

TORIES TO HIT AT JOBLESS

THE UNEMPLOYED face another benefit crack-down by the Tories. Those refusing starvation-wage jobs will lose all rights to benefit, says a document leaked from the Employment Service agency.

Unemployed people are to be pressed to take hard-to-fill job vacancies as a means of testing how seriously they want to work.

Moving spirit behind this latest scheme is Lord Astor, Tory social security minister in the House of Lords. It is to be implemented immediately by all job centres

and reviewed in three months when statistics will be collected.

The jobs that people will be obliged to take are low-

BY PETER JEFFRIES

paid, involve unsocial hours, and are in areas with poor public transport. Jobs such as hairdressers, child-care assistants and debt collectors top the list, followed by chefs and cooks and sales representatives.

Refuse

'Claimants who refuse to or fail to apply for jobs, or refuse such jobs, may be disqualified from receiving unemployment benefit for a maximum of 26 weeks,' says

the document. It was written by Rosemary Thew, head of the agency's benefit management branch in Sheffield.

This latest measure is part of a new three-pronged attack on the unemployed and young people:

■ Nine areas are to have 'short, sharp, shock' random interviews to check whether benefit claimants had sought work;

■ The Treasury has called for the slashing of income-

support benefits to 16- and 17-year-olds evicted by parents from their homes or who have left home after being abused; and

■ Major has demanded that Britain's growing number of beggars be driven off the streets.

Ashamed

Donald Dewar, shadow social security secretary, said Tory ministers ought to be ashamed of themselves.

But what about Labour?

Last week the Labour Party refused to guarantee that benefits will be paid to all 16- and 17-year-olds.

It plans to set up a Citizens' Service to 'encourage' unemployed young people to carry out 'Community Service' for three months in return for the princely sum of £50 a week.

No unemployed person, young or old, can expect any relief from a Labour government.

TOM KEMP MEMORIAL MEETING Trotskyist fighter remembered

THE memory was honoured last week of Tom Kemp, a fearless fighter for the working class and for the reconstruction of the Fourth International. He died last December.

Nearly 150 people gathered in London on 3 June, at a meeting chaired by Dave Temple, a leading member of the WRP, who had known Tom for some 30 years. The meeting brought together friends and comrades from all parts of Britain, as well as from abroad.

Tom's son Michael and daughter Renee read moving extracts from the diary that Tom as a young seaman had kept during World War II. These passages showed a young communist growing up and trying to understand the problems around him.

Tom's younger brother Alan spoke about early memories of his brother and the experiences of growing up with him in a working-class family in south London, and the abiding influence Tom had had on him.

Broken

Speaking for the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International, Geoff Pilling recollected memories of Tom over the time he had known him since the end of the 1950s and in particular recalled that it was Tom who had first introduced him to Marx's 'Capital'.

Tom's greatest contribution to the fight for the rebuilding of the Fourth International had come in the 1956-57 period when he had broken from the Communist Party (CP).

Unlike many intellectuals in the CP at that time who equated Stalinism and communism,

Tom had fought for the continuity of the fight for Marxism and for the future of the working-class movement through his turn to Trotskyism.

For this he had certainly paid a heavy price in terms of his academic career and it was a disgrace that he had never been awarded a professorship despite his outstanding publications record, said Pilling.

Decisive

Bill Hunter, a member of the Workers International League (LIT), stressed that Tom's greatest contribution as an intellectual was his unswerving fight for Marxism against all its open and hidden opponents.

He fought against the retreat from Marxism by a whole generation of intellectuals. He had been actively involved in the decisive turning-points in the class struggle in Europe — in the Belgian general strike and in the May-June 1968 events in France.

Terry Brotherstone said it had been an honour to speak on behalf of the WRP at Tom's funeral. He announced that a memorial volume to Tom was being prepared and would be published next year.

He passed on apologies from some of Tom's colleagues from the University of Hull who had been unable to be present, and he read from the obituary that had appeared in 'The Times'.

Among other speakers Alan Clark recalled Tom's contribution to the south-east London branch of the WRP, of which they were both members. He said he had felt privileged to have worked alongside Tom.



Workers Aid for Bosnia is one year old. Despite starting with few resources, the campaign has built tremendous support in the working class, and has sent several convoys to Bosnia — one is now on the road — showing what 'ordinary' people can do. Above, a Workers Aid lorry is unloaded at a refugee camp in Croatia last year; the aim was then, as now, to open the northern, direct, route to Tuzla, north-east Bosnia. See pages 4&5 for D-Day, fascism and ethnic cleansing; and the back page for Charlie Pottins's look at the past year, and Sue Morrison's reflections on getting through to Tuzla

S. African election appeal — funds still needed

WE'RE continuing our appeal for funds, started before the elections on 26-28 April in South Africa. As reported before, our comrades of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (South Africa) gained more than 5,000 votes in provincial elections in the Western Cape and Natal. These

comrades need the money to get a good start for its plans to build a revolutionary workers' party in South Africa.

Send money, payable to the 'Workers International', to PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

■ See letter and reply on our stand during the South African elections, page 7.

On other pages

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Campfield break-out, page 3

Glyndebourne festival, pages 4&5

Fighting racism, page 8

D-Day lies

FOR days on end, TV has been awash with programmes marking the 50th anniversary of the bloody invasion of the Normandy beaches.

Such propaganda has an important aim: to allow Britain's capitalist rulers to remind us of former 'glories' and divert attention from their chronic decline.

Presidents, politicians and the royal beggars were wheeled out to remind us of the great victory of 'good' over 'evil', of 'democracy' over 'dictatorship' in June 1944.

Of course the ruling class, aided and abetted by the Stalinist and labour leaders, could not have got the masses to suffer and die if it had not developed a lying propaganda machine to convince millions of workers that they were suffering and dying not for the profit and plunder of a handful of capitalist parasites, but for 'freedom'.

The troops who went into the hell of Normandy were told that they were fighting fascism. Yet when in 1943 the workers of Turin and Milan took strike action in a situation where their towns were in the grip of the Gestapo, British planes flew saturation bombing missions to these cities. When a minority of Labour MPs protested Churchill sneered: 'Let them stew in their own juice.'

The workers of Turin, Milan and Genoa threw out Mussolini in 1943. The imperialist governments put in office the government of Badoglio, a reactionary general who had served Mussolini and declared his pride in having done so. Stalin recognised Badoglio's government.

In the following year the British government imposed the old hated, tyrannical ruling class and the king on a hostile Greek population. The Greek army in Egypt had been placed in a concentration camp for opposing the return of the old regime, while the British government started disarming the Greek anti-fascist resistance while leaving the Greek fascist thugs with arms in hand.

The leader of US imperialism, Franklin D. Roosevelt, said the war was one for the 'four freedoms', one of which was 'freedom from want'. What a sick joke. Millions in today's world are ground down by hunger and poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, out of a total of 500 million people, 300 million live in pitiable poverty and the situation gets worse by the day.

While the imperialists lyingly told the soldiers who assaulted the Normandy beaches that they were fighting for a world that would secure 'freedom from fear', they were hatching plans to hold millions of people in the colonial and semi-colonial world in continuing slavery. In countries such as Britain they only granted the concessions involved in the so-called 'welfare state' to some workers because they feared the consequences of not doing so.

* * * * *

THE 'Guardian' tells us (6 June) that last week's celebrations of D-Day 'were miniature re-enactments in honour of the living and the dead of a day which has proved worth a capital letter by helping to yield half a century without a world war'.

And in the 'Independent' (7 June): 'Total war has been forgotten for two generations now . . .'

Shameful lies! The truth is that the imperialists were preparing and even launching World War III before World War II had ended.

That is why they dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cities with a combined population of 600,000 — a brutal war crime that sent a shock wave of horror and revulsion throughout the world.

Before the bombs were dropped the Japanese were suing for peace, as the Trotskyists exposed at the time and is now accepted as common fact. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were meant as a 'laboratory experiment' to test the effectiveness of this new weapon, and also as a warning to the Soviet leaders as well as the revolutionary movement erupting in the East.

And then came Korea, Cambodia and Vietnam. The last of these became notorious for imperialist barbarism against a colonial people: Napalm flame-throwers destroying people and villages; Chemical war using Agent Orange to defoliate trees and resulting in thousands of deformed and still-born children.

World War II was not a 'war against fascism'. It was a war fought amongst the imperialists for the division and re-division of the world. While capitalism is allowed to continue, the real and sinister danger of world war remains.

The former Yugoslavia alone demonstrates that fascism has not been defeated. That defeat will only come when capitalism is overthrown and the working class has taken power in its own hands.

Letters

Spit and polish

THE 'Guardian' on 1 June published a letter calling on readers to lobby the United Nations and NATO to 'rebuff' the Serbian forces in Bosnia by 'effective military action'. The letter was signed by a group that included right- and 'left'-wing academics, a bishop, and former MP Michael Foot.

'Rebuff' is a polite word for 'polishing off'. It echoes the tone of the letter which was, on the whole, violent. One target was anyone who might be critical of the Bosnian government. Anyone who disagrees with or doubts the wisdom of this government's attempts to persuade the UN/NATO to lead the war against the Serbs will be 'held accountable', said the letter, for mass genocide in Bosnia.

However effective this lobby might be in swinging right-wing opinion behind pushing Western governments into an intensified war against the Serbs, I doubt whether it will be successful on the left.

I doubt it because, for example, many readers of Workers Press are active in solidarity not only with the working class in Bosnia but worldwide. And a UN/NATO-led war serves to fuel the Serbian regime's propaganda. It strengthens its control over the minds of Serbian workers.

The information I have is that the Serbian working class is sick of war, which has brought nothing but misery. Presently it is powerless to act to overthrow the regime. The leadership it needs is killed, in prison, or, if alive and free, likely to be underground.

Lobbying for an intensified UN/NATO war effort makes the position of organising mass anti-war sentiment with the potential of toppling the regime in Serbia even more difficult than it is right now.

The UN/NATO's sanctions and military action against Iraq is a good example of the way in which the ruling class helps to keep oppressive nationalist regimes in power through continued intervention. Sanctions against the Serbian regime and air-strikes against its genocidal supporters in Bosnia reflect similar short-term goals.

