Workers PE

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Let us bury our dead in peace page



REGINNOGK LABOUR leader WIGHLINI **Neil Kinnock has** embarked on a systematic attempt to drive out all opposition

Defend Black Sections' rights!

The inquiries will centre on the London Borough of Hillingdon, which contains three parliamentary seats.

The witch-hunt against Militant was only the start of the campaign to stifle anybody who speaks out in even the mildest tones against the Kinnock-Hattersley lead-

The efforts to drive out supporters of Black Sections was stepped up last week with Shadow Transport Minister Peter Snape demanding action against Lambeth leader Linda Bellos

This followed her attendance at last week's successful recruitment meeting for the Black Section of the Labour Party in Birmingham

Snape said black section advocates are damaging Labour's electoral chances and are using the Party 'only as a vehicle for their singleinterest aims

Birmingham council's controlling Labour group last week expelled Jamaican-born councillor Phil Murphy for attending the launch.

Kinnock and Hattersley are desperate about one thing. They want to reassure the ruling class that the capitalist system will be safe in their hands. This was the purpose of Kinnock's trip to the United States. the United States.

His efforts to woo the middle class by his so-called 'New Realism' will have as much success as his visit to

Reagan. Sections of the mid-dle class — teachers, NHS workers and civil servants have shown their determina-tion to oppose the Thatcher government, often in the face of the cowardice of their union leaders.

They can be won as firm allies of the working class only through the fight for socialist policies. As Greenwich and all the recent polls have shown, they will never be won by Kinnock's head-long rush to the right.

The people using the Labour Party for their own purposes are not those at the Birmingham rally but 'leaders' who put their comfortable parliamentary seats above the future of the working class

Nor is it socialists who are bringing the Labour Party into disrepute, but its right

wing leadership. Increasing sections of the working class and the middle class are sickened by his craven refusal to fight Thatcher. Kinnock cannot even demand the calling of an election.

It was this leadership's crawling behind Thatcher's predatory Malvinas war that secured her victory in 1983. It is their retreat in face of the determined fight of the working class that threatens to impose a third Tory gov-ernment on the working

• Workers Press stands for the unfettered right of all socialists to organise in the Labour Party.

• We defend the right of all

black people to work within the Party and if they think it right to organise themselves into separate sections.

The outbursts against alleged 'Trotskyists' and the witch-hunt on the formation of Black Sections are attacks not just on the 'left' but on the working working class as a whole.

Teachers, civil servants, miners, the workers at Caterpillar and all others in struggle against the Thatcher government will get the same treatment from a Kin-nock government that they have had from Thatcher.

The working class is entering an election with a leadership incapable and unwilling to fight the Tories.

A new leadership, based on revolutionary socialist policies, is urgently required. This is the only effective answer to Kinnock's latest witch-hunt

Wapping comes to Tyneside



elements from the Party. In the last week the Labour leaders have: **RETREATED** on their

already thoroughly reformist election programme

LAUNCHED a witch-hunt against supposed Trotskyist' infiltration into the Party and

THREATENED to expel all those supporting the organisation of Black Sections

On the question of its PROGRAMME the Party

 Drop pledges to make in-creased social security payments

 Scrap proposals to nationalise firms ripped off by Thatcher's privatisation

Ditch promises to scrap private education.

Terry Ashton, general secretary of the London Labour Party, last week launched a witch-hunt against the alleged activities of the Workers Socialist League, an Oxford-based

'We will be investigating the general behaviour of some people to discover whether they are bringing the party into disrepute,' said Ashton.

Alan Thornett, linked with the WSL by the 'The London Evening Standard', spoke to Workers Press before he had seen the reports: 'I have no knowledge at all of this. It appears to be a witch-hunt designed to blame the left in the event of Labour losing the event of Labour losing the election as a result of right-wing policies'.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY **PARTY**

PUBLIC MEETING

Hands off the camps! Solidarity with the Palestinians!

TUESDAY 14 April, 7p.m. sharp Friends Meeting House, Euston Road. (opposite Euston Station)

Speakers Charles Pottins (WRP Central Committee)

Geoff Pilling (Workers Press Editor)

Michael Holmes (Medical Aid for Palestinians)

£1 entrance (50p concessions)

Wasted Talents

A CONFIDENTIAL British Medical Association report leaked last week concludes that the talents of three million unemployed people and their families are being wasted.

It is even more damning of Tory policies than last month's Health Education Council analysis of the widening health gap between rich and poor. So critical is it of Tory policy that it may never see the light of day.

'Young people are held back from achieving their full physical and mental potential by the debilitating effects of unhealthy environment, lack of emotional support or intellectual stimulation, or poor diet' says the report, 'Deprivation and Ill-health'.

'The problem as a whole is so great and so entrenched within the structure of society as to be insoluble without significant diversion of public resources. Whether the national will exists to combat deprivation in this way remains a matter for political decision beyond our compe-

The issue is not that of 'national will'; nor is it a question of diverting resources. Human beings themselves are the most vital of the productive forces, the most immediate instrument for the creation of wealth.

That in Britain alone capitalism is unable to employ several million people, especially young people, is an expresson of the stagnation of those productive forces, an indication of the extent to which they are imprisoned within the 'structure of society' - the system of capitalist profit-

And the situation in Britain is nothing compared with the grinding poverty, and with it the chronic ill-health, that grips the majority of the world's population.

The BMA has traditionally been a bastion of right-wing opinion. That it produces a report which, in its own way, points to socialism as the only solution to the problem of poverty, is further expression of the historical bankruptcy of capi-

It is at the same time an indication of the response which a fight for a socialist leadership and programme in the working class can now

The best-managed of households

AS OSCAR WILDE would undoubtedly have said, for the Royal family to mislay one of its members might have been put down to carelessness. To lose five does begin to look like something more deliberate.

Two of these Royal scions, first cousins of the Queen, had been listed in Burke's Peerage since 1963 as being dead. In fact, as the 'Sun's' fearless seekers after truth revealed last week, Miss Nerissa Bowes Lyon, who died only last year, and her sister Miss Katherine Bowes Lyon, who is still alive, were life patients in Earlswood, a Surrey mental hospital.

Their aunt, the Queen Mother, is also patron of Mencap, which looks after the interests of those described as mentally handicapped.

Some of the Queen's subjects might well find this a touch hypocritical given that Mencap's policy is against long-stay institutions. It is of course the sheer hypocrisy of the entire Royal family which has been brought to light by the case of the missing

If reports are to be believed, the Queen Mother only found out that her nieces were still alive some five years ago. Since then, according to the obsequious Sir Brian Rix she had been 'very supportive'. Whether of her nieces or of Mencap is not exactly clear.

Those somewhat more sceptical may want to know how many other Royal secrets are locked away from the public's gaze.

had died in 1940 and the other in 1921. The formation was regarded and the other in 1961. This misinformation was repeated annually. If nothing else, the period away of the horal relatives has exposed taken to be imps of what many eye previously

How did Burke's come to make with the over the Royal disappearance? We are informed that when the Burke's forms had to be filled in, the mother of the two unfortunate ladies took charge. and she is reported to be 'very vague'. Very vague perhaps. Very convenient certainly.

School students carry on the fight

ABOUT 50 school students came out on strike to lobby ILEA headquarters at County Hall on Tuesday in spite of torrential rain.

Pupils from several ILEA schools walked out even though they had been threatened with suspension or expulsion. All of them voiced their opposition to the YTS and the redeployment of their teachers.

During the rally, Frances Morrell, Labour chair of ILEA, refused to meet a delegation from the School Students' Union or address a rally. She even refused to leave the building while the rally was outside!

Dave Sirockin, secretary of the London School Stu-dents' Union, told Workers Press: 'We will fight the witch-hunt against me in the Labour Party. If the right wing tries to expel me then we will lobby Walworth Road with thousands of

'After the school strike on 26 March the NSSU met to discuss opposition to the two-year YTS conscription. We decided to give an ultimatum to Thatcher to back down by 7 April.

'ILEA have refused to negotiate with us. The Tories have refused to withdraw the compulsory two-year YTS. We are therefore organising for a national school strike after the Easter break.'

The School Students' Union demanded that ILEA:

1. Reverse its policy of compulsory redeployment

and all other education cuts. 2. Appeal to the London teaching and ancillary staff, parents and School Students Union to back a campaign to increase ILEA's budget;

BY JOHN OWEN & JOLYON RALPH

3. Reverse all victimisa-tion so far inflicted on school students and teachers for their involvement in the cur-rent dispute; and remove all references to activity in the dispute from school stu-dents' records;

4. Recognise the LSSU's right to negotiate, organise and act on its members' and supporters' behalf;

5. Allow school students the right to participate in LSSU activity on school pre-mises and in school hours, free from the threat of victimisation; and

6. Give finance, facilities and resources to the LSSU to allow it to organise democratically and autonomously throughout Inner London secondary schools.

In 1985 — immediately after the miners' strike, and during a struggle in all Labour-controlled authorities against rate-capping — a national school strike pul-led out 250,000 school students to fight against the compulsory YTS. After this the Tories shelved their

Now they have put them forward again for their elec-tion manifesto, and the SSU must again take action to



Dave Sirockin (left) and Andrew Dobbie

However, Tuesday's turn-out was lower than expected. What lessons can be drawn from this experience?

The TUC has refused to fight the government's attempt to build an army of scab labour through the MSC cheap-labour schemes.

The Tory government's attempts to divide youth from older workers in trade unions was accepted with little opposition by the TUC.

As a result of this, with the further decline of British capitalism and the growing number of unemployed, the number of unemployed, the Tories have extended the YTS to those aged 18 to 25, in the form of the Job Training Schemes, where unemployed people will be forced to work for their benefit.

After the 1985 demonstrations the SSU was practically disbanded, so it will have to be built almost from scratch.

Instead of building a movement and bringing new forces into politics, the SSU leaders left it to fall apart.

The SSU will have to learn to organise a real campaign to defend youth and educa-tion. It will have to organise joint action with the teachers, who are also vic-tims of these Tory attacks and have been organising resistance since 1985.

The example of France shows that secondary-school students must link up with students in further and higher education. The SSU should affiliate to the National Union of Students and fight for full student rights for school students.

Young people are under attack internationally, whether they are on YTS in Britain or starving in Africa. Only an International movement can defeat this attack by organising action by youth fighting together around the world.

Teachers' 'Natural Justice'

ILTA Council decided at a meeting on 31 March, to support a proposal made by Bernard Regan (executive member of the NUT, and one of those ILTA officers threatened with suspension from the NUT for supporting the call for unofficial stike action on 13 January) to carry out a court injunction against the officers of the national executive of the NUT.

This follows the appeal by Fred Jarvis and the other officers of the NUT executive against the decision of the regional diciplinary committee to reinstate the 50 suspended ILTA councillors

at the courts BY ED PHILLIPS

with the clear intention of calling for the supervision and, indeed, explusion of those leading officers in the left of ILTA council.

It must be said loud and clear, as we in the WRP have said in relation to the Phil Penn case, that political differences and the class strug-gle cannot and should not be fought out in bourgeois courts.

We would ask 'Socialist Action', of which Bernard Regan is a member, how they can defend such a position in the workers movement. This is not a tactical question but a question for principle which all socialists should stand united on.

Our conference should be placed in the firm militancy of teachers and not in the courts which represent only the interests of the bourgeois state. The bureaucracy in the NUT has been proven to be rotten to the core. It was fence campaign leaflet proc-laims, 'a misconveived re-sponse' which characterised the national officers move to suspend the $50\ ILTA$ officers,

but a clear message to all teachers that this leadership grovels before the capitalist state in the hope of defending its own positions, and of de-monstrating that they are prepared to police their own members should they dare to moblise themselves in de-fence of their hard won trade union rights of conditions of service.

We are told in the same leaflet that the move by the national officers 'overturn every principle of natural justice'.

Rousseau may not have been aware of it in the 18th century but we in the workers movement should be aware now no such phenomenon of natural justice and that the last place to work for justice for the working class is the bourgeois court.

Unemployed fight back

BY FRANK FITZMAURICE

KIRKBY Unemployed Centre is carrying out a cam-paign against cuts in funding which would mean, im-mediately, the sacking of seven full time welfare rights workers. After a lobby of the annual budget meeting of Knowsley council the centre was packed for a meeting of over 150 people.

the cuts. Speakers outlined the seven year struggle to build the centre from a small

room in Tower Hill Community Centre to the present centre with its facilities and tradition of fighting on behalf of the unemployed.

Like the other unemployed centres on Merseyside, the Kirkby centre took the principled step of refusing MSC funding because of the restrictions on activity this funding would have meant.

This independence has allowed them to mount campaigns on behalf of the unemployed that have resulted up of the cent higher take-the national average by than = so successfully

fought against some of the worst employers which prey on the town, through un-ionisation of their work-

Council. Knowsley although it has an over-whelming Labour majority, has a contemptible record of subservience to the Tory plans to reduce local authority spending, and its halving of funding for the four unemployed centres in the borough is again carrying out the dirty work for the Tories at a time of mounting attacks on social security payments.

That the cuts were a political move was made plain at the meeting. It was pointed out that the recent cut in interest rates has given the council over £1 million in extra revenue, while the cuts amount to £154,000.

It was also pointed out that the mayor's expenses have gone up from £90,000 to £100,000 and £200,000 has been budgeted for councillors' expenses.

The meeting called for a lobby of the council budget committee: and it prudently refrained from including the cuts in its agenda.

NUPE members battle for union democracy ched a 'Campaign for Democracy in NUPE'.

NORTH KENT members of the National Union of Public Employees, angered by union officials' refusal to redress their grievances, have laun-

Delegates from all over the country came to London on 4 April to launch this campaign against the bureaucracy within the union. Their conference, initiated by North Kent Branches Joint Committee, elected a steering committee to carry the campaign

Organisers and delegates were united in their bitter-ness towards full-time officials, and told how, all over the country, members had been refused justice on many occasions.

The Kent branches were stimulated to call for the campaign by the leadership's transfer of a full-time officer in their area, Nick Bradley, respected by all the Kent branches for his upon work union work.

Whereas in the past officers had always been trans-ferred after consultation with and agreement from the area's branches, the branches were now told they

had no rights in the matter. Letters to the divisional officer were ignored. Raising objections at area conference was ruled out of order on the ground that it was the responsibility of the national executive commit-tee and general secretary, Rodney Bickerstaffe.

BY JOHN EVANS

When Bickerstaffe was written to he referred questioners back to — the divisional officer!

Legal and disciplinary action was threatened against anyone who pursued the matter. In the case of area and divisional committee member Martin Craig, this threat has been carried through. At a branch meet-ing where he wasn't present, a divisional and area official had him expelled.

The divisional officer concerned, Shaun Hilliard, had his name mentioned a few times at the conference. A health worker, involved in the 1979 NHS strikes, re-membered him well as undermining the solidarity of the workers in struggle in Sheffield.

In North Kent he now threatens all who demand their union rights .

The basic demand in-

cluded in the 'Draft Charter for Democracy in NUPE' was that all full-time officials be elected and accountable to the members.

The demand was also raised that members should have full power of recall over those elected, and it was agreed to carefully consider the wording of such a demand before including it in the Charter.

Such a demand would strengthen the campaign, and many workers support its inclusion.

It was also agreed to de-mand that all talks with management be carried out in the presence of stewards; that all decisions on such talks be by the branch concerned; and that there should be a complete review of the union's structure to restore it to members' hands.

The NEC came under further attack over its rule changes and the introduction of undemocratic restrictions in the current NEC elections. Here are just three of these 1. No candidate, branch or member may circulate any material designed to promote any candidate, to any member or branch;

2. No candidate may speak at meetings to promote their candidature;

3. Canvassing of any kind for candidates is not allowed;

Members are told to make up their minds who to vote for on the basis of a short statement from each candi-

But members who have 'any complaints about the conduct of the elections' can write to the Electoral Reform Society within a month of the announcement of the results. (About as much use as telling Sid!)

Asked about how these rules came into being, a representative at NUPE head office replied: 'We consulted with the Electoral Reform Society and agreed on the guidelines.'

As the ERS don't have any rights under NUPE rules,I pose this one simple question: why weren't the members consulted? We have more rights than a non-elected body like the ERS.

A full-time official in London claimed the guidelines were to prevent right-wing organisations, such as Aims for Freedom, giving support to their chosen candidate without union constraints.

