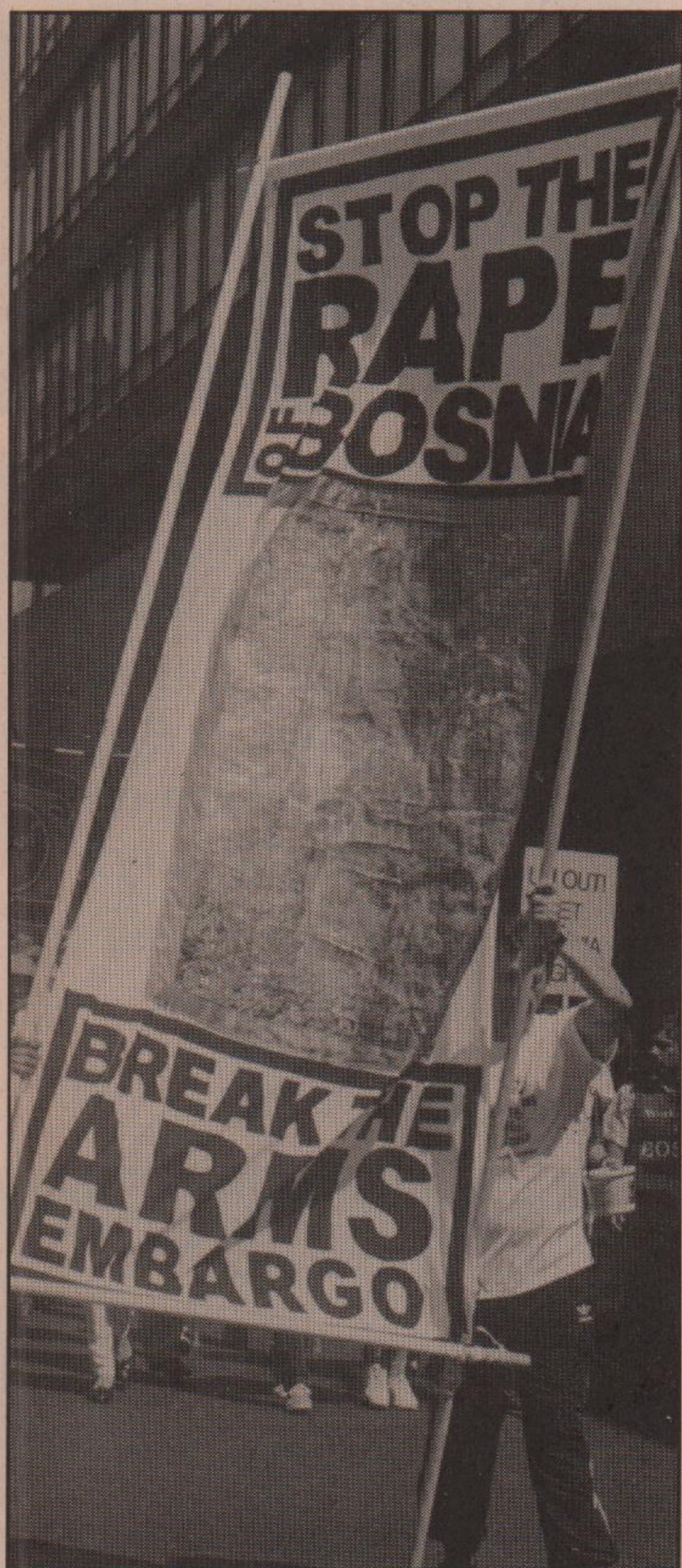


Bosnia special 20p

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

SATURDAY 29 JULY 1995

JOIN WITH NON-STOP BOSNIA PICKET



ONLY days after being set up, the 24-hour, non-stop London picket demanding a halt to the rape of Bosnia is already a powerful focal point for all those who are determined that Bosnia can and will win the war against its aggressors.

The picket - in Whitehall, opposite Downing Street - resulted from last Saturday's march and rally in defence of Bosnia.

BY THE EDITOR

It will continue in its present location until Parliament returns from its summer recess.

In its first hours, people from France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and the Lebanon joined the picket with many who had taken part in last Saturday's demonstration.

The backbone of the picket has been young Bosnian refugees, some of whom have been in Chetnik concentration camps.

Discussion on this non-stop picket is also non-stop.

What is the role of the United Nations in the conflict? Was the former Yugoslavia ever socialist?

Will lifting the arms embargo lead to a blood-bath?

These have been just some of the issues debated on the picket and with the many passers-by who have stopped to find out what is going on.

The picket needs YOUR help!

- Why not come down and show your support?
- Why not do a stint on the picket?

Support is particularly needed from the labour and trade union movement.

■ Messages of support can be sent c/o: The Alliance for the Defence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 12 Flitcroft Street, London, WC2H 8DJ. Tel: 0171-240 7992.

■ There will be a meeting every Monday at 7p.m. for all picketers and those wishing to help build the picket. Come to: The Quiet Room, Central Hall, Westminster.

Bosnia Solidarity Campaign

Stop the Rape of Bosnia

Defend multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina

Srebrenica, Zepa, Gorazde

End UN collusion with genocide!

Break the arms embargo!

Let the Bosnians defend themselves!

Join: 24-Hour Non-Stop Permanent Picket

Demonstrate

Sunday, 6 August

Assemble 2p.m. Hyde Park (Marble Arch)

March to Rally in Trafalgar Square

Donate

Cheques Payable to: Bosnia Solidarity Campaign (address below).

