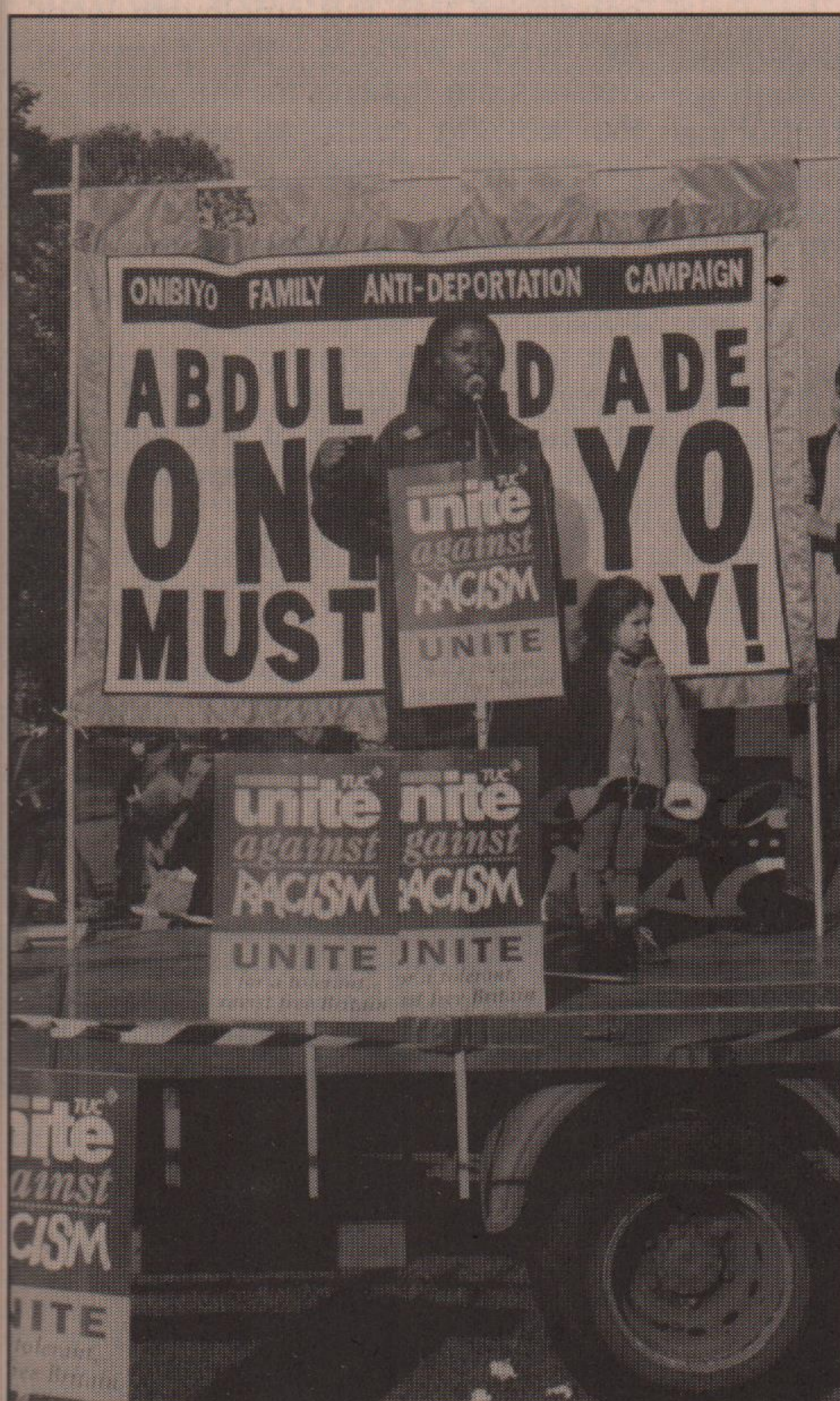


State deports British resident from 1964 OPPOSE RACIST DEPORTATION OFFENSIVE



Daughter of Abdul Onibiyo speaks at last Saturday's TUC 'Unite against racism' demonstration in Manchester

A NIGERIAN man was deported on Thursday 26 October who first came to Britain in 1964. Abdul Onibiyo was given £5 by immigration authorities before being put on a plane. He was handed over to the authorities in Lagos.

As a support of the pro-democracy movement against the military government in Nigeria, Abdul had sought political asylum. But that was before Britain declared Nigeria a 'safe' country despite its arrests and executions of political opponents (see Peter Fryer's Personal Column, page 6).

Abdul's family was only given a day's notice of his deportation. His wife and children were not even allowed to see him before he left. The rest of his family now face deportation even though they have nothing in Nigeria.

Abdul's 19-year-old son Ade is already in detention.

'The government are using this case and many others to play the "race card" in the run up to the elections,' said the Onibiyo Anti-Deportation Campaign. 'The campaign is now stepping up its fight to get Abdul back to his home and to stop the remainder of the family being deported.'

Saro-Wiwa death sentence

NIGERIAN writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, who led his Ogoni people to take on the Shell oil company and its stooges, has been sentenced to death in a frame-up trial for the killing of four Ogoni chiefs.

Battle-ready government troops were reinforced at every road junction and every village in Ogoniland, according to the Federation of Ogoni Women's Associations.

The writer, who always denied advocating violence, was one of 15 people charged with the chiefs' murder, six of whom were sentenced to death. The government claimed that Saro-Wiwa's young supporters killed the chiefs, believing they had taken bribes from the authorities. Ogoni people say the chiefs were more likely killed by state forces, to prepare the way for military intervention.

The struggle was waged against Shell because its oil operations polluted rivers and land, ruining the Ogonis' livelihood and environment, while contributing little in return. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop), of which Saro-Wiwa is president, demanded £6.6 billion in compensation. Shell has suspended operations in Ogoniland.

Exiled Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka, who has condemned the Tory government's racist moves to deny political asylum to Nigerians, said after news of the death sentence that there must be an African-led international campaign against the Nigerian military regime.

Abdul's whole life is here in Britain where he has lived and worked, where he has raised a family. He and his wife Joyce have had five children. Ade is a student at the college of North West London.

Abdul bought his first house in 1967 and was granted permanent residency status in 1974. He has always worked in local government and until his deportation worked for Lambeth as an engineer specialising in sewage and water.

Abdul worked for a short while in Nigeria, during which time he continued his National Insurance contributions and even his NALGO union subs.

Years later, in June 1993, immigration officers and police raided the Onibiyo's house and took the whole family to Kensington police station.

It was then that the family's immigration status was questioned. Because Abdul had spent more than two years abroad he was no longer entitled to residency. The family was instructed to report every month at an immigration office.

On 25 March, Abdul was grabbed by police and carted off to a police station when he had reported to the immigration office.

After a severe beating, Abdul was unable to eat or even walk for four days. After being held in a police cell for five days he was taken to Harmondsworth deten-

tion centre where he discovered that Ade too had been arrested and imprisoned.

At Harmondsworth, Abdul was denied access to his GP despite his serious injuries. Ade was refused leave to sit his A-levels and had to sit them in detention.

Abdul and Ade were released after 21 weeks. At the bail hearing the adjudication officer expressed concern at the detention of Ade and agreed to bail given the weakness of the Home Office case. The anti-deportation campaign was set up by Joyce during Abdul's detention.

CAMPAIGN

The anti-deportation campaign held a protest demonstration last Thursday (2 November) outside the Home Office. They ask for support by:

- Writing in protest to Home Secretary Michael Howard, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1A.

- Asking local MPs and local councillors to intervene on Abdul's behalf.

- Passing resolutions.

- Making a donation to the Onibiyo Anti-Deportation Campaign, 6A Acre Lane, London SW2. Tel: 0171-737 2134.

- Writing to Ade Onibiyo, c/o Campsfield House, Kiddlington, Oxfordshire.

'Crisis in the labour movement' conference

TWO Cambridge students, Rachel Robertson and Paddy McCloy, attended their first 'New Party' discussion in Brixton last Sunday. This kicked off a series of similar debates to be held around the country in preparation for the Manchester 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference next February (see ad, page 6).

The Cambridge delegation decided to adopt the model which is well underway in Brighton. Students there are holding regular discussions which have been lively and well attended.

'There's been considerable enthusiasm whenever I've spoken to other students about the new socialist party initiative,' said Rachel who had just returned from a talk she had given at Lancaster University and has been key to the emergence of the growing Student Aid for Bosnia national network. 'We're planning regular debates both in the Cambridge colleges and outside in the town. We see it as an opportunity to have our own views incorporated in a new party that will actually do something. There's loads of people here who feel the same and we'll make sure we're ready in plenty of time for Manchester.'

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Saturday 11 November, 1.30-4.30pm, 1A Centre, 1A Rosebery Avenue, London EC1. Chancery Lane tube. £2.50 donation. Write to Jackie Bailey, Camden UNISON, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE.

Workers Press

The dockers fight for the future

THE lock-out of dockers is not the concern of workers on Merseyside alone.

The Liverpool dock employers have set out to smash trade unionism in the port of Liverpool. They hope that this will be the final stage of ridding the industry completely of trade unionism.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company has hired a scab-herding firm, Drake International, to replace the sacked labour force. What the port employer wants is a workforce that is stripped of all protection afforded by trade unionism, a workforce that is denied all rights, that is available to work at all hours for wages which eventually each worker would be forced to negotiate individually.

The Liverpool dockers — many of whom have worked for 20 to 30 years in the industry and whose grandfathers and fathers were also dockers — have been treated in a particularly brutal and humiliating manner.