I suppose the NEC-ERS Alliance will also be approaching Fleet Street editors and asking them not to support 'moderates' or witch-hunt left- wingers in this and all future elections.

How can we counter the right-wing propaganda machine unless we to are allowed to campaign in elec-

How can we deal with the bureaucracy in our unions unless a ruthless campaign is waged against them?

Resigning from the union is no solution to this prob-lem, as understandable as members frustrations are. Members have to stay in and take up a principled fight against the bureaucrats. There will be lessons for all trade unionists in this strug-

One lesson of the printers' strike was that such lead-erships are incapable of winning any dispute. One lesson of the miners' strike was that no union leaders organised any decisive support

One lesson the teachers are learning is how, after two years of struggle, their leaders are winding down the campaign and handing their trade union rights over to the government.

It is crucial that NUPE members realise that the fight for their rights as trade unionists concerns all other union members as well. Before workers can ensure their basic rights they have to rid themselves of the over-paid bureaucracy — this deadweight in their ranks.

NUPE members should contact: Campaign for Democracy, 29 East Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 5NJ. Tel: 0634 813231.

Sale engineers fight sackings

WORKERS fighting sackings at the Sale, Manchester, engineering plant of Senior Colman have now been on strike since 19 January.

Ninety-seven workers were sacked for striking in support of four dismissed colleagues who had failed to comply with a management instruction to fill in new time-sheets.

These dismissals were a breach of both national and domestic agreements.

The Shop Stewards' Committee registered a 'failure to agree' with management in compliance with both national and domestic agreements, and advised their members not to fill in the new time-sheets on 16 January.

Four employees were selected — allegedly 'at random' — and warned verbally for failing to fill in the new time-sheet. Later the same day they were given written warnings and then dis-

At the request of a mass meeting that day, the union's district secretary tried to persuade management to reinstate the four dismissed

On 19 January a secret ballot voted 110 for and 2 against indefinite strike ac-

BY SUE GWYER

tion until the dismissed men were reinstated.

All the strikers were sent dismissal notices in the post on 20 January and told that if they had not returned to work by 8.00am next day their employment would be terminated.

On 23 January, with just thirteen workers having returned, the threats were con-firmed and 97 workers were

Union

Colman's convener Gra-ham Wyatt told Workers Press: 'Management had prepared to destroy the union. When the Senior group bought out the firm of Barber and Colman in July 1986 they brought in new job de-



On the picket line at Colman scriptions and would not rec-

ognise the union. 'This new contract was

still going through the procedures when we were sacked.

'The union was established in 1981 when there was a big fight against individual rates of pay ranging from £3 to £1 per week. We got them all on to £19 per week.'

This dispute is not about the trivial matter of time-sheets. It is about the fundamental right to belong to a trade union.

There is a sinister connection between the Senior Colman dispute and the Silentnight strike. Professor Roland Smith, who sits on the board of directors of the Senior Colman group, was also on the board of the Silentnight group of com-panies. He is believed to be an advisor to Thatcher's government.

Senior Colman strikers Senior Colman strikers need all the support they can get, financial and physical. The Senior Colman Strike Committee can be contacted through the AEU Manchester South District Secretary, J. E. Gwilliam, 43 Crescent, Salford M5 4PE.

JOB centres, DHSS and Unemployment Benefit offices in the north west and Wales were closed throughout last week as civil servants took strike action in support of their claim for a £115 a week minimum wage and a 35 hour week.

The action was part of a campaign by members of the Civil and Public Servants Association, the Society of Civil and Public Servants and the Northern Ireland Public Services Association, covering some 240,000 members.

This is the first national action in the Civil Service since the 16-week pay cam-paign of 1981 when the government tore up the existing pay comparability machin-ery which had kept civil service pay in line with 'good employers' in the private

Civil Service pay is 30 per cent less than it would have been under the old arrange-

ments. Over 130,000 jobs have gone and the workload in some areas such as the DHSS has doubled.

Barry Woodburn, the Manchester CPSA organiser pointed out: Some members are paying out more in benefits than they receive in pay.

Around 40,000 civil servants qualify for some kind of income supplement.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Others with particular skills are getting immediate large increases in salary when moving to the private sector.

The fight against low pay, the linking of pay to per-formance and the defence of national pay bargaining are the issues in the current dis-

Leaders such as Tony Christopher of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation make no secret of the fact that they are in favour of an Eric Hammond-style pay agreement.

This corporatist plotting can and must be defeated. The members in CPSA have shown the way forward by voting to strike despite the lack of a recommendation from their cowardly leaders.

THATCHER'S promised return to 'Victorian values' could take another great leap backwards if Common Market finance ministers accept moves being proposed next month.

Newspapers, books, and magazines would become subject to Value Added Tax — the first time print has been taxed in Britain since

the 19th-century Stamp Act. Tory Commissioner Lord Cockfield is expected to sup-port moves to bring EEC taxes into line when the finance ministers meet on 11

Birmingham East Labour MEP Christine Crawley says this will include tax on newspapers, magazines, and books. The Treasury has re-fused to confirm or deny

West Germany already has seven per cent VAT on print. In Denmark the tax on books is 22 per cent. Ireland has 10 per cent VAT on newspapers and 23 per cent on magazines.

After a public outcry, the Tory government was forced in 1984 to back down on VAT plans for print.

George **Roucou wins**

MANCHESTER building worker and UCATT shop ste ward, George Roucou, has won the right to stay in Bri-

His appeal against de-portation has been allowed after a campaign that brought thousands of trade unionists onto the streets to demand the right of Seychel-les-born Roucou to remain in Britain, where he has worked since he came with a British passport in 1975.

Poverty and Maternity

THE LINK between poverty and death of babies dominated the Maternity Emergency national rally in London last Monday.

On the day when the Tories' savage new cuts in maternity benefits came into effect, over 2,000 mothers, fathers, babies and children came to Westminster Central Halls to show their opposition.

After signing a petition the crowds went upstairs to visit stalls run by organisations who support the Maternity Alliance campaign.

A well-run creche took care of the needs of the smaller protesters while refreshments accompanied by music were very welcome for

Inside the main hall a non-stop series of speakers, punctuated with music and entertainment, explained from 11a.m. until 8p.m. how the latest cuts in benefits which follow continual erosion of maternity benefits since 1979 — will hit those who most need them.

A speaker from the National Childbirth Trust explained that reducing poverty, not just increasing technology, would give better sur-vival chances for more babies.

Community medicine specialist Gillian McIlwaine spoke of the problems in a high unemployment area like Glasgow. An unemployed pregnant teenager would now receive only £80 instead of the pre-

'A mother and one child will receive £33.45 a week if living with her parents,' she said, dismissing the Tory myth that teenagers become pregnant in order to be re-

'A mother and one child not living with her parents will receive £75, a bed, cooker and fire (chairs are not considered necessary) and



Not everyone in the audience paid attention to the speakers at the Maternity Alliance national rally

each year. BY CLARE COWEN

£41.10 a week when the baby is

Angela Phillips of the Maternity Alliance management committee said the campaign for benefits would continue, along the lines that all women should have a right to maternity income and the right to return to work, maternity pay should be an adequate replace-ment for lost wages and fathers should also have the right to paid

A Maternity Alliance leaflet made some telling points:

■ Thousands of babies die unnecessarily or suffer preventable handicapping conditions in Britain

supplementary benefit.

nothing.

■ Good health is less common among poor families than amongst the rich. Stillbirth and death in the first week of life are almost twice

as likely among babies born in social class V compared with social class I. Over 3.5 million children are living on or below the poverty line in Britain today.

■ Britain's record on rights for working parents is one of the worst

Rights are shrinking in employment, housing and childcare as well as in health services and state benefits, and choice is increasingly becoming the prerogative of those who can afford to pay.

Prescription charges go up

THE WELFARE of growing numbers of low-income families is threatened by the 1 April increase in prescription charges to £2.40.

Many people living in poverty who just fail to qualify for free prescriptions will be unable to afford medicines, warns the Health Visitors' Association.

The increase is a 12-fold jump since 1979. Already 2,000 people a week are not using prescriptions doctors have written for them.

The HVA stresses that most of these are likely to be deprived families whose health faces the worst risks through unemploy-ment, financial hardship and bad

'This further rise is nothing short of a tax on those vulnerable roups in communities who have the greatest need for adequate health care. The charges exceed the cost of many medicines and broaden the gulf in health between the haves and have nots,' said Rosalynde Lowe, HVA national chair based in recession-hit Gateshead.

In recent weeks:

 A Health Education Council report disclosed the health gap between rich and poor is widening

Thatcher refused pleas for free prescriptions for cancer patients. Around 200,000 people become can-

cer patients every year

Labour MP Willie Hamilton told the House of Commons a quarter of people who paid for prescriptions were just above the poverty line for exemption from charges. The number of people within 40 per cent of the supplementary benefit level climbed from 5.5 million in 1979 to 7.5 million in 1983.

Shortage of nurses

LONDON hospitals are closing wards and putting patients at risk because of a severe shortage of nurses.

London Health Emergency has surveyed London's 30 health districts and found that low pay and workloads greatly increased by staff cuts are driving out nurses in droves. Health services are likely to grind to a halt, it says.

Paddington/North Kensington: at St Mary's Hospital kidney transplant operations have stopped

● Hampstead: 230 nurses left last year. A place in the health authority's creche is £43 a week, and a staff nurse takes home £87

Hammersmith Hospital: 25 per cent of the 600 nursing posts are vacant; beds treating liver and cancer patients have closed

• Riverside: 657 nursing posts are empty (22 per cent of the total). At Charing Cross Hospital, seven coronary care, five surgical, and six medical beds have been closed

● Tower Hamlets: agency nurses are being used to fill the shortage of nurses, at a cost of over £1.3 million

• West Lambeth: A ward closed suddenly at South Western Hospital

City and Hackney: 350 unfilled nursing vacancies

● Merton and Sutton: Red alerts and restricted admissions are the crisis response to nursing shortages

• Wandsworth: nurses at St James's Hospital, Balham, have complained to management of inadequate staffing in wards and casualty, arguing that 'patients are being put at risk because of the shortage of staff'.

Special Schools under threat

THIS MONTH'S CUTS

• The £25 maternity grant for all mothers has been abolished as have single payments up to £187 for mothers on Supplementary Benefit. Instead there is one payment of £80 for mothers on the lowest incomes — a cut of £100 — and most mothers will get

The weekly maternity benefit for 74,000 mothers has ended—one in five pregnant working women no longer have the right to weekly maternity benefit of £32.85, totalling £530. Employers now pay the benefit instead of the DHSS, so women in small, non-unionised firms will suffer. The payment is taxable so those who do receive it may lose as much as £10 a week.

• The right to maternity leave in small firms (under ten employees) has gone. The qualifying period for protection against unfair dismissal has been raised from six months to two years.

Further plans are in the pipeline: free milk and vitamins for pregnant women and children on low incomes are to be abolished,

as is the single payment for maternity clothes to women on

BY PAT ROBSON

MANY LONDON parents are unaware of the threat hanging over Special Schools which their children attend.

There are some 100 Special Schools in the Inner London Education Authority which provide for children with varying difficulties for which ordinary or mainstream school has been stated as insufficient.

These Special Schools provide for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (malad-justed), moderate and severe learning difficulties (mentally handicapped), physically handicapped, autism, sensory and language impairment, (blind, deaf or dumb), and delicate (those not fitting in elsewhere).

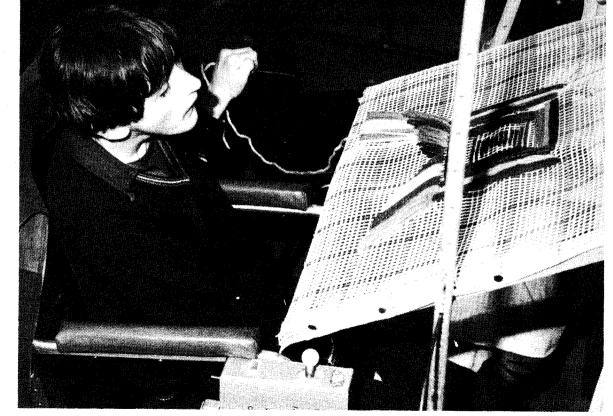
At a time when mainstream schools have overstretched teachers, overcrowded classrooms, curriculum changes and reduced budgets, ILEA is thrusting ahead with an 'integration' policy.

This follows the Fish Report published in July 1985 which would mean the eventual end of small, all-age Special Schools.

Many parents and teachers were shocked by a recent television news item which announced that Special Schools were closing and that all of them would be integated into mainstream schools.

A group of deeply concerned parents and teachers from Samuel Rhodes School, Islington, who find themselves in the front line, have formed the 'Campaign for Choice in Special Education'.

At a meeting on 19 March at



In special schools, children who have difficulty learning in mainstream schools are taught by teachers trained to develop their abilities

County Hall, one of the points stressed was:

We are sceptical about assurances that individual schools will continue. We support those parents who wish to see their children educated in mainstream schools but our clear wish is for a proper network of special schools to be

maintained as a positive alternative choice.

'We feel, as parents and teachers, that we are a kind of silent majority who are witnessing the destruction of our schools and it is time we found our voice.

A petition is being circulated, letters are being written to MPs, and the next important meeting takes place at County Hall on Thursday, 30 April, at 7.30p.m.

This new conflict between parents/teachers and the Inner London Education Authority might well be used by the Tories to further their secret plan to do to ILEA what they did to the GLC — abolish

Solidarity with PLO!

FIGHTING broke out again in Lebanon last week between Palestinian fighters and the Shi'ite Amal militia units that have been besieging Palestinian camps.

The battles, around villages overlooking the refugee camps, came after Syrian troops broke the siege of Chatila camp, where 3,000 Palestinians had been under bombardment and starvation.

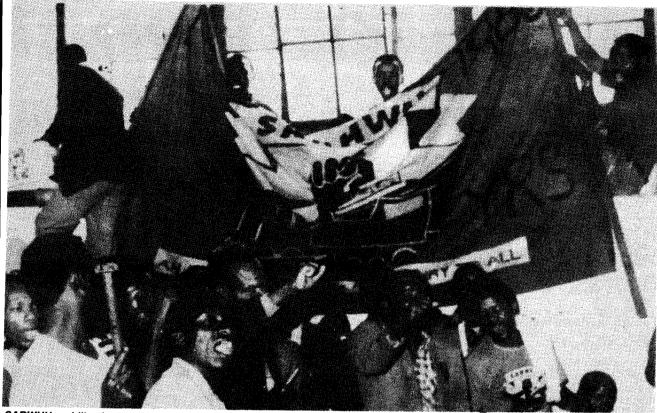
Families that had been kept apart by the siege rushed to embrace in tears, relieved to find loved ones still alive. Hungry children reached for food parcels brought by sympathisers.

Over 100 Chatila residents had been killed during the six-month siege, and 600 wounded. Many were women cut down by sniper fire as they foraged on the outskirts of the camp for food for their children.

Twelve-year old Mohammad Gandour told reporters last Monday. 'I lived in fear because of the shelling. There is nothing inside, no food, no water, nothing. We ate grains, grass and when it became unbearable people resorted to eating cats.'

The Syrian decision to call off the Amal forces came after pressure from the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Algeria. It is also on the eve of the PLO Parliament, the Palestine National Council, meeting in Algiers.

Vicious to the end, Amal troops halted lorries carrying milk powder to the camp on Moday, and fuel for the water pumps. Like the Israeli-backed fascists who massacred Chatila residents in 1982, they regard Palestinian babies as a military target.



SARWHU mobilised more than 3000 for a meeting at COSATU house which had originally been intended for stewards only

WRP Conference Resolution

THIS conference stands fully with the besieged Palestinians in the refugee camps of the Lebanon. This conference calls for an International campaign demanding:

1. A cease fire and withdrawal of all the militias that are surrounding the camps.

2. A withdrawal of all Syrian troops from Lebanon.

3. That complete freedom of movement is allowed for all Palestinians in and out of the camps.

These demands are only the most basic for the continued survival of the Palestinians.

We call on all International organisations to join with us in this campaign and to raise the defence of the camps worldwide.

THIS conference condemns the continued Israeli repression in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, and the recent closure by Israeli police of the Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem.

Conference demands the dropping of all charges against Michael Warshawsky and his comrades of the Alternative Information Centre.

