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- Get prepaid postal subscriptions (£4 for 10 issues — see page 16)
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LAST week's appeal by four Labour candidates to give Kinnock full support in the general election campaign must be rejected by the working class.

Bernie Grant, Diane Abbott, Russell Proffitt and Paul Boateng issued a statement urging that the Party set aside internal differences and concentrate on winning the election.

'We believe at the present time the best interests of black people and the community as a whole will be served by returning a Labour Government. Nothing must be allowed to distract from this,' they said.

This was their response to strident calls from right-wing Labour leaders for the expulsion of Lambeth Council Leader Linda Bellos and all other supporters of Black Sections.

One leading member of the Shadow Cabinet is reported as saying:

'I want these characters out and I don't even mind if we lose a few seats to the SDP in the process. It is an insidious disease that has been allowed to spread. It is political AIDS.'

This scurrilous witch-hunt against the left is Kinnock's preparation for a government to press ahead with its attack on the working class. Last week a clear alliance emerged amongst right wingers and Stalinist leaders to prepare for a coalition with the SDP-Liberals.

Speaking at the Eastbourne Amalgamated Engineering Union conference, secretary Gavin Laird said:

'We want a Labour government, but in the event of no party gaining an overall majority of seats in Parliament, a deal should be done with the Alliance.

'If it means we have to

BY CYRIL SMITH

trim our sails to ensure we don't have certain policies, by all means we should go ahead.'

In the same week Martin Jacques, editor of 'Marxism Today', announced that the next issue of the journal will give prominence to an article arguing for tactical voting in the general election to boost the Alliance vote in seats where this might keep the Tories out.

The same plea made by Bernie Grant and others — support Kinnock at any price — is being used to blackmail the Caterpillar workers into abandoning their occupation.

It is Stalinist Jimmy Airlie who has been at the centre of a conspiracy to break the Caterpillar occupation in Scotland (see editorial page 2).

The strength of the working class is realised only in struggle. Anything which subordinates that struggle to the election of a Labour government weakens the working class and drives sections of the middle class towards the SDP and the Tories.

It is in this situation that every tendency is being tested out before the working class.

Last week 'Labour Briefing' said: 'The bankrupt policies of the Labour leadership threaten another four years of Tory rule. Only if

STEP UP ANTI-TORY FIGHT

Labour clearly presents a radical socialist alternative will it have any chance of winning the election.'

Fine words. But how is the danger of another Thatcher government to be averted?

'Briefing's' slogan 'Labour — Take the Power' seems radical. It is actually a deception.

Far more is at stake than replacing the Tories with a Labour government.

There have been nine Labour governments over the last 53 years. But the capitalist class remains in power.

The Attlee government of 1945-1950 brought certain limited reforms to sections of

the working class. But subsequent Labour governments took back most of these reforms. That process will be continued by any Labour government or coalition government of which Labour is a part.

What the working class needs today is not a better reformist leadership, but the

building of a revolutionary alternative to reformism.

The urgent need is to step up every single struggle — against closures, against government spending cuts, against unemployment and homelessness, against union-busting attempts — into a united movement against the Thatcher government.

● All out support for every section of the working class in struggle!

● Full support for the Caterpillar sit-in!

● No coalition with the SDP-Liberal Alliance!

● Down with the Labour Party witch-hunters!

● No Unity with Kinnock!

International support for Tyneside strike

BY KEVIN TOWNSEND

TRADE unionists on Tyneside are enraged at the massive police presence and the intimidation of strikers at HFW Plastics.

At a mass picket last week, the gates were once again sealed off by the strikers.

The support by Tyneside trade unionists and the unemployed workers' movement has been so effective in closing down the plant that police have stepped up their presence on the picket line.

Three transit vans full of police were called to protect two scabs cutting open the chained gates with oxyacetylene torches.

The picket has received international support from German metalworkers.

A delegation of 21 members of the IG metalworkers' union have helped on picket duty in between their visit to trade unionists in the area.

The picket also had a visit from a sacked Swedish copper miner.

When the police moved in

to move the IG metalworkers' vehicles from the factory entrance, one of the police attacked a worker in the van.

Police surrounded the van while one officer violently punched Mehmet Aslan from the Krupps steel plant, Duisburg.

Pickets surrounded the police to prevent further violence.

The police then arrested Mehmet but later had to release him, to cheers from the picket line.

All 47 SOGAT members remain sacked following their refusal to sign a loyalty form giving up their trade unionists rights.

HFW Plastics workers have not received a pay rise for four years.

The strike is following the same direction as Wapping, with threats flying of court orders and injunctions against the strike.

● Forward donations to Gateshead Plastics Workers Welfare Fund, c/o 119 Jesmond Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear.



The Pink Panther — built by the Caterpillar Joint Occupation Committee — is still waiting in Glasgow's George Square to go to Nicaragua.

WORKERS PRESS

Caterpillar conspiracy

Civil Service strike rolls on

A CONSPIRACY between Communist Party leaders, right-wing union officials and the Tory government is striving to break up the Caterpillar sit-in. The central figure is Jimmy Airlie, leading Stalinist of the engineering union (AEU).

When the AEU National Committee met at Eastbourne last week it had before it two resolutions on Caterpillar.

Resolution 233 from mid-Lanarkshire said:

'This National Committee pledges the full support to the Caterpillar workers in their fight against redundancies and closures and instructs EC to give their full backing to our members in struggle at this plant and to involve the AEU MPs to take the fight into the political arena at the highest possible level.'

Resolution 232 from Dundee said:

'This National Committee fully supports the action of Caterpillar workers at Uddingston in occupying the plant as part of the struggle to save their jobs. We further instruct EC to give 100 per cent support to whatever action Caterpillar workers deem necessary.'

The two resolutions were clearly different. The mid-Lanarkshire resolution makes the point of **not** supporting the occupation.

For three days before Thursday's debate four Caterpillar stewards had canvassed support for the occupation. In the event the Dundee resolution was not submitted by the right wing-dominated Standing Orders Committee.

There was no protest from the conference floor. No amendment was presented to the right wing-supported Resolution 233. This could have been amended to support the occupation but this would have meant a conflict with the right wing-dominated EC.

It was left to Airlie to do the right wing's dirty work. He moved support for the mid-Lanarkshire resolution. With 60 angry workers from the occupation lobbying the conference he said he had just received very good news:

'That the occupation was receiving massive public support, even the Secretary of State is said to support it. The union has nothing to be ashamed of. Everything asked was given. We have given the company terms of reference, ACAS is involved and we are available any time to meet the management.'

We have just heard an hour ago very good news. The STUC has just met Ian Laing, under-Secretary of State for Scotland. He had indicated two things:

1. To contact ACAS to get a meeting going, and
2. He indicated that the SDA (Scottish Development Agency) ordered the purchase of the factory.

Airlie's suggestion that the SDA purchase will solve the Caterpillar crisis is a fraud. It is a body without

the resources to keep the plant open, even if it wanted to.

The 'Glasgow Herald', 10 April, made this clear: 'Mr Laing said yesterday that he had not ruled out the possibility of the Scottish Development Agency taking over as owners of the plant and leasing it back to an incoming company.'

'He made it clear there was no question of the SDA becoming involved in any long-term management of a manufacturing operation at the factory, because it did not have the resources'

The 'Morning Star' was the next in the conspiracy. Mick Costello's report from Eastbourne ('Morning Star' 10 April) was headlined 'Caterpillar support: Engineers' union votes to back sit-in.' This was an outright lie. The national committee had refused to take precisely this action!

While Airlie and the 'Morning Star' were doing their dirty work at Eastbourne, general secretary of the STUC Campbell Christie was working to get the ACAS talks under way.

It was Christie who convinced Tory Scottish under-Secretary Ian Laing to phone Caterpillar management and urge them to go to ACAS. As Airlie was on the platform at Eastbourne, Christie and Labour Scottish Affairs

spokesman Tom Clarke were leading a delegation of churchmen, Labour and SDP-Liberal Alliance MPs to plead with the Thatcher government for jobs.

The ACAS talks are a trap. They have one aim in mind: to break the determined resistance of the sit-in, force the workers out of the factory and make possible the sale of plant and machinery.

- The AEU leaders must break off the ACAS talks immediately. They must be made to reverse their cowardly decision and give full support for the sit in.

- Reject the SDA fraud! The labour leaders must be forced to fight for the nationalisation of the plant under workers' control!

- Caterpillar support groups must be built throughout the working-class movement! They must raise the money needed to sustain the occupation and win backing for the physical defence of the sit-in!

- The campaign for solidarity action of strikes and demonstrations must be intensified!

BY JOHN PETERS

AFTER a long struggle within their own ranks, Civil Service unions have voted for national strike action.

Since the 1981 pay campaign, civil servants in the white collar sector have accepted pay rises far below what was promised under the agreement their leaders concluded with the Tory government.

Action by members of the Civil and Public Services Association, the Society of Civil and Public Servants and the Northern Ireland Public Services Association began on 6 April.

Special votes were taken at the four computer centres in Reading, North Fylde, Preston and Newcastle to continue issuing giro, but to hold up work on implementing the Social Security Bill.

This action will create such an impediment to the Fowler legislation that the timetable will probably break down.

Rolling strikes affecting DHSS offices and unemployment benefit staff began on April 6, with no emergency cover.

Service

The Customs and Excise Inland Clearance service are also on strike for the whole six-week period until May 15.

Heavy lorries travelling from Britain to Europe with sealed containers have to use depots where customs officers carry out inspections and produce full documentation. This normally enables lorries to pass the ports with only formal inspection.

Without the documents they will not be allowed into Dutch, Belgian or French ports, and the customs unions of these countries are cooperating with the British strike by refusing to take uncleared goods. The unions expect long queues of lorries by the Easter weekend.

The land border between the two parts of Ireland will be affected by the strike as well as the Channel ports.

Holidaymakers will not be delayed — the unions feel nothing is to be gained by upsetting them.

The biggest action will take place in London and the south east England area from 5 May where there are more civil servants than anywhere else in Britain.

Members

The unions have called on their members to participate in the London May Day demonstrations on the previous Friday 1 May.

A spokesperson for the SCPS said: 'This is the year to have a go. I think there will be massive support not only because wages have been driven down over seven years, but because of privatisation and because there has been maximum pressure on civil and public servants in the wide range of jobs they do.'

'Members are angry. In what is likely to be an election year they clearly feel that trade unions and their members still reject the policy of a government that has attacked civil and public servants and the services that working people need.'

Pickets will be out at all affected offices and clearance depots. They welcome the support of local trade unionists on their lines.



Some of the Caterpillar workers who travelled to Eastbourne last week to lobby the AEU national committee

Workers Revolutionary Party
Series of Classes on:

Principles of Communism

AUEW House, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 7.30p.m.

- 15 April: Imperialism and Internationalism
- 22 April: Permanent Revolution
- 29 April: Stalinism and Bolshevism
- 6 May: Trotskyism and Revisionism

Workers Revolutionary Party
Scottish Area

Day School

The Struggle to Re-Organise the Fourth International
Sunday, 17 May — Venue to be announced

1st anniversary of non-stop picket

ON SUNDAY 19 April, City of London Anti Apartheid Group will celebrate one year of non-stop, round-the-clock picketing of the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square.

Many messages from inside South Africa have been sent to the picket to mark the occasion.

Albertina Sisulu, wife of Walter Sisulu, jailed leader of the UDF (United Democratic Front), said: 'The non-stop picket of the South African embassy is great for us. It is strengthening our struggle. What you are doing for our country is important. We are happy to

know that people who are democratic are with us.'

Sipho Dhlomo, a young trade unionist, and Ngwenya (an MK Freedom Fighter) are others who have sent messages to the picket from inside South Africa.

Many leading militants working in Britain, notably Keke Hamilton of the PAC (Pan-African Congress), have supported the picket against strong opposition from the right-wing official leadership of the Anti Apartheid Movement, as well as the London-based leadership of the ANC (African National Congress).

City AA has come a long way since April 1986. They have fought not only the right wing but confronted continual police harassment.

Indiscriminate arrests of black and young picketers have left City AA with £20,000 legal costs.

Charges range from police assault to petty obstruction in the fight to stay outside the embassy.

Two young women were sexually abused by police.



Despite this intimidation, the picketers have stood their ground, keeping up the vigil, even through the coldest winter for 47 years.

During the year City AA has acted on many fronts. It has participated in rallies throughout the country.

● They participated in Hat-

field Main miners' march to blockade South African.

● They commemorated the anniversary of Women's Day, Soweto, 16 June and Nelson Mandela's birthday, 18 July.

● A successful march of over 6,000 was organised this year on 14 March.

● A quarter of a million signatures have been collected calling for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political

detainees and over £5,000 has been sent to South Africa for the families of political detainees.

● In response to the 'whites only' elections, on 6 May City AA has organised their own election. Ballot boxes will be set up throughout Britain and workers and youth will be asked to vote for Nelson Mandela. Supporters are asked to assemble outside the South African embassy, Sunday 19 April at 2p.m.



'Leicester Highfields Apartheid Free Zone held a second successful picket outside a supermarket in the area.

Moments after this photograph was taken, the owners of the supermarket invited members of the picket inside and removed all South African branded goods from the shelves.

They then signed the petition declaring that they supported the campaign to make Highfields an Apartheid Free Zone'.

Call for workers' sanctions

A TRENCHANT call for workers' sanctions against the racist regime in South Africa came from Ron Prest of the African Congress of Trade Unions at a meeting in Croydon last week.

He said 25,000 people had been detained without trial: over half were trade unionists and 40 per cent were young people.

Despite this, Prest added, the workers had won battles: 11,000 employees of OK Bazaars, a large supermarket chain, had won a long strike for a pay rise, and miners were following their example.

Workers should refuse to handle South African goods, force their airline out of Britain, and make the pension companies pull out their investments.

Dickson Butchani of SWA-

PO said most of the large farms in Namibia had been taken over by multinational companies and that each town had a garrison of the South African army to protect these companies' interests. South Africa had recently completed a large military airbase in the region.

'The Namibian people are not beaten', Butchani declared. South Africa was spending three billion Rands per year occupying the country and it cost them 1.7 million Rands for every SWAPO revolutionary killed.

The South African soldiers' morale was low and many had deserted.

In the discussion, many attacked the Labour Party record on South Africa and expressed the belief that a Kinnock government would continue to safeguard British capitalism's interests in South Africa.

New fears of property developers moving into football

NEW FEARS have been expressed over the future of many of London's top football clubs. It has been reported that Watford's chairman, pop star Elton John, intends to sell the club for £3 million.

John is said to have instructed estate agents Hanover Druce to sell his 98-per-cent interest in the club, leaving him with the honorary position of life president.

Hanover Druce announced at a press conference that they were making a major move into football and acting on behalf of several London First Division football clubs. But they refused to comment on any connection with Watford.

BY JOHN HOLMES

Watford supporters now fear that the club's sale will open the door for property speculators to move in.

Workers Press has reported (21 March) on the property developers' threat to football. At that time Fulham and Wimbledon faced the threat of ground closure, and of mergers with Queens Park Rangers and Crystal Palace respectively.

Fulham have now been taken over by a consortium headed by television personality Jimmy Hill. It is understood however that partial development of their Craven Cottage ground remains a strong possibility.

Merger plans between Wimbledon and Crystal Palace were called off after 90 per cent of Palace fans voted against the proposal.

Plough Lane

As it stands, Wimbledon chairman Sam Haman is due to sell the Plough Lane

ground at the end of the season.

Fears for Crystal Palace's future remain after the announcement that ownership of the Selhurst Park ground had passed to chairman Ron Noades's company Altonwood, and that a new company, Crystal Palace 1986, had been set up to run the club.

Falling attendances are the reason put forward for the financial crisis of London's football clubs, and are said to have led to up to a dozen clubs considering partial development of their grounds.

But the real reason is the crisis of capitalism. With so many people unemployed or on low wages the number of supporters who can afford to spend as much as £5 just to stand on the terraces is dramatically reduced.

Investment

In contrast, property values have risen by more than 17 per cent in the last six months and are set to soar again with the reduction in interest rates after the Tory budget. This makes investment in football an attractive prospect for the city parasites.

For workers, it means the loss of their traditional leisure centres. Many supporters say that if football clubs

have sections of their grounds that can be developed, public sports facilities such as gyms and fitness centres should be built.

The answer to this is simple: under capitalism there is no financial incentive for such developments.

The problems facing football are important to the many thousands of workers and young people who watch their teams every week.

Struggles

Football clubs and all sports and leisure centres should be nationalised under workers' control. The fight to save football as a working-class sport must be linked to the struggles for jobs, health and education.

Teachers must fight for new leadership

Defend Inner London Teachers Association

BY THOMAS HOOD

THE NUT Conference at Eastbourne meets in the face of a massive Tory attack on education, teachers' conditions and their trade union rights.

It also faces the expulsions and suspensions of the leaders of the 13,500-strong Inner London Teachers Association, the biggest and the most militant branch of the union.