Credit Transfers to: National Westminster Bank, 56-68 St John Road, London SW11 1PB. Bank Code: 50-21-01. Account No: 57223920.

Picket Meeting: every Monday, 7p.m. Central Hall, Westminster.

More Information: Bosnia Solidarity Campaign, c/o ADBH, 12 Flitcroft Street, London, WC2H 8DJ.



Many banners were brought to the continuous picket held in Whitehall

SPECIAL ISSUE OF WORKERS PRESS

WE had intended to close down for the start of the summer break. But the eruption of a new stage of the crisis in Bosnia made this impossible.

We have therefore produced this 4-page special issue, devoted entirely to the crisis in Bosnia.

Further copies of this special issue of Workers Press are available from PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. Tel: 0171-387 0564. Make cheques payable to 'Workers Press'.

- Single issues 40p per copy, including postage.
- Bulk orders: 5 for £1.30, 10 for £2.40, 15 for £3.60, 20 for £4.70, 50 for £12.50.

Perhaps you could make a special contribution to help us with this work. It would be much appreciated.

• Next Workers Press: 12 August.

Bosnia must not stand alone

THE size, composition, and enthusiasm of last Saturday's 'Stop the Rape of Bosnia' march and rally indicates the beginning of a new stage in the fight for the defence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, its right to live, its right to its integrity and independence.

Called at short notice, according to the 'Observer' the march through the centre of London was 5,000-strong. The organisers themselves were surprised by the enormous response to their call.

This shows there is a real danger of falling behind the sharp change in the mood among many ordinary people.

One of the most heartening features of the march was the number of young people who took part, for many their first political action.

Saturday's mood was one of confidence. Faced with the enormous tragedy that the people of Bosnia are facing, several speakers on Saturday insisted that Bosnia would win its fight. The determination of Bosnian forces to fight to the end for Zepa shows that the spirit of the Bosnian peoples remains unbroken.

BUT there is no room for complacency or stupid optimism.

■ The aim of Milosevic and Karadzic remains unaltered. Backed by their allies among the Great Powers, these gangsters are determined to break up and 'ethnically cleanse' the sovereign state of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

■ Behind the smokescreen of 'neutrality' and 'even-handedness' the British government continues to support these foul aims. The Tory government's latest pledge to defend Gorazde is as cynical and worthless as the rest of its previous 'solemn' and 'binding' undertakings.

■ Although there were a number of trade union banners on Saturday's march, and while several unions have donated generously to aid convoys to Bosnia, the fact is that the leaders of the Labour Party and trade unions remain tied to the government's policy.

Despite repeated pleas from their brothers and sisters in Bosnia they have refused to fight for the lifting of the arms embargo or to expose the sinister role of the Tory government and the United Nations in the Balkans.

TO RALLY the working-class movement to the side of Bosnia remains the most urgent task of the hour. That is why Saturday's demonstration must mark not the end, but the next stage of our work.

We warmly welcome the international trade union call we publish on the back page of this special issue.

It is the elementary duty of every trade union leader and rank-and-file trade unionist to respond to this call.

The bitter struggle raging in Bosnia is the immediate key to the fate of the working class of Europe and the rest of the world.

