

# Socialist Organiser

No.262 No.261 20 February 1986 30p Claimants and strikers 15p

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# BESIEGE WAPPING

"I don't care what Brenda Dean says, we're glad to see other trade unionists down here on this picket. I just wish there were more of us."

That's how one sacked printer from The Times summed up his feelings about the mass picket outside Rupert Murdoch's Fortress Wapping last Saturday, 15th.

The mass pickets are starting to act as a focus to keep the dispute in the news. Now we need to step up this activity.

At a meeting of London Region NGA FoCs (workplace officers) last week, the main arguments from the floor were for mass pickets and for pulling out the whole of Fleet Street to win the dispute.

A Joint Chapels Liaison Committee is calling for a mass picket this Wednesday, 19th, and SOGAT RIRMA is asking all Fleet Street workers and other trade unionists to join a demonstration from Tower Hill to Wapping that evening.

The Joint Chapels Committee has called a meeting for rank and file union activists on Tuesday 18th; the print unions Broad Left paper 'Link-Up' has an open meeting on Wednesday 19th.

The rank and file who want to fight now hold the key to winning the dispute.

Wapping must be besieged by mass pickets every night. The place can be shut down. This can be done. There are 30,000 Fleet



Angry printworkers shout at police, Wapping, Saturday 15th. Photo: Andrew Moore.

Street printers working only ten minutes away by tube or bus.

Fortress Murdoch is not picket-proof. The roads leading out of the plant are very narrow. The police would have a lot of difficulty moving big enough numbers of pickets out of the way.

And what's special about newspapers is that they are a

commodity which goes out of date very, very quickly so even a small delay of a couple of hours in getting the scab papers out will severely disrupt Murdoch's distribution system.

A strong movement from rank and file print workers for mass pickets at Wapping can start a snowball of solidarity rolling. It will make it easier to get over

the arguments that the majority of Fleet Street printers who are unsure about shutting down Fleet Street in support of the sacked 6,000.

It will make it easier to argue for solidarity from SOGAT members in distribution because they will be able to see a real battle taking place over Wapping. It will make it easier

to win solidarity from all other trade unionists.

Joint chapel meetings must be set up to run the dispute at rank and file level. At the same time we must demand that the TUC backs the printworkers, declaring the Wapping picket to be a TUC picket and the boycott orders to be TUC orders.

## More on the print pp 2&3



# Areas in NUS

AT THE last National Union of Students executive meeting, only one of the dominant Democratic Left faction voted against a measly £45,000 allocation to the new Central Areas Development Fund.

Alan Smart, president of NUS Scotland, said that developing strong Area NUS organisations costs a lot of money, and moved that the allocation be increased to £90,000. The rest of the executive, bar Socialist Students in NOLS (SSiN) supporter Simon Pottinger, stuck on £45,000.

The background to this is a defeat for the DL on Areas policy at the last NUS conference. Before the DL lost their policy - for Areas to lose their autonomy in return for cash - their own estimates ranged from £50,000 to £130,000 for the Development Fund.

SO of 30 January carried a letter from Colin Adkins of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) national committee. He attacked SSiN's position in the NUS conference Areas debate, arguing that our support for Area autonomy would give us short-term gains but do nothing to use Areas to win youth votes for Labour in the next election.

Now we argued that our plan was the best way to win Labour votes - and to develop real campaigning centres now to take on the Tories. And we openly said so.

## Labour

The first Democratic Left figure to talk about getting a Labour vote via the Areas was ... Alan Smart, in a NOLS caucus last summer. Winning Labour votes was, he said, the main priority, though we shouldn't say so in the broader movement.

Now Alan Smart thinks that something has gone wrong. What's going on? What has happened to the DL's plans for developing Areas?

Certainly the 'responsibility', 'more than my job's worth' arguments are nothing new. Bureaucratic cowardice is no novelty in the DL.

What is more disturbing is the possibility that the minimal allocation is an attempt to kill the scheme at birth. Whether or not that is the aim, it will undoubtedly be the result.

However, given that the DL are really good, honest and true, the most likely explanation is that they cannot comprehend the change of direction that orienting to the Areas demands - because of their thoroughly wooden view of NUS campaigns (one poster, one sticker, one leaflet, one briefing, and lots and lots of prayers...)

Meanwhile, back at X Poly Labour Club, Colin Adkins is explaining how the 'Trots' have once again hampered Labour's chances of winning the next election.

The social-fascist morons aligned with the forces of reaction to defeat a truly socialist plan for Areas' etc. etc.

'Well', asks a Labour Club member, 'aren't we going to take the policy and through our energy, socialist fervour and majority on NUS executive provide the dynamism and money to ensure that our aims are realised.'

By Simon Pottinger (NUS national exec., in personal capacity)

'That would also show up the Trots' lack of concern over electing Labour'.

'No way', replies our hero. 'We're going to give it only £45,000. As for the dynamism, well we're not blue-arsed fanatics, you know...'

The above-imagined meetings will soon be taking place and Colin, I expect, is planning his answers.

He's got problems, though. Not only has Alan Smart left the fold on this one, but a DL Area convenor whom I'd better not name told me that every NOLS convenor must attack this development.

In fact it's going to take some pretty impressive gymnastics from Colin. In the tradition of Olga Khorbut, however, Stalinists have quite an impressive record in that particular sport.

Nominations have just closed for candidates for NUS national executive.

Simon Pottinger is running against Linzi Brand (Inde-

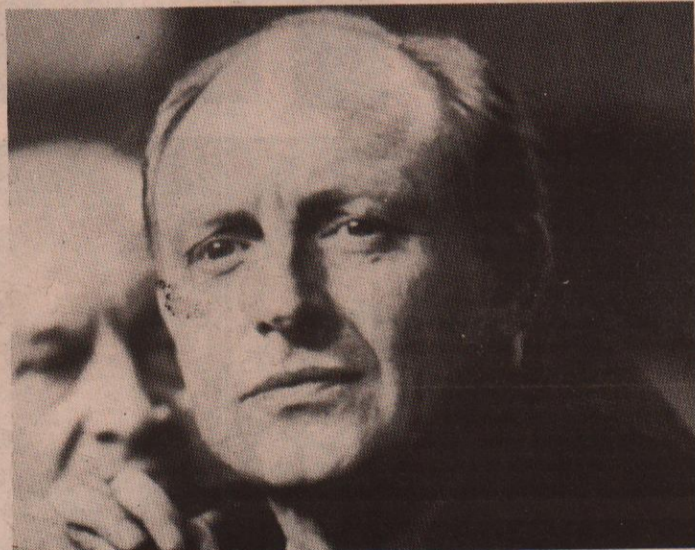
pendent/Union of Jewish Students) for Vice President Welfare. There is no candidate for that post from the dominant 'Democratic Left' faction of Labour students.

Three other Socialist Students in NOLS supporters, Michele Carlisle, Andy Burke, and Melanie Gingell, are running for part-time positions.

There are three Labour Party members standing for NUS president: Vicki Phillips of the Democratic Left, Andy Whyte of the Liberal-dominated Left Alliance, and a candidate backed by Labour Solidarity who is protesting against the 'extremism' of Labour Students!

Another Labour Party member, Sam Akinlade, is standing as an independent Further Education candidate for a part-time post. Sam has been a solid supporter of the DL for years now, and the label 'independent' is far from the mark.

SSiN is happy and willing to debate with the Democratic Left and/or Linzi at any college. Contact us at 7 Welbeck Court, Addison Bridge Rd, London W14.



Psst... don't tell people you want them to vote for me...

# Expulsions

By Dave Brennan

1000 students from around the country this week launched a national campaign in defence of student union autonomy with a march in Manchester.

The march was called in defence of three students who were effectively expelled after violent action disrupted a meeting with the Tory immigration minister David Waddington.

With the Tories trying to push through legislation limiting student union autonomy and college authorities on a renewed national offensive of fines and expulsions, Manchester has become a national focus.

Unfortunately the march was marred by the Socialist Workers' Party. Having completely failed to bring any other Socialist Worker Student groups to the demonstration, the university SWSS group led the march on a totally pointless and unsuccessful attempted occupation of the Manchester Business School.

The marchers, recognising a pointless stunt when they saw one, went to the local Tory HQ, stopping Manchester city centre traffic for an hour on the way.

The campaign now has two basic elements. Firstly, mass support must be built in Manchester; beyond that a national dimension must be developed, with a linking-up of unions under similar threat as its centre.

The main obstacle to both these tasks is the politics and tactical attitudes of the SWP. They are completely obsessed with occupations - not as a tactic but as an aim in themselves.

Their South Africa chant of 'One Solution Revolution' has been changed to 'One Solution Occupation'.

Their focus on achieving occupation no.3 at Manchester has been a major mental block against a strategy for a successful local campaign.

Similarly, it has made them openly contemptuous of a national campaign.

We need an objective and realistic appraisal of how to build both national and local campaigns. Socialist Students in NOLS have argued that the local campaign should adopt a programme of rolling direct action - lightning occupations, pickets, lobbies, road blockades, etc., coupled with a weekly national picket of the university admin.



An arrest outside Wapping. Photo: Andrew Wiard, Report

# TIME FOR ACTION IN SCOTLAND

INSIDE WAPPING...

Last Saturday, 15th, in Glasgow, the SOGAT general secretary Brenda Dean and the TGWU general secretary Ron Todd spoke at the first of a series of rallies in support of the print workers sacked by News International.

Brenda Dean outlined the history of the dispute with particular emphasis on the treacherous role of the EETPU leadership, and SOGAT's refusal to obey a court injunction to lift instructions to black distribution of papers from Wapping.

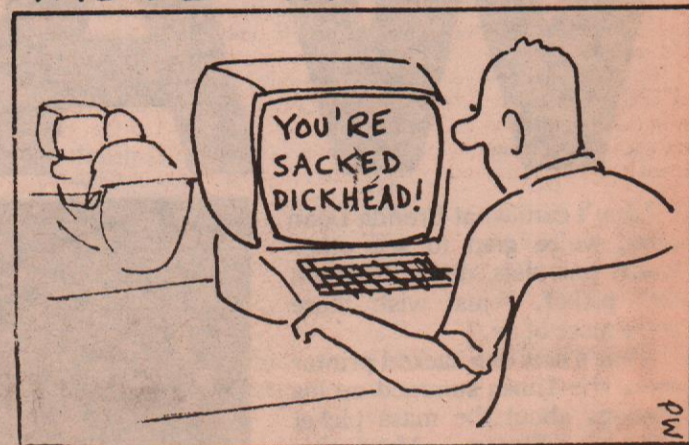
Ron Todd gave his support to the print unions and reaffirmed his instruction to TGWU members not to cross SOGAT picket lines, despite threats of further legal action, while recognising that TGWU drivers were still breaking that instruction.

Scottish TUC general secretary Jim Milne, on his usual good form, droned on at the audience about the need to "use our imaginations" and "find ways and means" to beat Murdoch.

The audience was clearly prepared for a serious fight against Murdoch but the only action the platform speakers called on them to take was a boycott of Murdoch's publications.

"Once you really hit Murdoch's circulation then we will be able force him back to the negotiating table," explained SOGAT Scottish full-timer George Lamont.

What demands SOGAT



would raise if they got back to the negotiating table was not explained. Nor was there any mention of spreading strike action to the rest of Fleet Street and picketing was only raised in the context of an attack on the SWP for allegedly being involved in the clashes outside Wapping.

At Kinning Park, Glasgow, SOGAT members picket the News International plant around the clock, but never in numbers greater than half a dozen at any one time.

"Outsiders" are clearly not welcome on the picket lines as far as SOGAT officials are concerned.

The scabs no longer bother to stop and listen to the pickets' arguments.

The dispute can be won, by not if the action is limited to token pickets, rallies and a call for nothing more than a boycott of Murdoch's publications.

# Southwark solidarity

By Vince Brown

Last week saw the setting up of a Printworkers Support Committee in Southwark.

