, men and women workers carrying on where the miners left off.

TREVOR KING

WHAT are the origins of the union at Silentnight?

WE tried to join the T&GWU but the management threatened us with the sack so things carried on as normal.

Silentnight did then say they would accept FTAT.

A few joined but they were scattered throughout the factory.

Then in February 1984 the management went to a women's section and retrained their job for new piece rates.

They said 'there's your new rate — do it or get out!'

To the company's surprise they walked out, and 95 per cent of the shopfloor went with them. After two weeks strike everyone was with us.

The order books were full, the warehouses were empty and the new catalogues had just gone out.

We won and all joined FTAT.

We went back with something for the first time in our lives — a national rulebook, a national labour agreement, the Bedding Federation rulebook.

This says that all piece rates and wage increases must be negotiated.

Then the Performance Index (PI) system was not working.

Shop stewards tried to negotiate but they were banging their heads against a brick wall.

The management could not adapt, they had been set in their ways for too long. In December 1984, 88 of us were made redundant.

At the beginning of 1985 we were asked to forego our wage rise for three months.

We made an honest decision, we were not greedy. The majority said go along with the company's terms.

Eight weeks after this Tom Clarke announced 52 further redundancies.

We then asked for the pay rise. Clarke would not budge.

We worked to rule — about 65 per cent of normal production. They said if you don't work in 10 minutes, you are suspended.

They suspended the workers and we came out on strike.

On 10 June 1985, that is on the eve of the holidays, we all received a company letter.

It said — return to work after the holidays or you will be sacked. We were all disgusted by this treatment.

We are one of the best workforces in the country and we all stood together. By 25 June we had all got a letter saying our employment had been terminated.

The company didn't lie when they said profits were down.

Tom Clarke and his family took £640,000 from a profit of £5 million in one year. They took the same when profits were £2.8 million!

That made our resolve even stronger. Our pay rise



TREVOR KING — thanks for the photographs, Trevor. (The pictures on these two pages are his)

out of the window there and then.

Yesterday (July 22) we were over in Huddersfield outside 'Night and Day'.

This is (or was) a firm which had Tom Clarke's son as a major director. It was

another firm.

The drivers at Silentnight did come out with us, but after three weeks they went back. The T&GWU eventually kicked them out of the union.

But the drivers of Abba Shipping from Felixstowe, who bring timber, have shown us their T&G cards and said they have been instructed to drive through the picket line. Other firms are Vitafoam, Harris and Jones and TNT.

The TUC conference last year passed an emergency resolution. We thought we had won but it was just words.

This time we want real support.

We are getting some support from the Co-op shops but this is not yet national. We want their full support. After all the Co-op movement has its roots in Rochdale.

would have cost a third of what he paid himself.

Manufacturers must realise that the cost of a dispute is more than the cost of settling a dispute.

HOW is the strike going now?

WE have been conducting a boycott campaign recently and had some success.

We had a demonstration outside Allied Carpets in Sheffield.

They took Silentnight beds

an outlet for Silentnight products.

Our support group have done a great job.

The manager came out to one of our pickets and said 'You've closed us down.'

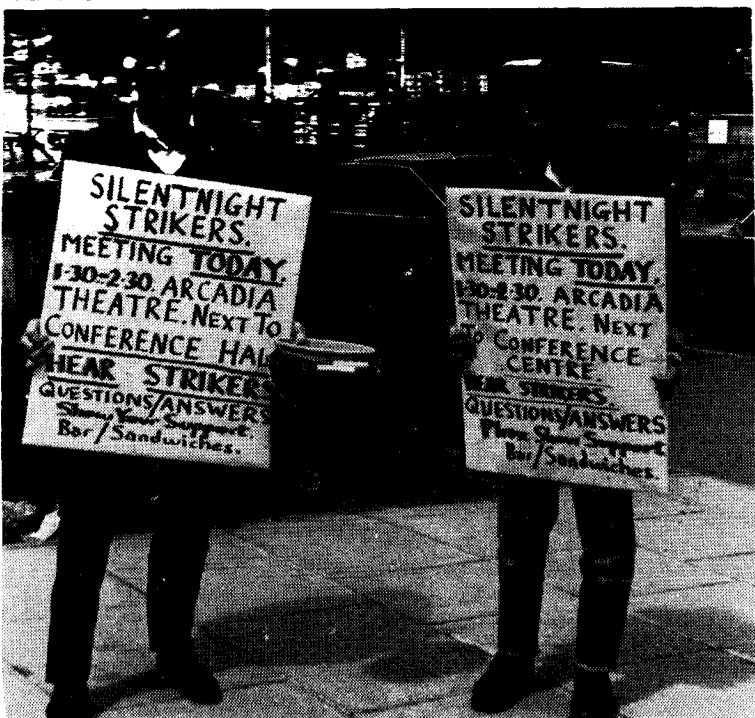
The company had been exposed and the local people won't have anything to do with them.

We have a picket every day while the firm is working.

We have tried to stop the drivers and some do turn away. Then along comes



HUDDERSFIELD Trades Council helps with picket duty outside 'Night and Day'. Silentnight owner Tom Clarke has a son who is (or was) a 'Night and Day' director. The shop's manager complained, 'You've closed us down'.



Campaigning at the NALGO conference in Birmingham - where the strikers raised £1,500



ABOVE: Tom Clarke's house. He and his family took a mere £640,000 from the firms profits last year. Below: an entrance to Silentnight premises carries a not-so-silent message

Mohamed A Farooq

WHAT do you feel about the workers inside Silentnight?

THE WORKERS inside Silentnight are wrong, they will do the same to them as they have done to us.

This government is trying to run our lives like slaves — they say do it or leave. The union is good but the Tories are trying to smash them. We are hoping a Labour government will help people like us.

WHAT support are you getting from your community?

WE are getting good support from our community, but also from the Labour Party. A lot of money is coming in.

The Labour MP is coming here but the Tory one, which some of us voted for, has never been seen.

We never got unemployment or supplementary benefit in the beginning.

The Pakistani Workers Association in Nelson gave us the use of their office, with the telephones, photocopying and advice.

Everybody is struggling

but our families are very firm.

My children and my wife are very proud of me because I took the right step.

I don't want anyone in future to say to my children 'your dad was a scab, he was not a good man.'

We may lose our jobs but I am not ashamed of myself at all.

I have worked here since 1967 and I was very experienced. When I was dismissed I was working on a very expensive range.

People here have worked here for 25 or 30 years. They are not daft and do not act without good reason.

TOM CLARKE is saying the strike is over. What do you say?

TOM CLARKE says the strike is finished.

People should come here themselves and see. The strike is very strong, the people are firm, their morale is high.

We have won support from many places, but we want more. All Co-ops should stop selling Silentnight products.



IRENE SCOTT

WHAT changes have taken place during the strike?

A NUMBER of changes took place from the shop stewards to the strike committee.

Many people became active through the strike.

All the striking women are now active in the strike.

At the start, there were problems of support from families but as time went on it became solid.

The 13 months of strike action have seen the blackening campaign grow.

We want physical support now more than moral or financial support.

The miners have collected food and money every two or three weeks from Yorkshire.

But every union should get involved.

Our fight is their fight.

WHAT connections are there between the miners' strike and yours?

THE MINERS learned the

hard way about what support is.

At the time we didn't realise it but the miners' strike played a large part in our strike.

It helped the working class to stick together in supporting each other.

It is absolutely fantastic what the miners have done for us.

They showed us how to set up support groups.

When we go back to work we will be able to help other people in struggle.

HOW would you describe the end of the miners' strike?

I DON'T think it can ever be called a defeat because although they went back they still have the union.

If it was a defeat they wouldn't have the NUM now.

It wasn't the result the NUM wanted, but they still have their beliefs, their pride and their union.

The UDM have nothing, they're just scabs.

I have talked to miners who stuck it out but went back in the last month of the strike.

What the hell — they're still scabs.

All credit to those that stayed out.

We are reaping the benefit of what the miners went through.

If we walked away now we would let down the support groups and our supporters and we are not going to do that.

WHAT other support have you had?

THE BEST support group is the one in Rochdale.

They have raised money and food, they put on a play about the strike which was great.

Dennis Skinner has supported us 100 per cent of the way.

The Labour Party and the TUC conference passed resolutions supporting us.

The resolutions last year were fine in words but nothing came from it.

I would like the TUC to change from a toothless lion to one with real teeth.

Shankat A Khan

WHAT kind of problems have the strikers overcome in their 13 months of struggle?

WE HAD a problem with the dole for a very long time.

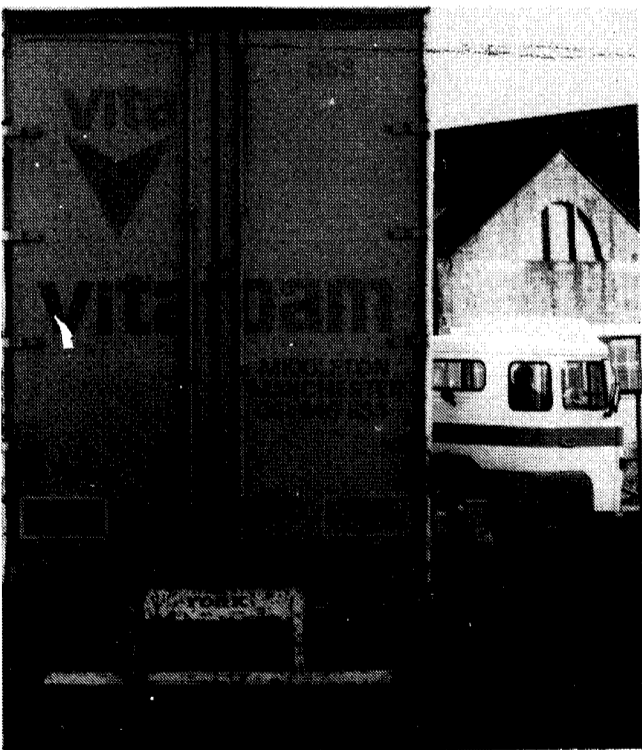
In the end they decided to pay us our benefit, but some of us think they may try to stop our money again.

Every strike has problems

such as shortage of money, shortage of facilities and the law. But the response has been good.

But we need continued backing and we need more publicity.

We will listen to anyone who can help our strike. We want pressure built on the company and the Co-op to stop selling Silentnight beds.



A lorry from VITAFOAM. Drivers have produced their union cards and claim they have been 'instructed' to drive through the picket lines

For speakers from the Silentnight dispute, contact Terry Bennett, 22 Garrick Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 8JA.

Telephones 0282-603055 814556 843649.

Please send donations to FTAT Cravendale, 92 Branch Strike Fund, Treasurer Mrs Ann King, 10 Rainhill Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire. Telephone 0282-813662.

To adopt a family, please telephone 0282-813662.



Trevor's photograph shows a short debate on a picket line

The councillors went to Jerusalem...

