

Workers Press

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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Letter from South Africa . . .

Dear comrades,

We wish to thank the staff and readers of Workers Press for the overwhelmingly generous financial, moral and political support extended to the South African section during the elections campaign.

We have once again seen Workers Internationalism in action. We cannot thank our comrades enough.

The elections did not even address the most basic democratic demands of the working class. We are currently discussing ways to draw the workers into campaigns around these demands as well as preparing to intervene in the coming Socialist Conference of the Congress of South African Trade Unions and to launch and publish our own newspaper.

The elections have of course put the Work-

ers International solidly on the political scene due to our campaign.

Some of our comrades feel that we could consolidate our gains by intervening in the COSATU Socialist Conference, drawing workers around us in struggles around democratic demands and by participation in the local authority elections that are coming up next year.

The thinking is that if we are going to stand in these elections we should start preparing now. Prepare the ground, study the relevant legislation, etc. Which brings us to crucial point.

Without the financial support got from Workers Press readers and the WRP in Britain we would not have been able to participate in the elections.

We feel that the fund you had going in

Workers Press should continue, if possible, but for the local authority elections.

Please discuss this possibility with our other comrades.

Once again, we salute the internationalism displayed by our comrades who support the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International.

Comradely greetings

D. Fredericks

Secretary, Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (South Africa)

■ Money is still needed for our comrades in South Africa to build their party. We therefore thank MW for his £25 and ask that you rush money payable to 'Workers International', PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

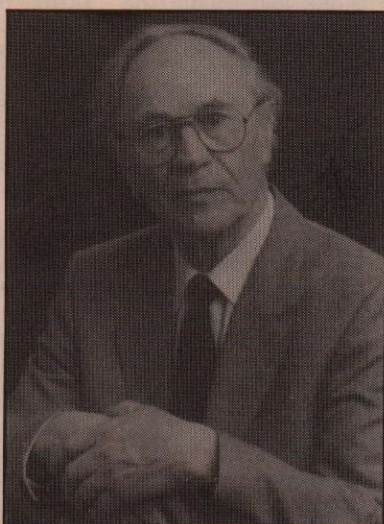
Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International

**Memorial Meeting
Tom Kemp
1921-1993**

**Conway Hall
Red Lion Square
London WC1**

**Friday 3 June
7.30pm**

We invite all Tom Kemp's comrades, family and colleagues to join in commemorating the life of an outstanding Marxist, a dedicated teacher and a fearless fighter for the working class and the rebuilding of the Fourth International.



Euro-elections fraud

THE coming European elections are a sham. The three major parties in Britain enter them united in their support for a Europe dominated by a handful of bankers and monopolists.

Any differences amongst the Tory, Liberal and Labour parties are about how the British ruling class can best defend itself in struggle against its capitalist rivals throughout the world.

Fighting under the slogan 'Making Europe Work for You', Labour has nothing whatsoever to say about how the real problems facing millions of workers in Europe are to be tackled: rising unemployment, homelessness, poverty, the growing threat of racism and fascism.

Labour's manifesto refuses to support even the most minimum demands: 'We will not introduce legislation to enforce a 35-hour week. It is a matter primarily for agreement between employers and employees.'

The manifesto calls for: 'co-ordinated monetary and fiscal policy and the creation of a European Recovery Fund to create new jobs.'

This is almost word for word what the Liberals, the most fervent supporters of the European Union, say. The Tory 'a European recovery plan that would open up European markets for British exporters'.

The Tory declaration strikes a far more sombre and realistic note: 'European business faces a stiff battle against global competition. Its chief priority must be to win new markets.'

It calls for more 'flexibility in labour markets': that is another round of attacks on trade unions and workers' rights.

At least the Tories hint at the crisis in Europe as it faces intensifying competition from its opponents in north America and the Pacific rim. For the monopolists who control Europe this will demand savage reductions in wages, further attacks on working conditions, yet more 'rational-

BY THE EDITOR

'isation' that will bring rising unemployment and poverty.

Labour tries to hide this crisis behind bland and meaningless words such as a 'hitec, high wage' economy. 'Europe guided by Labour's values of community, opportunity and justice will benefit Britain, her people and her children.' This is a cruel lie.

Technological developments while they remained controlled by the capitalists today mean mounting poverty, the destruction of jobs, the destruction of the environment.

Contact

Only if the working class take control of industry and production and use the great potential of technology for the solution of pressing human problems can this crisis be averted.

Unlike all those who call for the 'reform programme' of the Labour Party we say that the crisis in Europe, seen most graphically in the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and the fascist attack unleashed on the Bosnian people, can be solved only on the basis of socialist policies.

The European Union is a reactionary conspiracy by the capitalist monopolists to organise European industry, finance and agriculture in their own narrow interests.

Only the fight for a United Socialist States of Europe that brings together workers from the whole of Europe, both East and West, can begin to lay the basis for a future which can put an end to the scourge of unemployment and poverty and meet the growing threat of racism and fascism.



Bosnia: the crisis in Europe is seen most graphically in ex-Yugoslavia's break-up and with the fascist attack

On other pages:

Workers Aid and rebuilding the workers' movement — pp. 4&5

Labour left's 'socialist' demagoguery — p.2

Workers Press

Labour left's
'socialist' demagoguery

NOBODY could fail to notice how Tory ministers and top business figures made it very plain that John Smith was just the kind of prime minister they would have liked if ever it came to having a Labour government again.

Now we read in the columns of 'Tribune' (20 May) that 'John Smith would have been our greatest Prime Minister since Clement Attlee'. The writer? Ken Livingstone, MP for Brent East, who once liked to be called 'Red Ken'.

The establishment's unreserved praise for Smith will not surprise socialists. It goes beyond anything in the past, and this says something about just how complete now is the Labour Party's acceptance of capitalism. As with capitalism's acceptance of Labour, it comes at a particular point in history.

For half a century and more, the role of Labour Party governments was to assist in the control of the working class by dispensing to it a few reforms and concessions — while at the same time ruthlessly using the forces of state repression to put down any independent action by the working class.

But today, capitalism's crisis, and in particular the decay of British capitalism, dictates that not only can such reforms no longer be granted, but that all such past gains — called, grandly, 'universal entitlement to benefits': dole, pensions, free education and health care, etc. — must be taken back, and the power of the government, courts and police must be increased.

That is the meaning of the indecent rivalry between the parties in competing to be seen as the party of 'law and order'. The very man in the Labour Party who has led the pack on this issue is now naturally the frontrunner in the race to succeed Smith — that 'moderniser' (in other words anti-socialist and anti-working class) Tony Blair MP.

* * * * *

IT IS entirely understandable that millions of working-class people still think that the election of a Labour majority is the only way to get rid of the Tory government and stop the attacks on services, benefits, jobs and democratic rights. The absence of any alternative — socialist — party or strategy forces them to continue to be so cruelly deceived.

But there are professional deceivers at work, so-called 'left-wingers', among them MPs, who have sown illusions in the possibility of their fighting for socialist policies in the Labour Party.

Prominent among these has been Livingstone. He tells us that Smith was not a right-winger, but 'represented the mainstream of Labour tradition'. Well... yes! The political mainstream of the Labour Party is capitalist, the meaning of which has been to reconcile the working class to British imperialism and the temporary benefits that for a long time it could afford to grant some workers from the plunder of empire. Smith — and Livingstone — are in this 'mainstream', now a sluggish and putrid gutter.

Livingstone has his own way of putting this. He says of Smith that 'his intelligence would have led him to act quickly and decisively to modernise the British economy and ancient institutions'.

Yes, 'modernise' the economy, which means 'rationalise' industry and services at the expense of the working class; and 'modernise', make more effective as a repressive machine, not smash, the 'ancient institutions' of the British state, perfected over centuries for the control and oppression of the peoples of Britain, Ireland and the British Empire.

In its own way, this profession of faith by Livingstone is after all to be welcomed, in the sense that it makes clear that the 'official' left in the Labour Party is impotent in the face of the right wing and has no policy to challenge for leadership. It should no longer be necessary to expose the 'socialist' demagoguery of Livingstone and those like him.

Livingstone 'genuinely does not know who to vote for' in the leadership stakes, he says; it depends on who he thinks will best preserve 'party unity'. He means he will vote for whoever will best maintain that other unity established by Smith with the representatives of big business, 150 of whom paid £500 a head to attend that 'last supper' where Smith made his parting speech!

Blood and ashes

This letter is from 68-year-old Esad Jordanovic, a former fighter with the Yugoslav partisans who was interviewed recently in Workers Press (7 May). Esad had planned to join a Workers Aid for Bosnia delegation to the public-sector union UNISON's annual conference, but was unable to go because of ill-health. We are proud to have received his letter.

Dear friends,

Thank you for inviting me to be with you [at the UNISON conference].

Unfortunately my English is not so perfect that I can express everything I feel, but I consider that I am with friends and you will understand what I mean.

Life is so unpredictable, and two years ago I didn't even dream that I'd spend my retirement in Britain.

I have lived my life in Bosnia. I have experienced the horrors of World War II and I never thought that my children would have the same destiny as my generation. When that war started I was as young as my youngest child is now.

It seems that humankind can have more evil than any animal on this earth. More land, more power, or more blood...

Hitler was the biggest fascist in history. The whole world had to fight against him. The whole human race suffered in that war — particularly Jews. They had to disappear from the world because one lunatic didn't like them.

