

CONGRATULATIONS!

THE editorial board of Workers Press sends its congratulations to Paul Hill and Marion Serrivalli on their wedding on Friday, 12 February.

Paul, one of the Guildford Four is at the moment serving a life sentence in Long Lartin, Worcestershire. The wedding was originally planned for Wormwood Scrubs in London, but had to be postponed at the last minute when, in an act of bloody-mindedness, the Home Office transferred him.

Marion, from New Jersey, USA, had been writing to Paul for some years when they decided to marry. We hope that despite the circumstances it will be a happy occasion, and we pledge to fight until the day when the couple can enjoy a normal married life.

WE are receiving more letters than ever. But we want even more! We would be delighted to hear from those engaged in the rising struggle against the Tory government. How should this struggle be carried forward? What problems in the working class must be tackled if the fight is to be won? How is unity between Ford workers and health workers to be established? Send us your views.

Write to the Editor, Workers Press, PO Box 735 SW9 7QS

FORD WORKERS MUST CONTROL STRIKE

THE DECISION of 32,000 Ford workers to embark on an all-out strike in opposition to their national leaders has opened up a decisive fight in which the future of trade unionism throughout the company is at stake.

This is no ordinary wages battle. Fords wanted 'strings' that would have seriously eroded working conditions and weakened the ability of the unions to defend the interests of their members.

This is why the workers threw out the deal, much to the horror of the unions leaders as well as the Ford management.

'What use are unions to us if they can't control the workforce' complained Ford's chief negotiator when the deal was chucked out.

The employers and the Thatcher government will tolerate unions on one condition: only if they are bodies to discipline the labour force. They want unions that in return for paltry wage increases

impose speed-ups, 'employee involvement', 're-deployment' and 'job flexibility' — all designed to squeeze more profit out of a smaller workforce.

Even if the three year deal had been accepted it could only have been implemented with the collaboration of union leaders at plant level.

Behind Fords stands the Tory government with its police force, its spies and phone tappers.

The fight at Fords is not just a Fords issue.

● In the NHS, Thatcher's aim is to break up the unions as part of her drive to scrap a national health service.

● In the coal industry she wants to destroy the National Union of Mine-workers, introduce six day working in the pits, close down most of the mines and sell what are left to private speculators in the City of London.

Arthur Scargill's re-election as miners' leader was an important blow to these plans.

Fords face an international struggle for domination in a declining world car market. They can only survive if they greatly intensify the exploitation of their workers.

They have now trained their guns on those who have fought against these plans, for example the workers and their leaders in the Dagenham Paint, Trim and Assembly plant (PTA).

Many Ford workers are asking: is the company planning another 1962 when the convenor and 17 PTA stewards were sacked — only this time on a national scale.

Ford workers face a number of dangers as Thatcher tries to lend support to Fords.

Provocations on picket lines, with police trying to force through scab lorries, must be guarded against.

But the most decisive

question remains that of leadership.

The same FNJNC leadership that tried to sell out the claim is still at the helm with the AEU's James Airlie playing the leading role.

At the last meeting before the strike started, officials and convenors launched an attack on PTA convenor Joe Gordon for backing unofficial strike action in the plant and for telling a mass meeting how Transport and General Workers Union official Murphy had tried to sell out the claim.

The minutes of the meeting, showing who voted for the sell-out deal are also being kept secret.

They must be made available immediately so that every worker can see where each leader stood!

In Dagenham, the 'panel' of officials and convenors has declared itself a strike committee and decided there will be no estate-wide stewards' meetings during the strike.

The regular 'Coventry' conferences were discontinued some time ago. The strikers must demand a national stewards' conference takes place im-

mediately.

Democratically elected strike committees, accountable to the union members, must be set up, excluding officials like Steve Hart who abstained on the crucial sell-out vote.

Ford workers can have no confidence in Airlie who has a notorious record for selling out struggles from the Upper Clyde Shipyards to the recent Caterpillar occupation and the signing of the single union agreement with Fords at Dundee.

The danger is that these treacherous leaders will grab at the first management move and call off the strike, leaving the way open for Ford to sack militant stewards and workers.

Solidarity must be established with Ford workers internationally to unite their struggles. Fords will shut down operations throughout Europe, laying off 77,000 workers, in order to take on the workforce in Britain and have issued bullying threats to transfer work out of Britain.

Previous trips to continental plants by officials have been treated as holiday jaunts. No serious efforts

have been made to link up the struggle of Ford workers throughout Europe.

This is how we believe the strike can be won:

● Strike committees must be set up to place the strike under the control of the workforce. Such committees must be open to all strikers and fully accountable to them.

● A National meeting representing all such committees must be called to win the widest backing for the strike. Support groups of like those created in the miners' strike must be re-activated to win this backing.

● The minutes of the meeting at which the sell-out deal was accepted must be published immediately!

● No confidence in those leaders who voted for this deal or abstained on the vote! No secret votes! No secret corridor talks!

● Guard against state provocations!

● Ford workers must unite with workers fighting Thatcher's plans to smash the NHS!

● Forge links with Ford plants overseas for international solidarity!



Young PTA workers forming their picket at Dagenham

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Workers Press

Declaration of bankruptcy

'There are many areas of the economy where market allocation is essential and where competition between companies, whether privately owned or socially owned, is a dynamic factor which serves consumer and wider economic interests.'

So runs a bit of the 'Statement of Democratic Socialist Aims and Values', proudly presented to Labour's National Executive last week, by the dynamic duo Kinnock and Hattersley.

Kinnock had emphasised that Clause IV of the Party Constitution, with its talk of 'common ownership', is to be left untouched. The 'Statement' contains some noises about 'social ownership' of 'a greater sector of the economy'. Nobody believes that such phrases imply the slightest interference with the workings of capitalism.

The Labour Party has always had a contradictory character. On the one hand, it reflected the aspirations of millions of British trades unionists and their families, for whom it was a political weapon against the capitalist class.

On the other it was used by the bureaucracy which controlled the workers' organisations to keep the class within bounds which protected the requirements of capitalism and the capitalist state. Despite its reputation as a reforming party, all the reforms it ever really introduced can be classified as by-products of revolutionary struggle.

The Labour leaders gained their first ministerial experience in the two MacDonald governments of betrayal, in 1924 and 1929, and in serving the ruling class in two imperialist wars. Their main work was in the revolutionary aftermath of those wars. They had to head off the demands of the workers, and especially returning soldiers, and to save British capitalism.

It was after the Russian Revolution that Clause IV was drafted by the leading Fabians of the time, Sydney and Beatrice Webb. It was specially designed to give Labour a socialist flavour, which could help to keep radicalised workers away from Bolshevism, without committing anyone to anything.

The experience of the two MacDonald governments, in 1924 and in 1929, showed how little its undefined terms actually meant.

In 1945, however, the Attlee government had to carry out actual reforms, including nationalisation of some bankrupt industries, the setting up of the National Health Service and the implementation of the Education Act. But by 1949, the period of reforms had come to an end.

Effectively, it was never resumed. The Wilson governments of 1964 and 1974 added almost nothing to the list of reforms achieved by the reformists.

The Kinnock leadership is now turning in precisely the same direction as the founders of the now-disintegrating SDP.

The difference is that Owen, Jenkins and Williams were operating in the boom conditions of the early 1970s, while Kinnock has to explain the benefits of market forces, just when they are showing their true character.

The difficulty of drafting the latest 'Statement of Aims and Values' is that of finding words which will deceive rank-and-file members of the Labour Party, without actually saying anything definite.

For the crisis of Kinnock's beloved 'market forces', and the waning of the former strength of British capital, leave reformism far less room for manoeuvre. As new sections of the labour movement — the nurses, for example — are drawn into action against Thatcher, they will not be taken in by such tricks.

For them, more eloquent than any of Kinnock's words will be his determined silence on the demand to back them in their fight. The reformists are as bankrupt as their capitalist masters.



Strikers at Dagenham with banner attacking Murphy

FORD STRIKE

T & GWU official gets a 'drubbing'

FORD workers' began their strike magnificently on Monday 8 February with the management admitting that not one of its 32,000 workers in 21 plants had turned up to work. 160 in the closure-threatened Woolwich plant joined the strike on Tuesday.

Pickets were able to report 100 per cent success even at a number of small plants that had voted to accept the 'Murphy deal', a three-year efficiency agreement.

This was a resounding answer to Transport & General Workers' Union official, Mick Murphy who had claimed that 'agitators' were out to sabotage his deal with Fords. He forgot that the Ford workers would have the last say and they rejected his cowardly sell-out.

Strike action began before the official deadline of midnight Sunday 7 February in a number of plants. The vote to reject the sell-out was followed by walk-outs on Friday 5 February before the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee (FNJNC) met the company in another desperate move to head off the strike.

The Dagenham Paint, Trim and Assembly (PTA) plant was shut down by 500 pickets at 7 a.m. Lorry drivers halted all transport and women sewing machinists picketed the Dagenham K.D. plant. 150 PTA workers were sent to lobby the talks. The Engine plant walked out at Friday din-

BY OUR
INDUSTRIAL
CORRESPONDENT

ner time as news came through that the talks had broken down and an official strike was announced. In Halewood 500 had already walked out.

Picketing began immediately to shut down all operations in Dagenham and was maintained the whole weekend to stop a transporter contractor taking out finished cars.

Monday morning saw Fords totally shut down. The police enforced a six-picket per gate policy and forced hundreds of extra pickets onto the pavements but to no avail as there were only lorries and empty buses to turn round and no one tried to get in.

Entire production of 2,300 vehicles a day worth £17m had been stopped.

At Kent Avenue, Dagenham a constant

flow of young workers revitalised the picket line including young women assembly line workers and sewing machinists and a 24 hour rota for

picket duty was soon organised.

That done, the questions of the struggle ahead began to dominate the discussion; what was the company's strategy? would the government intervene? how can the shipping in of cars to break the strike be stopped?

It had been reported that the Ford dispute had become a major item at Thatcher's cabinet meetings and the question of police tactics and surveillance was talked about (many remember how Sid Harraway's phone was tapped in previous strikes).

A vanload of plainclothes 'heavies' claiming to be police approached one picket line and sped away when challenged.

Teachers

On Tuesday a delegation of PTA workers joined the teachers march and collected £423 as Thatcher attacked Ford strikers in Parliament. A delegation of nurses from the Royal Free hospital visited the Kent Ave picket line and promised to return in force the next Monday morning.

In Genk 2,500 Ford workers were laid off as the strike hit the European plants and it was predicted that up to 77,000 could be laid off.

The Dagenham Panel of officials and convenors decided to constitute itself as a 'strike committee'.

On Wednesday Fords issued a threat to transfer the Fiesta replacement to

Valencia and it was reported that the company was planning to bring in cars from Spain through Folkestone and Medway; also that secret moves were afoot to re-source components in Europe.

The Wall Street Journal complained that the UK Ford strike had shown that: 'New factory techniques, far from weakening restive unions, are enhancing labour's power to disrupt production'.

Delegation

A delegation of Kent miners came up in the evening to return the support given during their strike.

The call to block Fords imports was to be considered by the T & GWU Thursday.

A yawning gap between the 'leaders' and the workforce has exploded out into the open. The reaction against the officials and leaders who tried to sell out the claim has shaken the FNJNC.

When they heard what had happened at the sell-out talks, engine plant stewards who voted unanimously to reject the deal gave T & GWU official Steve Hart a 'drubbing' and refused to let him on the platform at the mass meeting; he was surrounded by drivers who told him in no uncertain terms what they thought of his actions in abstaining.

The drivers are also seeking a meeting with Ron Todd to secure Murphy's removal as chairman of the FNJNC. A petition circulated in the PTA demanded Murphy's removal and was handed in at the FNJNC meeting on Friday 5 February.

At that meeting the officials and convenors who had recommended acceptance attacked Dagenham PTA convenor Joe Gordon for reporting back to a mass meeting details of how Murphy had overturned a rejection vote and how officials like Airlie, Jack Adams, and Steve Hart had abstained in this crucial vote.

Some of them demanded Gordon's removal from the negotiating committee. They are desperate to keep their treachery secret.



Strikers at Halewood supported by the nurses

Camden NALGO 11th-hour ballot

MASS meeting of Camden NALGO members overwhelmingly rejected management's proposals for a new redeployment procedure following the breakdown of negotiations between the Labour council and the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO).

The same meeting voted down a Camden executive committee motion to go on all out immediate strike and instead agreed to ballot the membership before taking strike action.

This vote followed the intervention of full-time NALGO district officer Jill Hughes who successfully undermined the branch leadership by threatening that immediate strike action would not get official support.

BY OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

Last week Hughes gave the opposite information to a branch meeting when she said that it was within NALGO rules to strike and then ballot as soon as possible. On the basis of that information the Camden executive committee recommended immediate strike action until the council withdrew their threat to sack all NALGO members if they did not

agree to major changes in their contracts.

The strike was postponed following an eleventh hour offer of negotiations from the council but nothing was gained from these talks — the council would not guarantee that they would not repeat their threat of mass sackings. Hughes' contribution to the meeting surprised and angered EC members and shop stewards who later passed a motion of censure on her. Branch officers who had been on the negotiating team also revealed that she had been pressing them to accept the council's offer.

The role of the full-time NALGO official has been a



Camden NALGO MEMBERS queue to attend their branch meeting.

bitter lesson for trade unionists in Camden. NALGO's leadership does not want a major union in dispute involving 5,000 members in action against a labour council.

They are lined up with

labour party and Trades Union Congress leaders in urging their members to accept cuts in jobs and services. Members of local government and public service unions must beware of their

treachery. Camden NALGO members have reconfirmed their total opposition to the labour council's Rupert Murdoch-style threat of mass sackings. We urge them to vote yes to strike action!

The nursery takes to streets

AT a demonstration like this one, you don't begin by counting heads — you look carefully at the faces.

Young and not so young, they are caring but not careworn, tired of injustice but vigorously determined to defeat it at last, kindly but angry.

These are the nursery nurses of central Scotland — or at least several hundred of them — lobbying a meeting of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to demand nothing more, but nothing less, than a first step on to a ladder of fair wages.

Justice and fairness are the keywords on the placards they hold, and the slogans they shout, outside Rosebery House at Edinburgh's Haymarket.

Little wonder. Turn up with a reporter's notebook and an inquisitive look and everyone mobs you.

'The most any of us can earn is £6,400 a year,' explains Majorie Binnie from the West Lothian Nursery at Polbeth.

Salary

The nurses who are all members of the local government workers' union, NALGO, are demanding a regrading exercise which would make £7,200 the starting salary.

One nurse calls out that she has 21 years' experience and takes home £92 a week. Her 18 year-old daughter gets nearly the same pay, having just started in an office.

Twenty-one years is no

BY TERRY BROTHERSTONE

thing, says another. She's been doing the job 30 years and gets exactly the same.

For this pay these women work 32 and a half hours a week looking after the weans of Scotland — the future generation that the government's always making hypocritical noises about. They act as parent, teacher, nurse and cleaner all rolled into one.

Lobby

Their lobby is targeted at the local authorities who pay their salaries. But, behind them, as everyone knows, are government cutbacks which, as well as condemning the nurses to scandalous pay, leave them short of ancillary help and proper equipment.

Often there is inadequate heating and no money for essential repairs. Any little extras — like outings — have to be finalised through voluntary fund-raising in the nurses' spare time.

Martin O'Leary, service conditions officer of Strathclyde NALGO, spells out the details of the claim.

'It's arisen over a long

period,' he explains, 'and now things are at breaking point.'

'It's a quite separate issue from what's happening in the National Health Service, but, obviously, it arises out of the same basic circumstances.'

'At the moment we're not hitting at the nursery service itself — the action is limited to a boycott on helping to train student nurses and teachers. But it could go beyond that if the authorities don't grant our basic claim.'

'It's a disgrace,' adds Tania Freeland, a young nurse from the Forth nursery in Lanarkshire, and she asks that I mention her colleagues from the nearby Robert Owen area school.

A century and three-quarters ago Owen set out to prove you could make capitalism humane by ploughing profits back into education and welfare. By driving the Robert Owen nurses to protest on the streets against injustice, Thatcherism could scarcely have found a more symbolic target.

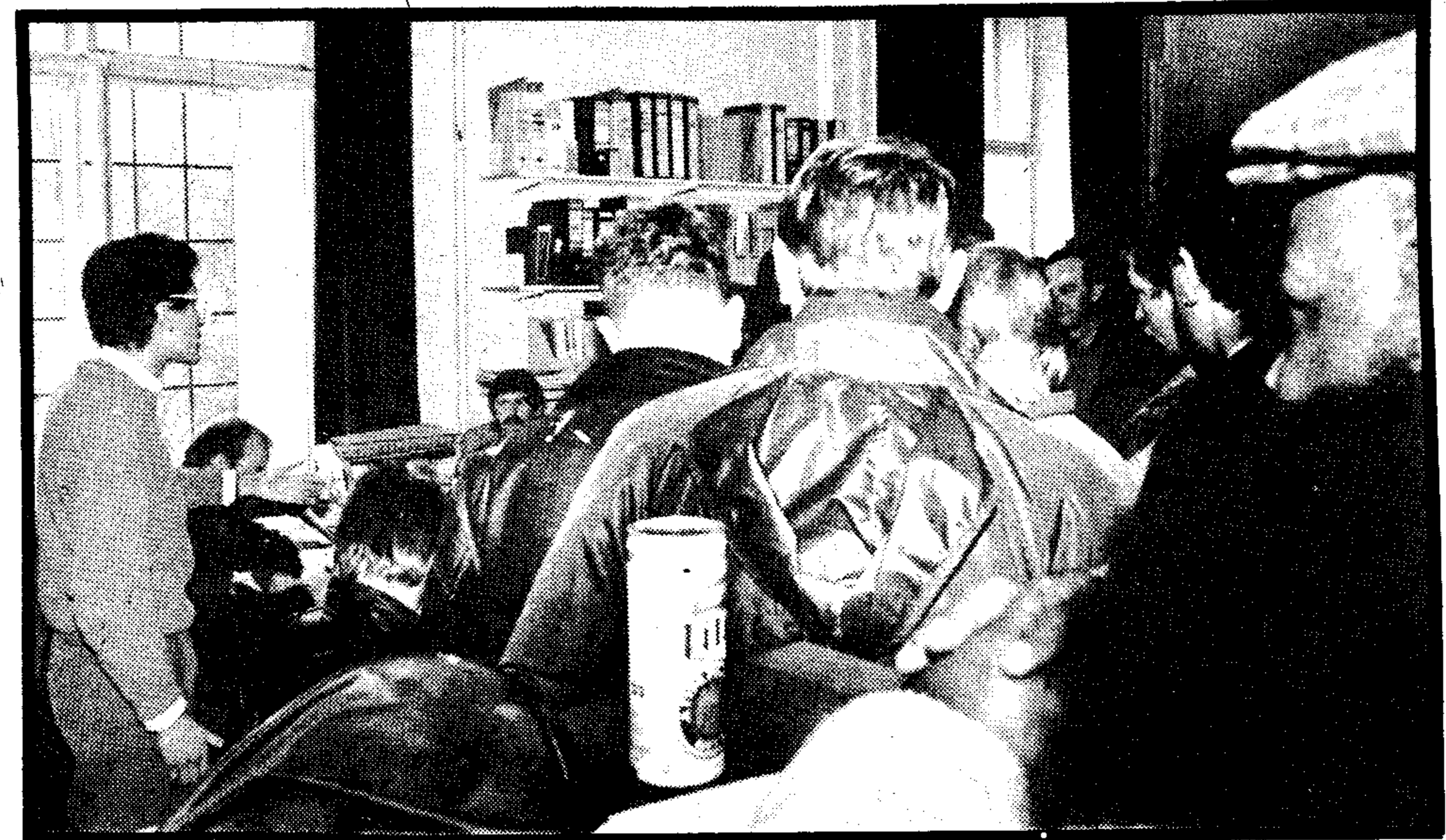
Nurses

Compare the raging humanity on the face of a thousand nursery nurses on the streets of Edinburgh with the coiffeured phoniness of millionaire Dennis Thatcher's bossy wife.