But the situation that the dockers face is one that tens of thousands of other workers now find themselves in, and millions more are facing in Britain.

Throughout industry the employers are taking advantage, with a vengeance, of the battery of anti-trade union laws that are on the statute book. These laws were introduced by the Tories but, in all important areas, will be retained by a future Labour government.

* * * * *

OVER decades of struggle, stretching back into the last century, the working-class movement won itself certain basic rights, above all the right to form trade unions to negotiate collectively with the employer.

It was through the trade union movement that certain conditions — covering hours of work, safety, regulation of working hours of women and children, etc. — were established.

This protection is being systematically undermined as low pay, long hours, dangerous low-paid work becomes the norm for millions of workers.

■ The giant supermarket chain

Asda suddenly announces that double pay for Sunday working is to be arbitrarily scrapped for all new workers. This is in flagrant breach of a commitment given by the company at the time of the Sunday Trading Bill which allowed such stores to open seven days a week.

Asda says that its move — which could lose workers £11 a week — is in line with what other stores are doing or planning, and that it has the right to increase the number of hours staff work.

■ More than a million people are now earning less than £2.50 an hour, and rates of pay for young people have plunged since legal protections for them were abolished by the Tories.

For increasing numbers of workers such pay is generous, as Scrooge once again stalks the land. Tory businessman Peter Bone bragged at the Tory conference that he pays one of his workers less than £1 an hour. This is the typical boss of the nineties.

■ Nine out of ten new 'jobs' are part-time, latest employment figures show. Half of all new jobs are filled by women working part time. More and more workers are being forced to take two, three and sometimes four part-time jobs as they struggle to make ends meet.

■ The giant fast-food chain Burger King was last month found to have paid one of the workers at its Glasgow outlet £1 for a five-hour shift and £7 for ten hours. The 17-year-old had been employed for £3.10 an hour, but was told to clock off whenever business was slack.

■ A 'World in Action' TV programme earlier this month showed that half Britain's workforce are depressed because they feel they are under increased stress in their

jobs and because they fear they may soon be unemployed.

One in three are working longer hours than they want and half get no overtime pay for their extra hours.

Almost 60 per cent of those interviewed for the programme said that they did not get enough time for family and other personal matters.

Nearly half had trouble sleeping; more than a quarter drank more because of work; and over one in five were smoking more because of greater stress at work.

Little wonder that professor Cary Cooper, an occupational psychologist, said on the programme: 'This is a time-bomb in our society and we are going to pay the cost!'

■ Under such conditions the state has no option, in the name of providing the necessary 'incentive to work', but to cut unemployment and related benefits, or to deny them to people who refuse to accept such slave-wages and working conditions.

■ The anti-union laws have hit particularly hard the well-organised sections of the movement, such as dockers, printers and miners. But the effect on growing numbers of workers in low-paid unregulated and marginal employment has, if anything, been worse.

Many such workers are from ethnic minorities, where unemployment is more than twice that of white workers. The scrapping of measures such as the Fair Wages Act and the ban on secondary picketing have left these workers — sweatshop workers, part-timers, cleaners, house-workers — particularly isolated.

■ Sections of the middle class are now being deeply affected by these changes. Workers such as teachers and bank officials, who often believed that they had jobs for life, are now learning that this is not so.

In universities, permanent, full-time contracts are now the exceptions as lecturing becomes casualised with hundreds of young part-time teachers, with no rights to unemployment or sick pay or pensions, replacing older staff.

Far from being able to separate themselves from the working class these groups now find that they face similar problems to those of millions of workers — redundancies, short-term contracts, replacement by younger and poorly paid school or university leavers. And they are weighed down with mortgage and other debts that they simply cannot repay.

At the same time millions of working-class children are being denied the right to any proper school education or to a real higher education.

* * * * *

THE employers are now returning not simply to Baroness Thatcher's Victorian values, but to pre-Victorian methods. In its early days capitalism exploited the working class in the most brutal and naked forms.

The employers strove continually to lengthen the working day, to make use of child and female labour working for the lowest wages and in the most dehumanising conditions.

Now these methods return for ever-increasing numbers of workers.

In fighting against the sort of slave conditions that the employers want for dock workers, the Liverpool dockers are fighting for the whole of the working class, as well as for increasing numbers in the middle class.

So what is at stake in the fight against the return of these conditions?

It is nothing short of the fight to defend the material, physical and spiritual well-being of the working class, its present generations as well as those to come.

That is why in Liverpool, as dockers recognise, they are fighting not just for themselves but for their children and grandchildren. More than this they are fighting for the future of the whole working class.

They deserve and must get the support of the whole working-class movement.

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Letters

More letters
— page 4

Serb rights and Chetnik pretensions

CHRIS Reynolds (Letter, 28 October), in his article in Workers Liberty accused Workers Press and the Workers Revolutionary Party of treating all Serbs as 'fascists'.

Since our campaign on Bosnia was largely inspired by a Serb comrade, and we have publicised the stand of Serbs opposing Karadzic's nationalist gangster-regime, it was not too difficult to show that this charge was non-sense.

Now, it seems that just as we have been called 'antisemitic' (by Workers' Liberty's forerunner 'Socialist Organiser') for opposing the Zionist State of Israel, we must support the 'right' of Dr Karadzic's 'Serb republic' to exist, otherwise we are 'anti-Serb', according to Reynolds.

KwaZulu, or the Afrikaaner racists' demand for a white 'homeland'? Does Workers' Liberty's enthusiasm for ethnic partition know no bounds?

Of course we distinguish between the legitimate rights of Serb workers and the pretensions of Chetnik warlords like Karadzic, who prevented people from voting in Bosnia's referendum, and used press-gangs to force Bosnian Serbs into their army.

Likewise (and unlike Workers Liberty) we do not support the right of the Croat-nationalist HVO-run 'Herceg-Bosna' statelet fostered by Tudjman.

The Serb statelets in Bosnia and the Krajina were set up by the Serbian military and the fascists, taking advantage of imperialist partition plans to engage in ruthless 'ethnic cleansing'.

The Serb Krajina 'republic' (or if Reynolds prefers, 'disaffected community') was the base for cluster-bomb missiles fired into Zagreb, and for besieging and bombing Bihac, where people had started to die of starvation.

and we did not condemn the Croats for doing that.

Nor would we join a hypocritical campaign whipped up by British-imperialist media like the BBC, which has been constantly anti-Bosnian, in line with the Tory Foreign Office.

But when Croatia democratic oppositionists produced evidence that Croat forces had murdered elderly Serb civilians and were deliberately destroying homes to prevent a return, of course we treated that differently.

If Chris Reynolds cannot tell the difference between ordinary people and reactionary nationalist leaders, or between legitimate military actions and indiscriminate murder, then I don't think we need his warnings about 'the dangers' of seeing the Bosnian-Serb rebels as fascists.

If he cannot distinguish between the MI6 spin doctors' hype and the brave people who expose atrocities by their 'own' side; but remains 'convinced' we just responded to internal dissent in the WRP, that shows his own limited outlook.

I am not 'angry' with Chris Reynolds. His letters just reflect the rotten, pathetic miseducation provided by Workers' Liberty, for which real struggles like that of Bosnia will always be subordinated to petty factional intrigue.

If they want to teach us how solidarity with the Bosnian people should be 'properly organised', maybe they'll set an example? If they prefer to debate with reactionaries like Hizb ut-Tahrir or Roger Scruton, we needn't waste time with them.

Charlie Pottins
London SW1

Serb symbols

HAVING exonerated the Croats' 'chequerboard' from fascist origins, Charlie Pottins proceeds, in his even-handed way, to apply that epithet to the Serbian symbol of four 'S's' (Inside left, 14 October).

As it happens, I use as a paper-weight a small plaque given me many years ago by a Yugoslav friend who was certainly no fascist. It bears the Serbian symbol in question together with the

dates '1804' and '1941'. These were the years of two great Serbian uprisings — the first against the Turks, the second against the German fascists.

As it further happens, I have just returned from visiting friends at Montauban, in south-west France, where one of the interesting buildings is what the locals still call 'the Yugoslav school', though it is now used as a municipal crèche. It was presented to the town, as a school building, by Yugoslavia in 1930, to help in Montauban's recovery from damage caused by floods.

The facade bears the symbol — thoroughly pre-fascist — of the four 'S's'.

Brian Pearce
New Barnet, Herts

Jewish jokes

I REALLY must protest against the story in Dot Gibson's comment last week about the man who supposedly wanted to go from Limerick to Donegal, and asked a neighbour for directions.

First of all, it wasn't a neighbour, but a man leaning on a gate,

and it wasn't in Ireland at all, but in a lost little Jewish hamlet somewhere in Byelo-Russia.

The stranger who'd lost his way asked the local whether he was right for Minsk (or in some versions, Pinsk); and was told helpfully: 'Ah, now, if I was you and I wanted to go to Minsk (or Pinsk), I wouldn't have started from here in the first place.'

I don't mind people borrowing our jokes, I'm an internationalist, but you should get them right!

And by the way, for those that didn't get the joke, or the point that Dot Gibson was making, I'd say the funny part was that the philosopher on the gate was a rustic. Whereas, in real life unfortunately the people who often tell you they can't help because you're in the wrong place to start with, are awfully sophisticated, urbane, even 'Marxists'.

Noah Nudnik

● Workers Press apologises unreservedly for any unintended offence caused by the first sentence of the Comment article on page 5 of last week's paper.

Solidarity grows for Liverpool dockers!