I was fighting during the war for freedom — freedom for humanity and freedom of thought. Many of my comrades died for

their freedom. I have faced many situations in my life in which I could have died. And when, finally, freedom came, I thought Hitler would never reappear, nor Stalin...

But it is not true. What happened to the Jews in World War II was not a good example for humankind.

We have given birth to new Hitlers, new fascists. Now in the Balkans there are the same Hitlers as there are in Russia. You will have them here, in Britain, if we, the ordinary people, don't stop them.

What is the cause of their fight? I don't know. More land or a 'pure nation'. At the end of the 20th century, when Europe is fighting to be without frontiers, new borders are being set up in the Balkans.

And we are all watching the killings, the rapes, the atrocities all around... blood and ashes... Because some of them will never agree to the existence of Bosnia. Why is that so? Because we are Muslims and they are Christians?

They don't believe in God. Because God doesn't say kill, but live in peace with your neighbour...

In our country, old people say one should be closer to one's neighbours than their brothers, because you have to rely on each other.

We are all born the same, we all have to work and live and survive. We all die one day. And there is no difference between us. Different colour of skin, eyes or hair doesn't mean anything.

The proof of humanity is only in good work, and we should all stick with that. God sees and recognises good work.

I wish I was younger and in good health so that I could do something more for this world

and future generations. I wish I could help my grandchildren to live in a world of peace and in a world where human beings will be what they're meant to be.

Unfortunately my heart and asthma do not allow me to do more than I do now. Marching, demonstrating and telling the younger generation what was happening 50 years ago and is happening now in Bosnia.

Today in Bosnia, tomorrow in your country, it is spreading like an epidemic.

But if my words and actions can contribute a little bit I'll die happier, because my life was not in vain. I have been fighting all my life against fascism — and I'll fight until the end of my life because I believe that there's enough space on this earth for all living beings and that all deserve to live. The only one who can decide about life is God, and we, human beings, should obey that power.

Dear friends, let us all together fight for human rights, freedom and democracy, so that new generations can live a better life than we did.

Esad Jordanovic
London

Naming the villains

I THOUGHT that Tom Owen's account of the dispute and action of the lecturers' union, NATFHE, in Sheffield College was terrific (21 May). I would like to make a couple of points, though.

Tom blames the union's 'action committee' (better known to members as the 'inaction committee') — yes, this dispute has been rumbling on through-

out England and Wales since April 1993, and it took a near riot at last year's NATFHE annual conference in July to bring the committee into public view; yes, a lot of what has happened is their fault.

But there are two more villains in the story. First, NATFHE's national further education industrial relations committee, which kept on insisting that the dispute could be won by national negotiations with the College Employers' Forum (led by Roger Ward), while the members performed a ritual dance of voting for strike action.

Nobody on the committee seriously dared to say that the real enemy was the Tory government; or that the Labour Party, that loyal opposition, largely agreed with them.

The second villain is the Socialist Workers Party and its allies in the Socialist Lecturers' Alliance. They managed to have things both ways by swinging the votes of two delegations at the annual conference from a position of 'the leadership always betrays' and 'strike tomorrow — the members are waiting for a lead!', to 'the leadership has already betrayed' and 'we must do the best we can, and build strike action locally!'

Thus handing victory to the Stalinists, who, not knowing what to do, plumped for 'realism'.

Well that is what I saw at all the conferences since the July 1993 annual conference. Now more than 100 college branches are voting on action. The NATFHE further education conference on Monday 30 May will reveal whether there is going to be a fight outside Sheffield and a handful of other colleges.

John Peters
London SE2

Obituary

Peter and Dot Gibson remember Margaret Alcock

OVER 100 relatives, friends and comrades crowded into Norwood crematorium, south London, on 19 May to pay their last respects to Margaret Alcock, who died at the age of 46.

We had known Margaret and her family for over 25 years. Her father, Tom Stratton, is proud that his is a 'party family — a family of socialists'. We are also proud of them.

Tom explains that he and Margaret were always discussing the necessity for socialism

MARGARET ALCOCK

and the violence of capitalism. So he was not surprised when she joined thousands of young people on the CND marches in the 1960s. It was there that she met her husband, Steve.

Nobody could be at Margaret's funeral without thinking of her mother, Vina, who died at the age of 54. Vina came from a very poor family in Dundee. She met and married Tom whilst he was serving in the Royal Marines during the war. She was a big-hearted 'no-nonsense' woman who was always there to help her neighbours and family, and took responsibility for our WRP branch's Workers Press accounts. Margaret had all her

strengths. Soon after Tom joined the party, Margaret also joined. Despite having a young family — Stewart and Louise — she took part in many party activities.

She was a staunch fighter for the paper, regularly delivering, collecting and selling. When the WRP stood a candidate in a general election, Steve and Margaret's home became the committee room.

Inspired

Margaret was there at the founding of the Workers Revolutionary Party and at all its major events. She inspired her

sister, Ann, younger by eight years, who became a shop steward at the Newmarks factory, where her father also worked.

Margaret fought against the local government cuts, and then, when the closure of the Lambeth council care centre where she worked became inevitable, with loving care she and Steve became parents to Judy. They could not bear to see her moved to another home.

Some 15 years ago Margaret was treated for cancer. She bore this with great fortitude, resilience and optimism. But in March this year she went blind, and was making plans for her future life with this inability when she died.

Margaret's funeral was conducted with great dignity by husband Steve, who bravely spoke of his feelings for her, their life together and her friends' esteem for her. We wish to convey our condolences to Margaret's family, and especially to our comrade Tom.

WORKERS PRESS £3,000
MONTHLY FUND

In so far: £3,819.35

BREAK out the (Workers Revolutionary?) party hats, blow up the balloons, we've made the May fund and there's still some days left in the month!

But, before we drink too much champagne (or is that too bourgeois?), we must remember some sobering facts. As mentioned last week there is a deficit on the fund since January, now standing at £4,082.20. Also our comrades in South Africa are in desperate need of money in their vital work (see letter front page).

And there is a spectre/hobgoblin that looms before Workers Press every year — the month of August! In August, not surprisingly, people rush off on holiday and forget to send in money for the fund. I would ask that you start making preparations now so that we're not starved of filthy lucre then.

Any extra money will allow us to get back to a better financial position and will allow us to consider what's needed to develop the paper, the WRP and the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International.

At some stage we will need a £4,000 fund, with more professional, and less part-time and voluntary, party workers.

I hope you agree that this

must be part of our political perspective. It's not going to be easy; but we are making progress in Workers Aid, South Africa, the proposed international conference of militant miners with workers from East and West...

Mike Cooke

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

Editorial statement

Several readers have expressed concern about the way in which a letter by Geoff Thurley (14 May) was replied to in a comment by Charlie Pottins (21 May, page 3). The editor accepts full responsibility for what appears in Workers Press, and agrees in retrospect that this correspondence was not handled in the most sensitive manner.

The best course, the editor now believes, would have been to contact Geoff concerning his mistaken

impression that the Workers International abandoned its banner on the May Day demonstration.

Given the clarification that the Workers International did indeed carry its banner on May Day and was the prime mover in bringing the Bosnians onto the march the letter need not have appeared.

The editor would like to make clear that he knows that Geoff works long hours in index bookshop and often cannot go on demonstrations.



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Journalists back Bosnia campaign

BY HILARY HORROCKS

THE National Union of Journalists (NUJ) last week expressed its solidarity with journalists and other trades unionists in Bosnia who are fighting ethnic division, at its annual delegate meeting (ADM).

A resolution from the Coventry branch reiterating support for the multi-ethnic staff on the Sarajevo newspaper 'Oslobodenje' was amended by the London Central and the Edinburgh and District branches to include an endorsement for the union national executive's support for Workers Aid for Bosnia, and a commitment to continue this.



funds for "Oslobodenje". ADM further instructs the NEC:

'1) To establish contact with journalists in Tuzla, a major multi-ethnic working-class centre in Bosnia, to campaign for the opening of the vital northern route to Tuzla and central Bosnia, and to continue to support Workers Aid which has made this one of its main aims;

'2) To approach TUC-affiliated organisations in a nation-

wide appeal for funds for "Oslobodenje", and to urge trade unions to follow the NUJ's lead in establishing links with their counterparts in the former Yugoslavia who are organised in independent trade unions and professional organisations.

'It endorses support for: '1) Journalists fighting to maintain and support "Oslobodenje" and other independent newspapers and uphold stan-

dards of journalism in all parts of the former Yugoslavia;

'2) The Workers Aid for Bosnia's campaign whose convoy to Tuzla showed that the international solidarity of the workers' movement is not dead.'

Proposing the motion, the delegate from Coventry told conference how the union branch had organised street stalls to raise both finance for 'Oslobodenje' workers and the political issue of the defence of Bosnia.

Seconding, the Edinburgh delegate drew conference's attention to the Scottish TUC's decision to send aid to the Tuzla miners, and urged a similar initiative from the NUJ.

AUT's solidarity with Tuzla

MORE than £900 was raised in a collection for the Scottish TUC appeal to send aid to the people of Tuzla, Bosnia, at the Association of University Teachers' summer council in Weston-super-Mare, Avon, on 19-21 May. This was topped up to £1,500 from central union funds.

In his report, general secretary David Triesman acknowledged and thanked the role of Workers Aid for Bosnia supporters in the union in making this appeal and bringing up the issue in the union. He also said that the force of the

argument had made clear the importance of the northern route, although because of the political situation in Bosnia Workers Aid was using the other route.

