

# Workers Press

Saturday 11 February 1989

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

20p Number 152

## BODIES FOR SALE

### THE BARBARITY OF CAPITALISM

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

**IN THE glossy magazine of the Sunday Times last weekend, the story was told of a slaughterhouse in which 10,000 pigs and 1,000 cattle carcasses a day are processed by people whose tools are razor sharp knives and saws. An average worker makes 20 cuts in the meat every minute, and their hands ache during the nights from the thousands of identical, repetitive slicing motions their hands make every day.**

In 1987 eighty-seven out of every 100 people who worked there, were injured or made ill by their work.

The accident rate increased in 1987, because the management sacked 2,340 of the 2500 workers for going on strike for better conditions.

The inexperienced workers who were taken on took some time to develop the skills not to carve themselves up at the same time as the meat. Their difficulties were augmented because the management had reduced the workforce by 500 to 2,000.

The factory is not in Paraguay or the Philippines, but in a small town called Sioux Falls in America.

The Sunday Times article is about a photographer who specialises in taking pictures of manual workers 'in a world where computers and robots are taking over.'

The management were reluctant to let him in at first because the American meat packing industry has been attacked by animal rights groups, who are upset over 'inhuman' butchery of the animals. The management were sensitive about such criticisms. The word 'inhuman' in this context takes on a whole new meaning.

The accident rate was reduced in 1988 to 56 per cent, by a combination of a \$5 million fine from the government and union activity. This means that more than one out of two workers who work in the factory for a year will suffer a serious injury - besides those who suffer from carpal tunnel syndrome, a crippling disease of the hands, caused by the repetitive motions of the job.

One of the strikers, Marianne

Sudenaga, who had had two fingers crushed in a sausage packing machine, went back to work at the slaughterhouse - she explains 'Because I didn't have any money.' She returned when her water was cut off because she could not pay the monthly bill.

What is the difference between these workers who go to work every day knowing that they have more than a 50 per cent chance of sacrificing some part of the bodies in order to be able to live, and the Turkish peasant who offers to sell his kidney to survive?

What does it mean when construction workers go to work in Britain knowing that when the Health and Safety Executive launched a recent safety 'blitz', it resulted in over 2,000 building

sites (one in four of those visited), being immediately closed down because the work involved 'a risk of serious personal injury.?'

And what is the difference between the Turkish peasant and the seafarers? 'The losses (of ships) are due neither to Act of God nor to bad weather', said an officer of the Nautical Institute at the time of Zeebrugge 'The blame lies with the owners and the insurers and the organisations ashore which fail to control standards of ship maintenance, ship manning, and safe ship operation.'

These workers are victims of the increasingly vicious play of the 'market forces' Thatcher hawks so keenly. It is a mystery why she wishes to legislate against the sale of donor organs when she is more

than happy to see workers selling parts (and sometimes the whole) of their own bodies every day in their jobs.

One of the reasons the American worker quoted above was forced to go back to work despite her fears about safety was because of the bill from the private water company.

Workers in Britain will face a further increase in their subjection to market forces under Thatcher when their own water system is privatised. We had a taster when the existing private water companies raised their prices by 30 to 50 per cent this year, 'as a result of the privatisation programme'.

This is the system that Kinnock plans to reform, and that Gorbachev wishes to peacefully co-exist

## Kola Mayekiso comes to Britain



The Workers Revolutionary Party banner on the 1987 March for Mayekiso

KOLA MAYEKISO, arrives in Britain from South Africa on a month-long Trades Union Congress (TUC)- sponsored speaking tour on 5 March.

She is the wife of Moses Mayekiso, general secretary of the South African Metal Workers Union (NUMSA), who is on trial by Pretoria on charges of treason to the South African state. The

horror with which Moses Mayekiso is regarded by the state forces is a response to his struggle for socialism, and against the Stalinist conception of a two-stage revolution in South Africa. At a time when Winnie Mandela can express regret for the retirement of PW Botha, and when the Soviet bureaucracy openly colludes with

imperialism and the ANC to betray the Southern African masses, Moses and all those like him point the way to the South African revolution.

Kola Mayekiso will be speaking at a meeting in the Assembly rooms in Lambeth Town Hall on Thursday 30 March at 7.30 p.m. Other details of her tour will be obtainable from the TUC.

# **Workers Press**

## **The largest blank spot**

TWO WAYS OF describing developments in the Soviet Union today are around in left-wing circles. One says that Gorbachev is somehow struggling to get rid of the Stalinist bureaucracy, the other that he is leading the restoration of capitalism in the land of the October Revolution.

These opposed conceptions are united in their denial of any role to the Soviet working class. Anyone inclined to believe either of them would do well to get hold of the February, 1989 issue of the journal 'History Today'.

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It carries a translation of an interview with Yuri Afanasyev, head of the Moscow History and Archives Institute since 1986. He was a delegate to the 19th Conference of the CPSU, but was only elected after a bitter struggle.

Referring to the Stalin era, Afanasyev declares: 'It is impossible to identify the heritage of a past which is hanging like a millstone round our necks without looking back, without history'.

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In fighting against the distortion of Soviet history, he is quite clear on its cause. 'Stalin's regime was unnatural, illegal, and contradicted the ideas, traditions and history of socialism. It was imposed by force, using mass criminal repressions. To make it appear legitimate, there had to be a fake history.'

Afanaseyev makes clear that he is no Trotskyist. But he knows he is in a fight. 'My belief is that Stalinism is by no means a thing of the past,' he tells his interviewer. 'Over the 71 years of Soviet power, we have failed to attain the task put to us by the founders of socialism: the alienation between the people and the means of economic production have not yet been overcome.'

'One cannot forecast the ways socialism will develop without a deep analysis of what has been achieved so far...without a true history of socialism in the Soviet Union since 1917. When we are told that what we have is real socialism we begin to think the goal has been attained. This is designed to lull society and drag it back into the past.'

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Afanaseyev puts his finger on what he calls 'the largest blank spot' of Soviet history: he demands 'an unbiased and scientific biography of Trotsky.' Unlike other Soviet historians, he is not only concerned with putting the record straight on Trotsky's role before his exile from the Soviet Union.

'Nor should we overlook Trotsky's active criticism of Stalin and Stalinism when he was in the Soviet Union and then abroad,' he says.

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Whatever disagreements Trotskyists might have with people like Afanaseyev, we must salute their struggle to uncover the truth about the degeneration of the first workers' state and the destruction of the movement established under Lenin's leadership and continued under that of Trotsky.

Its refusal to compromise expresses the growing pressure of the Soviet working class and especially its younger sections. This is the force which is going to sweep away the bureaucracy, including the wing led by Gorbachev. Whether he recognises it yet or not, Afanaseyev's historical work is clearing a path for this force to triumph.

## **WORKERS PRESS FIGHTING FUND**

In so far: £475.50

THIS is a very good start. But I must remind you that February is short month. At the time of writing there are only 21 days to collect the £1,524.50 outstanding. Please make a special effort.

We must understand that Workers Press has become important internationally. Comrades in France at the weekend had much to say about the paper. They were interested in Chris McBride's article about the problems faced by young people and the proposals for football supporters' ID cards. Youth unemployment, homelessness, lack of skills, problems of leisure activities - these are not British questions. I couldn't help thinking that it would have been good they had been able to attend the seminar (see report below).

Their enthusiasm was impelling. We must prepare ourselves to carry out our plans for the new Workers Press as soon as possible. Make sure to collect the fund for this.

Dot Gibson

Send donations to: Workers Press Fighting Fund,  
PO Box no 735, London, SW9 7QS

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## **CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MASSACRES IN IRAN AND IRAQ**

Picket the Iraqi Cultural Centre, Tottenham Court Road  
Saturday 25 February, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.  
Nearest tubes, Goodge Street and Warren Street

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## **REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY 3**

Special issue on the Fourth International in the Second World War available from INDEX BOOKCENTRE, £2.50  
Copies of Revolutionary History 1 & Revolutionary History 2 still available from: Barry Binteant, 111 Riverside Close, Mount Pleasant Hill, London E5

On 3 February Katie Kearney died, aged 24. She had been ill for only two weeks.

Joe Kearney, her father, has been our comrade and friend in the Workers Revolutionary Party, and its forerunner, the Socialist Labour League for 26 years. He is in the Crawley branch. Our deep sympathy goes to Jo and Chris, her mother, brother Steve, her small son, grandparents, relatives and many many young friends who attended her funeral on 8 February.

## **WORKERS PRESS SEMINAR**

BY TRUDI JACKSON

A TWO-DAY seminar was called to discuss the Party's plan to launch the new-style Workers Press, a development considered of the utmost importance as the Party begins to concretise the change in its relationship with the working class.

The struggle for the re-appropriation of Marxism and Bolshevism against Stalinism, since October 1985 when the corrupt Healy leadership was expelled, was outlined by comrade Bronwen Handyside, Workers Press editor, in her opening report.

Developments in the Preparatory Committee for an International Conference for the Rebuilding of the Fourth International expressed beyond doubt the need for the new paper.

Its international significance could not be over-emphasised. Contacts with people moving towards Trotskyism from all parts of the world are taking place.