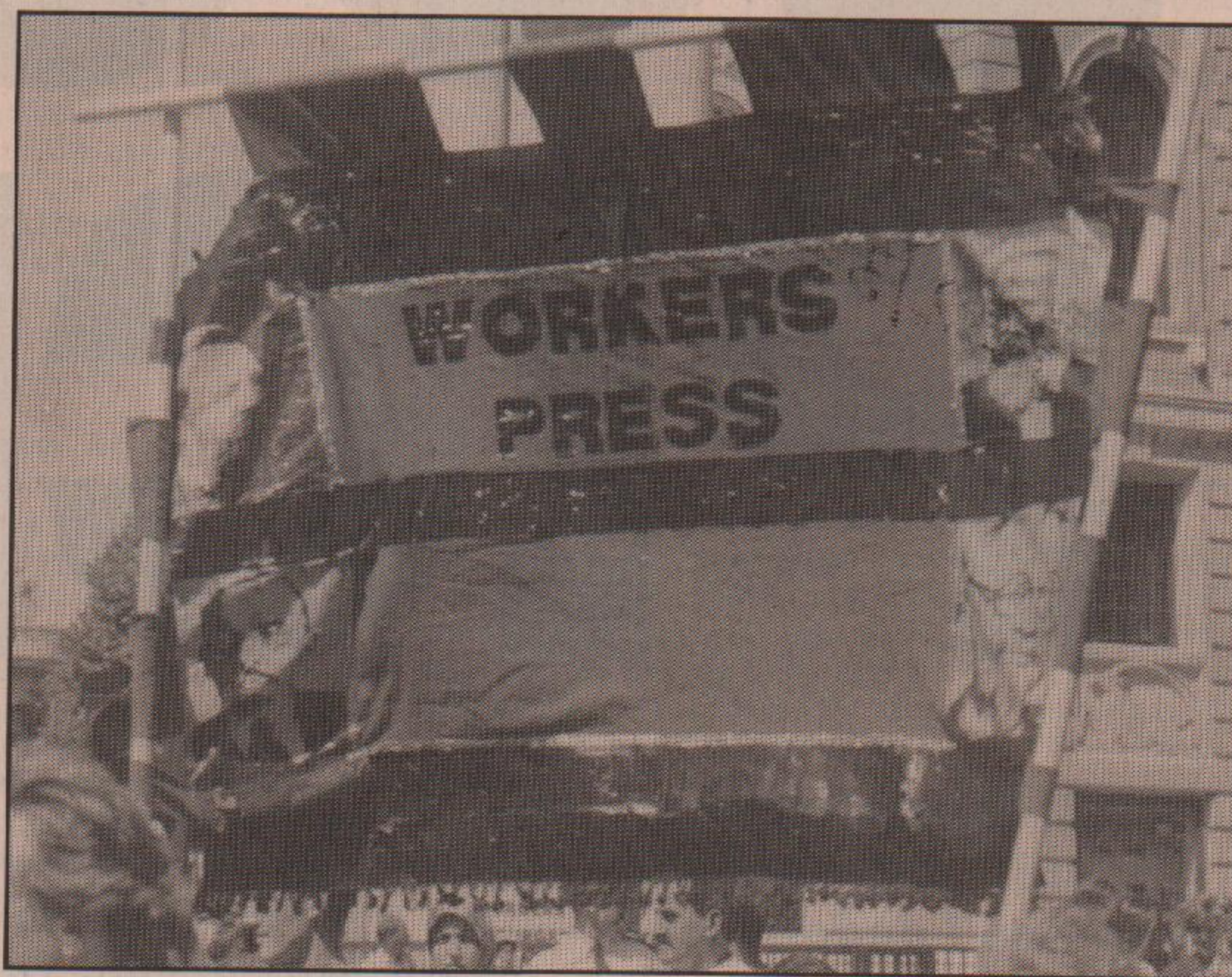
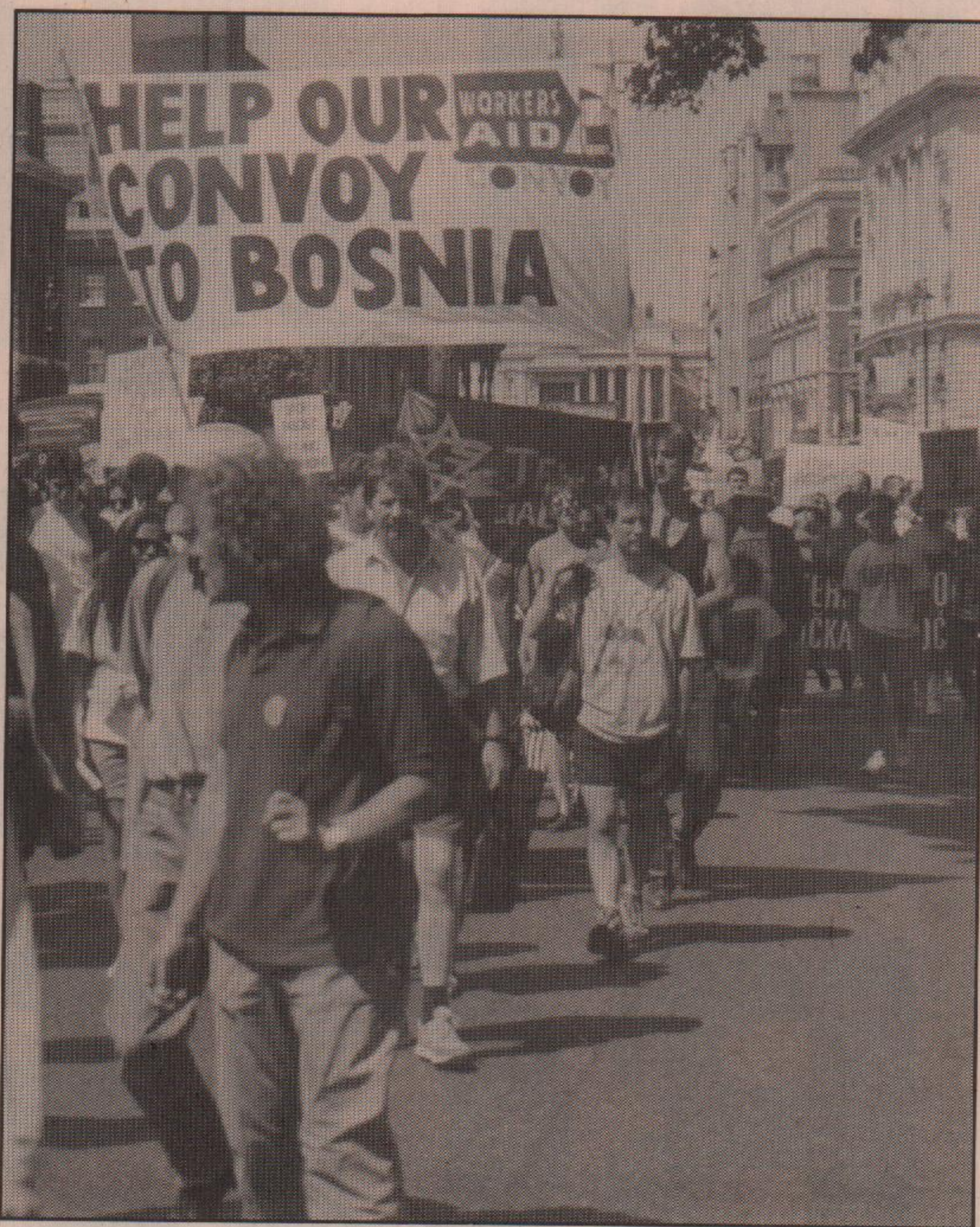
■ Step up the fight for the defence of Bosnia.