I know which side I'd gamble the whole of my British Telecom shareholdings on.

GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME!

Linda Bellos, leader of Lambeth Council explains to 200 angry gardeners that it is not her fault that 80 of them are to be sacked. The gardeners abandoned her office to demand an explanation. When told that there wasn't enough money coming in from the government and the rates, one shouted 'But if I lose my job I won't be able to pay the rates anyway.' Cuts in Lambeth are already producing compulsory redundancies.



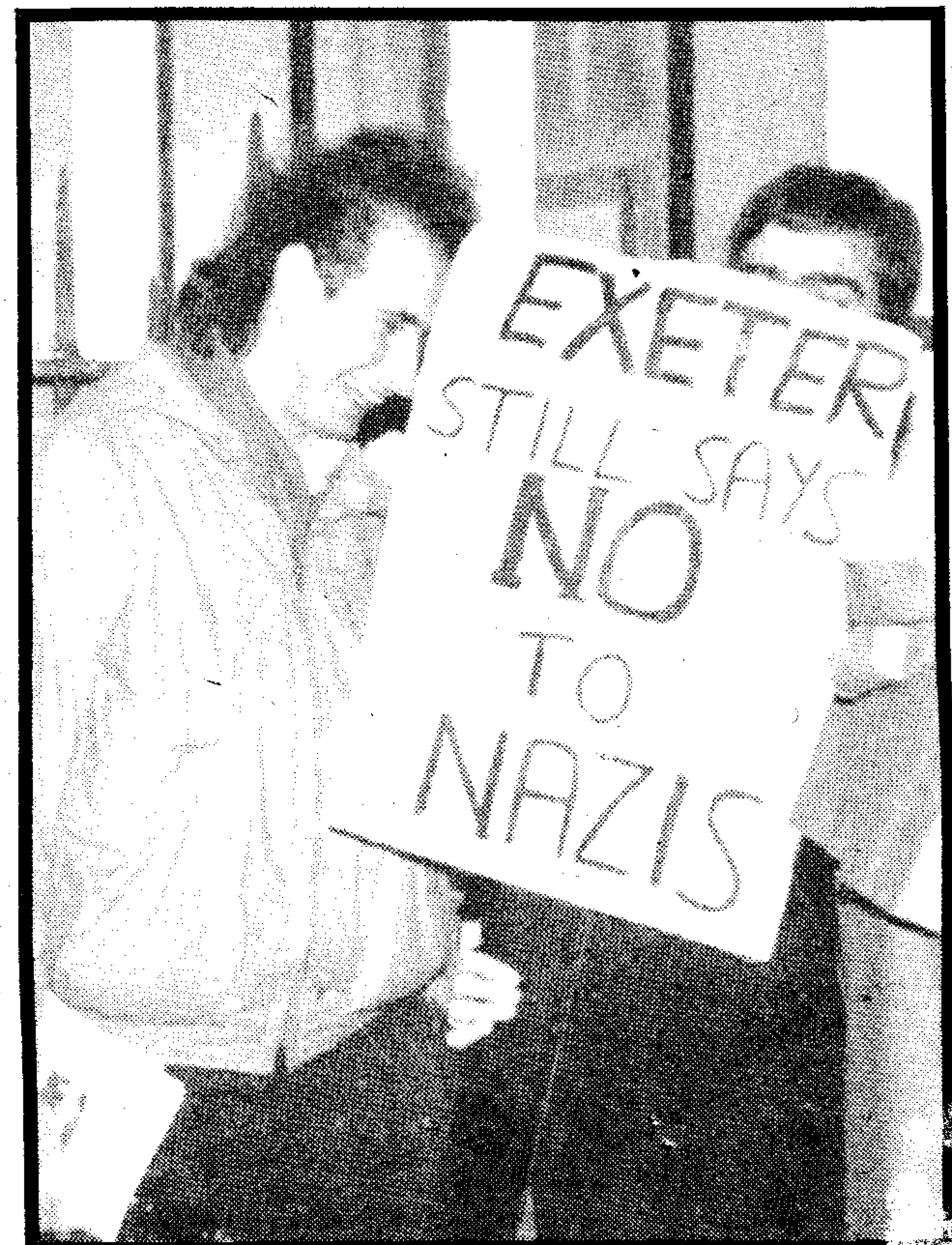
Exeter 'Orange' day opposed

BY GEORGE SMITH

PROTEST against the Exeter City Council sponsored William of Orange celebration was increased last Tuesday, when more than 30 members of the Exeter Antifascist Action lowered a banner against the celebrations from the public gallery during a council meeting in the historic guildhall.

The ruling Labour/Liberal coalition believe the celebration will promote tourism, but the only tourists set to come to Exeter are the Orange Lodges who will be

holding their tri-annual convention in the city and the National Front who have promised 'to bring their supporters from all over the county of Devon'.



tained Patrick's finger prints, but it had mysteriously disappeared.

O'Connor found it worrying when at this stage the jury returned to the court to ask the question: 'Does conspiracy to cause an explosion mean an agreement to that conspiracy?'

O'Connor held that in these circumstances a direction to the jury insisting that they reach a decision now should not have been given.

Because of the sensational treatment of the case by the press and the constant police security hype, the pressure on the jury was already very great. Shortly after the judge's direction the jury, some of them in tears, returned a verdict of guilty.

The appeal judges have reserved their judgement for a future date.

McLaughlin appeal: judgement deferred

THE usual 'security' circus was laid on at the Old Bailey last week at the appeal of Patrick McLaughlin.

Patrick was sentenced to life after a bin liner containing a large number of 'clues' had been left with a bomb outside Chelsea Barracks.

The bomb, which did not explode, was detonated in a controlled explosion by the Bomb Squad. Among the documents in the bin liner was one containing the address of the squat where Patrick spent the night after a party.

Two puzzle books were subsequently found containing Patrick's finger prints and his name and address.

The appeal was based on the 'profound bias' of the trial judge who acted as an 'advocate' for the prosecution throughout the trial.

Some of this bias consisted of sighs and grunts and the judge banging his fist on his

secution points.

To get around the lack of evidence the prosecution advanced the concept of a 'club' whose members did not necessarily know of every decision arrived at by the others. The judge fell in with this and referred to the 'Club' both during the trial and in his summing up.

Paddy O'Connor for the defence said that the police officer's evidence at the magistrate's court should have been ruled as inadmissible.

The police officer said that Patrick had admitted to knowing about the making of a bomb.

'Every one of the 'Judges Rules' governing the conversation were broken' said O'Connor.

Although the judge said that

the 'Rules' would govern the trial, a significant point was being won by the defence when he suddenly changed his mind.

Strangely the police officer did not make an exact note of this conversation or tell fellow officers of the alleged confession.

The defence was only told of it two weeks before the trial and for 'security reason' only 50 per cent of this 'confession' was made available to the defence.

In a dramatic moment the judges asked to see the report but the prosecution could not find it.

At the original trial the jury was unable to reach a unanimous verdict. The judge directed them to arrive at a majority verdict but they were still unable to do so.

They asked to see the bin liner alleged to have con-

We won't be bought off!

THE journalists' strike at the Advertiser North London Group (ANLG), now in its fourth month, is about to escalate with the news that fellow members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) within the group are to take action in support of their sacked colleagues.

The federated united NUJ chapels have voted to hold mandatory meetings on Friday 19 February to discuss their position concerning the 14 sacked journalists in London.

The strike began in November when six members of the union, including the Father of the Chapel (FOC) were made redundant and given two hours to leave the premises.

That sparked off an immediate walkout by the eight remaining NUJ members, who themselves were later sacked, despite the strike being made official.

Management had claimed

BY ANDY WILSON

that the original redundancies were for economic reasons. 'That is complete rubbish,' said FOC Andrew Wilson, 'it was the most blatant victimisation of trade union members. The company completely ignored the House Agreement and have attempted a witchhunt. The seven titles in the group are highly profitable.'

Problems began at the ANLG when a new editor, Jeffrey Steedon, joined the paper. He wanted to make drastic changes to the editorial content, claiming he

didn't want any 'doom and gloom' stories.

He didn't want stories about hospital closures, industrial disputes, council news or court copy.

Journalists who fought to maintain editorial standards and the rights of trade union members were sacked.

They have received much support, particularly on Tuesday mornings for their big demonstrations outside the ANLG offices in North Finchley.

Chapels

On February 19 while the united chapels hold their meetings, the ANLG pickets are to stage a mass demo, starting 12.30p.m. outside



Pickers outside the Advertiser

the offices at Ballards Lane, N12.

Since the start of the strike there has been only one

meeting with management. Talks quickly broke down when the company refused to return the jobs of any of the journalists.

'All that was on offer was money,' said Andrew Wilson 'but this dispute is all about jobs and we won't be bought off'.

Cuts mean death

KINGS
X
FIRE

AS the King's Cross fire inquiry proceeds a frighteningly clear picture is emerging of the circumstances on that November night. A combination of fatal delays built up from the time the fire was first sighted — well in time to put it out with no problems, let alone the deaths of 31 passengers.

The source of the fire was the grease and dust which had accumulated on the ancient wooden escalators because of drastic cuts in cleaning staff. The delays which culminated in the destruction of 31 lives came from the lack of any training for underground staff in the event of a fire.

The station inspector in charge of King's Cross on November 18th was a relief manager and had only worked at King's Cross three or four times. The last time he was there before that night was in July.

He said at the inquiry that he had never been involved in any kind of fire drill at King's Cross, and that there was no evacuation plan that he knew about. In the panic which arises from total inexperience in dealing with such a situation he had forgotten about the sprinklers which could have extinguished the fire in moments.

He had only a 'general' idea of where the fire hydrants were. He knew there was one in the booking hall, which was the nearest one to the fire, but he had no idea that it was behind a builders' hoarding and locked.

Knowledge of the location of hydrants and extinguishers is the most elementary precaution for safety in buildings used by the public

Fireman Roger Bell was involved in further fatal delays because of problems in finding firefighting equipment in working order. He said he asked an LRT worker where to find a hose and fire hydrant, but he did not know. He went to look for equipment but could not find any.

Bell and a policeman eventually discovered a box with sand, and some lengths of hose in a cupboard. After a

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

further delay the policeman found a vital hose connection in another box. It is obvious that the LRT workers had no idea where any of this equipment is kept.

The testimony given by the three people who were first on the scene trying to fight the fire and evacuate passengers at the same time reveals the fact that, courageously as they acted, they were badly handicapped by having to make up procedures as they went along.

The policeman who was commended for his assistance at the inquiry in fact acted contrary to LRT's supposed policy of evacuating people on trains in the event of a disaster. He did so because he and everyone else, including station staff, had no idea that this was official LRT policy decided after the Oxford Street fire in 1984.

The picture rapidly forming is of a horrorshow organisation which couldn't care less about the safety of millions of workers, and will do anything to save a quick buck. If all these factors were in operation on the night of the King's Cross fire then they are happening now.

The only precautions LRT has taken is to stop the public smoking cigarettes, and to attempt to stop the staff smoking in their time off.

Londoners have smoked on the tubes ever since they were built, during the war thousands spent hours down the tubes with cigarettes, primus stoves, the lot. According to LRT they would have been safer under the bombs. Workers must demand an end to this ignoring of safety measures including staff cuts which literally mean people's lives.

Anything goes for profit

BY ROY THOMAS

THE P&O shipping company that has taken the National Union of Seamen to court is the same P&O ferry company which used to be called 'Townsend Thorensen' of 'Herald of Free Enterprise' fame.

It is now coming to light that P&O has a record of carrying 'dangerous toxic waste' on its passenger ferries.

When the driver of a lorry owned by L.C. Transport of Wimbourne, Dorset, pointed out on 16 March 1987 that his lorry should only be loaded onto a freight ferry because it carried 12 tons of cyanide-based chemicals, he was told to drive onto the 'Herald of Free Enterprise'.

This scandal became known when divers trying to raise the sunken ferry saw the orange warning plates on the lorry.

Last year over 50,000 tons of highly toxic waste was shipped into Britain by lorry from the rest of Europe. Good old Tory 'Free Enterprise' can kill and maim in more ways than one.

Last week the rear doors of another P&O ferry fell off as it was about to sail. P&O said they were 'not sure why'!

Busworkers fight

BY CHRIS BOYLAN

LEICESTER busworkers staged their second 24 hour stoppage on Saturday.

The dispute began when management wrongly sacked a worker at the Labour council controlled Leicester Citybus.

In response to the union's solid support, in the form of a one-day strike, for their sacked brother, management offered to re-instate him but added a number of 'conditions' (strings) clearly designed to undermine union organisation.

For example, removing the right to circulate union branch newsletters in the workplace.

This manoeuvre infuriated the workers who responded by agreeing at a mass meeting on Saturday morning to continue with 24 hour strikes until unconditional reinstatement of the sacked worker.

The strike received nearly 100 per cent support, out of 300 workers only 10 scabbed.

Phil Hardy, Transport and General Workers' Union branch secretary at Citybus told Workers Press that 'we see this as the beginning of an attempt by management to smash the union and attack pay and conditions.'

The managers are now insinuating that the dispute could lead to job losses in an attempt to scare the workforce into stopping action, if they saw the unity and strength of the pickets they would know that they don't stand a chance.

Meanwhile there has been a noticeable silence from the Labour City Council.

Teachers' London strike

SCHOOLS all over London were closed on 3 February when teachers responded to the strike call by the Inner London Teachers Association.

The association, the metropolitan branch of

the National Union of Teachers called the strike to protest at cuts in the Inner London Education Authority's (ILEA) budget.

All 13,000 members took part and

thousands of them marched through London.

The cuts mean 9,000 redundancies, 3,000 of these teachers; the turn out showed the deep concern felt by

teachers — 247 schools were completely closed down and a further 317 were partially affected. Kenneth Baker condemned the action — but then he and his cohorts condemn the nurses too!



London Teachers march against the destruction of the ILEA



Police confront miners during 1984-1985 strike

EMPLOYMENT BILL

THE EMPLOYMENT Bill launched last October and currently on its way through parliament is the latest stage of the Tory plan for a step-by-step destruction of the power of the organised working class.

Once in force it would act as a scabs' charter, protecting the activities of strikebreakers against majority decisions even where these are achieved in line with government balloting rules. It would also outlaw joint ballots across more than one workplace and would force young people onto the Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

Since 1979 the Tories have been in the process of a gradual introduction of laws to restrict and eliminate the right to take industrial action while weakening workplace organisation and destroying employment protection rights previously achieved.

In this way employers will be given free reign when it comes to freezing pay, undermining working conditions and changing working practices in line with their current concern to achieve the fully flexible and mainly casual workforce.

Other steps along this road have been the enforcement



THATCHER

of strike ballots, the ban on solidarity action, the ending of wages council protection for the pay and conditions of young people and the Public Order Act.

The Labour Research Department (LRD) has produced a pamphlet — 'Breaking Workplace Unity' — which outlines the Bill's proposals and provides a running commentary on each aspect of the planned legislation.

LRD shows that:

- It ends the right of unions to discipline strike breakers who defy majority decisions, even where these have been arrived at by a lawfully conducted ballot.

It was in 1984 that the Tories introduced an obligation on unions to hold a ballot before approving industrial action. Now they want to say that a minority must have the right to ignore that decision and continue working without any risk of disciplining action. This is a scabs' charter, giving the police new powers to act against trade unions.

- It offers cash incentives to strikebreakers.

The Employment Bill promises substantial cash compensation to any union members who break a majority decision and who are subsequently disciplined. They will thereupon be able to take the union to court and seek damage of up to £13,240 each.

- It gives individual union members the right to apply to a court to take legal action against a union which is supporting industrial action not agreed by a ballot.

'Support' in this context has already been defined by one judge as not condemning such action forcefully enough and has been similarly implied against the National Union of Seamen in the current ferries dispute.

According to LRD this right is being given to individuals because employers — who already have such powers — have in some cases been reluctant to act in a way which may actually strengthen workers' resolve to take industrial action.

It warns that organisations like the 'Freedom Association' will be on the lookout for individuals to support in legal action against the unions.

- It obliges unions to hold separate workplace ballots for each location (factory, office, pit, school etc.) called out on strike against their joint employer, each result to be declared separately.

The aim here is to induce workers, in a workplace where a majority have voted against action, to opt out and strike break even if the great majority of workers in the total of all workplaces under the one employer have voted in favour.

As in the case of the clause allowing individuals to

Next stage in the Tory union-bashing plan

BY BERNARD FRANKS

ignore majority decisions, the much venerated 'democracy' is swept away when it suits the Tories to do so.

- It appoints a commissioner to aid and encourage scabs in taking legal action against trade unions.