Two of the many vital issues which were fought out over the weekend were: 'How is revolutionary theory developed?' and 'What is culture, as against the Stalinist idea of proletarian culture?'

Professionalism in producing the new Workers Press is a collective struggle which applies to every Party member and sympathiser. This is also a political question. Revolutionary content and form are inseparable.

Everyone was truly inspired by the level of the contributions during the last session, and it was agreed that some should be written down and published so that all readers of Workers Press could participate.

# DEFEND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS FIGHT THE TORIES!

## WORKERS PRESS PUBLIC MEETING

Sunday 19 February

3pm-7pm

Edric Hall, Southbank Poly,  
103 Borough Road, London SE1  
(nearest underground Elephant & Castle)

CRECHE/VIDEOS/REFRESHMENTS

Tickets £1 (50p concessions)

BY SIMON PIRANI

THE DEFENCE campaign for the 'Tottenham Three', young blacks framed up and jailed after the Broadwater Farm riots, will be represented at the 'Workers Press' public meeting on the defence of democratic rights, in London next week.

We hope that all those resisting the Tory onslaught will find a voice at the February 19 meeting. In addition to previously advertised speakers, the newly-formed national football supporters' campaign against identity cards are expected; so are the United Campaign Against Strip Searching.

One of our main speakers is the leading barrister Michael Mansfield, who defended the Brighton bomb trial, the Orgreave miners and many other important civil liberties cases, who will speak on the implications of the Tory abolition of the 'right to silence'.

We have had problems organising our platform because of the sheer scope of the meeting's theme. This includes not only deep-going legal changes, attacks on unions, police-state measures against the black and Irish communities, but also the introduction of the Tory 'national curriculum' in education, the threat to liberties inherent in the poll tax etc.

As well as platform speakers, we intend to have a full discussion at the meeting, following which the Workers Revolutionary Party will decide how to pursue the issue of democratic rights in the coming months.

One thing is certain: wherever

### SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- Cliff Slaughter (Workers Revolutionary Party)
- Michael Mansfield (barrister)
- Eddie Caughey (Irish Republican Prisoners Campaign)
- Martin Walker (author, 'A State of Siege')
- Peter Fryer (author, 'Staying Power')
- Geoff Hartnell (Durham sacked miner)
- George Hall (Wapping strike leader)
- Phil Edwards (teacher)
- + speakers on immigration laws, poll tax, soccer ID cards, strip-searching
- Chair: Dot Gibson (WRP)

there are actions in defence of democratic rights, we aim to ensure that Workers Revolutionary Party contingents are present and our draft programme - the last part of which is published in this week's Workers Press - is being distributed for discussion.

Put these dates in your diary:

• **Saturday 18 February:** march against racism in Camden, north London. assemble Camden Town Hall, Judd Street at 11 a.m., march 12 noon to Camden Town.

• **Saturday 25 February:** National student demonstration against the loans system, also the Greenwich Action Campaign Against Racist Attacks is

demonstrating through Woolwich, south-east London.

• **Monday 6 March:** vigil to commemorate the anniversary of the Gibraltar shootings, Kilburn Square, London, 6.00 p.m. Meeting on Republican life prisoners in Brent Irish Centre, Salisbury Road, London NW6, 7.30 p.m.

• **Tuesday 7 March:** meeting on Republican life prisoners in Deptford Town Hall, London SE14, 7.30 p.m.

• **Saturday 18 March:** Irish in Britain Representation Group march for justice and freedom. Assemble Whittington Park, Archway N19, 12.00 midday. The march will join up with a march from Wood Green for the 'Tottenham Three'.

• **Saturday 18 March:** national march against the poll tax in Glasgow.

• The London area of the Workers Revolutionary Party has arranged two series of classes.

The first is in central London, directed particularly to students (but open to all members and supporters) who wish to learn more about Marxism and the Fourth International.

The second, in Brent, will deal with issues raised for Marxism by the Irish revolution.

Lectures on Marxism, given by Cyril Smith, followed by discussion. All on Fridays at 7.30 p.m.

1. What is communism? 24 February.

2. Marxism and nature, 17 March.

3. How communism will be achieved, 21 April.

4. What is revolutionary leadership?, 19 May.

All in Room 9, Friends Meeting House, Euston road, London, NW1 (near Euston Station).

A series of meetings on Marxism in Ireland.

All at 7.30 p.m.

1. Socialism and nationalism in Ireland, Thursday 23 February.

2. British workers and Ireland - from Karl Marx's time onwards, Wednesday 22 March.

3. Communists and the armed struggle, Wednesday 26 April.

All at the Brent Irish Centre, Salisbury Road, London NW6 (nearest tube, Queens Park).

• *A note to our readers: we hope to run this column regularly. Please send details of your activities.*

### WRITE TO WORKERS PRESS

WORKERS PRESS welcomes letters on all subjects, but please be as brief as possible. Only in exceptional cases are we able to print letters longer than 200 words.

We also welcome new contributors of articles or reviews.  
Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

### 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

## LIVING MORE EXPENSIVE FOR LOW PAID

THE low paid face increases in the cost of living higher than that experienced by high income groups, even though their pay has been rising more slowly.

The December 1988 Low Pay Price index, shows that prices for the low paid rose by 6.5 per cent during the year. While this was less than the official Retail Price Index Figure (6.8%), it was above the increase in prices affecting the high paid (6.4 per cent), many of whom have received generous pay increases.

The main reason for the upward spiral in the Retail Price Index, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer Neil Lawson admitted would soon reach 7 per cent, is the rise in interests rates.

These have increased by 44 per cent during 1988.

If the Chancellor goes ahead with his threatened plan to take mortgage costs out of the Retail Price Index, the bias in inflation in the poorest householders will become still more evident. But rent and rates, which affect the low paid hard, are also rising faster than inflation - they were up 8 per cent last year. The rate of inflation affecting the low paid is expected to increase in the months ahead. The December index does not show the full effect of recent sharp rises in public transport fares (already up by more than inflation during 1988.)

## VIRAJ MENDIS

BY BOB MYERS

THREE thousand people marched through Manchester last Saturday opposing the deportation of Viraj Mendis and calling for an end to all deportations. The march went through the council estates and into the city centre, lined on both sides by columns of mounted riot police every 30 feet or so apart.

These helmeted, visored, radio-controlled goons looked down with unconcealed hatred, especially at the two Republican marching bands from Glasgow.

Rallies were held at the start and at the end of the march. In Manchester a NALGO worker, Francis Okanlami, is also now resisting deportation and separation from his wife and daughter. Manchester council is being asked why it has done nothing to investigate rumours of dozens of raids and arrests by immigration officials in the last week.

The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign continues to meet to ensure the safety of Viraj and to defend supporters of the campaign who now face court cases. Several members are on trial at this moment and face possible prison sentences arising from incidents where the police are claiming obstruction and assault. The campaign is launching a petition calling for the dropping of all charges. Contact for information VMDC, North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Hulme, Manchester.

# THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT - AN ONSLAUGHT ON DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

BY BERNARD FRANKS

THE PUBLIC Order Act 1986 is an onslaught on the rights of individuals, groups and organisations. The rights to meet publicly, to march, to picket, and to associate have been greatly restricted.

The Act gives the police vast powers to harass, suppress demonstrations and close down and disperse meetings, on the basis that criminal offences are being committed, or may be committed, by the organisers and participants, merely by the act of gathering together at a certain place or time.

In practice it means that union, community or social action can be deemed illegal on the say-so of an individual police officer.

The police have used it only sporadically, and not always successfully.

Millions of workers and community members who have not been involved in any dispute with authority, will know it only by hearsay.

They probably believe, mistakenly, that it applies only in major confrontations of great size and significance, like the mass picketing at Wapping.

**'The Public Order Act 1986 is an onslaught on the rights of individuals, groups and organisations. The rights to meet publicly, to march, to picket, and to associate have been greatly restricted.'**

Such illusions will be rudely shattered. The Act applies to very small groups and even individuals. It will be used against those who cannot see how their action could possibly be breaking any law.

There can be no apology, therefore, for once again detailing the dangers, and for asking all labour movement organisations what they are doing to warn workers about, and to fight, this insidious piece of legislation.

The Act came into force in two stages; on 1 January and 1 April 1987.

It was prompted by the Southall riots in 1979, developed and strengthened during the 1984/5 miners' strike, and rushed onto the statutes to use in the News International dispute in January 1987.

Section II of the Act requires that 'six clear days' of written notice be served at the local police station, of all marches and processions intended to:

- (a) demonstrate support for, or opposition to, the views or actions of any person or body;
- (b) publicise a cause or campaign; or
- (c) mark or commemorate an event.

Excluded from this rule are processions commonly held (Lord Mayor's show, funerals organised by a bona fide funeral director), also genuinely spontaneous actions where 'it is not reasonably practicable to give advance notice'. Date, time and route must be supplied along with the name and address of the organiser.

Any deviation from the plans given to the police, or to any changes they decide, is an offence leading to a fine of up to £1,000.

Sections 12 and 14 of the Act enable a senior police officer to impose a vast range of conditions, arbitrarily, on marches, processions, pickets, vigils, public meetings and the like.