NAZARETH: This town is, of course, known around the world as, according to the New Testament, the home town of a certain carpenter who fell foul of the religious and secular authorities of his day and was executed by the occupying imperialists.

When I was here twenty-odd years ago, the guide even showed us a basement workshop, complete with ancient-looking chisels and bench, where he was supposed to have served his apprenticeship.

I don't know if they've found his union card yet.

I was talking to a young Palestinian here who's an archeologist by profession but he was mainly interested in asking me how the miners' struggle is going — he remembered me from a march in London.

Nazareth today is a Palestinian town, population 60,000 — mainly Christians — with a Communist Party-led council led by mayor Toufik Zayyad.

As the largest Arab population centre within the State of Israel, it is a centre of political and cultural activity.

The streets are certainly cleaner since my earlier visit. There is mains drainage and all the municipal services of a modern town and the council is still making improvements.

But not without problems. When I arrived in Nazareth on July 7, local councillors and council workers were about to board coaches for Jerusalem to join a demonstration outside the kneset, demanding funds which central government has withheld.

Coming from Lambeth and with a comrade from Liverpool, we felt quite at home.

On the higher ground above Nazareth, the Israeli government has sponsored Nazareth Elit — Upper Nazareth — a smart Jewish town with factories and public offices that takes the business and potential rate-base away from cash-starved Nazareth below.

(This pattern of Israeli state-backed Jewish settlement on high ground overlooking Arab centres is recurrent throughout much of Galilee.

The new settlements often have the prefix 'Mizpeh' before their name, literally meaning 'lookout post' or vantage point.

The Zionist authorities are honest enough about how they perceive their function.)

Trying to improve their towns and villages and provide decent services, Arab local councils like Nazareth's have all run into debt problems, coupled with financial discrimination by central government.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS



Nazareth Elit — upper Nazareth — looks down on the Arab city. With government policies discriminating, it can afford to.

Several simply ran out of money this year to pay their staff.

There is also a continuing struggle over land, with the Zionists confiscating land from Arab villages then manipulating planning regulations to prohibit further building.

Houses built in defiance are demolished by armed police units.

After launching a public services strike this month, the local councils met in Nazareth on July 4 to discuss

their grievances and what could be done.

Besides immediate payment of a promised \$1.1 million subsidy which the central government had withheld, councillor Nimr Hussein said they called for 'full equality with the Jewish local authorities within three years and an end to the demolition of houses and to land confiscation'.

On July 7, the Nazareth councillors and workers joined hundreds of others demonstrating outside the Kneset.

Placards were raised attacking government policy and hostile officialdom.

'Equality and nothing less!' demonstrators chanted.

'We won't stay silent over the destruction of our local councils!'

'We won't surrender to robbing us of our lands!'

Nazareth's deputy-mayor Ramez Jaraysi attacked anti-Arab discrimination since the Israeli state was created.

'If this policy continues,

we will paralyze the whole country'.

There were speeches by some Kneset members, including CP leader Meir Wilner.

The following day, it was reported that a Kneset committee was considering the council's immediate crisis and that some promised funds would be released.

But the battle over land-grabbing, neglect, exploitation and discrimination goes on.

Equality is a long way off.



DEMONSTRATING Arab Local Council leaders and employees in front of the Kneset



Workman repairing water-main. Nazareth and other Arab towns have been hit by cash crisis and discrimination.

PALESTINIAN TRADE UNIONS PROTEST ISRAELI MILITARY BAN

TRADE UNIONISTS in the Israeli-occupied West Bank territory are protesting at Israeli military repression which has hit their annual conference.

Twice in the past month troops have surrounded the Nablus headquarters of the General Federation of Trade Unions to prevent members meeting.

The federation's annual meeting was originally planned for June 27, at the Ibrihamiyah College in Jerusalem.

The unions' activities and the worsening job situation were on the agenda.

Several prominent West Bank personalities were invited, and also Kneset member Muhammed Miari.

Zionist authorities told the college it would be closed down if the conference went ahead.

The federation executive

decided to hold the conference at the unions' offices in Nablus.

At 8.30 in the morning of June 27, an Israeli officer arrived at the offices, and instructed federation general secretary Shehadeh Minawi to accompany him to the Military Governor's offices.

Brother Minawi was interrogated about the speeches, duration of the meeting, and participants.

Then the Military Governor told him the conference would not be allowed, by military order.

Six army patrols surrounded the union headquarters, and ordered members to leave.

Kneset member Miari, the unions' guest of honour, was told to translate the order.

Executive member Shaher Sa'ad was detained for some hours by the troops.

The union federation decided to make another attempt to hold its annual conference, in accordance with its constitution, on July 4.

This time, to avoid accusations that it was a 'political gathering', the executive decided not to invite any guest speakers.

However, the Military Governor again summoned Bro.

Minawi and demanded the unions' conference be cancelled, on the grounds that it was a 'political assembly'.

General-secretary Minawi argued that it was a perfectly legitimate meeting of workers, but to no avail.

In the early hours of July 4, troops again surrounded the trade union headquarters and prevented access to the building, forcing the conference to be called off.

In a statement outlining these facts, the General Federation of Trade Unions calls on workers' organisations throughout the world to help them put an end to the Israeli harassment, 'so we may be allowed our legal right to express ourselves.'

— Trade unionists in Britain can send protests to the Israeli embassy, 2, Palace Green, W8.

ESTINE

THIS WEEK, we hear a bit about the Arab councils' struggle in Israel and meet the Anglican canon of Nazareth who went to see Arafat.

In forthcoming articles we will be hearing from young councillors in an even younger town — Um el Fahm, which gained municipal status only this year — and seeing something of its people's struggle.

We also be meeting Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, in Gaza, in Jerusalem and elsewhere, including Bedouin in the Negev, and learning about their struggles.

...the canon was just back from Tunis

CANON RIAH ABU EL ASSAL is head of the Anglican Church in this part of the world.

He is also president of the Progressive List for Peace, a joint Arab-Israeli party. Together with one of its two Knesset members, Mohammed Miari, Canon Riah went to Tunis early in June to meet with PLO chair Yassir Arafat.

'The hopes and aspirations of our people are part and parcel of our personality in Israel', the canon said, speaking to us beneath the stained-glass windows of his Nazareth church, alongside a lectern with decorative Arabic embroidery.

'We struggle for justice and a lasting solution for the Palestinian people.'

Canon Riah said successive Israeli governments had tried to 'de-Palestinianise' the Arabs, or had said 'Christians and Arabs' — 'as though we Christians are not Arabs'.

'Your identity is in danger. You are not what you are, as far as the authorities are concerned.'

In reaction to this, Palestinians like himself had joined the Progressive movement and were emphasising their 'Palestinianism'.

'We need to deepen this consciousness in spite of the efforts of the authorities — and others — those who tried to make us play it softly, make us forget who we are.'

He explained that various forces had come together to form the Progressive List.

As a coalition, it was an alliance of the Arab Progressive movement and the 'Alternativa' group working within the Jewish sector.

We differ from others, including the Communist Party, on several points.

First, the Right of Return for Palestinians.

This was a point of concern for us long before the Progressive movement.

The Right of Return for the Palestinian refugees was dropped from their programme (the CP) a long time before.

We said we should not forget the causes of the conflict, the causes which will return whatever agreements are made, if they are not solved.

It's not just a matter of human sympathies, of feeding people with milk and bread.

It's a question of Land — of a people who lost their land.

We say, back to the roots.

The Palestinian refugee has at least as much right to return as Israel gives Jews from America, or the Soviet Union.

If they say 'Let My People Go', we say, Let the Palestinian people go home!

Let me say to those concerned to find a peaceful solution, this is the prayer of every Palestinian.

It will be till we find a solution.

The major participants in the conflict are the Palestinians — not the Egyptians, not the Lebanese.

The outcome of Sadat's 'peace' trip was war in Lebanon.

People always said, "You can't have peace without Syria, you can't make war without Egypt."

The Israelis understood that there would not be war with Egypt, so they could go ahead with the invasion of Lebanon.

I heard from an Israeli friend that Sharon said the aim must be to kill as many Palestinians as they can.

Sharon forgets that was the philosophy of Hitler, to kill as many Jews as he could.

There is a need for a solution.

Not just for us Palestinians, but for the rest of the world, not least the Jews.

The Israelis have harmed the Jewish people throughout the world.

We do not replace the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people.

We strongly believe the Palestinian leadership is smart enough to negotiate a peaceful solution.

We believe there is a place for a Palestinian state, on Palestinian soil.

Palestinians, like the rest of the world, have the right

federation between them.

If we are asked to set a date, we might say 20 years, we might say 25 years.

After there is enough trust between the two nations.

There is already great similarity between the two peoples.

We are very much the "Jews" of the Arab world.

We have not only proved ourselves ready to die for our cause, we are also able to live for our cause.

A peaceful solution, just and lasting, will be for the two of us.

Palestinians are second only to Americans in the percentage of university graduates we produce.

The outcome of Sadat's 'peace' trip was the war in Lebanon

to self-determination. That means a state.

When we say we want a Palestinian state alongside Israel, we are asked where we'd put the border.

We were asked by Arens (the Israeli minister) where we would make the border.

We said we're not in a position to make a border line.

There is a legitimate representative for the Palestinians, there is an Israeli government.

They must negotiate.

There should be mutual recognition — not as precondition for negotiations but as the outcome.

Once states come into being, there may be a confederation of two states in historic Palestine.

The most logical development from two states is con-

At present, our young people face discrimination.

Millions of dunams of Arab land have been confiscated.

We urgently need industrialisation and job opportunities.

We have been greatly discriminated against.

But despite all this, the Israelis have not succeeded in breaking us.

Kahane says the Arabs are to go.

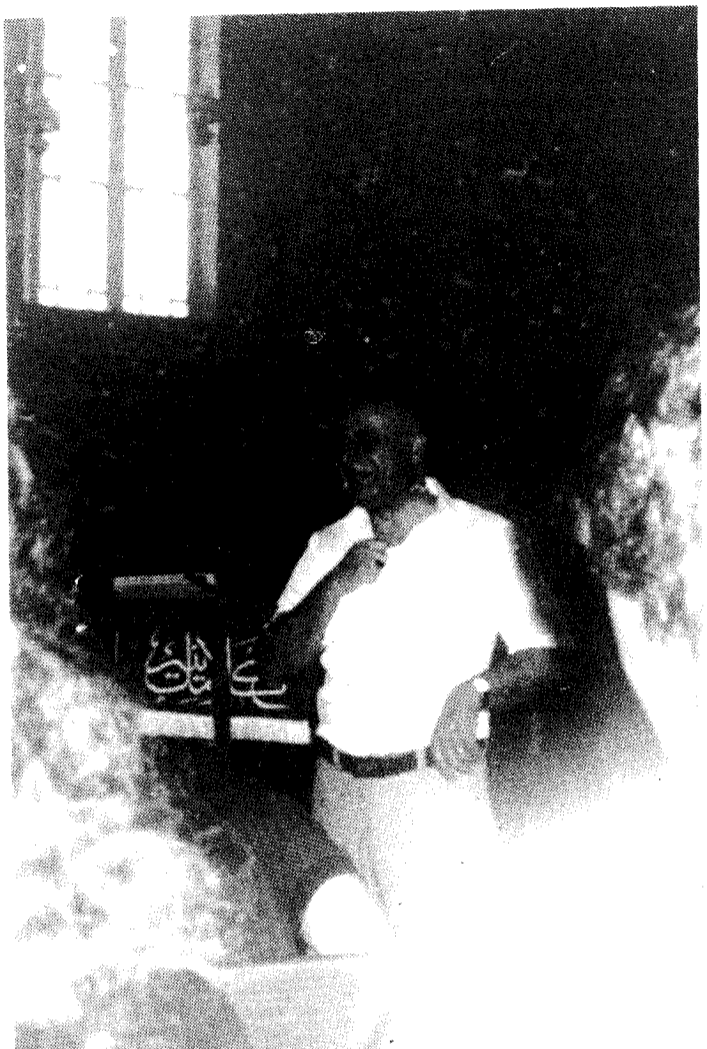
Others just use nicer words — 'the Arabs are to be transferred'.