The two issues are inseparable. The attempt to behead ILTA is the clearest sign that the present leadership will conduct no real fight against Tory attacks: the task facing NUT members is to replace this leadership.

For two years NUT and NAS/AWT members have fought the longest and most determined trade union action ever by teachers. For the first year the focus of the action was to restore the 35 per cent erosion in the relative value of teachers' pay since the Houghton Award of the mid-1970s.

Teachers' pay had been reduced in value to that of the average male manual worker. Cuts in spending on education, and a worsening in the social conditions from which many pupils came, have made the job of teaching much harder.

These factors undermined the notion of professionalism which had made many teachers reluctant to engage in trade union action.

The change was most marked among the membership of the NUT.

Dominance

By the early 1980s the dominance of the union at local level by head teachers was broken, first in London and then in other areas.

A significant opposition appeared at national conferences to the Broad Alliance (now Broad Left) amalgam of Communist Party, rightwing Labourites and straightforward careerists which controls the National Executive.

This group of mainly head teachers and college lecturers had concentrated on campaigns around educational issues while resolving pay and conditions through negotiations and arbitration.

In 1984 a limited campaign of action over pay focused on the demand that the employers should concede the right of access to 'independent arbitration'.

This was duly granted and led to an increase of 0.1 per cent on the employers final pay offer.

The anger that this created was so great that the leaderships of the NUT and NAS/AWT (the second largest teachers union) had no choice but to embark on a campaign of action when employers used the justification of central government spending controls to make a 4 per cent offer in 1985.

The action was conducted in a potentially very divisive and demoralising way. There was not one single day of national action; the tactic of concentrating on marginal conservative constituencies for selective action often made weaker areas of the union bear the brunt of strikes; and there were long periods when no action at all was taken.

Despite this, the determination to fight at grassroots level remained very strong.

Early in 1986 a coalition of the Head Teachers Union, two other non-strike organisations and the NAS/AWT entered talks run by ACAS. This altered the whole focus of the dispute because the

purpose of the talks was to determine a way in which working conditions and practices could be worsened in return for a small amount of extra money which the government had promised to make available for such a deal.

The NUT leadership was forced to denounce this development because it had repeatedly told its members that there was no question of trading off pay for conditions. However, the Labour Party leadership was desperate that the deal should be struck.

In its view industrial action by teachers was damaging Labour's election prospects. The deal reached by Labour-dominated authorities rather than a similar one imposed by a Tory government could be put forward as a triumph for the Labour Party and an act of common sense by the unions.

The ACAS talks were meaningless without the NUT, which represented the majority of classroom teachers and was taking the bulk of industrial action.

Secret meetings took place between the leaders of the NUT, Giles Radice and Neil Kinnock. A formula was arrived at which would allow the NUT leadership to sell entry to the ACAS talks.

There was to be an improved interim pay award, an arrangement whereby teachers could appear to keep some of the improvements in conditions of work gained during the dispute, and a pretence that the thing would be sold in the talks for extra money.

Last year's NUT conference endorsed entry into the talks on this basis.

The reality was very different. The intention from the outset was to get the government to provide money for a settlement by meeting its terms and also to make the teachers the first sufferers under a new social contract which was to woo voters back to Labour from the SDP.

The first main element in the pay settlement was a one-off payment which actually added nothing to the pay structure. This meant that the following year, when hopefully a Labour government would have taken over, the pay bill would actually be smaller.

The pay scale was to have a vaunted maximum of £15,000 but it would take most teachers more than 9 years to reach this.

In return everything that could be sold would be.

All sorts of activities previously regarded as voluntary became compulsory. A working week 7 hours in excess of previous practice was defined. The year was extended by five days.

Outside these defined hours an unlimited amount of extra time had to be spent on work which could not be completed within them.

Examination

Extra work required by new examination became compulsory. A job description for all teachers, which could be changed at will by the employer, and a system of appraisal which could be used to determine promotion, change of job, disciplinary action and dismissal was to be introduced.

The whole package was initially greeted with horror by most teachers.

There was widespread rebellion against it by local branches of the NUT when their executive endorsed it.

It was forced through a special conference by a very small majority when many delegates, particularly members of the

Communist Party voted against the express wishes of their local branches.

Another small majority was secured in a national ballot.

Many members abstained rather than vote against their leadership. The package was sold by concealing most of its worst points and playing on the danger of a settlement imposed by the government.

The leadership of the NAS/AWT had been in favour all along of selling conditions if the price was right but, with its large secondary school membership, it saw a tactical advantage in now denouncing the agreement.

Its own ballot produced an overwhelming 'no' to the package and far more teachers in total voted against the agreement than in favour of it.

However the block vote on the Burnham Committee was used to push the settlement through.

The Tory government was astute enough to see that there was no tactical advantage for it in allowing settlement between

unions and Labour local authorities.

It took the worsened conditions agreed in ACAS and put them with a different pay structure to be imposed by law.

This pay structure does represent a significant further attack on teachers. It introduces several concepts intended to undermine trade union solidarity and to bring market forces to bear.

Allowances

Some of the extra allowances above the low basic pay will be awarded on merit. Teachers will have to prove their commitment to do extra work above that required by the contract.

Other allowances will be for subjects where there is a shortage of teachers, such as maths and physics, where graduates can earn substantially better pay in other occupations.

Other allowances will be for posts difficult to fill, mainly in schools which have particular problems. There is also provi-

sion in the Act for regional variations in pay.

These innovations destroy the principle of a rate for the job of teaching. They would allow the lowest possible basic salary supplemented by higher pay in particular circumstances where demand for teachers exceeded the supply.

It would undermine the ability of unions to protect the majority of their members from the real poverty into which many of them have sunk.

The new system is to be imposed on teachers by an Act of Parliament which takes away from teachers unions the right to negotiate on pay and conditions. This destruction of negotiating rights represents a new stage in the Thatcher government's attack on trade unionism.

It will undoubtedly be extended to other groups of public sector workers unless it is fought not only by teachers unions but also by the whole of the trade union movement.

Leaders of both the NUT and the NAS/AWT have opportunistically separated the issue of negotiating rights from that of the system of pay and conditions.

The meaning of this separation of the two issues is to be seen in the statement of the NAS/AWT leadership that they may originally have opposed the ACAS agreement but that they now support it as one actually negotiated rather than imposed.

To these union bureaucrats, the right to sit on negotiating committees is more important than what is actually negotiated.

Negotiate

This right to negotiate is even secondary for many of them to the support for a potential Labour government. Through the TUC the two unions have in fact put forward a proposed negotiating structure endorsed by the Labour Party in which the government, not an employer of teachers, would have voting rights, and in which parliament would have a veto over any settlement.

There is an enormous gulf between the rhetoric of the correct campaign against Kenneth Baker's proposals and the reality of what is being done.

The joint action of the two unions is actually an excuse for each to hide behind the other while action is wound down. The NUT executive is regularly told by its officers that various forms and levels of action have been put forward by them in joint discussion but were ruled out by the NAS/AWT.

The NAS/AWT executive is told the same thing.

After the next election it is assumed there will either be a Labour or Coalition government which will accept an ACAS agreement and the TUC negotiating proposals, or a further Tory government.

In one case further action will be in the eyes of the union leadership be unnecessary, in the other case hopeless.

The scale of the planned

strike action in the face of this 'greatest threat in the history of the union' is only a fraction of that being taken earlier in the pay campaign.

Not complying with the new contract has been rejected in favour of drawing up guidelines on how local authorities should reasonably implement it.

Action will only be taken against the handful of authorities which implement it most unreasonably.

This action will have to be taken in the Tory shires where the unions are in any case weakest.

This abject betrayal contrasts with the determined mood of union members shown by a massive vote in favour of action and enormous attendances at rallies.

The Inner London Teachers Association of the NUT tried to force the pace of the action by calling a one day strike on 13 January which had tremendous support.

Officers

The national officers of the union asked its National Disciplinary Committee to remove the ILTA leadership from union office for breach of the rules.

The elected NEC to its credit refused to do so. The officers then interpreted the rules as allowing them the right to appeal to their own executive, which had already rejected the 13 January strike call.

The executive, sitting as an Appeals Committee has duly expelled Dick North, former Inner London Executive member and two other ILTA council members from the union.

It has banned Bernard Regan, current Executive member for Inner London from holding office for 2 years, along with the other ILTA officers.

The NUT annual conference thus takes place in circumstances where its leadership intends to abandon any fight to defend teachers pay negotiating rights and working conditions.

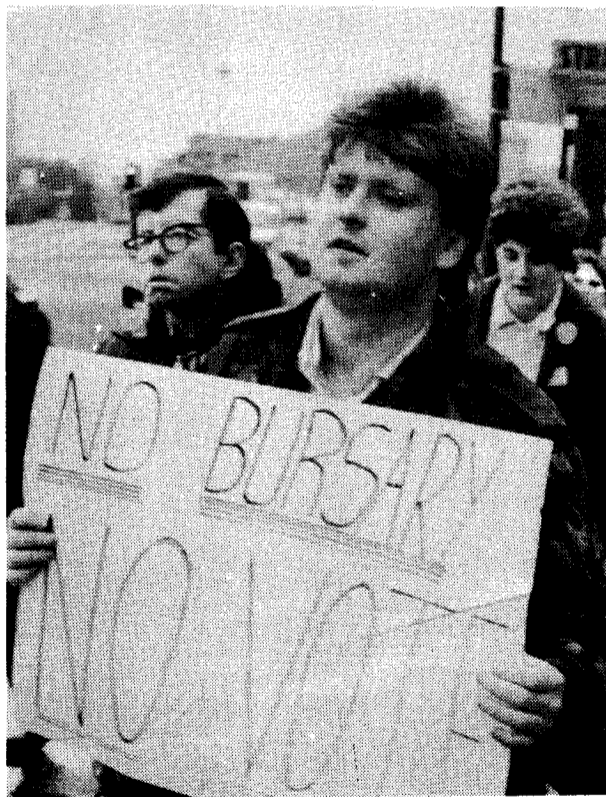
It also intends to witch-hunt out of the union all who resist this.

Those branches which have organised themselves to oppose the sell-out through Local Associations Pay and Conditions Campaign will be the next target. The task of delegates to this year's conference will be to support the proposals to fight for a real campaign in defence of teachers rights and to stop the witch-hunt.

The whole history of the dispute shows clearly the need to build a new leadership in the unions prepared to represent the interests and aspirations of the membership. This leadership can only be built through an understanding of the political reasons for the treachery of the Broad Left, including all its components from right-wing Labourites to the Stalinists of the Communist Party and the various other smaller groups which flourish there.

This requires a serious turn to the study of Marxism and Trotskyism.

Glasgow students ready to fight



BY CHRIS McBRIDE

'It seems ludicrous that a Labour council should introduce really right-wing cuts'. Raymond Mearns, chair of the Labour Group at Glasgow's Central College, was speaking to Workers Press on a demonstration of about 300 students.

They were opposing Strathclyde County Council's 'creative accounting', which will result in massive cuts in education grants.

Ian Davidson, chair of the council's Further Education Sub-Committee, failed to impress the demonstrators when he told them that there would be no cuts — only 'moving one area of the budget to another'.

Mearns said there were 70,000 students in the area with vote: 'That is bad for this Labour council — they are giving themselves enough rope and they are going to hang themselves. We're going to fight and

we're going to win.

The National Union of Students are not doing enough and we're not happy with them. It's taken various student Labour leaders to get this march in progress and the NUS have just sat on their arses.'

Marching alongside the students was a delegation from the occupied Caterpillar factory in Tanochside near Glasgow. Mearns welcomed them: 'We strongly support the Caterpillar workers. We were talking to some of the men from the Caterpillar plant last night.'

'They were telling us that morale was high and they are going to win their fight.'

On the future of workers' struggles in Scotland, Mearns said: 'No Tory government, no American capitalist bosses are going to trample on Scottish working people, because they are determined to fight and they will win. They've got the backing of the people, and that's what counts.'

Write for Workers Press!

WE ARE receiving more material than ever for Workers Press, but we want to hear from even more of our readers. Please send letters, news from your area, reports of the struggles of the work-

ing class, of women and youth, of developments in the Labour Party and Communist Party. . . We also need photographs — phone us on 01-733 3058 and discuss the best way to get them to us.

San Francisco dockers strike against scab labour

BY LISE BAUER

THE entire Bay Area on the US West Coast was brought to a standstill on 20 March when 1,700 longshoremen walked out in protest at an attempt to use non-union labour at one of their ports.

The action was provoked by Crowley Maritime Corp., one of the world's largest maritime employers. At Redwood City port, boatmen have been on strike since February against Crowley's over cuts in conditions and job losses.

As a result, several of Crowley's container barges have been waiting at Redwood City for weeks, unable to be unloaded. On Friday, 20 March, Crowley's patience snapped and, under the pretext that the barges contained perishable cargo, ten scabs were secretly brought into the harbour to unload 3 barges from Hawaii.

Immediately, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) shut down all the ports in the Bay Area in the biggest union action for several years.

A crowd of 500 angry longshoremen converged on the scabbing port and ran off the scabs, who were so anxious to escape the angry workers that they jumped into a van and crashed through a closed gate leading off the pier!

In addition, the supposedly ~~perishable cargo~~ was found to consist of canned pineapple.

The ILWU fears that this provocation was the beginning of a major attack on the rights which were established in bitter struggles in the 1930s.

It was in fact the first time the employers had tried to use non-ILWU labour on the West Coast ports since 1934.

The employers have now won a court injunction limiting the pickets to two. But the dockers are determined that they will not tolerate the introduction of non-union labour into the Californian ports, even if this means defying the courts and taking on the state itself.

In the words of 'Militant Longshoreman' (which is edited by Howard Keylor, a leading longshoreman in the 1984 boycott of South African cargo): 'There is no place to hide — either we do what we have to do to defend our jobs, or roll over dead!'

Fourth International: preparatory committee meets

REPRESENTATIVES of 37 Trotskyist organisations in 32 countries met at the weekend of 11 and 12 April 1987 to prepare a world conference of Trotskyists.

Organisations represented at the meeting included:

- The Workers Revolutionary Party of Britain
 - Groupe d'Opposition et Continuité de la Quatrième Internationale (Group of Opposition and Continuity of the Fourth International, based in France)
 - Irish Workers League
 - Revolutionary Socialist League of Italy
 - Workers Revolutionary League of Belgium
 - International Socialists of Germany
- All the parties belonging to the International Workers League (IWL)

Geographically, those attending the meeting represented the Americas, Africa, the Middle East and eastern and western Europe.

The Call for an International Conference of Trotskyists for the re-organisation of the Fourth International was launched by the Workers Revolutionary Party in January of this year.

The first item on the agenda of the meeting was the setting up of the Preparatory Committee to organise the conference. Applica-

tions from several organisations were discussed and the composition of the committee was agreed by unanimous vote.

The formation of the Preparatory Committee and the first steps on the road to the International Conference were made possible by the decisive struggles of the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world.

Revolutionary struggles are shaking South Africa, Central America, occupied



Palestine, South America and the Phillipines.

The process of political revolution, which received a new impulse with the Polish revolution of 1979-1980, is today showing itself in China and the USSR.

The miners' strike in Britain opened the way for a renewed wave of militant struggles by students and workers in France, Greece and the rest of Europe.

The traditional leaderships of the working class (Stalinists, social democrats, petty-bourgeois nationalists and trade union bureaucrats) are in profound crisis and disarray and are incapable of containing the rising struggle of the exploited.

The WRP's Call for an International Conference states:

'The continuity of the

Fourth International has been a contradictory process, but it consists in the struggle for the continuity of Bolshevism against Stalinism, and against the liquidationist revisionism which has transmitted this Stalinist pressure into the Trotskyist movement.'

The aim of the Conference is to answer the new upsurge of the class struggle by developing this continuity, which means implanting the Fourth International in the working class and on that basis unmasking Pabloism and its variants.

These are the objective conditions for the present need to re-organise the Fourth International on a principled basis. More than ever, the crisis of humanity is expressed in the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

The organisations participating in the Preparatory Committee are committed to undertaking political clarification, the establishment of a common programmatic and theoretical framework, and carrying

out systematic joint campaigns and work.

All organisations participating in the Preparatory Committee came together with the common aim of forming an international organisation as a step further on the road to re-organise the Fourth International.

The Preparatory Committee held a preliminary discussion towards the adoption of a document on the World Political Situation. It will arrange the publication of an International Discussion Bulletin initially in French, Spanish and English to facilitate the discussion.

The participating organisations will carry out joint work and political campaigns in their respective countries.

The next meeting of the Preparatory Committee will be held in May.

Bob Archer

Leon Perez

(Interim Secretariat, Preparatory Committee)

Anti-arab racism threat to rights

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

IT IS 3.30a.m. on a January morning. In the middle of the bare, cement-floored cellar, a young woman stands shackled to a pole. Four men stand firing questions at her.