Conference resolves to send a message of solidarity to Comrade Warshawsky of the Revolutionary Communist League (Israeli section of USec), and to approach those campaigning on his behalf here, with a view to assisting the campaign

Rail Strike in South Africa

BLACK RAIL WORKERS in South Africa, fighting for union rights and against victimisation have hit the employer, SA Transport Services(SATS), hard.

The company went crying to the courts last month that it was losing 500,000 Rand a day so long as the workers at City Deep container depot stayed out.

SATS regional manager

Spies Le Roux said 751 containers were stuck at City Deep waiting for delivery, a further 458 were on trains to be unloaded, and more were piling up.

The strike began when SATS management, who refused to recognise the South African Railways and Harbour Workers' Union (SAR-WHU), dismissed a worker at City Deeps.

at City Deeps.

As the City Deeps workers

were joined by thousands of others, the spreading strike may have pushed losses up to tens of millions of rands, besides what it has done to firms relying on the railways.

The South African Railways and Harbour Workers Union (SARWHU) reported on March 26 that a further 23 goods and container depots had been hit, including Johannesburg's Kaserne depot with 6,000 workers. More than 16,000 workers were out.

Ticket collectors at 55 stations in the Transvaal walked off when they heard the company was dragging its heels in negotiations. The strike spread to Bloemfontein, and was also joined by about 700 workers at Jan Smuts Airport.

The Posts and Telecommunications Workers Association pledged full solidarity with the railway workers.

The enthusiasm with which South Africa's Black working class is mobilising through the unions has been well-shown in this strike. SARWHU assistant secretary-general Themba Kuzwayo says workers have been signing up to join the union at a rate of 200 a day.

When SARWHU called a meeting at Cosatu House, in Johannesburg, originally intended for shop stewards, more than 3,000 railway workers turned up with their banners and slogans.

Surrounded by busloads of police who came armed with rifles and tear-gas launchers, the workers refused to be either provoked or intimidated. They proceeded with their meeting and voted to extend the strike.

Referring to workers' anger at both the company's anti-union policy and the state's heavy presence, the union said in a statement 'It was only the disciplined manner in which the SAR-WHU members conducted themselves that averted an ugly situation.'

According to Themba Kuzwayo, 'The strike also reflects a realisation by workers of their important contribution to the economy.'

The company was refusing to recognise the union, and working with the government to try and smash it, possibly by sacking and evicting migrant workers and trying to recruit raw labour from tribal 'homelands'

But the strike could meanwhile spread further, bringing out track maintenance workers for instance, and paralysing South Africa's rail transport.

Trade Wars: DEBT HEADACHES FOR IMF

RONALD REAGAN sent the world's stock exchanges into a tail-spin when he announced tariff measures against imported Japanese electronic goods on 27 March.

Not to be outdone, Thatcher followed this with a threat of reprisals against Tokyo for their refusal to let Cable and Wireless into the Japanese telecommunications market.

But even these sounds of the approaching trade war are not really the worst of the news for world capitalism.

The problem of the US-Japanese trade imbalance is not a new one, of course. Huge quantities of Japanese consumer goods have been pouring into European and American homes for some time.

The steady fall in the value of the dollar over the past two years has made little impact on this flood; nor has it done much to shore up flagging US exports to Japan.

The Japanese trade surplus now runs at over 50 billion dollars a year.

Yet, as the financial bigwigs assemble in Washington for the meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, their headaches are less ab-

out trade than about debt.
In the capitalist world to-

day, to an extent beyond anything Lenin could have envisaged, financial transactions predominate over actually making things.

And Japanese invasion of European bond markets and banking is now accelerating rapidly.

This was the meaning of the reminder that licences for foreign financial institutions in London could be revoked under legislation now going through Westminster.

In the first quarter of this year, Japanese intervention in the sale of Eurobonds rose above 25 per cent of the 50 billion dollar total.

The Euro-yen is fast replacing the Eurodollar as a major source of borrowing.

Until the 1980s, US imperialism was by far the world's largest lender.

European and Japanese capitalism were restarted after the war on the foundation of the almighty dollar.

Now all this has changed. The US is the world's heaviest borrower; Japan, the largest lender.

The outstanding US debt now totals twice the annual National Product.

International co-operation to let the dollar fall was agreed with acclamation at the talks at the Plaza Hotel in New York last year.

Since February 1985 the yen has doubled its dollar Not only has this failed to restore the US-Japan trade balance; but it has also been accompanied by an increased flow of credit into the US.

This is what links the starvation of masses in Asia, Africa, and Latin America to the consumer boom in Reagan's America.

Since 1982, Americans got into debt to buy 42 million cars, 24 million fridges, 84 million television sets, and 38 million microwave ovens.

Source

Effectively, Tokyo is the source of a great part of this debt

With a massive trade surplus behind them, Japanese banks and other financial institutions can become more and more powerful competitors on the US and European exchanges.

Meanwhile US manufacturing industry declines as fast as that of Britain.

Who wants to get into the risky business of setting up factories, when billions can be made from issuing bonds?

This is the background also to another topic in Washington this week, for a major source of US borrowing is really what used to be called the 'developing countries'.

The story used to be that

the World Bank would borrow money from the banks in the advanced countries — that meant mainly the US — and lent it to the independent governments of former colonial countries.

They were then going to import the technology needed to raise the standard of living of the masses impoverished by colonialism.

What actually happened was that they ran up fantastic debts.

When the prices of their exports dropped, they were forced increasingly to cut into food production, just to service these debts.

The result is increasingly widespread starvation, and the conversion of these 'independent' governments into tax-collectors for the international banks.

The men from the IMF

turn up from time to time to force even more desperate austerity measures on them. If that doesn't work, a military coup might not be avoided.

So, for three years, the flow of funds has been from the poorest countries in the world to the richest.

Now the IMF is announcing a pact to 'reschedule' these debts.

This means that they are going to let the Africans keep their treadmill going even longer, giving them more time to pay and, perhaps, lower interest rates.

Maybe the French representatives can provide the other delegates to the talks with some of those Ethiopian flowers whose export to Paris continued right through the period of the famine.

Tanks Block 'Peaceful

ARMOURED vehicles firing tear gas, water cannon, and mounted police, were turned out against youth in Chile's capital, Santiago, on April 3, as Pope John Paul II addressed crowds in O'Higgins Park.

Armed police moved in when a group of youth hoisted a banner denouncing torture in the right-wing military regime's jails. Youth and workers fought

Road'

back with stone

That evening, leaders of Chile's banned Communist Party were among a political delegation received by the Pope. They reportedly pledged themselves against the use of 'violence' for political ends.

This in a country where thousands of working people paid with their lives for reformist and Stalinist 'peaceful road' policies when the army overthrew the Allende regime and installed dictator Pinochet.

Arriving last week in Buenos Aires, the Pope said he had not time to meet an Argentine human rights delegation.

V.W. BOSS **ARRESTED**

WEST GERMAN police have arrested the former head of foreign exchange of Volkswagen, in connection with the financial scandal that has lost the company millions of dollars.

State Prosecutor Carl Hermann Retemeyer said inves-tigating magistrates had asked for the arrest of former VW executive Burkhard 'Bobby' Jungar, facing embezzlement charges, because there was reason to believe he might evade justice otherwise.

Junger, who claims he is being made a 'scapegoat', was sacked by Volkswagen in March after the firm had failed to cover-up its foreign exchange debacle.

The car firm is believed to have lost up to 480 million deutschmark (about £160 million) through speculations in the international money market, which came unstuck with the fall of the

Volkswagen reported last month that computer programmes had been wiped out and documents faked in an attempt to cover up fraud.

Yugoslavia: Mass **Bankruptcy Threat**

WORKERS in Yugoslavia, where the government is trying to enforce an austerity programme and pay cuts, have been told that more than 2,000 firms made losses last year, and about 200 face liquidation.

Dusan Kocoljevoc, a leading trade union official, said union leaders had been given the figures at a meeting last week. There were 2,306 firms that made losses in 1986, and 200 could soon face liquidation because they failed to cover losses going back to

Under a new bankruptcy law due to come into force in July, loss-making firms will have six months to make good losses. These firms will have to reduce wages to a minimum level. If they fail to recover, they face liquida-

The Belgrade daily 'Politika Ekspres' has reported that firms are often late in paying even minimum wages, and in some firms workers have not yet been paid this year.

Workers are saying that

the new bankruptcy law could result in an escalation of workers' resistance, already expressed in a country-wide wave of unofficial strikes recently against the government's pay laws.

...and bankers burn the books

A FIRE which gutted the offices of a leading Yugoslav bank may have been deliberately started to destroy records, according to Belgrade

The fire, at the central Belgrade offices of Investbanka on 25 March, followed a report in the newspaper 'Borba' that 80 of the country's 174 commercial banks had engaged in illegal transac-tions, involving 57 billion di-

Prime Minister Branko Mikulic warned in February

that his government would take tough action against banks that misused funds.

Announcing this as part of the same package as wage-freeze laws, Mikulic said many banks had misused loans intended to promote exports and increase agricultural production.

Mikulic acknowledged that, so far, attempts to clamp down on dealings had not succeeded. He said the number of banks misusing funds had increased, from 35 in October to 75 in December.

BY ELMER GANTRY The Story So Far: On vacation in Florida, attractive young Jessica Hahn, secretary for the Full Gospel

Tabernacle, a Pentecostal church in beautiful downtown Massapequa, Long Island, is introduced by Evangelist John Wesley Fletcher to Reverend Jim Bakker, whom she's always admired.

HOLY SOAP

Fletcher also gives her a glass of wine, which she later claims must have been laced with some kind of drug, so that she 'was incapable of firmly resisting.' Rev. Bakker has sex

Feeling emotionally distressed later, Ms. Hahn tells her pastor, Rev. Gene Profeta. He discusses this with a friend, California business consultant Paul R. Roper.

It is five years later, 1985. Jim Bakker, assisted by wife Tammv. heads the Praise The Lord organisation, worth \$129 million a year, running a religious TV chat show reckoned to reach 13 million households via satellite link-up to 178 stations, and with assets including the Heritage USA theme park in North Carolina.

Bakker has always felt Christianity should not be linked with poverty or austerity. As he puts it, 'Why can't everything be nice?'

A letter arrives at Praise The Lord from Roper and partner John Stewart, a California law teacher and religious broadcaster. It is the draft of a civil complaint on behalf of Jessica Hahn, claiming emotional distress.

Reverend Richard Dortch, Praise The Lord administrator, goes to meet Roper, then hires lawyer Howard Weitzman (whose clients have included John De Lorean).

At a meeting in the lawyer's office, Praise the Lord agrees to pay \$115,000 to Hahn, of which she gets \$20,300. Roper and Stewart get the rest as expenses. Praise the Lord also sets up a \$150,000 trust fund for Hahn, on which she is to be paid monthly interest.

The deal is that if she files no lawsuits and keeps quiet about Bakker for at least 20 years, she collects the \$150,000. However, all is not well. Enter Jimmy Swaggart, a preacher-man

from Louisiana, who holds that the US Supreme Court and Congress are 'institutions damned by God', and once warned his congregation 'Don't ever bargain with Jesus, he's a Jew." Swaggart preaches every Sunday to 8 million viewers in the

United States and abroad. Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, estimated takings last year \$140 million, owns a 270 acre site at Baton Rouge. with Bible College, printing and despatch warehouse, television and recording studios. He says he only earns \$100,000 a year. Although he's a Pentecostalist too, hardliner Swaggart sneers at

Jim Bakker's Heritage theme park as 'Christian Disneyland'. He's angry that Bakker dropped the Swaggart show from Praise The Lord's cable TV network. Praise the Lord folk felt Swaggart spent too much air-time attacking Catholics. So when Jimmy Swaggart hears an interesting tale from an old

friend, John Wesley Fletcher (remember him? He's the guy with the funny communion-wine), about what happened one steamy night in Clearwater, Florida, he's interested. Out of Christian duty, he decides to tell Jim Bakker. Rev. Dortch

flies down to Baton Rouge to meet Swaggart and two Assemblies of God officials at a hotel, and denies the Jessica Hahn story. February 1987, the nation's top TV gospel men are gathered at a

convention, and Jimmy Swaggart is about to speak, when Southern Baptist John Ankerberg comes over and whispers that the Charlotte, North Carolina, 'Observer' is hot on the Bakker-Hahn trail.

The two write to Bakker. 19 March, Jim Bakker announces he's resigning from Praise the Lord, handing the empire over to Rev. Jerry Falwell, founder of the 'Moral Majority' movement, and well-known eminence gris of the Reagan administration.

Bakker says he was victim of a blackmail plot over a woman, and blames 'diabolical' enemies including a rival evangelist

Wife Tammy, whom Jim married when they were students at Bible College in Minneapolis, and whose lowered feather-duster eye-lashes and tears have assisted many of his fundraising appeals, resigns too. She is being treated at a drug dependency clinic.

Bakker blames Jessica Hahn for the seduction, and says he'd been confused and frightened by it. A religious columnist friend says the preacher had described Jessica as 'very professional for 21 years of age . . . she knew all the tricks of the trade.'

Oral Roberts, another television preacher, having broken his highly-publicised fast at the top of his 200ft. 'prayer tower' to pick up a badly-needed cheque from a millionaire dog-track owner, announces that Jim Bakker is a 'Prophet of God'.

Roberts accuses Swaggart, the Assemblies of God, and the press of forming an unholy trinity which has launched an attack 'unlike any in the history of the world to come against the body of Christ.' Bakker is about to say a few words when a bolt of lightning strikes the Tulsa, Oklahoma TV mast, putting the programme off the air.

Great Balls of Fire

NOW WE switch for a musical interlude to a nightclub in Tennessee, where our guest is Rock and Country star Jerry Lee Lewis, once known for preferring girls a good deal younger than 21, now somewhat religiously inclined himself.

'Jimmy Swaggart don't have to lie about nothing!', says Jerry Lee,

Meanwhile back in the pulpit, Rev. Dortch becomes no.1 at Praise the Lord. But the same day, the Charlotte 'Observer' publishes details of the payouts to Ms Hahn and his part in them.

Unable to say whether the hush money came from followers' contributions to Praise the Lord ministries, Jerry Falwell says an audit team will look into it. He also says Jim and Tammy will continue to receive their salaries.

The Assemblies of God announce that Rev. Dortch has offered his resignation, though they give no reasons.

Jessica Hahn is now living in west Babylon, NY.

A 'For Sale' notice goes up on the Bakker's \$404,000 home in California. The Charlotte 'Observer' says the couple own \$700,000 worth of real estate and luxury cars. At a mansion in Palm Springs, Tammy says 'Jim and I are both very sad. We're hurting.'

Meanwhile on the campaign trail . . . Pat Robertson of the Christian Broadcasting Network, hoping to become Republican candidate for President on a religious ticket, (he's also for 'eliminating communism throughout the world') doesn't think these problems will spoil his chances. If think the Lord is housecleaning a little bit. I'm glad to see it happen.'

And now: Jimmy Swaggart says more scandals are coming in the Assemblies of God, 'but they won't come from me.'

Enter New York lawyer Norman Roy Gutman, who has represented 'Penthouse' magazine against Jerry Falwell, and Jerry Falwell against 'Hustler', and now represents Jim Bakker. Of Jimmy Swaggart, he threatens: 'We're going to be compelled to show that there is smellier laundry in his hamper than the laundry he thought was in Rev. Bakker's.

Here's hoping they wash it in public!

P.S. Memo to Mary Whitehouse. It sure beats 'East Enders', doesn't it. Ma'am?

Death of a Stalinist

FRANCE'S richest man, Jean-Baptiste Doumeng, died this week. His early years were spent in the small town of Noe where he lived in poverty until the end

His sudden rise to riches sounds initially like the stuff films are made of, but there is a slight difference; he was a Stalinist who made his money as a middle man be-tween the Soviet bureaucracy and Western Europe.

Among his 'achievements' were the secret sale of sur-plus EEC goods to the USSR, and arranging a meeting be-tween Giscard d'Estaing and Brezhnev in 1980.

It comes as no surprise to learn that he was friendly with the dictator De Gaulle and thought more of the French right than of the Socialist Party.

Indonesia's rubbish-tip people

BY CHRIS DIXON

SORTING THROUGH piles of garbage has become a way of life for unemployed Indonesian workers as the country's short-lived industrial prosperity has come to an end.

Hundreds of Indonesian workers were laid off in 1986 on the Jakarta Industrial Estate Pulogadung. As the months went by their children got hungrier, some fell ill though their parents could not afford to buy medicine.