We tell them — we belong here.

Many speak of Kahane as a new phenomenon.

He is not a phenomenon. He is an expression of a phenomenon that has been here for many years.

Now Israel says it is trying



Canon Riah Abu al Assal. 'Palestinians have the right to self-determination. That means a state. . .'

to find an alternative to the PLO.

America is trying to find an alternative to the PLO. Mrs. Thatcher is trying to find an alternative. This is an old story.

We decided, even if we have to go to prison, we have to show the rest of the world there is no alternative to the PLO.

That was the reason for

our recent visit.

There is in reality no alternative to the PLO.

Whoever tries to find one is not serious about the search for peace.

They thought they had defeated the Palestinian leadership in Lebanon. They were wrong.

The Palestinians are stronger. ♣



Parents left as refugees, sons return as migrant workers — cheap labour or militant workforce?



Nablus workers face Israeli army presence. Unions are being harassed.

'ORGANISING A MILITANT MINORITY'

IN THIS second part of 'Organising a Militant Minority', reprinted from Workers Power no 21, Keith Hassell argues that the Communist Party made a promising start in organising a minority movement in the trade unions which was prepared to challenge the union bureaucracy left and right.

However, as the fledgling party came increasingly under pressure from the Stalinist degeneration of the Communist International, the political line of the Minority Movement was tailored to the left bureaucracy of Purcell, Swales and others. This fitted in with the requirements of the Stalinist regime which was seeking allies in its bid to build 'socialism in a single country'.

Nevertheless, the lessons of the Minority Movement are still relevant today, as a new generation of the working class takes up the fight to defend its organisations.

IN THE period leading up to the foundation of the NMM the CPGB were clear about the role of the trade union bureaucracy. No section of the official leadership was regarded as 100 per cent reliable.

This was true as much for the 'lefts' as for the open boss-men on the right. Most prominent of the 'Left' leaders was A.J. Cook, an ex-CPer and founder of the Miners MM.

In 1924 CPGB and MM support did much to guarantee Cook's election as General Secretary of the MFGB.

Cook's election was a reflection of a leftwards movement within the whole working class which was refracted within the bureaucracy.

At first, the CPGB reacted with revolutionary realism:

'It would be a suicidal policy, however, for the CP and NMM to place much reliance on what we have called the official wing... It is the duty of our Party and the NMM to criticise its weaknesses relentlessly.' (Communist Review October 1924).

Lefts like Scargill, and Cook before him, are capable of much resounding rhetoric.

Enjoying the rank and file's respect they must be put to the test of action.

Yet their leftism is not unconnected to the fact that they do not hold the real power and responsibility within their unions.

Cook was isolated within the MFGB leadership, as were Hicks and Purcell on the General Council of the TUC.

As Trotsky explained, 'The right wingers have a system: They have behind them tradition, experience, routine, and most important of all, bourgeois society as a whole is thinking for them... The weakness of the left wingers comes from their lack of cohesion and this arises from their ideological shapelessness... and is therefore incapable of organisationally assuming the leadership of the trade union movement.' (L. Trotsky on Britain, p163-4 Pathfinder).

Tragically for the British

working class, these principled considerations less and less guided the practice of the CPGB and the NMM after 1924.

This is largely accounted for by the centrist degeneration of the CI increasingly coming under the hold of Stalin, in league with Zinoviev.

Guiding the line of the 5th Congress of the CI Zinoviev refused to recognise the partial stability that imperialism had attained, preferring, in Britain, to see revolution around the corner.

Since the British working class were not yet ready to rise to Zinovievite schemas, the CI shifted attention to the TUC 'lefts' in the hope of accelerating the revolution through gentle flattery.

Enforced

This policy was enforced upon the CPGB by Tomskey, who attended the TUC Congress of 1924 and 1925.

By the latter part of 1924 and throughout 1925 the crisis of British imperialism intensified once more. This time the bosses were confronted by a more confident working class which had been significantly radicalised.

At a special NMM conference in January 1925 the number of delegates (and workers represented) had tripled in four months! 617 delegates representing some 17 per cent of the TUC membership.

Yet as 1925 progressed the policy of the CI under Stalin was changing.

On the basis of the reactionary utopia of 'building socialism in one country' the main plank of Stalin's fore-

ign policy was to pacify the international bourgeoisie — to buy time to 'build socialism'. And the main agent of this pacification in Britain? The same 'lefts' that were to have been a catalyst for the revolution nine months earlier!

The CPGB and the NMM responded to this opportunism uneasily at first. Their centrist decline entailed vacillations and waverings within which some principled work could occur.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1925 the NMM was actively preparing rank and file organisations — Councils of Action in preparation for the general strike.

They particularly put effort into building joint committees of miners, dockers, railway workers and engineers. Dozens of these emerged between April and June 1925.

The Metal Workers MM had established 13 District Committees and the Transport MM some ten others. Alongside this the CPGB was busy, if belatedly, building party cells in the plants and mines.

However, a major turning

A REVIEW OF THE 1920s MINORITY MOVEMENT



A.J. Cook



Herbert Smith, President of the MFGB

point occurred after 'Red Friday' (July 31) when the coalowners and the Tories backed down from a confrontation with the miners.

The situation threatened to escalate into a general strike.

The Tories were ill prepared for this in 1925.

Tactical

They bought time with a tactical retreat and during the next nine months they refined all the coercive machinery they needed to smash a general strike.

In this context the September Congress of the TUC took place. Cook and Purcell had now been made honorary members of the Moscow Soviet.

Left resolutions were passed — opposition to the Dawes Plan and to Imperialism — for the British Troop Withdrawal from China.

Only Trotsky gave a revolutionary estimate of the Congress when he said of the Congress, 'it was left so long as it had to accept no practical obligations.'

Indeed, the General Council blocked any attempts to make it responsible for organising the General Strike, and a large right wing majority was enthroned on the General Council.

Trotsky's perspective was lost on the CPGB. Under the CI's tutelage Gallacher said of the 'left' Swales, 'In the stern, tough voice of Swales spoke the working class dictatorship.' (Calhoun, United Front, p174).

In the months leading up to the General Strike (May 1926) the NMM continued to build action committees. The March 1926 Action Conference of the NMM gave voice to the aspirations of more workers than ever before.

More than it ever was to again. Nearly one million workers through 883 delegates were represented. 52 trades councils were present. Alongside this by April 1926 the CPGB had built upwards of 300 party factory/mine cells — a five-fold increase in 10 months.

Influence

But precisely when the organisational influence of the NMM and CPGB was increasingly preparing the basis for a challenge for power, so the political line of the NMM was being more and more tailored to the limits of the 'left' officials.

A two-fold process was occurring. On the one side, the CPGB was depriving itself of its revolutionary independence, 'by the actual dissolution of the party into the so-called Minority Move-



TUC headquarters in 1926

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ment . . . (Trotsky on the Trade Unions, p36).

On the other side, within the NMM the independent line of the rank and file was being subordinated to that of the left reformist bureaucracy.

In February 1926 Cook was to say that he agreed with 'nine tenths' of the CP's policies. That is, Cook was not to be trusted.

But Hardy, the Organising Secretary of the NMM thought otherwise. Of the March NMM Conference he declared:

'We sent out from MM headquarters instructions for our members to work for the establishment of Councils of Action in every area.

'We warned, however, that the Councils of Action were under no circumstances to take over the work of the trade unions . . . The Councils of Action were to see that all the decisions of the General Council and the union executives were carried out.' (Hardy, Those Stormy Years, p185).

Excuse

Murphy added to this view a total identification of the left bureaucrats with their followers, as an excuse for not attacking Cook, Purcell et al: 'If we vigorously attack the "left wing leaders" we attack the mass with a similar outlook and drive them away from the party.' (Communist Review, no number, 1925).

On the very eve of the General Strike from his prison cell, Harry Pollit, the NMM leader wrote 'The Party's most important task is

preparation for this; at present more danger arises from the right wing . . . we should consider concentrating on the left wing in the localities and extending the MM as an all-in oppositional movement.' (H. Pollit by J. Mahon p131).

Through this policy the General Strike was doomed to defeat in advance. The CPGB taught the working class, through the NMM, to place their trust, not in the CPGB, but in the TUC 'lefts'.

They left the working class rudderless when the likes of Purcell and Cook were politically incapable of giving an independent lead when Citrine and Pugh on the General Council aborted the struggle.

The CPGB should politically and organisationally have prepared the rank and file, through the NMM, for the task of throwing aside Purcell and Cook when they became a brake upon pushing the struggle to the end.

After the General Strike Stalin's maintenance of the alliance with the TUC via the Anglo Russian Committee (ARC) precluded the possibility of learning this key lesson of the General Strike.

The CPGB fell into line with the by now thoroughly centralist Communist International.

It remained impervious to Trotsky's criticisms of its policy of 'courting the Left'. Indeed it went on to make excuses for the 'lefts'.

At the NMM conference in 1926, after the General Strike the weaknesses of the left officials were explained thus:

'The MM . . . declares that the fundamental failure of the left-wing in the General Council was due, (1) To their domination by many right-wing ideas; (2) To their lack of trust in the masses.

And a resolution on the General Strike at the same conference concluded: 'The Conference declares that no left leadership can be trusted in the future, unless it breaks with the right wing policy and allies itself with the left wing trade unionists organised in the Minority Movement.' (Report of 3rd Annual Conference of the NMM 1926, p48).

The central task remained, therefore, the wooing of this 'left' in the hope that it would swap its allegiance.