The excuse can be - that the proposed activity may result in a public disorder, damage to property, disruption to the community; or is an act to stop someone doing something they have a right to do, or to make them do something they have a right not to do.

The imposed conditions may involve anything that the police officer concerned happens to think of.

In regard to processions, this could include route changes, bans on banners and leaflets, changes in time and place of assembly, and restrictions on the number of those participating; such decisions to be taken at any time beforehand, or at any instant during the event.

**'As well as earlier provisions for banning all demonstrations in an area for up to three months, a new power is provided in the Act for the Police Commissioner... to prohibit a particular type of demonstration or a single demonstration.'**

For public assemblies advance notice is not required, however, if the police officer concerned professes to see the same sort of dangers that apply for demonstrations: 'he may give directions imposing on the persons organising or taking part in the assembly such conditions as to the place at which the assembly may be (or continue to be) held, its maximum duration or the maximum number of persons who may constitute it, as appear to him necessary to prevent such disorder, damage, disruption or intimidation'.

Organisers or participants failing to comply with any such direction, are liable to arrest by a uniformed constable, without a warrant, and, on conviction, to a maximum of three months in prison, a £1,000 fine, or both.

As well as earlier provisions for banning all demonstrations in an area for up to three months, a new power is provided in the Act for the Police Commissioner, or an Assistant Commissioner, to prohibit a particular type of demonstration or a single demonstration.

The Act states: 'If at any time the chief officer of police reasonably believes that, because of particular circumstances existing in any district or part of a district, the powers under section 12 [for imposing conditions] will not be sufficient to prevent the holding of public processions resulting in serious public disorder, he shall apply to the council of the district for an order prohibiting for such a period not exceeding three months the holding of all public processions (or of any class of public procession so specified) in the district or part concerned'.

The council will require the consent of the Secretary of State to issue such an order.

Organising or participating in a march knowing that a banning order is in force can lead to a fine of up to £1,000 under the new criminal offence of 'knowingly participating in a prohibited procession'.



Wapping residents take to the streets

**THIS IS the third and final part of the Workers Revolutionary Party's Draft Programme. The first two parts cover the WRP's socialist aims, the foundations of socialism, the bases of the programme, the basis for and the rebuilding of the Fourth International, the question of women and the family, the capitalist crisis and its impact on Britain, democracy, parliament, the workers' movement and Labour Party, the socialist revolution and the questions of imperialism and war.**

**This final part is our Programme of Action to fight the Tory government.**

**The Draft is at present being discussed in the branches of the WRP, and it will be considered, together with amendments, by the party congress at the end of March. We want to have the widest possible discussion on the Draft, and readers of Workers Press are particularly invited to send us their comments for publication.**

**We would urge you, if you missed the issues of our paper containing the first two parts of our Draft Programme, to write to us and request copies.**

**Write to: WRP, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS.**

### **13. AN ACTION PROGRAMME TO FIGHT THE TORY GOVERNMENT**

In opposition to the reformist and Stalinist leaders, who are paralysed and reduced to despair by the Tory attacks, the Workers Revolutionary Party advances the following programme of action to unite all workers, and others, drawn into struggle against the Tory government.

**Occupy to resist unemployment! Nationalise under workers' control! Work out an international plan!**

The Tory government has presided over a massive increase of unemployment. It has tried to mask the full extent of job losses with hundreds of thousands of low-wage temporary job schemes.

In the south, there are temporary labour shortages - though only in those industries which workers are shut out of by appalling working conditions and crippling living costs.

And this, too, is testimony to the destruction of well-paid secure jobs by the capitalist crisis.

The threat of closures should be met with the occupation of workplaces, controlled by occupation committees elected by the workforce, not by bureaucrats. Such occupations should be backed by the widest possible support committees.

To defend jobs threatened by the buying and selling of companies behind workers' backs, we say:

**Open the books, the secret computerised records and data banks in the City of London!**

**Investigate the profiteers' 'business secrets'! Stop the capitalists' fraud and robbery!**

We are for the same methods to oppose privatisation of the nationalised industries.

We do not defend the bureaucracy imposed by the capitalist state on them. We call for control of these industries by committees made up of workers and, where appropriate, those served (i.e. patients and relatives in the health service, parents and students in

education, passengers in the transport industry etc).

Thatcher's closures and privatisations are hitting whole industries, and resistance means, not pacts by bureaucrats, but the building of rank-and-file alliances across the normal trade union divisions.

For example, we are for the coal-rail-power alliance, through the organisation of workplace committees.

To halt the blight of unemployment, the WRP is for a programme of public works, with permanent jobs at full rates of pay.

To halt the economic crisis and the misery it causes, we are for nationalisation of the major industries, without compensation to the capitalists, under control of workers' committees - and, together with this, the abolition of the stock exchange and the capitalist credit institutions, the nationalisation of the banking system, and the creation of a central state bank.

We are for putting industry and the country's economy under the control of workers' committees.

With the growth of both British- and foreign-owned multi-national companies, workers in Britain are thrown out of work while employers frequently re-invest their capital in impoverished countries with masses of cheap labour - usually returning only if no-strike deals are guaranteed.

While British industries are wrecked by profiteering, skills are discarded which could be used to tackle the horrific problems of poverty and famine that capitalism imposes on humanity.

The workers who occupied the Caterpillar tractor factory in Lanarkshire in January 1987 pointed the way forward.

They built a tractor during the occupation and demanded that it be sent to poverty-stricken Nicaragua.

The WRP proposes this be taken further: we are for an international plan, worked out by scientists and economists co-operating with the labour movement, under which the resources of the industrialised countries will be applied to solving the problems of starvation and poverty.

The British working-class movement, in conjunction with workers all over the world, could then fight for the implementation of this international plan.

These aims - nationalisation, the dismantling of the capitalist banking system, international working-class co-operation to overcome famine and poverty - will never be fought for by Labour leaders who have dropped all calls for nationalisation from their programme, or by the union bureaucrats who block working-class mobilisation against Tory privatisation.

These aims will be fought for and won only by the working class in the course of a revolutionary struggle for power.

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**Fight cheap labour! No co-operation with the MSC! Unionise the scheme workers and unemployed! Defend living standards!**

For the Tories, unemployment is a means of weakening the working class and cutting its living standards.

Cheap labour schemes for young people have become an enormous industry. Now older unemployed workers on the ET schemes are forced to provide their labour free to employers, who are even exempt from paying tax on it. The workers themselves receive little more than the 'dole'.

The schemes act as a catalyst for the growth of cheap labour. Faced with mounting cuts in benefits, millions who once worked in manufacturing and service industries now turn to the 'black economy' to sustain their families.

There is a gigantic increase of 'illegal' work, part-time work, and home work by women.

The Labour and trade union leaders actively co-operate in the drive towards cheap labour. They founded the MSC and always fully supported the schemes. They have helped introduce low wages into sections of industry formerly dominated by trade union rates, with the use of single-union no-strike deals.

Within the trades unions, we demand: no co-operation with the state and its cheap labour plans! Withdraw all TUC and trade union representatives from the MSC and other similar bodies!

We are for union organisation of those on cheap-labour schemes, workers in the 'black economy', and the unemployed. This fight for organisation will be waged against the bureaucracy,

which is only interested in increasing membership to the extent that it improves income from dues.

We are for the defence of all trade union rights - to organise unions, strike, picket, take solidarity action, etc. - and of standards and conditions won by the unions.

**Resist 'flexibility', single-union deals, no-strike clauses, legally-binding contracts and all means used by union leaders to tie workers' hands in the fight to defend living standards!**

To defend living standards, against wage-cutting and inflation which is rising steeply again, we raise the demand for a sliding scale of wages and hours.

We advance this both as a means of protecting workers' living standards from the impact of capitalist crisis and as part of the struggle for socialism - and in the opposite spirit to the reformists' proposals for 'early retirement', 'jobsharing', etc. as ways of smoothing over the crisis.

**Defend the unions! Drive out the bureaucratic collaborators!**

Each new blow the Tory government strikes against trade union organisation, especially against the legal right to organise, is helped by the trade union leaders' cowardly treachery.

No sooner had the decision to resist the anti-union laws been taken at the 1982 Wembley TUC conference, than this decision was abandoned by the TUC leaders, including the 'lefts' - with the sole exception of miners' leader Arthur Scargill.