■ Take your union banner to the picket (see page 1).

■ Take your messages of support to the picketers.

■ Circulate the international trade union call throughout the labour movement (see page 4).

STOP THE RAPE OF BOSNIA



More than 5,000 people marched on the Stop the Rape of Bosnia demonstration on Saturday 22 July. Here are just some of the pictures.



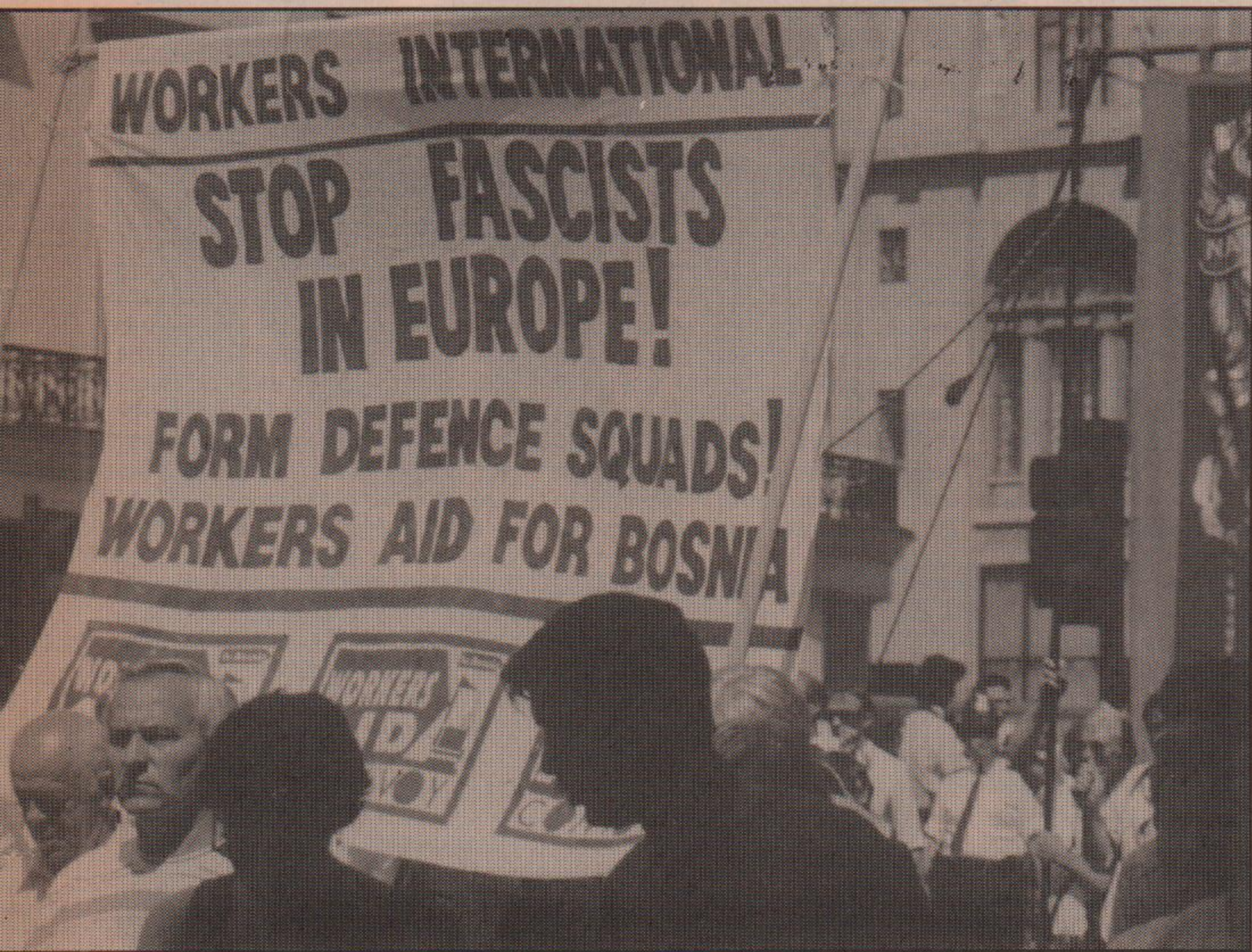
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THE RAPE OF BOSNIA



Message from the Croatian Trade Unions

Jasna Petrovic, international department, Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of

But still at this very moment the inhabitants of Bosnia Herzegovina and Croatia are actually hostages of international organisations and of their tolerance toward Serbian war crimes.

Dignity

Helplessness is perhaps the most humiliating feeling against human dignity.

All of us in the region and all the humane people in the world can only memorise and bear witness.

At this very moment, according to reliable information our organisation receives from our trade union colleagues in Sarajevo and Tuzla, crimes are being committed against the inhabitants of Srebrenica, Zepa - and soon of Gorazde too - that a human mind can hardly imagine: boys' ears and noses are cut

off, they are being slaughtered so that they would not grow up into Bosnian soldiers and fight against them one day. Again hundreds of women have been raped, while many preferred suicide to life in despair and shame.

On behalf of Croatian workers, UATUC members, on behalf of displaced persons in Croatia, from Vukovar and other towns destroyed by Serbs without any reaction by the international community, but also on behalf of our Bosnia-Herzegovina trade union and labour friends and common people, we appeal to you to raise your voice up in the sky, may everyone hear the things that have been allowed.