The committee includes representatives of the NGA, SOGAT, Southwark Trades Council, Southwark Labour councillors, the council workers joint trade unions committee, the three local CLPs and the Southwark Labour Party Joint Trade Union Committee. It has undertaken a bold plan of solidarity action.

Delegations to picket Wapping, local distribution points and scab lorry firms are to be encouraged and organised from local union branches, wards, etc.

A boycott campaign of mass leafleting and flyposting is to be supported by a council boycott of Murdoch papers and scab lorry firms (subject to legality of course!).

A workplace speaking tour, concentrating on local TGWU branches, is to be organised in conjunction with a public meeting and benefit social in early March.

Money will also be raised for the printworkers solidarity fund.

This committee, based on the best organised sections of the labour movement in Southwark, can provide rapid and effective solidarity action in support of the print workers, and for this reason it should be welcomed and supported.

Further information can be obtained from: Southwark Trade Union Resource Unit, 42 Braganza St., London SE17, tel: 01-582 0996.

# A LESSON FOR SOGAT

The police have started to use the same tactics against the printers that they used against the miners.

Last Wednesday, 12th, the police forced off the road a coach load of SOGAT members who were going to picket a TNT depot in Eastleigh, a suburb of Southampton.

Hampshire police's line was that the pickets were

going to cause a breach of the peace so they were quite right to stop the coach. But the question has to be asked: how did the police know the pickets were on their way?

sogat officials know the answer. All the arrangements for the trip were made on the phone, and they believe the police had the phone tapped.



# HOW TO BEAT HAMMOND

The EETPU is off the hook. On 11 February the EETPU leadership accepted the six directives from the TUC:

\*Not to assist further in recruitment for News International.

\*Not to recruit Wapping workers into the EETPU.

\*To tell EETPU members at Wapping that they are doing the work of sacked trade unionists.

\*Not to sign any agreement with News International without the consent of the other unions.

\*Not to negotiate unilaterally with News International.

\*Not to sign single-union agreements anywhere.

Dissent from within the EETPU certainly had a role in this; even Hammond's dictatorial regime could not ignore the horror of many EETPU members when they heard the facts.

But the TUC's demands are an elaborate exercise in bolting the stable door after the horse has bolted. The EETPU has already recruited the scab labour for Wapping; all it needs to do now is sit quiet until the print unions are beaten down, and then get everything signed and sealed.

The TUC did not tell the EETPU to instruct, advise or even ask its members at Wapping not to cross picket lines. No doubt it was embarrassed by the

fact that TGWU, NUJ, SOGAT and NGA members are all working on Murdoch's operation without those unions doing very much about it — though they have at least asked those members not to scab!

This result — or so it seems to me — underlines what SO said: that the demand for the TUC to expel the EETPU was not a real answer at all. The important thing was and is what policies the TUC will campaign for in the EETPU membership; and whether a strong enough rank-and-file movement can be developed to campaign for them if the TUC doesn't.

Ron Todd has been to the Wapping picket line. We should insist that Norman Willis and Harry Conroy get down to the Wapping picket line and tell all trade unionists not to cross. We should demand Eric Hammond goes there too.

And we should draw out the lesson: relying on the TUC leaders to whip Hammond into line is no good. Hammond is a right-wing maverick, but there's more to it than that.

Hammond's policy is a bold and extreme expression of the drift among all union leaders — towards collaborating with the employers because they believe they can't fight them. We need a cross-union rank-and-file movement to combat that drift and develop the sinews of solidarity.



EETPU rank and file at Wapping. Photo Andrew Wiard, Report

## Stop Fleet St!

As we go to press the state of play in Rupert Murdoch's legal assault on the print unions is very unclear.

NGA members at Northampton who print the Times supplements are still working on them, despite the pronouncements of Tony Dubbins on Saturday, pending the result of a ballot on industrial action.

If this ballot goes in favour of action then the boycott must start immediately. There can be no return to the earlier strategy of the NGA leadership of keeping everything selective. Secrecy and confusion are not good weapons for drawing workers into struggle.

Behind the NGA leaderships hesitation is their fear of the courts. This fear is not unfounded because back in 1983 the TUC abandoned the NGA to the courts in their battle with Eddie Shah. This cost the union £2 million. If the same thing is to be avoided this time round then the TUC must put itself on the line in defence of the NGA and SOGAT. Fining and sequestrating industrial unions is not the same as taking on the TUC. That's why the TUC must say that the pickets, boycotts and boycott instructions are TUC policy.

SOGAT were right to defy the Tory employment laws. But defiance on its own is not enough.

Instead of cooperating with sequestration — last week SOGAT sent round a circular to all branches asking for details of all accounts to be sent to the sequestrators — the union must be mobilising active and continued opposition.

The print unions with TUC backing should be prepared to pull out the whole of Fleet Street to force Murdoch and the courts to back down.



Riot police confront printers' pickets. Photo: Andrew Moore

## SOLIDARITY IS THE KEY TO VICTORY

Solidarity action from other trade unionists is vital if Murdoch is to be defeated.

This week saw the first TGWU member and TNT driver refuse to cross picket lines. Terry McCabe from Luton left his lorry outside the plant on Sunday morning because he said he couldn't stomach crossing picket lines.

As a result he was beaten up by other drivers in the canteen at Wapping. Of course, News International deny this. McCabe says that drivers carry weapons including machetes in their cabs to 'protect' themselves from pickets.

Reports are coming in that TGWU members at Tilbury are refusing to handle paper and supplies bound for News International. Meanwhile the Scandinavian paper workers unions have said that they will boycott paper for Wapping.

Murdoch has tried to lure anyone with a heavy goods licence

to drive for him. Already some firefighters have been approached and asked to do a spot of moonlighting for News International.

Their union, the FBU, has hit back with just the right response. It has said that any member who works for Murdoch will be thrown out of the union.

### NCU

The telecom engineers' union, the NCU, has kept to its pledge not to carry out repairs or any work to do with Wapping. This is in line with the policy of the Central London branch and of the national executive committee not to cross picket lines at Wapping.

Rumours abound that Murdoch is very irritated by this action and is considering using the courts against the NCU.

Print workers support committees have now been set up in Southwark and Tower Hamlets, — charged with mobilising soli-

arity for the sacked printers.

The key to getting more solidarity is to organise teams of rank and file strikers to go round to the distribution depots and to other workplaces connected with Wapping to get across the arguments about what this fight is all about and why the printers need support.

The present 'low key' approach of the SOGAT/NGA leadership might be able to win the battle for public opinion, but it won't succeed in shutting down Wapping. To do that we need a vigorous and energetic campaign, organised and controlled by rank and file strikers, to win particular groups of workers to active support for the strike now.

At the heart of such a drive must be a big push to pull out the whole of Fleet Street in support of the News International strikers and against the other press barons' plans to do a Murdoch themselves.

## PILE THE PRESSURE ON MURDOCH

Rupert Murdoch is now going to ACAS, the government conciliation service. Only a short time ago he was saying that he would never have the print unions in Wapping — there was nothing to talk about.

What's going on? The well-informed Financial Times (15 February) cites three factors.

One: "Mr Murdoch is clearly not winning the propaganda war". Two: pressure from the TGWU and EETPU. Three: to produce all Murdoch's papers at Wapping is straining capacity there. A return to some production at one of his old sites "may be inevitable".

Public opinion is not a very mighty factor in such battles. However, Murdoch does eventually need some sort of settlement with the unions.

His journalists have submitted to blackmail and cross the picket lines; but unless Murdoch can relax the barbed-wire and security-passes side of his operation slightly, all the journalists with any sort of self-respect will slip out to other jobs. That may not trouble the Sun much, but it will be a problem for the Times and the Sunday Times.

Even the EETPU is now obliged not to sign a deal unless the other unions agree.

So Murdoch's fortress is not as strong as it seems. But the move to ACAS has dangers.

Battered by the courts and fearful of unleashing the full power of their members in mass pickets, the union leaders may well think that even a bad settlement is better than nothing. They may sign a deal with huge job cuts, no-strike clauses, and sweeping 'flexibility' provisions, and hail it as a partial victory.

### Shortsighted

That would be terribly shortsighted. For any deal signed with Murdoch will immediately become a marker for other Fleet Street bosses. Already firms like the Guardian are demanding the same large-scale concessions that the unions offered to Murdoch before he broke off talks.

A series of 'partial victories' like that would destroy the print unions. If Murdoch shows any signs of weakening, the unions must stand firm for a settlement that maintains essential trade union rights and principles.

### JUSTICE FOR MINeworkERS!

Demonstration Sunday 2 March, 1.30pm from Jubilee Gardens, County Hall, London SE1.

- \* Release and reinstate all sacked and jailed miners
- \* Reimburse the NUM's stolen funds
- \* Review the cases of all jailed miners





## Polish villas

In the western lake district of Poland there is a beautiful and stately villa built near the small lake of Nartowko, unknown to tourists at large.

The villa has very high ground and first floors, and deep cellars. In the cellar is the boiler for the central

heating, as well as a large room, which is empty for the time being. The rest of the cellar is taken up by a modern, almost finished sauna.

There are only two rooms on the ground floor — but what rooms! One is 80m<sup>2</sup> large, has dark oak panelling on the walls, finished in a matt varnish. The ceiling is covered in ornamental coffers. The parquet flooring is also oak.

The other room on the ground floor, connected to the hall by an automatic sliding door of larch wood slats, has different interior decor for a change; this time in an extremely expensive and rare Caucasus walnut. The door handles are made of brass.

A wide and sweeping staircase with decorative, handmade metal-work balustrade leads up to the first floor. Upstairs there are six smallish rooms and two bathrooms.

The rooms have colourful damask-covered walls, each room a different colour. A corridor runs the whole length of the first floor, at one end having a particularly handy period bar. The bathrooms are tiled right up to the ceiling in blue and pink West German tiles.

There is an extension stuck onto the villa, which ruins the architectural line of the building. However, the refined and sensitive owner had the kitchen built there, lest smells should waft into the rooms.

The caretaker-cum-stoker will live near the kitchen. His wife is supposedly an excellent cook.

No, this is not the description of a summer residence belonging to the chairman of a polonian company (a company set up by a Pole with western capital who emigrated to the West but is allowed by the regime to hold dual nationality).

This description concerns a villa built by a "true worker", a "protector of the working people", the chief of the so-called OPZZ, (National Association of Trade Unions) — Alfred Miodowicz.

At a meeting in Konin someone asked comrade Miodowicz about this matter. He waved it off and answered nonchalantly... "it is a sort of ordinary summer house", after which he quickly changed the subject.

From 'Voice of Solidarnosc', December 1985

## Another Duvalier

Hackney North Labour Party has voted both to condemn the Tory government's ban on Louis Farrakhan entering Britain, and to refuse Farrakhan the use of any council premises if he should come to Britain. The Labour councillor who invited Farrakhan, Lester Lewis, has been deselected.

Farrakhan is a militant US black leader, and that is probably why the government refused him entry. But he is other things besides, and that is why Hackney Labour Party voted the way it did.

Farrakhan is an anti-Jewish racist. He is a right-winger with a social programme of black capitalism.

(He has collected a lot of money to set up a few feeble black businesses). He takes money from the Ku Klux Klan.

He has been condemned by Betty Shabazz, the widow of the great US revolutionary black leader Malcolm X. Malcolm was murdered in 1965 — no-one knows by whom, but very possibly agents of the Black Muslim organisation which Farrakhan now leads. For certain Farrakhan had written in the Black Muslim newspaper just two months before, "The die is set, and Malcolm shall not escape... Such a man as Malcolm is worthy of

death".

In short, Farrakhan is a sort of North American Duvalier.

The Hackney North Labour Party decision against Farrakhan using council premises was almost unanimous. Unfortunately, one small group opposed it — the Socialist Action supporters in that Labour Party. SA's co-thinkers in the US, the Socialist Workers Party, seem to think that racism is not racism (but only 'anti-zionism') when it is directed against Jews. Even though Farrakhan says that "Hitler was a great man", the SWP reckons it is a "smear" to call Farrakhan anti-semitic.