**The WRP calls for all-out resistance to the anti-union laws!**

**Demand that every union official commits himself or herself to this stand! Demand that everyone standing for office give a pledge of non-co-operation with the laws before all elections!**

**No taking state money for ballots or any other union function! No collaboration in any state body! Drive out those leaders who break decisions to resist the laws!**

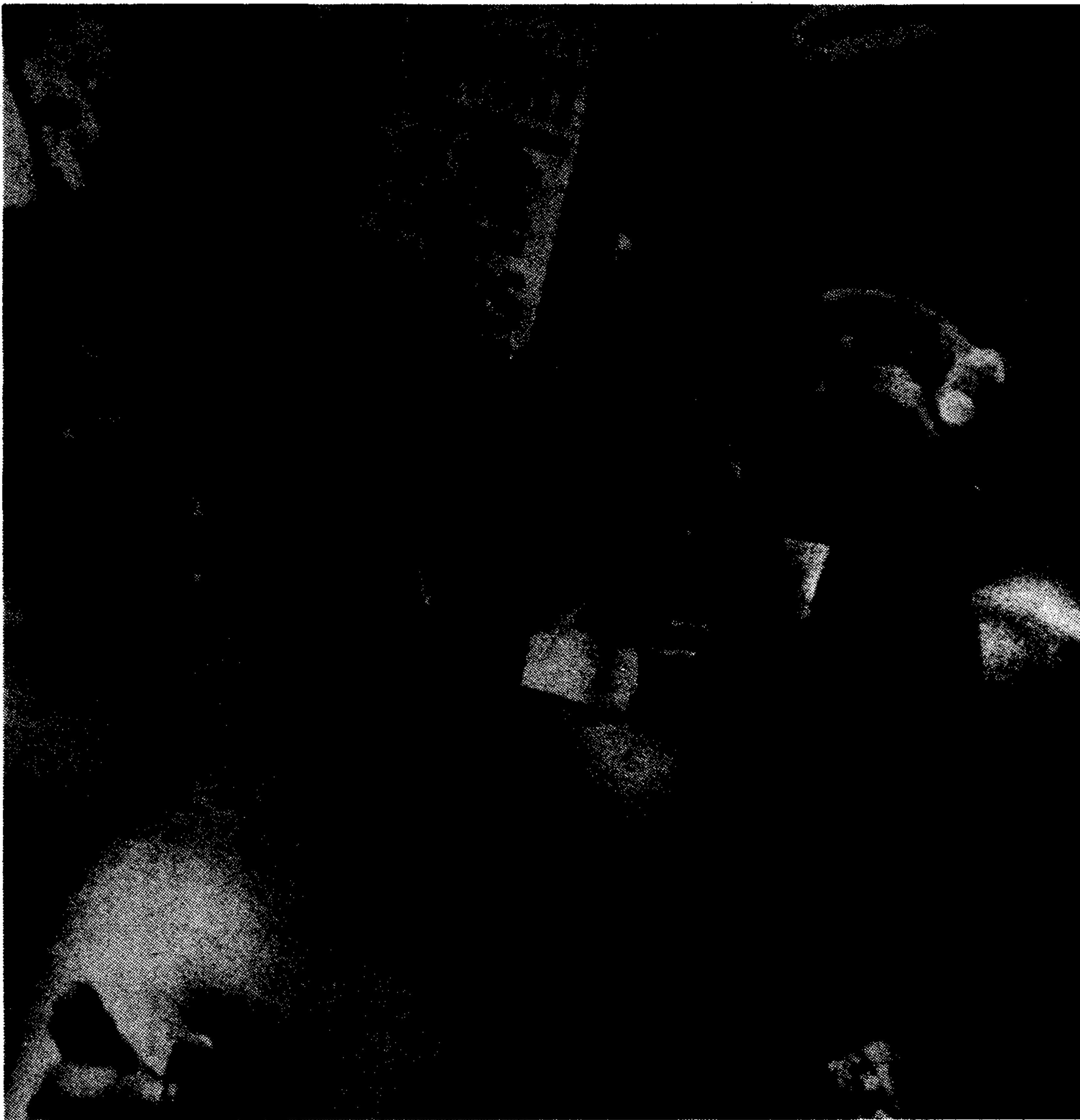
To implement these measures, to achieve the complete independence of the unions from the state, means driving the treacherous bureaucrats out of the unions once and for all.

In the course of this fight, we advance demands for the fullest workers' democracy in the unions.

This means full accountability of officials; regular election and recall of officials; an end to appointed positions; payment of the average skilled workers' rate to officials, and not a penny more; the scrapping of all privileges; investigation by rank-and-file committees of the frequent corruption scandals and misuse of funds.

The difference between the TUC leaders and those union leaders who advocated scabbing on major strikes and walked out of the TUC (Hammond of the EETPU, the UDM leaders) is one of degree, not one of principle.

Hammond and Co. have gone down the road of collaboration furthest and fastest. We oppose the TUC leaders' attempts to patch up a renewed 'unity' with them.



**'A future to look to for young people! Build a socialist youth movement!'**

In the miners' union we oppose the attempts, headed by the Stalinists, to re-unite with the UDM.

In the electrical industry, while we are for working wherever possible among those who remain under Hammond, the WRP sides with the EPIU leaders who rejected class-collaboration, scabbing, and no-strike deals.

But we oppose any illusion that the EPIU can base itself simply on the traditions of union militancy, which are by themselves insufficient in today's crisis.

The task in the electrical industry, as in others, is the building of union organisation based not on 'loyalty' to the TUC (which can only mean loyalty to the bureaucracy), but on the independence of the working class from the state and a break with the reformist bureaucracy, as part of the struggle for working-class power. The unions are defensive organisations; the bureaucracy tries more and more to turn them into means of controlling and policing the working class.

In the course of struggle against these 'labour lieutenants of capitalism' the question will arise of building new, revolutionary unions, under revolutionary leadership and politically independent from the capitalist state.

As struggles pass from defence of existing rights to political struggles against the state, the WRP is for building fighting organisations independent of the bureaucracy and even outside the existing unions.

We stand on the the Fourth International's 1938 founding programme, which held that 'during a period of exceptional upsurges ... it is necessary to create organisations ad hoc, embracing the whole fighting mass: strike committees, factory committees and, finally, soviets'.

We are for 'in all possible instances independent militant organisations corresponding more closely to the tasks of mass struggle against bourgeois society; and, if necessary, not flinching even in the face of a direct break with the conservative apparatus'.

\*\*\*

**Drive out Kinnock and the collaborators! No coalitions!**

The WRP is committed to carrying the struggle for its programme against the bureaucracy, into the Labour Party.

**We say: No coalition talks! Expel those leaders who raise the issue publicly in opposition to Labour Party conference policy!**

This fight must be carried into the Labour Party, not only in spite of the extremely difficult conditions created by Kinnock's policing tactics, but in active opposition to those tactics.

**Defend the 'Militant' and others against Kinnock's witch-hunts! Stop the programme of expulsions and inquiries!**

We raise these demands not in the



election of health authorities from the communities and from the workforce.

**Put an end to profiteering! Nationalise the blood-sucking drug companies and other private interests!**

This programme can only be won in the course of the struggle for a government of workers' councils.

This means finding forms of organisations through which health workers, and communities, can take responsibility for the service's future: broad defence campaigns against closures, support committees in the case of strikes and occupations etc, with the aim of going forward to control the service.

Similar methods are needed to fight the wholesale cuts in welfare benefits and local council services, and the opening-up of the inner cities to private exploitation.

The illusion that local government - which is part of the capitalist state - can be reformed and used in the interests of the working class, and that this can be done apart from a general struggle against capitalism, has been destroyed.

In London particularly it is often Labour councillors, including many 'lefts', who make the most savage cuts and use the most vicious methods against workers who resist.

We side with those councillors who take a stand against Tory and Labour cuts. But a fight waged inside the council chamber can not of itself achieve success; nor can trade union action alone.

Joint committees are needed, bringing together transport workers and passengers, teachers and parents, etc., then broadening out. Such committees can and will evolve in the direction of workers' councils.

Starting with the fight to defend services, they must go on to work out how to take control of them and run them.

Good examples of the type of spontaneous movement arising in opposition to Thatcher's attacks can be seen in the movement against the poll tax.

**Build independent organisations! Defend those who refuse to register for or pay the tax!**

**Demand that those Labour councils which carry out Tory policy without question reverse their decisions. If they refuse, demand their resignations and broaden the fight against them inside and outside the official organisations!**

A consequence of the changes in local government has been a complete halt in the building of council housing. The big construction firms, and building societies, are moving in.

More and more people are without a home, or are condemned to poor accommodation.

**We say: Occupy the huge amounts of unused property controlled by the speculators and profiteers!**

This means co-operation between the organised labour movement and those destitute families who are homeless.

As the economic crisis puts mortgage-payers in an increasingly

impossible position, similar methods will be needed to defend them from eviction.

**Demand an emergency building programme to eradicate homelessness and at the same time eradicate unemployment among building workers!**

**Nationalise the construction firms and building societies!**

Capitalism created the state school system. In its present crisis the system requires radical changes.

It needs a smaller, less educated workforce. That means no university education for the working class, and primary and secondary education only under strict control.

In higher education, declining capitalism demands loans instead of grants for students; a new funding system controlled by private interests; drastic cuts, especially but not exclusively in arts and social science departments.

So departments are closed; teaching staff are no longer to have security of employment; contracts are rewritten; and there are outright sackings.

The state funding of further education colleges is cut, and control passes more and more into private and MSC hands.

In schools, the government paves the way for a national curriculum, the compulsory testing of children with the results made public, and the right of schools to 'opt out'.

**We say: Defend state education facilities! No privatisation! Down with the loan system! A grant for all those who wish to have higher education!**

As with other public services, the fight must be broadened by the setting up of committees including teachers and other staff, students, parents, and all concerned with education.

This is not simply a fight to defend existing facilities. The future development of education is the concern of the whole the working class.

Proposals must be worked out for a socialist education system: its curriculum, financing, and future development.

In its struggle for power the working class must concern itself also with the development of the arts and artistic institutions.