The commissioner will be able to offer legal assistance on a much more generous basis than that of ordinary legal aid — so long as the action is specifically taken against a trade union or a union official.

The commissioner holds office for six years and is not subject to an election.

- It introduces a new Code of Practice on workplace balloting, possibly requiring that voting take place in an area apart from where industrial action is being discussed.

LRD reminds that although such codes are not legally binding, police and law courts will make reference to them as an authoritative source, as in the case of picketing.

- It outlaws action for achieving or maintaining the closed shop. All industrial action to enforce 100 per cent union membership or to

cause an employer to discriminate against a non-member will be unlawful.

All dismissal for non-membership of a trade union will automatically be 'unfair'. The Tories will even be abolishing their own previous legislation in this respect; their rules for an 8.5 per cent vote in favour of a closed shop having failed to undermine the system.

LRD quotes as the figure for the number of workers in closed shops as 3.7 million or 34 per cent of trade unionists.

- It enforces postal balloting for elections to union executive bodies and widens the range of people who must be elected regularly.

Union leaders by any other method than postal ballot would have to be elected every five years. For example COHSE currently distributes ballot papers at the workplace, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation uses workplace secret ballots and various other unions distribute ballot papers through their branches. Under the new law, these methods would be illegal.

This change was proposed

with the specific aim of unseating Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Mineworkers. Following his important victory over John Walsh to retain the post no doubt this proposal will be further amended.

Mr Scargill said at one stage: 'I think Mr Parkinson and Mrs Thatcher will try to introduce legislation which says that anyone in the NUM can be elected as president provided their name is not Scargill and their first name is not Arthur'.

- It prepares for a new onslaught on the political levy.

A previous attempt to undermine it collapsed when trade unionists voted overwhelmingly to continue the system. Now the Tories plan to require that any such ballot in future will also be postal.

- It bars unions from using funds to pay any court penalties (including those for contempt) incurred by individuals. Any individual could take union trustees to court on the basis that they had unlawfully used union property if such payments were made.

- It brings Crown employees (i.e. civil servants) under the definition of those who can be brought within the legal restrictions affecting industrial action. This would be a major step towards turning every DHSS office for example into a GCHQ in terms of banning strike action and trade union membership.

- It ends all pretence that the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) is an independent body by making it openly an agency of the Secretary of State for Employment. It will be renamed the Training Commission and will have a much greater employer representation.

- It introduces a compulsion, in effect conscription, to the Youth Training Scheme.

Currently, young people refusing to take up YTS places can have 40 per cent of their supplementary benefit (which is £18.75 a week for a 16 year-old) stopped for 13 weeks.

In April this year Supplementary Benefit will be

replaced by 'Income Support'. The new act would enable this to be withdrawn from anyone under 18 refusing a YTS place.

The sum total of past and proposed Labour Legislation introduced by the Tory government is aimed at outlawing strikes and all forms of industrial action. It also comprises a sinister creeping death for the trade unions which their leaders are doing nothing to warn of.

Instead they seek to operate within the continuously shrinking circle of legal limitations set by the state, putting protection of union funds before the defence of members when everyone can see that the Tories are simply going to continue changing the rules until every last penny has been confiscated.

It is no answer to say that we should concentrate all our efforts on returning a Labour government to stop the rot.

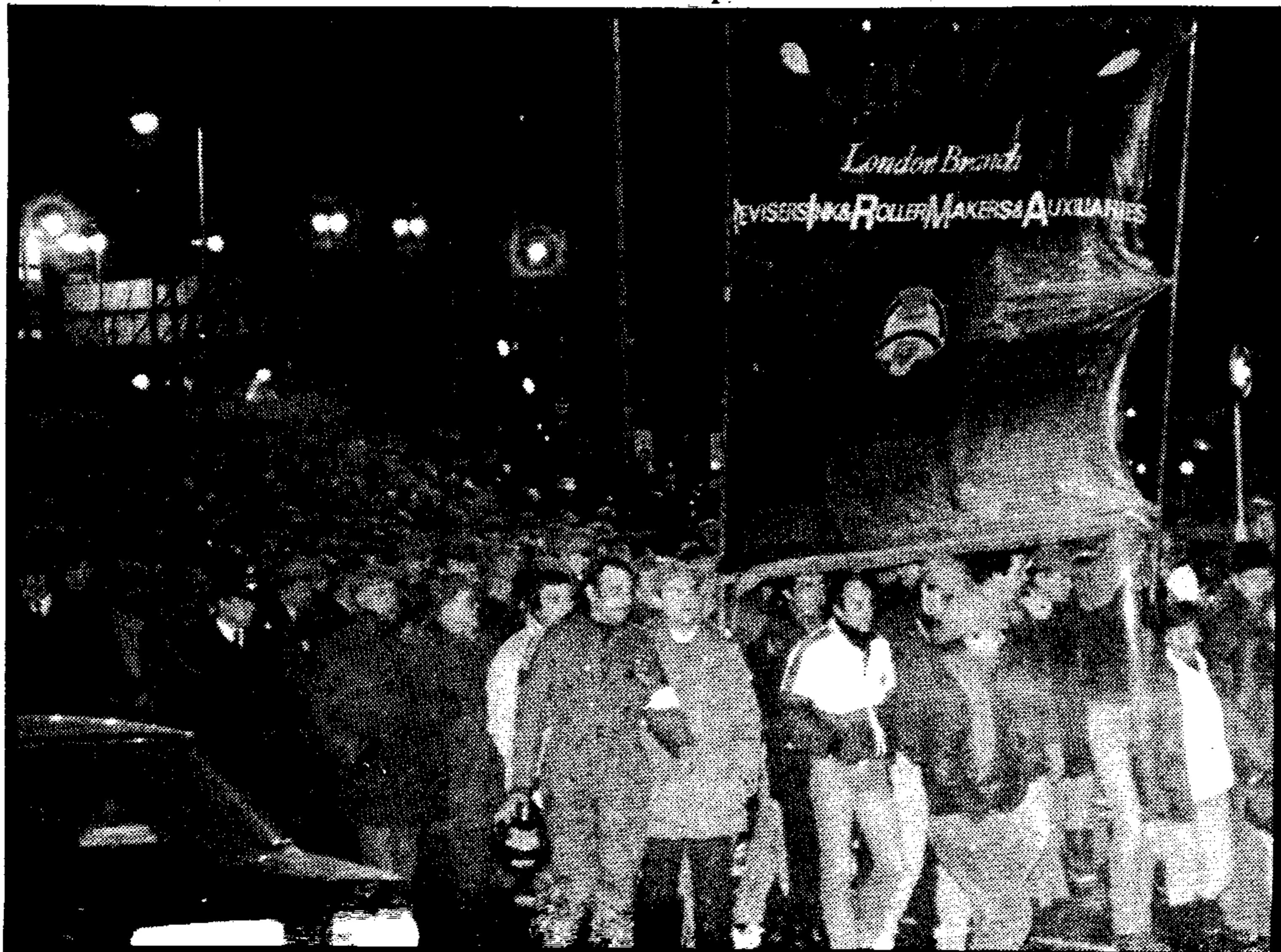
Damage

For one thing, a huge amount of damage will be done in the meantime, for another, there is no indication that Labour's increasingly anti-working class position will give it sufficient votes to get back, and for another there is absolutely no indication that with its total commitment to the market economy Labour will be interested in reversing the laws, even supposing such a thing were possible by purely parliamentary means.

Clearly, union leaders must be told to act now to generate a massive campaign warning of the dangers and organising a battle against the Tory onslaught. Labour left-wingers should be encouraged to use their parliamentary places to mount a vociferous campaign to the same ends, with no respect for club rules or house protocol.

But meanwhile workers' organisations, trades councils, union branches must build their own fight to smash these laws.

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Printers lead march on Murdoch's fortress during the Wapping dispute

World brief

NO ENTRY

SOUTH AFRICAN-born poet Breyten Breytenbach has been refused a visa to visit his native country. The Afrikaans poet, now living in France, spent seven years in jail in South Africa for conspiring to overthrow the racist regime.

He wanted to return to receive an honorary degree from the University of the Western Cape.

Doctors protest

AMERICAN Medical Association (AMA) spokespersons have joined the National Family Planning Association and others in opposing new US anti-abortion laws that would ban federally-aided clinics from telling a woman she could have an abortion.

Dr. Harry Jonas of AMA said under the rules, due next month, if a 40-year old woman learned she might have a Down's syndrome baby, and asked about abortion, her family planning clinic would not be allowed to tell her. 'These regulations are really incredible in trying to stifle information.'

Turkish death sentences

A TURKISH military court in Diyarbakir has sentenced 20 Kurdish guerrillas to death, and jailed 13 for life.

The rebels were convicted for more than 100 deaths, and for trying to overthrow the state. Guerrillas associated with the Maoist-inspired Kurdish Workers' Party are among various groups fighting for Kurdish freedom from foreign rule.

Haiti demo

NEW Haiti president Leslie Manigat was inaugurated last week despite calls for fresh elections from abroad, and from Haitians themselves who say the 17 January poll was fixed by the military.

The election was massively boycotted, and on 3 February, some 10,000 people, led by priests, demonstrated in the streets of Port au Prince, the capital, opposing inauguration.

Punjab CP leader murdered

COMMUNIST Party of India district secretary Chanchal Singh, two of his nephews, and co-worker Avtar Singh were shot dead in Lohar village, in the Punjab, last

The Khalistan Liberation Front, campaigning for a separate Sikh state in the Punjab, and backed by US and Pakistani intelligence, is suspected of the murders. The CPI has been opposing secessionist activity.

Panama drugs racket was US-backed

PANAMA'S strong-arm ruler General Manuel Antonio Noriega accepted \$4.6 million from drug traffickers to help their activities, according to charges by US Federal prosecutors read out in Miami on 5 February.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee has begun hearings against Noriega at the same time as he faces the court charges. The Panamanian ruler is confronting a wave of demonstrations against his regime at home.

Although the US government would also like him out, uncovering the truth about the drugs and other rackets may prove a double-edged sword, however.

Noriega is alleged to have taken \$4.6 million to protect a cocaine laboratory in Panama, and to have helped smuggle more than three tons of the drug into the United States.

As much as \$600 million might have come in bribes for making Panama the safe base for the Colombian Medellin syndicate, which controls 80 per cent of the world cocaine traffic, and for laundering drug profits through Israeli banks.

The evidence has come in secret testimony from convicted drug smugglers in the United States. Noriega's lawyers say such evidence is 'tainted'. But US critics of

the Reagan administration say the US government must have known something all along.

'How did the US government come to make arrangements of convenience with so outlandish an enemy of democracy and an accused thug and drug trafficker,' demanded the liberal 'Washington Post' (7 February).

The answer is that the US administration wanted a 'strong-man' regime to look after its bases and the strategic canal, and the hell with the Panamanian people; the more corrupt and criminally-disposed that regime the better.

Panama is the headquarters of US Southern Command, with 10,000 US troops, and the National Security Agency has important eavesdropping facilities there.

It is also a country with an organised working class which two years ago waged a general strike to resist IMF-imposed austerity measures. It was General Noriega who restored 'order'.

Noriega was seen by the

CIA and other US intelligence bodies as just the kind of crook they could work with in Central America. In fact, he is said to have been on the CIA's books for twenty years.

Last year, the chief of staff of the Panamanian armed forces created a sensation, accusing Noriega of having arranged for the CIA the plane crash death of his predecessor, General Torrijos, in 1981.

Colonel Diaz also accused Noriega of electoral fraud in 1984, of ordering the 1985 murder of opposition leader Hugo Spadafora, and of involvement in drug smuggling.

Noriega sacked Diaz, sparking three days of demonstration and clashes. A state of emergency was decreed, and the general strengthened his grip on government.

Last year, it was disclosed that Noriega had told White House military aide Colonel Oliver North he was willing to help mount sabotage and assassination campaigns against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

It has been revealed recently that Panama's ruler was also at the centre of a scheme put together by Colonel North in 1986, to arrange for a shipment of Soviet-bloc arms, which would be seized in El Salvador, and falsely linked to the Nicaraguan government.

A cargo of East German weapons aboard a Danish ship was seized by Panamanian officials in June, 1986.

According to former Panama military intelligence chief Jose Blandon, who used to be a close advisor of Noriega, the general decided to seize the ship himself because he felt 'betrayed' by US press attacks on him which he blamed on the Reagan administration.

Blandon, who called on Noriega to resign last month, says the general had a deal going with the White House to let contras, fighting Nicaragua, train in Panama. In return, the US would support Panama getting international bank loans.

'North and Poindexter handled the contra operation like a dictatorship,' says Blandon, referring to former US security adviser Admiral John M. Poindexter. 'If you supported the US contras you could do anything.'

The US article which particularly upset Noriega was in the 'New York Times', June 12, 1986. The general was on a visit to Washington when it appeared. Citing US intelligence sources, it said US law enforcement agencies as far back as 1972 had proposed 'total and complete immobilization' of General Noriega 'as a partial solution to the nation's heavy drug trafficking.'

Former US Bureau of Narcotics director John E. Ingersoll confirmed there

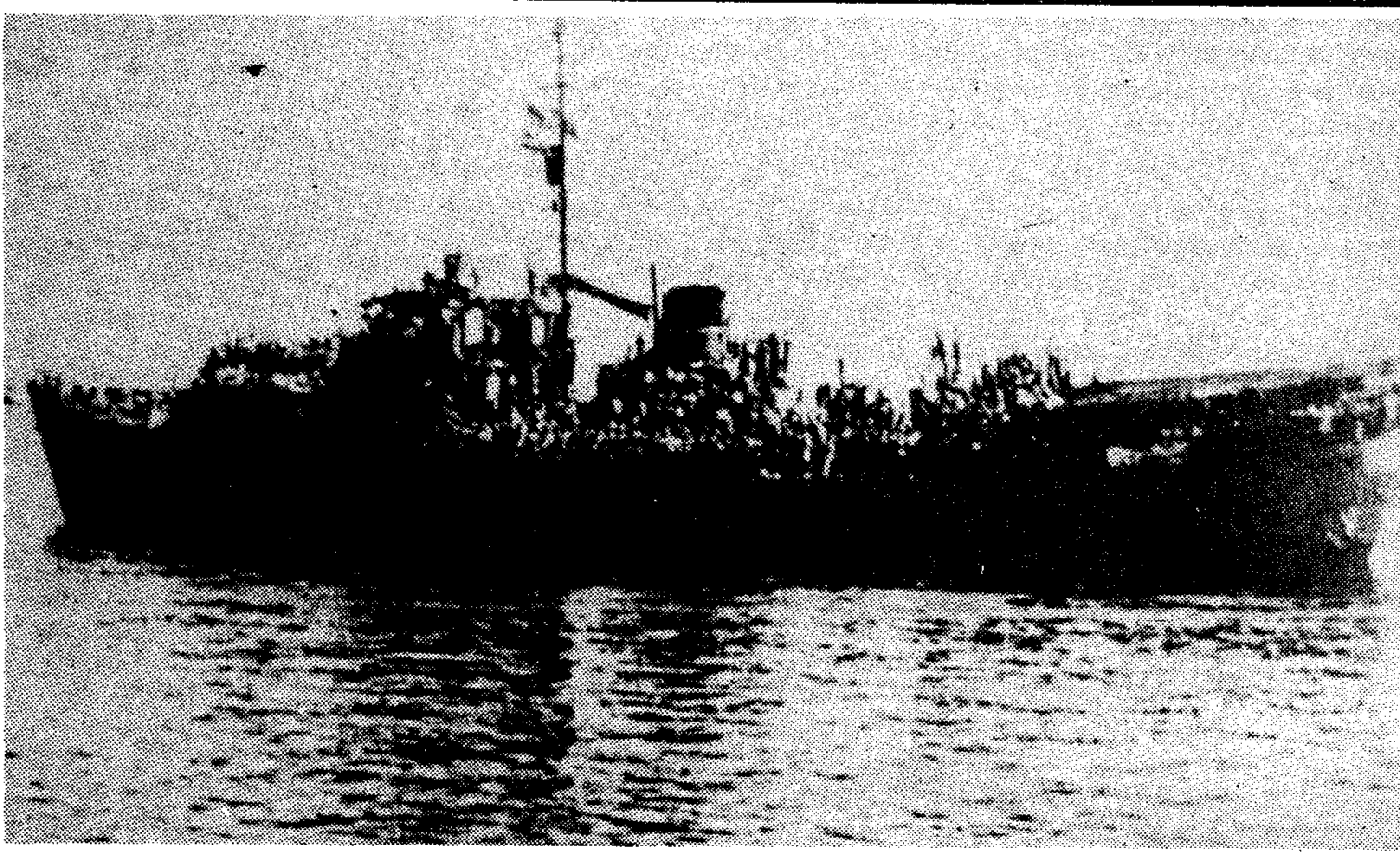
had been a proposal to assassinate Noriega. According to the 'New York Times', US government officials had preferred to keep Noriega, and overlook his criminal activity, because of help to US intelligence.

What has upset the US authorities is not so much that the Panamanian ruler is helping the drug traffickers poisoning American youth. After all, the CIA has been in the drugs business for many years, and planes running arms to the contras do not return home empty.

However, they appear to have caught the general double-timing them. He is alleged to have passed intelligence to Cuba as well as the CIA, to have helped move arms to the left-wing M19 guerrillas in Colombia, and to have had a share in exporting IBM computers to Cuba.

For Noriega, taking out insurance by deals with Castro, and occasionally playing the nationalist card over the canal, has been part of the bonapartist game, the better to keep control over the Panamanian working class for imperialism.

For the US imperialists, he has outlived his value, and they want someone safer. For the Panamanian working class, neither the racketeer-general nor a 'respectable' bourgeois parliamentarian replacement, US-approved, should be accepted.



1947, 'Exodus'; Jewish refugees brought from Europe by Zionists, breaking British blockade. Now it's the Palestinians aboard 'The Return'.

PLO SHIP BRINGS HISTORY HOME

A PLO chartered ship, the Return, has set out for Haifa, Israel, — formerly Haifa, Palestine — carrying about 120 prominent Palestinians deported by the Israelis, together with foreign observers.

The voyage, from Piraeus, Greece, is richly symbol-laden. For the Palestinian people, it is not only a challenge to the Israeli practice of deporting resisters from their own land (a practice contrary to international law), but represents the people's determination to return to the country they were driven from.