Centrist

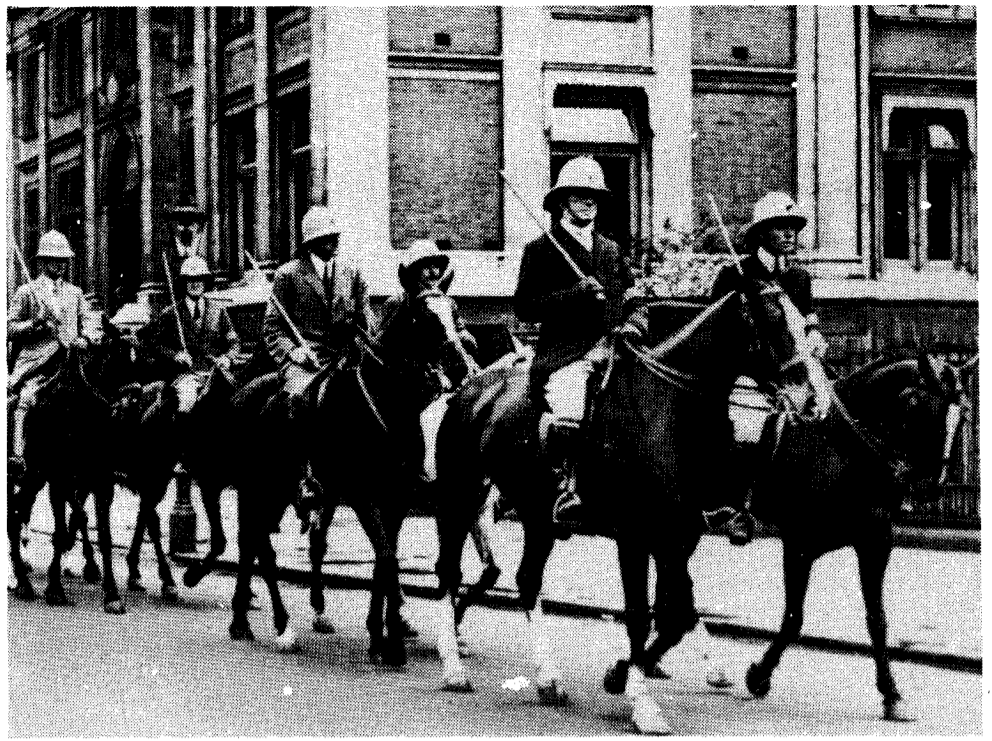
The CPGB paid dearly for their centrist errors. After the General Strike the TUC went on the offensive against the NMM. In April 1927 the TUC refused to recognise any trades council affiliated to the NMM.

Even then the CP refused to fight the proscription.

In 1929 the NMM was given a reward for its servility. It was totally proscribed by the TUC. Thereafter the NMM collapsed and held its last conference in 1929.

A new, a revolutionary NMM, remains an imperative need for the British working class, as does the building of a revolutionary Trotskyist party that will be both built through it and alongside it.

In the next years there will be conjunctures which will



Mounted special constables in London during the General Strike

either facilitate or make difficult the building and consolidating of this movement.

That is purely secondary. Today those who consider themselves revolutionaries have a duty to search out the existing focal points of resistance to the bosses' offensive which could prove the point of departure for a revolutionary rank and file movement.

The recent battle over the Longbridge victimisation was one, there will be others.

Revolutionaries must strive to give leadership to these struggles in the tradi-

tion of the revolutionary period of the CPGB and the NMM.

In the 1922/23 period the CPGB laid the basis for the NMM, a programme summarised in 'Stop the Retreat' and 'Back to the Unions'.

Today the foundation stones of new Minority Movement must be laid around a similar programme.

But the key lessons of the Minority Movement must be assimilated. Its early success was bound up with its

fight for a programme that related the defence of basic working class needs with the overthrow of capitalism — a transitional programme.

As the General Strike approached, it dropped its programme in order to win the approving smiles of the left union leaders.

This error sealed its fate. The new Minority Movement must be built independent of all sections of the union leadership, and it must be won to a programme that leads inexorably to the conquest of power by the working class.

A Break with the Past

A statement from the WRP Womens' Commission

Women and the Communist movement — challenge for Trotskyism

THE ESTABLISHMENT of a Women's Commission marks a new turn for the WRP and a further break from the degenerate policies of the Healy regime.

Under Healy, complete disregard for the particular plight of women in capitalism, with the burden of oppression as a worker as well as oppression as an unpaid domestic, led to unwarranted hostility to the women's movement and all the gains it has made in the past years.

This hostility to so-called 'bourgeois feminism' provided a cover for Healy's own foul abuse of women cadre of the WRP and the International Committee.

While women around the world were demanding a reappraisal of their status and fighting against their repression, Healy was using and abusing this repression to further his own fantasy of power and in the process destroying and holding back numbers of women who had joined this movement to fight for their class.

To dismiss the entire international women's movement

as 'bourgeois' shows the same barrenness of analysis that led the ICFI to spurn and renege on the Irish republican struggle, to condone the murder of Iraqi communists and to replace political polemic with the United Secretariat with the futile and spurious 'Security and the 4th International' investigation.

The women's movement embraces many struggles by working-class women in advanced capitalist countries for equal pay, better working conditions and equal access to the workforce; it embraces women in most countries around the world

fighting for social responsibility for child care, health and welfare care.

It embraces the involvement of women in national revolutionary struggles in Nicaragua, the Philippines, Palestine etc and the revolution in South Africa; it embraces the courage of women like the Madres of Argentina who spoke out against the repressive regime when no-one else dared.

At home, it was the Greenham women who led the struggle against US bases in Britain and the courage, strength and organisation of the women of the pit villages during the miners' strike changed the face of industrial disputes and introduced a new force into the labour movement.

Within the broad women's movement many tendencies are represented: Stalinism, reformism, revisionism and bourgeois feminism — sadly, Trotskyism is lacking.

The WRP of the past must take responsibility for this.

By refusing to fight within the women's movement for a class position, which would have brought clarity to thousands of women, it has left the movement open to misleadership.

And if sections of the women's movement are bourgeois feminist, these are mostly women who are sincerely, if misguidedly, struggling for changes for a doubly oppressed group.

On the other hand we find Healy promoting the most backward of bourgeois atti-

tudes to women for his own cynical purposes.

Let it be made clear: violent, sexual abuse of women is an institutionalised part of bourgeois rule and has no place in the communist movement.

The WRP Women's Commission has many tasks ahead of it. The women and men on the Commission bring together a wide range of experiences which will prove invaluable in the struggles ahead.

We must learn to identify the different tendencies in

the women's movement and to counter those that hinder revolutionary struggle.

We must involve ourselves in the struggles of women against their double oppression.

It is not just that we are neglecting half the class if we don't do this. It is also that we are lacking in understanding of the battles and consciousness of the class itself.

The fight to build a revolutionary movement is the fight against bourgeois ideology and part of that ideology is its attitude to women.

Crawley Branch WRP

Day Schools

Sunday, August 17 'Historical Materialism' Bob Archer
Sunday, September 21 'Political Economy' Geoff Pilling

10.30am — 4.30pm

Ifield Community Centre, Ifield Drive, Crawley

Entrance: £1 per day

Creche and refreshments available

Workers Revolutionary Party West of Scotland branch

LECTURE SERIES

MARXISM AND THE WORKING CLASS TODAY

Tuesday August 5th, 7:30 pm:

'Trotsky's Transitional Programme Today' — G. Pilling

Tuesday August 19th, 7:30 pm:

'The theory of permanent revolution: its relevance today'

Tuesday September 2nd, 7:30 pm

'Trotskyists, trades unions and the Labour Party' — W. Hunter

Tuesday September 16th, 7:30 pm:

'Ireland and the national question'

Tuesday September 30th, 7:30 pm:

'The Scottish working class and its history'

Tuesday October 14th, 7:30 pm:

'The family and the struggle for socialism'

All lectures at the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, except Tuesday August 19th, when the lecture is at Partick Burgh Halls, Burgh Hall Street, off Dumbarton Road, Partick.

Workers Revolutionary Party

PUBLIC MEETING

'WHERE THE WRP STANDS'

Thursday August 21st, 7:30 pm
Central Library, Wellgate, Dundee

Speaker: Simon Pirani (WRP Central Committee)
Discussion on the WRP Manifesto 'A programme for the crisis'

Workers Revolutionary Party West of Scotland branch

DAY SCHOOL

'COMMUNISTS AND THE TRADE UNIONS'

Saturday August 16th, 10:30 am- 4:30 pm
City Halls, Candleriggs, Glasgow

Opened by: Dave Temple (WRP Central Committee, member of NUM Durham Mechanics)

Discussion on: Marxism and the unions . . . lessons of the miners' strike . . . the fight against the anti-union laws

LETTERS

An open letter to the WRP from the 'Leninist' newspaper

WITHIN a short space of time, the Workers Revolutionary Party has undergone rapid change.

From being the most sectarian organisation on the British left, developments since the Healy group's expulsion have opened up some of the most fluid debate in the workers' movement.

However, this has been limited by the nature of the participants in the debate so far: all have been Trotskyists operating within the paradigm of various 'orthodoxies'.

The crisis of the WRP is not theirs alone but one exacerbated by the lack of communist leadership of our class which affects the whole of the workers movement.

The Leninist believes that answering the questions posed by events in the WRP will require more than the location of a 'golden age' of Trotskyism with an empiricist approach of checking off 'formally' correct positions of the Fourth International and its fragments at various points in time.

What is needed is an objective reassessment of the method of the various Trotskyist groupings, challenging many of the fundamental assumptions of this trend.

With this contribution, we aim to broaden the scope of the debate, not by adding our stone-hewn 'ten commandments' to the rest, but by asserting the need for Marxist method.

To quote your own founder: 'Revolutionary thought has nothing in common with idol worship. Programmes and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light of experience, which is the supreme criterion of human reason.'

Since Healy's expulsion, the political positions of the WRP have markedly improved, most notably on the issues of Ireland and gays, but the essential question of

orientation, and hence the attitude to its history, is still to be resolved.

Many problems have been revealed. Some within the ranks of the WRP have sought to give voice to them. Others have sought refuge behind rigid dogma.

One such is Tom Kemp, who asserts that, 'despite the degeneration of Healy and his clique there was no other organisation in Britain which preserved the continuity of the Marxist movement.' (Workers Press, April 19 1986).

We are supposed to accept, therefore, that a Chinese Wall exists between the leadership of an organisation and the political line which it determines.

Kemp continues by characterising the present period as a 'pre-revolutionary situation' and puts forward the slogan 'prepare the general strike'.

Such warmed-over Healyism can only take the WRP back to the grotesque subjectivism of the past.

Although Mike Banda and those who stood by his criticisms of the Fourth International have 'parted ways' with the WRP, the questions he posed were important, although he was somewhat lacking in solutions:

'Contradictory to Trotsky, what we have seen is... a manifest failure in theory and practice to grasp the nature of the epoch and concretise and enrich Trotskyism as contemporary Marxism.' (Workers Press, February 7 1986).

Who can deny this is so? Theory, after all, sees its reflection in practice.

In practice the Fourth International proved a fragile creature, never coming close to fulfilling its promise to supersede the Third and win the allegiance of tens of millions of workers.