The international ruling class is more concerned with creating conditions for the continued accumulation of capital than with the lives of oppressed Bosnian and Serbian workers. The nationalist elites of the former Yugoslavia, including the Bosnian elite, share this concern.

The war in Bosnia is an unwelcome alternative to the conquest of economic, political and social power by a united working class. National division and perpetual war is the only solution that the ruling class can offer Bosnia.

I hope Workers Press readers will agree with me that it is not the job of socialists to advise the ruling class on how to rule and on whether or not to fight wars, nor to lobby on behalf of a government that continues to collaborate with the UN and Serbian war criminals in negotiations over the division of the Bosnian working class.

I was encouraged to read in Workers Aid for Bosnia's literature of a letter written by Bosnian refugees that rejected every form of nationalism. I think this is likely to lead to criticism of all the ruling elites in the former Yugoslavia, including the Bosnian.

I look forward to reading the voice of this tendency more often in the pages of Workers Press.

Paul B. Smith
Govan, Glasgow

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: The day after the 'Guardian' letter referred to in this letter, there appeared a disclaimer written by two of the people who were supposed to have signed it — Branka Magas and Quintin Hoare — dissociating themselves from its contents.

Innocence in Algeria

I WAS born on 19 October 1966 in Bordj Bouariridj in Algeria. I joined the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) at its formation and have been involved in some of its political activities.

I have participated in FIS local election campaigns and in the political strike it launched, which took place when I was a university student. I also participated in the FIS's preparations for the parliamentary elections and was a member of the FIS's information committee.

We used to distribute leaflets, newsletters, videos, etc. I participated in the strike organised at Sétif university, where I was studying. All of these activities took place in the open.

On 2 March 1993 the military police came to my home, where I lived with my parents and six brothers. During their search of the house, the police found my FIS membership card as well as my polling station controller's card for the parliamentary elections. For the military police, this was proof that I was an outlaw. They left a summons for me to go to the police station within 24 hours, knowing that at that time I was studying at the university about 90 kilometres from my home.

The day after, the Sétif police came to the university and left a second summons for me. Two days later they came back to my home and left a final summons. They told my father that I was accused of distributing leaflets and newsletters which affected the security of

the state. This accusation was according to Algerian law, *under which every FIS activist is guilty until proven innocent*. Innocence is proved by savage torture, then prison if not execution.

Over an eight-month period, I moved between relatives' and friends' homes, until I got a visa allowing me to travel to France, where I stayed for about three months. I did not ask for refugee status because I knew that I would be deported to Algeria, which had happened to some of my colleagues.

After this period I was able to find a French passport and I came to Britain, where I was arrested at Dover on 30 March; I then applied for refugee status. After five days I was transferred to Canterbury jail, and up to now I have stayed in this jail and there have been no new developments in my case.

Hassan Benia, LV2991
HMP Canterbury



Many Chinese enterprises are joint ventures with British firms

Chinese interests

TOM BATTERSBY's article 'US capitalists back China's sweatshops' (28 May) is good as far as it goes. What it fails to do is mention the role of the British government in this grisly business.

A lot of the enterprises, particularly in China's six new economic zones, are joint ventures with British and Hong Kong capitalists. We can be certain that their consciences will be none too troubled if prison labour is used or factory regulations broken. Their preoccupation will be the fat profits accumulating in their bank accounts and not whether the workers they employ toil in unsafe or barbaric conditions.

Last autumn, I spent almost seven weeks in China and Hong Kong. I saw women in Zian working in a silk mill, repeatedly plunging their hands into exceedingly hot water, for the equivalent of less than £20 a month. In Chongqing, I talked to

a 13-year-old girl, working on the night shift.

Industrial laws are honoured in the breach. The consequence is wholesale carnage. A staggering 65,000 Chinese workers died in industrial accidents in 1990 — the last year for which figures are available.

While I was in Hong Kong, I had the honour of being the only British worker on a protest demonstration. It was being held because in Shenzhen, a Chinese city just over the border, a total of 281 workers had died in factory fires in only four months. The last of these was in the Zhili toy factory, which manufactures Barbie dolls for the British market.

The factory's owner, a Hong Kong businessman, desired to protect his property more than the lives of his workers. So when an electrical fault caused a blaze that burnt the place down, the hapless victims tried in vain to prise apart the iron bars on the windows.

Far from condemning this infringement of human rights — surely the most basic human right is life itself — Hong Kong governor-general Chris Patten's minions displayed hostility to the demonstrators.

Though the Hong Kong businessman responsible for these needless deaths remains acceptable in the high society of the colony, this is not true of the protesters. The police took down the names of the leading demonstrators, telling them they had broken the law on five counts and may subsequently be prosecuted.

Despite British politicians' prattle about Chinese infringements of human rights, successive Labour and Tory governments have not made Hong Kong a beacon for freedom, a shining example to its Chinese neighbour that has introduced democracy and repealed repressive colonial legislation.

When I left Hong Kong, a Chinese trade unionist was on the run. Having been thrown out of China, he had to go into hiding from the Hong Kong authorities. Likewise with the demonstration I took part in: its leader, Lau Shau Ching, had spent 11 years in Chinese jails for a political offence. From the manner in which he was treated by the police, it would appear that Hong Kong's governor-general will, before very long, provide him with free board and lodging for the same reason.

In my opinion, the British left has shown insufficient interest in China. When we repeat the concluding sentence of the 'Communist Manifesto' we need to remember that every fifth worker in the world we are calling upon to unite is Chinese. Much closer links need to be built. Problems will only be solved when, through our joint action, we combine to fight our joint enemies — the exploiters — be they British, Chinese or American.

Raymond Challinor
Whitley Bay

Workers Press £3,000 Monthly Fighting Fund

MAY FUND CLOSE:
£4,344.22

WE'VE finished £1,344.22 up on May's target but regular readers will know that I've been pushing a 'let's get on top of the debt' figure (calculated only since January) that is less rosy. That debt stands at £3,557.33, which comes out of the pockets of the many volunteers who work at the centre. Some of these have to live on low incomes already, so if you're in work think about them!

A report in 'The Times' from last Monday (6 June) show that the ruling class and its supporters are abandoning its Tory party financially. When the ruling

class starts to show its divisions in ways such as this there are some big opportunities for the working class.

We need to make Workers Press the paper that leads and takes advantage of these opportunities for the working class to ask in its own interests, against the centrists and reformists who want to control them for themselves and effectively capitalism.

Let's make a flying start towards our aim by repeating the May Fund performance and more this coming month.

Mike Cooke
Please rush money to: 'Workers Press', PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

Coming soon

TUESDAY 14 JUNE St Pancras coroner's court, Camley Street, London NW1 (tel. 071-387 4884), 9.30am. Inquest into death of John McLaughlin (45), killed when roof collapsed in January. Christopher Nelson (48) was severely injured. They were working on extension to car showroom in Finchley Road.

WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE St Pancras coroner's court, Camley Street, London NW1 (tel. 071-387 4884), 9am. Inquest into death of Tony Fishendon (27), killed in August 1992 while carrying a scaffold pole near a railway line; a passing train caused the electric current to arc to the pole. Family's solicitor requested that BR director for safety be put in the dock, but coroner refused. Judicial review has returned case to coroner. DPP turned down manslaughter investigation. Inquest may be interrupted by challenges from family solicitor.



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Handsworth college, Birmingham, October 1993: among the first strikes against 'new contracts'

Lecturers ask: 'Are we winning?'

BY OUR EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE recent strike of 900 college lecturers in Sheffield against the employers' 'new contracts' has given heart to thousands of NATFHE union members throughout England and Wales. The College Employers' Forum (CEF) wants to impose the slave contracts nationally. NATFHE's special further education conference — held during the annual national conference in Southport at the end of May — heard reports from these struggles. But the NATFHE leadership claims the dispute can be won by negotiations with 'reasonable' employers. Bath College has finished up with an ACAS deal; Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT) signed its own deal with NATFHE during the conference; Sheffield has suspended strike action following the management's request to enter negotiations. Strikes have taken place in

several colleges, including West Cumbria and Peterborough. More than 100 college branches will be taking action between 7 and 17 June, probably including all 13 Inner London Region colleges, which will be holding a lobby of parliament on 14 June. MANCAT branch said that management thought they had won a productivity deal, while lecturers saw it as a retreat. 'It buys us a year,' their speaker said. 'Otherwise it's not worth the paper it's written on.'

Hailed

Naturally the NATFHE leadership hailed it a great victory. The problem is the 'twin track' approach adopted at the last conference: all action and negotiations are really taking place locally while a notional offer to negotiate nationally is constantly rejected by the CEF. One result of the policy is that four branches in Manchester and at least two in Yorkshire have ceased all resistance to the employers' offensive and have accepted the 'new contracts'.

A defeated motion at the NATFHE conference called for national negotiations with the CEF to be reopened. 'There is no such thing as an equal initiative,' one delegate said. 'My college signed. The members just wanted to get on with teaching. They couldn't see national initiatives coming on.'

Will Sheffield and a few other branches be left to fight alone? Or will the movement for strike action defeat the employers' and the Tory government's plans? This is not a small, parochial dispute. It is about what sort of unions the working class needs.

NATFHE must allow the experience of industrial action to get through to the branches and members. The only way of resolving the issue is through strike action, under the control of the branches, for proper collective agreements.

NATFHE members want information about what is happening. Please send any information you have to Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

Campsfield break out

SIX political asylum-seekers escaped from the hated Group 4-run Campsfield detention centre, Oxfordshire, on Monday 6 June.

The escapes followed a protest by inmates in which damage has been estimated at £20,000.

Dr Mohamed Sekkoum of the Algerian community in London claimed the centre was effectively destroyed.

The detainees' protest was sparked by the removal for deportation of Algerian Ali Tamarat. He had recently been released after being on hunger strike for 12 days at Pentonville jail, London. He was rearrested about a month later from the demonstration outside the Campsfield detention centre.

Tamarat's solicitor, Sue Conlan, said he feared removal be-

BY MIKE COOKE

cause he had escaped from Algeria to avoid the attentions of Islamic fundamentalists.

The protest started with nine detainees causing some damage before going onto the roof. More than 50 police were then called in.