For the Israelis, and for Jewish people who once took pride in the state, it is a reminder of the ships which the Zionist Hagana once used to run the British blockade of Palestine,

bringing refugees from Europe in the 1940s.

The Israeli government said on 9 February they would use their navy to stop the ship entering the country's waters. They had pre-

viously tried to have the Greek government stop it sailing. But they cannot stop what the ship represents.

According to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, those on the ship were 'a gang of murderers'. Could he possibly have mistaken them for those he commanded forty years ago, 'Freedom Fighters of Israel', otherwise known as the Stern Gang?

Meanwhile, last week in Gaza, 15-year old Rami Aklouk died from head injuries after being battered by Israeli troops. A young girl was shot when troops clashed with funeral mourners. A 16-year old was shot dead in the West Bank village of Attil. The Israeli 'Iron Fist' continued; and so did the Palestinian people's steadfastness.

Mercury poison scandal

HEALTH officials in the Soviet city of Smolensk conspired with factory bosses to cover-up mercury pollution which for twenty years damaged the health of children.

Children lost their eyesight. They suffered trembling and other symptoms. But doctors at a local hospital sent their distressed parents home without any explanation of what had happened.

The Soviet teachers' paper 'Uchitelskaya Gazeta', which has revealed the scandal as an example of what can happen when there is not full 'glasnost' (openness), says an investigation launched after parents' complaints found an electric lightbulb factory was dumping untreated mercury waste in the River Dnieper.

Waste

Mercury concentrations in the Dnieper were found to be 140 times greater than permitted norms, and 70 per cent of the city's drinking water showed contamination.

Last year, large quantities of mercury waste were found in the rubbish bins of a Smolensk primary school, the teachers' paper says.

At first, it had been thought the pollution was coming from a glass factory manufacturing thermometers just outside Smolensk. A cleaning sys-

BY JOHN KELLY

tem was installed there, but leaks continued.

When workers heard of the danger, 30 per cent quit their jobs and left town with their families. Bosses at the lightbulb factory apparently decided that to avoid a similar reaction when mercury contamination was traced there, they should issue no information to the public.

In January 1986, the Ministry of the Electronics Industry reported that the factory was going to be closed, then rescinded the decision in a private letter.

The foremen in charge of the workshop that was causing the pollution received productivity prizes from the ministry later, the newspaper says.

When the factory was eventually closed, health officials instructed doctors not to cause a panic. The result was the cover-up.

Waldheim's Whitehall whitewash

AUSTRIA'S Nazi president Kurt Waldheim refused to resign last week despite the findings of an international commission of historians that he had been fully aware of atrocities carried out during his wartime officer service — something the former UN Secretary-General always denied.

As former president Bruno Kreisky said Waldheim was 'on too bad terms with the truth' to remain head of the country, it was also revealed that the British government had destroyed documents it possessed on Waldheim.

These concerned the fate of British commandoes captured in raids on the Greek islands, in 1944, interrogated by Waldheim's unit, then handed over to the infamous SS. This was fulfilling fuhrer Hitler's order to exterminate 'terrorists'.

For years, families of these men tried unsuccessfully to find out more, but were put off by officialdom. Now it has been admitted that the Foreign Office destroyed relevant documents in its possession when Waldheim became UN Secretary General.

Waldheim denied taking part in the interrogation of the six British prisoners. The historians' commission, set up by the Austrian government itself after worldwide outcry over Waldheim's election, says he did; and that he was all-too-punctilious in fulfilling orders to hand the prisoners over to the SS for 'special treatment'.

The historians' commission was unable to prove Waldheim's personal responsibility for Nazi mass killings in occupied Yugoslavia, although it has established he knew far more than he admitted.



The UN war crimes files which were opened to the historians for the first time did not contain all the documents they sought. Some may have been removed from files while Waldheim was secretary-general. Yugoslav archives have also been found incomplete.

Many people believe that both the US and Soviet intelligence services covered for Waldheim at different times, in the belief that he would be useful to them. The British government clearly now also has some explanations to give.



AUSTRALIAN Aborigines are continuing their campaign for land and rights in bicentennial year. Since 1788, when whites started colonising their country, nearly 80 per cent of the Aborigine population were wiped out.

That's why Aborigines like these demonstrating (above) in Sydney say 'there's nothing to celebrate in '88!'. Nothing, that is, except their resurgent resistance.

With the Aborigine death rate in Australian prisons 50 per cent higher than that of whites, and continuing efforts to deny them their land and rights, the Aborigine people are fighting to live.

Mitchell's shifting sands

'ARAFAT'S statements have the unhappy knack of shifting with the rapidity of the sand dunes in the Arab desert, but this time there appears to be a genuine move to make concessions so that a Geneva-type conference can go ahead.'

This was how one capitalist newspaper's political commentator referred to the PLO leader's remarks on the possibility of forming a government-in-exile, and indications that Palestinians might recognise the State of Israel within its pre-1967 borders.

Anyone familiar with the PLO's policies for the past decade will know that Arafat has been indicating this for some time. Certainly, the commentator writing in the Sydney 'Sun-Herald' on 17 January ought to have known it.

He should also know that the chief obstacle in the way of the Palestinians participating in Geneva talks on that basis was not Palestinian intransigence or any uncertainty about their proposals, but the hostility of Israel and its US patrons to any talks or recognition for the PLO.

Between imperialist and Zionist hostility, the treachery of the Arab bourgeois regimes, and the great-power calculations of the Soviet bureaucracy, the PLO leadership has had little option but to manoeuvre skilfully for survival.

The Australian paper's correspondent would once have been among their most unhesitating, indeed slavish, defenders in this. Who is it now deploring chairman Arafat's 'shifting' positions?

Why, none other than ALEX MITCHELL, onetime editor of NEWS LINE, co-author of 'Security and the Fourth International, and accomplice of Gerry Healy (with whom he enjoyed the lavish hospitality of Arab bourgeois and reactionary regimes).

Hi Alex! Remember me? I see you're settling in fine in your new job! your old News Line colleague,

Charlie Pottins.

Hitlerites in Leningrad

EXTREME right-wing groups, reviving the chauvinist and antisemitic ideas of Czarist Russia, have emerged in the Soviet Union.

One tendency, the Fetisov group, expresses open admiration for Adolf Hitler, as well as former Soviet dictator Stalin, as representatives of the 'German-Slav leader-principle'.

(An expert observes this tendency is not too popular with the older generation of Russians, who remember the Nazi invasion.)

Another group, around one Alexander Prokhanov, styling itself 'National Bolshevik', defends what it claims was a continuity of statehood between Czarist autocracy and the Soviet state.

This grouping is believed to be close to high-ranking officers in the military, according to Dr Stephen Shenfield, of the University of Birmingham, who recently returned from a study visit to the Soviet Union.

Shenfield believes hard-line Stalinists with entrenched interests may switch from opposing 'glasnost' to exploiting it. He says the right-wing 'Pamyats' movement, started supposedly to protect the Russian 'heritage' of old churches and war memorials, has become the umbrella for right-wing extremists.

Pamyats has backing from conservative officials, officers in the KGB and military, and elements in the provincial party apparatus.

Public response varies. In the University of Leningrad,

The 'conspiracy' is blamed for 'just about everything', Stephen Shenfield says, "rotten liberalism", food shortages, alcoholism, bureaucracy; the use of kvir as a baby food (because it contains a small amount of alcohol) is all put down to the plot.

'Pamyats' extremists are always looking for hidden 'Judeo-Masonic symbols'. A production of Pushkin's 'Snow Queen' was attacked because the ice crystals on her costume were six-pointed stars!

Religion is naturally not far from such outlooks; but here, the far-Right is divided. Some, like emigre writer Solzhenitsyn, seek their mystical answers in traditional Russian Orthodoxy. Others, perhaps taking a leaf from Nazi counterparts, argue Christianity itself was a Jewish imposition, and they want a return to paganism.

Part of the conspiracy-theory ideology claims that some Soviet ministries are already under Jewish control', Shenfield says. One paper claimed Gorbachev was merely 'a puppet of Arbatov', referring to his adviser, although it was uncertain in what sense the latter was 'Jewish'.

A 'Pamyats' official had been expelled from the Party recently, not for promoting the notorious Czarist antisemitic forgery 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion', as he had been, but for 'slandering Party officials'.

Shenfield believes that some conservative Soviet officials, worried they could



bureaucrats' idols? Hitler and Stalin

lose their posts as a result of glasnost' and 'perestroika', welcome 'Pamyats', because its racist attacks on 'non-Russians' and 'speculators' serve to divert attention from party bureaucrats who are really responsible for problems.

Careerists engaged in rivalry within the Soviet bureaucracy and professions, often conducted by ethnic-based cliques with powerful patrons, may want to re-assert their claim to 'Great-Russian' privileges.

At the popular level, ordinary people find it difficult to grasp what the problems of the Soviet system are — isn't it supposed to be socialism? Then why are there shortages? The Jewish manager, the 'little boss', is 'more visible' to ordinary workers than deeper social problems.

The still-prevailing official secrecy surrounding Soviet life makes people all the more prone to fall for 'conspiracy' theories, Shenfield says. There is also a strong ethnic consciousness among Russians, and an ignorance

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

there was a large meeting of staff and students last year to hear 'Pamyats' speakers. But when they held a meeting in the University of Sverdlovsk, there was a lot of opposition and heckling.

One of the left-wing clubs that Soviet workers and intellectuals have formed to discuss socialism outside the official party machine decided, because of concern at the growth of the far-right, to set up an Anti-Fascist Information Centre.

The aim was to gather and circulate information exposing the right-wing groups, rather as 'Searchlight' does in Britain, Dr Shenfield says. No sooner was the Anti-Fascist Information Centre set up than its offices were burgled by 'Pamyats' members.

Some of the propaganda circulating among the Russian Right comes straight from the books of the Czarist Okhrana (secret police) and Black Hundreds. 'Hard-core' devotees are regaled with the 'Judeo-Masonic conspiracy', in league with the Devil against the Russian people.

WORKERS PRESS is keen to increase its coverage of overseas news. We have a growing list of subscribers outside Britain and would be delighted to hear from them. So please send us your on-the-spot reports.

Struggles link up

NATIONAL UNION of Public Employees members at Prestwich psychiatric hospital in Manchester took strike action for two hours on January 3 to show solidarity with striking hospital workers in London.

About 70 people took part including some COHSE members, even though their Prestwich branch had decided not to back the action.

The picket was joined by Pat and Jean, members of the Ancoats action committee who are occupying Ancoats hospital casualty in a fight to have it reopened. Also on the picket was Tony Lowe, a striker from Senior Colman, who have been out on strike for over a year because of management attempts to smash their union.

Not far away, at North Manchester general hospital, 70 psychiatric nurses, members of Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE), walked out for an hour, while 40 nurses in Macclesfield took 24 hour strike action.

The Prestwich strikers were also protesting against proposed cuts by Salford health authority which met later that day. At the last authority meeting there had been a split vote on a motion to refuse to make any cuts. Since then the authority was granted an extra £375,000 by the regional health authority.

Local councillors again proposed that the authority should refuse to make any cuts. They said that if Salford took a stand other health authorities would follow, creating a political crisis for the government. However a package of £1 million cuts was passed by eight votes to seven with the chair Dr. Beswick using his casting vote. At this point councillors walked out.

The cuts consist of the closure of wards at Salford Royal hospital, which is now threatened with complete closure, and Hope hospital. £250,000 was cut from the maintenance budget, even though the chief engineer freely admitted that the authority already had a £14 million backlog of repairs, and that by delaying maintenance the authority may end

BY STUART CARTER

up with bigger bills later. One member said that if it was not for Crown immunity (which has only been removed from kitchens) the Health and Safety executive would have to close hospitals.

Savings are also due to be made at Pendlebury children's hospital, although how the cuts would be made was not specified.

The meeting was lobbied by 100 hospital workers. In response to questions from the lobbyists Dr. Beswick admitted that the health authority had been advised by the region to expect that this year's pay awards would again be underfunded by the government. The budget they were discussing made no allowance for this or for inflation, meaning that next year there would be even more cuts.

Action is set to increase in the North West, with demonstrations by all health service unions outside hospital gates on Wednesday 10 February. A day of action on 19 February has been organised by the joint shop stewards committees of north, south and central Manchester district health authorities. Some hospitals have already voted to strike for the day. There will be a mass demonstration and rally in Manchester. The day of action has been officially backed by north-west COHSE, north-west NUPE, and many other local unions including the civil servants and local government workers, office and manual. Delegations of hospital workers are visiting factories and workplaces to call on them to strike in defence of the NHS on the 19th.

Health workers should take a lead from Ancoats Action Committee and occupy wards and hospitals faced with closure.

Strikes defend hospitals

Strikes against privatisation spread through Glasgow hospitals last week.

On Monday, Greater Glasgow Health Board director Laurence Peterkin announced that domestic services at Stobhill, Gartloch, Victoria and Yorkhill children's hospital would be put out to tender. A wave of strikes followed on Tuesday.

The Health Board — which has engaged in a £5 million cost cutting programme and drastically reduced staff levels — accused strikers of endangering patients.

The most cynical lies were directed at the Yorkhill children's hospital workers: 'The Board said there was... only one cook for more than 300 children.' the Glasgow Herald reported.

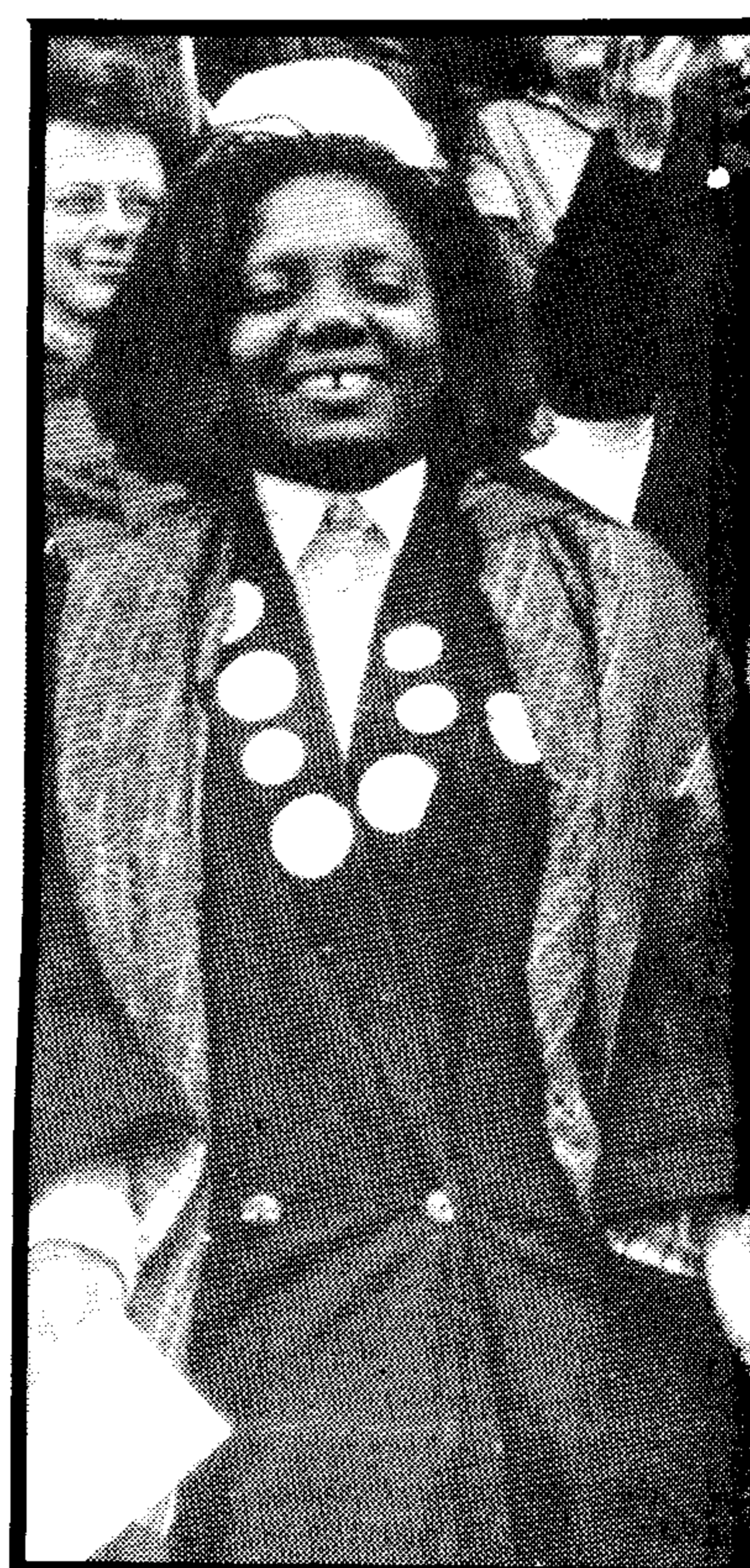
In fact one trained chef, the head of kitchens, the assistant head who is a trained chef, and two other supervisors, were on duty when the Yorkhill strike began on Tuesday afternoon. Evening tea had already been prepared.

'It was the same cover as is left at Christmas or the New Year,' said General. Municipal, Boilermakers

and Allied Trades Union (GMBATU) shop steward John Sweeney.

'The service is deteriorating because of "cost cutting", not because of strikes. Last September they closed the laundry which served this hospital excellently for 30 years, and now they tell us patients are being put through hell because the laundry porter was taken out for the afternoon!'

Full time union officials are pressing for a 'softly softly' line. After Yorkhill workers decided unanimously for a strike campaign, union officials told the press the hospital would be exempt. Despite this, the workers reaffirmed the strike decision and rejected a no-strike suggestion relayed via the Glasgow health workers'



Mildred Gordon, Labour MP supporting



Nurse Owens, charge nurse Peter May, and nurse Charnock

Liverpool Enters the Battle

The labour movement in Liverpool turned out in force to answer the call for all organisations to turn out and picket their local hospital on 10 February.

BY NORMAN HARDING

Two thousand car workers downed tools at Vauxhalls for four hours in support of their NHS. Firemen were answering only emergency calls and sent a deputation to the Royal Hospital. Groups of health visitors had turned up, many of them saying that this was the first time they had taken part in anything like this. 'We are not going to stand around and see the health service smashed — it involves too many people'.

This determination to defend the National Health Service was also expressed by the cleaning ladies from The

joint union committee.

Privatisation of catering services will be announced later this month — some stewards fear the union hierarchy will again oppose 'wild-cat' action.