This is objective fact. Banda may have been unable to face up to the tasks posed by

THE LENINIST is a fortnightly newspaper published by members and supporters of the Communist Party who are not in agreement with the general line of the CPGB. They participated in the discussions at the central London lectures organised by the WRP in the spring of this year. This open letter is taken from issue 35 of their newspaper.

his questions, but this does not negate their validity.

He had no answers in essence because he was only able to view Trotskyism in isolation.

He divorced the Trotskyist movement from the world situation in which it exists, taking its fundamental assertions as sacrosanct.

In this he is not alone. No contributors to the debate have been able to come up with a materialist analysis of the present period, especially the role and nature of the communist parties.

The Left Opposition defended many Leninist positions within the Comintern against the rightward moving majority, around Stalin, which they correctly characterised as centrist. They orientated themselves accordingly:

'We... shall work as a Party faction. We shall not only endeavour to win Party members, but also our fellow workers, to a Leninist policy, and then recruit them to the Party to fight for that policy.' (The Communist, September 1932, cited in 'Against the Stream', pp 97-8).

However, the successive defeats of the Opposition, the strengthening of the centrists and the defeat of the German workers in 1933 led Trotsky to desert the Comintern, characterising it as 'dead for revolution'.

But surely this was essentially no different from the failure of the Chinese revolution in 1927?

Trotsky then still characterised the Comintern as centrist.

The new orientation towards the construction of a 'Fourth International' was in fact a defeatist desertion of the advanced section of the world proletariat, organised then, as now, mainly within the communist parties.

Germany 1933 was not the 1914 of the Comintern as Trotsky asserted and did not precipitate its transformation to being a 'consciously counter-revolutionary' movement, as reality was to prove.

The Trotskyists proved unable to win the leadership of the working class away from the communist parties during or after World War II.

It is unacceptable to blame this on 'Stalinist betrayals' and 'adverse conditions'.

In Germany, a mass Com-



'The Communist Party of Vietnam carried through a national democratic revolution under the harshest conditions': An NLF training class by the hulk of a US armoured vehicle

munist Party was built, despite the betrayals of the social democrats and the murder of the communists' leading cadre and the decimation of the rank and file in the 1919 revolution.

The movement of Leon Trotsky proved unable to emulate the movement of Rosa Luxemburg.

The post-World War II revolutions threw the Fourth International into even deeper crisis. Counter-revolutionaries carrying out revolutions? Preposterous! Theories of the 'property overturns' in Eastern Europe abounded.

This problematic issue for Trotskyists plus their manifest irrelevancy tore the Fourth International down from the middle.

Neither the International Secretariat nor the International Committee attempted seriously to confront the anomalies in their system which had given rise to the split; both chose to circumvent the gaping irregularities in different directions.

The International Secretariat (IS), and later the United Secretariat (Usec), adopted an openly revisionist standpoint, tailing along behind existing movements such as 'youth vanguardism', 'Castroism' or many others, lastly (possibly the last ever) liquidating into social democracy in the shape of the Socialist League etc, in a last ditch attempt to find some relevance.

If it was the IS/Usec that tailed reality, it was the International Committee which ignored it, defending the ossified 'orthodoxies' of yesteryear.

Thus, in the midst of capitalism's most sustained boom, the SLL could talk of an 'unparalleled revolutionary crisis' and, at a similar time (the mid-60s), of Cuban socialism as 'a bonapartist regime still resting on bourgeois state foundations.'

When you have to ignore reality to this extent to justify your world view, it is time to dump that world view.

Such 'head-in-the-

sandism' is no substitute for revolutionary method based on objective analysis. Again, we can even quote Trotsky to you on this:

'What characterises a genuinely revolutionary organisation is above all the seriousness with which it works out and tests its political line at each turn of events.'

If we are to take Trotsky at his word then it is clear that the WRP has never been a genuinely Marxist-Leninist organisation; the acolytes have clearly ignored their master's guidance.

Both the tailism of the Usec and the catastrophism of the IC are opposite sides of the same coin — that of the world outlook of Trotskyism, which dismisses the world communist movement as counter-revolutionary and regards itself as the logical inheritors of the Bolshevik tradition.

But a different picture is apparent if we are to be honest. It is unnecessary here to repeat the WRP's past 'relations' with the Communist Party of Iraq.

Who then stood on which side of the class line? Was it the Communist Party of Iraq fighting against the reactionary Baathist regime, or the WRP under Healy which prostituted itself to such regimes, to the extent of supporting (and possibly aiding) the murder of communists, which played a counter-revolutionary role?

The answer is obvious.

Ho Chi Minh was responsible for the death of Trotskyists, but the Communist Party of Vietnam carried through a national democratic revolution under the harshest conditions, and now builds socialism under such conditions.

Whether the killing of Trotskyists is justifiable or not, it alone cannot be the criterion for determining the revolutionary credentials of the Vietnamese Communists, especially in the light of a successful revolution, hardly the actions of hardened reactionaries.

Castro, Mao, Kim Il Sung

and others have committed errors; we do not try to paint them in Leninist colours, but they are hardly counter-revolutionaries.

The WRP have favoured elements in truly counter-revolutionary social democratic parties over the communist parties.

I ask you, can you imagine a social democratic party leading any kind of revolution?

Oh yes, the revolutions might be 'bureaucratic', but look to your dictionaries comrades.

There is a world of difference between the terms 'bureaucratic' and 'counter-revolutionary'.

And even so, it is considerably more than the Trotskyists have been able to furnish the world's proletariat with. Rather to be a participant than a spectator.

In this, for all your differences, you have a fundamental feature in common with all other Trotskyists. To reiterate, the Labourism of the Socialist League and the subjectivism of the WRP are but different symptoms of the same disease.

Conversely, it must be said that we have no illusions about the movement we are in. It can be broadly compared to the Second International before 1914, with a mainstream centrist trend; to the right, today's Bernsteins, the Eurocommunists; to the left, a left-centrist trend, and one that is growing, a Leninist trend.

Trotsky made valid criticisms of the communist parties. But Lenin acknowledged the correctness of many of the anarchists' criticisms of the Second International, as he did many of the attacks by the 'Left wing' communists on the leadership of the official labour movement.

This did not make Lenin an anarchist or a 'Left-wing' communist.

Both these trends, although correct on particulars, had fundamentally incorrect world views. The same can also be said of Trotskyism, of whatever variety.

The so-called 'Stalinist' counter-revolutionary revolution is merely a contradiction in terms, the logical conclusion of a false train of thought taken through to the end.

Dialectics is not an excuse to hold two contradictory positions at the same time, but a means to understand the world.

This Trotskyism has failed to do.

Members of the WRP, the whole history of your movement needs reassessing.

Take up these issues with us. Open ideological struggle was the weapon with which Lenin forged the Bolsheviks and the Comintern. We look forward to crossing swords...

Alan Merrick
(for The Leninist).

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Spartacists marching through Berlin in 1919: 'The movement of Leon Trotsky proved unable to emulate the movement of Rosa Luxemburg'

LETTERS

Apartheid: responsibilities that the trade union leaders must shoulder

SOME readers (mainly members of the TGWU) have criticised the front page article on South Africa by Bill Hunter in last week's Workers Press.

This carried the headline: 'Don't let the TUC leaders off the hook — build up union sanctions.'

They have been especially concerned at the criticism of Ron Todd in the sentence, 'To declare, as Ron Todd does, that workers should perhaps take an hour off is a cop out.'

The reason for their concern is that they recognise that Todd, general secretary of the TGWU, now faces a right wing-controlled General Executive.

This has overturned his policy on a number of issues and plans to appoint the man he twice defeated for general secretary, George Wright, as his deputy.

They also know that Todd is deeply moved by the South African struggle, has a genuine desire to smash apartheid and is for action by British workers.

He has reported time and again that the TGWU will support any of its members who take action against apartheid.

However, in his speeches and reports to TGWU members in the last two weeks, Todd has made the point that it is no good passing resolutions for action which cannot be implemented.

He is clearly drawing on the experience of the miners' strike and the dispute at News International, when the TGWU failed to stop scab lorry drivers at the power stations and at Wapping, where the right wing helped to supply card-carrying scab drivers.

First of all it must be said that Ron Todd has our full support in any struggle against the right wing, but it must be clearly stated that the Workers Press was correct to carry this lead article.

The TUC General Council is the leadership of the British trade union movement.

Willis and Todd went to South Africa in their capacity as leaders of the entire movement.

Ron Todd is chairman of the TUC International Committee.

Many thousands of trade union activists were waiting for them to issue a call for trade union sanctions.

South African trade union leaders had called for this action; television film of the treatment of Willis and Todd by the South African apartheid police was seen by millions of angry workers and middle class trade unionists.

The Commonwealth Games were being reduced to a farce as one country after another pulled out their teams in opposition to Thatcher.

Everything was poised for the TUC General Council to take command of the situation.

What did they do? They called a lobby of the Commonwealth Conference!

As Bill Hunter said in his article:

'Trade unionists are entitled to ask after the meeting of the general council last week — was the journey to South Africa really necessary?'

At the lobby of the General Council on July 23 called by the Birmingham and Lambeth Trades Councils — for trade union sanctions — Ron Todd told a young comrade that he and other lobbyists were only there to draw attention to themselves!

Ron Todd has big responsibilities.



RON TODD makes a forceful point to a member of the recent TUC lobby. Peter Gibson urges union leaders to pay heed to what they had to say

If he loses sight of the enormous genuine feeling building up in support of South African workers, and turns his back on those activists anxious to organise a fight on this issue, he will succumb to the right wing.

None of us has the right to ignore the words of James Motlatsi, South African NUM president:

'We are calling for international solidarity action all over the world. We are calling on the working class of the world to take action.'

'Workers in South Africa are starting to doubt the TUC for not taking revolutionary solidarity action.'

Ron Todd should welcome and support the decision of the Birmingham Trades

Council for a lobby of the TUC Congress in September.

The campaign for this can only strengthen the demand for trade union sanctions and assist in organising actions now.

Peter Gibson
WRP Central Committee and
(in a personal capacity)
Chairman of the London Bus
Committee of the TGWU.

Workers sanctions campaign is a cover-up — claim

REGARDING your differences with the News Line on the matter of sanctions and arming the masses in South Africa; it appears to me that your differences are superficial and factional.

Basically your position, and that of News Line and all the other Trotskyist groups, is one of Centrism, despite variations on policy and approach.

All the centrist organisations agree on one thing; the abdication of independent working class action in the struggle for National and International class interests.

This is replaced by tail-endist pressure tactics upon the lackeys of Capitalism, Willis and Co.

They, we are told, must give leadership; their reluctance to do so must be overcome by mass pressure.

That the Willis's and Co are reluctant to lead workers into action as they are defenders of the capitalist class interests; that they are the agents of the bosses within the workers ranks, and conscious agents at that; that if they are pressurised into leading the workers struggle, they do so from the standpoint of diverting a dangerous revolutionary movement into defeat (1926), is not spelt out in your paper.