BY DOT GIBSON

SUPPORT is gathering for the 500 sacked Liverpool dockers, locked out by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

Three solidarity marches have attracted a total of 15,000 people, and the shop stewards are expecting a good turnout for the national demonstration today (Saturday 4 November).

From the outset the Mersey Dockers' Shop Stewards' Committee has seen their fight as one for all workers. For that reason they have:

- Held regular, at least weekly, public meetings to keep other workers informed of developments and to discuss the campaign, gathering information and airing proposals and suggestions.

- Started publication of 'Dockers Charter' which will circulate far and wide with information about the dispute and raise funds for the fight.

- Called an International Dockworkers' Conference, which

will take place within the next few weeks.

Donations are pouring in from workplaces, housing estate and shopping precinct collections. A women's support group was formed on 1 November, and other support groups have already been set up.

On the afternoon of Friday 27 October, 2,000 people, mainly locals, marched through Bootle, the area of Liverpool nearest to the docks. At the dock gate they tried to go inside to view the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company's development plans, but police refused to let them pass.

The Company is requesting planning permission. In accordance with procedures they have advertised in the local papers, and posters are on display all over the area inviting the local people to view their plans.

Faced with such a large crowd, the police inspector did not feel that he could let them through the gate, even if it was their right.

Eddie Loyden MP finally negotiated with the inspector who allowed a delegation of six to

go through to the dock building, where company officials locked them out.

However local residents can afford to wait for a viewing — it seems that local councillors have blocked the planning permission.

Loyden and other Liverpool MPs are now seeking a meeting with representatives of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company's largest single shareholder — the government, whose shares are held in the name of the Treasury Solicitor.

A letter with a request to meet Prime Minister John Major and deputy prime minister Michael Heseltine has not yet been answered.

In an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons the Liverpool MPs, supported by 75 others, condemned the sacking of the 500 dockers and the recruitment of replacement labour.

The motion recalls that in 1989 Tory minister Sir Norman Fowler rejected claims that the abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme would lead to casualisation.



Liverpool dockers outside the port of Liverpool

Mother campaigns for truth on McDonald's death

THE third anniversary of the death of Mark Hopkins, a worker electrocuted at McDonald's Arndale store in Manchester, was commemorated with protests and leafleting at more than 15 locations around Britain.

'I want every McDonald's worker to stand up for their rights, which is why I am backing this support campaign 100 per cent,' said Mark's mother Maureen Hopkins. 'In this way Mark's death will not have been in vain.'

Maureen herself organised the picket of the Arndale McDonald's on 12 October, which 40 people attended. 'It was horrendous to go to the Arndale McDonald's but I needed to do it in Mark's memory,' she said.

A confidential internal McDonald's report into Mark's death has only recently been released to defendant's in the McLibel trial in London. The

mighty corporation is taking on two London Greenpeace activists for statements they made in leaflets handed out at McDonald's stores.

The report into Mark's death was released only days before McDonald's UK safety officer Jill Barnes took the stand.

Mark's inquest decided his death was an 'accident' but the McDonald's report indicated a number of company failures and problems and said: 'Safety is not seen as being important at store level.'

'I think the report should have been put before the inquest,' said Maureen. 'It may have made a difference.'

Legal action is now being prepared to demand a new inquest on the basis of the report and other documents also not shown to the jury.

'I've always known there was

something wrong with the outcome of the inquest into my son's death. We haven't got peace of mind and Mark can't rest in peace while this new evidence, which has come to light during the libel trial, has not been seriously investigated. I won't give up. We want a new inquest. We're not bitter against the company but we want justice for our son and I won't rest until we get it.'

In central London there was a picket organised by the Support Network for McDonald's Workers. The network is run by a group of trade unionists in Hackney and aims to provide advice and information and promote solidarity for all McDonald's workers wanting to fight for rights. Many other stores were leafleted — even in Canada! The information handed out gave details of employment rights (particularly health and safety).

Tube workers prepare for strike action

A 48-hour strike is due on London Underground on 7 to 9 November, 12noon to 12noon.

The tube workers' union RMT has advised its members not to 'book on' between these times.

Members who have recently joined the union from ASLEF will also be included in the action. Some took part in the ballot and those who joined during the ballot have had their names put forward as being on the list as officially striking.

An RMT representative told Workers Press that there were some promising informal talks being held with the employer.

Tate & Lyle strike

MORE than 600 sugar workers have been striking one day a week against shift changes in east London. Workers at Tate & Lyle (sponsors of the Labour Party, see 14 October) voted by 87 per cent to strike against the employer's demand that they shower and clean up in their own time and that they have 30-minute lunch breaks.

Tate & Lyle personnel director Roy Anderton maintained the changes were necessary to 'ensure satisfactory handovers between shift teams and full productive use of paid working time'.

In other words, the employer wants a wage cut!

While management struggled to keep operations going, workers walked out on Sunday and Monday 23 and 24 October in protest at this attempt to 'squeeze blood out of a stone'. The sites affected were Isle of Dogs, Silverton and Plaistow.

'The company has been steam-rolling radical changes through for the past few years with little or no regard for a very loyal workforce,' said GMB rep Alan Gordon. 'Now they have pushed people too far.'

Your shirt is not all you can lose on the DLR

BY PETER GIBSON

What is going on at the Dockland Light Railway? Built by the government to get people to and from the Canary Wharf office complex, it was designed to be fully automatic and work without drivers.

Last week, one of the trains came off the rails and it was discovered that the bar holding the rail in place had broken.

DLR workers told the London press that the broken bar had not been spotted because of reductions in maintenance engineers. They were among 57 staff laid

off since March and a further 26 are to go soon.

Staff cutbacks are preparation for DLR privatisation. However embarrassing this derailment of its driverless train may have been, DLR is forced to cut costs in its efforts to find some mug to buy the system.

In the year up to 1 May 1995, DLR had a turnover of £6.7 million — but made an operating loss of £15.4 million.

Yes, it lost twice its turnover. But at least DLR is consistent. In the year to 1 May 1996 it is expected to make an operating loss of £14 million from revenue of £9 million.

Bleak future for monetary union

A TIDE of nationalism and depression could drive Europe back to an economic and social crisis on the scale of the 1930s unless economic and monetary union is established in the European Union. This is the sombre message of President Herzog of Germany in a recent speech to the European Parliament.

The abandonment of European Monetary Union would lead to 'trade wars, protectionism, the renationalisation of economic policy and deflation if not depression,' he said.

'That would be a throwback to the 1930s,' he added.

A foretaste of things to come could be seen in the trade war

developing between the US and Japan, Herzog warned.

'Please ask people in your constituencies whether they want to play with fire in this way,' he asked the assembled Euro MPs.

Herzog's remarks seemed to be directed principally at those in Germany who fear that monetary union could undermine the strength and stability of the D-Mark:

'Those German citizens who are afraid of losing their strong mark in monetary union have a point, but they must realise that its strength is not solely in the hands of the Bundesbank.'

The German president's sentiments run directly counter to the

growing opinion that the achievement of monetary union would involve the imposition of deflationary policies of such savagery that the realisation of a single currency is in fact impossible.

To achieve monetary union would mean the sort of unemployment rates last seen in the 1930s. Some economists have estimated that Europe's unemployment level might be doubled from its current 20 million if monetary union were to be achieved.

Hardly any members of the EU currently meet the criteria for entry into monetary union.

Virtually all, including France, would have to carry out

severe cut backs in government spending to meet the budget targets required under the Maastricht agreement. At the same time, to bring the rate of inflation down to the levels demanded by Maastricht would require further deflationary measures.

German finance minister Theo Waigel insisted that European monetary union without the participation of France and Germany was impossible.

In a recent interview he said that France had made 'great strides over the past years in developing growth and anti-inflationary policies' and he welcomed Paris's attempt at consolidating the budget.

100 lashes for 16-year-old

BY ROSS COOPER

A United Arab Emirates appeal court has sentenced 16-year-old Sarah Balabagan to 100 lashes, for killing her employer in what she still insists was self-defence.

Sarah, a Filipina house servant, was condemned to death last month after being convicted of

premeditated murder. But she claimed she stabbed Mohammed Abdullah al-Baloushi in self-defence with the knife he had used while raping her.

There were demonstrations over the death sentence in the Philippines, where people were still angry over the hanging of another Filipina servant, Flor Contemplacion, in Singapore.

The death sentence was commuted after al-Baloushi's family agreed to accept £25,000 blood money, which a Filipino businessman has agreed to pay.

Filipino labour department overseas officer Jose Espanol described the 100 lashes sentence as 'very harsh, considering that Sarah is only a wisp of a girl and that she is not only the accused

but also a victim.' Sarah's lawyer Salman Lutfi said the lashes would be 'very light'.

Under Koranic law the jailer would keep a book under his arm to lighten the blows.

The sentence has also been defended by some commentators in Britain, for whom the oil-rich Emirates are a profitable trading partner.

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Inside left

'horror stories'

The misnamed *Living Marxism* magazine's October issue demanded 'speech' for fascists, racists and religious cults. How appropriate. Its previous issue dismissed reports of murder, rape and atrocities by Serb nationalist forces in Bosnia as mere 'horror stories'.

Perbs have been declared guilty of genocide on hearsay evidence insufficient to convict a bicycle thief, and editor Mick Hume (ironically writing on to a sermon against 'cynicism').

Plans for aerial photographs showing mass graves at Srebrenica, Joan Phillips asked where America's UN ambassador Madeleine Albright had figured up the figure of 2,700 buried 'bodies' from 'Apparently Albright X-ray eyes which can count 2700 bodies buried beneath the soil,' she lied.