## Millions of jobs

This Friday and Saturday, 21st-22nd, the Socialist Society (a grouping mainly of left wing academics) is organising a conference to discuss Andrew Glyn's pamphlet 'A Million Jobs A Year'.

At a time when Roy Hattersley is declaring that he believes in high profits and saying that control of inflation must come before economic expansion, Glyn's proposals have become a focus for the left. He argues that full employment is possible, and can be engineered by comprehensive state controls over the economy — price controls, exchange controls, import controls, compulsory planning agreements and maybe sweeping nationalisations.

Some other articles and reviews are being circulated with Glyn's pamphlet as material for the conference. GLC economist Robin Murray argues for a focus on

'popular planning' at local level.

Veronica Beechey stresses shortening working hours, and raises the issue of how they should be shortened.

"Men overwhelmingly favoured reductions which would give them... a whole day or a series of days off — whereas women tended to favour earlier finishing times".

Reviews by Phil Hearse (from Labour Briefing) and Jeanette Findlay (from International) basically support Glyn's approach, but say that we should spell out more the political mobilisation against the capitalist class required to implement it.

There is a danger built into the structure of the conference — its aim is to produce an 'expanded version' of the pamphlet — that core strategic ideas will be essentially

unquestioned and that all the points raised will be accommodated by tacking on additions... a bit for women, a bit for local authorities, a bit for black people, a bit for this, a bit for that.

One of the documents circulated for the conference, the review of Glyn's pamphlet from Socialist Organiser, does try to question the core ideas.

We should start from workers' control, not state control, it argues. Shortening the working week should be central, not peripheral. It must go together with a programme for socialisation of housework so that work time is shortened for women as well as men. And the policies should be planned on an international, not national, scale; socialism in one country is impossible.

Information about the conference from the Socialist Society at 01-734 8501.

## Defend Baba Bakhtaura

As many as 3000 black people face deportation every year under Britain's racist immigration laws.

Baba Bakhtaura has been fighting for over three years for his right to stay. He came to Britain in September 1979 on a work permit, as part of a folk group. He applied to the Home Office and his leave to stay was extended until the end of November 1979.

He made another application for extension and this was refused in September 1980. Baba appealed against this refusal, but outside of the time allowed. He heard nothing more.

In June 1982 he was arrested for 'overstaying' and imprisoned for two months. In addition, the court recommended that he be deported. Baba appealed to the Crown Court and this recommendation was lifted.

In February 1983 the Home Office decided to deport him. Baba appealed to the Home Office-appointed Immigration Appeals Adjudicator, but his appeal was refused. He then appealed to the Immigration Appeals Tribunal (also appointed by the Home

Office) but they refused even to hear the case.

Baba however won the right to have his case heard in the High Court. In March 1984 the court said that the Home Office was wrong to deport Baba without considering the valuable service he provides to the Asian community as a folk musician.

But in December 1984, the Court of Appeal reversed this decision and ruled in favour of the Home Office.

The House of Lords has now decided to hear Baba's case and this will take place early in 1986.

The Baba Bakhtaura Defence Campaign asks supporters to:

\*Write to Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, at the House of Commons, London, explaining why Baba must stay. State the reference number HQ 517775.

\*Write to your MP at the House of Commons asking them to take up Baba's case with the Home Secretary.

\*Contact the campaign for leaflets, speakers for meetings, etc., at 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B19.

## The Guatemalan model

According to the US, Guatemala is now a 'democracy' — a model, perhaps, of what they want to impose on Nicaragua.

Yet, as in El Salvador, the armed forces remain the real power in the land, behind an elected president.

A new report from Amnesty International concludes that regular military and security forces have been responsible for thousands of the killings and torture. They have sometimes operated as plainclothes "death squads" acting with official sanction.

An Amnesty International delegation which visited Guatemala last April found a pit and an unmarked cemetery at a military base at Patzun in Chimaltenango Department, after receiving testimony that prisoners were held in such a pit and bodies dumped in it, and that the cemetery was used to dispose of the corpses.

The delegates found remnants of food, rope and paper in the pit, which was covered by a lid of wooden boards and a tin-roofed structure.

Amnesty has also received eye-witness reports of the wholesale murder of Roman Catholic church workers suspected of sympathising with opposition forces.

Trade union members have been abducted, killed, harassed or forced to flee abroad. And students and staff at the University of San Carlos have been repeatedly attacked by military and paramilitary forces. At least 70 members of the university

community were reported to have "disappeared" in the first ten months of 1985.

What about the 'Marxist dictatorship' in Nicaragua? Amnesty has examined that too, and another new report summarises the findings of four investigative missions since the Sandinistas took power in 1979.

Amnesty is critical of the Sandinistas, but makes it that that abuses by the revolutionary government do not compare with the state terror in countries like Guatemala or the atrocities carried out by the US-backed counter-revolutionaries fighting to overthrow the Sandinistas.

According to Amnesty, short-term arrests of prisoners of conscience have been carried out under a State of Emergency in force since 1982. Most of these prisoners are released without coming to trial, and prisoners of conscience wrongfully convicted of crimes have usually been pardoned shortly afterward. These detentions seemed to represent a pattern of intimidation and harassment.

Sometimes the prisoners are held incommunicado, and they have suffered ill-treatment in jail — but not the sort of torture carried out in the jails of right-wing Latin American states.

Amnesty also reports abuses by Sandinista armed forces in rural areas (particularly the Miskito region) in 1981 and 1982. In several cases, says Amnesty, though not in all, military personnel have been prosecuted and punished for abuses.

## Bog

There used to be 500 lavatories at the Wavell Barracks in West Germany, home of the Hampshire Regiment. Now there are 501!

But the extra one is rather special. For a start it has cost around £5000, paid for by the taxpayer via the British military government in Berlin. This expense is due to the fact that it has pink wall-paper and shiny brass fittings. The wooden seat, according to impeccable sources, is slightly higher than normal.

The cost and glamour of this particular army latrine is because royal Diana is slumming around the barracks next month.

Source: Observer

Anti-Fascist Action Conference

Saturday February 22 1986  
11 am — 5 pm, Manchester

HELP ORGANISE THE FIGHTBACK

For details and credentials write to: Anti-Fascist Action, PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.



# The Philippines: close to the boiling point

By Clive Bradley

Behind the scandal about election fraud, the Philippines is close to boiling point. A guerilla struggle, mainly organised by the Communist Party-led New People's Army and backed by its political front, the National Democratic Front, has mass support and has posed a direct threat to the regime. In the countryside and the cities alike, the population has moved into action against Marcos and his corrupt 'crony capitalism'. There is a growing and militant labour movement.

The Philippines are a group of islands in South East Asia with a population of 50-60 million. Winning their independence from Spain at the end of the nineteenth century, the islands were then conquered after a long war by the USA. They were the US's biggest colony. 'Liberated' by Japan in 1942, the Philippines became independent after World War 2 and were incorporated in the USA's post-war economic empire.

In military-strategic terms, the islands are vital for US interests. The US has huge military bases there. For that reason, successive US administrations have given political and economic backing to the Marcos regime.

Marcos's regime is bureaucratic, corrupt and repressive. And it is based on huge social inequalities. The top 10% of the population own nearly 40% of the wealth, while the bottom 20% own only about 5%.

In the sugar plantations of Negros island, half the acreage is owned by only 7% of planters, and the majority own less five hectares.

51% of Filipino families live in absolute poverty, and 70% live below the official subsistence level. The bottom 11% families have seen their incomes decline sharply over the past four years, but the incomes of the top 13% have increased by 30%.

Industrial capitalism has grown fast in the last 20 years. Agriculture accounted for 26% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1965, and 22% in 1983, but industry increased from 28% to 36%. Raw materials' share in exports fell dramatically from 95% in 1965 to 50% in 1982, and the share of manufacturing rose from 5% to 49%.

This massive capitalist development led to a growth in the working class. Most of the increase has in fact been in the service sector (27% of the labour force in 1965, 37% in 1981), rather than industry (an increase from 16% to only 17%). But



Pro-Aquino demonstration in the Philippines

there has been a significant growth in the proportion of the population living in urban areas: 32% were urbanised in 1965, and 39% in 1983. 34% of the population now lives in cities of over half a million people.

### Squalid

Workers' areas in the big cities like Manila are squalid; but the countryside is worse. Sugar plantation workers refer to the 'dead time' between April and September when there is no work, no pay and little food.

In Negros, where two-thirds of the Philippines' sugar is produced, a quarter of a million of the population of two million are out of work.

The government combines state monopoly businesses with Filipino private capital and multinational investment. Free trade zones — where multinationals get excellent terms for

investments, and workers have no rights — have been in operation for some years.

But the economy is in crisis. It shrank 5½% in 1984, according to the government, and as much as 10% according to other sources. The foreign debt is touching \$30 billion. And it compares badly to other countries' performances in South East Asia.

Large sections of the bourgeoisie are alienated from Marcos and his 'crony capitalism'; they have backed Aquino as the candidate of a less corrupt capitalism and a safe alternative to 'communism'. They are frantically sending signals to the US to support them on this basis.

The NPA is an alternative, very powerful source of opposition. Not aligned ideologically to either the USSR or China, and not supported by them, the Communist Party of the Philippines grew out of radical student movements influenced by Maoism in the 1960s. (China today vigorously supports Marcos). The NPA is believed to have 12,000 to 20,000 guerillas.

The civilian front of the far left — the National Democratic Front — claimed in 1981 to have 50,000 full time organisers, and ten million supporters, four million of them in urban areas. Even allowing for exaggeration, they are a formidable force.

And urban guerilla activities are supplementing rural armed struggle.

As one sugar planter told 'The Guardian' (20.8.85): "We've seen it all before, in Vietnam. When you tax the military with this parallel, they say 'the situa-

tion here is different, and we're handling it differently'. But it isn't different. It's the same.

"They say they have to win the hearts and minds of the people. But on this island (Negros) the NPA have already won the hearts and minds of the people".

The NPAs main bases are in Negros, northern Luzon (the island on which Manila is situated), in the hinterlands of Panay, and the mountainous regions of Mindanao.

As in Central America, with which there are many parallels, the Church has been alienated from the regime. Filipinos are largely Catholic, and Cardinal Sin is a leading anti-Marcos spokesperson.

The workers' movement is increasingly combative. The Financial Times (9.9.85) complained that 'moderate labour leaders are being challenged by radicals in the union movement who exploit lay-offs and inflation-hit wages'. Many of the militants are sympathetic to the NPA.

### Challenge

The militant union federation, the May 1st Movement (KMU) was founded on 1 May 1980 and by 1982 had 150,000 members. It challenges the old conservative business unions.

Labour legislation even outside the Free Trade Zones is repressive. Many unions are not recognised, and union recognition strikes — like most other forms of industrial action — are illegal.

But — one way or another — Marcos's days are numbered.



Cory Aquino: support

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A food ration fixed at the biological minimum, and a ban on having your home warmer than 12 degrees C — with powers for the police to check at any time: that's what the bureaucrats' economic plan means for Rumanian workers. This report by Cyril Smuga is translated from the French socialist weekly Rouge.

FOR MORE than ten years, Rumania has suffered a worsening energy crisis. Last winter, the supply of gas and electricity was cut off in certain parts of the country for two or three hours a day. Draconian measures have been taken to limit household energy consumption. They have not prevented a sizeable decline of industrial production, which has accentuated the financial difficulties of the country and put into question the repayment of the foreign debt (estimated in 1984 at \$7 billion).

On 21 March last year president Ceausescu sounded the keynote in his speech on the 20th anniversary of his coming to power: "No human or material effort can be too great to accomplish the glorious destiny of our country".

Various government decrees since then have given body to this perspective. Last summer the restrictions were announced for this winter: the maximum temperature authorised in dwellings and in workplaces is 12°C (54°F); last winter the limit was 16°C, 61°F; shops and offices only operate during daylight hours; the use of light-bulbs of more than 40 watts is prohibited, and so is the use of any electrical equipment (refrigerator, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, stove, iron, electric fire, etc.)