Support for the STUC initiative was moved by David Bleiman, Scottish and North-East regional organiser of the AUT and member of the STUC general council. He challenged those attending to give £6 or £7, 'about the price of a round of drinks tonight', so the AUT could send a truckload of aid to Tuzla.

Fascists still active on Isle of Dogs

DESPITE all the loose talk about the 'defeat of fascism' in the recent council elections, the British National Party (BNP) is still actively organising on the Isle of Dogs in east London.

Some 150 BNP supporters recently invaded a meeting of the Association of Island Communities and threw out the association's chair — a teacher and the wife of a local vicar. She had organised the wearing of 'rainbow ribbons' by white people on the island who wanted to differentiate themselves from the fascists.

The fascists accused her of

indoctrinating her school students against the BNP and of helping to bus in Pakistani voters on polling night.

Daubed

Since the elections the whole island has been daubed with slogans such as 'Labour cheats', 'Election rig', and 'Combat 18' — a reference to the shadowy Nazi group.

Those who say things have 'quietened down' are spreading illusions about what continues to be a real fascist threat after their sizeable vote.

Give us quality services

THIRTY per cent of all public expenditure is now controlled by quangos with no public accountability.

Quangos — bodies controlling NHS trusts, opted-out schools and colleges, training and enterprise councils, housing trusts, etc. — consist of 73,000 Whitehall-appointed members. Many of them are Tory party supporters. About 60,000 of them run local services — more than twice the number of the country's 25,000 local councillors.

Quangos

The majority of quangos cannot be investigated by any ombudsman or audited by the government's National Audit Office.

The public, whose money the quangos spend, cannot attend their meetings or see any of their accounts or

papers. In 1993, quangos had a budget of £46.6 billion — 30 per cent of all public spending.

There are now 5,521 quangos — one for every 10,000 people in Britain. As he said, in 1993, for William Waldegrave the issue was not 'whether those who run our public services are elected, but whether they are consumer responsive'.

One problem with that is that as a 'consumer' of food or footwear when you go into a shop you can tell those behind the till what you think of their merchandise. How do you do that to any of the 73,000 faceless people who sit on quangos?

By the spread of quangos the state ensures a steady stream of public money into private companies. What we need is quality not profit in public services.

Leicester's lessons from Japan and Bolivia

THE impact of 'market forces' on every level of education was the main point of discussion at the second conference of the Leicester Education Alliance held last weekend.

Those present discussed the continuing struggle against SATs — Standard Assessment Tasks — testing, which the government wants to use to direct funding to 'successful' schools, and the fight against the attempt by the government to destroy the working conditions of lecturers in further education.

Two teachers from Bolivia and a lecturer in education in Japan currently working in the University of Wales at Cardiff attended the conference, held under the theme, 'The Degrading of Knowledge in Education'.

One of the teachers from

Bolivia reported that a month ago teachers went on strike, including hunger strike. They had won widespread support from students.

Threat

Since 1952, when free education for all was won in Bolivia, teachers have come to be seen as a threat to the government, with many accused of spreading Marxist ideas.

The impact of the introduction of a market in education is seen at its starkest in Bolivia. Large numbers of private schools exist exclusively for the

middle class. The government is driving to slash the education budget and divert money into the army.

Supervised

In Japan, control of education by the state had been brought about by complete control over teacher education. New teachers had their work supervised all day. A national

curriculum had existed since 1951 and the 'correct' methods of teaching and the content of courses was rigidly enforced. Any teacher who objects to the prescribed methodology or proposes an alternative textbook is sacked.

■ A further conference is to be held this September and all organisations involved in the struggle to defend education will be invited.

Cooking the books

BY PETER GIBSON

WHAT happens when a company gets into the red? You and I both know that sometimes it succumbs to temptation and cooks the books.

There are lots of examples — the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, Maxwell's empire, and Barlow Clowes, to name a few.

Problems should have arisen for these firms each year from the auditor. After all, these gentlemen and ladies are required to say whether the accounts are a 'true and fair' picture of the company's position.

The records are then sent to Companies House and sometimes also published for the edification of shareholders and other interested parties.

BCCI used both Ernst & Whinney (now Ernst & Young) and later Price Waterhouse. Each firm duly signed off the accounts, in other words agreed that they were OK. Both companies were happy to confirm that the bank had net assets of several hundred million dollars.

After several years and a dramatic bankruptcy, Touche Ross was called in and found the bank owed nearly £5 billion.

Price Waterhouse and Ernst & Whinney now face an £8 billion writ from Touche Ross for not giving a true account of the state of BCCI's affairs.

This is not an isolated case.



Auditors found Maxwell's books to be 'true and fair'

Dubious accounting at Ferranti has cost the auditors KPMG Peat Marwick £40 million in an out-of-court settlement.

Ernst & Young had to pay £50 million as a result of the Johnson Matthey bank affair.

Touche Ross, the heroes at BCCI, were allegedly less noble in their dealings with Fidelity. A writ is still pending against them for £13 million.

Neither the Polly Peck nor the Maxwell fiascoes have yet produced any definite legal action against the auditors. But whoever said that those particular accounts were 'true and fair' is probably shopping for barristers at this moment.

There are similar pictures at, for example, Farruzzi in Italy and Banesto in Spain. Writs worth billions of pounds may be targeted at the auditors.

New pit camp set up at Parkside

ABOUT 250 Parkside demonstrators invaded British Coal property last week to protest at the eviction of the pit camp at the Lancashire colliery.

The demonstration last Sunday was held after police and bailiffs had moved in to close down the pit camp on Wednesday 18 May, British Coal had been awarded an eviction order (see last week's Workers Press).

Last Sunday police only turned up as the rally on British Coal property came to an end.

A new pit camp has been set up on council property opposite the colliery. The council is making moves for an eviction order, but pit-camp supporters are lobbying the council against this.

■ The pit camp can be contacted on 0925 221181.

Government due for rich immigration pickings

RICH people with a million in the bank will be able to buy their way into Britain under proposed relaxations of the immigration laws.

Those willing and able to invest at least £750,000 in a going concern or to buy a similar amount of Treasury bonds will be able to by-pass the controls exercised over less privileged people.

People with cash will initially be able to stay for one year but will be able to apply for extensions of up to five years, after which they will be able to stay in Britain indefinitely.

The announcement came from Tory Home Secretary Michael Howard on the same day that he accused Labour of preparing to 'open the floodgates' to non-European Union immigrants working on the continent.

Racist

There is of course no truth in such a claim as Labour is fully committed to maintain the racist immigration laws. Wealthy Hong Kong Chinese are likely to be the chief beneficiaries of Howard's move.

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Inside left

Dream topping

'WHAT is desperately needed is a fight for class independence . . . In the short term the government has an enormous legitimacy and popular mandate which it will not be possible to challenge. But the mass movement needs to develop its own organisations . . . to demand the jobs and houses which the black masses want.

'The independence of the mass movement must be topped off by building a mass workers' party' ('South Africa — the dream and reality', 'Socialist Outlook', 14 May).

Working-class independence and internationalism were raised in the South African elections by our comrades, the South African section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International. Working on a shoestring and standing in only two constituencies, they gained over 5,000 votes — a very respectable beginning.

'Workers List', which was led by the veteran Neville Alexander and was state-funded, obtained about 4,000 votes across the country. 'Socialist Outlook' (30 April) promised a full election analysis including 'the showings of the Workers List Party promoted by the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA)'. Maybe they had problems meeting the deadline of their 14 May issue. Neither the promised article nor any apology appeared.

We guessed that 'Socialist Outlook's' disunited sectarians would not mention the Workers International; but what happened to WOSA and the 'Workers List'?

'Although some tiny left-wing groups have called for a boycott of the elections and others have run a propaganda campaign to warn people of the dangers of a future government of national unity,' Mark Shotter reported, 'the ANC has managed to draw nearly all sections of the mass movement behind the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which promises mass programmes for housing, electrification, job creation, education and health' ('Socialist Outlook', 14 May).

But 'the left is becoming aware that what is achieved in achieving the RDP depends more on what takes place in the streets rather than the balance of forces in the government,' said Shotter. How long the government's honeymoon lasts will 'depend on whether it delivers on its promised social programmes and how it responds to independent mass activities'.

A 'mass workers' party' topping off the 'mass movement'? That's just 'Socialist Outlook' topping the cake. Its traditionally Pabloite recipe: 'mass' pressure on bourgeois-nationalist and Stalinist leaders to implement their programme.

Arms apart

'MORNING STAR' supporters liked the Trade Union Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament pamphlet on Bosnia, which argued that Croat atrocities were as bad as Serb ones (great consolation for Bosnian victims!). But, said a letter from Kitty Cavill to the 'Morning Star' (29 April), 'Serbia appears less interested in pursuing the free-market policies of the IMF'.

They're less sure about what Trade Union CND secretary Jim Barnes wrote in the 'Morning Star' (16 May): 'Calls for channelling money from weapons manufacture to service industries may give the author a good feeling, but they have little or no relevance to politics in Britain. . . if we stop the export of weapons, we then have the additional financial burden of servicing the balance of trade deficit.'

Arms for Malaysia, Indonesia or the Saudis are good business. Bosnia isn't reactionary enough to qualify.