Under capitalism film, TV, theatre, music, dance, and the visual arts are judged by a single criterion: their profitability.

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**A future to look to for young people! Build a socialist youth movement!**

The Tory re-modelling of education, combined with the growth of unemployment, leaves young people with the most dismal prospects.

There is a huge and growing body of young people who are unemployed, or working on government schemes with no future. This breeds disillusionment, homelessness, drug abuse, suicides - and rebelliousness.

If we are serious about fighting for a socialist future, we have to show young people the way forward.

Talk is no good to them. The WRP

belief that the Labour Party can become a 'fighting socialist party' as 'Militant' claims, but to convince Labour Party members and others in practice of the need to build a revolutionary leadership in Britain as part of the Fourth International.

\*\*\*

**Resist attacks on health and welfare services! Fight the cuts!**

As a result of capitalism's changing needs, and decades of working-class struggle, great concessions were made to the working class in the fields of health, welfare and education.

These concessions are now being systematically destroyed by the Tory government.

In the NHS, health care is deteriorating, and inroads are being made into the service under the impact of profiteering.

Waiting lists grow, hospitals close, and charges for basic items increase. Preventive medicine is neglected because the lion's share of resources and research go to 'glamorous' or 'prestigious' areas which offer more scope for private consultants (e.g. neglect of geriatrics in favour of orthopaedics and plastic surgery).

**We say: Defend existing services! No cuts!**

We demand also the extension of the state health service, the abolition of bureaucratic management, and the



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must first of all side with young people in every protest: against homelessness, against police violence, against the introduction of identity cards for football fans, against cuts in benefit.

Although we do not see rioting as a means by which to achieve political ends, we stand on the side of young people, black and white, who have been forced - by years of beatings, provocations, the 'Sus' laws, and similar police harassment, into violent confrontations with the police.

**Release the Tottenham Three and all other frame-up victims! Set up working-class committees to monitor the movement of the police and protect communities from them!**

Out of movements and activities that offer an alternative to the despair facing young people under Thatcher will come the forces for a revolutionary socialist youth movement - without which there can be no struggle for socialism in Britain.

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**Defend democratic rights! Mobilise against the Tory government!**

The Tory attacks on living standards, jobs, the welfare state, education, as well as the attacks on young people and on immigrant communities, are backed up by the onslaught on democratic rights won over centuries of struggle.

Legal rights for trades unions - the right to strike, to take solidarity action, to picket, to organise closed shops - have been destroyed by the anti-union laws. The first state ban on union membership, at GCHQ, was imposed without the law being changed.

This is combined with an attack on civil and legal rights. The right to trial by jury, and in particular the right to challenge jurors, is threatened. The right to habeas corpus and the right of access to a solicitor are severely restricted by the constant increases in the power of the police.

The Tories' witch-hunt against gays and lesbians - all aspects of which the WRP actively opposes - finds legal expression in the 'Clause 28' censorship measures.

Repressive measures are tested out, one after another, in the occupied north of Ireland: political assassinations, state help for fascist murder gangs, plastic bullets, the 'shoot to kill' policy, trial without a jury, 'supergrass' cases, internment, torture, the manipulation of elections against Republican candidates.

All this can be brought to Britain for use against the working class. Strip-searching, a special form of torture against women, has already been 'imported' from Ireland.

Behind all this are the departments of the state used to safeguard ruling-class power against any threat, however feeble: MI5 and MI6, which organised the 'destabilisation' operation that helped to bring down the last Labour government and opened the door for the Tory government.

Inseparable from the incursions on civil rights are the attacks on freedom of speech and on media freedom: the ban on broadcast interviews with Sinn Fein, the witch-hunts against journalists who

investigate state operations (e.g. the Special Branch raid against BBC Glasgow, and the government attack on the Thames TV 'Death on the Rock' programme).

Even when their own governmental power was a target of this onslaught, the Labour leaders have never lifted a finger to fight on these issues.

Their loyalty to the imperialist state and their fear of the working class are greater than any qualms they have about the Tory drive towards dictatorship.

Without their slavish support (as witnessed in the sacking of Labour MPs who voted against the new Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the calling off by leaders of the journalists' union of strike action against the broadcasting ban) the Tories could not proceed.

**Central to our programme of action to mobilise against the Tory government, is this call: Unite to defend democratic rights!**

This is the political issue on which the working class must fight now, bringing into the fight alongside it all those in society hit by the Tory onslaught.

**Demand the repeal of all anti-union and repressive legislation! Demand the opening-up of all the secret files! Demand a commitment on this from a future Labour government!**

It is not enough to demand the repeal of laws, however. Repressive laws must be defied.

**Defend those who defy the anti-union laws! Defend those who make illegal protests against the poll tax and other government measures!**

**Defend every victim of repressive legislation, every victim of police attack! Defend those journalists who refuse to be silenced!**

Out of such defensive struggles will grow a general movement against this government.

**Mobilise the working class to bring down the Thatcher government!**

**Take forward the fight both inside and outside the official labour movement!**

**Build up new forms of organisation uniting trade unionists, the unemployed, the working class communities, young people, and ethnic minorities! Forward to the struggle for workers' power!**

CONCLUDED

## WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Please send me information about the Workers Revolutionary Party

Name .....

Address .....

Age (if under 21) ... Trade union .....

Send to: WRP National Organiser,  
PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS



# ATTACK ON ITS

Organisers and 'inciters' may also face up to three months in prison.

The previous law dealing with 'disorderly behaviour' is greatly extended and politicised. Under Section 5 it is an offence to:

- \* use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour; or
- \* display any writing, sign or other visible representation which is threatening, abusive or insulting within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress thereby.

An offence under this section can be committed in a public or private place.

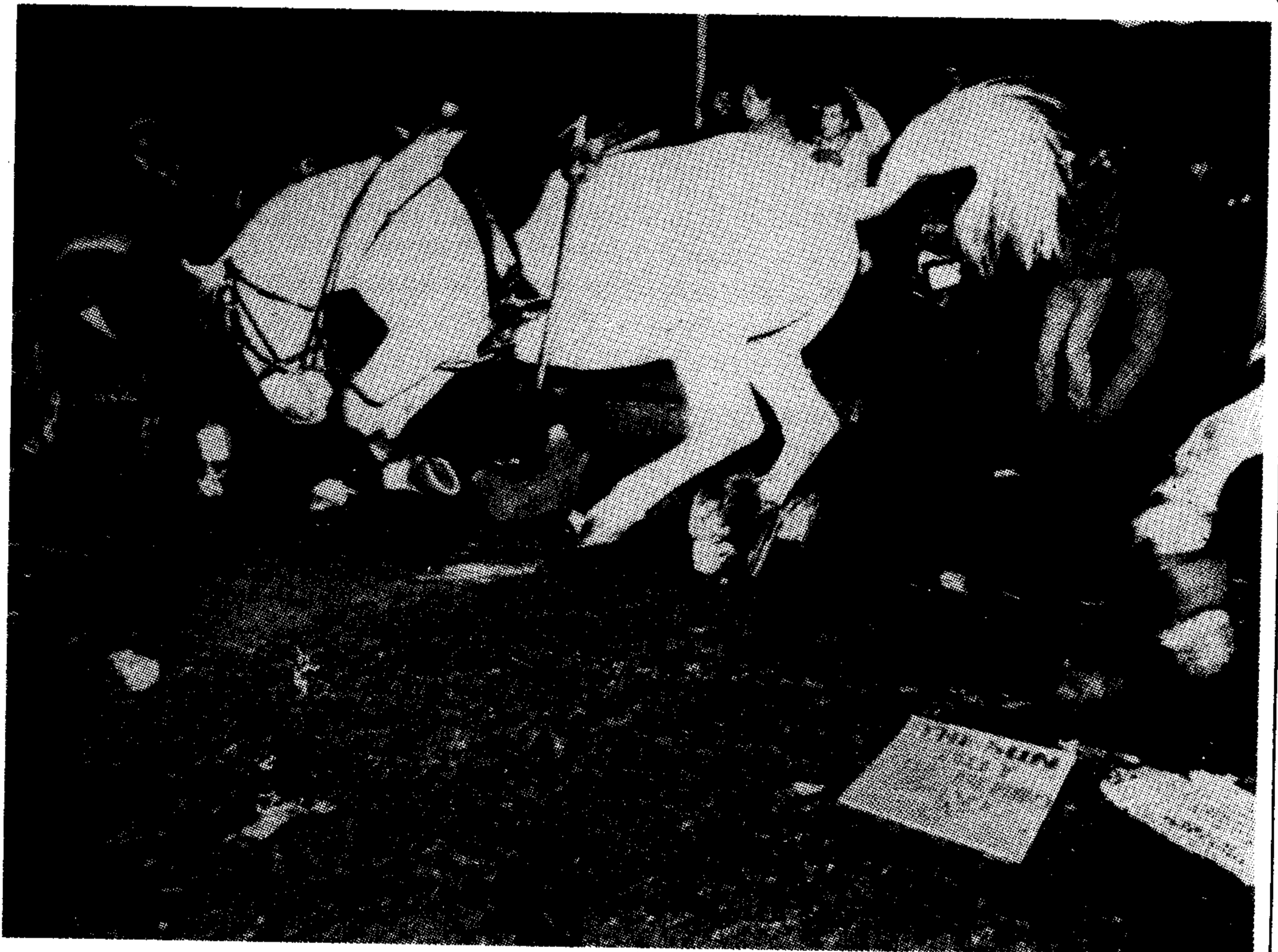
An arrest can be made only after a warning to stop such an alleged improper action has been given, and has been ignored.