Press lies cannot be fought by smothering the strike campaign. Thatcher is to blame for the NHS crisis.

Extend industrial action. All out on 24 February (Scottish one-day strike) inside and outside the NHS, and out again on budget day on 15th March.

Mount Pleasant Building Polytechnic College. 'We will be going to the next meeting of the Number 80 branch of the General and Municipal Workers Union to call for full support for the nurses and for a general strike on budget day'.

Nurses from the Special Hospitals from Maghull expressed their hatred of Thatcher and her attacks on the NHS. They felt this very strongly because of the special attention needed by their patients.

Three RCN members, Charge Nurse Peter May, Nurse Owens and Nurse Charnock (RCN steward) had scant respect for the leadership of the RCN.

Peter May said that his position in the hospital was the equivalent of Sister. He had first hand knowledge of the way the service was being run down after 25 years proud service in the NHS. Its break-up affected everyone and would have to be defended by everyone.

As the lobby grew in size arms were linked and a cordon was thrown round the Hospital cutting it off completely.



Nurses march in Swansea against the cuts

Workers out of

THE NATIONAL Union called a co-ordinating February in order to get Macclesfield for the N action on the 10 February service cuts.

Macclesfield health work attracting national TV cov

Pat O'Connor a COHSE steward at a Macclesfield Hospital explained how the national leadership of the Unions were not prepared to 'grab the nettle' of organising effective action to protect the health service, what action that had been taken was local and instigated from the grass roots.

There had been grumbings from union head offices complaining that the strike by health workers in Macclesfield was 'getting out of hand', the national union then disassociated itself from the action. COHSE was in the process of balloting members on further strike action.

The meeting also heard that there was much more feeling amongst union members now, than when they had taken action during the

All out for the nurses

JULIETTA LESLIE is a NUPE shop steward and a nurse at the Middlesex hospital. She spoke to Workers Press about the 3 February strike.

'We feel very positive about the strike. We had a great turnout of staff, there were lots of nurses in their red capes, and lots of press there. We had great support from the public driving past, all the cars were tooting.

BY ANDREW BURGIN

'We had support from other workers who came out and came to the rally in the afternoon. Camden NALGO and many different unions all came out with us on that day. The morale was good and we had a great time on the picket.

'Support from the union has been totally nil, the union has stabbed us in the back all the way and tried to stop any action that we've been taking, and to stop the strike. They've not really helped in any way. They didn't bring the banners or anything until the morning of the strike and they brought them after we started on the picket lines.

'Since Feb 3 we've set up a strike committee, it's the Bloomsbury health workers strike committee. We've also been collecting for a fund and collected quite a bit of money on the day of action for leafletting so we wouldn't have to rely on the union for leaflets and posters.

'We went with the help of the University College Hospital students, we organised our own banners and picket line signs and armbands. We just gave up on the union because we couldn't get in touch with our full time official Mike Taylor at all.

'We've arranged lots of support groups and we've been discussing the way forward, and everyone's ideas about which way they feel we should go in the future. We've had two meetings since the day of action. One on Thursday when a lot of new people came, people that we hadn't actually seen before the day of action. They came out on the day and after that have started coming to the meeting. We had a lunchtime meeting today which was just the NUPE nurses meeting to discuss the way forward and lots of people came.

'He kept arranging to come and not turning up, he didn't turn up for the meetings with management before the strike. We had phone calls from his wife saying he was very busy, so we haven't had any support at all.

'I think to go forward we have to get the support of other unions, we can't just be an isolated area of workers. We do need the support of all workers together for it to be effective. I'm still quite sceptical about the unions and the Trades Union Con-



Nurses enjoying the picketing at UCH

gress especially, with their recent behaviour we're bound to feel that way. But we feel that we want to keep our own momentum going and spread it in our hospital. We want to get everyone more involved and other workers as well outside the hospital.

in other areas of work, to union meetings and calling on them to join us, and putting the demand on the TUC to call an all-out day of action.

The strike has changed a lot of peoples perceptions of their own power, whether they can change things or not. Most of the nurses I've spoken to have said that they feel really positive that they did something, and they can feel now that they've got more power, things aren't stagnant — we can fight back. I think it is reflecting on other workers, like the Ford workers. We are defending our whole way of life — the health service, jobs everything.

uniforms were no protection at all, we had decided beforehand that all the nurses would go to the front to protect everyone who wasn't in uniform or who was from other unions.

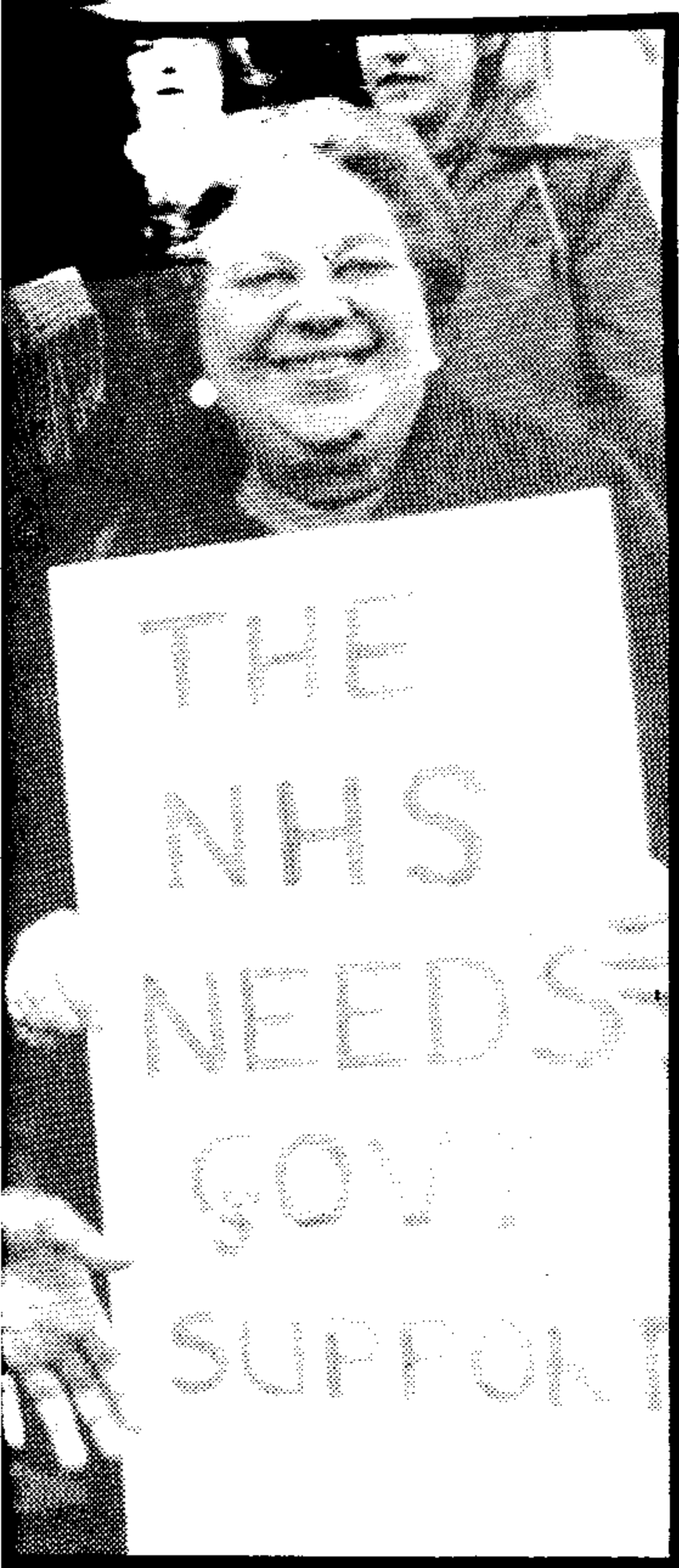
We thought that there was no way that they were going to hit nurses. It shocked so many nurses who've never encountered anything with the police before, who've always looked up to the police. I think that they realised we were living in a fascist state at that time, everyone is furious about the police, and a lot of the nurses feel very bitter.'

The first meeting of the Bloomsbury strike committee will be on Tuesday 16 February, at 7.30 pm in the Bloomsbury theatre, University College of London, Gower Street. The strike committee invites all trades unionists inside and outside the health service to come.



Julietta Leslie

'We're trying to build up by getting Bloomsbury Health committee fund going here and having meetings with outside people and inviting them along, then sending delegates out to help



hospital workers on the picket line.

Workers get hand

of Public Employees meeting on Monday 8 support from workers in North-West TUC day of action against the health

ers took a lead in striking, average the previous week.

BY PETER WINDELER

winter of discontent, and brought down the Labour government. During that period nurses did not take part in industrial action, but now even nurses were prepared to act.

Privatisation was attacked. Hospital cleaning in Macclesfield has been privatised but because of the poor pay, local workers cannot be found. Cleaners are bussed in from places as far away as Liverpool — still the hospitals were filthy. An ASTMS member explained that the pharmacy and pathology laboratories would be the next to be privatised. It had been established that private standards were lower than the standards in the health service.

Moore cuts himself

JOHN MOORE, Secretary of State for Health, is under fire in his own constituency of Croydon Central.

The Croydon Community Health Council has called for more cash for Croydon hospitals to prevent the closure of a surgical ward at Croydon's Mayday hospital

and the casualty department of Purley hospital.

The Health Council is also demanding reassurance that the planned new out-patients' and accident department at Mayday hospital will go ahead.

Miss McGlennon, secretary of the Health Council told a local meeting last week:

'We are supposed to have a cervical smear campaign, to deal with AIDS for which we have appointed a health adviser, but we don't get any more funding.'



Getting it across. Young nurses picketing St. George's, Tooting, in London, made it clear they were fighting for the NHS against Thatcher.



Nurses and their supporters outside Leicester Royal Infirmary

The WRP and Libya

A SCURRILOUS attack on the Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press) has been launched by the 'Sunday Times' in its issue of 7 February.

The 'Sunday Times' repeats the lies, distortions and half truths that have already appeared in the weekly journal 'Time Out' and first surfaced in the anarchist publication 'Solidarity'.

According to the 'Sunday Times', the WRP spied on prominent Jews and gave information about their activities to the Libyan regime and other Middle Eastern governments.

Two facts about this witch-hunt stand out.

- It comes on the eve of a growing strike wave against the Thatcher government. Through its servile press, the Thatcher government is playing the old 'Red Card'.

All these troubles are said to be due to a small number of left-wing agitators, manipulating tens of thousands of health workers, seafarers and car workers.

No worker with any sense will believe such rubbish.

What the ruling class fears above all is that an alternative revolutionary leadership will be built, in the course of these mounting struggles, to replace the corrupt Labour and trade union leaders on whom the Tories are utterly dependent for their survival.

- The allegations about anti-Jewish spying occur just when Zionism stands condemned throughout the world for its brutal atrocities in the Gaza and on the West Bank.

There is no evidence that the party when led by Healy ever spied on 'Jews', prominent or otherwise. The Party did, and still does, oppose Zionism as a reactionary ideology and instrument of imperialism.

For the sake of readers unfamiliar with the events surrounding the subject of the 'Sunday Times' article and who may be misled by it we list the salient facts of the case.

- In October 1985 the WRP expelled its former leader Gerry Healy together with his closest supporters. Healy was expelled for his gross sexual abuse of female comrades in the Party and for his systematic use of violence and slander against his opponents.

- Healy was supported by Vanessa and Corin Redgrave, by the then assistant general secretary of the WRP, Sheila Torrance, and by Alex Mitchell, Mitchell, a former 'Sunday Times' journalist, who ran

the party's paper 'News Line'.

- In the course of the events following Healy's expulsion information came to light of his unprincipled dealings with various Middle Eastern governments.

- Only a select group close to Healy had known of these secret arrangements which were carried out behind the party's back. This group included the Redgraves, Torrance and Mitchell.

- When these dealings came to light they were immediately made known to the whole Party and condemned. Those exposing Healy's activities are currently in the leadership of the group publishing Workers Press.

- We never objected to the fact that Healy dealt with Libya and other similar regimes, nor that money was obtained from them in the course of such dealings.

The question is not one of finance but political principle. It is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to take up the defence of colonial and semi-colonial countries whenever they come into conflict with imperialism.

In the course of the 1982 Malvinas war Healy's semi-patriotic line 'Down with the War' was overthrown and we declared for the victory of Argentina in the struggle against British imperialism.

Since the split we have denounced the old WRP's line on Ireland which failed to support the struggle of the Republican movement for Irish independence.

- Healy's crime in his dealings with the Saddam Hussein and Gaddafi regimes was that political principles were sold for financial gain. The WRP became uncritical supporters of these regimes. The crimes of some of these regimes against the working class were condoned. Thus the murder by the Iraqi government of members of the Communist Party was justified, a shameful betrayal of the principles of communism.

- The post-split WRP thoroughly exposed and denounced this betrayal of principles.

- Condemning the unprincipled links the party had developed with Libya the central committee said:

'In the 1970s we had a smokescreen of principled support in words for the national independence struggle, but even these formally correct words gave way to a craven subordination to petty-bourgeois leaders and petty-bourgeois governments.' ('News Line' 12 November 1985)

(The post-split WRP was still publishing 'News Line' at this time. It later reverted to publication of the weekly 'Workers Press'.

'News Line' is now the paper of the group led by Sheila Torrance, which defended Healy.)

Cliff Slaughter said in 'News Line' 20 November 1985:

'Healy sought and found relations with bourgeois leaders like Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi and Nkomo. It is not only that Marxism was distorted in order to mislead on their class nature. This party through Healy, sought financial support from these bourgeois, not for this or that political purpose, but as a system. And the real return for all this was that we had no actual perspective, in practice, for building sections or even recruiting a single person from these countries.'

The 'Sunday Times' and 'Time Out' revelations are full of the crudest distortions. Just two examples will suffice to show the quality of their reporting.

For example, the 'Sunday Times' claims that Libya gave the Healy-led WRP £542,267 to finance its activities. The fact is that much of this money was for printing work we undertook at that time for the Libyan regime as a straightforward commercial deal. Invoices for this work exist and it is entered into the appropriate company records.

'Time Out' claims that the Palestine Liberation Organisation paid 'about £5 each' to party members who took part in demonstrations defending the PLO.

First, there is not a shred of truth in this absurd 'rent a mob' type allegation.

Second, we are proud of our principled defence of the PLO in its struggle with Zionism and imperialism and we shall continue to stand by this principle.

The purpose of the witch-hunt is to intimidate our Party. The Tory press will fail completely in this effort. Since the expulsion of Healy, despite great difficulties, we have begun a serious turn to the mounting struggle in the working class against Thatcher. 'Workers Press' has begun to win support amongst a small but significant layer in the working class. It is this building of an alternative leadership that the Thatcher government wants to break up.

We call on all workers to reject these slanders — of the same order as those used against the miners and of the type soon to be brought into play against Ford workers and health workers.

Statement by WRP Political Committee
8 February 1988



LISTINGS

Listings published free for labour movement organisations. Send details to arrive by mid-day Monday for publication the following Thurs.

PICKET DURHAM PRISON! Stop strip searches! End British torture! On International women's day Sunday March 13. 1 pm. Organised by the Irish Republican POW campaign committee.

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. S Africa House, Trafalgar Sq. — City AA. **CAMP PAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR)** Wkly planning mtgs every Tues 7.30pm. Stoke Newington Community Centre, Leswin Rd, N16. All welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, N4 (01-991 2938.)

VMDC London Support Group Wkly Campaign Meetings, Thursday even-

ings 7.30pm. Camden Town Hall. All welcome. (Further details: 01-837 1688.)

GREENHAM COMMON WOMEN'S CAMP To all women — we are still here; we still need your support! Near Newbury, Exit 13 on M4, or BR Newbury, Berkshire.

BULLETIN OF THE IRISH HUNGER STRIKE COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE (BIRMINGHAM) Now available on subscription: £2 per year (3 issues incl. pp). From: Tiofaidh Ar La c/o IHSCC, PO Box 540, Sparkhill, Birmingham, B11

CURRENT CONTROVERSIES IN EVOLU-

UTION. A series of 10 lectures. Starting Thurs 14 Jan 7pm. £1 (includes light refreshments). Lecturer Mike Howgate. Venue Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1.

VALENTINE'S EVE SOCIAL. Organised by Tower Hamlets Hackney and East London WRP Saturday February 13. From 8 o'clock at 169 Leytonstone Rd Stratford, E15. Adm. £2. Unwaged/OAP £1. Proceeds for the special fund.

PALESTINE OCCUPATION — 1948 — 1967 — 1988. Public meeting organised by the Labour movement campaign for

Palestine — speakers from the British and Palestinian labour movements. **Monday 15 Feb 7.30 pm.** Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1.

DEFEND THE SANCTUARY — Viraj Mendis will stay. Public meeting: Speakers include Father John Methuen and Paul Weller. **Thursday 18 Feb 7.30 pm.** Friends House 173-177 Euston Rd. NW1.

END STRIP SEARCHING. Public meeting to launch a broad campaign to end strip searching. **Sunday 14 Feb 2pm.** Hackney town hall, Mare st, E8. Creche

BENEFIT for Irish Prisoners Appeal and Troops Out Movement. Old White Horse, Brixton Rd, Thurs 10 Mar, 8pm. Entertainment by the 'Jacket Potatoes' and other groups. Raffle of toys made by Gerry McDonnell and other prisoners.

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE. Meeting at the House of Commons, grand committee rooms. **Thurs 18 Feb 6 pm.** Speakers include Khaled Al Hassam (leader of PNC foreign affairs committee), Harry Conroy (NUJ General Secretary).

£20,000 Special Fund

THE FUND STANDS AT: £1,269.10

WE have received £226.96 for the fund this week. Thanks are due to the WRP South East London branch for the proceeds of their car boot sale. The Preparatory Committee for the organisation of an international conference of Trotskyists is calling meetings in all the countries where organisations are represented on the Committee and in other countries where it has yet to present its proposals. The collection of the fund is in no way separate from carrying out a campaign to explain the importance of this conference and the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

Send donations to: WRP Special Fund, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

WORKERS PRESS FEBRUARY FUND

In so far: £41

February is a short month! We have £41 in so far for this fund and this means that we must raise almost £2,000 in two weeks.

That's a tall order but entirely possible.

The number of Workers Press being sold is going up amongst health workers, Ford workers and other sections of the community in the rising tide against the Thatcher government.