Charlie Pottins

JANOS BOROVI answers an attack, by so-called Trotskyists, on Workers Aid for Bosnia that calls for no support for the campaign from the labour movement

UNDER the title 'WRP in new Bosnia fiasco', 'Socialist Outlook' (14 May), paper of the British section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, has launched an attack against Workers Aid for Bosnia. This kind of article, by its tone, by its insinuations, by its distortion of facts, by using partial truths to lead the reader to false conclusions, is only too well known to me.

Having suffered in my youth in the Stalinist school of falsification in Hungary, I am allergic to attempts to reintroduce this method, especially when it comes from people claiming to be 'Trotskyists'. A polemic with Bill Peters, the article's author, should have only one purpose: to help clarify what should be done to rebuild working-class internationalism.

Bill Peters accuses Workers Aid of having taken only four lorries out of 33 to its destination, the miners' union in Tuzla in northern Bosnia, and of having permitted the others to go to 'their own destinations — including the private market'. And he says that the 29 other trucks used Workers Aid 'as a means of getting through, and wanted nothing to do with a working class or trade union based initiative at all'.

The article goes on to say that this 'has caused considerable confusion amongst those in Tuzla who have been waiting for an aid convoy to the unions'.

True? Yes and no. True that only four lorries were delivered to the miners' union. True, also, that there was confusion among the miners, who had been waiting expectantly for the Workers Aid convoy. But this is not the whole story.

Peters 'forgets' to mention some facts. First there was a 38-tonne

thousands and thousands of Bosnian miners in Slovenia and Bosnian workers living in Germany, in a large and unprecedented mobilisation.

Workers' support

IT IS utterly false to write that the convoy was not supported by the workers' movement. Why does our 'revolutionary' censor hide this mobilisation? I believe that he does not want to (or cannot) see the workers' movement as it actually is: the state of disarray, disorganisation and confusion there is among workers following the explosion of Stalinism.

Let us look at this in more detail. Possibly one black-marketeer did try to use one of the Workers Aid for Bosnia trucks. The mayor of Tuzla told our convoy that he is launching an investigation into this allegation. But the overwhelming

'Over-stretched by the building of the convoy, faced with the very complicated and tragic situation in Bosnia and Tuzla, we had difficulty in understanding how much the rebuilding of workers' solidarity is closely linked with the rebuilding of the workers' movement.'

majority of the 29 trucks that did not reach the miners' union and the logistic centre did reach, contrary to Peters's declaration, *starving miners, workers and their families*.

The aid was delivered *directly* by the Bosnian workers and miners of Slovenia and Germany to them in Tuzla and Brcko, in the Posavina region. Was it the original plan of the Workers Aid organisers? Certainly not, and it is true that many miners, most of all the unemployed, were very disappointed (the United Nations only delivers to refugees).

There was a heated discussion between the miners' union leaders and the Bosnian miners of Slovenia. Our comrades on the convoy explained on Tuzla radio what had happened: that those Bosnian workers delivered the aid directly because they had *no confidence* in the miners' union and/or the town of Tuzla's leadership. They wanted to be sure that the aid they collected arrived safely at its destination.

Was this egotism? Don't they have enough 'workers' spirit'? Who can blame them, knowing the awful conditions in Bosnia? Certainly someone like Peters doesn't have the right to do so! Peters, who:

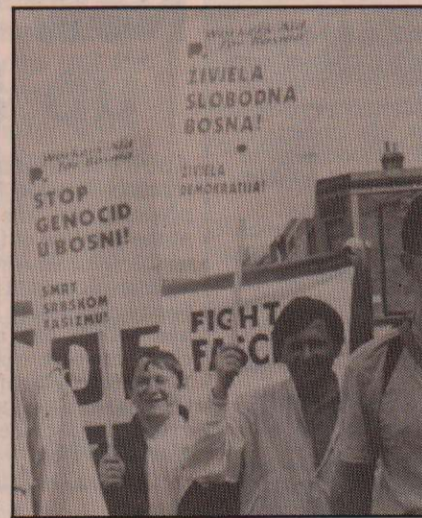
■ Hides this great, unprecedented mobilisation initiated by Workers Aid for Bosnia among Bosnian workers;

■ Launches this highly dubious attack on them.

Are we satisfied with how things turned out? Not at all.

We responded to the call from Tuzla and its miners' union, and from the Bosnian miners of Slovenia, for internationalist help and solidarity. The Workers International launched a big campaign — big, that is, in the light of our slender forces — and was joined in Workers Aid for Bosnia by the International Workers League (LIT) and other organisations: trades unions and others.

We concentrated our efforts on the Tuzla region because there, more than anywhere else in Bosnia, the workers and miners were totally opposed to nationalism and fascism and were resisting them.



Stop the genocide in Bosnia

lorry from France on the convoy, with 18 tonnes of sowing wheat delivered to the Tuzla logistic centre's warehouse in Zenica — the lorry was too big to get past the narrow bridges and tunnels of the southern route to Tuzla from Split in Croatia. This lorry was sent by Bosnian workers in France, financed by a large public collection, and supported by the biggest French teachers' union, with 150,000 members.

There was also a large coach on the convoy that was sent by the Spanish Workers Aid committees to the Tuzla miners' union.

Peters, the moralist, is shocked. How awful! Twenty-nine lorries did not go to the miners' union. If he was sincere, at least from his humanitarian point of view, he would be pleased that such a large convoy could be built and arrive in the Tuzla region. But, no, he is not happy. He suggests that Workers Aid has been used to supply the private (black) market.

Moreover, Peters 'forgets' to mention that all these suspect 29 lorries, the hundreds of tonnes of food, medicines and hospital equipment, and the money to pay for fuel and the team's subsistence, were paid for by collections amongst

Work and r the v mo



Under fire in the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo, last year. The only force capa

Were we right to do this? Certainly, yes. The events of the last year prove that the only force in Bosnia really capable of resisting the imperialist carve-up, of resisting fascism and even Muslim fundamentalism, is the united working class, as in Tuzla. We are proud of our fight, but not satisfied. We are not satisfied because we have certainly underestimated how complex is the task of rebuilding workers' solidarity.

Over-stretched by the building of the convoy, faced with the very complicated and tragic situation in Bosnia and Tuzla, we had difficulty in understanding how much the rebuilding of workers' solidarity is

closely linked with the rebuilding of the workers' movement. We are learning, and we are not ashamed to say so.

Complex work

THANKS to this fight to build Workers Aid for Bosnia we have started to get to grips with the complex, difficult work of rebuilding the workers' movement. Is it necessary to answer those workers who mistrust the Tuzla miners' union leadership and the leadership of the town? Of course it is. Peters does not dare answer them — that is not his problem! But revolutionaries cannot ignore

Workers Aid Rebuilding Workers' Movement



of resisting the imperialist carve-up, fascism and even Muslim fundamentalism is the united working class

them. Have we a ready-made easy answer? Certainly not. We are in the process of understanding that in Bosnia too, even during war conditions, the working class has to reconquer its independence, has to relearn its heritage and its methods.

I would not condemn a Bosnian miner because he delivered food directly to his hungry family. This is a difficult situation: how do we build a working-class leadership in a war?

How do we reinforce solidarity? How do we build a leadership that has the confidence of all the workers without weakening the war effort?

The responsibility on working-class activists is tremendous. I refer to those who see the working class as the only force that can not only lead the fight against fascism (it does to a certain extent, at least in Tuzla) but can also win this fight.

We have to support all forces that are resisting the ethnical carve-up of Bosnia, and fight to win such support throughout the international workers' movement. Does this mean supporting non-working-class forces? Yes, but only to the extent that they really fight. Unfortunately these forces are capitulating more and more before the various imperialist plots, and more and more the working-class forces

are in the forefront. In the Tuzla-Posavina area the 2nd Corps of the Bosnian Army resistance is based on the miners' battalion.

We have to combine solidarity, help, aid, and the work of preparing working-class solutions. We have to discuss with these workers the experiences of the international working class in its fight against imperialism and Stalinism.

We should suggest to all — Tuzla's town leaders, the miners' union leadership, rank-and-file miners, workers and the unemployed — the building of workers' control committees to control the arrival and distribution of aid.



Tower Hamlets trades council banner with Bosnian women on May Day — international workers' day — in London

Setting up such committees would end the black market because it would mean that the whole population — men and women, working and unemployed — could take part in the organisation of everyday life, of survival. The mobilisation around the building of these committees would also powerfully reinforce the military resistance.

All leaders who don't just pay lip-service to this mobilisation of the Tuzla working class, but help develop it, help find the way to a harmonious collaboration among the municipal services, the unions and workers' control, will win the workers' confidence.

Correct orientation

THE fight for workers' control is part of the Fourth International's programme, first elaborated in 1938 by Leon Trotsky. The dramatic reality of the experiences of the war in the former Yugoslavia shows how alive that programme is today.

It shows that it is impossible to strengthen the working class and its resistance with a so-called 'pure' humanitarian policy. Those who regard the working class with contempt are the same as those who find 'goodness' in the bureaucratic state apparatus.

The experiences of the last Workers Aid convoy have shown the correctness of our working-class orientation and, at the same time, the necessity for its development.

The fact that Tuzla became the leading force in the magnificent resistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina shows it is the working class that, despite the great confusion in its ranks, is leading the resistance.

It is the Trotskyists' task to fight for the elaboration of a workers' programme for the regrouping of the initial elements of an independent workers' party, not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also in the other states of the former Yugoslavia.