The implication given prior to the Act was that this section was included to deal with 'hooliganism'.

In practice racists have remained totally free to intimidate and to pedal their filth, the main use for it is to restrict trade union action and to ban posters and slogans of left-wing organisations.

Section 4 of the Act replaces the 'threatening behaviour' of the 1936 Public Order Act, with an offence of causing a person to believe that immediate unlawful violence will occur, or of provoking a person into using unlawful violence by threats or action, written display, or representations of an insulting or abusive nature.

The offence is widened from the previous law and now covers private as well as public places.



**Police and pickets at Wapping - who is out of order?**

A constable can arrest without a warrant, and summary conviction may lead to a maximum penalty of six months in prison and a £2,000 fine.

The Police Monitoring and Research Group describes the sections on riot, violent disorder and affray, as the most serious under the Act.

**'Part IV of the Act empowers courts to make an order prohibiting persons convicted of offences connected with football - including those committed on the way to or from a ground - from attending any subsequent match.'**

\* Riot. The Act states: where 12 or more persons who are present together, use or threaten unlawful violence for a common purpose, and the conduct of them (taken together) is such as would cause a person of reasonable firmness present at the scene to fear for his personal safety, each of the persons using unlawful violence for the common purpose is guilty of riot.

It is immaterial whether or not the 12 or more use or threaten violence simultaneously, the common purpose is inferred in the conduct.

Also, no person 'of reasonable firmness need actually be, or likely to be, present at the scene.' It is enough for the police to say that such a person would have felt intimidated if they were present, if they existed.

Again, the offence applies equally in private places as in public.

Maximum penalty for this offence is 10 years in prison and a fine.

\* Violent disorder. This case applies where 'the person of reasonable firmness' meets up with three or more 'intimidating persons'.

Maximum penalty in this case is five years prison and a fine.

\* Affray. This time only one or more people need strike terror into the person that is the figment of the attendant constable's imagination.

A fine and three years prison is the maximum sentence.

These sections of the Act replace the previous Common Law Public Order offences of riot, rout, unlawful assembly and affray.

Part IV of the Act empowers courts to make an order prohibiting persons convicted of offences connected with football - including

those committed on the way to or from a ground - from attending any subsequent match.

An exclusion order may only be made in addition to an imposed sentence, or in addition to a probation order 'or an order discharging him absolutely or conditionally'.

The order has effect for the period specified in it - which shall not be less than six months.

Provision is made under this part for police to photograph persons covered by an exclusion order and, if necessary, to make an arrest so that a photograph can be taken.

Today, trade unions and communities are coming increasingly into conflict with newly imposed conditions for extending exploitation, undermining rights, eliminating public services and destroying the quality of life.

At the same time they are finding their scope for peaceful public opposition attacked by a series of laws besetting, bounding, disrupting and confounding their actions.

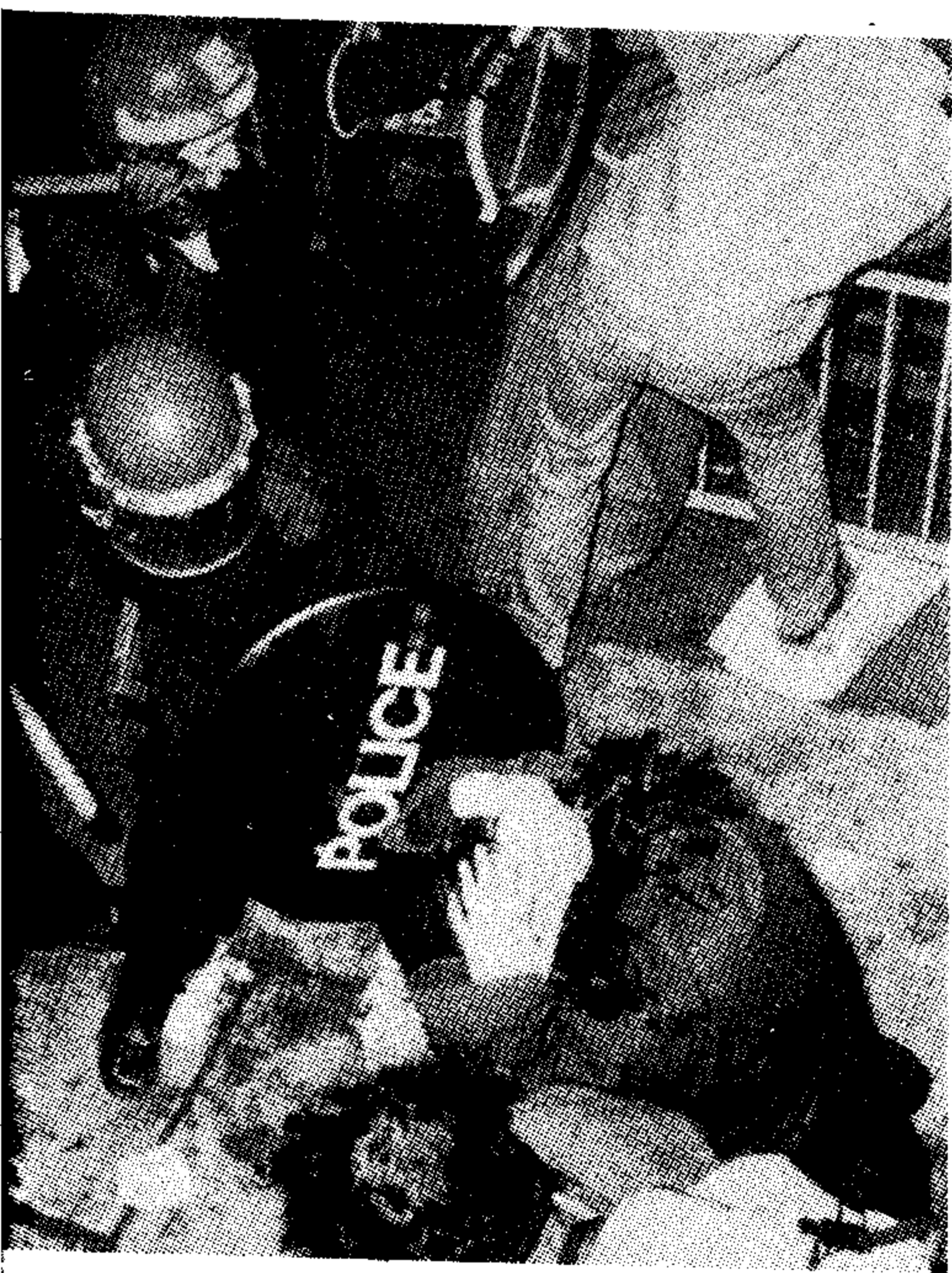
The Public Order Act 1986, in conjunction with other anti-democratic laws, is a major step towards a complete system of state repression, seeking to ensure that all government and employers' policies are imposed without the possibility of opposition.

Workers and communities involved in struggle, will not meekly call off their resistance to devastating attacks because yet another specially devised law has been put on the statutes to prevent their actions.

**'The Public Order Act 1986, in conjunction with other anti-democratic laws, is a major step towards a complete system of state repression, seeking to ensure that all government and employers' policies are imposed without the possibility of opposition.'**

The great danger is that reformists and Stalinists prominent in the trade unions and community, will seek to lead such movements only to try and fold them up in the name of obedience to the law.

Only a revolutionary leadership is capable of formulating policies to actively defend democratic rights, and to carry through community and trade union actions to their necessary conclusions.



**Police maintain public order at Wapping**

## Personal Column

Peter Fryer

## News from the USSR

GLASNOST hasn't, unfortunately, made it any easier here in Britain to get hold of dissident journals published in the Soviet Union.

Since my visit to Moscow last autumn I've been making strenuous efforts to see a copy of a recent issue of a dissident magazine called 'Glasnost' containing an article by Alexei Zverev, whom I spent a day with, entitled: 'Give Comrade Trotsky the Floor.'

In spite of occasional police raids, 'Glasnost' comes out in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, Polish, Bulgarian, and Armenian.

Yet not a single university library or Russian department in Britain receives this publication in any of these languages, it seems. This may be partly due to academic cutbacks which, I'm told, have hit Russian departments particularly hard. Nor is it at all easy, either in London or in Moscow, to get access to 'Moscow News' - which is far from being a dissident journal, of course, but does often contain fascinating items showing which way the wind is blowing in the USSR.

All the more value, therefore, attaches to 'Ukrainian Peace News', which describes itself as the 'external representative' of the Ukrainian Trust Group based in Kiev and the city generally known in the west as Lvov but pronounced and spelt Lviv by Ukrainians.

The latest issue of 'Ukrainian Peace News' contains a wealth of important material, ranging from a report of big demonstrations in Sverdlovsk, in protest at the sacking of

Boris Yeltsin, to a statement attributed to an Armenian woman worker in her forties:

'No matter who is in power, they will not come to terms with the problems facing the USSR. Our country needs a change of regime, not new leaders.'