Then another group smashed telephones and broke windows of the centre.

Home Office minister Char-

les Wardle blamed 'the regular series of protesters, a motley coalition of left-wing supporters' who paraded outside the centre and stirred up trouble inside.

He claimed the perimeter fence had been raised to keep the protesters out rather than the detainees in!

Allegations that a Nigerian woman, Elizabeth Blanchard, was gagged and handcuffed while being transferred from Campsfield to Banbury police station, Oxfordshire, are to be investigated by the Home Office.

The use of gags was supposed to be banned after the death in July 1993 of 40-year-old Joy Gardner from Jamaica.

Britain looks to US for penal regime

THE British government wants to put many young people, and a fair few of the rest of us, 'inside', or so it would seem by Home Secretary Michael Howard's visit to investigate US military-style 'boot camps' for 'young offenders'.

US criminologists consider the record of the camps in operation there as 'unproven' at best. But British Tories are trying one-upmanship on Labour's prince uncharming Tony Blair, who has been going for 'law and order' in a big way recently. Howard no doubt also has an eye on the 'hang 'em and flog 'em' brigade who come out in full regalia every year at the Tories' annual conference.

But it would be well to look more closely at the US record. The only expertise the US state can boast of is the highest jailing rate in world. It now has nearly a million people in its prisons. At the end of last year the figure stood at 948,881, and

that total is rising by an average of 1,250 each week.

The US locks up a greater proportion of its population than any other country. The figure currently stands at 455 people in every 100,000. This represents a quadrupling of the rate of incarceration over the last 20 years, as the figure had stood at roughly 110 per 100,000 from the 1920s until the early 1970s.

The next biggest jailer of its population was the old South African regime, which imprisoned 311 in every 100,000. The rate of imprisonment in the US is highest amongst black men. The figure for them stands at 2,678 per 100,000.

Jailings

A report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics claims that almost half the increase is due to the government's war on drugs. The report also cited increased jailings for sexual assault, mugging and robbery.

However the crime rate has not dropped as quickly as conservatives would have liked. New York City last week reported an 11 per cent decrease in major crime, although in some quarters it is being suggested that this was due to particularly adverse weather conditions.

What is certain, though, is that conditions within the jails are worsening. On average prisons hold 25 per cent more prisoners than they were designed for, and at the present rate of incarceration the overcrowding will get worse.

One result has been that prisoners have not been taken to state prisons, but have been kept in local sheriffs' jails. Texas reported that almost 60 per cent of its prisoners were kept this way. One sheriff described this as a 'disaster waiting to happen'.

Congress's only response to the overcrowding has been to earmark money to build new jails.

Trades council delegates slam Monks

OVER 100 delegates from trades councils meeting in Gateshead heard John Monks, TUC general secretary, defend the decision to invite Tory employment minister David Hunt and Confederation of British Industry director Howard Davies to speak at the 5 July meeting on 'Full Employment', to be held at the TUC's HQ, Congress House, in London.

Peter Gibson, from Croydon trades council, called for the invitations to these two exponents of unemployment to be withdrawn, and for the organisation of a conference of activists to organise the battle against low wages and longer hours created by unemployment.

The delegate from Camden announced from the rostrum their intention to organise an alternative conference on the steps of Congress House on 5 July.

A string of delegates spoke out against the new TUC campaign organised by the ex-Liberal Democrat chair Des Wilson who, delegates heard, was being paid £50,000 for his part-time work for the TUC.

No honours?

OXFORD university has entered a row surrounding the US president's meeting with Italian neo-fascist Gianfranco Fini — who is said to have called Mussolini 'the greatest statesman this century' — by being urged to stop plans to give Bill Clinton an honorary degree. Among those putting pressure on the university are two concentration-camp survivors.

Correction

IN last week's centrespread discussion article, 'The "new" South Africa cannot fully destroy apartheid', De Klerk, Kriel and Buthelezi were inadvertently described as 'henchmen of the working class'. The description should, of course, have read 'hangmen of the working class'.

Fighter for socialism

IT IS with a sense of shock that we report the death of Phil Martin at the age of only 44. Phil joined the WRP in 1977 during a by-election campaign in Moss Side, Manchester.

He brought with him all the fighting qualities which had previously sustained a successful boxing career and within a short period became the secretary of the lively and growing Moss Side branch.

Phil devoted himself tirelessly to every aspect of party work, encouraging those around him with a mixture of socialist conviction and a street-wise sense of humour.

It was the Young Socialists and the development of young recruits which received his particular attention. His anger at the return of mass unemployment led him to join the

OBITUARY

People's March for Jobs from Liverpool to London in 1981.

Phil's success in building the WRP in Manchester came increasingly into conflict with the destructive methods of the Healy regime and in 1982 he left the party, effectively driven out by WRP leader Gerry Healy and his coterie.

In recent years, Phil won national recognition as a boxing promoter and founded Champs Camp, his gym in Moss Side which has produced one Commonwealth and four British title holders in the past 18 months. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Audrey and his three children.

Performance related pay?

HAVING paid £30 million for a chain of supermarkets in Spain in 1988, the Ashley Group sold it last year for only £20 million as it was a bit of a failure. Last week the group had to set aside £20 million against the possibility that it may not receive the money.

This would produce a pre-tax loss of £22 million for the 1993 tax year, on top of a £65 million loss in 1992. The Ashley Group may need to make a rights issue to strengthen its balance sheet.

Now two former directors of the group have shared £621,000 compensation for their loss of office. Is that what is meant by performance-related pay?

And perks?

IN JUNE 1993, Sir Archie

Hamilton resigned as armed forces minister and returned to the back benches. Earlier, in July 1991, he had taken the decision to close the Royal Navy depot at Trecwn near Fishguard in west Wales by 1996 with the loss of 500 jobs.

Soon after he left office he set up a company, Crown Ridge, which submitted proposals to redevelop the site. A fellow shareholding director is Rhodri Phillips, son of a government whip in the House of Lords, Viscount St David.

The proposal is to build a leisure complex and industrial units at Trecwn when the navy move out.

Crown Ridge is not Sir Archie's only business interest. Companies House records show he has also joined the board of Saladin, a security firm headed by Major David Walker, the ex-SAS officer who assisted Colonel Oliver North during the Iran-Contra affair.

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Worker Aid for Bosnia
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Inside left

Marxist milestones

TRAVELLING across Germany last week to visit a comrade who had driven on a Workers Aid convoy to Bosnia, we noticed signs for Trier, where Karl Marx was born, and Jena and Erfurt, where German Social-Democracy fought out its programmatic battles. We went through Thuringia, centre of the 16th-century peasant wars, and Saxony, where in 1923 the German Communist Party made its last attempt at revolution.

That evening over a meal, in a village baker's large, old house they have converted into their centre, young people brought up under East German Stalinism spoke to us about freedom, unity, unemployment and racialism. One of them stressed the need to restore the humanism of Marx.

We were in Silesia, where 150 years ago weavers protesting against poverty and unemployment defied armed troops. The local theatre is named after Gert Hauptmann, who wrote a play about them. Their heroic struggle also inspired the young Karl Marx.

That summer of 1844, he met Frederick Engels, who was writing his book 'The Condition of the Working Class in England'. Though born of bourgeois philosophy, scientific socialism was brought forth by the struggles of working people, and Marx and Engels's human regard for them.

Off the box

WE HAVE to make our people realise, freedom is not about having 24 TV channels to choose from, says Slovenian miners' leader Franc Drucs, whom I met last week. He was just back from a meeting with Italian trades unionists, who are facing a new right-wing government that includes fascists.

[Prime minister] Berlusconi is a man of capital, and his cabinet will cut profit first. The rich will get richer, while the number of those suffering hardship will increase. It is not just wages that are threatened, but safety, conditions, everything. Overnight the workers could lose gains which it took many years to achieve.'

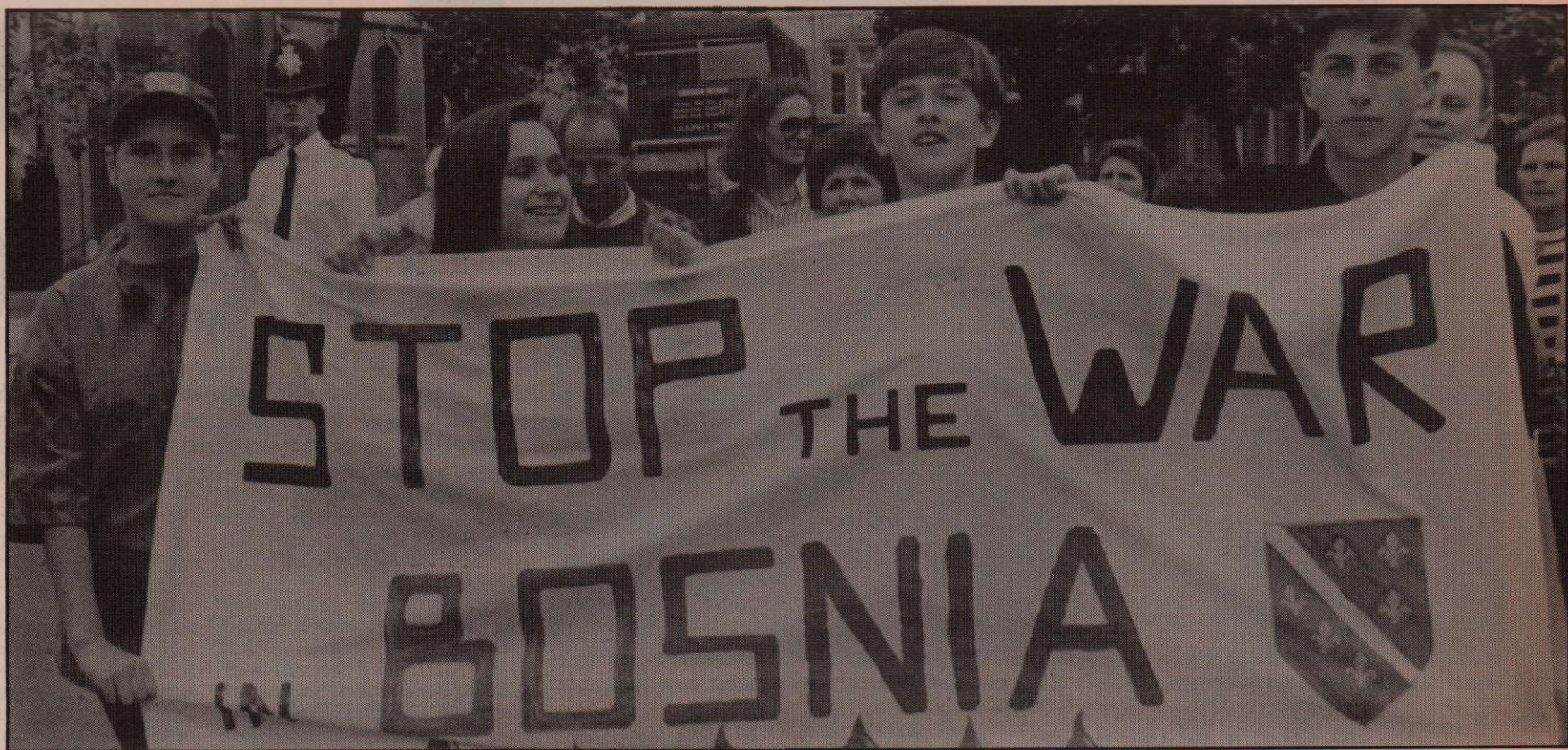
Putting much of the blame on Berlusconi's ownership and control of the media, Drucs sees this as part of a wider problem. 'Watching television in my hotel room in Rome one night, I analysed what was available. Out of 24 programmes, three were official, five were sport, five were entertainment and advertisements, and the rest were political — that is, presenting the new government's policies.