When she does not respond, one of them says: 'At your rally you said "Long live Palestine". We'll show you what we think of your Palestine!'

He takes out a small Palestinian flag, and burns it in front of her.

An Israeli military interrogation somewhere in the occupied West Bank or Gaza?

It happened in southern California on 28 January. The interrogators were US law-enforcement officers. Their prisoner was an American citizen, born in Ramallah, Palestine, and brought to the United States at the age of three.

The 22-year-old woman had been in her college library. Two armed men with a subpoena took her in handcuffs to a house in the suburbs, where she was taken down into the basement.

During a 12-hour interrogation the woman was shown photo after photo of Arabs living in San Diego, and asked to identify them. She did not do so.

Finally, at 8.30 the next morning, she was released. As she was going, the officers told her: 'When you least expect us, expect us. We'll always be around.'

The incident is part of a growing pattern of official harassment of Arabs and people of Arab origin in the United States. As with Britain's 'Prevention of Terrorism Act', an entire national community is being branded, harassed and intimidated.

Comparisons have been made with the 1919 Palmer Raids and deportations of 'alien agitators', and the World War II internment of Japanese-Americans.

The Reagan administration is drawing on a report from the federal Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) entitled 'Alien Terrorists and Undesirables — A Contingency Plan.'

A May 1986 INS memo recommended expelling 'activists' from 'particular nationalities or groups... most probably those citizens of states known to support terrorism.' It named seven Arab countries and Iran.

The INS urged police surveillance of targeted groups, and 'detention of aliens apprehended as the result of any special projects undertaken by INS.'

Drawn Guns

On January 26, INS agents with drawn guns burst into the homes of nine people in Los Angeles in the early hours of the morning. A tenth man was arrested a fortnight later while taking a chemistry examination at his college.

None of these people had any previous record. No weapons were found in their possession. They were charged with no crime. But nine were Palestinians, and the other a Kenyan woman married to a Palestinian. They were brought shack-

led hand-and-foot before an immigration judge. The public was barred from the courtroom. Deemed 'too dangerous' to be allowed bail, they were locked up under tight security at a federal prison in San Diego, away from their families and lawyers.

Two Palestinian students were released, and on 17 February a judge ordered the others released on bail pending hearings on 28 April.

The INS is charging each of the eight with being 'a member of or affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an organisation that advocates the economic, international and governmental doctrines of world communism through written or printed publications.'

The McCarran Act of 1952, passed at the height of McCarthyism, permits exclusion from the United States of any alien who writes or distributes material advocating 'world communism'.

This has been used to bar left-wing activists, and under the Reagan administration, foreign journalists and writers who have criticised US policy.

All eight have denied involvement in the PFLP. But the authorities are citing as 'evidence' possession of two publications, 'Democratic Palestine' and 'al Hadaf', both available in Arab bookshops or university libraries.

The FBI has named Khader Musa Hamide, a marketing specialist who has lived in southern California since he was 16, and applied for US citizenship, as 'leader' of the arrested Arabs.

James Zogby, of the Arab-American Institute in Washington, describes Khader Hamide as 'a solid, committed Arab-American concerned with civil rights.'

He said Hamide had been an opponent of US aid to the Contra terrorists, a delegate to Rev. Jesse Jackson's 'Rainbow Coalition' convention, and a supporter of the November 29 Committee, which engages in perfectly legal political and educational work for the Palestinian cause.

According to the 'Los Angeles Times', the FBI was told by the Anti-Defamation League that the November 29 Committee was in 'de facto alliance' with the PFLP.

Once concerned with opposing anti-semitism, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is nowadays a Zionist outfit in 'de facto alliance' with the Reagan administration.

Last year, the ADL mailed congressmen a paper attacking the African National Congress as 'communist' and 'PLO-linked', in a bid to counter moves for sanctions against South Africa.

Incidentally, while the US authorities were secretly moving against the November 29 Committee, the latter's San Francisco chapter was organising a weekend conference on the Middle East together with the International Jewish Peace Union, New Jewish Agenda, and the American Friends' Service Committee (Quakers). Some 'terrorists'!

Almost a year ago, the FBI secretly rented a flat next door to Hamide's so they could spy on him. Apparently finding no evidence of law-breaking, they nevertheless came up with a recommendation for deportation. Using immigration procedures is easier than satisfying a federal court.

The Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee says 'The arrests in Los Angeles are politically motivated and... constitute a

gross violation of the rights of Arab-Americans, permanent residents and students to guaranteed freedom of expression.

This storm-trooper approach to our community is yet another attempt by the Reagan administration to scapegoat Arabs and Arab-Americans for its policy failures in the Middle East.'

The American Civil Liberties Union has warned that INS plans amount to 'selectively enforcing the laws' against people on account of their ethnic origin, and potentially, religious beliefs.

Some people ask whether Israeli occupation law is being extended now not only to the Zionist state's citizens (as in the Warshawsky case) but to those of its US patron too.

Arab-Americans relate the California arrests to widespread Anti-Arab racism in the United States. This became especially noted after the 1973 oil crisis upset US capitalism, and has grown ever since.

Hysteria over hijacking and other incidents in the Middle East has helped, but the ground was laid with television and the press always racially stereotyping Arabs as either 'oil sheikhs' or 'bloodthirsty terrorists'.

Reagan spoke of Americans 'not being pushed around any more', neatly reversing what US imperialism actually has done to people throughout the world, not least the dispossessed Palestinians.

Not only civil rights campaigners, but the American labour movement too, must be aroused to what is being done.

People are being victimised on racial grounds. Under the guise of fighting 'terror', the capitalist state is terrorising those engaged in legitimate political activity. Possession of Left-wing literature is being treated as a crime.

Anti-Arab racism must be fought as a menace to all working people's rights, and socialists must take this issue into the unions.

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BUTCHER!

Union accuses mine bosses

AFTER yet another South African mine disaster — 34 miners killed in an explosion at the Ermelo colliery, east Transvaal — mineworkers' leader Cyril Ramaphosa has called the mining company Gencor 'a butcher'.

Gencor also owns the Kinross mine where 177 miners were killed in an underground fire last September due to dangerous materials being used.

All but three of those killed at Ermelo were black. Another 16 were injured. A survivor said lights had gone out followed by a rush of air and an explosion. He managed to get his oxygen mask on, but others didn't.

Gencor said it thought there had been a methane gas explosion. If so, the 9 April disaster was the second in a week.

The previous Tuesday, 16 miners were killed in a methane explosion at Secunda, also in the eastern Transvaal, a colliery belonging to the state-owned Sasol

company.

Methane is an obvious risk in mining, which is why proper safety procedures have been developed to detect and prevent gas build-ups, and keep uninsulated material likely to ignite the gas out of the mine.

Yet South African mines have a grim record:

- In 1982 a methane explosion at Ermelo killed 11 miners.

- In 1983 union lawyers won a finding of criminal negligence against owners following a methane explosion in which 68 miners were killed.

- In August 1985 another explosion at Secunda, the Middlebelt disaster, killed 30 miners. The union is still waiting for an inquiry to be held, and Cyril Ramaphosa accuses the government's mining inspectors of neglecting their duty.

As for Gencor, Ramaphosa says the company is a 'butcher'. Management is claiming an electrical storm might have caused the Ermelo blast, but the union says it has serious doubts about this explanation.

Defiant miners move wives into hostels

DEFIANT miners at the Anglo American corporation-controlled coal mines in the Eastern Transvaal have unilaterally moved their wives and girlfriends into the 'single-sex' hostels in defiance of mine management.

It is the first public action to be taken after the National Union of Mineworkers' annual conference where they pledged to take control of the compounds and dismantle the 'migrant labour system'.

The management have, in words, opposed the single-sex system but have done nothing to change it.

Unless mine-managers turn a blind eye to the action, they will have to throw the wives and girlfriends out of the compounds, action that will discredit their claims to being opposed to the single-sex system.

Attempts by management to stop the 'occupation' of the hostels have failed so far. Threatening letters from management to miners' wives, warning them that their presence in the hostels constituted trespass, have been ignored.

The much hated compound guards (indunas) have turned a blind eye to events and a large number of them are said to have joined the union.

Pressure is now building up for the mine managers to build proper houses on the land owned by the companies.

NUM representative Marcel Golding said that the occupations are the first step 'in the fight to bring an end to the migrant labour system and hostel life'. He said that the occupations had been disciplined and co-ordinated and that new rules on how the living arrangements would be organised had been introduced.



Musawenkosi Mfosi was one of the first miners to bring his girlfriend Beauty Mgwita into a single-sex hostel. George Mbukwana looks on.

Irish neutrality under threat?

THE Irish Dail is being recalled from Easter recess this week to rush through a Bill allowing a referendum on continued EEC membership.

Prime Minister Charles Haughey announced this following a Supreme Court action, brought by economist and EEC-opponent Raymond Crotty, over moves towards a common EEC foreign policy.

By a three-two majority, the Court accepted that ratification of the Single European Act would be unconstitutional. Crotty had argued that under the Act Ireland would be surrendering the right to decide its own foreign and security policies.

Former Taoiseach Garret Fitzgerald assured the Dail

last year that the Act was not contrary to the constitution, although then opposition leader Haughey had expressed concern and urged a referendum.

Although the three main parties all favour amending the constitution if necessary, some politicians are nervous that the EEC may no longer be so popular since recent changes in the Common Agricultural Policy.

They are also worried in case the constitutionality of the Anglo-Irish agreement is now challenged in the courts.

Left-wing parties are likely to warn that the EEC foreign policy link could be a backdoor attack on Ireland's neutrality, since other EEC countries are NATO members.

Soviet trade unionist wins travel permit

BY BOB ARCHER

FIODOR FINKEL, the Soviet trade unionist who has been on hunger strike to obtain permission to travel abroad, has won his request.

Finkel's wife Svetlana is suffering from cancer and the travel permit is needed to obtain medical treatment abroad.

Finkel himself is one of the leading spokesmen for the Free General Workers Union SMOT, set up in Moscow in 1978 in opposition to the state-controlled unions. He started his hunger strike in February.

Although weak and subject to fainting fits, he was proposing to make one more demonstration outside the central office of the civil reg-

istry (OVIR) on 30 March.

On 27 March he received a summons to appear at the OVIR office at the very same time fixed for the demonstration.

He therefore carried out the demonstration and then presented himself to the authorities, only to be told by a functionary that there was no chance of obtaining permission to travel.

The official used the feeble excuse that his brother, Vadim Finkel, had recently completed his military service.

That same night, Finkel's telephone was disconnected, cutting him off from co-thinkers in the west who were eagerly following developments and campaigning for support for his demands.

Then on 31 March, Finkel's phone was suddenly reconnected and he was informed by OVIR that a travel permit for the family would be

issued.

Finkel has now finished his hunger strike but is suffering from stomach cramps and was for a period taking only liquids.

His sister Lilia, who also participated in the hunger strike, is suffering from spasms of the larynx, and had to be taken to hospital and fed intravenously.

SMOT representatives in the west have thanked all those who added their voices to support for Finkel's demands.

They are now anxious about another SMOT member, Vladimir Guerchouni. He is at present held in a psychiatric hospital.

Guerchouni has asked trade unions in the west to invite him to address their congresses. This would put pressure on the Soviet authorities to let him out of the country.

'Like any other human being'

'What type of law is it that prevents a man from living with his wife and children?', asks miner Judas Ngwenya.

Judas, from Lekazi in South Africa's kaNgwane tribal homeland, works at the Landau Mine. He says that for 200 years, migrant mineworkers were made to believe they were not human, but now they have 'realised' they are.

'It is that realisation that has made me bring

my wife into the hostel and live with her like any other human being is allowed to do.'

Before the union defiance campaign began, Judas had found his young wife Fikile a job on a neighbouring farm and used to try and stay overnight with her. But the white farmer has denied giving permission, and more than once the racists' police raided the farm, leading to a hefty 200 Rand fine for Judas when he was caught there.

Stalin's purge of youth leaders

BY CYRIL SMITH

THE ARREST and execution by Stalin's secret police of a leader of the Communist Youth movement in the 1930s has been described in a Soviet youth magazine.

The article, written by the grand-daughter of Alexander Kosarev, appears in the latest issue of 'Younost'. The writer quotes from her grandmother's unpublished memoirs, explaining how her family had suffered at the hands of the Stalinists.

Prison

Kosarev's wife had spent 20 years in prison and his daughter was sent to a labour camp from 1949 to 1956 for keeping a picture of an 'enemy of the people' — her father.

Kosarev, a factory worker since he was 11 years old, had taken part as a teenager in the Russian Revolution

and the Civil War. He rose with Stalin's approval to become the leader of the Komsomol (Communist Youth League).

When the purges began after the assassination of Kirov in 1934, he was too slow in denouncing those thousands of communists being arrested at that time. In December, 1938, Stalin himself turned up at a session of the Komsomol Central Committee.

When Kosarev came under fire for not detecting the 'Trotskyists' on his own Committee, Stalin quietly remarked: 'Maybe he didn't want to.' The entire Committee — the 'Kosarev gang' — was then arrested. Kosarev was shot without a trial in 1939.

The article quotes his wife's memories of that time:

'We heard footsteps on the stairs, and as we went to look I saw a man in uniform creeping towards me in his stocking feet.'

Kosarev never gave in to his interrogators and re-

fused to 'confess' to the last. He is said to have thrown a paperweight at them, and yelled: 'You mean bastards. It is not Kosarev you are crushing, it is Soviet power.'

'He was never a yes-man,' writes his grand-daughter, 'even to those like Stalin, with whom it was forbidden to disagree.'

Victims

Kosarev was 'rehabilitated' by Khrushchev in 1956, unlike the most important victims of the Soviet Trials of 1936-1938. The article about him appears on the eve of the 20th Congress of the Komsomol.

Gorbachev's 'glasnost' campaign, so welcome to people like Thatcher, may have aims which are opposed to the cause in which men like Kosarev died. But there are new forces gathering in the USSR which will take every advantage of his openness while it lasts.

Seventy-one years since the Easter Rising

THOUSANDS of people will this weekend commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland, when James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army joined forces with the left wing of the Irish Volunteers and attempted to overthrow British rule in Dublin.

Connolly attributed a blazing urgency to the rising, because he feared that the opportunity presented by World War I would pass by. But he had no political means of mobilising the mass of Irish workers — and the right wing of the Volunteers, always hostile to his consistent and daring drive towards insurrection, knifed the rising in the back, Eoin Macneill issuing a countermanding order at the last minute which kept the majority of the Volunteers out of the battle.

The rebels were defeated by British imperialism, supported to the hilt by the chauvinist labour bureaucracy. The 'socialist' Arthur Henderson sat in the war cabinet and made no attempt to save the lives of Connolly and the other leaders of the rising who were shot.

Connolly's devotion to revolutionary struggle, and his conviction that the national question could never be resolved without the achievement of socialism, placed him in the revolutionary wing of the Second International, with Lenin and

Trotsky and against the social-chauvinist traitors who supported the World War I.

Seventy-one years after the Easter Rising, the Irish working class, which Connolly believed would lead the liberation struggle, occupies a more powerful place than ever in Irish society.

It is more numerous and well-organised than ever. At the time of the rising, the working class was a small minority of the population; today, after years of rural Ireland being drained of its population and large-scale industrialisation, only one-fifth of the working population is on the land.

The trade unions have also grown into a force infinitely more powerful than in Connolly's time. Total union membership has increased from 189,000 in 1922 to more than half a million; a higher proportion of Irish workers are unionised than in Britain. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, founded by Connolly, which had 5,000 members at the time of the rising now has over 30 times that number.

On the other hand, the religious divisions nurtured by British imperialism in the 19th century have been cemented by the 1922 partition. The working class does not have a party it can truly

call its own. Many nationalist workers in the south vote largely for Fianna Fail, their protestant counterparts in the north for the Unionist parties.

What is the road forward for the Irish working class? Can unity be achieved — and how, on which programme? What is the relationship of the struggle for socialism and the national struggle? And the relationship of the trades unions to the military struggle of the Republican movement against British imperialism? What are the responsibilities of socialists in the British trade union movement regarding Ireland?

This is the first of a series of Workers Press articles, in which we present the views of Irish socialists and trades unionists — without necessarily agreeing with all that they say — to our readers.

This interview is with JOHN McANULTY, a member of the national committee of People's Democracy, the Irish section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Comrade McAnulty has been active in the nationalist community in west Belfast and formerly represented PD on Belfast City Council; he is an activist in the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), the main teaching union.

Working-class unity on basis of principles

WP: People talk about 'working class unity' in abstract terms. How can this be fought for in Ireland?

J McA: The class unity I am looking for is around the issue of revolution — that means initially organising those layers who see the national question as crucial.

I characterise the protestant, or Unionist, working class as a backward section of the class — the most backward in the sense that it's most directly organised by imperialism.

The Workers Party (formerly, Official Sinn Fein) and Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) have two different positions.