Infringement of these norms incurs sanctions up to and including prison sentences. Teams of party activists have been mobilised to check the application of the measures. They are authorised to conduct searches at any hour.

In this way the Rumanian government hopes to reduce household electricity consumption by 50% compared to last year (it represents 7% of the energy produced in Rumania, as against 27% in Hungary and 19% in Bulgaria).

In October another government decree introduced militarisation of labour in the country's main power stations. Their employees are thus subject to iron discipline and, above all, cannot leave this ill-paid work for another sector where wages are higher.

'Socialism is soviets and electrification', so Lenin liked to say. Ceausescu did not liquidate the soviets, but as regards electrification he is on his way...

### Shortages

Rumania does not only suffer from an energy shortage, but also from a lack of foodstuffs and more generally of the whole range of raw materials. The problem of food supplies was 'solved' in 1981 by the introduction of rationing of bread, flour, meat, eggs, sugar and oil. The ration norms, 'scientifically studied', are those of the biological minimum. As for the shortage of raw materials, it is one of the main factors in the limiting of industrial production and the poor quality of Rumanian products.

The country now suffers from enormous excess industrial capacity. The steel industry has works which could produce 20 million tons of steel a year; it only produces 12 million because it lacks iron and coal.

Oil-refining capacity stands at 35 million tons a year, but Rumania only produces 11½ million.

The situation is no better when the basic materials are plentiful. Thus the biggest mineral-water bottling plant, Biborteni, only produced 38 million litres in 1984 because it was short of bottles, caps, crates and transport, while its capacity is 100 million litres!

This economic crisis comes after a decade of accelerated industrial growth, of the order of 11½% per year between 1971 and 1975, and 7% per year between 1976 and 1980. The main motor of this growth was the continuous development of investment at the expense of consumption. The



## ECONOMIC PLAN MEANS MISERY FOR WORKERS

proportion of national income given over to accumulation rose from an average of 26% in the '60s to 35% in the '70s.

The consumption-goods sector represented 35% of total production in 1965; it fell to 24% in 1982. While overall production increased threefold between 1970 and 1982, electricity production only doubled. The present energy crisis was thus implicit in the logic of the industrialisation of the last decade.

Such facts may be surprising in an economy regulated in principle by central planning. It is not because of 'forgetting' or 'mistakes' in planning that the energy and foodstuffs sectors were neglected and the machine-making sector got the bulk of the investment credits. It is to do with the respective weights of these sectors in the Rumanian bureaucratic apparatus.

Bureaucratic power is in fact not capable of generating a global rationality of economic development. It can impose a stagnation or even a reduction in consumption on the masses when it has a favourable relation of forces. But it is the law of the relation of forces inside the bureaucracy that comes into play in relation to the sharing-out of the accumulation funds.

### Groups

The groups which are most numerous, best organised, and have the best contacts inside the central apparatus of the State-Party get the biggest share. Discontent in such groups would destabilise the regime immediately, while the negative effects of accepting their demands for investment are only destabilising in the long term. And since every new investment increases the power of the bureaucratic group which benefits from it, history repeats itself...

Becoming aware of this mechanism, Ceausescu has tried to remedy it by regularly retiring the officials responsible for the main industrial sectors and generalising rotation of managers between sectors. At the same time he has tried to reinforce his own position, by nominating his closest friends and members of his family to key posts in the party and the state.

He has also tried to get the military to play a role in the internal conflicts of the economic apparatus of the bureaucracy. Thus Ceausescu risks having a good part of this

bureaucracy leagued against him.

It is not, as the history of the 'people's democracies' teaches us, a comfortable situation for the main leader of the country.

Already, in some intellectual milieus integrated into the apparatus, signs of discontent are appearing, and they are all the more significant because some people want to bring the masses into the conflict.

At the end of 1984, a Rumanian literary journal published the text of Jean-Pierre Brissot, a French philosopher of the 18th century, who on the occasion of a peasant revolt in Rumania 200 years ago lauded the right of the people to revolt...

A number of indicators of an approaching political and social crisis are thus present today. But the decisive factor, that is, the ability of the Rumanian workers to make their voice burst out, remains the great unknown.

The Rumanian working class does not lack traditions of struggle. In 1976 and 1981, miners' strikes shook the country and came up against fierce repression. In 1977, an embryonic free trade union had some success before being dismantled by repression. And the millions of individual, or sometimes even collective, complaints sent each year to the authorities bear witness to the discontent of the population.

In the elections to the Rumanian parliament in 1985, 2.27% of citizens voted against the official list (as against 0.14% in 1965 and 1.5% in 1980). The highest percentages were in the regions inhabited by the Hungarian and German national minorities. In the industrial centres of Constanta and Prahova, more than 6% of citizens voted against the list.

The Rumanian regime has tried to reinforce the atomisation of the working class, particularly through modifications of the pay system.

### Penalties

As from 1983, the wages funds of sectors and enterprises, and the individual pay-packets of workers, depend entirely on the accomplishment of the tasks assigned to them. Non-accomplishment, even if it because of lack of supplies, gives rise to penalties which can exceed monthly income. This new system, called the 'overall agreement', has increased the exploitation of the workers.

It has encouraged the development of sector-by-sector particularism and

integration into the hierarchical system of the sectors. The level of wages depends more than ever on the results of the enterprise and of the industrial sector (and not on individual effort), and thus we have the statistical manipulations that the factory directors and their bosses apply themselves to. The official press has reported this.

### Atomisation

We do not know whether the measures described above have led to such an atomisation of the Rumanian working class that it will prove incapable of collective action in face of attacks on its living standard. For such action is today the decisive ingredient which is missing in order to transform the Rumanian economic crisis into a highly explosive cocktail.

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

The following story went the rounds of the nomenklatura (the USSR elite) in the '70s.

One day the mother of a Central Committee official, who lived in a collective farm, came to visit him. She was shown his luxurious Moscow apartment and his dacha and was given excellent kremlivka meals. Unexpectedly she wanted to go home as quickly as possible.

"What's the matter, Mother?" her son asked. "It's lovely here; why don't you want to stay?"

"Yes, it's certainly lovely here", the old woman replied, "but it's dangerous. Suppose the reds come?"

Michael Voslensky, 'Nomenklatura: Anatomy of the Soviet ruling class'.

West Germany's very conservative trade unions have recently protested about contract workers from East Germany?

The union leaders' complaint is not that the workers from the 'communist' East will infect their Western brothers and sisters with rebellious attitudes and militant demands. On the contrary. It is that the Eastern labour, organised by the Berlin government, undercuts union labour by working long hours for low pay.

What do the East German workers' unions have to say about it? Nothing at all — for they are in fact no more than pliant agencies of the Stalinist government.

Stan Crooke looks at how German workers — traditionally among the best organised in the world — were denied effective union organisation under an avowedly Communist government.

Forty years ago on 9 February 1946 the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB) in what is now the German Democratic Republic (DDR) held its first national delegate conference.

Hitler had been defeated. East Germany was occupied by the USSR, the West by Britain, France and the US. But hopes and promises of a new order were wide-spread.

Stalin sought to develop East Germany and other countries occupied by the Red Army into a strategic buffer-zone between capitalist Western Europe and the Soviet Union. In practice, this meant maintaining capitalist structures in those countries while at the same time ensuring USSR domination of social and political life.

The FDGB was the fusing into a single organisation of the revived organisations of the different trade union formations (Social Democratic, Communist, Christian and Liberal) which had existed prior to Hitler.

The stated goals of the FDGB were anything but revolutionary. It pursued collective bargaining and a system of social insurance, welfare and protective legislation. Above all, it was committed to rebuilding the enterprises destroyed by the war and participating in "economic reconstruction" — on a capitalist basis.

Works councils had been set up spontaneously by workers in the closing days of the war. They were centres of resistance to both capitalism and Stalinist encroachment. Elections to



# the working class

# PUTTING REAL TRADE UNIONS



German workers rose in revolt in East Berlin in 1953

such councils were banned in the East in 1947. The councils themselves were banned the following year (they had been suppressed immediately in the West) — and replaced by trade union committees staffed by compliant members of the FDGB.

Propping up capitalism on the one side, the FDGB provided assistance to Stalinism on the other. Key positions in the FDGB were in the hands of members of the old Moscow-loyal German Communist Party (KPD).

## Fusion

The fusion of the pre-Hitler trade union formations into a single centralised union also paved the way for the fusion of the KPD and the Social Democratic Party (German equivalent of the Labour Party, not the SDP).

Although Stalinist pressure played a large part in this fusion, many workers naively welcomed it as a step to stronger and more united workers' organisation. They would be tragically disappointed.

The FDGB was heavily under the control of the Stalinists who, through the USSR army, were the effective state power.

It permitted the dismantling and shipping off to the USSR of substantial sections of German industry as "reparations". This especially hit factories taken over by workers at the time of the collapse of fascism and now being run by the workers themselves.

Stalin changed policy in 1947. His attempts to appease imperialism by leaving capitalism intact in the Soviet-occupied region were, by this time, clearly unsuccessful. The writing was on the wall and it spelt 'Cold War', though there was always the danger that it might hot up.

## Structures

The capitalist structures of Eastern European countries were abolished and replaced by those which characterise the Soviet union. The governments of coalition with bourgeois parties were dissolved and replaced by

one-party Stalinist regimes. All forms and degrees of independent organisation, however limited, were crushed.

## Role

What of the FDGB? The statutes adopted at its third congress, in 1950, expressly acknowledged the leading role of the SED (German Communist Party) and thereby also acknowledged that its own role was to be no more than a transmission belt carrying the decisions of the SED into the workforce.

There are elections, after a fashion, in the FDGB, but there is no democracy. The ballot paper in workplace and district elections is a list of names drawn up by the current office-bearers in conjunction with the union officials one step up in the bureaucracy above them and with the local SED leadership. Putting forward an alternative rank and file slate of candidates is impossible.

And the nominal right of removal of union functionaries who breach union statutes or

no longer enjoy the confidence of their members" is in practice non-existent. Any dismissal of officials from office takes place as a result of decisions by the layer of the bureaucracy above them, sanctioned after the event by the appropriate union body.

After bowing down before the "vanguard role" of the SED, the statutes of the 1950 Congress went on to outline the basic functions of the FDGB. Given priority were:

## Plans

"Mobilisation of all workers, manual and white collar ...for the fulfillment and fulfillment in advance of the economic (five-year) plans, for the consolidation of labour discipline, for the development of competition and the activists' movement, and for the formation of labour brigades...

"Working out practical methods for increasing the productivity of labour, for the improvement of quality, for lowering the overheads, and for raising the viability of the people's factories.

"Fulfillment of obligations

arising out of the factory collective agreements".

Passing reference is made to improving working conditions and living standards. But the message is unmistakable: the role of the FDGB is to raise productivity through maintaining discipline in the workforce.

Subsequent FDGB documents spelled out in more detail how productivity might be raised and costs cut. Whipping up competition — with the adjective "socialist" occasionally thrown in — between workers was of central importance:

"The trade unions are responsible for the organisation and development of competition as the principal method of raising labour productivity. The leading bodies of the industrial unions thus have full responsibility for the competition-movement and the activists' movement." (FDGB document, 1951).

As a way of reducing costs the FDGB came up with the idea of deducting money from the wage-packets of its members should they fail to meet the 'norms':

"Insofar as those with 'personal' or 'brigade accounts' (i.e. bonuses introduced in 1951 based on the amount of raw materials used in production) use up more than the established norm through their own fault, then deductions are to be made from their wages, corresponding to the extent to which the norm has been exceeded. Such deductions, however, may not exceed 10% of the wage". (Resolution of FDGB national executive, 1951).

## Norms

When higher norms of production were introduced, FDGB greeted this "step forwards towards socialism" and took to task factory-managers who failed to squeeze the workers sufficiently.

"The establishment of technically based labour norms is a principal precondition for the application of a wages system based on achievement...Industrial unions must take pains to ensure that workplace managements fulfill their legal duty — elaboration of technically based norms, and creation of the preconditions for their planned increase, in line with the tasks laid down by the (five-year) plan." (FDGB document, 1951).