Last week in Tuzla, a Red Cross worker told me how, after helping provide amenities for the 23,000 stranded refugees from Srebrenica, he managed to reach Bosnian government-held territory, the International Red Cross Committee (ICRC) set up a tent where people could ask for missing relatives.

About 10,000 names came in. After checking for duplication and so on, ICRC officers were able to reduce the list to around 8,000. Some were people who had been able to escape from Srebrenica before it fell to the Chetniks, roughly 5,000. A list was submitted to the Bosnian authorities for them to locate.

Red Cross officers were able to identify 208 prisoners held by Serbs. As Joan Phillips (who comes to her work for *Living Marxism* from a well-paid post in the Economic Intelligence Unit) can presumably calculate, that left 2,792 people unaccounted for. After witness statements by survivors, Dutch UN soldiers, and Serbs living nearby who witnessed the shootings, it does not require too much imagination to link their disappearance with those mass graves.

Don't suppose this will impress the cynical, obnoxious hard-gloss editors running *Living Marxism*. If they can dismiss the personal testimony of people who have suffered 'ethnic cleansing', rape and torture, what use are statistics? I agree with *Workers Press* reader Tom Carter (letter, 9 September), who likened their sneers with the Holocaust revisionism of the far Right's David Irving.

Not that *Living Marxism* types keen on history of any kind (perhaps feeling inferior about their own 'Who needs people's history?', a review in the November issue, attacking guru Frank Furedi's strictures against over-attention to the past). A reader's letter says the Spanish Civil War has no relevance for the future and *Land and Freedom* director Ken Loach should have been asked to task for 'living in the past'.

Along with its defence of the Serb 'tricks the September issue had an article complaining Irish people were exhibiting an unhealthy obsession' with the 150th anniversary of the famine. The title was 'Digging up Ireland's dead'. It was on sale as Bosnia's soldiers were uncovering bro-sculls and bones in pits near the front — more testimony to the genocide that *Living Marxism* says never happened.

Moscow medical

DOCTOR writes: President Yeltsin's condition is not as bad as the press attack which interrupted the funeral of the bloody martyrs to the brain. But I was relieved to hear right-wing propaganda was seeing a psychiatrist, have heard the bad news —

Charlie Pottins

Tuzla miners for

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

ONLY a third of the miners in Tuzla area of Bosnia are still working. About 4,000 are serving in the Bosnian army, and another 4,000 have been laid off, largely due to the war.

Many may not be returning to the mines, and will need alternatives. Their future prospects — as well as their present hardships — are a matter of concern for the union, and a vital part of the future of Bosnia itself.

On a recent visit to the Tuzla miners' union, with Scottish TUC deputy-general secretary Bill Speirs, War on Want director Margaret Lynch, and Steve Longworth and Faruk Ibrahimovic from Workers Aid, I heard from Mohammed Resnic, president of the Tuzla Miners' Union, Resad Hesagic of the Kreka mines, and Abi Sulmanovic of the Djeordji mines, about some of their problems.

The miners who are still employed receive a salary of 40

deutschmarks a month (about £17), plus one meal a day while working. Out of this they usually have to keep a four-member family.

During the Winter of 1993-94, when Tuzla was under blockade, almost all workers were forced to sell what they had in their flats — the TV, washing machine, furniture — to buy day-to-day essentials. Some people managed to buy at low prices, sell higher, and get by.

Transport remains difficult and food is not cheap. Typical prices are 50p for a kilo of sugar, 80p for rice, and 20p for a packet of flour.

The traffic is back on the streets of Tuzla, and there are buses — battered and crowded — but no free fare: 'If they can't pay, they don't ride.' Electricity is coming back on, and central heating, and the tower-blocks have just got their water on for two hours a day, but the bills are coming as well. There is also a 20 deutschmark enrolment fee to be paid when children start school.

'Our great dream is to return all

members to work.' The mines remain short of equipment, spare parts, fuel, and safety equipment. 'The state cannot deliver because of the war going on.'

'The union did not have an input into who was asked to come back to work, and who not. People were chosen to produce more.' Those who have been laid-off were those less able to meet targets, or continue working in the mines.

'Also under present conditions more essential jobs have to come first, for instance there would be work for a locksmith but not a gardener.'

Even before the war there were 2,300 disabled miners. 'In peacetime, the state looked after people, but now it does not have the means. We treat them as workers employed in coal mines.'

Because of the war the town council has had to scrap many of the services, such as parks, that would have provided alternative employment for people in the past.



Tuzla

Tuzla region has taken in thousands of refugees from 'ethnic cleansing' in places like Srebrenica, many housed temporarily in local schools and unfinished buildings. They are understandably bitter, and could put a strain on Tuzla's traditions of neighbourly solidarity as well as resources. Trade unions remain a centre of workers' unity.

The miners' union provides some food for unemployed members' families when it can, and tries to keep them part of the union. It is supporting small projects, such as smallholdings and small workshops which would give jobs that will not affect the workers' health.

A commission is working with the coal mines to prepare projects — for instance, to make work-gloves for use in the mines. They could also produce overalls, which would be cheaper than importing them. The miners' union has also asked for its members to have the right to repair vehicles for the city. They will be putting in for this fairly soon.

Tuzla's coal-fired power plant has taken a battering from enemy shelling, but is still running. The plant was built to export power and light to Croatia and Slovenia. But, like the northern route to Tuzla, the transmission lines run through enemy territory.

The miners say Bosnia has not got the hydro-electric or nuclear plants to dispense with coal. But looming up behind the immediate problems of the war is the threat of recession, 'rationalisation' and privatisation experienced by miners and other workers elsewhere.

European and US interests eyeing Bosnia's resources and workforce

Letters

More letters
— page 2

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Milosevic and Peron

IN ANSWER to John Ballantyne ('Letters', 21 October), my point was that Serb President Slobodan Milosevic and Peron had a lot in common.

Milosevic uses a Stalinist party machine and police apparatus to foster a climate of ultranationalism. And in Argentina, Peron was heavily influenced by Stalin as well as Mussolini.

Both presided over highly-revisionist external policies: Peron over the Malvinas/Falklands and Milosevic over Tito's 1946 borders. Both made life highly unpleasant for minorities.

Jews were often persecuted in Argentina and the Patagonian Welsh were forced to learn Spanish. Milosevic's attitude to Magyars and Albanians is pretty notorious.

Both leaderships were economic disasters. Peron turned the tenth most prosperous country in the world into a Third World country in nine years.

Milosevic has presided over the worst inflationary spiral that any country has ever undergone: 313 million per cent per month in 1993.

Milosevic has often reminded me

of Nicolae Ceausescu, who also used a Stalinist apparatus to foster an ultranationalist ideology and also knew Peron personally.

With respect to the Croatian shield, I now have a Player's cigarette card, 'Yugoslavia' (No.50), from the 'National Flags and Arms' set of the mid-to-late 1930s (Letters, 21 October). The card is interesting because it shows the Royal coat of



YUGOSLAVIA

Royal Yugoslav coat of arms

arms of Yugoslavia, which incorporates those of Serbia (a white cross between four heraldic striking flints), the red-and-white chequered field of Croatia, and the three golden stars and silver crescent of the Slovenes.

In the period of this card, Yugoslavia was the most biddable member of the Little Entente from a Nazi point of view. Milan Stojadinovic admired Hitler. He was prime minister between 1935 and 1939. During the 1930s, the Regent Prince Paul increasingly co-operated with the Axis powers and signed the Tripartite Pact of Germany, Italy and Japan in 1941.

Tom Carter
Somerton, Somerset

'Great' Serb meets 'Great' Croat

TOM CARTER describes Slobodan Milosevic as a Peronist (Letters, 7 October).

Interestingly, Peron himself acted as protector to both Serb and Croat right-wingers. Milan Stojadinovic — or the 'Leader' as his Greenshirts called him — was Yugoslavia's Serbian strongman of the 1930s and a

champion of friendship with Nazi Germany.

After World War II, he became a prominent figure in the banking world of Peron's Argentina, where, in 1957, he held a very friendly meeting with fellow emigré Ante Pavelic.

Pavelic was the well-known Ustasha mass-murderer and former ruler of the 'Independent State of Croatia'.

Recognising each other respectively as the greatest Serb and greatest Croat alive, the two agreed to co-operate and drew up plans for the future partition of Bosnia.

Stojadinovic was considered a minimalist by many Serb nationalists, since he wanted to dismember Bosnia but not Croatia.

Milosevic, by contrast, wanted to dismember both countries.

Paul Morris of *Workers Power* seems to take Milosevic's side in this dispute, since he supports the right of the Greater Serbian nationalists to retain possession of the former 'Krajina' region in Croatia. Maybe 'Milosevic-Marxist' Morris would agree with Serbian 'opponentist' Vuk Draskovic, who calls for 'Greater Serbia by democratic means'.

Attila Hoare
New Haven, Connecticut, USA

need help the future

will be seeing strings are attached to reconstruction aid.

'We lack the capital to oppose the employers,' says Abi Suleimanovic. He stresses the unions' main task is to defend the workers. 'I worked in Germany, so I know.'

There is a union now for workers in privatised industry. But trade unionists are still determined to assert their part in shaping both the wartime economy and whatever society is being built.

The miners have some ambitious schemes for putting disused sites to new productive use that would benefit local people. They want to turn opencast pits into fish farms, and use the mines to produce mushrooms.

'With 5-6,000 deutschmark we could produce 30 tons of mushrooms a year.'