The Workers Party believe that 'unity' is a thing in itself, that a section of the class is reactionary, and that therefore, you must adopt a reactionary programme in order to unite the working class. You don't mobilise anyone.

And that's what happened with the Workers Party policy. Initially (in the early 1970s) they retreated on the national question; now they call for the return of Stormont (i.e. a devolved six-county parliament), they capitulate to loyalist objections to the Anglo-Irish agreement, and in the economic sphere they support multi-national investment.

The role of the CPI is to act as a buffer for the trade union bureaucracy, a bureaucracy whose survival depends on keeping politics out. The loyalist organisations have enormous influence in the factories — so the politics that have been kept out are nationalist and revolutionary politics.

It's the CPI who lead the offensive against the left and prevent the political issues being raised; they organise around the slogan 'keep politics out of the unions'.

The bureaucracy is a tremendous barrier to the Irish revolution, and their whole programme is one of collaboration. The excuse of 'loyalist resistance' is used to paralyse the trade union movement — not just on the need for a working-class programme, but even on radical economic demands.

British comrades will see this clearly at trade union congresses, where debates on Ireland are blocked because our brothers and sisters from 'Northern Ire-

land' oppose this discussion. The CPI are part of this blocking, they support this ban.

The CPI start with the conception that the limited unity of workers in unions is a progressive step, and has to be defended — and if that means holding back on political demands, then that's the price to be paid.

For us, there isn't a national question on one hand and

year, catholic workers were forced out of a Belfast leisure centre. The best their union could do was to issue a statement, saying that the loyalists' threats against them weren't real!

The employers actually had a better position than the trade union officials: they said they would pay a full wage to any worker who felt they couldn't go in due to intimidation, and also that

The question of discrimination will have to be taken up, first of all, through individual campaigns, such as the one on Kathleen Gleeson. (Kathleen is a member of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, who has been accused of indoctrinating pupils with nationalist propaganda — a charge she is opposing vigorously. She has been suspended and

gangs, and the involvement of the B-Specials and the RUC in those pogroms. No doubt the unity did terrify the state.

However, the leadership of the ODR strike was divided on the national question. Their failure to resolve this led to their failure to answer the Orange attacks. They weren't able to point to the Orange government because they refused to make that an issue. These attacks caused the movement to fold.

That's not to dismiss that movement. The main lesson is that in a period of economic collapse, loyalist workers can either break away from their ideology, or else become even more reactionary. And the decisive question is the existence of a strong alternative force to lead the revolution.

One feature of today's struggle is that the loyalist organisations aren't able to answer the immediate problems of the protestant workers. For example a pogrom against catholics doesn't help if the reason that you're unemployed — far from it being that a catholic is taking your job — is that decisions are taken in the City of London that remove your job from the world economy.

WP: What issues should be taken up in the British working-class movement in relation to Ireland?

J McA: Solidarity is not an abstraction. For example if you are solidarising against religious discrimination, that becomes concrete if you organise around named examples of that discrimination, with workers who are actually facing this problem.

The solidarity the Irish people are looking for is solidarity from the class. The fight for this has to be directed towards the organisation of the British working class, the Labour Party and the trades unions, rather than in closed, comfortable circles of 'solidarity activists'.

No one expects, of course, that Marxists in Britain can guarantee the solidarity of

British workers. That depends on the stage of the class struggle in Britain generally, and also on the level of mass resistance in Ireland. But I think we can look for a coherent and consistent understanding, propaganda — and therefore the bottom line is that all those who are members of the Marxist movement in Britain must be educated on Ireland, and have a real understanding of the struggle there.

Solidarity with the Irish working class has to be through Sinn Fein. They are the physical expression of the struggle. You can't go round them. There's a tendency to try and ignore Sinn Fein, to try and go round them, and look for struggles that can be supported as opposed to Sinn Fein.

WP: How do you see the struggle of the Irish working class going forward now?

J McA: We believe the way forward involves the self-organisation of radical workers within the trade union movement in Ireland, with the focus on the south. Because that's where it's possible to make a development; that's where nationalist workers have factory organisation.

To give an example, during the H-block struggle, that movement was able to build factory branches, and win the support of the majority of trades councils. It was of course blocked by a ban on resolutions for mobilising at the higher levels of the trade union movement, beyond branch level.

A breakthrough at that level would pose an alternative to those Unionist workers disillusioned with the pro-imperialist policy of their leadership. But at the end of the day, the mobilisation of workers prepared to tackle the national question is a task in itself, and the eventual fate of the loyalist population may be outside our control.

In general politics, and in the trade union movement, there is no loyalist veto that can halt forever the progress of the Irish revolution.



British troops erecting barbed wire barricades

an economic question on the other; there's a national question which expresses itself in economics.

Refusing to address the national question makes it impossible to put socialist alternatives to the working class.

A central element of the workers' unity I stand for is defence of the oppressed and the weakened sections of the working class. A failure to make political repression, and religious discrimination, a central issue in trade union politics is a shameful betrayal.

WP: What are the practical results of the union bureaucracy's stance?

J McA: I'll give a recent example: during the initial loyalist protests against the Anglo-Irish agreement last

they would only operate with their full workforce, and not alter its composition under threat.

More recently, the Irish Congress of Trades Unions (ICTU) organised, under pressure, a conference in Belfast against sectarianism and discrimination in workplaces. There were no resolutions and no open discussion. The platform picked selective lists of speakers, and gave equal time to clerics, a local representative of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) — and killed the campaign. It died from that conference!

The point is this: the pressure there is against discrimination, such as it is, has come from government agencies, themselves under pressure in Ireland and internationally. But the trades unions have remained largely silent over 70 years.

faces other disciplinary action).

WP: In the Outdoor Relief strike of 1932, of which the CPI had the leadership, nationalist and protestant workers united in an explosive movement against cutting unemployment benefit: this is often quoted as a fine example of unity. What do you think?

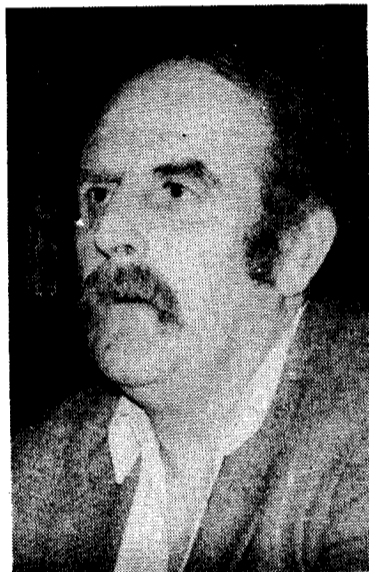
J McA: What happened in 1932 was more complex than is often presented. It was a year of extremely high sectarian tension — the ODR strike was preceded, and followed, by pogroms against catholic workers. And there was clear evidence of the state mobilising Orange

Palestinians in refugee camps 'Breaking the siege is a victory'

BY PETER RICKARD

A PUBLIC meeting was held by the Workers Revolutionary Party last Tuesday in solidarity with the Palestinians and their fight for survival in the Lebanese camps.

Charles Pottins (WRP Central Committee) outlined a short history of the attacks and massacres and the political



CHARLIE POTTINS

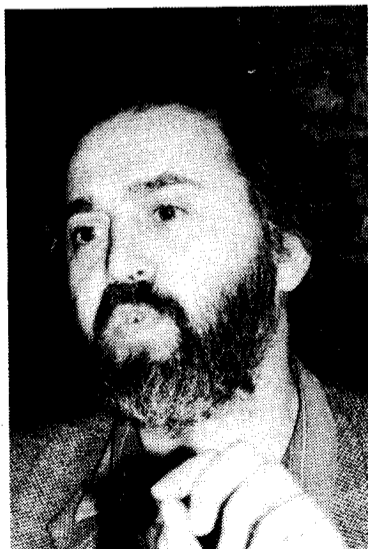
manoeuvres by American and British imperialism and the Stalinists and their proxies.

Andrew Hornung from the Labour Movement Campaign on Palestine made it very clear that the breaking of the sieges was a victory for the Palestinians.

The demands by the Amal militia that the Palestinians leave the positions they had gained to protect the camps in the south of Lebanon were not conceded.

Workers Press editor Geoff Pilling paid great tribute to the capacity of the Palestinians to continue to fight under the worst conditions possible.

The discussion afterwards centered on whether the withdrawal of



ANDREW HORNUNG

the Palestinians in 1982 was a defeat or not.

The collection from the meeting was for the Medical Aid For Palestinians.

The speaker from the Medical Aid for Palestinians, Michael Holmes, was unable to attend as he was involved in arrangements for the medical team's safe return following the relief of Dr Cuttings from the Bourj al Barajneh refugee camp in Beirut.

Tories prepare to privatise prisons

PLANS are being laid by the Tory government to put aspects of prison operation out to tender and give contracts to private firms to build and run new jails.

The proposals are described as a means of attacking the chronic overcrowding, structural decay and growing unrest that spring from the recent explosion in the prison population.

But the chief aim is to slash the cost to the state of running and building these institutions — and on this basis conditions would deteriorate still further.

The British prison system is certainly in crisis. Each week 300 fresh inmates are added to the total. So, by the end of April, 50,000 prisoners will be packed into accommodation designed for 41,000.

Seventeen new prisons are to be completed during the next eight years, providing a total of 9,500 places — equal to just eight months' intake at the present galloping rate at which people are being locked away.

Meanwhile prison officers are being offered a deal under the so-called Fresh Start scheme, by which they would accept greater flexibility and a heavier workload but would lose overtime payments. In return they would get a straight £15,000 a year for a 49-hour working week.

Their dissatisfaction with the new system will of course be taken out on the prisoners.

Lord Caithness, minister for prisons, is to go to the US to look at private prisons. And Corrections Corporation of America, which runs nine private jails and is the largest operator of its kind in the country, will be invited to Britain 'on a consulting basis'.

The description in Workers Press (14 April) of the struggle mounted by Comrade Phil Penn, a prisoner at Wormwood Scrubs, to expose the lack of the most elementary standards of hygiene in the kitchen there, showed how prisons endanger public health.

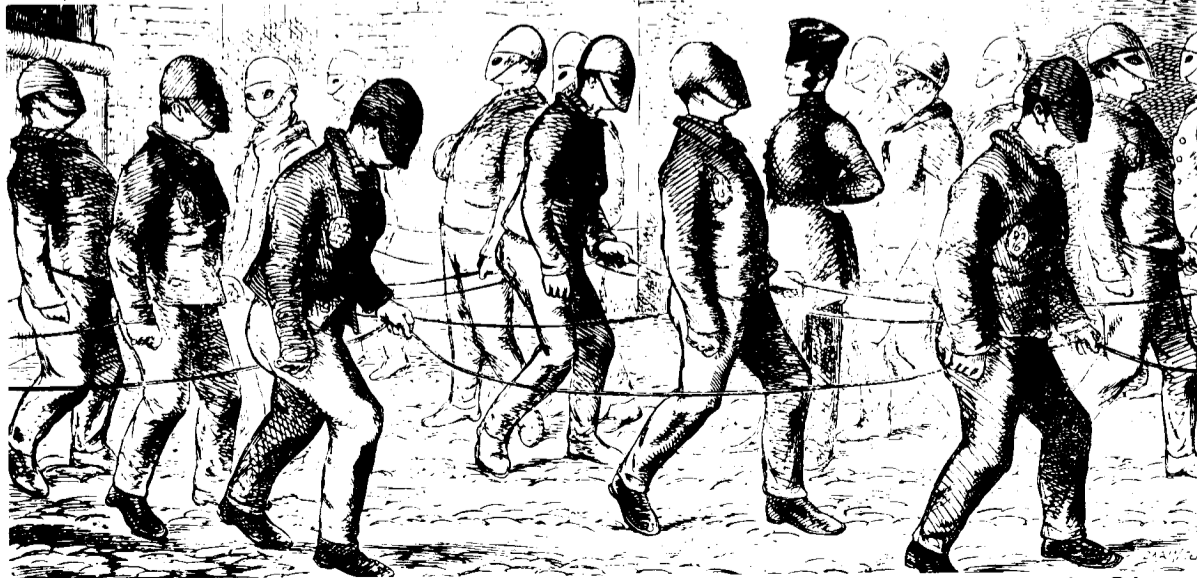
Two letters in the same issue confirmed that appalling conditions are widespread.

They confirmed that riots and disturbances occur as a result of

- physical and mental torture;
- degradation and humiliation;
- disgusting food;
- disgusting visiting conditions and

- screws who for the most part are more illiterate and prejudiced than their so-called charges

(Quote from Mick McCallum, chair, Dumbartonshire Prisoners'



Victorian prisons: extraordinary measures were taken to separate the convicts even during group exercise. Prisoners were positioned at 5-metre intervals, their places marked by knots in a rope, and marched briskly round in circles.

BY BERNARD FRANKS

Support Committee).

In fact, a fifth of those suffering these conditions have never been found guilty of breaking any law but are being held on remand awaiting trial for months on end.

In Holloway Women's Prison, for example, 120 of 360 inmates are remand prisoners, and of these possibly 80 will not receive a custodial sentence after a year or more in jail.

So huge is the overcrowding problem that many on remand are held in police cells, confined for up to 24 hours a day.

In England alone more than 360 prisoners, 80 of them women, are held in this way, at a cost of £1,400 per week per inmate in the London area.

Of those eventually convicted, many are found to have serious mental problems which prison life can only worsen.

Horrible cases of self-mutilation have been revealed, a high proportion among women prisoners.

To make life easier for the prison authorities and their subordinates, difficult inmates are still doped with tranquillisers even though this practice has been condemned by the World Health Organisation.

Those who still retain a semblance of independence or put up spirited opposition are punished with random body searches, solitary confinement, and loss of 'privileges'.

PRIVATE prisons are not new in Britain. Before 1877 they were the norm, but they proved to be such stamping grounds for vice, corruption, disease, squalor, and brutality that even the foremost advocates of free enterprise accepted the need for the state to run them.

Britain's first prisons were probably places for holding political and religious dissenters.

The poor were rarely locked up but were fined, whipped, branded, tortured to death, or simply hanged in batches for even minor offences.

With the rise of capitalism, crimes against property became the prime concern.

During the 18th century the reg-

ime in part of each prison was so savage that those who could afford it paid for better conditions in the other part.

Those who could work were forced to do so — though not on tasks that would clash with outside industries. So a profit could be made even out of the most debased members of society.

This process was taken to its logical extension at the Bridewell, where men were hired out as labourers and women were forced into prostitution to enhance the owners' profits.

Reformer John Howard (1726-1790) toured hundreds of British and continental prisons and concluded that a humane system should be introduced and that prisons should be under public control. Scandalous ill-treatment and financial malpractice were brought to light.

PRISON conditions have not changed basically since Victorian times and private tendering is the same, driving down provision and standard of staffing to the lowest levels because the primary concerns are maximum profit and minimum cost.

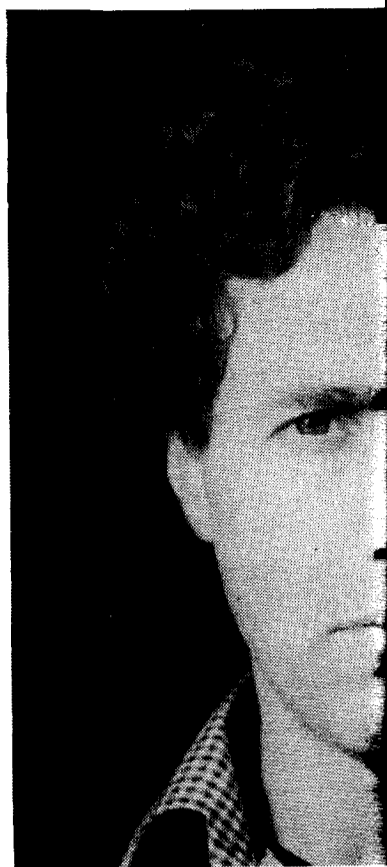
Socialists believe that prisons should cease to exist. True, there are criminals in society who need to be dealt with, but these rarely end up in prison.

On the contrary, today they are rewarded for their efforts with high places in government, commerce, industry, and the armed forces.

The prison population, on the other hand, comprises in the main the social casualties of the class war: the homeless, the addicts, the ill and the disabled.

Many have simply lashed out in frustrated rage at the nearest apparent tormentor or have taken items which they need and which appear in any case to be in chronic over-supply.

Others, like the Irish Republican prisoners, the imprisoned miners, the Greenham Common women, and Comrade Phil Penn, have made a conscious stand against British capitalism and its agencies and in this respect are political prisoners and prisoners of war.



Overcrowding

BY JEFF JACKSON

BRITAIN's overcrowded prisons have now reached record-breaking proportions.

Government proposals to privatise prisons has brought into focus the operation of the penal system in this country.

Prison governors and penal reformers are predicting the prison population figure will pass the 50,000 mark before the end of spring.

Already there are 10,000 more inmates than the institutions themselves have room for. Plans to reopen disused army barracks are

TV RE

Security in the Raw. Op

STRIP SEARCHING

While prison and custodial officers search for weapons or drugs, even every woman, who has to be strip searched as humiliating and degrading.