'Not one programme could I listen to from the trades unions, not one programme about workers' problems. The official news programme mentioned a demonstration in Rome, and we saw people with placards, but it just recorded what had happened, there was no explanation of the reasons for the demonstration.

'Trades unionists are kept down at the lowest level, we are not represented in the media. There is not one trade union television channel in Europe. Is it surprising you get an election result like we have seen in Italy, or elsewhere?'

Franc Drucs wants trades unionists to unite, and make themselves felt politically. His union is hosting a conference this month with miners' representatives from Italy, Germany, Hungary, and Poland. 'The governments meet together in Brussels to decide common strategy. We must do the same,' says Drucs.

He is anxious to overcome inter-union divisions and rivalry. 'To have independent consciousness means trades unions must co-operate among themselves, and unite internationally.' **Charlie Pottins**



Young supporters of Bosnia on the Workers Aid demonstration in London last year

Come out against the UN!

The following is the text of an open letter issued by the French section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International to the signatories of the document 'Europe begins in Sarajevo'.

**No to the partition of Bosnia!
No negotiations with criminals!
Support the Bosnian resistance!
Lift the arms embargo!
Karadzic, Milosevic — murderers!
Mitterrand, Balladur — accomplices!
UNPROFOR out! Lift the blockade on Bosnia!**

Dear friends,
In drawing up the 'Europe begins in Sarajevo' list you took the auspicious step of putting Bosnia at the heart of the debate on the elections to the European parliament. Yes, the future of the peoples of Europe does begin in Sarajevo. Since the beginning of this war in the former Yugoslavia we have de-

nounced the intervention of the French government and of the great powers that have taken the side of Milosevic and his Greater Serbia policy.

We have condemned their plans for partition — the Vance-Owen plan was only the first of these — as the objective of the United Nations' policies. That is why we have come out for the withdrawal of UNPROFOR, and for the right of Bosnia-Herzegovina to obtain arms for its own defence.

On this basis we have played an active part in building Workers Aid for Bosnia in France. We think that the European governments are defending interests quite opposed to those of the workers and the masses.

We say that there is no future for the defence of workers' rights and liberties in a Europe which accepts the ethnic division of Bosnia. That is why we support no list of candidates in the European elections,

even if it claims to speak for the workers' movement, which refuses to put itself on the side of the Bosnian resistance.

But amid all your talk of support for Bosnian resistance you demand 'the enforcement of all the UN resolutions'.

Do we have to remind you that the UN does not recognise the right of the Bosnians to defend themselves, and that all its resolutions are inspired by the idea that there are 'belligerents', and not aggressors and their victims?

So we must leave no ambiguity. Nor must we encourage any illusions in government policies, whether in Washington or Moscow, Paris, London or Berlin.

At the same time we must warn those who call for air strikes by NATO against the occupied zones or Serbia that that will do nothing to settle the problem of greater-Serbian nationalism.

On the contrary, it would in fact

seriously endanger the possibility of organising the workers' and democratic forces needed for the overthrow of the Milosevic government.

Yes, the future of the peoples of Europe does begin in Sarajevo.

Now more than ever it is necessary and possible to draw into active solidarity with the Bosnian resistance — the highest point of the struggle against fascism in Europe — the masses of workers and young people sickened by the future of unemployment and hardship that the profit system offers them.

Only under the impact of such a mass mobilisation will the friends of Milosevic relinquish that forcing through of ethnic partition which they call a negotiated peace.

But this entails a clear, independent, unflinching policy.

If you come out openly against the UN and their accomplices in the French government, we shall unreservedly back you up!

Celebration at a house

TOM OWEN comments on the cultural contradictions revealed at the new Glyndebourne opera house

CHANNEL 4's production of Mozart's comic masterpiece, 'The Marriage of Figaro', on Saturday 28 May was billed as being a list of firsts: the first performance in Glyndebourne's new opera house, of the opera staged when the festival first opened 60 years ago to the day, the first live broadcast from the festival in 30 years . . .

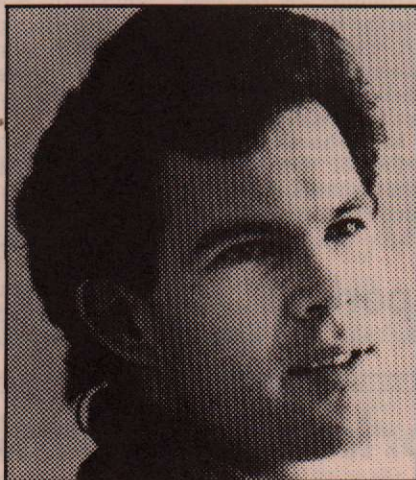
The broadcast — indeed, 'celebration' — of such a big occasion promised a deluge of pretentious celebrities with their vacuous and either self-congratulatory or sycophantic whining, and these there were in abundance.

Later I steeled myself to watch 'The House that George Built', the one-hour documentary screened during the long interval. This told the story of the construction of the new opera house during the long interval when the nation's cultural — and not so cultured — elite were sitting on the wet Sussex grass with their hampers and champers.

I am sure much more could be written about this programme, but what struck me was the extraordinarily transparent way in which it

revealed the cultural contradictions of contemporary capitalism.

The new opera house received no direct state funding and its £30 million budget was raised from the 'private sector'. But if the Glyndebourne entrepreneurs did not re-



Gerald Finley played Figaro at the Glyndebourne festival

quire the state to build their house, they certainly needed the cultural capital of an army of highly skilled workers: bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, acoustic engineers, designers, etc.

And once the house was built and prepared for the 'clients/patrons' a whole different range of productive

labour and skills came into play, those of set designers, orchestral musicians, singers and — for the likes of me and thee — a vast and complex broadcasting network.

When the clients and patrons file back, settle into their pine seats



Alison Hagley played the clever and resourceful Susanna

and the lights dim and the music starts, a magic other than Mozart's comes into play. The consumers become an audience and the producers become performers and players.

If the material product of the labour of the builders and craftworkers has become a spectral

'thing', 'the house', because their labour could only be expressed as 'labour-power', a product of alienation, is there a parallel process at work in relation to the 'spiritual production' of the collectivity of artists and musicians?

At one level, especially in the case of Glyndebourne, the experience and meaning of the opera art form, like the opera house itself, is seen as the 'exclusive' property and cultural currency of a privileged elite.

Some 'Marxists' — especially contemporary academic Stalinists — have argued that at the level of 'spiritual production' and creative performance the labours of the artists have also become 'spectral', their individual and collective struggle to achieve harmony out of discord, for human realisation, can only be realised as a closed moment of fiction or, in the case of 'The Marriage of Figaro', as the moment of comic resolution.

Certainly much that has gone under the name of art, and in this century much of what comes under 'popular culture', could be described as limited in the above way. But as an overall theoretical approach to the problems of artistic production, this way of looking at things is fixed and 'idealist'.

The clearest way to demonstrate

D-Day, fascism and ethnic cleansing

AMIDST all the furore about D-Day, the press ignored a militant demonstration held in Caen, Normandy, on 4 June. Some 4,000 people marched through the rain against fascism.

In many statements, demonstrators showed that the policy of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia marks the sharpest point of the re-emergence of fascism in Europe.

The European Forum for Bosnia-Herzegovina issued a joint statement with the Society for Endangered Peoples in which they said:

'Every version of right-wing radicalism, neo-Fascism and neo-Nazism reappearing now, 50 years after the defeat of Hitler and Mussolini, is solidly established in the "Greater Serbia" of Milosevic, Seselj, Arkan, Karadzic and Mladic.

'A regime guided by a master-race ideology wages or intends to wage a war of aggression against neighbouring states. For the first time since the 1940s, genocide is being carried out again in Europe, and concentration camps have been set up in which tens of thousands of Bosnians have been murdered.

'With systematic mass rapes, sieges, bombardments and starving of towns, mass deportations, expulsions and massacres, Milosevic had prepared a kind of "final solution" for the Muslims in Bosnia.'



'Milosevic has prepared a kind of "final solution" for the Muslims in Bosnia'

'But the memory of Europeans is very short. Who, watching more than 1,000 Bosnian mosques going up in flames, seeing all the historic monuments of half a millennium of central-European Islam destroyed for ever, recalls the night of the Nazi pogrom against the Jews in November 1938? As in the 1930s, Europe tolerates the martyrdom of a non-Christian minority.

'Day after day, the Serbian authorities in Kosovo are intensifying an apartheid solution based on the South African model.

'Belgrade is pushing ahead with the expulsion of Muslims from Sandzak and Hungarians from Vojvodina.'