The role of the FDGB extended beyond the workplace itself into the leisure activities of its members.

A night out at the movies? The FDGB would organise it for you: "Once a month a culturally valuable and con-

temporary film of German, Russian or popular-democratic origin must be shown in the workplace. "But," the FDGB warned, "there is no place for reactionary or kitsch films in the workplace" given that "in all spheres of cultural work there must be a more energetic struggle than hitherto against formalism and all forms of American cultural barbarism." (FDGB document, 1951).

## Theatre

In theatre, too, the FDGB made its presence felt: "The proportion of workers in the Volksbühne (People's Stage) is to be raised from 30% to 60%...The audience at premiere performances is to be so composed that 60% are factory workers, especially activists...Wherever possible premiere performances should be held in large factories." (ibid).

The FDGB prescribed recommended reading for its members: "The importance of ideological work demands a planned use of written propaganda material. This must ...spread the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin in the trade unions". (FDGB national executive resolution, 1951).

The FDGB also arranged evening classes. Themes included: "Economic Plan and Wage Labour (The teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the principle of achievement)"; "Learning from the Soviet Union Means — Learning to be Victorious! (The teachings of Lenin and Stalin on socialist competition and the Stakhanov movement)" and so on.

The FDGB also laid a Stalinist hand on sporting activities. "A further task of the workplace sports association is encouraging workers to win the sports achievement award Ready for Work and for the Defence of Freedom...

"In its meetings the workplace sports association... should also discuss social questions, especially the concepts of peace between peoples, the unity of Germany, and the struggle for peace and the five-year plan". (FDGB document, 1951).

The FDGB does not unite workers but helps atomise them. Even in the mass demonstrations organised by the FDGB the workers remain atomised: such demonstrations are not the expression of a collective solidarity but stage-managed events organised through the FDGB by the ruling bureaucratic elite, which depends for its very existence on the atomisation of the working class.



# The architects

The election of a Royalist government on 31 March 1946 led to an immediate and dramatic escalation of the attack against the Left by the extreme right wing private armies like Grivas's 'X' and by the state itself.

KKE General Secretary Zachariadis clung to the policy of 'reconciliation' and the notion that when the time came the urban proletariat could be mobilised in an insurrection. All the evidence pointed to the contrary.

The Greek TUC had been placed under the control of the right and now functioned to demobilise the struggles of the working class. In the mountains, former ELAS members were already being forced to join together to defend themselves.

Markos Vafiadis, the former ELAS guerilla leader of the Salonica region who was not destined to lead the armed struggle, offered to raise an army of 25,000 in two months. His offer was turned down by Zachariadis, who instead wanted to create soviets in the Greek army based on conscripted followers of EAM. Zachariadis's policy was a complete disaster.

All the conscripted EAM sympathisers were taken straight to prison camps. 50,000 potential fighters for the Left in the approaching civil war were confined in this way. The same thing

**In late 1946 Greece slid into civil war. As Ian Swindale shows in this fifth article of his series, Communist Party policy led to defeat for the left.**

happened to former ELAS officers. When the government began calling them up they approached Zachariadis with a view to taking off for the mountains. "The party has not taken the decision to go and organise a new Resistance. You must be disciplined and present yourself to the government when called upon to do so," Zachariadis told them.

In September 1946 300 officers did so and were imprisoned in camps on the Aegean Islands.

The KKE policy was nothing short of criminal. The whole logic of the boycott of the March elections pointed towards preparation for the armed struggle. But instead Zachariadis pursued the

impossible policy of 'reconciliation'. When the Royalist government organised the plebiscite on the future of the monarchy in September 1946, KKE policy swung back fully in the direction and its followers were called upon to participate in the vote.

The KKE had faced fraudulent elections in March; the plebiscite would surely be just as fraudulent with the extreme right now in complete control of the country.

The official result claimed that 68% of the population voted for the return of the monarchy. King George II returned to Greece immediately.

Despite the political line of the KKE Central Committee the first guerilla units went onto the offensive against the National Guard in September 1946. In October, over a hundred operations were carried out, many of them following the same basic pattern of ELAS during the German occupation: The andartes would storm a small town or village, overwhelm the National Guard and withdraw with fresh supplies of arms and recruits from among the villagers.

Despite the KKE line that those who ran away to join the armed bands were cowards running away from the revolutionary struggle in the towns and factories, Markos managed to create a 6,000-strong force by the end of October. On the 28th he announced the creation of the Democratic Army.

The government mobilised the army against the insurgents and in an astute move that was to help secure continuing economic and military support from the West for years to come, Prime Minister Tsaldaris protested to the UN against "aggression from the countries to the North", i.e. Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria.

## Aid

Aid to the Democratic Army from the countries to the north was in fact restricted to supplies and medical care for the wounded. The USSR sent nothing at all.

To clean up the Right's own image, village self-defence organisations (MAY) were created. The private armies could thus be disbanded and reconstituted on a legal basis. Together with the National Guard this put 160,000 men at the government's disposal.

In the meantime, the British Mission under General Rawlings was busy establishing 'refugee camps' around the main garrison towns into which thousands of villagers were herded in order to deprive the Democratic Army of new recruits and other forms of support.

Nevertheless, by the beginning of 1947, the whole north-western part of Greece had come under the control of the Democratic Army and guerilla units had begun to operate in the Peloponnese.

By March 1947 the Democratic Army was 13,000-strong and 20% of its fighting force were women.

America now began to take over the role carried out until then by the British. US President Truman declared to Congress America's "unreserved interest in Greece" and was granted \$300 million for financial aid. He had already sent an American union leader to work alongside Makris, who had been imposed on the Greek TUC as a puppet of the government.

All Greek government expenditure

became subject to the approval of the large number of US missions that were now established in Athens. The Washington Post wrote: "Diplomatic observers have been unable to find anything in contemporary history to compare with the eagerness with which this small, independent country has hastened to place the management of its internal affairs in the hands of another country."

The United Nations Commission on the Balkans (UNSCOB) began an investigation of the accusations of "aggression from the countries to the north". The western participants were anxious to find such evidence. One historian suggests that Stalin was prepared to go along with this in the hope that it would damage links between Tito and the West and swing the Stalinist leaders in the Balkans back towards the USSR.

On April 1 1947 King George II of Greece died and was succeeded by his brother Paul. King Paul was married to a former member of the Hitler Youth — Princess Frederika — who was to play an active and thoroughly reactionary role in Greek politics for over a decade.

A week after the accession, government forces launched their first major offensive against the Democratic Army. Guerilla positions were bombed and rocketed from the air after which army units advanced.

But the Democratic Army was a highly mobile guerilla army operating in small units of less than 100 men and women, so the army frequently closed in on bare rocks. The Greek Army failed to engage the guerillas in serious battle but lost large quantities of arms and supplies to Democratic Army raids.

By the end of the spring offensive the Democratic Army had grown to 18,000 and throughout the summer carried out a number of major operations against government forces in northern Greece.

July saw a fresh round of mass arrests of EAM supporters in Athens and Salonica. Under US pressure the KKE and EAM remained legal organisations and this seems to have assisted the government in its round-up. Had the government been allowed to outlaw the Left as they wished, it is likely that many more EAM/KKE supporters would have fled to the Mountain.

By the middle of August 20,000 had been imprisoned but there was no change in KKE policy: "Only cowards want to go and join the Mountain".

In the villages, over a quarter of a million Greeks had by now been rounded up into "refugee camps". Markos, denied reinforcements from the cities by the KKE's criminal policy, found himself in a race against time to recruit to the Democratic Army before the whole countryside was depopulated. By the end of the summer the Democratic Army was 35,000-strong. Further recruitment was now practically impossible.

Back in Athens the Americans were having as much difficulty in overcoming the economic crisis as the British had faced. Corruption was widespread, particularly in the distribution of American aid. The bourgeoisie remained unwilling to invest its own money and foreign capital investment, because it was usually tied to specific projects, often remained unused. The head of the first American economic missions wrote:

"...the government's only practical policy has been to make constant demands for foreign aid both to keep itself in power and to safeguard the privileges of the small clique of businessmen and bankers which constitutes the invisible power in Greece.

"This clique has decided to defend its own economic interests at all costs, without any concern for the possible effects on the economic health of the country...They have never considered investing their profits in their own country to help its economic recovery."

To establish a less corrupt regime in Greece the Americans were forced to

intervene more and more directly in Greek affairs. They reorganised the government, bringing the octogenarian Liberal Sofoulis in to head the government with Tsaldaris as his deputy. These two were implacable enemies and were only persuaded to work together when much needed fuel being supplied to Greece by the US suddenly got "held up" in Italy.

The American Military Mission now proposed increasing the strength of the Greek Army to 200,000. New age groups were conscripted — either to barracks or to concentration camps, depending on their political sympathies. Political indoctrination was attempted on unreliable recruits and those who did not respond were sent to island "corrective camps" where they



Dimitros Partsalidis, the first general secretary of EAM and later the second prime minister in the Provisional Democratic Government. He was expelled from the KKE in 1950.

were exposed to the harshest possible treatment, including torture.

Zachariadis, as we have seen, had in public followed a policy of 'reconciliation' and legality (which he had undermined through the EAM/KKE boycott of the March 1946 elections). Privately he had the illusion that when the time came and Stalin gave the go-ahead, an urban insurrection would be launched.

Now, with the Liberal Sofoulis heading the government, there were one or two indications that the persecution against the Left was about to ease a little.

It was precisely then that Zachariadis decided to abandon the legal struggle, not in favour of his urban insurrection but of using the Democratic Army to establish a 'Free Greece'. First, however, the Democratic Army would have to be reorganised for this task in line with Zachariadis's own conceptions of military strategy.

## Cease

It was to cease being a highly mobile guerilla army and become instead a standing army based in the areas of Northern Greece already under its control. From there the army would set out to liberate Greece. Zachariadis's policy was adopted by a meeting of the KKE Central Committee in September 1947, attended by only six of its 25 members.

On 8 October the KKE paper announced the decisions of this CC meeting and was immediately banned together with the EAM paper, by the government. It was only a matter of time before the KKE and EAM were themselves declared illegal organisations.

The last operations of the civil war under Markos' own leadership took place in November 1947 and the following month Zachariadis, not content with leading the KKE from one political catastrophe to another, outlined to the Political Bureau his suicidal military strategy. By the spring of 1948 the Democratic Army would be expected to capture and hold a number of large towns.



KKE General Secretary Zachariadis



# of defeat

Markos was complete opposed to the plan. He pointed out that this was precisely what the government wanted the Democratic Army to do. Centralising Democratic Army forces in one area would free a large number of government troops in different parts of Greece currently tied up in opposing the guerilla bands. These forces could then be concentrated on engaging the Democratic Army in decisive action. The Democratic Army needed to decentralise its forces.

But Zachariadis, who was already launching a Stalinist purge of the Democratic Army, was more interested in a politically controllable centralised army than small guerilla units. He was also preparing the establishment of a provisional government and he believed that if the Democratic Army was able to hold a number of large towns this would facilitate recognition of the provisional government by the Stalinist countries.

The composition and programme of the Provisional Government was announced on 24 December 1947. Zachariadis was not included in the list of Ministers but Markos, despite his opposition to the newly adopted military strategy, was made Prime Minister and Minister of Defence.

The Provisional Government's programme included: mobilisation of all people's forces for the liberation of Greece; installation of people's justice; nationalisation of foreign owned property and heavy industry; agrarian reforms; reconciliation between Greeks; reorganisation of the country on a democratic basis; establishment of friendly relations with the Stalinist States; equal rights for ethnic minorities; organisation of armed forces to resist external aggression; organisation of new elections.

The first attempt by the Democratic Army to capture a city to serve as its capital was launched against Konitsa on Christmas Day 1947. The assault failed. But instead of withdrawing, as a guerilla strategy would imply, the attackers held on to the positions they had captured. Government reinforcements arrived and the Democratic Army forces were driven off.