Last Monday's Open Space programme did not really develop this aspect of strip searching, and only showed the tip of the iceberg of routine and systematic practice of strip searching.

But it was moving to see women who had themselves undergone the psychological torture of the searching re-creating the experience — in contrast to the film of trained prison officers being 'taught' how to do it 'with sensitivity and respect'.

One Irish woman, strip searched 90 times while on remand, described what it is like to know that you have to go to court in the morning and that although you will be always in the custody of officers, you have to be stripped and intimately examined before and after the court appearance.

'You're just standing there naked — it's a terrible feeling. You

THE JAILING OF PHIL PENN

'A recent manifestation of this tendency'

THANK you for your informative letter, the background to which I had already read in the Workers Press. I will be raising it in the various organisations of which I am a member, and putting the case to the comrades in the Barnet Co-operative Party (of which I am chair), and the Hendon South Constituency Labour Party where I am Political Education officer.

Needless to say I abhor all violence directed at comrades within the labour movement, particularly after the experiences so many trade unionists have endured at Wapping, and before, during the miners' strike.

It is of course, totally unacceptable to help the

'authorities' by acting as provocateurs as would appear to have been the case with Cde. Penn. His jailing and the manner by which he was sentenced — by depending on witnesses from a supposedly socialist organisation providing 'evidence' — should be condemned by all socialists, trade unionists and democrats in the Labour movement.

Sadly, this is just one of the more recent manifestations of this tendency — manifestations of which have been experienced by other comrades over a period of at least 30 years.

Cllr. Ellis Hillman
London Borough of Barnet

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 explaining the case.

- Write to Phil Penn: No. L27055, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs, PO Box 757, Ducane Road, London W12 0AE (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.

crowding at sting point

A message from Fleet Street

The Fleet Street Support Unit sends a message of solidarity to Phil Penn and his family.

This group deplores the use, by any socialist group, of the capitalist courts and forces of the state against other socialists.

Liz Short, Chair

WRP

Workers Revolutionary Party

PO Box 735
London SW9 7QS
Tel: 01-274 7271

9 February 1987

Dear Comrades,

THE JAILING OF PHIL PENN

One of our comrades, Phil Penn, has been jailed for 12 months, eight months of it suspended, for assault. He is a highly respected member of our Central Committee, a party member for 18 years, active in the trade union movement and recently in campaigns such as that on the Guildford Four.

Our concern in this case is that members of another organisation claiming to be part of the labour movement were, apart from the arresting officers, the only police witnesses. This would be like miners giving evidence against miners in the recent strike.

As you may know, in October 1985, the Workers Revolutionary Party expelled its former leader Gerry Healy for sexual abuse, violence and slanders against members of the organisation; charges he never contested. A small group of party functionaries — including Corin and Vanessa Redgrave, Sheila Torrance and Richard Price — supported Healy and were expelled by the majority. This group then formed a bogus party calling itself the 'Workers Revolutionary Party' and publishing a newspaper, 'News Line'.

Phil Penn was arrested and charged after a demonstration called by the print unions at Wapping, on 3 May 1986. The events, as reported in court, were as follows:

- In the 'News Line' of 1 May 1986, the Worker's Notebook column carried a crude and provocative attack on Phil, insulting his intellect and presenting him as ignorant and illiterate, speaking in grunts.
- On the 3 May Wapping march, as the conflict between demonstrators and police became increasingly fierce, Phil went to fetch his camera. Once away from the main body of demonstrators, he came across members of the Healy-Torrance group. They verbally abused him, taunting him with quotes from the above-mentioned article. He refused to be provoked.
- Four of them, Richard Price, Eric Rogers, Paul Williams and another man, then attacked him physically — in Price's case with banner-poles — and knocked him to the ground. In defending himself, Phil damaged the eye of one of his assailants. Only Phil was arrested.

No organisation calling itself socialist would collaborate with the police against members of the labour movement. This is a point of principle. But members of the Healy-Torrance group eagerly acted as police witnesses. Three of the four men who attacked Phil did not appear in court but two women members of the Healy-Torrance group gave evidence which Phil vigorously contested. Had he been found guilty on the charge of wounding with intent, he would undoubtedly have been given a much longer custodial sentence.

This is not the first time the Healy-Torrance group have acted in this way. Six of them appeared as police witnesses in Sheffield Crown Court in January this year after an incident between themselves and members of the International Communist Party. On this occasion the court did not believe them and the defendant was found not guilty.

We should point out that members of the Healy-Torrance group again attacked and beat up Phil Penn on 8 June 1986 in Leicester. They used sticks and knives. The police wished to prosecute his attackers, but, as a matter of principle, Phil refused to act as a witness and the case could not go forward.

We are asking all labour-movement organisations to condemn the anti-working class actions of the Healy-Torrance group, which were responsible for the jailing of Phil Penn. Messages of support and inquiries should be sent to: Workers Revolutionary Party/Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS.

Yours fraternally,

Dave Temple,

Chairman, Workers Revolutionary Party/Workers Press.

expected to be put into operation at any time.

Plans to build more prisons to accommodate the growing number of society's offenders makes quite clear the ruling class's preparedness to continue criminalising whole sections of the population — especially the working class as it increasingly comes into conflict with the state.

Any suggestion that this situation is the result of a failure by the government to deal adequately with the problems involved is completely false.

The dehumanisation rather than rehabilitation of offenders goes hand in hand with the bankruptcy of the capitalist system and its affect on workers everywhere.

VIEW

Space, BBC2, 13 April

is torture.

oms officers claim it is way to find concealed anyone, and particularly undergone it describes it trading, even as rape.

want to scream and you want to cry — you want to hit out, but you know you can't.

One woman, 17 years old at the time, was arrested outside a nuclear base and stripped in front of male officers.

The programme was screened the week after the case was made public of a seven-months pregnant woman whose baby was endangered by a harrowing and apparently random search by customs officers.

The experience, rather than the extent, of strip searching was shown in the programme.

Strip searching is on the increase, specifically designed to break prisoners like Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, who have now been searched countless times, both on remand and in the maximum security wing at Durham jail where they are incarcerated.

Wayne Poulson

● There will be a national demonstration in Durham on Saturday 13 June. Coaches meet at the Student Union, Dunelm House, New Elvet, at 2p.m.

Privatisation of prisons is not a matter of governmental abdication of responsibility to develop a coherent penal policy but an expression of capital's extraction of profit in its most excruciating form.

It does not take much imagination to liken this development to the period in Nazi Germany and the introduction of the notorious slave labour camps.

Here are some of the more glaring statistics:

- British prisons now have the worst record for insanitary conditions and overcrowding in the whole of western Europe;

- A fifth of the present prison population are on remand awaiting trial;

- Most European countries have 100 per cent individual cells with plumbed water and sanitation; in Britain only 18 per cent have individual cells and only 4 per cent have integral sanitation.

Prisoners are forced to do time in the most intolerable conditions. Very often they are required to live three to a cell; a space so small that only one of them at a time is able to stand up.

In some cases the men have to eat, sleep and spend 23 hours a day in such circumstances.

Latest figures give the prison population in England and Wales as over 49,000. This figure does not include prisoners who are confined in police cells.

This means there are 10,000 prisoners more than there is room for.

Facilities such as workshops, association periods and educational classes are frequently unavailable to the prisoners because warders cannot cope with the numbers in their charge and supervise such activities.

Crown Immunity, which protects prisons and hospitals alike from legal prosecution by inmates, is the only thing which prevents the vast majority of these antiquated institutions from being closed down.

The likelihood of the spread of AIDS and hepatitis is very real. Medical care of inmates serving less than a two-year sentence is handled, not by the NHS, but the Prison Medical Service.

Only longer serving prisoners are accompanied by their medical records. Any drugs and medication prescribed for the shorter-stay prisoners are therefore unrelated to any treatment they may have received outside. Also, prisoners are not advised of the sort of medication they receive while serving time, or of any possible side-effects.

VICTORY FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

A programme of action, the workers' united front and a proletarian party

'Unless the masses are organised, the proletariat is nothing. Organised — it is everything.'

A revolutionary situation is at hand

IT IS crucial that all class-conscious fighters grasp the stage that the struggle in South Africa has reached.

The mighty May Day 1986 strike and nationwide stay-away of 16 June 1986 highlight the existence of a profound revolutionary situation in our country.

Both occur against the background of an offensive of the toiling masses that has continued almost unabated since September 1984.

Moreover they happen under conditions of extreme economic disarray and acute political crisis in the ranks of the racist ruling class.

In a report drawn up for capital by a group of industrial relations consultants, these champions of the system of wage slavery alert their paymasters to the serious challenge that the struggle of the working class represents.

They point out that 1986 was marked by a record number of strikes, overtime bans and go-slows (600 in all) — and that these class battles were much more protracted than in previous years.

What for them was most alarming, however, was the extremely high incidence of 'politically-motivated stay-aways': 25 for the year, compared with one in 1982, four in 1984, and 22 in 1985.

Fascism will be the punishment for the working class not taking power

THE working class has indeed shown boundless tenacity, self-sacrifice, and heroism in the last three years.

But the magnificent scope of the offensive must not blind us to the fact that it has been for the most part spontaneous, disparate, sporadic, and regional.

Besides, while the racist rulers' counter-offensive — the state of emergency with its draconian repressive laws — may not yet have succeeded in inflicting a mortal blow on the struggle, it has been able to stall the advance of the masses.

This certainly does not mean that the revolutionary situation has passed. What it does mean however is that, unless the present impasse is resolved in favour of the toiling masses, there is every danger (as Trotsky warned the French socialists who faced a similar situation to ours in the 1930s) 'that the revolutionary energy of the masses will be dissipated in spurts, in isolated explosions . . . and give way to apathy'.

The ANC-SACP alliance baulk at revolution

THE communist revolutionaries in South Africa thus have a gigantic historic responsibility thrust upon them.

Only they can transform a situation pregnant with all the promise of revolution into an actual and living revolution, and prevent its

being turned into a massive defeat of the masses.

Indeed we are living in a critical situation, where, as Trotsky warned over 50 years ago, 'the old "revolutionary" organisations are shown to possess hindquarters of lead, which prevent them from performing the necessary about-face at the right moment'.

Neither the ANC nor the SACP can be relied on to provide the necessary leadership to the struggle.

While workers and youth everywhere are afire with ideas of socialism, the ANC-SACP alliance is heavily weighed down by its two-stage conception.

While the masses are more than ready to take on the might of the state, the alliance is held back by cowardly hopes of an easy 'Lancaster House' passage to power.

The alliance shows no consistent interest in transforming the proletariat's revolutionary potential into an all-out assault for state power.

Hardly, in fact, had the ANC proclaimed 1987 as the 'year of advance to people's power', than one of the alliance's leading figures, Joe Slovo, reassured the

BY A SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARY

bourgeoisie that it is ready to negotiate as soon as Botha says the word.

To the delight of the proletariat's class enemies, Slovo told the 'Observer': 'I believe that transition in South Africa is going to come through negotiation. If there was any prospect of settling it peacefully tomorrow, we would be the first to say let's do it.'

Build the proletarian party to guarantee the revolution

IF a revolution is to arise out of the revolutionary situation, then the leading class in South Africa, the working class, must be given a 'conscious head'.

Without this vital subjective factor — the revolutionary party — the spontaneous, disparate, sporadic and regional struggles of the toiling masses cannot possibly be converted into a sustained, conscious, national offensive aimed at conquering state power.

The communist revolutionaries have therefore, as a matter of

urgency, to organise themselves into a disciplined and centralised proletarian party.

Only such a tightly organised underground structure, with communist cells throughout the mass movement, will be able to fight consistently for the triumph of the socialist revolution in South Africa.

A programme of action is needed

A REVOLUTIONARY programme of action is urgently required to rescue the struggle from its present stalemate.

Such a programme will be able to put an end to the existing diffuseness, guide the struggle in all its aspects, and systematically prepare the working class for the seizure of power.

The militants in COSATU, the UDF, and the NECC — indeed in all the organisations throughout the country — must understand fully the significance of the present political situation.

They must realise that a revolutionary situation does not persist interminably!

It is the highest expression of the irreconcilability of class contradictions in capitalist society. It is a time when a battle to the death begins, when, in Trotsky's words, 'either the masses will take the path of Marxist policies before it is too late, or the proletariat will be smashed. Such is the alternative of the present epoch'.

The struggle therefore needs much more than the call by UDF-COSATU-NECC for a mass united campaign against apartheid and the state of emergency (important as this call is).

What is needed is a programme of action that provides for all-sided political activity, reflects the struggle in all its complexity, and, above all, furnishes the means whereby the masses can be mobilised for the battle for state power.

The workers' united front must implement the programme of action

The political struggle in South Africa has reached an impasse not only because of the state's counter-offensive but also because of the masses' lack of unity and the extreme sectarianism of the leadership.

The conditions for greater unity certainly exist. The masses are certainly in favour of struggling on the basis of a national programme of action.

But all sorts of subterfuges and ruses are used to block the unification of the mass movement.

To be sure, the UDF and the NFC have different political programmes, and COSATU and AZACTU-CUSA may have divergent perspectives on the role of the working class in the struggle.

Rather than ruling out joint actions, however, this state of affairs is the precise reason why a workers' united front has to be built.

The united front is an organisation for direct and immediate struggle, which consciously strives to put a unified national struggle in place of the sporadic and regional movements of the masses.

The united front does not deny any of its participants the right to their own organisations; nor does it deprive any of them of the right to engage in the freest and most open criticism.

What it does is lay before the masses a programme of action and invite all those who consider themselves the militant fighters of the proletariat to prove their worth in deeds.

The united front alone can end the internecine fighting among the different organisations of the oppressed, for through the united front unity is not merely proclaimed but given a concrete organisational form.

March separately, strike together

THE united front is the real testing ground for how revolutionary a political organisation is, how much support it has among the masses, and what the quality of its leadership is.

Only those who wish to conceal



from the mass of workers what they concretely represent will resist (and indeed frustrate) the building of the workers' united front.

The united front cannot in any way compromise an organisation's independence, for its guiding slogan remains that of the Third International while under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky: **March separately but strike together!**

Advance with the method of Lenin!

HOW MUST South African militants proceed to construct the united front? Lenin gave this advice:

'You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and prepare firmly for the transition to the next link.'

The chain that must be completed is the revolutionary process. We must start with what exists and end with the final battle for state power.

Success rests on our ability to channel the energies of all vanguard militants into purposeful, directed, and united action. The mass of workers have demonstrated again and again that they are ready to do battle.

Militants must discover the links for converting single-issue struggles and local battles into all-sided, national and co-ordinated struggles.

The means must be found for linking every individual demand to an all-sided struggle against the entire system of apartheid-capitalism.

Prepare for an organising centre of the united front

THE united front already exists in embryo. A start has been made on formulating a programme of action. The utmost clarity is now needed!

The Marxist-Leninist conceptions of a united front policy and a revolutionary programme of action must be carried vigorously into every organisation of the masses throughout the country.

The tentative steps taken by COSATU, AZACTU-CUSA and the UDF, NFC and NECC towards national co-ordination of struggles must be given wider definition and begin to embrace all organisations nationwide.

Without delay, trade unions, workers' local organisations, civic and women's organisations, youth and student organisations, boycott committees, area and street committees, and defence committees should begin selecting delegates to constitute a national organising centre of the workers' united front.

Through conscious organisation, local and regional struggles must begin to flow into a mighty torrent of national co-ordinated struggle, guided by a definite, systematic programme of action.

Comrades, build the links in the chain!

Combining legal and illegal means

UNDER South African conditions, where open forms of struggle are becoming increasingly difficult, every effort must be made to protect the organising centre and all leaders of the united front from the security police.

Preparing for insurrection, no less than insurrection itself, is an art.

Absolute discipline must be demanded of every fighter. Legal, semi-legal and illegal methods must be skilfully combined. For this, comradesly trust must be built up between political opponents.

The united front represents a practical and tactical alliance

among all class-conscious fighters, regardless of their political organisations. The only condition it lays down is that these organisations have a presence among the masses.

The grave dangers and risks involved in building the united front entail the highest revolutionary integrity on the part of all participants. All who are irresponsible or engage in dishonest practices must be recalled.

The leaders must constantly be made aware that the eyes of the masses are upon them, and that their participation in the united front depends on their carrying out the will of those they represent.

Only if the united front is constructed with this understanding can its participants be relied on to be revolutionary fighters and not sectarians or obstructive bureaucrats.

Not two stages but permanent revolution

IN recent years the struggle has proved over and over again, through countless ex-

periences, that the South African revolution combines in itself both a struggle for democracy and a struggle for socialism.

This is because the political system in South Africa denies all democratic rights to the majority of the people.

Given South Africa's unique situation, a truly revolutionary programme of action must embody the perspective of a permanent, uninterrupted revolution, in which the working class, as the most revolutionary class in South African society, will lead the rest of the oppressed to smash apartheid-capitalism.