They have the equipment to retread tyres but would need 80,000 deutschmark to complete this project. They say they can provide crucks to clean the town.

'We would like to influence who will clean the streets, who will look after the parks, as the situation improves. There is also a need to categorise the disabled in terms of the degree of their disability.'

(There is a Human Rights Centre in Tuzla now, which among other projects has decided to assist the war-injured and people with disabilities in fighting for their rights).

'We extend solidarity to those

who are not employed but are still our workmates. We want to show our willingness to help. Your visit, and the aid from your unions, are especially important to these workers. They don't feel abandoned, thanks to your help, to Workers Aid, and a Swedish organisation. It is moral support, too, knowing we have friends who think of us.

'Our trade unions will need help as well, with training and finance. The trade unions as organisations need help. They cannot collect membership dues when members have no money. Not one worker is excluded from the trade union. We are all one family. We are working and suffering together. When we achieve reasonable salaries we will start collecting membership.'

Danish trade unions have offered to provide courses for Bosnian trade unionists in Denmark. Omar, a Tuzla miner, is shortly travelling to the Arctic circle, to speak to Swedish ore miners at the Kiruna mines.

'Many trade unions in Europe do not understand the situation till they have direct contact. We need finance to go to speak in different countries. People there would like to hear a worker's word or opinion. When we explain, we get support.'

'With 40 deutschmark a month it is impossible to provide for a household. Not to mention the situation of those laid off. We feel sometimes it is very unpleasant to speak about these

things because we are used to helping others. But the time has come to raise our voice, to ask others to help democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina.

'It is not like a normal situation, where we can live from our work. It is very difficult for trade unions to work in such conditions. Because we are creating a new state. The employers as usual do not like to listen to the trade unions. Everybody wants to live with democracy, so if aid comes quickly it will help. The trade unions will get more support. If it comes later we will have to cope with other problems. But we will not give up, we will survive.'

Outside the Tuzla miners' headquarters stands the statue of a heroic miner bearing a rifle, symbol of past resistance under the pre-war monarchy and under Hitler's fascism, when Tuzla workers refused to be divided, just as they resist any division of Bosnia now. 'This is a multi-ethnic city, and we are proud of it,' Mohammed Resnic says.

On the Sunday evening before my return from Tuzla, I sat in the newly-restored modern concert hall donated by the miners' union to the town, for another symbol.

More than 70 young people in Tuzla were killed by a Chetnik mortar attack on their cafes in May. But enjoying a beautiful dance and music performance by Tuzla school students, I saw a people determined, despite everything, to LIVE!



Looking to the future. Left to right: Omar (Tuzla miners' union), Bill Speirs (STUC), Charlie Potins, Mesad Hesagic (Kreka miners), Maxwell Craig (Churches in Scotland). Front: Margaret Lynch (War on Want), Mohammed Resnic (Tuzla miners)

Bronwen Handyside reports

Two nations



A sad story

'A sum of £9 million seems a lot — and to appeal against it looks greedy. But it is not a lot when you live the life-style of the super-rich.'

Thus, heartrendingly, spake Maya Flick, former wife of one of the richest men in the world, when appealing against her initial divorce settlement.

The Court of Appeal in London agreed last week that Mrs Flick, the mother of three children, would be allowed to go ahead with her claim for more cash.

The appeal was heard in Britain because it is the site of one of the Flicks' homes — they have several others in different countries.

The £9 million was granted on the grounds that it would enable Mrs Flick to continue to live in the style to which she had become accustomed during her marriage.

Could someone explain to the Court of Appeal, that if they could arrange for me to have the life style of the super-rich for just ONE MINUTE — I could become accustomed to it as well.

Rationing

AND so, probably, could young Jaymee Bowen, whose life was saved by an anonymous benefactor when the NHS said it would no longer treat her.

Stephen Thornton, chief of the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon Health Commission which dealt with Jaymee's case, told the Evening Standard:

'I can understand how and why Jaymee's family have behaved the way they have.'

'All I hope is that there is some opportunity for our side of this affair to be understood as well.'

'Sadly I have a limited budget and by law I am not allowed to overspend it.'

Mrs Maya Flick could have paid for Jaymee Bowen's treatment 120 times over, with her first divorce settlement. If she gets half her husband's fortune — presumably what she is after — she could finance it 1,320 times, and throw in a couple of hip operations as well.

It is an obscenity that this useless woman's desire for luxury is more important than an 11-year-old child's longing for life.

NHS rationing

LAST week Stephen Thornton addressed a conference called to discuss rationing in the Health Service.

Small groups are being set up from the 35 participants to work in detail on what is tastefully called 'priority setting'.

The chair of the meeting, the broadcaster Nick Ross, says: 'There was complete agreement that rationing is inevitable.'

Among the organisations represented at the conference were: the medical royal colleges, the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, the association of fund-holding GPs, the Association of Community Health Councils, and the Patients Association Pressure Group.

Different strokes

THERE are people who want to

travel on Britain's trains who can't afford to pay the fares. Some try to travel without a ticket, and find themselves summarily dealt with by British Rail, which has a blanket policy of fining all who travel without payment.

But when the chairman of P&O travelled first class from Waterloo to Haslemere without forking out the necessary £15.60 for the first class fare, he was let off the penalty — to save him 'embarrassment'.

Lord Sterling of Plaistow, who gets £650,000 a year, contacted the managing director of South West Trains, Peter Field.

Field wrote to the penalty fares office at Portsmouth to say that Lord Sterling had correctly been issued with a penalty, but that it was not 'appropriate' to require payment of the fare, or to impose a penalty. He asked that all record of the notice be deleted from computer records.

Field added a hand-written note which said: 'You may have guessed from the above that the person concerned would find the matter extremely embarrassing.'

A spokeswoman from South West Trains said that Lord Sterling had not been given preferential treatment, and that: 'Penalty fares were not designed to penalise people who did not have a ticket but those who deliberately fail to buy a ticket.'

So next time that inspector's hand falls on your shoulder, try telling them it's not that you didn't buy a ticket — it's just that you simply don't have a ticket.

Lord Sterling's company — P&O — is the shipping firm whose vicious anti-working-class policies sparked the 14 months seafarers' strike in 1988.

How to save money

WE recently received three separate, but identical letters at the place where I work.

They were from Gill Rowlands, advertising the Commission for the Rights of Trade Union Members, telling us that if we had any complaints against our union, she would be very pleased to help.

We filed them all in the wastepaper basket — but this was apparently not the case with all those Gill Rowlands approached.

She heads not only the Commission for the Rights of Trade Union Members, but also the closely related Commission for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action.

Last year they assisted 27 people — at a cost of £398,000. Ms Rowlands gets £49,803 for a 22 and a half hour week.

The impressively named Commission for the Rights of Trade Union Members had 328 telephone calls last year — and boasts in its annual report that it had a 100 per cent record of answering every call within 30 seconds.

As Stephen Byers, a Labour spokesman on training and employment remarked, that was the equivalent of one call a day. The 30 second delay was probably the period in which the Commission's five staff stumbled over each other on the way to pick up the phone.

The Commission for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action did not do nearly so well. Its five staff had not received any applications for help.

If you have any material for this column, please send it to Bronwen Handyside, Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

'White list' of shame

PERSONAL COLUMN

THEY'RE not merely threatening to deport. They're already actively engaged in kicking out of Britain every single black person against whom the slightest semblance of a case can be cobbled together.

On Thursday 26 October they seized Abdul Onibiyo, a highways engineer, from Lambeth, south London, and bundled him on a plane bound for Nigeria.

Onibiyo came to Britain in 1964. But in the late 1970s he was out of this country for two years. In the eyes of the Home Office this temporary absence rendered him an 'illegal immigrant'.

ALL of us born in these islands are descended from 'immigrants' even the Irish and Welsh, whose ancestors the Celts were coming here from the continent of Europe as late as 250 BC.

It was 'immigrants' — including comparatively recent ones — and their descendants who created that gloriously hybrid cultural heritage that we think of as 'British', even that part of it which is smugly if inaccurately labelled 'English'.

What composer of art-music is more quintessentially 'English' than George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), whose *Messiah* used to be, and I hope still is, the climax of the musical year for countless music-lovers throughout the north of England?

Yet Handel's name is properly spelt 'Händel', for he was born in the German town of Halle, near Leipzig, and didn't come to England until he was 25 or so.

The pianist and conductor Charles Hallé (1819-1895), who gave his name to one of England's most famous orchestras and was knighted in 1888, was born in the German town of Hagen and came to this country at the age of 29.

The composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912), whose father was a West African doctor of medicine, was proud to call himself an Anglo-African.

The 'English' novelist Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) was born of Polish parents in the Ukrainian town of Berdichev. After sailing in British merchant ships, he was naturalized at the age of 27.

The 'British' sculptor Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), knighted in 1954, was born in New York of Polish-Jewish parents.

The 'British' dramatist Harold Pinter (born 1930) was the son of a London East End tailor of Portuguese-Jewish ancestry, whose family's name was originally da Pinta.

Even that most costly of British cultural artefacts, our beloved royal family, was imported from Hanover in the year 1714 and didn't adopt the English surname 'Windsor' until anti-German sentiment in World War I made it prudent to do so.

PERHAPS partly because of this tradition of hospitality to 'immigrants', the brimming creativity of so many of whom has so greatly enriched our national culture, Britain has long had another hallowed tradition.

When people ask me, as they sometimes do, 'Is there *nothing* in British history that you can feel proud of?' I always start by referring to the tradition of providing a haven for political refugees fleeing from persecution in their own countries.