Two hundred of them who estate remembered the re-fuse they used to dump from the factories where they once worked.

It contained cardboard, plastic sheets, pieces of alu-minium, steel piples and empty oil drums.

At first, they obtained high prices for what they were able to recycle, but then the firms who had been buying from them dropped the prices in order to squeeze them out of the dumpsalvaging business.

Finally the local military command was called in to keep the unemployed workers out of the dump unless they sold to a trader approved by the army at a fixed price.

One of the men who organised resistance to this milit-ary control of the people's desperate and fragile liveli-hood had been involved in an attack on a police station in 1983. The military commander set his troops on the man's trail.

He fled, taking with him several of the former factory workers.

So the laid-off men who had tried to make a living from recycled rubbish ended up as political refugees in hiding from the ever-more desperate brutality of the Suharto regime.

THE ELECTIONS in East Timor and West Papua on 23 April will be conducted with special conditions and under military occupation.

The Indonesian govern-ment has been brutally supof the East Timorese and West Papuans; since last year the Indonesian army has been conducting Operasi Kikis (Operation Extinction) in East Timor.

The voters in these colonies will have to use separate ballot boxes for the three assemblies (parliament, provincial and subdistrict assemblies), whereas in the 25 provinces of Indonesia, all the voting is done on a single slip.

It will be impossible for the East Timorese and West Papuan voters to conceal how they are voting. They have to collect a voting slip for each assembly, and then, without defacing it, place it in the box of the appropriate party.

The vote is in any case meant to endorse Indonesian rule of the colonies by a massive vote for Golkar. Only three parties are allowed to take part in the election, and Timorese parties like Fretilin and the UDT are banned.

Mexican left parties test their strength

MEXICO'S left-wing parties recently engaged in an interesting trial of their relative strengths.

In preparation for coming elections for governor, seven organisations agreed to hold a primary in Mexico state, the area around the capital, where almost 20 per cent of the population is concentrated and the left is mainly active.

Taking part in this test of support were: the Mexican Unified Socialist Party (PSUM), the major Stalinist party; the Mexican Work-ers' Party (PMT), a workers' organisation with a leftorganisation with a left-nationalist programme; three smaller Stalinist groups, (UIC, CS, PRS); the Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRT), the Mexican section of the Unified Secre-tariat; and the Socialist Workers' Party-Zapatist Workers' Party (POS-PTZ), Mexican section of the Inter-national Workers League national Workers League

Three candidates were fielded. The PSUM, the smaller Stalinist groups, and the PMT joined forces behind one. The PRT put forward another. And the POS-PTZ stood America Alboa, a woman councillor.

Almost 40,000 people were entitled to vote in this primary, having been registered by the groups concerned as members in the state before the election. They could vote for any of the three candidates. Voting took place on 21 March.

The PSUM-PMT alliance candidate stood on a plat-form of independence from the state and all bourgeois parties, but treated as a tactical' question whether there could be alliances with bourgeois opposition elements of the ruling Institu-tional Revolutionary Party

(Claiming to inherit the mantle of the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, a peasantbased revolution producing a national-bourgeois state, the PRI has ruled Mexico since 1929.)

The POS-PTZ ran on a platform of political independence of the working class, non-payment of Mexico's crippling foreign debt, and support for workers' and students' struggles in Mexico, as well as socialist and transitional demands, such as nationalisation of banks and major industries.

The PRT policy was roughly middle-of-the-road between the other two.

The results now available show the PSUM-PMT candidate obtained 20,000 votes; the POS-PTZ received 18,000; and the PRT came third with 5,000.

Members of POS-PTZ are very pleased that their candidate came a close second. America Alboa swept the board in working-class neighbourhoods around Mexico City, with more than three-to-one majorities over the other two candidates in most cases.

The PSUM-PMT alliance, inclined to Euro-Stalinism. obtained big majorities over POS-PTZ in the rural areas, however. These parties and the smaller Stalinist groups are engaged in a process of fusion.

Issue

The PRT is divided over the issue of fusion. The POS-PTZ is opposed.

The issue of what the left will do when the real elections come is not yet de-cided, though the PRT has indicated that it will unconditionally support the PSUM-PMT candidate.

The POS-PTZ is proposing a public discussion, followed by a referendum on progwhether to critically endorse the winner of the primary as

While the PSUM, PMT, and PRT have ballot status, the Mexican government has repeatedly refused this to the Trotskyists of the POS-PTZ, thus preventing them from fielding their own candidate. They may never-theless decide to run an independent campaign.

Workers Revolutionary Party Special National Congress — 4&5 April 1987

For the reorganisation of the Fourth International

Main resolution passed by the Congress

AS THE working class developed, the need for an international association was brought before it by its own experience.

Marxist theory revealed that the necessity for such an association arose from the nature of capitalism itself.

Today the contradiction between the development of the productive forces and national boundaries dominates the class struggle. That was the central characteristic of the miners' strike of 1984-1985.

Not only does the energy crisis, born from the crisis of capitalist society, demand an international solution but this period of enormous conglomerates of finance capital, with their gobal exploitation and domination of world economy, gives a fresh acuteness of Marx's dictum that the class struggle is national in form and international in content.

The meaning of any national struggle today can only be grasped from this standpoint.

The task of reorganising the Fourth International is placed before us more urgently out of the objective necessities of today. To defend the conquests it has already gained and lead the world revolution, the working class needs a World Party.

That leadership itself can only be developed in international association. Following the struggle in the Comintern, Trotsky understood this more than any other Marxist.

He declared that we had to firmly grasp that really independent parties — independent of Stalinist and petty-bourgeois leaderships — 'cannot be built unless there is a close international bond between them on the basis of self-same principles, and provided there is a living exchange of experiences, and a vigilant mutual control.' ('The ILP and the Fourth International' — Trotsky's Writings On Britain Vol 3)

Today, imperialism can do no other than impose its crisis on the workers of the advanced countries, on the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa, Latin America and on the workers and peasants of the deformed and degenerated workers states

They must organise to take back the gains won by the working class everywhere, and it is the resistance to this attack which is bursting forward against unemployment, the continuing destruction of jobs and skills, and the wiping out of the communities. The workers in health, welfare and education services are drawn into the same struggle as the bourgeoisie tries to dismantle the elementary gains won in those spheres.

In all these cases, while wages fights remain important, it is a question of the whole future of the class which predominates. From this comes the crisis of the trade unions and 'trade union consciousness.' Spontaneous struggles of great intensity go far beyond the scope of trade unions, and meanwhile the trade union bureaucracy (Stalinist and social democratic) move closer to the bourgeois state and monopolies, adapting their

structure and policies to the needs of imperialism.

The immediate cause of these possibilities of the reorganisation of the Fourth International was the coming together of a number of struggles within the subjective factor—the Fourth International itself. Those coming forward at present with the aim of taking the decisive step of building the Fourth International on a principled basis have all been through long experience in which they had to break from Trotskyist leaderships which degenerated and went to the right.

These leaderships capitulated to the Stalinist bureaucracy, or to the reformist and petty-bourgeois nationalist forces which had been given a lease of life by the counterrevolutionary forces of Stalinism.

When the Stalinist bureaucracy 'definitely passed over to the side of the bourgeois order' it sought to physically destroy Bolshevism not

agency in the workers' move-

The Trotskyist movement developed in struggle, politically and physically, against Stalinism. The liquidationist tendencies inside the Fourth International, beginning with Pablo who not only advocated 'entryism of a special type' into Stalinist parties, but kept deliberately silent about Stalinist murders of Trotskyists, transmitted the pressure of Stalinism, which needed to try to destroy Bolshevism, into the Fourth International itself. Thus the centent of Pabloism was essentially the same as Stalinism.

TROTSKYISM is the continuation of Bolshevik methods of struggle and Bolshevik ideas: thus its development is the essential means for the working class to achieve political independence.

The struggle against Pabloite liquidationism from 1951, including the foundation of the International Committee in 1953 — with all its limitations and inadequacies — has been the struggle for Bolshevism

The Healy leadership abandoned the theory of permanent revolution, making opportunist agreements with Arab bourgeois governments, centrists and reformists, capitulating to Stalinism (Vietnam and China), and in Ireland dropping the most basic principle of unconditional support for the struggle against British imperialism.

The majority of the WRP expelled its degenerate leadership in 1985. Healy's personal and political degeneration was exposed by the fight taken up by the party membership against the sexual abuse of women members. It was this abuse which brought an immediate reaction from party members who had fought for Trotskyism within the WRP. This systematic abuse caused the destruction of many communist cadres throughout the International Committee.

The expulsion of Healy brought into the open the contradictions, and opened the way for the WRP to negate its own history and take forward what was positive in it, and to make a crucial contribution to the development of the International. Healy has now pronounced for Gorbachev's reforms of the bureaucracy: Banda has de-

the bourgeois revolution in France, and thus in effect poses 'democracy' as against revolutionary socialism.

THE United Secretariat of Mandel capitulated not only to Stalinism but to petty-bourgeois nationalism. At the beginning of the 1970s the leadership of the United Secretariat — Mandel, Maitan and Frank — orientated their international on the strategy of guerrilla warfare in Latin America over the next prolonged period.

Those who opposed this constitute one of the currents that carried forward the continuity of the Fourth International.

In 1979 the United Secretariat leadership abandoned the principle of building a Trotskyist party in Nicaragua, and subordinated itself to the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN). It endorsed the expulsion of the Simon Bolivar Brigade by the FSLN and its delivery into the hands of the reactionary Panamanian bourgeois state.

This experience of the Simon



Miners confront the state: Orgreave, September 1984. The miners' strike in Britain was a turning point internationally

only in the USSR but internationally. The Fourth International, which represented the continuity of Bolshevism, was thus subjected to an unprecedented international campaign of extermination, from

It was this international drive to wipe out revolutionary leadership which most of all defined Stalinism as 'the most counter-revolutionary We stand on the struggle against liquidationism, on which the International Committee was formed. At the same time we recognise how contradictory its history was; the maintenance of vital principles on the one hand, the increasing theoretical, political, organisational and moral degeneration of successive leaderships (Healy, Lambert, North) on the other.

nounced Trotskyism and declares for Stalinism — these positions have emerged because the political issues were fought through systematically since October 1985.

In the PCI, Lambert has made adaptations to social democracy. He is president of a Movement for a Workers' Party, which his party developed, and which stands on the Constitution of 1793 arising from

Bolivar Brigade is a burning lesson for revolutionaries and a warning to all those who minimise the call for the building of parties the Fourth International in every country.

It is not our call which separates us from the United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers Party (US), but reality. Their act was in continuity with those who supported

Workers Revolutionary Party Special National C

For the reorganisation the Fourth Internat

the Popular Front in Spain before the war. It is not only a question of being against the building of Trotskyist parties in theory, but of being for the destruction of Trotskyist parties in a real situation.

Those Trotskyists of the Interna-tional Workers League (LIT) who fought against Mandel for the continuity of the Fourth International carried on the traditions of Trotskyism in Spain.

In the name of overcoming isolation and 'developing the programme,' liquidationist revisionism (Pabloism) has tended always to dissolve the Trotskyist vanguard into a general milieu of radical middle-class lefts, adapting re-volutionary Marxism to the re-quirements of this milieu.

But the real overcoming of the Fourth International's isolation requires a conscious struggle to implant it into the working class, which is the only truly and consistently revolutionary force against capitalism. This requires fighting to develop programme and policies of the Fourth International. against petty-bourgeois centrists and revisionists; only in this way can the political independence of the working class be established.

After the expulsion of Healy we were forced to this conclusion that the explosion in the WRP took place as a result of profound inter-national developments. International processes since have underlined that conclusion. The miners' strike stands out now as the beginning and not the end of an international heightening of struggle.

WE concluded secondly that the international developments had brought about a polarisation in World Trotskyism of which the splits in the WRP were the sharpest expression.

The anti-Trotskyist policies of the United Secretariat in the 1970s prepared the way directly to the open rejection of permanent revolution and Trotskyism by leaders of the SWP in the US and by the SWP in Australia.

Mandel and his collaborators maintain these renegades in their international. As in Germany they liquidate their sections for the sake of so-called unification with anti-Trotskyist forces.

Developments in the WRP took their place in this world polarisa-tion of the Trotskyist movement. On one side are the degenerations, the revisions and the capitulations, the betrayals, and on the other side are the forces reflecting movements in the working class, seeking to resolve the crisis of leadership in struggle against bureaucracy, and truly showing the continuity of the Fourth Inter-

Reorganising the Fourth International means uniting in a World Party all those who are on, or who can be won to, the revolutionary side in that polarisation. To take our own conclusions seriously means to enter into struggle against the other side of that polarisation.

To rally and consolidate all who seek to intervene and participate in the gathering class forces can only be done by firmly laying down principles as against the revisions and capitulations. That we seek to do in our call.

We have to divide and unify the Trotskyist forces internationally on these principles. Our Call must divide as well as unite tendencies in the world Trotskyist movement. There is no other way to proceed. How can we make a call for the reorganisation of the Fourth International without stating the principles on which that reorganisation can take place?

The Call seeks to rally all those

forces in the world today attempting to resolve the question of our age — the crisis of humanity which is the crisis of working class lead-

With this Call we have taken an important step, not just in issuing it, but in laying down the principles on which the reorganisation can take place. These principles, which guide the development of our theory are objectively and historically given to us.

We began by listing the foundations of the Fourth International — The First Four Congresses of the Third International, the Transitional Programme, the Permanent Revolution. With the assistance of other Trotskyists — the GOCQI (Group of Opposition and Continuity of the Fourth International — the group led by Michel tional — the group led by Michel Varga), and the LIT (International Workers League) — who have gone through their own struggles for the Fourth International, we have

questions are subordinated means to return to Bolshevism and the struggle of the Left Opposition against Stalinism and all brands of socialism in one country. Declaring for a programme of the international revolution against a programme of socialism in one country, Trotsky wrote in 1928:

'In our epoch, which is the epoch of imperialism, i.e. of world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital, not a sing-le communist party can establish its programme by proceeding solely or mainly from conditions and tendencies of developments in its own country.' (Third Inter-national after Lenin — Chapter 1 Part 1)

When the Fourth International was founded in 1938, it was on the central principle of the necessity for a world party dedicated to the establishment of independent pro-

joint work with these tendencies who agree with us on the principles of our call. This does not exclude joint work with others.

We are criticised for including in our Call the setting up of Trotskyist parties in all countries because, it is said, this will preclude sections of the United Secretariat. Some of these critics have expressed agreement with this in principle, but see their role as fighting for this within the United Secretariat. That is their right.

The WRP is not for excluding them from the Conference. But the issue is something else: the princi-ple of building Trotskyist parties in every country contains the difference between the conception of the World Party and capitulation to Stalinist and petty-bourgeois

If we did not think so we would not be seeking the means to

our critics. It declares:

'The WRP calls upon all organisations who agree with this call to participate jointly with us in a commit-tee to prepare the Conference itself, its agenda, and its arrangements, to organise the pre-conference discussion and distribution of documents.

This means that we are seeking to organise together with those who support the principles set out in the call, and who represent the continuity of the Fourth Interna-tional. What are our critics saying? 'It is in order for you to state your principles, but for god's sake don't organise around them!'

We do not think that the urgent need is for a gathering of Trots-kyists which is just organised for representatives to state their positions, and then return home, although we know that some may attend on that basis. We are discus-



Volunteers of the People's Militia in Managua, Nicaragua

been able to concretise these fundamentals in the conditions of the polarisation of the Trotskyist movement over the past years. Our Call brings out the nature of the struggle for continuity of the Fourth International, and declares for the building of Trotskyist parties in every country.

TO enter the struggle for internationalism was the greatest step taken by those who broke with supporters of North and Banda — who could not make a complete rupture with opportunist-sectarian politics and ultimatism.

This signified the beginning of a turn away from conceptions of national Trotskyism and a re-pudiation of British excep-

To struggle for the building of an international as the key question for the WRP — to which all other letarian revolutionary leadership of the world's exploited masses.

The continuity of the struggle for communism in the Fourth International since its formation has been carried through precisely by forces which have maintained this principle despite enormous pressures on the revolutionary van guard. Continuity now rests with all those who have opposed attempts to return to Stalinist or social democratic ideology or to liquidate Trotskyist leadership.