A programme of action which does not combine the struggle for democracy with the struggle for socialism, but separates them out from each other as two distinct stages, cannot hope to win the unswerving confidence of the class on which the whole of the SA revolution depends — the working class.

Build the united front! Build the proletarian party!

IN THE struggle for the acceptance and implementation of a revolutionary programme of action, in building the united front, the best elements will be separated from the laggards, cowards and traitors.

By leaps and bounds, these elements will be drawn to the consistency and truth of Marxist-Leninist ideas; and they will be drawn into, and begin to constitute, the revolutionary vanguard party.

There can be no doubt that only a vanguard party can provide consistent **POLITICAL leadership.**

So it is necessary, in the midst of the fight for a united front programme of action, to hoist the revolutionary banner of the embryonic vanguard party. Only the programme of a Trotskyist vanguard party can lead the working class to ultimate victory.

Nor can there be any doubt that only a vanguard party will ensure consistent **ORGANISATIONAL leadership.**

Whereas the united front is based on the disciplined collaboration of all workers and other members of the oppressed, only a tightly knit and highly disciplined organisation of the most class-conscious proletarian fighters can really provide the means for preparing and consummating the insurrection.

Time is short, and the greatest challenge lies before us.

'To try guessing whether events will leave "enough" time in which to form the new party is to engage in the most sterile of endeavours', wrote Trotsky.

'The resources of history in matters of various possibilities, transitional forms, stages, accelerations and delays are inexhaustible.'

Comrades, put your heads down, and proceed to forge the links in the chain of the revolutionary process!

● Forward to a revolutionary programme of action!

● Forward to a workers' united front!

● Forward to a vanguard party!

KEY

ANC — African National Congress. Main nationalist organisation in South Africa, formed in 1912.

SACP — South African Communist Party.

COSATU — Congress of South African Trade Unions. Largest trade union federation in South Africa. Includes main industrial unions. Leading positions held by ANC supporters.

AZACTU — Azanian Congress of Trade Unions.

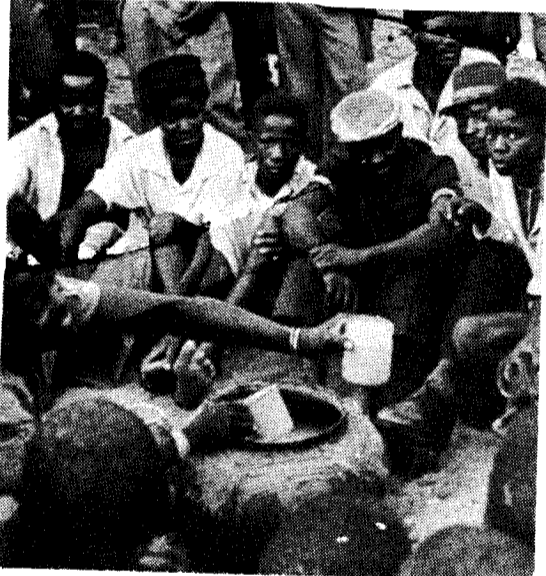
CUSA — Council of Unions of South Africa.

SACTU — South African Council of Trade Unions. ANC trade union organisation.

UDF — United Democratic Front. Popular-front anti-apartheid organisation, dominated by ANC supporters.

NFC — National Forum Committee.

NECC — National Education Crisis Committee.



TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A Magazine of Marxist Theory
Volume 1 Number 1 March 1987

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REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN

HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

LIAM BAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984.

JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989.

EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637.

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877.

GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016.

JOHN MCCOMB: 17-year sentence, B51715.

ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576.

PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.

NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence, 879225.

PARKHURST

HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603.

GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, B75882.

PAUL NORNEY: Life sentence, 863532.

TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence 69204.

PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD

HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636.

NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY

HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087.

HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638.

BILLY GRIMES:

SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418.

WANDSWORTH

SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE

HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP

RONNIE MCCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799.

STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence, 758663.

JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635

ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND

HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085

BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034.

CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662.

EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1888.

BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, B26380.

PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, B75881.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE

DONAL CRAIG: 4 years.

VINCE DONNELLY: Life Sentence, 274064.

DURHAM

HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.

MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134.

ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.

REMAND PRISONERS: BRIXTON

HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, London SW2 5XF.

MICHAEL J MCKENNEY: L46486 (has now got 16 year sentence)

LIAM QUINN: L49930

G. (DANNY) MCNAMEE: L48616

LIAM MCCOTTER

PATRICK McLAUGHLIN

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274064.

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire

PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree.

PAUL HILL: 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD CONLOI: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.

JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.

HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Long Lartin.

JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.

BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Long Lartin.

GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Long Lartin.

RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Long Lartin.

PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Long Lartin.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for supplying and updating this information.

LETTERS

Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editorial Board. Letters over 500 words will normally be cut. Letters should arrive by first post Monday at: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS, and should include sender's address.

Where Kinnock's sympathies lie

HARRY COHEN, Labour MP, advises us on the left to be more aware of our real enemies — the capitalists. Let me inform Harry Cohen that we are aware of that which he advises and also aware of the agents of capitalism that Harry Cohen stands shoulder to shoulder with in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The primary economic object of socialism and thereby socialism's top economic priority is to nationalise and democratise the capitalist economy. This is stated under 'objects' in the rules of the Labour Party, and all members of the party signed allegiance to this object when they became members.

Neil Kinnock stated (BBC Radio interview, December 1985): 'Our (i.e. the Labour Party's) absolutely predominant priority will be in generating employment, production and investment so we can rebuild the British (i.e. capitalist) economy.'

Within the order of priorities the use of funds for re-nationalisation will have to take their place in a pretty long queue.

Therefore Neil Kinnock has made it absolutely clear to the nation and to the Labour Party that his political and economic sympathies lie with Keynesian capitalism and not with democratic socialism.

The leadership of the Labour Party is the highest possible corruption of socialism. Consequently, a fight against capitalism must include the rescue of the leadership of the Labour Party, and I would suggest that Harry Cohen can start this off by pointing out to the National Executive Committee of the Labour party that Neil Kinnock's near indifference to re-nationalisation and his total indifference to nationalisation are not compatible with the objects of the Labour Party.

Alan Wales

The need for new leadership in unions

JOHN EVANS'S article on the Campaign for Democracy in NUPE (11 April), though a well-written account of the conference of 4 April, unfortunately stopped short of the full implication of recent struggles and the conclusion to be drawn before such campaigns as this are to be successful.

I don't think it adequate simply to say 'that such leaderships are incapable of winning any dispute' without examining the treacherous nature of these leaderships.

Otherwise it implies they would, under certain circumstances, be prepared to take on the anti-union laws and the government. As the Wapping dispute showed, they clearly will not.

Even though he correctly points out that 'no union leader organised any decisive support' for the miners, Evans fails to mention that this was done in spite of the mass support they had from workers here and abroad.

Nor does he mention that the NUM leadership failed to demand that the TUC act on its own conference decisions



Ogreave and Wapping exposed the limitations of both militancy and our present leaders

to mobilise such support, completely letting Willis and partners off the hook.

At best, all these leaders can offer us is a Labour government under Kinnock and Co. Is that any real alternative?

Surely we have to realise that this mood of hostility and real sense of betrayal in the union has to be diverted into such campaigns as John writes about, so that we can prepare ourselves to meet and defeat any government

that denies us our basic rights and refuses to redress the injustices we suffer.

Ogreave and Wapping exposed the limitations of both militancy and our present leaders and demonstrated, I believe, that the decisive confrontation has not started yet.

I fully agree with John when he says we have to rid ourselves of this parasitic deadweight in our ranks before we can win such struggles.

What is posed clearly is the absolute necessity to build such united fronts as Campaign For Democracy in NUPE and build a new leadership together based on socialist principles.

Any other approach would leave the bureaucracy free to keep their 'business as usual' sign clearly displayed.

Tony Godfrey, South-east London

Pearce's odious national

socialism

BRIAN PEARCE'S recent pronouncements on the Irish question and national socialism have provoked critical response in the letters page of Workers Press.

This is only to be welcomed. But his position on these issues can only be understood in the context of his rejection of Marxism.

Pearce's rejection of Marxism is made clear in an earlier polemic against Bobinska (see Workers Press 2, 16, and 30 August, 13 and 20 September, 4 October, 8 November 1986). In his final contribution, Bobinska pointed out that Pearce 'offered a profoundly nationalistic interpretation of the French Revolution' (8 November). This is shown by Pearce's claim that the French Revolution was primarily a French phe-

nomenon' (30 August). By implication its bourgeois — i.e. its class — characteristics are of secondary importance.

Bobinska's charge is vindicated by Pearce's later contributions to the letters page of Workers Press. In his discussion of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the Battle of the Boyne, he identifies the interests of British capitalism and the British labour movement with 'the standpoint of world history' (17 January). Pearce moreover displays a criminally uncritical attitude to the role of the British state in the struggle against fascism (7 February and 14 March). Earlier Bobinska had emphasised the independent revolution-

ary role of the international proletariat in the present epoch (16 August). According to Pearce this is 'ultra-leftism' and 'workerism'.

Will Pearce clarify his position? Which is the agent of universal human liberation — the international proletariat or the British state?

Cliff Slaughter has claimed that what North describes as a nationalist and opportunist tendency 'was arrested and driven out' of the party with the expulsion of Healy in October 1985. ('The Fourth International', Workers Press, 17 January).

The privileged position granted to Pearce's odious national socialism in the letters page of Workers Press raises a question mark.

David Gorman, Workers Press supporter, Liverpool

An 'old soldier' remembers

AS A West-Countryman myself I was pleased to see a contribution from Exeter to your correspondence page.

In the history of England's western counties, two dates that are, or should be, of importance to everyone interested in popular struggles for freedom are 1685 and 1834.

The second date is, of course, that for the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The first is that for the battle of Sedgemoor and the Bloody Assize. I mention it for two reasons.

First, the judicial massacre carried out by Judge Jeffreys on behalf of King James II left a legacy of bitterness against the King and all he stood for which made it most appropriate for William of Orange and his army of liberation to land at a West Country port.

The other reason is that, among the officers of the King's forces who slaughtered at Sedgemoor the 'peasants, artisans and others enrolled among the sons of toil' who opposed royal and ecclesiastical tyranny with their scythes and other primitive weapons, there was a certain Patrick Sarsfield.

To Irish Catholic 'nationalists' Sarsfield is a hero, for his later role in Ireland. In Dorset and Somerset he left a different memory. He embodies the contradictions of the real history of that time, which annoy Simon Pirani so much.

'Liberation is the work of the masses, it is not possible

against them', writes Geoff Barr. Well, the masses in Northern Ireland are predominantly Protestant, and strongly averse to the aims of the IRA. What conclusion are we to draw from that fact?

Doesn't their 'political mass' (a fine expression) count for enough? Perhaps they are not 'masses' at all, but — wait for it — 'settlers' (still, after 300 years and more)?

Of course Ireland was 'colonised'. What country hasn't been, at one time or another? Britain was colonised by the English. If some party arose in Wales which refused to recognise England, calling it instead 'the (X) Counties', and aimed to impose on the English the Welsh language and the ideology of Primitive Methodism, would that be OK by the WRP?

An end to these proposals to redraw the map, as Engels put it, 'in the antiquarian vein'!

Charlie Pottins writes of the absence of religious discrimination in the Republic. How does he explain the decline in the proportion of Protestants in that part of Ireland from about 25 per cent before Partition to about 5 per cent today? In a different context he would doubtless call that 'a cold pogrom'.

If your readers can 'stomach' one more dollop of old soldier's reminiscences, let me recall the first occasion on which I fell out with the

late R.P. Dutt. It was when I was in India in 1944.

Before I went there I accepted Dutt's picture of the National Congress, under Jawaharlal Nehru, as a secular and even quasi-socialist organisation.

The Moslem League was to be seen as an artificial creation of the imperialists ('playing the Moslem card'). Faced with Indian realities, it did not take long for me to perceive how false that idea was — and to say so, in letters home, which earned me a rebuke from the great guru of 'King Street'.

Experience of self-government in several provinces under Congress ministries in 1937-1939 had convinced most of India's Moslems that Congress Raj meant Hindu Raj, and that 'Pakistan' was the only solution of their problem.

In taking that line they were no more 'puppets of imperialism' than are the Protestant people of Northern Ireland when they insist on maintaining their separate political entity.

A few more words on the general question of World War II. How strange that those who shout 'Nazi!' whenever a policeman feels the collar of some mugger or drug-pusher are often the same as those who see participation in the fight to smash Nazi Germany as having been some sort of crime against socialism.

If Nazi Germany had not been destroyed from with-

Applause for an unsigned complaint

I APPLAUD the writer of the unsigned letter (4 April) for forceful and correct criticism levelled against Brian Pearce and his reactionary, anti-Irish and pro-imperialist views in relation to the great and historical struggle of Ireland and her people against imperialist repression and domination.

I also think the criticism of Workers Press for publishing Pearce's letters was also in order.

Whether or not Pearce raises important questions for Marxists (editorial note in same issue) is not the point, because everything Pearce has written so far in his letters to Workers Press shows in a crystal clear fashion that he doesn't support the right of Ireland to be free, united and an independent country. Therefore he is in favour of British imperialist interference in Irish affairs.

Nor of course does he support the armed struggle of the IRA against the jack-

boot tyranny of British imperialism and its occupation of the six counties. Surely these are two important and crucial points that any Marxist worth his salt would start with and support when analysing or commenting on the struggle in Ireland against imperialism.

Having done that you would then be entitled to debate with Sinn Fein and counterpose the Marxist revolutionary programme to their programme and in this way give unconditional but not uncritical support to the liberation struggle being waged in Ireland by the IRA and Sinn Fein. But not Pearce — his pro-imperialist leanings run too deep for that.

I therefore suggest that he hawks his reactionary views in some pseudo-liberal journal where he can continue the debate with like-minded people on his reactionary views about the IRA and the

liberation struggle taking place in Ireland.

But from a safe distance where he is unlikely to do any harm to himself or to those real revolutionaries in Ireland who are fighting, dying and being imprisoned for the cause of Irish freedom.

Workers Press I think should be the paper for those who genuinely support the struggle in Ireland, who want to construct a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Britain and internationally.

And who want to and will also give every assistance with the building of such a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Ireland but in the context of supporting with-out conditions the right of the IRA and Sinn Fein to wage war against British imperialism and its occupation of the six counties.

'A nation that oppresses another cannot itself be free' (Karl Marx).

Charlie Walsh, West London WRP

out, does anyone seriously believe it would have collapsed from within? The 'techniques' of fascism, German style, were well-designed to render ineffective any and every resistance movement, however heroic, unless aided from outside by military pressure.

The Trotskyists in Germany and the other occupied countries fought bravely to bring Hitler down. All honour to them, and shame on their slanderers.

But what about the Trotskyists in Britain — many of whom, significantly, came to Trotskyism from pacifism?

Their contribution to the struggle against the most dangerous enemy of the working-class movement was to promote strikes which hindered the war effort.

It was disgraceful of the Stalinists to call them 'agents of Hitler'; but might not Hitler have said about them: 'With enemies like these, who needs friends?'

It is pointless to insist that the ruling class of Britain were not interested in fighting fascism, 'did not care one bit about freedom and democracy'.

In Russia (after 22 June 1941) the bureaucracy fought to defend their privileged existence. But what matters, in both cases, is the objective consequence of their policy, namely, the destruction of Nazi Germany, that great bastion of fascism (real fascism).

And if Nazi Germany had not lost the war, would we be discussing fine points of Marxism here today, let

alone waging the class struggle under conditions of 'bourgeois democracy'?

Some of us, dare I say it, would definitely not be here, or anywhere else, at all. To which I add a final reflection: had Hitler's army been in charge in Belfast, the IRA, if it gave any trouble, would soon have suffered the fate of the Home Army in Warsaw in 1944.

Brian Pearce

East Midlands Branch

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Highfields Community Centre, Melbourne Road, Leicester
21 April: Bolshevism and Stalinism

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PERSONAL COLUMN

In defence of Annie Besant

FIRST, a confession. I've always had a soft spot for Annie Besant, that extraordinary woman who defied most of the canons of nineteenth-century British society with courage, intelligence, and aplomb.

So when I read in the 'Times Literary Supplement' last week the allegation that she 'defied convention by abandoning her children', I was nettled, to say the least.

The truth is more complex, and less discreditable, than that misleading vignette suggests.

Let's come back later to that episode in her life. First of all it has to be said that Annie Besant eventually abandoned socialism for theosophy, having been converted by the eccentric Madame Blavatsky. This change of allegiance dismayed most of her friends, as well it might.

Nothing however can expunge from history Annie Besant's role in the London working-class movement just 100 years ago.

She was prominent in the events of 'Bloody Sunday' (20 November 1887), when socialists and radicals called a demonstration in Trafalgar Square: partly to protest against repression in Ireland, partly to assert the right of free speech.