We aim to speak about our policies and proposals for the struggle and to open up the pages of Workers Press for letters and interviews to hear what others are saying about this situation.

Workers Press is a campaigning paper. Buy it each week — sell it to your friends and fellow workers — donate to the monthly fund.

Send donations to:

WRP Monthly Fund
PO Box 735
London SW9 7QS

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Basic Principles of Marxism

Six Lectures at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC 1.

Friday, February 5, 1988, at 7.30.

The Crash of '88.

WHAT are the implications of the financial and economic crisis for the working class?

Thursday, February 11, 1988, at 7.30.

What is Revolution?

MARX understood the revolutionary transformation of society as expressing the conflict between the advance of the forces of production developed by human beings and the social relations between them.

Thursday, February 18, 1988, at 7.30.

What is Capitalism?

WHY does the social system under which the working class is exploited appear to some people to be in line with 'human nature'? How does this system operate, and how will it be destroyed?

Friday, February 26, 1988, at 7.30.

The State and Revolution

HOW does the state exercise power over the working class? Can that power be broken? What will take its place?

Friday, March 4, 1988, at 7.30.

The Russian Revolution, Stalinism and Trotskyism.

SEVENTY years ago, the Russian workers, led by the Bolsheviks, overthrew Tsarism and capitalism, and the world socialist revolution began. The rise of a bureaucracy within the Soviet state led to the betrayal of the revolution, but not its destruction.

Thursday, March 10, 1988, at 7.30.

The Fourth International Today.

FIFTY years ago, Trotsky led those who fought to continue the work to prepare the world revolution in the foundation of the Fourth International, World Party of Socialist Revolution. After decades of crisis, the time has come for the re-founding of the FI.

READING:

Cliff Slaughter, *Marx and Marxism*
Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*
Lenin, *The State and Revolution*
Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*

Moscow court clears Old Bolsheviks

BY CYRIL SMITH

ON FRIDAY, 29 January, the Soviet Supreme Court decided that 20 out of 21 defendants in the third of Stalin's infamous 'show trials' were innocent of all the charges to which they had 'confessed' in 1938.

A foreign ministry spokesman, announcing the decision to a Moscow press conference, explained that the trial had been 'falsified' and the evidence 'obtained unlawfully'.

The most prominent of the 20 was Nicolai Bukharin. He joined the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1906, aged 15. As he managed to tell the 1938 court, before he was 21 years old he had been twice arrested by the tsarist police, and was also imprisoned for his revolutionary activity in Austria in 1914 and in Sweden in 1916.

Bukharin was a Bolshevik from the time of his first meeting with Lenin, in Germany in 1912. He was a member of the Party leadership from 1917 until his removal by Stalin in 1934, and in 1917 he led the insurrection in Moscow. Between 1918 and 1931 he was editor of 'Pravda' and he edited 'Iszvestia' from 1934 until his arrest by the GPU in 1937.

Bukharin's devotion to Lenin never implied slavish agreement. On the contrary, he was a 'left' critic during the war and after the Revolution. In Lenin's 'Testament', Bukharin was described as 'the favourite of the Party'. But Lenin warned against Bukharin's philosophical position, saying that 'he never understood the dialectic'.

From the time of Lenin's death in 1924, Bukharin was on the right of the Party, and sided with Stalin against the Left Opposition of Trotsky. His downfall in 1929 came after the 180-degree turn of Stalin to the Five Year Plan and the forcible collectivisation of Soviet agriculture.

He was shot after the 1938 trial. The Party commission set up by Gorbachev is expected to 'rehabilitate' him when it reports in June.

Christian Rakovsky was from an older generation. A revolutionary in the Balkans since 1889, he was active in exile in many countries, returning to Russia during the 1905 revolution. In 1907 he was arrested and imprisoned.

In 1917, Rakovsky joined the Bolshevik Party with Trotsky. In 1918 he was Chairman of the Ukraine Soviet and played a leading part in the civil war there.

In the 1920s, he was sent as Soviet ambassador to London and to Paris, largely to keep him away from the struggle inside the Party, where he was the most important of Trotsky's supporters. In 1928, after the illegalisation of the Opposition, he was exiled to Siberia.

In 1934, the Stalinists announced that Rakovsky had agreed to submit to Party discipline and end his fight against the Stalin leadership. He was then made ambassador to Tokyo, until his arrest by Stalin in 1937.

Alexei Rykov was a revolutionary from 1900 and a leader of the Bolshevik faction from 1903. Many times imprisoned, he twice escaped from Siberian exile in 1907. In 1917 he was a member



Bukharin

of the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet. He became the first Commissar for Internal Affairs and played a leading part in the civil war.

From 1919 until 1929, Rykov was on the Politburo. In the 1920s, Rykov adhered to the 'Right Opposition' led by Bukharin.

Men like these were forced — largely under threats to the lives of their families — to 'confess' in open court to all kinds of fantastic crimes. It was not just a matter of 'wrecking activities', but of a wholesale conspiracy with Trotsky to assassinate the leading Stalinists and to hand the Soviet Union over to fascism.

The indictment, which it took the Supreme Court half a century to discover was 'falsified', included revelations like this: 'The accused Bukharin was aware of the negotiations carried on between L. Trotsky and the German fascists and, like L. Trotsky, made preparations for the defeat of the USSR and for the severance of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Maritime Region, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Central Asiatic Republics from the USSR.'

The 1938 trial was remarkable for the fact that, after all the defendants had 'confessed', Krestinsky suddenly repudiated his confession in open court. The proceedings were halted, and resumed the next day, when Krestinsky returned to his original testimony.

Khrushchev promised in 1956 that the entire record of the Trials would be investigated honestly. But the bureaucracy refused to open up the question. Instead, the names of seven relatively minor defendants in the 1938 trial were cleared during the 1960s.

In his speech last November, Gorbachev once more evaded the issue, even attempting to defend Stalin's role and repeat some of the older slanders against Trotsky. But now the issue has been brought into the Supreme Court, the problem of the 1936 and 1937 trials, and above all the problem of the name of the chief accused in all three trials — Leon Trotsky — cannot be avoided.

It is reported in Moscow that the next session of the Supreme Court in May will take up the cases of Piatakov and Radek. Both of these men had been Left Oppositionists until they capitulated to Stalin in 1928, and they were



Rakovsky

victims of the second Show Trial in 1937.

One defendant in the 1938 trial was not cleared last week. In 1936 Stalin called Henry Yagoda 'the flaming sword of the revolution'. That was after his work in organising the first of the big frame-up trials, that of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

But Yagoda had to be eliminated. So he was dragged into the later frame-ups, and shot in 1938. Now, the Supreme Court has refused to declare him innocent. It is impossible to separate this decision from the obvious falsity of the earlier Trials.

The Supreme Court decision shows the real crisis of the Soviet bureaucracy, and of the Gorbachev leadership in particular. In its desperate effort to maintain the stranglehold of the bureaucracy on the Soviet state, this parasitic caste has to find new ways to regulate the deep conflicts within its own ranks.

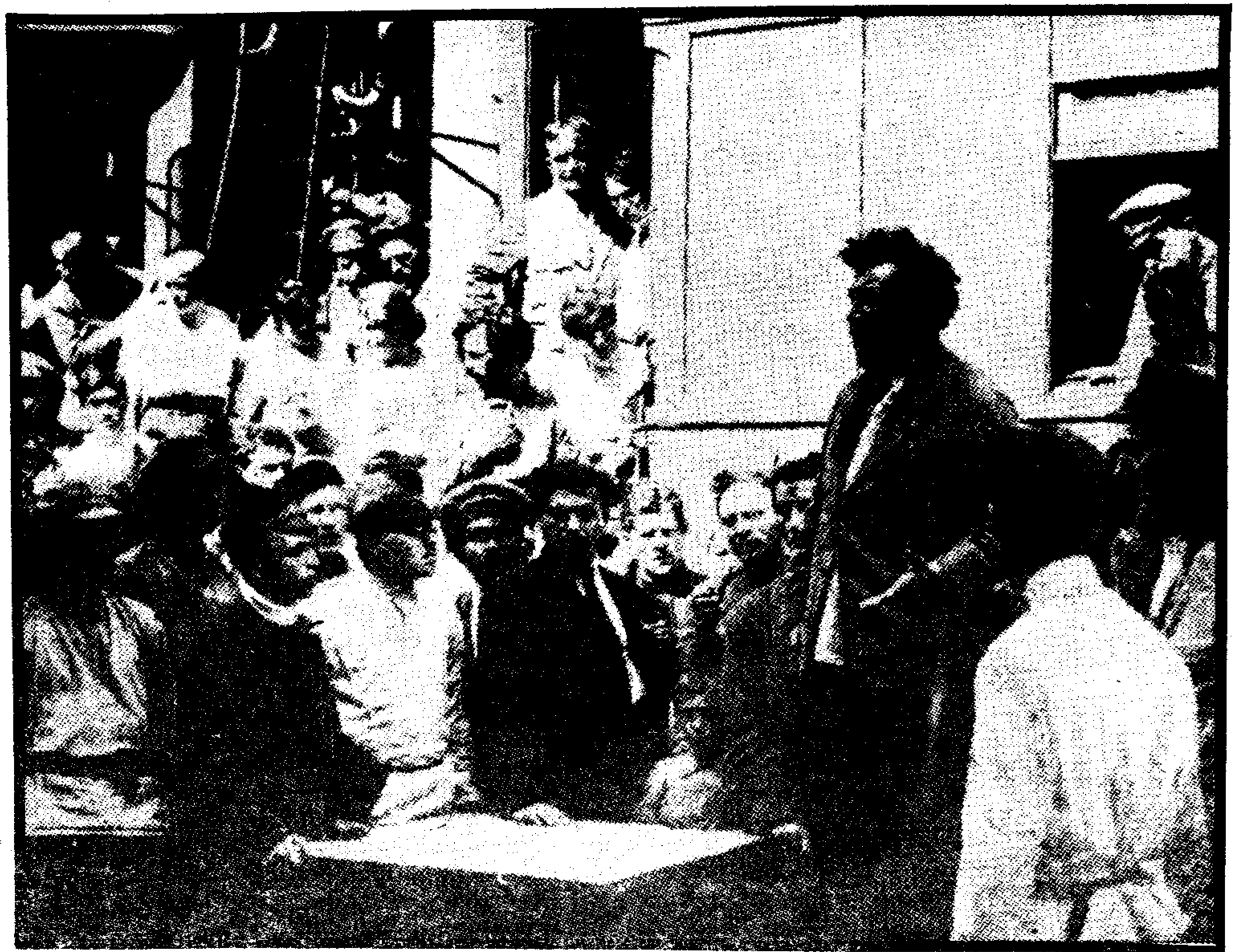
The days when this could be organised by the torturers and executioners of the secret police ended with the

death of the central figure of the entire structure, Stalin. The Stalinist apparatus can no longer cover up the destruction of revolutionary leadership and the betrayal of revolution in the old way.

As the press has pointed out, Bukharin's 'rehabilitation' has a special significance for the policies of Gorbachev. Bukharin's name was associated after 1924 with the line of conciliation of the richer peasantry. He provided the theoretical basis for Stalin's 'theory' of 'socialism in a single country', in its pre-1928 form.

But the fact that Left Oppositionist Rakovsky is now also cleared is even more significant. It is impossible to go on defending the lunacies of the earlier trials now that the 1938 trial has been declared false. The pressure to restore Trotsky to his place in the history of the Soviet Union becomes overpowering.

With that, the historical issues suppressed and evaded by the bureaucracy for 60 years will be up for discussion by a new generation of workers, intellectuals and youth.



Zinoviev

LETTERS

Please send your letters to Workers' Press, PO Box 745, London SW9 7QS. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

NHS Defence

PHYLLIS MAGINNIS (Workers Press 6 February) raises some important questions about the development of the struggle to defend the NHS.

She criticises Workers Press for not having placed demands on the Labour leaders and suggests that we should demand that in the House of Commons Kinnoch calls for the resignation of the Thatcher government.

She sees this demand as a step towards a Labour government that would, under the pressure of the working class, be forced to defend the NHS, if only for a limited period. Only when such a Labour government began to betray would it then be correct to call for the opening of the NHS books, to organise hospital occupations and to demand the nationalisation of the drugs industry under workers' control.

What is implied here? That the working class should wait until a Labour government comes to office (which is by no means certain) before taking such measures.

Those thousands coming into the fight are certainly not taking this advice: a movement is building up against the Tory government amongst health workers, car workers and others in which the central demand must be for a general strike to bring down the Thatcher government.

Are the Manchester hospital workers at Ancoats correct in re-occupying the hospital? Or should they have waited for a Labour government to come into office before they took such action? To ask the question is to answer it.

Thousands and thousands are saying: we are not prepared to wait for urgently needed operations and other treatment. Nor are we prepared to wait for dubious promises by Labour leaders. 'We need that treatment now' is what they are saying.

It is this deep social crisis to which the health workers are responding, a crisis that in turn explains the widespread sympathy amongst the working class and sections of the middle class for 'the defence of the NHS.'

Nurses and others are rapidly learning who their enemies are: not only the Tories but their defenders in the working class movement.

Many Ford workers have similarly learned that the main barrier to their fight is the treachery of their right wing and Stalinist union officials.

As we said last week, the health workers' struggle is in this regard taking off where that of the miners ended.

The danger is that we will seriously underestimate what is new in this situation and thereby dangerously underestimate the possibilities for building an alternative revolutionary leadership. I believe Phyllis Maginnis's letter exhibits just these dangers.

Geoff Pilling

Emergency cover in the NHS

IT is of utmost importance to revolutionaries in the struggle to defend the NHS that we are clear on the issue of emergency cover.

NUPE and COHSE, during the day of action on 3 February, made it clear that complete emergency cover would be insured in co-ordination with management, so no patients suffer

Backing this up with the arguments of professionalism among nurses (of self-sacrifice and accountability which has led to years of free overtime and disgustingly low wages.)

Health workers on strike must not accept the management's quota of emergency cover as happened on 3 February, where, in many cases, more nurses were on duty than usual!

If management refuses workers' control of emergency cover, should we not be for all-out action now?

If management has the right to decide on emergency cover then what effect, if any, will the strikes have? And, when the Fire Brigades' Union went out on strike in 1977, should we have argued against it so that 'respectable levels' of emergency cover were implemented?

Health workers must be in control of emergency cover.

Should we not be demanding independent strike action by all health workers as 3 February was clearly not enough!

We recognise that such a demand will not be implemented in the immediate future, but nothing short of such a demand can lead the struggle away from its existing limitations and leadership.

Thatcher will in no way change her overall economic strategy of privatisation and give adequate funds to the NHS. We must be clear on this.

And should we not be agitating that what is needed is a generalised attack on Thatcher and the demand for indefinite action by health workers could be the basis for creating such a movement.

One day strikes are not enough — indefinite action now!

Vangelis
North London WRP

PLO and the Fourth International

THE 'Group of Opposition and Continuity of the Fourth International' (GOCQI) recently published in Workers Press, the statement 'Hands off the Palestinian People' (Workers Press 23 January).

Comrade Charlie Pottins subsequently replied to the GOCQI statement, but failed to give a clear class analysis of these struggles and the PLO, claiming, for example, that the PLO 'has become synonymous (!) with the Palestinian national identity (!) and struggle (!)' (Workers Press 30 January).

Neither the GOCQI nor comrade Charlie explained that in the absence of revolutionary leadership, the Palestinian masses have been drawn to support the progressive content of the PLO struggle — namely the struggle for the democratic right of self-determination. Consistent Trotskyists defend this progressive content of the PLO (Sinn Fein, ANC etc), along with defence of these organisations when attacked by imperialism, without losing sight, for a single moment, of their anti-working class leadership and aims.

Yet in contrast to the GOCQI, comrade Charlie fails to recognise that the alien class leadership (bourgeois) and programme of the PLO does not represent the historic interests of Palestinian workers and that the PLO subordinates the political independence of the working class to the strategy and tactics of the bourgeoisie.

Internationally, workers' political independence can only be fought for by all those fighting to re-build the

Fourth International. This means building an independent Trotskyist party amongst Palestinian and Jewish workers, to lead the struggle for proletarian dictatorship as the only means by which to complete and safeguard the democratic task of Palestinian self-determination as part of an international struggle for world Socialism.

At the heart of the Palestinian revolutionary upsurge and the crisis of the Zionist State — manifestations of world Imperialist crisis — is the necessity to resolve the fundamental problem of leadership. And we must do this alongside campaigning in the labour movement in conflict with the venal pro-Zionist Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy, for international solidarity with the besieged Palestinian masses.

Comrade Charlie complained that the GOCQI did not prove its assertions that the Palestinian youth 'reject the counsels of despair and capitulations' of the PLO, or that the PLO has dragged the masses 'from one defeat to another'.

Certainly such proof would have strengthened the GOCQI statement. But comrade Charlie further weakened his position by defending the PLO's betrayal of the struggle for complete self-determination. No longer aiming for the destruction of the Zionist State, the PLO has capitulated to imperialist pressures. Struggling solely for the creation of a smaller 'Palestinian state', the PLO imagines such an 'abortion' could live in peaceful co-existence with the violent, expansionist and enslaving Zionist State.

In this way comrade Charlie indicates that he has learnt nothing from Ireland's historical experience, where partition in 1922 not only contributed to holding back the integrated development of the productive forces, but divided the market and most fatal of all, divided the Irish working class.

Comrade Charlie's defence of the PLO's reactionary 'two-State' utopia however, is nothing but the logical consequence of starting with the interests of the bourgeois PLO, and not with the necessity to fight at all times, in practice and on the literary front, for the political independence of the international working class. Anything less must always lead straight into open opportunism.

Norah Wilde

'Eve-ow' to Vanessa!

I WAS shocked when I was reading Workers Press (30 January) to turn the page and see a picture of that bloody Vanessa Redgrave.

For crying out loud I thought we had seen the last of her.

It seems we are haunted by her. One can't go to see films like: 'Comrades', 'Prick up your ears', without this bloody woman parading across the screen like some latter-day Joan of Arc.

So come on Workers Press let's give her the final eve-ow.

Surely if ever there was a case for positive discrimination it is to boycott bloody Vanessa Redgrave.

I was always led to believe that communists are stopped from working, but there seems no shortage of work for this comrade.