Compared with Peterloo, the mass evictions of Durham miners, and sundry colonialist wars, this tradition might weigh no more than a feather on those scales by which we judge British bourgeois democracy in the 19th century.

But the tradition existed, and it was honoured. The Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini

found a refuge in London in 1837. To be sure, the British government stooped to opening his letters and passing on their contents to Italy's rulers, but there was a storm of indignation throughout Britain when this became known.

The rising British bourgeoisie was so cocksure of itself that it could even put up with that notorious 'red terror doctor' Karl Marx for 34 years.

Of course, their semi-competent, semi-literate police kept a spasmodic eye on him, reporting to their masters about the untidiness of the Marx household and penning such gems as: 'This man has not been loyal to his own King.' But here he was, and here he stayed.

Though Leon Trotsky was a notorious exception — a Labour government barred him from coming here in 1929 — this tradition was still to some extent honoured in the 1930s, when Britain opened its doors to some victims of Hitler's persecution.

BUT now, according to a document leaked last week, that most despicable of Tory home secretaries, Michael Howard, proposes to throw this tradition into the dustbin.

Besides cutting benefits to most refugees, Howard intends, it seems, to promulgate a 'white list' of countries from which asylum-seekers will no longer be allowed to enter Britain. The list is said to include Nigeria, Algeria, and Sri Lanka, these being supposedly 'safe' from persecution of dissidents.

In all three countries however there are monstrous violations of human rights.

Under the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha in Nigeria, political dissidents are murdered, detainees are tortured, opponents of the regime are tried in secret, and four journalists were recently sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment.

The exiled Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka says of the leaked document: 'a more meretricious document I have yet to meet in my modest encounters with the paper trails of official deception.'

With it, in Soyinka's opinion, the British government is 'laying the groundwork for a policy of accommodation with Abacha's and other African dictatorships.'

'The real objective', he adds, 'is a clean bill of health for the likes of Abacha and a return of favours — all in the line of business — at the next Commonwealth Conference.'

In Algeria, over 40,000 people have been killed since the cancelled 1992 elections. In Sri Lanka, where there are constant reports of arrests and 'disappearances', 34 schoolchildren were killed on 22 September in a government bombing raid in Vadamarachi.

No one should have any doubt that the oleaginous Howard sees this scarcely concealed playing of the 'race card' as a sure way to bring disillusioned Tory voters back into the fold at the next general election.

The shameful 'white list' — the very phrase betrays Howard's sinister intentions — has an ill-concealed double purpose: abroad, lucrative business deals with the regimes declared 'safe'; at home, a coded reassurance to racist voters that he means to 'keep Britain white' so far as it lies within his power.

The likely effect for black people living in Britain will be that they will be required to furnish proof of citizenship before being given a job. And in practice more and more employers will be disinclined to employ black people.

Well may Howard rub his hands as he stands at the Commons dispatch box. They are dirty hands. And soon they may have blood on them.

Peter Fryer

Whose recovery?

BY PETER GIBSON

WHILE the government and economists talk a great deal about the 'recovery' we need to expose what it is they mean.

The half-year results from a number of companies look very good. Here is a selection:

	Profit growth (per cent)	Dividend growth (per cent)
British Aerospace	+114	+25
RTZ	+35	+17
Legal & General	+100	+12
ICI	+122	+10
Reuters	+20	+21
Zeneca	+45	+5
Rentokill	+23	+22
Asda	+35	+25
Lloyds Bank	+21	+15
BAT Industries	+21	+12
TSB	+20	+16

Which is not bad when you recall that average earnings in manufacturing have gone up only 4.5 per cent and in the service industries by only 2.5 per cent.

The average increase in profits for British-based companies last year was 17 per cent — producing an average profit of 10 per

cent. So you can see what sort of 'recovery' is taking place. It's not in the work place among the workforce.

The recovery is in the exploitation of the workforce and in the production of *bigger profits*.

Official male manual earnings for April (the last available) stood at £289.20 and for female manual £188.80. The non-manual figures were £441.70 and £291.60.

But these figures don't tell us how many hours people had to work to get this money. This is exactly the point about a minimum wage. It's not just about how much per hour, it also determines how long you have to work to get a living wage for yourself and your children.

In 1983, men worked 1,970.8 hours per year and women 1,735.5 hours. By 1993, the figures were 2,038 and 1,803.

In 1993, workers in the rest of Europe worked far less.

	Men hours	Women hours
Belgium	1,737.6	1,662.6
Denmark	1,791.3	1,704.0
Germany	1,783.2	1,690.9
Italy	1,767.7	1,608.7
Luxembourg	1,806.5	1,696.0

Workers wanted: age 12, pay £1.55 per hour!

BY ROY THOMAS

EMPLOYERS flout the law! A Labour Research survey for the GMB union shows widespread infringement of child labour laws. It also reveals local authorities who should be implementing

these laws and do not have the resources to do so.

Thousands of employers fail to notify local councils that they employ school children below the statutory leaving age. About 700,000 children between 13 and 16 are employed part-time but a survey of local councils showed

that seven out of eight children were working illegally.

Yet only a handful of employers are prosecuted. The survey found that in 108 local councils there were only 11 prosecutions — some of these dating back as far as 1989.

Of these same authorities only 15 had specific child employment officers. Of these 15, three of the posts were part-time and a further one was only a temporary appointment.

The University of Greenwich surveyed its local council and found that 45 per cent of under-16s reported that they had worked during the summer holidays.

In Leeds, a survey by the education welfare service found 36 per cent had part-time jobs.

The GMB has found that 12-year-olds were working for £1.55 an hour and 16-year-olds for £2.24 an hour.

While Greenwich council had only issued permits for less than 250 children, it was found that 656 children were doing 1,086 jobs between them.

Of these, 13 per cent were illegally employed simply because of the type of work involved, 30 children were working in factories, 29 in street markets, 28 in decorating houses, 20 selling door-to-door, 14 were working on building sites, 13 in furniture removal and 10 on fair grounds.

In Leeds, the education welfare department found 71 per cent were working without a permit, 53 per cent worked for more than two hours on a school day and some were working more than six hours.

Many were at work before 7am and after 7pm and were involved in collecting money and heavy lifting.

Durham reflected the view of many councils when it stated: 'There has been no enforcement action instigated by the LEA in respect of child employment in recent years. This is due to the impracticability of enforcing bye-laws which are blatantly out of date.'

Here we go again.

Child labour is OK even if it is illegal.

Let's find out about the real scroungers!

THE Inland Revenue Staff Federation estimates that the average family is paying £800 a year more tax in 1995 than in 1979. Yet there is a shortfall of approximately £17 billion in collecting tax.

The same amount of money could also have produced £440 million in fraud by directors.

But then the Tory party looks to companies and directors to solve their own financial crisis and this wouldn't be helped by taking this money away from them.

Workers, obviously, must set up their own investigations on these freeloaders on the labour of others and Workers Press would be very interested in any evidence of company or director fraud.

The IRSF says that the government has invested £27 million to claw back £92 million in benefit fraud.

But had the same investment of time and resources been aimed at company fraud it could have produced £247 million in unpaid company tax and other frauds.

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The need for a new socialist party

Manchester Town Hall

24 February

11.30am-5.30pm

Please send me further details of the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference.

Name

Address

Photocopy and send to Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

A successful experiment in independent socialist agitation

Lawrence Daly and the Fife Socialist League (1956-62)

FROM 1959, the nuclear disarmament campaign became the centre of Lawrence Daly's activities and he challenged the nuclear disarmament position of the old Stalinist left wing in the National Union of Mineworkers.

As pit delegate to the 1959 Scottish NUM conference, Daly proposed the area follow Derbyshire and adopt a unilateral policy. The 'Moscow line' of the Communist Party was for multi-lateral disarmament. The CP and right-wing lodges managed to defeat Daly's motion.

Also in 1959, Daly's agent in the parliamentary elections had been Will Warren, a member of the anti-nuclear Direct Action Committee. Will was jailed in 1960 for direct action at Foulness naval base.

But in 1960 things changed. International peace talks had failed and the British CP were now behind the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

CND grew by leaps and bounds, aided by socialist groups like the New Left Review, the Socialist Labour League and Daly's Fife Socialist League.

So at the next Scottish NUM conference Daly managed to get a unilateralist policy through which was finally agreed at the NUM conference.

Even the 1960 Labour Party conference defeated Hugh Gaitskell's multilateral policy by 43,000 votes out of the 7.5 million total. This margin was much less than the NUM block vote that year.

So, in the four years from 1956, Daly and a small working-class socialist group had been central to what could have been a historic change of Labour Party policy.

The year 1960 also saw the final innovation of the FSL: the launch of a monthly local paper, the *Socialist*. This paper soon

This is the concluding part of a contribution to the discussion of the need for a new socialist party, by postal worker and Communication Workers' Union activist DAVE CHAPPLE. His contribution is based on an article which first appeared in the *Somerset Clarion* (June/July 1995). Chapple left the Labour Party in 1994 and is not a member of any national political party. He has been a reader of Workers Press for four years.

Last week, on the basis of recent successful attempts to stand independent socialist candidates in Somerset, Chapple looked back to the aftermath of the Khrushchev speech, the bloody suppression of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the founding of the Fife Socialist League by ex-Communist Party member Lawrence Daly. This week we publish Chapple's assessment of why the FSL 'experiment' ended and its implications for socialists now

picked up a circulation of 4,500 in West Fife. Its main concerns were: unilateralism and CND; socialist regeneration and links with New Left Review/New Left Clubs in Scotland and elsewhere; local labour movement and council affairs; the struggle for democracy and militancy in the NUM; Scottish self-government.