This fight has only just started. We are late, but not too late. Workers Aid for Bosnia, and the organisations that take part in it, have enough standing in the eyes of the Bosnian workers for those workers to give them a hearing.

Northern route

TO SUPPORT his attack, Peters adds that 'the labour movement should have nothing to do with this [i.e. Workers Aid's] fraudulent campaign'. He also criticises

Workers Aid for its fight to open the northern route into Tuzla (from Orasje on the Croatian border).

Events have shown how last year it was essential to give a positive response to the people of Tuzla's call for a fight to open this route, a corridor that is a 'lifeline' for a Greater Serbia. Today, eight months later, this corridor stands at the centre of the war. Workers Aid is proud to be among the first to unmask the imperialist UN support for carving up Bosnia, with the deliberate closing of the northern route at the centre of this attempted carve-up.

Peters's organisation and its centre, the so-called 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' led by Ernest Mandel, split with Workers Aid to build 'International Workers Aid'. We do not agree with their narrow humanitarian conception, but we are glad to see bread,

'We should suggest to all — Tuzla's town leaders, the miners' union leadership, rank-and-file miners, workers and the unemployed — the building of workers' control committees to control the arrival and distribution of aid.'

sugar and medicines entering Bosnia-Herzegovina. We are glad that International Workers Aid could send a convoy to Tuzla, as we are glad about every humanitarian organisation getting a convoy to Tuzla.

As a humanitarian, Peters should at least give Workers Aid for Bosnia the same support. He does not. Worse, he calls on the labour movement to withdraw support for Workers Aid. Even bourgeois humanitarian aid organisations, which are very hostile to everything coming from the workers' movement, do not make this kind of call to sabotage an aid organisation.

Workers Aid does not call for the sabotaging or slandering of other aid organisations. It is not against other organisations. But it is different. Workers Aid combines a humanitarian and a political fight from the point of view of the international working class. We try to learn from our weaknesses. We know that fighting workers appreciate our efforts to rebuild international workers' solidarity.

A writer of world stature

PERSONAL COLUMN

'GO on,' urged my Brazilian friend, 'get out and ring his bell. He'll be pleased to see you.'

I thought it over. At length I decided that no, I would not descend unheralded on a great writer: even if he and I had both parted company with Stalinism in that pivotal year of 1956; even if we did share a passion for his native Bahia and its astonishing culture.

After all, Jorge Amado would be 82 in August and was due in about three weeks' time to publish the latest of his many novels, the ironically titled 'A descoberta da America pelos turcos' ('The Discovery of America by the Turks').

Writers, great or small, should, I felt, be left in peace to get on with their work. For 'the night cometh, when no man may work'. My friend mocked my British scruples and lack of journalistic initiative.

'I'm on holiday', I countered weakly. 'And anyway, we've just seen his museum.'

It's a tiny enough museum, occupying just the ground floor of the house where Amado used to live in the Pelourinho, the old slave quarter of the ancient city of Salvador — an area now being rehabilitated at a great rate, and rather well, by a municipal authority anxious to attract tourists.

In the Amado museum, besides displays of first editions of his novels, are photographs of the author in the company of just about every prominent 'progressive' and world peace movement luminary of the day before yesterday, among them his personal friends Ehrenburg, Picasso, Robeson, Sartre, and Signoret.

As a writer of world stature, whose novels have been translated into at least 24 different languages, Amado is regarded in Brazil with a veneration otherwise reserved for outstanding footballers and racing-car drivers.

His name is known even to illiterates and others who will never read a line he has written. It is as if, say, the name of a living Thomas Hardy were a household word in Britain.

In fact, though Bahia and 'Wessex' have little in common, the comparison with Hardy is quite apt up to a point: both are 'regional' novelists whose work transcends that uncomfortable conceptual corset; both are acutely aware of social change and social conflict; both make the life of the common people central to their work.

Jorge Amado was born on a cacao plantation near the coastal town of Ilhéus in the south of Bahia state; his father was one of the many migrant workers who, at the turn of the century, had started carving cacao plantations out of the tropical forest.

Having gone to Rio de Janeiro to study law, Jorge Amado published his first novel, 'Carnival Land', at the age of 20. It was the first in a series of powerful — and powerfully, almost painfully, honest — novels about the golden 'chocolate bean' and how it gradually enslaved everyone who touched it.

These were passionate and bitter outcries against the injustices done by the rich landowners and federal government to the poor of north-east Brazil.

'The workers in the cacao groves had the cacao slime on their feet. It became a thick crust that no water could ever wash off. And all of them, workers, jaguncos [hired killers], colonels, lawyers, doctors, merchants, and exporters, all had the cacao slime sticking to their souls, inside them, deep down in their hearts.'

'Education, culture, decency — these were powerless to wash it away. Cacao was money,

power, everything in life. Not only was it planted in the black, sap-giving earth: it was also inside themselves. It arose within every one of them, casting its dark shadow over every heart, crushing all good impulses.'

In 'The Beach Waifs' (1937), banned in Brazil as soon as it appeared, he wrote of homeless urchins one of whom becomes a revolutionary, 'pursued by the police of five states as the organiser of strikes, as the director of illegal parties, as a dangerous enemy of the established order'.

With his masterpiece 'Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon' (1958), Amado's work entered a new phase. Now he took himself less seriously, and his writing became more subtle, more lyrical, and more humorous, as when the people of Ilhéus pray for rain and then nearly drown in it.

Now, instead of denouncing, he poked fun — at hypocrisy, pomposity, and obsolete views of honour and revenge. Sex was no longer something harsh or ugly, but was treated playfully. His pages were crowded with a huge cast of bandits, religious fanatics, priests in the syncretic macumba cult, cooks, drunks, prostitutes, police, soldiers, and rich cacao lords.

I haven't yet read 'A descoberta da America pelos turcos'; French critics are said to have been captivated by its funniness, and I hope it soon becomes the fifteenth of Amado's novels currently available in English translation.

Amado was a Communist deputy to the Brazilian Congress from 1946 to 1948, when the Brazilian Communist Party was outlawed. Between 1948 and 1968 he visited the USSR 12 times, and in 1951 he was the first Latin American to receive what was then called the International Stalin Peace Prize; he donated the 25,000 roubles to the Brazilian CP.

No other Latin American writer received as much attention in the Soviet Union — though there were frequent criticisms there of his 'naturalistic excesses' and of the way he 'sometimes loses his sense of measure in describing erotic scenes', most of which were silently omitted in Russian translation.

Like many of us at the time, Amado saw the USSR as his 'second nation — the great land of socialism', and Stalin as his 'master, guide and father'.

'We love in Stalin culture, youth, the beauty of things, harmony and music', he wrote in 'O Mundo do Paz' ('The World of Peace', 1950).

Such embarrassing dithyrambs, typical of the period, are of course irrelevant to how we judge Amado as a novelist. But I should have liked to ask him what he thinks about recent developments in what we both regarded, 40 years ago, as 'a new, beautiful, happy and exemplary world'.

I should also have liked to challenge a view he expressed in the 'Jornal do Brasil' the week before 'A descoberta da America pelos turcos' came out, to the effect that the Portuguese, as colonisers, were less cruel to 'their' Native Americans and Africans than were the Spaniards in the New World.

In fact, as Charles R. Boxer showed in his 'Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire' (1963), the Portuguese in Brazil were no less ruthless than their European counterparts elsewhere in the Americas.

Peter Fryer

Television

Close shave for Labour leader?

Review by Anton Moctonian

IS THE major difference between the contenders for Labour leader, as one commentator observed, merely that some use better barbers than others?

'A Week in Politics' (Channel 4, 21 May) should have enabled us to gauge the real differences in a contest that has been dubbed by the media as a battle between the so-called 'modernisers' and the 'traditionalists'.

Labour Party leadership contests, of course, used to be between the left and the right. One wonders what has changed to make the labels no longer relevant.

Activists

The programme featured activists from the party's Brighton Pavilion branch, a constituency held by the Tories with a majority of 3,500. What came across in the interviews with the activists was their shared lack of enthusiasm for any of the prospective candidates.

Each of the activists naturally offered the usual eulogy to the late John Smith, but all avoided naming a preferred predecessor. 'Too early to say who I'll

support,' was the answer most gave.

Indeed, so intent were those interviewed to not answer Vincent Hannah's question, that one wondered whether any political differences existed between them at all. Looking from traditionalist to moderniser, from moderniser to traditionalist, you could not tell which was which.

One question was raised in my mind that most who remember Tony Benn's leadership challenge in the early 1980s might also be asking: Where is the Labour 'left' — has anyone seen or heard from them? Where indeed are the socialists?

TRUE STORIES: 'Tracking Down Maggie' (Channel 4, 19 May), was a typically idiosyncratic and off-beat Nick Broomfield film. It featured his attempt to interview Thatcher about the dubious business deals of her son, Mark.

Broomfield, who has previously made films about South Africa's Eugene Terre-Blanche and American serial killer Aileen Warros, trailed Thatcher on her recent book-

signing tour of Britain and the United States.

In Chelsea, Broomfield met a woman who had salvaged a toilet that had been discarded by the former PM — a back-to-basics white porcelain job, found in a skip outside the



Maggie — tracked

Thatcher's home. It now occupies pride of place in the woman's drawing-room, with a plaque on the seat inscribed: 'Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher sat here 1967-1979.'

The Tories' predilection for leadership worship taken to its logical conclusion.