The proof of such continuity lies primarily in the fact that Fourth International movements exist today which express their confidence in Trotskyist principles — not just in abstract declarations, but by seeking in practical ways to build Trotskyist leaderships in every corner of the globe.

IF we are to tackle our international tasks then clearly we must begin by strengthening reorganise the Fourth International, but would be joining the United Secretariat ourselves. We repudiate with contempt the suggestion that the inclusion of this basic principle was a manoeuvre by the late Comrade Moreno (LIT) or our own Political Committee mem-

From groups like Socialist Viewpoint and others internationally comes disappointment that our Call for the International Conference is not made as a call for an 'open' forum to all who call themselves Trotskyists. Our Call sets forth the basic principles upon which the reorganisation of the Fourth International can take

In its conclusion it asks all Trotskyist organisations to participate in a Conference on the basis of what has been set out previously. This does not exclude groups who might disagree with aspects of the Call. However it is the next proposition that shakes and disturbs

sing and will continue to discuss with all those who consider themselves Trotskyists, but that is not the question.

The burning need is for the reorganisation of the Fourth International. We believe it can be done on the basis of the principles in our

THIS follows from our conclusion on international developments, which were the context of the WRP explosion. Whole new layers of people internationally are being drawn into collision with Stalinism and social democracy.

It is impossible to consider the miners' strike without discussing the role of women in the coalfields. It was not accidental that the WRP split took place over the sexual abuse of women cadres: the strug-gle by this oppressed layer in the party reflected the powerful

ongress — 4&5 April 1987

on of ona

changes expressed by the women in the coalfields, a harbinger of the forces internationally who will come on the scene in the future.

Women internationally have been and are being drawn into vast struggles echoing and superseding the experiences of the women in the British coalfields. Out of the crisis of the old leaderships significant sections, particularly youth, will seek the programme of Trots-

We have to reorganise the Fourth International in line with these developments, which means that we come before these new forces clearly and decisively elaborating our principles and independence, and raising for them the banner of Trotskyism as the only party of the world revolution.

If it is true that the initiative for an International Conference responds to the objective needs of the working class it is true also that this initiative already lags beind the tempo at which the working class is driven forward by the

The working class does not come into action in a steady acceleration without interruptions and at the same rate in every part of the world. The heritage of Stalinist and petty-bourgeois nationalist lead-ership means that the struggles are separated and diverted, and that there are partial setbacks, sometimes severe.

The preparations for the International Conference must mean the building of the Party here and this means intervening and participating in the mass movement, recruiting the leaders who come forward in struggles, and paying particular attention to organising women and

In the training of revolutionaries of the Fourth International it will naturally not be enough to rely upon conviction and enthusiasm drawn from the general truth of a renewed upsurge of the working class internationally. The lead-ership in every country will need to be trained through all the ups and downs of changing class relations within the development of the class struggle.

To build sections of Trotskyism thoroughly implanted in the mass movements and recognised among the working class as a force chal-lenging for political leadership is an essential complement of the organisation of the International

We reaffirm that the task of Trotskyism is to fight to make our programme and the parties built upon it the leadership of the working class.

We reject theories of 'stages' in the development of revolutionary leadership with their strategy of working for some intermediate or 'transitional' working-class lead-ership which is not Stalinist, not reformist, not yet Trotskyist—e.g. the Lambertist Movement for a Workers' Party — just as we reject the Pabloite conception of the development of petty-bourgeois national-revolutionary movements into the leadership of the proletarian revolution.

Again the basic principles of Bolshevism are at stake: the political independence of the working class and the necessity of ensuring that independence through a party based on the theoretical, political and organisational principles of Bolshevism; these three being 'cast in one piece'.

THE transformation of our forces of today and their conflict with the leadership of the working class does not proceed either through an intermediate type of leadership of the working class or through the transformation of reformist or Sta-



SWAPO singers at Namibia Health and Education Centre, Kwanza Sul, Angola

linist parties into revolutionary leadership.

The road is through the Transitional Programme creatively developed, applied, and fought for by Trotskyists who build their independent revolutionary parties.

The Stalinist crisis means we must attach great significance to the prospect of agreement, joint work and unity with Trotskyists working in Eastern Europe, the USSR and China. The contradictions in the workers' states not only cannot be resolved within the framework of socialism in one country, but they intensify and raise ever anew the danger of capitalist restartion. talist restoration.

It is a betrayal of the permanent revolution and of Bolshevism to substitute reliance on this or that 'liberal' or 'progressive tendency' in the bureaucracy for the political revolution to destroy the bureaucracy. Revolutionary sections of the Fourth International must be built to carry out this task.

It is necessary to develop in It is necessary to develop in independent work and publications the Marxist understanding of the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism and of social democracy, as they are called upon always to stifle and strangle the workers' movement which surges forward.

As has been seen by the evolution of elements like Banda it is absolutely necessary to insist upon and deepen total opposition to all 'theory' that the Stalinist bureaucracy has some 'progressive side' or 'dual nature.'

Trotskyism and Stalinism are mortal enemies. Stalinism is the gravedigger of Bolshevism, Trotskyism its continuation.

Reorganisation of the Fourth International is by no means solely an organisational job. It means a conscious and thorough theoretical and political arming of our movement and especially the youth, and on this basis, an organisational leap forward internationally.

. . . THE worst service to the cadres of the Fourth International and especially the youth would be to persist in underestimating or taking for granted the basic principles of Bolshevism — Trotskyism.

Any tendency to brush aside Any tendency to brush aside these basic principles as 'old fashioned' or 'inevitably requiring re-examination' or 'just generalisations' must be fought.

Development of the Fourth International programme and theory is absolutely necessary, as it al-ways is for Marxists, but such development means reconquering the most basic theoretical and political conquests of Bolshevism. That is the key to the struggle to root Trotskyism deep in the working class.

The WRP stands before a big leap together with the international tendencies which have agreed with our Call. To struggle against British exceptionalism means to enter into the undoubted problems of the future allying with those of the future, allying with those with whom there is a principled agreement, and fighting through the differences which will inevit-ably come up in the struggle in real situations.

We must avoid being side-tracked by secondary considerations — we are all subordinate to

the necessity to build a World Party of the Fourth International in the international working class. Building the Fourth International today means breaking out of inward turning circles.

ward turning circles.

The opportunities opening up for international leadership place every group and tendency on test. It is this international situation which gives us the opportunity in linking the Fourth International with movements of the working class and oppressed peoples to class and oppressed peoples to override individual grievance and past personal differences.

We must proceed as quickly as possible to build close international bonds with those with whom we have agreement on principles. We have to develop a living exchange of experiences, and interventions internationally in the mass move-

That is the importance of the committee to organise the Conference — a committee of those who agree with our Call. The committee will organise the fight internationally for the principles in the world discussion before the Conference and at the Conference itself.

The really central question in the history of the Fourth International has been how to break into the mass movement. The possibilities for resolving that are posed by this present stage of the imperialist epoch. That is the conclusion from our analysis of the stage reached in this international crisis expressed. this international crisis, expressed in the miners' strike. Either we take it seriously, or we are no better than commentators and phrasemongers.

We must orientate our education work around the building of the World Party by organising an in-ternational summer school and organising a series of lectures in every district.

Besides the production of a monthly theoretical journal and internal international bulletins for the Conference, the preparatory committee should publish a series of basic pamphlets and study guides on the basic elements of our theory and programs. theory and programe.

The preparatory committee must make recommendations as to attendance at the International Conference, organise finance, handle documents, and organise the production of a World Political Report and a document on how to reorganise the Fourth Interna-

TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A Magazine of Marxist Theory Volume 1 Number 1 March 1987

Contents

Introducing Tasks of the Fourth International One Year Since Healy's Expulsion, by Geoff Pilling 'What Is To Be Done' in Historical Context, by Tim Peach In Defence of Thought, by Chris Bailey Trotskyism in Latin America, by Oscar Poma 27 Reasons and No Explanations, by Dave Bruce The Class Nature of the Bureaucracy, by Gerard Laffont A Reply to Comrade Laffont, by Cliff Slaughter

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Congress resolutions:

In accordance with the statement of the Central Committee making the call for the International Conference, we resolve:

(a) To convene a first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of all those who declare agree-ment with the ten points of the

(b) To reaffirm that agreement in principle with the ten points of the Call is the basis for parti-cipation in the committee. 6The organisations participating in the Preparatory Committee must be those who recognise themselves and each other as parts of the continuity of the Fourth International and the struggle to build Trotskyist organisations.

Agreement on the ten points in the Call is a minimum basis for a discussion among Trotskyists. Our aim must be to set up an international democratic centralist organisation on the foundation of principled and programmatic agreement.

This conference instructs the WRP delegates on the International Conference Organising Committee to fight for at least one session of the International Conference to be set aside to discuss the women's question and for the delegates to the Conference to be decided with this in mind.

6That all delegates sent abroad on International work, summarise and publish their discussions in the Internal Bulletin, with due regard to

BUILD TROTSKYIST PARTIES IN ALL

ON 31 January 1987, Workers Press published the Workers Revolutionary Party's call for an International Conference of Trotskyists to reorganise the Fourth International.

Over 30 organisations around the world now support that call and will be represented at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

Another dozen organisations have expressed interest in the conference in varying degrees.

The most important controversy so far is around the point of the WRP's call which is for the building of Trotskyist parties in every country.

The argument of those who complain about the inclusion of this

COUNTRIES

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

sion, because the discussion is precisely about these points.

At the centre of the theory and programme of the Fourth International is the question of Trotskyist parties in every country.

With the dissidents of the USec, the main tactic is to be firm on the principles and show in practice that it is possible and necessary to fight for them.

The USec is more and more going in the direction of liquidationism into the Stalinist, reformist and petty bourgeois milieus.

The American Socialist Workers Party has formally renounced Trotskyism and is proposing a fusion with Castro-Sandinists.

The Australian SWP took the advice so seriously it dumped the

It is precisely against this increasingly liquidationist tendency that the unity of orthodox Trotskyists to reorganise the Fourth International has to proceed.

With this need as our starting point, we have to base our call to those dissidents to join us on the principles, and not merely on a 'tactical' withering away of our principles.

In 1979, around the defence of the Trotskyists of the Simon Bolivar International Brigade (SBIB) and the need to build Trotskyist parties in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the then Bolshevik Faction (BF), today the LIT (International Workers League), was able to consolidate its previous gains and emerge out of the struggle inside the USec with

international magazine, 'International Courier'. The first issue in Turkish appeared recently.

It is likely that they will be represented at the International Conference called by the WRP.

In their letter, the comrades of

In their letter, the comrades of the CWL criticise national-Trotskyism and explain the need for an international organisation and leadership. They are also very clear on the question of Trotskyist parties in every country.

They pose this question as the most important in their decision to start developing relations with the LIT, and we reproduce (below) part of the letter for the benefit of our readers and also for our critics.





The list of countries where the Unified Secretariat (USec) says Trotskyist parties are no longer needed because some other leadership will do the job is growing daily; it began with Castro in Cuba

point is not, of course, one of principle, but is of a tactical nature.

They say that members of the Unified Secretariat (USec) who may agree with it and are in opposition to the leadership of the USec will be prevented or 'excluded' from participating in the Conference.

They would like the point 'tactically withdrawn' from the call to allow those 'dissidents' to come to the Preparatory Committee and to the Conference itself.

The critics of its inclusion refer mainly to the TUFI (Tendency for the Reunification of the Fourth International) formed by the British International Group, the American Socialist Action group and the Matti Tendency in the French LCR.

That tendency was mainly ignored in the last World Congress of the USec (dedicated totally to the differences between Mandel and the Socialist Workers Party on Central America) and their proposals obtained very few votes.

But what the critics don't say is that this is a **political** struggle where principles come first. You cannot bargain with essential principles in order to have a discus-

USec and is now in the process of fusing with a wing of the Australian Stalinist movement.

Recently, Alain Krivine, a major leader of the French LCR, announced publicly a proposal to disolve his organisation in the 'renovateurs' of the Stalinist PCF.

The German section of the USec just dissolved into a small Stalinist party, the KPD.

Pedro Penaloza, a member of Congress of the Mexican section of the USec, the PRT, is leading a public factional fight to liquidate his organisation in a fusion with both the Stalinist PSUM and the left nationalist PMT (Partido Mexicano de los Trabajadores).

Hugo Blanco led a small number of his followers in Peru into a dissolution inside the Stalinist PUM (Partido de Unificacion Mariateguista).

The list of the USec 'country-exceptions' (allegedly where Trots-kyist parties are no longer necessary because some other non-revolutionary leadership will do the job) is growing daily.

To the original Cuba have been added Nicaragua, El Salvador, Germany and the Philippines.

an overwhelming majority of the Trotskyist movement in Latin America on its side.

Both Mandel and the SWP opposed building sections in Central America in order to support unconditionally the reformists of the FSLN and the FMLN.

The BF became organisationally strengthened in that fight because it stood by its principles and fought and won the majority of the Trotskyists in Latin America to its side.

This lesson should be remembered by all those who today are willing to compromise on principles in order to have somebody else in the discussion.

But if we need a more recent example, let us take the experience of the comrades of the Communist Workers League (CWL) of Turkey, the group publishing the newspaper 'Workers Front'.

The CWL were, until the coup d'etat of 1980, sympathisers of the USec.

They have now sent a letter to the LIT (International Workers League) dated 1 February 1987.

In that letter they announce their wish to be invited to the next world congress of the LIT and their initial steps to publish in Turkish its

Turkey and the International

A letter from the Communist Workers League of Turkey to the LIT (International Workers League):

BASED on our own experience, the emergence of Trotskyism as a political current within the history of the left movement in Turkey can be dated to 1974-75. These were the years when Trotskyist sectors began their first efforts towards political organisation.

Such a development necessarily posed the question of establishing relations with one of the existing international currents.

Contacts were initially made with the USec. As a result of the influence of the USec's revisionist policies and Menshevik organisational concepts on Trotskyist sections in Turkey, however, the existence of the international leadership impeded the development of the national movement.

In the course of our practical work, we learned that the United Secretariat not only possessed no militants trained in underground conditions, but had never even made any efforts in this direction.

The technical and material poverty of their organisations was so great that they were even incapable of securing the possibility for one person who needed to leave the country to do so.

As a result of police attacks upon our movement and the arrest of a number of our comrades, we protested in writing this structure of the USec and the lack of seriousness which it demonstrated.

Two facts which we confronted upon making these protests were of hair-raising dimensions.

The USec answered our letter in a completely frivolous manner. In their response figured some curious lines as to whether they remembered our name correctly or not.

However, as early as 1979 we had forwarded the basic documents of our movement to them and made attempts to participate in their Eleventh world congress.

The second fact which we learned as a result of our persistent efforts was that the person through whom we had been carrying on our relations as a representative of the USec was in fact not a representative of the USec, but rather a sympathiser who had come to Turkey on business.

Therefore, nothing this person said or did was binding upon the USec.

To recall one such non-binding statement made by this individual who claimed to have conveyed our criticisms faithfully to the USec, he declared to us that the USec did not believe it was possible to have an organisation in Turkey due to the backward nature of the Eastern countries and that this view had been expressed openly to him.

had been expressed openly to him. Following the 1980 military coup, we decided to remain inside the country and continue our work. Our movement suffered heavily from the arrests made in 1981-82. The identity of numerous members of the organisation became known to the police and several were followed and arrested.

One comrade of ours was sentenced intially to 17-and-a-half and subsequently to an addional nineand-a-half years in prison. Another ten or so of our comrades were sentenced to terms ranging from six to eight years each.

Not a single offer of assistance was made to us during all of these arrests and operations, and instead propaganda was circulated to the effect that our group, which was labelled as 'Morenoist' despite our denials, had dissolved.

In 1980 and 1981 we attempted to establish relations with currents outside the USec, but our efforts were unsuccessful. The fact that those of our comrades who spoke foreign languages had been arrested and that we didnt know where to find many of the rest was a significant obstacle.

In 1981, we were able to establish contact with the Spartacist group. We invited representatives of this group, about whose views we had no detailed information, to come to Turkey and meet with us.

This group, which leaves no room for doubt as to who is truly 'revolutionary', had, however, one small concern. 'If we come to Turkey, who will vouch for our safety?' they asked. We did what was natural in the face of such an unserious response and took no further initiative to establish ties with them.

It seems they preferred doing 'healthy political' in the atmosphere of artificial security afforded by the metropolitan countries to taking revolutionary risks.