It also covered issues like opposition to capital punishment and contained regular profiles of socialist pioneers.

Yet, by mid-1961, the FSL was barely alive, on Daly's own admission.

Reasons

A sell-out or reorientation to the Labour Party by Daly cannot be among the reasons for this. One of the last issues of the *Socialist* has Daly still calling for 'the creation of a new socialist party, with complete political, electoral and organisational independence' (March 1962).

As far as can be judged, from the scanty evidence, the causes of the Fife Socialist League's decline were:

■ Not one local working-class initiative similar to the West Fife experiment had been established or continued. The Glasgow- and Liverpool-based Socialist Workers' Federation — which included Eric Heffer and Harry McShane — had folded by 1957. Heffer and

Daly were at the Wortley Hall conference in April 1958 but it is not recorded if formal discussions were ever held with the SWF leaders to discuss the FSL.

■ No significant tendency appeared from out of the non-Stalinist left wings of the Bevanite movement in the Labour Party, the NUM or other trade unions, for the FSL to link up with. Aneurin Bevan's 1957 Labour Party conference speech opposing unilateral nuclear disarmament ensured that any Labour left/CND tie-up was still-born.

■ The middle-class New Left movement was unable to create any educational or propaganda headway in the major workers' organisations that could have given outstanding non-Stalinist orators like Daly a mass audience.

■ CND and the Direct Action Committee failed to attract significant trade union support. The 1961 reversal of the 1960 Labour conference unilateral policy must have demoralised many working-class CNDers.

■ The other most promising working-class organisation of the non-Stalinist left — the Socialist Labour League — had crippling difficulties, both internal and external. It was far too intense and suspicious an organisation for the miners, unemployed women and pensioners of West

Fife who were prepared to follow Daly.

■ One important failure was the total lack of contact between Daly's FSL and the existing and growing British working-class black organisations: Claudia Jones's *West Indian Gazette*, the Indian workers' associations, the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination. With Stalinist influence still strong in these groups, contact with Daly would have been very interesting.

■ The Communist Party managed to survive 1956, with its mass resignations. It was obviously in long-term decline but was still strong enough in the trade unions and in certain local communities to help wreck and stifle socialist alternatives. West Fife was the exception to this, because of Daly's respect among the miners. Elsewhere, socialists who resigned from the Communist Party did not link up with young CNDers to form groups like the FSL. In the South Wales and Scottish NUM, the CP remained a dominant force right up to the 1970s.

Maybe these are all subsidiary to the main reason for the FSL's decline: the exhaustion of a small core of dedicated workers. They were demoralised that, even if the revolution were 20 or 30 years off, so few local socialists were enthused by the FSL message of a socialist Scotland to become active and take over the reins of the organisation and run the race.

The last issue of the *Socialist* came out in May 1962. Daly's independent, brave socialist initiative in West Fife had run its course.

Daly wrote about the failure of the FSL in a letter to all supporters, local (full) members and national (affiliated, non-voting) members. He said the failure to break out of being viewed as a purely local group into becoming the kernel of a national, new left organisation was due to apathy.

As Willie Thompson says, in his article on 'The New Left in Scotland', Britain could have done with such a group, large or small, during the Wilson years.

Daly's valedictory, disappointingly, just calls on FSL members to campaign for a Labour victory at the next general election. He and fellow FSL local councillor George MacDonald were to become members of the Labour group.

Future

But Daly's future lay in the NUM, not the Labour Party. A year after the FSL broke up, Daly left full-time pit work to become Fife miners' agent.

In 1965, he defeated CP member Guy Stubbs for Scottish NUM general secretary and in 1966 he was elected to the national NUM executive.

At this time, Daly was promoted at national meetings of NUM left-wingers as the left candidate to succeed the CP member Will Paynter as NUM general secretary. Among Daly's supporters was CP member Mick McGahey.

Early in 1968, Daly wrote *The Miners and the Nation*, a widely-read pamphlet that helped get his name known in every NUM

Barnsley Miners' Forum, a militant Yorkshire NUM pressure group where a certain Arthur Scargill first came to prominence in the NUM.

In December 1968, Daly beat the Lancashire right-winger Joe Gormley for NUM general secretary with a 52 per cent vote.

The fall from militant socialist grace was almost immediate.

In August 1969, a South Wales executive decision to call an area-wide strike on the day the National Coal Board closed the Avon colliery was condemned in a letter from the new general secretary. Daly said the strike was against union rules and should be abandoned. Many on the South Wales executive had campaigned for Daly.

Worse, in October 1969 thousands of South Wales and Yorkshire miners went on unofficial strike to reduce surfacemen's hours.

Previously, at that year's NUM conference, Daly had threatened that surfacemen might take action into their own hands but had advocated channelling their anger into the official conciliation procedure.

Revolt

The South Wales executive had agreed with Daly but, faced with rank-and-file revolt, accepted the unofficial action. In Yorkshire, Jock Kane, a prominent CP member, who had gone back to the face after a time as full-time agent, fully supported the action.

Not so Daly. He went on television to denounce the strikers and call for a return to work.

Daly's reputation among NUM socialists never recovered. He won support from his brilliant advocacy of the miners' cause before the Wilberforce Inquiry into the 1972 national NUM strike and the 1974 pay board inquiry. But in 1969, Daly found himself echoing his Communist predecessor Paynter in denouncing pit-closure strikes because they were unofficial. On surfacemen's hours he went to the right of some in the CP.

In 1974, Lawrence Daly, the eloquent, militant, independent revolutionary socialist from Fife, found himself moving a composite motion on behalf of the NUM. It supported the TUC/Labour Party liaison committee, which produced the infamous 'Social Contract' to keep down wages and to support the Labour government.

A familiar path to the right, but still, in Daly's case, a sad one. There were, and still are, strong rumours in the NUM about the 'demon drink'...

I saw him only once, in front of the huge 1982 CND demonstration in Hyde Park: an unmistakable worker among a front line of middle-class, most upper-middle-class, politicians and intellectuals. In some respects he was back where he started in 1956.

The Fife Socialist League and its outstanding leader Lawrence Daly deserve more than a footnote in that small labour movement niche called 'Scottish labour history'.

Achievement

The question — and the implied criticism that goes with it — as to whether the FSL developed a full revolutionary programme is less important than its achievement in sustaining five years of socialist education and agitation among thousands of West Fife workers.

No one in the intervening 30 years has succeeded in forming a party to the left of Labour with a significant and quickly expanding working-class base, in the numbers required to reach outside the circle of shop stewards and activists.

If it's true that the main reason the FSL failed to survive was its uniqueness and isolation, it follows that a proliferation of successful, local, independent working-class groups, able to federate at a time of major unrest in the national TUC and Labour Party, just might give us a chance. A chance to challenge a money-mad system that debilitates middle class and working class alike.

The Somerset Community Defence Campaign has survived for ten years. We have met monthly throughout that time — for two years as the anti-poll-tax movement. We have published more than 36 editions of our paper, the *Somerset Clarion*. Our links with ordinary workers are shown in the election results discussed last week.

So, revolutionary comrades, a question: Is your socialism known and respected among your neighbours, workmate and friends as was Lawrence Daly's?

If your answer is an honest NO, tell me, where is the British part of the revolution going to start?

Reading

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SOMERSET CLARION

No. 37

A SOCIALIST JOURNAL FOR THE
LABOUR & TRADE UNION
MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTH WEST



50p
June/July
1995

INDEPENDENT SOCIALISTS

TAUNTON DEANE COUNCIL ELECTIONS
Bishops Hull Ward - 2 Councillors
Remember you can cast UPTO TWO votes
At Bishops Hull Primary School, May 4th, 8am to 9 pm
Polling cards are helpful, but not essential.

RE-ELECT YOUR PRESENT COUNCILLOR
ALAN DEBENHAM
Independent Green Socialist

Outspoken hard-worker who represents the whole community often leading protest campaigns - recently against VAT on fuel, Tory cuts and excessive growth for Somerset, for free fares for OAPs and better pensions.

"Once again it's time for the Tories to go!"

Well-known, experienced local Councillor and campaigner for people's services, jobs, rights and for environmental conservation.

PAST AND PRESENT

How UN 'got rid of' Srebrenica

THE United Nations' top commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier, deliberately abandoned the Bosnian 'safe havens' at Srebrenica and Zepa, refusing air support to Dutch UN troops there, and letting thousands of people be 'ethnically cleansed' by Serb forces.

Janvier, whose decision probably reflected British and French government policy, told his officers on 10 July: 'Gentlemen, don't you understand? I have to get rid of these enclaves.'

As Serb shells fell on Srebrenica, Dutch forces evacuated in panic, their armoured vehicles ploughing through homeless refugees, crushing elderly people and children under the tracks.

More than 23,000 Muslim

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

women and children were driven out of Srebrenica by invading Serb nationalists, who included troops from over the border in Milosevic's Serbia.

Some 8,000 men and young boys were later reported 'missing'. Many are known to have ended up in mass graves.

Hurem Suljic, who managed to escape from a Serb Chetnik

round-up, says he was among hundreds herded to a field where they were machine-gunned.

He managed to lie down faking death, and got away after dark when the Chetniks stopped bulldozing operations for the night.

Srebrenica was declared a UN 'safe haven' in April 1993.