AN OPERATION that attempted to tilt the 1990 council elections in the Tories' favour was exposed by an excellent 'Panorama' programme (BBC1 16 May).

This powerful report had been shelved by the BBC until after the recent council elections and proved damning evidence on the activities of the Tories in Westminster. Andrew Arden QC called the activities of the Tories in this ward the greatest act of corruption in the history of local government.

Remove

The strategy, in a nutshell, was to remove potential Labour voters from marginal wards and replace them with those more likely to vote for the Tories. To this end the programme detailed how the aim was to turn a hostel for single men into private flats.

The cost of this gerrymandering in the borough was claimed to be as high as £55 million. Let's hope that those responsible get the bill.

Programme guide

Saturday 28 May 4 GOES TO GLYNDEBOURNE: 'The Marriage of Figaro'. The first live broadcast of an opera from the festival in 30 years. Bernard Haitink conducts the London Philharmonic. The cast includes Gerald Finley as Figaro and Alison Hagley as Susanna his intended bride (5pm, Channel 4).

Sunday 29 May ENCOUNTERS: 'Lawn and Order'. A film about self-expression, obsession and eccentricity. From the shaved croquet lawn in Phoenix, Arizona, to the high weed jungle in downtown Toronto. In North America the front garden is more than it seems (7pm, Channel 4).

Monday 30 May 'Josef von Sternberg — the Man Who Made Dietrich'. A centenary profile of the famous director responsible for some of the classics of 1930s cinema (1.30pm, BBC2).

Tuesday 31 May ASSIGNMENT: 'Changing the Pretorian Guard'. Denounced by the

ANC as the brutal representatives of a hostile state, the same police are expected to become the dutiful servants of Mandela's government (7.45pm, BBC2).

Thursday 2 June TRUE STORIES: 'The Hunted'. In 1987 Odd Lindberg's film of a seal-culling expedition rocked to its foundations Norwegian society



This year's astroturf creation in 'Lawn and Order', Saturday on C4

where whaling and sealing is at the very heart of its culture. Today he lives in exile in a secret location in Sweden with his family, unable to return home for fear of reprisals (9.30pm, Channel 4).

Friday 3 June OVER THE GARDEN WALL: 'The Dry'. A new series examining plant ecology: the climate, soils, shade, moisture and all that affects different plants' abilities to thrive in a range of habitats. This first programme visits the last lavender farm in England (9pm, Channel 4).

Selected films

DISHONORED (1931). Directed by Josef von Sternberg, Marlene Dietrich plays a prostitute recruited by the Austrian secret service. Unforgettable final scene when she is led away to be executed for high treason (Saturday, 12.15pm, BBC2). **BLONDE VENUS (1942).** Sternberg again. Dietrich's way of paying for her husband's medical bills by having an affair with a wealthy politician



Beth Chatto looks over the garden wall, Friday on C4

ends in tragedy. With Herbert Marshall and Cary Grant (Tuesday, 4pm, BBC2). **SCARLET EMPRESS (1934).** One of the most outstanding and innovative films of its time, Sternberg's epic profile of the rise to power of Catherine the Great of Russia. Marlene Dietrich, John Lodge and Louise Dresser (Friday, 12.30am, BBC2).

JJ

Humanity denied at Tuzla

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

PRIME minister John Major made a big deal of it back in February. The United Nations was going to re-open Tuzla airport in Bosnia, he told MPs. In March, British development minister Baroness Chalker was flown in on a UN plane.

But the question remained, as a Bosnian woman refugee told a support meeting for Workers Aid for Bosnia at the House of Commons on 23 February: 'They say they are going to open Tuzla airport. But who for? Will we Bosnians control it?'

Even the air corridors for UN flights to Tuzla had to be agreed by Bosnian nationalist leader Radovan Karadzic before the UN would go ahead. And what about the passenger lists?

On 19 May, a Tuzla radio journalist based in Zagreb, where he has worked closely with Workers Aid for Bosnia helping co-ordinate relief convoys, heard tragic news from his family back in Tuzla. De-

pressed by the continuing tension and hardships of prolonged siege, his father-in-law had committed suicide. The war had claimed another casualty.

The Tuzla man urgently wanted to join his distressed family, to be with them for the funeral that Saturday, to help them cope with the grief.

Friends in Workers Aid for Bosnia contacted the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR), explaining the circumstances, and urging that on humanitarian grounds they should allow the Tuzla citizen a place on one of their flights, so that he could return home for the funeral.

As one friend wrote: 'There are humanitarian decisions that make a great deal of difference to the survival of people.'

Back came the reply from Mary Fisk, at the office of the UN secretary-general's special representative for Yugoslavia, UNPROFOR headquarters in Zagreb. 'I regret to inform you that UNPROFOR is unable to assist with the movement of Mr [X] to Tuzla tomorrow. As I mentioned, we are unable to

transport any non-UNPROFOR personnel on flights to Tuzla. I had hoped that there might be an exception made in this case, but we are not yet at the point where this is possible.'

'Perhaps, if things settle down a bit and we begin regular flights into Tuzla, Mr [X] could be accommodated at a later time.'

Denied

While UNPROFOR waits for things to 'settle down for a bit', organisations like Workers Aid, denied the use of the direct northern route from Zagreb to Tuzla, have to send convoys over a 1,200-mile roundabout route via Split. Bosnians have begun running buses along parts of this difficult route, much of it makeshift mountain tracks that take a heavy toll on vehicles and passengers alike.

On the steeper slopes, it is often touch and go whether vehicles will make it. Assuming no mishaps or hold-ups at checkpoints, from Zagreb to Tuzla this way is a five-day journey. Tuzla airport is one of the

best in the Balkans. But despite the fanfare of publicity when the UN said it would 'open' it, the airport remains closed to Bosnians, closed to citizens of Tuzla. UNPROFOR says it may be able to fly people in 'if things settle down a bit' — which could mean, if the Bosnians cease resisting and accept a UN-brokered division of their country.

UN control of the airport is just one more way of keeping Tuzla under siege and Bosnia under pressure. If things should radically change, and Bosnian forces succeeded in driving off the Serb aggressors, UNPROFOR would have no reason to excuse its presence, and Bosnians should not need UN permission to fly into Tuzla airport.

The sad case we have described is just one of the inhumanities inflicted upon the Bosnian people by this war. But it illustrates the truth about the UN's 'humanitarian' and 'peacekeeping' role. As Workers Press has insisted all along, the UN Protection Force is there for nobody except itself and its imperialist controllers.

SA elections 1994 — the great fraud

A member of the Workers International in South Africa, which stood two candidates in the recent elections, comments on the electoral stitch-up by the main parties

MOST people have heard of pirate videos or pirate cars — but pirate voting stations, that's a new one! In Kwa-Zulu/Natal, where electoral fraud was at its worst, up to 50 pirate voting stations were set up, some even in taxis!

This accounted for over a million votes. Ballot boxes were stuffed impossibly full, and election agents for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the African National Congress (ANC) were thrown out of many voting stations by Inkatha members and the police.

Voting stations were moved to Inkatha strongholds. Voters' cards were issued to under-aged youth. Some home affairs department officials, seconded to the IEC, sabotaged the electoral process. The IEC failed to deliver ballot papers to all the voting stations. Ballot papers were hidden. Tens of millions of ballot papers are 'missing', unaccounted for.

Ballot boxes were tampered with and some pirate ballot boxes surfaced. Mid-way through the counting, the IEC announced that its computer had been tampered with. Voting totals that were faxed to the commission's head office had been fiddled.

The masses' votes had been put aside, and the main political players had agreed that the ANC would accept less than a two-thirds majority, that the National Party would get the Western Cape, that Inkatha would get KwaZulu/Natal, and, apparently, that the right-wing would get a Volkstaat.

South African workers must never forget the despicable role of the ANC/South African Communist Party in this treacherous sell-out.

Democracy an empty word

THE list of electoral 'irregularities' is unending, but a spe-

cial comment must be reserved for the Western Cape.

The Western Cape boasted the 'best-organised' regional administration of the Independent Electoral Commission. Days before the election, it was announced that the regional administration was already fully prepared for the elections and that it would finish counting the votes long before the other regions.

The counting in the Western Cape started with the National Party taking an early lead. Gradually the ANC began to catch up. When the National Party (NP) lead was getting into serious trouble, suddenly there was a counting 'snarl-up' by the well-organised IEC.

Of course the NP won the election in the region, and many votes were not counted owing to the ballot boxes being 'tampered' with. And of course in the Mitchell's Plain district 338,000 ballot papers were returned unused. Some officials explained this away by saying that many residents voted outside their district. Apart from this being a blatant lie, many people from outside voted in the Mitchell's Plain district.

This is a very interesting point considering that the National Party lead in the region was 432,666 above the number of votes polled by the ANC.

The National Party certainly got a lot of votes in the Western Cape, but the dirty tricks show that it did not really win in the region.

Electoral fraud was on such a massive scale it could not be hidden. IEC chair Judge Kriegler admitted before the world's television cameras that the outcome of the elections would be the result of 'political manipulation'. Some newspapers called it 'horse-trading'.

All that remained was for the IEC to declare the elections 'free and fair', something that its chairman, the 'honourable' Judge Kriegler, promptly did. This hypocrisy was com-

pleted by the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations, the US government and the Western 'democracies', who all echoed the judge's lamentable declaration of a free and fair farce. By so doing they exposed to the world that, for them, democracy is an empty word, a tool with which to oppress the working class. This experience reveals once again that imperialism and its agents are mortal enemies of democracy.