Message from Australia

The Communist League of Australia has condemned the jailing of Comrade Phil

We reproduce extracts from the statement published in their paper, 'Socialist Press':

The Communist League condemns the jailing of Comrade Phil Penn of the Workers Revolutionary Party, who has been sent-enced in Britain to 12 months in prison (eight months suspended).

His jailing by a London court results from the services of members of the group supporting S. Torrance and G. Healy, the expelled former leader of the International Committee of the Fourth International, who gave evidence against Penn following his arrest after a demonstration in support of the Wapping print workers on 3 May 1986.

Phil was attacked by four members of the Healy-Torrance group while on his own after the demonstration. Phil defended himself and was alone arrested by police. One of his assailants had an eye damaged in the attack.

Phil was again attacked, this time with a club and a knife, by supporters of Healy, in Leicester on 8 June. Despite pressure from the police, Phil refused to act as a police witness, and the case had to be dropped.

Comrade Phil has been the subject of particularly vicious and violent attack by the Healy-Torrance group because of the exemplary role he played in the campaign to expose Healy before the members of the Workers Re-volutionary Party of which Healy was leader until his expulsion in October 1985.

When, as a result of Healy's increasingly reactionary and irrational behaviour and the influence of other comrades who discussed with him, Phil came to the conclusion that Healy was reactionary and degenerate, he firmly and

decisively set about correcting his

Phil enthusiastically and resolutely supported the campaign to expose Healy before the whole membership of the WRP and have him expelled. .

After Healy's expulsion Phil repeatedly insisted that members of the WRP had to squarely face the full significance of their past errors and correct them.

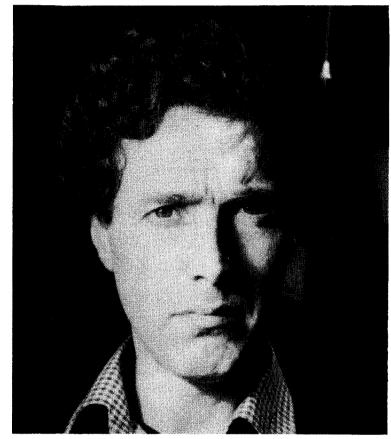
Members of the International Communist Party in Britain have also been subject to reactionary physical attacks by members of the Healy-Torrance group and have been the target of Healy's long-standing practice of using the capitalist state against his political opponents.

Six members of the Healy-Torrance group appeared as police witnesses in Sheffield in January in an attempt to have members of the ICP jailed. The jury in the case however did not believe them and threw the case

Healy — always in awe of the power of the capitalist state — has a long record of use of the capitalist state against his political opponents in the workers' movement. .

The use of the capitalist state against Comrade Penn is a totally reactionary act, intolerable in any movement claiming to be a part of the working class.

The Communist League condemns the actions of the Healy-Torrance group and demands Comrade Penn's release.



Letter from America

WE reproduce here extracts from a letter received from the Central Committee of the League for the Revolutionary Party — USA:

The LRP comdemns the jailing of Comrade Phil Penn. We demand his immediate release.

Penn was first assaulted by members of the Healy/Torrance WRP — News Line group who later gave testimony in court which led to his conviction. This despicable use of the bourgeois

state by the followers of Gerry Healy against a member of a working class organisation is further proof of the throughly rot-ten nature of Healyism.

The record of Healy's thuggery within the workers' movement is one aspect of the treacherous capitulation perpetrated by this adventurer and his followers in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Comrades who are rightly indignant at the use of the capitalist courts should not pass over the physical assaults on Penn which led to it.

Goon tactics were not and are not confined to Healy alone. The fight to free Phil Penn must be a fight to free Trotskyism from the ugliness and brutality committed in its name

With communist greetings

Sy Landy
For the Central Committee of the
LRP

Resolution passed last week by City **Anti-Apartheid** Group

CITY Anti-Apartheid Group condemns the imprisonment of Phil Penn and the role of the WRP/News Line members who appeared in court against him as police witnesses.

We regard the action of WRP/News Line as crossing the principled working class lines of not calling on the police and courts to political disputes within the workers movement

We send our solidarity to Phil Penn in Wormwood Scrubs prison.

What you can do...

■ Raise the jailing of Phil Penn in your union branch, trades council, support group, etc. Phone 01-274 7271 for copies of the circular letter

ing the case.

Write to Phil Penn: No. L27055, HM Prison Worm-wood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Ducane Road, London W12 OAE (registered post is best).

Send messages of support for Phil and reports which we can print in Workers Press. We will have a special column each week while he is behind bars.

RELEASE

JAILED

TRADE

Conference greets Phil

Dear Comrade Phil,

The Special National Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party sends you our warmest revolutionary greetings. We received the report of your fight on the the conditions in prison with pride, but not surprise.

Your stand is a tribute to you as a leader of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

You can count on us to back up this fight and make public the conditions in prison.

Yours fraternally,

Peter Gibson Chair of the Congress

npetn's ers (NALGO) have been refusing to cover for vacant posts in an attempt to persuade the council to budget accelerate recruitment.

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

ANYONE watching the antics of the majority of the Labour Group in Lambeth would be forgiven for thinking that they simply do not want to win the local elections in May.

Perhaps Neil Kinnock, who is hotly pursuing an identical course on a national level, would be able to explain why.

The Lambeth Labour group under the leadership of Linda Bellos has recently passed a cuts budget with drastic implications for the borough and its community.

Under threat of surcharge and disqualification a rate was set well within the limits laid down by Tory

The cuts include delayed openings of a wide range of social services, (crucial to an inner-city borough), cuts to the housing repairs budget, and biggest of all a so-called recruitment drag' through which they plan to save £6.1 million by leaving jobs empty.

Recruitment to the already unacceptable level of vacant posts will be slowed even further, with a consequent effect on deteriorating

Members of the National Association of Local Government Offic-

They are choosing whether to continue the 'no cover' policy, which hits services, or accept vacancy levels and work harder.

The run-down services are ripe for the private contractors and the Tories plan to slam through their temporarily shelved privatisation legislation if they win the next election.

The response of Linda Bellos to NALGO's opposition to these policies was to say that there would have been no dissension from a cuts budget if she had been a white

She has also written a letter to the Labour Group, as a result of

the rebellion of eight councillors who voted against the budget, to say 'I do not see so much a Left Right split but instead a white left

'I believe my record indicates that I am not of the white left, but instead on the black left, which represents an entirely different tradition in the Labour Party'.

To justify the cuts budget on the basis that this is acceptable for the black left is an insult to black people. To use the tactics of the smear campaign against political opponents is the action of the worst kind of coward.

Although Kinnock and Bellos appear to be on opposite sides of the fence over the question of black sections in the Labour Party, and Bellos uses this to validate her claim to be a left-winger, they are both for tying the Labour Party to a refusal to fight.

Bellos was shouted down at a rally called by Birmingham black section on the grounds that she stands with Kinnock, on the right.

UNIONISTS

S WALES MINERS

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale — Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough,

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr - Eight year sentence. Gartree maximum security prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester

DURHAM MINERS

GARY BLACKMORE: Murton --- Two year Youth Custody from December

MICHAEL STEPHENSON: Wearmouth — Three years from June 1986. RF8756 HM Prison Acklington, Morpeth, Northumbria

JOHN MATTERSON: Murton — Two years, three months Youth Custody from December 1985

Classes on Marxism

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LETTERS ====

and should include sender's address.

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MARXISM & SCIENCE

LET ME comment on Comrade Cyril Smith's criticisms of my first article (Workers Press, 28 February). One of my targets was demonology, a key feature of the anti-scientific method practised in the reign of our recently departed All-Wise Teacher and political thug, G. Healy.

Part of Cyril's letter illustrates this method perfectly. After my thumbnail sketch of the logical structure of scientific inquiry Cyril feels he has spotted the influence of an evil demon and must denounce its presence by shouting (would it not be better to have screamed?) its name, 'Popper'.

He then tells us Popper was an anti-Marxist so obviously we cannot learn anything from him. As I understand it, the main target for Popper was originally the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle.

They believed that scientific theories were provable or verifiable; that only statements that were so verifiable had any meaning. From their point of view there can be unequivocally correct theories of the world.

This is similar to the Kantians, who definitely knew that Newtonian mechanics and Euclidian geometry were correct; these are now known to be wrong descrip tions of the physical world Cyril is rather shy about what he had in mind when he referred to 'objective knowa few examples would have helped.

The awful thought occur-red to me (and I stifled a scream) that he might have leanings in the direction of the positivist heresy mixed with neo-Kantianism.

In my view Popper is correct to emphasise the central role of negation or falsifica tion in scientific method and the struggle of alternative theories that this implies. He was (is) one-sided and therefore idealist in raising this to be a central tenet of his epistemology.

For instance, he ignores the 'tenacity' of scientific theories. Even wrong theories are still useful and therefore must reflect or contain an aspect of the physical world. I recom-mend reading Paul mend reading Feyerabend's criticism of Popper and his sparring partner, Kuhn, for example:

'The idea that a struggle of alternatives is decisive for science, too, was introduced by Mach and Boltzmann mainly under the impact of Darwinism. The need for tenacity was emphasised by those dialectical material-ists who objected to extreme "idealistic" flights of fancy.

'And the synthesis, finally, is the very essence of dialectical materialism in the form in which it appears in the writings of Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky. Little of this is known to the "analytic" or "empiricist" philosophers of today, who are very much under the influence of the Vienna Circle' ('Consolations for a Specialist', in 'Critic-ism and the Growth of Knowledge' ed. I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, Cambridge University Press, 1970).

Comrade Moxham has adaquately dealt with the other disembodied spirit introduced by Comrade Smith, namely that of 'Natural Science', which he alleges is loose in the world gaining objective knowledge of the movement of matter etc.

This 'Natural Science must be on more than nodding terms with Hegel's World Spirit since it can obtain objective knowledge of matter and the material relationships between its ininitely many aspects'.

My aim was to appeal to comrades to struggle against timidity and reluctance to express their point of views in party meetings, which is a direct product of the anti-scientific guru era of the party.

The spirit of guruism is still about in the party in the form of the practice of party members. We cannot build a scientific Marxist party unless we adopt a ruthlessly critical attitude to anyone who implies they have a special relationship with objective truth.

Incidentally, the word 'objective' is a favourite adjective of the Stalinist bureaucracy: people were 'objectively' traitors and agents irrespective of the fact that they subjectively thought they were fighting on the side of the working

Healy spent many hours hunting down imagined traitors and agents, who 'objectively' must be present, to explain the failure of his meglomaniacal fantasies.

The most important consequence of the overthrow of Healy is the possibility of developing an understanding of the scientfic foundations of Marxism, that is, freed from the tyranny of the urgent promptings of the objective spirit of the 'World Revolution'

This involves struggling to grasp the relationship be-tween objective and subjective factors in the scientific cognition of the world.

I noted that Comrade Smith nowhere in his wordy and confusing letter addresses the question of the relationship between principles of democratic centralism, scientific method, and party building. Why not?

But he welcomes a 'science column', by which perhaps he means Gee-Whizz-isn't-science-amazing type articles to be found in other newspapers and jourFinally, on the question of artificial intelligence, which Cyril alleges I supported at least implicitly. Actually my point was rather different.

Since it is clearly possible in the foreseeable future to construct informationprocessing systems that will rival in complexity the human brain, the question then will arise: 'What is missing?' That is, why cannot such machines be said to be conscious, to reflect, to

For Marxists this is because they will have no social being and its products, such as natural language and socially organised sensuous practice, namely, work. This will explode the bourgeois myth that thought is purely the product of individual brains.

This then becomes a powerful argument for socialism, since only that form of society is consonant with the very basis of human consciousness, the chief aspect of our species being.

How should we view the new technologies from the point of view of Marxist theory?

First we must understand that we are only at the beginning of a revolutionary transformation of the productive processes.

Present-day computers, especially the so-called 'supercomputers', appear immensely powerful. For instance, supercomputers can perform more than 1,000 million calculations every second.

Each calculation might involve a product, addition, or subtraction of two ten-figure decimal numbers (called Floating Point Operations or FLOPs in the trade). Already devices are operating in laboratories that will, when incorporated into the design of computers, increase this speed by a factor of between 10 and 100.

Beyond that, physicists

are discussing the use of pure quantum effects that operate faster than light — which would make even the next generation of supercomputers appear pedestrian.

We can also remark that these developments represent a synthesis of the two main stages of the develop-ment of the productive forces under capitalist social relations.

The first stage was dominated by a revolution in communications technologies, the most important being the invention of printing.

This was characteristic of the mercantile phase of capi-talism. The industrial phase was associated with the emergence of control technologies, that is, the controlled release of natural energy to vastly increase the productivity of labour.

But the new technology revolutionises both the sphere of communications and control. The same microp-rocessor can be used to control a power plant or machine tool and to send messages to distant parts of the world.

We can also perhaps understand what is taking place as a repetition on a much higher plane (many turns of Lenin's helix) of the very processes that must have occurred blindly in the first stages of evolution.

A key stage in the origin of life must have been when, by random chemical reactions and aggregation, molecules became sufficiently complex to be able to store information about their environment and, in some sense, pass on this 'knowledge' to the next generation of slightly more complex molecules formation-processing at a molecular level, no less.

This property is the key feature of living systems compared with inanimate matter.

Dave Pelman

A non sequitur but one damn error after another

CYRIL SMITH'S reminder Workers Press, 28 March) that thought is a vital pre-cursor to going to the press is timely — and certainly en-couraged me to reread the column by Dave Pelman and the letters it provoked, of which Cyril has written two.

It might have been more useful if he had quoted the source of his quotation from 'Anti-Duhring', which is, after all, nearly 500 pages long.

I would have liked to read the whole passage because I cannot understand how Engels' 'humble' claim that thought is not the thought of the individual man — 'but. . . exists only as the individual thought of many milliards of past, present and future men. . . the knowledge which has an un-conditional claim to truth is realised in a series of relative errors' — contradicts either what Ken Moxham or Dave Pelman had to say (see point 1 of 'Science and Marxism', Workers Press, 28 February).

I did manage to trace the quotation in Cyril's first letter from the 1844 'Manuscripts'. It comes from the Progress Publishers edition of 1959, page 92. The last contenes reads'. sentence reads:

'My own existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being.

I have always found this translation obscure. In 'Karl Marx, Early Texts' (1979), David McLellan retranslated it as follows:

'Therefore, what I individually produce, I produce individually for Society, conscious of myself as a social being' (emphasis added).

The later translation seems to convey Marx's meaning far more clearly than the Moscow publication and implies that the pas-sage, if relevant at all, bears out Dave Pelman.

Can Cyril show us any science developed by society, other than in the form of the labour of individual scientists working in teams, institutions, etc.?

In 'The Holy Family',

Marxism versus Pelmanism

I AM NOT all that worried by the rather insulting and patronising tone of Dave Pelman's response to what was meant to be friendly criticism. The fact that his attitude to science seems to have no discernible affinity with Marxism at all is much more important.

He peddles a magic formula called 'scientific method', and urges us to use it to understand 'the scientific foundations of Marxism, that is, freed from the tyran-ny of the urgent promptings of the objective spirit of the "World Revolution"

I believe that, in the guise of an appeal to freedom, this view expresses something quite alien to revolutionary socialism and to Marxism as a scientific world outlook. (Healy also said that last phrase. Maybe Stalin did, too. So what?) In fact, it is really alien to science itself.

I think that Hegel's 'World Spirit' is indeed close to the Marxist conception of natural science — closer than Pelman's individualism, anyway. For Hegel used that term to indicate the collective social development of every aspect of human

That is why Marx, in overcoming Hegel's upside-down way of making ideas active and nature passive, could transform 'Spirit' into 'productive forces'. No worder ductive forces'. No wonder Dave Pelman, with his purely individualist view of both natural science and the revolutionary party, wants to use it as a term of abuse.

Certainly we can learn

from Karl Popper, and from many other opponents of Marxism. We don't do this by picking out some good bits. Nor do we merely demonstrate the logical inconsistency of their theories, or show that they don't fit the facts.

We also have to analyse their historical necessity, their material roots in bourgeois society.

Popper, incidentally, did at least recognise later the inadequacy of his earlier ideas. His earlier principle of falsification had left any in a prov only awaiting execution by evidence.