Obviously you cannot give a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the nature of reformism, its role and purpose, otherwise one would ask: why waste the workers' energy and time and divert their struggle into activating those whom we know will only act in order to betray the struggle? Indeed, why?

The 'line' is of course, 'We know what the TUC and reformist leaders are like, but the masses don't, so we must "expose" these traitors to the masses, for only then can we build a revolutionary leadership.'

Then why do you not consistently expose them in your paper as conscious agents of the capitalist class within the workers ranks? — you don't.

The reason is very simple. Because you of the Trotskyist movement have the illusion that the Labourite reformists can be made to act against capitalism and in the workers interests.

You always declare if they do not act, which raises the possibility that they can act for the workers given the necessary class pressure.

(See Dave Dowsett letter Workers Press July 26th) Further, as Dowsett states, 'if they do not act then we have a duty to expose them for what they are.' Why delay exposing them 'for what they are'?

You do not and cannot consistently expose reformism for what it really is (apart from occasional lip service) as it would conflict with your policy of 'critical' but practical support for reformism; of pressurising the reformist lackeys of capitalism to act in the workers interests.

Your 'General Council Lobby' to force the TUC to lead the struggle for sanctions and collect money to arm the SA masses, is doomed to failure.

The workers must be told the truth, and not fostered with illusions, and urged to waste their strength and dissipate their militant energy on futile exercises as trying to force the reformist agents of Capital to act.

By not exposing the true nature and role of the TUC and TU leaders you are betraying the workers of both this country and SA.

Your standard Trotskyist reply will be: 'But when the workers go through the experience of failing to force the TUC leaders to act, they will then turn to the Marxist party for leadership' — for what? To be told to go on another, and then another, and then . . . lobby to the TUC, Labour Party conference, parliamentary lobby, etc?'

You complain of the crisis of leadership in the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

You create this crisis, this

death of revolutionary leaders, by persuading and misleading the potential revolutionary leadership thrown up continuously during the course of the working class struggles (Catherine O'Reilly as one example) to abdicate their role as leader of the independent working class struggle, in favour of Willis, Todd and this reformist scum.

You tail-end this servile, cringing flotsam of Capital and persuade working class leaders to do the same in the interest of enlightening the mass of workers!

The Dunnes Strikers as but one example have done more to combat apartheid and publicise the struggle against it than the whole of the reformist leadership with or without pressure.

This one act of independent class struggle has brought the issue to the fore for millions and won international admiration and support.

It is along these lines, and that of the dockers etc., that the energies of the revolutionary workers should be directed.

The workers in these struggles, as with the miners during their strike, would soon see through the renegade policies of the Willis's, Kinnocks and Co., when these servants of Capital condemn the struggle and act against it on their masters' bidding.

The greater the threat made to Capital by the workers actions, the greater the anti-working class reaction of Willis, Kinnock and Co; the deeper and the broader the exposure before the masses.

To argue as the Trotskyist movement does, that one must campaign amongst the workers and win them to making Socialist demands off the reformists as the means of exposing the reformist misleaders, is like the story of 'catching a bird by placing salt on its tail'.

If one can win the workers to Socialist demands, which

means a political class conscious level, then there should be no room for illusions in Labourism.

It is the illusory concept fostered that Trotskyism is a Revolutionary Marxist tendency that has decapitated the revolutionary working class leadership and turned potential class leaders into tail-ending the agents of capital and abettors of the leadership crisis.

The actions of the Dunnes strikers, dockers etc., prove

that workers will take action; that however small and weak the forces to begin with they can act effectively.

Here lies the spirit, the revolutionary class spirit, of the 'Hands off Russia' movement, the 'Jolly George' incident: it is independent class action that will instill fear into the hearts of the bosses and their lackeys and so both aid our SA brethren and overcome the crisis of leadership by building our own Revolutionary Socialist Par-

ty — a more powerful effect than the mighty and strong TUC could ever accomplish.

Tom Cowen
P.S. I have never read an anti-Trotskyist letter in your publication — the letters and polemics have always been between various sections of the Trotskyist movement.

What about allowing a completely different viewpoint to occupy your pages and extend the range of debate?

See opposite — editor



QUESTION from the editor: when is a union leader a 'conscious agent of capital', when merely a bureaucrat and when a 'brother'?

Remember those in jail!

CAN I appeal to readers and supporters of Workers Press to write to the Irish Prisoners of War in British jails and to the jailed miners (see list of names in each issue of Workers Press).

We must never forget these class war prisoners who are victims of British imperialism and its jackboot methods used over the cen-

turies against the Irish people and against the British working class — epitomised with the jailing and sacking of the miners during their heroic struggle.

I also ask readers to send in reading materials and/or records and tapes.

We must never forget these brave men and women and must show them that as

socialists and revolutionaries we are with them in spirit.

I am sure Terry French, who was recently refused parole, would appreciate a card or letter from some of you to let him know he is not forgotten.

Please don't just say you will do it, but do it.

Charlie Walsh

REVIEWS

NUCLEAR POWER: the big lie

The Worst Accident in the World. Chernobyl: The End of the Nuclear Dream. By the Observer's Investigative Team. Pan, £2.95.

THE FIRST PART of this title is deadly serious, the second part is a tragic joke.

The book makes it clear that continuous propaganda has, since its military origins, lied about both the safety and the economics of nuclear power.

Perhaps the authors are referring to President Eisenhower's dream-type announcement of 1953 when he proclaimed an age of 'atoms for peace.'

In reality the owners of nuclear power, the military leaders and governments, tried to stop the campaign against nuclear weapons and nuclear technology from obtaining a mass base.

This campaign has been given a new urgency by the events at Chernobyl.

There was great suspicion by the rural and urban population near the Chernobyl power station.

Even with close control of the media the local residents refused to buy vegetables and fruit grown near the nuclear power plant.

On Saturday 26 April at 1.23am the reactor exploded.

This was the worst acci-

dent in a long line of disasters for the nuclear industry in America, Europe and the Soviet Union.

The Observer's team reveal a history of false figures, suppressed reports and lying claims.

After the initial glee of the American government at a disaster in the Soviet Union, the line became: the accident was not as bad as everyone thinks, and secondly, in any case, there are better safety margins in the west.

Comparisons

At the same time, Reagan issued instructions telling United States federal employees to avoid making comparisons between American and Soviet reactors.

Why all this fuss? The year 1985 had been a bad year for nuclear accidents in the United States.

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission showed the Chernobyl power station had two containment layers similar to many American reactors.

In fact five American reactors have no regular containment domes.

The safety margins in America are no better and in certain respects are worse than in the Soviet Union.

The conclusion that should

be drawn is that there are no safe nuclear power stations.

No trade unions, scientists or parties can ensure adequate safety standards in an industry based on military need and economic greed.

Between 1969 and 1979 no less than 169 incidents in the USA could have led to meltdown.

The Irish sea, containing a quarter of a tonne of plutonium, is the most radioactive sea in the world.

High numbers of leukaemia deaths are recorded around British reactors: near Berkeley in Gloucestershire, at Leiston near Sizewell and Dounreay in Scotland.

These facts and many more are presented by this book.

The main weakness is that while it gives an interesting history of the nuclear industry 'warts and all', it leaves out the military and economic necessity for capitalism to develop this industry.

Consequently the role of the working class in opposing its development and the role played by the worldwide trade union bureaucracy in, generally, supporting nuclear power, is left untouched.

The information compiled in this book is certainly worth having.

There is a section on how

the development of the nuclear industry in the Soviet Union was bureaucratically mismanaged.

It starts with the 1930s, which makes a direct connection with Trotsky's analysis in 'Revolution Betrayed.'

The authors mention the heroism of the workers at the nuclear reactor in containing the accident, some giving their lives.

They compare these workers with the way the Red Army fought against Hitler in the Ukrainian marshes in 1941, yet the reader will not find any analysis of the deadly conflict between imperialism and the Soviet Union, other than some detailed observations, albeit interesting ones.

Necessity

It is imperialism's necessity to protect its world markets, and recapture others, that is the drive to produce horrendous weapons.

The socialist revolution of 1917 meant that imperialism could no longer economically exploit Russia.

America first developed and then used the atomic bomb as a warning that America not only had the bomb but was prepared to use it.

The US immediately de-

veloped its war plan against the USSR.

It made 5 nuclear tests before 1949, then two unexpected events occurred.

The Soviet Union exploded their first atomic bomb in 1949, and then in December the Chinese revolution was successful.

Now the drive to war and against national liberation struggles is intensified.

In the three years from 1950, the US tested 31 nuclear bombs.

General Douglas MacArthur openly advocated the use of nuclear weapons and invasion of China during the Korean war.

President Eisenhower wanted to use nuclear weapons to defeat the Viet Cong in 1954, in order to 'bomb Vietnam back to the Stone Age.'

The US long-term aim to overthrow the Soviet Union's nationalised property relations — that is the content of all their manoeuvring.

The Soviet Union has countered this threat in ways characteristic of its bureaucratic degenerated state.

Only after the ending of wartime alliance with the west did Stalin order the building of nuclear weapons.

In 1947, they searched the prison camps for physicists who could help them.

Then the scientists were ordered to explode the first bomb before Stalin's 70th birthday in 1949.

Since 1924, when Stalin came to power and socialism in one country became the official doctrine, the working class have been forced from any control over the development of technology.

This is the major factor that led to Chernobyl.

Ignores

This book ignores these central political reasons for the development of nuclear power reactors.

It gives an environmental or 'green' account of what happened, and is incapable of putting forward any solution.

Whatever its weaknesses it adds to the growing body of literature against the use of nuclear power.

It incidentally adds to the wealth of information about the far-reaching effects of nuclear testing since the 1950s.

'The Battle for Socialism' which Peter Fryer wrote in 1959 contains a chapter on this.

The subsequent literature points to one conclusion: all nuclear power stations must be closed down.

Martin Ralph

Britain's nuclear weapons: 'A fantastic attitude'

No Conceivable Injury. By Robert Milliken. Penguin, £3.95.

As the banner on the CND march said, 'If it's so safe, why don't you set it off in your own back-yard?'

In this book we have a reasoned expose of the effects of the manoeuvrings of the super and not-so-super powers on the health and lives of thousands of human beings.

Milliken examines the history of British nuclear tests conducted at several sites in Australia in the 1950s.

The first part of the book is spent in analysing the historical circumstances leading to the British government's fantastically cavalier attitude to the rights of the Australian people.

Fading

As America emerged from the Second World War a major power, superseding the fading influence of Britain, the possession of the atomic bomb was seen as a key factor in her success.

The threat of the 'communist spectre' also loomed, as Russia steadily progressed towards the possession of nuclear weapons.

As successive Labour and Tory governments saw Britain's position slipping away, they became desperately eager to establish Britain as a major nuclear power.

Their first attempts to do this, by exchanging information with the USA, met with a decided rebuff.