Former resistance fighter Jean-René Chauvin, who was held in the Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald, also stated that 'The ethnic cleansing carried out by Milosevic's government — first in Kosovo, then in Croatia, and now in Bosnia-Herzegovina — repeats the crimes of Hitler and his followers.'

The demonstration issued many

calls for the unity of Bosnia and the lifting of the arms embargo. Calls were also made for the linking of the Bosnian and Rwandan masses.

However, many of the statements saw the way forward for Bosnia as residing with the United Nations, disregarding the fact that it is the UN itself which is preventing the Bosnian people from defending themselves.

Thus Chauvin called on the people of Europe to 'act to compel their political leaders to apply the United Nations resolutions and demand the delivery of arms to Bosnia in order to allow the people to fight', whilst the European Forum for Bosnia-Herzegovina claimed that 'political action in accordance with the principles of our democracies can put a stop to fascism'.

If the latter were truly the case then the situation would not have arisen in the first place!

Liberation

Chauvin's contribution, however, indicated that the politicians of the UN and the European governments will not be able to meet the demands for the safety of Bosnia.

Referring movingly to the internees of Buchenwald swearing at their liberation 'Never again', he warned that a failure to support the Bosnian people would be a 'failure to assist people under threat of death'.

He warned of the treachery of

those who called for an end to the negotiations before the Bosnian people could be armed.

'Coming from them', he said, 'this is hypocrisy aimed at supporting the aggressors more effectively. The SS and former Vichy militias didn't negotiate: they killed.'

We would agree with this failure of governments, and say that there are certain preconditions to our support for any major pro-Bosnian list of candidates in the European election (see the Open Letter to the 'Europe Begins in Sarajevo' list, issued by the French section of the Workers International, printed on this page).

The meeting after the demonstration heard many discussions on the lists for the European elections.

There was a heavy Bosnian presence on the march. Members of the Workers International spent time with them after the demonstration.

The Bosnians were very positive about organising convoys, and clarification was reached on the aims of the struggle.

The most pressing task for the European working class is, as Jean-René Chauvin said, to 'take up these two slogans of the Yugoslav partisans who fought united against the Hitler invaders:

Bratsvo, jedinstvo! (Fraternity and unity!)

Smert fasizmu — Sloboda narod! (Death to fascism! Freedom to the people!)

se of spirit

this perhaps is to look at forms of property ownership, or modes of production. These have changed, are changing, and will change according to historical laws and circumstances, and so necessarily will the relationship between artist and audience and what was once called patronage.

But the historical explanation is only a partial one. Does not history also limit or even capture a work of art in its own realm of language,

outside our own personal, social or political experience.

This is a complex issue but it seems to me that some art is capable of penetrating those barriers thrown up by an alienated human historical condition and, in Trotsky's words, building a 'bridge from soul to soul'. Just how this bridge is built is not just a question for literary and art criticism or history, but has to do with how art is politicised, albeit in a most refined way.

If we take the example of Mozart's 'Marriage of Figaro' — and I apologise to opera buffs for seeming to neglect the composer and his work — we can begin to see the 'alchemy' of a great artist at work. Certainly you could experience this if you were lucky enough to see the Channel 4 production.

Mozart took his source from the French dramatist Beaumarchais (1732-99), whose play was banned by the absolutist Louis XVI's censor. The play was politically sensitive because of two issues.

First, because the count in the play, having forsworn the feudal 'droit de seigneur' — the right of the landowner to sleep with a vassal bride on her wedding-night — does everything he can by hypocrisy and subterfuge to achieve it.

Secondly, he is thwarted and humiliated by the wily Figaro and



Some of the cultural elite sit on the grass as they enjoy their champers and hampers outside the new opera house

his even cleverer fiancée, the servant girl Susanna, who is in league with the rejected countess.

Formally the play observes all the conventions of French neo-classical and enlightenment comedy and draws on a tradition that goes back to Molière (1622-73) and Roman comedy.

It uses all the stock devices of a resourceful female servant, mistaken identities, and the final comic resolution in which a semblance of social order is reconstituted.

Mozart lifts this story-line with all its conventions virtually intact and reshapes it as a sexual-political drama of great range and depth. He achieves this both dramatically and musically by extending the genre through from the tragic to the comic to the farcical.

It is this range of human emotion, love lust, resentment, jealousy, despair, and joy which provide the score for the dazzling variation of musical styles and forms. He seems to move effortlessly from the almost unbearably

lyrical solo to the soaring witty duets to the robust ensemble singing.

The finale is pure comic convention; a kind of order is restored, the leading roles sing triumphantly that they are 'content' and leave to celebrate the various marriages with fireworks and feasting. But the darkness and the confusion are still there with the joy. Only the most pedantic and purblind Althusserian could claim that Mozart remains trapped in the ideologies of an *ancien régime*.

style, and what is now constantly put to the fore, ideology. These are the questions which Marx asked about the enduring appeal of Greek art or Trotsky asked about the meaning of the work of the medieval Italian poet, Dante.

Our abiding fascination and excitement with the art of the past reveals more than an antiquarian interest, as indeed does the appeal of contemporary work which lies

Hell in Amazonia

PERSONAL COLUMN

BEFORE leaving the subject of Brazil for the time being, I can't avoid writing about the most horrifying and distressing aspect of that vast country.

Just how horrifying and distressing wasn't clear to me until I came back to Britain and read the recently published 'Slavery in Brazil: A Link in the Chain of Modernisation: The Case of Amazonia' by Alison Sutton (Anti-Slavery International, Human Rights Series no. 7, £5.95).

My two previous columns on Brazil have been in part light-hearted; but there can be nothing light-hearted about this one, for it is written from a heart heavy with pity and anger after reading Sutton's thoroughly researched and well-written book.

It is a book that scalds the conscience. It takes the reader thousands of miles away from the bright lights and facile hedonism of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador to a place of medieval darkness and degradation; a place where profit is made, not by 'normal' capitalist exploitation, but by the wholesale enslavement and intimidation of human beings; a place where men, women and children in torment might well say with Marlowe's Mephistopheles:

Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.

The enslavement of black people in Brazil was ended in 1888.

Today, in the words of the Pastoral Land Commission, many of whose members have been attacked and several of whom have been murdered, there is in Brazil 'a form of slavery in which the victims are chosen by virtue of their poverty rather than their colour'.

One of the great strengths of Sutton's book is that she shows with the utmost clarity how modern-day Brazilian slavery — debt bondage and forced labour — is an integral part of the world capitalist system, directly benefiting gigantic multinational corporations like Volkswagen, Nixdorf, and Li-Quigá as well such powerful Brazilian banking groups as Bradesco, Banco Real, and Banco Bamerindus.

These were the concerns that in the 1960s and 1970s took advantage of tax concessions of up to 50 per cent of entire tax liability if over two-thirds of the rebate was invested in industrial or agricultural projects in the 'modernisation' of Amazonia.

The pickings were too rich and too easy to be spurned. Thousands of workers were and still are trapped in a cycle of debt and kept in slavery by threats, force, and torture.

In Brazil the richest tenth of the population owns nearly 50 per cent of the revenue, while the poorest tenth owns less than 1 per cent. Close on 100 million people live in dire poverty.

Just over a year ago 58 per cent of the population of Piauí, 47 per cent of that of Ceará, and 36 per cent of that of Bahia — all north-east states — were living on the equivalent of £10 a week or less.

From areas such as this comes a steady stream of hungry, desperate workers who are recruited by seductive promises of fat pay packets. They enter into verbal contracts and are taken thousands of miles by truck to toil in dangerous conditions: clearing land, tapping rubber, panning for gold.

Few are ever paid more than a fraction of what they have been promised. Their pay is confiscated to pay for transport costs, food, working clothes, and tools. These debts, often fraudulently inflated, mount up.

Often these migrant work-

ers' identity cards are taken from them to prevent their escape. Both threats and force are used. These are the words of one contractor on an estate in Pará:

'You'll never leave here until you pay your debts. I have orders to kill you if you don't go back to work.'

Those who do try to escape are punished sadistically. On an estate in Pará owned by the Bradesco bank, there was a punishment in the 1980s called the 'trunk':

'It's a hollowed-out trunk in which they put bits of left-over food attracting ants and other insects. They put the person to be punished inside. The guy spends three days tied up.'

Elsewhere three men who had tried to run away were caught, stripped naked, and forced to stand near a stream, where they were bitten by insects while under armed guard and forbidden to brush mosquitoes away or scratch bites.

Workers are forced to beat each other, chained up at night, subjected to various forms of sexual humiliation, forced at gunpoint to climb into the top branches of trees which are then cut down.

In Brazil there are officially estimated to be half a million child prostitutes. In 1987 the Pará state deputy started to campaign on the use of children aged 11 to 15 as prostitutes in mining camps. In the following year he was shot dead.

Girls and young women are promised high wages as cooks and waitresses. When they reach the mining camps they learn that they must work as prostitutes and must pay off debts incurred for transport and medicine — including medicine to treat malaria. The chance of escape from these remote areas is slender.

Girls and women are often starved into submission, beaten and locked up, and the local police arrest and ill-treat those who try to escape. They are beaten with electric wire folded over four times, or with the *palmatória*, a kind of wooden paddle with weal-raising holes in it invented by the Portuguese colonisers of Angola and Brazil.

Sutton denounces 'the near-total impunity enjoyed by those who over recent years have killed — or ordered the killing of — many social rights activists, including trade union leaders, lawyers, priests and nuns'.

In Rio Maria, Pará, seven leaders of the local rural workers' union have been murdered in the past nine years. Others have received repeated death threats.

Last year the Brazilian government at last admitted to the world that there is slavery in their country. But with a totally inadequate labour inspectorate, the hope of effective government action — even if the will existed — is meagre.

As one leader of the agricultural workers' union put it: 'To get an inspector to go into the countryside is the same thing as dreaming that inflation will fall.'

Aside from a piece in the 'Independent' contributed by the author herself, the British press has virtually ignored Sutton's book. And, more than a month after publication, there seems precious little chance that this silence will be broken.

Yet acres of forest are being used to titillate the British public with the scabrous details of yet another top people's sex scandal.