In his book 'Objective Knowledge: an Evolutionary Approach' (1972), he tried of course without success to find a place for ideas and theories to exist and evolve independently of both individual consciousness and physical objects. This was the autonomous 'Third World', which so puzzled his supporters, let alone his cri-

Many people have noted one important feature of the 'philosophy of science' and its account of 'scientific method': it bears no re-semblance whatsoever to the actual procedures followed by scientists. Marxism can well understand this.

Natural science is part of the productive forces, the accumulated collective ability of humanity to create its own life-conditions. It develops through the work of many individuals, each doing his or her best to gain knowledge of the world.

But, in bourgeois society, these forces are under the control of capital, which buys and exploits the brainpower of scientists, along with the labour-power of other workers, as indi-viduals. So what people think they are doing is often quite different from what they really do.

Now look at the sneering reference to 'World Revolution' in Dave Pelman's piece. Yes, indeed, this is the most objective of 'spirits', tyrannous for some, and urgrasping its objectivity — that is, its existence independent of individual will and consciousness — no one can be a Marxist.

Dave is upset that I did not spell out the 'relation between principles of democratic centralism, scientific method, and party building', so I shall try to do so.

The party exists to fight to unite the working class for the world revolution that Pelman finds so tyrannous.

In order to accomplish this task, it has to develop the scientific theory which can reveal to the class what its true situation is — objectively true, that is.

The individuals who make up this party are men and women from many different social backgrounds, with different experiences and various personal strengths and weaknesses.

Like anyone who wants to complete anything, they have to subordinate their wills to this task. That is to say, they must recognise that this work is objectively necessary.

It does not depend on any individual's wishes or know-ledge, but arises indepen-dently of them, from the material conditions of life of the whole of world society.

Democratic centralism is the method of organisation which best expresses this communist spirit. It is in-compatible with individualism, big-headedness or per-sonal aggrandisement of all varieties. That is why, however belatedly, we got rid of Healy.

Yes, I do want to see a science column in Workers Press which shows the amazing power of natural science, as well as the hor-rors of its exploitation by capitalism and the capitalist state. I want to learn, along with our other readers, as much as possible about the immense possibilities and dangers before mankind.

That, I believe, is what gives the 'spirit of the World Revolution its objective, inescapable urgency.

Cyril Smith

Marx and Engels waged a far from humble polemic with similar nonsense from the Young Hegelians around Bruno Bauer: 'History does nothing, it ''possesses no immense wealth'', it ''wages no battles''. It is man, real living man who does all that, who possesses and fights: "history" is not, as it were, a person apart, using man as a means to achieve its own aims.' (page 116)

Try a simple analogy. If Engels ('Origin of the Family') is to be believed, marriage is a social institution, historically conditioned. Nothing too tricky here. Does, then one man marry one woman or do our unfortunate Romeo and Juliet each marry the sum total of humanity as a social being?

If he rejects the analogy, perhaps Cyril could tell us how he differs from Geoff Pilling in his useful book 'Marx's Capital' (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980):

'Under capitalism the private labour of each individual is transformed into its opposite, social labour, only through the transformation of concrete labour into abstract labour' (page 45).

Geoff expands the point on the following page:

'Further, under commodity production labour is not immediately social; it becomes social labour only through the mediation of exchange relations on the market.

Question: is it possible that individual labour, which is mediated into social labour through the process of exchange, can find its immediate reflection in social thought?

If that appears confused, it gets even worse. The social and economic pressures on scientists are confused with the methods of scientific research, which Lenin correctly described as instinctive materialism, at least within the bounds of an individual scientist's own discipline.

Then follows a glaring non sequitur which runs like

Scientists are influenced by bourgeois pressures. So (!) when you describe scientific method, you remind me of Popper, who was a reactionary.

Popper's descriptions of scientific method are onesided, grossly so, and there-fore wrong. But how does Dave Pelman's description of an aspect of the scientific method differ in essence from Engels' notion that knowledge is realised in a series of relative errors?

When Lenin stressed that it was the movement of concepts that reflected the movement of the world, was he right or was he a Pop-

When he wrote in 'Materialism and Empirio-Criticism of the 'inexhaustibility' of the electron was he essentially correct or was he a sceptic who deserved no more than Hegel's scorn?

By the way, I was skimming the 'Small Logic' to try and source the passage on scepticism that Cyril refers to. I couldn't find it, but I did come across the following (page 117):

The essence of Sophistry lies in giving authority to a partial and abstract principle, in its isolation, as may suit the interest and particular situation of the individual at the time.

Dave Bruce, S.E.London WRP

PERSONAL COLUMN

Capitalism and the artist

JOHN RUSKIN once observed that no artist's work was worth half its proper value during his or her lifetime. But the moment he dies, his pictures, if they are good, reach double their former value

How astonished Ruskin would have been that a single painting by Vincent van Gogh should be bought, by a multi-millionaire, for almost £25 million.

In 1970 Gerald Reitlinger, in 'The Economics of Taste', said that 'Mile de Ravoux' at £175,000 was so far the dearest painting by van Gogh. But, he added, there must be van Gogh pictures that are worth a million.

We have come a long way in 17 years £25 million is equivalent to nearly a third of Bhutan's gross domestic product. Such a sum would feed a lot of hungry children in the countries that imperialism has ill-used.

Are those sunflowers really worth £25

'What we are witnessing', says the 'Guardian', 'is nothing to do with real value. It is a game for mega-millionaires. satiated with material possessions.

Another aspect of that game can be seen in the grossly inflated prices paid for the tasteless jewels amassed by the Duchess of Windsor.

As long ago as 1912 Roger Fry — no Marxist, but no fool either — called art the symbolic currency of the world. Possession of rare and coveted works of art is seen as a sign of greatness, national or personal.

An intelligent visitor to our planet might be forgiven for supposing the human species to be mad.

Millions of people haven't enough to eat. Millions haven't a decent roof over their heads. Many don't even have access to proper drinking-water. A few months ago, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, I saw a shanty-town whose inhabitants, since the nearby streams are all polluted, have to dig in the ground for water.

Yet a handful of multi-millionaires, whose wealth comes from other people's toil, bolster their self-esteem and status by amassing works of art and precious stones.

Madness? Certainly. But it's the madness of a decaying social system.

Unlike some socialists I know, I believe a great many people, especially young peo-ple, can now be won for socialism if such anomalies are explained to them with care, patience, and passion.

There are many young workers who view these anomalies with disgust and anger, and are thirsting for two things: an explana-tion; and an indication of what they themselves can do to bring about change

Marxism alone provides por And alone throws light on the anomalous posalone throws light on the anomalous posi-tion of the artist in capitainst society— existing, as Roger Fry put it, like a sparrow 'picking up the crumbs that fall from the nch man's table, and looking forward to pie in the sky in the shape of posthumous re-

By artists I don't mean just painters, of course, but sculptors and musicians and poets too: all, indeed, whose talent impels them to create beauty in this society where the rich are greedy for beauty, provided its creator is both dead and highly esteemed by the pundits.

The fate of van Gogh's sunflowers should surely inspire the revolutionary movement to reach out to young artists

They are badly needed. For they are well equipped to fire the rest of their generation with a vision of the future society, in which there will be no poverty and works of art will no longer be commodities or status sym-

Thatcher's misquotation

'FROM each according to his abilities, to each according to his means.' That was how Margaret Thatcher 'quoted' Marx during her Moscow visit.

At least, that's what I thought I heard her say, on television; and Alan Watkins of the 'Observer' thought he heard the same.

But, as he pointed out last Sunday, what Marx actually wrote, in 'Critique of the Gotha Programme (1875), was: 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.'

Perhaps Thatcher's version was 'a more acceptable formulation for a Conservative', suggested Watkins

It wasn't Marx, by the way, who originated this slogan. He seems to have borrowed it from the anarchist Michael Bakunin, who in 1870 put it like this: From each according to his faculties, to each according

Leaping nun

I WAS interested to see that Monica Baldwin's 'I Leap Over the Wall', first published in 1949, has just been reissued by Hamish

The author entered a convent in 1914 and stayed strictly secluded there until 1941, when she was released from her vows and went back to the outer world.

those 27 years she had 'missed' World War I and the start of World War II; her uncle Stanley Baldwin had been prime minister for a time: broadcasting had arrived; the motor-car had replaced the horse and carriage; and women had taken to showing their legs and painting their faces.

If you're wondering what Marxists might find interesting in an account of such an experience, I can only reply: 'Everything.'

It confirms from an unexpected perspective the view of our epoch as the terminal crisis of a social system. It puts flesh on the bare bones of social history.

Baldwin was shocked by the deterioration in the quality of life since she had gone inside. The world had become alarming and even, she felt, hostile.

I was disappointed that the only review I've seen of this reissue made no mention of Baldwin's astonishment at the way the English language had changed during her incarceration.

During a railway journey the expression luggage in advance meant nothing to her. so she told the porter to do as he thought best. There were many expressions in the daily papers that she couldn't make head or tail of lazz, gir and it, the Unknown Soldier. tail of jazz, gin and it the Unknown Soldier, lease-lend. He lywood, cooktail sthotease, and solationism, for instance

She was bewridered when friends said its your funeral or Believe it or not. Advertisements for Brasso, Rinso, and Vim meant nothing to her, and in restaurants it was hard to make sense of the menu.

This is a useful reminder that language never stands still. English has been changing faster than ever since the advent of television, and the past 27 years have brought changes on a far bigger scale than that recorded by Baldwin — not least in the not least in the language of politics.

Further particulars

BRIAN PEARCE tells me that the journal 'Sbornik' is to be renamed 'Revolutionary Russia' from the next issue onwards.

Those interested in reading Pearce's paper, 'Lenin versus Trotsky on "Revolutionary Defeatism", which I mentioned on 21 March, should write to the editor: Dr John Slatter, Department of Russian, University of Durham, Durham City DH1 3JT.

I hear from Nigel Todd that his 'Black on Tyne: 1860s', which I mentioned on 14 March, is to be reproduced in the 'North East Labour History Bulletin' this autumn.

Peter Fryer

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ble 10.30a.m. Saturday 2 May, Roehampton Lane, SW15; march to Bishops Park for Rally at 1.00p.m.

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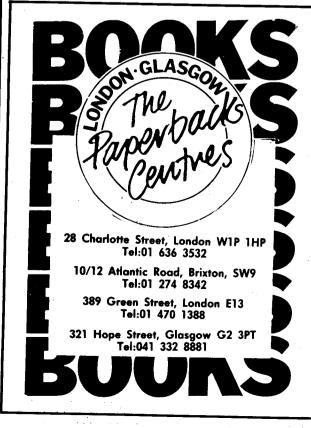
CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings are held every Tuesday, 7.30p.m., Stoke Newington Community Centre Leswington. ton Community Centre, Leswin Road, N16. All are welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, London N4 (01-881 2938) meeting will be on Wednesday, 15
April at 7.30p.m. in Camden Town
Hall)

Defend Lesbian and Gay Rights.
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Stalinism feeds lie-machine

This Week. Thames Television, 2

LAST WEEK'S This Week was a classic example of putrid col-laboration between the media, gov-ernment-controlled British Coal, academia and the British Communist Party.

The word went out: 'Do a job on the NUM' and one-time lefty Jonathan Dimbleby together with side-kick Trevor Phillips join hands with Roy Link (NCB house-based leader of the seek LIDM) boy and leader of the scab UDM), historian Hywel Francis (son of Dai Francis, leading South Wales Stalinist) and retiring NUM vice-president and long-standing mem-ber of the CPGB, Mick McGahey, to carry out a crude and contradic tory character-assassination job on NUM president Arthur Scargill.

Dimbleby defined the parameters in his introduction meters in his introduction:
... The NUM is now so small indeed that its president, Arthur Scargill, only just retains a place and a voice on the top table of the TUC General Council. Despite that dealing and despite the trauma of decline and despite the trauma of the strike, Mr Scargill has been insistent that his men should be as militant as ever' (my emphasis).

But the mood of the miners has changed and, as Trevor Phillips reports, their leader is now under open attack not only from his critics outside, but from once-loyal colleagues inside the union.

Phillips then takes over and cuts directly to the cemetery in South Kirby where we see Mark Jones placing flowers on his son's grave. The voice-over of Mark Jones ex-The voice-over of Mark Jones ex-plains 'David was very strong on Arthur Scargill' who has 'got his views, strong views, and he feels passionately about them'.

The implication was obvious: support for Scargill can only lead to the grave.

To even infer such a thing is scandalous. Since David Jones' tragic and untimely death on the picket line at Ollerton, his mother and father, Doreen and Mark Jones, have been untiring, active supporters of the miners and their

'It's what (David) believed in, and what the miners believed in,' Mark states in the programme, and from my point of view they were right: they had to take up the struggle and fight for their jobs, their industry and their union.'

When I telephoned Mark Jones and asked him what he thought of the way This Week had used his footage he commented succinctly: 'I felt as if I had been raped.'

The Coal Board and the government have a sticky problem. They want to build a capital intensive 'super-pit' in Margam, South Wales. To be financially viable it has to 'super-exploit' its more has to 'super-exploit' its work-

So they are looking for ways to divide the NUM if they can and get the Stalinist-controlled South Wales NUM to sign a local agree-

ment which would include provision for a six-day working week. The NUM executive knows this is the thin end of the wedge.

Retiring NUM vice-president, Michael McGahey, knows better: 'Sir Robert Hanlan, the chairman of the NCB, has made clear that they are not looking for six-day working throughout the British mining industry.

That's rich, I thought as I watched the programme, the NCB chairman's 'word' versus the NUM Executive's considered view, and

like Phillips knows this well. Time to spin a web of subtler lies and innuendoes. Time for the academic to do a double act with the 'old trade union battler'.

Francis: 'To criticise Arthur would be in some way to criticise the sacrifices made by miners and their families, and it has somehow other got mixed up together. . .

McGahey: 'He did not learn the lesson of the strike . . . I think we are still using 1972 tools for 1984.

Francis: 'I think it's rather im-

Not a lot, but it is nonetheless worthy of our attention.

During the miners' strike the media's chosen weapon for hammering the NUM was to vilify its president, Arthur Scargill, on a daily and sometimes hourly basis. He was depicted as a dictatorial, power-hungry demon who cared nothing for the miners but was hell bent on subverting 'democracy' for his own political ends.

On those heady days his chief-lieutenant, Mick McGahey, was never mentioned without attribut-

Age-old political differences which could not be resolved inside the NUM or even within the workers' movement now explode in a wider arena. Old wounds caute-rised with a few drops of state ointment; attempts to settle old scores subjectively by appealing to the class enemy for arbitration.

No different in content from Healy and the Redgraves taking WRP companies to court; no different from the Torrance-machine supplying police witnesses to facilitate the jailing of Compade Phil Penn the jailing of Comrade Phil Penn.

For the politically bankrupt there remains fewer and fewer disguises.

McGahey, Terry Thomas, Hywel Frances, even the miserable Roy Link (whose pension can hardly be said to be guaranteed) know perfectly well that no National Official of the NUM can speak for himself or herself. They are bound by policy voted on by the NUM Executive. Those who suggest otherwise are Those who suggest otherwise are

The same principle applies whether one is referring to 'talks with the UDM' or to a six-day working week.

As Scargill stated in the programme: 'The policy of the union is for a shorter working week, and until and unless anyone changes that policy, that will be my position. I will not be party to extending the working week for miners.'

To conclude I would like to say

To conclude I would like to say this. Dimbleby in his opening re-marks laid stress on the fact that since the end of the strike '... the mood of the miners has changed and, as Trevor Phillips reports, their leader is now under open attack from ... inside his union.

Show us the proof, Dimbleby and

If the mood of the miners has changed, and Scargill opponents, like McGahey, are taking the high ground, how in hell do you explain the fact that last week 64,454 miners voted a Scargill supporter, Sammy Thompson (a Yorkshirecy by a healthy margin of 8,846 votes, defeating McGahey's cothinker, Eric Clarke, in the process??? man to boot), to the vice presiden-

Tom Scott Robson

This review replaces Robson's



Nurses marching with Arthur Scargill in support of the miners — one section of the many workers who supported the miners during the strike

McGahey sides with the chairman! He should have been 'retired' long ago, as many miners in Scotland have been saying for years.

In the final analysis it comes down to a question of leadership, as Phillips makes clear in his commentary: 'Mr Kinnock has put his cards on the table by publicly supporting the South Wales area.'

'South Wales wants negotiation. Nottingham is appealing for conciliation. But back in Yorkshire Scargill (sic) is offering yet more confrontation.