The demonstration was banned. Over 80,000 people with bands and banners defied the ban by marching on the square from all directions, but contingent after contingent was broken up by brutal police attacks.

A detachment of Grenadier Guards with ammunition and fixed bayonets, followed by two squadrons of Life Guards, arrived at the square, to be greeted by shouts of 'We want free speech', 'Britons shan't be ruled by bayonets', and 'We are all true Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotsmen, and we only want our legal rights as citizens of London'.

The fighting went on for hours, and three of the many injured later died. Annie Besant was one of a group that made a determined attempt to break through a four-deep cordon of police.

She and the crusading journalist William T. Stead then formed the Law and Liberty League, which led a united campaign for freedom of speech and in whose journal 'The Link' Annie Besant exposed the conditions of the 700 women employed, and savagely exploited, at the Bryant and May match factory.

These women workers earned on average less than seven shillings a week, from which their employers were making unwarranted penny deductions.

Encouraged by Annie Besant's support, the women came out on strike and, after a fortnight's struggle, won a small wage increase and some improvements in working conditions.

This was the first breakthrough by London's unskilled and hitherto unorganised workers, and was the beginning of the great strike movement of 1888-1892 (in which the 1889 strike for the 'dockers' tanner' was probably the most dramatic episode and certainly the most important).

'Few people could help being touched', said a contemporary account of the Bryant and May strike, 'by the way in which the girls were determined to stand together at all costs.'

'I can pawn this for you', 'I'll lend you that to take to Uncle's' was heard all about the room, and in every direction girls might be seen plotting how they could help one another on, until Bryant and May gave them back their pennies.

Annie Besant was unanimously elected honorary secretary of the newly formed Matchmakers Union. After that she joined H.M. Hyndman's Social-Democratic Federation and was elected to the London School Board in a fierce contest.

* * *

Nor can anything expunge from the record Annie Besant's major contribution, a whole generation before Marie Stopes, to the fight for freedom to give contraceptive knowledge to women.

A Bristol bookseller had been sentenced to two years' hard labour for issuing an allegedly obscene book: Charles Knowlton's 'Fruits of Philosophy', a birth control classic first published in 1832.

Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, her colleague in the freethought movement, decided to provoke a test case by themselves publishing a sixpenny edition of 'Fruits of Philosophy'.

Annie Besant spoke passionately in court about 'the poor woman who has only sixpence to spare, and should be allowed to purchase with that sixpence the knowledge which richer women can obtain for five shillings'.

Besant and Bradlaugh were found guilty in 1877, but in the following year this verdict was overturned on appeal.

They then successfully sued the police for the return of seized copies of the offending book, which they sold with the words 'Recovered from the police' stamped across the cover in red.

Was this the kind of woman who would abandon her children?

Her clergyman husband, the Rev. Frank Besant, had beaten her up and pocketed the small sums she earned through writing short stories: in those days any money a wife earned belonged by law to her husband.

The Besants had two children, a boy and a girl. When the parents parted, the husband retained their son under the deed of separation, while their daughter Mabel remained in her mother's sole custody except for an annual month-long visit to her father.

The latter then applied for sole custody

of Mabel on the ground that Annie Besant was propagating atheism and had helped to publish an indecent and obscene pamphlet.

The judge told her that her character was tainted and that modest women could not be expected to associate with her. Her refusal to let Mabel receive religious education was 'likely to work utter ruin to the child'.

'Fruits of Philosophy' was described in court, quite falsely, as advocating 'promiscuous intercourse without marriage'.

A friend said Annie Besant entered the courtroom young and beautiful and left it old and hard and full of hate.

Mabel, aged seven, was torn from her mother's arms and carried away. In due course the Court of Appeal granted Annie Besant the right of access, but Mabel was upset by her mother's visits.

So Annie Besant resolved not to see or write to either of her children until they were old enough to understand and judge for themselves. And, when they came of age, both chose to return to her.

How this story can possibly be summed up as a mother's 'abandoning her children' defies understanding.

But the biographies of both Besant and Bradlaugh have always been peculiarly subject to distortions that no amount of patient correction seems able to eradicate.

Over and over again, for instance, one reads that Bradlaugh refused to take the oath of allegiance when he was elected to the House of Commons in 1880.

In fact, he never refused. He claimed the right to affirm; this right was denied him. He then decided to take the oath under protest — but the House refused to let him do so.

For six years he fought for the right to take the oath, and this fight involved eight legal actions, imprisonment in the clock tower, forcible ejection from the House, and four re-elections, in each of which the electors of Northampton sent him back as their representative.

* * *

The Annie Besant who captures my imagination, however, is not the colleague of Bradlaugh, nor the theosophist, nor even the supporter of Indian freedom who launched a Home Rule League in 1916 and was elected president of the Indian National Congress in 1918.

It is the ardent socialist in her heavy laced boots, off-the-ground skirts, and red neckerchief, who was one of the best public speakers of her day and put her formidable powers at the service of London's working women in their struggle against Victorian values.

Peter Fryer

The paramount struggle for theory

CYRIL SMITH'S article 'Have the productive forces stagnated?' (21 March) claimed that 'under the bourgeois social order, those powers are cut to pieces'.

Referring to humanity's power to produce/create, Cyril treated these powers as material objects, when in fact these immaterial powers can only be realised/materialised in material objects.

Moreover, to speak of 'powers' as something separate from those who own them is to dehumanise humanity, whose species-being, in contrast to the animal kingdom, is the power to produce purposively in our interests and in an all-sided way.

Nor do workers 'sell off their humanity a bit at a time in order to buy the necessities of life'.

Only someone with a mystical or religious view of life could claim that all are born with a quantifiable amount of humanity which daily decreases through working.

For Marxists on the other hand, in the struggle to survive, both as a part of, and against nature, mankind developed the productive forces and in the process, increasingly humanised/

socialised his own possibilities, needs and powers.

At a certain historic stage this process gave rise to alienated labour, in which the products produced by labour were appropriated as private property by non-producers.

Alienated labour thus gave rise to private property. Private property is the material embodiment of human labour power alienated in the productive process, where labour is separated from privately owned means of production.

Under capitalism, in order to survive workers are therefore obliged to sell or alienate their labour power which takes the form of wage-labour.

But it was only through these forms of alienation (private property, wage-labour) that contradictorily, capitalism could further develop and internationalise, increasingly socialised/humanised productive forces, which includes the accumulated skills, knowledge and powers of humanity.

In this way, capitalism laid the foundations for a truly human, i.e. world communist society, which is the negation and abolition of all forms of alienation; where

mankind's power to produce, means to produce and the products produced, will no longer be separated from and turned against the producer, but will be returned to humanity at a higher level, through the abolition of private property.

Centrally however, for Marxists, the only historically progressive social force in the imperialist epoch, capable of overcoming the contradiction between the alienated forms of social existence and its humanised content is the international proletariat under revolutionary leadership.

Cyril additionally added that 'fragmentation is driving force for class struggle' and gave two examples of fragmentation.

a) Cripplingly limited and one-sided activities of workers.

b) A global system of production carved up between warring capitalist nation states.

Firstly, fragmentation drives nothing forward, but only the struggle against fragmentation.

Secondly, it is the conflict between the socialised content and privatised form of the productive forces which is the driving force of the class struggle, which in turn

manifests the struggle of workers against alienated forms of existence such as fragmentation.

Thirdly, internationally, bourgeois national states were brought into being through the global extension of developing the productive forces by capitalism.

The carving up of the productive forces by warring nation states is not the motor force of the (international) class struggle, but its consequence.

Nor is 'fragmentation' of the productive forces internationally, into national spheres, the engine of class struggle.

Internationally, the class struggle arises out of the conflict between productive forces and private property relations, which takes the national form of conflict between the internationalised forces of production and the outmoded bourgeois nation states.

In the struggle for the reorganisation of the Fourth International it is becoming increasingly clear that the struggle for theory is central and paramount; as Lenin insisted without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement.

Norah Wilde

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A Preparatory Committee has been formed and has held its first meeting to organise the International Conference of Trotskyists, planned for later this year, to reorganise the Fourth International.

A statement on page 5 reports on what has already been achieved by this decisive first meeting.

The Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund is the only source of money for our party's contribution to that committee, and it is therefore urgently needed.

● Please send donations, large or small, to: WRP Special Fund, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

LISTINGS

Listings are published free by WORKERS PRESS for organisations in the labour movement. Please send details to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Friday.

FREE THE FRAMED IRISH PRISONERS BENEFIT Brent Irish Cultural Centre, Salisbury Road, Queens Park, NW6. Friday, 24 April, 7.30p.m. Entertainers include Maria Tolly. Admission Free.

LONDON EDUCATION DEFENCE COMMITTEE Public Meeting, Coburg Primary School, Coburg Road, off Old Kent Road by Burgess Park. Wednesday 29 April at 6.00p.m. Organised by ILEA/NUPE Schoolkeepers.

FREE THE FRAMED IRISH PRISONERS PICKET Downing Street, Wednesday 29 April, 6.00p.m.-7.00p.m. For a Public Inquiry into the Beating and Framing of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four. (Next campaign committee meeting will be on Wednesday, 15 April at 7.30p.m. in Camden Town Hall)

HANGERS WORKERS SUPPORT GROUP MARCH Support the locked out Limbfiters. Assemble 10.30a.m. Saturday 2 May, Roehampton Lane, SW15; march to Bishops Park for Rally at 1.00p.m.

BLACK FLAG VIGIL To commemorate Sixth Anniversary of 1981 Republican Hunger Strike. Tuesday, 5 May in Kilburn Square at 7.30p.m. Organised by Bobby Sands Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee.

LONDON MAY DAY MARCH AND RALLY. Friday 1 May. Assemble Temple Green, Embankment at 6.00p.m. March via Fleet Street and Farringdon Road to Clerkenwell Green.

NON-STOP PICKET OF SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE For the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa. For sanctions against the racist South African government. Outside South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, London. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings are held every Tuesday, 7.30p.m., Stoke Newington Community Centre, Leswin Road, N16. All are welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, London N4 (01-881 2938)

DEFEND THE WOMBOURNE 12 Defend Lesbian and Gay Rights. Planning meetings every Thursday at 7.30p.m., The Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 (Finsbury Park tube)

BRING BACK VICTORIA WILLIAMS! Campaign meetings take place on second and fourth Wednesdays of every month at UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, Acton (7.30 p.m.)

TALK POLITICS WITH THE RCG Weekly discussion meetings every Sunday, 7.00p.m. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. 26 April: The Soviet Union and the fight against imperialism.

USA ... CLASS STRUGGLE ... USA ...

Growth of the U.S. labour movement

A FEATURE SERIES
BY NORMAN HARDING

THE HISTORY of American labour is not simply a story of strikes and frame-ups of men and woman fighting and dying in their efforts to organise the working class. It is the story of the development of American capital.

The years of the American Civil War saw not only the rise to power of a group of young barons of industry and finance but also the growth of American trade unionism as national movement.

The Civil War started on April 12th 1861. Edmund Ruffin, a man who had made a fortune from the sweat and deprivation of his slaves, was given the unsavoury honour of firing the first shot at Fort Sumter across Charleston Harbour.

Surrounded and toasted by gaily-clothed Southern American 'ladies and gentlemen' he fired the shot that started what was to be an extremely bloody war.

The Charleston Mercury wrote at the time, 'Slavery is the natural and normal condition of the labouring man'.

In the North entire memberships of trade union locals enlisted to fight, believing that there would never be a free Trade Union Movement if the slave holders triumphed.

George Fitzhugh, a Southern sociologist, had declared in 1857 that the real aim of those fighting for the abolition of slavery was to establish Socialism — Communism — and that this would mean no private property, no church, and no law.

This argument was to be the main thrust of the attack on the young labour movement.

The young financial barons had only one interest in the war: to make money, and they did not care how many were killed in the process.

Their first task was to avoid being enlisted. This could be done



An extremely bloody war. Here Confederate troops massacre a mainly black force of soldiers and civilians at Fort Pillow in Tennessee

by taking advantage of an advertisement appearing daily in New York City Newspapers: 'Gentlemen will be furnished promptly with substitutes by forwarding their orders to the office of the Merchants, Bankers, and General Volunteers Association.' For this service they had to pay a mere 300 dollars.

J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, P. Armour, J. Hill, A. Carnegie, J. Gould and J. Fisk, all in their early twenties, built and laid the basis for the massive personal fortunes many of which still dominate American life.

Morgan gave his bank account a boost by buying from a New York government arsenal a consignment of defective rifles for seventeen thousand dollars and sold them back to the government for one hundred and ten thousand dollars.

These were the true representatives of American capital; with a

war to exploit and a country to plunder.

They owned the Republican party and the government. In the industries controlled by them the railways, oil, mines, cars, textiles, etc., a fighting working class began to emerge which threw up leaders who faced death at the hands of the police and the National Guard or were hanged by the state.

The Pinkerton Detective Agency was to become infamous for its anti-working class activities.

It provided employers with scabs and spies who were to act as agent-provocateurs in attempts to frame working class leaders. But more of that next week.

Next week Norman Harding will examine the life of William Sylvis, founder of one of the first national unions and the first National Labour Federation in the early 1860s.

ROBSON'S CHOICE

AT EASTER, like Christmas, the most cynical of TV programmers like to be seen by carrying out their civic duty by paying obeisance to matters of the spirit.

To the atheist this may be a bore, but not if he or she is also a music-lover.

On **Saturday**, at 10.25p.m. (BBC2), the first ever television performance of the beautiful **Faure Requiem**. In total contrast, the electric Hazel O'Connor appears in Brian Gibson's film **Breaking Glass** at 10p.m. (C4).

Verdi's **Aida** can be seen on the **South Bank Show** on **Sunday** at 10p.m. (ITV) in a spectacular production from the La Scala, Milan, featuring Luciano Pavarotti and Maria Chiara in the principal roles. Clashing with **Aida** is Hitchcock's famous thriller **Strangers on a Train** (11.45p.m. BBC2).

On **Monday** there are a number of potentially choice bits for the family which I will refer to chronologically: at 11.45a.m. (BBC2) **Wings in the Wilderness**; at 5.10p.m. (Radio 3) a **symphony concert from Liverpool** entitled **Russian Music**; at 6p.m. (BBC2) Glenn Ford and Jack Lemmon in **Cowboy**; at 8.10p.m. (BBC1) John Badham's film **War Games**; at 8.30p.m. (C4) a portrait of celebrated East End photojournalist by the talented Peter West, **Bert Hardy's World** followed by **Eleventh Hour Cinema: Anne Devlin** at 5.15p.m. also on Channel Four.

On **Tuesday** at 9.40p.m. (BBC1) **The World of UB40** looks at unemployment in Peter-



Peter West's portrait of photo-journalist Bert Hardy is on Monday (8.30p.m. C4). This is Hardy's picture of two boys in Glasgow's Gorbals.

lee, County Durham. ITV's **Viewpoint 87** looks at the right-wing Christian movement in the US at 10.30p.m. with Anthony Thomas' documentary **Thy Will be Done**.

On **Wednesday** a chance to see Francois Truffaut's amusing **Domicile Conjugal** at 10p.m. But a better bet is the first in a new series on BBC2 called **Secret Society** (one has already been banned) with Duncan Campbell: **We're All Data Now** starts at 10.20p.m.

Thursday is a desert with the notable exception of Bernardo Bertolucci's epic **1900**, the first part of which starts tonight at 11.45p.m. (C4) followed by the second part tomorrow. In this highly political film Bertolucci

seizes Italian history between 1900 and 1945 with both hands and reflects it though the lives of two childhood friends (played by Robert de Niro and Gerard Depardieu). Not to be missed!

Friday presents me with a dilemma which can only be resolved by time-shifting with a video-recorder. Part Two of **1900** is a must (though it is not as strong in my opinion as Part One) — it starts at 11.35p.m. (C4).

Unfortunately, this clashes with **Lonely Are the Brave**, my favourite 'western' by a mile. I will record **1900** and watch Kirk Douglas in his finest role, but I am well aware that most viewers will not have that choice.

TOM SCOTT ROBSON

REVIEWS

Morality and mortality

Victorian Values. By James Walvin.
Andre Deutsch, £9.95.

WHAT 'Victorian values' does Thatcher praise when she characterises the last century as the great days of Toryism?

Is it Victorian morality — or mortality rates? Half the children born in Bath died before the age of 5. Half the babies of working class Liverpool died before the age of one?

Is she looking with bourgeois pride at the institutions the Victorians built: workhouses, asylums, prisons, barracks, hospitals, police stations and board schools?

A new television programme investigates Thatcher's 'Victorian values' (Wednesdays, ITV, 8p.m.)

The accompanying book by the programme's historical adviser, James Walvin, says the debate 'is, at heart, political and not historical'.

Thatcher looks at the era of Disraeli's 'two nations' to find values she likes; James Walvin looks, as best he can in a sketchy 'TV-tie in', at what Victorian society was like.