Peter Fryer

Television

Defenders of the faith

Review by Jeff Jackson

JUST before Christmas 1985, two Nevada teenagers, Ray Belknap and James Vance, attempted to carry out a suicide pact they had apparently entered into by shooting themselves with a 12-gauge shotgun.

Belknap died instantly but his best friend, Vance, who tried to follow suit by placing the now blood-stained weapon under his own chin, astonishingly survived although horribly disfigured as a result of the self-inflicted blast.

The young men were ardent fans of the heavy metal band Judas Priest. In a letter Vance afterwards wrote to his dead friend's mother, he claimed that 'alcohol and heavy-metal music such as Judas Priest led us or even mesmerised us into believing that the answer to life was death'.

FINE CUT: 'Dream Deceivers' (BBC2, 4 June) documented the background to this case and followed the legal battle when it finally came to be heard in Reno district court some five years later.

Weak

Both sets of parents claimed a recorded subliminal command, 'Do It', had mesmerised their sons. Judas Priest fans, filmed picketing the court house, had other ideas. One placard read: 'Judas Priest Doesn't Kill. Weak Minds Do', and another, 'Suicide is a Tragic Aspect of American Culture However Rock-n-Roll Is Not At Fault Here'.

Interviewed sitting on a children's roundabout in the yard where he had tried to kill himself, the tragic Vance stated: 'I would like to call certain people murderers.' Members of the

band he and Belknap had once idolised elsewhere protested that the image of Judas Priest being drug-crazed Satan-worshippers couldn't be further from the truth.

'We don't all sing about "love"', lead singer Rob Halford pointed out. 'We feel we're a bit more intellectual than that.'

father, and disputes within both families invariably arose over the preferred choice of music.

Vance had moved out five times because of such arguments. His parents were active church-goers. Scenes from local gospel meetings with them in attendance were juxtaposed with shots from Judas Priest



There's no love and no devil in the songs of Judas Priest

A lot of people can understand the feeling of isolation and the frustration that living in the modern world can give you.'

Although Belknap and Vance had similar histories of rebelling against authority, there had been no major incidents. Neither was living with his natural

concerts. Mrs Vance said her son would quote song lyrics as if they were the Scriptures. In court, a doctor who was a witness for the families stated: 'The lyric line has religious implications that would arouse in anyone in our culture religious associations and feelings.'

'For example: "Thy kingdom come electric ecstasy" ... I think you have embodied in the phrase itself the very conflict that both these young men were struggling with.'

As lawyers wheeled into court computers and hi-tech equipment in an attempt to pin down the alleged hidden messages in the recordings, so to were the various skeletons in both families' closets exposed.

Ray's elder natural sister had attempted suicide on two separate occasions (she was not a heavy-metal fan); James's step-father once gambled and drank heavily. His past also contained episodes of physical abuse and drug-taking.

Subliminal

The band were cleared. The judge found the subliminal 'commands' attributable to 'the accidental combination of sounds'. Three years after the shooting James Vance hospitalised himself for depression. While under treatment, he died of a medication overdose, cause unknown.

'People don't know what it's like to have to open your whole life after you've had a horrible experience like this,' he'd said. 'We weren't looking for an easy way out. We obviously thought there was something better.'

As well as being deeply affronted at the humiliating spectacle of musicians having to 'defend' their artistic reputations in such an absurd and reactionary legal wrangle, David Van Taylor's direction agonisingly captured the sickness and the pain endured by the other hapless victims of vengeance-taking bourgeois society.

Programme guide

Saturday 11 June FINE CUT: 'Imperfect Journey'. Ryszard Kapuscinski's book 'The Emperor' about Haile Selassie provides a rationale for a journey by Polish intellectual and African film-maker Haile Gerima to look at life in Ethiopia at a critical time (8pm, BBC2).

Sunday 12 June ENCOUNTERS: 'Shark Wars'. Investigates the conservationists' battle to save one of the ocean's oldest species (7pm, Channel 4). **'The Richard Dimbleby Lecture: Security and Democracy'.** Stella Rimington, new head of MI5, sheds light on the workings of one of the most secretive governmental departments (10.15pm, BBC1).

Monday 13 June 'Human Rights, Human Wrongs'. The actress Helen Mirren follows the lives of a family of young

girls in Pakistan who are just some of the 150 million children working in the world today (12.30pm, BBC2). **PANORAMA.** A report on PLO chairman Yasser Arafat's actions since last year's 'peace deal' between Israel and Palestine (9.30pm, BBC1). **GLOBAL IMAGE: 'In a Time of Betrayal'.** Film-maker Carmen Castillo returns to Chile to confront Alexandra, a former revolutionary who was subsequently tortured into service with the secret police and later became chief prosecution witness against the excesses of the Pinochet regime (10.55pm, Channel 4). **'A Different Country'.** Michael Ignatieff charts the rise of Scottish nationalism (11.15pm, BBC2).

Friday 17 June WORLD CUP GRANDSTAND: Here at last! The opening of the 15th World

Cup finals. Live coverage from Chicago of the first half of the match between reigning champions Germany and Bolivia (7pm, BBC1 — then switch to BBC2 for the second half).

Selected films

SHANGHAI EXPRESS (1932). Directed by Josef von Sternberg, Marlene Dietrich as the notorious Shanghai Lily on a train journey through civil-war-torn China. Also on board: former lover Clive Brook, and evil war-lord Warner Oland. **Marvellous!** (Saturday, 12.15pm, BBC2). **DAYS OF HEAVEN (1978).** Writer/director Terence Malick's powerful drama of love, jealousy and death among a group of migrant workers in 1916 in the Texas panhandle (Sunday, 9pm, Channel 4). **DIARY FOR MY FATHER AND MY**



Brooke Adams and Richard Gere in 'Days of Heaven', Channel 4 on Sunday

MOTHER (1990). The final part of Marta Meszaros's trilogy about recent events in Hungarian history deals with the anti-Soviet uprising of 1956 (Sunday, 12.15am, Channel 4).

JJ

The fraud of special schools closures

The transferring of school pupils with 'special needs' or 'learning difficulties' from special schools catering for children with physical or mental disability has denied them desperately needed help. **BERNARD FRANKS** looks at the stark reality behind the theories that laid the basis for this education cut

THE basis was laid by a 1981 act for the systematic closure of special schools for physically and mentally handicapped children and the transfer of their pupils to 'mainstream' schools. A whole theory was evolved to explain how this would mean an integrated, more natural lifestyle for disabled children, while benefiting their unimpaired counterparts by heightening their awareness of disability.

In 1990, there were still 2,000 special schools in Britain — 80 per cent local authority and 20 per cent private — catering for 200,000 handicapped children.

These institutions often supply ultra-specialist care and teaching facilities, along with one-to-one support by extremely dedicated professional staff.

Shut

Naturally, equivalent special provision was promised in the mainstream schools: one in five children estimated to have some learning difficulties were to have 'their needs considered', while the one in 50 (134,000) between the ages of two and 16 (19 if still at school) with severe problems would be 'state-

mented', that is, assessed for special provision.

Many parents were fooled that here was a major advance, and not, as it proved, a purely politically motivated plan to shut expensive specialist provision.

The changeover soon faced huge problems, while mainstream placement in a period of severe education cuts is totally unworkable for many of the individuals involved. For example, with the best will in the world, ordinary school language units could not match the speech therapy expertise of the threatened special schools, nor could they take on pupils early enough — at two years, instead of five — or on a residential basis.

Councils have delayed 'state-menting' by educationalists, psychologists, doctors, etc., fearing the funding commitment. And many children 'with some learning difficulties' have

been neglected, owing to 'priority'.

The new terminology has proved a trick, replacing references to physical and mental handicap with 'learning difficulties' so as to downgrade the problems, to the level where a few extra teaching aids will suffice.

Many parents have realised the extent of the fraud, and have begun campaigns to save their special schools, now hit by local authorities' spending cuts.

Meanwhile, the national curriculum, with its plan for league-table examination results, has meant it's to the disadvantage of ordinary schools to take pupils with severe learning problems.

Schools adopting the 'mainstreaming' ideal may well be classed as bad schools because of their examination results. And no doubt their extra provision will be the first to be cut.

Fighting racism and fascism

PHIL EDWARDS reviews two publications now available which deal with some important questions relating to the fight against fascism in east London

YOUNG people have been on the receiving end of racist and fascist violence for some considerable time now. Only last week a young Asian man, Shah Mohamad Ruhul, was the victim of a violent stabbing incident in the Poplar area of Tower Hamlets, east London. He was attacked by ten adult white racists and is now unconscious in the London hospital.

Quddus Ali, a victim of a violent assault in Tower Hamlets last year, having regained consciousness, is being interrogated by police seeking to 'prove' that he provoked the racist attack on him.

In Sheffield, a number of Pakistani young men are being tried in court for daring to defend themselves against racist and fascist gangs. The local trades council joined up with them, local trades unionists, and young anti-fascists to hold a successful demonstration of 300 people which succeeded in forcing the police to drop charges in most of the cases.

Nevertheless, police in Tower Hamlets have continued to victimise young Asians on the streets. Those taken into the police stations have been the victims of racist abuse. The local trades council has succeeded in convincing the local authority to call for a public inquiry into police racism.

'Brick Lane 1978: The Events and Their Significance', by Kenneth Leech has now been re-published, with some updating. It is a useful addition to Tower Hamlets trades council's 'No More Blood on the Streets: How to Fight Racism and Fascism', recently published.

Ken Leech, a local Anglican anti-racist campaigner, makes several references to 'Blood on the Streets', which was produced by Tower Hamlets trades council's predecessor, the Bethnal Green and Stepney trades council.

Both pamphlets look at the growth of racial violence in the Spitalfields area of east London in the 1970s and at the 1978 events that led up to the electoral collapse of the National Front and the later formation of the British National Party out of its fragments. Leech also looks at the history of immigration in the area and at the growth of resistance by young Asians to growing racist and fascist attacks.

A revealing section, the 'Ghetto Controversy', is about the Greater London Council's role in attempting to create a housing policy that segregated Bengalis. This was successfully resisted by local Bengalis and their allies in the white working class.

It attacks the Commission for Racial Equality's 1979 ill-informed and grossly distorted report about the situation in east London and the role of local organisations. There are big lessons to be learnt about the 1978 experience, when the Anti-Nazi League organised a carnival in south London at the very moment the fascists were threatening to march through the Brick Lane area.