There is a report about the founding of an independent 'Communist Workers' Party' at a two-day conference of informal associations in Sverdlovsk attended by representatives of over 20 local organisations from different centres, including the Union of Communist Workers (Moscow) and the Union of Communards (Perm).

The sessions took place in two private flats, and at one stage the conference was raided by the police and all the delegates were arrested, loaded on buses, and taken to another town, where they were eventually released.

According to another report, 30 of the 93 'informal' public organisations in Moscow and Leningrad are Marxist in orientation.

There is valuable material on Poland, including the text of a leaflet issued in Warsaw during Thatcher's visit there, which said in part:

'It is quite possible Mrs Thatcher will use her visit to Poland to assure the Poles she is the defender of workers' rights by expressing her support for Solidarnosc. Well, no thanks.'

'We would prefer a thousand times over the support of British miners, or seafarers, or of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, who have everyday experience of poverty, persecution, and the terror of security forces.'

Of special interest is the publication in 'Ukrainian Peace News' of Trotsky's April 1939 article 'The Ukrainian Question', with an introduction by Zbigniew Kowalewski,

an exiled leader of Lodz Solidarnosc and author of a forthcoming book on the Ukrainian national movement in the 1940s.

An editorial note points out that Soviet official historians, and the Gorbachev regime as a whole, are terrified of the population discovering Trotsky's attacks on Stalin over the oppression of nationalities within the USSR.

Socialists in Europe and throughout the world, writes Kowalewski, should draw from Trotsky's stand on the Ukrainian question the conclusion that there can be no socialism in the USSR so long as the Ukrainian nation isn't independent - and that they should support the Ukrainian struggle in every possible way.

Readers may care to know that Kowalewski is speaking at a central London seminar later this month on 'The Ideology and Programme of the Ukrainian National Movement in the 1940s'.

The seminar will be held at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 28 February, in Room 330 of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, on the third floor of Senate House (North Block), Malet Street, W.C.1.

## Can we count on it?

TO my dismay, I find I made a stupid arithmetical error in my article on defence of free speech (Workers Press, 21 January). Plainly it isn't 'three years' since 1984, but five years.

This isn't the first time I've shown myself to be innumerate. On 24 October 1987, quoting a saying attributed to the 18th-century Portuguese dictator Pombal - 'Bury the dead; feed the living; and shut the doors' - I wrote of this as a nine-word phrase when anyone (except me) could see there were ten words in it.

I'll try and do better in future.

## AS I SEE IT

BY TOM OWEN

## Ten years on

THIS WEEK I publish two poems written and published ten years ago.

The first poem is in response to the deal the despicable and discredited Callaghan government negotiated with Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist Party, to stay in power for a few more miserable months.

The deal offered was justice for the North Wales quarrymen in their terrible struggle against dust disease.

It was a cynical deal for since then many a striking quarryman has died without any form of compensation.

The second poem was published a year later in honour of the struggle for National Liberation in Namibia. I will be more than happy to supply a list of 'left' publications who refused publication of both poems.

TRACTATUS  
TABULA  
RASA

(For those who would write on slate)

1.1 Slate does not exist.  
1.2 It is mined and made.  
1.3 Slate is made because it is not found easily, it does not reveal itself. When the grass, heather and brown earth are stripped, the rock blown, dynamited from the cool centre, slate is there, blue, green or white like ice-stone.

2.1 The ice-stone is cut with iron, then shaved, dressed and honed.

2.2 Then we have slate; for the stacked terraces of England, the castles of France, mosaics, head-stones, knife-sharpeners and snooker-tables.

3.1 With hands, the finest cut slate is translucent, pale green worlds shed their shadows, thick white yolks glow like opium in resin.

3.2 To achieve an illusion, a spectral delicacy, much dust is made, it has filled the lakes of Pendarn, Peris and Conston, coated the green smooth slopes of Elydir with scree.

3.3 Dust is fine, high in silicate and as it fills the lakes, so it fills the pores of the cutter, causes new eruptions on the skin, gathers water in the tract.

3.4 Dermatitis will not cure, the

shale that covers the hill is covered in turn by lint and cotton on the limb.

3.5 Fine dust fills the fibres of the lung so that men cannot walk. Because they have worked high in the mist, it is the rain and the breed that is blamed for their stubborn infirmity.

4.1 To make good Welsh slate we needed latifundia: the estates of Vaynor and Penrhyn, the enterprising Duffs who entertained the Asters with splendid garden parties, peacocks and fallow deer.

4.2 The precious children of the valleys of Peris and Ffrancon choked on diphtheria and T.B. even before they could taste the dust.

4.3 Now we do not need slate.

5.1 Welsh children no longer write on slate.

NAMIBIA  
(S.W.  
AFRICA)

She follows them, haunting as a day does a night, a century, always some yards behind their one shadow.

White from death, naked in the powder of shooting, her last child trails from her hand.

The woman does not show fear. From a wide morning, the black sun has burnt their action into her glands. Silent, aghast in the dust, she raises an arm, that strip of flesh, whose eloquent tremble should skin the white hides off our moralities.

The anonymous troop, their cars, automatics and dog tags halt. Some clanking conscience, some abused reflex, prevents the shooting

(Today they have shot the five year old running from the scrub.)

Permanent is the mother's stare grievous as the cycle of the southern sun.

It dries and bakes the furze on lips, drives back the freshest obscenities into their entrails.

She accuses, to the desert reptilians in the burning arch.

She, who would have decked a wreath for her broken daughter with all the wild flowers of Africa, has chosen to follow the stench of soldiery to break the words of half a world and call us all to arms.

# LETTERS

Write to: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

## The solution to the Brit occupation of north-east Ireland

TO SEEK and cause the 'emigration' of native traitors, who give aid and comfort to a foreign occupying power is not 'sectarian' but in fact a legitimate part of the struggle for national unity and Liberation.

The solution to the Brit occupation of north-east Ireland, is the emigration of their 'loyalist' and 'castle catholic' supporters.

This solution is possible because the bastard 'orange state' has a fragile economy that depends on vulnerable road transport, electric lines and telephone lines! Regular disruption of this vulnerable system would lead to a withdrawal of 'capital' which would cause mass unemployment among the Brit supporters, this in turn would cause a big increase in Brit expenditure.

The unions and 'respectable' left would howl with rage but we should ignore these 'capitalist' stooges and reactionary parasites. For 20 years or more they have betrayed our country and our class.

We should therefore treat them as enemies and not as potential allies or friends, their past and present behaviour is a kick in the teeth for 'Socialists' within the Republican movement who had hopes for a 'sincere and constructive' debate! In the present climate such hopes are illogical to say the least, therefore a change in policy is called for and a proper 'campaign' against capital would be bloodless and more humane and would also have a better chance of success.

Only when their vested interests are under threat will our enemies respect us and engage with us in 'constructive debate'. The present policy of the Republican movement does not put the interests of the 'loyalists' the 'castle catholics' or their capitalist masters in danger, this is why they ignore and try to 'isolate' us, it is also why they feel free to put the 'jack-boot' into our comrades, our supporters and their property. So: do we continue to implement a failed policy, or shall we drop the Bullshit, face reality and formulate a logical policy!

**Brendan Dowd  
(IPOW)**

## And a reply from Workers Press

BOTH letters from Brendan Dowd to Workers Press are welcome: last week's because it reminded us of the courage-characteristic of generations of Irish nationalists - with which he conducted himself, and tore apart the 'case' against the Guildford Four; this week's because it gives us an opportunity to discuss Brendan Dowd's view of the Irish revolution to which we are totally opposed.

Firstly: Ireland isn't like a nineteenth-century African colony. There is more than a settler garrison defending the interests of imperialism - there is a northern bourgeoisie which didn't hesitate to organise armed revolt against the British parliament itself (in 1912) rather than accept 'Home Rule'; there is a southern bourgeoisie ready to jail and extradite Republicans, and do many other things, to protect the interests of imperialist multi-nationals.

Secondly: on grounds of expediency alone, the idea of sabotaging the six-county economy to the point where it costs Britain too much financially, just won't work. State subsidies to industry, direct employment by the state, benefits, and the cost of the repressive apparatus, have already made it a nightmarish burden for British imperialism. The consequences of withdrawal are a still greater nightmare for them.

Thirdly and most importantly: we are deeply opposed to Brendan Dowd's implication that workers who could be thrown out of work by the sort of military action he proposes are all 'Brit supporters'.

Of course there is a minority of extreme loyalists and their supporters who whip up religious sectarianism and organise anti-nationalist pogroms: our attitude to them is the same as our attitude to all fascists.

But the majority of workers - even protestant and 'loyalist' ones - PRESENTLY face a threat to their jobs, NOT from the sort of fantastic campaign that Brendan Dowd envisages, but from the policies of the British Tory government and the economic crisis.

This has brought them into conflict with that government. Does Brendan Dowd think this a welcome development or not?

**Simon Pirani  
WRP**

Many Irish nationalists would argue that these very jobs have been denied to them, and reserved for protestants, by religious sectarianism. I agree.

But the whole point is that the 'privilege' of work, which has buttressed working-class support for loyalism, is now being taken away!