But under proposals put before Milosevic by British and French foreign ministers last year, the towns supposedly under UN 'protection' in east Bosnia — Srebrenica, Zepa, Gorazde and even Tuzla — were to be handed over to Serb rule.

And on 30 May this year the UN security council accepted a report from special representative Yasuki Akashi advocating withdrawal of UN troops from Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde.

UN human rights investigator Tadeusz Mazowiecki resigned on 27 July, saying nobody had lis-

tened to his reports on atrocities in Bosnia.

The sight of Dutch UN troops surrendering to the Serb forces under General Mladic caused a shock in Holland. Soldiers' photographs and video footage, showing the Chetniks making 'selections' of victims, were destroyed.

British UN officers blamed the Dutch commander for being too slow to ask for air strikes, though this was disputed.

Now a Dutch inquiry report confirms that their battalion commander Ton Karremans pleaded for air strikes on 6 July, but the UN refused. Defence Minister Joris Voorhoeve says UN headquarters broke promises and abandoned the Dutch troops and the people of Srebrenica.

Meanwhile, the dirty tricksters and spin-doctors of the UN and Britain's MI6 set to work. The press was briefed. 'Muslim troops

fail to defend town from the Serbs', reported The Times on 10 July. In fact, the Dutch commander had told the Bosnians to go. Those that remained were to end up in mass graves.

A report in the Washington Post on 26 October, citing survivors and Bosnian officials, said half the Bosnian men who tried to break through to the Tuzla area had not made it, and there could be five or six mass graves in Srebrenica's 'killing fields'.

UN refugee officer Kris Janowski said up to 3,000 men had been separated from their families in more recent 'ethnic cleansing' by Arkan's Serb forces in north-west Bosnia.

According to Frank Westerman of the NRC Handelsblad, a Dutch UN officer said the answer to why the UN command behaved as it did over Srebrenica 'may be so scary that I don't care to think about it.' Westerman also found

that Julian Harston, chief of UN representative Akashi's political team, thought the fall of Srebrenica was not inopportune. 'The disappearance of the enclaves of Zepa and Srebrenica cleared the way for the use of disproportionate force,' Harston argued. (Guardian, 25 October).

In other words, as we have said, NATO's later intervention, continued imperialist plans to enforce a carve-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the cynical minds of NATO planners, Muslims could be 'cleansed' from their traditional centres in the east, and replaced with Serbs from the west.

Keeping the arms embargo on Bosnia kept the Bosnian army dependent on its Croat allies, and restricted its ability to liberate more territory. But the struggle against the carve-up has not ended, nor must our solidarity with the Bosnian people.

No walkover for Tudjman

CROATIA'S President Franjo Tudjman has failed to win the political triumph he wanted from the Croatian army's victories.

Last weekend's elections were no walkover.

Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) gained over 40 per cent of the vote, easily enough to remain in government with a clear lead over the opposition. But it will not have the two-thirds majority needed to push through constitutional changes strengthening the president's position.

Half the seats in Zagreb, the capital, were taken by the opposition, including the ex-Communist Party Social Democrats. Tudjman's HDZ was also swept off the city council. Opposition parties also did well in port cities like Rijeka and Split.

Over the country as a whole the main opposition alliance took about 20 per cent. The Social Liberals, who made an issue of pensions policy but wanted the government to speed-up privatisation, were third with about 12 per cent, while the Social Democrats had 9 per cent.

Some small right-wing nationalist parties which might have been Tudjman's allies failed to pass the threshold needed for parliamentary seats.

Tudjman had called a quick

election, hoping to benefit from patriotic euphoria over the Croatian army's successes in regaining western Slavonia and the Krajina from Serb forces.

But along with distrust of the government's war aims in Bosnia, there is wide discontent over economic and social issues, and fear that Tudjman's regime threatens democratic rights.

Tudjman's failure to win the kind of backing he wanted is more striking in that he stood to benefit from a new electoral law passed in September, setting aside parliamentary seats for Croats living in Bosnia, and even overseas.

Big hoardings erected along roads in Croat-occupied areas of Herzegovina carried HDZ election posters showing the president and the slogan: 'The RIGHT man, and the RIGHT party, for the RIGHT time.'

The Bosnian government protested at the call on Bosnian Croats to vote, calling it 'an ugly move' to undermine Bosnia's future unity.

President Alija Izetbegovic warned the United Nations 50th assembly in New York: 'The Bosnian government and army will not accept the division and disintegration of our country... (it) will lead to the continuation of war, immediately or later.'

Rakovica — rebirth of workers' movement in Serbia

On 16 October, thousands of workers marched through the centre of Belgrade shouting anti-government slogans. It was the biggest demonstration for two years against President Slobodan Milosevic.

The following comments were written by Greek journalist L. Hatzipromidis and published in the newspaper *Elftheortypia* on 17 October. Hatzipromidis is one of the very few journalists in Greece who have not identified with Greek national chauvinism

THE protest and slogans of thousands of workers from the Rakovica region of Belgrade are perhaps an indication of the restoration of a section of society that had forgotten all about the social and material interests of classes and had identified with the nomenclatura.

Just seven years ago, on 4 and 5 October 1988, similar marches had originated in the workers' heartland of Rakovica to go towards the federal parliament to demonstrate in front of Slobodan Milosevic.

These marches were soon converted into nationalistic demonstrations. The then up-and-coming Milosevic promised to solve all by 'changes IMMEDIATELY' and concluded by saying: 'And now each one of you return to work.'

The workers withdrew. 'We trust Slobodan,' they shouted.

That was at the time of 'Great Nation' unity to the neglect of workers' and citizens' welfare. But now workers have nothing to defend.

They are unemployed or receive hunger wages. Rakovica, a region of tens of thousands of workers and big factories eight years ago, has no become no man's land.

It is an irony that Milosevic with his party's votes helped Seselj, the leader of the extreme Serb-nationalist Radical Party, to become the parliamentary deputy for the area. Seselj was then Milosevic's friend but is now his enemy.

After seven years of humiliation, of manipulation of the workers who joined demonstrations as 'working people' and left

as 'Serbs', the workers have now acquired new guiding principles.

The national and social humiliation, added to fraudulent promises, have now reached the level of what is described in Serb history by the horrible word 'IZOAJA' — 'treachery'.

At the same time, developments on the front line in Bosnia after the appointment of generals by Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic shows the civil crisis among Serbs that may lead to a break down.

Tolerance limits regarding national and economic problems are exhausted. Appeals concerning foreign and local enemies has reached the end.

The only thing that exists is brutal violence. It remains to be seen for how long!

Transport and General Workers' Union member John Ballantyne adds:

I HAVE just received news that the workers at one of the largest factories in Belgrade, the Rakovica motor car plant, went on strike on Monday 16 October and demonstrated in front of the

Serbian government buildings.

Car workers were demanding payment of overdue salaries and the resignation of the industry, trade and finance ministers. They also demanded steps to revive heavy industry.

Milosevic's mouthpiece, the Belgrade News Agency, denounced the strikers as 'a group of political hacks' opposed to peace. Serbian Prime Minister Mirko Marjanovic promised workers that their demands would be met but drew back from promising the ministers' resignations.

The protests coincide with the revival of hyperinflation and the apparent slide of the Serb Dinar on the black market currency exchanges.

This autumn has seen the prices of basic foodstuffs, petrol and other commodities treble in price. This strike will send shivers down the spine of the Belgrade bureaucracy as the working people in the former Yugoslav Republic begin to flex their muscles. Judging by the Belgrade media reaction, they have cause to shiver if not freeze.

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Croat police seize ex-judge

FEARS have been expressed for the safety of a former judge seized by Croatian plain-clothes police while returning from a peace and human rights conference in Bosnia.

Radovan Jovic, a Serb from Glina, in the Krajina region, who was jailed by the Serb nationalists as a dissident, has been charged with 'espionage' by the Croat authorities. Over a dozen low-grade civil servants were charged with spying for Serbia recently.

The former judge had been attending the Helsinki Citizens Assembly in Tuzla, along with a delegation from Serbia and Montenegro, who had to take a roundabout route via Hungary

and Croatia. Croatian newspapers backing President Tudjman accused opposition leaders attending the Tuzla conference, of making 'anti-Croatian' speeches.

On the way back two coaches carrying assembly participants, including some from Britain, were held up for nine hours at the Croatian border while police took away the passports first of those from ex-Yugoslavia, and then from ex-Soviet republics like Azerbaijan, and consulted headquarters.

It was about 1 a.m. when the coaches were finally allowed to proceed, under police escort.

Most Western delegates were leaving for home early that

morning, but the ex-Yugoslavs rested at their hotel, on the coast south of Split, before resuming their long, roundabout journey. The police came at 11am. Four plain-clothes officers went up to Jovic's room, where he was lying down, suffering with back trouble.

At 12.30 they called an ambulance to take Jovic away, and said they would be holding him for questioning after his treatment. To counter any protest the hotel was cleared that afternoon, and everyone put on two buses which were driven under police escort to Zagreb.

Jovic's sister, who lives in Zagreb, had been taken away for questioning on Monday night,

about the time he and other delegates were being detained at the frontier.

On Wednesday the authorities said they were holding the former judge for 'espionage'.

Serb delegates we spoke to said Jovic, a native of Glina, remained a judge there under the Serb Krajina 'republic', but was jailed for political opposition by the Chetnik leader Martić.

After US diplomats intervened he was released and went to the United States, but more recently he had been in Belgrade, joining peace circles.

He had been invited to the Tuzla assembly by former UN human rights commissioner Tadeusz Mazowiecki.