The government played up their victory for all it was worth. Queen Frederika visited the town to be photographed among her 'loyal subjects'.

Markos tried to use this defeat to reverse the disastrous policy of Zachariadis but at a meeting of the KKE Central Committee he, along with the other members of the committee, was browbeaten by Zachariadis into confirming the correctness of the new policy.

Stalin was by now getting anxious about the situation in the Balkans. Tito was pursuing an independent line and trying to establish a Balkan federation. The KKE had participated in a conference organised by Tito on the subject. As far as Stalin was concerned the Greek revolution should be stopped.

Zachariadis was unaware of Stalin's view although even he must have realised that Stalin was reluctant to back the KKE. He felt that if the Democratic Army could notch up some successes and in particular establish a capital for the Provisional Government, then Stalin's hand could be forced in the matter.

In the winter of 1947-8, Democratic Army forces were concentrated on Mt. Grammos, and two large recruitment operations were launched. In the appalling cold these units combed the denuded countryside looking for recruits. When they were located by government forces the US-equipped air force dropped napalm on them (the first use of napalm in war).

One expedition had set out with 1,500 men and recruited a further 1,000. But of this total, 1,300 had died — 80% of them from cold and hunger — so that only 1,200 men returned. A 200-strong unit was sent south to open up belatedly a route from Athens to the mountains for those wishing to flee. The whole unit was wiped out.

The rank and file of the Democratic Army were kept in the dark about the fundamental differences that existed

between Markos and Zachariadis on questions of military tactics and strategy. Long after Markos had ceased to have any influence on decisions, all the orders and statements still went out over his name.

To reinforce the break with the guerilla strategy the record of ELAS during the occupation now came under regular attack in the Democratic Army's newspaper: "The Democratic Army's basic weakness stems from the fact that, although it is a revolutionary army committed to achieving the democratic reconstruction of our country, in the tactical sphere it is still enslaved by the foreign concepts (!) and bourgeois traditions (!) inherited, for the most part from ELAS... This is a gross error, almost a 'mortal sin' to cling to the anti-popular traditions and foreign influences which have come to us from the negative side of the ELAS heritage."

By the spring of 1948 US spending on the Greek civil war had reached \$8,600 for every guerilla. 250 US Army officers were acting as advisors to a Greek army of 136,000 men backed by a National Guard of 50,000. The Democratic Army numbered 35,000.

The government army's 1948 spring offensive proved more successful than the previous year's. This can be attributed almost completely to Zachariadis's policy of creating a standing army, and the adoption of a mobile "guerilla" strategy by units of the Greek army. 1368 partisans were disarmed and 641 killed.

## Break

The final break between Tito and Stalin came on 28 June 1948 and placed the KKE in a difficult position, since it was not possible to push Stalin into recognising the struggle of the Democratic Army without Yugoslav aid. At the Fourth Plenum of the KKE CC, shortly after the rift, it was decided to give secret support to the Moscow line and at the same time not openly criticise Yugoslavia. It was only after the final defeat of the Democratic Army, when Zachariadis was looking for scapegoats that the KKE turned on Tito publicly, blaming him for their defeat even though they had received more practical aid from Yugoslavia than from any other source.

The Fourth Plenum was also used by Zachariadis to establish even tighter control over the guerilla leaders (kapetanios) of the Democratic Army. A short distance away on Mt Grammos 12,000 partisans were locked in a desperate battle against 70,000 government troops. The report to the Plenum and the resolution it passed were both written by Zachariadis but it was Markos who was compelled to present them.

After eight weeks of fighting, 9,000 partisans found themselves encircled by 90,000 government troops. Markos argued that they should break through government lines, disperse, and harass government units. Zachariadis would have none of it.

He now accepted the need to withdraw, but insisted that the partisans should regroup on Mt Vitsi, up against the Yugoslav border. For good measure, he also named a leading guerilla, kapetanios Yannoulis, as culpable for the defeat on Grammos and had him executed.

On the night of 20 August the Democratic Army broke through the encirclement, even managing to take their wounded with them. As they headed for Mt Vitsi, Markos set off for Albania where he had been ordered to go following a final irrevocable split with Zachariadis. A five-man squad was despatched shortly afterwards with the task of eliminating him by simulating a "border incident".

Markos suspected an attempt might be made on his life. He travelled so fast that he was already in Albania when his pursuers caught up with him. Fortunately for Markos an Albanian army patrol was in the area and they drove off the attackers. Markos was given the



Greek generals survey the carnage in 1949.

protection of the Soviet Mission in Albania.

With Markos out of the way, Zachariadis was able to replace all the kapetanios who opposed trench warfare in the mountains with his own men.

In the autumn of 1948 government troops launched a massive attack on Vitsi and suffered enormous losses. The Democratic Army counter-attacked but its advance was also halted. The war was destined to drag on into 1949.

During the winter of 1948-9 the Democratic Army did achieve some minor victories, occupying several towns for short periods and restocking with supplies, arms and a few recruits. But at the same time the government finally put an end to resistance in the Peloponnese.

By the spring of 1949 the government was scenting victory and rejected the latest (21st) peace proposal to come from the Provisional Government.

Government army units spent the spring clearing the Roumeli region in central Greece and driving the partisans before them towards Mt Vitsi (8,000 partisans) and Mt Grammos (5,000). The partisans were now completely isolated both nationally and internationally.

The government forces launched

their final assault on 10 August. The fighting was so bitter that some Albanian soldiers crossed the border quite spontaneously to fight alongside the partisans.

But by the end of August it was all over. 8,000 partisans managed to escape into Albania. On Sunday 16 October Radio Free Greece announced that the Provisional Government was ceasing hostilities "to prevent the total destruction of Greece".

## Torture

158,000 Greeks were killed in the course of the Civil War and over 50,000 went into exile. But the suffering of the vanquished did not end there.

On the island of Makronisos, a huge rock off the coast of Cape Sounion, thousands of prisoners were to be systematically tortured or executed at random as the victorious reactionaries set about extracting recantations and grinding down the defeated. Many of those in exile fared little better.

Zachariadis, in his search for scapegoats, carried out a thorough purge of the refugees. At the Third KKE Congress Markos Vafiadis, Karageorgis, Partalidis and (posthumously, for he

had died of a heart attack in 1947) Santos were expelled from the KKE 1,500 partisans were named as being responsible for the defeat of the Democratic Army and purged. The refugees were settled in the countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR, sometimes in towns which were specially built for them. Although they did not know when they would be able to return, most thought that their exile would be of short duration. It lasted over 30 years.

In Athens, the hunting down of people associated with the losing side continued for a decade and more with many people forced to go into hiding for the whole of that period.

Greek citizens applying for jobs now had to present their employers with a certificate establishing their political reliability and these certificates were denied to anyone suspected of having left wing sympathies. All through the 1950s and early 1960s, behind a facade of democracy, the country was ruled by the financial oligarchy, right wing politicians, the Royal Family and, by no means least, the American Embassy.

A brief outline of the history of Greece from the end of the Civil War to the present day in next week's issue will conclude this series.



# LEAKS

Is the nuclear industry run by secret anti-nuclear campaigners? That seems to be the theory of Dr John Cunningham (Environment spokesperson of the Parliamentary Labour Party). His defence of nuclear power is shaken neither by the democratically-decided policy of his party nor by the record of the industry.

This record consists of a 30 year series of "accidents", in addition to permitted pollution. Particularly striking is the record of Sellafield (Windscale) in Cunningham's own constituency of Copeland.

Sellafield started 1986 with a concentrated burst of leaks. First, there was a spillage of uranium into the Irish Sea. Initially described as a couple of kilograms, it later turned out to be nearer half a tonne!

Next, the disappearance of a large and long-established breeding colony of gulls at Ravenglass was blamed on radio-active pollution from Sellafield. This was quickly followed by an "amber alert" in the re-processing plant.

During the alert, a mist of plutonium nitrate (an easily absorbed form) was released and breathed by at least eleven workers with dozens more at risk. Construction workers held strikes to protest at lack of information and to demand monitoring for radio-active exposure.

## Pool

Then last week, New Scientist revealed that a brand-new concrete pool for storing spent nuclear fuel was leaking.

But radioactivity is not all that leaks from Sellafield. A four-year old report on staff at the plant recently escaped, revealing that some were "neurotic or unstable", management was "outdated" and some armed guards "incompetent". Also, some workers were deliberately exposing themselves to excessive radiation just to get a few days of sick.

Scandalously, the report has not been acted on. However, the management has reminded staff of the Official Secrets Act.

Dr Cunningham's response to this catalogue of horrors was to accuse the Sellafield management of letting down the industry, warning them that they were in danger of forfeiting public confidence! Thus, an opportunity to air Labour's new policy of phasing out nuclear power was lost by Cunningham's defiance.

Now, Dr Cunningham and his constituency party are campaigning to reverse this policy at the next conference. That, of course, is their democratic right. But Cunningham has apparently extracted a promise from Neil Kinnock that the policy will not appear in the next manifesto.

Cunningham argues that an anti-nuclear policy will lose votes in the twenty marginals



## Science

By Les Hearn

with nuclear installations. This need not be so if we couple our policy with the demand for alternative safe employment, preferably with realistic suggestions worked out with trades unions and local communities. In any case, opinion polls show that phasing out nuclear power is more popular than is voting Labour!

The scandal is that, instead of explaining this to "Nuclear Jack" Cunningham, Neil Kinnock apparently acquiesces in the disenfranchisement of the 62% who voted for the new policy at the 1985 Labour Party Conference.

SO readers should consider putting this motion (or something like it) to their next ward (etc) meeting:

"This (organisation) calls on the Parliamentary Labour Party to put forward the policy supported by 62% at the last Labour Party conference of: phasing out nuclear power and providing alternative safe employment for nuclear industry workers. We also call on the Leader to argue for the inclusion of this policy, which is not only right but popular, in the next manifesto."

Copies to: Neil Kinnock, John Cunningham and the NEC.

Readers might also try to get their organisations to affiliate to SERA (Socialist Environment and Resources Association) which did so much to get this policy adopted.

Local organisations can affiliate at £8.50; national ones at £25 p.a. Write to SERA, 9 Poland St., London W1V 3DG.

## SCIENCE COLUMN BIRTHDAY FUND

The science column celebrates five years of regularity this month and still remains the only regular science column on the left. If you have enjoyed or even found useful the science column's articles then why not give a little extra for your paper this week.

All gifts to the Science Column Happy Birthday Fund will be forwarded to the Premises Fund. £5 has been collected so far (by me!). Send to 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

## Review

# Dead end street

Edward Ellis reviews 'Streetwise', a film by Martin Bell

'Streetwise' is a deeply distressing film. It left a horrible, sick feeling in my stomach. It is not, properly speaking, a film at all. To call it a documentary is to trivialise it. It is life put onto film. And the death of Dwayne Pomroy.

Dwayne is one of several young teenagers in Seattle, USA, who agreed to be followed about by a film crew. Remarkably, or perhaps as a result of skilful editing, the teenagers ignore the camera throughout. And so we are given a slice of their — generally not very happy — lives.

## Hanged

Dwayne, who needs to have his heavily-infected tonsils taken out, is arrested quite late in the film for selling dope. He is waiting to be released. And then he hangs himself.

His father is let out of prison to attend his funeral. We see him, grief-stricken, by his son's body laid out in his coffin, sobbing into a can of Coca Cola. Aside from his father, the priest, the guards and the film crew, there were three people at his funeral. He was, or so he told his doctor, sixteen.

Others live on with a little less tragedy. They eke out a living from theft, scavenging, begging and in the cases of most of the young women, prostitution.

Most come from broken homes or uncaring parents. Life on the street is cruel and violent. They all take drugs, though mostly nothing serious.

Yet their lives are not without strength, or humour, or companionship, even if much of that is short-lived.

Streetwise deals with its subject matter in the only way that it should: it just films the people, and lets them speak for themselves. There is no commentary. And so all the humour — if it did not make me cry, it certainly made me laugh — is absolutely natural.

'Shadow' — who talks very slowly and likes tatoos — hennas his hair, taking great pains to read all the instructions properly.