Do something. Do not allow yourselves to get blood on your hands.

Our unity is our power.

Break the arms embargo!

Workers Press sent LESLEY THOMPSON out to find why people had come on the Stop the Rape of Bosnia demonstration

Lena Pache from Norwich, was with her son. She is fed up with sitting in front of television, reading papers and feeling angry. She saw this demonstration as a way of empowering herself.

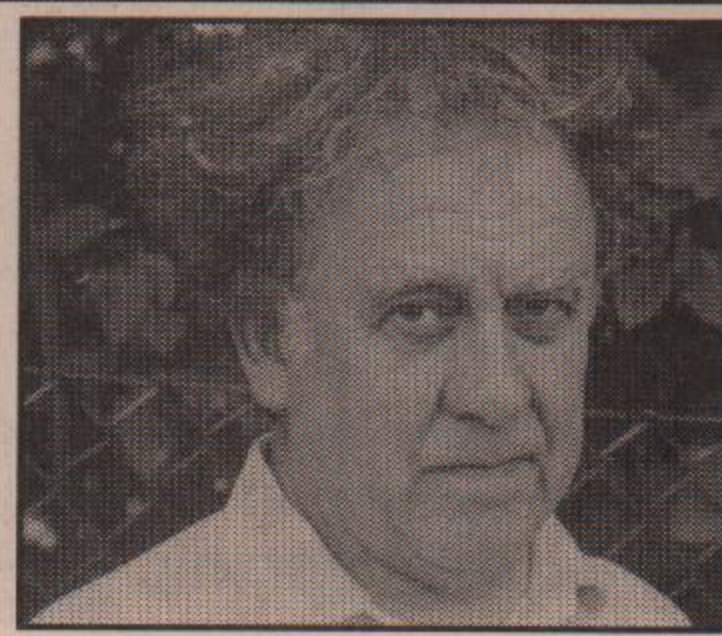
She couldn't afford the trip but

who were brought to Britain by the Red Cross.

'The UN claim to be helping the people', he told Workers Press, 'but are doing nothing at all. They cannot even deliver the promised humanitarian aid, they only support the Chetnik killing and slaughtering of innocent people.'

If the arms embargo was lifted, said Niajz, then Bosnian refugees would return to their country and fight to rebuild their houses and their lives.

A group of Albanian men from Kosovo, who heard of the demonstration from the Kosovo Information Centre that repre-



D. Bradley

bargo so that the Bosnian people could defend themselves.

'The war is equivalent to the fascism that happened in World War II', said Anna and Lucy. They were disgusted with the attitude of the British government and although they did not want the UN to pull out they thought that the arms embargo should be lifted. Life-long Conservative supporters, they pledged never to vote Conservative again.

'The arms embargo should be lifted. It is completely one-sided - the Serbs have the weapons of the former Yugoslav army and Bosnia has only small arms,' said David James from north London.

He expressed his sympathy for the people of Bosnia who are being murdered, massacred, and tortured.

A group of Algerian students thought the Bosnians were being slaughtered because they were Muslim. They contrasted the situation with the war against Iraq, and compared fascism in Bosnia with World War II.

Margaret Lang from Birmingham and Jenny Gardner from Feltham felt frustrated that nothing had been done and that the safe havens had been allowed to fall. Margaret said that her union, the MSF, had not raised the issue of Bosnia at all, but that she would raise it at the next branch meeting.

Ivan Martinovic, one of a family of Croats from Montenegro, pointed out that although the European Union had recognised Bosnia as an independent state at the same time it denied it the basic right to self-defence. He compared Serbian fascism with that of the Nazis.

A young couple from Sarajevo, Ermedin Salmanovic and Sami-



Lena Pache and her son

felt that she had to come. The armies of the Western powers do not protect people from being massacred, she said; their main function was to protect the West's financial and political interests.

'The arms embargo should have been lifted a long time ago - before thousands were massacred and the first enclave went,' she said.

D. Bradley, an architect from Southwark, wanted to see the arms-embargo lifted. He contacted the TUC but they didn't seem interested and could not provide any details of this march. He will raise Bosnia at his next Unison branch meeting.

A woman wearing an 'Anti-Nazi League' jumper was 'rather upset' by the lack of support from 'certain sections of the left' against what was going on.

Steven Rhodes, from London, thought that people had been conned into believing Bosnia had nothing to do with Britain.

UNPROFOR had degenerated into a mechanism whereby the aggressive party could do what it likes.

'The UN is essentially complicit in the murder of Bosnia', he said. 'The arms-embargo should be lifted.'

Niajz Kidiriz from Banja Luka in Bosnia was held in the Serb concentration camp at Sanski Most. He was 16 years old. There were about 4,000 men of fighting age in the camp, without food and water.

Niajz witnessed the murder of his best friend (also 16) in the camp; he was thrown from a bridge into the river below.

The Chetniks burnt Niajz's village.

He said the Serbian soldiers did not want to kill the Bosnians with bullets, 'they wanted to enjoy themselves slaughtering us - and when they were doing that they were drunk - all of them'.