Yours in disgust,

Martin Goodrich

Correction

IN my letter dated 19 January, replying to comrade Pirani, I make the mistake of accusing Stalin of giving critical support to the

Kerensky government in the period of the Kornilov revolt — this, of course, is not so, and is a chronological mistake, Stalin giving such support in April 1917.

Would you therefore please inform Workers Press readers of 'is correction.

Tom Cowan

Who leads the Palestinians

CHARLIE POTTINS' letter in Workers Press, 30 January, disregards the different class forces within liberation movements in Palestine to argue for a political subservience by Trotskyists to the right-wing Fateh leadership of the PLO.

In advising support for the two-state solution against the supposed absurd purism of any other approach, Charlie writes 'the trouble with the "all or nothing" brigade is they deliver nothing'.

Such a contemptuous phrase is the same as that used by the labour bureaucracy who claim that their realisable, practical policies and prized negotiation structures are jeopardised by irresponsible militants who divert the working class towards unrealisable goals.

The PLO's defence against its critics (repeated by Charlie) takes a similar form to that of the British labour bureaucracy; these leaderships play the same class role, albeit in different circumstances.

Charlie by sleight of hand misrepresents the significance of working class representation inside the PLO.

The PNC, the highest body inside the PLO awards a mere one per cent of its seats to working class representation.

More importantly, the social composition of the PLO membership and support cannot in itself be accepted as the criterion by which we judge its class content.

If Charlie wants to support stagist strategy, or thinks that other leaderships can substitute for parties of the Fourth International in certain struggles, or if he seeks to re-interpret unconditional support for national liberation struggles as uncritical support — and these are the real issues he raises — he should address these questions openly, instead of concealing them in criticism of the GOCQI.

Organisations which call themselves Trotskyist but refuse to fight for their positions are (rightly) open to the charges of opportunism. Of marching under a hidden banner. The WRP has unfurled its banner — for Trotskyist parties in every country. Clearly Charlie does not want to see this banner planted in the Palestinian struggle!

No serious revolutionary Trotskyist party can approach the question of building internationalist solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation struggle and organising to carry that struggle forward, purely from the abstract assertion of formally correct positions.

But no serious Trotskyist could ever repudiate the role of criticism as an indispensable weapon in the fight to discover and build the concrete path to the realisation of the international goals of our Party.

The points of attack and the methods utilised by Charlie in his letter are the stock-in-trade of every anti-Trotskyist within the Palestinian solidarity movement in Britain.

The well-worn arguments

which Stalinists and liquidators such as Socialist Action have always used to channel initiative and prevent it going beyond the strategy and tactics of their petit bourgeois, class collaborationist concepts of anti-imperialist struggle.

Just as the ANC seeks state sanctions and sabotages efforts to build workers' sanctions, the PLO seeks cross-class alliances to pressure Western governments into support for UN resolutions and an international conference against any steps towards the building of working class solidarity.

Israeli goods could be blacked at British ports by trade union action, just as South African goods could be. Trade union links with the racist, scab Histadrut can be broken and links built with the Palestinian trade unions.

Paole Zion's affiliation and special status within the Labour Party can be opposed.

There are clear and obvious concrete paths to building working class international solidarity. Such actions are not compatible with any class-collaborationist compromise with the Zionist colonial state; for that reason they would never be supported, let alone advocated by the PLO leadership.

This is more so now that the struggle in the occupied territories is threatening to go beyond the control of the PLO. By the very fact that the working class is coming on to the stage as an independent force, as a leading force, in the struggle for liberation.

The confusion and sudden willingness to consider compromise on the part of imperialism and elements within labour Zionism express recognition and fear of the potential power of the Palestinian working class, and not of the PLO.

Zionist apologists who called in 1982 for withdrawal to the occupied territories, and now call for withdrawal from the occupied territories are expressing tactical differences with the right-wing Zionists who call for the expulsion of the Palestinian people.

Like the Tory Mellor they fear for the future of the Zionist state feeling that Israel would be more secure if the Palestinians were not provoked into an uprising which could fundamentally change the balance of forces in the Middle East.

The PLO have never had a strategy for the mass mobilisation of the population in the occupied territories, still less for the mobilisation of the Palestinian working class.

The significance of this is that such a strategy would have implications beyond the borders of the Zionist state. There are thousands of Palestinian workers in Arab countries especially in Saudi Arabia — a country from which Arafat's FATAH receives the greater part of its financial backing.

There may be some doubt whether this backing dictates Arafat's policies in a crude and direct way, but no doubt that the Saudi's backing would crumble if the mobilisation of the Palestinian working class was actively encouraged by the PLO leadership.

Charlie's attempt to confine Trotskyists to political subservience to the PLO leadership is at best an abdication of leadership.

In the context of the heightening struggle in Palestine, and the moves to a negotiated settlement on terms acceptable to the Zionist state and the USA (as well as Hussein's Jordan) this argument amounts to ensuring that the PLO leadership has a free hand within the British working class to represent a betrayal as though

it were the only option, and to prevent the possibility of any independent working class action in support of the Palestinians against any such betrayal.

It is the ongoing interest in ensuring this control of working class initiative that explains the special relationship between the old WRP under Healy and Arafat's FATAH. A history we should be capable of learning from.

Sue Wilson
WRP and Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine Steering Committee (in a personal capacity)
Louise Cerovecki
WRP

Aboriginal struggles

IN Workers Press of 20 January, Bronwen Handyside raised some important points about the Australian bi-centenary celebrations and Aborigines.

International coverage of aboriginal struggles, particularly in workers' papers, is an important contribution to that struggle.

I would, however, like to make two points relating to comrade Handyside's article.

1. The not uncommon mistake that... the only successfully completed genocide in the world was that of the Tasmanian aborigines...

Tasmanian Aborigines constantly battle to dispel the notion that they do not exist, particularly in their fight for land rights. The 1986 census listed the number of Tasmanian Aborigines as 6,716.

They are presently making land right claims for 13 sites, small surrounding islands and Oyster Bay, Kuti Kina Cave and Mount Cameron rock carving area and presently control 200 hectares on Bass Strait Island.

The case of Truganini is of vital importance to aboriginal history. Aborigines fought successfully to have Truganini's bones returned and to ceremoniously cremate her on 30 April 1976 at Cornelian Bay cemetery, Hobart 100 years after she died.

90 year old Mary Clarke, Truganini's great granddaughter attended the ceremony.

It is true that Truganini was the last 'full-blood' Tasmanian Aborigine, but her descendants and those of other Tasmanian Aborigines are still alive today.

Part of the armoury of reactionary white Australians is to deny their existence by claiming the only real Aborigines are 'full-bloods' and thus try to deprive Aborigines of assistance and land rights.

2. Spelling of terms such as 'aborigines', 'aboriginals' etc. by comrade Handyside and most white Australians and many government departments.

This point may appear trivial but Aborigines consider it part of their struggle for recognition as a separate people and nation.

Aborigines have demanded of governments that Aborigine be spelt with a capital 'A' and the term 'aboriginal' in lower case and be used as an adjective.

The term 'aborigines', i.e., refers to indigenous people of any country.

This demand was in opposition to a law (British) of 1901 used to deny Aborigines their identity as a race. This law, at the time, gave the Commonwealth power to legislate in relation to any race of people except 'aboriginal natives'.

Sigrid Borke
Communist League,
Australia

Personal Column

Peter Fryer

History and the Hurd Instinct

NINE years ago, shortly before she became prime minister and long before she began to extol 'Victorian values', Margaret Thatcher inaugurated the right-wing backlash against 'people's history' or 'radical history'.

I use these terms, for want of a better, to describe the very modest amount of 'history from below' that has trickled its way into our schools in the past 20 years or so.

God knows there's been little enough of it. It's been spooned out pretty grudgingly to those pupils who have at last been told that, besides a history of kings and queens, national saviours, heroes and heroines, and great leaders in peace and war, Britain has also had a history of the poor and powerless.

But however little has in fact been done to correct the traditional imbalance, that little has got right up the noses of Thatcher and her friends.

In 1979 Thatcher contributed a foreword to a pamphlet by Hugh Thomas (Lord Thomas of Swynnerton), 'History, Capitalism & Freedom', published by the Centre for Policy Studies.

This, it should be pointed out, is the principal right-wing think tank. It was founded by Lord Cayzer of British Commonwealth Shipping, a firm that is one of the biggest contributors to Tory Party funds. Recent contributors to the Centre include Beecham, the Rank Organisation, J. Lyons & Co., Plessey, the Hawker Siddeley group, Glaxo, and De La Rue.

In her foreword to Thomas's pamphlet, Thatcher summed up the big-business view of what sort of history should be taught to

British children:

'A whole generation has been brought up to misunderstand and denigrate our national history... Our population has been indoctrinated with considerable folly...'

'They are quite unaware that the Britain of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was admired and envied the world over for its liberty, for the comparative well-being of its inhabitants, for achievements in... manufacturing, for its subjects' enterprise, patriotism and social conscience.'

When she became prime minister, Thatcher appointed Lord Thomas of Swynnerton as her 'historian-adviser', and he has served her well by periodically calling for a more 'patriotic' orientation in history teaching.

This call was made more crudely by Sir Geoffrey Elton, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, who told the Historical Association in January 1986: 'We need more English history, and not this non-existent history of ethnic entities and women.'

Some history teachers have been expressing disquiet about the Thatcherite backlash in their subject. In 1984 there was a discussion on the matter in 'History Today', and the 'Times Higher Education Supplement' commented dryly that the called-for 'patriotic' history entailed 'an interpretation of the British experience that is expedient to our present leaders rather than faithful to the historical record'.

The latest move in the Tory onslaught on history was made last week by Douglas Hurd, the home secretary, who declared in a speech celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir Robert Peel:

'The amazing social cohesion of England, formed under Peel and the Victorians, is in need of repair. During the remainder of the twentieth century we have set ourselves the task of knitting it together again.'

Now, Sir Robert Peel was the architect, not only of the modern Conservative Party, but also of the Metropolitan Police, who were long known as 'Peelers'.

Peel created the Metropolitan Police by bringing about 'social cohesion' in London by

fiercely repressing the working class at a time when the ruling class lived in mortal dread of revolution. The Met was the prototype of the new system of bureaucratically controlled local police forces.

Then, as now, the 'Peelers' were detested by London's working people: for their freedom from democratic control, seen at their origin as a major break with tradition and a major blow at civil liberty; for their unbridled brutality, soon to be demonstrated on the skulls of London's working people.

Only by the 'hard' policing insisted on by Peel — who, incidentally, had done a stint as chief secretary for Ireland in the years 1812-1818 — did successive Victorian governments attain any semblance of 'social cohesion'. And again and again that semblance was shattered when the workers' struggle surged up in fiercely fought strikes and demonstrations.

Hurd's potted version of Victorian Britain as possessing 'amazing social cohesion' is an expedient myth. It does grave violence to historical truth.

It's no accident that Hurd instinctively comes forward with this myth of a vanished golden age of 'amazing social cohesion' precisely now: at a time of mounting working-class resistance to the sufferings that his government has visited on our people, on our sick and needy.

This latter-day worshipper of Sir Robert Peel wants to emulate his Tory hero by doing some 'repair' work to the 'social fabric' between now and the end of the century.

his is the clearest possible warning that we should expect further attacks on our civil liberties. It's a warning to us to keep our powder dry.

The working class of Peel's day resisted him and his class and everything they stood for. They resisted Peel, and they resisted his brutal 'Peelers'.

The working class of Hurd's day have the same capacity for resistance to the capitalist state — and to its thugs who think nothing of kicking a ward sister in uniform when she stands in their way (as we were told on TV last week by distressed nurse who had witnessed

the incident).

The working class of Hurd's day will also resist, and repudiate, his expedient myths. Our past is a past of class struggle, and not even Thatcher's home secretary has the power to write that central fact out of British history.

Songsters and saints

ONE or two readers have queried my use of the word 'songster' to describe the celebrated Afro-American musician Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter, whose surname I carelessly misspelt last week).

'Songster' isn't a derogatory term but a technical one, and perhaps I should have explained it.

'Songsters' was how the black American entertainers of the old generation — the generation before the blues singers proper — chose to describe themselves.

Most of them were born in the 1880s and 1890s, though a few were older still. Besides archaic blues, their repertoires generally included ballads, dance pieces, ragtime songs, minstrel show and medicine show numbers, parodies, comic songs, and even songs borrowed from the vaudeville stage.

Many of them recorded in the 1920s, and their work, much of which is now available on long-playing discs, wonderfully documents the popular music of the United States immediately before the advent of the Victrola wind-up gramophone and the radio.

The best account of the songster generation and its music is Paul Oliver's magisterial 'Songsters and Saints: Vocal traditions on Race records' (Cambridge University Press, 1984), which also, as its title implies, discusses the musical traditions of black preachers, gospel singers, and street evangelists.

The same title, 'Songsters and Saints', is used for two volumes of LPs — four discs in all — that were issued to illustrate Oliver's book. These are Matchbox MSEX 20012 and MSEX 20034.

BOOK REVIEW

BY BARRY FORDER

Beyond the Rhetoric
ed. P. Teague
Lawrence & Wishart
243pp — £6.95

This is a grotesque book. A group of 13 academics, of varying degrees of reformism, suggest ways in which the Anglo-Irish agreement can be made to work and plead for further British government economic assistance to the six counties.

Against a background of Labour councils queuing up to implement Thatcher's cuts, reading this book gives another indication of the degeneracy of reformism and Stalinism.

Coyly

The authors coyly conceal their political affiliations, but they are presumably a mixture of Labour Party and Communist Party members. Purporting to go beyond the rhetoric of nationalism and other 'ultra-left' stances, their central message is summed up neatly in the first essay: 'Northern Ireland is not unreformable.'

So they desperately scrape around looking for

ways in which British imperialism and the southern bourgeoisie can neutralise the republican working class in the north and resurrect the stinking corpse of the Social Democratic Labour Party.

They accept the Anglo-Irish agreement as the lesser of innumerable evils; and put forward suggestions about 'anti-poverty programmes' attracting investment and so on.

Reformable

But the central (unspoken) tenet of the book is of course that capitalism is reformable, that partition is here to stay and that republicanism and socialism are outmoded romantic throwbacks.

No attention is paid to republican prisoners, strip-searching, the H-blocks or the crisis of working class leadership north and south — these gentlemen are trying to find ways in which the working class can be controlled and pacified.

There are several essays on the economic situation in Ireland and these contain useful information on the disintegration of the northern economy, the huge subsidies paid by Britain, and the massive bank debts

incurred by the southern government — to the tune of £7 billion.

Thus southern workers are now being squeezed so that the interest payments on these debts can be paid.

But in the end the authors can only wring their hands and blame the nationalist working class — after all, if they weren't so militant the Unionists wouldn't be so right wing!

The authors exemplify the main characteristic of academic bourgeois thought — they are mesmerized by apparently eternal and fixed notions such as 'Protestantism', 'loyalism', 'partition', with no sense that the deep crisis of imperialism will lead to great working class struggles in which such divisions will be overcome.

I find something obscene about the use of sociological jargon in regard to the struggle in Ireland. For example: 'the mobilisation of mass politics is organised around the appeal to collectivities.'

This use of language actually embodies a totally elitist and bureaucratic wish to control the working class — hence the distaste shown for the 'romantic rhetoric' of republicans, who are

actually out there on the streets confronting British imperialism.

It is no accident that a book like this appears at this time. British imperialism and the southern bourgeoisie are both in a huge crisis and are driven together in the Anglo-Irish agreement in an attempt to smash the working class.

In such a context reformism and Stalinism will seek to carry out their traditional role of confusing and controlling the working class and allowing capitalism to maintain its grip. But this will fail.

Workers

It is clear from Simon Pirani's recent articles that republican workers are opening up the political discussion — great opportunities will be presented to Trotskyism to influence such workers.

Furthermore, conditions in Ireland are now better than they have been for 50 years to break protestant workers from Unionism, and to break southern workers from the reactionary Fianna Fail, and build a revolutionary Irish workers' party.

This is what the authors of 'Beyond the Rhetoric' fear.

RELEASE JAILED MINERS

SOUTH WALES Harbourough, Leicester.
DEAN HANCOCK:
Oakdale - Eight year sentence. Gartree Prison, nr Market Harbourough, Leicester.
RUSSELL SHANKLAND:
Taff Merthyr - Eight year sentence. Gartree Prison, Market

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.
PETER JORDAN, 15-year sentence, H22338.
EDDIE BUTLER, Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN MCCOMB, 17-year sentence, B51715.
HUGH DOHERTY, Life sentence, 338636.
VINCE DONNELLY, Life sentence, 274064.

MAIDSTONE
HM Prison County Road, Maidstone, Kent
SHAUN MCSHANE, B75898
DONAL CRAIG, 4-year sentence, L40579.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
PATRICK HACKETT, 20-year sentence, 342603.
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
NATALINO VELLA, 15-year sentence, B71644.
NOEL GIBSON, Life sentence, 879225.
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, Life sentence, 119085.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
MARTIN BRADY, Life sentence, 119087.
HARRY DUGGAN, Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES, 10-year sentence, 78647.
SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harbourough, Leics, LE16 7RP
RONNIE MCCARTNEY, Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE, Life sentence 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL, Life sentence, 338635.
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, 30-year sentence.
ROY WALSH, Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham
BRENDAN DOWD, Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES, Life sentence, 119034.
CON McFADDEN, 20-year sentence, 130662.
MICHAEL J MCKENNEY, 16-year sentence, L46486.
EDDIE O'NEILL, 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
PAUL KAVANAGH, Life sentence, 1888.
GERARD McDONNELL, Life sentence, B75882.
BRIAN KEENAN, 21-year sentence, B26380.
PATRICK McGEE, Life sentence, B75881.

DURHAM
HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.
MARTINA ANDERSON, Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER, Life sentence, D25135.

REMAND PRISONERS:
BRITTON
HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Britton, London SW2 5XF.
LIAM MCCOTTER, L883693
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, L883694.
LIAM QUINN, 49930

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:
CAROLE RICHARDSON, 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG, HM Prison Gartree.
G.(DANNY) McNAMEE, 25-year sentence, L48616, HM Prison, Parkhurst
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, 30-year sentence, HM Prison, Gartree
GERARD CONLON, 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
PAUL HILL, 462778, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
STEPHER HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
RICHARD McILKENNY, 509497, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
Wormwood Scrubs, Ducane Rd, London, W12 0AE.

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.