FIFTEEN years on from the battles waged by the Bengali working-class youth and others against fascism in east London, fascism rears its head. Not that it ever disappeared. It simply

regrouped and changed its tactics. Electoral adventures and tuggish racist attacks are the twin arms of its strategy.

In Tower Hamlets and Newham, in the recent elections, they were stronger than they had been for well over a decade. In the postscript to 'Brick Lane '78' reference is made to the inadequacy of youth organisation since 1978.

The Ocean Estate is one of the largest working-class estates in the Stepney neighbourhood of Tower Hamlets, controlled until this year by the Liberal Democrats — 25 per cent of its population are young people. Ocean Youth, a group of local young people, established itself in response to cuts in local facilities such as those in 1991. The background to these cuts was growing drug abuse and criminalisation of young people.

Ocean Youth 1992-93 report, which has now been published, shows us the whole climate of racism forming the backdrop to this fascist activity and the role of the local authority in implementing racist policies.

Stepney neighbourhood changed the name of Altab Ali park, where young Altab Ali was murdered, back to its original 'St Mary's'. It refused the use of its local park for a rally against unemployment organised locally by Tower Hamlets and Newham trades councils two years ago.

Funny that the local Liberals didn't seem to put up the same barriers to the fascists' 'right of assembly'.

Ocean Youth's report suggests a direct link between lack of drug-abuse centres and youth and community centres, and the growth of school truancy. And since the report local Intermediate Education Centres (IECs) for truants have been drastically cut, as have

section 11 staff — who give language support to children whose first language is not English — who have been sacked or redeployed.

We have yet to see if the new Labour council in Tower Hamlets will carry out its promise to reverse this cut in section 11 funding. The response of the Liberals to truancy was, like the Tories, the big stick: financial penalties for schools with high 'non-attendance' or take the parents to court.

Unfortunately, whilst the report looks at 'institutionalised' racism amongst staff at institutions including schools and the local sixth-form college (which has seen many fascist and racist attacks on its Asian students), it fails to look at the constraints placed on these institutions by budgetary attacks. Schools adopting anti-discriminatory policies will not automatically mean Asian pupils achieve.

Three hundred students from Tower Hamlets college demonstrated to challenge racial discrimination by staff. Local young people have been the victims of police racial abuse and violence, particularly by the Territorial Support Group.

Clearly young people are at the very centre of the attacks on the working class politically and economically. They are beginning to organise independently. But the organised trade-union movement must lend its support and experience to this movement so that the next generation of young fighters can be properly equipped to take their proper place in the struggles which lie ahead.

'Brick Lane 1978: The Events and Their Significance', by Kenneth Leech, is available from Eastside bookshop, Mile End Road, London E1.

Bronwen Handyside reports

Two nations



Cultured — like a bacteria

PERIPATETIC music teaching in England and Wales is disappearing, as schools throughout the country are forced to prioritise national curriculum requirements.

Many councils have cut music services completely, and others are barely able to keep theirs going.

Children have to begin to learn before their teens in order to be a serious strings player or pianist.

As schools begin to charge for music lessons, 'instrumental lessons will effectively only become available to those who can pay for them as a private lesson', says Jonathan Willcocks, director of the Junior Academy at the Royal Academy of Music.

Claire Wilkins, in her first year as a music student at East Anglia University, said: 'I would never have taken up the violin if it wasn't for the peripatetic teacher, for the simple reason that we are not very rich'.

'We couldn't have afforded them without the subsidised lessons. If it wasn't for them, I don't think I would ever have started playing.'

Lauretta Young, 18, has been leader of Coventry Youth Orchestra for three years. She plans to study at the Royal College of Music and combine professional violin playing with teaching. 'If I hadn't been taught by a peripatetic teacher I wouldn't have learnt to play the violin,' she says.

Geoffrey Dolton is an opera singer. 'My parents weren't musical at all really, and my father wasn't very keen on me doing music,' he says. 'If it wasn't for the peripatetic teacher, I wouldn't have done music at all. Lessons mean money and I didn't come from a family that could afford extra activities. I saw other kids having piano lessons, but I knew there was no point asking my parents because we just didn't have the money for it.'

On 1 April this year, as part of an enforced Welsh Office cut, South Glamorgan's music service, together with junior, senior and county orchestras, was given six months to make itself self-financing under a new 'business plan'. Children are now customers and the teachers have to sell their services to them.

Barnsley council got rid of all its peripatetic staff when its poll tax was capped three years ago.

The destruction of these services means that the vast unexplored musical potential of millions of working-class children will be thrown away.

Only the rich, and the children of the rich are to be allowed the enjoyment of this huge area of culture.

At the same time as the teaching of music is being destroyed by the introduction of 'market forces', former defence minister Alan Clark and his pals continue to demonstrate for us the dizzy cultural heights the super-rich can reach, after tens of thousands of pounds have been spent on educating them.

God and Mammon

OTHER areas of education are not exempt from this government's idea of what constitutes true culture.

Last week education minister John Patten rebuked head teachers who said that enforcing a daily act of Christian worship was difficult for many schools whose pupils and teachers may or may not be Christian.

Patten said he was disappointed by the survey by the notoriously conservative National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) showing that eight out of ten heads thought the government's expectations concerning the law were unacceptable.

Addressing the NAHT in Eastbourne, Patten said the 50-year-old law was 'a good law', giving pupils time to focus on religious responses to moral issues.

Funnily enough he said nothing about compelling Alan Clark to sit through a daily act of Christian worship to sharpen up his notions about the acceptability of child abuse.

Nor did Patten explain why he wasn't insisting that schoolchildren worship the same god as he and Alan Clark do — money.

Labour's crumbs for the young

THE new modern, re-vamped Labour Party is no better when it comes to dealing with the young (nor to anything else, but that's another story).

After the brou-ha-ha last week over Major's contemptuous attack on beggars, the Labourites hastily backed off what might have seemed a guarantee to reintroduce benefits for 16- and 17-year-olds (too close to a possibly winnable election folks).

So do they propose apprenticeships? Or jobs? Don't be silly. These public-spirited people propose a youth 'Citizens Service' — 'designed to encourage greater civic responsibility and meet social needs'.

Labour's crown prince, Tony Blair, hailed the proposal which would provide 250,000 voluntary places for three months. For this young people will be paid the grand total of £50 a week. So after three months you can go back to your abusive family — that is if you have not starved to death while paying the average room rent (in London) of £50 a week.

Treasury cuts to vulnerable young

HOW far away is Mr Blair and his starry-eyed notions from those of Treasury officials, who are calling for the cutting of benefits paid to 16- and 17-year-olds who qualify for income support because they have been evicted by their parents or have left home after being abused.

The bill for these hardship cases has apparently gone up too rapidly, and may soon reach £40 million a year. The Treasury is demanding they be slashed.

In a cold-blooded letter shown to the 'Guardian' last week, a senior official at the social security department warned the Treasury: 'I am sure you will be sensitive to the criticisms that could be levelled against the department and ministers if just one case could be proved that the department forced an abused child back into the clutches of an abuser.'

The officials are proposing that the DSS interrogate parents when a 16- or 17-year-old says they have been thrown out, and that social workers should be used to check up on claimants who say they are being abused.

If you have any material for this column, please send it to me at Workers Press, PO Box 735, London, SE10 1XD.

Letter

More letters on page 2

Crushing support

CHARLIE POTTINS criticises Socialist Outlook's position on South Africa in his 'Inside left' column, and concludes: 'Its traditionally Pabloite recipe: "mass" pressure on bourgeois-nationalist and Stalinist leaders to implement their programme' (28 May).

If I remember correctly, the WRP during the Gulf war gave support to the bourgeois-nationalist leaders of Iraq, in the name of anti-imperialism. In other words, it is not only the 'Socialist Outlook' tendency that considers that bourgeois nationalism can play a progressive role — in fact, all Trotskyist tendencies that I know of consider that bourgeois nationalism has a progressive role to play. In my opinion, such support strengthens this reactionary class, covers up its real nature and thereby enables it to crush and intensify the exploitation of its workers and peasants.

Also, in the 1930s, Trotsky himself supported the tactic of rallying upon the Socialists and Stalinists in France, to break with their bourgeoisie and to form their own government; a tactic designed to expose the bankruptcy of these forces and open the gates to the forces of revolution.

How different is this tactic from that pursued by 'Socialist Outlook' today in South Africa? Surely, they are more loyal to Trotsky's ideals than the WRP.

And as for Pablo, he only took Trotsky's ideas of critical support to their logical conclusion.

A. Thomas
London SE26

Charlie Pottins replies:
IN HIS enthusiasm to attack

rather missed the point of my criticism of 'Socialist Outlook's' turnabout over South Africa. He also displays remarkable ignorance about Marxist attitudes to the colonial and national questions.

Thomas recalls that the Workers Revolutionary Party and Workers Press sided with Iraq in the Gulf war, against US and British imperialism. We must plead 'guilty', and ask for several other 'offences' to be taken into consideration, including support for Argentina over the Malvinas, for the Irish struggle against British rule, and for the Bosnian people against Serb aggression and UN partition schemes.

It also seems relevant to point out that we participated in campaigns against apartheid, sometimes with people we are now opposing. We make no apologies for that, or for numbering former South West African People's Organisation and African National Congress fighters among our Workers International comrades in Namibia and South Africa.

We Marxists are for the maximum possible unity of the working class around the world to overthrow capitalism. Among the biggest obstacles to this are the national and 'racial' inequalities fostered by imperialism, expressed in extreme form by apartheid. To ignore such real divisions, contenting ourselves with pious phrases about workers' 'unity', would be to serve as accomplices of racism and oppression.

In an imperialist country like Britain, whose ruling class has its fingers in everything from Arab oil and Argentine beef to African gold and diamonds, we support those fighting imperialism, both to assist workers in these other countries and to undermine our own capitalist masters, above all by breaking

Marx and Engels supported the Irish struggle, and the Communist International (Comintern), under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, urged the Communist Party of Great Britain to support the struggles of the Irish, Indian and Egyptian peoples for national independence. Trotsky likewise backed the Chinese struggle against Japanese colonialism (in which Chinese Trotskyists formed armed units), declaring that 'only conscious or unconscious agents of Japanese imperialism can put the two countries on the same plane'.