Despite the nominally friendly relations between the two countries, the Americans decided that Britain

represented too high a security risk in their own frenzied efforts in the arms race against the Soviet Union.

Several British spy scandals around the late 1940s and early 1950s served to settle the question of co-operation with the UK for the Americans for good.

The British were forced to set up their own programme, and to find a site for testing weapons, having been firmly excluded from the American site in Nevada.

And in fact, because of the American's obsession with secrecy, they ended up having to duplicate tests which had already been exhaustively performed in Nevada.

After a cursory survey around the world, Australia was selected as the ideal situation in which to make repeated tests of atomic weapons.

One factor in the choice must have been the vast, ostensibly uninhabited miles of desert.

For the British, as for the Americans in the Marshall Islands, the aboriginal people could not be construed as being of any importance whatsoever when compared to the jockeying of imperialists for supremacy.

The second, and probably most important factor in the decision, was the craven lick-spitting of the Australian government under Bob Menzies, possibly the only government left in the world which still thought the British were the bees-knees.

The fantastic irresponsibility of the British tests, exposed by the Royal Commission of 1985, had two sources.

One was the arrogance of the UK, the second was the

extraordinary willingness of the Australian government to allow them to proceed with virtually no conditions attached.

The Australians got nothing out of the tests — except of course a rather nasty dose of radiation which by the end of the tests had fallen on almost every capital city, not to mention the repeated bouts that tribal aboriginals received, in the so-called uninhabited areas close to the test sites.

The Australian scientists who 'participated' in the tests were allowed only observer status and received only low key information about safety criteria for firing.

Sites

In the case of the 'minor' trials, which involved the use of plutonium which is still lying around the test sites, the Australians were not even involved to that extent.

This was as a result of deliberate policy by the British, and an unquestioning acceptance of that policy by the Australians.

The scientists who were invited to the tests were all also men with very strong ties to the British atomic research establishment.

The one Australian scientist who had begun to voice second thoughts about the development and use of such weapons, Oliphant, was never invited to attend despite an international reputation for his work in the field of atomic research.

Australia's only request in exchange for the facilities extended was that some information be collected in re-



AUSTRALIA, 1953: washing down a 'hot' vehicle. Note the absence of protective head gear

lation to the use of nuclear power.

In 1986 Australia remains a non-nuclear country.

Together with an intelligent analysis of the history and politics that lay behind the cynical exploitation of the Australian people, black and white, as unwitting and helpless guinea-pigs in the imperialists' drive for power, the book contains countless concrete details illustrating Milliken's argument.

Such as the Australian airforce men, who were instructed to fly through the atomic cloud in one of the first tests, and unlike the American and British airmen who participated in the same test, were not issued

with film badges, monitoring devices, or advised on the necessity of decontamination of their aircraft and their own bodies at the end of the flight.

Such as the aboriginals who were allowed to wander onto the test site, and camp next to a radio-active crater.

Such as the firing of bombs again and again under circumstances when the weather conditions, and hence the direction of the poisonous atomic cloud, were entirely unpredictable.

Rumblings began to be heard in the late 1950s from the Australian unions. At the beginning of 1958, the CND was formed in Britain.

Milliken goes into the findings of the Australian Royal Commission of 1985, which castigated the role played by the British government — carefully pointing out that this role could never have been carried out without the active connivance of the Australian government.

He himself does not attempt a Marxist analysis of these questions, but he presents the facts so that the material is there.

Without such detailed factual presentations, the Marxist analysis tends to sound a little too abstract — Milliken has produced an extremely useful book.

Bronwen Handyside

REVIEW

A handbook for the sanctions campaign

Profiting from Apartheid. Labour Research Department. £1.25 from bookshops (including Paperbacks Centres) or £1.40 by post from Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF.

THIS 50 PAGE BOOK is crammed with information that will be of great assistance to anybody in Britain fighting for solidarity action with the South African working class.

Britain is the largest foreign investor in South Africa with 38 per cent of the total. UK companies employ 370,000 people in South Africa, in every sector of the economy — banking, manufacturing, mining and fuel.

While the present unrest and sinking value of the Rand are causing worries for the British investors, past profits have been enormous.

Between 1979 and 1983, 16 per cent of all British firms' foreign earnings came from South Africa. £150 million annually was paid in dividends in this period from South Africa firms to their British parent companies.

Because of the campaign against apartheid many firms have allegedly decreased their involvement in South Africa but in many cases this is shown to be on paper only.

Even where there has been a real withdrawal this has largely been counteracted by other firms increasing their stake.

Britain takes about 10 per cent of South African exports and is the largest market for fruit and vegetables.

Britain in return supplies South Africa with 16 per cent of its imported machinery and 19 per cent of its chemicals.

With this heavy involvement of Britain in the cheap labour South African economy and with 50 per cent of donations to the Tory party coming from firms with South African connections it is not hard to understand Thatcher's and the City of London's support for Botha.

This book contains information not only on the size and nature of British investment and trade with South Africa, it also lists all the British companies in

South Africa and their subsidiaries.

It has a breakdown of the major firms with their employment figures, profits and activities.

Also there is a table showing trade through the various British ports with the greatest value of trade (£411 million) coming through Heathrow.

The amounts of British bank loans are shown and the various insurance companies with subsidiaries in South Africa.

One section deals with the way in which most of the firms contravene the 1977 EEC Code of Conduct which was supposed voluntarily to regulate things like minimum rates of pay.

No surprise that Pritchards, at the centre of cheap labour privatisation here, are in the forefront of firms paying below the minimum.

Some firms pay as little as £10 for a 45 hour week. Women in particular are paid low wages, employers arguing that they are not breadwinners.

This information is invaluable to trade unionists campaigning here for a boycott of South African work and trade.

The position of the South African unions is described, in particular the rapid rise of COSATU with 650,000 members, and the attacks these unions are facing under the present state of emergency.

The British TUC has a long list of the union leaders in detention.

The majority of British firms which do not recognise the non-racial unions are listed in the pamphlet.

The need for trade unionists to take action is clearly shown by the fact that while 93 per cent of British union members are in unions affiliated to the Anti-Apartheid movement, many of them with a policy of boycotting goods, very little has been done.

The exceptions are shown. The Dunnes store strike, the boycott by Portsmouth hospital workers and a few others.

They have shown the way. Others must follow their example.

Local authorities are also investigating their South African links and Bristol

UK trade with South Africa

Port	Imports		Exports	
	£m	£m	£m	£m
London	16.2	36.6		
Medway	101.7	0.3		
Dover	1.1	31.2		
Southampton	192.1	329.2		
Avonmouth	35.4	15.0		
Port Talbot	7.9	—		
Ellesmere Port	—	20.3		
Liverpool	102.6	158.7		
Greenock	6.1	0.2		
Middlesborough	19.5	18.0		
Hull	5.6	5.0		
Scunthorpe	6.6	—		
Immingham	31.1	12.6		
Felixstowe	22.3	96.9		
Belfast	7.5	—		
Heathrow Airport	411.8	229.9		
Total All Ports	989.8	1100.7		

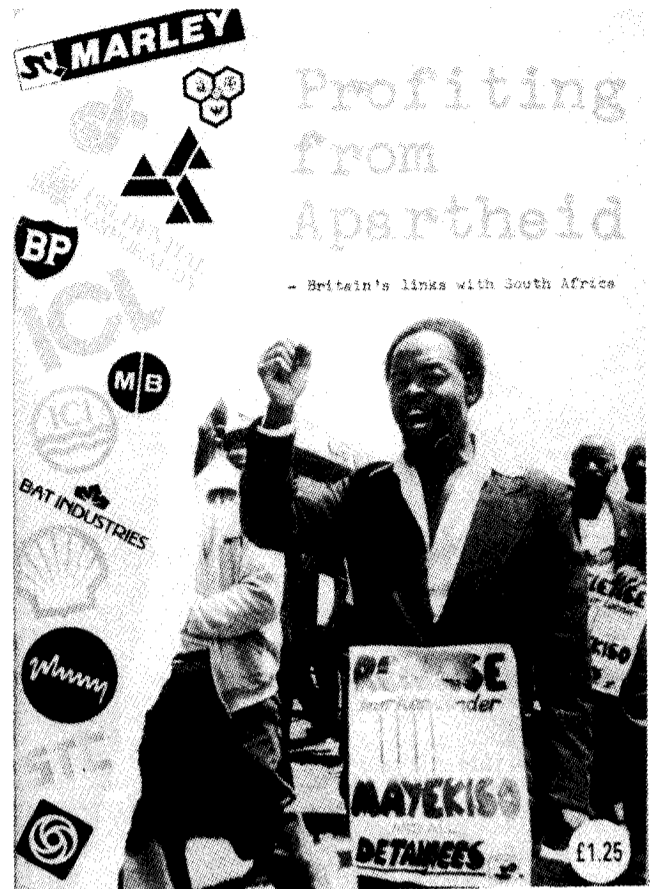
Source: Customs and Excise

City is blocking goods through its municipally owned port.

Pension funds are also coming under scrutiny but when the NUM tried to remove its members' pension money from South Africa they were blocked by the British courts.

Doubtless this booklet will be bought and used by the hot air machines in the unions to cover their inactivity with rhetoric, but in the hands of those who are prepared to do more than talk it will be very useful.

Bob Myers



Scene from a rally to launch COSATU in December 1985

TV Preview

Saturday August 2

6.30pm, Channel 4. **20/20 South Africa — Shutting the door.** An investigation of the problems for the Commonwealth states, and the front-line states, of imposing sanctions on South Africa.

9.15pm, ITV. **20/20 Ordinary People.** Television premiere of a film starring Donald Sutherland, who turns in his usual sterling individual performance.

Sunday August 3

2.30pm, Channel 4. **Ghare Baire. (The Home and the World)** The fourth and the final in this series of films by Satyajit Ray based on the writings of Rabindranath Tagore. The background to the story is the division of Bengal enforced by Lord Curzon, the then viceroy of India, which resulted in the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1947.

Monday August 4

8.30pm, ITV. **Scales of Justice: The Magistrates.** An examination of the magistrates court and a number of cases in which justice was most decidedly neither done, nor seen to be done. The programme also discusses anomalies in the consistency of sentencing at magistrates courts in different parts of the country.

10.00pm, Channel 4. **Commodities: Coffee is the Gold of the Future.** This fourth in the series of programmes about common commodities enquires into whether there is any future for small scale peasant production in the era of agribusiness, modernised production methods and international controls.