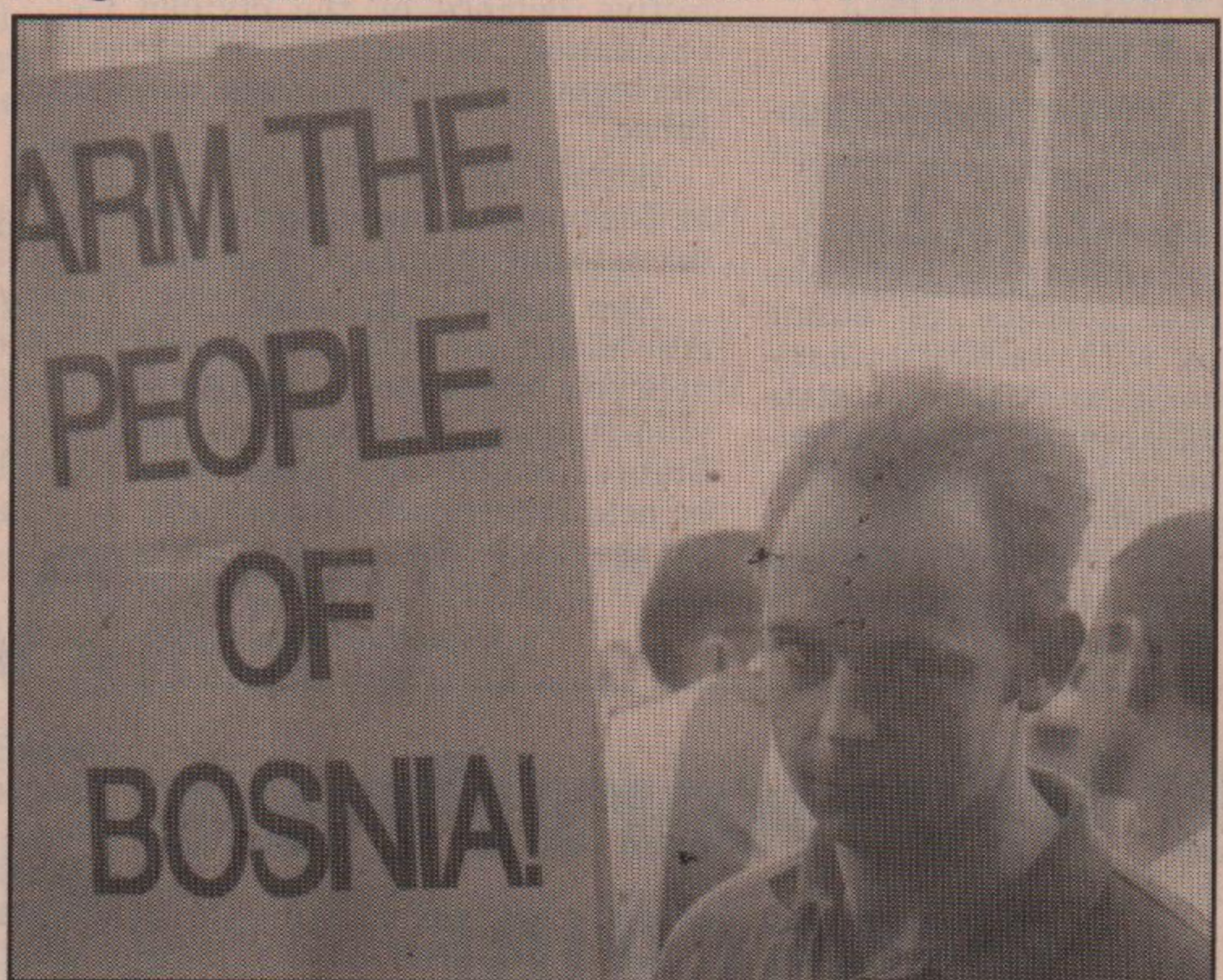
He heard of 'many rapes that happened in Omarska camp, and it's happened in Srebrenica now - one girl hanged herself because she was raped.'

Niajz came to the demonstration with friends from Srebrenica

sents 2,000 refugees from Kosovo, said they had come on the demonstration to show their solidarity with the Bosnians.

They thought that the Kosovo issue must also be brought to people's attention and that there should be a comprehensive settlement across all of ex-Yugoslavia. They thought that the UN was supporting the Serbs and that the British government was complicit in the murder of Bosnia.

A group of South Bosnian refugees who have been in Brit-



Steven Rhodes

ain for three years thought that the UN should get out of Bosnia and that the British government was overseeing the murder of Muslims.

SD from Iraq said that although he would not fight to defend Iraq he would fight in defence of the Bosnians. He thought the attitude of the British government and Boutros Boutros-Ghali was criminal and that the arms embargo should be lifted.

Dr Haq, from Bangladesh, came on the demonstration because she was in favour of freedom for everyone. She was against the position of the UN and thinks the British government was guilty of genocide. She supported the lifting of the arms em-

ra Ibramovitch, thought the UN was not doing enough. Samira said that her family in Sarajevo had received only one kilo of flour in the last two months. Much of the humanitarian aid was being pilfered by UN soldiers and sold on the black market. They said that the arms embargo should definitely be lifted.

Nasrim Ahmed (Basingstoke) and her friend Khaliva Denshah (Southall) had come on the demonstration to protest against the policies of the British government and the UN. Khaliva thought that fascism in Bosnia had to be defeated because if it was not it would give a green light to all reactionary forces elsewhere, and especially Russia.

Stop war against Bosnia now!

Statement of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), an international trade union federation composed of 312 trade unions in 110 countries, representing a combined membership of over 2.6 million members

THE fall of the eastern Bosnian 'enclave' of Srebrenica on 13 July, and the impending fall of Zepa, both undefended by the United Nations which had disarmed Bosnian government troops against a pledge to protect the civilian population, does not come as a surprise.