Brendan Dowd and other Irish nationalists may be sceptical about 'loyalist' workers being drawn into action against imperialism.

We do not share their scepticism (this was the subject of a previous argument in 'Workers Press' with a Republican prisoner from Long Kesh).

On the other hand Brendan Dowd's talk of forcing people to emigrate can only re-inforce reactionary sectarianism, and must be rejected.

We Trotskyists advocate working-class action (which will necessarily include military action) as the means to defeat British imperialism in Ireland.

A concrete example: in the past three months, a pogrom of unprecedented proportions has been unleashed against nationalist communities in the six counties, not by loyalists but by the army and RUC.

Republican representatives have stated this is the worst such series of invasions for 15 years.

Their answer to it has been (from Sinn Fein) pickets of police stations, and (from the IRA) threats issued to soldiers' families.

I agree with Brendan Dowd that this feeble response to the invasions - combined with the Sinn Fein and fheis's right-wing turn towards appeals to Fianna Fail and the SDLP - do not endanger the capitalists and their supporters.

Surely working-class action is a far more effective means to resist army-RUC terror.

In the early 1970s nationalist workers threw up barricades, and in the case of 'Free Derry' were able to bar the way of the state forces into their areas for a lengthy period.

Their resistance to state violence led to the use of weapons from petrol-bombs to firearms.

Why don't Brendan Dowd and his comrades in prison consider seriously the possibility of issuing an appeal to nationalist workers, to take such justified actions of self defence?

We for our part would do everything in our power to ensure such actions received practical support from the British working class.

Again, the reactionary parasites of the 'respectable' left would howl with rage - but we would be quite happy to join Brendan Dowd in proceeding despite them and against them.

## Revenge or justice?

PETER Fryer's comments on 28 January 1989, need clarification.

While British capitalism cannot administer an equitable system of justice, that does not legitimate serious acts of violence by victims or their relatives for offences which clearly do not result from state oppression (as the case he quotes from Hungary does appear to).

Contrast these examples with those of last week's media that the Probation Service in the North of Ireland is effectively helping to 'transport' young people to prevent them from becoming victims of 'community justice', which includes kneecapping and other serious violence against those suspected of offences such as theft and joyriding ('Guardian' 27 January 1989).

Is this to be similarly excused? The offence of child rape must be seen in the context of a net of patriarchal attitudes which encourage male power and sexuality to be expressed in a variety of horrifying and harmful ways.

To see the mother's understandable reaction as analagous to an act of 'class revenge' is wrong.

Any socialist system of justice would not, I hope, endorse or excuse either the rape of a young child (or anyone else), or the serious assault on the perpetrator.

It would try to explain them, and deal with both 'offenders' humanely. Political justice is an important and class issue, and one which would benefit from further debate in the Workers Press.

**Malcolm Nicholas.  
National Association of  
Probation Officers.  
(In a personal capacity.)**

### POLITICS FROM THE PRISONS

AND OTHER ARTICLES ABOUT IRELAND

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# News briefs . . .

## Modernised riot weapons

HOME OFFICE scientists are testing out a new range of gun which fires both plastic bullets and CS gas canisters.

The British-made Arwen Ace fires a tadpole-shaped plastic missile with a CS gas tip. A rapid-fire version of this weapon is commonly used by US police.

While chief constables allegedly prefer at present to fire gas canisters and plastic bullets separately, they see the need for up-dating their baton-firing weapons which they say are old-fashioned, inaccurate over long distances and tend to jam.

## Worse than average

YTS FARM workers are three times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than ordinary trainees, according to the Unemployment Unit. And, with a rate of 350 major and fatal incidents per 100,000 trainees, agriculture's injury rate is 75 per cent higher than the next most hazardous category, construction.

## Grave news

EMPEROR Hirohito's state funeral on 24 February is being seen as the sternest test yet for Japanese security forces.

Thousands of police will protect mourners from 141 countries and world organisations, among them over 50 heads of state.

Riot squads skilled in the martial arts, snipers, frogmen, helicopter units, coastguard vessels and an observation airship all form part of the massive operation already underway. Daily swoops are taking place on the lookout for subversive elements. The main threat apparently comes from a group known as 'The Middle Core Faction' which launched an unsuccessful rocket attack at the Tokyo Summit in 1986.

## Three men on a train

SUCH is the crisis of Stalinism the bureaucracy is even allowing jokes about itself to appear in its official press. The following example comes from East Germany. It was retold on West German radio last week:

Lenin, Stalin and Walter Ulbricht (one of Honecker's predecessors) are travelling on a train along a newly-laid railway line. Unexpectedly the journey comes to an abrupt halt when it is discovered that the track has not been finished on time.

Lenin jumps from the train and, together with some of the other passengers, begins laying the uncompleted section of the track. Stalin alights and proceeds to shoot the civil engineer in charge of the project for the new line.

And Ulbricht? He starts to rattle the coaches of the train to create the illusion that the journey is continuing as if everything was going ahead as planned.

# IRANGATE

## CIA RUNS THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**THE TRIAL of Oliver North has begun after a suitable delay to allow the U.S. presidential elections to take place.**

Channel 4's programme 'Cover up - Behind the Iran-Contra Affair' has shown who benefitted most from the delay ... the new president, George Bush.

Colonel North's defence is that he merely carried out the orders of his superiors, Reagan and Bush.

The programme revealed that the Irangate affair went back long before Reagan was elected and involved the most clandestine activities of the CIA.

While Carter was campaigning for re-election he was engaged in negotiations for the release of American hostages in Iran.

Reagan made a secret deal with the Iranian government not to release the hostages till after the election.

In return Reagan promised to sell the Iranians all the arms they needed. The hostages were released on the day that Reagan was inaugurated.

The actual arms deals were carried out by private companies set up by covert experts who had been dismissed from the CIA by Carter, following the Watergate scandal.

'Cover up' named Theodore Shackley as the principle figure involved. He had been in charge of CIA operations against Cuba in the early 60's, the notorious drugs triangle operation in Laos with Generals Secord and Singlaub, and the overthrow of Allende in 1973, by which time he was CIA Director of Operations in the western hemisphere.

Having gone 'private', these operators continued their activities, financing them with profits from arms and drugs deals. Money from sales to Iran were

## PARAGUAY

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

**PARAGUAYANS celebrated in the streets last week as hated dictator Alfredo Stroessner was thrown out after over forty years in power.**

New leader General Andres Rodriguez has promised elections on May 1 - but won't allow the banned Communist Party to take part. General Stroessner ruled Paraguay with a rod of iron, torturing and murdering opponents. From 1947 to 1987, the country was under official state of siege.

In recent years, trade unionists,

used to finance the Contras in Nicaragua.

When CIA contractor Ed Wilson was jailed for 50 years for selling arms to Libya, he complained that he had taken the rap for Shackley and that the CIA was really in control.

During the Irangate hearings, Congressman Jack Brookes asked North to explain secret plans he had drawn up for Reagan and Bush to suspend the U.S. constitution and intern 400,000 people by the military in the event of an invasion of Central America by U.S. forces.

The chairman of the hearing ruled out any questioning of this on the grounds of national security.

According to former CIA Chief of Operations in Angola, John Stockwell, who now exposes CIA operations, George Bush wasn't just the 'wimp' vice president who kept in the background but had been associated with the CIA for 25 years working with Cuban exiles involved in bombings, assassinations and drug deals and as CIA Director ordered operations in Angola and Jamaica.

With the election out of the way, Reagan has been called to testify at North's trial, but not President Bush, making it clear that a 'damage limitation' manoeuvre has been agreed backstage.

## Camden NALGO on strike



Brent NALGO in a recent strike against their council

BY LIZ LEICESTER

**Social Services workers in Camden social services workers took strike action on 9 February against a vicious cuts package proposed by the north-west London Labour council.**

They were joined in their one-day strike by other groups of council workers in spite of moves by Socialist Workers Party (SWP) members to undermine it.

At a meeting of the Camden branch of the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO), a motion for strike by the entire branch in support of the Social Services workers was narrowly defeated after SWP members put an amendment which claimed

the one day strike would be a 'flop'.

They said there hadn't been 'sufficient' preparation, and it was left to individual shops whether they joined the action or not. Furious Social Services workers watched as an alliance of SWP members, Stalinists, and officers of the branch tried to isolate their strike.

Camden's Social Services budget was cut by £6 million last year - now a further £3 - £4.5 million cuts are on the cards. This will mean the closure of three to six under-fives centres, privatisation of council homes for the elderly, cuts in home helps and social workers, increased charges of up to £15 a week for nursery places, cuts and closures in day centres for the mentally ill and people with special needs.

peasant leaders and outspoken priests were all arrested. None of this stopped the Thatcher government sucking up to Stroessner, with aid and visits.

Stroessner private secretary Ramon Reverchon was here in November as the guest of the government's Central Office of Information.

General Rodriguez is no popular hero, having been in charge

of military repression. Much wealthier than his army salary would explain, he denies suggestions of drug trafficking, saying 'they could never prove that I was involved'.

The US government, which originally backed Stroessner, is expected to recognise Rodriguez for fear that something worse, from their viewpoint, might otherwise emerge.