Tuesday August 5

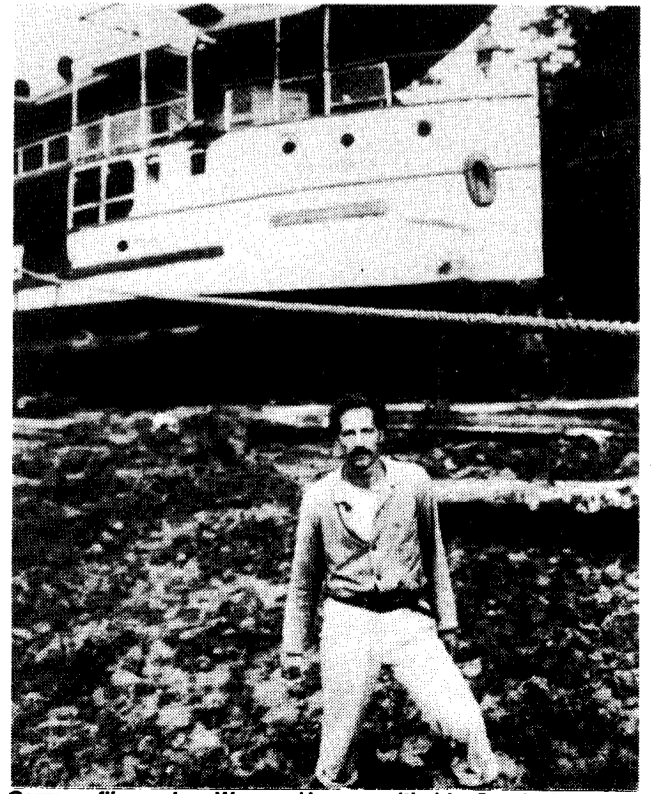
10.30, ITV. **First Tuesday: Good Vibrations.** Documentary about Evelyn Glennie, who graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with the highest of awards for her musical ability. She plays an unusual instrument, the glockenspiel, and she is also completely deaf. She says she hears the music through her body, and also in her heart.

Wednesday August 6

10.30pm, ITV. **Crime Inc.: The Mob at Work.** The programme examines how the Mafia infiltrated some of America's trade unions, and also purports to trace which unions are controlled by the Cosa Nostra today.

Thursday August 7

11.05pm, Channel 4. **Burden of Dreams.** A remarkable documentary about the making of an equally remarkable film — Werner Herzog's memorable masterpiece 'Fitzcarraldo'.



German film-maker Werner Herzog with his South American steamship in a scene from 'Burden of Dreams', a documentary which shows the making of his film 'Fitzcarraldo'



Goldmine worker

London march climax

First national march against racism is a resounding success

LAST WEEK the national march against the racist deportation of Viraj Mendis campaigned throughout London.

On Wednesday the march went from Southall to a civic reception at Brent Town Hall.

An open-air rally was held where the speakers included Brent Mayor Les Ford, Russell Profit from the Race Relations Unit at Brent Council and ex-GLC leader Ken Livingstone.

BY CHRIS, JOHN & KEVIN

During the enthusiastic rally, Livingstone stated that 'Any immigration laws are racist by nature'.

This was endorsed by Chris McBride, a marcher from the Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press), who also pointed out that Labour Party members who believed this must confront the Labour Party leadership with it.

On Wednesday the march went from Brent to Kilburn Square where a lunchtime street meeting was held and marchers relaxed in the hot sun.

Later in the day, Bob Crossman, Labour Mayor of Islington, greeted the marchers at a civic reception.

He told them about a local campaign with the Osman family who are threatened with deportation to Turkey.

He condemned talks of reforming racist immigration laws and pointed out that all immigration laws are racist.

Iranian marcher Kamron Mashadi spoke of the £1,500 fee which foreign students have to pay to study in Britain.

This stopped him from studying here because his allowance was stopped by the Khomeini government when he expressed opposition to the reactionary Islamic regime.

Many of the marchers and speakers were annoyed at the Royal wedding, saying it was a spit in the eye for the 60 black people who are deported every week from Britain.

HOME OFFICE

Viraj Mendis pointed out that, 'the Home Office is the heart of racist Britain, where a small number of people decide whether or not myself or Kamron Mashadi live or die.'

'Both of us are threatened with deportation and face persecution from the Iranian and Sri Lankan governments.'

A delegation of the marchers attended a Socialist Workers Party meeting on the same evening where Alex Callinicos was speaking.

The delegation of marchers made a request for support for the lobby of the Home Office against Viraj's deportation.

The SWP meeting informed the delegation that the SWP had officially refused to support the march.

On Friday July 25, about 150 people picketed the Home Office at Queen Anne's Gate.

Viraj Mendis and a delegation of marchers were refused permission to speak to anyone in the Home Office involved in Viraj's case, despite having marched for over 200 miles.

During a rally on the picket, the marchers were told of the massive police provocation in Brixton the night be-

fore where over 600 police raided the Afro-Caribbean centre in a so-called 'arms and drugs raid'.

The marchers later joined the non-stop picket of the South African Embassy at Trafalgar Square.

The same evening a public meeting was held at the Hackney Asian Centre where the marchers demanded of the SWP members why they had not mobilised any of their '4,000 members' to attend the march.

That evening the marchers stayed in Hackney Asian Centre and march supporters' houses.

On Saturday July 26 the march assembled outside Islington Town Hall with over 300 people from various fighting organisations and a lively band.

The route went past the 'Aliens Registration Office' where the marchers' anger boiled over.

RALLY

A packed meeting at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, held a noisy and successful rally where plans were made to step up the campaign.

It was announced that the VMDC would meet on Sunday August 3 at 7.30pm at Manchester Town Hall and there would be a national day of action in support of Viraj on Saturday September 6.

It was also announced by prospective parliamentary candidate Paul Boateng that Viraj would speak at the Grand Committee Room at the House of Commons.

This is an opportunity for Viraj and the VMDC and rank and file Labour Party members to put Neil Kinnock on the spot by questioning his proposed racist immigration laws.

Speaking at the meeting in support of Viraj were Alf Holme from Manchester City Council, a speaker from the Eelam Solidarity Campaign, John Owen, marcher and member of the WRP, Shahid Shyed, a NALGO member who had successfully fought against his deportation through the trade unions, David Reed from the Revolutionary Communist Group, Kamron Mashadi and Manda Kunda who are both fighting against deportation, Sarah Calloway from King Cross women's centre, Chris Smith, a marcher and member of Anti-Fascist Action, Carol Brickley from City Anti-Apartheid Group, two speakers from Manchester Anarchist Group, Glyn Ford, Euro-MP for Greater Manchester East, Viraj Mendis and 'Sparrow' — a marcher who kept up the spirit of the march up, with songs and jokes.

● All people wishing to fight against Viraj's deportation should phone Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign on 061-795 3870.



WRP members join the marchers to picket the 'Aliens Registration Office' in London

VMDC marchers speak:

JOHN OWEN and KARL FORMAN marched with the campaign as part of the WRP delegation. I asked them what they thought were the most important lessons of the march.

BY PHIL PENN

JOHN OWEN: The march has been very important in raising the issue of racism in Britain. All those who are claiming to fight for the South African black workers and who say they are against apartheid should have been more active in this campaign.

It was the first ever national march against racism.

It has been organised to unite all those families and people who are fighting against deportation.

There are over 60 people a week being deported.

This issue has to be tackled by the labour and trade union movement, which as a whole has not taken up the case of racism in Britain.

The police have been allowed to get away with numerous racist attacks in areas like Toxteth in Liverpool and Brixton and Broadwater Farm in London.

However corrupt the trade union leadership we must not avoid a fight with them. The trade unions are the organised strength of the British working class.

This fight must be taken

into the unions in order to make the working class confront its leadership.

Racism is a class issue, anyone seeing it as a moral issue is missing the point. A victory for this campaign is a victory for the whole working class. It will serve to unite workers, whatever colour, against capitalism.

I think that this campaign has been good in that it has put the issue to other organisations that we must put aside our differences on this basic issue.

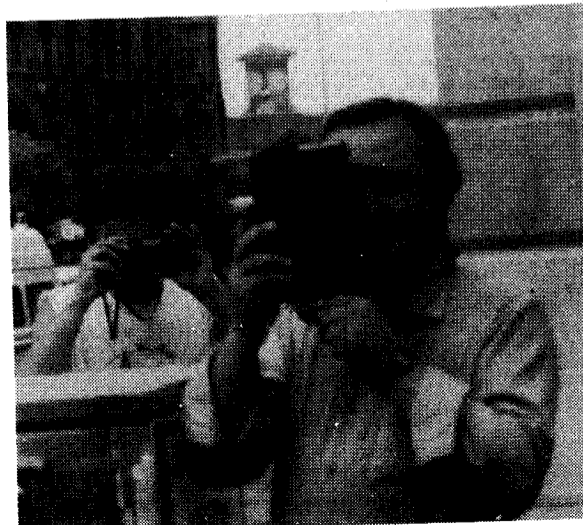
KARL FORMAN: The refusal of the Home Office to see Viraj is a sign of racism, they treat black people like dirt.

They know that Viraj is not just one individual, he is representing campaigns of a number of other people against racist deportations.

We have generalised the march into a fight against the immigration laws as a whole.

This is an important issue which must not be shied away from. There is an ele-

Parallel Mirrors



Our photographer snapped a marcher snapping a 'passer-by' who was snapping pictures of the marchers with a Polaroid camera. If his pictures were not up to scratch, he repeated the shot. Who for?



VIRAJ MENDIS

ment of racism, not only in the trade union bureaucracy but also in the Labour Party and even other left wing groups.

Like John, I would also call upon people to sink their differences and join in this campaign against the deportations.

KAMRAN MASHADI is an Iranian who has been in Britain since 1980.

He is opposed to the Khomeini regime but has been refused political asylum and has been told that he will be deported.

KAMRAN MASHADI: I have been on the march since it left Manchester. The British

government know that if I have to go back then I face certain death.

According to Amnesty International, 50,000 political prisoners have been executed in Iran. 140,000 political prisoners are being constantly tortured.

A few years ago, some of my friends were deported to Iran. They were taken straight from the airport to be executed.

For people like Viraj and myself, deportation is a life and death question.

As we said on the march: 'It is One Struggle, One Fight'. Anyone facing deportation should support this campaign.

VIRAJ MENDIS: WHEN WE went to the Home Office, we asked the receptionist if she could ask one of the officials to come down to see us.

She tried to get someone but she was told that every one was too busy to see us.

This is not a small building. There must be hundreds of officials who deal with immigration, but not one of them could be spared to accept a letter on behalf of the campaign and the hundreds of people out here.

It only serves to demonstrate the contempt they have for black people: they are not even prepared to acknowledge our existence.

The march has been very good, many different organisations have pledged their support for the campaign.

Because of the march we now have the basis to escalate the campaign.

We now know who is with us and who is against us, and far more people are with us now than there were before the march.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the comrades

from the Workers Press who have been on the march all the way through.

They have been stewards, they have worked very hard for the campaign and have shown in practice that they are not sectarian which is something which haunts the left in this country.

Unfortunately some sections of the left in this country are not confident enough of the correctness of their standpoint to be able to work with other people.

I hope that the comrades from the Workers Press will continue to work with the campaign and one day we will be able to get many more forces involved in a campaign against immigration laws.

● Like the Irish say: 'Our day will come'.