Farce and cover-up

MANY people are asking: why were the elections turned into such a farce? And why are the ANC, the OAU, so many international bodies and governments involved in this cover-up?

This electoral fraud was not really aimed against any particular party; it was directed against the tremendous strength of the working class in an attempt to control it.

But the reasons go deeper than this. Capitalism, in the age of imperialism, is incapable of granting the masses' democratic rights. After capitalism reached its imperialist phase in the first quarter of the 1900s, its crises intensified greatly. Ever since, the system as a whole has been sliding downhill. Whilst the economy has been slowly strangled by the bosses, the working class has been on the march.

On the one hand, capitalism cannot anymore afford to

grant the democratic demands of the masses. On the other hand, the winning of democratic demands strengthens the working class in its struggle against the bosses. Capitalism is a victim of more and more contradictions which it cannot get out of. In South Africa these contradictions are especially sharp because of the inability of the capitalist system to address the needs of the working class, and because of the political strength of this class.

It was to somewhat ameliorate these fundamental contradictions that the election results had to be cooked by a conspiracy between the representatives of apartheid, nationalism and Stalinism. None of them realised that by doing so they were cooking their own goose.

These developments clearly show that neither capitalism, the ANC, nor Stalinism is capable of guaranteeing the democratic rights of the masses. This underlines the fundamental belief of our party that only a working-class government can guarantee the full democratic rights of the masses. The main task of the moment is to prepare the ground for such a workers' government by building the revolutionary workers' party.

The treachery witnessed during the elections is an indication of what the masses can expect from a 'government of national unity'. Be forewarned. Be prepared. Let us build the revolutionary party.



Voting in Soweto — huge queues wait to use the ballot box

Big poll turnout is workers' victory

MORE than 80 per cent of the estimated 24 million voters in South Africa made their crosses for a better future. The magnificent turnout during 26-28 April showed first and foremost the tremendous strength of the oppressed working class, which has demonstrated its vitality in powerful struggles through the years.

The clearly revealed fraud during the elections robbed the working class of its full victory, yet nonetheless it was the only winner. Not because the African National Congress gained most votes, but because the working class made its strength felt in the political process. It showed that it will still speak the last word.

The huge turnout at the polls is a confidence booster for the working class and all true democrats. In the struggles of the 1980s the working class instilled terror into the hearts of the ruling class, especially when the state of emergency failed to silence the workers. Despite the banings of organisations, draconian emergency regulations, mass detentions, state-sponsored vigilantism and the occu-

pation of the townships by soldiers, the masses kept on fighting back and winning ground.

In the midst of the state of emergency the working class launched the biggest union federation in the history of South Africa, the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The enlightened section of the ruling class felt the hot breath of the insurgent masses and knew it had to adapt or die.

Slide

Hence the slide towards negotiations as the means to save the capitalist system — by using the African National Congress/South African Communist Party leadership to tie the working class to the chariot of capitalism. But these talks were not enough to control the masses; it had a twin strategy, the unprecedented and wide-scale violence.

Throughout the negotiations period the regime and its surrogates, mainly Inkatha, took P.W. Botha's method of vigilantism to a higher level. They colluded in unleashing murder and destruction in

townships, in workplaces and on trains. To date more than 20,000 people have been killed by these reactionaries.

Thousands of houses were destroyed and hundreds of thousands of people were turned into refugees overnight. The capitalist class spent millions of rand on this violent suppression of the working class. The main purpose behind this strategy was to de-

'It is now clearer than ever before that when the time is right, with a proper revolutionary leadership, the South African working class will be strong enough to sweep away the capitalist system.'

stroy its fighting spirit, to drain its strength, and to demoralise it.

Yet, despite all of this, despite threats of bombings and violence on the way to the polls, the oppressed working class lined up victoriously in their millions to cast their votes.

Great numbers turned up even in Natal, where the violence is at its worst.

The meaning of this show of power is that the working class has proven that the apartheid-capitalist ruling class, in conspiracy with imperialism, could not defeat it. It has proven that it has a tremendous capacity to overcome whatever obstacles are strewn in the way of its struggle.

It is now clearer than ever before that when the time is right, with a proper revolution-

ary leadership, the South African working class will be strong enough to sweep away the capitalist system.

The political strength of the South African working class is the greatest resource of the socialist revolution, its greatest source of inspiration and hope. It is a fountain from which the revolutionary party can never drink too much.

Bronwen Handyside reports

Two nations



Little Dorrit lives!

FORMER Prime Minister Thatcher's mission to restore Britain to 'Victorian values' got a shot in the arm last week with the news that the country's jails are increasingly being turned into debtors' prisons.

The number of those imprisoned for debt in 1993 was more than a third higher than 1992. Fine defaulters now make up a quarter of all admissions to prison, and the numbers jailed this year will be greater than in the previous record year of 1982.

Only a Charles Dickens could do justice to the following stories of six victims of increasingly savage sentencing by magistrates.

■ A 30-year-old mother of three young children was jailed for 14 days for failing to pay a fine of £300 for not having a TV licence. She had no previous convictions, and a long list of other debts.

■ A pensioner from Essex with poll-tax debts of £1,028 was sentenced to 50 days in jail. The RSPCA had to look after his 11 dogs while he was inside.

■ A 35-year-old father was jailed for 14 days because he did not pay a road-traffic fine of £300. His three-year-old son was abandoned outside the court. Only when court staff intervened was he taken to see his father so arrangements could be made to look after him.

■ The 23-year-old mother of a three-year-old girl was given 70 days for non-payment of poll-tax debts totalling £400.

Despite her lack of previous convictions, she was held overnight in police cells and sent straight to jail on a warrant for her arrest — without either a court hearing, or any child-care arrangements being made for her daughter.

According to Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers: 'The vast majority of the defaulters were unemployed and in multiple debt.'

The Royal bowels

BUT does money buy you love? Or happiness? I don't know, but it can buy you a regular series of colonic irrigations — according to the modest household budget of Charles Windsor's air-head wife.

Colonic irrigation — for those of you conjuring up visions of bringing water to the Libyan desert — is a 'health' treatment which involves having your bowels flushed out by the forcible introduction of large quantities of water.

It is in fact a glorified and very expensive enema — the kind of thing the NHS gives to you free, but you would much rather it didn't.

I leave to your imagination the actual physical steps involved but I am longing to know why those cowards down at the 'Daily Mirror' have not snatched a world first by photographing Diana in full flood.

I suppose it would be a bit like being too close to the road when the bus thunders past you after a heavy rainstorm — rushing quickly over the other side to avoid the splashes.

The princess of Wales pays £1,430 a year to have her innards

sluiced out every fortnight. She also spends £16,744 a year on 'manicure and pedicure'. I know a few people who would be happy to suck her toes till her toenails fell off for half that sum, but this is after all a family newspaper.

We would not have found out about the royal bubblehead's spending habits were it not for her estranged hubby, who is pursuing his war with her through the pages of the tabloid press.

He was 'outraged' at having to stump up £160,000 for the ex-Sloane's spending on her appearance. She also splashes out £1,200 a year for underwear, £4,160 for twice-weekly personal training — and £18,000 a year for the holidays necessary to recover from her strenuous schedule of shopping, grooming, and putting herself on display.

Amid his moans, the prince failed to mention that he would hardly notice the dent made in the £4 million a year income from the Duchy of Cornwall, which provides for the princess's toe-treatments, bowel-sluicing, etc.

The princess made a valiant effort to retrieve her reputation in the eyes of the gutter press by holding the rucksack of a student who dived into Regent's Park lake and rescued a drowning tramp.

She drew the line at getting her feet wet — but probably she had just had herself pedicured. Neither did she assist the student in administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, but perhaps she had just had a mouthcure.

The tramp, visited twice by Diana in hospital, discharged himself early in great disgruntlement, complaining about an excess of publicity.

Breakfast blues

AND in the 'God help those who come between an upper-class Englishman and his breakfast' department...

Brigadier Vere Hayes, deputy constable of Dover Castle, sacked his cook because she made him under-cooked steak and kidney pie, curdled hollandaise sauce and cheese straws like planks — but, most unforgivably of all, scrambled eggs adulterated with milk.

The brigadier gave evidence at an industrial tribunal brought by the disaffected cook that the eggs in question were: 'Just a mess of white plonked on a piece of toast because she had used too much milk. It was swimming in water.'

The brigadier, obviously a man who knows how to prioritise the really important things in life, was last year a member of the United Nations forces in Bosnia, opposing air-strikes against the Serbs.

At an industrial tribunal which heard the cook's charges of unfair dismissal, the brigadier said: 'I probably appear rather domineering but the gloves are off... I'm the head of the household. I'm the man.' He added that he wouldn't have accepted the cook's mistakes from his wife either.

Someone who was also running the risk of a swift frying pan over the head was the chairman of the tribunal, who commented:

'Where two ladies are involved in the same kitchen it is often a recipe for disaster.'

Let us just hope he is not adjudicating any sex discrimination cases.

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

IMPERIALISM'S DIRTY WORK

ARE the loyalist killer gangs in the north of Ireland only a reaction to IRA killings? Will they stop if agreement is reached on new forms of political rule in the six counties?

These questions remain to be answered by Irish republicans and they were given added urgency by last weekend's gun and bomb attack on a Dublin pub.