Another character argues with a Pentecostal idiot collecting for a hostel, accusing him of being a middle-class twit. Later, when his mother asks him with he will do with the dollar she gives him, he claims he will 'save it'.

Dwayne's father tells him not to smoke because it's unhealthy, whilst lighting up.

An extremely violent butch dyke who takes no nonsense from any sexist man, very touchingly takes care of kids on the street. She tries to persuade them to do something better, but looks after them if they don't.

But is there hope? 'Streetwise' suggests that there isn't.

Dwayne's father, seeing his son in a prison interview, warns him that he too is bound for prison if he's not careful. Most of them will go to prison.

## Solutions

Because 'Streetwise' is a documentary, it proposes no solutions. And there probably are no short-term solutions.

Destitution and street life are



the product of a barbaric, inhuman system, a system that churns out inequality like a vending machine. The streetwise kids are the system's victims; it is unlikely that they could be organised into a force for their own liberation; and the

destruction of this system will be achieved only by an organised social force.

But 'Streetwise' shows us vividly why this barbaric, inhuman, system should be destroyed. And the sooner the better.

# Making the personal public

The personal is political, they say. In any case, with the help of a TV camera, the personal can certainly be public.

'Couples Arguing' (Channel 4, February 16) was a documentary in which American couples who felt a domestic brawl coming phoned up the TV company to be filmed brawling.

It is difficult to know who is worse: the viewers like me, for indulging in this mass voyeurism, or the participants, for such incurable exhibitionism that they should want millions of people to ogle at the degeneration of their domestic bliss.

For certain it would all be useful evidence for the women involved in divorce suits. The men were all utterly foul pigs who deserved little better than to be drowned in a vat of peanut butter.

Since this was so obvious, there must have been some financial incentive that might lead these weird people to so miserably subject themselves to a public humiliation several degrees worse than the mediaeval stocks. What does capitalism do to people?

The programme had its lighter moments, of course. Two old hippies, one of them an alcoholic, would periodically break off from hurling unrepeatable abuse at each other to sing songs together to the accompaniment of a badly-tuned gee-tar, and an English marriage guidance

expert informed us (expertly) that 'when he said I hate your ...ing guts you ... .., he really meant that he hates himself.'

'Gis a job. I could do that.'

## TV

Hot Metal, the long-awaited sitcom by the authors of 'Whoops Apocalypse', showed us how awful that other medium, the newspaper, can be. Certainly no sitcom has been so fortuitously topical as this one.

It is all about how 'The Crucible' rescues itself from collapse by inventing sex-shock news about the girlfriend of one of the Royal family, and in the process finds out that Khrushchev is alive and well and living in a cottage in Switzerland.

## Freedom

There is no depth to which the media-men will not sink. Hot Metal tells us, as the reporter painstakingly goes through a box of Royal condoms sticking pins in them to guarantee the accuracy of an editorial suggesting that the girlfriend-in-question is pregnant. The same reporter, upon being discovered in a wardrobe, insists he has a right to be there because of the

freedom of the press.

It is funny — or at least I think it is — but there is something important missing from what Hot Metal has to say.

The scandal — creating tabloids are an easy target. Saucy news is manufactured by The News of the World and all the rest; and in many cases reality is absurd enough in itself.

The ex-editor of The Crucible stands for higher journalistic standards. And higher standards are not difficult to achieve.

But all news is structured and filtered by the prejudices of editors. Even 'quality' papers help to create reactionary public opinion. Even — shock, horror — the BBC deliberately lies about the world in order to form a picture of it that serves the interests of the powers-that-be.

Hot Metal sticks to the easy targets, and — so far anyway — leaves the 'quality' press untouched as symbols of truthfulness.

On the subject of comedy, the good news is that BBC1 is to re-run Hancock's Half Hour on Sunday evenings.

I have met people who don't find Hancock funny and all I can say about them is that they cannot be fully human.

Hancock made yearning and failure funny. His belligerent ravings against the

world and his vainglorious posturings kept paths at bay but could never hide the melancholy at the heart of both Hancock the character and Hancock the man.

These classics from the late '50s and early '60s show The Lad at the height of his powers before he ditched script-writers Galton and Simpson, and before the booze took its toll.

## Sample

Here is a taste from his best known half hour: the blood donor.

Doctor: I've just taken a small sample to test.

Hancock: A sample? How much do you want then?

Doctor: A pint, of course.

Hancock: A pint? Having you gone raving mad? Oh well... of course...you must be joking.

Doctor: A pint is a perfectly normal quantity to take.

Hancock: You don't seriously expect me to believe that. I mean I came here in all good faith to help my country. I don't mind giving a reasonable amount, but a pint...why that's very nearly an armful.

I'm sorry, I'm not walking around with an empty arm for anybody...No, I'm sorry, I've been misinformed...I've made a mistake, I'll do something else, I'll be a traffic warden.

# Get organised

Become a supporter of the Socialist Organiser Alliance — groups are established in most large towns. We ask £5 a month minimum (£1 unwaged) contribution from supporters.

I want to become a Socialist Organiser supporter/I want more information.

Name .....

Address .....

Phone no. ....

Send to Socialist Organiser, PO Box 823, London SE15 4 NA, or phone 01-639 7965.



# Suspended for an NUM poster!

Following on from the warning letters handed out to myself and other rank and file members of the NUM, management have now gone one step further. Today, when I reported for work at the mine I was not allowed into the pit. The reason given was that I had posted a notice announcing a branch meeting of the NUM.



Paul Whetton is the secretary of Bevercotes NUM, Notts.

I have been suspended on full pay and told not to report to the colliery until the manager sends for me.

Obviously quite a lot of the lads are uptight about this and we are now awaiting his decision. Without preempting what he may or may not say, what this action proves is that they are really running scared of the success that the NUM is having within the Notts coalfield. I know, for example, that the vice president of Notts NUM has been given a warning for the same sort of thing.

## Accommodate

At the beginning management were prepared to go a small way towards accommodating us. When they saw what success we were having, they decided to come down on us hard in an attempt to stop the NUM recruiting.

The UDM have sat back and they profess to be (although we don't accept that they are) trade unionists. For so-called trade unionists to sit back and allow management to blatantly victimise workers and do absolutely nothing themselves proves that they are working hand in glove with management who are attempting to smash trade unionism in the Notts coalfield.

It virtually amounts to management saying to us that you will be members of the

company union or you will not be members of any union at all and if you continue your activities for the NUM then we will sack you.

We hear about this sort of thing in South Africa or Poland, and it is assumed that such things couldn't happen here. But right here in the Notts coalfield we are being denied a basic human right.

I wouldn't pretend for a moment that we face the same difficulties as trade unionists in Poland or South Africa, but it is nevertheless true that management are denying us the right to belong to a trade union.

## Fascism

During the miners' strike Neil Kinnock said that Margaret Thatcher was laying the ground for fascism. As I said at the time, it would be wrong to think that Thatcher is herself a fascist, but for once I agree with Neil Kinnock. She is definitely laying

the ground for fascism.

We've got massive unemployment, our financial crisis would be even worse if it was not for North Sea oil, we've seen a huge increase in racist attacks and the continued activities of the NF and now we've got down to the nitty gritty of saying to people that they cannot belong to a trade union.

Up and down the country big and small companies are declaring war on the trade union movement.

It is completely wrong for the TUC, in these circumstances, to leave a single trade union to take on the employers single-handed. The employers are backed by a government that is leading us down a very dangerous road.

## Credibility

The TUC has got to recognise that, it has got to coordinate a campaign and say to this government, you're not on. You will not deny the people of this country their basic rights.

If the TUC don't do that they will lose entirely any credibility that they have ever had and rank and file trade unionists will take matters into their own hands, which may not be a bad idea, but the problem is that the fight against the Tories needs to be coordinated.

And we are not going to let the TUC off the hook. We are demanding that they stand up and be counted and fulfil their obligations to our movement.

The government is not stable, workers up and down the country are under attack and so now is the time to come together to fight the Tories.

I think the dispute may have had something to do

with my suspension, but it is also due the fact that we are people who are clearly prepared to stand up for what we believe in.

I think it is the Coal Board trying to stamp out any sort of honest, basic trade union organisation. They are quite prepared to live with the UDM because the UDM will do what they are told and dance to the Coal Board's tune.

The NUM on the other hand is an independent trade union and what we are being denied is the right to belong to that free and independent trade union.

The success that we are having at Bevercotes is the same sort of success that we are having at every other colliery. The UDM is at a standstill. The Leicestershire vote and all the other decisions since have ensured that. There is only one way the UDM can go now and that is downwards. The NUM can only go forwards. The Coal Board recognise that. They have shown that they have no interest whatsoever in signed agreements and they know very well that the NUM will once more become the recognised union in the Notts coalfield and the management will pay for what they have done and they will pay very dearly.

So it is in their interests to stop the growth of the NUM and they are doing everything they can to stop it.

At Welbeck two miners have definitely been suspended, at Ollerton one miner has received a verbal warning and here at Bevercotes two written warnings have been issued.

We have a national appeals procedure, but I can't go

through that because the first stage is at pit level and the second stage is at area level and the Coal Board does not recognise the NUM in Notts at either of those levels.

Union members spend a lot of time avoiding management-manoeuvred disputes because the management can justify all sorts of actions under cover of an industrial dispute. So we have to be very careful not to fall into such a trap on this occasion.

So we are telling our members at the pit not to take any action until the management actually takes a decision.

When the time comes I'm sure there will be solid support from the NUM members and many UDM members will also be saying that it's not on.

I have referred the matter to area officials who have in turn alerted national officials and I believe the legal aspect of the situation is being looked at.

I don't know what the outcome of the Wapping situation is going to be but I think that it is very important that trade unionists don't fall into the trap of thinking that what is going on there won't happen to them in the future.

The attack on the print workers is a basic attack on trade union rights, just like the miners' strike, and we have got to shut down that plant.

Talks and ACAS and all the rest of it are fine but there is only one way we are going to stop that plant and that is by rank and file action.

It is part of the struggle of every trade unionist and we should all get down to Wapping and close that plant.

'lock, stock and barrel' to the US-based Sea Containers for just £60 million! Over one thousand workers were made redundant in the first year as existing trade union agreements were scrapped by the new employers.

Last year British Ferries lost £7 million on its new luxury Channel Island route. Other losses were incurred as vessels got caught in the Danish national docks strike. Inroads into sea traffic by a shift to air travel led to the NUS being forced to accept further reductions in British Ferries manning levels.

Now a cut-throat trade war has broken out between the main competitors on the ferry routes. When British Ferries acquired Sealink UK it inherited a 15% pool share of 50% of the UK/Belgium multi-purpose ferry trade, i.e. 7.5%. (European Ferries had the other 50%). This share was reckoned to be too small for the UK's largest ferry operator.

British Ferries told Trans-Route Maritime (RTM) — its pool partner — that its pool share must be increased to 50% of 50%, i.e. 25% over a period of three years. RTM promptly terminated the pool and joined forces with European Ferries.

On top of that RTM closed the ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge to British Ferries and continued to operate its own ships into Dover, relying for access upon the open ports policy of the UK government. British Ferries responded by closing its Dover Western Docks terminal, and has since asked its workforce — via the joint trade union committee — to take industrial action to protect members' jobs!

As long as the employers are left to manipulate the situation the chance of trade unions taking effective evasive action in good time are minimal.

British Ferries currently employs 3,000 workers and operates seven ships in its short-sea UK/French/Belgium routes and more than 40% of its ferry line revenues are derived from this source. There is no way that ferries could compete with a fixed link carrying freight over these short-sea routes.

Further job losses appear certain unless the NUS, NUR and TSSA galvanise a fightback in defence of passenger services. In this case they must start by defending the entire workforce on this route including a campaign to socialise assets worth £100 million.

## Illegal meeting

The NCB's campaign of victimisation and harassment of Notts miners still in the NUM continues. A notice has gone up at Ollerton pit saying that NUM members may not sit in groups at the canteen and that four NUM members sitting together would be regarded as having an illegal meeting, and would be subject to disciplinary action.