Trotsky added, however: 'This does not at all suppose a blind confidence in the Chinese government and in Chiang Kai-shek. In the past, above all in 1925-27, the general was already dependent upon working class organizations in his military struggle against the Chinese generals of the North, agents of foreign imperialism.'

'In the end, he crushed the working class organizations by armed force in 1927-28. We must learn the lessons from this experience which resulted from the fatal policies of the Comintern. In participating in the legitimate and progressive national war against Japanese invasion, the working class organizations must preserve their entire political independence from the Chiang Kai-shek government' ('Pacifism and China', 25 September 1937, 'Writings of Leon Trotsky', Pathfinder Press).

Already, after the 1905 Russian Revolution, Trotsky in his 'Results and Prospects' had concluded — much in the spirit of Marx after 1848 — that the workers could not wait for the bourgeoisie to complete the democratic revolution, but must move on to the dictatorship of the proletariat — as they did in November 1917. This was the theory of permanent (i.e. uninterrupted) revolution. In taking up the struggle against Stalinism, Trotsky was resuming this fight.

This is where we differ from

insist on entrusting national liberation, and even the attainment of socialism, to the bourgeoisie.

That is why, contrary to A. Thomas's suggestion, in defending Iraq against imperialism, Workers Press never defended Saddam Hussein's regime against the rights of the Kurdish people or Iraqi workers. (We expelled former leader Gerry Healy, who took the latter reactionary position, in 1985.)

It is also why we welcomed our South African comrades' decision to raise the red banner of socialist internationalism in the recent elections, against the bourgeois ANC and its Stalinist allies (whom Thomas forgets to mention), and for permanent revolution. They did so, not from outside the struggle, but as working-class vanguard fighters.

Of course, at times it has been necessary tactically to make demands on existing workers' leaders, Labour or Stalinist (perhaps reader Thomas would prefer we left them alone to do as they please?).

That is entirely different from adopting the strategic perspective, as Pablo did in the 1950s, that Stalinist or nationalist leaders would be transformed by objective circumstances into leaders of the socialist revolution. That is why we say Pablo revised the theory of permanent revolution into its opposite, a recipe for passive adaptation.

'Socialist Outlook' failed to mention the Workers International's intervention in the South African elections, and ended up dropping mention of any independent working-class opposition there. Instead, harking back to its Pabloite origins, it wondered whether the ANC-Nationalist-Stalinist coalition could meet black workers' aspirations!

Only someone blinded by sectarianism could compare this with what Workers Press said, or claim that Pabloism is other than the opposite of

Miners' action in Kazakhstan

A MINERS' conference will be held in Kazakhstan this week to decide the next steps of a campaign over pay and working conditions.

Miners were on strike in the Karaganda area until Friday 3 June, when an order requested by management, declaring the strike illegal, was granted by a judge.

The strike had begun on 18 May. On 20 May, four miners at the '50 years of the October Revolution' mine began a hunger strike; on 28 May, 21 more miners began an underground sit-in. The strike was organised by the Independent Miners Union of Kazakhstan.

Miners in this former Soviet republic earn about £30 a month. Living standards are even below those in the Russian coalfields, and strike leaders say the action began as conditions have 'become intolerable'.

An appeal was circulated last week. Immediately, messages were sent by fax from the Aberdeen trades council and the Transport and General Workers' Union branch at Stamford Hill bus garage, north London.

The issue has been raised in other trade-union organisations and Workers Press hopes to give a fuller report next week.

The strike is suspended but the dispute in Karaganda is not resolved. All workers' organisations are asked to continue sending messages of support.

Those received so far have been an important boost for the miners in the front line.

Messages can be sent by fax to the strike headquarters on 010-7-3212 57-72-93.

Please notify Workers Press if you send a message and we will continue to report on the miners' struggle there.

Workers Aid one year on

AN IMPORTANT anniversary was marked on 6 June. On that date, assembling forces from several countries had, with careful planning, embarked for the struggle against fascism in Europe — Workers Aid for Bosnia is one year old!

A Serb comrade of the Workers International had urged us to do something about Bosnia, and it was his idea that we should launch an aid convoy to the mining area of Tuzla, north-east Bosnia.

The campaign was founded at a meeting in Lambeth town hall, south London, on 6 June 1993, attended by members of the Workers Revolutionary Party (British section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International) and other labour-movement organisations.

Join

We had taken part in demonstrations, picketed the embassy of the former Yugoslavia in London, and held public meetings, when we had decided to join anti-fascist activists to start a group called 'Red Aid for Bosnian Refugees'. Workers Aid for Bosnia was the eventual result.

None of us had expert knowledge of the former Yugoslavia, nor experience of practical

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

problems like getting a convoy on the road. But from the start, the campaign showed what 'ordinary' people could do — the school student painting our lorries, the old-age pensioner bringing in tins of food, the trades unionists moving resolutions for funds and fixing fan belts to keep trucks moving.

Bosnian refugees have played a vital part in every aspect of the campaign — speaking at meetings, giving advice, raising funds with us on the streets.

And then there's the drivers, who have braved mountain tracks in sun, hail and snow; the seasoned revolutionary putting principles into practice; the student down from Oxford; the unemployed ex-soldier; and the lorry driver from Lancashire who 'just thought it seemed the right thing to do'.

When the first Workers Aid convoy (which travelled during last September and October) ran into an obstacle — the United Nations' refusal to open the northern route (which is by far the quickest) to Tuzla — members showed their mettle by blockading the UN headquarters in Zagreb, the Croatian capital, while supporters raised

the maximum protest abroad.

Such experiences were too rich for some political groups. Supporters of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec), some of whom hadn't been keen on the campaign from the start, decided to split away from Workers Aid, calling themselves 'International Workers Aid'. Since then they have slandered Workers Aid for Bosnia, and tried to undermine support for it.

But Workers Aid for Bosnia is international! There are thriving committees in France and Spain, and supporters in Germany and Sweden. On the March convoy there was a truck driver from Normandy, miners from Slovenia, firefighters from the Basque country, comrades from New Zealand and Greece, as well as Bosnian workers returning home.

The campaign has reached into major trades unions like the GPMU print union, and helped link Tuzla miners with the Scottish TUC, which has decided to send aid.

Example

On the first anniversary of Workers Aid for Bosnia we heard that, following the example of Brighton Workers Aid, there's to be a benefit concert in London with top classical musicians from Bosnia; and that academics and students at Cambridge are collecting textbooks and materials for Tuzla University.

Another convoy is on the road. And we've only just begun!



Workers Aid is building workers' internationalism in the fight against racism and fascism — against racist attacks in Germany (above) and fascism in Bosnia (see pages 4&5)

Floppy-boot brigade go to Tuzla

A Workers Aid for Bosnia convoy is currently on its way to the mining town of Tuzla, Bosnia. Here SUE MORRISON reflects on a humanitarian aid convoy last month of which she was part with five others, which delivered about \$500,000 worth of medical aid from Sweden to Tuzla's hospital.

TRYING to describe a convoy to Tuzla is a near impossibility in such a short space because so much happens. In May, we took six trucks to Tuzla filled with medicine for the hospital.

We got there on a shoestring — literally! The fan-belt broke on one of the 1950s Swedish army trucks, so the shoestrings came in handy and we became the floppy-boot convoy.

We were stuck on the Croatian/Bosnian border for a day at Kamensko. It was hard to tell why — all our papers were in order. Perhaps it was because we were with a Bosnian, or because we didn't offer a roasted pig — a someone else did — or beer or Deutschmarks.

Finally one convoy member's threat to block the border if we weren't over that day seemed to cause a ripple. Blocking roads is an effective way of being heard: we had to wait six hours on a pontoon bridge because three trucks refused to be turned back for lack of papers.

The road itself is at times like a series of ocean waves. On the road to Milankovici we would gasp as the front end disappeared into another huge

pothole and the back end would lurch at such an angle that we were convinced it would surely this time tip straight over the edge of the mountain.

And later, driving up Milankovici in the dark, we had to drive with one truck towing another without lights because the battery was dead. I flashed my hazard lights so the driver could at least see a little.

A United Nations truck backed into one of our Bedford's, breaking the windscreen. From that time the driver would drive with his legs out the window or he would mime the cleaning the non-existent windscreen for the entertainment of those around. So many people stand at the side of the convoy routes, mainly children asking for food.

Tuzla had changed from when I was there the previous month. It was spring. Bosnia is very beautiful — wild herbs grow all over the landscape. On the way we drove through a township. A house was completely destroyed by shelling, but the front garden was in full bloom — reds, lilacs and golds.

The people of Tuzla have used every available piece of

land for gardens. What used to be pavements and verges are now covered in vegetables. People work on these plots from early morning until last light.

When shelling broke out while I was there I told the people I was staying with that I wanted to hide. They said that that was how everyone used to be but now people are determined not to live in fear.

Pleased

The hospital was pleased with what we had brought. We had their address on our customs paper so avoided the bureaucracy in Tuzla, which would have meant a day's delay.

At the hospital we were given a shower and food. Having spent the previous night sleeping upright in the cab of my truck at a checkpoint, this was much appreciated.

But to be there, surrounded by many men of my age in wheelchairs or with missing limbs, was hard. The hospital is also a favourite target of the Serb forces, along with the marketplace.

The woman of the family I

stayed with was from India. She had had to elope because her parents were arranging a marriage for her. They thought that my home country of New Zealand must be a nirvana.

They talked of music. But eventually all conversations led to the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Every night they revealed some facts more shocking than the night before. How some of these things could be true they didn't even try to explain to themselves anymore. It was very painful. So much is happening to try and create ethnic division there and destroy the community.

It is nearly a month since we got back. I miss the people on the convoy. So much happened between us. Walking into a supermarket here is a shock — so much food, so much choice.

Last weekend I collected for Workers Aid in Bath. A young Bosnian woman of only 16 was with us. Old beyond her years, she could gently and firmly go up to people and ask for their support for Bosnia. She had seen her home destroyed and her brother and father taken to a concentration camp.

Workers Press

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