So let's try (once more) to get Scargill: 'Most labour leaders dis-like Scargill's (sic) policies and his (sic) methods,' claims Phillips over a shot of Kinnock sipping, Perrier

He then cuts to the bosses' 'flavour of the decade', Eric Hammond, who is sounding off at the 1975 Labour Party Conference: 'The miners did not choose to strike (sic). The Triumvirate did, and they were defeated!'

Such crudities help, but only in moderation, and an aspiring hack portant because that is why I suppose there has been a great reluctance to analyse the strike itself, because that would be seen in some way or another as a criticism of the very great and courageous sacrifices that were made by miners and their communities.

McGahey: 'I disagree with Arthur's approach. I think it is too abrasive, in relation to the UDM for example. I refuse to accept that 20 thousand miners and their families and communities are unfamilies and communities are untouchables . . .

Francis: . . . we have to disentangle the image of National Presiwe have to disendent and Arthur Scargill's own persona . . . between Arthur and the

McGahey: 'If he as an individual reflects the feelings of the Executive, then he will be the right man at the right time for the job . . . None of us live on an island unto ourselves ... we must reflect the Executive', and Terry Thomas, South Wales NUM, agrees with this one hundred per

What does all this guff add up to? ing to him longstanding mem-bership of the Communist Party.

How times have changed! Now that McGahey is a willing tool of the NCB, of Thatcher and of Kinnock, and enthusiastically adopts the same methods of slander and lie against Second lies and the same will be adopted the same methods. adopts the same methods of stander and lie against Scargill and the NUM that were used against Scargill and McGahey in 1985, there is not a single mention of his political affiliation by Phillips, Dimbleby or anybody else. Surprise, surprise! It takes one

to know one, as the saying goes.

If you can, get along to the current exhibition at the Tate Gallery, Millbank, London before it closes on 20 April.

The picture above is of a Naum Gabo construction of stainless steel sheet and spring-wire, made in 1974, entitled 'Torsion, Variation'.

This is one of many examples of his feel of space and time, which appear in the exhibition covering 60 years of his work.

Russian-born Naum Gabo, an enthusiastic supporter of the Russian Revolution and the freedom for artistic expression it brought, was co-author, in 1920, of The Realistic Manifesto' in which he stated 'Space and time are the only forms on which life is built and hence art must be constructed'. **Geoff Thurley**

ow in Paperback

Where Sixpence Lives. By Norma Kitson. Hogarth Press, £4.50.

WHEN Norma Kitson's book was published in hardback, our reviewer said it had 'flashes of lightning and it is certainly written to make people's feet march and to set them in the right direction.

Many comrades fighting for the South African revolution have come across the activities of the official Anti-Apartheid, representatives of what Norma Kitson calls the Chevra, the 'Burial Society'

The struggles and sacrifices of Norma and David Kitson to put the South African revolution first both inspire and arm with knowledge. The paperback publication of her autobiography brings it within everyone's grasp.

Selling Hitler. By Robert Harris. Faber and Faber, £4.95.

ANOTHER book making its appearance in a paperback edition Robert Harris's account of the Hitler-diary conspiracy, in which shrewd operators made the work of fairly amateurish forgers a front-page story, and exposed the purchasability of a number of prominent historieus. prominent historians .

With \$4 million missing, this was the most expensive fraud in publishing history, and cost at least four editors their jobs.

The story has a lot to say about values of the bourgeois press. For Murdoch the authenticity or otherwise of the diaries was of minor importance; sales of the 'Sunday Times' increased by 60,000 copies.

And David Irving, right-wing historian, did rather well out of the episode, sending bills to newspap-

ers in several countries for his work in uncovering the deception
— and his publishers trebled the
print run of his book on Hitler's medical history.

Educate, Agitate, Organize: 100 Years of Fabian Socialism. By Patricia Pugh. Methuen Paperbacks,

THE OFFICIAL history of the Fabian Society is guaranteed to send a shiver down the spine of every

From its original mixture of mysticism and rhetoric, it became a training ground for Labourite prime ministers from Ramsay MacDonald to James Callaghan.

Kinnock is an enthusiastic Fabian, the kind of 'thoughtful demo-cratic socialist' that the society has nurtured since 1884.

'LET US BURY OUR DEAD IN PEACE'

BY SIMON PIRANI

TENS of thousands of people lined the streets of west Belfast last Wednesday to defy police and army intimidation and pay tribute to IRA Volunteer Lawrence Marley.

Mourners were attacked by baton-wielding RUC police as Marley's coffin left his home in Ardoyne, north Belfast, draped in the Irish tricolour.

Rifle-toting British soldiers, low-flying helicopters, and more than 100 army and police land-rovers were used to surround the funeral procession through Ardoyne.

Then the cortege drove to the Falls Road, where thousands of nationalists had waited for four hours, jamming the pavements.

Marley's funeral was post-poned from Monday, and then Tuesday, after the RUC waded into mourners with

The RUC claimed that the purpose of the intimidation was to stop 'an IRA funeral'. But the IRA's Belfast brigade pointed out in a statement on Monday night that they had already staged a ceremony in Marley's hon-our on Sunday, when they fired a volley of shots at Ardoyne's Republican

The ghoulish state attacks on the funeral brought anger to boiling point, and on Tues-day night riots broke out on the Falls Road: cars, articulated lorries and buses were burned out, and barricades

IRA units bombed the Woodburn army-RUC barracks (no casualties), and attacked British army patrols, with two soldiers wounded.

Shot

Volunteer Marley, 41, was shot six times in the chest on Monday at his home. The loyalist para-militaries of the Ulster Volunteer Force claimed responsibility.

Ardoyne was swamped by the army when Marley was shot,' a Republican Press Centre spokesman told Workers Press. 'There was a roadblock on every single road in the area, except the one used by the killers.

'The police wanted to dictate who would carry the coffin and how the funeral would be conducted.

'At the recent funeral of Emmanuel Garghan (who died in the INLA feud), people carrying the coffin wearing black ties and white shirts were deemed to be in "para-military uniform".
This intimidation is just not acceptable.

history, British occupation forces have attacked funerals and even desecrated graves and monuments.

These attacks intensified since the hunger strikes, and reached a climax in recent months with frenzied attempts to stop coffins being draped with the tricolour, and the berets and gloves of IRA men.

The funeral of an RUC officer was disrupted last month by an IRA bomb; a message issued afterwards stated: 'If you want to bury your dead, keep a dignified distance from Republican and nationalist funerals.'

Opposition

Three thousand mourners honouring IRA volunteer Gerard Logue in Derry last month were attacked by hundreds of soldiers and police, and 75 armoured cars; the IRA fired a volley of shots in the churchyard under the nose of the state forces.

The campaign against the funerals was joined by the Catholic hierarchy, with Bishop Edward Daly condemning 'violent' IRA displays, but saying nothing about the British forces.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) attacked the state for playing into the IRA's hands. When Sinn Fein councillors at Omagh moved suspension of business for a week in protest, the SDLP voted against.

Danny Morrison of Sinn scenes of riot police attacking mourners shows the reality of life for nationalists under the Hillsborough agreement. The SDLP should hold their heads in shame . . . let them con-demn Thatcher and the ghoul under whose direction the RUC are carrying out this operation.'

Protest

The brutal attacks on Marley's funeral, reminiscent of South Africa or Iran, brought a storm of protest from southern Ireland and the United States.

But there was not a whimper from the British



STRABANE: The massive RUC presence at Volunteer Charles Breslin's funeral on February 26th 1985

Labour leadership. Kinnock and Co.'s commitment to the army occupa-

state intimidation. Labour's spokesman on the six counties, Stuart Bell, said at the weekend that Labour was putting a fourpoint plan to extreme right-wing Unionists, clearly hop-ing to win their 14 parliamentary votes in the event of a close election re-

tion, with which Britain

maintains control of

northern Ireland, pre-

vents them speaking out

against the most vile

to the anger of Bell other Labour leaders who fear that the cat is out of the bag — said the Unionists' views would be 'listened to seriously' by the Labour leadership.

The sight of working-

class men, women and children being batoned and pushed by gun-toting soldiers and police must redouble our fight against this sort of chauvinism in the British labour movement.

Working-class organisa-tions must side with the nationalist communities in Ireland against police and army violence, show trials, plastic bullets, stripsearching . . . and now the deliberate disruption of Republican funerals.

For a British withdrawal from the north of Ireland! Support the nationalist communities and the Republicans against British imperialism! For a united socialist Ireland!

Part two of the Leon Goodman interview will appear next week



DERRY: Mourners attending the funeral of Volunteer Kieran Fleming on December 23rd 1984 baton-charged by RUC outside the Fleming home

Workers

Saturday April 11 1987. Newsdesk 01-733 3058

Seamen back occupation

ABERDEEN branch of the National Union of Seamen has passed the following resolution in support of the Caterpillar

Aberdeen branch of the NUS sends its warmest greetings to the Caterpillar workers after their decision to continue the occupation of their factory, despite a court ruling against them. We condemn the AEU executive's cowardly abandon-ment of the struggle by refusing to support the occupation on the grounds that it is illegal.

We note the Caterpillar shop stewards' spokesman John Gillen's defiant answer to the courts: 'If we go on with the

occupation and the court finds us in contempt and decide they want us physically removed, we will call on the trades unions and unemployed to come and physically defend the plant.'

1. To offer its fullest physical support to the Caterpillar occupation;

To petition the NUS executive council for funds to be made

available to support the workers;
3. To campaign for this course of action throughout the

labour and trade union movement;
4. To bring the union banner on all Caterpillar and related

Caterpillar support group is launched

WEEKLY demonstrations to back the Caterpillar sit-in will be held on Saturdays by the newly-formed Glasgow Caterpillar Support Group.

The support group is calling on trades unionists, youth, the unemployed, women, community organisations and all those who want to fight unemployment to take part.

'To hell with the hierarchy of the unions; to hell with the Tory law,' said Jim MacDuff, electricians' shop steward from the Yarrow shipyard, at the support group's founding meeting last Monday.

'The union hierarchy say they have their arms twisted

behind their backs with the law, that they can't do anything.

'Well we don't need to wait for them: it's us, the workers in the factories, the people on the streets, who will decide.'

Jim, speaking on behalf of the Yarrow shop stewards' committee, pledged to do everything possible to win support among the 3000 workers, at the warship-building yard for the Caterpillar struggle.

Members of the engineering, print, mining, and teaching unions, as well as students and unemployed, took part in the meeting.

'According to Caterpillar, we were "victims of re-medy" — their remedy for falling profits, which was to Caterpillar worker John Jamieson told them.

When we started our sitin, management responded by declaring it illegal.'

John said that political and religious groups had sup-ported the sit-in, but now the workers' own union, the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), had withdrawn support. 'They are fright-ened of their money being taken off them.'

Of the proposal to end the sit-in and picket the plant, John said: 'If we picket in the street we will have nothing. With the occupation we are preventing machines leaving the factory: without

these it is worthless, nothing more than a big aircraft hanger.

Some trades unionists from the Midlands travelled to the meeting, and stated their intention of starting support groups there.

One of them, an AEU member, said that Bill Jordan, the AEU leader who was now telling Caterpillar workers to end the sit-in, had presided over massive losses at a factory of which he was convenor.

'My branch of the AEU has passed a resolution demanding that this class treachery be reversed, and that the executive give full support to Caterpillar.

'As workers, as socialists, we cannot afford to lose this particular struggle.'

There was a discussion about the possibility of Cater-pillar workers finding loopholes in the law to prevent eviction. But National Union of Seamen member Neil Rothnie pointed out: 'When the basic class issues are at stake, the courts never find in favour of workers.

He added that the support group, and the Caterpillar workers, had to have their eyes wide open to the fact that eventually the sit-in would be up against the law, just as the miners and Wapping strikers had been.

An Iranian student said that the Organisation of the Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerrillas had publicised the

Caterpillar sit-in in their paper, and would do so on their radio station. 'Factory occupations in Iran often last only a day: they are crushed by the military; workers are shot and imprisoned,' he

The support group agreed that its tasks were to raise political, physical and financial backing for the sit-in.

● A weekly demonstration will be held on Saturdays at 11a.m. at the 'Pink Panther' tractor at George Square, Glasgow. (The 'panther', built during the sit-in to donate to War on Want to help fight famine is transed in fight famine, is trapped in Glasgow by an interdict from the multinational com-

 The support group meets each Monday (except for Easter week, when it will be Tuesday), at 7.30p.m. at the Transport and General Workers' Union offices, Bath Street, Glasgow. All are welcome.

More information on Glasgow support group from Kate Lonergan, secretary GCSG, c/o Shop Stewards Committee, Yarrow Ship-builders, 1581 South Street, Glasgow G14. Phone 041-954

Financial donations to: T. Stevenson, Treasurer, Joint Occupation Committee, 17 Campsie View, Bailleston, Glasgow.

Please note: stationery supplies are urgently needed

LAIRD MUST GO!

From CHRIS McBRIDE at CATERPILLAR

'GAVIN LAIRD has been a disaster for the AEU. We just paid our dues and went along with it but now they've shown their true colours and it's about time that something was done about them!'

Derek Dixon, an occupant at the Caterpillar tractor works near Glasgow, is one of the many workers heading into a confrontation with the leaders of their unions.

As the occupation runs into its 13th week the question of the leadership needed to safeguard this essential industry is being raised sharply for the Caterpiller workers. Their defiant stand against the Caterpillar multinational and the courts is scaring the wits out of AEU leaders and the Scottish

Dixon described the difference between the occupation leaders, and the 'big wigs' Gavin (or Give-in) Laird and Communist Party member Jimmy Airlie, who is 'negotiating' between the Scottish

TUC and the occupation committee.

'John Brannan and John Gillan are not prepared to give in to people like Jimmy Airlie and Gavin Laird, they are standing up for the whole community.

Thatcher doesn't need to bring in any more new legislation because they've got people like Laird and Jordan at the top of the tree.' Airlie had told the occupants that 'our union cannot support an illegal occupation.

Asked about the 1978 Caterpillar strike and the present dispute, Dixon explained: '1978 was a strike for pay. This time it's a life or death situation. We've got to give it all we have got or there will be nothing there at the end of the line.

Asked about the attitude of the strikers he told us: 'The guys who have stuck it through till now will see it through to the end.'

His workmate Tom Far-rell said: 'I don't think there's any point in giving up the struggle. It's a viable plant; surely there must be something there.



Left to right: Michelle Wildslith, Sandra Black and Carole Bolam on the HFW picket line

vneside

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

SOGAT '82 are once again in bitter struggle against Murdoch-style union-busting. A Gateshead firm, HFW, has sacked its entire workforce for refusing to sign a loyalty pledge and is busing in scabs and patrolling its premises with private security guards with Alsatian dogs.

The workforce, who have not had a pay rise in four years, introduced an overtime ban after the company refused to pay an agreed annual increase.

HFW responded by forcing its workers to sign the loyalty pledge. Eight workers includ ing the FoC (shop steward) refused and were instantly

All 50 SOGAT members many young and low paid —

walked out in support. Five days later the entire workforce was sacked when they refused to return to work. The management have withdrawn union recognition and have been engaged in re-

cruiting scabs. When managing director Paul Jackson took over he was horrified to learn that women employees were earning £100 a week. His reaction was: 'No woman is worth that', and he set about cutting their wages.

Michelle, 17, summed up the feelings of the women workers when she told Workers Press: 'I started a threemonth trial period on £47. Following the trial period all

the lads got an increase of £10 whilst myself and other girls didn't get anything.'

Sandra, who was sacked for refusing to sign the pledge, said: 'We have never had a wage rise in four years. refused to sign the form because I knew there was an overtime ban and they wouldn't give us time to consult our union. When I re-fused to sign I was sacked immediately.

Carole said: 'We even took a wage cut of £10 last year. The highest take-home pay is £71 in this factory."

The strike is receiving trade union support on Tyneside. HFW management were forced to abandon a Gates-

head hotel last week where they were interviewing scabs because local trades council leaders reminded the hotel that the National Conference of Trades Councils is due to be held this year in the same hotel and they might reconsider.

When this issue was posed the hotel management turfed out the scab company.

Some unemployed workers who were going to the interviews turned away when confronted with pickets from the factory. British Telecom engineers fresh from their own dispute refused to cross the picket line to repair the company phones.

 Donations to: HFW Strike, SOGAT, 119 Jesmond Road, Newscastle-upon-Tyne NE2