It is the logical outcome of the policy of the leading European and North American powers, a policy of pre-emptive surrender which has deliberately refused to distinguish between aggressors and the victims of aggression.

The outcome of the 21 July London conference — accurately described by Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic as a 'green light' for continued Serb aggression — constitutes yet another chapter in the 'international community's' refusal to respond effectively to the threat against the entire population of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is the failure of Western policy which has reduced the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina to a dwindling number of besieged enclaves which are now declared incapable of being defended.

Governments which proclaim their willingness to organise a 'tactical' defence of Gorazde stand passively by while inadequately armed Bosnian troops fight on at Zepa after refusing to deliver the male population into the hands of their executioners.

Daily attacks continue on Sarajevo and Bihac, Tuzla airport remains closed, and up to 15,000 residents of Srebrenica, captured by the forces of General Mladic, remain unaccounted for.

The sinister farce being enacted under the auspices of the United Nations, the 'Contact Group' and other conclaves of governments must come to a stop.

Political

The war against Bosnia-Herzegovina is not an 'ethnic' nor a religious war.

It is a political war waged by a regime combining the fascist ideology and practice of 'ethnic cleansing' with Stalinist authoritarianism, a war against a state and society committed to the fundamental values of democracy, pluriculturalism and tolerance.

The failure of European and North American governments to rise to the defence of the state and

people of Bosnia-Herzegovina undermines the struggle for democracy in all of eastern and central Europe and ultimately constitutes a threat to the survival of democracy in all of Europe.

The international labour movement must approach this conflict not in a spirit of deference to governmental institutions that have proven unable to act in the defence of the most elementary human rights, but by recalling its own best traditions of resistance to fascism and to Stalinism in defence of peace with justice and freedom and the right of every people to life, free from oppression.

Gangs

No political solution is possible unless and until the military intervention of the terrorist gangs of General Mladic, Karadzic and Milosevic is repelled by military means.

The army and the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina must be provided the means for self-defence.

The mandate of the military forces presently in Bosnia-Herzegovina under the auspices of the United Nations must be redefined so as to protect, as a priority, not the tattered credibility of a collapsing 'peace-keeping' mission, but the integrity of the state and the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations) calls on all its affiliates and the labour movement as a whole to take a lead in mobilising public opinion to demand that their governments take action now to halt the war against Bosnia-Herzegovina and to ensure the effective defence of the civilian population throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, including Zepa and Bihac.

Supply lines must be reopened to Tuzla and Sarajevo and action taken to put an end to the sieges.

And Radovan Karadzic, General Mladic, and the government of Serbia which continues to provide support for the attack on Srebrenica and other cities, must be held immediately accountable for the fate of the dead and missing.

Geneva, 24 July 1995

'We have to stand and take sides'

Many went to the rally after the march which was chaired by DOT GIBSON. Not all the 'speakers' were able to deliver their messages because of lack of time. We present here some of what was said. Report by MIKE COOKE

LEEDS professor of theology ADRIAN HASTINGS condemned the West's search for a so-called 'political solution'.

'A "political solution" in their sense is impossible,' Hastings said. 'You can't "settle" with Karadzic and Mladic.'

Hastings called for a war-crime tribunal to include along with those directly responsible — that is Karadzic, Mladic and a small number of others — the West's political leaders who have colluded in the genocide: Clinton, Major, etc.

ALI SAID brought greetings from Scottish Friends of Bosnia, but his speech was interrupted by the arrival of the BOSNIAN AMBASSADOR to great applause.

'We know we are not alone,' said the ambassador. 'We know there's a big fight for the equality of human beings against the fascists. We will fight and win this war.'

'We know it's a fight for the future of humanity. If the fascists win in Bosnia then we know that more will arise elsewhere.'

The ambassador then addressed the many Bosnian members of the audience in their own language.

FARUK IBRAHIMOVIC from Tuzla extended his gratitude to Workers Aid for Bosnia and to Workers Press. He reminded the audience of the tragic shelling of Tuzla on 25 May when 72 mainly young people were killed while enjoying themselves at a café. He said that the Chetniks always took out revenge on civilians.

Labour MP for Croydon North

West, MALCOLM WICKS, described the three days he spent in Sarajevo 18 months ago: 'Serb fascists sit in the hills, drunk, and they decide on which child, which old woman to shoot.'

He contrasted the 50th anniversary celebrations of the defeat of Nazism with the 'tragic image of despair' of a woman who 'could take no more'. She had hung herself rather than give herself up to the Chetniks. This was the image on the main banner of the 'Stop the Rape of Bosnia' demonstration.

MICHAEL FOOT said: 'From the first attacks on Croatia and Slovenia everyone should have been able to see who the real aggressors were.'

Foot read out the declaration of the London conference in 1992 which 'understood' that the aggressors were the Chetnik forces.

'We are critical of our leaders because we remember what they said,' said Foot. 'They signed the document from that conference condemning ethnic cleansing and they should not be surprised at not being believed now by anybody, including the Serb aggressors.'

IQBAL SAKRAME asked: 'What has come out of protest?' His answer was: 'Solidarity. The knowledge that Bosnia is not on its own.'

Sakrame said that 'peace-keeping' should not stand in the way of people willing to defend themselves. They asked for no more than the right to self-defence, a right in the UN's charter and taken away illegally by the UN itself.