Necessity, not Victorian values, imposed hard work and thrift on the working class, he points out.

Three in ten of the people of York were 'underfed, ill-clothed and badly-housed'; measles killed at least 7,000 every year and child labour ensured that young people grew up stunted, bronchial and with poor eyesight.

Local councils took charge of gas, trams and electricity, but Churchill remarked 'I can see little glory in an Empire which can rule the waves and is unable to flush its sewers.' In 1851, Punch observed that the contractor for the Great Exhibition:

... is bound to supply, gratis, pure water in glasses to all visitors demanding it, but the committee must have forgotten that whoever can produce in London a glass of water fit to drink will contribute the rarest and most universally

useful item in the whole exhibition.'

Cleanliness, said Wesley, was next to godliness. In Glasgow you needed five shillings for the key to the public water tap.

Medicine was rudimentary. Florence Nightingale's principle was that 'a Hospital should do the sick no harm.'

Charity is one of Thatcher's favourite Victorian values. Walvin concludes that charity hardly touched the poor.

Of £76 million pounds bequeathed in 446 wills in the 1890s which Walvin looks at, £20 million was left to charities ranging from the Pure Literature Fund to the Cabman's Shelter Fund and the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain Association.

Samuel Smiles argued that philanthropy harmed the poor and a headmaster complained in 1899: 'Some people seem ever afraid lest the poor be instructed beyond their station.'

The publication of pornography thrived. Prostitution on a large scale involved especially very young girls.

In factories, the problem of sexual abuse of women workers by male overseers was openly discussed. So much for the prudery and puritanism beloved by Thatcher.

As the police moved in against vagrants, the poor, poachers and juvenile offenders, they met violent opposition.

A superior new prison, one man to a cell, was built at Pentonville, but the treadmill remained, and until 1868 hangings were public spectacles.

The patriotism which Thatcher praises was associated with the eugenic movement and denigration of the 'lesser breeds' in towns, the people Cecil Rhodes wanted to ship off to the colonies and Charles Booth thought should be in penal colonies.

Bridget Dixon

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How we turned to the workers

THIS is the second part of an interview by Chris Bailey with Leon Goodman, a founder member of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. Here he speaks about the movement's struggles in the 1930s and during the war.

HAVING carried through our split with the Stalinists, we found that recruitment was slow and we looked for co-thinkers, allies, who knew the working class in the United States, who had some experience and their references were good.

That was the American Workers Party. A.J. Muste was the linchpin. He was a religious person, but the religion was not where you had a bunch of images on the wall. There was a small group in the Workers Party who were for the fusion, and individuals who were against the fusion, and wanted to go the other way, towards the Communist Party.

One of the pro-Trotskyists — he gave us all the information — was Burnham. He went by a different name at the time. The guy who was for the CP was Louis Budenz; he was rewarded by being made editor of the 'Daily Worker', where he was able to do a real hatchet-job on Trotskyism.

We carried through a fusion: by that time we had already established that we, Trotskyists, communist



TROTSKY

theorists, who based ourselves on correct doctrine, could conduct one of the classic strikes in American labour history — the Minneapolis teamsters' strike. Before that Minneapolis was known as an open-shop camp.

The head of the union, a guy by the name of Tobin, got paid for not organising it, deliberately keeping organisation down. When John L. Lewis headed the drive to build the CIO, he had to buy out the leaders of many unions, particularly the steel union.

He had to guarantee Tobin a job at full pay for the rest

of his life, because the only ones he organised were a few of the top skilled craftsmen. But the thousands of guys who worked in the yards and at the furnaces weren't in a union.

Also we had people in coal. West Virginia was a linchpin in coal-mining. It's poor and backward. One of our comrades was in the leadership of organising in the mines. Every miner had a gun, because that's how you got your meat: deer, rabbit and so on. They had a march in Logan County with rifles, and so they were organised. The miners had a reputation for their strikes being bloody, and long.

We tried to organise leather-workers in Philadelphia. We held street-corner meetings. We didn't think that they paid much attention; we thought they just came for the show. (It was before TV: you got your kicks heckling the reds!) But things got so goddam-bad they came to us to be organised. They couldn't take it any more.

None of us worked in the industry. We didn't know the first thing about it. We didn't even know who the guys were. But we still had a policy of trying to work with the CP, to win members from it — so we went to the CP and told them we had a group of workers. They never thanked us for the information and I don't think they ever took us up on it, because evidently they figured that if they did they couldn't keep us out.

Challenged

The American Workers Party was the only organisation, at least in the east, which challenged the CP in the organisation of the unemployed. The Muste-ites had forces in Pennsylvania, but not in Philadelphia.

When we started to organise the unemployed there, we had to battle the CP. We were on their territory. Everything was a fight. There were some guys that made it their aim in life to harass us physically.

One morning, some of the guys who were a bit bigger than I met one of the Stalinists on his way to work and started to beat him up: we didn't have any more trouble from him after that.

There was a 13- or 14-storey concrete building in Philadelphia to house unemployed men. You could get a thousand guys at one crack. So Bernie Morgenstern and I distributed a leaflet saying, 'get rid of unemployment!' A good leaflet, we were proud of it.

So the police haul us in and give us the customary roughing-up: they make a



Cartoon from the 'Socialist Appeal' in 1938, the issue which announced the founding of the Fourth International



Minneapolis strikers fighting police in the long struggle for union recognition

court case out of it — 'disorderly conduct'. They locked us up, and overnight changed the charge to 'violating the Flynn Sedition Act!'

That's not nice! The sentence was from one to 20 years in prison, and the way the act is worded you mustn't even hold any law officer in contempt, if you piss on a judge's backyard fence you're in contempt. And this judge's nickname was 'hanging Harry'!

The American Civil Liberties Union provided the legal defence, but we weren't happy with them. We organised our own defence committee and got circulars sent round to different parts of the country. The ACLU thought they had an ideal case: with their stupid legalism, they never challenged any of the jury-men. The first two are always stoolies for the prosecutor. So we were convicted, found guilty, but we got the smallest sentence ever given for that in Pennsylvania: 90 days. Some others, young Stalinists, got two years.

At that time the CP was very active in organised unemployed demonstrations. And they'd come into prison. Usually they would wind up in the hospital ward, having been beaten up. One way or another — usually Bernie's doing — we figured out a way to get in touch with them. To them we were the

Satans, the devils — but we would send them up oranges and little things like that. 'Trotskyists are nice to our people'... the word would get around. We won some of their people over to the Communist League of America. Some stayed and some didn't.

There was a split with the Oehlerites about going in to the Socialist Party, which we did in 1936. This was the 'French turn', urged by Trotsky. He said: 'You're losing time; get in; there's a ferment in there.' One of our Trotskyist comrades, Goldman, resigned from the Workers Party. But he wasn't condemned.

Entered

As a rank-and-filer, I didn't know that this was deliberately planned, because in the SP anybody could publish a paper, expressing any views. So he got out and started the 'Socialist Appeal', which became our organ when we entered.

This was a crucial time. The purges were going on, the Moscow frame-ups. The SP leaders wanted to play it down. To us this was the biggest news in the world. What a fight! Despite all the assurances that we would have the right of free speech it didn't quite work out in practice that way.

The Rev. Norman Thomas

— we used to meet him in Manhattan in his house in a fancy section of New York City — finally threw us out. It was a net gain. We left with more people than we went in with; we more than doubled in size and some of those we got were damn good comrades.

Some Trotskyists fell by the wayside: Shachtman, who was one of the best speakers and writers, became a social-democrat and anti-Trotskyist. It was Schachtman and Muste who attended the first session of the Fourth International, shortly after the fusion, in 1938.

Coming back on the ship, Muste told Schachtman that he was leaving the movement and going back to the church. As Schachtman described it, he broke out into a sweat. Because don't forget that when guys do something like that, usually they inform. He had all the names, he had met everyone. But Muste promised he would never reveal the names, and he didn't.

There was a real scoundrel, Felix Morrow: he got a job for Readers Digest. He was one of the editors. Some other comrades who could write would go to him and ask for a job. He would say: 'OK, you're not a Trotskyist any more? I'll give you a job. I want to hear you denounce Trotsky!'

We prepared for America's entry into the war by collecting in all the membership cards. Also those comrades who weren't citizens were dropped from the rolls, although I think the way this was implemented was a mistake.

We had been indoctrinated to be with the working class: we're part of the working class, so be with the working class. I felt that there are times when you can not follow blindly where the working class go. You have to keep your seedcorn.

We had some people who I knew were being prepared to enter Germany at the end of the war to try and rebuild the movement. We sent comrades to be seamen, to go out on the Murmansk run. Any guy who wanted to go to sea could get a job of course.

On the Murmansk run, if you survived one trip, the odds were you wouldn't survive the second. When I found out about this I said: 'This is lunacy. We are losing some of our best com-



GOODMAN

rades. The German submarines are sending them to the bottom of the sea.' That I didn't agree with.

I was able to get exemption from the draft because I was in war industry. I worked in an explosives plant in Kentucky. It was built, finished, tested, and accepted by the government. But the truth of the matter is, it never produced a pound of powder during the whole war. This is capitalist efficiency!

The saddest day in my life — I say this unequivocally — was the day when Trotsky was struck down. I remember when my parents died, when my first wife died, and my second wife... this was worse.

Abstained

I think Trotsky while he was still alive recognised, at least Natalia did, that there was something weak in the Fourth International itself, with some of its leaders.

When the fight between the Clark-Cochrane tendency and Cannon went on, I felt that there was something politically wrong so I abstained. Cannon and his group did not appear to understand international politics; Clark and Cochrane did not understand how a party is organised and does its work.

I don't expect I could do better, no. But I expect leaders to. Jim knew that: he wouldn't overlook any little thing: where a party has its headquarters, how meetings were organised and so on.

I was sidetracked on many occasions. In the struggle with Tito, I paid attention. I knew Tito's role in the Spanish civil war: one of his major jobs was to kill Trotskyists and POUM-ists. But he was the first leader of a bureaucratised workers' state to stand up to Stalin and say no!

When the Maoists first blossomed out with their criticism of the Russians and Stalinism, it sounded revolutionary. They had me taken in for a few weeks. But that was on account of a great urgency, a yearning on my part to find some crack in the wall where you could hammer away at Stalinism.

Workers Press

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THATCHER'S BRITAIN

TORIES ATTACK ON YOUNG JOBLESS GOES ON

A YEAR ago, the Tories decreed that young unemployed people would lose their social security benefits if they stayed more than eight weeks in one lodging. Those in sea-side towns had to move on after only two weeks.

When the restrictions were introduced, it was supposed to be for a two-year period, until 1988. Now, Social Security Minister John Major has announced that they will continue until April, 1989.

Thatcher's men are also getting ready to shift some of the social security burden for youngsters looking for work on to local authorities. Instead of getting money for board and lodging from the SS, they will only get the living expenses part, the accommodation being the responsibility of the local authority, under housing benefit.

It looks as though fuel costs and some of the local rates will be lost to these homeless young people, since these are not covered by housing benefit.

■ ■ ■

100,000 HOMELESS

The announcement of the homelessness figures for 1986 was well timed by John Patten, Minister for Housing last week. Telling the world that over 100,000 people are now officially without a home, he chose to give the news just as MPs were going to their own homes for Easter.

The Department of the Environment said it was just a coincidence: they always give the figures on a Friday.

The number of homeless has nearly doubled since the figures were first published in 1978.

■ ■ ■

HOW TO EARN 5 MILLION

How long would it take you to earn 5.2 million? Four hundred years? Six hundred? If you are on Social Security, two or three thousand years might be nearer the mark.

You should talk to Mr Thomas Ward, head of the Washington law firm, Ward, Lazarus, Grow and Cihlar. By the way, he also used to moonlight as a director of Guinness, and is a mate of Ernest Saunders, former chief of that firm.

In the High Court last week, Ward claimed that he earned every penny of the money Guinness gave him as his fee for helping them in their takeover bid for Distillers. Guinness was certainly good for him, but the company is now saying they didn't know about the money.

Answering the claim by Guinness for their money back, Ward agreed it might seem a lot, 'taken out of context', but he was sure 'his services were crucial to the success of the bid'.

Guinness don't agree. They are trying to freeze the cash until the full trial of their case against him and Saunders.

The result, pleaded Ward, was that he had been left 'without adequate resources' to fight the case.

Workers Press readers might feel moved to send Ward financial help. On the other hand, they might not.

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£36 a week less, 6 hours more

LONDON Buses proudly told their workforce that they had won the tender to keep six of the seven routes put out to London tender at Norbiton, Kingston, Surrey.

Last week London Buses told the Transport Union the terms on which they had won the tenders.

Each driver at the Norbiton garage received a letter giving 12 weeks' notice to end their contracts, but telling them there would still be a job for every one of them at £36 per week less for over six hours a week more.

The drivers and engineers at Norbiton and three other London garages at once walked out for 24 hours.

The Norbiton drivers have refused to apply for any of the new jobs at lower wages and last Monday they lobbied a Bus Delegate Conference at the union's headquarters at Transport House.

In leaflets from the delegates, and the Norbiton delegate speaking to the conference, warned all London Bus workers that whatever happened to Norbiton in June would set the pattern for every other London bus garage.

All London Regional Transport bus, rail, building and maintenance shop stewards have been called to a mass meeting of London Transport

TUC next Wednesday to hear details of these attacks and, on Friday 24 April, all bus crews and engineers will be balloted to take industrial action. The London Bus Committee Delegate Conference and the bus engineers shop stewards are all calling for a big 'yes' vote for industrial action.

Delegates to the conference also voted to reject a 4 per cent increase in wages tied to productivity.

The bus garage delegates were saying: 'We have no productivity left to give and faced with London Transport's plans for lower wages and longer hours we have nothing left but to fight.'

'DON'T DITCH US!'



Sacked printers from the Derby Trader Group lobbied the NGA regional conference last Saturday. Father of the Chapel Ron Senchat is on the right

Trader workers lobby NGA conference

SACKED members of the NGA printers union from the Derby Trader Group of newspapers lobbied their union's Regional Conference in Leicester on Saturday 11 April.

The 90 workers have been locked out since 4 December after management provoked them into a walkout and sacked them the following day.

The Trader is a 'free' newspaper (paid for by its advertisers) pushed through doors throughout the East

Midlands.

Since the struggle began, the workers have had some success in persuading advertisers to withdraw from the paper, although some black-spots (like the Nottingham Co-op) remain.

They also supply sticky labels to wrap round copies of the Trader, so that sympathetic members of the public can post the papers back to source as 'unsolicited mail'.

One of the central aspects of their campaign has been a continuous picket outside the firm's main plant in Heanor,

Derbyshire, to stop the production of the Trader at source.

The decision to lobby the regional conference to maintain support for their struggle was taken amidst strong and well founded fears that the union leadership, having virtually ignored the locked out workers for the last few months, is now looking for ways to ditch them altogether.

Ron Senchat, FoC for the sacked workers, told Workers Press: 'It is like trench warfare at the moment. The management is frightened to

go back into the factory.

'The presses are waiting to start up but we are guarding the place to make sure that no one gets back in.

'There is a lot of financial support coming in from other unions, but we need more support and solidarity from the union leaders. Even a few visits to the picket lines would help and we must have increasing support in getting the Trader blacked.'

● **Donations and messages of support to: Trader Sacked Workers Dispute, c/o 114 Stonehill Road, Derby.**

Moat House Hotel Dispute

PICKETS have been outside Moat House Hotel in Liverpool for nearly two weeks after management sacked them for forming a union.

Forty-nine maids, kitchen staff, cleaners, porters, waiters and waitresses have been sacked, initially for wanting to join the TGWU.

Now more staff have been sacked for refusing to cross the picket line, and management have been recruiting scabs to do their jobs.

The pickets have had the support of the National Union of Seamen and from passers-by.

Pat, a spokesperson for the pickets, said: 'The management have refused to give us our holiday pay and our week in hand.

'People have donated clothes for us at night on the picket line, because we are picketing 24 hours a day.

'The delivery men are refusing to cross our picket line, so the management are going out to get supplies themselves.

'During the Grand National weekend a coach-load of Irish tourists refused to stay at the hotel and checked out, respecting our picket lines'.

Picket against JTS

Unemployed activists from Liverpool and Kirkby unemployed centres picketed the 'Sight and Sound' training agency last Friday, over the introduction of the Job Training Scheme (JTS).

The Merseyside Association of Trades Councils called a boycott of the schemes and there is a growing opposition to them in the technical teachers' union NATFHE, NALGO and sections of the TGWU.

The Merseyside Associa-

tion of Trades Councils is also calling on the TUC and affiliated trade unions to implement this boycott.

However, to combat the JTS, you must have the strategy of defeating the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) which also runs the YTS Youth Training Schemes.

The struggles against JTS and YTS are not separate. The aim of the government is to drive a wedge between unemployed, especially youth, and older workers organised in trade unions.