ROBSON'S CHOICE

Spot the difference

It is doubtful whether any class-conscious worker in Britain today has any lingering illusions about the so-called 'impartiality' of the BBC, especially after the year-long miner's strike which pumped lies and half-truths into the sitting room day in, day out.

The BBC has always spoken with His Master's Voice, as was made crystal clear as far back as 1926, but today it strikes a shriller note. As the crisis of the ruling class deepens its voice becomes more strident, its methods cruder.

Playwright Neville Smith reveals in the latest issue of Film and Television Technician that a BBC producer commissioned him to write a comedy about the security services in 1984. Smith spent 18 months researching and writing and, judging from much of his past work, I am sure the end product was

extremely funny and near the bone politically.

In any event, the play was not only formally accepted but enthusiastically received. A team was chosen to produce it and the first pre-production meeting took place. Four days later Smith was informed that Peter Goodchild, Head of Plays, 'won't wear it'. By way of explanation it was said that 'in the current political climate this play has no chance of being made'. Can there be any doubt that these supine, paper men know their place?

Another writer, Tom Pickard, wrote a drama called *Leftover People*. It was about the shipbuilding industry in the North East and also a celebration of the 50th anniversary in 1986 of the Jarrow March. Two years have passed and, as Neville Smith points out in the same article, the play has not been broadcast nor is it likely to be.

Political censorship is an essential feature of state broadcasting. In the past, however, especially during the period of the post-war boom, the ruling class was more relaxed about enforcing it. Today, on the other hand, faced with a rising tide

of working class (and middle class) militancy, the Tory government is prone to over-react. The legal farce surrounding attempts to suppress *Spycatcher* is a perfect example of this.

What it cannot directly suppress, as in the examples given (to which one would have to add Duncan Campbell's Zircon documentary which suffered the same fate) it frames information in the hope of altering or obscuring its essential content. An eloquent example of this technique was BBC Television News' presentation of the hospital workers' one-day strike a week last Wednesday.

Here was an issue on which the ruling class itself was seriously divided, therefore crude distortions of the days' events were not on. A subtler approach was required, if you can call it subtle.

Most readers will have assumed, as I did, that the main evening news programme on BBC1 was called *Nine O'Clock News* because it commenced at 9 o'clock. If that is so, it failed to live up to its name on 3 February 1988.

When millions switched on

their television sets — at 9 o'clock sharp or a little earlier — expecting the latest news of the highly successful hospital workers day of action, they were fed a **Party Political Broadcast** by the Conservative Party instead, extolling the National Health Service and trying, with Saatchi and Saatchi slickness, to persuade us that the service is as good as it is because the Tories have funded it lavishly, to a level unimaginable even in our wildest dreams.

Maybe the Tories — so remote and out of touch — really do believe their own lying propaganda. Nobody else does. So contradictory is this phenomenon, so divided is the ruling class on this particular issue, that 20 minutes after BBC1 broadcast the Tory 'commercial', BBC2 broadcast part five of the serial *Campaign*.

For those who may not have stumbled across it, the underlying plot of this sloppy soap opera, set in a fictitious advertising agency populated by neurotic bed-swappers (possibly just like the real-life Saatchi and Saatchi, I wouldn't know), is of interest.

The 'agency' wins a lucrative account. It is invited to handle the publicity campaign for a snap election on behalf of the government in power.

The first challenge it faces is to launch a nation-wide poster, press and TV campaign designed to show that the finance-starved National Health Service which cannot begin to meet the needs of the community and is on the brink of a terminal breakdown, is a modern, lavishly equipped service which is being subjected to slight pruning here and there in order to make it more efficient and thus improve patient care.

A 'nurse', so near the headline that she is prepared to say anything for a little extra cash, volunteers to read the advertising copy off the teleprompter knowing it is a damned lie. On the eve of launching their glossy campaign, unfortunately for all concerned, the nurse's

own ward is closed down to save costs.

To cut a long story short, the shock of her own predicament obliges the nurse to reconsider the deal she made with the ad agency. She withdraws permission for her image to be used in the campaign. General panic ensues, followed by some heavy drinking and a fresh change of partners . . .

The irony in all of this is risible. While BBC1 presented fiction in the name of fact, BBC2 presented fact in the guise of fiction. I doubt very much whether anyone in the audience under the age of 100 had any difficulty spotting the difference!

On Saturday, at 4.30p.m. (Radio 4), *Science Now*. At 7.45p.m. (Radio 3), Elgar's oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius*. At 7.45p.m. (Radio 4), *Saturday Night Theatre* presents *The Boys from Hibernia*, by Mark Power. At 9.45p.m. (BBC2), *Tutti Frutti*. At 10.45p.m. (BBC2), my pick of the week by forty lengths, *Second Breath*, (Le Deuxieme Souffle). Jean-Pierre Melville made this film in 1966 and cast Lino Ventura as the weary gangster about to tackle his last job. At 11p.m. (Radio 4), *Fallen Arches*, a new comedy series by Stephen Sheridan. At 11.30p.m. (Radio 4), *Lenin and the Rovers*, the 'gripping story of one man's fight to establish Britain's first communist football club'. At 12.40p.m. (C4), the irresistible *Kiss Me Deadly*, a film by Robert Aldrich from the novel by Mickey Spillane.

On Sunday, at 7.35a.m. (Radio 3), Piano Concerto No.5 in Schnabel's *Beethoven Concertos*. At 1.10p.m. (BBC2), a second chance to see Horizon's informative *The Greenhouse Effect*. At 6.15p.m. (C4), *The Princess and the Pea*, a fairy tale for children featuring Tom Conti and Liza Minnelli. Also at 6.15p.m. (Radio 3), *Desperately Seeking Superstrings*. Don't be put off by the desperately Hampstead title. This is a serious examination of one of the most outlandish/advanced theories in particle physics. At 7.45p.m. (BBC2), *Eyes on the Prize*, continues the story of the civil rights movement in the US. At 8.45p.m. (C4), Ten

Great Writers looks at the work of Henrik Ibsen. At 10.15p.m. (Radio 4), *The Year of Dreams* continues the review of the year 1988.

On Monday, at 6p.m. (C4), *Information Technology* looks at interactive video. At 7.40p.m. (BBC2), pianist Barry Douglas plays Rachmaninov and Shostakovich. At 8.10p.m. (BBC2), *Horizon* looks at the crisis gripping air traffic control over Britain. At 10.55p.m. (C4), a Moroccan film by Jilali Ferhati called *Reed Dolls*.

On Tuesday, at 12.25p.m. (Radio 4), part six of *The Spy Who Came In from the Cold*. At 3.30p.m. (Radio 3), more recordings of *Jacqueline du Pre*. At 6p.m. (C4), final part of *Drums of Asia*. At 6.30p.m. (Radio 3), the music of *Turkish Gypsies*. At 8p.m. (BBC2), a splash of colour live from around the world in this four-hour *Arena Special* entitled *All on a Mardi Gras Day* (continued on BBC1 at 10.45p.m.). This could be a welcome antidote to *Olympic Grandstand* which might otherwise have swamped the schedules and sucked our sanity down with it. At 10.35p.m. (ITV), *Inside the Bank of England*.

On Wednesday, at 2.30p.m. (C4), a delightfully sophisticated comedy made in 1935, *Hand Across the Table*. At 10.30p.m. (C4), the final episode of *Porterhouse Blue*.

On Thursday, at 8p.m. (BBC2), the generally informative magazine programme *Tomorrow's World*. At 9.30p.m. (C4), a film by John Davis set in West Belfast, *Acceptable Levels*. At the ridiculous hour of 12.35p.m. (C4), the Rene Clement classic *Les Jeux Interdits* (Forbidden Games).

On Friday, at 2.30p.m. (C4), *Equinox: Earthquake Country*. At 2.35p.m. (Radio 3), two Mozart string quartets. At 6.30p.m. (Radio 3), *The World on a String* featuring jazz fiddler *Stephane Grappelli*. At 8p.m. (Radio 3), the first of nine plays about church and state under the Roman Empire, by John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy, *Whose is the Kingdom?*. At 11.45p.m. (BBC2), Paul Newman directs Joanne Woodward in *Rachel, Rachel*.

Tom Scott Robson



Ralph Meeker (left) stars in the cult film noir 'Kiss Me Deadly' 1955. Channel 4, Saturday 13 February at 12.40 am.

IRELAND . . . R.U.C. . . . SHOOT-TO-KILL . . .

Stalker blows the whistle

THE Stalker Affair has opened the wound of shooting-to-kill — and that is welcome.

Barrister Anthony Jennings pointed out last week: 'More than 270 individuals have been killed by the security forces since 1969. . . 20 members of the security forces have been prosecuted for killings committed while on duty. One of them has been convicted of murder and one of manslaughter. . . This is a staggering acquittal rate of 90 per cent.' ('The Independent' 8 February).

Jennings' notes two landmarks in the encouragement of shoot-to-kill:

- Bloody Sunday 1972, in which 13 civilians were killed and none of the murdering paratroopers prosecuted;

- The 1975 killing by British army lance corporal Jones of Patrick McElhone, a 'totally innocent victim' according to

BY SIMON PIRANI

the murder trial judge. Jones was acquitted after stating in court that he suspected McElhone was a terrorist, although not one that posed an immediate threat. The acquittal was upheld in the House of Lords, where Lord Diplock said that McElhone, 'if he got away, was likely sooner

or later to participate in acts of violence'.

Their lordships thus sanctified shoot-to-kill back in 1975, when Labour was in office. Anyone who might ever do anything was fair game.

In any case, regardless of judicial niceties, MI5 had moved into Ireland, funding loyalist paramilitaries and organising terrorist killings like the Miami Showband massacre. They sought to raise the temperature of Britain's war against the IRA — and simultaneously destabilise the Labour government. All of this information was revealed last summer by ex-army man Fred Holroyd and Colin Wallace.

MI5's involvement was one of the main reasons that the Attorney General

Sir Patrick Mayhew decided not to prosecute Royal Ulster Constabul-

ary (RUC) officers over 'shoot-to-kill'.

Secrets

'Sources close to the security services' reckon that Mayhew's 'considerations of national security' almost certainly 'boiled down to a briefing by MI5, that prosecutions would blow open too many secrets about its role in northern Ireland' ('The Independent' 5 February).

How then should the labour movement respond to Mayhew's decision? The Rt. Hon Neil Kinnock has called in parliament for a judicial inquiry — knowing that even if it took place, it would never get to the heart of the matter, that is, the British state security that lies behind the RUC.

Kinnock does a crucial job for the RUC, MI5 and

British army — by giving the appearance that their conspiratorial violence is

subject to some sort of 'democratic' control in the 'mother of parliaments'.

The reality is the opposite. The 'moles' of MI5, the SAS assassination squads, and the RUC's sectarian killers-in-uniform call the tune. Kinnock provides the window dressing.

Inquiry

This is why Workers Press again calls for a labour movement inquiry into the state forces' secret operations — against Irish nationalist communities, against the labour movement itself, and indeed against the 1974-1979 Labour government.

Such an inquiry could bring together the mountains of evidence about

MI5 and special branch activities against the trade unions here. It could gather information on the situation in the north of Ireland and its relevance to the whole working class movement.

Ex-army men such as Holroyd and Wallace could be invited to give evidence to such an inquiry. So could many investigative journalists who are increasingly the target of Thatcher's 'big brother' regime. Trade unionists, and representatives of the Irish nationalist communities who have experienced two decades of state repression, could be asked to help.

Kinnock's call for a judicial inquiry is an evasion — because the capitalist state will never willingly expose its own workings in front of the working class. The working class movement must do that job itself.

The Nin Affair

BY TOM OWEN

MAY DAY 1987 represented the 50th anniversary of the bloody repression of sections of the Spanish and Catalan working class by Stalinism.

The 'May events' in Barcelona heralded the defeat of the Spanish working class and the military victory and illegal occupation by the fascist or nationalist forces which was to last for nearly 40 years.

The centrist POUM and the anárcho-sindicalist organisations, the trade union federation CNT and the political wing FAI were the victims of a vicious military provocation and then many of their leading cadres were assassinated by Stalinist agents.

Murdered

Amongst those who 'vanished' were Andres Nin of the POUM and the exiled Italian anarchists Berneri and Bardieri.

The CNT-AIT May Day rally commemorated all those murdered by the Stalinists and publicly accused the Negrin government of having allowed the assassination of Nin.

The general outline of events is well-known now to all who came to read them but no responsibility has been taken by either the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union



Volunteers leaving for the front to fight Franco

(CPSU).

Writing in 1970 the Spanish euro-Communist Claudin writes:

'For my part I will only add that the repression of the POUM and in particular the vile murder of Andres Nin, constitute the blackest page in the history of the PCE, which acted as accomplice in a crime committed by Stalin's secret service.

'We Spanish Communists at this time were un-



ANDRES NIN, founder and leader of the POUM

doubtedly put out of our right minds, like all the world's Communists at this time and for a long time after, by the monstrous lies that were fabricated in Moscow.

'14 years have passed since the 20th Congress of the CPSU yet the PCE has still not made any

self-criticism or helped to clear up the facts.

'Even if we assume — and in my view this is probably the case — that the leaders of the PCE cannot themselves contribute much more to what is already known, they could at least call upon the CPSU to make public the information which it alone possesses.' (The Communist Movement from Comintern To Cominform, Fernando Claudin, 1970, English Publication Penguin Books 1975; trans. Brian Pearce p. 711)

The May Day issue of Solidaridad Obrera (Workers Solidarity) the paper of the CNT testifies that this information has still not been released.

As Claudin goes on to say:

'The Nin affair belongs to the history of Spain, and not only to that of the USSR.'

It also belongs to the history of the world working class. The 'Nin affair' opens a veritable Pandora's box, the POUMistas were a particular target for Stalin's venom because of their denunciation of the Moscow Trials and the crimes of Stalin against the old Bolsheviks, and were denounced as Trotskyists and 'enemies of the people'.

Solidaridad Obrera quotes from Pravda 17 December 1936.

'In Catalonia, the elimination of Trotskyists and anarcho syndicalists has begun, it will be brought to conclusion with the same energy as in the USSR.'

If glasnost in the Soviet Union means 'openness' then why not some 'openness' about the criminal activities of Stalinism in Spain and elsewhere?

The reason for the silence so far is that the 'Nin affair' raises the spectre of Trotsky and of political revolution.

The crisis of Stalinism and imperialism has also placed the tradition and programme of Bolshevism back on the agenda.



Republican refugees fleeing from Catalonia to France following Franco's victory

DON'T LET HEALTH WORKERS FIGHT ALONE

GENERAL STRIKE ON BUDGET DAY

STATEMENT BY THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

THE fight of nurses, ancillary workers and other health workers to defend the NHS is the fight of every ordinary person in this country.

It is not striking health workers who are endangering patients. It is Thatcher who is destroying the health service. Only those with money will in future get proper treatment. The old, the poor, the unemployed will be left in pain to suffer and to die.

Health workers are

now in the front line of the struggle against the Tory government. They must not fight alone.

Fight

The union leaders must not be allowed to do to health workers what they did to the miners: leave them to fight alone against the Tory government. The full strength of the working class must be mobilised in their support.

The strike committees being formed in hospitals

should turn to the whole community with the aim of involving and organising workers both inside and outside the NHS to campaign for the maximum support for this fight against the Thatcher government.

It is these committees which must decide on emergency cover.

Those nurses who picketed Frickley colliery have shown the way forward.

● Health workers must turn to the miners who are fighting Tory plans to privatise the coal industry.

● They must win support from Ford workers who are locked in a bitter struggle to defend their wages, working conditions and their unions.

The trade union leaders have refused to lead this struggle against Thatcher. They want a movement limited to isolated protest actions.

Such protests will make no impression on a ruthless Thatcher government determined to smash the health service unions and introduce total privatisation.

If Thatcher remains in office millions will continue to suffer as waiting lists lengthen, desperately needed operations for sick children are cancelled and hospital and other services continue to be shut down.

While Thatcher butchers the health service Kinnoch and the right wing leadership of the Labour Party turn their fire on the left in the Party. We ask every Labour Party member to demand your leaders fight the

Enemy

Tory enemy.

The TUC general council meeting on 24 February must be met by the largest lobby of hospital workers, Ford workers and all those drawn into the defence of the NHS.

The very future of the NHS is now at stake. This lobby must say loud and clear to the trade union leaders: either lead a fight to the finish against Thatcher or get out of the way!

Budget day, 15 March, will see the Tories give millions to the rich and nothing for the cash-starved NHS. Sheffield nurses are right — Thatcher must be answered with a general strike on that day. This strike must be the start of a movement to bring the government down.

No other way is now left to defend the health service.

- Don't let the health workers stand alone!
- Lobby the TUC general council on 24 February!
- For a General strike on Budget day, 15 March, to defend the NHS!

Anti-cuts Scientist Arrested

MANAGERS of Riverside Health Authority in central London are facing legal action by a senior research scientist who was arrested and detained last week as a result of a campaign against hospital closures.

Dr Ray Bhatt, who works at Westminster Hospital's Child Health laboratories, claims that allegations of possible fraud are part of a campaign to try to silence him.

Had it not been for the fact that he was missed from an evening meeting he was due to attend, Dr Bhatt fears that he may have been held incommunicado for days and not five hours.

He had been arrested and held in Rochester Row police station following a call to the CID from a member of the district health authority who suggested a fraud had been committed.

Dr Bhatt had sent a letter to graduates of Westminster Medical School asking for their support for a campaign against the closure of Westminster Hospital and Westminster Children's Hospital and their proposed merger with the present St Stephen's Hospital in Fulham.

The letter, which was also sent to members of the House of Commons and the Lords, asked for donations for a support group to be sent to a box number at a local

BY HANNAH SANDERSON

post office box.

Because of an oversight, the mailing omitted to include an appeal signed by 10 Westminster consultants supporting the call and requesting support.

Dr Bhatt has a long record as an opponent of the health authority's plans to close the Westminster hospitals, and it is hard to believe the district administrators are not aware of this.

There are now fears among Riverside staff that the health authority's plans go much further than closing down the Westminster hospitals.

They are concerned that St Stephen's hospital, now earmarked for 'temporary' closure, may not be reopened and that hundreds of jobs may be wiped out.



WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Please send me information about the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Name date

Address

Trade Union Age (if under 21)

SEND TO:
Secretary to the Central Committee
PO Box 735, London SW9
7QS