This was an escalation of the campaign of indiscriminate murder of Catholics and supporters of Irish republicanism which, in recent weeks, has seen the killing of building workers, students and a housewife.

One man was shot dead and another badly injured when the Ulster Volunteer Force planted an 18lb bomb at a fund-raising function in the pub for the families of republican prisoners.

About 400 people were present and widespread carnage was only avoided because the bomb failed to detonate.

It is nearly 20 years since the loyalist gangs attempted this scale of mass murder in the Irish southern state.

Incendiary

In recent years most of their activities in the 26 counties has been limited to leaving incendiary devices in department stores.

In 1974, at the time of the loyalist strike in the north, 33 people were killed in bomb

Every attempt is made to spread the belief that the loyalist killings would stop if the IRA called a ceasefire and agreed to participate in talks about a new, devolved, political arrangement for the north.

This is part of the overall, imperialist campaign designed to suck the republican movement into the so-called 'constitutional' process and to disarm the nationalist working class.

It contends that full democratic rights can be conceded through agreement with the Tories and the Unionists on a new form of rule that does not

agree to the abolition of partition.

The most dangerous aspect is that this view is encouraged by the political perspectives of Sinn Fein and the IRA leadership.

Naivety

Indeed, with a cruel example of political naivety, only hours before the UVF attack in Dublin, the IRA leadership issued a statement welcoming rumours that the loyalist killer gangs were considering a halt to their attacks on nationalists.

This is consistent with the line of the Sinn Fein leadership as it attempts to be seen as diplomatic equals of the British government in the great charade about clarification of the joint declaration.

The Tories' 21-page response to Sinn Fein's questions was welcomed by leading republican Martin McGuinness as 'a small step in the slowly evolving peace process'.

In reality the Tories confirmed that the Unionist veto on partition will remain and is central to the talks.

The joint declaration is a

means to tie the nationalist working class into structures of rule that will not change either unemployment or the repressive apparatus of the state in the north.

But the dilemma for imperialism — reflected in the current debate within the republican movement on acceptance of the declaration — is that Sinn Fein leaders Gerry Adams and McGuinness will not be able to deliver all the nationalist working class.

The loyalist killer gangs will still be needed to do the dirty work of imperialism.

BY JOHN STEELE

attacks in Dublin and Managhan.

A recent television programme on these bombings confirmed the involvement of British intelligence in aiding and arming the loyalist killers.

Operate

Like then, today both the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association undoubtedly operate under the surveillance and influence of agents of the British state.

The loyalist killings are portrayed by the media and Unionist politicians as merely 'reactive' to the IRA campaign in order to exert added pressure on the republican movement to accept the joint declaration on Northern Ireland issued by the Dublin and London governments.

US capitalists back China's sweatshops

BY TOM BATTERSBY

ON 3 JUNE, China's Most Favoured Nation trading status with the US comes up for its annual review. At least £16 billion worth of exports are at stake for the Beijing regime.

China's rulers are reasonably confident of renewal. The sweatshop conditions under which workers operate make Chinese exports very competitive and so attractive to American businessmen in the current recessionary climate.

This pressure from commercial interests will no doubt be lost on the Clinton administration.

Human rights abuses, whilst often embarrassing to the Western friends of China, have yet to unduly affect the persuasiveness of the dollar.

In fact the abuses are directly connected at times to China's profitability. On 17 May, three workers in the Shenzhen special (semi-capitalist) economic zone were arrested.

Their crime was that of attempting to organise a trade union. The primary purpose of

this union was to have been protesting at the factory conditions.

Unrest amongst the 70 million industrial workers in China is a growing problem.

What sorts of struggles are going on in factories further away from Hong Kong and Western journalists is anyone's guess.

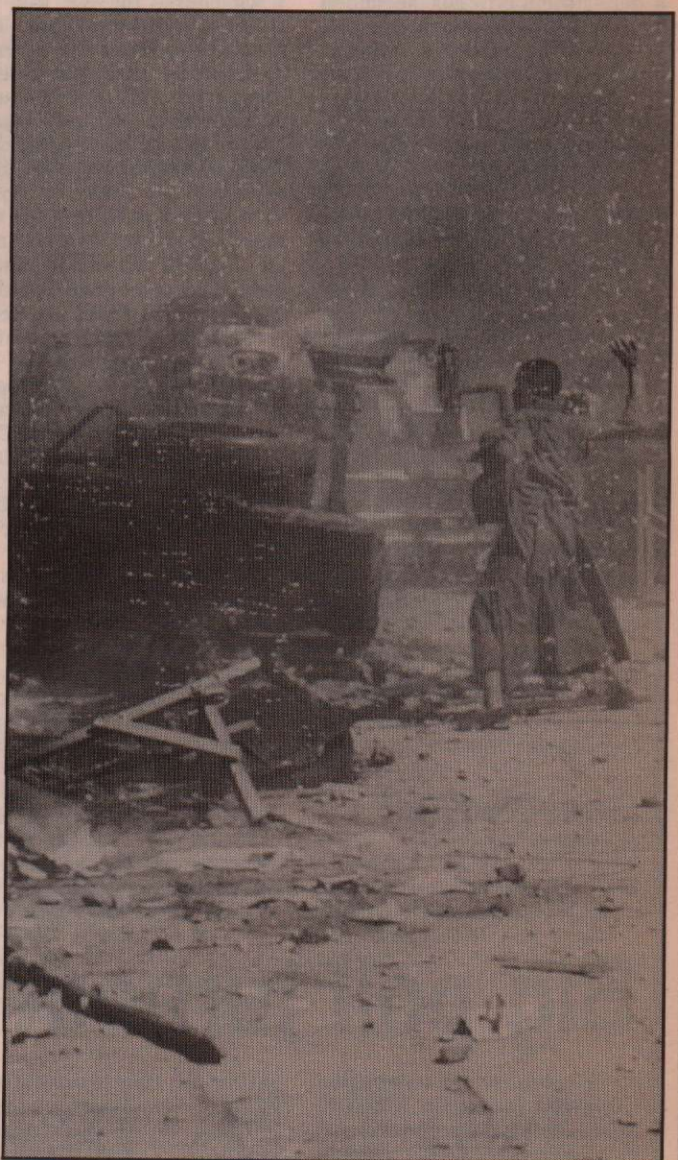
Only the most notorious of dissidents make the news.

One such is Wei Jingsheng whose most recent bout of custody began on 1 April. Unbowed, he spends his time writing to the country's leaders about such things as workers' rights and the occupation of Tibet.

Wei was arrested just after a meeting with John Shattuck, US assistant secretary of state for human rights.

This does not seem to have helped him secure any sort of privileges, such as the right to a fair trial. Accused of treason, for which the penalty is death, the prospects look bleak.

If he took up his concerns on factory conditions with Shattuck he shouldn't hold his breath. On these sorts of human rights the US imperialism has a record even the Chinese would be hard-pressed to match.



Tibet 1987: repression of the country by China continues

Indonesian military in crisis clampdown

INDONESIAN security forces are holding over a dozen East Timorese in a fresh clampdown on resistance there, which is a growing international issue.

Among those arrested was Jose Antonio Nexis, alias Sama Larua, a member of the National Council for Maubere Resistance. He is said to have been carrying a message from the council's leader, Konis Santana, for a seminar on Timor in Manila, the Philippine capital, this weekend.

Police also claimed they were stepping up investigations into the murder of a young woman trade unionist, 23-year old Titi Sugiarti, whose mutilated body was found near the factory where she worked in Bandung.

There were bitter strikes at the factory in February.

Last year another young

trade unionist, Marsinah, who had been involved in a strike at a watch factory in Surabaya, East Java, was found murdered in a forest many miles away. Marsinah had disappeared soon after 13 of her fellow-workers underwent interrogation by the military.

Her body showed signs of sadistic torture, and although some management members have since been tried for the killing, many people continue to suspect that army officers were responsible.

In January, the body of Petrus Tomae, an East Timorese worker, was found in a river, with head injuries. He had been working for a firm owned by relatives of Indonesian president Suharto, and may have been secretly organising fellow-workers.

Trades unionists have

blamed the military for violence in Medan, north Sumatra, during strikes last month, in which workers were killed. They also suspect the security services had a hand in stirring pogroms against Chinese in the town.

In Jakarta, the capital, 21 students have been jailed for six months on charges of 'defaming' President Suharto. They were charged under a law going back to Dutch colonial rule, for having taken part in a demonstration against the government. Eleven more students were arrested outside the court.

The arrest of ten students in East Timor, scene of a bloody massacre by the army three years ago, and the detention of two East Timorese leaders in Java, came as Philippines President Fidel Ramos banned delegates from 15 countries from attending a conference about

East Timor due on 31 May to 4 June in Manila.

Philippines opposition leaders accused Ramos of letting himself be 'pushed around' by the Indonesian government and various business interests. In New Zealand, more than 50 out of 99 MPs backed a protest over East Timor as Prime Minister Jim Bolger led a trade delegation to Jakarta on 15 May.

■ Jailed Indonesian resistance leader Xanana Gusmao has rejected a UN move to have him shipped into exile.

In a letter smuggled out of Cipinang jail, where he is serving a 20-year sentence, Gusmao said UN special envoy Francesc Vendrell and Indonesian official Francisco Lopes da Cruz had put the deal to him.

'I will not accept exile unless all Timorese political prisoners are freed,' he said.

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