## Laings lock-out

200 labour movement activists gathered outside the Law Courts in the Strand last Tuesday, 18th, in support of the five members of the Laings lock-out committee.

These five building workers, sacked last October by Multination Builders John Laing, issued a defiant statement from the steps of the Court. They pledged open defiance to the injunction against them being sought by Laings.

This injunction, if granted, would make it illegal for any of the sacked workers to picket Laings sites or address public meetings on the dispute.

Sacked steward Brian Higgins, on behalf of the lock-out committee, declared their willingness to go to jail in support of UCATT and TGWU policy of total opposition to the Tory trade union laws. He urged workers not to leave their defence to the labour movement bureaucrats, but to build for the mass pickets of the Laings British Library site by St. Pancras station.

"Like the jailed miners, only mass industrial action can defend us", he said.

The Laings lock-out committee can be contacted through PO Box 551, SE5 8JJ.

## Below is the Laings' strikers' press release:

On October 18 1985 we were

locked out of our employ on the instructions of John Laing the multi-national building corporation. It was and is the blatant use of the blacklist to prevent known trade union activists working, organising and negotiating in the construction industry.

Since then we have won two battles for the right to work. We have been locked out of our legitimate employ three times. The last time being January 27th. In spite of this and of police harassment, arrests, death threats, attempts on our lives, financial hardship and official union attempts to sell us out we are still battling for the right to organise and negotiate.

Because of our past successes and the fact we will not give up our struggle and the potential for other workers to rally to our support, John Laings have now resorted to the use of a High Court Injunction which is unprecedented in modern history in the UK.

It is the first time individual workers have been attacked by the Tory Employment Laws. If allowed to succeed the injunction will: remove the right of all workers to speak about our struggle; remove our right to freedom of association; remove our right to picket.

But we will not be intimidated by this appalling attack on basic democratic freedoms. It is an attack on the democratic rights of all trade unionists in the UK on the democratic rights of all working people.

We are prepared to go to jail if necessary to defend these rights.

We say to Margaret Thatcher,

the Tory government and the State, we cannot allow you to bring the South African system to the UK. We call on all true democrats to join us in our struggle to defend our basic liberties.

## Tyneside clothing strike

Over 140 clothing workers and members of the NUTGW have been on strike since 17 September 1985 for union recognition. The Contracts Company which is a subsidiary of French Connection have refused to recognise the union since February 1985 even though there have been over 100 members at the factory since it opened in July 1984 and many have previous membership at S. Newmans.

We want union recognition because: overtime is compulsory. A refusal to work overtime led to some cases of dismissal; there are no allowances with bonus scheme; we have to use a disc system to visit the toilets; the company's discretion is used to pay full basic wages; no one can earn bonus no matter how hard they work; management treat us like dogs; no warnings are given before sacking of employees; the workforce has tried all sorts of methods to urge the employees to recognise the union; including petitions and challenging them to arbitration through ACAS.

No shop steward is allowed to operate in the factory and a

number of workers have been sacked since the dispute began.

The company have advertised our jobs in the paper and have advertised to put out work to other clothing firms.

We need your help. It is vital that this strike is won; fight for trade union recognition and properly negotiated terms and conditions affect all workers and trade unionists in this area.

\*Visit our picket lines before 8 am and send messages of support.

\*Collect at your workplace on a weekly basis and send cheques to NUTGW Contracts Dispute Fund, 18 Norfolk Street, Sunderland.

The strike committee can be contacted c/o National Union of Seamen, 4 Coronation Street, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, Tel: Tyneside 4561428.

A London support committee has been set up which can be contacted on 01-622 0247.

## Tunnel job threat

Up to 150,000 jobs will be cut in the UK, France and Belgium if and when the Channel link is built.

Another estimate is 50,000 job losses in the UK alone. Either way marine transport workers — on both sides of the Channel — can expect to be paid off in their thousands as the multi-billion pound project nears completion in the 1990s.

This raises serious doubts

about the survival chances of Sealink British Ferries (formerly Sealink UK). British Ferries currently employs 10,000 workers, operating the most extensive network of ferry services in Europe. At the time of privatisation in 1983 Sealink UK was a 'viable' company:

\*Its fleet comprised of 38 ships (replacement cost £20 million each) plus assets, i.e. harbours, terminals, etc., totalling £127.8 million.

\*It operated 24 short-sea routes, carried 18.6 million passengers, plus 2.3 million vehicles and 1.1 million freight units.

\* Profits were £15.8 million on a turnover of £264.8 million.

Then the Tories sold it off

60p

WORKERS' LIBERTY

Under whose flag?

Trotskyists today working class socialism or Third World nationalism?

'Under Whose Flag?': class politics or bloc politics? 60p plus postage from 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY



# Socialist Organiser

## Raffle winners

This week we announce the winners of our fund-raising raffle. And we have, at last, a fixed and definite date for moving into our new offices — 1/2 March.

There will still be a lot of work to do on the new premises, and new equipment to buy, after that date. But it will be the end of the first stage.

Thanks this week to: Tunbridge Wells readers £5.80; Pat

Markey, raffle ticket sales £2; Basingstoke raffle ticket sales £4; Birmingham raffle ticket sales £1; Canterbury raffle ticket sales £6; Cardiff raffle ticket sales £18 and more money from Martin Barclay's sponsored walk £18; Durham raffle ticket sales £10; Mark Nevill, raffle ticket sales £5; Glasgow raffle ticket sales £6 and donations from Maria Higgins £10 and Danny Rafferty £10; Manchester raffle ticket sales £40 and donations from Andy Barrett £35, Pete Keenlyside £10; drinks levy £10.60, public meeting collection £13.90; Merseyside raffle ticket sales £12; Nottingham raffle ticket sales £40.80 and donations from Christine Priestley £8, Jim Dempsey £3, other readers £4.68; Sheffield raffle tickets £10 and donation from Dave Barter and Lynn Ferguson £60; Southampton raffle tickets £6; York/Harrogate raffle tickets £11.80 and donation from Nic Brereton £5; East London raffle ticket sales £15.60 and donations from Patrick Blandford £40, other readers £3.27; North London raffle ticket sales £11.80, and donations from Mary Corbishley £30, Tony Jain £27.

also expecting money soon from jumble sale stalls in Merseyside and North London, and from Bruce Robinson's sponsored slim in North London.

Send money and reports on your local fund-raising activities to: SO, 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Because of the move, we'll be missing the issue of Socialist Organiser that would have been dated 6 March.

Glasgow 50 Club, last five winners.

Rickie Houston (17 January), Russell McVean (24 January), Marie Higgins (31 January), Mike McCarthy (7 February), Ian McCalman (14 February)

Winners of the Socialist Organiser fund-raising raffle:

First prize (radio/cassette recorder): Ticket no. 1145, Brian McGinty, Stanton GMBATU.

Second prize (radio/cassette recorder): Ticket no. 0602, Tony Serjeant, Durham

Third prize (Gestetner duplicator): Ticket no. 1477, Michael Morris, 58 Blakeney Rd, Sheffield 10.

Fourth prize (£30 worth of books): Ticket no. 2139, Laura Bell, 4 Hamilton Rd, Salisbury.

Bits and pieces of raffle ticket money are still due to come: please send it in quickly. We're

Local Group	Target	So far	Per cent
North London	1600	1099.39	69%
Nottingham	1000	955.01	96%
South London	800	807.15	101%
Manchester	1000	653.95	65%
East London	760	567.42	75%
Merseyside	500	487.50	98%
Cardiff	600	462.50	77%
Glasgow/Edinburgh	560	362.00	65%
Durham/North East	200	281.80	140%
Sheffield	400	251.91	63%
York/Harrogate	300	213.10	71%
West London	500	200	40%
Coventry	350	175.00	50%
Stoke North	200	172.75	86%
Basingstoke	560	127.47	22%
Stoke South	200	90.00	45%
Birmingham	100	65.00	65%
Colchester	100	47.80	48%
Aberdeen	20	46.00	230%
Canterbury	90	38.00	42%
Southampton	60	12.00	20%
Leeds	60		
Oxford	40		
Central/general	5000	1023.30	20%
Total	15000	8138.53	54%

## Don't let Tories off the hook No witch-hunt!

Reports that Liverpool District Labour Party (DLP) will be disbanded and that leading Militant supporters expelled are 'pure speculation', say Labour Party officials.

But the purpose of the inquiry into the DLP, which reports to Labour's National Executive on 26 February is to pave the way for expulsions — perhaps only of Militant supporters Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn and a few others. If more thoughtful voices in Neil Kinnock's inner circle advise caution, on the other hand the press will be baying for blood. Hatton has said he will not be surprised by moves to expel him.

That will not be the end of the story. Expulsions of Militant supporters and others are already happening all over the country.

The inquiry into Liverpool DLP is a frame-up. It is not an honest and sincere attempt to clean up local government corruption, of which many Labour authorities must be guilty, some on a far grander scale than Liverpool.

It is an attempt to make a blood offering of Militant to the Tory press, and to strengthen the position of the Labour leaders by clamping down on activists who take 'unlawful' action against the Tories.

The inquiry is expected to propose to do away with the control exercised by the DLP over the council Labour Group. But the labour movement needs to have democratic control over its representatives: councillors should not be free to disobey the wishes of the Party.

Defence of Liverpool DLP does not mean endorsing the record of Militant on the council,



Lambeth council leader Ted Knight (left) and deputy leader Graham Norwood (right) lead a march in protest at the surcharges. Will Labour's leaders now come to the rescue of the crisis-racked Tories by trying to purge Labour councillors who defied the government?  
Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report.

or swearing blind that all their actions were above board. In particular, as Militant themselves now (too late!) acknowledge (Militant International Review, no. 31, p.11) it was a mistake — we think a very serious one — to issue 31,000

redundancy notices to the council workforce in September.

But Liverpool Labour Party and the city council are under attack — from the Party leadership and from the Tory government — mainly for what they have done right, not what they did wrong.

This week or next will see the result of the court cases against Liverpool and Lambeth councilors surcharged for not setting a legal rate last year. The legal penalties run into tens of thousands of pounds.

The Tory laws are unjust and anti-working class, designed to prevent local authorities from fixing budgets that meet the needs of the working class people who elected them. They should be done away with; and all resistance to them should be supported by the labour movement.

The failure of the Labour Party leadership to lift a finger to defend the Lambeth and Liverpool councillors — their failure to campaign for money for them, for example — is scandalous.

And there is no reason to trust their current denials that there will be a witch-hunt. Kinnock has made it clear that he thinks 'maggots' should be treated as such.

The Party organisation committee's refusal to endorse Militant supporter Pat Wall as parliamentary candidate for Bradford North is an indication of how some of the leadership is thinking.

There are no claims of corruption or irregularity levelled against Wall — opposition to his candidature is purely and explicitly political.

And another NEC committee has initiated the expulsion of two members of the Welsh Labour executive, because — and only because — they sell Militant.

Some right wing MPs are trying to get the Labour whip withdrawn from Militant supporters Terry Fields and Dave Nellist.

There is a lobby of the NEC to protest against witch-hunts, at 8.30 am on Wednesday 26 February at Labour Party headquarters in Walworth Road.

The speaking tour by representatives of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU), the second-largest affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), advertised in last week's Socialist Organiser, is going ahead in early March.

The speakers are coming at the invitation of Camden NALGO and the CPSA (Inner London DHSS), who organised a tour by MAWU steward Maxwell Xulu last December.

Trade union and Anti-Apartheid activists should make every effort to arrange speaking engagements for the MAWU representatives. Meetings should be fixed up in as many workplaces as possible.

We need to provide as much publicity as we can for the achievements of the South African workers' movement. MAWU is a particularly significant independent non-racial trade union, and has been involved in many long and bitter struggles — such as the Sarmcol British Tyre and Rubber strike.

Inquiries to Julian Bild, Camden NALGO, 01-278 4444 x 2281, or Mike Murphy, 0203 78877.