He said he wouldn't believe in 'civilised Europe' and the 'international community' when they

wouldn't lift the arms embargo.

'Guardian' journalist ED VULLIAMY talked of the 1,200 days of huffing and puffing since the discovery he and other journalists had made of the Omarska concentration camp — 'a name to go down in the roll of shame of history'.

'But the bullies of history need not triumph,' he said. 'The future of this country Bosnia is a yardstick for the future of this civilisation.'

'How dare the world's leaders talk of freedom and democracy again. But there is some hope. One is this rally. Another is that the B-H Armija [army] has remained armed and fighting.'

'Their message to the UN is: if you aren't serious get out and let us fight it out alone.'

An independent journalist expelled from Belgrade, DEBRA DESETRAVAN, praised those in Belgrade who were with Bosnia under very difficult circumstances.

While the Serb Chetniks had dirtied their own nation there were still Serbs who risked their own lives to speak out for Bosnia, she said.

Workers Aid for Bosnia secretary BOB MYERS asked: 'Who's going to stop the rape of Bosnia?'

'The UN? I think they are participating in it.'

'The French UN soldiers disarmed B-H soldiers who were defending themselves against the Chetniks.'

'So who's going to stop the rape?', he continued.

'It's the people of Bosnia, the B-H army and the people of Europe who are against fascism. If the workers' movement doesn't go to the aid of Bosnia it will pay a terrible price.'

Labour MP for the Western Isles, CALUM MacDONALD, thought the demonstration and rally could be a turning point in the battle for public opinion.

'What's at stake?', he asked.

'The ideas, principles and beliefs that underlie civilisation and the idea of Europe. It's ethnic cleansing against civil society and ethnic solidarity. We've been betraying that for three years and in betraying that we betray ourselves.'

MacDonald described how these world leaders had decided back in 1992 that Bosnia was doomed and thought that a Greater Serbia was something they could do business with.

'They proved to be wrong,' said MacDonald.

'The project of ethnic fascism is bound to fail. It's doomed to fail. You can't build long-term stability and peace on that basis.'

Mr WASTI of the Muslim Solidarity Committee spoke of how the meeting showed that people of all religions, secular and non-secular were united with Bosnia against the Serbian aggressor.

Former Durham miner DAVE TEMPLE brought greetings from the National Union of Mineworkers' executive member for Northumberland, Ian Lavery.

Temple described how there was confusion in some areas of the labour movement that believed Serbia represented what was left of 'socialism' in Yugoslavia.

Some, including NUM leader Arthur Scargill, supported Milosevic and Karadzic against Bosnia.

Others refused to take 'sides' and said that the Serb-nationalist forces weren't 'fascist'.

'But what is fascism if not what's happening in Bosnia?', Temple asked.

He went on: 'The UN controls humanitarian aid to force Bosnians to give up to ethnic cleansing.'

'The only way to stop it is international solidarity. And we need to turn that international solidarity with sufficient speed to crush the fascists.'

'We have to stand and take sides.'

Victory to multi-ethnic Bosnia!

GMB process section national secretary KEITH STANDRING was unable to complete his speech at the rally for Bosnia because of lack of time. Below we print some of what he intended to say.

The GMB general union congress agreed unanimously to support the workers of Bosnia-Herzegovina and to call upon the TUC to organise aid.

The union has launched an appeal to members for food and medical aid and is seeking to establish contacts with trade unions in Bosnia and arrange reciprocal visits, and to campaign with other organisations for refugees from the war to be granted asylum in Britain in particular to enable families to be reunited.

Standring has contacted the unions in Tuzla on behalf of the GMB and in particular the chemical and salt unions and

has offered help in securing replacement parts and equipment for the productive capacity of Tuzla — which means 'salt' — which has been severely reduced as a result of the war.

Provision of these parts will help the people of Tuzla to again become self-sufficient economically.

'This is the practical type of trade union solidarity which is needed to help our fellow workers in Bosnia — however much, much more is needed,' says Standring.

'The workers movement has the responsibility to be unconditionally for the people of Bosnia to defend themselves and fight for their independent, multi-cultural and united country — the arms embargo on Bosnia should end!' COMRADES — as a lifelong socialist and trades unionist, it is evident to me that the only solu-

tion to the problems of the former Yugoslavia is one in which all its peoples — Serbs, Bosnians, Croats and others, unite in a common struggle against their common enemies: fascism, imperialist intervention and Greater Serbian nationalism!

International working class solidarity actions, demonstrations and strikes against the imperialist governments and their military intervention, material aid to the people of Bosnia — these are the ways to contribute to the solution of the problem by the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, themselves led by the working class.

Comrades and friends I am led to hope by your attendance here today, like the GMB, you too are opposed to the triviality of 'revolutionary politics'. Actions speak louder than words. The beleaguered workers of Bosnia appeal to us across the miles — they

ask us to heed the cries of their dead, dying and tortured comrades who demand justice, which is our demand also.

To British workers and our trade union movement I say: 'Let not their cries go unheeded.' The struggle of the Bosnian workers is an inextricable part of the working-class struggle in Britain and elsewhere.


Their fight is our fight. To stop the rape of Bosnia, our demands, our rallying call must be:

WITHDRAW ALL IMPERIALIST MILITARY FORCES!

ARM THE BOSNIAN WORKERS!

DEFEAT FASCISM AND SMASH RACISM!

VICTORY TO MULTI-ETHNIC BOSNIA!



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